



Brice Prairie Master Plan

Town of Onalaska

Community Meeting #1



Sand Lake Elementary School

January 28, 2006

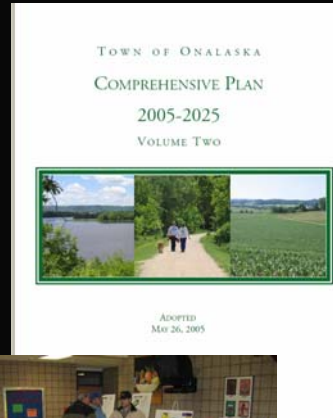
9 am – 11 am

Agenda

- Background
- What is a Master Plan?
- Brice Prairie Capacity Reports
- Starter Ideas
- Table Sessions
- Report Back
- Next Steps

Background

- Town Comprehensive Plan was updated and adopted in May, 2005
- Covers all aspects of the entire Town
- In the Land Use analysis and the future land use map, the Town was divided into Planning Districts.



Town Comprehensive Plan

- Planning Districts



- Public participation and debate
- Preference for "Growth with Conservation"



Town Comprehensive Plan

1. Promote conservation, agriculture, and limited conservation-based development as preferred land uses.
2. Explore policies, programs, and compensation mechanisms that will allow for alternatives to industrial uses for undeveloped properties with that zoning definition.
3. Prohibit the rezoning of Exclusive Agricultural Zoning Districts.
4. Ensure zoning is consistent with the Land Use Plan designation.
5. Protect and enhance Brice Prairie's status as a recreational gateway to the Great River State Recreational Trail, Lake Onalaska, the Black River Bottoms and other areas within the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.
6. Encourage redevelopment opportunities to focus land use on conservation design principles.

■ Future Land Use Plan



Brice Prairie Planned Land Uses

Protecting existing areas

- Agriculture Preservation: preserve productive agricultural lands
- Conservancy: preserve environmentally sensitive lands
- Residential: protect existing neighborhoods



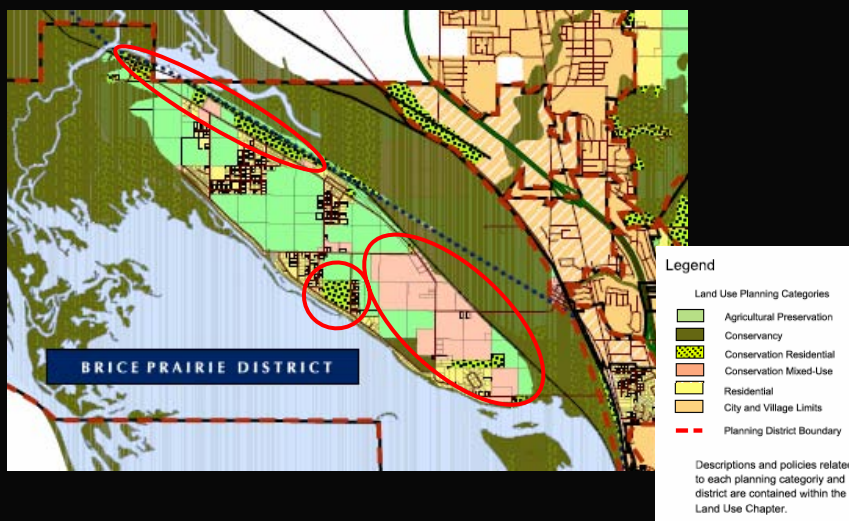
Brice Prairie Planned Land Uses:

Accommodating new development

- Conservation Residential: residential with open space
 - Minimum 60% open space preserved
- Conservation Mixed Use: mixed-use areas with open space
 - Where Prairie residents and visitors can live, work and recreate
 - Mix of compatible uses:

▪ Public and Non-Profit	▪ Residential
▪ Office	▪ Open space
▪ Commercial	▪ Education
▪ Recreation	▪ Agriculture

