

**Town Land Use Plan**  
**Town of King**  
Lincoln County, Wisconsin



Adopted by the Town Board:  
May 24, 2001  
(Amended on July 7 and August 7, 2001)

© VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES 2001. All rights reserved.

The party to whom this document is conveyed (“Client”) from VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES is granted the limited, non-transferable, non-exclusive right to copy this document in its entirety and to distribute such copies to others.

In no event shall VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES be liable to Client or any third party for any losses, lost profits, lost data, consequential, special, incidental, or punitive damages, delays, or interruptions arising out of or related to the recommendations contained in this document.

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES shall not be liable or otherwise responsible for any future modifications to this document or their effect on the results of the implementation of the recommendations contained herein. In the event that Client modifies this document, the following disclaimer applies:

This document is based on copyrighted materials of VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES. This document contains modifications that have not been reviewed or approved by VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES. As a result, VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES expressly disclaims any and all warranties associated with, or liability resulting or arising in any way from, this modified document.

**Town of King Land Use Plan Acknowledgements**

**Town Board**

Bob Steigerwaldt, Chairperson

Bess Wurster, Former Chairperson

Curtis G. Powell, Supervisor

William Smith, Former Supervisor

Ginger Jach-Richards, Supervisor

Daniel J. Newbauer, Former Supervisor

**Town Land Use Committee**

Dave Bethel Sr., Member

Ivan Fry, Member

Ginger Jach-Richards, Member

Dick Morris, Member

Dennis Phillips, Member

Jessica Soucy, Member

Bess Wurster, Member

**Town Clerk**

Jessica Soucy

Barbara Taves, Former Clerk

**County Staff Liaison**

John Mulder

**Consultant Lead Staff**

Michael Slavney

**Town of King  
Lincoln County  
Wisconsin**

Vision Statement for 2020

*“The general and consistent vision for the Town of King expressed by property owners is simple: Our community prides itself in being a small, rural, peaceful place for people to live and recreate and we wish to keep it that way. There is an abundance of environmental wildness and diversity that is a source of enjoyment for many. The lakes, rivers and forest that surround us are a strength and asset to the community that we don’t ever want to lose. With that in mind, the Town of King will be vigilant in doing everything possible to preserve its unique rural recreational character. Our main objectives regarding our vision will be apparent in the finalization of our community plan and with the results of our community land use survey.”*

The Land Use Committee  
Township of King, Lincoln County

As adopted  
July, 2000

Accepted by the Town Board  
July, 2000

## **I. Purpose of Town Land Use Plan**

The *Town of King Land Use Plan* will allow the Town to guide future development in a way that preserves the rural character of the community, protects natural resources, enhances recreational tourism opportunities, and provide for efficient service delivery. The *Town Land Use Plan* includes background information, maps, goals and objectives, and implementation strategies.

More specifically, the *Town Land Use Plan* recommends how lands within the Town of King should be used over the next 20 years, based on public involvement and the Town's vision, goals and objectives. These recommendations may form the basis for new or updated tools to implement the Plan, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances. The recommendations should also be used as a basis for day-to-day development decisions, such as rezoning, conditional use permits, subdivisions, and park land acquisitions. After adoption, the Town should occasionally consider logical amendments to the Plan based on changing conditions in the community or new information.

Following adoption by the Town Board, this *Land Use Plan* is also intended to be a component of the *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan*. This dual adoption is important because, under State law, the Town and County share planning, zoning, and land division review authority. Both jurisdictions should be “reading from the same play book” to ensure consistent, predictable, and desirable decision-making.

## **II. Background Information**

The following is a summary of background information pertinent to land use planning in the Town of King. More detailed information and maps may be found in the *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan, Volume I: Inventory and Analysis Report* (November 2000).

### A. Location

The Town of King is located in northeastern Lincoln County and contains approximately 36 square miles. From its center, the Town is approximately 4 miles east of the City of Tomahawk and 32 miles northeast of Merrill. There are no cities or villages in or adjacent to the Town. A concentration of development is located around Lake Alice in the southwestern portion of the Town, and around the cluster of small and medium sized lakes in the east-central portion of the Town. Within Lincoln County, the Town of Harrison is located to the east, the Town of Skanawan to the south, and the Town of Bradley to the west. Oneida County is located to the north.

