

# DOOR COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN 2045

## VOLUME I: VISION AND GOALS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES.....	5
CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.....	10
CHAPTER 4: AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES.....	13
CHAPTER 5: HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	17
CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES.....	22
CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION.....	26
CHAPTER 8: LAND USE.....	29
CHAPTER 9: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION .....	42
CHAPTER 10: BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.....	45
CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTATION.....	48

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides an overview of Wisconsin’s comprehensive and farmland preservation planning laws, followed by an explanation of the processes used to develop the Door County Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plan (this plan) and a brief description of the contents of this Volume. This Plan was last updated in 2014 when both the comprehensive and farmland preservation plans were combined into one because of similar statutory requirements. Both sets of laws require consideration of the same topical areas and have the same public participation, hearing, notification, and adoption requirements. Both comprehensive and farmland preservation planning laws also require Door County to have this Plan adopted by the end of 2024. After the County adopts this Plan, the farmland preservation portion of this plan will also become certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). This certification will enable the certification of the Farmland Preservation Zoning Ordinance to occur in 2025.

## **OVERVIEW OF WISCONSIN’S COMPREHENSIVE AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLANNING LAWS**

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law – 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, codified in s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats., also referred to as the “Smart Growth” legislation – was signed into law on October 27, 1999. This legislation defined a comprehensive plan, detailed numerous land use regulations and programs that needed to be consistent with a comprehensive plan starting January 1, 2010, and listed mandatory procedures for adopting a comprehensive plan. Comprehensive plans are required by this state law to incorporate a twenty-year vision, although plans are to be updated no less than every ten years. Since its initial adoption, the Comprehensive Planning Law has been amended several times, most significantly with regard to the consistency requirement. According to the amended version of s. 66.1001, Wis. Stats., beginning on January 1, 2010, the actions of a town, village, city, or county with regard to any zoning or subdivision ordinance, or official mapping program, are those which must be consistent with that community’s comprehensive plan. Later, that law was changed to specifically exclude Conditional Use Permits. The County of Door, with both zoning and subdivision ordinances, was required to have a comprehensive plan in place by 2010.

The Comprehensive Planning Law does not mandate how a community should grow. Rather, it offers an outline of the topics and information to be addressed within a plan. While a municipality may choose to include additional topics, a comprehensive plan must include at least the nine “elements” referred to in the legislation (listed below) and as defined by the Comprehensive Planning Law:

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities and Community Facilities
5. Agricultura, Natural, and Cultural Resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

From this background information, the community is to develop its goals and policies, thereby providing a rational basis for local land use decisions. The law requires public participation, based on a written public participation plan that details how the plan will be developed, adopted, implemented, and updated. Per s 66.1001(4), Wis. Stats., Procedures for Adopting Comprehensive Plans, the county is

required to adopt a public participation plan that establishes communication methods, information distribution procedures, and public meetings for every stage of the plan preparation. Door County's public participation plan can be found on the Land Use Services Department's website: <https://www.co.door.wi.gov/492/Planning>. Plans must also include specific implementation objectives, policies, and programs, including agencies that will be responsible for implementation items and the timeframes within which those implementation measures will occur.

### **FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLANNING LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Wisconsin's farmland preservation law, sometimes called the "Working Lands Initiative," is codified in Ch. 91, Wis. Stats., as authorized by Act 28 in June 2009. All Wisconsin counties were required to have an adopted farmland preservation plan that meets statutory requirements, with staggered deadline dates based on a county's population density increase between 2000 and 2007. Door County was required to adopt a plan no later than December 31, 2014. The two main components of farmland preservation planning, as outlined in s. 91.10, Wis. Stats., are public participation and plan content. The same public participation plan procedures for adoption of a comprehensive plan also apply to a farmland preservation plan. Note that the Public Participation Plan for the farmland preservation plan, adopted by the Door County Board of Supervisors in 2023, is combined with the comprehensive plan's Public Participation Plan, addressing both statute requirements.

Per the farmland preservation planning law, the county's farmland preservation plan must state the county's policies related to farmland preservation and agricultural development. The plan needs to address issues that may affect farmland preservation and agricultural development in the county, including those that relate to population and economic growth, housing, transportation, utilities, communications, business development, community facilities and services, energy, waste management, municipal expansion, and environmental preservation. The plan must specifically address the following:

- Agricultural uses, specialties, resources, and infrastructure.
- Trends and forecasts related to agricultural land use, agricultural production, enterprises related to agriculture, and the conversion of agricultural lands to other uses.
- Goals and actions to preserve farmland and promote agricultural development in the county, including goals pertaining to the development of agriculture-related enterprises.
- Policies, goals, strategies, and proposed actions to increase housing density in areas that are not identified for agricultural development.

The county's plan must also include maps and text that clearly delineate and describe the rationale for areas that the county plans to preserve for agricultural and agriculture-related uses. These areas may include undeveloped natural resource and open space areas, but may not include any area that is planned for nonagricultural development within 15 years after the date on which the plan is adopted. Finally, the farmland preservation plan must be consistent with the county's comprehensive plan.

## **DESCRIPTION OF OVERALL PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

### **DOOR COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2045 PROCESS**

*This section is to be completed after completion of the plan.*

Following is a description of the processes used to develop the Door County Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plan 2045 (this plan, adopted in 2024). All of the documents described below can be found at <https://www.co.door.wi.gov/492/Planning>.

**Public Participation Plan.** A public participation plan was adopted by the Door County Board of Supervisors. (March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023)

**Volume II, Resource Report.** A draft of the Resource Report volume (described below) and associated maps were posted on the Door County Land Use Services Department’s website for public review and input. The public was notified via a press release. Municipalities and other Land Use Services contacts were notified via email. (October, 2023)

**Volume I, Vision and Goals.** A draft of the Vision and Goals volume (described below) and associated maps were posted on the Door County Land Use Services Department’s website for public review and input. The public was notified via a press release. Municipalities and other Land Use Services contacts were notified via email. (July, 2024)

**Resource Planning Committee Sponsorship for Public Hearing.** The municipalities and other Land Use Services contacts were notified via email. (August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

**Open House Meetings.** The municipalities and other Land Use Services contacts were notified via email twice. (September 3<sup>rd</sup> and September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

**Resource Planning Committee Public Hearing.** (October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024)

**Door County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing.** *(tentative November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024)*

### **OVERVIEW OF VOLUME I, VISION AND GOALS**

The Door County Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plan 2045 consists of two volumes. This volume – Volume I, Visions and Goals – provides the issues, opportunities, and vision statements for the required topic areas, and the overall plan goals, policies, and action items. Volume II, the Resource Report, provides the demographic and other information required by the Wisconsin statutes for comprehensive and farmland preservation plans. This volume refers readers to the appropriate chapter(s) within the Resource Report for background information.

## **CHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1001(2)(a), Wis. Stats., the Issues and Opportunities element of a comprehensive plan shall include: “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.”

### **GENERAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

For planning purposes, an issue is defined as an internal weakness or external threat that needs to be addressed, while an opportunity is an internal strength or an external trend that could be capitalized on. The general issues and opportunities found below regarding Door County were identified through analysis of the individual municipalities’ plans (towns, villages, and the City), as well as public participation meetings.

An overarching theme that the municipalities of Door County center in their plans is sustainability. The “three pillars” of sustainability consist of environmental, economic, and social systems. Achieving and maintaining sustainability requires balance between all three interconnected systems – human needs and desires must be met, but in an equitable manner that also ensures the preservation of the natural environment.

One issue that poses a threat to achieving sustainability in the County is the area’s major reliance on fossil fuels and other non-renewable energy sources. This is not unique to Door County, and neither is the lack of infrastructure in the county to utilize renewable energy sources. However, there are significant renewable energy sources available in the county to help the county become more energy independent and mitigate costs.

### **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapters 2, 4, and 5 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed demographic, housing, and employment information, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Issues and Opportunities element of this plan.*

Between the 2010 and 2020 Censuses, Door County’s year-round population of 27,785 increased by 2,281 people (8.2%), to 30,066 residents. This growth occurred through net migration (the number of residents moving into the county minus those leaving), rather than through natural population increase (births minus deaths). The Door County Land Use Services Department (LUS) projects the county’s population will continue to increase by a total of 9,566 residents between 2020 and 2050, or roughly 318 additional people per year.

In addition to its year-round population, Door County has many seasonal residents (part-time) and tourists either visiting for a day or staying overnight in one of the many lodging or camping facilities. Although difficult to estimate, one study found the county’s full-time equivalency population is between 20% and 161% higher than its year-round population, depending on the month. Applying this estimate to the 2020 year-round population for Door County, there are between 6,013 and 48,406 additional full-time equivalent people in the county, depending on the month.

In 2020, Door County's median age was over 12 years older than the state's, at 53.3 years compared to 39.6, respectively. The county's 65 and older population is the only age cohort expected to grow its share of the total population between 2020 and 2050. In 2020, the county's 65+ population consisted of 30% of the population, with those 25-64 making up 48% of the population, and those under 24 making up 22%. By 2050, Door County LUS projects the 65 and older population to consist of 38% of the population, whereas those 25-64 will make up 44%, and those under 24 will make up 18%. This trend toward a ballooning senior population will affect nearly all aspects of living and working in Door County, as outlined in the issues and opportunities sections of Chapters 3-10 in this volume.

While Door County remains predominantly white, there continues to be significant growth in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations, specifically those of Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity. Between 2010 and 2020, the county's Hispanic/Latinx population saw the largest raw increase, of nearly 400 residents, followed by those of two or more races (biracial), with an increase of over 200 residents. This trend is expected to continue where BIPOC residents consist of larger shares of Door County's population. In 2020, the Hispanic/Latinx population consisted of 3.5% of the county's population; Door County LUS projects this population to make up over 10% of the county's population by 2050. The Black (alone) and the biracial populations are also expected to increase their share in the county's population by 2050 by approximately 2 percentage points. This trend toward a diversifying population will affect various aspects of living and working in the county, as described in the following sections of this volume.

## **GENERAL VISION STATEMENT**

### **VISION STATEMENT FOR DOOR COUNTY**

In the year 2045, Door County boasts vibrant, diverse, and welcoming communities that support exceptional quality of life for both present and future generations through an equitable and sustainable balance between a full service, growing economy, the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, and thriving, interconnected social systems. The county strives to maintain its rural charm and agricultural character while promoting its unique natural scenery through recreational opportunities utilizing the widespread and diverse public access to the water and green spaces.

Door County is known as a leader in sustainability and as an environmentally aware place, with pristine open spaces and natural features; clean air and water; protected habitats, parks, and areas for outdoor recreation; and green technologies and clean, renewable energy resources. Residents and visitors highly value the county's natural resources for long-term enjoyment for all and responsibly recognize their economic and public health benefits. Tourism is dependent on the health of the natural environment; tourism programs follow sustainable education practices, supporting Destination Door County's "Leave No Trace" sustainable tourism principles. Ground and surface water quality are continually monitored and maintained for safe use as drinking water and enhanced recreational opportunities. The county strives to become less dependent on fossil fuels and outside energy sources; deepens its focus on environmental stewardship and environmental justice; and ensures new development efforts are aesthetically and ecologically sensitive, occurring contiguous to existing development, maintaining historic assets and character, and exacting minimal harm on the natural environment.