- Areas of new development



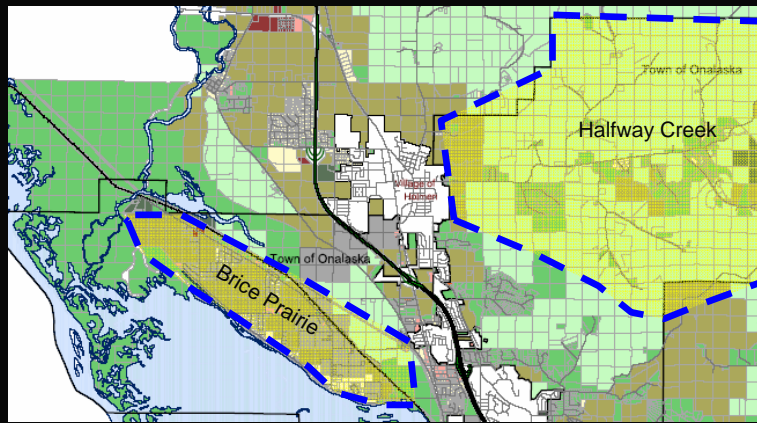
Why Master Plan?

- Comprehensive plan already has significant detail
- Some areas need more attention to detail
 - town centers and other special areas
 - environmentally-sensitive areas
 - high growth areas and redevelopment areas



Town of Onalaska areas needing more detail

- Brice Prairie
- Halfway Creek



Brice Prairie is a Special Place



A hammock on Brice Prairie
is worth a dozen in
the city.



Spring 2004

Master Plans

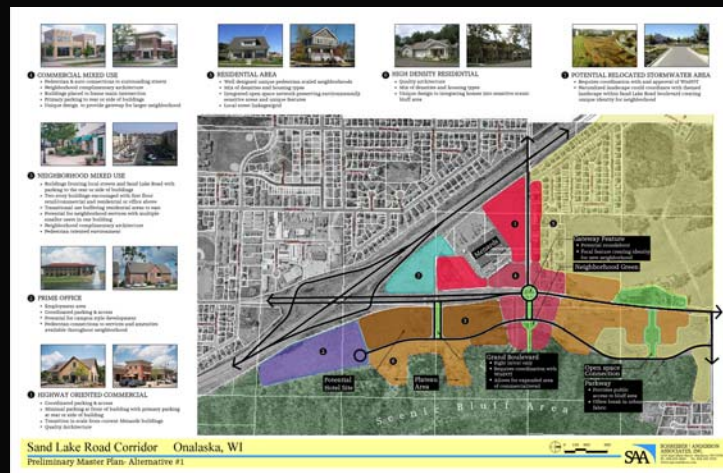
Typical Master Plan Process

- Collect & analyze data
- Property owner & resident input
- Identify opportunities & constraints
- Design alternative concept plan(s)
- Select desired plan(s)
- Detailed plans, implementation strategies



