



# LAND USE

## Chapter 2

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the plan's Land Use Chapter is to inventory the existing land use patterns and to recommend a direction for future development that is consistent with the desired character of the community. This chapter contains data about existing land use within the town, as well as numerous recommendations pertaining to future land use and land use policy.

## Existing Land Use

In order to plan for future land use and development in New Denmark, it is necessary to consider existing land uses and development trends. A land use inventory, which classifies different types of land use activities, is an important means of identifying current conditions. Comparing land use inventories of previous years can identify various trends that are helpful in establishing a plan for future land use.

The Brown County Planning Commission (BCPC) conducts a countywide land use inventory every decade. Fieldwork for the most recent inventory for the Town of New Denmark was completed in September of 2020. Using this data, the various land use categories were broken down by acreage. Table 2-1 describes the land use composition of the town, and Map 2-1 shows the location of the various land uses within the town.

New Denmark is a rural farming community with single-family homes scattered throughout the town. In the Fall of 2020, the town has been reviewing a subdivision proposal to be developed on the south side of town. Currently, the residential development in the town has occurred on existing lots of record and by individual lot splits. Langes Corners, an unincorporated community located in the northwest portion of the town, has the densest development including both residential and commercial development.

**Note:** Classifying land uses is a subjective process and open to some interpretation. One example is that a forested park could be classified as outdoor recreation or as a natural area. More recently, the BCPC is counting only driveways, houses, accessory buildings, maintained yards and landscaped areas as residential. Any forested or unmaintained areas on residential parcels the BCPC is now counting as natural areas. This is to better account for natural areas and their benefits; this is not related to zoning or any sort of property valuation and should not be considered as such. Comparing land use inventories that were taken years apart should be viewed as an indicator of general trends, rather than as a precise measurement of specific land uses.

## Residential Land Uses

Over the past 14 years, the amount of residential land has decreased from 1,076 acres in 2006 to 9,26.67 acres in 2020. This is an increase in developed residential land of 258 acres in 16 years. The presence of reasonably affordable developable land, desire for larger country lots, and proximity to the Green Bay Metropolitan Area has helped contribute to this trend.

## Comprehensive Plan Goal #2 – Land Use Goal

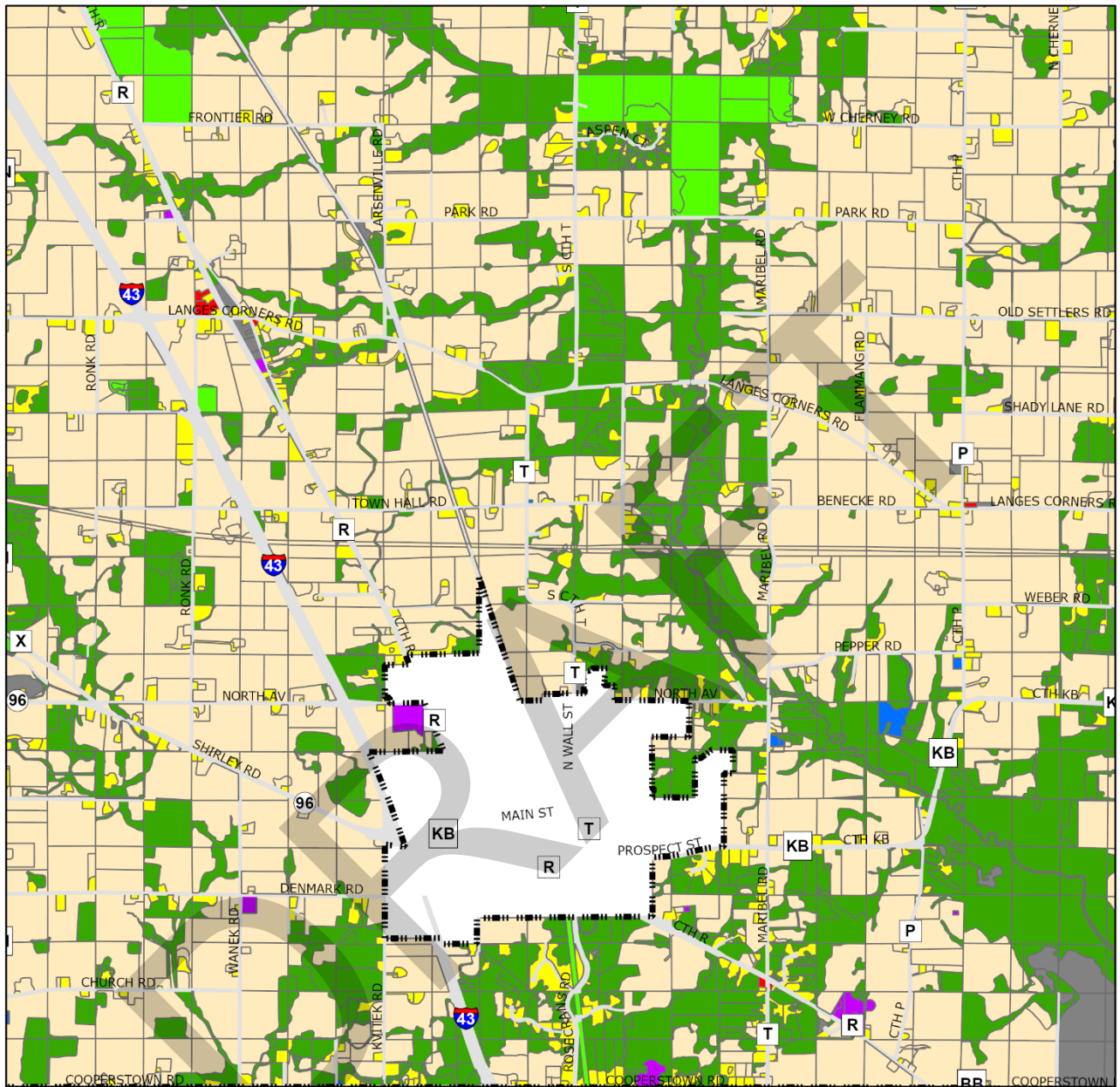
*New Denmark will manage the future growth within the town to retain the rural, small-town feeling while ensuring an orderly, compatible, balanced development that maintains or improves quality of life, maximizes the efficient provisions of services, and promotes integrated development.*

**Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources Community Goals** (numbers correspond with top ten community goals)

2. Maintain the town's rural atmosphere.
5. Preserve green space and wildlife areas.
6. Preserve 35-acre lot size for rural land preservation.



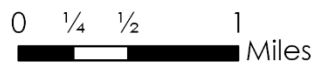
# Map 2-1: Town of New Denmark Existing Land Use



## Land Use Categories

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Transportation
- Communications/Utilities
- Institutional/Governmental
- Parks/Open Space
- Agricultural
- Natural Resources

1 inch equals 1 mile



Sources: Brown County Planning Commission  
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The Langes Corners area, the area just west of Neshota Park, and portions of the town located just south of the Village of Denmark have the densest concentration of residential development. The town added 19 single-family homes in the past ten years. Most of the new homes have been scattered throughout the town. The Hidden Hills Estates subdivision plat, off Rosencrans Road and adjacent to the Devils River State Trail, has been recorded. The subdivision has 19 lots for single-family homes.

The residential uses in the town are almost exclusively single-family residences. The land use survey estimates that over 99 percent of the residential land use in the town is for single-family housing. Two-family residences and multifamily units make up less than one percent of the developed residential acreage in the town. These percentages have not changed since the 2006 land use inventory, largely because of the rural nature of the town and the lack of multi-family development that has occurred in the town.

