

Town of Farmington Comprehensive Plan

Introduction – Issues & Opportunities

The Town of Farmington was established in the late 1858. We are located at the south west corner of Polk County. Farmington is a community of diverse qualities. We still have a few farms left and it is important to respect their rights as large scale land owners. We also have conservancy land located west of 280th Street and bordering the St. Croix River and we have a small amount of commercial activity as well. We also have land that borders the Village of Osceola. We have acreage that is owned by the Federal government and the DNR and a conservancy. It is our goal to respect each of the unique qualities of our community, preserve its rural character, and work to have government assist, not dictate the growth of all of the unique areas.

Farmington's current population is over 1900 people. Our town has grown about 1% each year for the past 10 years. We expect it to continue on this growth pace. Our housing has grown at the same pace, about 1% each year (9-10 families). We expect this growth pace to continue. Our town could employ up to 12% of our population. We have citizens of a variety of ages, education levels and income levels residing in our community. We are predominantly a white, middle class group of people. We don't see this demographic makeup changing in the next 20 years.

The main goal of this plan is respect the diversity of the people living in our town and be of service to everyone, regardless of their status, and respect and encourage a variety of employment, housing, and economic development as long as it becomes an asset and not a liability to the community.

Housing

The Town of Farmington's housing stock consists of many types and styles of structures. The Town's housing types include stick built, modular, older farmhouses, small homes, large homes, and a few manufactured homes. Farmington takes pride that we have had zoning in place since 1973 that has allowed us to require homes that are built to Wisconsin Building Codes with the assistance of building inspections. Farmington allows all types of homes that are built to HUD standards on HUD approved foundations, which are also subject to building inspections.

Our Town's plan is to encourage all types of housing that will meet an individual's financial ability. Our plan is to welcome all types of housing that are built to Wisconsin Building Codes and meet HUD specifications. Farmington's Zoning Ordinance regulates housing standards & requirements and we will continue to abide by our current zoning ordinance and make adjustments as they become necessary.

Transportation

The Town of Farmington's Zoning Ordinance regulates how new roads are built. We have modified that ordinance as new issues come up. Our policy on transportation is to continue to be open to changes and issues that arise and plan to alleviate any potential problems we see coming. The town's current policy tries to limit number of dead end roads. We have standards are on how new roads are to be built. We have a driveway ordinance to regulate how driveways will enter onto our roads. As far as plans to address the existing roads that we have, the state of Wisconsin, in an effort to curb rising taxes, has put limits on our town's ability to levy funds to fix our roads, and with the uncertain cost of materials, we can only plan road improvements from year to year after we see how much money is available. Our community does receive from the State of Wisconsin about \$1,900 per mile annually, which basically covers minimal maintenance. The Town of Farmington has about 75 miles of roads.

Within our township we have a private airstrip located in Section 17. Sections of our town located around the Osceola Municipal Airport are subject to the Overlay Zoning of the Airport. We have a land conservancy working on hiking and walking trails. We have opened our roads to ATV's. Our town would be willing to work with other communities in a possible public way to the Twin Cities. Our Town has limited funding available to use on transportation and does not have the ability to spend tax money on any kind of transportation, urban or rural, studies in the near future.

Our plan for future road and other transportation issues is to continue with our current zoning regulations for new road construction. Farmington will try to maintain the current stock of roads we have given the limited funds the Town has to work with each year. We will be open to work with surrounding communities to encourage alternate modes of transportation.

Utilities and Community Facilities

The Town of Farmington encourages the development of utility & community facilities.

- a. We allow private septic systems concurrent to Polk County's regulations – Farmington has one sanitary district located in the North half of section 19.
- b. New construction of Utilities follows Polk County & State regulations.
- c. Our Town has private wells and will continue to allow private wells in the future.
- d. Our town maintains a recycling site & garbage disposal site at the town hall.
- e. We have a community park & ball field on 230th Street south of 50th Ave. and are looking to expand it when feasible.
- f. We have one cell tower located within our community.
- g. We have power lines above and below ground throughout the town and a substation in Section 18.
- h. We have fiber optic communications located throughout the town.
- i. We have Natural Gas lines and 2 substations located in the town.

- j. Our town owns one cemetery in Section 2 and there are 2 others located in our town. One is owned by the Oak Grove Cemetery Association and the other is owned by the Catholic Church.
- k. We do not have any health care facilities.
- l. We have numerous child care operations in private homes in the area that are subject to County & State regulations.
- m. We contract police & fire from the village of Osceola and are a member of the Municipal court system.
- n. We own a portion of the Osceola Area Ambulance Service with 5 other units of government
- o. The Village of Osceola has a library our residents can utilize .
- p. We are part of the Osceola School district.

Farmington's plan would encourage additional facilities if their purpose is a benefit to the health & well-being of Farmington and surrounding communities. Our Town may be limited in allowing facilities & structures due to restrictions along the Riverway corridor and we will have to work within those restrictions. Farmington believes it has adequate facilities for the next 20 years.