Typical Master Plan Process

- Detailed plans, implementation strategies



Capacity & Tipping Point

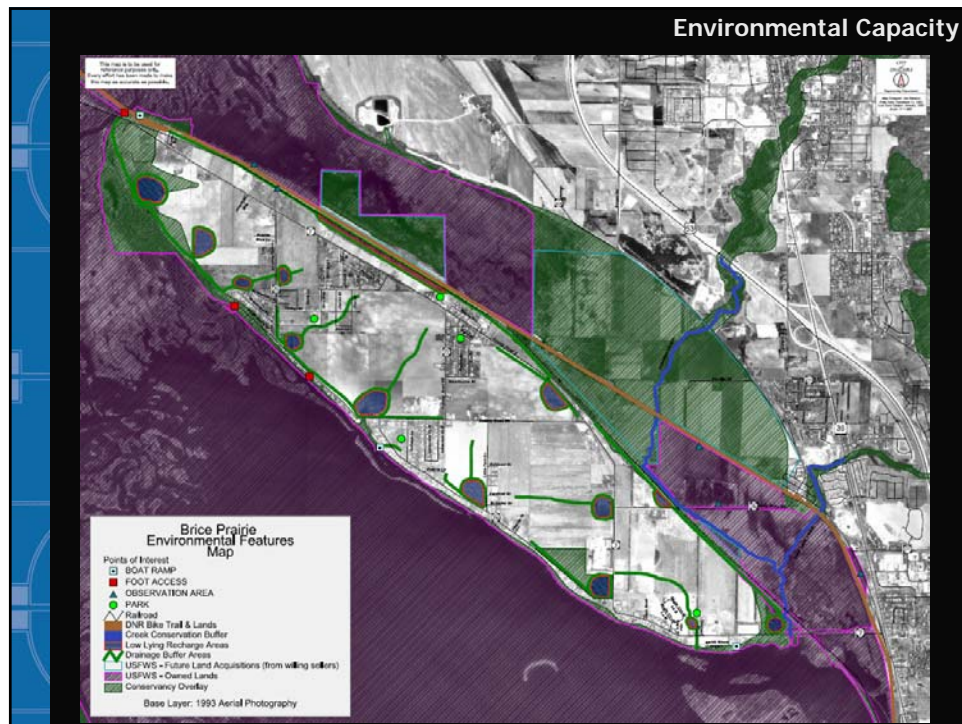
- Capacity: reaching limits/ends
- Tipping Point: Point at which major conditions change and decisions must be made about the future
 - Town Hall, staff, services
 - Roads – safety, efficiency
 - Emergency Services – response time, facilities
 - Schools – classes, buildings
 - Environment – water quality or water/sewer service
 - Economically viable businesses
 - Character – rural/suburban

Brice Prairie Capacity Analyses

- Environmental capacity
 - Ground & surface water, wetlands
 - Habitat, impervious surfaces, shorelands
- Transportation
 - Access, efficiency and congestion
- Emergency services capacity
 - Fire/EMS & law enforcement

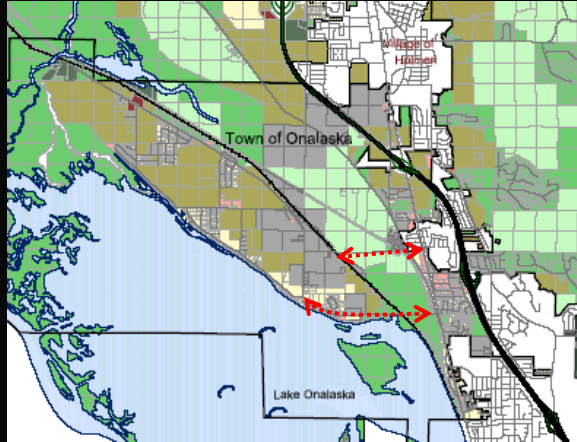
Environmental Capacity

- Prepared by team of environmental experts
- Describes the Prairie's many environmental features
- Additional residential and non-residential development will further strain the Prairie's characteristic environmental features
- Primary Limiting Resource: Groundwater
 - Dependence of Prairie residents and businesses on groundwater
 - Permeable Prairie soils that are particularly susceptible to contamination
 - Contamination that has already occurred



- ### Transportation Capacity
- Prairie's current roadway network can accommodate a moderate amount of additional development
 - Neither a third roadway connection to STH 35 nor a widening of CTH Z and CTH ZN are necessary
 - Key intersections may be congested
 - Meets minimal transportation standards
 - May not be acceptable to Prairie residents, business owners, and emergency service providers
 - Additional roadway segments and connections on the Prairie can ease congestion along the shoreline

