

Preface

Updating the Waukesha County Farmland Preservation Plan

A *Comprehensive Development Plan for Waukesha County* (WCCDP) was adopted on February 24, 2009. The Waukesha County Comprehensive Development Plan Advisory Committee oversaw the preparation of the multi-jurisdictional planning effort that culminated in this adopted plan. The 2009 WCCDP sets forth the vision for proper growth and distribution of land uses across the County's varied municipalities and addresses the nine required elements of the State's Comprehensive Planning Law (Section 66.1001 of the *Wisconsin Statutes*). In June 2009, after the completion of the 2009 WCCDP, the State of Wisconsin adopted a new Farmland Preservation law (Chapter 91, *Wisconsin Statutes*) as part of its Working Lands Initiative. The law requires county farmland preservation plans be included in a county's comprehensive plan and that county comprehensive plans and farmland preservation plans be consistent.

In order to satisfy the requirements of the Working Lands Initiative, in 2010, Waukesha County staff assembled a Farmland Preservation Planning Advisory Committee comprised of local farmers, elected and appointed officials and local administrative staff to steer the preparation of the new County Farmland Preservation Plan. The committee structure was very similar to that of the subcommittees that were assembled to guide the preparation of the County Development Plan. The Waukesha County Farmland Preservation Plan was completed in early 2011 and has been incorporated as Appendix "D" of this WCCDP as part of the 2011 Development Plan amendment process. The new farmland preservation plan element is similar to the adopted County Park and Open Space Plan (Appendix "A" of the County Development Plan) in that, given the breadth of the topic, it is essentially a plan within a plan. The Farmland Preservation Plan draws upon much of the data and plan elements of the previously adopted 2009 WCCDP and is presented as an appendix in order to avoid duplication of plan text and the difficulties that would result from re-organizing the entire 2009 WCCDP document. The appendix format also clearly differentiates the independent Farmland Preservation Plan Advisory Committee plan preparation process from the prior WCCDP preparation process.

Recognizing that land use plans should not be static documents, the WCCDP provides for an amendment process, which allows for consideration of amendments to the adopted plan on an annual basis. While the majority of amendments over time are anticipated to be property-specific, some amendments take a more comprehensive form. The incorporation of the Farmland Preservation Plan is the first such comprehensive amendment to the 2009 WCCDP. The Table of Contents of the WCCDP has been repealed and recreated as part of the 2011 Farmland Preservation Plan amendment in order to reflect the inclusion of the new Appendix "D". Map VII-2 of the WCCDP depicted the County's recommended land use plan map as of the date of plan adoption in 2009. This recommended land use plan map, which is maintained and updated as a digital mapping layer on the County Information Mapping Site at www.waukeshacounty.gov/landandparks, has been updated to reflect the land use category designations that are set forth by the new County Farmland Preservation Plan. The Farmland Plan text also amends the "Agricultural Preservation" land use category of the WCCDP to now become the new "Farmland Preservation" category and revises the definition of this category to be consistent with the definition and criteria established for farmland preservation areas, as specified in Chapter D-3 of Appendix "D". The remainder of the 2009 Development Plan document text remains unchanged. As amended, the WCCDP document also stands as the County's adopted Farmland Preservation Plan. In the event of inconsistency between the 2009 Development Plan and Appendix D (Farmland Preservation Plan), the 2009 Development Plan defers to the Farmland Preservation Plan.