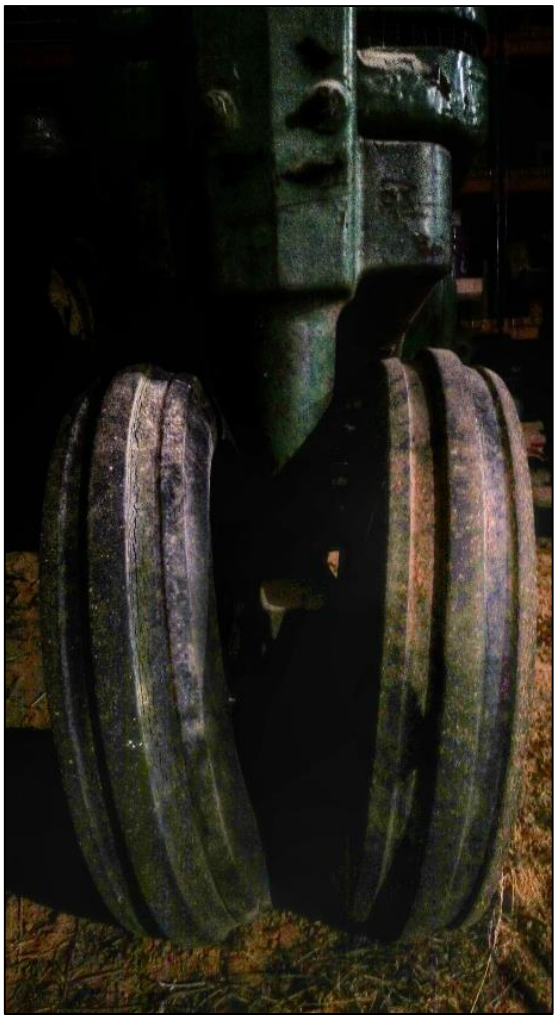
Lafayette County

Farmland Preservation Plan

2016-2026



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Executive Summary

The 2016-2025 Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan identifies and guides land use through managed growth and development strategies. Protection of Lafayette County's rural character, its agriculture industry, and the health, opportunity, and prosperity of the communities make up the core of this plan. With proper consideration, the plan will help encourage the responsible protection of natural resources, heighten economic security, and promote Lafayette County agriculture as a robust and thriving industry. The objectives of the plan are to

- meet all requirements for a Farmland Preservation Plan under Wis. Stat. Ch. 91;
- maintain/update the availability of benefits to farmers/landowners under the Wisconsin Working Lands program including farmland preservation tax credits;
- maintain/increase the operational efficiency, practicality, productivity, protection in areas of agricultural productivity and environmental importance;
- provide a framework for farmland preservation zoning, conservation easement, support in grant and special designation applications, and other decisions based on policy as they relate to farmland preservation and development within Lafayette County now and in the future;
- update the existing Farmland Preservation Plan and its guidelines to more closely reflect the development patterns and trends occurring in the county; and
- meet the requirements of the Wisconsin *Working Lands Initiative* (WLI).

With more than five of 10 county residents earning income in or in direct support of agriculture, the importance of farmland preservation planning is paramount. The economic impact of the agriculture or agriculture support industries are realized by the county through savings and income. Both farm and non-farm populations witness the strong role agriculture plays in daily life.

Initial farmland preservation tax credit eligibility of individual parcels has been determined through in-depth analysis of data collected by a variety of county, state, and federal sources. Upon implementation of this plan 155,952 acres will be eligible for participation in the Farmland Preservation tax credit program which may return more than $1.2 million to participating farmers per year.

This plan has been written through the collaboration of the Lafayette County Department of Land Conservation/Planning and Zoning (DLCPZ) and the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and the residents of Lafayette County. This Farmland Preservation Plan incorporates the interests and concerns of county residents and business owners as they pertain to Farmland Preservation Planning. The DLCPZ and the Lafayette County Board approved adoption of the FPP on September 27, 2016. “Southwestern Wisconsin” refers to the south-and-western-most counties in the State of Wisconsin: Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, and Richland.

Introduction

Anyone who has spent time in Lafayette County has likely noticed the summer wind wafting waves through the rows of corn, soybeans, or alfalfa in contour with the rolling hills; heard the distinct hum of a grain bin's dryer fan in the fall; or turned their nose toward the breeze to catch the faint scent of silage as it's fed to hungry cows on a winter morning. These scenes, although subtle, help paint the picture of the Lafayette County landscape. Many residents living in the county rely on agriculture as a way of life. This way of life not only provides shelter and food, but also a social network that is rooted in a strong work ethic of neighbors helping neighbors, doing a job and doing it right, and ushering in future generations that understand and uphold the importance of the American Farmer. These benefits are afforded to those not only to those live or work on farms, but also to the city-dwelling friends, families, and out of county visitors that stop by for a visit. In Lafayette County, the importance of a healthy agriculture industry is apparent across township lines, and stretches into and through the fabric of daily life of all its residents.

With more than five of 10 residents earning income in or in direct support of agriculture, the importance of farmland preservation planning is paramount. Reinforcing the economic value of the agriculture industry in Lafayette County is the overall cost to the County. Agricultural activities generate a large portion of local government revenues while requiring less investment in infrastructure or services compared to other land uses. For example, residential development demands for services are often far more costly than the tax revenue they add to the County coffers. Adding to the dollars-and-cents advantages of agriculture land use, are the intangible benefits of scenic views, clear night skies filled with stars, and the ability to lose one's self in solitude minutes from home.

Failing to plan for an increase in non-farm populations can negatively influence the agriculture industry. As the impacts of residential land use begin to impact working farms and farmland, the non-farm user's expectations for increased county governance (and the potential for conflict) grow. Slow moving agricultural traffic often frustrates and inconveniences commuters, while the same fast-moving commuter may show little consideration for the challenges facing operators of farm implements.

It is with these considerations in mind that this Farmland Preservation Plan informs the decisions of the policy makers of the County, the residents, and those working in the agriculture industry. The information contained in the following pages is intended to serve as explanation of the methods used in the identification of parcels eligible for the farmland preservation plan of 2016-2025, create goals which strengthen and protect the interests of the agricultural and agriculture support sectors while remaining sensitive to the needs of those outside of, but nonetheless affected by, the activities of the industry. This plan meets the requirements of the Wisconsin *Working Lands Initiative* (WLI), adopted in the 2009-2011 Wisconsin State Budget. With the adoption and certification of this plan, owners of eligible farmland preservation land will have all of the benefits of the *Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative* accessible to them and may qualify for access to other state-funded programs and opportunities and the ability to make the decision of joining or creating an Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) or participating in the Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement (PACE) program.

Plan Development

Notice of Authority

Acting as a significant resource for the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors (County Board), this Farmland Preservation Plan defines the prominence of agriculture as it pertains to land use, regional character, economy, and its role as a manager of natural resources. Any amendments to county ordinances shall take into consideration the recommendations and priorities outlined by this Farmland Preservation Plan in an effort to balance the services and associated costs Lafayette County can offer its farmers while preserving valuable farmland and other resources determined to be of value to agriculture, endangered or threatened species, or to responsible development of residential housing.

All information contained herein supersedes and replaces any previously published requirements, benefits, and/or eligibility as well as any incentives related to participation in programs related to or concerning Farmland Preservation. All maps contained herein are not legally recorded, are not technical surveys, and are not intended to be used as such.

Program Consistency

This Farmland Preservation Plan has used the most current information and therefore requires the authority to supersede and/or replace previously published plans as they relate to farmland preservation and land use zoning. The enactment of the *Working Lands Initiative* (WLI) under the 2009 Act 28 requires all counties to revise their current Farmland Preservation Plans and enforces ordinances for recertification. As part of recertification, consistency between local plans is required. The following plans have been evaluated to ensure they are updated to work in conjunction with this Farmland Preservation Plan.

Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan

The 2015-2026 Farmland Preservation Plan offers County leaders the direction and insight to meet the goals and objectives set forth by the County's Comprehensive Plan as adopted on November 13, of 2007 (Resolution 40-07). The Comprehensive Plan identifies several goals related to Agriculture and land use:

- protect economically productive areas, including farmland and forests;
- protect and improve the health, safety, and welfare of residents in Lafayette County;
- preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of Lafayette County;
- protect and preserve the community character of Lafayette County; and
- explore emerging technologies addressing the energy needs, employment opportunities, and youth retention strategies as outlined in the vision statement of the Comprehensive Plan.

Land and Water Resource Management Plan

To address soil and water quality concerns in Lafayette County, policy makers are guided by recommendations outlined in the Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP) for the years 2015-2026 (Resolution 48-14). This plan was approved on December 2, 2014 by the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors at the recommendation of the Land Conservation Committee. The nine critical goals for carrying out natural resource protection aim to

- reduce soil erosion;
- develop urban and agriculture stakeholder interest;
- ensure effective management of nutrients and manure;
- ensure safe drinking water supply;
- address water and soil quality issues in Farmland Preservation Plan and Land Use Plans;
- promote sustainable agriculture and plan for climate change;
- promote restoration and protection of surface water;
- address invasive species; and
- promote sustainable forest management through the Managed Forest Law.

Grow Southwest Wisconsin

The Grow Southwest Wisconsin planning project was designed to plan for the social and economic resiliency and self-sufficiency of southwest Wisconsin. The planning process was guided by principles that included improvement in transportation choices, affordable housing availability, economic competitiveness, community support, coordination with federal policies and investments, and focuses on values of the community and neighborhood. When used as a tool for meeting the goals, objectives, and strategies detailed in the Grow Southwest Wisconsin Plan, the Farmland Preservation Plan offers improved insight to Lafayette County's agricultural, economic, and social state. The Grow Southwest Wisconsin Plan includes numerous goals focused on the education, exploration, conservation, and increased efficiencies of land-use both related and un-related to agriculture. These goals include:

- support and encourage education and research related to agriculture;
- conserve water and soil;
- build knowledge and interest in agriculture;
- encourage people to live and work in the region;
- support agriculture transportation infrastructure that improve access;
- utilize technology for agriculture purposes;
- market, brand, and promote regional agriculture and its products;
- support or develop financial and business management tools for farmers;
- develop and use efficiencies of systems; and
- have agricultural lobbies work to promote agriculture friendly legislation.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a locally initiated planning process designed to create employment opportunities, foster more stable and diversified local economies, improve local conditions, and provide a mechanism for guiding and coordinating the efforts of local individuals and organizations concerned with the economic development of the region. Utilizing CEDS throughout the Farmland Preservation Plan offers a metric of comparison to highlight Lafayette County's deviation from the surrounding southwest Wisconsin region. Included in the CEDS are Agriculture and land use-related goals or issues for the southwestern Wisconsin Region:

- develop agribusiness incubators, financial support services, and workforce development;
- support and encourage education and research related to agriculture; and
- capitalize on local food opportunities through diversifying the local food economy.

Issues and Opportunities

Introduction: Lessons from the Past

In 1824, after the discovery of deposits of lead along the Fever River (now the Galena River), settlements began appearing in what would become Lafayette County. Those early lead miners built their lives around hard work. This 'lead-rush' led to increased access to southwest Wisconsin around 1832 bolstered by the opening of the Erie Canal and the end of the Blackhawk War. Immigrant farmers then found their way to the county and, settling alongside the miners, began to work the land. The fortitude of those early miners and farmers shines through to this day and is reflected by the County's acres of cultivated fields, dairy processing plants, and herds of animals grazing sun soaked hillsides. In an effort to ensure the continued success of local agricultural enterprises, the lessons of the past must stay in mind as we look to the future.

Lafayette County relies heavily on agriculture. According to the 2014 Lafayette County Tax Assessment Roll, nearly 91% of unincorporated township land is either 'Agricultural Land (Class 4)' or 'Agricultural Forest Land (Class 5M)'.[1] Class 4 lands, as defined by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR), is comprised of all unimproved property dedicated to farmingand includes any activity listed under Subsectors 111 and 112 of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).[2] This heavy reliance on agriculture brings about its own set of opportunities and challenges. Making land use issues more complicated are the conflicts that arise as development patterns change and real estate for residential use has sought out rural lands. The majority of the township population resides on non-farm properties.[3] This Farmland Preservation Plan will outline the complications of high non-farm populations residing in designated agricultural areas and will outline the requirements to ensure Lafayette County's Farmland remains largely intact.

Population, Workforce, and Business Economics

The population of Lafayette County has had a dynamic past. On the following page, Figure 4.1 shows an explosion of residents coinciding with the settlement, discovery and capitalization of the lead deposits in the late 1800s followed by a sustained reduction in residents until 1990. After reaching its lowest point in 140 years, Lafayette County's grew slightly in 2000. The Wisconsin Department of Administration current projections anticipate a growth of under five percent leading into 2025.[4] Although this growth presents little risk of converting significant acreage out of farmland, it is important for Lafayette County to establish policies which promote the localization of future developments. Fragmentation of farmland can lead to instances of regional fragmentation which, in turn, can contribute to the loss of the farmland base and subsequently, insufficiencies in farm support operations and facilities therefore increasing operational costs to farmers.[5] Secondly, conversion from farmland to other land-use can lead to parcel fragmentation.

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[1] *2014 Lafayette County Tax Assessment Roll*. April 15, 2015. Raw data. Treasurer's Office, Darlington, WI.

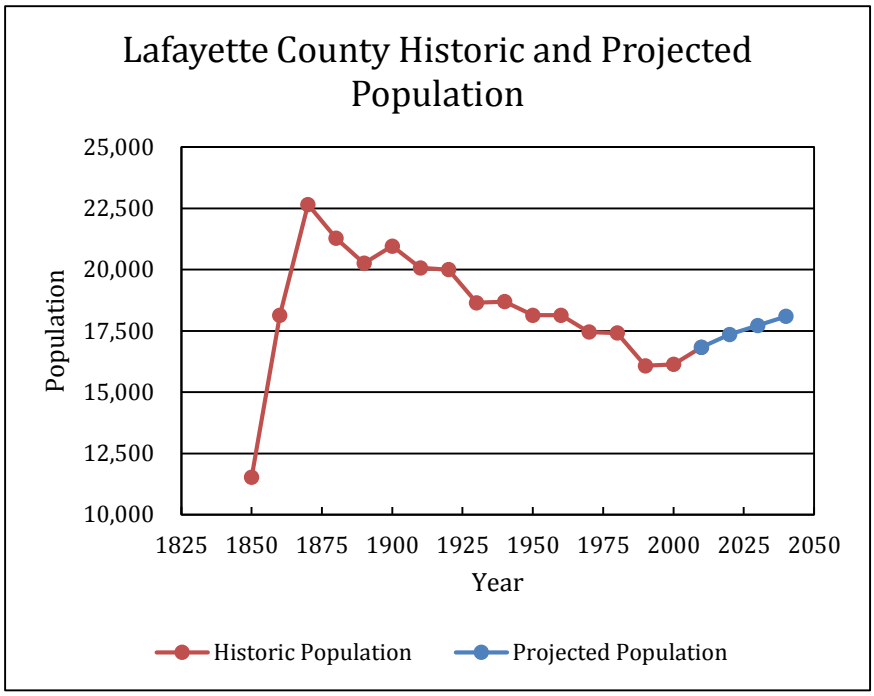
[2] Wisconsin Department of Revenue. *2016 Agricultural Assessment Guide for Wisconsin Property Owners*. Publication no. Prop 061 (R.1-16). Accessed February 3, 2016. https://www.revenue.wi.gov/pubs/slf/pb061.pdf.

[3] 2000 United States Census, American Community Survey. Lafayette County, Wisconsin, P002-Urban and Rural; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed April 15, 2015, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_00_SF1_P002&prodType=table

[4] Wisconsin. Department of Administration. Demographics Services Center. *Household Projections, by County, by Age Group, 2010 - 2040.* By David Egan-Robertson and Dan Barroilet. May 1, 2014. Accessed April 15, 2015. http://www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Intergovernmental-Relations/Demographic-services-Center/Wisconsin-Population-Projections.

[5] Pfeffer, M. J., and M. B. Lapping. "*Prospects for a Sustainable Agriculture in the Northeast's Rural/Urban Fringe*." *Research in Rural Sociology and Development: A Research Annual*, 1995, 67-93.

Figure 4.1 Population of Lafayette County, Wisconsin



Sources: Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture Population Projections, USDA Census.

> ‘‘Development in rural/urban fringe areas creates other farm management problems. Without strict zoning regulations farmland often becomes parcelized as entire farms or parts of farms are sold to developers. This parcelization of farmlands leads to a ‘‘checkerboard distribution of farmlands, i.e. many noncontiguous fields. Farming such scattered plots is problematic. For example, field surveillance to monitor crop growth and pest populations is difficult, as is the movement of farm equipment because of transportation problems. Under these conditions consolidation of landholdings to achieve efficient scales of operation is nearly impossible.”[6]’

In 2008, the agriculture sector employed over 54% of Lafayette County residents; Wisconsin’s highest percentage of agriculture-related workforce.[7] This high percentage of employment in the agriculture sector is the source for nearly two-thirds of all income earned by county residents. Since 2008, the agriculture industry’s share of workers has fallen slightly from 54.5% to 51.6%.[8] This decrease, however, does not stem from a decrease in agriculture jobs alone. 112 agriculture jobs were lost while the population of the county increased by 72 people.[9]

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[6] Pfeffer and Lapping, "*Prospects for a Sustainable Agriculture in the Northeast’s Rural/Urban Fringe*." *Research in Rural Sociology and Development: A Research Annual*, 85.