The town has four zoning classifications in its zoning ordinance that allow residential development. Residential development is allowed within the R-1 Residential District, A-R Agricultural Residential District, the A-1 Agricultural District and the AG-FP Agricultural Farmland Preservation District. The minimum lot size requirements for these zoning classifications are described and discussed later within the Future Land Use Recommendations portion of this chapter under the Residential heading.

**Table 2-1: Town of New Denmark 2020 Land Use Acreage**

Land Use Totals	2006 Total Acres	2020 Total Acres	% Change 2006-2020
Residential	1,075.9	975.5	-9.3%
Commercial	23.1	11.9	-48.5%
Industrial	295.7	226.6	-23.3%
Transportation	1,070.5	970.6	-9.3%
Communication/Utilities	4.7	50.3	970%
Institutional/Governmental	26.1	28.1	7.7%
Outdoor Recreation	457.4	437.8	-4.3%
Agriculture	14,199.6	13,696.2	-3.5%
Natural Areas	5,058.4	5,559.4	9.9%
<b>All Land Uses</b>	<b>22,211.4</b>	<b>21,956.4</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>

Source: Brown County Planning Commission

### **Commercial, Industrial, and Communication/Utility Land Uses**

Commercial land uses occupied 23.1 acres in 2006, and only 11.9 acres in 2020. Industrial land uses occupied 226.6 acres in 2020, fewer than in 2006. The largest industrial area is still the quarry located in the extreme southeastern corner of New Denmark. The biggest concentration of businesses and industries is in the Langes Corners area, including the Belgioioso Cheese plant. Other businesses and industries are scattered throughout the town, generally along the county highways.

### **Institutional Uses**

Institutional land uses include churches, schools, cemeteries, and government buildings. Institutional lands account for 28.1 acres of the town, which is only 0.12 percent of the total town land area. The institutional uses are scattered throughout the town and include five cemeteries, two churches, and the town hall.

### **Outdoor Recreation Uses**

The Brown County land use inventory indicates that New Denmark contained 437.8 acres of outdoor recreation uses in 2020, which comprised approximately 2.0 percent of the town. While the Town of New Denmark does not own or operate any public outdoor recreation facilities, Neshota Park, owned and operated by Brown County is in the northern half of the town adjacent to Park Road. The town does contribute funds to the Veterans Memorial Park Association for use towards Veterans Memorial Park, located in the Village of Denmark. A portion of the Devil's River Trail is in the southern

portion of the town. The trail starts in the Village of Denmark and extends into Manitowoc County. There are also several privately-owned facilities located in the town that can be used by the public. Twin Oaks Golf Course is in the northwestern corner of the town adjacent to CTH R. Circle Tap Bar, located in the western portion of the town adjacent to CTH N has a lighted ball diamond that is used by softball leagues. Basil's II Tavern, located on CTH P, has volleyball courts for volleyball leagues and has horseshoe pits. 20th Century Bar, located at the intersection of CTH's T and R, operates a bowling alley and volleyball courts which are used by residents. Shady Acres Campsites, located near I-43 in the western portion of the town, offers camping opportunities. Other recreation opportunities are in the Village of Denmark including Veterans Memorial Park, a shooting range, a bowling alley and recreation facilities associated with the Denmark schools. Parks and other outdoor recreational uses are discussed further in the Community Facilities Chapter of the plan.

### **Agricultural Land Uses**

Agricultural use remains the predominant land use within the town. The recent land use update indicates that there are 13,696.2 acres of land devoted to agricultural use, a decrease of 503.4 acres of agricultural land in the Town since 2006. The 1990 Brown County land use update indicated that the Town had 15,473 acres of land devoted to agricultural use. The reduction in available agricultural land is largely a result of the number of parcels being developed into rural residential use and farm fields not being actively cultivated.

### **Natural Areas**

The largest wooded area in the town is in the northeast portion of the town. Most of the valleys of the Neshota River are forested. The scattered woodlots of the town are generally located on flat terrain and are usually composed of a combination of green and white ash, sugar maple, birch, white and red oak, beech, elm and some white pine. Many of the wooded areas are also considered wetlands. The wetlands are scattered throughout the town. The largest blocks of wetlands are located adjacent to the Neshota River, in the northeast portion of the town, in the south-central portion of the town, and in the west central portion of the town. Most of the wetlands of the town are wooded wetlands. The major surface water resource of the town is the Neshota River, which cuts across the eastern portion of the town. There are also small tributaries of Kings Creek, Buck Creek, and Devils River.

Natural areas within the town accounted for 5,559.4 acres in 2020. These natural areas include woodlands, wetlands, and brush lands. Woodlands cover most of the natural areas in the town. Some of the woodlands also include wooded wetlands.

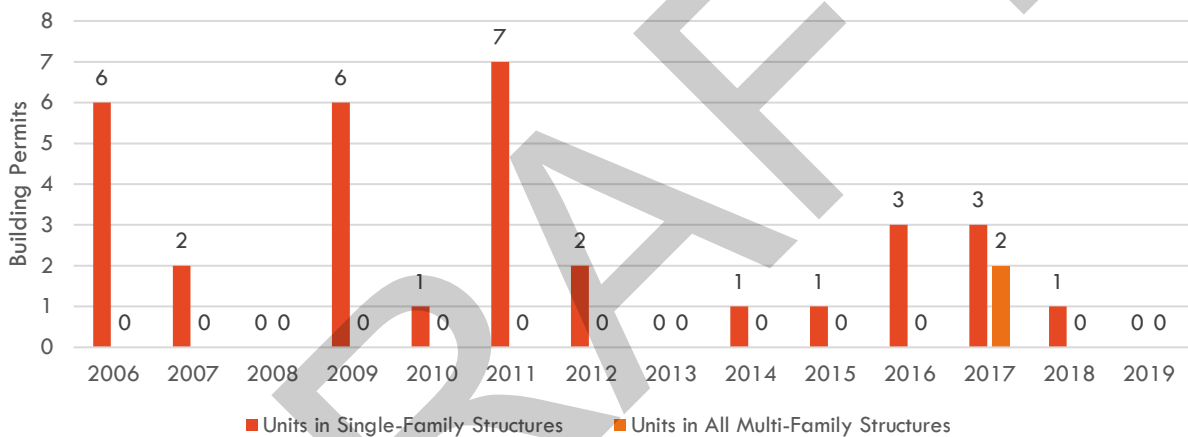
# LAND USE TREND ANALYSIS

## Supply and Demand

Due to the rural nature of the town, there is an abundance of land that has the physical capability of being developed. Town zoning policies have curbed rezoning land out of Exclusive Agricultural zoning. The town has limited parcels zoned Agriculture-Residential where rural residential development on small lots is allowed. While there is some demand for residential land in the town, town development policies have been to keep the town as a rural agricultural community.

According to the Town of New Denmark building permit files, 33 single-family homes were built during the period of 2006-2019. The permit data for the past six years is displayed in Figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1: New Housing Unit Development in New Denmark, 2006-2019



Source: Town of New Denmark Zoning Administrator.

## Land Prices

According to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, in 2019 Brown County had 18 land transactions covering 907 acres of agricultural land continuing in agricultural use, with an average value of \$11,390 dollars per acre. No transactions of agricultural land being diverted to other uses occurred. By comparison, in 2019 in Brown County there were 20 land transactions totaling 1,116 acres at \$11,088 dollars per acre for ag land continuing in ag use. 2018 also saw four land transactions where ag lands were diverted to other uses, with 136 acres sold at \$24,261 dollars per acre.

