

# TOWN OF OAKLAND LAND USE PLAN

JANUARY 2002

PREPARED BY  
NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
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**Project Summary.** In an attempt to identify the trends of growth and change presently experienced within the town, the Town of Oakland identified the need for a Land Use Plan. Funding for the plan was provided by the Town of Oakland and from a grant provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Lake Protection Program. The Northwest Regional Planning Commission provided technical assistance for the Town of Oakland Land Use Plan. The purpose of the Land Use Plan was to identify land use concerns, development issues, examine the town's land base and to make recommendations regarding future land use and development. This Land Use Plan establishes the base for development of a Comprehensive Plan, which will be required of all municipalities in the State of Wisconsin (Chapter 66, Wisconsin Statutes). Comprehensive Plans are required to be implemented by January 1, 2010. This "Smart Growth" plan will contain a minimum set of 9 elements, each of which will examine a different sector of the community.

**Acknowledgements.** Special thanks and recognition is due to the member of the Town of Oakland Land Use Planning Committee for their continued participation, helpful critiques and intimate knowledge of the town, it's history, residents, current issues and resources. The Town of Oakland Land Use Planning Committee members include:

Mary Brill  
Diane Caffrey  
Mary Conley, Town Clerk  
Jaime Carlson  
Don Garner-Gerhardt  
Don Hagen, Committee Chairman

Bruce Johnson  
Santee Pease  
Roy Peterson, Town Chairman  
Jan Resberg  
Paul Scott  
Jim Rausch, Town Supervisor

Special thanks is also due to Steve Rannenber, Douglas County Zoning Administrator for making available the time and resources of the Douglas County Zoning Office.

Technical assistance for the plan was provided by:

Jason Laumann, Community Development Planner Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
Stephen Andrews, Senior Advisor, Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
Lance Frost, Geographic Information Specialist, Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
Jeff Maas, Community Development Planner, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

**Plan Purpose.** The purpose of the Town of Oakland Land Use Plan is to promote balanced and appropriate land uses, encourage responsible development patterns, and endorse conservation of the natural and cultural environment.

SECTION I

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

**Project Area.** The civil Town of Oakland is located in the north central portion of Douglas County, encompassing all 36 sections of Congressional Township 46 North, Range 13 West and sections 7 through 36 of Congressional Township 47 North, Range 13 West. Sections 1 through 6 of T47N, R13W fall within the Town of Parkland.

**Land Cover.** The Town of Oakland encompasses 41,590 acres (64.98 sq. miles) of north central Douglas County. Just over one-half (58.58%) of the town is forested. Agricultural lands (both in use for production and unused fallow fields) are found generally in the northern one-half of the town. The following table details the amount of each type of land cover category found in the town.

**Table 1: Land Cover Classifications**

Land Cover Category	Acreage	Percent of Town's Area
<b>AGRICULTURAL LAND</b>	<b>4,732</b>	<b>11.38%</b>
Herbaceous Field Crops	131	0.32%
Grassland (Timothy, Rye, Pasture, Idle)	4,601	11.06%
<b>FORESTED LANDS</b>	<b>24,365</b>	<b>58.58%</b>
Broad-leaved deciduous forest	15,874	38.17%
Mixed deciduous/coniferous forest	7,432	17.87%
Coniferous forest	1,059	2.55%
<b>SHRUBLAND</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0.72%</b>
<b>BARREN LAND</b> ( <i>Rock outcrops, gravel pits, un-vegetated land</i> )	<b>196</b>	<b>0.47%</b>
<b>WETLANDS</b>	<b>11,161</b>	<b>26.84%</b>
Emergent / wet-meadow	651	1.56%
Lowland shrub wetlands	6,340	15.24%
Forested wetlands	4,171	10.03%
<b>OPEN WATER</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>2.01%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

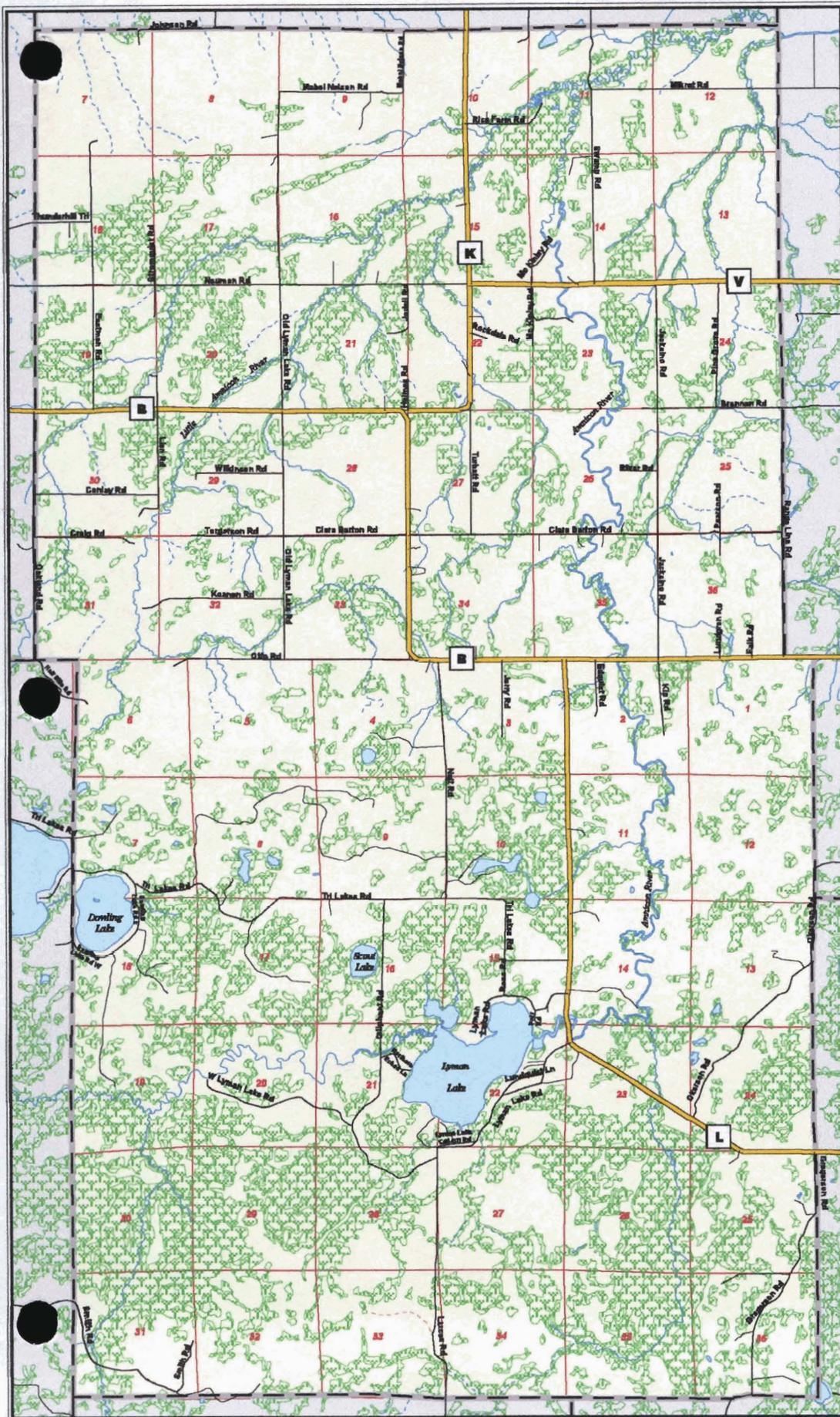
Source: WISCLAND Satellite dataset

**Hydrography.** The entire Town of Oakland falls within the Lake Superior Drainage Basin with waters flowing north and east toward Lake Superior. The prominent hydrographic features of the town include the Amnicon River and its tributary network, the Little Amnicon River and its tributary network and the three largest lakes: Lyman Lake, Dowling Lake, and Scout Lake.

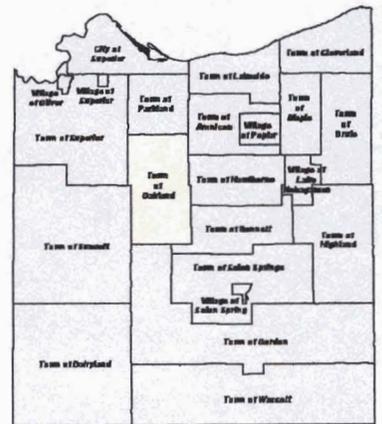
**Wetlands.** Wetlands serve important environmental functions including flood control, water quality improvement, and groundwater recharge and providing habitat for fish and wildlife. The map on the following page delineates wetlands (two acres and larger) as mapped by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on its Wisconsin Wetland Inventory Maps. This delineation may not reflect all areas categorized as wetlands by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) or by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

# Town of Oakland

Map 1



-  Water Features
-  Intermittent
-  Wetlands (2 acres or larger)
-  County Road
-  Town Road



Douglas County,  
Wisconsin



A complex set of local, state and federal regulations place limitations on the development and use of wetlands. The Department of Natural Resources regulates the placement of structures and other alterations below the ordinary high water mark of navigable streams and lakes. The Corps of Engineers has authority over the placement of fill materials in virtually all wetlands. The USDA incorporates wetland preservation criteria into its crop price support programs. Prior to placing fill or altering wetland resources, these agencies must be contacted to receive authorization.

Of the Town of Oakland's total area, 26.84 percent is classified as wetlands. The largest wetland complexes are found in the town's southern areas in the Douglas County Forest lands, as well as along substantial portions of the Amnicon River, the Little Amnicon River, and their respective tributaries. Wetlands in the town are of three principal types: forested wetlands, lowland shrub wetlands, and emergent/wet meadow wetlands. These three wetlands types are represented on the Land Cover Map (Map 2).

**Generalized Soil Types.** Within the Town of Oakland are four major soil type districts. The southern portion of the town is dominated by peaty (wet, marshy) soils and Mellen loam. The north central part of the town contains a band of Superior sandy loam and the final northern quarter of the town falls into the Superior clay region (Map 3).

**Susceptibility to Groundwater Contamination.** According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources groundwater susceptibility model, approximately the entire lower one-half of the Town of Oakland is highly susceptible to contamination. The remainder of the town ranges from medium to low susceptibility. The high susceptibility in the south of the town can be attributed to two main factors: the presence of predominantly wet, peaty, highly permeable soils and very shallow groundwater. The depth to groundwater in this area is primarily within 20 feet of the surface with the south central portions of the town with groundwater as deep as 50 feet (Map 4).

**Depth to Groundwater.** As is indicated on the Depth to Groundwater Map, the depth to groundwater throughout the town is within 50 feet of the surface. One notable exception is the extreme northwest corner of the town where the depth exceeds 50 feet. Of note, depth to groundwater is not the same as depth to potable (drinkable) water. The depths illustrated indicate the level at which the subsurface water level begins not the level at which water suitable for household use can be pumped (Map 5).

**Flood Hazard Areas.** Flood hazard areas are identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to assist in risk assessment for land development. Areas prone to periodic flooding are identified on the map in a purple diagonal hatched pattern. In the Town of Oakland, the flood hazard areas extend along the Amnicon River, the Little Amnicon River, and their respective tributaries and in the two large wetland areas in the town's southeast and southwest (Map 5).

**Public Lands.** Of the town's total area, 31.4 percent is in public ownership/tax exempt land, the most substantial portion of which is in the Douglas County Forest lands covering roughly the southern one-third of the town (Map 6).

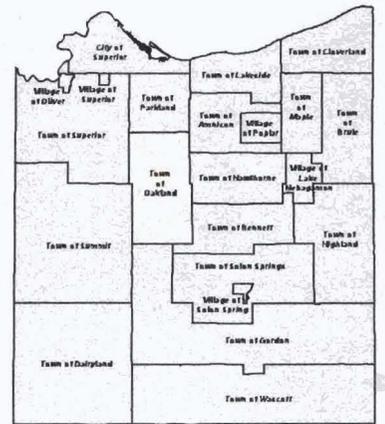
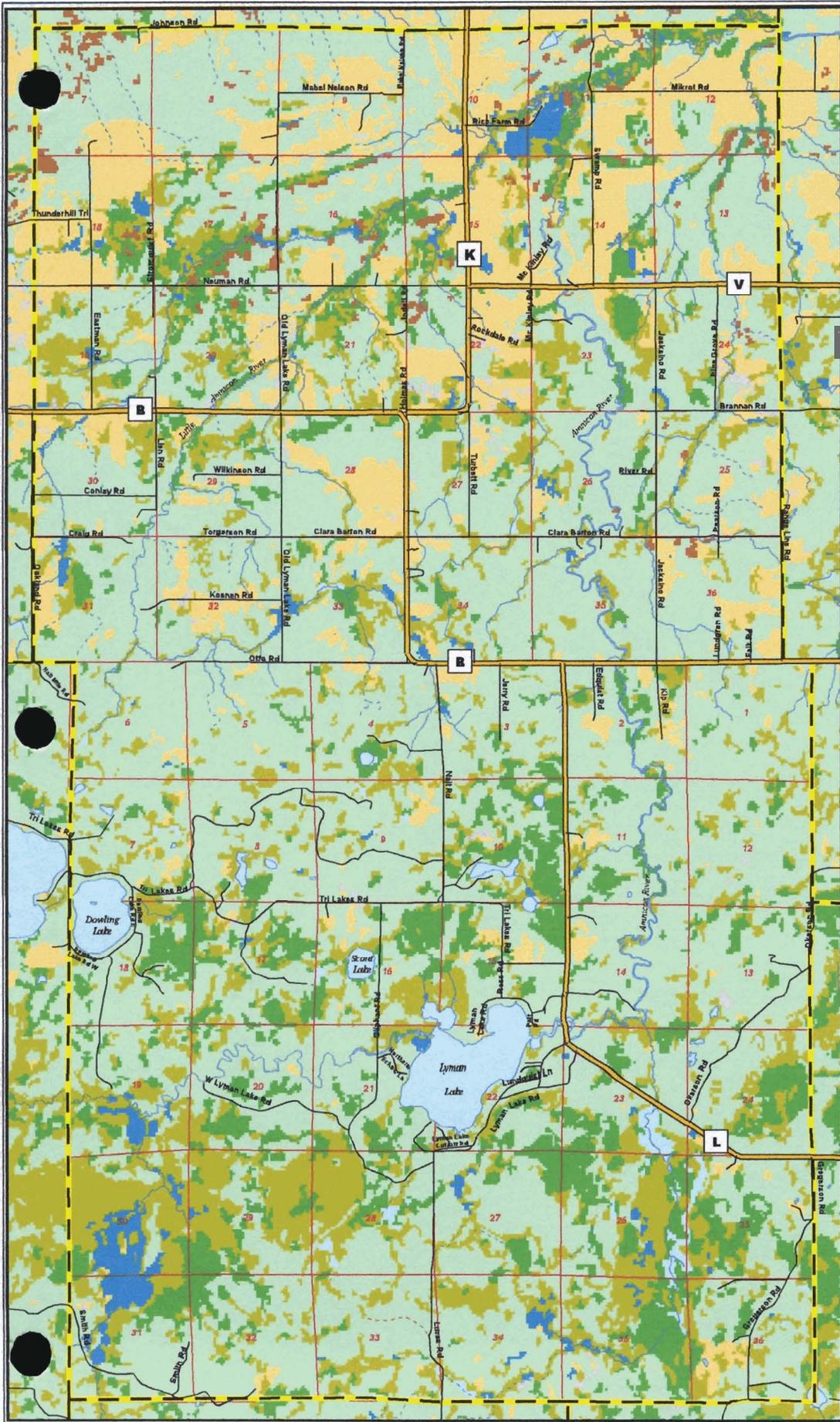
# Town of Oakland