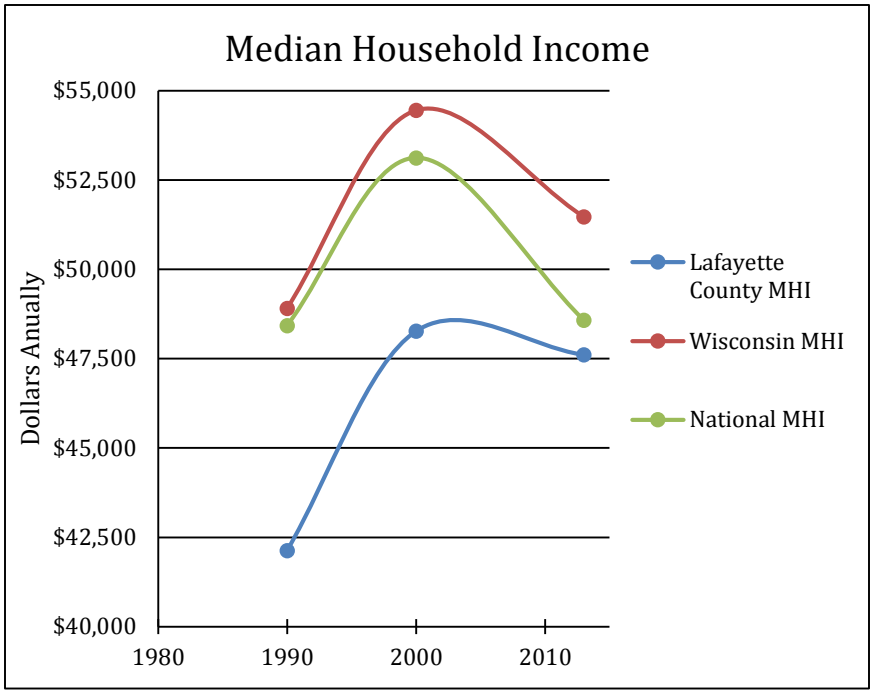
[7] Deller, Steven, and David Williams. *The Economic Impacts of Agriculture in Wisconsin Counties.* Technical paper. March 2011. http://www.aae.wisc.edu/pubs/misc/docs/deller.economic impacts.03.24.pdf.

[8] 2010 United States Census, American Community Survey. Lafayette County, Wisconsin, *C24050-Industry by Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over*; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed April 15, 2015, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_C24050&prodType=table

[9] 2010 United States Census, American Community Survey. *Lafayette County, Wisconsin, ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates*; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed April 15, 2015, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_DP05&prodType=table

Median household income (MHI) for Lafayette County residents in 2013 was $47,608.38, once adjusted for inflation.[10] Figure 4.2 shows the MHI for households in Lafayette County averaged 8.2% less than the national median income and nearly 12% less than Wisconsin's state median household income between 1990 and 2013. This lower-than-average income implies that Lafayette County's workers are being compensated at a rate that is lower than the state average. Compounding the effects of lower pay on the county's economic growth, the adjusted average weekly wages has declined by 7.25% since 2001.

Figure 4.2 County, State, and National Median Household Income, 2010 Dollars



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Although the median household income is lower than the state average, the unemployment rate is nearly one percent lower than the state average and 1.5% lower than the national average. More than seven out of ten county residents with jobs travel to work sites outside of the county. In spite of this apparent lack of local job opportunity, Lafayette County boasts one of the lowest unemployment rates in southwestern Wisconsin. With the majority of employed persons travelling for work, an opportunity exists for new industry to come to the county. By locating in Lafayette County, new business could act as a catalyst to decrease the number of externally employed residents as well as present opportunity for the currently unemployed residents to not only live, but also work in Lafayette County. This would not only help job seekers, but a diversified economic profile could boost the county's resiliency should an ag-related disaster occur.

Round Bales Stacked for the winter; Lafayette County, WI

[10] 2009-2013 United States Census, American Community Survey. *Lafayette County, Wisconsin, Income in the Past 12 Months*; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed April 15, 2015, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_10_5YR_S1901&prodType=table

One resource Lafayette County has in abundance is scenic landscapes full of encouragement for prospective rural homeowners to spread out and enjoy the serenity of the countryside. Table 4.3 shows that, as of the year 2000 (the most recent statistics available), the majority of people living in township lands occupy non-farm residences.[11] The 82% of the rural population live in 'non-farm' housing as defined by the United States Census Bureau. The remaining 18% of the population occupies 'farm' residences. Although the majority of the rural population lives in 'non-farm' housing, the total land acreage associated with 'non-farm' housing is far less than one may expect. Eighteen percent of the rural population owns 91% of all township land in Lafayette County. The 82% of the population residing in 'non-farm' housing own a mere 1% of the land while the remaining 8% of land is classified outside of the categories of, 'Agriculture', 'Agriculture Forest', or 'Residential (Class A)'. Changes in farm owners, numbers, size, and type are constant.

Figure 4.3 Farm vs. Non-Farm Populations, 2010

Municipality	Percent Non-Farm	Percent Farm
Town of Argyle	84.98%	15.02%
Town of Belmont	86.40%	13.60%
Town of Benton	75.42%	24.58%
Town of Blanchard	68.63%	31.37%
Town of Darlington	81.88%	18.12%
Town of Elk Grove	69.41%	30.59%
Town of Fayette	77.92%	22.08%
Town of Gratiot	65.06%	34.94%
Town of Kendall	56.14%	43.86%
Town of Lamont	70.37%	29.63%
Town of Monticello	54.00%	46.00%
Town of New Diggings	84.38%	15.63%
Town of Seymour	66.13%	33.87%
Town of Shullsburg	63.31%	36.69%
Town of Wayne	66.15%	33.85%
Town of White Oak Springs	48.89%	51.11%
Town of Willow Springs	68.51%	31.49%
Town of Wiota	71.47%	28.53%
Average	**69.95%**	**30.05%**

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

[11] 2000 United States Census, American Community Survey. *Lafayette County, Wisconsin, P002-Urban and Rural*; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed April 15, 2015, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_00_SF1_P002&prodType=table

Housing Market and Future Demand

Throughout Lafayette County, the number of housing units is increasing faster than the rate of population growth. Fewer people are moving into a growing number of housing units. The results are a lower population density with a larger impact from newly constructed homes. Since 1970, the population of Lafayette County has fallen by 3% while the average number of people living in a unit has fallen by 41% as shown in Figure 4.4.[12] With an average residential parcel size of 1 acre[13], more land will be needed to house a lower density of residents. This falling population density is, perhaps, the biggest threat to Lafayette County's productive farmland.

Figure 4.4 Persons per Household

Year	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015(est.)
Population	17,456	17,412	16,074	16,137	16,836	16,948
Housing Units	5,358	6,293	6,312	6,674	7,230	7,338
Persons/Unit	**3.26**	**2.77**	**2.55**	**2.42**	**2.33**	**2.31**

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration Household Projections, USDA Census.

In 2015, the most recent available housing and population estimates available from the Department of Administration, there were 16,948 people living in 7,338 housing units. This is equates to 2.31 persons per housing unit. With a projected population of 17,429 living in the county 2025 and an anticipated persons per unit average of 2.69, 6,471 households would sufficiently accommodate all residents. With the Demographics Services Center projecting a total of 6,479 housing units throughout Lafayette County in 2025, the need for additional housing has already been met. However, it is unreasonable to grant building permissions only to new residents who are unable to find appropriate housing, Lafayette County must expect and anticipate new home construction to continue. This continued new home construction must consider the impact fragmentation of farmland can have. Therefore, this Farmland Preservation Plan recommends that the County Board adopt ordinances that require any new development be carried out in a manner that minimizes the conversion of productive farmland to uses other than agriculture or in direct support of agriculture as defined by Wisconsin State Statutes Ch. 91.

Since 2010, the market share of renter occupied housing units has increased by 8%[14] and in 2014, the data most recently available for rental statistics reports that 1,482 units or roughly 22% of housing units were occupied by renters.[15] Although rental units made up nearly a quarter of all housing units in 2014, more than 1 in 4 Lafayette County renters spent 30% or more of their gross monthly income was spent on rent.[14] When compared to Wisconsin's average 48.2% of all renters spending 30% or more of their gross monthly income on rent, Lafayette County is ahead of the curve although, more affordable housing may benefit those who live and work here or attract additional people from outside of the county as they search for a home of their own.

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[12] Wisconsin. Department of Administration. Demographics Services Center. *Household Projections…2010 - 2040.* By Egan-Robertson and Barroilet. May 1, 2014. Accessed April 15, 2015. http://www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Intergovernmental-Relations/Demographic-services-Center/Wisconsin-Population-Projections.

[13] Lafayette County, *2014 Tax Assessment Roll*.

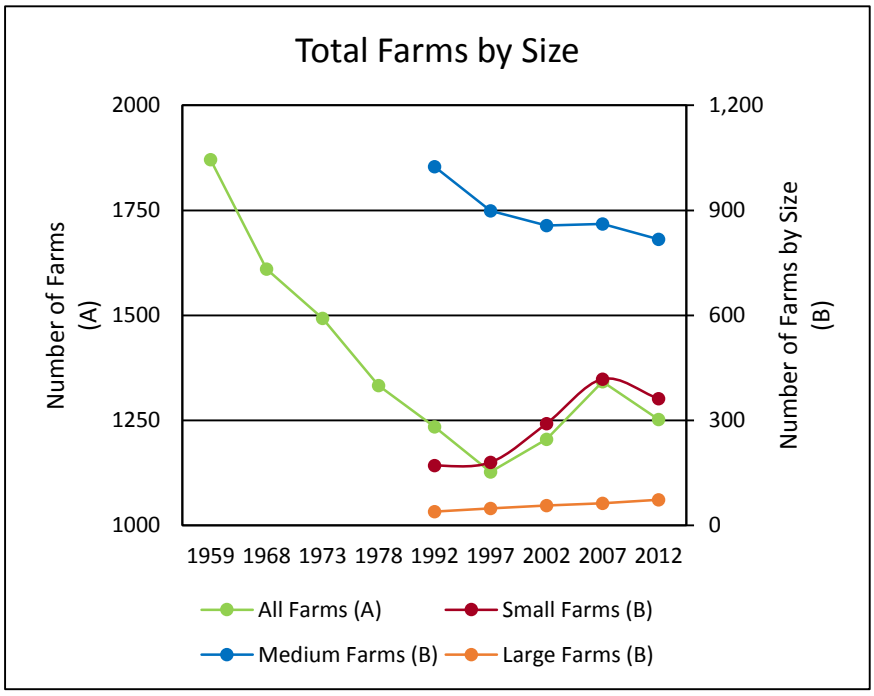
[14] 2010-2014 United States Census, American Community Survey. *Lafayette County, Wisconsin, Selected Housing Characteristics*; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed November 8, 2015, http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_5YR_DP04&prodType=table

[15] 1990-2014 United States Census. *Lafayette County, Wisconsin, Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics*; digital table, American FactFinder, Accessed July 22, 2015. http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk

Agriculture Trends

Between 1992 and 2012, an average of 42 land ownership changes occurred per year.[16] Each time land appears on the market, development is possible. Data cited in the 1981 Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan and, more recently, reported by the USDA, show that overall farms sized at or below 49 acres have increased by 112%, while very large farms of 1,000 acres have increased in number from 39 farms in 1992 to 73 farms in 2012 as shown in Figure 4.5.[17] While these changes were occurring at the ends of the farm size spectrum, the farms between 50 acres and 999 acres decreased from 1,025 farms to 817 farms. This pattern indicates that small farms appear and result in fragmented land even as the largest farms swell in size monopolizing large tracts of land.

Figure 4.5 County, State, and National Median Household Income, 2010 Dollars



Source: 1959-1978 Assessor's Farm Statistics, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; and 1992-2012 USDA Agriculture Census

This polarization of farm size has coincided with one of every five farms between 50 and 999 acres folding since 1992. While total farm numbers have grown by only a small fraction between 1992 and 2012, data obtained from the 1981 Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan reports a sharp decline in farms since 1959. The increase in average acres per farm between 1959 and 2012 shows strong negative correlation with the number of individual farms of any size. That is to say, as the average acres per farm grows, the overall number of farms declines. This loss of farms is occurring at the rate of six individual farms per one-acre gain in average farm size.

On the following page, Figure 4.6 depicts an overall increase in yield per acres between 1992 and 2012.[18] Genetically enhanced crops, efficient application of fertilizers by incorporation of nutrient management plans, and more efficient cultivation methods increase yields. Between 1992 and 2007, the total average yield per acre increased over 40%. The 2007 growing season produced the highest yield per acre for all crops noted. This increase in crop yields occurred at the same time as average farm size increased.

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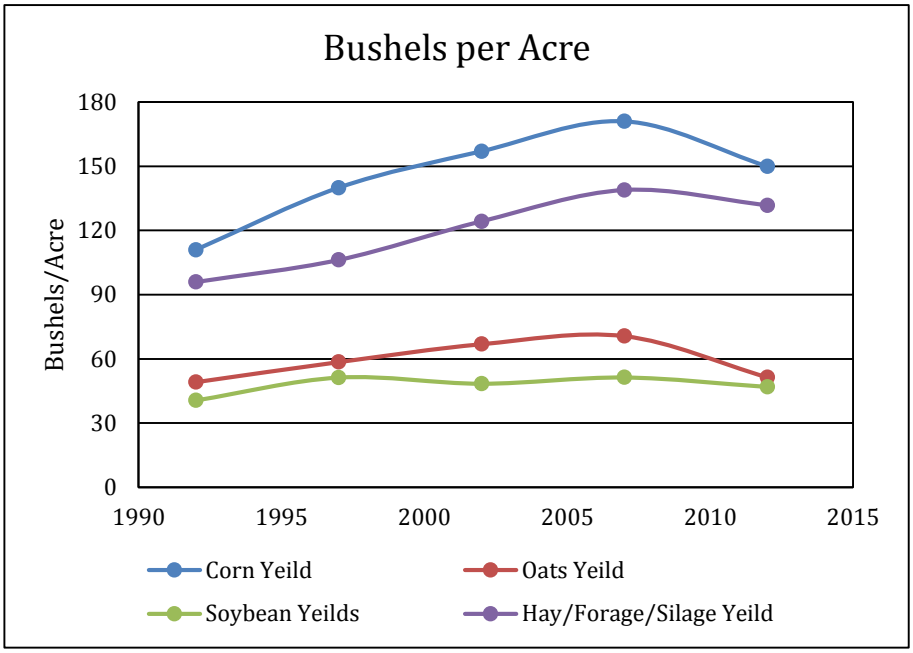
[16]Lafayette County, *2014 Tax Assessment Roll*.

[17]Board of Supervisors, Lafayette County. *Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan*. By Lafayette County Planning and Zoning Committee, Lafayette County Technical Advisory Committee, and Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Darlington, WI, 1980.

[18]"*Weight Per Bushel and Bulk Densities of Grain and Seeds*," table generated by College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, The University of Georgia; accessed August 14, 2015, http://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/bae/extension/handbook/documents/Density%20of%20Agricultural%20Products.pdf

Standing in contrast to the overall increase in production, the yields of 2012 were down an average of 12% from 2007. This decrease in crop performance is correlated, and potentially caused by killing frosts in April, above average temperatures all summer, and a drought that gripped the southern third of the state until December. Lafayette County, in addition to having precipitation totaling 6 to 10 inches below normal, saw nearly 40 days of temperatures in the 90s or higher. Interestingly, milk production did not slow in 2012 despite the hot, dry summer. Production of milk per cow was 13% higher in 2012 than 2007.

Figure 4.6 Select Crop Yields



Source: USDA Census of Agriculture

While production increases as individual farm numbers decline, the value of high-quality farmland grow. Supporting this are the rising costs of land as well as the growth in the agricultural support industry and the increased production of specialty items made from locally sourced crops and commodities. Farmland Preservation planning works to ensure the continued cultivation, stewardship, and profitability of the land by encouraging non-farm development to occur in areas of the county that minimize the impact on agricultural enterprises.

Natural Resources

Resources found underfoot, overhead, or flowing past serve as the fuel for Lafayette County's economic furnace. Little of the county's land remains unchanged since pre-settlement. Because agriculture impacts Lafayette County more than any other in the State of Wisconsin, it should come as no surprise that forests; swamps; federal, state, county, school, or cemetery lands take up little more than 10% of the county's surface. In light of the significant economic impact stemming from the county's natural resources, water quality, soil erosion, and land management strategies should be of great concern to County Officials, residents, and the businesses tied to agriculture and tourism.

The geography of Lafayette County is unique. The 635 square miles that lie within the boundary of Lafayette County are completely within the greater Driftless Region. The distinctive topography in the Driftless Area is comprised of steep valleys and narrow floodplains sculpted during the Wisconsin Ice Age, which ended approximately 11,000 years ago. Lafayette County, in the southeastern quadrant of the Driftless Region, exhibits the iconic Driftless topography throughout. Karst topography, a characteristic of geographies rich in carbonate rock, is present throughout the region. Peppered with outcrops of sandstone and dolomite, valley floors rich with floodwater-deposited sediments sit in contrast to hilltops that boast deep, windblown, loess deposits that have been cleared and converted for agricultural production. Often covered in trees, the steep hillsides between are ill-suited to large-scale cultivation. While little acreage remains intact, the reintroduction of Oak Savannah that is native to the region is occurring in small pockets throughout Lafayette County.

Two river basins divide Lafayette County. The Grant and Platte River Basin drains nearly 28% of the county and empties directly into the Mississippi River while the Sugar-Pecatonica Basin drains the other 72% of the county and flows to the Rock River. 70 miles of classified trout streams are contained in these basins.[19] The East Branch of the Pecatonica and its main channel are home to smallmouth bass, channel catfish, walleye and northern pike. Lakes, ponds, and other non-flowing waters are rare in the Driftless Region. Public fishing access in Lafayette County lakes is limited to Yellowstone, Horseshoe, and Bloody Lakes.

[19] Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, *DNR_Watersheds*, accessed June 1, 2014, ftp://dnrftp01.wi.gov/geodata/watersheds/

Sport fish such as Bass and Northern Pike are present in Yellowstone Lake while Horseshoe and Bloody Lakes can support fisheries of panfish although their shallow depths and non-managed populations make the species in these waters susceptible to winterkill during long and intense winters.

The issue of water quality should be of the utmost importance throughout Lafayette County. This importance has been stressed through the chorus of the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan, the Lafayette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, and the southwestern Wisconsin Region's Grow Southwest Plan's identified goals to

- reduce soil erosion;
- ensure effective nutrient and manure management;
- address water and soil quality issues in Farmland Preservation Plan and Land Use Plans;
- promote restoration and protection of surface water; and
- conserve water and soil.