### B. Growth Trends

The Town experienced moderate population growth during the 1990s. Between 1990 and 2000, King's population grew from 675 to 842 full-time residents, representing a 25% increase. The number of housing units increased from 576 in 1990 to an estimated 667 in 1999—a 16% increase. Based on 2000 census data, roughly 40 percent of all housing units in King are “seasonal” homes.

### C. Significant Natural Resources

The Town of King is predominately forested—mostly in privately owned lands. The Wisconsin River flows northeast to southwest through the Town, with a large impoundment at Lake Alice. Trout Creek flows into the Wisconsin in the northeastern portion of the Town, and Pickerel Creek and Meadow Creek join the Wisconsin via the eastern reaches of Lake Alice. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, few areas of prime farmland exist in the Town.

The State's Natural Heritage Inventory program notes a few areas of sensitive natural areas in the Town—concentrated in the northern half. No plants found were on the threatened or endangered list. The Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Gray Wolf, Canada Lynx and Karner Bule Butterfly exist in the habitat common to the Town of King. In most cases these species are not further endangered by low density development of land.

### D. Existing Land Use

Providing an accurate depiction of the Town *existing* land use pattern is an early step in the planning for a desired *future* land use pattern. Map 1 presents the existing (Year 2000 as corrected) land use within the Town, divided into several land use designations. This map was developed with the assistance of town land owners at public hearings held for that purpose.

A vast majority of King is forested, and either contained within the State or County Forest system (designated as “Public Forest” on Map 1) or held under private ownership (designated as “Private Forest”). Some tracts of this private forest land are owned by commercial forest product companies.

Most of the developed lands within the Town of King are used for single family residences. Subdivisions and smaller clusters of lots are concentrated on waterfront properties along Lake Alice and along the CTH A corridor. Map 1 also shows a cluster of homes located along CTH D east of Lake Alice.

Small areas of non-residential development—mostly small, recreation-oriented businesses and service oriented businesses—are located in a scattered pattern around Lake Alice and throughout the Township, with a notable cluster near the Wisconsin River Bridge on CTH A. The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Foundation owns a large tract of land adjacent to Treehaven, a University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point Field Station in the eastern portion of the Town. Finally, the Case Corporation operates a large testing and demonstration facility in the eastern portion of the Town adjacent to the Foundation property.

### E. Existing Transportation System

The Town is well connected to the region through the existing roadway network. USHs 51 and 8 are located in the extreme northwestern portion of the Town and provide connections to major cities in the area. CTH A provides a good east-west road in the central portion of the Town. CTH D provides a good east-west road in the southern portion of the

Town. CTH H links CTHs A and D in the south central portion of the Town, east of Lake Alice. Between 1992 and 1998, traffic volumes increased by approximately 54% along CTH A, and by approximately 80% along CTH D. Local roads managed by the Town complement this major road network.

F. Existing Utilities, Community Facilities, Parks, Historic and Cultural Resources

The Town Hall building is located along CTH A, north of Lake Alice. The Town does not own or operate any park land in the community. There is no County-owned park land within the Town (not including the County forest). Segments of Lincoln County's snowmobile trail network are located parallel to USH 8 in the northwestern portion of the Town.

G. Historic Sites and Information

It was determined by federal agencies that there are no officially registered historical sites in the Town of King. However, near the headwaters of the Wisconsin River are historically significant sites. A total of nine localities have yielded prehistoric artifacts, some of which go back ten thousand years to late Paleo-Indian era. Several sites from the early to middle woodland era (3000 years ago) and the late Woodland period (900 years ago) have also been located. A total of 174 archaeological sites have been found and cataloged. The first European presence in the region was in the 1600s.

### **III. Results of Public Participation Exercises**

To guide the planning process, the Town Board appointed a Town Land Use Committee. The Committee led and participated in a number of participation exercises to ensure that this *Plan* is based on Town residents' vision.

A. Key Planning Issues Exercise

In Spring 2000, the Committee participated in a preliminary exercise to identify key planning-related issues in the Town. Those areas are Land Use, Community Character, Pace of Development, Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, Intergovernmental Issues, Environment, and Community Services and Facilities.