Map 2

## Land Cover

-  Urban / Developed
-  Agriculture / Grasslands
-  Forest
-  Shrubland
-  Barren
-  Wetlands
-  Wetlands (Lowland Shrub)
-  Wetlands (Forested)
-  Open Water

-  County Road
-  Town Road



Douglas County,  
Wisconsin

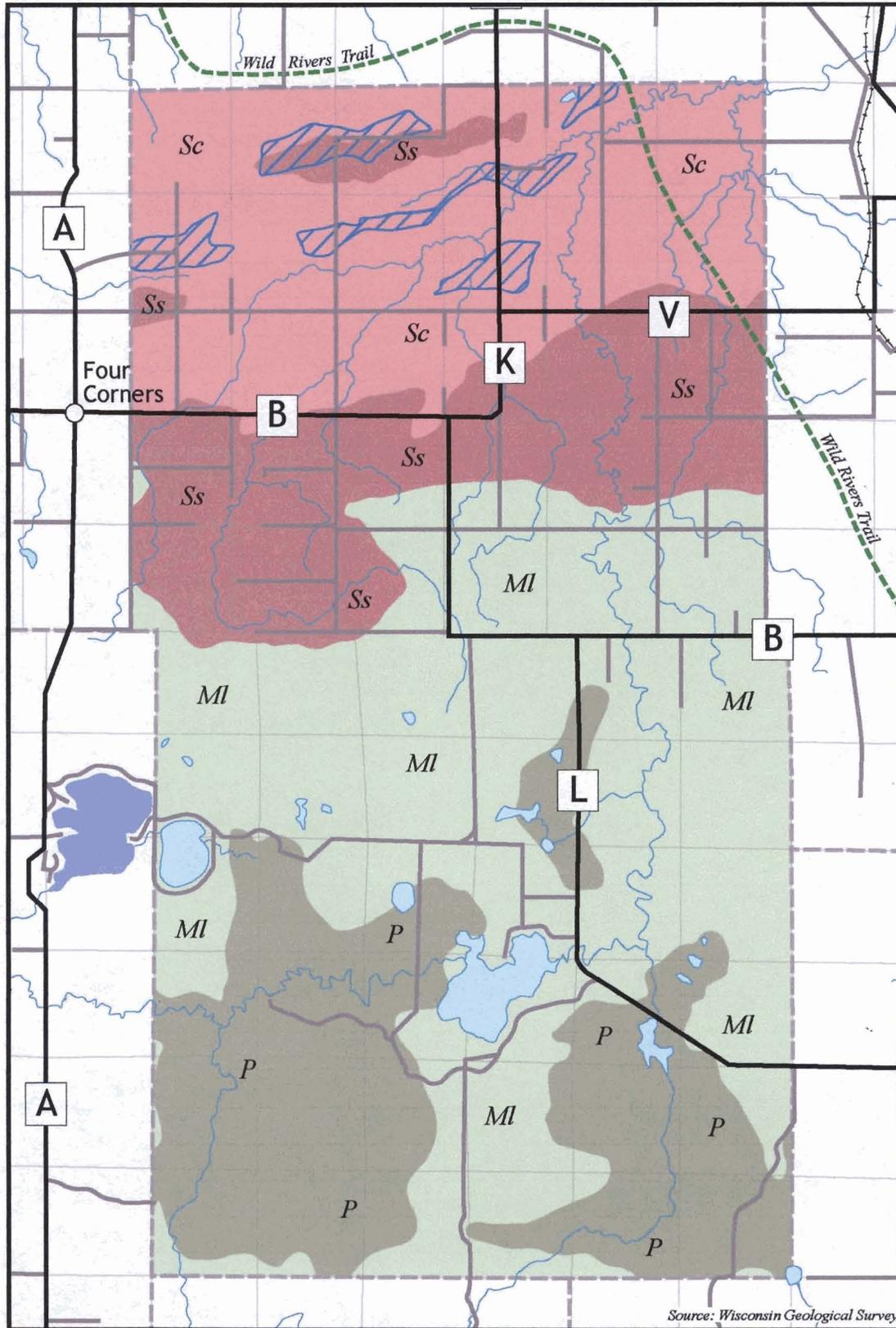


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# Town of Oakland: Generalized Soil Map

Map 3



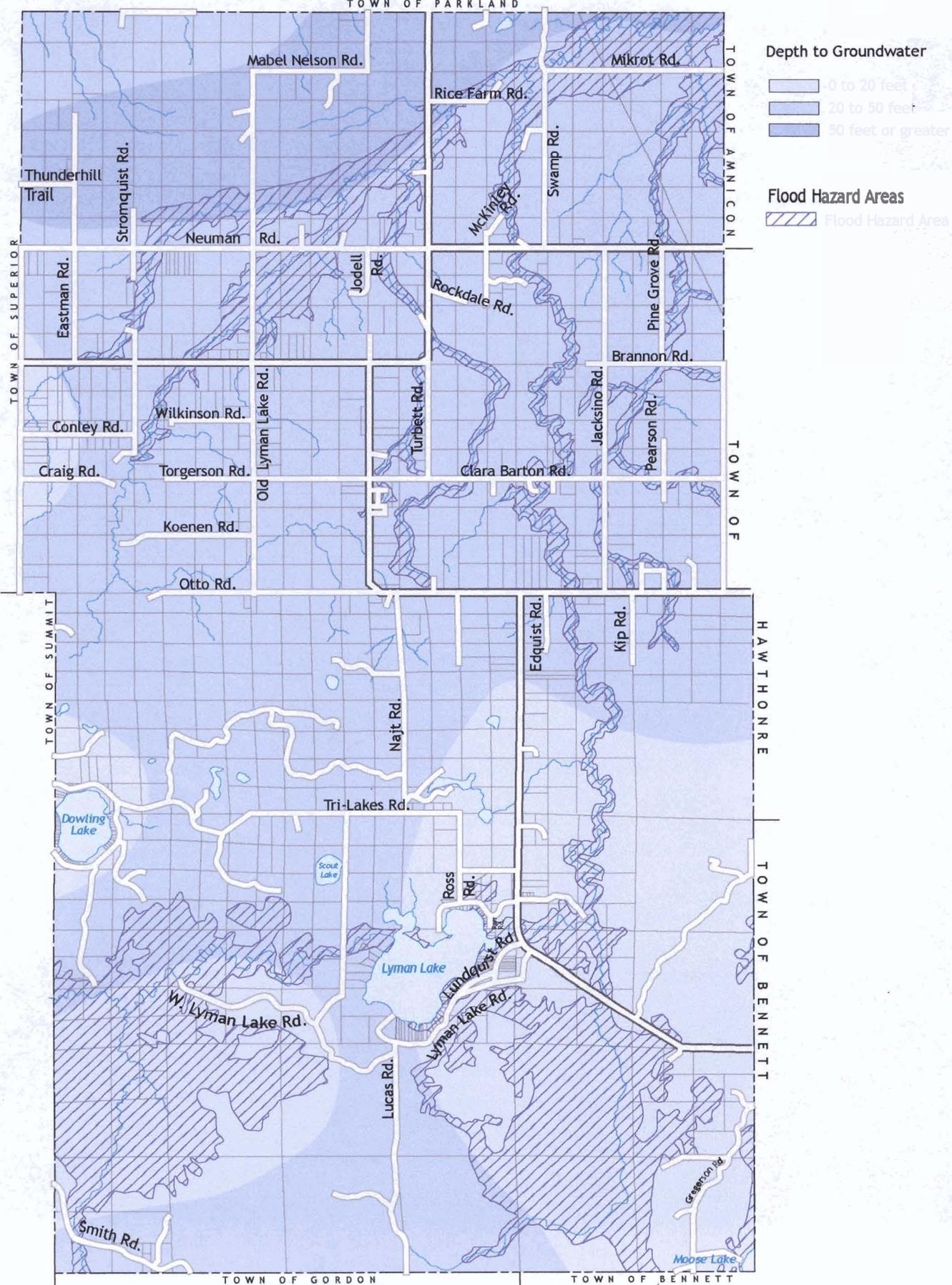
Source: Wisconsin Geological Survey

- Sc: Superior Clay*
- Ss: Superior Sandy Loam*
- MI** *MI: Mellen loam*
- P** *P: Peaty soils, predominantly wetlands*
- ▨** *Areas of rock outcrops*



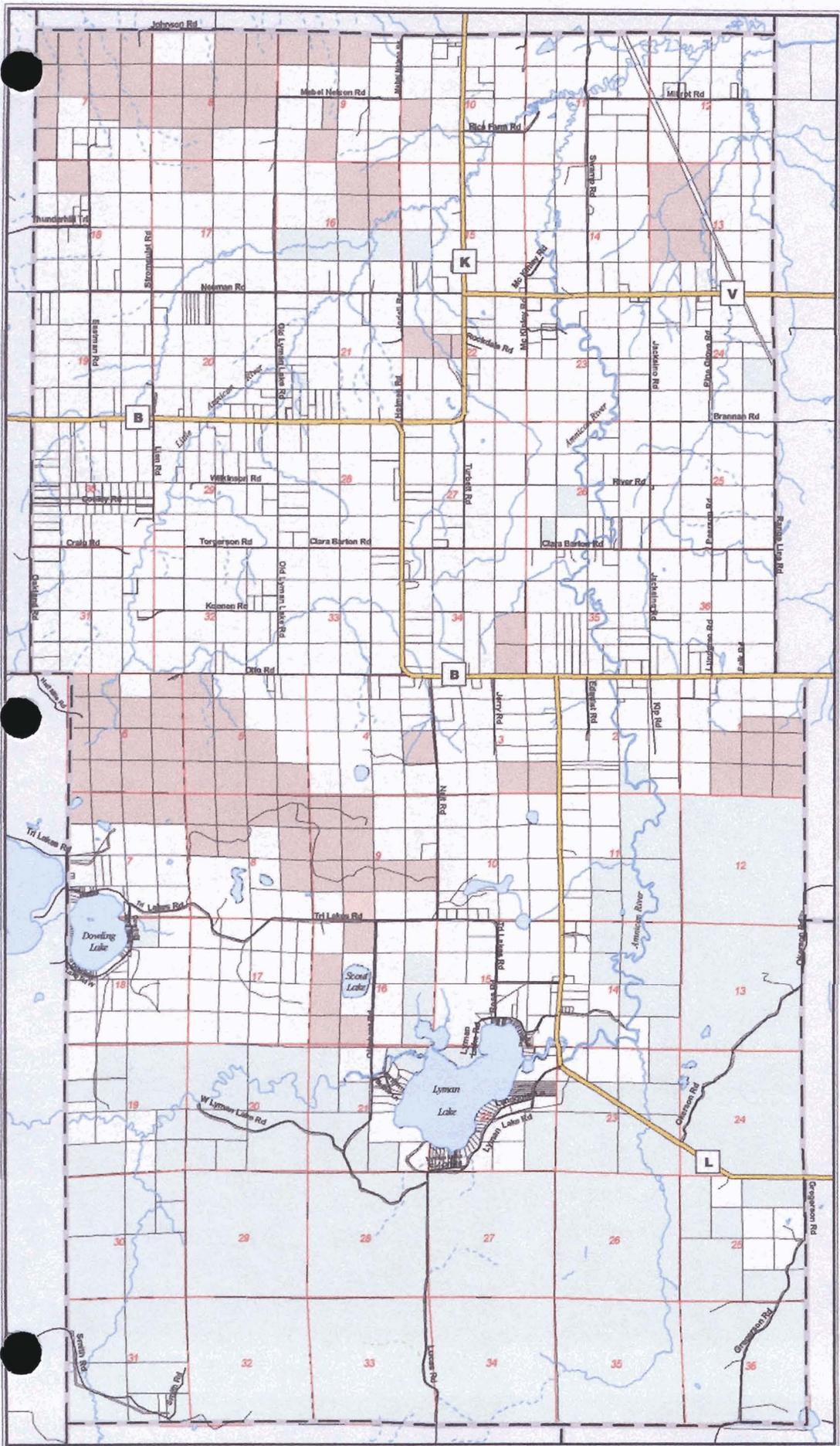
# Town of Oakland: Depth to Groundwater

Map 5



# Town of Oakland

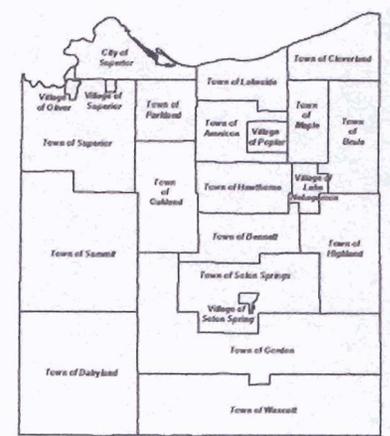
Map 6



**Land Ownership**

- County Lands
- Local Government
- Industrial Forest

County Road  
 Town Road



*Douglas County,  
Wisconsin*



**Table 2: Town of Oakland Public Lands**

Land Owner	Acres	Percent of Town's Area
Douglas County	161	0.40%
Douglas County – Forest Crop	12,413	29.80%
Douglas County – Special Use	362	0.90%
Town of Oakland	115	0.30%
Miscellaneous Tax Exempt Land	11	0.03%
State of Wisconsin Lands	0	0.00%
United States / Federal Lands	0	0.00%
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC / EXEMPT</b>	<b>13,062</b>	<b>31.43%</b>
Private Lands	28,528	68.57%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Northwest Regional Planning Commission Geographic Information Systems Database

