

TOWN OF SHERMAN

LAND USE PLAN

January 2001

Draft

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special recognition is due to past and current members of the Sherman Town Board who had the foresight to support the first steps towards managing future land use in the Town of Sherman.

- Bill Lindsay – Chairman
- Gerald Mikula – Supervisor
- Everett Warner – Supervisor
- Robert Burge, Sr. – Former Supervisor
- Mary Sutter – Former Supervisor
- Ed Borgiaz – Former Chairman

Land Use Planning Committee

This project would not have been possible without the dedication of Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC) members who collectively volunteered thousands of hours over the past 3 ½ years:

Current LUPC Members:

- Bob Burge, Jr.
- Tim Burge
- Gary Carlson
- Ken Godfrey
- Charlie James
- Don Jourdan
- Jim Leever
- Kathy Marose
- Vicki Meyer
- Tom Mowbray
- Tom Robinson
- Earl Sprangers
- Dan Stanley
- Ray Sutter
- Arlen Wanta

Previous LUPC Members:

- Paul Gottwald
- Don Kirch
- Ellie Klein
- Orin Kohlbeck
- Bob Pripps
- Meta Reigel
- Walt Smiley
- Foster Udell
- Jim Wilson

Technical Assistance

We also want to recognize and express appreciation to the following individuals who assisted the LUPC in development of this plan:

Fred Goold	Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Jason K. Laumann	Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Cathy Techtmann	Iron County Community Resources Development Agent (Former)
Tim Campbell	Iron County Community Resources Development Agent (Current)
Joe Bisenius	Iron County Zoning Administrator

Financial Assistance and Funding

Development of this plan was jointly funded by the Town of Sherman and by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources through the Lake Protection Grant Program.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1998, a land use planning committee was directed by the town board to guide the Town of Sherman land use planning process. The committee consisted of a cross section of property owners, both lakeshore and non-shoreland, along with town board members and local business interests. The land use planning committee has spent the past 3½ years developing land use recommendations regarding the future of the Town of Sherman. This plan is intended to be the beginning of an on-going, dynamic process to be visited and reviewed on a regular basis.

The Town of Sherman is located in southern Iron County. The town occupies approximately 115 square miles in six civil townships (Figure 1, page 2.). The town is heavily forested and contains numerous surface water resources and wetlands. Sherman is characteristic of northern Wisconsin's lake and forest region.

Surface water resources in the town are abundant with 55 named lakes and numerous unnamed small lakes, many of which are located within the State owned lands of the Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area.

The demand for lakefront property and lake access has caused increased development pressure on lakes throughout the town, threatening water resources with overcrowding and the problems associated with overuse. At the same time, the demand for off-lake development, particularly residential housing has increased and has begun to change the character of the rural landscape within the town. Of particular concern in the town is "keyhole" development or the development of non-shoreline property and providing lake access through a common lot.

The questions of maintaining the rural, "northwoods" character, maintaining and improving surface water quality of lakes and environmental assets, preservation of aesthetic resources, and working to minimize land use conflicts were identified as major issues facing the Town of Sherman.

This land use plan will provide town officials with a guide for reviewing subdivision plats, certified survey maps, rezoning requests, and other land use proposals. In addition to the public sector, the plan will also benefit the private sector by providing a level of assurance as to having a town plan.

The plan is intended to address the land use issues facing the town and is intended to provide the basis for a comprehensive plan for the Town of Sherman. It does not specifically address issues such as housing needs, capital improvements programming, or protective services. It is also important to remember that this plan is advisory in nature and will be incorporated into a comprehensive plan for the town to satisfy "Smart Growth" legislation in Wisconsin.

Recommendations will also be incorporated into the Iron County Comprehensive Plan, which is scheduled to begin in 2002.

Figure 1 – Iron County

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

1. Development pressure both on lakes as well as non-water front property will continue to increase.
2. Commercial development pressure along the highway 182 corridor will continue to increase.
3. The town's "northwoods" character will continue to be an extremely important consideration of the economy and quality of life.
4. There will be an increase in the demand for additional or improved public services, roads, and facilities.
5. The town will create a permanent Plan Commission.
6. The town can assist desirable new development locate without additional tax dollars.
7. The town will continue to work cooperatively with adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions to address planning and land use issues.
8. New retail business locations can be "clustered" off roadways instead of "strip" along roadways.
9. The town can influence county policies regarding land use and zoning to achieve more stringent regulations.

CHAPTER 1

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION

Historical population. Since 1950, the Town of Sherman has had a variable population. The town sustained a gradual decline to 1970; however, population grew through the next decade with the town reporting a population of 336 in the 1980 Census. The town reported another period of modest decline from the 1980 to 1990 with a net loss of 69 inhabitants. In 2000, the town did just the opposite and increased by 69 inhabitants.

Population projections. In the table below, are population projections for the Town of Sherman and Iron County. Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) generated these projections, which were based on census data from 1950 to 2000. Projections for the Town of Sherman indicate a continued modest growth through the coming 20 years, while the county as a whole is expected to experience an overall decline. The continual growth in the Town of Sherman 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, retired living, or working out of the home
- More recently, the conversion of seasonal/recreational homes into permanent residences

Table 1: Historical Population and Population Projections, 1950-2020

	1950 ¹	1960 ¹	1970 ¹	1980 ¹	1990 ¹	2000 ¹	2005 ²	2010 ²	2015 ²	2020 ²
US Census ¹	164	153	152	336	267	336	---	---	---	---
NWRPC ²	---	---	---	---	---	---	353	373	393	412
Iron County	8,714	7,830	6,533	6,730	6,153	6,861	5,928	5,727	5,525	5,324

¹US Census Bureau

²Based on linear regression of NWRPC estimates from 2005 through 2020.

Seasonal population estimates. Summer and seasonal residents form an important segment of the town’s land ownership and tax base. The figures below reflect estimates of the number of seasonal residents in the Town of Sherman. Please note they are only estimates based on the average number of persons per seasonal housing unit, as the Census does not enumerate seasonal residents. Seasonal population estimates do not include permanent resident counts.

Table 2: Seasonal Population Estimates

	1980 ¹	1990 ¹	1995 ¹	2000 ¹	2005 ¹	2010 ¹	2015 ¹	2020 ¹
NWRPC Projections	826	878	904	930	956	982	1,008	1,034

¹NWRPC estimates based on persons per housing unit average.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic change. A key concern in examining population change is the structure of the population in terms of age. The table below reveals the population structure in 5-year increments from the 1990 and 2000 federal Census reports.

Table 3: Town of Sherman Age Distribution, 1990 & 2000

	< 5	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
Town of Sherman: 1990	9	25	6	18	21	19	48	77	23	3
Town of Sherman: 2000	3	20	20	13	37	53	65	84	36	5

Source: US Census Bureau

The following emerging trends can be identified in examining the age structure of the towns population since 1990:

- *Children under age 5 and persons age 5 to 14 are in decline*

This could be the result of the decrease in family size in the past ten years.