Door County is a diverse place that fosters a variety of employment opportunities, supported by a wide range of affordable, year-round housing and transportation options that are accessible to people of all ages, abilities, and incomes. The county seeks to balance the needs of a growing retirement community while also enhancing economic vitality by working closely with local businesses and attracting and

retaining young families and residents in the workforce. Both nonprofit and for-profit organizations capitalize on the depth and breadth of our residents' knowledge of and desire for the preservation and advancement of the arts, maritime and agricultural assets, education, health care, and research that promotes the long-term wellbeing for all. Through public and private partnerships, healthcare and childcare, as well as support services for senior residents, are widely available. High quality educational programs, both formal and informal, along with unique cultural activities, are available to people of all ages year-round as well.

### **SUMMARY LIST OF PLAN GOALS**

*Note: The goals below are not listed in any order of importance or priority.*

**GOAL 1.** Improve communication and knowledge regarding land use issues between all levels of government and residents, and support or initiate cooperative efforts on issues requiring multijurisdictional coordination and enforcement.

**GOAL 2.** Preserve and protect the county's surface water, groundwater, wildlife habitats, and natural features and resources which enhance the quality of life, and pursue nature-based solutions to increase ecosystem services and the resiliency of the county for current and future generations.

**GOAL 3.** Protect existing agriculture and promote sustainable agricultural innovations, operations, and techniques, with an emphasis on providing local food sources to serve present and future generations.

**GOAL 4.** Maintain and enhance the community's rural atmosphere and agricultural heritage by pursuing smart growth and infill development strategies through a compact land use pattern that minimizes conflicts between land uses and preserves the small-town aesthetic of the county.

**GOAL 5.** Preserve historic, cultural, and archaeological sites that contribute to the county's distinctive identity and community character, and support, maintain, and expand the presence of cultural, historical, and artistic groups, festivals, events, activities, and educational opportunities.

**GOAL 6.** Facilitate a diverse variety of quality, year-round and seasonal affordable housing for all income levels for the current and future population, and support economic opportunities that attract and retain residents, particularly young people and their families, to provide an adequate workforce and activate economic growth.

**GOAL 7.** Support the development, maintenance, and upgrading of utilities and community facilities and services in an efficient, coordinated, and cost-efficient manner to service the current and future demands on resources and infrastructure while prioritizing sustainable systems and operations throughout the county.

**GOAL 8.** Develop a sustainable and accessible transportation system that is safe, equitable, affordable, efficient, intermodal, well-connected, and resilient and adaptable to changes in demand, technology, and the environment at the lowest socioeconomic cost, prioritizing the expansion and use of non-motorized transit routes and modes that enhance the natural character of the county.

**GOAL 9.** Maintain and enhance the quality of parks, recreational areas and facilities, and trails, pursuing opportunities to support and expand the growth of outdoor year-round recreation for residents and visitors alike.



**CHAPTER 3:  
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1001(2)(e), Wis. Stats., the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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.” (Not that s. 295.20(2), Wis. Stats., outlines a property owner’s right to register and potentially later extract nonmetallic mineral resources, as well as how those rights may be protected from changes in planning or zoning designations.)

*Note: This chapter will address the historical and cultural resource aspects of these statutory requirements, while Chapter 4 will address the agricultural and natural resource aspects.*

### **HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Decreasing government funding for the arts and other historic and cultural places and activities
  - a. Local municipalities struggle to garner support for municipal-level historic preservation efforts
  - b. Competition between non-profits and lack of coordination among organizations
2. Loss of the small-town character of local municipalities and lack of education and preservation regarding historic buildings and places
  - a. Lack of historic preservation guidelines surrounding saving, upkeeping, or renovating historic buildings
  - b. No design standards for new buildings being build in historic areas, especially commercial buildings
3. Lack of government/municipal officials’ involvement in community-led historical, cultural, and artistic organizations, initiatives, and events
4. Uncertain support for cultural activities as Door County’s overall market is aging
  - a. Losing/not attracting young people and families
  - b. Lack of kid-friendly activities

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Tourism is a major economic driver
  - a. Rustic Roads
  - b. Increasing demand for more year-round cultural activities

2. County-wide marketing
3. Partnering on educational programs for the arts and historical and cultural preservation
4. Expansion of non-profits' activities and efforts; partnerships can be cultivated to bring more offerings to residents and visitors

### **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapter 3 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed information on historical and cultural resources, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources element of this plan.*

Door County hosts a variety of associations and organizations dedicated to preserving and enhancing the county's historical and cultural heritage. As a peninsula surrounded by water, Door County has a rich maritime history, evident in the county's museums, lighthouses, and shipwrecks. There is also a unique American Indian history accessible to learn about at five different sites in the county. Many maritime-related and other archaeological and historical sites are listed on both the national and state historic registries; there are 63 sites in Door County listed on both the state and national registers, with eleven (11) additional sites on the national register. Additionally, the Wisconsin Historical Society has 1,636 sites in Door County listed in its Architecture and History Inventory.

Cultural resources in the county area abundant and open to the public in large part due to the many arts and humanities associations, private businesses, and other agencies that operate schools, galleries and studios, theater groups, performing arts centers, and festivals. A variety of indoor and outdoor spaces are utilized by both local and non-local artisans and performers to showcase original works of art. In addition to creating and viewing original work, there is also a breadth of educational opportunities for people of all ages to learn about the natural environment, art, folk art, dance, drama, history, horticulture, literature, and many other topics. Lastly, there are several private wineries, breweries, and cooking schools contributing to the culinary culture of the county.

### **HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County is a leader in cultural preservation, as its numerous and diverse cultural resources – including the arts, historical sites, and those natural and agricultural spaces key to the county's distinctive cultural identity – are being actively maintained and enhanced through the work of cultural organizations supported by county-wide networks. The county's cultural offerings and arts industry are thriving, supported by residents and visitors of all ages through donations of time and funding as well as patronage, providing for a more interesting, attractive, and vibrant community. Door County's historical and archaeological resources – buildings and other sites and structures, museums, and landscapes – have been identified for maintenance and enhancement, with a continued emphasis on sustainability and architectural consistency; efforts are coordinated and supported by an array of community-driven financial and educational resources. The county has established a system offering education, guidance, and support for local historic preservation and design boards. Historic preservation and other ordinances and standards preserve historic structures and provide for attractive new development through design standards – particularly for commercial buildings, signage, and parking – and by strictly limiting and beautifying highway corridor development.

**CHAPTER 4:  
AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

As noted in Chapter 3, per s. 66.101(2)(e), Wis. Stats., the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources element of a plan shall contain: “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.” (Note that s. 295.20(2), Wis. Stats., outlines a property owner’s right to register and potentially later extract nonmetallic mineral resources, as well as how those rights may be protected from changes in planning or zoning designations.)

*Note: This chapter will address the agricultural and natural resource aspects of these statutory requirements; Chapter 3 addressed the historical and cultural resource aspects. Note also that there are additional legislative requirements regarding agricultural resources discussed in Chapter 7, Agricultural Resources, Volume II, Resource Report.*

### **AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. General agricultural issues:
  - a. Consolidation and downsizing of farms
    - i. Increasing input and operation costs
    - ii. Aging population; younger generation of farmers cannot take over all work
  - b. Land impacts from agricultural operations and practices that are not environmentally sound
    - i. Lack of nutrient management implementation and enforcement
    - ii. Use of pesticides and fertilizers
  - c. Industrialized farming makes it hard for small farmers and producers to be suppliers for most grocery stores and restaurants; small farms can’t compete with larger “factory” farms
  - d. Lack of knowledge and education about agricultural communities and practices, leading to a decrease in agricultural preservation and the redevelopment of agricultural lands
  - e. Regulatory issues – forestry uses vs. agricultural production, etc.
2. General natural resources issues:
  - a. Lack of connectivity and coordination among non-profits, advocacy groups, and municipalities working on natural resource and environmental efforts
  - b. Water quality/protection and coastal hazards
    - i. Groundwater concerns from agricultural practices
    - ii. Improper maintenance of septic systems
    - iii. Fluctuating water levels of Lake Michigan increase potential for flooding and coastal erosion
    - iv. Stormwater runoff concerns

- c. Increasing impacts of climate change
  - i. Overall environmental health and resiliency of ecosystems
  - ii. Increasing temperatures and extreme weather events
- d. Endangered species; invasive species

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Sustainable agricultural practices and operations are becoming more mainstream among farmers.
2. Ecotourism, agritourism, and geo-tourism capitalize on the County’s natural resources and agricultural character and support the local economy
  - a. Ecosystem services such as outdoor recreation are major draws to the County
  - b. Agribusinesses – orchards, vineyards, farms – opening operations to the public for educational and interactive experiences
3. Habitat, natural feature, and agricultural land restoration and protection
  - a. Preservation through land conservation easements and trust purchases
  - b. Endangered species and natural resource protection efforts pursued by various community organizations and non-profits
  - c. State and regional programs to maintain agricultural lands and preserve natural resources
  - d. Increase in public awareness and educational opportunities around sustainability
4. Implementation of and improvement to infrastructure for stormwater, coastal erosion, and renewable energy

### **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapters 6 and 7 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed information on agricultural and natural resources, as required by comprehensive and farmland preservation planning legislation requirements for the plan.*

### **AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

Door County’s unique climate, geology, topography, soils, and hydrology serve as the foundation for the county’s diverse agricultural and natural resource activities. Its temperate climate and rocky soils have played a large role in the past success of the county’s apple and cherry industries. Despite favorable conditions for orchards, the county’s geographic isolation and external economic forces have contributed to the downward trend in both the number and size of orchards. Overall the number of farms in the county, as well as the acreage of farmland, has been in decline since the late 1980s.

However, while there has been a decrease in the number of farms, Door County boasts a plethora of agricultural resources, from various agricultural product processing facilities and educational programs to farmers markets and the Door County Seed Library. Organic and grass-feeding practices have become more prominent among farmers. Agricultural tourism has become more popular in the county in the past decade as well. Various dining establishments partner with farms across the county to provide a farm-to-table menu, multiple orchards offer “pick-your-own” experiences during harvest

times, and residents and visitors alike can explore the many wineries, breweries, distilleries, and cideries that use locally grown products in their production processes.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Both agricultural and developed lands contribute to runoff pollution that negatively impacts both surface and groundwater. The fractured bedrock and shallow soils that exist in the county leave the groundwater particularly susceptible to runoff and other types of pollution. The county's surface waters, including Lake Michigan and interior waterbodies, are also degraded by runoff pollution, E. Coli contamination, algae/cladophora, and invasive species. Many federal, state, and local regulations are in place to protect these water resources, as well as other natural features that provide transition between land and water, such as floodplain, shoreland, and wetlands, which are critical to the health of surface and groundwaters.

Together, Door County's waters, wetlands, woodlands, and other natural areas make up ecosystems that provide important and irreplaceable habitat for wildlife species, including many rare natural communities and species that thrive there. However, human interaction with these ecological communities, along with climate change, certain agricultural practices, and new development, threaten the existence and quality of these habitats, and all pose significant risks and challenges to maintaining them. A variety of federal, state, and local planning and protection initiatives are currently working toward protecting the ecologically significant areas in the county and preventing further degradation from climate change.

### **AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County residents and visitors alike share a deep respect and appreciation of the county's unique biological, geological, and topographical diversity. They view themselves as part of the natural community within which they live, work, and play, and participate in individual and organizational efforts support climate change mitigation and adaption, protecting the county's significant ecosystems, air and water resources, shoreline areas, Niagara Escarpment, and other important natural features. Residents and visitors understand how their activities affect the county's natural environment – particularly Lake Michigan and Green Bay – and vice-versa, recognize those resources as important to themselves, the county, and the state for environmental, socioeconomic, and public health reasons.