Increases in suspended sediment, elevated nitrates in ground water, and soil erosion are threatening or have already started to degrade the health of Lafayette County's water resources. Soil erosion lowers water quality by increasing the cloudiness of a water body. This cloudiness is known as *turbidity*. As turbidity increases, so does the solar energy absorption. Increased energy absorption raises water temperature and reduces dissolved oxygen concentrations. In slower moving sections of a stream, the particles fall out of suspension covering and smothering eggs of fish species such as trout that rely on cold and clear water for healthy breeding population. Elevated nitrate levels further degrade the quality of water resources by promoting algae growth that leads to low dissolved oxygen levels leading to the suffocation of sensitive species.

The results of voluntary nitrate sample testing are shown in Figure 4.7 on the following page. The yellow and red buffers identify streams with sample sites situated 1,000 feet or closer to their banks that test results show elevated levels of nitrates at the source. The depicted data is not inclusive of all wells in Lafayette County as collection was not scientific but through voluntary sample submissions provided by residents at the County Fair. Samples were tested and recorded by the county, but does not include a record of individual resident submissions and could therefore contain multiple samples of one site. Human exposure to elevated levels of nitrates can, in sufficient amounts, lead to health complications with infants being particularly sensitive.

Unless specialized structures exist on farms, runoff generated from heavy rains or melting snow transports animal waste and/or chemical fertilizers, the leading non-native sources of nitrates, to larger bodies of water. On level ground, rain- and meltwater transport pollutants downward through the strata where they contaminate groundwater; a major source of drinking water for county residents. It is estimated that ninety percent of nitrates in Wisconsin's water supply originated from manure spreading, agricultural fertilization, or legume cropping activities.[20] With agricultural land use dominating Lafayette County, the majority of nonpoint pollutants can be linked to the agricultural activities of the past, present, and will likely continue into the future unless actions are taken to reduce and control the mobilization of pollutants. Municipal water systems have spent no money to reduce the nitrate levels.[21]

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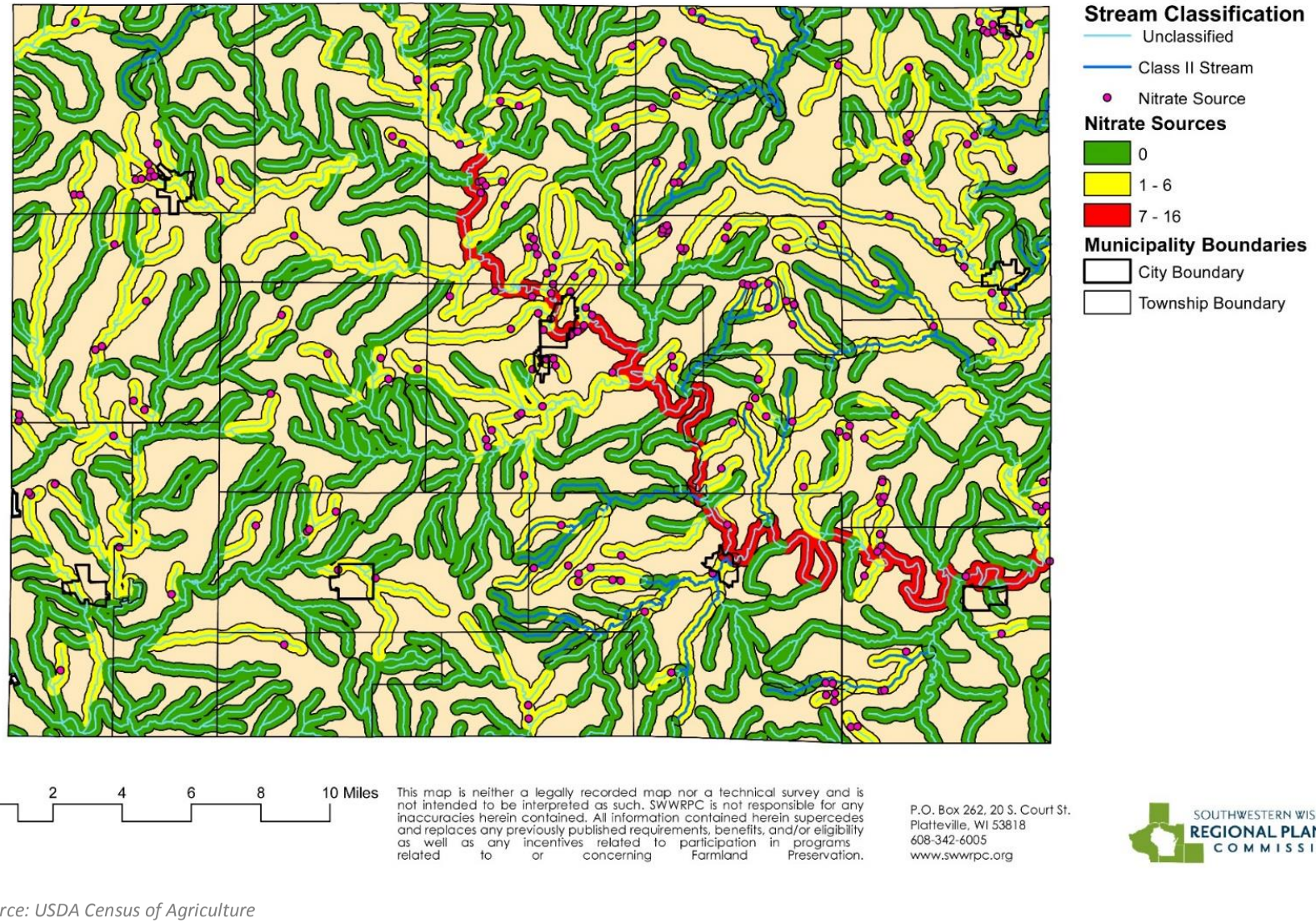
[20] Shaw, Byron. "*Nitrogen contamination sources: A look at relative contributions*." In *Proc. Nitrate in Wisconsin's groundwater: Strategies and challenges conference. Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center, Stevens Point, WI*. 1994.
[21] United States Geological Survey. *Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater Through Comprehensive Planning*. By Lynn Markham, Christine Mechenich, Raquel Miskowski, Charles Dunning, James Rauman, Elizabeth Woodcock, Cheryl Buchwalk, Jennifer Bruce, and Ann Moser. USGS, 2007.

Figure 4.7 Test Sites with Elevated Nitrate Levels within 1,000ft of a Stream



Source: USDA Census of Agriculture

Recreation and Tourism

As reported in the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan, 84% of residents participating in the recorded survey stated that tourism and recreation are important aspects of the county and its economic development.[22] Increasing the opportunities for tourism is an integral part of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan, written in 2007, outlines the goals of the county's municipalities. Progress, as measured by increased tourist spending, has not been realized even though 13 municipalities have policy or program recommendations in place to increase the promotion of tourism as stated in the Comprehensive Plan. Lafayette County has, as a whole, places little priority on improving tourism and recreation while emphasizing the prioritization of programs/plans that directly affect agriculture. The low prioritization of this physical infrastructure that would help bring travelers through and to communities by increasing access to Lafayette County and its natural and cultural resources.

Tourism, a main staple in the overall economy of Wisconsin, contributes far less to the Lafayette County's economy than the average of the region or state. Figure 4.8 summarizes the spending by tourists in Lafayette County, southwestern Wisconsin, and Wisconsin as a whole. According to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, total tourist spending equaled $11.14 million dollars in 2013.[23] This means tourist spending equaled $661.68 for every resident of Lafayette County. This is 63% less than the $1,776.52 average of tourist spending per resident in the State of Wisconsin. When compared to the other counties in southwestern Wisconsin, Lafayette County positions itself in last place in both total tourist dollars spent and tourist dollars spent per resident. When compared to the rest of Wisconsin, Lafayette County ranks in 69th place of the 72 counties for per resident tourist spending. These low rankings, compared to the region and state, highlight the need for Lafayette County to fight for more tourists and tourist spending. Failing to increase tourist spending, not only places more risk in the Agriculture, Manufacturing, or other industries, but also fails to draw in visitors or potential new residents.

Table 4.3 Tourism Spending Comparison, 2013

Area	Dollars Spent	Population	Dollars/Resident Impact
Lafayette County	**$11,140,000**	**16,836.00**	**$661.68**
SW Wisconsin Average	$26,240,000	29,318.80	$894.99
Wisconsin Average	$140,320,000	78,985.92	$1,776.52

Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

[22] Lafayette County (Wis.). Planning and Zoning Committee, Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan, 2007. *http://www.swwrpc.org/Publications/Comprehensive%20Plans/2007_County_Lafayette_Comprehensive_Plan.pdf*. 2007. Web. June-July 2015.

[23] *County Total Economic Impact*. 2014. Raw data. Wisconsin Department of Tourism, Madison, WI.

Utilities

The physical infrastructure that enables a community to function and grow is vital to its success. City and county garages, libraries, municipal offices, schools, police/sheriff/fire stations, parks, and schools are a few of the structures that fall under the category of 'Community Facilities'. Add utilities such as gas lines, electric power lines, and water lines to other infrastructure including storm and sewer lines, waste water treatment facilities, and landfills, and the overall development of a city, village, or town becomes a staggering feat of engineering and land use. With this accomplishment, however, comes great cost. In an effort to minimize cost while maximizing benefits and adhering to the goals present in the Comprehensive Plan, careful consideration is required throughout the development phase of new construction sites. This Farmland Preservation Plan recognizes the importance of community expansion but also recommends methods to reduce the costs commonly associated with new, dispersed development.

The supply and distribution of water in Lafayette County is largely left to non-public entities. Residents in the towns of Lafayette County are supplied water from privately owned wells with the only exception being the unincorporated lands of Wiota. Formed in 1948, the Town of Wiota's Sanitary District provides drinking water for three town farms, the hamlet of Wiota, and a cheese factory from the district's water tower.[24] All wells throughout the county must meet the Wisconsin Administrative Code of Well Construction and Pump Installation guidelines as administered by the Department of Natural Resources following Wis. Stat. Ch. NR 812. Of the nine municipal water systems in Lafayette County, four have wellhead protection plans in place. Additionally, Benton is the only municipal water system adhering to a wellhead protection ordinance. Handling the task of storm water management is a complex system of culvers, pipes, natural drainage ways, and drains throughout the county. Sediment management practices are guided by Wis. Stat. Chs. NR 151 and 126 as they pertain to US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Phase 2 Storm Water Regulations. Waste water treatment operations are apportioned by municipality. According to the Lafayette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, there are seven wastewater treatment facilities each servicing one of the seven incorporated municipalities in Lafayette County. At the time of publication, the Land and Water Resource Management Plan noted 103 non-permitted or failed septic systems.

The responsibility of solid waste management and disposal is that of each municipality. Lafayette County does not operate a solid waste landfill. Waste management needs are currently met with either curb-side service or designated drop off sites. Drop off sites most commonly service areas outside of city or village boundaries. The entire county has adopted an animal waste management ordinance as a tool to "prevent water pollution and thereby protect the health of Lafayette County resident and transients; prevent the spread of disease; and promote the prosperity and general welfare of the citizens of Lafayette County", as stated in the Lafayette County Animal Waste Storage & Nutrient Management Ordinance § 6-4-6.59.

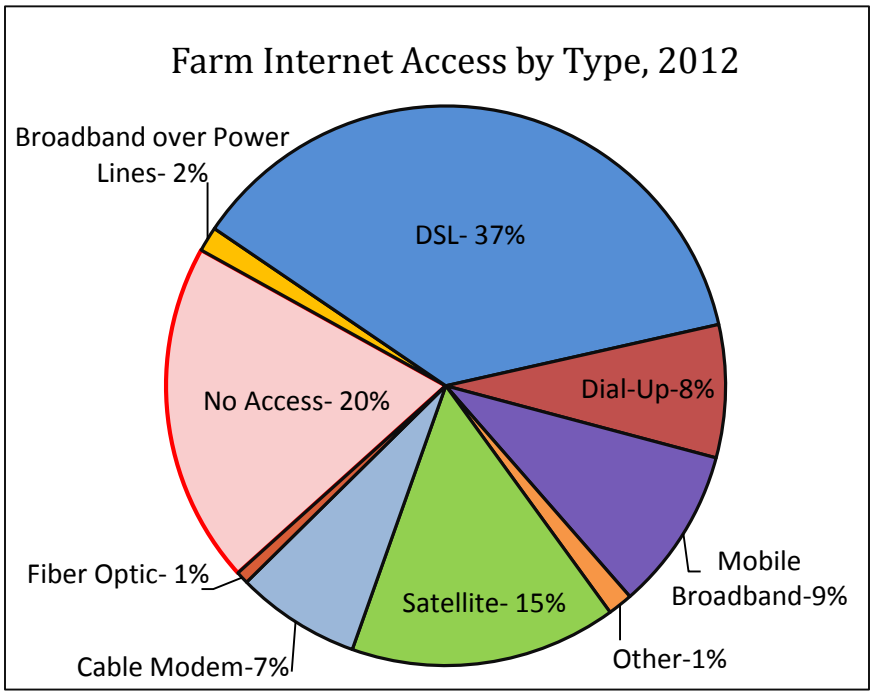
The Petroleum Environmental Cleanup Fund Award (PECFA) was created to comply with federal regulations that require measures to prevent the release of contaminants from underground storage tanks. This program reimburses a portion of the clean-up costs acquired by owners with eligible petroleum product systems. Home heating oil systems are included in the eligible product systems list. As of May 31, 2007, Lafayette County had spent over seven million dollars on petroleum cleanup leaking from underground storage tanks. At the time, these activities cost $434 per county resident. This dollars-per-resident is much higher than the Wisconsin state average of $262 per resident. This higher-than-average spending offers two perspectives: either Lafayette County is an exemplary model of petroleum remediation or, the practices of days gone by displayed little regard for environmental sensitivity burdening the current and future generations with the true costs of clean up.

[24]Wiota (Wis.: Town). Town Board. *Town of Wiota, Lafayette County, Comprehensive Plan*. Platteville, WI: Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

Infrastructure and Facilities

Telecommunication infrastructure includes cellular telephone capacities with a maximum advertised download speed not exceeding 25mbps. However, according to research done by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), nine of 12 (75%) provider networks do not meet the service speeds advertised.[25] Cellular coverage is available in nearly the entire county based on June 2014 records released by the NTIA. According to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Survey, 61% of farms had access to the internet in 2007.[26] Lafayette County's overall ranking for speed and technology in telecommunication is currently 64th in the state. By 2012, the farm access had grown to 80%. Figure 4.6 shows the type of internet access farms utilized in 2012. This growing demand for farm-based internet access, when coupled with the underperforming internet service currently offered illustrates increased access, a more diverse offering of service types, and increasing the delivered speed of rural telecommunications needs to be a top priority as farms grown in size and complexity.

Figure 4.6 Farm-Accessed Internet Type, 2012



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Survey, 2012

Transportation in Lafayette County is limited to mostly road and highway travel. Connection to major metropolitan areas that include Chicago, IL; Milwaukee, WI; and Minneapolis, MN is possible by US Highway 151 in the northeast corner of the County, or by utilizing State Highways 78, 81, or 176 to connect with larger roads that lie outside of County borders. 1,121 miles of city, village, or town roads; 135 miles of State or National highway; and 199 miles of private roads snake through the landscape of Lafayette County. The county hosts no active railroads but does contain 30 miles of rail corridor serving as a trail for recreational use. The two airfields serving the county are privately operated and are located near Shullsburg and Argyle.[27] Public transportation options are limited to bus services offered through charter companies and the Lafayette County Human Services Department's Aging Unit and are performed through the Lafayette County Commission on Aging and Elderly & Handicapped Transportation groups. Some school districts in the County satisfy their bussing demands by owning their own busses while others contract privately owned bus lines.

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[25] Lafayette County, WI. National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Accessed September 2, 2015. http://www.broadbandmap.gov/summarize/state/wisconsin/county/lafayette.

[26] Lafayette County, WI. USDA. *National Agriculture Statistics Survey, Table 45. Selected Operation and Operator Characteristics: 2012- 1997*. May 2, 2014. Accessed September 18, 2015. ttp://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/Wisconsin/st55_2_045_045.pdf.

[27] "VFRMAP - Digital Aeronautical Charts." VFRMAP - Digital Aeronautical Charts. Accessed August 23, 2015. http://vfrmap.com/?type=vfrc&lat=42.676&lon=-89.938&zoom=10.

Public Safety in the County is guided and administered by a network of committees, departments, and agencies. The Lafayette County Sheriff's Department serves as the County's law enforcement entity with Police Departments concentrating efforts in their respective municipalities. Ten fire districts serve the county and emergency medical services are handled by seven districts. Southern Lafayette County residents rely on the emergency medical services provided contractually through the Warren, Illinois district. Community Facilities that house government operations include the County courthouse, the health department building, an assisted living facility, a hospital, one park, and several shops housing highway department staff and equipment. The County rents office space from the City of Darlington and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Infrastructure for Agriculture

Lafayette County is rooted in agriculture. The clearly defined identity of the county and the entrepreneurial spirit of its residents have created a network of businesses, organizations, and services in support of agriculture that is as immense as it is divers. Using data obtained from the Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection in 2014, Lafayette County infrastructure and businesses related to agriculture are numerous. This data, however, is not a comprehensive list and should not be interpreted as such. Producers of agricultural goods not included in Figure 4.7 that include aquaculture, milking, and beef producers; organic farms; and plant nurseries account for over 325 businesses in Lafayette County.[28,29,30,31] In addition to the listed businesses and services available to farmers in Lafayette County, other service sectors play an active role in ensuring the continued success of those working in agriculture.

Figure 4.7 Lafayette County, WI Agriculture Infrastructure

Business/Service Type	Total
Animal Dealer Licenses	3
Animal Market Licenses	3
Animal Trucker Licenses	5
Dairy Plants	16
Food Processors	7
Food Warehouses	8
Grain Warehouses	7
Import Feed Lots	4
Meat Plants	5
Organic Businesses	3
Public Warehouses	4
Retail Food Establishments	31
Total Establishments	**96**

Source: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection, 2014

[28]DATCP_Animal_Health Geodatabase. (2014). Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection. Available: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection Access [August 28, 2015].
[29]DATCP_FOOD_SAFETY Geodatabase. (2014). Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection. Available: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection Access [August 28, 2015].
[30]DATCP_MISC Geodatabase. (2014). Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection. Available: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection Access [August 28, 2015].
[31]DATCP_PLANT_INDUSTRY Geodatabase. (2014). Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection. Available: Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection Access [August 28, 2015].