- *Inhabitants aged 15 to 24 have increased since 1990*
- *Persons aged 25 to 34 have decreased over the last ten years*

The age group 25-34 is most likely to move out of a rural town like that of Sherman for employment, educational, or other opportunities elsewhere. The decline 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, 65 to 74, 75 to 84, and 85 and over have all increased steadily in the past 10 years.*

The steady increase of the 35 and older age groups indicates common trends in this area. Many of the housing units are seasonal, recreational, or occasional use in the Town of Sherman. Many of these owners are 35 years and older. 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 and return to the area. Third, the town sustains a stable population of residents age 55 to 85 and older who choose to remain here with family or other ties to the area

CHAPTER 2

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 483 housing units in the Town of Sherman. Of these, 166 were classified as occupied.

Of these total occupied housing units, 161 (97.0%) were recorded as owner occupied and 5 (3.0%) were recorded as renter occupied.

Of the 317 vacant housing units reported, 301 (62.3% of all housing units) were designated as seasonal/recreational use dwellings.

Table 4: Housing Unit Characteristics, 1980-2020

	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Total Housing Units	512	539	483	489	482	475	467
Total Occupied Housing Units	133	121	166	165	173	181	190
Inhabitants / Occupied Housing Unit	2.52	2.20	2.02	1.87	1.75	1.62	1.50
Owner Occupied Housing Units	109	114	161	165	173	181	190
Renter Occupied Housing Units	24	7	5	0	0	0	0
Total Vacant Housing Units	--*	418	317	267	216	166	115
Vacant Housing: Seasonal/Recreational Use	--*	399	301	252	203	154	105
Vacant (Uninhabited or abandoned)	--*	19	16	15	13	12	10

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 Sherman lost 29 housing units, an average of 1.5 units per year. Current projections in Table 4 above indicate at this rate the Town of Sherman will lose an additional 16 total housing units by the 2020.

Inhabitants per occupied housing unit. Despite the fact that the total number of occupied housing units is 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 25 to 34 who find educational or employment opportunities elsewhere

HOUSING OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

Owner occupied. In 2000, 161 (97.0% of all occupied housing units) were identified as owner occupied, representing a 2.7 percent increase from 1990. Projections indicate that owner occupied units will continue to comprise the majority of all occupied units through 2020.

Renter occupied. Renter occupied units comprised only 3 percent of all occupied housing units in the Town of Sherman in 2000. Projections indicate a continued decrease in the number of renter occupied units by the year 2020, where it's projected to be zero.

Seasonal housing. The 2000 Census identifies 301 (62.3% of the town's total housing units) housing units in the Town of Sherman for seasonal use. This past decade (1990 to 2000), seasonal housing units have gone down 24.6 percent. This, in part, may be because retired persons have turned many of these seasonal homes into year-round homes. Projections indicate a gradual decline of seasonal and recreational housing units in the town through 2020.

HOUSING TRENDS

As is indicated in the population section of this plan, the Town of Sherman is expected to have an increasing population through the year 2020 and exhibiting an increase in total occupied housing units for the same period. While population is of prime importance in affecting changes in housing, factors such as demographic changes and economic activity also impact the construction of new houses.

Demographic changes affecting housing. The continued increase of town residents aged 55 and over is an important factor affecting housing as older residents often forgo home ownership for apartment living, assisted living quarters, or to be nearer to family or health care facilities. The growth of this age group in Sherman can be attributed to two reasons. The first is that the town maintains a stable, aging population. Secondly, a few retirees and a few seasonal homeowners have chosen to make the Town of Sherman their permanent place of residence. In coming years, some residents aged 65 and over can be expected to leave the area and potentially sell off their houses and land to incoming residents.

Decline in inhabitants per occupied housing unit. A trend common to many northern Wisconsin towns and rural areas in general is the gradual decline of inhabitants per occupied household. The figures in Table 4 indicate that in 2000 the Town of Sherman had an average of 2.02 persons per household, representing a decline from the 1990 level of 2.20. Projections indicate that by 2020, the town will have an average of 1.50 persons per household. The central trend causing this decline include the out migration of inhabitants over 18 for work or school, overall smaller family size, fewer families with infants moving into the town, and fewer children being born to Sherman resident families. Additionally, many households are composed of retired couples or single person households.

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 5 below reveals the present status and future projections for housing density in the town. Presently, the Town of Sherman maintains a total housing density of 4.09 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.

Table 5: Average Housing Density 1980-2000/Projected Density to 2020

	1980		1990		2000		2010		2020	
	Units	P/sq. mi.								
<i>Total Sherman Land area: 118.0 Square Miles</i>										
Total Units	512	<i>4.33</i>	539	<i>4.57</i>	483	<i>4.09</i>	482	<i>4.09</i>	467	<i>3.97</i>
Occupied Units	133	<i>1.12</i>	121	<i>1.03</i>	166	<i>1.41</i>	173	<i>1.47</i>	190	<i>1.61</i>
Vacant Units	--*	--*	418	<i>3.54</i>	317	<i>2.69</i>	309	<i>2.62</i>	277	<i>2.35</i>

Sources: Calculated from US Census Bureau data
NWRPC Projections (2010 & 2020)
*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 16 40-acre parcels, each with a residence and enough land to still retain the amenities of privacy, quiet, natural aesthetics and so on.

Housing projections. From 1980 to 1990, the Town of Sherman added 27 new housing units. But, from 1990 to 2000 the town lost 56 housing units. Projections indicate an additional 16 housing units will be lost through the year 2020 in the town. The 1990 Census indicates that 62.3 percent of all housing units in the Town of Sherman are seasonal/recreational units with that percentage to decrease to 22.4 percent by 2020.

CHAPTER 3

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

LOCATION

The Town of Sherman, Iron County, is geographically situated in the Northern Highland province of Wisconsin, a former mountainous region that rivaled the peaks of the Alps. The town lies within the highland lake district of northern Wisconsin, an area with some of the highest lake densities in the world. The town lies within six watersheds with most lands draining to the Bear River and Flambeau Flowage.

The lakes region of southern Iron County has seen a rapid increase in the development of recreational homes, cottages, and cabins. Development pressure within the Town of Sherman is presently concentrated in the lakes cluster at the town center. Many lakes and rivers in the town are located on public lands. The Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area contains several thousand state-owned acres of water and miles of undeveloped shoreline.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

The Town of Sherman was once part of an expansive mountain range. This range was worn down by wind and water to form a plain, which eventually became submerged under water. The land surface re-emerged and entered a period of glaciation, which altered the geological character of the region. Four periods of glaciation covered the area, with the last glacier receding about 10,000 years ago. Glacial activity is responsible for the composition of present day soils in Iron County and the formation of the lake-wetland region of the Northern Highland province.