From Brown County data, the median assessed value of farmland in the town, with no buildings on the property, is \$3,100 per acre, which is about the same across all ag land in Brown County. This compares to the assessed value of farmland in the town of about \$181.1 per acre<sup>1</sup>. Prices per acre for land, including farmland that is parceled out for residential use, is much higher than the cost of buying farmland for farm use. Based on real estate transactions in the town over the last five years, a three-acre parcel for residential use could easily cost in the range of \$18,000 to \$38,000 or more. Average housing values and prices for existing homes in New Denmark are discussed further in Chapter 5 of the plan.

<sup>1</sup>State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue Agriculture Statistics.  
[https://public.tableau.com/profile/research.policy#!/vizhome/AgriculturalStatistics0\\_1/Story1](https://public.tableau.com/profile/research.policy#!/vizhome/AgriculturalStatistics0_1/Story1).

## Opportunities For Redevelopment

Due to the rural nature and the lack of concentrated development within the town, there are very limited opportunities for redevelopment. A few places in the town might have some older buildings that could be candidates for redevelopment because of their age and condition. Places that could have these opportunities include the intersections around unincorporated hamlets, where some activity has previously centered around, like Langes Corners.

## Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

As the Town of New Denmark continues to grow, new residents will encounter active farming operations. New residents in these areas should be made aware of the active farms, as well as the sights, smells, and other activities that characterize farming operations. Every effort should be made to ensure that the existing farming operations are not negatively impacted by development. Potential future industrial and commercial development, as well as potential expansion of existing industrial and commercial development, in New Denmark should be done to not adversely affect adjoining lands and uses. Building and landscaping techniques should be used to negate any potential negative impact.

## 20-Year Projections In 5-Year Increments

The State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law requires communities to project their future land use needs for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural lands for a 20-year period in 5-year increments. In order to get a better idea of how much available land the Town of New Denmark might need to continue to grow at its current rate, the land use inventories for 1990 and 2000 were compared with the 2020 data. Research was also conducted on land divisions occurring within the town within the last five years.

The 2040 Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) population projection indicates that the town is projected to grow to 1,825 people. This is an increase of 180 people over the course of the planning period (2020-2040). Based on an average of 2.63 people per household in the town (2020 U.S. Census figure for the town), there will be a need for approximately 68 additional units during this time period to house the increase in population for the 2020-2040-year period. The most recent (January 1, 2020) Department of Administration estimate of population for the town indicates that 1,556 people reside in the town. This is below the DOA 2020 projection for the town by 89 persons. While population increases or decreases do not occur linearly, the town could still reach the 2040-year population of 1,825 people. If this should happen, the town would need to add closer to 100 additional housing units over the course of the 20 years to meet the expected population change. If the future town population increases faster than projected, additional housing units will also be needed. In addition, the persons per household average within the town have historically declined every 10 years due to a trend towards smaller families, potentially requiring more housing units.

Table 2-2 identifies the land use acreage changes that occurred in the town during the period of 2006 and 2020. While this shows a decrease in residential acreage, we know the residential population did increase from 2000-2010. As mentioned previously, the 2020 land use totals have counted passive natural areas adjacent to residential uses as natural uses instead of residential uses. Taken together, these general land use trends are like other communities in Brown County. During this comprehensive planning process, the town has added 19 new residential parcels south of the village off Rosecrans Road, which will increase residential land use. Also, if the subdivision retains most wooded areas, the natural areas land use total will remain static.

**Table 2-2: Town of New Denmark 2020 Land Use Acreage**

Land Use Totals	2006 Total Acres	2020 Total Acres	Difference 2006-2020
Residential	1,075.9	975.5	-100.4
Commercial	23.1	11.9	-11.2
Industrial	295.7	226.6	-69.1
Agriculture	14,199.6	13,696.2	-503.4
Natural Areas	5,058.4	5,559.4	501.0

A review of records of lot splits occurring in the town by certified survey maps since 2010 indicates that there have been 33 lots (industrial lots excluded) created by Certified Survey Map (CSM) and 19 lots created by one subdivision. The average size of each lot created is 3.84 acres. Assuming that there could be anywhere from 68 to 100 new housing units created in the town in the next 20 years based on the future population projections and assuming that the average lot size will be 3.8 acres yields a need for 261 to 380 acres of additional residential land. This does not necessarily mean that the town will need to rezone that number of projected acres to residential zones. The town also has existing lots that have not yet been built upon. The town's zoning ordinance allows residences to be built in the agricultural-zoned areas by right (no rezoning required to build there). Town development policies also have an impact on future acreage needs for residential development. Should future town policies require smaller lot sizes than what have occurred under recent market conditions, the amount of land needed for future population growth will be smaller than the 261 to 380 acres previously indicated. A smaller population increase than projected would also decrease the need for additional acres.

The land use inventory found that the existing ratio of land uses within the town is approximately one acre of commercial development for every 82 acres of residential development and one acre of industrial development for every 17 acres of residential development (determined after subtracting out of the calculations 170 acres of existing industrial development utilized by the quarry within the town, leaving 56.6 acres of other industrial uses). Applying these ratios to the 261 to 380 projected acres needed for residential development yields the need for one and a half to four and a half additional acres of commercial land and eight to 22 additional acres of industrial land during the 20-year planning period. When talking about such a small amount of land for future additional commercial and industrial growth, under real-world conditions such acreage figures could increase substantially and not be out of line with the needs or wants of a community. Future agricultural acre projections are based on the possible change per decade, assuming new residential, commercial, and industrial land come from converted agricultural land.

Table 2-3 identifies the 5-year growth projections for the town. The figure identifies a range of projected acres within the 5-year increments. Because it is unrealistic to predict specific acreage needs for each period due to the unsteadiness of growth, a straight-line projection has been used to determine the 5-year increments. The final residential land use estimate in 2040 includes acres needed for upwards of 100 new housing units. The 100 units corresponds with the town's CSM activity and is just a different way of arriving at an estimate for 2040. Some of that growth could occur in the other 5-year increments but is harder to separate out than for estimated population growth. Again, these numbers represent a possible range the town might see, not necessarily that it will.

**Table 2-3: New Denmark 20-Year Current Trend Land Use Projections in 5-Year Increments**

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
<b>Est. New Housing Units (based on 68 total units added)</b>	--	26	25	15	2
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>2040</b>
<b>Residential</b>	975 acres	1,027-1,073 acres	1,077-1,168 acres	1,107-1,225 acres	1,111-1,355 acres
<b>Commercial</b>	12 acres	12.5-13 acres	13.1-14.2 acres	13.5-14.9 acres	13.5-16.5 acres
<b>Industrial</b>	57 acres	60-63 acres	63-68.7 acres	65-72 acres	65-79.7 acres
<b>Agricultural</b>	13,696 acres	13,605-13,591 acres	13,551-13,489 acres	13,518-13,428 acres	13,514-13,288 acres



# FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed land use for the Town of New Denmark is shown in Map 2-2 and includes various categories for different land uses. The Future Land Use map is not a zoning map and the recommended uses as shown on the map do not necessarily identify exact dimensions of such potential future uses, but general locations. Actual future use of such properties may expand or contract from the location that has been shown on the map. While the map indicates specific locations, as well as potential general locations for future land uses, in some cases future use of a property may be limited because of limitations posed on the property by environmental regulations and requirements. While a property may be shown for commercial use, for example, or may even be zoned for commercial use, if the property has wetlands contained onsite, actual use of the property will be limited to the area that is outside of the wetlands due to environmental regulations.