Large, contiguous areas of critical agricultural and natural resource lands, including forested lands and those housing biologically diverse communities, are being preserved and maintained by private and public landowners, providing environmental, economic, and other co-benefits to residents and visitors. Proper management of these lands is accomplished through a variety of means, including education and economic incentives, with climate change/environmental protection and agricultural advocacy organizations working together to address the challenges they face in preservation efforts. Agricultural operations and associated business activities are thriving economically, and supported by county residents, visitors, and businesses, who understand the importance of buying locally-produced goods.

## **CHAPTER 5: HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

## **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

*Note: This chapter will address both the housing and economic development requirements of the state statutes for comprehensive plans.*

Per s. 66.1001(2)(e), Wis. Stats., the Housing element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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.”

Per s. 66.1001(2)(f), Wis. Stats., the Economic Development element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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.”

## **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. General housing issues:
  - a. Impacts of tourists and second homeowners
    - i. Shifting of seasonal and short-term housing
    - ii. Increase in housing and rental prices
  - b. There is a lack of:
    - i. Rental units – renting is appealing to younger people who are not ready for homeownership and older residents looking to transition from homeownership
    - ii. Affordable rental and homeownership opportunities
    - iii. Seasonal and workforce housing
    - iv. Senior housing
  - c. Quality of certain housing types
2. General economic development issues:

- a. Economic viability and financial stability of small businesses
- b. Lack of long-term employment opportunities
  - i. Many jobs do not offer full benefits
  - ii. Difficult for dual career couples/young families to settle in Door County
  - iii. Child care
- c. Tourism puts pressure on small businesses that are often understaffed
- d. Lack of infrastructure to support technology jobs
- e. Workforce readiness and job skills

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Benefits of tourism as an economic driver in Door County
  - a. Utilization of natural features and outdoor recreation
2. Educational workshops for workforce readiness and job skills
3. Commercial business and retail development
4. Enhancement of income and wealth generating opportunities
  - a. Attraction and diversification of industries and occupations, specifically those employers in fields paying higher wages/salaries
  - b. Attraction of younger workers to replace the aging workforce
5. Workforce housing grants and collaborative efforts with businesses for seasonal workers
6. Increased density and mixed use areas with affordable housing, both single and multifamily
7. Broadband

### **SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapters 4 and 5 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed housing and economic development information, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Housing and Economic Development elements of this plan.*

### **HOUSING**

In 2020, Door County had 25,024 housing units, with approximately 59% of those classified as occupied (usual place of residence) and 41% classified as vacant (i.e., an occasional/seasonal residence). Compared to the state, with a vacancy rate of 11%, Door County has an extremely high proportion of seasonal residences, especially in Northern Door where the vacancy rate is 65%.

U.S. Census median home values are significantly higher in Door County than in neighboring counties as well as the state. Estimated at \$223,200 in 2020, Door County's median home value for owner-occupied housing units is \$34,000 higher than the state's estimated median home value for owner-occupied homes, at \$189,200. In addition, Multiple Listing Service (MLS) data for 2021 shows median housing values to be much higher in Northern Door than in the rest of the county. The median sale price of homes in Northern Door in 2021 was \$429,500, compared to \$268,000 for Central Door and \$308,000 for Southern Door in the same year. Comparing these to median household incomes in all three areas shows that households earning the median household income in Northern Door typically are spending more than what is considered affordable to purchase a median-priced home. Unaffordability is a problem in the county's rental market as well. As of 2020, over 1,900 households in Door County were

living in unaffordable units and considered housing cost burdened (i.e., spending more than 30% of gross monthly income on housing costs). Estimates done by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition in 2021 indicated that an employee earning the average hourly wage in Door County must work the equivalent of 1.65 full time jobs in order to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent (FMR).

While housing affordability will be an on-going issue in Door County, primarily in Northern Door, the availability of land for new housing units does not appear to pose an issue. The US Census Bureau estimated a total of 14,386 housing units in Door County in 2020. Based on the Door County LUS population projections through the year 2050, the number of housing units in Door County in 2050 is projected to be 19,916, an increase of 5,520 new housing units from 2020. An analysis of existing vacant property assessed for residential purposes shows that there is sufficient land area to accommodate these housing units, taking into account both the probable number of parcels and acreage per unit needed.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Door County's economy is largely comprised of the agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism industries. With the county's heavy reliance on tourism, leisure and hospitality jobs ranked first in total number of jobs, at 20%, in 2020, but only earned 12% of the county's total payroll for the same year. Retail jobs, closely associated with leisure and hospitality, made up over 15% of the total jobs in Door County in 2020, but earned less than 12% of the county's total payroll. Higher paying jobs in manufacturing and education & health services both comprised 17% of the total number of jobs in the county in 2020, earning 23% and 22% of the total payroll, respectively. Economic development plans for the northeast Wisconsin region and Door County predict healthcare will continue to grow as an industry, producing more higher wage jobs.

Average annual wages paid to Door County workers in 2020 in all industries, except leisure and hospitality, were less than the state's average. This is reflected in the median earnings data – wages, salaries, and self-employment income – for Door County, which was less than neighboring counties and the state. The county's average median household income of \$61,765, which includes both earned and non-earned income, was also less than neighboring counties and the state. However, Door County's per capita personal income, which also includes both earned and non-earned income, was significantly higher than these same areas. High per capita income, in conjunction with low median household income and earnings, indicates that a much smaller proportion of households are accounting for the bulk of the wealth in Door County than in other areas. On the other end of the spectrum, just over 8% of Door County's year-round population was living below poverty levels in 2020. The highest poverty rates occur in the under 18 population, at 12.6%, and the Black alone population, at 15.3%.

In addition to low wages, other labor and economic development challenges include the seasonal tourism cycle and an aging population. Economic development activities designed to address these specific issues are focusing on the development of new and existing businesses, a skilled, younger workforce, and increasing community cash flow.

## **HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, persons of all ages and income levels are living and working in Door County, involved in local, community-level activities but aware of their connection to the global environment. Housing and economic development activities are socially and environmentally responsible, supporting community-wide resiliency efforts. Homes and businesses county-wide are served by a variety of transportation options and quality, high-speed telecommunications infrastructure. Housing options include affordable, mixed-density types in areas close to schools and services, with options for senior and disabled residents that help them maintain their homes and independence for as long as possible.

Economic development efforts seek to further create jobs that pay a living wage and offer benefits, attracting and retaining young workers and families to the area. County residents enjoy educational and training opportunities that create and grow employment in key industries, such as healthcare, maritime technology, skilled trades (plumber, carpenter, electrician), and food production. The area supports an optimal mix of industrial and commercial uses unique to Door County, in harmony with a sustainable year-round tourism industry, as efforts to lengthen the county's "season" while promoting Destination Door County's "Leave No Trace" principles have been successful. Local agricultural and orchard operations, including agri- and eco-tourism, are integral to the economy, supported by residents, business owners, and visitors who favor locally-grown products.

**CHAPTER 6:  
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES**

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1001(2)(d), Wis. Stats., the Utilities and Community Facilities element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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 governmental services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.”

*Note: This chapter will address the utilities and community facilities aspects of these statutory requirements, with Chapter 11 discussing parks in the county.*

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Increased need and demand for public services and infrastructure
  - a. Degradation concerns
  - b. Provision of utilities
  - c. Investment in community facilities
2. Aging population
  - a. Access to elderly care facilities
  - b. Stress on healthcare and emergency services
  - c. Funding for schools
3. Internet/broadband access

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Public school system improvements and increased post-high school graduate educational opportunities
2. Government cooperation on the expansion of community centers and public facilities and services
  - a. Further advance and develop police, fire, and ambulatory services
  - b. Establish cohesive solid waste and recycling services and facilities
3. Renewable energy resource availability

4. Increased internet/broadband access
5. Grant and other funding opportunities for community development

### **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapter 9 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed information regarding community facilities and utilities, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Utilities and Community Facilities element of this plan.*

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Door County's community facilities include administrative facilities; solid waste (garbage) disposal and recycling; road maintenance; protective and emergency services; educational facilities; libraries; healthcare facilities; childcare facilities; cemeteries; and churches. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) oversees solid waste disposal, recycling, open burning and trash incineration, and composting in the state. Door County implements DNR policies through a variety of ordinances, including solid waste management, recycling, and outdoor refuse burning and fireworks. Additionally, the county regularly collects pharmaceuticals at the Sheriff's Department and conducts clean sweeps for electronic equipment and hazardous substances through the Highway Department.

Protective and emergency services in Door County are comprised of law enforcement through a county police department and jail, several municipal police departments, and town constables; ten local fire departments; and a county-owned and operated emergency ambulance services department. Other community facilities in the county consist of five public school systems, four private schools, a technical college, and eight county libraries. Door County also has one hospital and a wide variety of public and private, for-profit and non-profit healthcare organizations. Additionally, there are several types of assisted living facilities, adult direct care services, and childcare facilities throughout the county.

### **UTILITIES**

Utilities in Door County include municipal wastewater treatment (sewer) systems; private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS); water supply systems; storm water management systems; electric service; natural gas and other types of heating fuels; renewable energy; and telecommunications. There are ten municipal wastewater treatment facilities in the county that serve approximately one-third of all housing units; POWTS serve the other two-thirds. All of the county's drinking water comes from the ground. Private wells serve approximately 70% of the county's households and the other 30% of households are served by municipal water systems.

Non-renewable energy sources provide the vast majority of Door County's power and heating supply, including coal and natural gas. Wisconsin Public Service provides the majority of power to all municipalities, except for the Sturgeon Bay Utilities area and the Town of Washington. Sturgeon Bay Utilities is municipal-owned and the Town of Washington has their own private cooperative that serves the island.

In 2022, the state published the Wisconsin Clean Energy Plan which set a goal for all electricity consumed within the state to be carbon free by 2050. Sturgeon Bay Utilities and Wisconsin Public Service offer various voluntary programs for residents and businesses to take part in, for energy efficiency and renewable energy alike.

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County continues to work with its municipalities and other community and government agencies to provide residents with high-quality, accessible public services, utilities, and community facilities through the improvement and expansion of communication, education, and information-sharing. The county and its municipalities promote and support sustainability in all services and facilities, emphasizing long-term environmental protection with sanitary sewer service systems, on-site wastewater treatment systems, stormwater management, water supply systems, solid waste and recycling disposal, telecommunications facilities, and power generation. Policies and standards support public health; connectivity and coordination of utilities, services, and community facilities; conservation of natural resources; and renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Specifically, residents, visitors, businesses, and regulatory agencies in the county are working toward:

- Ongoing maintenance, improvement, or expansion, as needed, of rescue services and facilities (police, fire, emergency services), cemeteries, healthcare facilities, childcare facilities, libraries, and schools;
- Minimizing waste streams;
- Maintenance and enhancement of water and wastewater systems, prioritizing the protection of water quality;
- Expanding and improving utilities, particularly with regard to infill;
- Ensuring and improving high-speed, broadband internet and cellular telephone services;
- Supporting and promoting the current use and expansion of renewable and alternative energy sources;
- Offering ongoing public education efforts regarding community facilities, services, and utilities; and
- Working always to achieve a sustainable balance between improving facilities and maintain natural and environmental resources.

## CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1001(2)(c), Wis. Stats., the Transportation element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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 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.:

*Note: Chapter 11 will address the bicycle and pedestrian transportation aspects of the statutory requirements.*

### **TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Limited funding and staffing resources
  - a. Road maintenance delays
  - b. Accessibility and reach of services limited; no general public transit services
2. Safety; County is car-centric
  - a. Reliance on non-renewable fuel sources; volatility of fuel costs
  - b. Congestion and traffic in main parts of towns/villages; commuting stress
  - c. Dangerous conditions for non-drivers
3. Recreational wayfinding
  - a. Public access to the water

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Public transit
  - a. Shuttle and bus services in towns/villages could be expanded county-wide
  - b. Ride share services
2. Better signage
  - a. Improved access to water
  - b. Rustic Roads
3. Improved connectivity between municipalities
  - a. Trails and bike connections

## **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapter 8 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed transportation system information, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Transportation element of this plan. For a summary on bicycle and pedestrian transportation, see Chapter 10 of this volume; refer to Chapter 12 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed bicycle and pedestrian information.*

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) supports Door County's transportation network, which is involved in all modes of transit, including state highways, public transit, air, rail, water, bicycle, and pedestrian. Most of the funding for county and town road maintenance and construction comes from WisDOT through general transportation aid. The WisDOT owns and funds the operations of three movable bridges in the City of Sturgeon Bay. Other supporting/connecting roadway infrastructure includes one park-and-ride lot in Southern Door, the Door County Coastal Byway, rustic road designations, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The county also has three airports; the main airport, owned and operated by Door County, accommodates corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes. The county's water transportation system includes the Port of Sturgeon Bay and multiple ferry services, with the United States Coast Guard stationed here to oversee multiple facets of water transportation and recreational water usage.

Door County Connect, the county's official public transportation service, partners with Door-Tran, a local non-profit that coordinates and provides transportation services. Through this partnership, residents of the county have options of a shared-ride taxi service (Door-2-Door Rides) throughout the county and a public connector bus service in the City of Sturgeon Bay. Additionally, a free shuttle bus runs in Sister Bay during the busy season. Other services include transportation for veterans as well as non-emergency medical transportation.

## **TRANSPORTATION VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County, its municipalities, and its transportation providers continue to work to provide a variety of transportation systems, networks, and options that are safe, reliable, affordable, equitable, and accessible to all residents. Systems are reliant, as much as possible, on renewable energy sources, and are well-maintained and attractive, inflicting as little impact as possible on environmental and natural resources.

## CHAPTER 8: LAND USE

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1011(2)(h), Wis. Stats., the Land Use element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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 [the Issues and Opportunities element of the plan], 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 use and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas, the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in [ the Utilities and Community Facilities element of the plan], will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in [the Utilities and Community Facilities element of the plan], and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.”

### **LAND USE ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Carrying capacity of the land
  - a. Increase in condos, short-term rentals, & commercial businesses potentially change small town feel
2. Fluctuation in housing and employment trends/patterns
  - a. Lack of employment and affordable housing options
3. Farmland and natural resource preservation
  - a. Loss of agricultural land to commercial or residential development
  - b. Water quality and runoff issues
4. Infrastructure needs
  - a. Lack of transit options
  - b. Aging and increasing population

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Infill development and redevelopment of unused/abandoned lots
2. Infrastructure improvements
  - a. Services for seniors and children

3. Promotion of agricultural and ecological tourism; promotes preservation efforts

### **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapter 10 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed land use information, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Land Use element of this plan.*

Land use inventories are conducted within large geographic areas in order to classify the approximate type and amount of land currently dedicated to specific purposes. Several land use inventories have been conducted for Door County in the past, with the most recent having been completed by the Land Use Services Department using 2023 aerial photography as the basis.

Woodlands, wetlands, and natural areas are the county's largest land use, covering 37.8% of the total land area, followed by agricultural uses, covering 37.2% of the county's total land area, and open space/fallow fields covering 10.6%. Residential uses cover 5.5% of the total land area. The other land use categories, containing a combined total of approximately 7.7% of the county's total land, are parks and recreation, transportation, water features, industrial, commercial, communications/utilities, and governmental/institutional.

Door County has a variety of land use management plans, ordinances, and policies in place at both county and municipal levels to enforce existing land use regulations and achieve future land use goals. County-level plans include:

- Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plan 2045 (this plan)
- Land and Water Resource Management Plan
- Parks and Open Space Plan
- Flood Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Coastal Byways Management Plan

County-level ordinances include zoning (comprehensive and shoreland), land division, floodplain, airport height, and addressing.

### **LAND USE VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County works to maintain an economically efficient and environmentally sustainable land use and development pattern, where rural land uses are balanced between residential and economic activities and natural resource preservation. Communities' central development areas (existing "downtowns" and "hamlets") are unique, with well-maintained and preserved historic sites along with large, contiguous areas of open space and natural features. The county's compact land use pattern promotes sustainable development and environmental stewardship by maintaining and protecting ground (drinking) and surface water quality, wildlife habitat, and conservation corridors while providing scenic views and recreational activities for residents and tourists alike.

Farming practices are lucrative and sustainable; residents are able to make a living off the land while also being good stewards. There is a variety of size and types of farms, with small family farms thriving along with larger entities. Housing is clustered, on small lots, or adjacent to or within communities, with access to walking and biking routes to commercial and recreational activities. Business expansion and establishment is accommodated by provision of sufficient land areas for such activities, as well as efficient, consistent regulations regarding location and types of businesses. Small businesses enjoy a variety of supports, along with larger employers such as the healthcare industry, allowing the business community to provide the goods, services, and jobs community members and visitors want and need.

## **FUTURE LAND USE**

*Note that future land uses for the incorporated areas of the county – the City of Sturgeon Bay and the Villages of Egg Harbor, Ephraim, Forestville, and Sister Bay – are shown on the county-level land use map, although the county does not have any zoning, subdivision, or official mapping programs in effect in these areas.*

## **FUTURE LAND USE MAPS DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE PROCESSES**

### **2009 DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

For the 2009 adoption of this plan, the county-wide future land use map was developed, by necessity, in a piecemeal fashion. For municipalities that had already created their own future land use maps as part of their municipal comprehensive planning processes – the Towns of Baileys Harbor, Brussels, Gardner, Gibraltar, Liberty Grove, Nasewaupée, and Union; the Villages of Egg Harbor, Ephraim, and Sister Bay; and the City of Sturgeon Bay – Land Use Services Department (then Planning Department) staff took those municipal-level maps and “translated” their land use categories into the county-level land use categories. For example, a municipality may have designated two or more small-lot residential land use categories on their municipal map, which were then translated simply into “residential” for the purpose of the county-level map. Current information regarding wetlands, government and institutional land uses, parks and recreation, communication and utilities facilities, and transportation were then overlaid onto the new maps, as in many cases the county had information more recent and accurate than the original municipal maps for these types of uses and land cover. Also examined were the 2007 (then “current”) land use maps for each of these municipalities, so as to ensure review of any discrepancies between existing and projected/desired uses.

The Towns of Egg Harbor, Jacksonport, Sevastopol, and Sturgeon Bay created future land use maps that dealt only with either certain kinds of land uses, or certain areas of the municipality. For these towns, staff took the municipal-level maps and translated the legend categories provided into the county-level legend. The current information regarding wetlands, government and institutional land uses, parks and recreation, communication and utilities facilities, and transportation were then overlaid. For the remaining, unmapped areas of the towns, staff members developed future land use designations by reviewing current land uses, development patterns, and zoning maps. Likewise, the future land use maps created for the Towns of Clay Banks, Forestville, and Washington and the Village of Forestville – municipalities that did not develop any kind of future land use maps of their own – were created by staff after reviewing current land uses, development patterns, and zoning. Staff then distributed the maps to each of the county’s 19 municipalities for review, comment, and corrections. Maps were then reviewed and approved by the ad-hoc Core Planning Committee, the oversight body established by the county board to oversee the county comprehensive plan development.

### **2014 & 2024 UPDATE PROCESS**

In 2014, Land Use Services Department staff again distributed the future land use maps described above to each of the county’s 19 municipalities for review, comment, and corrections. The updated/corrected maps were then synthesized into the final county-level future land use maps. This same process was used for the 2024 update.

## DESCRIPTION OF FUTURE LAND USE MAPS

Described in the following section are the land use categories depicted on Maps 9.1 A – C, Future Land Use, which can be found at the end of this volume. These general land use categories largely match those categories used in creating the current land use maps, with the addition of “rural residential” and “mixed commercial/residential” categories and the replacement of the two categories “agricultural” and “open/fallow” with “rural/agricultural.” Boundaries of “core areas” – a term and land use category first used in the county’s 1995 Door County Development Plan – are also depicted on the county-wide future land use maps. Core areas are found only in towns and are referenced in the Door County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance as areas allowing higher multiple-occupancy development densities and, in some instances, decreased setbacks. Core area boundaries were reviewed by towns in their review and approval of the county-level future land use maps.

Note that larger-sized versions of these county-level future land use maps are available from the Door County Land Use Services Department for all 19 municipalities. Those maps depict wetlands larger than two acres in area and also areas served by public sewer (as of 2024), features not shown on the smaller-scale maps in this plan volume.

**Important note:** *While the Land Use Services Department can provide more detailed municipal-level versions of these county future land use maps, still more specific future land use maps are available from those municipalities which have themselves developed and adopted their own comprehensive plans. Those municipal-level plan maps and accompanying goals, policies, and action items should be consulted for more detailed information as to desired land use activities or guidelines regarding development activities – many proposed land uses or projects might require review and approval by multiple levels of government. All municipalities - except for the Town of Forestville - have adopted or expect to have adopted their own municipal-level comprehensive/Smart Growth plans by the date of this county plan adoption.*

## FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

Future land use category designations are not intended to serve as zoning designations, but rather indicators of desired types of future development and land uses. Mapped future land use categories will, however, be one consideration when petitions are presented to the county requesting county zoning ordinance map amendments. (Other considerations will include input from the affected town[s] with regard to the municipal-level future land use map or any pertinent goals and action items, if any, and any pertinent goals, policies, and action items from the county plan.)

Note that there are several areas on the county-level future land use maps where the boundaries of particular land use categories are not meant to be specifically defined, due to loosely defined boundaries on the municipal-level future land use maps. Any proposed map amendments for these areas will need to be evaluated with even more care than usual. Those areas are: 1) the proposed commercial area at the intersection of State Trunk Highway 42 and Europe Bay Road (Town of Liberty Grove), 2) the proposed mixed use area around the community of Namur (Town of Union), 3) two proposed residential areas along State Trunk Highway 42 and one along State Trunk Highway 57 just north of the City of Sturgeon Bay (all three in the Town of Sevastopol), and 4) proposed mixed use areas in/near the communities of Valmy and Institute (both in the Town of Sevastopol). Finally, note that, per the town’s request, the majority of the Town of Egg Harbor – outside areas governed by county shoreland zoning – is depicted as an unbounded mixture of rural/agricultural, residential, and commercial uses.

### Core Areas

The areas encompassed by the core area boundaries consist of existing built-up communities and their planned expansion areas. These communities already contain a fairly dense mixture of commercial, residential, and institutional uses. In many cases public sewer already exists. In general, future high density (re)development, whether commercial, residential, or mixed-use, should be directed to these areas. Guidelines for these areas are as listed below.