Topography in the town is considered generally level to rolling. The underlying glacial geology of the area consists of primarily pitted outwash, intersected by ground and end moraines.

CLIMATE

The climate of southern Iron County is classified as continental, a climate characterized by large seasonal and daily variations in temperature. Winters are cold with large amounts of snowfall. Summers are relatively short with brief periods of hot, humid weather. Average temperatures range from 13 degrees Fahrenheit (F) in January to 67 degrees F in July. The average annual temperature is 41 degrees F, with temperature extremes of -50 degrees F to 105 degrees F. Average annual precipitation is about 32 inches with average annual snowfall often exceeding 80 inches. The growing season averages 103 days.

GEOLOGY

Undifferentiated crystalline rocks underlie the Town of Sherman. Glacial deposits cover bedrock at depths of 50 to 100 feet. Outwash covers most of the southern portion of Iron County.

SOILS

The soils of the Town of Sherman are primarily upland and outwash types from glacial drift and poorly drained organic soils found in the wetland/lakes areas. The dominant soils associations found in the town include:

- Vilas-Omega Association (Vi-Om), nearly level and gently sloping somewhat excessively drained sandy soils with pitted outwash plains being the major landform.
- Vilas-Pence Association (Vi-Pe), nearly level and gently sloping somewhat excessively drained sandy soils with pitted outwash plains, remnant lakeshore beach lines, and eskers being the major landforms.
- Organic Soil Association (Or), nearly level poorly drained organic soils and poorly drained fine sandy alluvial soils. The dominant landforms are lake basins, lake beaches, and broad floodplains.

Soils in the Town of Sherman are generally considered unsuitable for agricultural purposes and this land use is uncommon in the town.

WATER RESOURCES

Lakes, Rivers and Streams

Iron County has 214 named lakes comprising 28,586 acres. There also exist 280 unnamed lakes in the county, occupying an additional 418 acres. The Town of Sherman has nearly 3,000 acres of surface water (excluding Turtle-Flambeau Flowage) in 55 lakes. Excluding the flowage, the town has 79 miles of shoreline, with 13 miles classified as public. The largest water body in the town is the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage, a man-made reservoir created in 1926 by the damming of the Turtle and Flambeau Rivers. The Turtle-Flambeau is the largest publicly owned water resource in the State of Wisconsin. Numerous rivers and streams are located in the Town of Sherman, including the Bear River, Manitowish River, Flambeau River, and Hay Creek.

Water Quality

The quality of surface waters in the Town of Sherman is generally considered very good to excellent. Waters of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage are considered as an “Outstanding Water Resource” under Wisconsin Administrative Code. While water quality in both Iron County and the Town of Sherman are generally excellent, some lakes with high naturally occurring levels of mercury do exist. Bearskull Lake in the Town of Sherman is listed as a 303d impaired water by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources due to high mercury levels.

Iron County zoning ordinances were amended in 1998 to include provisions for lake, river, and stream classification; land division; and shoreland protection. The surface water classification system is based on the relative vulnerability of each water body based on surface area, lake depth, type of water body, length of shoreline, and size of watershed. Policies for implementing the county's inland lakes, navigable rivers and streams classification include statements related to preservation of existing undeveloped shoreline in Iron County, management of sensitive aquatic resources, and preservation of habitat. Development standards related to lot sizes, lot depth, shoreline setback, and vegetation removal have been applied to all zoning districts (R-1, RR-1, R-2, A-1, C-1, I-1, F-1), which are located within a shoreland area. Amended county zoning ordinances also include provisions for lake access.

Groundwater Quality

Ample supplies of groundwater are found under most of Iron County. Groundwater serves as the major source of water supply to the Town of Sherman. The chemical composition of groundwater is generally very good; although, instances of localized problems such as mineralization, hardness, and high iron content do occur. Pollution from human activities is not a significant problem in Iron County.

Floodplains

Areas susceptible to flooding are considered unsuitable for development due to the risks to lives and property. The Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM) produced by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 1988 serves as the most recent source for identifying areas subject to flooding in the Town of Sherman.

Wetlands

Wetlands account for more than 34,000 acres, or 40 percent of the total acreage of Town of Sherman (Wisconsin Wetlands Inventory –WDNR). The three dominant wetland types found locally are emergent/wet meadow, aquatic bed, scrub/shrub, and forested wetlands. A patterned peat land bog is located in the Boot Lake Wildlife Area. This bog community is extremely rare in Wisconsin but is common in northern Minnesota and Ontario, Canada. Wetland ecosystems are sensitive natural resources, which provide vital environmental functions such as water purification, flood control, groundwater recharge, as well as providing habitat for numerous plant and animal species.

Figure 2 – Town of Sherman

Figure 3 - Hydrography

Figure 4 – Wetlands

Figure 5 - Watersheds

LAND COVER TYPES

Existing land cover types were derived using the Wisconsin DNR WISCLAND data set. The source data were obtained through the nationwide MLRC (Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium) acquisition of dual date Landsat Thematic Mapper (TM) Satellite data.

The dominant land cover types are forest and wetlands, which comprise nearly 80 percent of the total land area in the Town of Sherman. The primary forest species are aspen (*Populus spp.*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum.*), and jack pine (*pinus banksiana*). The forest community in the Town of Sherman includes many other coniferous and deciduous species occurring at varying local densities throughout the town.

Wetland communities in the Town of Sherman consist of three dominant types, emergent/wet meadow, scrub/shrub, and forested wetlands. Dominant plant species found in local open bog land communities includes tamarack (*Larix laricina*), black spruce (*Picea mariana*), leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), and tussock cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), and sphagnum moss. Other wetland plant species associated with local wetlands include small cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*), bog rosemary (*Andromeda glaucophylla*), bog laurel (*Kalmia polifolia*), bog sedge (*Carex oligosperma*), tawny cottongrass (*Eriophorum virginicum*), sphagnum mosses (*Sphagnum spp.*), and wool grass (*Scirpus cyperinus*). Wetland species associated with the coniferous swamps of the region commonly include northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), speckled alder (*Alnus incana ssp. rugosa*), along with many sedges and flowers. The wooded swamps of the region are commonly associated with black ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), lake sedge (*Carex lacustris*), ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*), and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). Many other species ferns, grasses, sedges, and flowers also inhabit these environments.

Small, scattered pockets of grassland, barren land, and shrubland are also found throughout the town. These land cover types account for less than five percent of the vegetative cover in the Town of Sherman.

WILDLIFE

The local area provides habitat for a wide range of animal species, including the following list of significant waterfowl, furbearers, and game and non-game animals.