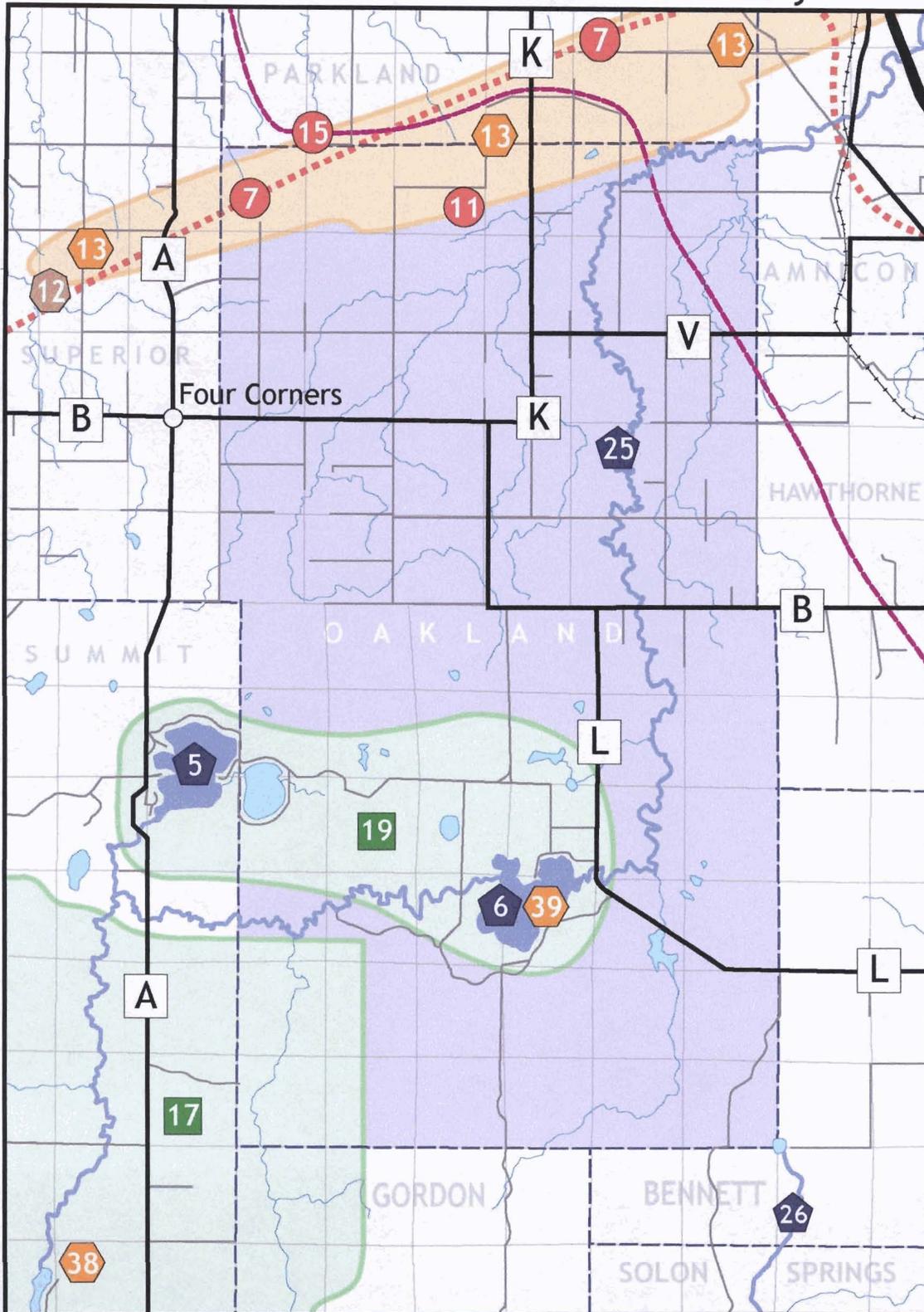
**Industrial Forest Lands.** Several commercial forest concerns own portions of the Town of Oakland. These include Mosinee Paper Company, Nekoosa Papers Inc., Consolidated Papers Inc., and Wausau Paper Mills Company. These companies manage their holdings for long-term timber and pulp production. The main concentrations of industrial forest lands are found in sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 16 of Township 46 North, Range 13 West and sections 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18, and 22 of Township 47 North, Range 13 West.

**Critical Resources.** In 1975, an effort to identify those resources of Douglas County that were considered critical to the overall ecological integrity and cultural wealth of the area was conducted. The result of that group effort undertaken by local officials and citizens in an analysis and a document named "Douglas County – Critical Resource Information Booklet" which details the results of the process analysis. Work groups consisting of representatives from the business community, government, and interested citizen representatives were formed. Each work group dedicated their time to one particular critical resource. Eight such resource categories were analyzed:

1. Commercial Vegetation
2. Scenic Areas
3. Historical, Cultural, Architectural, and Archeological Resources
4. Natural Areas
5. Agricultural Land
6. Minerals and Special Geologic Features
7. Water Resources
8. Wildlife/Recreation

# Town of Oakland: Critical Resource Inventory

Map 7



## CRITICAL MINERAL & GEOLOGIC RESOURCES

- Douglas Fault
- Fogelberg's Butte
- Middle River / Old South Shore RR right of way

## CRITICAL WATER RESOURCES

- Amnicon Lake
- Lyman Lake
- Amnicon River
- Moose River

## CRITICAL SCENIC RESOURCES

- Panoramic viewshed of Lake Superior
- Tozer Lake (Bear Lake)
- Lyman Lake

## CRITICAL HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Coppermine shafts

## CRITICAL NATURAL AREAS

- Empire Swamp area
- Tri-Lakes area

Note: The numbers in the icons for each critical resource feature denote the rank of that feature within the list of all resources at the county level.

Source: Douglas County Critical Information Booklet (1974)

SECTION 2

POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

**Introduction.** Population is an important contributing factor to the pattern of settlement and development of a municipal unit. Changes in the number of inhabitants along with other characteristics including income, education, and age all serve to impact economic development, land use, transportation, and use of public and private services. Understanding past changes and present conditions of the population enhances the ability to prepare for the future.

**Population Growth.** The Town of Oakland has had (with the exception of a slight decline between 1960 and 1970) an increasing population through the year 2000. The largest net gain occurred from 1970 to 1980 with the addition of 314 town residents. Census 2000 reports the town as presently having 1,144 inhabitants with projections indicating an additional 240 town residents by the year 2020

**Table 3: Town of Oakland Population 1959-2000, Projections to 2020**

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Town of Oakland	530	636	624	938	993	1144	1193	1256	1319	1384
Douglas County	46,715	45,008	44,657	44,421	41,758	43,287	41,824	41,815	41,671	41,325

Source: US Census Bureau (1950-2000) and NWRPC Projections (2005-2020)

**Table 4: Town of Oakland Population Change by Decade 1950-2000, Projected Change to 2020**

	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020
Town of Oakland							
Net Change	+106	-12	+314	+55	+151	+112	+128
Net % Change	+20.0%	-1.8%	+50.3%	+5.8%	+15.2%	+9.7%	+10.2%
Douglas County							
Net Change	-1707	-351	-236	-2663	+1529	-1472	-490
Net % Change	-3.6%	-0.8%	-0.5%	-5.9%	+3.6%	-3.4%	-1.2%

Source: Calculated from US Census Bureau data and NWRPC Projections

Population trends in the Town of Oakland have gone against the larger trend for Douglas County. The county has reported a continual (with the exception of 1990 to 2000) net loss in population since 1950. The majority of the loss for Douglas County can be attributed to the continued population decline of the City of Superior. The continual growth in the Town of Oakland since 1950 can be attributed to the following key factors:

- Development of lakeshore property
- Development of desirable sites of wooded seclusion
- The rising popularity of country living while retaining the ability to commute to the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area.
- More recently, the conversion of seasonal/recreational homes into permanent residences

**Demographic Change.** A key concern in examining population change is the structure of the population in terms of age. The Table 5 reveals the population structure in ten-year increments from the 1980, 1990 and 2000 federal Census reports.

**Table 5: Town of Oakland Age Distribution 1980, 1990 & 2000**

	<u>&lt; 5</u>	<u>5-14</u>	<u>15-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-44</u>	<u>45-54</u>	<u>55-64</u>	<u>65-74</u>	<u>75-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
Town of Oakland: 1980	89	159	169	193	101	89	60	46	32	0
Town of Oakland: 1990	65	176	96	189	187	96	97	50	25	3
Town of Oakland: 2000	64	172	139	113	223	207	107	83	28	8

Source: US Census Bureau

The following emerging trends can be identified in examining the age structure of the town's population since 1980:

- *Children under age 5 have declined steadily*
- *Inhabitants aged 5 to 14 increased to 199, and experienced a slight decline to 2000*
- *Inhabitants aged 15 to 24 decreased sharply to 1990 and increased to 2000*
- *Inhabitants aged 25 to 34 have decreased steadily since 1980*
- *Inhabitants aged 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55 to 64 and 65 to 74 have all increased steadily in the past 20 years*
- *Inhabitants aged 75 to 84 have remained relatively stable*
- *Inhabitants aged 85 and older have increased since 1980*

These trends tend to indicate the following types of demographic transition within the town:

- *Children under age 5 have declined steadily*
- *Inhabitants aged 5 to 14 increased to 199, and experienced a slight decline to 2000*

These trends tend to indicate that the families moving into the Town of Oakland have fewer children and are having fewer children once established here.

- *Inhabitants aged 15 to 24 decreased sharply to 1990 and increased to 2000*
- *Inhabitants aged 25 to 34 have decreased steadily since 1980*

These are the age groups most likely to move out of a rural town like that of Oakland for employment, educational, or other opportunities elsewhere. The recent increase of 15 to 24 year olds suggests the aging of existing children of families in the town or an influx of young families (aged 18 to 24) into the town. The continual decline of 25 to 34 years olds may suggest the difficulty of this group to find secure employment, purchase land, or purchase a starter home in the town.

- *Inhabitants aged 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55 to 64 and 65 to 74 have all increased steadily in the past 20 years*

The steady increase of these groups indicates three primary trends at work. First, there is a climbing market demand for "rural living" with the ability to commute to the Duluth-Superior area for work. The Town of Oakland is ideally placed for this, being within 15 to 25 minutes driving time of the Twin Ports. The increased affluence of individuals over age 35 enables them to purchase property and to build a home in the country. Second, many seasonal or recreational

housing units in the town are being converted into primary, year-around residencies as individuals retire to the area. Third, the town sustains a stable population of residents in these age groups who choose to remain here.

- *Inhabitants aged 75 to 84 have remained relatively stable*
- *Inhabitants aged 85 and older have increased since 1980*

The town sustains a stable population of residents in these age groups who choose to remain here with family or other ties to the area.

SECTION 3

HOUSING

**Introduction.** Adequate housing is a cornerstone of every community. The ability of a municipality to address the demand for housing is key to its economic viability and the well being of its inhabitants. By studying changes in the number and type of housing units and other housing characteristics, insight can be gained into the changes taking place within the community.

**Existing Conditions.** In 2000, The U.S. Census Bureau recorded a total of 541 housing units in the Town of Oakland. Of these, 425 were classified as occupied.

Of these total occupied housing units, 408 (96.0%) were recorded as owner occupied and 17 (4.0%) were recorded as renter occupied.

Of the 116 vacant housing units reported, 103 (19.0% of all housing units) were designated as seasonal/recreational use dwellings.

**Table 6: Housing Unit Characteristics: 1980-2020**

	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Total Housing Units	450	498	541	565	587	610	633
Total Occupied Housing Units	306	347	425	449	478	508	537
Inhabitants / Occ. Housing Unit	3.06	2.86	2.69	2.65	2.62	2.59	2.57
Owner Occupied Housing Units	289	318	408	427	457	487	517
% of Total Occupied that are Owner Occupied	94.4%	91.6%	96.0%	95.1%	95.6%	95.8%	96.2%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	17	29	17	22	21	21	20
Total Vacant Housing Units	--*	151	116	116	109	102	96
Vacant Housing: Seasonal/Recreational Use	--*	127	103	103	98	92	85
Vacant (Uninhabited or abandoned)	--*	24	13	13	11	10	11

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980, 1990, 2000); NWRPC Projections (2005-2020)

\*Data not collected for these categories in Census 1980.

**Projected Change in Housing.** For the 20-year period from 1980 to 2000, the Town of Oakland added 91 new housing units, an average of 4.6 units per year. Current projections (in Table 6 above) indicate at this rate the Town of Oakland will add an additional 92 total housing units by the 2020.