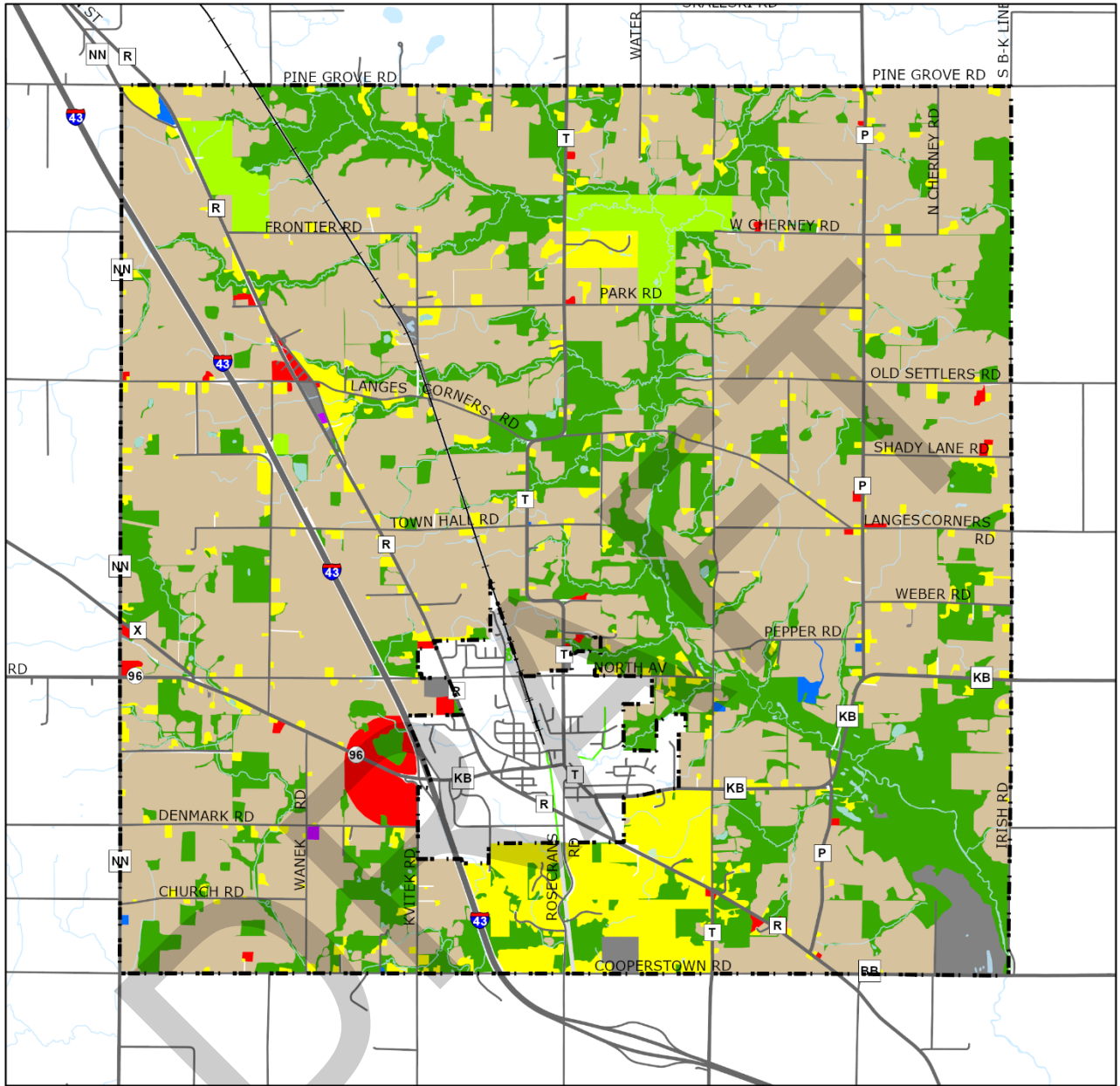
In reviewing the future land use map, it is important to understand that while some areas have a proposed future land use that is different from the existing land use or from the existing zoning, it does not mean that existing use of the property cannot continue. The property can continue to be used for any use allowed under the current zoning classification. If the existing use was a legal use when it was established, it can continue if the landowner or subsequent landowner wants to continue the use. Possibly except for the areas recommended for future conservancy use, it also does not mean that the town will be rezoning the land to a zoning category that is consistent with the proposed future use shown on the Future Land Use map. That would only occur if requested by the property owner. It simply means that if the owner of a property ever wants to change zoning from the existing zoning on the property to another zoning classification, the land use map should be used to determine what zoning classification the land should be rezoned to. If a property owner wishes to rezone property to a use other than what the Future Land Use map recommends and the town is satisfied with the proposed rezoning, the town should first amend the comprehensive plan to make the proposed use consistent with the comprehensive plan and then change the zoning on the property. The Future Land Use map does not and cannot change the existing use of a property. It is a tool to be used by the Town for making future land use decisions.

## **Agriculture**

Most of the land within the town is zoned either AG-FP Agricultural – Farmland Preservation or A-1 Agricultural. The former zoning category allows landowners to receive tax credits from the State of Wisconsin under the Farmland Preservation Program if the landowner wants to partake in the program and meets the program eligibility requirements. Agriculture has been and will likely continue to be the dominant land use within New Denmark over the 20-year timeline of this plan. Several of the top issues that came out of the town visioning session again involved preserving the town's rural/agricultural character and maintaining the town's open areas. The town continues to have many active farms operating within the town. The town should continue to work with these landowners to ensure that the town's development policies do not interfere with the continuing operation of the farms. Development should be limited within the town's agricultural areas to the activities and recommendations within this chapter. The town should periodically review its policies to ensure that those policies do not negatively affect agriculture activity, and that agriculture continues as the town's dominant land use throughout the life of this plan.

Some existing farmed areas of the town are identified on the Future Land Use map for uses other than agriculture. These existing agricultural areas will likely remain in agriculture for the foreseeable future and will continue to be used for agricultural if the property owner wants that to continue. The map simply recommends potential future use of the properties other than agriculture if the landowner would ever want to change the use of the property.

# Map 2-2 Town of New Denmark Future Land Use



## Future Land Use Category

- Agriculture
- Business/Industrial
- Commercial
- Communication/Utilities
- Governmental/Institutional
- Industrial
- Natural Areas
- Parks/Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation

- Railroad
- Highway (Federal, State, or County)
- Local Road or Street
- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Rivers and Streams
- Trails
- Town of New Denmark



1 inch equals 1 mile



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Sources: Brown County Planning Commission  
Devin Yoder, Senior Planner  
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## Residential

The Town of New Denmark has historically tried to maintain its rural and agricultural nature and control the amount of non-farm residential development that occurs in the most rural areas. The town's first subdivision plat, Hidden Hills, was approved in 2020. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs about agriculture, several of the top issues that came out of the town visioning sessions (both most recently in 2019 and in 2006) involved preserving the town's rural/agricultural character, maintaining the town's open areas, and maintaining the 35-acre minimum lot size requirement to build a house in the Agricultural zone, and keeping the town from becoming too crowded.

The town has three zoning classifications within its zoning ordinance where residential uses are permitted uses. The R-1 Residential zoning classification was developed for residential development that is served by public sanitary sewer service only. A small portion of the town (about 11.3 acres) immediately adjacent to the Village of Denmark is in the Denmark Sewer Service Area (SSA). However, no sewer service is presently available, so there are no lands in the town that are zoned R-1 Residential on the town zoning map. From the 2040 Brown County Sewage Plan, the town does have an allocated 38 acres (based on population and further growth) for sewer residential land, but no proposed sewer service area expansion.