Eligibility Analysis

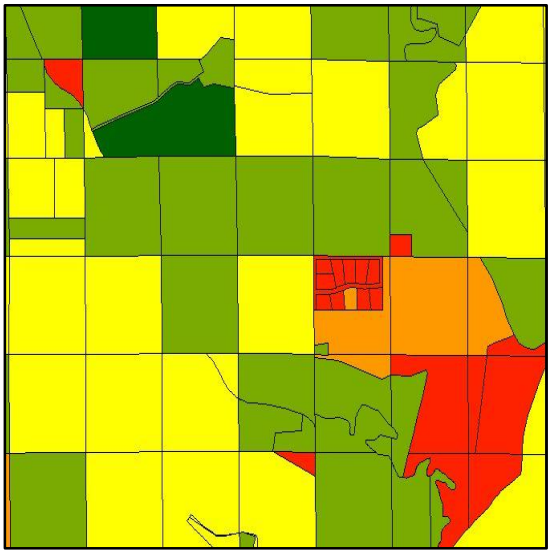
Land Evaluation Site Assessment Modeling

As one of its main purposes, this Farmland Preservation Plan identifies land that is to be preserved for agriculture use. To ensure objectivity, a point-based system for rating the importance of agricultural land resources based upon distinct and measurable features has been employed for this Farmland Preservation Plan. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process is a resource management industry standard. LESA, as a tool, is not designed to produce a land use map. It is intended to provide objective, unbiased information about specific sites based on the presence of valued characteristics. The categorization method is used to inform decisions regarding land use, zoning, and development. LESA scores have only been calculated for parcels within zoned Townships as eligibility for participation in the Farmland Preservation Program requires zoning. Table 5.1 contains a list of townships within Lafayette County that are zoned.

Table 5.1: Township Zoning

Township Name	Zoned
Argyle	**Yes**
Belmont	**Yes**
Benton	No
Blanchard	No
Darlington	No
Elk Grove	**Yes**
Fayette	**Yes**
Gratiot	**Yes**
Kendall	**Yes**
Lamont	**Yes**
Monticello	**Yes**
New Diggings	No
Seymour	No
Shullsburg	**Yes**
Wayne	**Yes**
White Oak Springs	No
Willow Springs	No
Wiota	**Yes**

Two categories of characteristics are defined and measured by LESA modeling. The first category, Land Evaluation (LE), takes into account the soil-based qualities described by the USDA definition of 'Prime Farmland'. In addition to the presence of prime farmland, the size of a given parcel is of value. Large parcels offer improved efficiency over small parcels. Small parcels, often separated by fences or natural barriers require a producer to adjust planting strategies. When fragmentation of the land is introduced or increased, farmer productivity decreases.



Sample LESA Model Product

The second category of LESA modelling is Site Assessment (SA). Site Assessment rates other attributes affecting a site's importance relative to agricultural use. For eligibility assessment guidelines set in this LESA model, SA categories include: Zoning Type, Average Slope, Presence of Rivers or Streams, Endangered Species Habitat, and State or National Highway Adjacency. Additionally, to better meet the goals of Lafayette County, parcels under five acres that have more than $20,000 in improvements are automatically disqualified as a means to exclude lands used as a site for residential or recreational purposes.

Applying the LESA Model

Due to the prominent role played by agriculture and agriculture services in Lafayette County, small changes to Farmland Preservation eligibility may be felt by a disproportionate percent of residents when compared to others in Wisconsin. It is with this impact in mind that the eligibility of any given parcel is one that is not taken lightly. To remove human error and biases, LESA modeling was applied once specific characteristics were identified and weighted to reflect relative desirability. The LESA point schema that has been employed was developed with input from the communities, town boards, and the County Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning Departments.

Using the schema shown in Figure 5.1 allowed the relative value, or score, of each category to be calculated on a parcel-by-parcel basis. This individualized approach to Farmland Preservation eligibility ensured that parcels qualified, or did not qualify, based on their characteristics alone, free from any influence of neighboring parcels. Characteristics of neighboring parcels may be similar to any parcel in question, however, parcels with greater separation were more likely to show different traits. These differences tended to contrast more greatly as separation increased. Most large parcels deemed ineligible were a result of zoning other than 'A-1 Agricultural' but some ineligible parcels occurred as a result of characteristics not ideal for agricultural production.

After calculating the total LESA score for each individual parcel in the County, the overall point distribution was analyzed. This distribution allowed categorization to occur. The distribution of all parcel's LESA scores was then grouped into five categories according to the standard deviation of the parcel scores of Lafayette County. This allows the top 60% of parcels to be eligible for Farmland Preservation. This automatic disqualification caveat was presented as a means of eliminating parcels that were not rezoned when the parcel was created or to exclude those not agricultural in nature.

Figure 5.1 Lafayette County LESA Scoring Schema

Land Evaluation (33%)

1. **Prime Farmland (22 pts. possible)**

90% or more	25pts.
75% to 89.9%	20pts.
50% to 74.9%	15pts.
25% to 49.9%	10pts.
Less than 25%	0pts.

2. **Size of Parcel (11 pts. possible)**

More than 30 acres	12pts.
10 to 29.9 acres	6pts.
Less than 10 acres	0pts.

Site Assessment (66%)

3. ***Automatic ineligibility if the parcel is less than 5 Acres and has more than $20,000 in improvements***
4. **Zoning (30 pts. possible)**

A1 Agriculture	30pts.
Other	0pts.

5. **Rivers and Streams (11 pts. possible)**

Trout/Stream/Exceptional/ Outstanding Waterway Designation	11pts.
Named Stream	7pts.
Unnamed Stream	5pts.
None	0pts.

6. **Slope (10 pts. possible)**

Low Average	10pts.
Medium-Low Average	8pts.
Medium- High Average	4pts.
High Average	0pts.

7. **Endangered Species (6pts. possible)**

Both Terrestrial and Aquatic	5pts.
Terrestrial	2pts.
Aquatic	2pts.
+Bonus Township Occurrence	+1pts.

8. **State/National Highway Adjacency (5 pts. possible)**

Non-Adjacent	6pts.
Adjacent	0pts.

LESA Results

As stated above, parcels with LESA scores equal to or greater than 46 points were deemed eligible for participation in the Farmland Preservation program. This eligibility did not guarantee state income tax credits, however. There are additional steps required of the parcel owner to claim credits made available by the Farmland Preservation program. The results of Lafayette County's LESA analysis benefited the majority of parcels. Table 5.2 summarizes the eligibility statistics of Lafayette County townships. Townships that are not zoned are ineligible for Farmland Preservation benefits and reflect this with "N/A" as their cell value.

Table 5.2 Farmland Preservation Program Eligibility Statistics for Lafayette County, WI

Township	Total Acres	Eligible Acres	Percent Eligible	Total Parcels	Eligible Parcels	Percent Parcels
Argyle	22,654	22,039	97.3%	1,077	947	87.7%
Belmont	26,077	25,724	98.6%	1,171	1039	88.4%
Benton	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Blanchard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Darlington	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Elk Grove	23,215	22,820	98.3%	919	808	87.5%
Fayette	22,907	22,675	99.0%	1,039	931	89.8%
Kendall	27,158	26,962	99.2%	1,026	965	93.8%
Lamont	12,655	12,514	99.3%	516	459	89.0%
Monticello	12,556	12,492	99.5%	444	414	93.2%
New Diggings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Seymour	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shullsburg	22,223	22,023	99.1%	808	744	92.1%
White Oak Springs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Willow Springs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wiota	33,756	33,295	98.6%	1480	1264	85.2%
Total	**261,103**	**258,017**	**98.8%**	**8,480**	**9536**	**89.7%**

Under this Farmland Preservation Plan, almost 99% of the County's zoned township acreage is eligible for participation in Farmland Preservation. These 258,017 acres have the potential of returning $1,935,127.50 in state income tax credits to land owners each year. Over the life of this plan, the potential state income tax credits total $19,351,275.00. These returned income tax credits lower the amount of taxes owed by the participating Lafayette County landowner. Lowering the amount of taxes owed makes available more funds for the purchase of other goods, services, or for hiring additional employees. Hiring additional employees by private industry further increases tax credit benefits to the state through increasing the taxable population, resulting in more tax revenue.

Historically, the majority of Lafayette County landowners eligible for participation in Farmland Preservation planning have not chosen to meet the additional requirements in order to collect their income tax credits. Table 5.3 shows the income tax credits distributed to participating farmers for the tax years 2010 through 2013. While the Department of Revenue (DOR) includes payments to land owners enrolled in the Farmland Preservation Program, Agricultural Enterprise Area Agreements or those with an Individual Agreement (no longer available per WI. Statutes), and their varying credit rates, the new plan eligibility calculation only considers potential credits of eligible farmland preservation lands under the base rate of $7.50 per acre. No data was available reporting the number of parcels claiming under different rates.

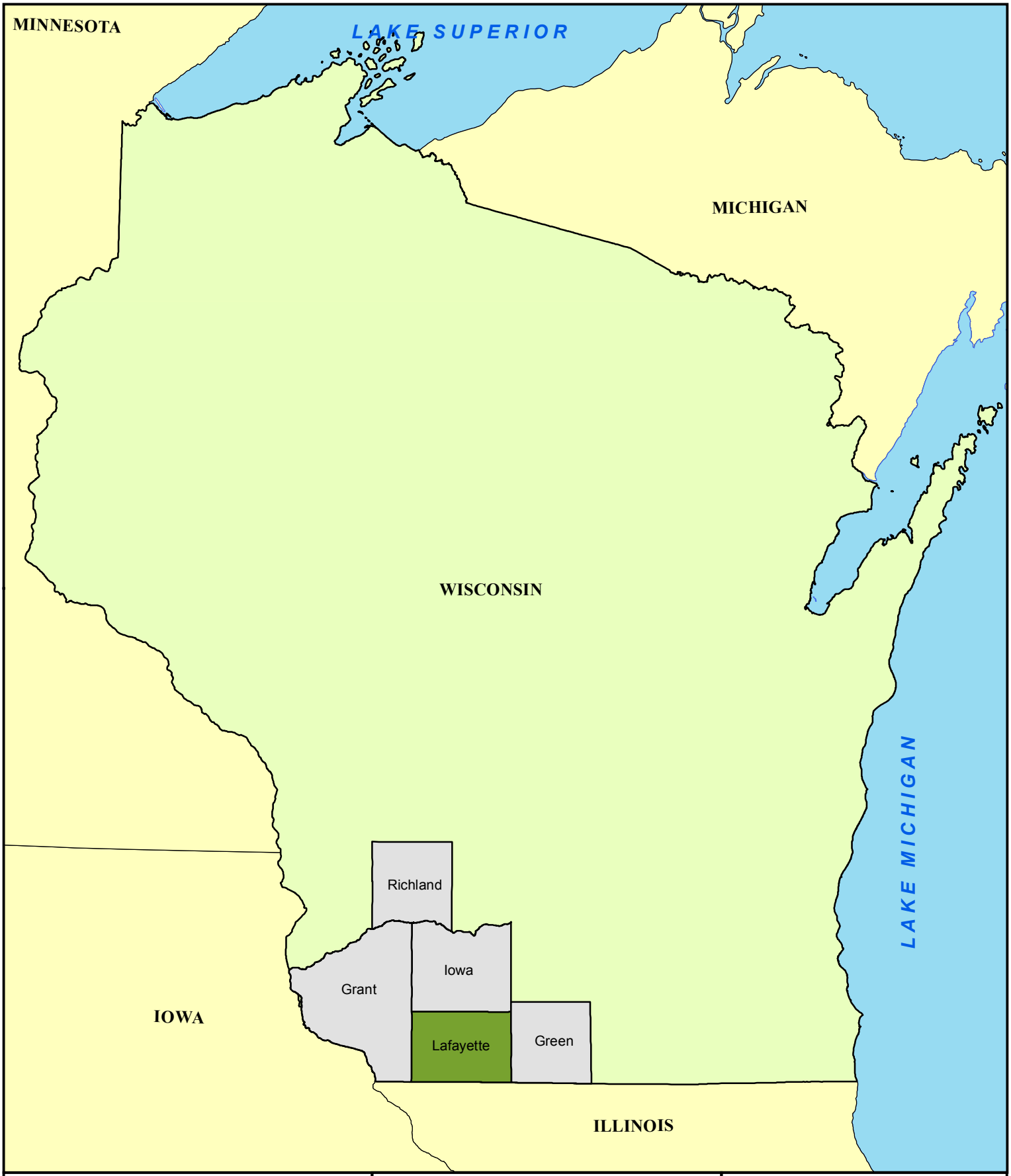
Table 5.3 Current Vs. New Plan Statistics; Lafayette County, WI

Tax Year	Combined Schedule Collections	
	Amount Claimed	Acres
2010	$590,675	91,114
2011	$563,725	85,874
2012	$542,238	76,925
2013	$564,084	78,433
Historic Total	**$2,260,722**	**332,346**
New Plan Eligibility/Year	**$1,935,127.50**	**258,017**

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Revenue

Regardless of rate differences, this Plan makes 9,536 parcels of land eligible that total 258,017 acres of Lafayette County. These parcel owners, upon participation and further qualification, can claim a total income tax credit amount of nearly $1.9 million per year. Over the 10 year life of this Plan, Lafayette County lands are eligible to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program with potential to collect $19,351,275.00 in tax credits.

The following pages contain the Farmland Preservation Eligibility Maps by township. These maps are a result of community input, geographic characteristics, as well as property boundaries. These maps do not identify areas in which to concentrate development due to continued lack of development pressure. By restricting or concentrating growth to specific areas of the county, developers may be dissuaded from Lafayette County. To avoid further stagnation of population growth, any action with potential to deter the inflow of people or industry into the County is not advisable and therefore, not suggested at this time. However, if in the future, population growth increases, County officials may decide to change strategies and move towards a more concentrated development model.



Legend

- Lafayette County
- Southwestern Wisconsin Region
- Wisconsin
- Other State Boundary
- Lake Boundary

Lafayette County Location

N

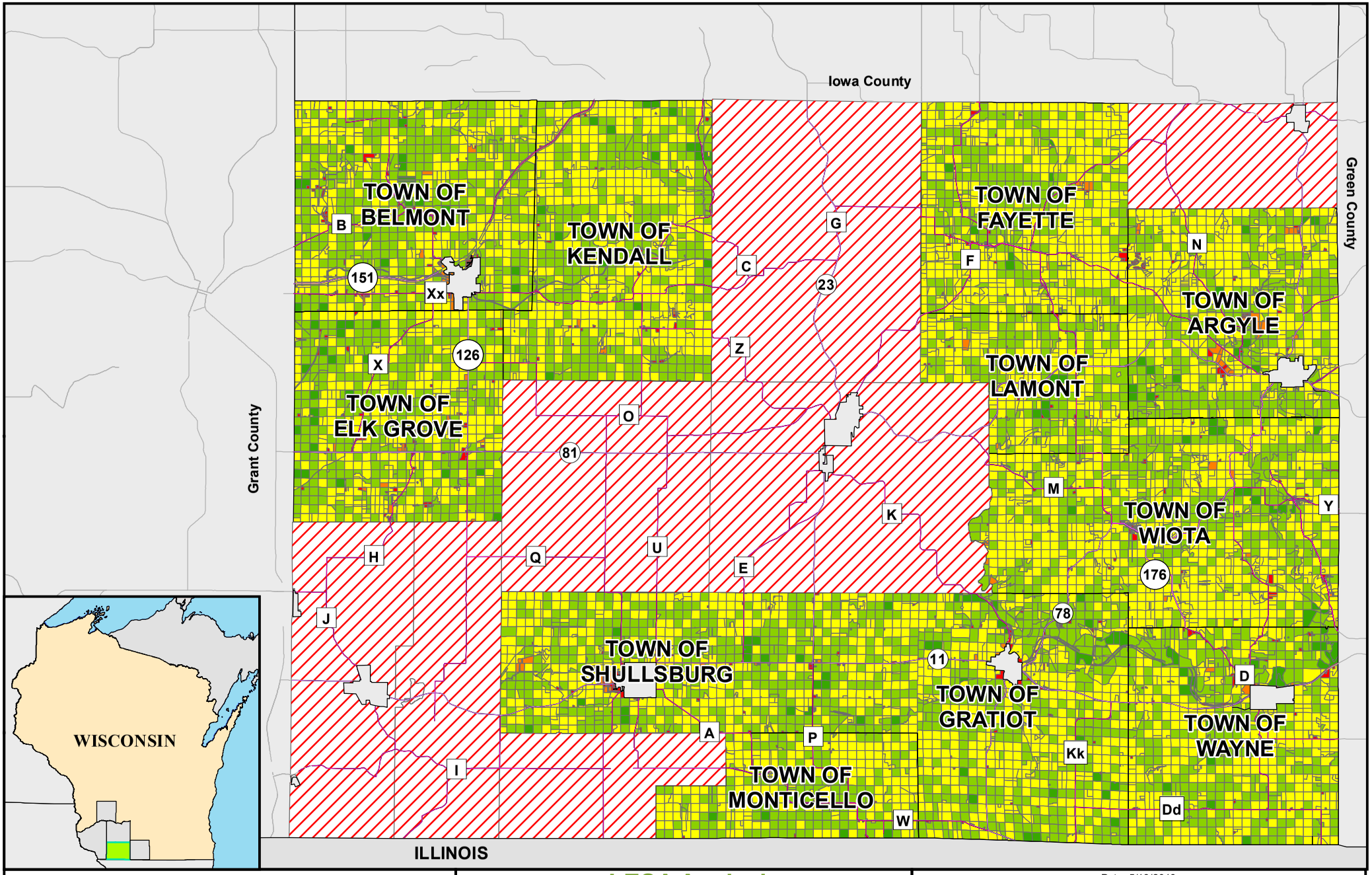
0 12.5 25 50 Miles

Date: 5/11/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a technical surveyand is not intended to be one. SWWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