**Inhabitants Per Occupied Housing Unit.** Despite the fact that the total number of inhabitants and housing units are increasing, the total number of inhabitants per occupied housing unit is in a gradual and steady decline. Factors for this decline include:

- Fewer children moving with families or being born to families in the town
- The overall trend of families having fewer children

- An increasing divorce rate
- Gradual loss of inhabitants aged 15 to 34 who find educational or employment opportunities elsewhere

**Housing Density.** Housing density is a key concern for development in rural, unincorporated towns. Low density and the amenities of space, quiet, and privacy are key factors in preserving the rural quality. Table 7 below reveals the present status and future projections for housing density in the town.

**Table 7: Average Housing Density 1980-2000, Projected Density to 2020**

	1980		1990		2000		2010		2020	
	Number	P/sq. mi.								
<i>Total Oakland Land area: 64.98 Square Miles</i>										
Total Units	450	6.9	498	7.6	541	8.3	587	9.0	633	9.7
Occupied Units	306	4.7	347	5.3	425	6.5	478	7.3	537	8.3
Seasonal Units	---	*	127	1.9	103	1.6	98	1.5	85	1.3

Sources: Calculated from US Census Bureau data and NWRPC Projections

\*no data available for 1980

**Rural Character Threshold.** A “theoretical” threshold for rural character is estimated to be 16 total housing units per square mile. At this density level, a single square mile section could contain sixteen 40-acre parcels, each with a residence and enough land to still retain the amenities of privacy, quiet, natural aesthetics, and so on. Presently, the Town of Oakland maintains a total housing density of 8.3 units per square mile. Of course, housing density varies widely throughout the town with lakeshore areas maintaining a substantially higher density than the forested and agricultural areas.

SECTION 4

TRANSPORTATION

**Introduction.** The transportation network is the backbone upon which a community bases its economy, access to resources, and connection to other communities forming a critical link to continued development and growth. Maintenance and repair, in addition to periodic additions and enhancements to this system, are essential for its use by county residents, visitors, and businesses. Keeping pace with changes in transportation trends and network use are also essential to anticipate needed improvements and potential additions to the transportation network.

Vehicular (automotive) travel is the predominant mode of travel for residents of the Town of Oakland and Douglas County. The conversion of railroads in the county and region into recreational trails precludes the redevelopment of passenger rail service in the foreseeable future.

**Roadway Characteristics.** The Town of Oakland's roadway network is comprised of 85.09 miles of highways and roadways. Roads within the community are classified by their functional use and by the amount of traffic they carry. The table below indicates the functional use of Oakland's roadway network.

**Table 8: Town of Oakland Roadways**

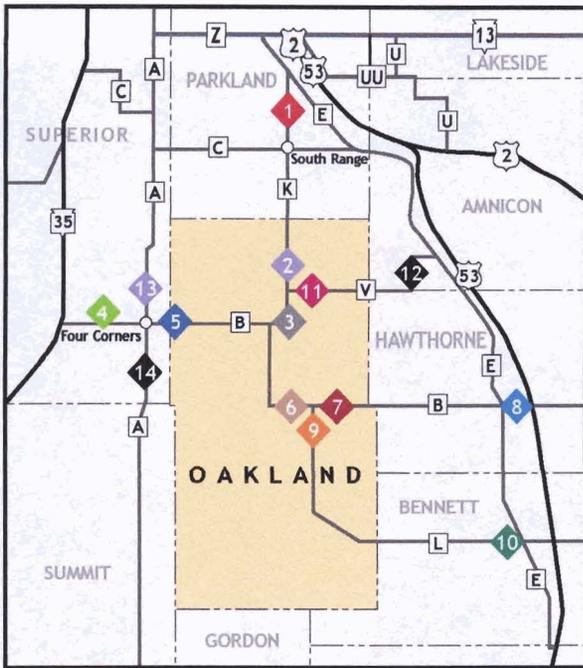
Classification	Miles of Roadway	Percent of Town Roadway System
County Trunk Highways	19.32	22.70%
Town Roads	59.77	70.24%
Rustic Roads	0.00	0.00%
County Forest Roads	6.00	7.06%
Special Use / Other Roads	0.00	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85.09</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 8

**Table 9: Average Daily Traffic at Selected Sites in and near the Town of Oakland**

	1966	1969	1973	1975	1978	1981	1984	1987	1990	1993	1996
Site 1:	710	550	590	590	1,060	950	1,000	1,070	1,050	1,050*	1,300
Site 2:	295	350	320	520	610	550	630	690	610	610*	1,000
Site 3:	265	275	240	290	460	470	430	<i>(No data recorded from site after 1984)</i>			
Site 4:	675^	600	760	650	680	750	990	1,080	1,130	1,200	1,100
Site 5:	NA	475	450	680	670	760	990	1,100	1,140	1,100	1,100
Site 6:	250	375	270	280	290	460	630	600	600	640	680
Site 7:	185	235	280	200	280	400	470	480	480	250	640
Site 8:	305	310	360	560	650	660	740	770	760	2,200	1,800
Site 9:	140	155	150	150	<i>(No data recorded at site from 1975 to 1990)</i>					250	250
Site 10:	235	150	240	240	300**	260**	220**	210**	200**	350	340
Site 11:	160	155	80	230	290	270	320	<i>(No data recorded from site after 1984)</i>			
Site 12:	NA	70	70***	150	210	200	160	280^^	270^^	<i>(No data recorded)</i>	
Site 13:	255	515	500	850	820	960	770	850	900	1,100	1,300
Site 14:	520	620	550	780	800	820	880	930	880	1,000	1,000

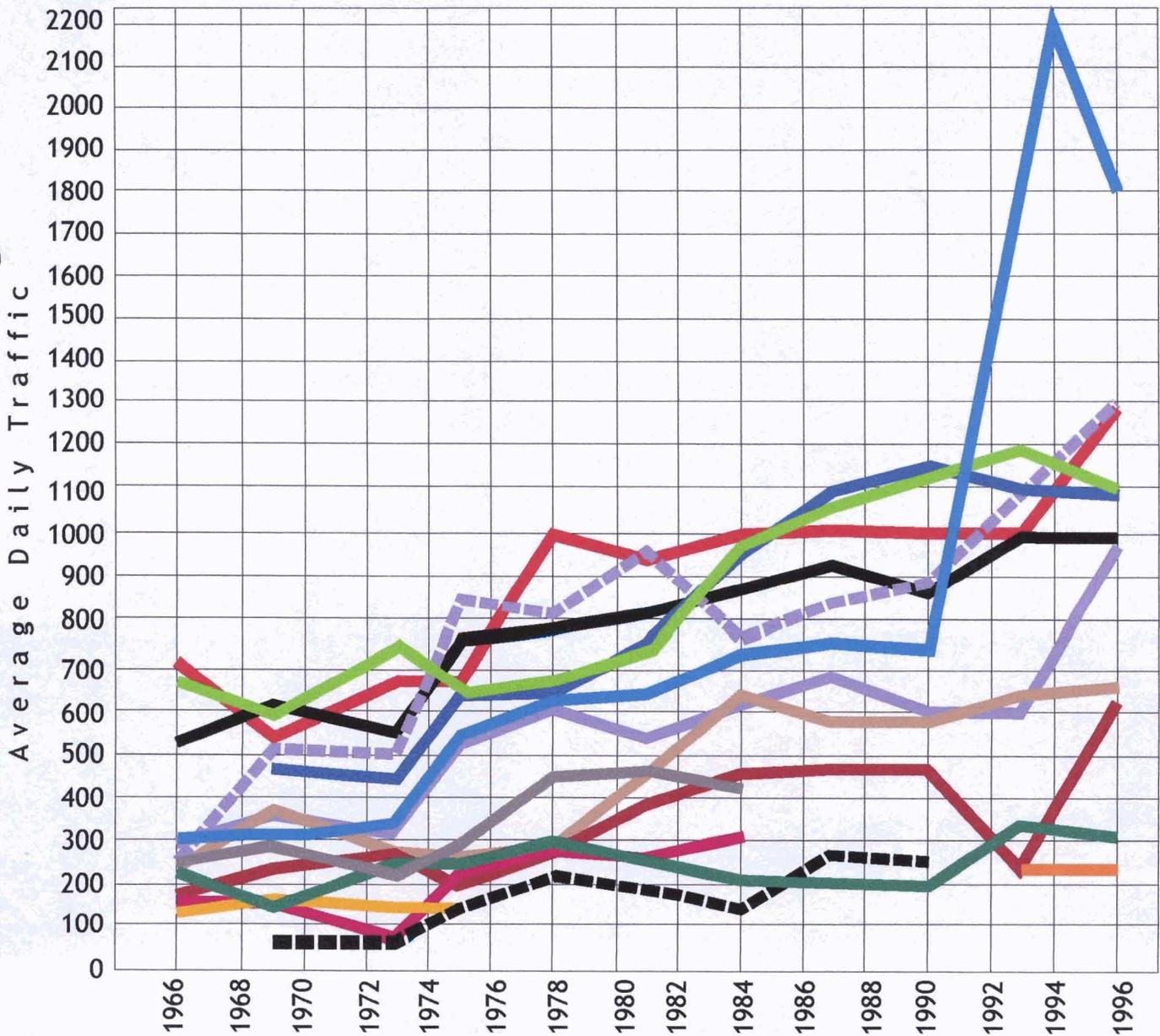
Site 1: CTH "K" just south of jct. With CTH "E" (in Parkland Twp.)  
Site 2: CTH "K" just north of jct. with CTH "V" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 3: CTH "K" just east of jct. with CTH "B" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 4: CTH "B" 1 ½ mile west of CTH "A" (in Superior Twp.)  
Site 5: CTH "B" 1 mile east of jct. with CTH "A" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 6: CTH "B" ¾ mile west of jct. with CTH "L" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 7: CTH "B" just east of jct. with CTH "L" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 8: CTH "B" just west of jct. with US 53 (in Hawthorne Twp.)  
Site 9: CTH "L" just south of jct. with CTH "B" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 10: CTH "L" just west of jct. with US 53 (in Bennett Twp.)  
Site 11: CTH "V" just east of jct. with CTH "K" (in Oakland Twp.)  
Site 12: CTH "V" 1 mile west of jct. with CTH "E" (formerly CTH "AA") (in Amnicon Twp.)  
Site 13: CTH "A" just north of jct. with CTH "B" at Four Corners (in Superior Twp.)  
Site 14: CTH "A" just south of jct. with CTH "B" at Four Corners (in Superior Twp.)  
\*1990 ADT / ^1966 ADT reading recorded 2 ½ miles west of jct with CTH "A" / \*\*These readings were taken just west of the jct. of CTH "L" and US 53, all other from just east of this junction. / \*\*\*1969 ADT / ^^These reading were taken on STH "V" ½ mile west of jct. with the Hines Rd.  
Source: Wisconsin Highway Traffic, Division of Planning & Budget, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 8



### Sites of Average Daily Traffic Recording in and near the Town of Oakland 1966 - 1996.



Note: A gap in the line on the graph indicates a period when average daily traffic was not collected.



**Commuter Traffic In and Out of Douglas County.** As of 1994, the county was experiencing a net commuter loss of 1,512 individuals who resided in Douglas County but worked outside the county. Table 10 indicates Douglas County's commuting patterns. As is indicated, most workers who commute remain in Douglas County. Of note, 85.6 percent of commuters who leave the county travel to Minnesota, primarily to the City of Duluth.

**Table 10: Douglas County Commuting Patterns**

	Commute To	Commute From	Net Commute
Bayfield County	101	245	144
Washburn County	137	56	-81
Burnett County	43	25	-18
Minnesota	3,917	2,609	-1,308
Elsewhere	376	78	-298
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,574</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>-1,521</b>
Commute within Douglas County	12,739	-----	-----

Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development, Wisconsin Commuting Patterns 1994.

**Roadway Maintenance and Repair.** Neither the Douglas County Highway Department or the Wisconsin Department of Transportation have any major roadway improvement projects scheduled for county highways in the Town of Oakland through their budget cycle ending in 2005.

**Airports and Airfields.** No scheduled passenger flights are available in Douglas County. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international destinations are in Duluth, Minnesota or Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. At present, Douglas County has a total of eight airfields. Their use and present condition is outlined in Table 11.

**Table 11: Douglas County Airfields**

Airfield	Location	Owner	Status
Richard I. Bong Airport	City of Superior, T49N, R14W, Sec. 35	City of Superior	Municipal, General Use
Solon Springs Municipal	T Solon Springs, T44N, R12W, Sec. 1	Solon Springs Twp.	Municipal, General Use
Degerman Field	T Highland, T45N, R10W, Sec. 5	John D. Degerman	Private
Cedar Island	T Highland, T46N, R10W, Sec. 22	J. G. Ordway	Private
Elm's Airfield	T Parkland, T48N, R13W, Sec. 13	Roger E. Elm	Private
Carlson's Airfield	T Superior, T48N, R14W, Sec. 24	Earl Carlson	Private
Northern Lakes Marina	V Lake Nebagamon, T47N, R11R, Sec. 36	Anthony R. Colleta	Private, abandoned
Apollo Club	T Superior, T47N, R14W, Sec. 15	Charles Androwski	Private, abandoned

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics, 2000

SECTION 5

LAND USE & ZONING

**Existing Land Use.** The predominant land use activity in the Town of Oakland is forestry. As was mentioned earlier, Douglas County maintains approximately one-third of the town for forestry (including timber sales, public recreation, and wildlife habitat). Residential and agricultural uses comprise the second and third most prevalent land use activities respectively. Table 12 below lists the various categories of land use in the town.

**Table 12: Town of Oakland Existing Land Use**

Land Use Classification	Acres	Percent of Town
Agricultural	2,953	7.09%
Forestry	34,765	83.49%
Commercial	94	2.25%
Residential	3,272	7.85%
Public Park	37	0.08%
Institutional (town, church, etc.)	36	0.08%
Open Water	482	1.15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,639*</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: NWRPC Geographic Information Systems analysis of field survey conducted June 2001

\*uncorrected overage of 48 acres from Geographic Information Systems database

**Existing Zoning.** All areas of the Town of Oakland are under Douglas County Zoning. The town has seven zoning districts presently in force, these include: R-1 Residential, RR-1 Residential-Recreation, R-2 Residential, C-1 Commercial, A-1 Agricultural, F-1 Forestry, and W-1 Resource Conservation. The Town of Oakland presently has no lands zoned I-1 Industrial for industrial or manufacturing use.

