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Land Use Plan

Adopted : _____

Prepared by: City of Buffalo
City Landowners

**Buffalo City Land Use Plan
Buffalo County, Wisconsin**

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**Buffalo City Land Use Plan
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Definitions:

Bluff- A steep headland, promontory, riverbank, or cliff.

Dugway- A section of roadway extending from the top of a bluff to the bottom of a bluff, generally through the wooded portion of the bluff with a steep grade, often with sharp curves and/or switchbacks. We assume the term originates from construction by digging into a hill.

Prime Farmland- Rural land with the best combination of physical & chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses. Normally includes classes I, II, III land as defined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Light Industrial - Land in this district shall be used only for the purposes permitted by this subsection. This district is intended to provide for manufacturing and industrial operations which, on the basis of actual physical and operational characteristics, would not be detrimental to surrounding areas by reason of smoke, noise, dust, odor, traffic, physical appearance or similar factors relating to public health, welfare and safety. Those industries requiring outdoor storage for raw materials and/or finished products may be required to provide a fence or screen in accordance with the provisions of Section 7.0.

Any use determined to be objectionable by the Planning Commission on the basis of pollution, noise, dust, smoke, vibration, odor, flashing lights or danger of explosion may be permitted only upon the issuance of a conditional use permit setting forth dimensional and site requirements, performance standards, aesthetic controls, and pollution standards for that particular use.

1. Permitted Uses are those such as, but not limited to, the following:

- a. A one-family dwelling provided that the dwelling is used solely by a watchman or caretaker employed on the premises and by members of his/her family. Dimensional requirements for R-1 Districts shall apply.
- b. Any use permitted or authorized by conditional use permit in the C-1 Commercial District.
- c. General warehousing
- d. Wholesale business.
- e. Printing and publishing.
- f. Manufacture of products from paper, but not the manufacture of paper or pulp.
- g. Repair, service and assembly of motor-propelled or non-motor propelled vehicles, including the repair and storage of automotive accessories, except the wrecking of motor-propelled vehicles.
- h. Storage and warehousing of fuel and materials and contractors' yards, except the storage of wrecked and dismantled vehicles, junk, explosive or inflammable gases or liquids.
- i. Manufacture and bottling of nonalcoholic beverages.

- j. Processing, packing and manufacture of feed, except meat and meat products, fish and fish products, sauerkraut and cabbage by-products, or the vining of peas.
 - k. Manufacture of products from wood, except the manufacture of paper pulp and plastics.
 - l. Manufacture of sporting goods and office appliances and supplies
 - m. Manufacture of goods from leather, but not the tanning of hides or manufacture of leather.
 - n. Knitting mills and the manufacture of products from finished fabrics.
 - o. Cleaning, dyeing and pressing establishment and laundries, except bag cleaning.
 - p. Laboratories.
 - q. Manufacture of jewelry and cosmetics.
 - r. Manufacture of cigars, cigarettes and smoking tobacco.
 - s. Enameling and painting.
 - t. Blacksmithing, tinsmithing, sheet metal working and plumbing shops.
 - u. Manufacture of goods from plastics.
 - v. Accessory uses clearly incidental to a permitted use.
2. Uses authorized by Conditional Use Permit. See Section 8.0 for permit requirements.
- a. Other uses found to be compatible with the purpose of the district, subject to approval by the Medford Planning Commission.
3. Dimensional Requirements:
- a. Maximum Building Height - 65'; 5 stories
 - b. Minimum Lot Width - 100'
 - c. Front Yard Setback - 40'
 - d. Rear Yard Setback: Buildings 2 stories or less in height - 20' Buildings greater than 2 stories in height - 3 additional feet per each story or fractional story
 - e. Side Yards - Not required; but if provided a minimum of 10'
 - f. Off-street Parking (Amended by ordinance #587, section 2, dated (6/20/89)
See City of Medford Off-street Parking Area Specifications & Standards Code.
 - g. Truck Loading/Unloading Area (Amended by Ordinance #587, Section dated 6/20/89)
See City of Medford Off-street Parking Area Specifications & Standards Code. 3.6 I-

Works Cited

“Bluff.” The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

“Dugway.” Brevick, Dave. Buffalo County Highway Commissioner. Personal Interview. 4 Oct. 2001.

“Prime Farmland.” Official definition. National Resource Conservation Services.

Planning Process

The land use planning process began with a presentation by the Buffalo County Extension Agriculture Agent to the Buffalo County Towns Association and Buffalo County Municipalities in 2000. The agent spoke to the Buffalo City Council in mid-2012 to bring them up to speed on the need to develop their Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

Buffalo City officials then invited a number of people to serve on a planning committee. Efforts were made to invite a diverse group of residents and non-residents. The planning committee provided needed views and input into issues that should be addressed and that are included in this document. Results from a community survey are found at the end of this document, see page ??.

Land use plans are not static documents, but are designed to change and be revised to meet current needs of the people. This document will be used as a guide to future change and development in Buffalo City.

Brief History of Buffalo City

It is important to understand a little about one's past before making decisions about the future. The following is a brief excerpt about the history of Buffalo City.

Early History

The origins of Buffalo City can be traced back to Cincinnati, Ohio. Around 1854, a group of German and Swiss immigrants formed the General Colonization Society of Cincinnati. The purpose of this group was to form a colony out West, with a dream of building the perfect city. The Society looked to a more northern state and in 1856 purchased 1,000 acres in Wisconsin along the Mississippi River. The land was chosen because of its location on the river. The site was surveyed and about 500 acres were platted into 1,965 lots, each 50 feet by 100 feet. These lots were divided and sold among the 228 members of the Society, many of whom remained in Cincinnati. Those settlers that did arrive came with great optimism and enthusiasm for building a metropolis. A road was built across the Belvidere bluff to Waumandee. A post office, a saw mill, saloons, stores, and homes were built. A school and church were started. On March 18, 1859 The Wisconsin legislature granted a city charter. The first election for City Officers was held in May, as was the first Common Council meeting.

The Buffalo City 500

No history of Buffalo City would be complete without the story of how 500 cows —ruined the city. As the story goes, almost every resident owned a cow. Each morning the cows would gather at the edge of the river for their swim to Lost Island (also called Summerfield Island) where they grazed until evening. In the evenings, the cows would swim back to the city. As the channel became a thoroughfare for river boats, the thought was that the river traffic would endanger the lives of the cows. So the residents agreed to the building of a wing dam that diverted the river current around to the Minnesota side.

The Wisconsin side soon silted in, and boats made the Minnesota side their port of call. Buffalo City was no longer a stop for river boats. In 1885 when the Chicago & Burlington Railroad was being built along the Wisconsin side of the river, the residents again rose in opposition, afraid that the trains would run over their cows. Consequently, the track was laid closer to the bluffs, and there the Village of Cochrane was established.

While enthusiasm of the early settlers remained high, it soon became evident that the river waters ran low. The commissioners from the Society, who purchased the land because of its location, and the early settlers, had all arrived in the spring when the river was running high. When the water levels returned to normal, it was found that the city was located on a slough that was not navigable. Attempts to pay riverboat captains to make regular trips through the slough and attempts to divert the main channel to force the water to go past Buffalo City all failed. The lack of navigable waters hindered every enterprise. Settlers began to leave, and no new settlers replaced them. Of the original settlers only a few remained. The metropolis as envisioned by the members of the General Colonization Society of Ohio was not to be.

But Buffalo City did survive, and today boasts a population of over 1,000. People live here by choice, either sticking to or coming back to their roots, or because of its location on the river. The river, always the river. One hundred and fifty years ago the river was instrumental in the early beginnings of the city. It was the factor in a dream that never became a reality, and today it remains a factor in the continuing appeal of Buffalo City.