LESA Analysis
Lafayette County

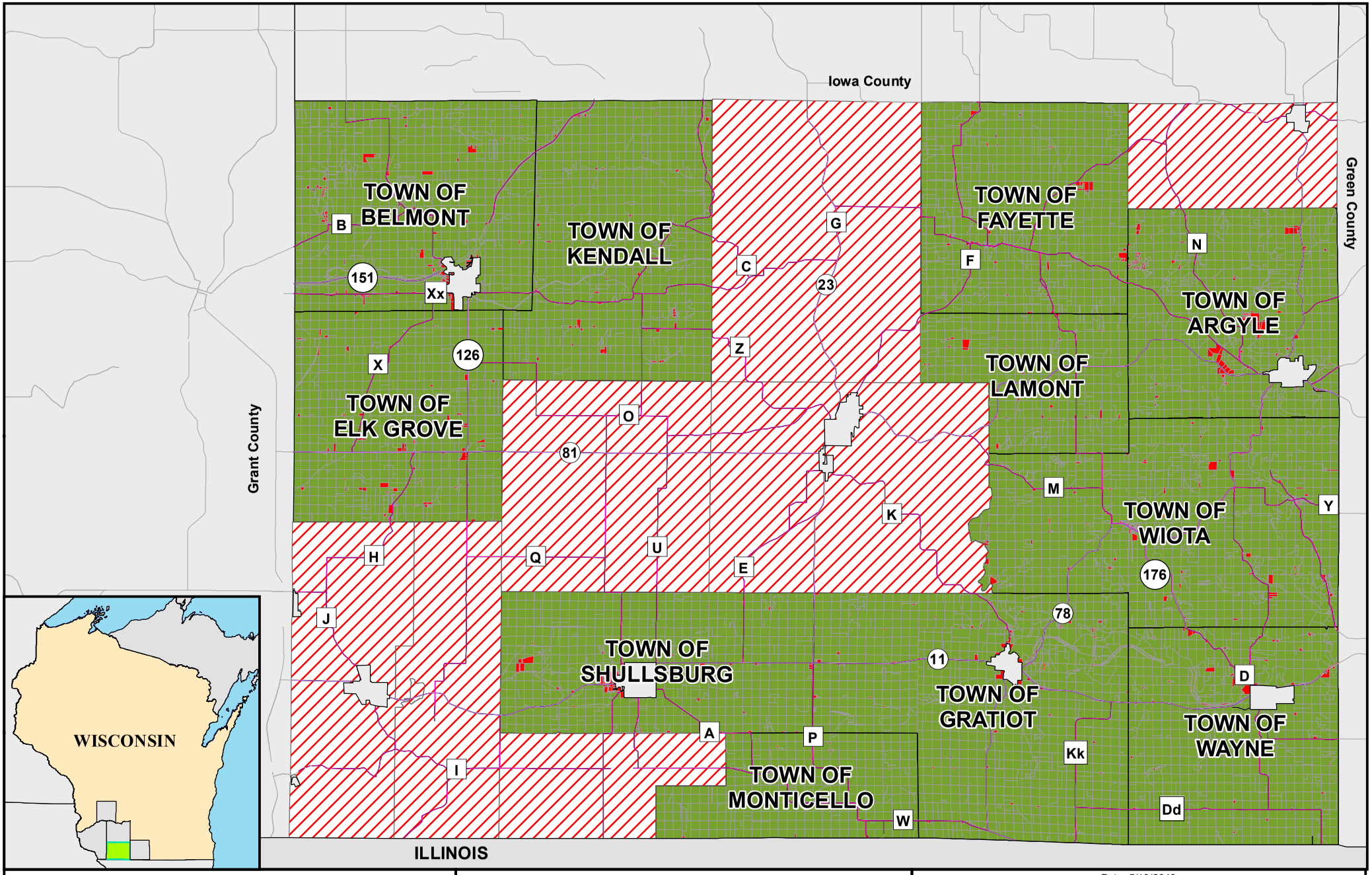
N

0 3.5 7 Miles

Date: 5/13/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Lafayette County, Wisconsin

N

0 3.5 7 Miles

Date: 5/13/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a technical surveyand is not intended to be one. SWWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF BLANCHARD

TOWN OF FAYETTE

TOWN OF LAMONT

TOWN OF WIOTA

VILLAGE OF ARGYLE

F

H

N

G

A

78

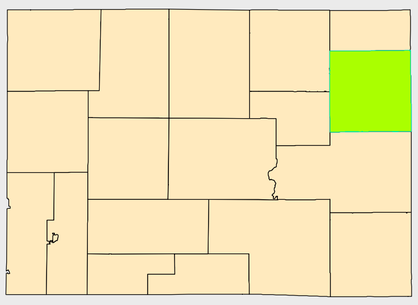
81

C

D

M

Y



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Argyle
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a technical surveyand is not intended to be one. SWWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF BLANCHARD

TOWN OF FAYETTE

TOWN OF LAMONT

TOWN OF WIOTA

VILLAGE OF ARGYLE

Green County

F

N

H

G

A

78

81

C

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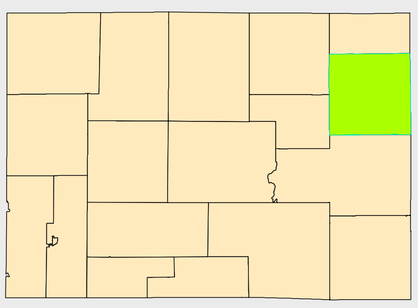


Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Argyle, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a technical surveyand is not intended to be one. SWWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

IOWA COUNTY

GRANT COUNTY

G

B

151

Xx

X

126

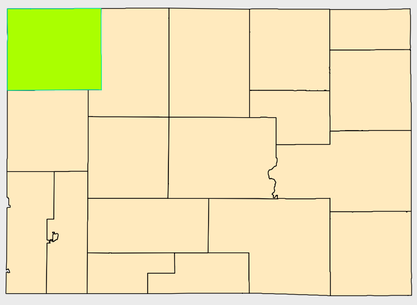
F

CITY
OF
BELMONT

TOWN OF
KENDALL

TOWN OF
ELK GROVE

TOWN OF
SEYMOUR



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Belmont
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Grant County

G

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151

Xx

X

126

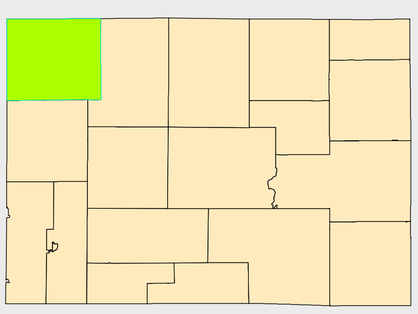
F

CITY
OF
BELMONT

TOWN OF
KENDALL

TOWN OF
ELK GROVE

TOWN OF
SEYMOUR



Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Belmont, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF BELMONT

CITY OF BELMONT

151

Xx

G

F

X

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126

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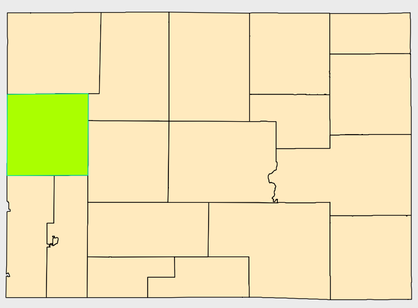
GRANT COUNTY

TOWN OF SEYMOUR

TOWN OF BENTON

TOWN OF NEW DIGGINGS

TOWN OF SHULLSBURG



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Elk Grove
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF BELMONT

CITY OF BELMONT

TOWN OF KENDALL

TOWN OF SEYMOUR

TOWN OF BENTON

TOWN OF NEW DIGGINGS

TOWN OF SHULLSBURG

Grant County

B

151

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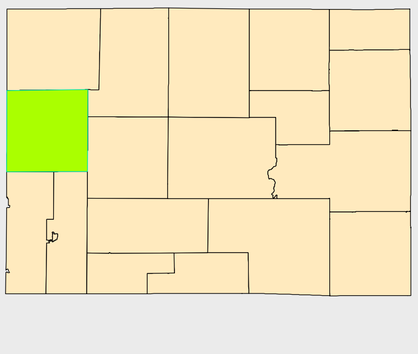

Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Elk Grove, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

IOWA COUNTY

TOWN OF WILLOW SPRINGS

TOWN OF BLANCHARD

TOWN OF ARGYLE

TOWN OF LAMONT

TOWN OF WIOTA

D

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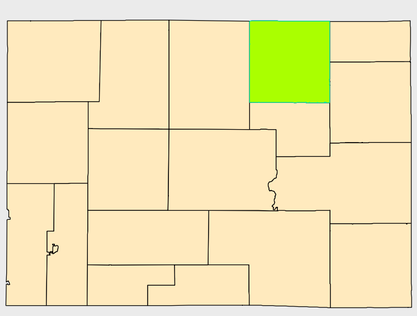

Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Fayette
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

IOWA COUNTY

TOWN OF BLANCHARD

TOWN OF WILLOW SPRINGS

TOWN OF ARGYLE

TOWN OF LAMONT

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF WIOTA

N

D

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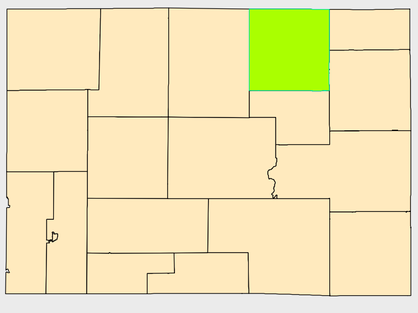

Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Fayette, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF WAYNE

TOWN OF WIOTA

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF MONTICELLO

TOWN OF SHULLSBURG

VILLAGE OF GRATIOT

ILLINOIS

176

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Kk

Dd

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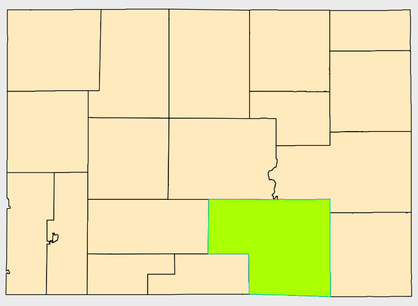

Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Gratiot
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF WAYNE

TOWN OF WIOTA

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF MONTICELLO

TOWN OF SHULLSBURG

ILLINOIS

VILLAGE OF GRATIOT

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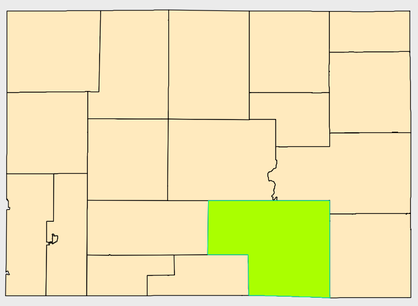

Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Gratiot, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

IOWA COUNTY

TOWN OF BELMONT

CITY OF BELMONT

TOWN OF ELK GROVE

TOWN OF WILLOW SPRINGS

TOWN OF SEYMOUR

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

G

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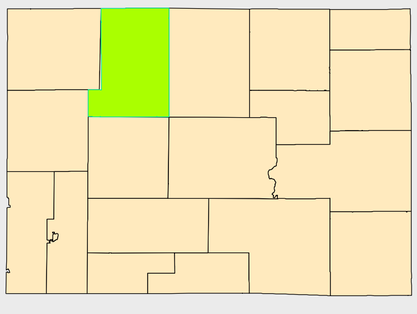

Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Kendall
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

IOWA COUNTY

TOWN OF BELMONT

CITY OF BELMONT

TOWN OF ELK GROVE

TOWN OF WILLOW SPRINGS

TOWN OF SEYMOUR

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

G

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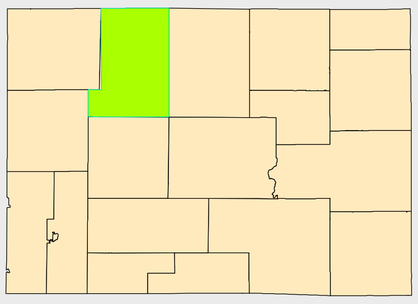

Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Kendall, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF FAYETTE

TOWN OF BLANCHARD

TOWN OF WILLOW SPRINGS

TOWN OF ARGYLE

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF WIOTA

D

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G

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M

81

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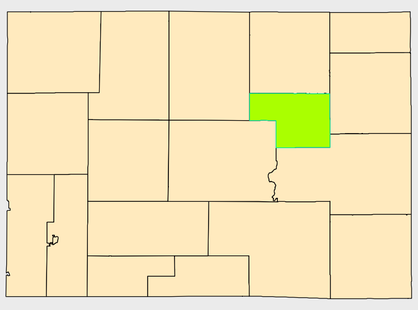
176



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Lamont
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF FAYETTE

TOWN OF BLANCHARD

TOWN OF ARGYLE

TOWN OF WILLOW SPRINGS

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF WIOTA

D

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G

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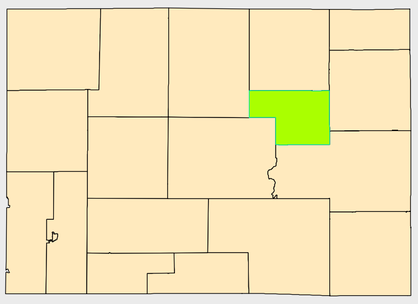
176



Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Lamont, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF GRATIOT

TOWN OF SHULLSBURG

CITY OF SHULLSBURG

TOWN OF WHITE OAK SPRINGS

ILLINOIS

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23

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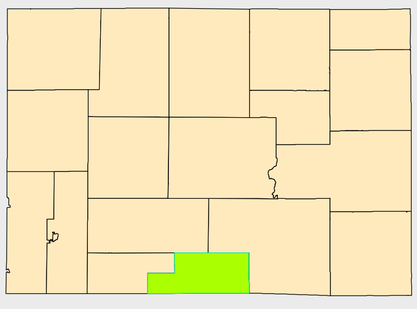

Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Monticello
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF GRATIOT

TOWN OF SHULLSBURG

CITY OF HULLSBURG

TOWN OF WHITE OAK SPRINGS

ILLINOIS

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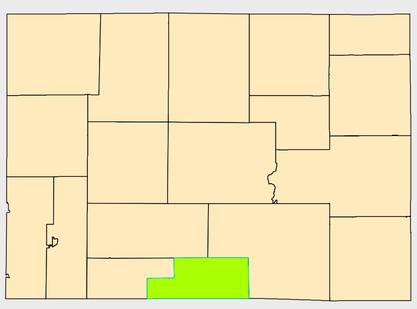

Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Monticello, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF GRATIOT

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF MONTICELLO

TOWN OF SEYMOUR

CITY OF SHULLSBURG

TOWN OF WHITE OAK SPRINGS

TOWN OF NEW DIGGINGS

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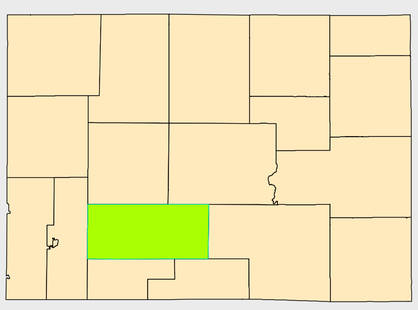

Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Shullsburg
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF GRATIOT

TOWN OF MONTICELLO

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

TOWN OF SEYMOUR

CITY OF SHULLSBURG

TOWN OF WHITE OAK SPRINGS

TOWN OF NEW DIGGINGS

E

23

P

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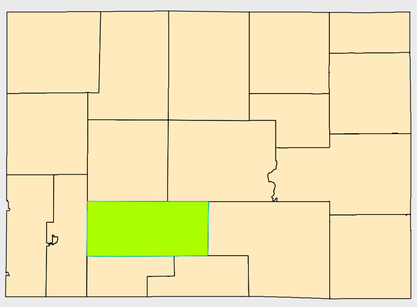

Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Shullsburg, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF WIOTA

TOWN OF GRATIOT

GREEN COUNTY

VILLAGE OF SOUTH WAYNE

176

78

D

N

M

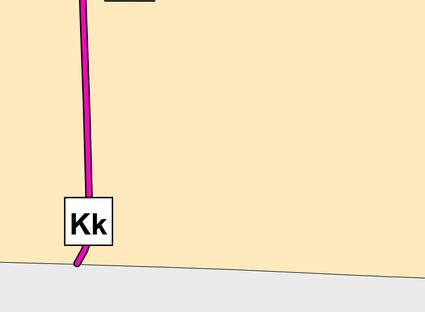
11

B

Dd

Kk

ILLINOIS



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Wayne
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF WIOTA

TOWN OF GRATIOT

GREEN COUNTY

VILLAGE OF SOUTH WAYNE

78

176

M

D

N

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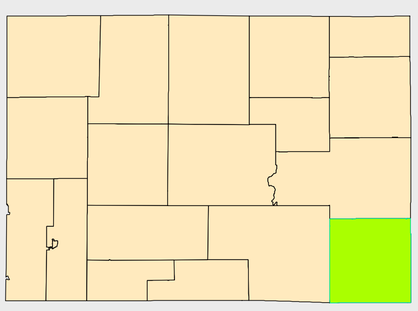
B

Dd

Kk

ILLINOIS



Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Wayne, Lafayette County

N

0 0.45 0.9 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF GRATIOT

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

VILLAGE OF WIOTA

K

78

81

TOWN OF LAMONT

Kk

11

176

D

M

TOWN OF WAYNE

TOWN OF ARGYLE

N

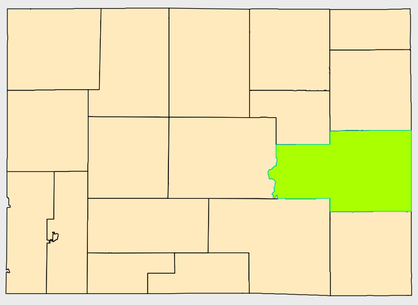
VILLAGE OF SOUTH WAYNE

VILLAGE OF ARGYLE

C

Y

GREEN COUNTY



Legend

Total Points

- 80 - 100
- 58 - 79
- 35 - 57
- 13 - 34
- 0 - 12
- Unzoned Townships

Town of Wiota
LESA Analysis Results

N

0 0.5 1 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

TOWN OF GRATIOT

TOWN OF DARLINGTON

VILLAGE OF WIOTA

K

78

81

TOWN OF LAMONT

Kk

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TOWN OF WAYNE

TOWN OF ARGYLE

N

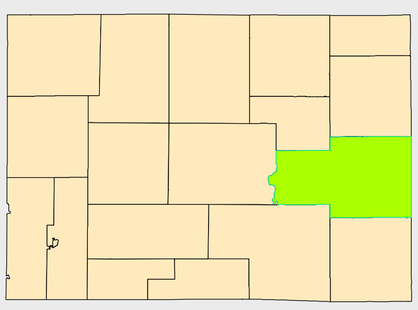
VILLAGE OF SOUTH WAYNE

VILLAGE OF ARGYLE

C

Y

GREEN COUNTY



Legend

Eligibility

- Yes
- No

Farmland Preservation Map for Town of Wiota, Lafayette County

N

0 0.5 1 Mi.