- Maintain the vital community character of these core areas by encouraging future commercial, residential, and institutional uses to locate in these areas.
- Allow higher density development in accordance with the availability of and capability of wastewater treatment systems.
- Within individual development core areas, guide the future development pattern by identifying suitable locations for each type of desired development (e.g., retail, single family residential, mixed-use, townhouses, etc.).
- Promote orderly and rational expansion of these communities, particularly by avoiding a linear strip development pattern along major roads in favor of a more compact development pattern. Where possible, communities should strive to maintain a distinct “edge” to their built-up areas.
- Avoid sprawl by maintaining undeveloped parts of the core areas as lower density rural lands until such land is actually needed to accommodate growth from the central parts of the core areas.
- Encourage infill development and redevelopment.

Targeting much of the projected commercial and higher-density residential development to core areas will serve to allow the county to grow with minimal “sprawling,” utilize sewer or planned sewer extensions, expand commercial and industrial uses contiguous to existing such uses, and maintain the rural atmosphere of outlying areas of the county. Core areas are therefore those areas of the county deemed to be designated for “Smart Growth,” as defined by the Wisconsin legislation’s 14 municipal planning goals.

**Residential** – Areas designated as “Residential” are intended to be developed predominantly with single-family uses, or, where allowed by zoning or other ordinance, mobile homes, group quarters, or non-transient multi-family buildings. Some parcels designated as “Residential” may currently contain duplexes, multi-family developments, or resorts, if those uses are located on parcels currently zoned for primarily single-family residential development, or if the municipality wished to ensure that the long-term development of the property would be primarily residential rather than commercial in nature. “Residential” areas include the majority of the county’s shorelines and areas containing smaller lots and/or emerging small-lot residential development patterns.

**Rural Residential** – Areas designated as “Rural Residential” are intended to develop with predominantly single-family residential uses, generally on larger parcels and in areas removed from designated community centers, core areas, or “downtowns.” These areas consist primarily of wooded uplands, areas where agricultural activity has greatly diminished, and certain areas adjacent to existing developed areas. Typically, public sewer is not available, though some of these areas have been platted or are beginning to develop at relatively low densities. Development in these areas

should continue at modest densities and be consistent with the generally rural character of these areas. Commercial activity should be discouraged except for uses that are compatible with lower density residential development.

**Commercial** – “Commercial” areas are those intended for development with retail sales, trade of goods and/or services, commercial offices, and commercial lodging establishments and are found largely in community centers, core areas, or “downtowns.” Commercial areas should maintain defined boundaries, avoid excessive access points to major roads by encouraging shared driveways or internal circulation patterns, and have buffering or screening of light industrial uses and storage and parking areas from adjacent public rights-of-way and residential areas. Highway corridor development should avoid further strip development and loss of community separation by limiting future development density, employing stringent setbacks, and requiring screening of new uses. Note that the future land use maps depict many “outlying” (i.e., non-core) commercial areas, reflecting existing commercial zoning or businesses such as multiple occupancy developments; when redevelopment is proposed for the latter, it should be undertaken carefully and with consideration for neighborhood compatibility.

**Mixed Commercial/Residential** – Areas designated as “Mixed Commercial/Residential” are intended to accommodate a variety of commercial and residential activities, typically higher-density and in designated community centers, core areas, or “downtowns.” There are also several small “Mixed Commercial/Residential” areas scattered throughout the county outside the core areas, most of which have historically been minor development nodes and which are usually situated at a major crossroads. Unlike core areas, public sewer is not expected to extend to any of these outlying areas. Development in these outlying areas should avoid large-scale projects that would conflict with the “small-town” character of these communities, alter the visual quality of the surrounding areas, or create conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses.

*For further guidance, see also the detailed explanations of core areas and the commercial and residential land use categories, as applicable.*

**Industrial** – “Industrial” lands are intended for uses such as fabrication, wholesaling, or long-term storage of products and for extraction (mining) or transformation of materials.

**Transportation** – Lands designated as “Transportation” include existing or planned parking facilities, airports, marine transportation areas, and non-motorized-related transportation areas.

**Communications/Utilities** – Those areas shown as “Communications/Utilities” denote areas where the generation, processing, and/or transmission of electronic communications or of water, electricity, petroleum, or other transmittable products is occurring currently, or where the disposal, waste processing, and/or recycling of byproducts is occurring.

**Governmental/Institutional Facilities** – Those areas shown as “Governmental/Institutional Facilities” denote existing or planned expansions of public and private facilities for education, health, or assembly; cemeteries and related facilities; and government facilities used for administration or safety. (Note that public utilities and outdoor recreation areas are categorized separately.)

**Parks and Recreation** – Land designated for “Parks and Recreation” are appropriate for out-of-doors sport and general recreation facilities, camping or picnicking facilities, nature exhibits, and protected historical and other cultural amenities.

**Rural/Agricultural** – “Rural/Agricultural” areas cover much of southern and central Door County, where there are currently relatively stable agricultural lands with few non-agricultural uses, as well as most of the cleared areas located within the northern part of the county, which has more limited or discontinued agricultural activities. These areas are not planned for non-agricultural development in the next 15 years, however, lands in this category can, and most likely will, contain residential uses compatible with agriculture. Agricultural and related operations in these areas should be protected by ensuring development is at low density levels.

**Woodland/Wetland/Natural** – Lands designated as “Woodland/Wetland/Natural” are primarily in a natural state, and include wetlands, woodlands, and public and private conservancy areas. Note that lands in this category can – outside of wetland and conservancy areas – and most likely will, contain very low-density residential uses in upland areas. The character of these regions should be protected by discouraging any development that would adversely impact the environmental quality or natural beauty of these areas. Maintenance of these natural areas should include continued private stewardship and public ownership or, if necessary, acquisition of easements or additional public lands.

#### **FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAPS**

Farmland preservation planning law requires maps and text that clearly delineate and describe the rationale for areas that the county plans to preserve for agricultural and agriculture-related uses. These areas may include undeveloped natural resource and open space areas, but may not include any area that is planned for nonagricultural development within 15 years after the date on which the plan is adopted.

For all of the towns except for the Town of Clay Banks, the Land Use Services Department staff created draft farmland preservation plan maps based solely on two land use categories from the future land use maps described previously. (See Maps 9.2 A - C.) The process for creating these maps is described below.

- 1) The Rural/Agricultural future land use designations were renamed “farmland preservation areas,” and
- 2) The Woodland/Wetland/Natural Area future land use area were also converted to farmland preservation areas, except for conservation areas (such as Land Trust, Nature Conservancy, or The Ridges ownership, state ownership, etc.). The conversion of Woodland/ Wetland/Natural land use designations to farmland preservation areas was done because there are now uses involving wooded areas that can count as agriculture, and because Woodland/Wetland/Natural land adjacent to agricultural land is eligible for the per acre income tax credit.
- 3) Properties with any other future land use designation besides Rural/Agricultural or Woodland/Wetland/Natural are shown as “nonfarmland preservation areas.”

The farmland preservation map for the Town of Clay Banks was created differently because of their Exclusive Agricultural (EA) zoning. On the Town of Clay Banks farmland preservation map, all properties zoned EA are shown as “farmland preservation” areas, as well as most areas zoned Estate or Prime Agricultural. The Estate and Prime Agricultural lands are included because these zoning districts allow farming and most of the land is currently being farmed. Most other areas with zoning districts where agriculture is not allowed were mapped as “excluded areas.”

In the event land use designations conflict between future land use and farmland preservation maps, the farmland preservation map will supersede the future land use map. For example, if a property owner in the Estate areas described above wishes to rezone to a denser residential category, it would be inconsistent with the Door County Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plan 2045. However, if and when a property owner decides to discontinue farming, the property may still be used for residential purposes to the extent that the Estate zoning allows.

#### **OTHER MAPS ASSOCIATED WITH FUTURE LAND USE**

Per state statutes, the land use element of a comprehensive plan shall include maps showing productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, public utilities and community facilities, and the general location of future land uses. Refer to the list below for the Resource Report maps which should be reviewed in conjunction with the future land use maps. All maps can be found at the end of the Resource Report, Volume II of this plan.

- Productive agricultural soils - Map 6.2: Prime Agricultural Soils
- Natural limitations for building site development
  - Map 6.1: General Soil Associations
  - Map 6.4: Surface Water Features
  - Map 6.5: Major Wetland Areas
  - Map 6.6: Shorelands and Floodplains
- Floodplains - Map 6.6: Shorelands and Floodplains
- Wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands
  - Map 6.4: Surface Water Features
  - Map 6.5: Major Wetland Areas
  - Map 6.8: Preserved Lands
- Boundaries of utilities and facilities - Maps 10.1 A – C, 2024 Land Use (shows public sewer service areas and utilities such as communication, electric substations and transmission lines, and other utilities)

#### **EXISTING/POTENTIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN MUNICIPAL PLANS AND COUNTY PLAN**

Door County municipalities that completed their own comprehensive plans identified within those plans internal conflicts or conflicts with other municipalities. The Town of Nasewaupsee had also identified a conflict between the town’s plan and the county’s shoreland zoning regulations in its 2003 plan. Note, however, that since the Town adopted this plan, state law regarding shoreland zoning has changed and the county no longer regulates uses in Nasewaupsee.

The county-level future land use maps for this comprehensive plan were created so as to completely accommodate and not conflict with local municipal plan future land use maps. This process has resulted in several internal conflicts within this plan, between the future land use map (based on the towns' maps) and the goals, policies, and action items. These conflicts and their potential resolutions are listed below.

- 1) The Town of Nasewaupée's future land use map includes significant commercial expansion along the STH 57 corridor, which conflicts with several goals, policies, and action items advocating the minimization of commercial sprawl along the highway corridors. Since the county has no zoning jurisdiction in this area, there is currently no resolution available to the county to address this issue. On the other hand, given that the county only has shoreland zoning jurisdiction in the town, no actual/official conflicts are expected to arise.
- 2) The Town of Sevastopol's future land use map includes commercial expansion along STH 42/57, which conflicts with several goals, policies, and action items advocating the minimization of commercial sprawl along the highway corridors. To resolve any potential conflicts this might create, the Resource Planning Committee will need to carefully review any rezoning and conditional use permit applications within this highway corridor. Conditions that address screening, traffic issues (frontage and reverse frontage roads, strict sign regulations), and design would be appropriate.
- 3) The Town of Sevastopol has also mapped three alternative housing "bubbles" that are not located near any existing commercial centers or residential developments. Again, review by the Resource Planning Committee of any rezoning and conditional use permit applications within these alternative housing "bubbles" should be cautiously considered and include conditions that address screening, traffic issues (frontage and reverse frontage roads, strict sign regulations), and design.
- 4) The Town of Gardner has mapped residential development along many road corridors throughout the town, exhibiting the potential for sprawl, adjacent siting of conflicting land uses, and loss of agricultural or open space lands. As with the Towns of Egg Harbor and Nasewaupée, since the county has no zoning jurisdiction in this area, there is currently no resolution available to the county. Given that the county only has shoreland zoning jurisdiction in the town, though, no actual/official conflicts are expected to arise.
- 5) The City of Sturgeon Bay's comprehensive plan future land use map includes extraterritorial land use areas, encompassing a 1.5 mile radius beyond the city limits, which conflicts with the county's future land use map in several locations:
  - The county's future land use map designates approximately 50 acres of land in the Town of Sturgeon Bay, located between 18th Avenue and Highway 42/57 and to the south of Alabama Street (CTH "T"), as future commercial use. The city's extraterritorial future land use map designates only a strip of road frontage along Alabama as future commercial or mixed residential use, with the remaining portion of the area in question designated as mixed residential use.
  - The county's future land use map designates stretches of commercial use along the STH 42/57 highway corridor in the Towns of Nasewaupée and Sevastopol, conflicting with the

city’s extraterritorial future land use map which shows these areas as primarily agricultural. As discussed above, the county’s map for these areas is actually in conflict with county plan goals, policies, and action items; see discussions #1 and #3 above as to how or if these conflicts will be addressed.