**Table 13: Town of Oakland Existing Zoning Districts**

Zoning Districts	Acres	Percent of Town
A-1: Agricultural	12,534	30.10%
C-1: Commercial	82	0.20%
F-1: Forestry	24,970	60.03%
R-1: Residential	896	2.15%
R-2: Residential	1,530	3.68%
RR-1: Residential-Recreation	606	1.46%
W-1: Resource Conservation	137	0.33%
Open Water	835	2.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Douglas County Zoning Office

**Growth Management Factors.** Certain factors, both cultural and natural, serve to inhibit the development of areas within the town. Cultural factors include pre-existing development in the form of residential, commercial, or institutional use or lands established for conservancy; potential resource use (forestry, mining, gravel pit, etc.); or sites made un-usable through contamination. Natural factors inhibiting growth include wetlands, sensitive natural areas, buffer zones for wildlife habitat areas, steep slopes, or other special conditions that preclude development. The following table and accompanying map reveal the growth management factors

present in the Town of Oakland. Just over one-fourth of the Town of Oakland has no pre-existing man-made or environmental condition which would prohibit development.

**Table 14: Town of Oakland Growth Management Factors**

Growth Management Factors	Acres	Percent of Town
Lands in industrial / commercial forest	3,199	7.69%
Lands in public ownership	6,957	16.73%
Wetlands	8,790	21.14%
Existing Commercial / Industrial Use	139	0.33%
Existing Residential Use	7,547	18.15%
Steep Slopes (12.5% slope; Soil Cons. Service)	734	2.01%
Water buffer zone (development prohibited)	2,296	5.52%
Open water	835	1.77%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Douglas County Zoning Office

**Tax classification.** Parcels are assessed for the value of the land and improvements on them for taxation purposes. Viewing the tax classifications is instructive in revealing the pattern of land use in the town. The following table illustrates the amount of land in the Town of Oakland that falls into each tax classification.

**Table 15: Tax Classifications**

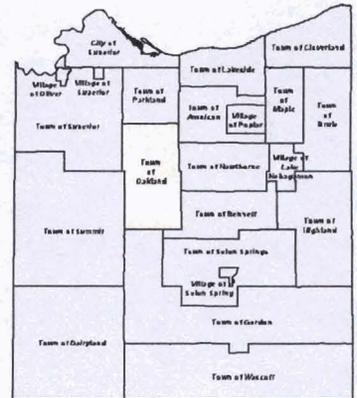
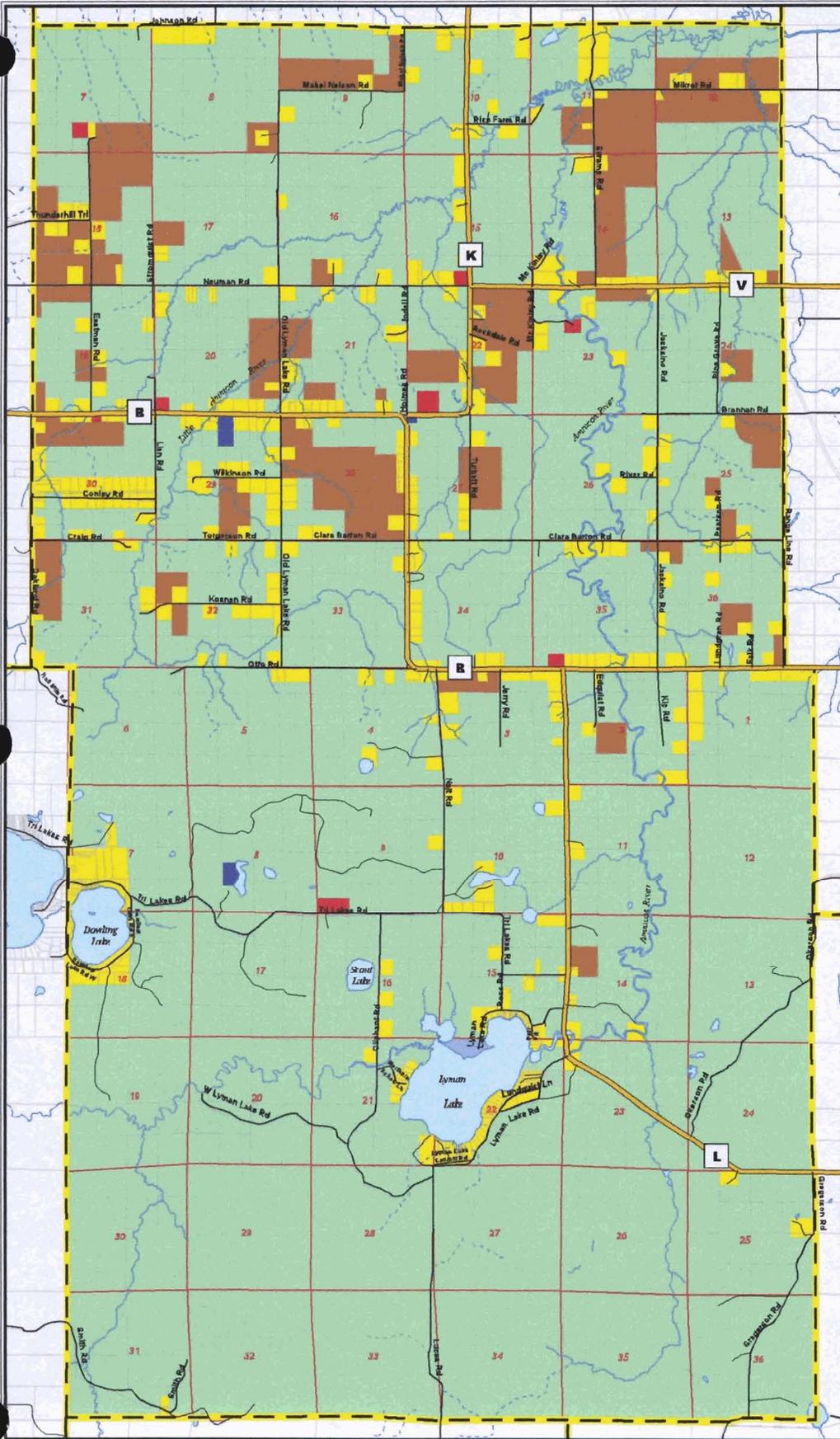
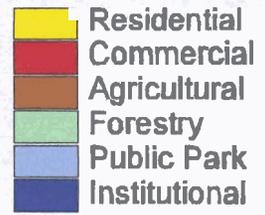
Tax Classifications	Acres	Percent of Town
Residential	8,775	21.1%
Agricultural	2,986	7.2%
Mercantile (Commercial)	81	0.19%
Manufacturing	80	0.19%
Productive Forest Lands	8,911	21.2%
Private Forest Crop	1,406	3.3%
Managed Forest Lands	3,930	9.5%
Swamp and waste	1,904	4.6%
Exempt: Douglas County Lands	161	0.4%
Douglas County Forest Crop	12,413	29.8%
Exempt: Special Use Lands	362	0.9%
Exempt: Town of Oakland Lands	115	0.3%
Exempt: Miscellaneous Lands	11	1.09%
Parcels with no Tax Classification Data	455	1.13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,590</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

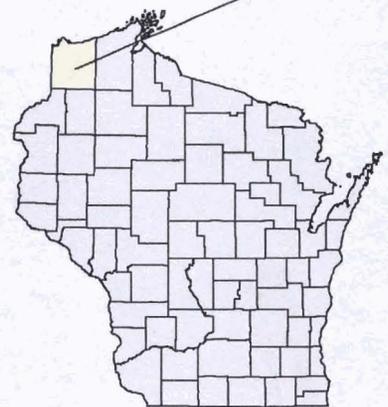
# Town of Oakland

Map 8

## Existing Land Use



Douglas County,  
Wisconsin

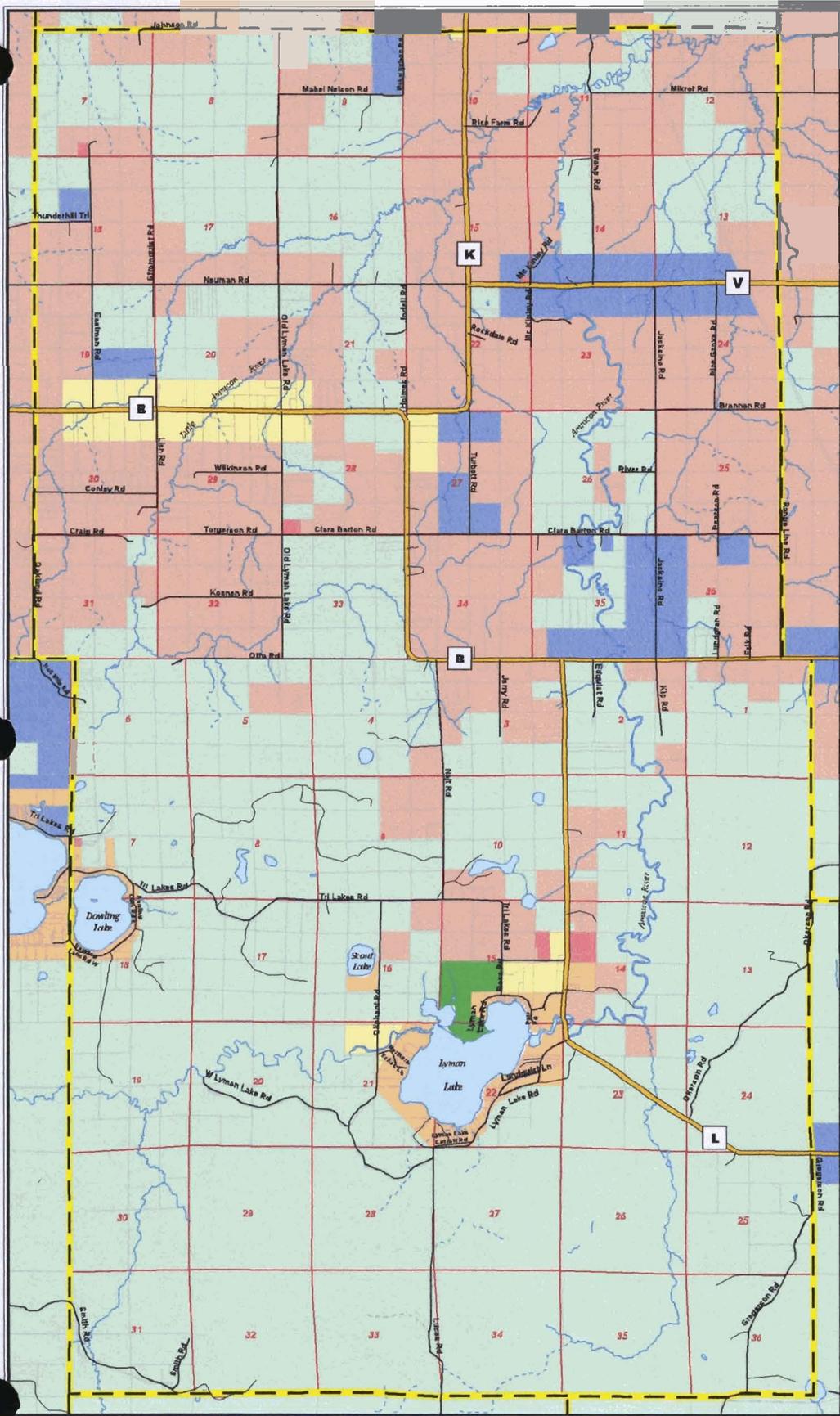


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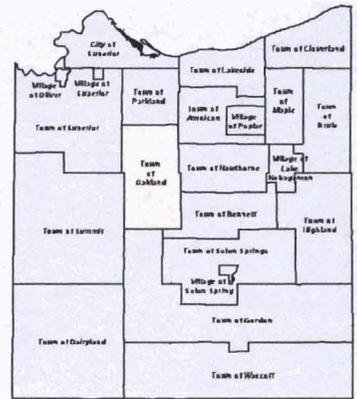
# Town of Oakland

Map 9



- County Zoning Districts**
- Residential - R1
  - Residential-Recreation - RR1
  - Residential - R2
  - Commercial - C1
  - Agricultural - A1
  - Forestry - F1
  - Industrial - I1
  - Resource Conservation