Bald Eagle	Eastern Gray Wolf	Red Fox
Beaver	Mallard	Ruffed Grouse
Black Bear	Mink	Snowshoe Hare
Bobcat	Muskrat	White-tailed Deer
Common Loon	Osprey	Wood Duck
Coyote	Otter	Woodcock
Fisher	Raccoon	

Rare, threatened, and endangered species are present in the Town of Sherman. Ospreys inhabit portions of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage along with the largest concentration of bald eagles in the State of Wisconsin. Occasional moose sightings are reported near the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage. Gray wolves, a threatened species in Wisconsin, may also be present in the town. Lands within the town, particularly within the TFSWA, contain suitable habitat for many species of threatened or endangered wildlife not currently known to exist in this area.

Figure 6 – Land Cover

CHAPTER 4

RECREATION AND TOURISM

INTRODUCTION

Recreation and tourism are critical economic generators for the Town of Sherman and Iron County. The four-season recreational activities and the areas bountiful natural resources provide residents and visitors of the town and county with excellent recreational opportunities.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Referred to as the “Crown Jewel of Wisconsin” the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage was created in 1926 and encompasses nearly 19,000 acres, over 100 islands and 220 miles of shoreline for residential and tourist enjoyment. Activities associated with the flowage include swimming, boating, hiking, fishing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, wildlife watching, and simply enjoying the quite outdoors. Within the flowage, nearly 60 campsites provide visitors with access to the flowage and forest.

The Northern Highland-American Legion (NAHL) State Forest, which comprises a portion of the Town of Sherman, is the largest state owned property at over 220,000 acres. Within the state forest area, the Northern Highland State Forest was created in 1925 and the American Legion State Forest was created in 1929. It was not until 1968 that the two state forests were combined into one management unit. Within the NHAL, there are a total of 902 lakes of which 26 are located in Iron County.

In addition to the state forest lands, thousands of acres of county forest land are available for residents and visitors to enjoy. Throughout the county, a vast recreational trail system provides opportunities for hiking, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and ATVing.

LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

Resorts within the Town of Sherman contribute significantly to the local economy. In 2001, a total of nine resorts provided 45 cabins/rooms and 8 trailer sites for visitors to lodge in the Town of Sherman. Over the last 20 years, the number of resorts in Iron County and across northwest Wisconsin has declined significantly as a result of resorts being sold off to private owners as condominiums. Table 6 identifies the remaining resorts in the Town of Sherman.

Table 6: Resorts in the Town of Sherman

Name	Lake	Rooms/Cabins	Beverage/Food
Birches on Boot Lake	Boot	8 rooms/12 cabins	Bar
Double EE Resort	Boot	4 cabins	
Big Muskie	Big Muskie	3 cabins	
Westphal's Resort	Little Muskie	6 cabins, 6 trailers, 2 travel trailer sites	
Springstead Lake Lodge	Springstead	4 cabins	Bar
North of the Border (Chico's)	Springstead	3 cabins, Accommodations for groups	Bar/Mexican Food
French Lake Resort	French	4 cabins	
Springstead Historic District	Stone	1 cabin	

REGIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

Tourism has a major impact on the local economy in the Town of Sherman, Iron County, and the State of Wisconsin. According to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, the economic impact of expenditures by travelers in the State of Wisconsin during calendar year 2000 totaled \$9,971,705,643. Within Iron County, the total 2000 economic impact of tourism totaled \$49,042,232 and represents less than 1 percent of the total statewide expenditure. Between the period 1993-2000, tourism expenditures in Iron County increased 42.32 percent.

The economic impact of tourism expenditures in Iron County translates to 1,371 jobs, \$28,706,443 in resident income, \$3,850,968 in state revenue and \$3,525,415 in local revenue. Seasonally, tourist and residents have a direct impact on the local economy. For example, according to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, \$233,000,000 was spent during the 2000 deer-hunting season. By comparison, local hunters spent \$23.10 per day while traveling hunters spent \$56.86 per day.

Overall, state forest lands provide a major impact to the local economy. In 1995, more than 600,000 Wisconsinites visited one or more of the state's northern forests. Countless more out-of-state residents also visited the area state forests.

CHAPTER 5

TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

The transportation network is the backbone upon which a municipality builds its economy, ensures its access to resources, and provides a critical link for the transport of residents and visitors as well as goods and services. The assessment of the present transportation infrastructure, in addition to identifying future maintenance and development needs, is vital to retain their continued use to the town.

Vehicular (automotive) travel is the predominant mode of travel for residents of the Town of Sherman and Iron County. Regularly scheduled air and transit service is not available from within Iron County but is available in the City of Ironwood, Michigan.

ROADWAY CHARACTERISTICS

The Town of Sherman’s roadway network is comprised of 66.25 miles of state highway and town roads. This figure includes state highways, which the town is not responsible for maintenance. Roads within the Town are classified by their functional use and by the amount of traffic they sustain. Table 7 below indicates the functional use of the town’s roadway network.

Table 7: Functional Classification of Roadways

Road Type	Mileage in Town of Sherman	Percent of Town Roadway Network
Federal highways	0.00	0.00%
State trunk highways	21.56	32.54%
County trunk highways	0	0.00%
Municipal (town) roadways	44.69	67.46%
Other	0.00	0.00%
Total	66.25	100.00%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 7 Office, Rhinelander

In the Town of Sherman, US Highways 182 and 47 are classified as state major collectors. There are no county trunk highways within the Town of Sherman. Within the 44.69 miles of town roads, Flowage Road (4.45 miles) and South River Road, the easterly most .40 miles, are classified as minor collectors. The remaining 39.84 miles of town roads are classified as local roads. Highways 182 and 47 serve as the primary road corridors providing access to the town for residents and visitors, while the town roadway network provides alternate and ancillary routes to homes and recreation sites within and beyond the town.

Increasing traffic volume. Table 8 indicates average daily traffic counts as collected by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation from 1969 to 1999 in various locales in and around the

Town of Sherman. As is evidenced by the data, average daily traffic in the vicinity of the town has increased steadily, and in some cases, dramatically over the past 30-year period.

Table 8: Average Daily Traffic for Roadways In and Near the Town of Sherman, 1969-1999

	1969	1972	1975	1978	1981	1984	1987	1990	1993	1996	1999
Recording Site 1:	200	280	300	550	420	380	450	450	470	460	NA
Recording Site 2:	220	350	200	420	400	420	480	410	500	580	640
Recording Site 3:	200	360	270	330	NA	NA	240	380	410	660	820
Recording Site 4:	260	440	480	510	550	530	420	560	650	820	980
Recording Site 5:	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	220	130	130	110	180

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Highway Traffic Volume Data

Site 1: USH 182, 3 miles N of Price Co. line
 Site 2: USH 182, near junction with Ferry Lake Rd
 Site 3: USH 47, 1 mile W of Vilas Co. line

Site 4: USH 182/47
 Site 5: Flowage Road, N of intersection with USH 182

Average daily traffic volumes at the six recording sites within Table 8 identify a continued increase in traffic volumes. Over the past 30 years, recording site ADT volumes have increased between 90 and 310 percent. More recently, over the past 10 years, recording site ADT volumes have increased between 25 and 115 percent. Recording site 3 along USH 47 west of the Vilas County line had the largest percentage of increase in ADT during the past ten-year recording period, recording an ADT of 240 in 1990 and 820 in 1999.