### **EXISTING/POTENTIAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND MUNICIPAL EXPANSION (ANNEXATION)**

In order to identify potential conflicts between farmland preservation and future expansion by incorporated municipalities, Land Use Services Department staff reviewed the comprehensive plans of towns and incorporated areas that border one another. (No municipalities in the county have a farmland preservation plan.) Of the five incorporated areas in the county, only the City of Sturgeon Bay and the Village of Sister Bay show extraterritorial planning jurisdiction on their future land use maps. These extraterritorial planning areas were compared against the county farmland preservation maps to identify any potential conflicts in the event of annexation. The only significant area with conflicting future land uses is in the Town of Liberty Grove, bordering the Village of Sister Bay. The Village future land use map shows a 160-acre area as residential, whereas the town and county future land use maps and the county farmland preservation map show it as agricultural. Further discussion on all incorporated areas and potential annexation issues with bordering towns are described below.

- Village of Ephraim. The Village of Ephraim borders the Towns of Gibraltar and Liberty Grove. The Village’s comprehensive plan does not mention annexation and its future land use map does not show any extraterritorial planning areas.
  - The only bordering Town of Gibraltar parcels that are designated as farmland preservation area are located along the southern end of the Village. This area is not being used agriculturally and is primarily wooded or wetland. About one-half of the bordering properties are zoned “wetland” or “conservation area” and the other one-half is zoned for agricultural uses. The town’s plan mentions annexation as within the scope of the Village’s authority but that it is not being exercised. Their plan also lists “efforts for cooperative decision making” in the event the Village would decide to pursue annexation.
  - Only a small bordering area is designated as farmland preservation in the Town of Liberty Grove. This area contains woodland and a tree plantation and is zoned for agricultural uses (Heartland-10).
- Village of Egg Harbor. The Village of Egg Harbor shares borders with the Towns of Egg Harbor and Gibraltar. There are no farmland preservation designated areas along the border of the Town of Egg Harbor. There are Town of Gibraltar parcels located along the northern boundary of the Village that are designated as farmland preservation. This area is zoned wetland and agriculture (Heartland -3.5 (HL3.5)). The agricultural area is currently being farmed.
- Village of Forestville. The Village of Forestville borders only the Town of Forestville, the entire area of which is designated as farmland preservation. The Village of Forestville’s comprehensive plan does not mention annexation and the Town of Forestville does not have a comprehensive plan. Considering that the Wisconsin Department of Administration projects the Village’s population to decline by over 15% between 2010 and 2040, and that the area does not have a significant seasonal population, annexation by the Village does not seem likely.

- Village of Sister Bay. The Village of Sister Bay borders only the Town of Liberty Grove, including some areas mapped as farmland preservation. As mentioned previously, the Village has designated a 160-acre area with a residential future land use, while the town and county plans have it designated as agricultural. This area is zoned for agricultural uses and is currently being farmed. Both the Village of Sister Bay and the Town of Liberty Grove list annexation as a top-ten concern in their comprehensive plans. Both plans also state that they should “determine common areas of development between communities before development or annexation” to possibly resolve any future conflict.
- City of Sturgeon Bay. The City of Sturgeon Bay borders the Towns of Nasewaupée, Sevastopol, and Sturgeon Bay.
  - Town of Nasewaupée. A large southern bordering area in the Town of Nasewaupée is mapped as farmland preservation but, except for one forty-acre parcel, is not currently being used for agriculture. All of these areas are designated by the City as “agricultural/residential” on its future land use map. Note that Door County does not have zoning jurisdiction in this area.
  - Town of Sevastopol. A small area just north of the Town of the Town of Sturgeon Bay and along the Highway is designated as farmland preservation, is zoned for agriculture (Countryside), and is currently being farmed. The City designates this area as “agricultural/residential” on its future land use map.
  - Town of Sturgeon Bay. Most of the area of the southern portion and a large area of the northern portion of Town of Sturgeon Bay that borders with the City is designated as farmland preservation by the County. The City designates these areas as “agricultural/residential” on its future land use map. These areas are largely wooded but a significant amount is being used for agriculture. The wooded areas are zoned Wetland and the farmed areas are zoned as Prime Agriculture.

**CHAPTER 9:  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1001(2)(g), Wis. Stats., the Intergovernmental Cooperation element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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 government unit shares common territory. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local government 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.”

*Note that s. 66.0301, Wis. Stats., outlines how and for what purposes municipalities may enter into agreements for various projects and purposes, including municipal boundary agreements, while s. 66.0307, Wis. Stats., further details how municipalities may adopt and implement a cooperative plan regarding boundary issues. Section 66.0309, Wis. Stats., describes the methods for creation, organization, powers, duties, and membership considerations for regional planning commissions.*

### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. State-level conflicts, issues, mandates
  - a. Regionalization of economic development programs
  - b. Department of Natural Resources program funding
  - c. Department of Transportation project funding
2. Conflicts within the county
  - a. Sometimes municipal plans and county plans do not match up
  - b. Coordination between agencies can be inefficient
3. Demographic issues
  - a. Aging population
  - b. Income and wealth gaps
4. Government service provisions
  - a. Increasing costs

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Improved internet/broadband options and decreased costs
2. Community member involvement in planning processes
3. Increased cooperation among emergency services and other government agencies

### **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

*Please refer to Chapter 11 of Volume II, Resource Report, of this plan for detailed information regarding intergovernmental cooperation, as required by the comprehensive planning legislation for the Intergovernmental Cooperation element of this plan.*

Wisconsin consists of 72 counties, the primary political subdivision of the state. Door County is governed by an elected Board of Supervisors, currently representing 21 Supervisory Districts, which is responsible for policy-making, law-making, budgetary approval, and cooperative decision-making. Policy is set through the adoption of plans, budgets, ordinances, and resolutions. Much of this work is conducted through the county's various committees, which also oversee the county's departments. Door County's programs and services are primarily funded by property taxes.

With regard to land use issues, the primary types of county and municipal interactions in Door County are relationships required by or established with the Wisconsin Departments of Administration and Natural Resources, and the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. Land use relationships primarily involve comprehensive planning, zoning, land use education and discussion forums, and plat review. A wide variety of other cooperative relationships outside of land use also exists between Door County, local municipalities and other governments, and non-governmental organizations.

### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County and the government agencies with which it interacts – local, regional, and state level – communicate and cooperate to provide efficient and effective government services. Officials from all levels of government within the county meet on a regular basis to communicate and coordinate services, including active communication between municipal officials and county board committees. Local- and county-level elected and appointed officials are offered and take advantage of educational and training opportunities regarding their roles as elected officials and also the issues and programs they manage. A unified web-based system provides links to local municipalities and regulatory information, allowing for easy access to government information at all levels within the county.

**CHAPTER 10:  
BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

## **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

This chapter is an expansion on the “recreational resources” topic identified in the Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources element and the “various modes of transportation, including [bicycles]” topic identified in the Transportation element. In conjunction with Chapter 12, Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Recreational Facilities in Volume II (Resource Report), these chapters serve to replace the 2014 Door County Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Recreational Facilities Master Plan.

## **BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND RECREATION ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **ISSUES**

*These issues were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The issues listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Safety issues
  - a. County is car-centric
  - b. Lack of adequate signage
  - c. Road-sharing challenges with bicycles, vehicles, pedestrians, and ATVs
2. Walkability and bike-ability of municipalities
  - a. Limited park and trails connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians
3. Winter recreation

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

*These opportunities were identified through analysis of the plans of the individual municipalities of Door County and through public participation sessions. The opportunities listed here, therefore, are not necessarily to be considered as conclusions based on fact or opinions shared by County of Door elected officials or staff members.*

1. Development of a more extensive bike and pedestrian network
  - a. Connectivity between municipalities
  - b. Increase in safety for alternative transportation
2. Outdoor recreation
  - a. Shoreline, parks, open spaces
    - i. State and County parks
  - b. Winter recreation: snowmobiling, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing, etc.
  - c. Water access recreation: fishing, boating swimming, etc.

## **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

Door County’s bike network extends the majority of the county, and bikers are able to access most roads and trails. Sturgeon Bay is the only municipality in the county with its own bike lane network; it is one of just 24 communities in the state of Wisconsin to be designated as a bicycle friendly community by the League of American Bicyclists. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation administers the Transportation Alternatives Grant Program (TAP) which includes bicycle and pedestrian facilities programming. The most recent project funded through TAP in Door County is “Walk, Bike, Eggsplore Egg Harbor” which will add 4,700 feet of pedestrian facilities and on-road bike accommodations. Additionally, there are various bike rental and maintenance facilities, as well as organizations that offer bike tours, throughout the county.

There are a variety of outdoor recreational resource areas, including state, county, and local municipal parks and preserves, as well as physical recreation centers. Boasting five state parks and nineteen county parks, Door County contains some of the best hiking and snowmobiling trails, campsites, and stargazing locations in the state. Outside the parks, there are also a variety of private campgrounds that offer various levels of camping. The county also is part of the Lake Michigan Water Trail, as well as the end of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. There two YMCA locations in the county, as well as recreation centers in the Towns of Liberty Grove (Ellison Bay) and Washington.

Common recreation activities supported throughout Door County include kayaking and other boating as well as horseback riding and fishing. There are plenty of fishing charter services available to residents and visitors. Winter activities are very popular in the county as well, including ice fishing, cross country skiing and snowshoeing, ice hockey and skating, and snowmobiling. Recreational events are also hosted in the county throughout the year, such as (ice) fishing tournaments, run/walk events, bicycle races, candlelight ski events, and a summer triathlon.

#### **BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2045, Door County residents and visitors enjoy a plethora of safe, accessible, and high-quality bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational facilities. Biking and walking are supported through wide-spanning, interconnected trail networks, providing for both transit opportunities, as well as enjoyment. Parks, recreation areas, and trails are well-maintained and provide a variety of passive and active year-round recreational opportunities, expanding on outdoor winter recreation. All bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational facilities protect and enhance the natural environment and agricultural character of the county, preserving ecological corridors through responsible, sustainable recreation.

## **CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTATION**

### **SMART GROWTH LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS**

Per s. 66.1001(2)(i), Wis. Stats., the Implementation element of a comprehensive plan shall contain: “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 [all other elements of the comprehensive plan]. 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.”

### **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICES**

Beginning on page 50 are all the Door County Comprehensive and Farmland Preservation Plan 2045 goals, objectives, and policies. All are derived from the 2022-2024 planning process, which included review of municipal plans, input gathered through email correspondence, and public participation sessions.

### **EXPLANATION OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION ITEMS**

For each goal, there is a set of objectives and a set of policies. Also listed for each goal are potential cooperating departments and agencies that could be involved in the implementation. The goals, objectives, and policies are described below.

**Goals:** Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities and desired outcomes of the community.

**Objectives:** Objectives more specifically identify future direction; by accomplishing an objective, the County moves closer to achieving its goals.

**Policies:** Policies are rules or courses of action implemented to achieve specific objectives; County staff and officials should use policies on a day-to-day basis when making decisions.