**County Road**  
**Town Road**



Douglas County,  
Wisconsin



**Northwest Regional  
Planning Commission**  
*an economic development district*

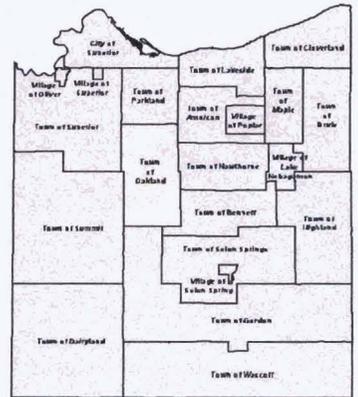
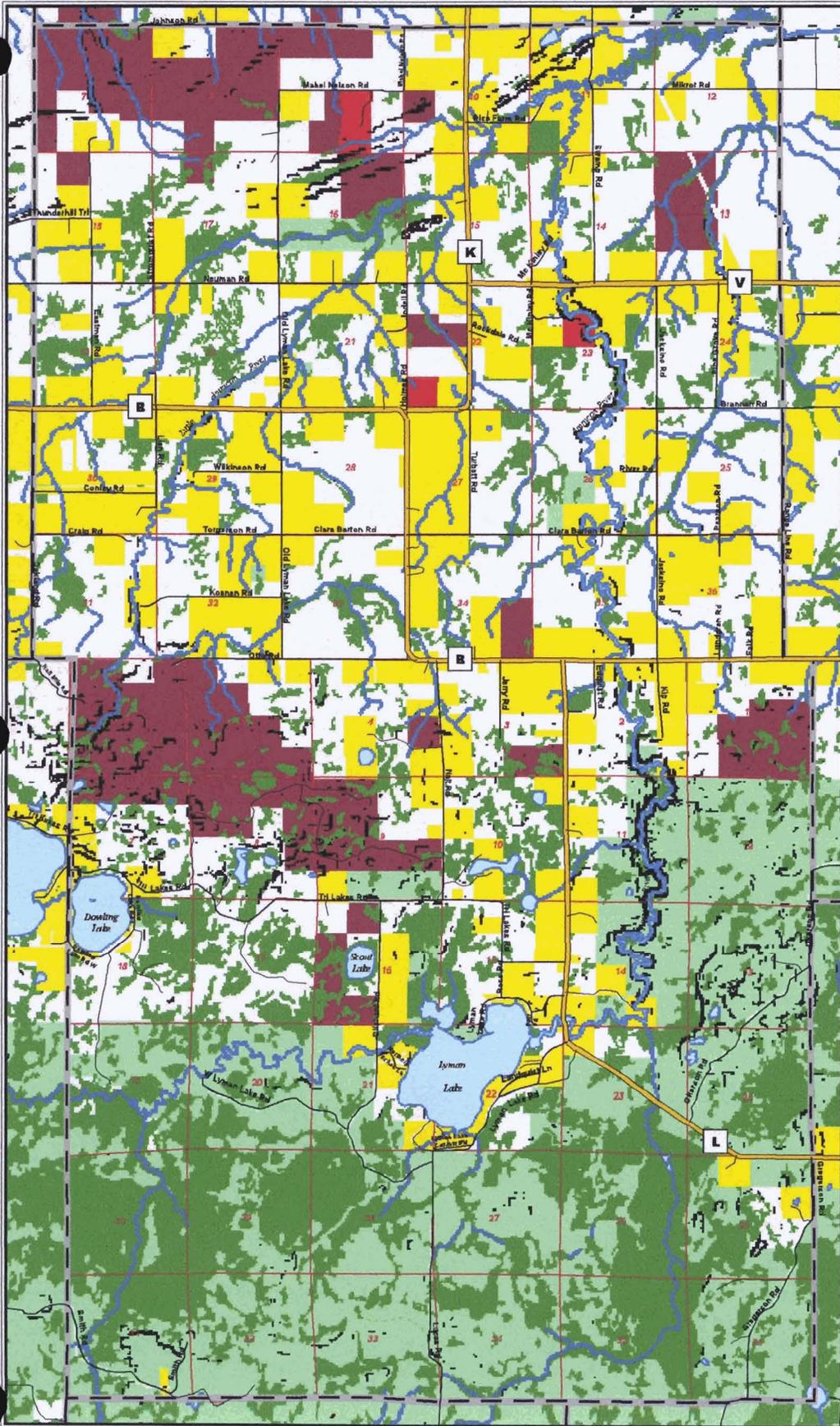
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# Town of Oakland

## Growth Management Factors

-  Water
  -  Water Buffer (75 feet)
  -  Steep Slopes (>12.5%)
  -  Residential
  -  Com/Indust
  -  Wetland
  -  Public Land
  -  Industrial Forest
  -  none
- 
-  County Road
  -  Town Road



Douglas County,  
Wisconsin



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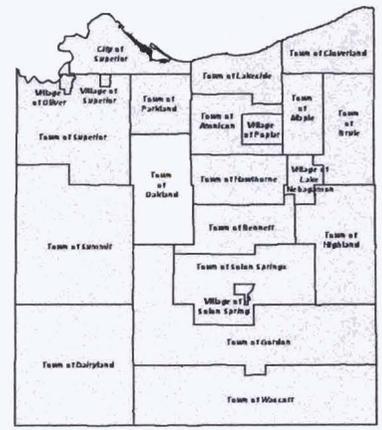
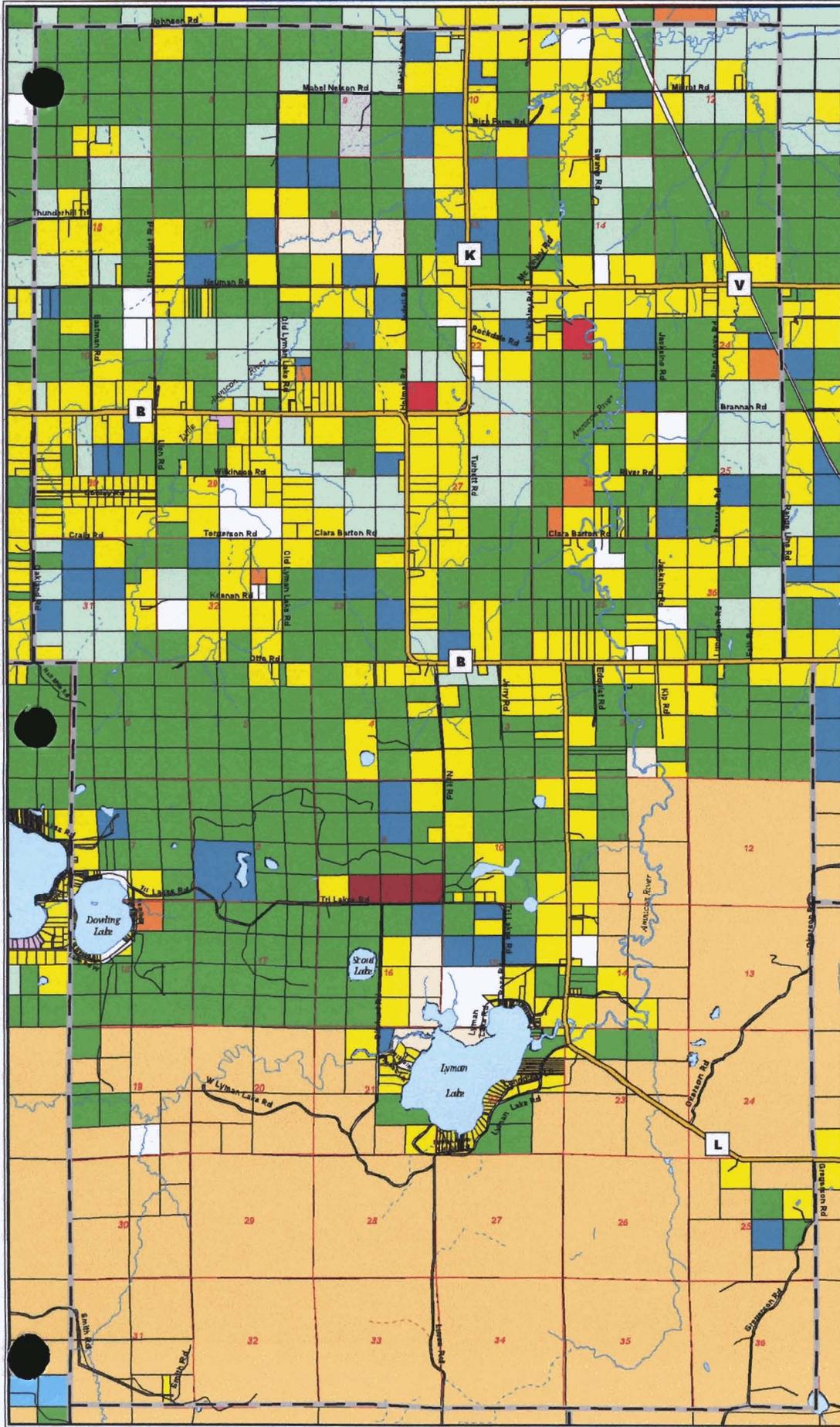


# Town of Oakland

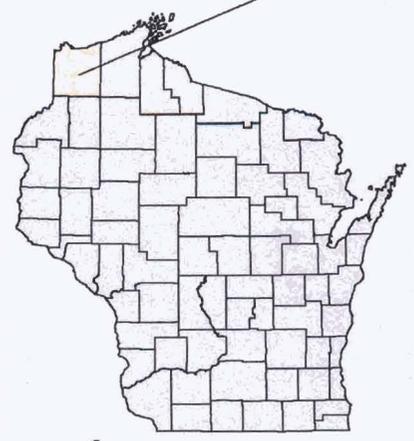
## Property Tax Classification

Map 11

- Residential
- Mercantile
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Swamp and Waste
- Federal
- State
- County
- County Forest
- Special Use Land
- Municipal
- Exempt Industrial
- Exempt Utilities
- Exempt Railroads
- Other Exempt
- No Data



Douglas County,  
Wisconsin



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**Table 16: Change in Parcels & Acreage for Tax Classification Categories, 1978-1998**

Tax Classification	Number of Parcels			Acreage		
	1978	1988	1998	1978	1988	1998
Agricultural	321	241	123	6,037	4,149	3,449
Residential	601	626	703	5,000	1,468	2,062
Mercantile (Commercial)	8	10	8	10	11	49
Manufacturing	1	1	1	80	80	80
Swamp and waste	37	30	105	537	418	1,677
Forest	593	570	562	19,489	16,411	15,525

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

**Change in Parcels.** A review of tax classification parcels from 1978 to 1998 reveals the following trends:

- › A continued decline in lands assessed for agriculture
- › A continued, but modest increase in parcels assessed residential.
- › Stability in both mercantile (commercial) and manufacturing parcels since 1978.
- › A notable increase in swamp and waste assessed parcels (this is primarily due to the Department of Revenue's 1997 re-classification of what constitutes swamp and waste)
- › A gradual decline in parcels assessed for private forestry use.

From these trends it can be reasoned that:

- › Commercial and manufacturing activity in the town are presently stable and not in a mode of growth.
- › Forestry and agricultural lands are gradually being converted over into use for residential development, primarily as small lots of 10 acres or less. The increase in residential parcels coupled with the decrease in residential acreage suggests the subdivision of existing residential parcels for new development along with the conversion of agricultural and forestry lands.

SECTION 6

PUBLIC INPUT AND  
PUBLIC CONCERNS

**Community Survey.** A community planning survey was created by the Town of Oakland Planning Committee and distributed to each resident and property owner in the town in October 2000. Results were gathered and processed by Northwest Regional Planning Commission and made available to the public at the first planning input session in March 2001. Additional public forums were held in August 2001 and (list others as they occur). The full results and a copy of the survey as it was distributed are found in Appendix A of this plan.

The purpose of the Community Planning Survey was two-fold: to let the property owners and residents in the town know that Oakland is preparing a land use plan and that their input is welcomed, and secondly, to gather that input through questions centered around issues and concerns currently faced by the town.

**Public Input Sessions/Public Commentary** from the public input sessions held, those in attendance identified the following issues.

*Preservation of rural character in the Town of Oakland*  
*Concerns over outdoor lighting / "light trespass" / diminishment of night sky viewing*  
*Regulations for control of jet-skis on the lakes*  
*Not to become a suburb of Superior*  
*Protect the natural resources of the town*  
*Improve the quality of the town's roads*  
*Better law enforcement for truck traffic on CTH "B"*  
*Establish a reward system or financial incentive for keeping land in its natural state*  
*Investigate a fee for the use of the land by the proposed Arrowhead-Weston power line*  
*Concern for appropriate placement of septic systems*  
*Better coordination between Douglas County and the Town of Oakland*  
*Better enforcement of existing zoning ordinances by Douglas County*  
*Concern over unplanned development/actions of non-resident developers*  
*Increasing road use and associated maintenance costs due to increased development*  
*Find a consistent form of education for residents/visitors on land use policy to head off future conflicts and problems*  
*Preservation of the town's environmental corridors*

SECTION 7

GOALS, OBJECTIVES  
AND ACTIONS

The Town of Oakland, in accordance with the survey results and public input collected during the planning process developed a series of goal, objective, and action statements that serve to define the desired future direction of the town.

**Goal 1: PROTECT AND MAINTAIN THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN OF OAKLAND**

Objective A: Identify the characteristics of the Town of Oakland that constitute rural character and work to maintain those characteristics.

Objective B: Identify a target development density threshold for the Town of Oakland with accommodation for development factors such as road access, site suitability and land cover.

Objective C: Identify open space areas that presently contribute to the rural character of the Town of Oakland and review options for their retention as open space.

Objective D: Make use of innovative residential and commercial development design techniques to accommodate growth while retaining the town's rural character.

Objective E: Work to protect the environmental corridors from incompatible or damaging development in the town.

Objective F: Work to provide a variety of recreational amenities and access to residents and visitors within the town's capacity to do so.

*Action: Review capacity of existing lake access points, trail and roadway network.*

**Goal 2: MINIMIZE LAND USE CONFLICTS WITHIN THE TOWN OF OAKLAND**

Objective A: Work to cooperatively guide new land use activities including residential, commercial, forestry and agricultural into suitable and appropriate areas of the town.

*Action: Identify areas suitable for various types of land use activities within the Town of Oakland through the Land Use Planning and Public Input Process.*

*Action: Review existing zoning districts and existing land use patterns in the town and devise recommendations for better integration of zoning and land use.*

Objective B: Incorporate a variety of innovative design standards, site designs and related concepts that accommodate development appropriate to the character of the town.

**Goal 3: MAINTAIN, PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF THE TOWN OF OAKLAND**

Objective A: Work to protect and maintain the quality of the town's surface and subsurface water resources.

*Action: Identify and enforce equitable controls for personal watercraft use*

*Action: Identify areas unsuitable for moderate to high density development due to high groundwater, susceptibility to contamination or inability to sustain septic systems.*

Objective B: Work to preserve the high quality of the town's air resources.

*Action: Identify potential threats to air quality*

Objective C: Work to protect the aesthetic beauty of the town's natural amenities.