Date: 5/20/2016

Sources: Lafayette County & SWWRPC

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SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Plan Implementation

The implementation of this Farmland Preservation Plan will work in conjunction with the preexisting plans of Lafayette County and satisfy all requirements of Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapter 91. These preexisting plans, as outlined in the introduction, focus on specific aspects of Lafayette County resource management. While this Farmland Preservation Plan establishes priorities of its own, coordination of County Plans may allow objectives from multiple plans to be completed simultaneously. Additionally, this section is intended to be used as a guide by which the County can navigate through farmland preservation planning. Zoning ordinance amendments; implementation actions; and plan evaluation, amendments, and updates will be outlined to better prepare this plan for its continuous adaptation as the trends, needs, and policy desires of Lafayette County change.

Immediate Considerations for Implementation

The Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan has been written to establish guidelines for the decision making process around land use and land use planning. The policies that follow shall be used as a foundation on which to make decisions for future land use changes while preserving agriculture. These include, but are not limited to, rezoning lands for development, directing development to concentrate in areas serviceable by existing infrastructure, and coordinating with municipal governments on land use issues.

Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes requires that the County amend its zoning ordinances to implement the recommendations in this Farmland Preservation Plan. All zoning ordinance amendments must be certified by DATCP. This Farmland Preservation Plan recommends the following amendments to the Lafayette County Zoning Ordinance:

- **A-1 Agriculture district update**: Currently, and likely to continue as the most prevalent zoning district in Lafayette County, A-1 zoning will be responsible for the implementation of most of the policies outlined in this Farmland Preservation Plan.
- **Update rezoning request standards**: Each zoning request shall be judged on its merits by the nine standards defined in the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan as well as an additional standard included in this Farmland Preservation Plan. These standards, designed to address protection of the air, rivers and streams, groundwater, soil erosion, environment, scenic beauty, wetlands, floodplains, rare or irreplaceable natural resources, historical sites, archeological sites, land suitability, cost to townships, effects on other residents and businesses, effects to roads, effects on agricultural operations in the area, conflicts with existing uses, minimal agriculture land conversion (field fragmentation), and the availability of alternative sites. The method by which these standards are judged shall be updated to include a site's Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI). The ESI shall be given its fair influence as a standard through the reallocation of an equal amount of influence from the nine other standards.
- Enable and allow continued leniency for older farm residences in A-1 districts: Continuation of residences legally established prior to the adoption of this plan within the A-1 district. Allowing for the reasonable modification, expansion, or replacement of such residences without the need for rezoning or variance. The County will establish a liberal definition of 'farm residence' for preexisting residences within the limits permitted by statute and will consider adjustments to the non-conforming use standards in the county zoning ordinance. Furthermore, under the Working Lands Initiative Law, where not defined as 'farm residence,' uses will become 'prior nonconforming uses,' whereas previously, such residences were considered conforming uses in the A-1 district. The county will also collaborate with towns to rezone A-1 zoned lands developed with non-farm/improved residences to more appropriate zoning districts.
- **Amend zoning map and definitions as needed**: Changes to the countywide zoning map will be required for Plan implementation.

Subsequent Considerations for Implementation

Immediately following the adoption of zoning ordinance amendments, the County shall consider taking the following actions as they relate to this plan:

- Ensure the consistency and conformity of the existing Subdivision Ordinance with the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan with considerations made for right-to-farm notice requirements in regard to plats and/or certified survey maps. Additionally, require identification and protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas through development of a county-wide Environmental Sensitivity Index.
- Evaluate potential development, economic, and environmental benefits farmland preservation zoning may offer non-zoned municipalities. Coordinate zoning practices of all municipalities for increased efficiency in activities related to development, infrastructure, and land use permitting.
- Ensure compliance of Farmland Preservation Plan participants by prioritizing lands by acres claimed and their proximity to environmentally sensitive areas, new development, and/or division/subdivision request activity.
- Educate and communicate with Lafayette County residents, officials at the County and local levels, as well as private partners about the Plan and adoptions of ordinance amendments.
- Increase public outreach, expand notification policies focused on diversifying platforms by which information is shared, and broaden policies that enable feedback from citizens.
- Attempt to guide modifications to Chapter 91 of Wisconsin State Statutes and pending Wisconsin Administrative Rules concerning farmland preservation planning and zoning in a manner that assists the County implement its farmland preservation program while simultaneously reducing unwarranted negative impacts on private land owners, through the Wisconsin County Code Administrators organization and other groups.
- Develop programs ensuring the security and productivity of agriculture as a part of Lafayette County's future by:
    - Establishing a farmer-to-farmer program focused on linking individuals or groups new to farming with those who wish to stop farming;
    - Identifying opportunities and incentives to reduce the cost of land and agriculture equipment for first-generation farmers;
    - Leveraging agriculture's existing industry to support the Economic Development Directors as they work to attract and retain businesses that will contribute to the County's viability and tax base;
    - Supporting alternative and/or small-scale farming operations including but not limited to Community Supported Agriculture, Agricultural Co-operatives, and Agriculture Waste to Energy production, et cetera; and
    - Collaboration with the County's growing population of Latino farmer's to identify the feasibility or interest in moving from farm labor positions to farm owner.

Plan Adoption

Collaboration between Lafayette County Government departments and committees, as well as county and township residents and elected officials was encouraged throughout the plan writing process. Forged by informational presentations during township board meetings, committee meetings, and postings for public review, Plan maps and revisions are a reflection of the wishes of Lafayette County as a whole. The extent to which this Plan succeeds is largely placed in the hands of the decision makers of the County and its ability to regulate zoning activities and their ability to work in tandem with local governments, farmers, farm organizations, economic development organizations, and other groups or individuals as affected.

Prioritizing the steps of the implementation process is key to ensuring the Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan has been adopted in a way that encourages its use in future decision making. A recommendation of adoption of the Farmland Preservation Plan by the Planning and Zoning Committee is the first action required for full implementation of this Farmland Preservation Plan. Following the recommendation of adoption, the Farmland Preservation Plan will be adopted through ordinance after its approval by the County Board of Supervisors. Approval by ordinance of this Farmland Preservation Plan required the concurrent amendment of the existing Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan ensuring acceptable consistency is maintained between the two plans. These steps have been included by the County for Plan adoption under Chapter 91 of Wisconsin Statutes and as detailed component of the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan under Section 66.1001.

The Lafayette County Board of Supervisors adopted this Plan after recommendation from the Lafayette County Planning and Zoning Committee and contingent upon Certification from DATCP. The Lafayette County Board of Supervisors adopted this Plan on September 27, 2016.

Plan Monitoring

Regular assessment of this Plan is a commitment taken on by the County. By maintaining the Plan's relevancy and the suitability of Plan provisions in relation to the trends of the County's agricultural, economic, and development status, amendments are possible. The dynamic nature of the Plan will allow for increased consistency with local policies and plans by consideration of input from towns, villages, and cities of the County. By welcoming critiques, Plan efficacy can be judged and amendments can be made.

Plan Amendments

Capitalizing on the dynamic nature inherent in the plan, appropriate amendments are permissible as long as the amendments display relevancy to the trends and associated policies developing in the County. Plan amendments are not, however, intended to be applied on a case-by-case basis nor are they intended for the development of proposals for reasons of limited consequence countywide.

Section 66.1001(4) and Chapter 91 of Wisconsin State Statutes outline the procedure for Plan amendments. The required formal process for Plan amendment is the same as the initial adoption process. Upon Plan adoption, the County agreed to the following procedure for the amendment of, addition to, removal of any part, or update to this Plan:

1. The County Board or the Planning and Zoning Committee initiates the proposed plan amendment. Occurrence of initiation may be the result of regular Planning and Zoning Committee evaluation of the plan, or at the request of a local government, property owner, or the public. The proposed amendment shall be evaluated by the Planning and Zoning Committee and County staff for its ability to meet the vision and goals of this Plan and other plans adopted by the County and whether it satisfies state requirements to maintain certification as a Farmland Preservation Plan. Contact with DATCP staff may be required during this step or in the following steps of the amendment process.
2. The County Board shall adopt a resolution stating the procedural steps that must be completed to ensure public participation during the process for Plan amendments under Wis. Stat. § 66.1001(4) and Chapter 91.10(5).
3. The County Planning and Zoning Committee shall prepare or direct all specific text or map amendment preparation for the Farmland Preservation Plan. If the proposed amendment affects a particular town, the Planning and Zoning Committee shall notify the requested language or map changes and share the proposed changes with that town during this and ensuing steps.
4. County staff shall forward all materials required per Wis. Stat. § 91.20, to DATCP to facilitate certification of the plan amendment. Included materials are:
    a. A copy of the adopted ordinance and plan amendment
    b. Summaries of
        i. Key changes from the previously-certified plan
        ii. The process used to amend the plan
        iii. The relationship of the plan amendment to the County's Comprehensive Plan
    c. A statement signed by the County Corporation Council and the County Planning Director or chief elected staff, declaring that the plan amendment complies with Wisconsin State Statutes Section 91.18
5. One or more public meetings as required by Wis. Stat. § 66.1001(4) on the proposed amendment. Following the meeting(s), the Planning and Zoning Committee makes a recommendation by resolution to the County Board by majority vote on the entire committee pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.1001(4).
6. A Class 1 notice associated with the proposed plan amendment shall be published under the direction of County staff at least 30 days before a County Planning and Zoning Committee public hearing and containing all information required Wis. Stat. § 66.1001(4)d.

7. A formal public hearing shall be held on an ordinance that would incorporate the proposed plan amendment to the County's Farmland Preservation Plan and, therefore, the County's Comprehensive Plan.
8. The County Board of Supervisors shall approve or deny the ordinance adopting the proposed plan amendment following the public hearing and DATCP certification. Approval or denial of the ordinance adopting the proposed plan amendment must be by a majority vote of all members. The County Board of Supervisors may require changes from the Planning and Zoning Committee recommended version of the proposed plan amendment.
9. County Staff shall send a copy of the adopted ordinance and Plan amendment to all of the following:
    a. Adjacent and surrounding government jurisdictions
    b. DATCP
    c. Nonmetallic mine operators
    d. Any person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit with the local government
    e. Any other property owner or leaseholder who has requested notification in writing as required under Wis. Stat. §§ 66.1001(4)b,c.

Plan Update

Wisconsin State Statute § 66.1001 requires that the County's Comprehensive Plan be updated no less than once every 10 years. The update process is outlined in the currently adopted Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 91 of Wisconsin State Statutes specifies that DATCP may certify a farmland preservation plan for a period that does not exceed 10 years.

Appendix A: Public Participation

Pre-plan Preparation

Beginning in January 2014, preparations began for the update of the Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan. Plan writing staff met with staff from the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection at the time, as well as several employees from surrounding counties to discuss Plan requirements and commonly overlooked aspects.

Once the plan schedule was developed and kick-off meetings held with county staff, SWWRPC began updating the zoning map with changes made over the past several years. Due to internal staffing challenges, Lafayette County had not been updating its electronic maps with these rezones. During this time, staff also compiled and analyzed data from the U.S. Census, USDA Census of Agriculture, and other sources.

Following the June kick-off meeting, county staff met for identification of community outreach methods, and data collection and analysis needs took place. This data advised the recommendations present in this Plan.

Town/Public Meetings

Public meetings were held in the townships of Gratiot, Argyle, and Belmont on the 9th, 14th, and 22nd of September, respectively. Presentation of farmland preservation income tax eligibility criteria and the resulting maps was the focus of the meeting. Several parcels were identified as incorrectly zoned by meeting attendees and updated parcel zoning information was collected closer to the time of publication to reflect eligibility status as accurately as possible. Presenters answered questions regarding regulation changes while GIS staff explained the LESA analysis process and made corrections to the data when appropriate. There were no objections to the methods or criteria employed in the map-making process.

Public Hearing

On July 21, 2016 the Lafayette County Planning and Zoning Committee recommended for approval Resolution 38-16 to the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors. This Resolution contains language that adopts the Farmland Preservation Plan as a guide for future land use planning and approves the maps contained within the document as the official directory of lands eligible to participate further in Farmland Preservation programs.

At the September 27, 2016 meeting of the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors, the 1st by-title reading of Resolution 38-16 was completed and was adopted contingent upon DATCP approval via voice vote after waiving the County-Board required 2nd reading.

Resolution 38 - 16

ADOPTION OF LAFAYETTE COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

Whereas, the County Board of Lafayette County, Wisconsin has adopted Resolution 40-07 the "Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan" pursuant to §66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes;

Whereas, Lafayette County adopted a Farmland Preservation Plan in 1980 that was certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) as making qualified land eligible for farmland preservation tax credits;

Whereas, The Farmland Preservation Program empowering statue, Chapter 91 WI. Stats., was revised by the 2009-2011 Wisconsin Administrative Rules promulgated in 2010 directing the comprehensive revision of all existing county farmland preservation plans;

Whereas, Chapter 91.10(2) WI. Stats. Now requires consistency between the Farmland Preservation Plan and the county's Comprehensive Plan, which DATCP has deemed accomplished by incorporating the Farmland Preservation Plan and Farmland Preservation Ordinance into the Comprehensive Plan;

Whereas, the Lafayette County Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department and the Lafayette County Planning & Zoning Committee contracted Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to prepare and submit to DATCP an update to the existing Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan and the Farmland Preservation Plan;

Whereas, the final draft of the revised Farmland Preservation Plan and Farmland Preservation Ordinance have been reviewed and certified by DATCP with the condition that it be approved by the Lafayette County Board and incorporated into the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan;

Whereas, a public hearing was held before the Lafayette County Planning & Zoning Committee on July 21, 2016 as required by §66.1001(4) Wisconsin Statute after which action was taken by the Committee to recommend approving the revised Farmland Preservation Plan for incorporation into the Lafayette County Comprehensive Plan as Appendix A1.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors, at the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Committee, does hereby adopt the 2015-2026 Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan.

Respectfully submitted
PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE

Jack Wiegel, Chairman

Larry Ludlum

Kriss Marion

Dwayne Larson

Gerald Heimann

LEGAL NOTE: The proposed resolution and document are within the county board's authority

FISCAL NOTE: No direct fiscal impact on the Lafayette County budget from the passage of this resolution.

I, Linda Bawden, Clerk of the County of Lafayette, State of Wisconsin, do certify that the Lafayette County Board of Supervisors at a meeting held on September 27, 2016 adopted this resolution.

Linda L. Bawden
Lafayette County Clerk

Appendix B: Existing Condition Data

The data contained herein documents existing conditions and provides data referenced in the body of the Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan. The sources cited in the body of the text and in this Appendix should serve as reference to provide the most current data. Proposed amendments that reference data published within the adopted Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan shall obtain and apply the most accurate and current data available from the appropriate source cited in the adopted Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan. All dollar values represented are equal to the value of the 2010 U.S. Dollar. To align with US Census Data Collection dates, 2010 serves as the standard. The true dollar value calculations are based off 2010 Milwaukee, WI regional data. Milwaukee, WI regional dollar value reflects most closely the economic profile of Lafayette County when compared to other neighboring regions including the Chicago, IL or Minneapolis, MN regions. All 'Percent Change' columns in the tables below reflect the change from the earliest data to the latest available data unless noted otherwise.

Agricultural Data

The Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan contains numerous facts, figures, and references. This subsection show tabular data and the sources for each figure. The following pages contain all data related to the agricultural landscape of Lafayette County.

Farm Characteristics

Data concerning farm size, operator statistics, production values and other, quantifiable characteristics of Lafayette County farms and farmers.