B. Town Vision Setting Workshop

A town vision setting workshop was held on May 24, 2000 to understand key issues and obtain participants' vision for the future. Eighteen King residents attended.

### C. Community Survey

To gather citizen perceptions of the Town of King and its growth, a written citizen survey was sent to all Town households. The survey included questions to learn citizen perceptions on existing conditions in the Town and attitudes on how the Town should grow in the future. The survey was divided into sections. The following is a general summary of the survey results.

#### *Community Issues*

Respondents were asked to rank the five most important issues facing the community. The top five choices determined by number of votes were: (1) Town taxes; (2) junked cars/junk in yards; (3) WPSC power line; (4) development on lakes and; (5) water pollution. Other common responses included jet skis, litter/trash, and loss of forested areas. Many respondents indicated a desire for collaboration with other towns on issues of water safety and various types of recreational trails including ATV, snowmobile, hiking and biking.

#### *Town Direction*

Most residents indicated an average or better level fire and police protection in the town. Property assessments received an average to poor rating while road maintenance and recycling were split, most responses being average. Many indicated a desire for additional recreational opportunities, particularly hiking trails, fishing areas, biking trails, wildlife observation areas, boat landings, and swimming beaches. The vast majority of respondents indicated their desire for the Town to retain its rural “North Woods” character. Most desired strengthened sign regulations.

#### *Vision for King*

The vast majority of respondents indicated their desire for the preservation of large blocks of forest land. Nearly as many believed that development should be limited in certain areas to protect wildlife and natural habitats. The most desired types of future development included single-family residences and tourism-related development. Most respondents believed that the Town has a responsibility to protect the interest of neighboring property owners and the community.

#### *Support for Local Land Regulations and Plans*

The majority of respondents indicated that the Town should have a say in where new development occurs. Many indicated additional planning was needed, particularly in the areas of land use, natural resource protection, roads, and shore lands.

#### *Town Impressions*

Respondents were asked to indicate what they liked most about the Town of King and what they liked least. Common “likes” included the Town’s peaceful North Woods atmosphere and rural character, scenic beauty, small size, and the fact that the Town is not overdeveloped. Common “dislikes” included clutter on some properties, high taxes, and lack of zoning enforcement.

*Tax Levy*

Generally, most respondents oppose higher taxes to promote the vision they have for the Town of King and Lincoln County.

**D. Summary of Participation Efforts**

Several common themes emerged from the participation exercises, including the following:

- Desire to maintain the single family residential character and avoid multi-family or attached dwellings in order to assist in the preservation of the North Woods character of the Township.
- Additional or new businesses must be required to provide adequate buffer or transitional zones to reduce conflicting land uses.
- Provisions must be put in place for the aggressive enforcement of zoning codes duly adopted by Lincoln County. Inspections and prosecution of violations is essential to proper enforcement.
- Strong desire to retain the rural character and scenic beauty of the Town.
- Desire for planned growth which is beneficial to the Town.
- Provisions must be made for new residential developments to establish and maintain transitional areas to mitigate conflicting land uses.
- Support of local government involvement in the protection/preservation of the interests of neighboring property owners in order to mitigate conflicting land uses.
- Desire to improve communication to the residents from local government.

**IV. Planning Framework****A. Town Vision Statement**

A community vision statement is an expression of the direction the Town wishes to head over the next 20 years and beyond. In Summer 2000, the Town Land Use Committee developed the following vision statement:

**The general and consistent vision for the Town of King expressed by property owners is simple: Our community prides itself in being a small, rural, peaceful place for people to live and recreate and we wish to keep it that way. There is an abundance of environmental wildness and diversity that is a source of enjoyment for many. The lakes, rivers and forest that surround us are a strength and asset to the community that we don't ever want to lose. With that in mind, the Town of King will be vigilant in doing everything possible to preserve its unique rural recreational character. Our main objectives regarding our vision will be apparent in the finalization of our community plan and with the results of our community land use survey.**

## B. Town Goals and Objectives

The development of goals and objectives is an important step in the planning process because these statements represent the basic values of the community. Goals are broad statements that express general preferences for the long-term development of the community. Objectives are more specific than goals and are usually attainable through implementation activities, described later in the *Plan*. The following goals and objectives emerge from the Town's vision statement and public participation results.