What's In a Name?

How Buffalo City got its name remains unclear. It has been suggested that the name came about due to the fact that three brothers who farmed on the bluff raised buffalo. It has also been suggested that the name might have some connection to the name of the county, as Buffalo County existed two years before Buffalo City.

There has also been some confusion about the official name of the city. The original plat map as laid out by the General Colonization Society in 1857 is titled: —Map of Buffalo City—Buffalo Co., Wisconsin. County land deed records from the General Colonization Society are registered with the name of Buffalo City. The city was incorporated (chartered) in 1859 with the name City of Buffalo City.

Why then, did the first local election list results for the City of Buffalo? The first Council meeting minutes read City of Buffalo, as did much early correspondence. Even state and county governments addressed official business to City of Buffalo. It appears that the city went by the names of Buffalo, City of Buffalo, and Buffalo City, but there is no documentation to explain why.

In April 1992, at the urging of Mayor William Bruegger, the Common Council passed an ordinance making the official name City of Buffalo City. The “City of” being a term used by the State to designate what type of municipality (for example, Town of Belvidere, Village of Cochrane, City of Alma, etc). The ordinance was sent to the state.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 150 YEARS OF BUFFALO CITY HISTORY

1859 City chartered
1861 City makes bid for county seat; jail is built 1872 Fire department established
1873 Smallpox epidemic
1914 Schoolhouse is re-built
1937 Bell Tower is constructed
1947 First fire truck, a Darley, is purchased 1959 City turns 100 years old!
1965 State of emergency declared due to high water
1968 School building closed; City purchases building to become City Hall
1978 City signs first contract with SVEMS
1987 Second fire truck purchased
1991 New municipal/fire hall building built
1992 City passes ordinance making —Buffalo City official name
1992 Ye Old Schoolhouse Shoppe opens
1995 Creation of Tri-Community Fire Dept. with the merge of Buffalo City and Cochrane-Belvidere Fire depts.
1995 Foelsch Riverside Park opens on County 00
2004 New cemetery fence is erected
2005 Weather sirens installed
2006 Electronic voting machines used for elections
2009 City conducts own survey for new floodplain maps. FEMA accepts maps.
2009 City celebrates 150th birthday!

History of the Jail Building

The stone building that sits in what is now the City Park, was constructed when Buffalo City made a bid for the county seat in 1861. The state legislature at the time had passed a bill authorizing the people of Buffalo County to decide by popular vote whether the county seat should be moved from Alma to Buffalo City. The jail was built and offered to the County. Other monies were earmarked for the building of a courthouse, should the out-come be successful. There is little doubt that the construction of the jail was a tactic used to influence voters to support the move. Unfortunately, Buffalo City lost the bid due to the fact that the northern part of the county was more populated and, having the majority of votes, voted to keep the county seat in Alma.

Whether or not this jail was ever used as the County jail is not documented. In 1864 the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors ordered an examination of the condition of the jail to determine if it was suitable for County use. There is no written evidence that this examination took place. In 1867, the same Supervisors passed a resolution to build the county jail in Alma.

It is clear that the jail was constructed so that one side of the building would be home to the City Hall. Council meetings, as well as elections, were held in this building from the 1860's until 1968 when the meetings and the polling place were moved to the school house which had closed. The building was also used as the City Fire Hall. A garage door was installed on one end of the jail portion of the building making this a garage area for the fire truck.

Today, the old jail building is undergoing a renovation. The Buffalo City-Cochrane Area Historical Society is the driving force behind this project. The Historical Society is confident that this building will eventually be listed on the Wisconsin National Register of Historic Places, and receives the recognition it deserves as ...the oldest jail in the state of Wisconsin.

Scenic Valley Emergency Medical Service (SVEMS)

The beginnings of the ambulance service started with the Scenic Valley Clinic, which is now the Scenic Valley Dental Clinic in Cochrane. In 1975, the Clinic received federal grant money, part of which funded the purchase of a Chevy van for clinic use, and a complete communication system. With two key elements in place, transportation and communication, an ambulance service was proposed, and in the spring of 1976 the service was started informally. In the summer of 1976 Scenic Valley Emergency Medical Services was incorporated with the state of Wisconsin as a private, non-profit entity. In February 1978, Buffalo City officially accepted SVEMS as its ambulance service on a contract basis, and has signed a contract every year since. Scenic Valley Emergency Medical Service is run by volunteers from the area, and continues to support itself through service contracts, fund-raisers, and donations. Scenic Valley sponsors the Love Life Tree each December in the City Park to honor loved ones.

The Bell Tower, in the City Park, was built by the City Council and other citizens in 1937. The tower is built of limestone rocks and is 30 feet high. The bronze bell was first used in the Catholic church in Buffalo City until the church was torn down and the parish became affiliated with the church in Alma. The Bell Tower was used for the first time on Memorial Day, 1937. The bell used to ring daily at 7:00 a.m., noon, and 6:00 p.m. It was also used as a fire warning.

Schoolhouse

The first school was opened in the spring of 1859 in the home of one of the early settlers, with Lawrence Kessinger as the first schoolmaster. A schoolhouse was built in 1882, but was struck by lightning and completely destroyed. A brick schoolhouse was built at the same location (corner of 8th and Humboldt) in 1914 for a cost of \$3,300. This two-room elementary school remained in operation until 1968 when it closed. Buffalo City students attended school at the Cochrane-Fountain City school district complex on Highway 35. Buffalo City bought the schoolhouse from the school district for \$1.00. From November 1968 until April 1991 the schoolhouse was used as the City Hall, the polling place, and in the winter the Fire Department held their meetings there. The school was vacated in 1991 when the new municipal building/fire hall was constructed on County Road 0 (10th Street). There was interest by a few parties in buying the old school-house and using it as a community center, a home for the Lion's Club, and converting it to a residence. None of these materialized.

Ruth Shirley spearheaded a plan for the old school. In November 1991 Margaret Michaels and Judy Seep approached the Common Council with a proposal to turn the old school into a clothing shop and food pantry. The Council approved of the plan. In May 1992 the **Ye Old Schoolhouse Shoppe**, with seed money from Catholic Charities of La

Crosse, was open for business selling used clothing and household items. The food pantry was never developed. The City still owns the building, but rent and utilities are paid by the Shoppe. The non-profit Shoppe has proved to be highly successful, relying on dedicated volunteers for the entire operation. Today, there are over thirty volunteers. The success of the Shoppe is evidenced by what it gives back to the surrounding communities and local organizations. Over the years the Ye Old Schoolhouse Shoppe has contributed to Scenic Valley Emergency Medical Service, the Tri-Community Fire Department, the Alma Library, the swimming pool at Cochrane, the Buffalo City Cemetery, and the Buffalo City street banners, just to mention a few.

City Hall

City Hall is the place where Common Council meetings take place, and where all official city business is conducted. It is home to the city clerk's office. As discussed elsewhere in this booklet, City Hall was once located in the jail building and also in the old schoolhouse. In the late 1980's it became apparent that the Buffalo City Fire Department was running out of room to store vehicles and equipment. A building large enough to keep all fire equipment in one location was needed. This need turned out to be the catalyst for the construction of a new municipal building which would house not only the Fire Hall, but also City Hall, a community room, and extra office space. A new, modern City Hall would better serve a growing community, and the addition of the community room would offer residents a spacious place to host gatherings. Public hearings were held to get input on where this building should be located. At one time, the land behind the old schoolhouse was considered. The prevailing thought behind finding a location though, was to build the fire hall at a location that would be conducive to serving the Village of Cochrane and the Town of Belvidere should the Buffalo City and Cochrane-Belvidere fire departments ever merge. Thus, the new municipal/fire hall building was built on the edge of the city limits, on County Road 0, between Buffalo City and Cochrane. The first Common Council meeting in the new building was held on April 15, 1991, with the dedication ceremony held on June 30, 1991.