Table B.1 Farms, Acreage in Farms, and Acreage per Farm; Lafayette County

Farm Statistics	1959	1968	1973	1978	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Farms	1,871	1,610	1,493	1,333	1,235	1,127	1,205	1,342	1,252	-49%
Acres in Farms	362,944	359,930	371,828	365,529	356,651	338,376	342,800	342,368	368,501	2%
Acres Per Farm	194	224	249	274	289	300	284	255	294	34%

Source: Lafayette County Farmland Preservation Plan, 1980
USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.2 Land in Farms Use, Lafayette County

Land in Farms Use	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Total Cropland	282,410	262,873	264,340	249,866	276,055	-2%
Harvested cropland	222,847	219,982	226,310	218,389	251,760	11%
Idled Land	59,563	42,891	38,030	31,477	24,295	-145%
Irrigated Land	409	86	207	68	172	-138%
All Land in Farms	282,819	262,959	264,547	249,934	276,227	-2%

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.3 Land, Building, and Machinery Values, Lafayette County

Estimated Value of Land & Buildings	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Average per Farm	$439,240	$458,719	$774,949	$970,492	$1,365,708	**68%**
Average per Acre	$1,511	$1,523	$2,546	$3,801	$4,641	**67%**
Machinery & Equipment						
Per Farm Value of all Machinery/Equipment	$119,440	$111,199	$133,255	$141,550	$181,472	**34%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.4 Agriculture Products Sold and Average Farm Sales Income, Lafayette County

Market Value of Agriculture Products	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Total Market Value of Products Sold (**$1000s**)	$207,424	$181,075	$158,336	$236,831	$287,325	**28%**
Average Farm Product Sales Income	$167,955	$160,670	$131,399	$176,476	$229,493	**27%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.5 Economic Profile of Agriculture and Government Payments, Lafayette County

Economic Contributor	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Payments Received **($1,000s)**	$4,352	$6,642	$9,249	$7,496	$8,501	**49%**
Farms Receiving	649	842	714	1,028	922	**30%**
Average Payment/Farm	$6,706	$7,888	$12,953	$7,292	$9,220	**30%**
Market Value of Products Sold **($1,000s)**	$207,424	$181,075	$158,336	$236,831	$287,325	**28%**
Total Economic Impact of Payments **($1,000s)**	$211,776	$187,716	$167,584	$244,326	$295,826	**28%**
Gov. Payment Percent of Whole Market Value	2.1%	3.5%	5.5%	3.1%	2.9%	**28%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.6 Total Farm Expenses, Lafayette County

Feed Expenses	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Farms Purchasing Feed	1,033	949	805	768	784	**-24%**
Feed Purchased Adjusted **($1,000s)**	$31,933	$24,650	$20,545	$27,673	$63,746	**100%**
Average Farm Feed Purchase	$30,913	$25,974	$25,522	$36,032	$81,309	**163%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.7 Feed Expenses, Lafayette County

Expenses by Year	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Farms	1,235	1,127	1,205	1,342	1,252	**1.4%**
Total Farm Expenses**($1,000s)**	$156,504	$140,652	$128,965	$174,706	$250,592	**60%**
Average Expense per Year (**$1,000s)**	$126,723	$112,611	$106,671	$130,183	$200,1554	**58%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.8 Operator Characteristics, Lafayette County

Operator Characteristics	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Male Operated farms	1,183	1,187	1,141	1,216	1,157	**-2%**
Female Operated farms	52	65	64	126	95	**45%**
Age Group						
<25 years	39	16	18	17	15	**-160%**
25-34 years	183	87	79	95	89	**-106%**
35-44 years	297	336	290	210	151	**-97%**
45-54 years	266	342	341	366	287	**7%**
55-64 years	285	132	153	360	372	**23%**
65-69 years	124	120	103	107	144	**14%**
70+ years	88	118	123	187	194	**55%**
Average Age	48.7	51	51.6	54.1	56	**13%**
Ownership Status						
Full Owners (farms)	693	787	804	911	814	**15%**
Part Owners (farms)	362	322	299	350	356	**-2%**
Years on Present Farm						
<2 Years	68	80	42	57	38	**-79%**
3-4 Years	93	80	91	103	86	**-8%**
5-9 Years	137	174	213	231	166	**17%**
10+Years	771	779	859	951	962	**20%**
Average Years on Farm	19.4	19.8	20.4	20.9	22.3	**13%**
Primary Occupation						
Farming	974	807	791	749	715	**-36%**
Other	261	320	414	593	537	**51%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.9 Farm Expenses and Net Cash Income of Operations, Lafayette County

Year	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Farms Purchasing Feed	1033	949	805	768	784	**-24%**
Feed Purchased	$31,933	$24,650	$20,545	$27,673	$63,746	**100%**
Average Feed Purchase	$30,913	$25,974	$25,522	$36,032	$81,309	**163%**
Average Farm Expenses	$126,723	$112,611	$106,671	$130,183	$200,154	**58%**
Average Net Income of Operations	$42,289	$33,668	$33,492	$58,064	$48,961	**16%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.10 Crop Harvest Acreage and Yield, Lafayette County

Selected Crops Harvested (acres)	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change
Corn for Grain	107,606	96,985	96,178	114,461	114,595	**7%**
Oats, All	9,691	6,324	4,704	3,198	2,530	**-74%**
Soybeans, All	14,484	42,719	54,948	35,861	17,397	**20%**
Alfalfa/Silage	86,309	73,079	59,795	54,086	49,568	**-43%**
Total Selected Crops Acres	218,090	219,107	215,625	207,606	184,090	**-16%**
Bushels Per Acre						
Corn for Grain	111	140	157	171	150	**35%**
Oats (bushels-total)	49.18	58.54	66.90	70.68	51.48	**5%**
Soybeans (bushels-total)	40.62	51.31	48.44	51.35	46.95	**16%**
Alfalfa/Silage	91.73	97.71	145.77	132.86	123.50	**347%**
Total Bushels per Acre	95.95	106.25	124.25	138.85	131.77	**37%**
Average Bushels per Acre	77.70	90.76	108.47	112.95	100.74	**30%**

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture Census, 1992-2012,
University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences

Table B.11 Land Sales and Values by Use, Lafayette County

Land Continuing in Agriculture Use	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percent Change
Number of transactions	34	38	40	40	58	30	**-12%**
Acres sold	4,720	4,232	3,739	4,864	5,081	2,413	**-49%**
Dollars per acre	$4,373	$4,385	$4,573	$4,174	$4,686	$5,005	**15%**
Total Sales Value **($1000s)**	$20,641	$18,557	$17,098	$20,302	$23,810	$12,077	**-42%**
Land Diverted to Other Uses							
Number of transactions	1	0	1	0	0	0	**100%**
Acres sold	4	0	90	0	0	0	**2150%**
Dollars per acre	$4,368	$0	$7,528	$0	$0	$0	**72%**
Total Sales Value	$17,471	$0	$677,520	$0	$0	$0	**3778%**
Totals							
Number of transactions	35	38	41	40	58	30	**-14%**
Acres sold	4,724	4,232	3,829	4,864	5,081	2,413	**-49%**
Average Dollars per acre	$4,370	$2,193	$6,051	$2,087	$2,343	$2,502	**-43%**
Total Sales Value **($1000s)**	$20,646	$9,279	$23,167	$10,151	$11,905	$6,039	**-71%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 2008-2013

Economic Indicators

Economic Indicators are statistical figures related to economic growth, trends, or conditions. Considered into this Farmland Preservation Plan and the recommendations contained herein are the consumer price index, agricultural/gross domestic product, and unemployment rate as they relate to Lafayette County.

Table B.13 shows the annual average Consumer Price Index values for the Milwaukee-Racine, Wisconsin region as calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics between 1980 and 2014. Due to data collection period differences between the USDA Ag-Census and the US Census Bureau, the CPI for 2010 (highlighted below) serves as the baseline for all monetary data and, as such, all monetary data within this Farmland Preservation Plan has been adjusted reflect its value in terms of 2010 dollars.

Table B.13 Consumer Price Indices for Monetary Data Inflation Adjustment

Year	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**
Annual CPI	126.2	132.2	137.1	142.1	147.0
Year	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**
Annual CPI	151.0	154.7	157.7	160.3	163.7
Year	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**
Annual CPI	168.6	171.7	174.0	177.7	180.2
Year	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
Annual CPI	185.2	189.9	194.102	203.029	202.999
Year	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Annual CPI	209.646	216.934	221.143	225.061	227.820

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1980-2014

Table B.14 All Wage and Job Statistics, Lafayette County

Year	**1992**	**1997**	**2002**	**2007**	**2012**	**Percent Change**
Wages and salaries **(1,000s)**	$95,137	$109,210	$113,423	$182,730	$139,720	**47%**
Number of jobs	4,234	4,274	3,950	4,320	4,240	**0%**
Average Wage per Job	$22,470	$25,552	$28,715	$42,299	$32,953	**47%**
Per Capita Unemployment Insurance Collected	$141	$86	$227	$147	$191	**36%**

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, 1992-2012

Table B.15 Workers per Farm with Workers, Lafayette County

Group	**1992**	**1997**	**2002**	**2007**	**2012**	**Percent Change**
Farms	531	530	388	377	419	**-21%**
Workers	1105	1521	1132	1277	1520	**38%**
Workers per Farm Average	2.08	2.87	2.92	3.39	3.63	**74%**

Source: USDA Agriculture Census, 1992-2012

Table B.16 Municipal Median Household Income, Lafayette County

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change
Town of Argyle	$41,271	$49,140	$51,136	**24%**
Village of Argyle	$36,309	$44,892	$34,738	**-4%**
Town of Belmont	$46,011	$48,738	$44,829	**-3%**
Village of Belmont	$38,416	$43,338	$40,398	**5%**
Town of Benton	$48,280	$47,347	$56,356	**17%**
Village of Benton	$36,899	$37,693	$46,925	**27%**
Town of Blanchard	$46,514	$59,770	$52,397	**13%**
Village of Blanchardville	$36,269	$50,127	$41,685	**15%**
City of Cuba City	$58,143	$48,184	$43,781	**-25%**
City of Darlington	$38,364	$54,772	$45,088	**18%**
Town of Darlington	$44,853	$48,184	$52,397	**17%**
Town of Elk Grove	$48,280	$45,519	$57,637	**19%**
Town of Fayette	$38,208	$45,075	$48,128	**26%**
Town of Gratiot	$38,888	$57,924	$49,890	**28%**
Village of Gratiot	$33,640	$52,155	$38,813	**15%**
Village of Hazel Green	$49,732	$49,294	$49,403	**-1%**
Town of Kendall	$46,277	$50,626	$43,471	**-6%**
Town of Lamont	$39,869	$49,932	$57,831	**45%**
Town of Monticello	$39,454	$43,521	$48,516	**23%**
Town of New Diggings	$36,225	$51,292	$50,069	**38%**
Town of Seymour	$39,454	$49,738	$52,863	**34%**
City of Shullsburg	$39,838	$40,205	$38,483	**-3%**
Town of Shullsburg	$40,413	$38,152	$50,457	**25%**
Village of South Wayne	$34,377	$38,434	$26,781	**-22%**
Town of Wayne	$49,144	$55,733	$57,055	**16%**
Town of White Oak Springs	$43,607	$50,982	$48,516	**11%**
Town of Willow Springs	$45,684	$51,098	$56,822	**24%**
Town of Wiota	$45,189	$49,738	$48,572	**7%**
Average MHI	**$42,129**	**$48,272**	**$47,608**	**13%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Table B.17 Tourist Spending, Lafayette County

		2013 Traveler Spending **(1,000,000s)**	Rank In State	Rank In Region
Southwest Wisconsin Region	**Lafayette County**	**$11.14**	**67th**	**5th**
	Grant County	$38.56	45th	1st
	Green County	$36.08	48th	2nd
	Iowa County	$29.05	53rd	3rd
	Richland County	$16.35	64th	4th
	SWWI Average	$26.24		
State Average		$140.32		
		2013 Business Sales **(1,000,000s)**	2013 Labor Income **(1,000,000s)**	2013 Full time Equivalent Jobs from Traveler Spending
Southwest Wisconsin Region	**Lafayette County**	**$18.88**	**$2.85**	**130**
	Grant County	$69.22	$17.86	450
	Green County	$61.3	$15.36	421
	Iowa County	$45.77	$9.72	339
	Richland County	$27.33	$5.76	191
	SWWI Average	$44.50	$10.31	306
State Average		$226.71	$60.12	1637

Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism, 2013

Population Data

All data related to the total number, age, gender, and race of Lafayette County residents as reported to the United States Census Bureau.

Table B.18 Population by Age Group, Lafayette County

Age Group	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change
Under 5 years	1,197	957	1,189	-0.7%
5 to 9 years	1,481	1,163	1,181	-20.3%
10 to 14 years	1,336	1,336	1,178	-11.8%
15 to 19 years	994	1,378	1,218	22.5%
20 to 24 years	802	781	888	10.7%
25 to 29 years	1,160	746	935	-19.4%
30 to 34 years	1,346	945	872	-35.2%
35 to 39 years	1,200	1,294	880	-26.7%
40 to 44 years	927	1,412	1,049	13.2%
45 to 49 years	748	1,200	1,321	76.6%
50 to 54 years	749	904	1,414	88.8%
55 to 59 years	743	727	1,211	63.0%
60 to 64 years	1,492	741	899	-39.7%
65 to 69 years	741	675	682	-8.0%
70 to 74 years	663	672	638	-3.8%
75 to 79 years	525	521	532	1.3%
80 to 84 years	311	354	418	34.4%
85 years and over	248	240	254	2.4%
Median Age	**38.3**	**38.1**	**40.4**	**5.5%**
Total population	**16,663**	**16,046**	**16,729**	**4.7%**

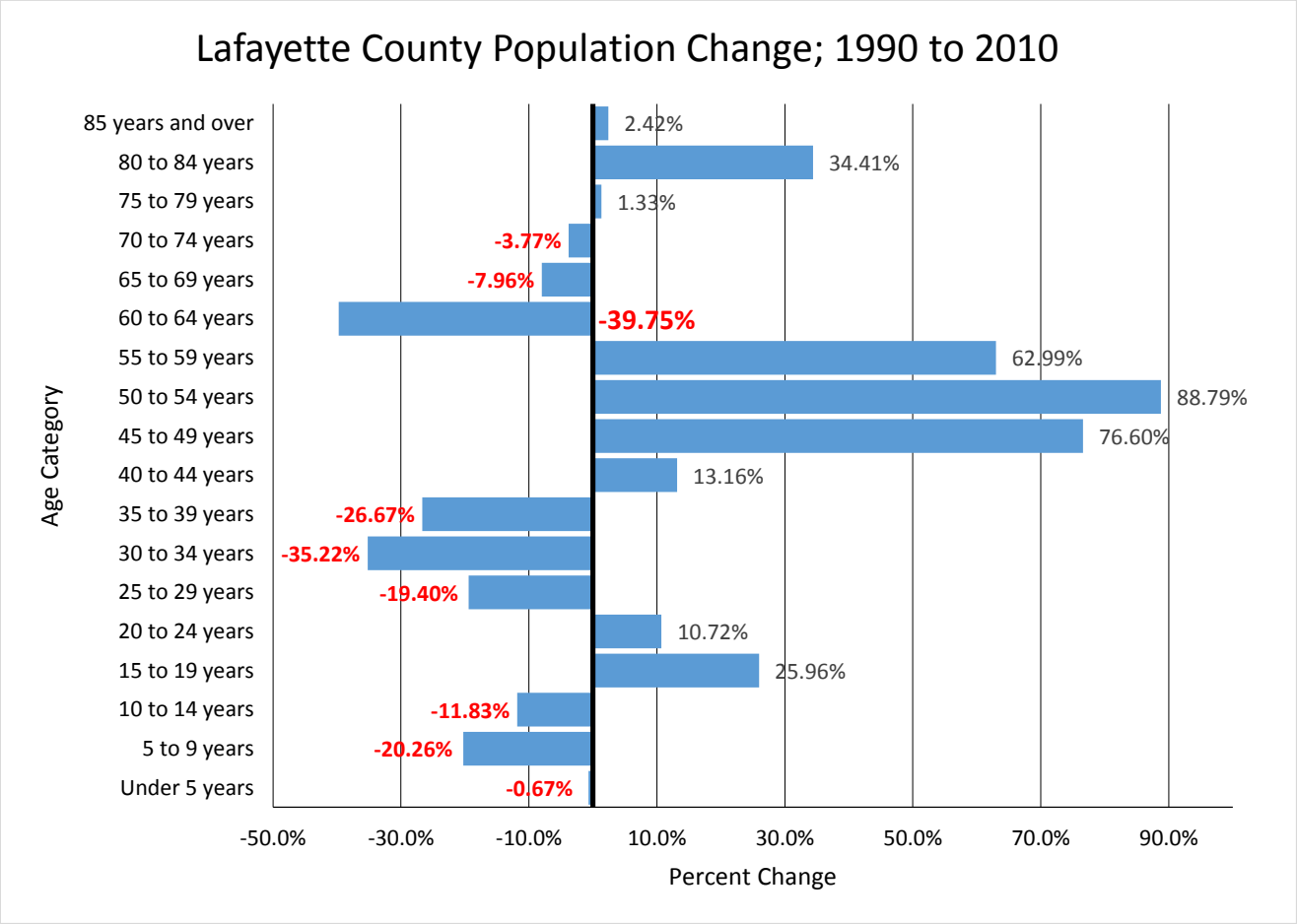
Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2013

Table B.19 Population by Age Group and Gender, Lafayette County

Age Group	1990		2000		2010		Percent Change	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 5 years	590	607	519	438	610	579	3.39%	-4.61%
5 to 9 years	762	719	608	555	605	576	-20.60%	-19.89%
10 to 14 years	659	677	647	689	629	549	-4.55%	-18.91%
15 to 19 years	563	431	722	656	651	567	15.63%	31.55%
20 to 24 years	410	392	417	364	504	384	22.93%	-2.04%
25 to 29 years	601	559	380	366	476	459	-20.80%	-17.89%
30 to 34 years	679	667	487	458	441	431	-35.05%	-35.38%
35 to 39 years	642	558	634	660	437	443	-31.93%	-20.61%
40 to 44 years	491	436	706	706	551	498	12.22%	14.22%
45 to 49 years	376	372	641	559	643	678	71.01%	82.26%
50 to 54 years	357	392	491	413	714	700	100.00%	78.57%
55 to 59 years	360	383	357	370	644	567	78.98%	48.04%
60 to 64 years	717	775	350	391	465	404	-35.15%	-47.87%
65 to 69 years	352	389	311	364	326	356	-7.39%	-8.48%
70 to 74 years	285	378	334	338	308	330	8.07%	-12.70%
75 to 79 years	211	314	236	285	239	293	13.27%	-6.69%
80 to 84 years	119	192	125	229	196	222	64.71%	15.63%
85 years and over	76	172	80	160	113	141	48.68%	-18.02%
Gender Total	**8250**	**8413**	**8045**	**8001**	**8552**	**8177**	3.66%	-2.81%
Total population	**16,663**		**16,046**		**16,729**		**0.40%**	

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Chart B.20 Population Change by Age Group between 1990 and 2010, Lafayette County



Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Table B.21 Population of Hispanic Origin, Lafayette County

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change
Village of Argyle	0	6	17	**183%**
Village of Belmont	3	1	7	**133%**
Village of Benton	0	0	4	**0%**
Village of Gratiot	0	0	0	**0%**
Village of South Wayne	0	0	2	**0%**
Town of Argyle	3	8	1	**-67%**
Town of Belmont	2	8	14	**600%**
Town of Benton	0	0	3	**0%**
Town of Blanchard	2	1	4	**100%**
Town of Darlington	2	0	18	**800%**
Town of Elk Grove	0	1	16	**1,500%**
Town of Fayette	3	0	0	**-100%**
Town of Gratiot	2	0	2	**0%**
Town of Kendall	0	8	11	**38%**
Town of Lamont	0	2	0	**-100%**
Town of Monticello	0	0	5	**0%**
Town of New Diggings	0	0	5	**0%**
Town of Seymour	1	0	44	**4300%**
Town of Shullsburg	1	0	3	**200%**
Town of Wayne	4	7	12	**200%**
Town of White Oak Springs	0	0	1	**0%**
Town of Willow Springs	0	15	11	**-27%**
Town of Wiota	0	5	6	**20%**
City of Darlington	7	27	297	**4143%**
City of Shullsburg	4	0	29	**625%**
Total Hispanic Population	**34**	**89**	**512**	**1406%**
Total County Population	**15,280**	**15,254**	**15,966**	**4%**
Total Percent Hispanic	**0.2%**	**0.6%**	**3.2%**	**-**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Housing and Property Characteristics

Data related to the characteristics of housing units and land. Category definitions are those of the cited data source.