Increases in average daily traffic in and around the Town of Sherman can be attributed to two primary factors. First, is that local residents are simply making more daily and weekly car trips for shopping, commuting to work, recreation, and other purposes. Second, many areas of Iron County, particularly Sherman and Mercer, have seen a significant increase in the development of seasonal homes and recreational residences. This increase, in addition to the influx of tourist-season traffic comes hand-in-hand with the increase in overall regional traffic load. In addition, Highway 182 receives significant logging truck traffic.

ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to local road systems are critical for maintaining an adequate and safe roadway system. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains a schedule of upcoming roadway improvement projects. Table 9 identifies projects in Iron County through 2007.

Table 9: Scheduled Highway Improvements in Iron County, 2002-2008

Year	Sponsor	Roadway	Location	Mileage	Type of improvement
2002	WisDOT	STH 77	Upson Lake Rd – Elm Street	8.7	Roadway Maintenance
2002	WisDOT	STH 122	USH 2 – MI State Line	4.25	Roadway Maintenance
2004	WisDOT	USH 2	West County Line – CTH B	8.21	Resurfacing
2004	WisDOT	USH 51	STH 77 – USH 2 (Hurley)	1.3	Pavement Replacement
2005	WisDOT	USH 51	South County Line - Mercer	7.8	Pavement Replacement
2005	WisDOT	STH 77	Fifth Street – First Street	0.81	Pavement Replacement
2005	WisDOT	STH 77	Ashland County Line – Upson Lake Road	7.07	Pavement Replacement
2006	WisDOT	USH 2	CTH B – Michigan State Line	9.57	Pavement Replacement
2006	WisDOT	USH 2	CTH B – MI State Line (Passing Lanes)		Reconstruction
2006	WisDOT	USH 51	CTH C – Hurley	3.95	Reconstruction
2006	WisDOT	USH 51	Mercer – Weber Road	3.8	Reconstruction
2008	WisDOT	STH 169	Ashland Count Line – USH 2	7.07	Roadway Maintenance

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 7

ROADWAY EVALUATION

A pavement surface evaluation rating (PASER) was conducted by the Town of Sherman during the summer of 2001 to meet requirements set forth by the Wisconsin State Legislature to provide the Wisconsin Department of Transportation an overall evaluation of the surface condition of areas roads. The information will be useful in assisting the town in developing future roadway improvements based on a priority rating system that considers the surface condition and functional classification. Figure 7 identifies the surface condition rating of town roads based on a classification of gravel roads rated 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent and asphalt roads rated 1-10 with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent.

AIRPORTS AND AVIATION

No passenger flights are available to the residents of Sherman within Iron County. The nearest airports providing regular scheduled passenger flights to domestic and international destinations are located in Ironwood, Michigan; Mosinee, Wisconsin; Duluth, Minnesota; Rhinelander, Wisconsin; and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. At present, there are three private airfields within Iron County. Their location and present status in listed in the following table.

Table 10: Iron County Airfields

Airfield Name	Location	Owner / Operator	Status
Saxon	Saxon Twp; T47N, R2E, S. 35.	Carl Lindblom	Private
Springstead	Sherman Twp; T41N, R3E, S. 31	Lugino Dalessandro	Private
Blair Lake Airport	Mercer Twp.; T42N, R3E, S. 19	Kenneth Reese	Private

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics.

TRANSIT

Limited transit service is available to residents of the Town of Sherman and Iron County. Within Iron County, public transportation is available via Greyhound Bus Lines and Gogebic/Iron County Public Transit. Greyhound Bus Lines does not have a designated bus stop in Iron County. However, regularly scheduled service for Greyhound is available in Ironwood, Michigan and Minocqua, Wisconsin. The Gogebic County Public Transit system operates within the State of Michigan with very limited service into the City of Hurley with respect to pick up only along the mainstreet of Hurley via a dial-a-ride service. The Iron County Aging Unit operates a specialized transportation service throughout the county for clients over 60 years old or with physical disabilities. For clients within the Town of Sherman, a dial-a-ride service is available for doctor appointments or shopping with a 24-hour advance notice.

RAIL

The last remaining rail line in Iron County is owned by Canadian National Railway. This rail line travels through the northern portion of Iron County connecting to a mainline in Ashland County and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Several abandoned rail corridors exist in Iron County that provide recreational trail access and may in the future provide other transportation corridors. Hundreds of miles of abandoned rail corridors exist throughout the county.

Figure 7 - 2000 Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

CHAPTER 6

LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

Land use activity is the product of the natural (physical) and cultural (human) activity of the landscape. The prime concern of land use planning is to understand this relationship by examining the past trends, present conditions, future uses, and proposals for use. Appropriate land use planning decisions should be based upon a sound understanding of past, present, and future trends for the maximum benefit to the community.

EXISTING LAND USE

In the Town of Sherman, forestry is the dominant existing land use as is evidenced by Figure 6, page 6-3. The largest forested tracts within the town include the Northern Highland State Forest, Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area, Hay Creek-Hoffman Lake State Wildlife Area, and Nature Conservancy lands.

Residential areas are found in the highest concentrations around the lakeshore areas. The highest residential densities are found in the lakes cluster near the town hall. Some scattered commercial sites are located along the Highway 182 corridor.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Nearly 43 percent of the Town of Sherman is under public ownership (State, Local, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Land Commission). The Lac Du Flambeau Indian Reservation occupies nearly 14,000 acres in the eastern portion of Sherman. Table 11 indicates acreage of these public/private holdings in contrast to the proportion of acreage of lakes and wetlands in Table 12.

Table 11: Town of Sherman Land Ownership

	Acres	Percent Land Area
State	9,314	12.2%
Other - DNR	16,437	21.5%
Wisconsin Land Commission	6,327	8.3%
Local Government	463	0.6%
Lac Du Flambeau	13,961	18.3%
Nature Conservancy	890	1.2%
Forest Products Industry	3,580	4.7%
Private Ownership	25,390	33.2%
Total	76,362	100.00%

Table 12: Town of Sherman Lakes and Wetlands Acreage

	Acres
Lakes	10,980
Wetlands	34,200

Open water/shoreline. As is indicated on the table above, approximately 12.5 percent of the town is open water. Public shoreline in the town equals 13.6 miles, excluding the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage, which has an additional 200 miles of public shoreline. The majority of shoreline in the town, except that which abuts the flowage, is under private ownership.