The A-R Agriculture-Residential District zoning classification allows residential development with a minimum lot size requirement of 1.5 acres and requires that the residential lot have a minimum of 200 feet of frontage on a public road. While there is some property zoned A-R Agricultural-Residential in the town with this zoning classification, it's a much smaller amount than either A-1 Agricultural District or AG-FP Agricultural Farmland Preservation District. Many of the A-R Agricultural Residential-zoned properties are closer to the Village of Denmark or along county trunk highways.

Of the two zone districts intended for farming (A-1 and AG-FP) the A-1 Agricultural District zoning classification occupies the greater land area within the town. The A-1 Agricultural District allows single-family dwellings as a permitted accessory use and has a minimum lot area of 35 acres and 500-foot minimum of contiguous frontage. The AG-FP Agricultural District was set up to meet the requirements of the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program and includes additional zoning requirements to comply with that program. Landowners with properties located within this zoning classification can get tax credits from the State of Wisconsin if they qualify for the Farmland Preservation Program. Property owners within this zone must also have a 35-acre minimum lot size in order to build a house, which is a permitted accessory use. Farm dwellings and related structures existing prior to January 1, 2015, which remain after farm consolidation may be separated from the farm parcel on a lot containing a minimum of one and one-half (1.5) acres and two hundred (200) feet of contiguous lot frontage.

Future residential development areas have been identified on the Future Land Use map where future residential development is recommended to occur should the property owners choose to develop their property. These areas are located adjacent to the Village of Denmark, in Langes Corners, and in the northwestern corner of the Town by Stagecoach Road. These areas already have some existing residential and commercial development. Also the terrain and the soils in much of the future development areas identified adjacent to the Village of Denmark are not as conducive to agricultural use as most other areas of the town. Because these areas have been established as development areas, rezoning requests in these areas to the appropriate residential zone should occur if requested for by the landowners following proper rezoning procedures.

Several the top issues that came out of the town visioning session involved preserving the rural/agricultural character of the town and controlling the amount of development that occurs within the town. The town should continue the policy of controlling the density of new residential development in the town occurring outside of the residential development areas. This will help ensure that agriculture continues to be the main land use in the rural portions of the town and will help to control the potential adverse impacts that could occur between agricultural and residential land use. The town should

continue to maintain the minimum lot size requirement of 35 acres for a new house in the Agricultural zoning district of the town. The town could consider rezoning requests to rezone for A-R Agricultural Residential zoning to allow for smaller individual lots created from larger lots. Through the rezoning process the town could then address any outstanding questions or issues with the applicant. R-1 Residential zoning should continue to only be considered for sewered residential land. This would allow for property owners to add residential lots in individual instances case-by-case while preventing new subdivisions from popping up in the more rural areas. Also, the town may want to consider utilizing zoning techniques that would allow some rezonings to occur but would ensure that residential development in these areas of the town be kept at a low density, such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

The town should ensure that future development in any area preserve identified future road locations, and that existing road frontages are not all developed without preserving adequate space for future road access. Adopting an official map (Wis. State. Stat. §62.23(6)) and area development plans by the town can ensure that space is reserved for future road intersections so that future roads can access lands located beyond the existing road frontages. The town may have certain areas that because of the terrain, do not require the conserving of frontage for future roads because the areas beyond the roads cannot be developed.

The Hidden Hills subdivision is the most recent subdivision activity in the town and has happened in the Future Residential Development Area. Any future activity like this should only occur within the identified Residential Development Areas. The town should try to encourage any subdivision activity to be done by conservation by design subdivisions for situations where the terrain and environmental features of a site lend itself to such a subdivision type development. The conservation subdivision generally preserves the rural atmosphere and environmental features of an area better than a conventional subdivision plat does. Additional discussion about conservation by design subdivisions occurs later in this chapter.

While duplex and multifamily development would be a positive addition to the town because it would add other residential options available to town residents, the lack of public sanitary sewer service makes these types of residential uses less likely to be constructed. These uses are in the Village of Denmark and area residents wanting to utilize these type uses will likely need to move there because of the lack of availability in the town. Should additional multifamily buildings ever be located within the town, the buildings should reflect the characteristics and features generally associated with single-family homes. These include front doors facing the streets and sidewalks, garage space, and private outdoor areas or greenspace on the grounds. This type of use should blend in with other residential land use types in the area and should have an adequate amount of greenspace onsite and should be orientated with the parking in the rear of the lot.

## **Commercial and Industrial**

Future commercial uses should be allowed near existing business and industrial uses or at major intersections in nodes, rather than in strips along the entire length of a road, county trunk, or highway. This helps minimize the places to turn for the increased truck and automobile traffic associated with business use, and not interfering with existing agricultural or residential uses. These uses should serve the residents, as well as those commuting through the town. Existing commercial uses in the town should be encouraged to remain in business by the town allowing for the expansion of these operations if they do not negatively impact existing residents or farming operations.

Map 2-2, the Future Land Use Map, identifies locations for future commercial and industrial use in addition to the locations of existing business and industrial uses already established in the town. The locations of existing businesses and industries as shown on Map 2-2 does not imply that the properties on which these uses are located have been rezoned for such uses but only indicates the existing land use type on the property. In addition, the locations recommended on Map 2-2 for future business and



industrial uses only indicate potential locations for such uses. Most of these sites have not been rezoned to accommodate these uses. That would need to be done in conjunction with actions by the town and the property owner. Some of the potential future business locations that have been identified on the Future Land Use map include the interchange at the intersection of I-43 and STH 96, the Langes Corners area adjacent to CTH R, and an area of land along CTH R next to the Village of Denmark and adjacent to an auto salvage dealership. All the locations are situated adjacent to or in proximity to CTH R, which is a heavily traveled vehicular route. Extension of public sewer and water service to the locations adjacent to the Village of Denmark, especially next to the I-43 interchange, would be invaluable in helping to attract business or industrial use to these sites. Because the town does not have this service available to it, this would mean trying to work something out with the village. The I-43 interchange is one of the few interchanges along this highway that has not yet been developed and the town should take care as to what kind of commercial or light industrial type uses occupy this area when it gets developed.

If a property owner wants to develop a commercial use somewhere not identified on the Future Land Use map, they would need to first rezone the property. The determination of the town to rezone these locations should be on a case-by-case basis. All future locations for commercial uses, irrespective of the type of zoning classification requested, should be located so that little to no adverse impact will occur to adjacent properties and land uses.

In some situations the B-1 Community Business District classification within the Town Zoning Ordinance is not flexible enough for the town to selectively review specific sites for limited business uses and attach conditions to the use of the proposed sites for the proposed business. The town may be reluctant to rezone a specific parcel for B-1 Business because of the variety of business uses that could operate on the site according to the existing zoning classification but might consider a business zoning if it could control the specific use of the proposed site and attach conditions on the use and on the site. To help this situation, the town should consider creating another business zoning classification that has fewer permitted uses and gives it more flexibility to be more selective in the business types allowed in this district. This zoning classification should be used for future locations within the town that are not identified on the Future Land Use map and should be set up so that the town could attach specific conditions for the use of a particular site for a business. Site selective conditions could include such things as landscaping, site design, architectural controls, and additional setbacks. Business conditions could include such things as hours of operation and the size of the structure. This could apply to sites with greater visibility and are closer to residential properties.