### **PROCESSES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND UPDATING PLAN**

#### **IMPLEMENTING**

**Door County Land Use Services Department:** after plan adoption, staff members will review existing programs and ordinances for changes required to ensure consistency with the plan. Those changes requiring sponsorship or adoption by the Resource Planning Committee will be brought to the committee. Staff members will also review/refer to the plan frequently to guide the planning and zoning programs and be responsible for updating the plan.

**Resource Planning Committee (RPC):** all current and future members of the RPC will receive a copy of this plan. The RPC will conduct periodic reviews to determine progress in meeting plan goals. The RPC will also refer to the appropriate sections of the plan when evaluating applications for conditional use permits and deciding upon recommendations to the county board regarding zoning map or text amendment petitions.

**Door County Board of Adjustment:** the comprehensive plan will be implemented in part by the Board of Adjustment when administering the zoning ordinance through requests for variances.

**Door County Board of Supervisors:** the plan will be made available to the current and future supervisors so they may use it as appropriate in policy, programming, and budgeting decision-making.

## **UPDATING**

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation states that comprehensive plans must be updated and re-adopted at least every ten years. Legally, therefore, this plan needs to be revised and re-adopted no later than December 2034.

The process for minor revisions to the plan shall be determined by staff and the RPC on a case-by-case basis. If background data is updated, but it is determined that trends and issues have not really changed, the RPC may choose to simply publicize and have a public hearing to adopt the plan with updated background data.

## **GOALS**

**GOAL 1. Improve communication and knowledge regarding land use issues between all levels of government and residents, and support or initiate cooperative efforts on issues requiring multijurisdictional coordination.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

### **Door County Departments:**

- *Soil & Water Conservation*
- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*

### **Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Local businesses/community associations*
- *Local conservation groups*
- *Property owner associations*

## **Objectives**

1. Promote proper understanding and implementation of the comprehensive plan.
2. Coordinate growth consistent with both the county and individual municipalities' future land use maps and goals.
3. Continue to improve current and establish new planning and zoning relationships.
4. Offer assistance to other municipalities in addition to those under county jurisdiction.
5. Promote effective communication and sharing of planning and zoning resources and information between the county and its municipalities.
6. Communicate and coordinate land use decision-making processes and implementation activities with municipalities and other governing agencies.
7. Regularly discuss and review planning and zoning issued with local, county, and regional agencies.

8. Develop educational tools to aid municipal officials in visualizing and analyzing the potential impacts of adopting specific policies/plans/ordinances, changing/modifying zoning districts, and implementing proposed projects and programs.
9. Create and coordinate frequent and ongoing educational and information-sharing opportunities for locally elected or appointed officials, as well as the general public.
10. Support and participate in, as appropriate, educational programs and activities for elected officials, government staff members, and private citizens.
11. Coordinate jointly developing, sharing, and managing future and current community facilities and programs when feasible.

## **Policies**

### **Timeframe: Ongoing**

1. Ensure new development is as consistent as possible with the comprehensive plan by creating or updating zoning, subdivision, and other ordinances and programs.
2. Work with local elected officials at educational meetings on analyzing the vision for the county expressed in the comprehensive and farmland preservation plan and evaluate and prioritize the plan's goals and objectives to implement this vision.
3. Develop model ordinances (zoning and others), including residential development architecture/design, commercial development design, and lighting ordinances.
4. Write staff reports for issues going to public hearing, using the plan as the basis for the recommendations. The plan should be referred to in order to:
  - a. Evaluate new developments/projects/subdivisions to see if they fit vision, goals, etc.
  - b. Guide decisions regarding requests for rezonings, text amendments, conditional use permits, and variances.
5. Ensure that the burden of proof rests on the applicant and not the RPC for conditional use, zoning amendments, and other permit applications.
6. Assist towns in understanding the appropriate criteria by which to evaluate proposed zoning changes or development proposals.

### **Timeframe: 1 – 5 Years**

7. Develop a process for identifying and resolving potential land use conflicts.
8. Evaluate conducting more outreach to local officials, such as:
  - a. Holding more frequent planning meetings for local elected and appointed officials.
  - b. Addressing topics and issues towns have identified as important in their plans to discuss with each other, not solely planning and zoning issues.
9. Create criteria by which the Board of Adjustment and the RPC may evaluate development proposals and provide them with a list of standard questions and issues to consider when evaluating rezoning and other requests.
10. Develop of "book" of information to help guide local elected officials in decision making so that all municipalities are operating off of the same standards.
11. Develop "build out" scenario maps.
12. Provide links to all local municipal websites.

### **Timeframe: 5 – 10 Years**

13. Collect models and research intergovernmental agreements in other areas, their periodic review, expiration of agreements, and plans for future agreements.
  - a. Work with municipalities to address potential conflicts through the development of border or other cooperative agreements, including annexation, extraterritorial, and zoning/plat review.

**GOAL 2. Preserve and protect the county’s surface water, groundwater, wildlife habitats, and natural features and resources which enhance the quality of life, and pursue nature-based solutions to increase ecosystem services and the resiliency of the county for current and future generations.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

**Door County Departments:**

- *Facilities and Parks*
- *Soil & Water Conservation*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Local conservation groups*
- *Property owner associations*
- *WI Department of Natural Resources*

**Objectives**

1. Preserve the natural resource base, primary environmental corridors, and surrounding agricultural lands, which contribute to the maintenance of the ecological balance, natural beauty, and economic wellbeing of the County.
2. Proactively work to preserve water resources, including ground and surface waters, watersheds, stream corridors, shorelands, floodplains, wetlands, and recharge areas, and protect the County’s Lake Michigan and Green Bay shorelines from coastal hazards.
3. Encourage planning and development efforts that increase climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and programs in order to build a resilient community that can withstand and recover from natural hazards and disasters.
4. Pursue and expand partnerships with municipal, state, and federal entities, as well as non-governmental organizations, to establish and maintain programs, educational opportunities, and community outreach sessions for the protection of threatened and endangered species, and the management of invasive species.
5. Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions and County municipalities to establish a compact development pattern that prioritizes natural resource and environmental corridor protection, supports green infrastructure projects, and enhances existing public open spaces, ensuring continued public access.

**Policies**

**Time Frame: Ongoing**

1. Protect natural areas and features through the development and enforcement of overlay zoning standards, and the evaluation of potential impacts of rezoning and development proposals.
2. Support waterfront management, restoration, erosion control, clean-up initiatives, stormwater management, and use of vegetative buffers.
3. Coordinate with County municipalities and nonprofit agencies on land and natural resource preservation for lands that are under shared authority or cross government boundaries.
4. Protect threatened or endangered species and wildlife habitat areas.

**Time Frame: 1 – 5 Years**

5. Further develop county-level coordination efforts for agricultural and natural resource preservation efforts with a focus on education and landowner outreach.
  - a. Promote best management practices, such as wellhead protection and soil and water conservation techniques.
  - b. Pursue programs that provide citizens with resources, tools, and incentives that protect the natural environment.
6. Establish an Environmental and Climate Management Plan that pursue the following.
  - a. Codify the County’s commitment to sustainability through the adoption of waste management, energy efficiency, and climate adaption legislation.
  - b. Complete a climate event risk assessment to determine where the County can improve its resiliency and hazard mitigation efforts; update the Hazard Mitigation Plan as needed.
7. Examine existing impervious surface regulations to establish where impervious surface reduction is needed.
  - a. Develop a county-wide drainage area map and update the impervious surface inventory map to identify and reduce impervious surfaces within known drainage areas.
  - b. Replace paved areas with green infrastructure and promote pervious surfaces in future development to manage stormwater and runoff.

**Time Frame: 5 – 10 Years**

8. Revise the zoning ordinance and other ordinances to eliminate fragmentation of environmental and natural corridors.
9. Establish regulations for developers and provide programs for landowners in regard to the retention of agricultural lands, natural areas and features, and open spaces.
  - a. Require all site plans, preliminary plats, and certified survey maps to accurately depict environmental resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, and rugged topography.
  - b. Condition the approval of development proposals on the efforts to preserve the natural resources and features of a site.
10. Work with County municipalities to encourage a compact, orderly, and efficient development pattern that minimizes land use and/or intergovernmental conflicts
  - a. Complete a maximum density study and review, analyze, and changes zoning classifications as needed.

**GOAL 3. Protect existing agriculture and promote sustainable agricultural innovations, operations, and techniques, with an emphasis on providing local food sources to serve present and future generations.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

**Door County Departments:**

- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Local agricultural groups*
- *Door County Cooperative*
- *Destination Door County*

- *WI Department of Natural Resources*
- *WI Department of Trade, Agriculture, and Consumer Protection*

### **Objectives**

1. Coordinate with county municipalities to develop plans, ordinances, and programs to protect existing agricultural areas and encourage further agricultural uses.
2. Minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses by supporting a compact land use pattern that directs future development to smaller, less productive land parcels.
3. Develop zoning policies and other programs that encourage local and small specialty farming operations and help grow the County's agribusiness sector.
4. Support sustainable agricultural practices that improve the health of soils, protect water quality, and expand local food source options.

### **Policies**

#### **Time Frame: Ongoing**

1. Research and pursue incentives to retain the most protective farmland – as determined by factors such as soil type – in agricultural use.
  - a. Promote best management in agricultural practices, such as limiting pesticide use, crop rotation, and soil and water conservation techniques.
2. Perform cost/benefit analyses on all future agricultural land conversion proposals.

#### **Time Frame: 1 – 5 Years**

3. Review new development proposals for potential negative impacts on farming and establish mitigation standards for developers.
4. Develop mandatory buffers/setbacks between farm operations and adjacent developments to minimize conflict.
  - a. Examine zoning maps for high-density residential uses adjacent to agriculture and revise if appropriate.
5. Support the growth of agribusiness, and promote connections between local food and agriculture producer and consumers.
  - a. Ensure zoning regulations do not impede the establishment of new agricultural uses, the expansion or maintenance of existing operations, or the development of businesses needed to support agriculture.

### **GOAL 4. Maintain and enhance the community's rural atmosphere and agricultural heritage by pursuing policies and strategies that preserve the small-town aesthetic of the County.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

#### **Door County Departments:**

- *Historical Museum*
- *Facilities & Parks*
- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Local historical societies and foundations*
- *Local user groups*
- *Destination Door County*
- *WI Department of Natural Resources*
- *WI Department of Transportation – Scenic Byways Program*
- *WI Historical Society*

**Objectives**

1. Preserve rural character by maintaining large areas of natural and open space that provide scenic views.
2. Work cooperatively with developers and county municipalities to identify future development areas using infill and smart growth development strategies.
3. Regulate new development to minimize its visual impact and preserve the county’s open spaces between communities.
4. Encourage county-wide signage standards and minimization of billboard usage.

**Policies**

**Time Frame: Ongoing**

1. Consider the appearance of new development, particularly along highway corridors, when reviewing conditional use permits and rezoning petitions.

**Time Frame: 1 – 5 Years**

2. Consider county-wide signage standards and elimination of billboards, possibly through county-wide regulations or development of a model signage ordinance.
3. Review zoning ordinances for any necessary amendments to improve corridor appearance and minimize blending of communities.