Figure 8 - Existing Land Use

Figure 9 – E-911 Structures

Figure 10 - Property Ownership

TAX PARCEL TRENDS, 1977-1997

Following are trends of the tax parcel classification from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. These are not by zoning districts and the way parcels are assessed does not necessarily reflect or represent the actual land use of that property.

Tax classification. Examining past trends can serve as a good indication of future trends in the town. The table demonstrates the number of parcels, acreage, and value characteristics of the town’s privately owned lands in the three dominant tax classification categories: residential, commercial, and forestry.

Table 13: Assessment and Percent Change by Land Classification, 1977-1997

A – RESIDENTIAL	1977	1986	% Change 77-86	1997	% Change 86-97	% Change 77-97
Total Parcels	538	623	15.80	639	2.57	18.77
Improved Parcels	343	401	16.91	455	13.47	32.65
Land Value	\$2,193,660	\$2,851,370	29.98	\$11,873,400	316.41	441.26
Value of Improvements	\$2,661,860	\$4,138,960	55.49	\$13,447,700	224.91	405.20
Total Real Estate Value	\$4,855,520	\$6,990,330	43.97	\$25,321,100	262.23	421.49
Total Acres	N/A	1,611	N/A	1,608	-0.19	N/A
Average Parcel Size	N/A	2.59	N/A	2.52	-2.70	N/A
B - COMMERCIAL						
B - COMMERCIAL	1977	1986	% Change 77-86	1997	% Change 86-97	% Change 77-97
Total Parcels	18	20	11.11	18	-10.00	0.00
Improved Parcels	18	20	11.11	18	-10.00	0.00
Land Value	\$364,490	\$308,110	-15.47	\$942,300	205.83	158.53
Value of Improvements	\$458,260	\$452,470	-1.26	\$760,500	68.07	65.95
Total Real Estate Value	\$822,750	\$760,580	-7.56	\$1,702,800	123.88	106.96
Total Acres	N/A	126	N/A	140	11.11	N/A
D - FOREST						
D - FOREST	1977	1986	% Change 77-86	1997	% Change 86-97	% Change 77-97
Total Parcels	669	639	-4.48	589	-7.82	-11.96
Total Real Estate Value	\$1,591,310	\$1,852,620	16.42	\$4,177,100	125.47	162.49
Total Acres	23,866	21,854	-8.43	19,829	-9.27	-16.92

Source: Iron County Statistical Report of Property Values (1977, 1986, 1997 Statement of Assessments)

Town Totals (Residential, Mercantile, Manufacturing, Agricultural, Swamp/Waste, Forest)

E- TOTAL	1977	1986	% Change 77-86	1997	% Change 86-97	% Change 77-97
Total Parcels	1,228	1,286	4.72	1,247	-3.03	1.55
Improved Parcels	361	423	17.17	437	3.31	21.05
Land Value	\$4,156,540	\$5,020,890	20.79	\$16,993,700	238.46	308.84
Value of Improvements	\$3,120,120	\$4,592,430	47.19	\$14,208,200	209.38	355.37
Total Real Estate Value	\$7,276,660	\$9,613,320	32.11	\$31,201,900	224.57	328.79
Total Acres	23,984	23,744	-1.00	21,612	-8.98	-9.89

Residential Parcels. Modest residential growth in the Town of Sherman was experienced during the period 1977-1997. The number of residential parcels and parcels with improvements increased throughout the period. The total acreage of residential parcels actually declined from 1986-1997, as did the average parcel size. Assessed valuation of residential parcels and parcels with improvements experienced a significant increase between 1977-1997.

Commercial Parcels. The number of commercial parcels and commercial acreage remained fairly constant from 1977-1997. The valuation of these parcels increased significantly from 1986-1997.

Forest Lands. The number of forest parcels in the town decreased throughout the period 1977-1997 (-17%). At the same time, there was a marked increase in the assessed valuation of these parcels.

Forest land valuations have increased dramatically in recent years, partly as a result of increasing raw land values for recreational properties and partly as a result of increasing stumpage values. Increasing demand for forest property, and the subsequent rising property taxes, have pressured many landowners' into selling their forested lands for development purposes. Unplanned, scattered development in Wisconsin's northern forest region has led to forest fragmentation, a form of "sprawl".

EXISTING ZONING

Iron County's current zoning map and zoning districts were created in the early 1970's, which were then adopted by the Town of Sherman. Zoning is a form of land use control which, when applied universally and consistently, is designed to protect and preserve the public good. Land use changes can be granted through a public hearing process. As illustrated by the Town of Sherman Zoning Map, Figure 11, the majority of the town is designated as F-1 (Forestry District) and A-1 (Agricultural). The Highway 182 corridor is a designated commercial district (C-1) with the lakes cluster near the town hall designated RR-1 (Residential-Recreation). There are also several scattered pockets of RR-1 throughout the town.

See Appendix C for descriptions of the zone districts and development standards.

Figure 11 - Zoning

CHAPTER 7

ISSUES AND GOAL DEVELOPMENT

The planning process in the Town of Sherman involved an extensive public input element that included a community land use survey, which was mailed to both local and non-local property owners in January 1999. The overall survey return rate was 55 percent. In addition to the survey, a public meeting was held in November 1999, which provided a forum for the public to express their concerns to local government officials.

The following is a summary of the Town of Sherman land use issues identified in the survey process.

COMMUNITY LAND USE SURVEY ISSUES

Issues Identified

- Appearance of the Town of Sherman
- Housing
- Lakeshore Development
- Zoning and Land Use Planning
- Town Services
- Recreation
- Environmental Quality
- Town of Sherman's Future

GOAL DEVELOPMENT

Through the public input process, the concerns of citizens and public officials regarding land use planning and resource protection issues were identified. Based on this input, a set of goals, objectives, and action steps were developed. The Land Use Recommendations section will describe the proposed policy considerations along with the recommended implementation tools.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STATEMENTS

1. GOAL: Minimize land use conflicts with the Town of Sherman

Objective: Guide residential, commercial, industrial, and other development into appropriate areas of the town.

Action: Keep new large-scale commercial developments near or adjacent to existing commercial, particularly on STH 182, so not to encourage strip development.

Action: Encourage new residential developments to conserve land and efficiently provide public services and accessibility.

Action: Guide new residential development into adjacent or existing residential areas.

2. GOAL: Protect and maintain the environmental quality and scenic beauty of the Town of Sherman.

Objective: Balance the needs of the environmental protection and stewardship with reasonable and appropriate use of private property.

Action: Address lakeshore development issues with an emphasis on preventing overcrowding which could diminish property values and the environmental quality of the town's surface water resources to afford the highest possible protection to sensitive lakeshore, river, and wetlands areas.

Action: Protect the town's surface water quality by working to guide the siting of new commercial and residential activities into areas which will not adversely affect the water resources, contribute to nutrient loading, damage spawning grounds and nesting areas, or diminish natural shoreline cover.