Fire Department

The Buffalo City Fire department was created in 1872, and was a service of the city. The first fire truck was purchased in 1947 for \$2,500. A new truck was purchased 40 years later for \$80,000. In 1995, the Buffalo City Fire department and the Cochrane-Belvidere Fire department merged to form the Tri-Community Fire Department. It operates independently, but is governed by a Fire Board comprised of representatives from the three communities. In 2009, there are about 40 volunteer firemen serving the area.

9 ELEMENTS OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The Smart Growth legislation, signed into law as part of the 1999-2000 budget, is intended to provide local government units tools to create comprehensive plans, to promote more informed land-use decisions and to encourage state agencies to create more balanced land-use rules and policies. Nine elements are required by the Smart Growth legislation. These elements ensure that all aspects of community life will be considered as part of the comprehensive plan. The nine elements are:

- Issues and opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Agriculture, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use
- Implementation

Development of Goals for Buffalo City

Land use planning is more than a set of rules for building, etc. It is a declaration of the priorities and values of the people within the City. These priorities and values should determine if and how property is developed and used.

The remainder of this document describes the priorities and values of the people of Buffalo City. It lists a set of action plans to achieve these priorities and values.

Issues and Opportunities:

Population and Population Projections:

Population of Buffalo City has increased steadily over time from 484 in 1960 to 1,023 in 2010. Projections from the Wisconsin Department of Administration – Demographic Services Center, indicate that population is expected to continue to increase slightly to 1,173 in 2020. Residents felt that their population would not reflect the projections as indicated. The current recession and limited lots available may hold the population down some. They also felt that if energy continues to increase, people may move closer to jobs.

Buffalo City Population Statistics and Projections – U.S. Census Data

| Jurisdiction | Census 1960 | Census 1970 | Census 1980 | Census 1990 | Census 2000 | Census 2010 | Proj. 2015 | Proj. 2020 |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Buffalo City | 484 | 671 | 894 | 915 | 1,040 | 1,023 | 1,134 | 1,173 |
| Buffalo County | 14202 | 13743 | 14309 | 13584 | 13804 | 13,577 | 14,554 | 14,794 |

Population by Race:

Buffalo City is predominantly white. This has been constant since records have been kept. The group saw little indication that this would change in the near future.

Buffalo City Population by Race – 2010 Census

| Race | Population % |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Total | 1,023 |
| White | 98.4% |
| Hispanic | 0.0% |
| Black | 0.09% |
| Asian | 0.23% |
| Native American | 0.19% |
| Other | 1.0% |

Population by Education Level:

Buffalo City is similar to other neighboring municipalities except that they have a slightly lower percent of the population with high school and college graduate degrees in Buffalo County. This may be explained by the distance they are from higher paying jobs than other municipalities in Buffalo County.

Buffalo City Population by Education – Am. Community Survey

| Education Level | Population % |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Total (>25 years old) | 677 (people) |
| No High School Diploma | 11.5% |
| High School Diploma Only | 41.8% |
| Some College | 23.9% |
| Associates Degree | 9.6% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 9.6% |
| Graduate Degree | 3.5% |

Population by Age:

Population in Buffalo City tends to be older than in Buffalo County. The median age is 49.3, Buffalo County is 44.1. This is most likely due to the large number of people that have moved to Buffalo City to retire.

Buffalo City Population by Age – 2010 Census

| Age – years | Number | Percent |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Under 5 | 57 | 5.5 |
| 5-9 | 48 | 4.6 |
| 10-14 | 54 | 5.2 |
| 15-19 | 27 | 2.7 |
| 20-24 | 51 | 5 |
| 25-34 | 110 | 10.6 |
| 35-44 | 111 | 10.8 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----|------|
| 45-54 | 177 | 17.3 |
| 55-59 | 83 | 8.1 |
| 60-64 | 73 | 7.1 |
| 65-74 | 127 | 12.3 |
| 75 and older | 105 | 10.4 |

Per Capita Income:

Per capita income has increased in Buffalo City faster than that of Buffalo County, and only lags slightly behind the State of Wisconsin.

Buffalo City Per Capita Income – 2000 Census

| | 1990 per Capita Income | 2000 Per Capita income | 2011 per capita income |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Buffalo City | 11,116 | 18,392 | \$24,016 |
| Buffalo County | \$10,947 | \$18,123 | \$23,240 |
| State of Wisconsin | \$13,276 | \$21,271 | \$27,192 |

Buffalo City Planning Committee: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis:

Strengths:

- Mississippi River access
- No railroad tracks, no railroad noise
- Flat terrain, easy to move around (no hills to main service center – Winona, MN)
- Quiet
- Great access to hunting and fishing
- Centrally located to jobs
- Gas station in town
- Restaurants and bars
- Safe community – low crime
- Good fire and EMS services
- Good school – close
- Public boat landings accessible
- Well-kept parks
- Pride in the city cemetery

Weaknesses:

- No Post Office
- Name not on the school
- No sidewalks
- Lack of stores (services)
- Older community – hard to change
- No city water and sewer
- Reduces the ability to grow (assisted living)
- No senior living facility – assisted living or nursing home
- Nearest emergency medical facility is 20+ miles away

- Need to commute for many jobs
- No city police
- Tax rate too high
- No public transportation
- No certified day care options

Opportunities:

- Develop a campground in the city
- Business growth
- Space is available for business growth
- Assisted living facility
- Expand on areas' recreational resources
- Biking/walking trails

Threats:

- Flooding – seepage into homes
- Storms
- Younger generation leaving
- Many older, retired, part-time residents
- Hard for services businesses to survive
- Lack of “community” feeling
- Bedroom community – 20 miles from work, people purchase almost everything in Minnesota – is this sustainable in the long run?
- Property values declined because of economy – how long before they increase significantly – housing
- People moving closer to work – as energy increases – shorter commute
- Taxes – will need to increase to improve city infrastructure

The committee also ranked the top concerns they had in Buffalo City.

Strengths

- Mississippi River access
- Safe community – low crime
- Good school – close

Weaknesses:

- Older community – hard to change
- Nearest emergency medical facility is 20+ miles away
- Need to commute for many jobs

Opportunities:

- Expand on areas' recreational resources
- Biking/walking trails

Threats:

- Flooding – seepage into homes
- Many older, retired, part-time residents
- Bedroom community – 20 miles from work, people purchase almost everything in Minnesota – is this sustainable in the long run?

HOUSING ELEMENT:

Wisconsin’s population density is 103 people per square mile, Buffalo County is well below that with only 20 people per square mile. Housing growth in Buffalo City was the third fastest among Buffalo County Municipalities and Towns.

Housing Units in Buffalo City and Buffalo County – Census Data

| Area | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Buffalo City | 297 | 425 | 447 | 492 | 577 |
| Buffalo County | 4,597 | 5,478 | 5,586 | 6,098 | 6,664 |

There are a total of 577 total housing units in Buffalo City. 80% (464) of the homes were occupied during the 2010 census. 67% of the homes (312) were occupied by families. 34.5 % of households (160) had at least one individual 65 years or older living in the home. 8.2% (38) were renter occupied homes. Average household size was 2.2 persons. The median home value was \$114,700. 92.4% of all homes were single family dwellings (9% of those homes were mobile homes). 18% of homes were seasonal or recreational homes this is the highest percent among Buffalo County Towns.