*Action: Identify scenic, unique or fragile sites which are of particular aesthetic value to the town and review a variety of means to preserve and maintain them.*

Objective D: Work to protect the rural "night sky / dark sky" amenities of the town.

*Action: Examine innovative and efficient private lighting design options for private and public uses which direct light earthward rather than skyward*

**Goal 4: WORK TOWARD EQUITABLE AND CONSISTENT ENFORCEMENT OF ZONING AND LAND USE REGULATIONS IN THE TOWN OF OAKLAND.**

Objective A: Identify areas of present concern as examples of situations to avoid in future land use development.

Objective B: Work to minimize the use of variances in the town.

Objective C: Pro-actively work to improve communication with Douglas County on issues of zoning enforcement and land use regulation.

Objective D: Work to improve education and awareness of zoning and land use regulation procedure and policy for Town of Oakland residents.

**Goal 5: PROMOTE CONTINUED INTERACTION AND COOPERATION WITH NEIGHBORING TOWNS AND ORGANIZATIONS, DOUGLAS COUNTY AND THE STATE OF WISCONSIN.**

Objective A: Promote cooperation and increased communication for long-term planning with neighboring towns and Douglas County.

Objective B: Work to strengthen existing partnerships of fire departments, lake districts, recreational groups and related mutual aid agreements with adjoining municipalities.

**Goal 6: ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE AND CONTINUED PUBLICLY BASED LAND USE PLANNING PROCESS IN THE TOWN OF OAKLAND.**

Objective A: Encourage public participation in land use planning in the Town of Oakland via open meetings, public input session and participation in the town government process.

Objective B: Provide the opportunity for continual public review and amendment of the land use plan.

SECTION 8

PROPOSED LAND USE  
AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section lists the various broad land use areas derived via the planning process for the Town of Oakland. Following this section is a map illustrating the coverage of these broad land use areas.

- I. **Moderate to high-density lakeshore residential:** This area is identified in *dark blue* on the map and is found around Dowling and Lyman Lakes. A mix of permanent and seasonal housing units and various types of private lake access defines this area. The majority of usable parcels have been already developed along these lakes; however, some additional parcels may be carved from existing ones.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Adherence to State of Wisconsin and Douglas County shoreland ordinances for setbacks of new developments and improvements to existing structures.

Encourage the reintroduction of native shoreland vegetation to control and filter run-off from lawns and to stabilize the existing shoreline.

Discourage excessive parcelization, backlot development, and development of "keyhole" access lots. Discourage excessive lakeshore development or substantial modification of the natural shoreline that would impair water quality or create erosion potential. Discourage excessive or poorly designed shoreland outdoor lighting that would diminish the rural amenity of night sky viewing.

- II. **Areas perceived to have development potential/pressure in coming years:** These areas are identified in *medium blue* on the map and are found to the north, east, and south of Dowling Lake, along Tri-Lakes Road, and to the south of Lyman Lake.

As valuable and desirable lake lots are developed to capacity in the Town of Oakland, market pressure for developable real estate with "northwoods" amenities will continue. These amenities include access to viewsheds, wooded seclusion, wildlife habitat, or capacity for hunting and wooded lots for timber management.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Residential development should make use of conservation subdivisions or similar planned unit development techniques that maintain the natural contours of the site and landscape. Development projects that do not meet the conservation subdivision criteria should be developed with a minimum lot size of 20 acres to retain low-density "rural character" and wooded seclusion of developments.

New residential developments must be sited to avoid the diminishment of natural corridors including ravines, creeks and waterways, critical habitats, wetlands, sensitive and fragile soils and to avoid natural hazard areas.

**III. Moderate density residential corridor:** These areas are identified in *light orange* on the map and are found along the CTH "B", CTH "K" and CTH "V" corridors through the town. These corridors already contain a substantial portion of the town's residential development and are responsible for conducting the bulk of roadway traffic to, from and through the town.

**CONCERNS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

***Over development*** - i.e. too many parcels developed into housing resulting in a high frequency of driveways onto the highway as a safety concern

***Aesthetic concerns*** - increased development along this corridor without attention to screening (either vegetative or manufactured fencing), appropriate setbacks

***Maintenance of traffic flow*** - increased development along this corridor without attention to screening (either vegetative or manufactured fencing), appropriate setbacks

***Overuse by vehicular traffic*** - a growing concern, especially for the CTH "B" is the overuse of county highways through the Town of Oakland by large trucks. Large trucks use this route to bypass the Wisconsin Department of Transportation weigh station located on USH 53 en route to Duluth-Superior. This increased load poses two immediate problems to the residents: declining road quality and safety.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CORRIDOR INCLUDE:**

Parcel divisions must be part of a conservation subdivision development that is appropriately screened from the roadway and protects naturally occurring vegetation. Non-conservation design development projects must have a minimum parcel size of 20 acres to control density and over-development, driveway frequency, and maintain the appropriate speed of the corridor.

Designated minimum setbacks for new residential development and related buildings (garages, workshops, storage sheds) for both safety and aesthetic concerns.

Use of screenings (preferably vegetative plantings, trees, etc.) to ensure privacy and minimize aesthetic discontinuity.

Development of roadway shoulders by the Douglas County Highway Department so the roadway can more safely accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic, provide safe transit for motorists, and increase visibility for wildlife hazards (hitting deer).

Concentration of new commercial enterprises at designated sites to minimize excessive ingress and egress from the roadway to preserve the speed of the corridor.

Development of standards for commercial signage including color scheme, size, and lighting so the corridor does not become cluttered with distracting and un-compatible signs.

**IV. Low density residential / agricultural / forestry:** These areas are identified in *yellow* on the map and encompass roughly the northern and central portions of the town, including a substantial portion of the CTH "L" corridor. They are presently characterized by low density, single-family homes with active or former farming operations and small to large woodlots. This area forms the core of the town's "rural character" and open space.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Residential development projects should require a minimum parcel size of 40 acres to control density and preserve the open space amenities

Use of screenings (preferably vegetative plantings, trees, etc.) to ensure privacy and minimize aesthetic discontinuity.

New residential developments must be sited to avoid the diminishment of natural corridors including ravines, creeks and waterways, critical habitats, wetlands, sensitive and fragile soils and to avoid natural hazard areas.

**V. Douglas Fault viewshed area (Areas perceived to have development potential/pressure in coming years)** This area is identified with a *hatch pattern* on the map and encompasses the northwestern corner of the town. At present, it is largely forested and undeveloped. This area has the primary amenity of beautiful north-facing views and has a perceived high market value potential for residential development. Access to most of the area is limited to the CTH "K", Mabel Nelson Road and Eastman Road.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Use of conservation subdivisions or other planned unit development treatments as applicable to desired higher-density developments and the use of appropriate vegetative screenings to minimize the visual impact of these developments on the landscape. Non-conservation design development should require a minimum lot size of 40 acres.

Recognition of the characteristics of the soil, susceptibility to groundwater contamination, and ability of the area to support private septic systems.

Review the feasibility of setting aside a portion of the area for public use as a park, preserve, or hiking trail network.

Any new roadway construction must take into consideration the variability of the landscape.

Further analyze the physical characteristics of the viewshed and define existing development patterns within this area to prepare/plan for future land development that may impact the viewshed.

**VI. Commercial nodes.** These areas are identified in *red* on the map and are found at the intersections of CTHs “B” & “K” and at CTHs “K” & “V”. The sites at the intersections of the county trunk highways are presently functioning as commercial nodes with two businesses and the town’s municipal buildings in place.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Encourage larger commercial enterprises which are incompatible with the Town of Oakland’s rural residential character and long-term goals to locate at the designated development nodes identified in the Douglas County Land Use Plan or in the City of Superior where appropriate municipal infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) is already in place.

Encouraging new commercial and retail developments to concentrate at these designated sites to inhibit the development of highway sprawl in the town.

**VII. Institutional lands / parks.** These areas are identified in *gray* on the map. These three areas include the Boy Scouts of America Camp Neuman area, Anna-Gene County Park, and the Town of Oakland municipal complex at the junction of CTHs “B” & “K”. These areas are largely unchanging in their present and anticipated future use.

The Town of Oakland would be well served to examine additional sites within the town suitable for potential expansion of town facilities (example: expansion of town garage facilities, fire department, etc.) if such is necessary in the coming 20 years.

**VIII. Douglas County Forest Lands.** These areas are identified in *pale mint green* on the map and encompass roughly the southern one-third of the Town of Oakland. The county maintains this area for timber harvest, wildlife habitat, recreational access, and wetlands protection.

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Adherence to policies and standards set forth in the Douglas County Forestry Plan for long-term forestry management, recreational access, and wildlife habitat.

Recognition that private developments on parcels bordering county lands should maintain an appropriate vegetation buffer to reduce forest fragmentation.

New road construction should be limited to those roads used specifically for logging and timber operations. After their use for timber harvest, Douglas County should encourage the closure/gating/limiting of access to these areas to deter increased human activity and to promote forest regeneration and wildlife habitat.

Forest access for logging operation and development of recreational trails should be encouraged to make use of the existing logging roads and trails.

**IX. Forestry Lands.** These areas are identified in *medium green* on the map and are found in the west central portion of the town. These areas presently lack significant residential development and are held as private woodlots for timber harvest, hunting and recreational access.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THESE AREAS INCLUDE:**

Maintain Douglas County F-1 Forestry zoning designation for these areas.

In the event that residential development is imminent on these areas, a minimum parcel size of 40 acres should be maintained to control density and over development.

**X. Protection areas / conservancy.** These areas are identified in *dark green* on the map and are found in three places on the map. These include the undeveloped north and west shoreline areas of Lyman Lake and two areas west of CTH "B" and north of Otto Road. These areas are identified as containing outstanding or fragile natural resource attributes that have been identified for long-term protection.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PROTECTION/CONSERVANCY AREAS:**

Re-zoning of these areas to the Douglas County W-1 Conservancy District.

Prohibition of residential use, commercial use, or other land development activity in these areas.

**XI. Amnicon River / Little Amnicon River Corridors.** These areas are identified in *dark green outline highlight* on the map and encompass the length of the Amnicon and Little Amnicon Rivers through the Town of Oakland and several tributaries of the Little Amnicon River system.

**Amnicon River.** The Amnicon River is a significant regional waterway and has been identified in the Douglas County Land Use Plan and the Douglas County Critical Resource Inventory as contributing to the scenic, aesthetic, and natural beauty of the area and for providing habitat to both terrestrial and aquatic life. The majority of the Amnicon River corridor is in private ownership and presently has no formal long-term-management strategy. Substantial development within the river corridor could result in decreased water quality and the loss of aesthetic benefits.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AMNICON RIVER CORRIDOR:**

Adherence to State of Wisconsin and Douglas County shoreland ordinances for setbacks of new developments and improvements to existing structures in the river corridors.

Encourage loggers and timber harvesting operations to adhere to the regulations and setbacks regarding timber harvest in areas adjacent to navigable streams.

Determine areas of the Amnicon River Corridor within the Town of Oakland that have specific points of interest, fragile characteristics, outstanding geologic or other features, or provide

unique natural habitat and work for their long-term protection via purchase of development rights, easement purchase, or rezoning to W-1 conservancy.

**Little Amnicon River.** The Little Amnicon River is a tributary to the Amnicon River and connects to the main river just west of the junction of Mikrot and Swamp Roads in the town's northeast corner. In contrast to much of the Amnicon River, the Little Amnicon River shoreline areas are low and marshy, particularly adjacent to and west of CTH "K". These wetlands areas provide groundwater recharge and natural water detention capacity after rain and during the spring thaw.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LITTLE AMNICON RIVER CORRIDOR:**

Adherence to State of Wisconsin and Douglas County shoreland ordinances for setbacks of new developments and improvements to existing structures in the river corridors.

Discourage developments, disturbances, new road construction, or bridge building that would serve to diminish the capacity of the Little Amnicon's adjacent wetlands to filter rain water or spring thaw run-off.

**XII. Development discouraged.** This single site is marked in *brown* on the map and encompasses the Aurora-Ouisconsin Shooting Range facility and neighboring parcels which house the town's old landfill site and a quarry. Residential development should be discouraged on adjacent parcels to avoid conflicts between land-owners and the noise generated by the lawful activity of sport shooting. Additionally, residential development should be discouraged due to the presence of the old landfill and its potential for residual contaminates.

## CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS

The **conservation subdivision** concept has been around for several decades as a planning tool for residential development. The concept has been widely used throughout the eastern United States (notably the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey) where the growing population and demand for housing has begun to outstrip the availability of developable land. Additionally, municipalities seeking out ways to accommodate new residential development without sacrificing their natural areas, forest, and open spaces have been employing the conservation subdivision as one of their development tools.

Figures A, B, and C were prepared to illustrate how the conservation subdivision could assist the Town of Oakland accommodate new residential growth without diminishing its natural characteristics.

Figure A illustrates an undeveloped 80-acre parcel; perhaps a farmer is retiring and wishes to sell land holdings to add to his or her retirement funds. The parcel to be developed has a number of attractive features for residential development including gentle slopes down to a creek, the creek itself, and a combination of both wooded and open areas.