Existing industrial businesses are scattered throughout the town with the majority located along CTH R. These businesses provide a benefit to the town by adding to the tax base and providing jobs for area residents. The town should do whatever is necessary to retain these industrial businesses in the town. Over the course of the plan, there may be a need for additional industrial businesses to add to the town tax base and to provide job opportunities for residents.

The Future Land Use map identifies an area in Langes Corners adjacent to CTH R that is identified for industrial or commercial use. There is still some open land available for development on the east side of CTH R and existing buildings available for use on the west side of the highway. The properties are accessed by heavily utilized CTH R. These are the largest parcels of existing industrial zoned vacant land available in the Town. These parcels can also be utilized for business use.

Any future industrial development in the town should consider any existing residences. Buffering of the residences from industrial or commercial use through plantings, shrubbery, or berms to lessen any adverse impact on adjacent properties should be considered depending on the situation. Specific and detailed planning should be undertaken prior to any industrial development occurring adjacent to the residential properties so that a development plan can be determined for the area that would work with the existing land uses.

Future industrial use should be encouraged to locate near existing industrial uses or adjacent to highways in nodes rather than in strips along the highway to better handle the increased truck and automobile traffic associated with industrial use, as well as to not interfere with existing agricultural or residential uses. Other potential future industrial sites are identified on the Future Land Use map.

As previously indicated, there are many instances of existing industries scattered throughout the town. Because such uses can impact adjacent uses, the town should consider amending its zoning ordinance to

require landscaping, as well as additional side yard and rear yard setback requirements, when building on industrial-zoned property when such zoned property is located adjacent to residentially-zoned properties. Future locations for industrial uses should be in areas so that little to no adverse impact will occur to adjacent properties and land uses.

Many of the locations identified in the Future Land Use map for future commercial or industrial use are interchangeable as far as the type use that could occupy the locations.

### **Town Center**

The unincorporated community of Langes Corners, located in the northwestern portion of the town, is the closest thing to being considered the social and cultural hub of the community. The Langes Corners area includes a scattering of single-family homes and a few businesses.

Langes Corners is expected to continue to serve some of the existing needs of the community through the businesses and services that are already there. New businesses, as well as residential development, looking to develop in New Denmark should be strongly encouraged to locate in Langes Corners. The town should work to make any additional development there well-designed and that complements the existing land uses while providing future residents of the area with a quality living environment.

The recommendations for future land use within areas of the town containing concentrated development emphasize characteristics that can help make any neighborhood walkable, livable, and varied. In addition to the concepts discussed in this chapter, the review of future development proposals should consider these broad characteristics:

- Walkable, meaning that pedestrians can easily reach everyday destinations.
- Livable, meaning that a neighborhood is safe with easy access by various means of travel to schools, shopping, and services that meet many of the needs of its residents.

Before approving subdivision plats, the town should review the proposed plats to ensure that, when applicable, adequate access to frequented destinations in the community have been adequately addressed in the design of the plats and are part of an overall plan for the area. Based on the existing development within the town, this could potentially apply to Langes Corners or to areas of the developed adjacent to the Village of Denmark. Non-vehicular travel should not have to take a wide circular route to get to destinations located nearby.

### **Street Networks**

Street network design impacts the character and form of development, particularly in residential areas. Streets should be laid out and designed to be compatible with the residential neighborhood concept while fulfilling their inherent transportation function.

Blocks should vary in size and shape to avoid a monotonous repetition of a basic grid pattern or to follow topography. To be conducive to walking, block layouts within residential areas should generally be designed with frequent street connections with individual block lengths being a maximum of about 600 feet. The street network should connect to the adjacent neighborhood commercial businesses and extend out into the surrounding neighborhoods. Selected streets should extend into and through any adjacent commercial area to provide convenient access from all sides of the center.

### **Traffic Calming**

For a road network to provide a desirable residential environment, it must be designed to discourage excessive speeding and cut-through traffic. Street widths and corner curb radii should be as narrow as possible while still providing safe access for emergency and service vehicles. If required, traffic calming techniques, such as curb extensions and other specialized measures, can be used to slow and channel traffic without hampering convenience, direct access, and mobility.

## **Pedestrian Network**

Pedestrian connections are a definite benefit to neighborhoods and should be given consideration in new developments. This and other multi-modal transportation concepts are addressed in greater detail in Chapter 3 of the plan. Utilization of the Devils River Trail in the southern portion of the town provides an avenue of travel and acts as a link to development along the route.

## **Subdivision, Street and Neighborhood Connectivity**

Since there is not a lot of dense residential development within the town, there is not a pressing need to connect developments through internal street patterns. The use of the existing road network for driving, biking or walking to adjacent development is available to town residents. If more dense residential development is contemplated within New Denmark, the town should require a well-connected street pattern as discussed in the Transportation Chapter. The use of area development plans and the official map to locate future roads, as discussed in the Transportation Chapter, should be utilized to help ensure connectivity between developments.

## **Design Issues**

The town should focus on the design of its main corridors, which are the county highways. Land use along these corridors helps to establish the overall character of New Denmark so the town should make it as attractive as possible.

Establishing design criteria for new businesses is an effective way of ensuring high quality development. Standards may vary depending on the location of such businesses. Parking lot landscaping standards can be adopted, including using landscaped “islands” within large parking lots and placing parking behind buildings instead of in front of the buildings.

Street trees have a tremendous positive visual impact on the streetscape. As trees planted along the edge of streets mature, they can often become the defining element of a neighborhood. Existing trees should be incorporated into the design of conservation by design subdivisions and new trees planted within new subdivisions in the town.

## **Natural Areas and Recreation**

The Town of New Denmark currently does not provide any public park sites. The town does contribute funds to the Veterans Memorial Park Association for use towards Veterans Memorial Park, located in the Village of Denmark. Residents use some of the other public and private recreation facilities located in and around the town. Neshota Park, owned and operated by Brown County is in the northern portion of the town off Park Road. The park includes a playground, a sledding hill, a shelter, a picnic area, restrooms, parking, six miles of hiking/ski trails, and two miles of horseback riding trails. It is also a popular hunting area. There are also privately-owned facilities located in the town that can be used by the general public. Twin Oaks Golf Course, an 18-hole golf course with an adjoining driving range is located in the western portion of the town adjacent to CTH R. Circle Tap, a tavern located adjacent to CTH N in the western portion of the town has a lighted softball diamond that is used extensively for softball leagues and tournaments. Basil's II Tavern, located on CTH P, has volleyball courts for volleyball leagues and has horseshoe pits. 20th Century Bar operates a bowling alley which is used by residents. There are also several other recreation facilities associated with the Denmark School facilities in the Village of Denmark that are utilized by town residents. See Map 6-1 for the facilities located in the town.

The Devils River Trail is in the southern portion of the town on abandoned railroad tracks. The trail starts in the Village of Denmark and extends south into Manitowoc County. Approximately one mile of the trail is in the town. The portion of the railroad line located north of the Village of Denmark is still in operation. The Canadian National Railroad line tracks that bisects the town has limited use. Should the tracks ever be abandoned, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources could possibly acquire the tracks for use as a recreational trail and extend the existing trail north out of the village. Town officials would need to work with the DNR and Brown County in planning for the development of this portion of the trail if this does come to fruition. It would also be advised that the town work with the Brown County Planning Commission to identify a possible trailhead location to provide parking that

would encourage people to use the trail while discouraging parking on the shoulders of intersecting roads. Development of a feeder trail system by the town connecting to the railway trail would provide additional opportunities for residents. A feeder trail system could include the addition of paved shoulders along roadways, as well as trails, sidewalks, or walkways.