There has been a significant growth of seasonal homes, cabins and second homes in Buffalo City over the last twenty years. It was determined that housing is available for purchase for those choosing to purchase a home. Land for building homes is readily available in the City.

Goals and Actions:

- Buffalo City Council needs to explore ways to increase the number of families moving to Buffalo City.
- Housing is available for different economic levels, but there is a need for apartments/condos for single people.
- City Council needs to address the number system for houses as well as street names. Numbering and naming system needs to be kept updated.

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT:

Vehicular traffic is the major form of transportation in Buffalo City due to limited other forms of transportation available. Recreational transportation is used including snowmobiles, ATV's, and bicycles.

No new road construction is anticipated in the timeframe of this plan. The major objective of the transportation plan is to improve current roads high quality.

Buffalo City has 21.52 miles of road. Zero miles of state road, 3.32 miles of county roads and 18.2 miles of City roads. Functional road classification for rural roads include principal arterials, major and minor collectors, and local roads.

Principal arterials serve interstate and interregional trips. These roads serve urban areas with populations greater than 5,000 and are classified as interstate highways. Buffalo City has zero miles of principal arterials.

Collector miles collect traffic from local roads and link them to nearby population centers. Major collectors are classified as state roads and minor collectors are classified as county roads. Buffalo City has 4.07 miles of collector miles. This includes all County Roads and Herman Street and Herman Road.

Local roads provide access for travel over relatively short distances. These roads are classified Local Miles and includes all town roads. Buffalo City has 17.45 miles of Local Miles. See map page ??.

Buffalo city also has no bridges over 20 feet and no bridges under 20 feet.

State and Regional Transportation Plans:

At www.dot.state.wi.us the Wisconsin Department of Transportation home page under "Plans and Project", then, "Planning Resources", then, "Modal and Multimodal Plans", the Town reviewed and considered the following State and Regional Transportation Plans that have potential affects or integration with the Town plan.

Connections 2030 - the current multimodal plan being developed for all forms of Transportation through the year 2030

Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020 – the current strategic plan for all facets of the 12,000 miles of the State's highways

Wisconsin Six-Year Highway Improvement Program – the more specific construction programs for the Wisconsin DOT through 2014

Wisconsin Airport System Plan 2030 – the plan for determining airport facility needs

Wisconsin Bicycle Plan 2020 – comprehensive bicycle plan

Wisconsin Statewide Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 – the plan outlines State and local measures to promote safe pedestrian travel

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 – the rail plan being developed for integrated rail development through 2030

Buffalo County Highway Plans – Currently, there are no plans for major county road work, beyond general maintenance for any county roads within the borders of Buffalo City.

Currently, Buffalo City is not specifically identified for any recommendations or included in any projects with these plans.

Bus Service:

There is no bus service in Buffalo City. The nearest commercial bus service is the Jefferson Bus Lines stopping in Winona, MN.

Freight Rail Service:

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) runs along the entire western edge of Buffalo County and the Buffalo City. The closest currently used spur is located in the Village of Cochrane, WI.

Passenger Rail Service:

There is no passenger rail service to Buffalo City. Daily passenger service (AMTRAK) is available in Winona, MN, with one train heading south in the am and one train heading north in the pm.

Airports:

There are no public or private airports in Buffalo City. Winona, MN has a private airport but no passenger air service. La Crosse, WI has the closest passenger air service which is about 40 minutes from the Town. Most residents traveling by air would fly out of Minneapolis/St. Paul which is about 120 minutes travel time. An airport shuttle service to the MSP Airport from Wabasha, MN is also available.

Water Transportation:

The Mississippi River runs on the entire west side of Buffalo County, with the Port of Winona being the closest terminal. Much of the grain produced will be transported by truck to Winona and sold to one of three grain buyers to be loaded onto barges. Fertilizer, Chemical, Liquid Propane and other commodities are shipped to Winona and distributed throughout the region by truck.

Trucking:

Most commercial shipping in the Town is by truck, with State Highway 35 being a major transportation route. Road bans may be implemented each spring on County and Town roads.

Pedestrian and Bike Trails:

There are no designated biking trails in Buffalo City.

Snowmobile Trails:

There is a very strong network of snowmobile trails in Buffalo City and across Buffalo County. These trails are located on private property. Maintenance and property agreements are completed by local clubs. See map on page 19.

Buffalo City Road Improvement Plans

2016

Humboldt from 24th St. to Herman---1,372 feet
Belvidere from 24th to end of St. (by storage sheds)---633 feet
6th St. from County Rd OO to Humboldt---634 feet
13th St. from County Rd OO to Herman St.---2,007 feet

2017

1st Street---1,901 feet
24th Street---3,169 feet
Front Street---1,426 feet

2018

14th St. from County Rd OO to Schiller then from Belvidere to Herman---1,426 feet
16th St. Schiller to Belvidere---739 feet
19th St. from County Rd OO to Belvidere then from Humboldt to Herman---2,111 feet
21st St. from County Rd OO to Front Street then Belvidere to Humboldt---897 feet

2019

7th St. from County Rd OO to Washington St.---2,692 feet
8th St. from County Rd OO to Washington St.---2,903 feet

2020

South Herman St.---2,482 feet
20th St. from County Rd OO to Herman---2,693 feet
North Herman from 16th St. to North St---3,433 feet

2021

South Humboldt St.---2,113 feet

Buffalo City has some problems with vandalism of town road signs and has a goal to keep all road signs up to date and replaced as needed and as funds permit.

Bicycle usage in rural areas is on the increase. The planning committee expressed concerns about safety on town and county roads due to the amount of motorized traffic, farm traffic and bicycle traffic all sharing the same roads.

Some elderly transportation is available through Buffalo County Health and Human Services, Meals on Wheels (Cove Restaurant) program. Transportation is also available for veterans through Veteran's services.