**GOAL 5. Preserve historic, cultural, and archaeological sites that contribute to the county’s distinctive identity and community character, and support, maintain, and expand the presence of cultural, historical, and artistic groups, festivals, events, activities, and educational opportunities.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

**Door County Departments:**

- *Historical Museum*
- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Local arts associations*
- *Local business/community associations*
- *Local conservation organizations*
- *Local historical societies and foundations*

- *Door County Community Foundation*
- *Destination Door County*
- *WI Historical Society*

### **Objectives**

1. Increase awareness of historically and culturally significant sites and buildings through the incorporation of historical and cultural resources into recreational and educational opportunities.
2. Pursue county-level programs and ordinances to encourage the preservation and reuse of historical buildings by establishing standards and providing guidelines.
3. Regulate new development to minimize its visual impact and preserve the county's open spaces between communities.
4. Consider zoning, design review, and/or historic preservation regulations that maintain rural character through appropriate site design standards.
5. Develop policies that promote the preservation and expansion of cultural and historical resources as integral parts of the county's economic development.

### **Policies**

#### **Time Frame: Ongoing**

1. Promote Door County to those in the arts across the region as a place to live, work, play, and create.
2. Identify and pursue funding sources for historic preservation and arts programming.

#### **Time Frame: 1 – 5 Years**

3. Support the organization, promotion, and development of the arts by establishing artist-showcase events, arts destinations, performance opportunities, and public art programs.
4. Create a Door County Historic Preservation Commission, which would:
  - a. Support municipalities in establishing new and enhancing existing historic sites and districts.
  - b. Work with municipalities to develop a county-level historic preservation ordinance and create a County Historic Districts Plan and Map.
  - c. Encourage preservation of places on the Door County Historical Society sites list and other inventories that are not yet preserved.
  - d. Promote private landowners to protect and rehabilitate historic and archaeological sites and incorporate them into new development areas where appropriate.

#### **Time Frame: 5 – 10 Years**

5. Develop educational information on the value of historic preservation/design standards and design ordinances, and the benefits of being on state/federal historic registries.
6. Explore financial tools for municipalities to support historically appropriate (re)development.

**GOAL 6. Facilitate a diverse variety of quality, year-round and seasonal affordable housing for all income levels for the current and future population, and support economic opportunities that attract and retain residents, particularly young people and their families, to provide an adequate workforce and activate economic growth.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

**Door County Departments:**

- *Transportation*
- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*
- *Health and Human Services*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Door County Housing Partnership*
- *Door County Economic Development Corporation*
- *Destination Door County*
- *Local agricultural groups*
- *Local airports*
- *Local arts associations*
- *Local business/community associations*
- *Local conservation organizations*
- *Local development organizations*
- *Local utilities*
- *Schools*

**Objectives:**

1. Develop and enforce policies and programs that provide a range of affordable, quality housing to meet the needs of citizens of all income levels, age groups, and those with disabilities.
2. Maintain and rehabilitate the existing housing stock while promoting infill (re)development to enhance established neighborhoods and encouraging a mix of housing types in newly developed areas.
3. Promote existing and encourage new housing and commercial/industrial developments that have minimal negative impacts on the environmental and surrounding land uses such as resource protection and agricultural areas.
4. Utilize existing and pursue new partnerships between government agencies, local neighborhood associations, nonprofit agencies, and private sector industries to expand county-wide solutions to seasonal and year-round housing challenges, and educate the public on ways they can support housing challenges.
5. Invest in the development of new and existing programs, strategies, and resources that diversify and grow the County's economy by retaining and recruiting employers that offer a variety of employment opportunities.

6. Expand efforts to provide the County with a skilled workforce by supporting trade and technological education programs, facilitating job training assistance, and creating opportunities to attract skilled workers to the area.
7. Continue to encourage year-round and recreation-based tourism by promoting local, regional, and state-wide marketing efforts that highlight the County's rich cultural, natural, and agricultural resources.

### **Policies**

#### **Timeframe: Ongoing**

1. Continually monitor local population characteristics as to changing demographics and distribute any relevant information to housing agencies and organizations.
2. Identify preferred growth areas to site new businesses that offer access to the community facilities, services, and infrastructure needed to foster economic growth.
3. Regularly review zoning regulations to ensure they do not prohibit or excessively restrict desirable economic development opportunities.

#### **Timeframe: 1 – 5 Years**

4. Support programs that help maintain and rehabilitate the County's existing housing stock and/or redevelop vacant non-residential buildings into affordable workforce housing.
5. Research and adopt zoning amendments to encourage more affordable, alternative, and denser housing options.
  - a. Explore reducing minimum lot sizes and allowing more units per lot, particularly to core areas of municipalities.
  - b. Reduce the reliance on the zoning districts that only allow for single-family residential and incorporate an appropriate level of multi-unit residential in County zoning.
6. Encourage recruitment of employers in key industries and partner with educational institutions to diversify the economy and create career and workforce development pathways for residents.
7. Work with the Door County Economic Development Corporation and County municipalities to further identify economic development targets and promote a vibrant business community.

### **GOAL 7. Support the development, maintenance, and upgrading of utilities, and community facilities and services in an efficient, coordinated, and cost-efficient manner to service the current and future demands on resources and infrastructure while prioritizing sustainable systems and operations throughout the county**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

#### **Door County Departments:**

- *Emergency Services*
- *Highway*
- *Facilities & Parks*
- *Sheriff*
- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Local fire departments*
- *Local haulers/recyclers*
- *Local schools*
- *Local utilities*
- *WI Department of Natural Resources*

**Objectives**

1. Provide adequate government and community services and facilities in a logical, reliable, efficient, and cost-effective manner to serve a compact development pattern and maintain high quality of life for residents.
2. Assure that the costs for and access to new county services, facilities, and utilities are distributed fairly and equitably.
3. Work with the school districts to ensure adequate school facilities to county students and families, and increase opportunities to connect students and employers through higher education, workforce training, certification, and apprenticeship opportunities.
4. Locate new commercial/industrial development within areas contiguous with existing commercial/industrial development and served by all necessary utilities.
5. Expand the coverage and implementation of technology networks, such as broadband, across the county in both the public and private sectors.
6. Support all county utilities in providing top quality and innovative utility services, prioritizing the development and expansion of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and environmental sustainability initiatives.

**Policies**

**Timeframe: Ongoing**

1. Monitor population characteristics in relation to services provided, review facilities to determine any need for new or expanded services, and explore options for improving the level of existing services.
  - a. Introduce technology upgrades that will make the provision of County services more efficient, equitable, and transparent.
2. RPC decision-making should include consideration of matters related to pertinent utilities and community facilities.
3. Continue to collaborate with the school districts to ensure adequate facilities and services for its students, families, and employees.

**Timeframe: 1 – 5 Years**

4. Expand high-speed internet and broadband access across the County.
5. Promote the private development of licensed childcare facilities and pursue funding opportunities, where possible, to assist in the establishment of such facilities.

**GOAL 8. Develop a sustainable and accessible transportation system that is safe, equitable, affordable, efficient, intermodal, well-connected, and resilient and adaptable to changes in demand, technology, and the environment at the lowest socioeconomic cost, prioritizing the expansion and use of non-motorized transit routes and modes that enhance the natural character of the county.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

**Door County Departments:**

- *Transportation*
- *Emergency Services*
- *Highway*
- *Facilities & Parks*
- *Sheriff*
- *Soil and Water Conservation*

**Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Door County Economic Development Corporation*
- *Door County Silent Sports Alliance*
- *Destination Door County*
- *Local airports*
- *Local business/community associations*
- *Local ferries*
- *Local utilities*
- *WI Department of Natural Resources*
- *WI Department of Transportation*
- *U.S. Coast Guard*

**Objectives**

1. Support public and private transportation that is safe and accessible to all residents and visitors regardless of age, abilities, and income.
2. Encourage a transportation system that is harmonious with surrounding land uses by minimizing its negative impact on environmental corridors, natural areas, wildlife and endangered species, agricultural production, and waterways.
3. Provide safe and efficient access between neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, service centers, and recreational centers.
4. Ensure coordination with state and regional transportation planning efforts that may have an impact on the county and its transit system.
5. Support water and air transportation options by pursuing assistance grants and enforcing safety protocols, such as airport height limitations.
6. Expand safe biking and pedestrian routes to serve all neighborhoods, schools, recreational areas, and community centers.
7. Encourage new housing developments to be built near jobs and services in order to minimize automobile dependency in core areas.

## **Policies**

### **Timeframe: Ongoing**

1. Help implement the bicycle and pedestrian elements of Chapter 10, Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Recreational Resources, of this plan.
2. Regularly review and revise zoning to allow appropriate land uses that do not require automobile transportation.
3. Address safety and efficiency issues by identifying dangerous intersections, providing adequate traffic controls, assessing lines-of-sight, providing appropriate access points, maintaining a minimum Level of Service (LOS) on all highways and roads, and other appropriate methods.
4. Continue to coordinate with and assist municipal- and county-level transit systems, such as Door County Connect.

### **Timeframe: 1 – 5 Years**

5. Create and adopt a County Intermodal Transit Map.
6. Explore new transportation alternatives to reduce single-vehicle traffic and congestion, including increased transit and ride share options and active transportation.

### **Timeframe: 5 – 10 Years**

7. Require developers to construct sidewalks, bike lanes, or other alternative active transit pathways in all new developments.
8. Working in conjunction with municipalities and surrounding governments, periodically update the County's Official Map to reserve rights-of-way for future arterial and collector streets, pedestrian and bicycle paths, bridges, and other transit related features.

## **GOAL 9. Maintain and enhance the quality of parks, recreational areas and facilities, and trails, pursuing opportunities to support and expand outdoor year-round recreation for residents and visitors alike.**

*The implementation of these objectives and policies will be an ongoing process, to be undertaken by Door County LUS/RPC, potentially in cooperation with the following Door County departments, including their associated oversight committees, and outside agencies:*

### **Door County Departments:**

- *Transportation*
- *Emergency Services*
- *Highway*
- *Facilities & Parks*
- *Sheriff*
- *University of Wisconsin-Extension*

### **Outside Agencies:**

- *City, villages, towns*
- *Door County Economic Development Corporation*
- *Door County Silent Sports Alliance*
- *Destination Door County*
- *Local recreation facilities and centers*

- *Local sports clubs and organizations*
- *WI Department of Natural Resources*
- *WI Department of Transportation*
- *U.S. Coast Guard*

### **Objectives**

1. Ensure the county is adequately served by both passive and active open spaces, parklands, and recreational facilities that are well maintained and accessible to all.
2. Provide a safe system of multiuse trails that can be utilized in all seasons.
3. Support and expand efforts that grow year-round, specifically winter, recreational opportunities.
4. Promote the variety of recreational events, clubs, and competitions in which residents and visitors can partake throughout the year.
5. Enhance current and develop new water access sites to encourage water-based recreational activities.

### **Policies**

#### **Timeframe: Ongoing**

1. Continue to maintain and improve the County's parks and recreational sites.
  - a. Respond to recreational trends, particularly among the youth of the County.
  - b. Use official mapping to preserve any areas designated for future park or recreational uses.
  - c. Consider access for disabled, elderly, and the very young when planning and designing any new recreation projects, including parks, trails, etc.

#### **Timeframe: 1 – 5 Years**

2. Develop a comprehensive map of the various trail systems and recreational/park areas throughout the county.
3. Grow partnerships with governments, organizations, and private property owners to promote and expand winter recreational opportunities.
  - a. Provide programs for winter recreation equipment rental, such as snowshoes, at municipal, county, and state parks.
  - b. Partner with golf courses to establish a snow trail system and/or identify sledding hill locations.

#### **Timeframe: 5 – 10 Years**

4. Ensure public land is located within walking distance of the majority of residents to increase access to green space.