### **Goal 1: Preserve the rural character of the Town of King**

#### *Objectives:*

1. In order to preserve the rural character of the Town, development of heavy industry, heavy metal mining operations, and high power transmission lines is discouraged.
2. Improve continuous communication locally and with neighboring municipalities to mitigate conflicting land uses.

### **Goal 2: Limit new development to appropriate locations to ensure land use compatibility.**

#### *Objectives:*

1. Develop and enforce all zoning codes in a fair and consistent manner.
2. Require development plans that incorporate the principles of good site design.
3. Provide for growth that benefits the Town and reflects the Town's character.

### **Goal 3: Preserve and promote a visually attractive environment.**

### **Goal 4: Provide sufficient open space and recreational opportunities to meet the needs of Town residents.**

#### *Objectives:*

1. Provide for a diverse range of recreational opportunities including hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, ATV and snowmobile trails, beaches, boat accesses, camping, and fishing.
2. Ensure that adequate space for recreation will exist in the future.
3. Protect the Town's natural resources and unique physical features.

### **Goal 5: Strengthen local government.**

#### *Objectives:*

1. Encourage public participation in planning and making decisions that affect the Town.
2. Establish fair and consistent decision-making based on the Town's goals and objectives.
3. Create community involvement and spirit through activities.

**Goal 6: Protect/preserve appropriate land uses in the Town of King through ordinances, zoning and subdivision controls with dedication or cash contributions for roads and open space/parks.**

**V. Land Use Plan Map and Description**

This part of the *Town of King Land Use Plan* presents the planned land use map, intended to guide the growth and development decisions over the next 20 years. Map 2, which differs little from the corrected existing land use map, presents desired future land uses for different properties within the Town.

The Land Use Committee recommends that the Town of King Board of Supervisors appoint a Town Plan/Zone Advisory Committee to bring recommendations for zoning ordinances and future plans (congruent to County Zoning ordinances and classifications) to the Town Board for adoption within the next nine years. This should be completed by the Year 2010, when the Town must have a State-defined “comprehensive plan” and consistent enforcement ordinances in place.

A. Land Use Plan Map Designations

The land use designations shown on Map 2 are designed to reflect both desired land use and development character. These planned use designations have been divided into three general categories: rural/environmental, residential, and nonresidential. A complete description of the categories and specific designations is provided as Attachment A. (Not all of the designations described in Attachment A have been used in Map 2.) To achieve the desired future land use pattern for the Town of King, new or revised zoning districts will have to be created and mapped after the land use planning process is complete.

In general, differences between the three general categories of land use (e.g., between “rural/environmental” and “residential”) are intended to be greater than differences between the multiple designations within each category (e.g., between “rural lands” and “private forest”). As such, following initial adoption of this *Town Land Use Plan*, the Town and County should not require a formal *Plan* amendment before acting on a development proposal which suggests a change in land use designation within the same category (e.g., when a land owner proposes to remove land from “private forest” designation to the “rural lands” designation.) In contrast, the Town and County should require a formal *Plan* amendment before acting on a development proposal which suggest a change in land use designation that would also change the category (e.g., from “rural/environmental” to “residential”). Such changes lead to more significant shifts in land use policy and development impacts.

B. Description of Land Use Map

In general, Map 2 recommends the continuation of the current land use pattern that is focused on the preservation of King’s unique environmental features, lakes, large blocks of public and private forest lands, and smaller areas of agricultural land. To achieve the desired future land use pattern for the Town of King, new or revised zoning districts will have to be created and mapped after the land use planning process is complete.

## VI. Other Plan Recommendations

### A. Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

- Keep intensive development away from planned *Public Forest* and *Private Forest* areas.
- Support logical additions to the County Forest, with particular focus on acquiring gaps of privately owned forest land in between larger sections of the existing County Forest system.
- Work with the County to assure that a full range of recreational and forestry uses are allowed in the County Forest.
- Ensure that forestry personnel are actively enforcing the recommended forestry management practices within each of the designated “aesthetic management zones” as described in the *Lincoln County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan*.
- Provide logical public access points to the Town’s developed lakes.
- Encourage private landowners to participate in industrial tree farm programs to protect open space and diverse habitats.
- Preserve as much land, both public and private, as possible to protect water quality, maintain connections among natural habitats for wildlife, and prevent erosion.
- Conduct or require viewshed analysis before approving new developments. New development should be designed, located, and landscaped in a manner that does not detract from the rural character of the Town.
- Cooperate with the County and other communities on comprehensive survey of historic and archaeological resources in the Town, and preserve those resources.