Transportation Capacity



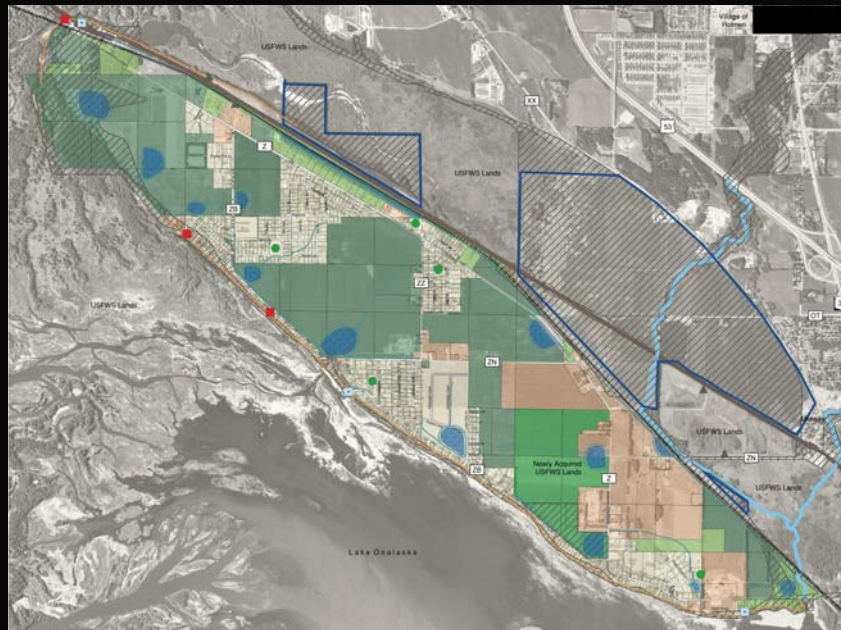
- 2 connections limit growth
- 3rd road connection: not necessary for transportation, destructive for environmental

Emergency Services Capacity

- Fire/EMS: Village of Holmen Fire Department
 - Supplemented by Brice Prairie First Responders (EMS only)
- Police: La Crosse County Sheriff's Department
- Current response times are adequate
- Only 2 entrances points onto the Prairie, occasionally blocked by trains
- Further development: greater investments in emergency services staffing and equipment



Today's Tasks



Today's Tasks



- What type of development is appropriate for the Prairie? Where should that development be?
- What types of open space should be protected?
- What does open space mean to you?
- What are your priorities?
 - For preservation
 - For development

- Conservancy and Ag Preservation
 - Purchase of Development Rights
- Conservation Residential
 - Conservation subdivisions
- Conservation Mixed Use
 - Crossroads communities or hamlets

Future Land Use Intents

- Conservancy
 - Preserve environmentally-sensitive and archeological areas
- Ag Preservation
 - Preserve productive agricultural land.
 - Preserve productive farms by preventing land use conflicts between incompatible uses.



Purchase of Development Rights

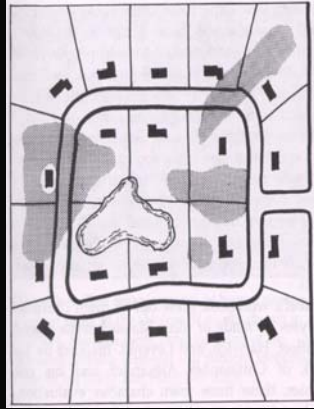
- 100% voluntary program – rights are purchased at negotiated value, land remains in private ownership
- Landowners *sell* to governments the development potential of their property, which is then devoted to conservation easements
- Conservation easements permanently protect open space and valuable ag land by restricting or prohibiting development



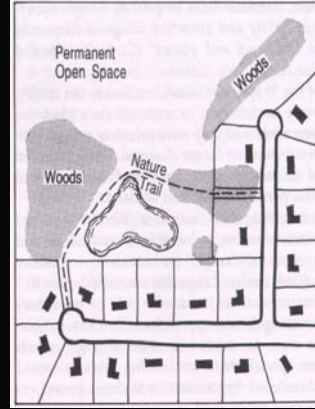
- Questions about: PDR
 - Is a PDR program right for Brice Prairie?
 - If so, what areas are priority for PDR?
 - Environmentally-sensitive land?
 - Agricultural areas?
 - Buffers to agricultural areas?
 - Other areas of Brice Prairie?

- Conservation Residential
 - Balance of conservation & development
 - 60% open space & 40% development
 - Maintain same number of lots, just smaller and clustered
 - Comprehensive Plan states “generally maintain 60% open space”.