Table B.22 Property Classification, Acreage, and Land Values, Lafayette County

Property Classification	Number of Acres	Percent of County Acreage	Value of Land	Percent County Total Value
Residential Class A	5,613	1%	$71,986,310	**32%**
Commercial Class B	1,192	0%	$13,894,316	**6%**
Manufacturing Class C	110	0%	$1,033,138	**0%**
Agricultural Class D	333,032	87%	$62,124,307	**27%**
Undeveloped Class E	21,741	6%	$16,568,218	**7%**
Ag Forest Class 5M	15,329	4%	$18,503,822	**8%**
Forest Lands Class F	2,774	1%	$6,613,944	**3%**
Other Class O	4,677	1%	$37,227,395	**16%**
County Total	**384,468**	**100%**	**$227,951,449**	**100%**

Source: Lafayette County Tax Assessment Roll, 2014

Table B.23 Land & Improvement Values (in $1000s), Lafayette County

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change
Land Values	$156,707	$156,001	$157,635	$179,556	$190,701	$190,086	$185,816	$227,951	**46%**
Improvement Values	$358,629	$359,002	$379,786	$402,414	$421,782	$431,970	$431,599	$708,985	**97%**
Total Value	**$515,336**	**$515,003**	**$537,421**	**$581,970**	**$612,483**	**$622,056**	**$617,414**	**$936,936**	**82%**

Source: Lafayette County Tax Assessment Roll, 2007-2014

Table B.24 Total Housing Units, Lafayette County

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change
City of Darlington	997	1,052	1,082	**9%**
City of Shullsburg	543	576	586	**8%**
Town of Argyle	178	210	214	**20%**
Town of Belmont	261	283	284	**9%**
Town of Benton	170	166	192	**13%**
Town of Blanchard	89	103	114	**28%**
Town of Darlington	293	276	349	**19%**
Town of Elk Grove	150	158	176	**17%**
Town of Fayette	163	155	170	**4%**
Town of Gratiot	244	258	261	**7%**
Town of Kendall	111	118	142	**28%**
Town of Lamont	103	102	125	**21%**
Town of Monticello	60	52	55	**-8%**
Town of New Diggings	188	194	225	**20%**
Town of Seymour	126	122	153	**21%**
Town of Shullsburg	127	143	152	**20%**
Town of Wayne	168	178	193	**15%**
Town of White Oak Springs	43	39	49	**14%**
Town of Willow Springs	209	237	300	**44%**
Town of Wiota	364	364	400	**10%**
Village of Argyle	364	365	393	**8%**
Village of Belmont	346	401	454	**31%**
Village of Benton	357	417	426	**19%**
Village of Blanchardville	365	376	396	**8%**
Village of Gratiot	98	103	108	**10%**
Village of South Wayne	202	218	220	**9%**
Average	**243**	**256**	**278**	**16%**
Total Housing Units	**6,319**	**6,666**	**7,219**	**14%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Table B.25 Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Lafayette County

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change	Percent of All Housing Units (2010)
City of Darlington	678	719	652	**-4%**	**60%**
City of Shullsburg	385	418	407	**6%**	**69%**
Town of Argyle	110	151	180	**64%**	**84%**
Town of Belmont	173	192	230	**33%**	**81%**
Town of Benton	111	140	185	**67%**	**96%**
Town of Blanchard	57	82	87	**53%**	**76%**
Town of Darlington	195	203	278	**43%**	**80%**
Town of Elk Grove	97	108	137	**41%**	**78%**
Town of Fayette	104	118	124	**19%**	**73%**
Town of Gratiot	157	187	179	**14%**	**69%**
Town of Kendall	64	80	109	**70%**	**77%**
Town of Lamont	69	83	91	**32%**	**73%**
Town of Monticello	31	39	41	**32%**	**75%**
Town of New Diggings	135	14	164	**21%**	**73%**
Town of Seymour	68	84	101	**49%**	**66%**
Town of Shullsburg	74	98	106	**43%**	**70%**
Town of Wayne	110	135	144	**31%**	**75%**
Town of White Oak Springs	18	22	31	**72%**	**63%**
Town of Willow Springs	144	185	240	**67%**	**80%**
Town of Wiota	254	266	287	**13%**	**72%**
Village of Argyle	254	257	261	**3%**	**66%**
Village of Belmont	258	279	315	**22%**	**69%**
Village of Benton	262	317	317	**21%**	**74%**
Village of Blanchardville	254	257	264	**4%**	**67%**
Village of Gratiot	69	76	74	**7%**	**69%**
Village of South Wayne	129	150	144	**12%**	**65%**
Municipal Average	**164**	**179**	**198**	**21%**	**71%**
Total Housing Units	**4,424**	**4,839**	**5,346**	**21%**	**74%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Table B.26 Renter-Occupied Housing Units, Lafayette County

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change	Percent of All Housing Units (2010)
City of Darlington	268	266	342	**28%**	**32%**
City of Shullsburg	121	109	127	**5%**	**22%**
Town of Argyle	38	27	34	**-11%**	**16%**
Town of Belmont	73	57	40	**-45%**	**14%**
Town of Benton	46	19	30	**-35%**	**16%**
Town of Blanchard	23	14	11	**-52%**	**10%**
Town of Darlington	90	63	51	**-43%**	**15%**
Town of Elk Grove	44	37	29	**-34%**	**16%**
Town of Fayette	36	20	18	**-50%**	**11%**
Town of Gratiot	65	50	36	**-45%**	**14%**
Town of Kendall	38	30	25	**-34%**	**18%**
Town of Lamont	23	11	19	**-17%**	**15%**
Town of Monticello	20	12	8	**-60%**	**15%**
Town of New Diggings	24	36	30	**25%**	**13%**
Town of Seymour	47	34	42	**-11%**	**27%**
Town of Shullsburg	42	38	29	**-31%**	**19%**
Town of Wayne	49	41	35	**-29%**	**18%**
Town of White Oak Springs	21	13	12	**-43%**	**24%**
Town of Willow Springs	53	45	43	**-19%**	**14%**
Town of Wiota	90	65	62	**-31%**	**16%**
Village of Argyle	91	86	105	**15%**	**27%**
Village of Belmont	69	98	124	**80%**	**27%**
Village of Benton	78	76	81	**4%**	**19%**
Village of Blanchardville	81	89	96	**19%**	**24%**
Village of Gratiot	18	21	23	**28%**	**21%**
Village of South Wayne	60	53	62	**3%**	**28%**
Average	**61.85**	**54.23**	**58.23**	**-6%**	**21%**
Total Housing Units	**1,608**	**1,410**	**1,514**	**-6%**	**21%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Table B.27 Vacant Housing Units, Lafayette County

Municipality	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change	Percent of All Housing Units (2010)
City of Darlington	51	67	88	**73%**	**8%**
City of Shullsburg	37	49	52	**41%**	**9%**
Town of Argyle	30	32	34	**13%**	**16%**
Town of Belmont	15	34	14	**-7%**	**5%**
Town of Benton	13	7	7	**-46%**	**4%**
Town of Blanchard	9	7	16	**78%**	**14%**
Town of Darlington	8	10	20	**150%**	**6%**
Town of Elk Grove	9	13	10	**11%**	**6%**
Town of Fayette	23	17	28	**22%**	**16%**
Town of Gratiot	22	21	46	**109%**	**18%**
Town of Kendall	9	8	8	**-11%**	**6%**
Town of Lamont	11	8	15	**36%**	**12%**
Town of Monticello	9	1	6	**-33%**	**11%**
Town of New Diggings	29	18	31	**7%**	**14%**
Town of Seymour	11	4	10	**-9%**	**7%**
Town of Shullsburg	11	7	17	**55%**	**11%**
Town of Wayne	9	2	14	**56%**	**7%**
Town of White Oak Springs	4	4	6	**50%**	**12%**
Town of Willow Springs	12	7	17	**42%**	**6%**
Town of Wiota	20	33	51	**155%**	**13%**
Village of Argyle	19	22	27	**42%**	**7%**
Village of Belmont	19	24	15	**-21%**	**3%**
Village of Benton	17	24	28	**65%**	**7%**
Village of Blanchardville	20	30	36	**80%**	**9%**
Village of Gratiot	11	6	11	**0%**	**10%**
Village of South Wayne	13	15	14	**8%**	**6%**
Average	**17**	**19**	**25**	**43%**	**9%**
Total Housing Units	**489**	**534**	**699**	**43%**	**10%**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990-2010

Appendix C: Soil Classifications and Designations

Land capability classification quantifies characteristics to identify appropriate uses. The following soils classification flow chart is the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) model. They offer the following explanation:

*"**Land Capability Classifications: Source (Exhibit 622-2)***

a. ***Definition:*** *Land capability classification is a system of grouping soils primarily on the basis of their capability to produce common cultivated crops and pasture plants without deteriorating over a long period of time.*
b. ***Classes****: Land capability classification is subdivided into capability class and capability subclass nationally. Some States also assign a capability unit.*
c. ***Significance:*** *Land capability classification has value as a grouping of soils. National Resource Inventory information, the Farmland Protection Policy Act, and many field office technical guides have been assembled according to these classes. The system has been adopted in many textbooks and has wide public acceptance. Some State legislation has used the system for various applications. Users should reference Agriculture Handbook No. 210 for a listing of assumptions and broad wording used to define the capability class and capability subclass.*

Categories Capability Class

Definition: *Capability class is the broadest category in the land capability classification system. Class codes I (1), II (2), III (3), IV (4), V (5), VI (6), VII (7), and VIII (8) are used to represent both irrigated and nonirrigated land capability classes.*

a. ***Classes and definitions:*** *The following definitions, from Agriculture Handbook No. 210, have been slightly altered.Class I (1) soils have slight limitations that restrict their use.*
b. *Class II (2) soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.*
c. *Class III (3) soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require special conservation practices, or both.*
d. *Class IV (4) soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or require very careful management, or both.*
e. *Class V (5) soils have little or no hazard of erosion but have other limitations, impractical to remove, that limit their use mainly to pasture, rangeland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.*
f. *Class VI (6) soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and that limit their use mainly to pasture, rangeland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.*
g. *Class VII (7) soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to rangeland, forestland, or wildlife habitat.*
h. *Class VIII (8) soils and miscellaneous areas have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plant production and limit their use mainly to recreation, wildlife habitat, water supply, or esthetic purposes."*

Table B.9.I Soil Classification Flow Chart

For non-soil areas, like river wash, quarries, dumps, etc: Capability Class = VII
***NOTE**: For soils that have Severe Erosion, move one class poorer. Example, a Class III with severe erosion moves into Class IV. However, do not move from Class VII to Class VIII.*
If Not, Go to B.9.II Stony Soils

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Table B.9.II Stony Soils

For Stony Soils	
***Stony Definition:** Mark "Yes" when stoniness limits or alters planting or harvesting operations regardless of most intensive long-term use. This limitation exists when 50% or more (by volume) of the top 10 inches is comprised of stones or rocks 3" or greater in any dimension. Use the length of the entire pit face profile, on the side where the control area is marked, to a depth of 10" to determine stoniness. Stoniness is a common limitation on glaciated or shallow soils over bedrock; these fields commonly need to have rocks picked up and removed.*	
Slope	**Capability Class**
0-20% Slope	Class VI
> 20% Slope	Class VII
If not, Go to B.9.III Soils that have a Water Table <36" of the Surface	

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Table B.9.III Soils that have a Water Table <36" of the Surface

For Soils that have a Water Table <36" of the surface:				
Natural Profile Drainage (Inches)	**Percent Slope**	**Dominant Soil Texture**	**Capability Class**	**Capability Class if Cropped and Drained**
Somewhat Poorly	< 6%	loamy	II	
(water table 12"-36")	6-12%	loamy	III	
	< 6%	clayey	III	
	< 6%	sandy	IV	
Poorly	< 6%	loamy	VI	II
(water table 0"-12")		clayey	VI	III
		sandy	VI	IV
Very Poorly				
(organic 16"-51" thick)		organic/loam	VI	II
		organic/clay	VI	III
		organic/sand	VI	IV
(organic >51" thick)		organic	VI	III
If not, Go to B.9.IV Soils That Have Dominant Texture of Sand or Loamy Sand (Sandy soils):				

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Table B.9.IV Soils That Have Dominant Texture of Sand or Loamy Sand (Sandy soils)

For Soils That Have Dominant Texture of Sand or Loamy Sand (Sandy soils):		
Percent Slope	**Dominant Soil Texture**	**Capability Class**
0-6%	sand or loamy sand	IV
6-12%	sand or loamy sand	VI
>12%	sand or loamy sand	VII
If not, Go to B.9.V All Other Soils		

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Table B.9.V All Other Soils

For All Other Soils, Use This Table.			
***Note:** Pick the correct slope range, then the correct soil texture, then the correct soil depth, if needed.*			
Percent Slope	**Dominant Soil Texture in Profile**	**Depth of Soil**	**Capability Class**
0-2%	All Textures but sandy loam	> 40 inches	I - No Overflow
0-2%	Sandy Loam	> 40 inches	II - Occasional Overflow
0-2%	All Textures but sandy loam	20-40 inches	II - Occasional Overflow
0-2%	All Textures but sandy loam	< 20 inches	III
0-2%	Sandy Loam		III
2-6%	All Textures but sandy loam	> 20 inches	II
2-6%	All Textures but sandy loam	< 20 inches	III
2-6%	Sandy Loam		III
6-12%	All Textures	> 20 inches	III
6-12%	All Textures but sandy loam	< 20 inches	IV
6-12%	All Textures	< 20 inches	VI
12-20%	All Textures	> 20 inches	IV
12-20%	All Textures	< 20 inches	VI
20-30%	All Textures	> 20 inches	VI
20-30%	All Textures	< 20 inches	VII
> 30%	All Textures		VII

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Prime Farmland

Prime Farmland Classification is an important identifier in this Farmland Preservation Plan because it has the ability to sustain high crop yields when managed in accordance with best farming practices and is, therefore, of great importance to Lafayette County. The NRCS defines prime farmland as such:

> *"**Definition**: The farmland classification designates map units as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or farmland of unique importance. Soil map units with components of prime farmland are classified as: prime where 50 percent or more of the components in the map unit composition are prime; of statewide importance where less than 50 percent of the components in the map unit are prime but a combination of lands of prime or statewide importance is 50 percent or more of the map unit composition; of local importance where less than 50 percent of the components in the map unit are of prime or statewide importance but the total of land of prime, statewide, and/or local importance is 50 percent or more of the map unit composition. All other soil map units are shown as not farmland unless they are designated as unique.*
>
> 1) *Prime farmland is defined as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. It has the combination of soil properties, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops in an economic manner if it is treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, an acceptable level of acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable content of salt or sodium, and few or no rocks. Its soils are permeable to water and air. Prime farmland is not excessively eroded or saturated with water for long periods of time, and it either does not flood frequently during the growing season or is protected from flooding. Users of the lists of prime farmland map units should recognize that soil properties are only one of several criteria that are necessary. Other considerations for prime farmland are the following:*
>
>   a) ***Land use:** Prime farmland is designated independently of current land use, but it cannot be areas of water or urban or built-up land as defined for the National Resource Inventories. Map units that are complexes or associations containing components of urban land or other miscellaneous areas as part of the map unit name (i.e., major components) cannot be designated as prime farmland. The soil survey memorandum of understanding determines the scale of mapping, and local land use interests should be considered in designing map units.*
>
>   b) ***Flooding frequency:** Some map units may include both prime farmland and land not prime farmland because of variations in flooding frequency.*
>
>   c) ***Irrigation:** Some map units have areas with a developed irrigation water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality while other areas do not have such a supply. In these map units, only the irrigated areas meet the prime farmland criteria.*

d) ***Water table:*** *Most map units are drained but a few undrained areas are included. Only the drained areas meet the prime farmland criteria.*

e) ***Wind erodibility:*** *The product of I (soil erodibility) x C (climate factor) cannot exceed 60 to meet prime farmland criteria.*

2) ***Unique farmland*** *is land other than prime farmland that is used for the production of specific high-value food and fiber crops. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high-quality and/or high yields of a specific crop when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Examples of such crops are citrus, tree nuts, olives, cranberries, fruit, and vegetables. The specific characteristics of unique farmland are the following:*

a) *It is used for a specific high-value food or fiber crop;*

b) *It has a moisture supply that is adequate for the specific crop (the supply is from stored moisture, precipitation, or a developed irrigation system); and*

c) *It combines favorable factors of soil quality, growing season, temperature, humidity, air drainage, elevation, aspect, or other conditions, such as nearness to market, that favor the growth of a specific food or fiber crop.*

3) ***Significance:*** *Farmland classification identifies the location and extent of the most suitable land for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has national leadership for the management and maintenance of the resource base that supports the productive capacity of American agriculture. This management and maintenance includes identifying, locating, and determining the extent of the most suitable land for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. Prime farmland information is one of the four designations of farmland. An NRCS state conservationist can approve and have recorded in the field office technical guide (FOTG) soil map units that meet the criteria for farmland of statewide and local importance if the units are capable of producing crops on farmable land. Farmable land is land in a jurisdiction for which cropland productivity index has been developed in the land evaluation (LE) part of Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA). Unique farmland described above is recorded in the FOTG by approval of the NRCS state conservationist."*