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

The Town of Farmington has a variety of agricultural, natural, and cultural resources located within our community. It is our goal to have government assist, in meeting their needs in our community

- a. Polk County & the State deals with Groundwater issues.
- b. We have 4,439 acres in forest lands. There are 517 acres in various woodland programs offered by the State of Wisconsin.
- c. We have 15,052 acres in productive farmland.
- d. We have the scenic river way located on the west side of our township and it is regulated by federal, state, and county regulations.
- e. The DNR monitors threatened and endangered species within our township.
- f. The streams, surface water, floodplains, & wetlands are regulated by the County's shore land protection ordinance.
- g. Farmington works with Federal & State agencies in an effort to maintain wildlife habitat.
- h. All mining operations are overseen by the Town with all reclamation plans monitored by Polk County.
- i. Our town has a community park and a land conservancy to provide parks & open space. We also have lands operated & owned by the Federal Fish & Wildlife Agency.
- j. We have an old Air Force Base that has many historical buildings and Standing Cedars land conservancy has many old areas of historic interest.
- k. We have many recreational opportunities – snowmobile trails, ATV designated roads, hiking trails, biking routes, the Rec Park, canoeing kayaking, and a designated Rustic Road.

Farmington's plan for agricultural, natural and cultural preservation is to continue to provide a friendly relationship with the area farmers. Our plan is to allow some kind of cluster development option to help preserve open spaces and save agricultural lands. Farmington would like to work with the conservancy lands to develop future hiking, bicycling and horse trails. Farmington will work with areas of historical interest and try to preserve those areas when it is feasible. Many of the other areas of interest are regulated by State & Federal agencies so Farmington will work as best as possible to encourage these agencies to do the best for the community as a whole while keeping in mind that Government is here to assist, not oppress.

Economic Development

The Town of Farmington has a few commercial businesses located within our township. The town encourages growth of these areas as long as they are in harmony with their neighbors. Our town also has a large number of in-home businesses. The town encourages development of these as well. Our town is not able to compete with TIF districts and don't have any plans to in the future. Our current Zoning Ordinance lists the allowable commercial activities in the community.

Farmington's plan is to continue to encourage the smaller scale businesses and do not want government to interfere with their operation as long it is not a threat to the health & well-being of their neighbors. A large contingency of our community works outside the limits of our community so we want to make sure the town provides services so they are able to reach the main artery roads with minimal problems.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Town of Farmington is located within Polk County. We have State Highway 35 & County Road X which the County is responsible for its maintenance. We are also located next to the Village of Osceola. We have a few roads that we share maintenance resources with the Town of Alden, Village of Osceola, and the Town of Osceola. We are also located north of Somerset township in St. Croix County, and have a similar shared road maintenance agreement. We also use equipment owned by the County. We have always encouraged working with our neighboring communities.

The Village of Osceola provides police & fire protection as well as Municipal Court services on a contract basis. The town lies within the Osceola School district. We are part owners of the Osceola Area Ambulance Service along with the Village of Osceola, Town of Osceola, Village of Dresser, and the Town of Alden. We share First Responder services with Alden & the Village of Osceola.

Farmington's plan is to continue its relationships with the surrounding communities. Farmington has already built a network of sharing resources and our plan is to continue to make cooperative efforts with neighboring communities whenever it is possible.

Land Use

The Town of Farmington has its own Zoning and we have been monitoring & assisting land owners with their land use issues for many years. We have identified the different areas of our township. We currently have seven defined zoning classifications in our Township, Residential, Agriculture, Conservancy, Restricted Commercial, Commercial, Industrial, and Recreational. Our goal is not to discourage development, but to assist in making the development a benefit to the whole community.

At the present time subdivision of land has almost stopped. We don't expect it to pick up again for several years. Economic trends impact how much development we will need in the future. Economic conditions have slowed the sprawl we were experiencing a few years ago. Due to the economic conditions and the amount of lots available for new homes, we don't expect to see any new land subdivisions in the next several years.

The Town of Farmington's plan is to stay on track with its philosophy of assisting those who wish to subdivide their land. Polk County has an extensive subdivision ordinance in place and we will rely on them to monitor the land division process. The Town will continue to regulate the roadways & building requirements. It is Farmington's plan to allow a cluster housing plan to help preserve open lands. We are also limited in any areas vulnerable to annexation by the Village of Osceola and hope to work with the Village when annexation becomes necessary. When the Village adopts their plan, we hopefully will have a better idea of planning in this area.

Implementation

The Town of Farmington chose to adopt its own zoning, separate from Polk County, in 1973. Since then, the Town of Farmington has been regulating buildings, roads, land use, and many other areas of growth. The Town has made revisions to our zoning ordinance as needed over the years and plans to continue this process. We will update maps as needed. We will strive to make sure that the plan and zoning have no contradictions and are consistent with all other regulations by the state, county, and federal government.

As was said in the introduction, it is the Town of Farmington's goal to be an assistant to its community members and not be over burdensome. Farmington would like to work with its residents and be a team as we grow together in the future.☺