Conservation Subdivisions



- Same # of lots
- 2 acre vs. $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lots
- Private vs. common open space
- Natural features protected
- Trail & pond access



Conservation Subdivisions

- Clearwater Conservation, City of Onalaska
- 51 homes on 110 acres
- 59% open space
- Farmstead preserved with a gardening cooperative



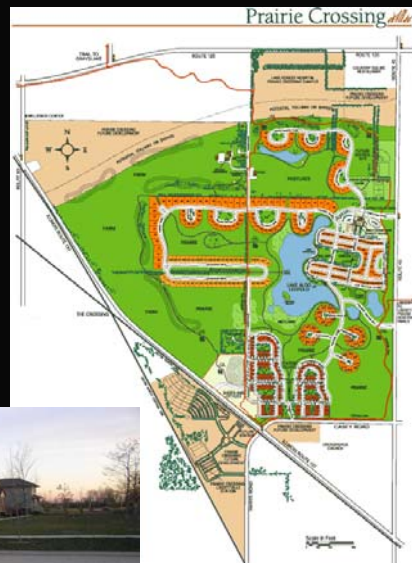
Conservation Subdivisions

- The Preserve, Hunter's Bay, WI
- 41 homes on 185 acres
- 65% open space (incl. 65 acres of wetlands marshes)
- Site includes 1-mile segment of Ice Age National Scenic Trail



Conservation Subdivisions

- Prairie Crossing, Gray's Lake, IL
- 395 homes on 677 acres
- 69% open space (395 acres permanently protected)
- Organic farm and on-site public charter school



- Questions about: Conservation Subdivisions
 - Are they right for Brice Prairie?
 - If so, where are they appropriate and where are they not?
 - What should happen with the preserved open space?
 - Private access for homeowners?
 - Public access?
 - Should open spaces from separate projects be connected for wildlife and habitat?

- Conservation Mixed Use
 - Where Prairie residents and visitors can live, work and recreate
 - Well-defined town centers that serve as both community gathering places and commercial centers
 - Mix of compatible uses:
 - Public and Non-Profit
 - Office
 - Commercial
 - Recreation
 - Residential
 - Open space
 - Education
 - Agriculture
 - Alternative development option for the existing industrial-zoned properties on Brice Prairie

Crossroads Communities/"Hamlets"

- Rural homes clustered around a crossroads or small civic or commercial area (e.g., a church or neighborhood store) and surrounded by a large expanse of protected open space.
- Development is clustered; 60% open space.
- A mini-village - mix of types and sizes and can include residential, office, retail and commercial uses.
- Walkable, community gathering spot



Crossroads Communities/"Hamlets"

Some La Crosse County "hamlets":

- Midway: Town Hall, bar, residential, bike trail
- Mindoro (Town of Farmington): Town Hall, school, convenience store, farmers co-op, residential
- St. Joseph's Ridge (Town of Greenfield): school, restaurant, grocery store, monastery
- Others: New Amsterdam, Stevenstown, Burns, Middle Ridge Barre Mills, and Newburg Corners



- USFWS would like to purchase 187 acres on Brice Prairie from Mathy Construction and Capitol Air Systems
- New USFWS regional headquarters would be on 12 acres; remaining 175 acres left as open space
- Land purchase not yet finalized

Crossroads Communities/"Hamlets"

USFWS Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center, Savanna District (IL)



Your Turn

- We need your input!
- Table Sessions
 - 1 hour
 - Facilitators at each table with starter questions
 - Draw your ideas on the basemap and write down your thoughts
 - Elect a spokesperson
- Report Back



Ground Rules

- Argue with your pencils: write down and draw your ideas
- Respect different opinions
- Give everyone a chance to add their thoughts
- Focus on issues, not people
- Make comments concise – a lot to cover in a little time



Next Steps

- Community Meeting #1: Today
 - Getting input and ideas
- Work back in our offices
- Community Meeting #2:
 - Discuss and critique draft Master Plan
 - Saturday, February 11, 2006, 9 am – 11am
 - Sand Lake Elementary School
- Refinements to Master Plan
 - Detailed plans, implementation strategies

- La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan
- "Setting a Regional Vision"
- Sub-Area Group #4: Towns of Onalaska and Holland and Village of Holmen
- Monday March 27th, 7pm
- Holmen Village Hall, 421 S Main St, Holmen



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