Park and recreation standards typically indicate that 12 acres of recreational land should be provided per 1,000 people. Based on a 2020 population projection of 1,665 people, the Town would need about 20 acres of land to meet the recreation standard. The acreage standard is met by the amount of acreage within Neshota Park. If town residents express the need for public recreational sites for their own use, with facilities planned for and developed based on needs of the town residents, the town could consider developing a community park. The best option, if possible, might be for the town to work with Brown County at Neshota Park to add additional facilities rather than for the town to buy parkland for its own use.

If the Town of New Denmark determines that it needs a park facility or local publicly-owned conservancy areas in the future, it should consider preparing an outdoor recreation plan to quantify local needs and prioritize acquisition and development activities. The plan should review inventory in the Brown County Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan, in addition to analyzing appropriate locations and activities for outdoor recreation in New Denmark. Once completed, the plan should be submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to ensure eligibility for Stewardship program grants. The town may also want to consider the appropriateness of establishing a park impact fee to ensure that new residential development pays its fair share of the cost of new parks, outdoor recreation facilities, and open space sites.

The natural areas in the town, in conjunction with the agricultural lands, provide it with the rural character that residents enjoy and want to preserve. In order to further the goal of preserving the rural character of the town, environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors and steep slopes adjacent to streams should be protected from development. Various layers of government protect some of these areas by enforcement of existing wetlands laws and shoreland floodplain zoning. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Brown County Zoning Department enforce and administer regulations giving protection to some of the natural areas within the town. The town also has a Conservancy zoning classification within its zoning ordinance.

The town should implement the recommendations contained within Chapter 7 under the Conservancy Zoning heading regarding updating the Conservancy zoned lands that are identified on the existing Town Zoning Map. It is unclear as to what type of criteria was used to locate the Conservancy-zoned areas on the original Town Zoning Map that was adopted by the Town in 1974. The recommended changes will give better protection to the natural resources of the Town which was the highest rated issue to come out of the Town visioning session. The changes include replicating state and county shoreland zoning protection and adding existing wetlands that have been delineated on the Wisconsin Department of Resources Wetlands Inventory map as Conservancy zoned areas. In addition, implementing the suggested conservancy recommendations will correct some of the Conservancy zoned inaccuracies that presently exist in the existing Town Zoning Map.

Besides regulatory activity by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Brown County Zoning Department, and the town, other options to help preserve natural areas include land donations by property owners and acquisition of key areas and integrating natural areas into the subdivisions if subdivisions are developed near these areas. Any effort the town can make to address and preserve the water quality of the creek will be a positive benefit to this natural resource and to town and area residents.

### **Conservation By Design Subdivisions**

Conservation by design subdivision development, or conservation by design, is a subdividing method that focuses on maintaining open space and conserving significant natural and cultural features. This is accomplished by preserving a significant portion of a development site as undivided open space with the remaining land uses for the house lots and necessary roads. The open space is permanently preserved through conservation easements. A conservation by design subdivision provides the landowner with the same number of lots as could be accomplished through a conventional subdivision.



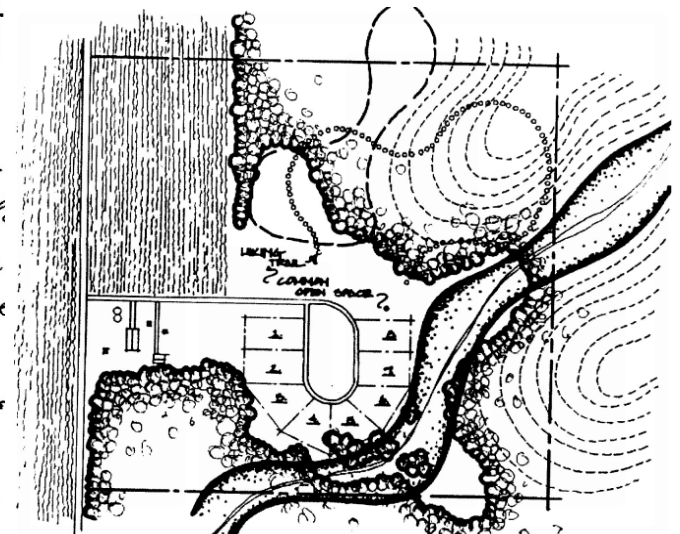
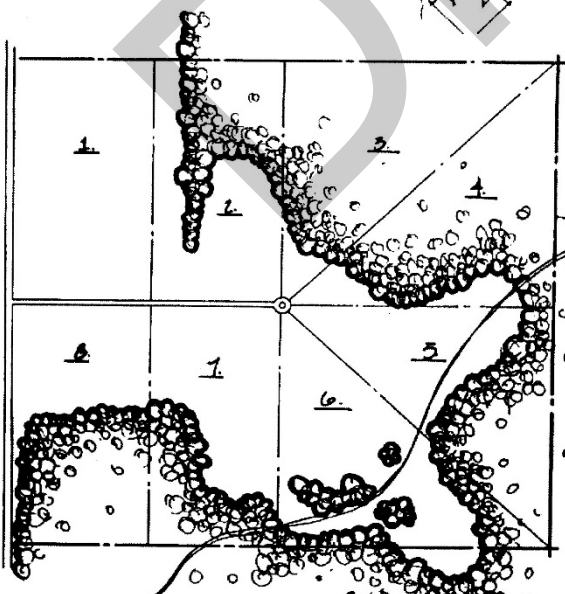
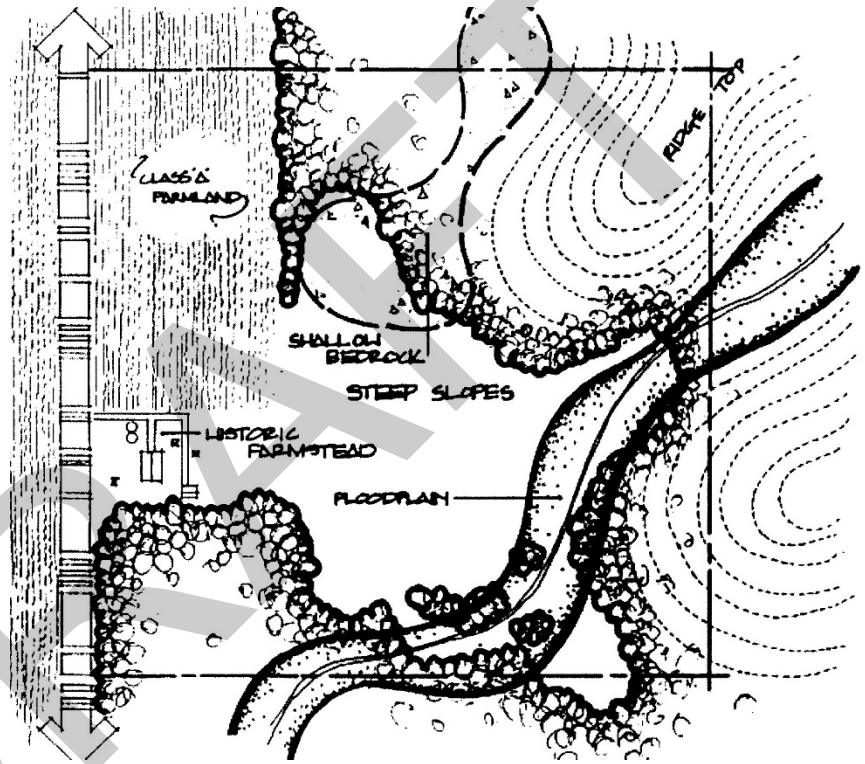
The conservation by design development concept for subdivisions can usually do a better job of helping to maintain a community's rural character than can conventional subdivision design. This method of development is not new to Brown County, as it has been successfully implemented in some Brown County communities. This technique can help preserve natural and agricultural features that attracted new residents to the area by improving the design of future residential developments and maintaining a rural quality to the development.