Action: Encourage periodic checks of septic systems within the town to minimize adverse impacts on the town's water quality and reduce potential contamination.

3. GOAL: Provide better public communication on town issues.

Action: Establish a liaison to coordinate and provide information to the public concerning town issues.

Action: Develop an informational pamphlet to inform property owners about town's resources, services, and best use practices for maintaining the Town of Sherman's character.*

**Information pamphlet could be used as an introductory "summary" of town's resources, services and policies as well as listing relevant contacts and agencies to answer specific landowner and homeowner questions. Subjects to be considered for inclusion could include the following (please note these are only recommendations):*

- ◆ Information on use of yard fertilizers and their impacts on lakes/water quality
- ◆ County shoreline building setback requirements for residences and accessory structures
- ◆ Boat use and boating regulations for town's lakes
- ◆ Map of lakes illustrating boat ramps & public access points
- ◆ Brief description of zoning ordinances
- ◆ Regulations and "code of conduct" for motorized recreational vehicle use
- ◆ Outdoor lighting recommendations
- ◆ Local emergency contact numbers including: fire, ambulance, and police
- ◆ Other community services: recycling, garbage service, etc.
- ◆ Summary of "best practices" for maintaining the town's resources
- ◆ Requirements and recommendations for well and septic systems

4. GOAL: Maintain and improve the visual aesthetics and rural “northwoods” character of the Town of Sherman.

Objective: Work to avoid the visual discord that results from poor design, management and maintenance of buildings, structures, and other developments in the town.

Action: Establish a set of recommended design standards for commercial developments that fit the desired aesthetic goals of the town.

Action: Encourage the use of landscaping and screening (fences, planting, etc.) to reduce the visual impacts of conflicting land uses in proximity to one another.

Action: Establish regulations and guidelines for planned unit developments, subdivisions, condominiums, clustered developments, and apartments so that demand for housing can be met without diminishing the quality and character of the town.

Action: Assess the need to establish siting guidelines for mobile homes, trailers and mobile home parks in the town and work to develop and adopt design standards for mobile homes.

Action: Assess the need to establish a larger minimum lot size in off-lake areas in an effort to control development density.

5. GOAL: Promote interaction and cooperation with adjoining and concurrent governmental jurisdictions for short-term and long-term planning.

Action Coordinate with Iron County Zoning for enforcement of local and county regulations within the town and participate in conditional use permit review to ensure the town’s goals are adhered to.

Action: Continue cooperation in planning for facilities, services, and land use policies with adjoining towns for maximum efficiency, cost reduction, and regional development consistency.

Action: Encourage increased communication with the Department of Natural Resources for land management and recreational use policies.

6. GOAL: Promote a variety of recreational opportunities and amenities to residents and visitors.

Objective: Promote appropriate balanced and responsible usage of the town’s recreational resources.

Action: Encourage lake associations, resorts and recreational clubs to develop “codes of conduct” and to promote responsible use of recreational resources in the town.

7. GOAL: Ensure an effective and continued public-input based land use planning process.

Action: Encourage public participation in land use planning and decision making in the Town of Sherman

Action: Provide public forums, input sessions, and informational sessions on land use planning and land use decisions so decisions reflect the best interest and will of the public.

Action: Provide continual public review and public-based amendatory process to the land use plan.

CHAPTER 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This land use plan should be revisited and reviewed periodically if local or regional growth trends change dramatically. It is important that this plan be integrated and used in conjunction with background information and recommendations contained in the plan document.

This document and the accompanying recommendations along with the Future Land Use Map (Figure 12) is intended to assist local officials and town residents in land development and management issues. Foremost, its purpose is to provide a framework for updating or modifying the county's zoning ordinance and the zoning district map.

It is important to remember the Town of Sherman is a rural “northwoods” town with a diverse landscape rich in history and endowed with vast natural resources. Maintaining this rural “northwoods” character is an important element of this plan. In conjunction with the public land, forest and open space lands are positive financial contributors to the local tax base. While typically these lands may generate less revenue than shoreland residential land, they also require little public infrastructure. The economic contributions inherent with agricultural or timber production provide jobs and a support system. Furthermore, the working landscape instills positive values that are hard to quantify including quality of life, cultural heritage, wildlife habitat, water quality, and open space protection.

The Town of Sherman’s visual “northwoods” character has remained intact and growth is inevitable and important for the town. But if it is not balanced and directed, the town will ultimately lose intrinsic values and part of its unique “northwoods” quality.

This plan should be reviewed periodically (at least every five years) in order to maintain its usefulness as a "current" document. It is important to reiterate that this plan provides the Sherman Town Board with the foundation for the development of a Comprehensive Plan. The following steps are suggested as how the town should now begin to proceed in order to carry out this plan:

1. The Town of Sherman Board should endorse and adopt the following recommendations referencing this study as the basis for that action as a guide for the physical and land use development of the town.
2. The Town Board should petition Iron County to make the necessary changes in the county zoning ordinance. If these changes are not forthcoming, the town could pursue local zoning powers.
3. The Town Board should meet with the county zoning office to reach an agreement on zoning administration policy and practice within the Town of Sherman.

4. The Town Board should work to comprehensively develop and coordinate the recommended ordinances, policies, and programs within this plan.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The town will maintain and use the land use plan to guide development and land use decisions.
2. The town will actively participate in review of all land subdivisions, zoning changes and other land use decisions, and make recommendations to the county zoning committee.
3. New development should be encouraged to comply with the land use guide and “northwoods” character recommendations.
4. New commercial development should be encouraged to build in close proximity to existing commercial development.
5. In the future, the town may consider petitioning Iron County to create an overlay district to achieve town land use goals.
6. The town should consider adopting and implementing a Northwoods Design Standards ordinance for new commercial development.
7. The town should develop a plan to identify the cultural and historical resources of the town.
8. The town should adopt the Wireless Communications Facilities Ordinance (see Appendix D)

A generalized future land use plan for the Town of Sherman is presented in the following narrative and the accompanying map (Figure 12). The plan identifies various land use categories, each with different land use/development objectives. In summary, it:

- Directs development away from sensitive environmental areas.
- Protects and maintains the Town of Sherman’s natural resources, especially wetlands, forest lands, and surface water resources.
- Provides for the continuance of forest uses.
- Provides for the continuance of active resort and recreational uses.
- Maintains rural “northwoods” character, particularly by avoiding high-density development in rural areas.
- Maintains the Town of Sherman’s scenic resources.
- Protects the town’s cultural resources.
- Minimizes land use conflicts.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

Commercial Districts

The Highway 182 corridor is currently zoned for commercial land use. Existing commercial development along the corridor is confined to four primary locations.