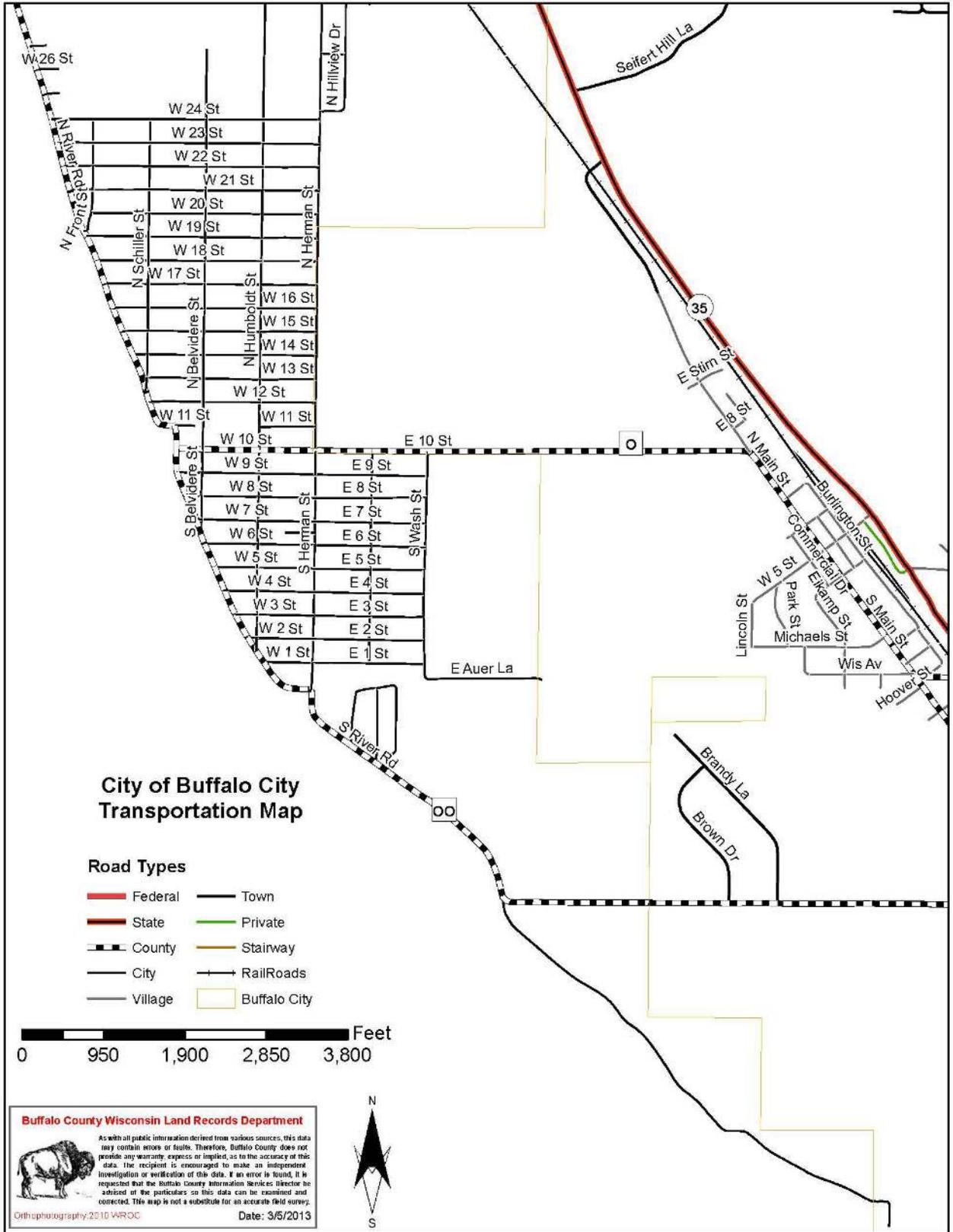
Buffalo City currently cooperates with the following units of government on transportation issues: Buffalo County and the Town of Belvidere.

Goals and Actions:

- Develop walking/bike paths between Buffalo City, Cochrane, CFC School, and Merrick State Park. Work in cooperation with Cochrane, Town of Belvidere, Town of Milton, CFC School, DNR, and Buffalo County to make this happen. Include in the update of the Buffalo County Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Many City Streets are in poor repair:
 - Excellent 10%
 - Good 20%
 - Fair 40%
 - Poor 30%

The City Council will develop a long term street improvement plan to address this issue.

- Study the possibility, together with Buffalo County, for road improvement to County Road OO including the addition of a walking/bike path.





UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT:

This element looks at existing utility service and community facilities benefiting the citizens of Buffalo City. Items include solid waste disposal, recycling services, parks, telecommunication services, emergency response services, schools, government facilities and others.

Sanitary Waste and Water Supply:

Most citizens in Buffalo City are serviced with private water and sewer. Citizens have voted against municipal water and sewer several times.

Solid Waste/Recycling:

Garbage disposal and recycling is available in cooperation with the Village of Cochrane, Town of Belvidere, and Buffalo County. Town citizens can bring their recyclables and garbage bags to the BBC Waste and Recycling Center for disposal. The City does not have curbside garbage or recycling pickup. Other private waste haulers have dumpsters to rent on a monthly basis.

City Facilities:

Buffalo City maintains a City Hall and City Shop.

There are no cemeteries located in the City.

Telephone/Electricity/Internet Services:

Cell phone service is very acceptable in the Village of Cochrane. DSL internet service, cable TV, and phone service is excellent throughout the City.

Xcel Energy and Riverland Energy provide electrical service in Buffalo City. The citizenry find alternative energy sources such as wind, solar and methane acceptable.

Natural Gas:

There is no natural gas lines in the City. Most people rely on Liquid Propane.

Libraries:

There are no public libraries in the City. They can take advantage of limited library services at the Cochrane-Fountain City School.

Education:

Students residing in Buffalo City attend the CFC School. Taxpayers also support Western Technical College.

Fire Protection, Police Protection and Emergency Management:

Fire protection is provided by Tri-Community Fire Departments and Scenic Valley Ambulance Service provides EMS services. Police protection is provided by the Buffalo County Sheriff's Department. Buffalo County Emergency Management Department provides training and planning for emergencies.

Health Care and Long Term Care Services:

Excellent Medical Services are provided by services in Winona, La Crosse, Rochester, and Wabasha. Long term care services are provided in Fountain City, Winona, and other surrounding communities.

Public Parks:

The Buffalo City has three community parks that the City maintains for its citizens:

Buffalo City Park - 10th & Humbolt St

Veterans Memorial Park – 19th & Herman St

Foelsch Riverside Park - S. River Rd & CTH OO

The City also has several other city owned picnic spots along the Mississippi River.

Goals and Actions:

- Maintain current community facilities, i.e. City Hall, Shop, and parks.
- Maintain the excellent community services available; EMS and Fire response, sewer and water.
- The Buffalo City Council will study the cost/benefit of adding additional law enforcement presence in some manner. Options may include; sharing a police officer with Cochrane, working out an arrangement with Buffalo County, hiring a constable, etc.

AGRICULTURAL NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT:

Agriculture:

There are only two remaining active farms in the Buffalo City limits. Both of these farmers are very respectful and courteous to Buffalo City residents in their farming practices. The lots that are surrounded by homes, may be areas for possible expansion of residential, commercial, or light industrial business development.

Many residents rely on agriculture in some form for employment through on-farm employment, La Crosse Milling, Gold'n Plump Chicken, trucking, and other types of employment.

Natural Resources:

Buffalo City is a river town. It is defined by the Mississippi River and its valley. The resources available to Buffalo City because of this are many and spectacular.

The Mississippi itself brings a flow of tens of thousands of cubic feet per second of fresh water from a watershed of thirty-four million acres in Minnesota and Wisconsin. This abundance of water ensures a supply of pure water for the city from wells drilled through a hundred or more feet of purifying sand below the riverbed. The water quality of the main channel of the Mississippi River benefits from the large settling basin effect of Lake Pepin, a 21 mile by 1.7 mile wide spot in the river some 20 miles upstream of Buffalo City, allows for some 120 species of fish. An abundant and diverse clam population used to thrive in its waters, but federal water management policies since the 1930s have decimated these species.

Located in pool 5 of the Army Corp of Engineers 27 locks and dams, Buffalo city has access to recreation on the Mississippi River. Public access to the river is available in four boat landings in and adjacent to Buffalo City. Recreational boating, fishing, and waterfowl hunting are all just seconds away from boat landings and docks. More recently, silent sports such as canoeing, kayaking (along with newly formed paddle clubs), birding, and exploring have all gained in popularity, and brought in many new visitors to Buffalo City.

The flood plain of the Mississippi Valley is largely part of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This refuge encompasses 240,000 acres along 261 miles of the river. It coincides with a major migratory bird flyway which provides a uniquely diverse set of bird species for birding enthusiasts. The secluded backwaters allow waterfowl hunting, as well. The complex system of sloughs and islands in non-flooded areas is ideal habitat for beaver, muskrat, otter and other small mammals. The valley has a long history of fur trapping, though now it is carried on at a hobby scale.