The following conservation by design example uses the same number of house lots as the conventional layout but completely alters the design by simply reducing the lot size and being sensitive to the environmental features in order to preserve natural and open areas. The following sketches are from "A Model Ordinance for a Conservation Subdivision" prepared by the University of Wisconsin Extension. These sketches (steps 1-3) are hypothetical situations and the lot sizes utilized in the sketches do not reflect the existing Town zoning requirements.

Step 1 (right): Inventory and mapping of existing resources for a hypothetical 40-acre site.

Step 2 (bottom left): Development yield as permitted under existing ordinances (zoning, etc.) for the 40-acre site and assuming a 5-acre minimum lot size zoning standard. Eight lots would be permitted under this scenario.

Step 3 (bottom right): Concept map of the conservation subdivision showing the eight lots that would be permitted, plus the historic farmhouse, which would be preserved, for a total of nine dwelling units.



The following are some observations from comparing the conventional subdivision to the conservation by design subdivision:

- Conventional layout – All parts of the tract are either house lots or roads.
- Conservation layout – Close to half of the site is undivided open space or agricultural land that can be permanently preserved.
- Conventional layout – View from across the road to the trees and creek is disrupted, and houses can be seen in all parts of the development.
- Conservation layout – View from across the road to trees and creek is almost entirely preserved.
- Conventional layout – Only four property owners have access to parts of the creek.
- Conservation layout – All property owners have access to the length of the creek.
- Conventional layout – No common space; each lot owner only has use of his own five-acre parcel.
- Conservation layout – Creates several common open space areas with a large area remaining for active agricultural use.
- Conventional layout – No pedestrian-ways unless sidewalks are included in the construction of the roads.
- Conservation layout – Trail network can be completed and can link with neighboring subdivisions.
- Conventional layout – No area for neighborhood facilities.
- Conservation layout – Central green area can include children's play area, shelter, or other amenities.

The conservation by design subdivision offers a preferable alternative to typical subdivisions with large house lots blanketing entire tracts of land. This subdivision technique provides another option for the landowner, the developer, and the municipality. These subdivisions, as well as conventional subdivisions, should only be in the town's Residential Development Areas as shown on [Figure 2-6 \(the Future Land Use map\)](#) and only in situations where the zoning allows such use.

Recommendations relating to conservation by design developments include:

- Require a minimum of 30 percent of the acreage of the conservation by design subdivision to be dedicated to open space, natural areas, or agricultural uses. The 30 percent requirement can include undevelopable land in the calculation, such as wetlands, creeks, and other water features.
- To ensure that conservation by design subdivisions meet the density requirements set by the town, yield plans should be required to determine the maximum number of home sites allowed. Each yield plan would show how many lots could be created if the tract were subdivided conventionally using a standard minimum lot area and width. The total number of lots under the yield plan then becomes the maximum number of home sites allowed within the conservation by design subdivision.
- Changes to the Town of New Denmark Zoning Ordinance should be made to allow flexibility for the required lot sizes, while still ensuring that the overall maximum density of a conventional subdivision yield plan for the same property could not be exceeded.
- Natural resource features that add to the rural character of the town, such as woodlands, stream corridors, wetlands, steep slopes, and floodplains, should be included within the preserved open space to the greatest extent possible. Prime agricultural land can also be included.
- The open space within the conservation by design subdivisions should be owned by any of the following four entities: homeowners' association, individual landowner, land trust, or the town and

should be spelled out and agreed upon in writing before the subdivision is approved. The town should only take ownership of the conservation area if it wants to use the areas for public use. Generally, a homeowners' association would be the preferred entity.

- If a homeowners' association is to be formed as part of plat approval, it is vitally important that the formation of the homeowners' association and the by-laws of the homeowners' association be reviewed by the town prior to subdivision approval to ensure that all concerns of the town are met and identified as part of the by-laws. The formation of the homeowners' association and its by-laws are the most important aspects of the conservation by design set-up and should be reviewed thoroughly by the town to ensure that the homeowners association will be a viable entity capable of handling any future problems that could come up regarding the subdivision.
- The uses allowed in the open space areas can run the gamut from agricultural uses, conservation practices, and recreation uses, such as trails, play areas, and ballfields.

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# LAND USE POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

## Comprehensive Plan Goal #1 – Land Use Goal

New Denmark will manage the future growth within the town to retain the rural, small-town feeling while ensuring an orderly, compatible, balanced development that maintains or improves quality of life, maximizes the efficient provisions of services, and promotes integrated development.

The proposed land uses for the Town of New Denmark are shown on [Figure 2-6](#) and includes categories for the different land uses. While the map indicates specific, as well as general potential locations for future land uses, in some cases future use of a property may be limited because of limitations posed on the property by environmental concerns or terrain. Expected development activity will include residential activity, as well as some mixing in of local commercial and industrial uses. Most of the town should continue to be zoned Agricultural to retain farmland and the rural atmosphere of the town. The detailed programs and policies dealing with the future development of the Town of New Denmark are located under the Future Land Use Recommendations heading. The following is a summary of some of the recommendations in this chapter of the plan:

### Objectives

1. *Continue to protect and enhance the town's rural atmosphere and open spaces.*
  - a) Consider developing design standards for commercial and industrial buildings and sites.
  - b) Add landscaping requirements and additional side yard setback requirements to the business and industrial classifications within the town zoning ordinance to apply when such zoned parcels are located adjacent to residentially-zoned parcels.
  - c) Work with owners of commercial and industrial businesses in the town if they require rezoning for expansion of their businesses if no negative impact occurs on adjacent properties.
  - d) Amend the town zoning ordinance to update both the I-1 Limited Industrial Zoning classification and the B-1 Community Business Zoning classification.
  - e) Create another business zoning classification that gives the town more flexibility than the existing Community Business zoning classification for the town to be able to be more selective in the type of business uses allowed in the zone and to be able to attach specific conditions on the site and the proposed business.
  - f) Consider utilizing zoning techniques that would allow some rezonings to occur in the areas of the Town that are located outside of the Residential Development areas but would ensure that residential development in these areas of the Town be kept at a low density.
  - g) Any future multifamily buildings should reflect, as much as possible, the characteristics and amenities associated with single-family residences.
  - h) The town should consider adopting development criteria for multifamily development or adding a multifamily zoning classification to the zoning ordinance to address building criteria requirements for this type of land use.
  - i) Amend the Town Zoning Map to replace the areas that are shown as Conservancy on the existing zoning map with the areas recommended for Conservancy Zoning as identified in Chapter 7 under the Conservancy Zoning heading.



- i) The town should create an official map and area development plans to ensure that space is reserved for future road intersections in the identified development areas within the town so that future roads can access lands lying beyond the existing road frontages.
  - k) Update the town zoning map to reflect existing conditions and change it over to a digital format to increase the accuracy of the map and make it into a product that can be updated quickly and more accurately than the present zoning map.
  - l) Keep abreast of any development in adjoining municipalities adjacent to the Town of New Denmark borders to determine if such development should precipitate any changes to the Town Future Land Use map.
2. *Preserve the 35-acre lot for rural land preservation.*
- a) Continue to maintain the minimum 35-acre lot size requirement for a new home in the Agricultural zoning district.

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