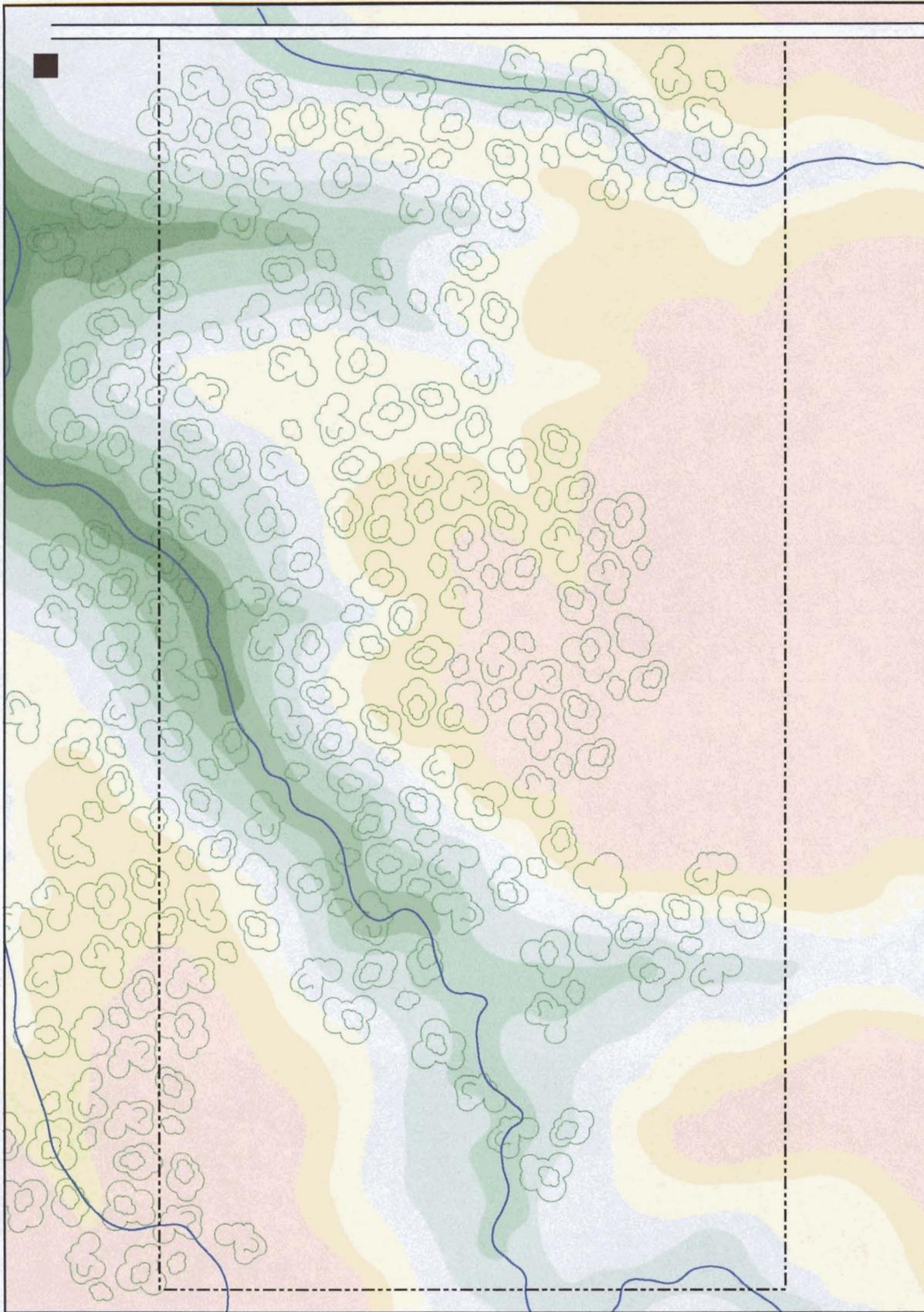
Figure B represents the conventional method of residential development or subdivision development. Lot lines are drawn, a straight road is laid out, and the parcels are sold and developed. While this type of development enables the farmer to profit from the sale of his land and enables individuals to build a house and purchase a land holding, it also significantly diminishes the natural character of the area.

Under this type of development (Figure B) the contours of the land and natural flow of the landscape is broken up into parcels that do not conform to the land's natural attributes. The road directly down the center of the former 80 cuts through the slope and valley rather than following the natural contours of the land.

Figure C illustrates the concept of the conservation subdivision. Using a clustered design, 12 residential parcels are created but on lots of one to two acres in size. The remaining lands are then left in their natural state and are held as an undivided interest. The undivided interest lands can be held in trust by the homeowners in the subdivision, can be retained by the original land owner, delivered into public hands, or purchased by a private organization such as the Nature Conservancy; and the lands will have covenants written into the deed that they are designated for specific uses (recreational use, wildlife habitat, etc.) and not to be developed. This option preserves natural areas and corridors of the town while still enabling development to take place and profit to be made by the original landowner and satisfy on-going market demand for land in rural areas. Lands in the undivided trust portion of the conservation subdivision, as they are no longer eligible for development, are then taxed as conservancy lands—substantially lower than that of residential property.

Conservation subdivision development projects should be encouraged to contain diversity in housing types and costs to match the housing needs of the community.

Figure A: Undeveloped 80 Acre Parcel

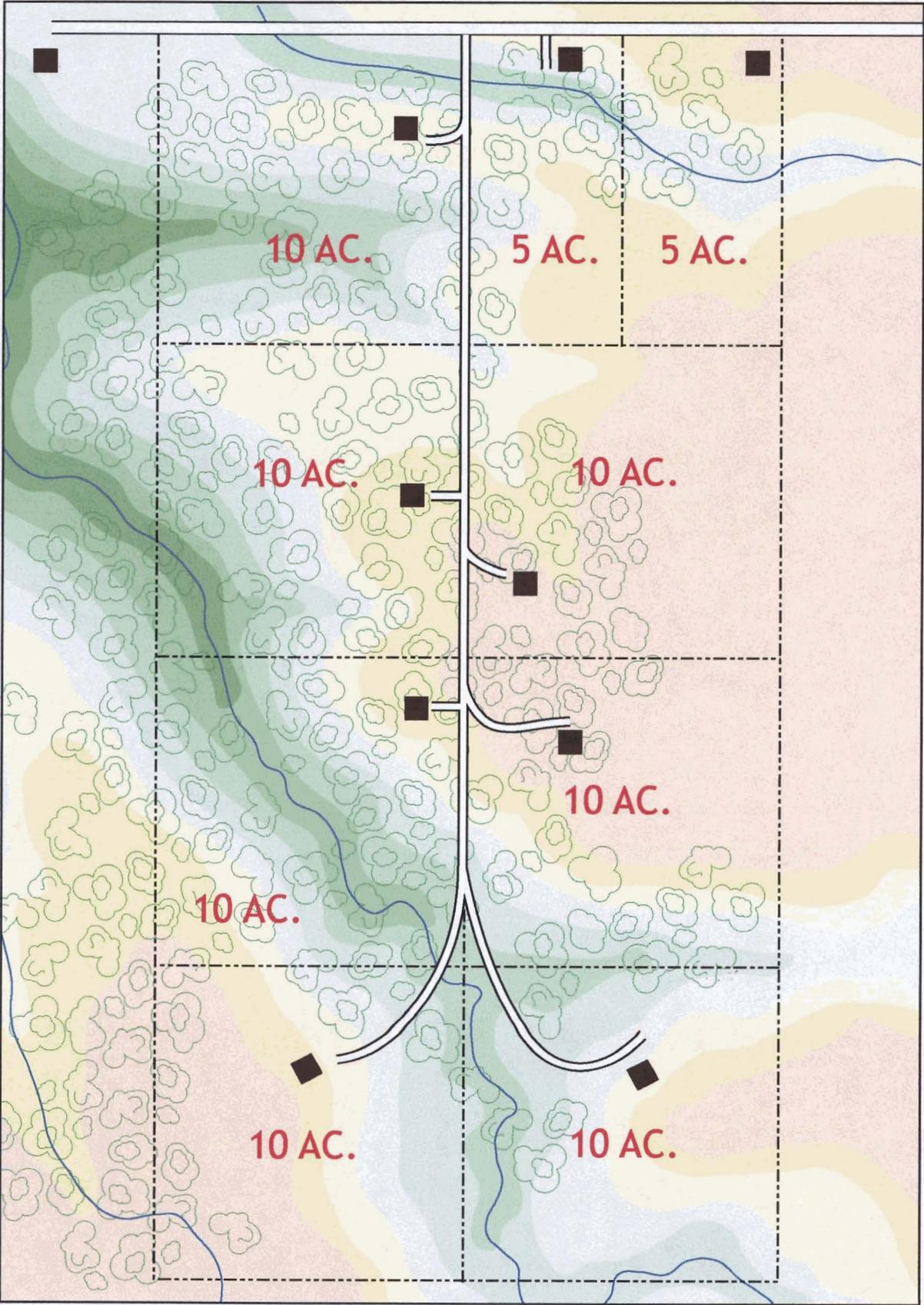


residence



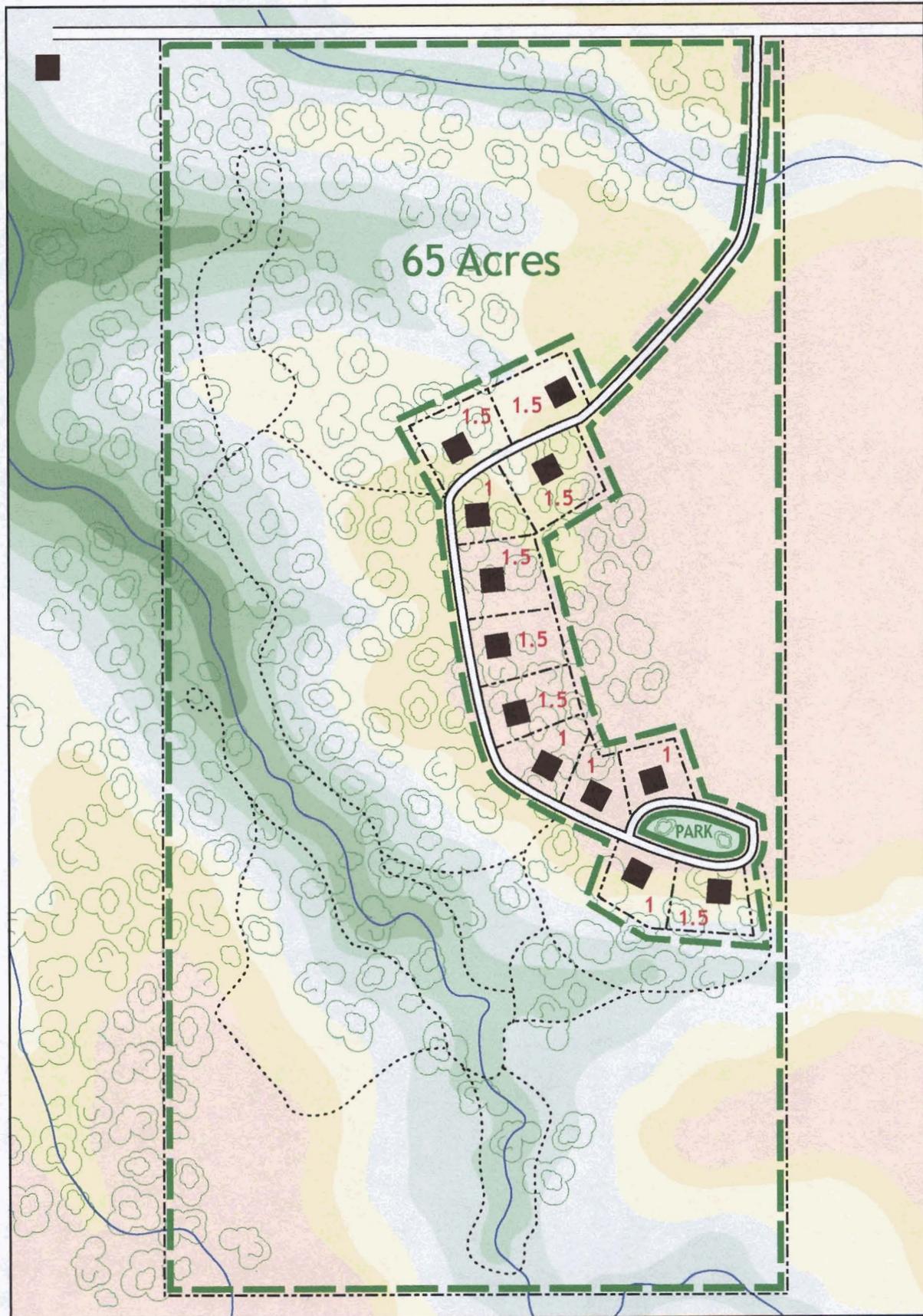
property boundary

Figure B: Conventional Subdivision



----- property boundary  
—— residence

# Figure C: Conservation Subdivision



- — — — — preserved "green-space"
- - - - - property boundary
- residence
- - - - - footpath

## **OTHER POTENTIAL IMPEMENTATION TOOLS**

### **SIGNS**

In an effort to preserve community character and natural setting, many communities have opted to utilize a *sign ordinance* to regulate the nature, size, location, and number of signs in their community. Ordinances of this nature give the community a legal tool for regulating signage and offer a tool to prevent the placement of unsightly and intrusive billboards that tend to propagate along transportation corridors.

### **NOISE**

Noise concerns within a community can affect the quality of life for residents. These concerns may be addressed through the development and implementation of a town noise ordinance.

### **PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR)**

In an effort to preserve and protect valuable natural or cultural features, communities may chose to purchase the development rights to a land parcel(s). PDR is a voluntary program, where a community, land trust, or some other agency usually linked to local government makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on the parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer or to try to negotiate a higher price. Once an agreement is made, a permanent deed restriction is placed on the property that restricts the type of activities that may take place on the land in perpetuity.

## **CONCLUSION**

In October 1999, the State of Wisconsin passed its "Smart Growth" legislation bill which stated that all municipalities (towns, villages, and cities) making land use decisions must base their decisions on a plan and have that plan formally adopted by their municipal government by January 1, 2010. By making the commitment to prepare, complete, and adopt a land use plan, the Town of Oakland has demonstrated its desire to be a progressive and thoughtful community. The town is concerned about its future direction, preserving its heritage, and enhancing the well being of its resources and inhabitants.

The land use plan is not a static or unchanging document, rather, it serves as a "snapshot" of the town at its time of completion and requires periodic revisiting and revision and conditions by the residents and government of the town to accommodate changes in the Town of Oakland

In closing, it is the sincere hope of the Town of Oakland's government and the Town of Oakland's Planning Committee that this plan be seen as a useful tool and as an asset and benefit to the town which contributes to the continued well-being of the residents, visitors, property owners, and businesses in the Town of Oakland.