### B. Transportation

- Continue to work with the Lincoln County Highway Department to update and implement the Town Road Improvement Program (TRIP) to provide for the appropriate upgrading of Town roads.
- Consider implementing Town road impact fees for new development projects that place a burden on or require the upgrading of Town roads.
- Plan for a network of interconnected new roads in planned residential development areas, for reasons of highway access control, rural character preservation (visibility of development), and the current inaccessibility of certain planned development areas.
- Consider applying to the State for “rustic road” status along one or more Town roads. To qualify, a roadway must have outstanding natural features, including native vegetation, abundant wildlife, open areas or agricultural vistas that make the area unique.
- Support access control and rural character objectives by discouraging large amounts of “side of road” development on State and County highways.

### C. Utilities and Community Facilities

- Provide new neighborhood parks within the areas planned for significant *Rural Single*

*Family Residential* uses. The Town may require at least some of that land through requiring park land dedications and/or park impact fees from new subdivisions.

- Work with Lincoln County on the possibility of providing shared park facilities within the Town.
- Follow the recommendations of the County's *Outdoor Recreation Plan* when making park acquisitions and development decisions. Encourage the County to update this plan.

#### D. Housing and Economic Development

- Work with Lincoln County to address housing, zoning, or property maintenance code violations on existing residential or commercial properties.
- Encourage developers to plan for new neighborhoods using the principles of "conservation neighborhood design," particularly in areas with significant natural resources. These principles emphasize providing housing in proximity to parks, open spaces, and services; blending automobile convenience with the creation of safe, comfortable places to live and walk; preserving and enhancing natural systems that define, sustain, and connect neighborhoods; and promoting rural character by "hiding" development from main roads through natural topography, vegetation, and setbacks

#### E. Plan Adoption and Implementation

The process the Town of King used to review and adopt this *Town Land Use Plan* included the following:

- Once the Town Land Use Committee was comfortable with the *Town Land Use Plan*, it forwarded a recommendation for approval to the Town Board.
- The Town then posted and published a Class 1 notice for a formal public hearing on the *Plan* held in front of the Town Board.
- Following the public hearing, the Town Board approved a resolution which (a) adopted the *Town Land Use Plan* with changes and (b) forwarded the Plan to the County for inclusion in the *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan*.
- The County Board will then adopt the *Town Land Use Plan* as a component of the *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan*.
- Following County adoption of the *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan*, the Town Board may have to adopt the complete *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan* by ordinance to fully comply with the new State planning law.

This Plan includes many recommendations for guiding land development and preservation within the Town over the next 20 years. Some of the recommendations may be applied immediately and other recommendations will require subsequent Plan implementation activities, including the following:

- Adopt a Town subdivision ordinance to provide for appropriately designed development patterns, interconnected road networks, park land dedication and park impact fees, and advancement of "conservation neighborhood design" principles.
- Consider implementing a driveway ordinance and design standards to encourage the appropriate siting of homes in areas where limited development is proposed.

- Participate to the full extent allowed by law in the County zoning process to assure that Town desires are brought forward in zoning decisions.
- Work with Lincoln County on an update of the County's zoning ordinance to properly implement the land use recommendations of this *Plan*. Many provisions of this *Plan* cannot be implemented without a new or substantially revised zoning ordinance.
- Annually review this *Plan* to gauge progress on implementation and consider logical amendments based on changes in conditions. A more detailed review and update should be performed every five to ten years.
- Forward all adopted *Plan* amendments to the County for incorporation into the *Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan*.
- Appoint a permanent Advisory Board to be responsible for reviewing and recommending Town Board actions on all rezonings, conditional use permits, variances, and zoning amendments pending before Lincoln County, and further to review all subdivision requests and make recommendations for consideration of the Town Board. Said Board would also be charged with an annual review of the Town Land Use Plan, and make recommended changes where necessary. A public hearing, after an appropriate ten (10) day minimum legal notice shall be held by the Board on all pending Township land use and zoning changes and/or recommendations.