- Future commercial development should be encouraged to locate in close proximity to the existing commercial sites along this corridor. Enforceable control will require changes to existing Iron County Zoning Ordinance.
- Commercial design standards may be used to help preserve the “northwoods” character of the Town of Sherman by regulating the exterior aesthetics of commercial buildings.

Rural Forested/Residential/Open Areas

These areas include the rural lands outside of the shoreland districts. Rural residential activity has been primarily concentrated within the lakes cluster near the center of the town. Few rural residential parcels have been developed outside of this zone, but rural development is likely to occur in this area as the available supply of lake frontage diminishes.

- Maintain the overall rural open space and forested character of this region at a development density that is less than the shoreline areas. This may be accomplished by increasing residential lot size. Currently, Iron County zoning requires a minimum lot area of 60,000 ft² on lands zoned F-1, R-1, and RR-1 on lands outside of the shoreland zoning areas. A minimum lot area of five acres is recommended for development on lands (R-1, R-2, RR-1, A-1, F-1) outside of the shoreland zoning area. The Town of Sherman may seek revision of existing Iron County zoning or creation of an overlay district to include a recommended minimum lot size requirement.
- Promote low-density residential parcels. Preservation of rural character is closely associated with development density. Regulation of lot dimensions and development location is consistent with maintaining the rural “northwoods” character of the town.
- Protect the integrity of wetlands, woodlands, and other natural features located in the Town of Sherman.
- Promote and encourage the use of private woodland management practices that help maintain the rural open space and forested character of the town.

Shoreland Residential

These areas consist of the shorelands directly adjacent to the surface waters in the Town of Sherman. A lakes cluster in the center of the town is significantly developed. Both full-time residents and seasonal residents occupy lake homes in the Town of Sherman. Further residential development is regulated by the lakes classification development standards and accompanying shoreland ordinances.

- Encourage the continued establishment of and participation in lake property owners associations to further protect the town’s water and wetland resources.
- Elimination of future “keyhole¹” development projects. Work with Iron County to revise existing policy regarding these types of development projects. Town of Sherman has authority to approve/reject conditional use permits for lake access lots. In the absence of a revised county policy regarding these projects, the town may choose to deny approval of conditional use permits.
- Recommend that Iron County examine a countywide ordinance pertaining to gazebos and accessory structures.
- Recommend that Iron County review current 50 percent averaging rule for expansion of property within the 75-foot setback. Advise county to seek alternatives to this rule.
- Recommend that **all** forms of new shoreland development meet **all** requirements for single family residences, for each unit on the property.

Other Recommendations

- Recommend that parcels currently zoned as Agriculture be re-zoned to more accurately reflect existing land uses.
- Implement a Wireless Communications Facilities Ordinance. See model ordinance in Appendix D.
- Continued active enforcement of the Iron County Sign Ordinance.
- Compilation of an informational land use brochure for town residents. Brochure should contain information and discussion related to: water quality, shoreland setback requirements, boat use and boating regulations, maps illustrating boat ramps and access points, description of zoning ordinances, regulations and “code of conduct” for motorized vehicle use, outdoor lighting recommendations, local emergency contact numbers, community services, summary of “best practices” for maintaining town’s resources, and septic system recommendations and requirements.

¹Off-shoreline development, which grants lake access through a common parcel.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The future character of the Town of Sherman and the quality of life for residents will be shaped by today's land use choices and decisions. This plan is intended to serve as a guide for future community development. The plan should be used by citizens and local government officials and to make land use decisions. To achieve the plan's vision, it is essential that the plan be completely understood and used by the residents, town board, and the Iron County Zoning Committee. It is also critical that the plan be considered a dynamic and evolving document. Periodic review and modification of the land use plan will be essential in order to meet the changing needs of the community. A community plan can be functional only if it is consistent with the existing community needs, goals, and desires.

Successful plan implementation will require the following concerns be addressed:

Citizen Awareness and Participation

A committee of concerned and dedicated citizens has developed this land use plan. The entire community of Sherman needs to be aware of the plan, to understand its content, and to support the planning effort. Copies of the plan should be made available to existing town residents and to new residents when they relocate to the Town of Sherman. Also, it is recommended that the town newsletter continue to be distributed to residents to keep them abreast of current land use issues, regulations, and other topics. This information could also be posted on the Internet at the town's web site (if developed). Furthermore, the distribution of an informational brochure would assist in conveying town land use concerns and recommendations to residents and developers.

Developer Awareness

Potential developers in the town must be aware of this plan and of its intent. Development practices that will help preserve the "northwoods" character of the community must be encouraged through education and supported by regulation at both the town and county level. Distribution of the plan to potential developers prior to project planning will help eliminate confusion and possible conflict in the future.

Town Decision Making

It is recommended that the Town of Sherman Board adopt this plan, and town board members become educated on the details of the plan. The town board should actively use the plan as a "blueprint for the future" in the land use decision-making process.

Town Planning Commission

The Town of Sherman is encouraged to establish a planning commission, which would review any potential development projects to ensure consistency with the town plan. This committee would also make recommendations to developers and the town board to ensure that proposals meet plans standards. The commission would also serve to update and revise the plan as needed and to coordinate the development of a future comprehensive plan.

Town Ordinance Adoption

Land use in the Town of Sherman is currently regulated under Iron County Zoning. The town may at some future point decide to enforce its own set of ordinances, which reflect the specific needs and goals of the Town of Sherman.

County Land Use Planning/"Smart Growth"

It is essential the Iron County Comprehensive Plan reflects and includes the recommendations of the Town of Sherman Land Use Plan and its future comprehensive plan. It is recommended that the town actively participate in development of the Iron County Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the town's interests are represented at the county level.

RECOMMENDED TOWN OF SHERMAN ACTIONS FOR LAND USE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The land use plan and its recommendations along with the Future Land Use Plan Map (Figure 12) are intended to assist local officials and town residents in land development and land management issues. The land use guidelines and recommended future land uses present the basis for update or modification of Iron County zoning ordinances as they apply to the Town of Sherman.

The following steps are suggested as to how the town should now begin to proceed in order to implement this land use plan.

- Adopt the land use plan and its recommendations recognizing the goals, objectives, and action statements serve as the primary plan guidelines.
- Coordinate the Town of Sherman planning activities with those of adjacent jurisdictions. Planning activities should also be coordinated with the Iron County Planning and Zoning Department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
- Create a permanent Town Planning Commission to oversee plan implementation, update and manage the plan, and communicate plan actions and intent to citizens, developers, and the town board.
- Acknowledge state, federal, and locally approved plans such as the Iron County Land and Water Resource Management Plan and participate to the extent necessary to ensure consistency with the Iron County Comprehensive Plan².
- The Town of Sherman should consider adopting and implementing all or part of the model ordinances in Appendix B pertaining to "northwoods" design standards, and wireless communication facilities (Appendix D)

² Tentatively scheduled to begin in 2002

Figure 12 –Future Land Use