Outside of Buffalo City lie the beautiful Mississippi River bluffs extending up to 500 feet above the river. Many of these bluffs have vertical cliff sections in their upper regions, making the views from the valley floor exotic and as nearly alpine as the Midwest can

claim. Farmland and timber line the landscape on the bluffs. The surrounding area is home to the famous “Buffalo county Whitetails” as well as an abundance of bald eagles, the occasional golden eagle, wild turkeys, bear, as well as many small game species.

Groundwater

All drinking water in the City of Buffalo City is from groundwater. All residents have their own private wells. Well water testing has indicated that wells that are drilled (not sand points) have good/safe drinking water, but some residents are concerned about the City having both private wells and private septic systems.

Surface Water

The City has no surface water resources outside of the Mississippi river.

Forests

The City has very little forested land. The City does not currently have an urban forestry plan, but are considering due to the proximity of the EAB to Buffalo County.

Wetlands

There are no wetlands in Buffalo City.

Floodplains

There are no designated floodplains in Buffalo City.

Cultural Resources:

Buffalo City is rich in history and cultural activities that reflect its heritage. Some examples of cultural resources in the City include:

- Jailhouse
- Bell Tower
- School House
- Mausoleum
- 4th of July celebration that is shared with the Village of Cochrane.

Goals and Actions – Agriculture

- Support agriculture in Buffalo County.
- Support businesses that add value to Buffalo County agriculture products.

Goals and Actions – Natural Resources

- Study the impact of “silent sports” on Buffalo City.
- Maintain access to the Mississippi River for all.

Goals and Actions – Cultural Resources

- Maintain current significant historical sites and buildings.
- Encourage support of the Buffalo City/Cochrane Historical Society.
- Encourage support for the Buffalo County Historical society.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT:

Buffalo city is becoming a bedroom community and increasingly a site for seasonal residents. Hunters and fishermen still utilize many of the establishments, but other recent businesses have helped to grow the economy. The additional of a few additional attractions and businesses could make the visitor economy a year round, sustainable economy.

The majority of the data for this section came from the U.S. Census Bureau, Selected Economic Characteristics: 2005-2009 5-Year Estimates. Other sources of information were the Department of Workforce Development and citizens from Buffalo City.

Employment Information:

Manufacturing, construction, finance, and the education/health/social occupations comprise a majority of people employed in Buffalo City. It is also within commuting distance to manufacturing, school and health care jobs in Arcadia, Mondovi, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Wabasha, and Winona. Buffalo City and all of Buffalo County tends to have very low unemployment rates, due to the variety of jobs in the region and the growth of industry in Arcadia (Ashley Furniture and Golden Plump Chicken), and Winona MN.

Buffalo City Employment Statistics – Census Data

| Employment Status | Number | Percent |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Population 16 years and older | 885 | 100 |
| In Labor Force | 550 | 64 |
| Civilian Labor Force | 550 | 64 |
| Employed | 512 | 60 |
| Unemployed | 38 | 4.4 |
| Armed Forces | 0 | |
| Not in Labor Force | 308 | 36 |
| Occupation | | |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing | 25 | 5 |
| Construction | 39 | 8 |
| Manufacturing | 169 | 33 |
| Retail Trade | 41 | 8 |
| Professional, management, etc. | 23 | 4 |
| Education, health care | 95 | 19 |
| Transportation | 27 | 5 |
| Arts and entertainment | 33 | 6 |
| Finance, insurance, real estate | 18 | 4 |
| All others | 42 | 8 |
| Class of Worker | | |
| Private wage and salary | 415 | 81 |
| Government workers | 45 | 9 |
| Self-employed | 48 | 9 |
| Unpaid family | 4 | 1 |

Commuting to Work:

Many employed residents of Buffalo City, commute out of the City to work. Arcadia, La Crosse, Eau Claire, Wabasha, Rochester, and Winona, MN are within 60 minutes for all residents.

Buffalo City, Commuting Habits – Census Data

| Means of Travel | Percent |
|---|----------------|
| Car, truck, van – drove alone | 84 |
| Car, truck, van – carpooled | 12 |
| Public transportation | 0 |
| Walked | 2 |
| Other means | 1 |
| Worked at home | 1 |
| | Minutes |
| Mean travel time to work (minutes) | 26 |

Buffalo County Industries:

Buffalo County has a very small manufacturing base. Only one manufacturing industry, La Crosse Milling (oat miller) is in the top ten employers in the County. Most all of the employment opportunities in the near future will be outside of the City or Buffalo County.

Buffalo County Top 10 Employers – WI DWD

| Company | Service | Size |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Marten Transport | Trucking | 1,000+ |
| Mondovi Public Schools | Education | 100-249 |
| CFC Public Schools | Education | 100-249 |
| County of Buffalo | Government | 100-249 |
| American Lutheran Homes | Nursing Care Provider | 100-249 |
| Dairyland Power | Electrical Power Generation | 100-249 |
| School District of Alma | Education | 50-99 |
| Midwest Dental | Dental Care | 50-99 |
| US Army Corp of Eng. | Engineering Service | 50-99 |
| La Crosse Milling | Oat Miller | 50-99 |

Environmentally Contaminated Sites in Buffalo City:

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) was utilized in identifying contaminated sites in Buffalo City. There are no open contaminated site in Buffalo City identified in the database.

The Wisconsin DNR Solid and Hazardous Waste Information System was reviewed for waste disposal sites in Buffalo City. There was one disposal site in the registry located in Buffalo City.

County, Regional and State Economic Develop Programs:

County Programs:

- Revolving Loan Fund

Regional Programs:

- Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, Economic Development Program, Revolving Loan Fund

State Programs:

- USDA – Rural Development

Brainstorming of desirable business characteristics:

- Focused on recreation
- Related to recreation on the river, boat motor repair, live bait, etc.
- Light industry
- General store of some kind
-

Current Businesses:

- Gas station
- Motel
- Resort
- Bars
- Salon
- Home daycares
- TV repairs
- Electrician
- Contractors
- Farmers
- Gun dealer
- Landscaping and lawn care
- Engine building and repair
- Carpet
- Campground
- Septic service
- Restaurants
- Welder
- Banner printing
- Masseuse
- Small engine repair
- Convenience store
- Thrift store
- Church

Current committees that City has dealing with economic development

- Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
- Western Dairyland
- USDA –Rural Development Administration

Issues with current economic development activities:

- No economic development committee
- Poor cell service in industrial park
- There are currently 14 lodging rooms available in the Buffalo City. Is this adequate for future business/tourism growth?

Goals and Actions:

- Work with area organizations to get defined missions and plans on economic development.
- Develop a campground that is friendly to tent campers (bicyclist).
- Develop area Chamber office that addresses economic development in cooperation with Cochrane as a possibility.
- Develop website links for economic development including light industrial development and what land/buildings might be available for economic development.
- Look into the possibility of a marina and better access to the Mississippi River.
- Develop a plan to support local businesses, grow in the community and possibility build in area zoned industrial.
- Work with Buffalo County to develop a non-profit countywide economic development corporation.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT:

Buffalo City has a number of cooperative agreements, formal and informal with area units of government and businesses. A few examples includes:

Buffalo City has been part of the Buffalo County Recycling program since the program began. The City also cooperates and helps to fund Emergency Response and Fire Protection with the Village of Cochrane and Town of Belvidere.

Buffalo City is involved with the Wisconsin League of Municipalities.

Buffalo City is served by the Cochrane-Fountain City Public Schools. The residents of the City are very supportive of their school.

Spring Lake Road agreements with the Town of Belvidere.

Cooperate with the Village of Cochrane on Little League Baseball.

Goals and Actions:

- Explore additional options for sharing of equipment with Buffalo City, Cochrane and the Town of Belvidere, i.e. shared street sweeper, and other road maintenance equipment.
- Maintain the strong relationship with the Fire and EMS Services.
- Support County efforts at economic development to improve the local economy and increase tax base.
- Make a special effort to work out differences with the Village of Cochrane.

LAND USE ELEMENT:

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

Buffalo City is a bedroom and retirement city. The following table displays the breakdown of property within the town.

Buffalo City Property Assessment

| Property Classification | # of Parcels | Total Value | Total Acres |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Residential | 775 | 55,435,600 | 42.4 |
| Commercial | 15 | 1,643,600 | 12.5 |
| Manufacturing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Agricultural | 39 | 66,300 | 368.3 |
| Undeveloped | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Productive Forest Lands | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Agricultural Forest Land | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Woodland Tax Lands | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Exempt Lands | 60 | 0 | 629 |
| TOTALS | 891 | 57,338,900 | 628.9 |
| Cochrane-Fountain City Schools | 894 | 57,338,900 | |
| Cochrane Drainage District | 1 | 0 | |
| Western Wisconsin VTAE | 894 | 57,338,900 | |

Buffalo City has its own Zoning Committee which also serves as the Building committee. Sanitary permits are issued and administered by the Buffalo County Land resources committee. The City also has a five member Board of Appeals comprised by City residents.

Existing Land Uses:

Buffalo City is mainly a residential community with few lots zoned commercial. There is not a downtown area. See current zoning map page ???. Buffalo City does not have City sewer or water services.

Commercial:

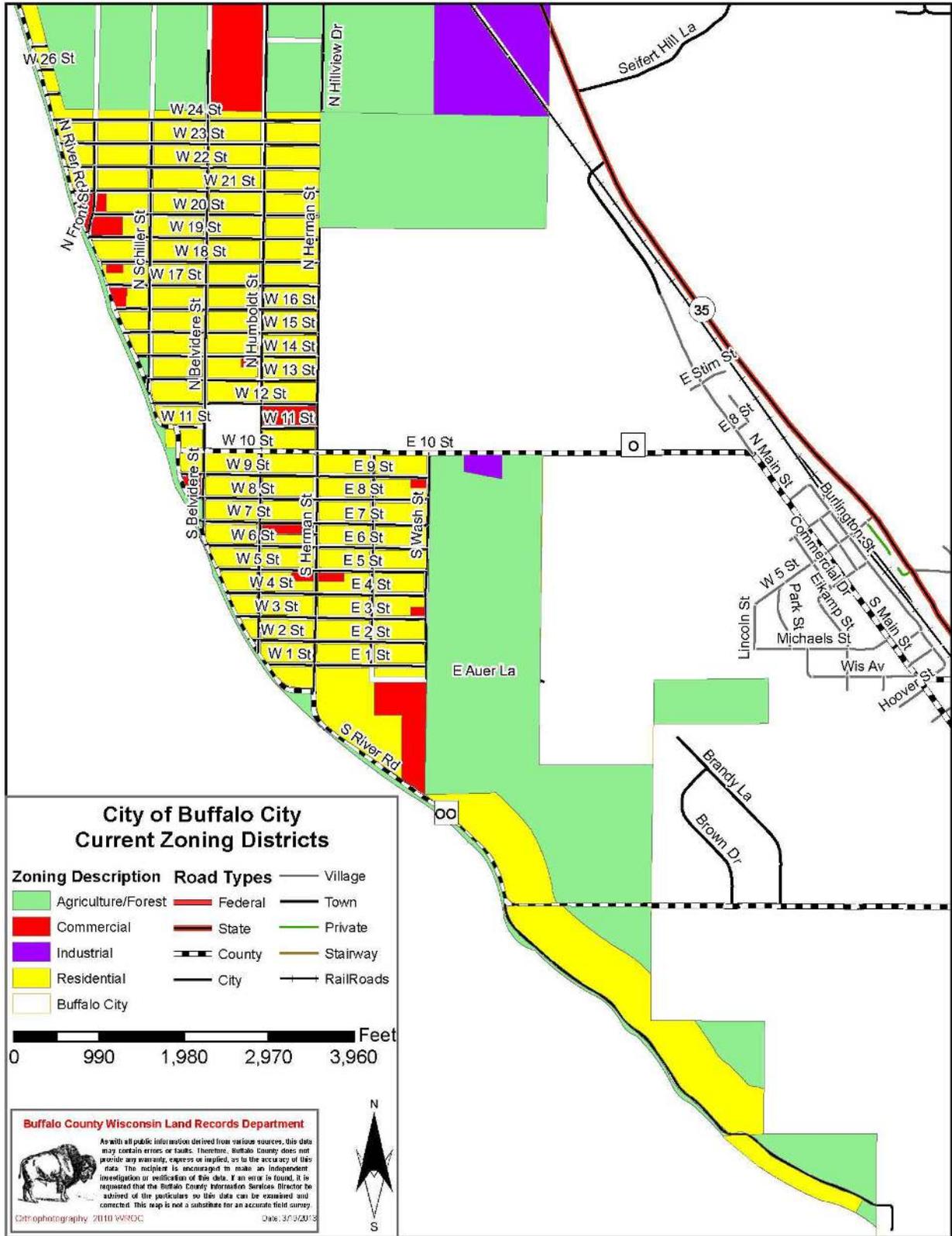
Only 15 properties in Buffalo city are zoned commercial. There are several home based businesses in the City in the residential district.

Industrial:

Currently, two properties are zoned industrial. The committee expanded the future land use plans to include additional possible sites for industrial growth and to zone all industrial areas as light industrial.

Goals and Actions:

- City Council should continue using the conditional use process to approve small commercial businesses in the residential district.
- Review the current rule which prohibits constructing garage/structure across an alley from a residence.
- Commercial and Light Industrial district(s) should be expanded if land that is currently zoned agricultural becomes available.
- The City should research the feasibility of annexing the “Duellman” housing addition.
- Buffalo City should explore avenues to encourage the construction of an assisted living facility.
- Council should look into rezoning areas that are currently used for a different purpose. For example, commercial properties that now have residents built on them.



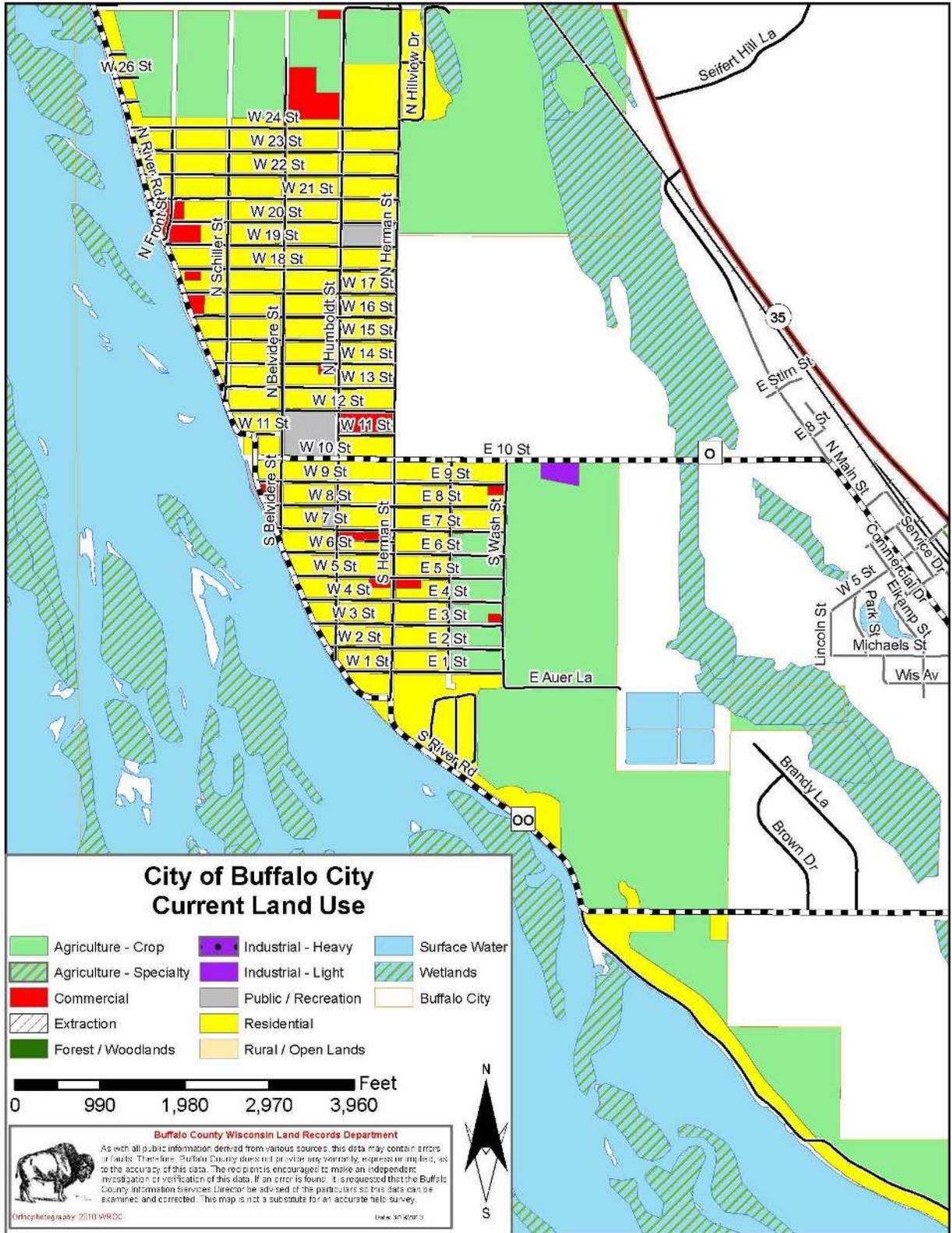
**City of Buffalo City
Current Zoning Districts**

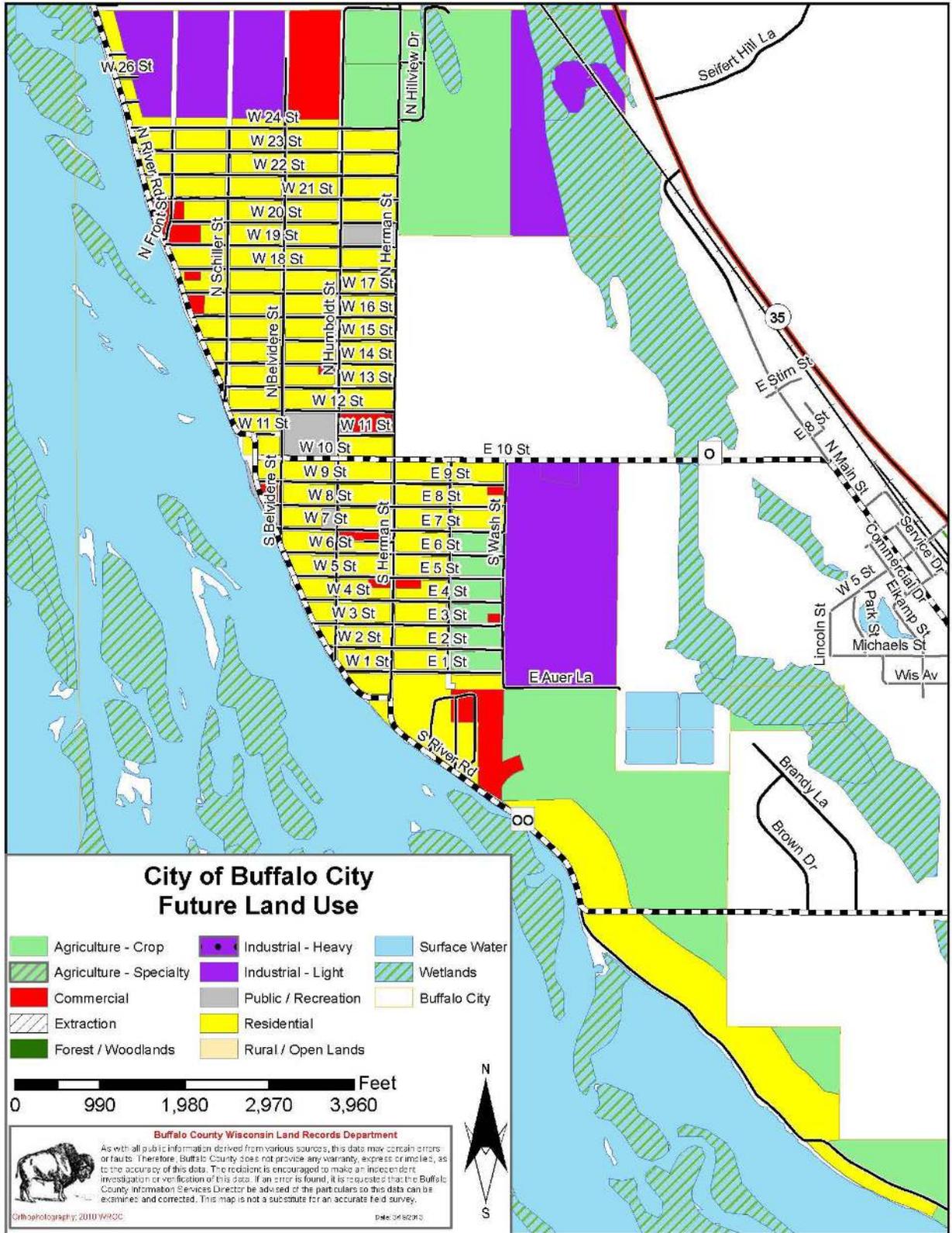
| Zoning Description | Road Types | |
|--------------------|------------|----------|
| Agriculture/Forest | Federal | Village |
| Commercial | State | Town |
| Industrial | County | Private |
| Residential | City | Stairway |
| Buffalo City | Railroads | |

0 990 1,980 2,970 3,960 Feet

Buffalo County Wisconsin Land Records Department
 As with all public information derived from various sources, this data may contain errors or omissions. Therefore, Buffalo County does not provide any warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy of this data. The recipient is encouraged to make an independent investigation or verification of this data. If an error is found, it is requested that the Buffalo County Information Services Director be advised of the particulars so this data can be examined and corrected. This map is not a substitute for an accurate field survey.
 Citrophotography 2010 WISDC Date: 3/13/2015







IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT:

Goals and Actions in Implementing Plan:

- The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed at each annual meeting of the City. Updates that are needed will be the responsibility of the Buffalo City, City Council and will be incorporated by notification of public meetings, surveys if necessary and public hearings.
- The plan will be updated at least every ten years.
- The implementation of the plan will be the responsibility of Buffalo City, City Council.
- The Buffalo City, City Council will work together with other Towns, Municipalities, and Buffalo County to implement other portions of the plan.