

Agricultural Resource Goals & Objectives:

Goals:

1. Identify areas of Dane County suitable for long-term preservation and viability of diverse agricultural enterprises and resources. [Protect / Encourage protection of] those areas for the benefit and use of current and future generations.

Supporting objectives:

- a. Minimize the amount of land converted from agricultural use to accommodate permitted non-farm development.
 - b. Develop and implement new tools, such as Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and conservation subdivisions to meet agricultural resource goals.
 - c. Implement fees and other financial mechanisms to support agricultural preservation efforts and create a disincentive for conversion of agricultural land.
2. Maintain Dane County's status as one of the nation's most productive and economically viable agricultural areas. Keep farming economically viable in Dane County through the 21st century.

Supporting objectives:

- a. Ordinances and regulations which restrict noise, odors, keeping of animals or other activities that could inhibit typical farm operations should not apply in locally-designated agricultural areas.
- b. Actively promote and develop direct-marketing alternatives for all agricultural foods and products.
- c. Develop marketing tools to promote use of Dane County grown goods in local, regional and wider markets.
- d. Continue and strengthen efforts to educate farmers about cost-saving measures.
- e. Educate the general public on the value that agriculture production/Agri-Business adds to the Dane County economy.
- f. Help entrepreneurs plan, start and grow new enterprises that capture value from agriculture.
- g. Provide information about modern agriculture production to foster understanding and tolerance between farmers and their residential neighbors.
- h. Consider whether any new county regulations would put Dane County farmers at a competitive disadvantage to farmers in adjoining counties.

3. Maintain Dane County's rural character and preserve the distinct character and physical separation of Dane County communities.

Supporting objectives:

- a. Encourage separation of incompatible uses in rural areas.
- b. Encourage future urban development to be compact, adjacent to existing development and consistent with town planning policies.
- c. Commercial and industrial uses which are not agriculturally related should be located in areas identified for such use and where the full range of public services (sewer, water, fire protection and police protection) can be economically provided.
- d. Reduce scattered rural nonfarm development by encouraging clustering of rural development as part of a town farmland preservation strategy. Provide tools such as conservation subdivisions to accomplish this objective.

Agricultural Resources Policies & Programs:

1. **Continue and expand assistance and incentive programs as identified in the *Land and Water Resources Plan*, including those related to:**
 - a. education;
 - b. conservation planning;
 - c. technical assistance;
 - d. cost-share;
 - e. financial incentive, and;
 - f. facility design.

2. **Continue and expand direct services, marketing assistance and on-demand technical assistance provided to farmers through Dane County University of Wisconsin Extension programs. Provide sufficient resources to these programs to:**
 - a. Educate farmers about new ways they can improve their incomes;
 - b. Provide loans, referrals and business counseling to farmers in a farm-specific program
 - c. Educate farmers about conservation easements as an alternative to development and a way to pass farms on to future generations.
 - d. Hold farming community sharing meetings where farmers can talk to each other about what they do to save costs, etc.

3. **Design and implement education workshops and distribute materials for farmers, developers, landowners and the general public, including:**
 - a. Educate landowners on their options and alternatives to development (ask non-profits and others to help) – TDR, PDR, etc
 - b. Benefits/drawbacks of conservation subdivisions.
 - c. Develop a publication giving notice to rural home/property owners of potential impacts of ag practices such as road traffic (tractors, etc) and manure odor; require distribution to all new rural property buyers.
 - d. Explore whether notification of farming practices can be recorded on deeds, surveys or other legal documents to avoid potentially frivolous lawsuits.
 - e. Develop and distribute a map of Dane County that illustrates the types and location of agriculture in the county. Use Attain Dane and other information to help identify areas where farming will occur.
 - f. Distribute county map showing present and future urban service areas of all cities in county

4. **Establish a “Buy Dane County” farm products campaign, that includes the following elements:**
 - a. Develop a Dane County logo to enable farmers to foster local marketing efforts.
 - b. Work with local ad agencies on a campaign for Dane County grown products
 - c. Start a pilot project that tests the feasibility of selling Dane County food products (fruit, vegetables, milk, meat, etc.) including local institutional markets, grocery stores and restaurants.
 - d. Encourage local purchasing in county food service facilities. The county should establish a policy that 10% of food purchases through its Consolidated Food Service be made locally within two years. In addition, the county should support the initiative to create the Courthouse Catering enterprise, which proposes to source 75% of food locally for a cafeteria in the new courthouse. *ANCR NOTE 8/10/05: Where did the 10% figure come from?*
 - e. Create an electronic web site to market Dane County products over the web.
 - f. Establish tax benefits for produce grown and sold locally.
 - g. Enlist restaurants and grocery stores to showcase county products – establish a government-sponsored council to promote goals.

5. **Make sure county-funded highway and other transportation improvements and plans take into account the needs of farmers. For example, highway shoulders and crossings should be designed to accommodate farm equipment and minimize safety conflicts with automobile traffic.**
6. **Include transportation of agricultural goods to market in all long-term planning related to truck, rail, air and other infrastructure designed for freight transport.**
7. **Establish a Dane County Agriculture Enterprise Development Center to:**
 - a. develop new markets for Dane County products;
 - b. research value-added opportunities for Dane County farmers;
 - c. attract agricultural processing and service facilities to the area;
 - d. coordinate activities with adjacent South-Central and Southwestern Agriculture Development Zones, and;
 - e. pursue private and/or other public sector or nonprofit funds and gradually diminish dependence on County funds. *ANCR 8/15/05 NOTE: Need a strong dollar commitment up front (\$500,000 /year minimum); establish a strong relationship with the private sector*
NOTE 2: I have a concern how it will operate.
8. **Explore the feasibility of a Central Agriculture and Food Facility (CAFF) that could:**
 - a. provide processing, storage, marketing and office spaces for organizations and individuals involved in local food processing and marketing, and;
 - b. provide a winter venue for a year-round farmers' market.
9. **Support the efforts of the City of Madison and others to create a public market in the City of Madison that would provide additional market opportunities for Dane County farmers.**
10. **Work to develop viable, affordable options for rural farm families needing health insurance.**
11. **Establish a Dane County Food Council to:**
 - a. help capitalize on Dane County's exceptional assets;
 - b. coordinate efforts to build a stronger local food system;
 - c. advise County government to address food system issues, particularly aimed at strengthening the capacity of the local and regional food system;
 - d. assist in food-related education;
 - e. gather relevant data and information;
 - f. play a coordinating role among groups in the local food system, and;
 - g. develop policies to address food system issues.
12. **Adopt a permanent, county-wide Transfer of Development Rights program to protect large areas of agricultural land. (See details under Land Resources Policies & Programs.)**
13. **Develop a permanent, county-wide Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to preserve agricultural lands. (See details under Land Resources Policies & Programs.)**
14. **Revise county zoning and land division ordinances and county and town plans to establish design guidelines that minimize conversion of agricultural land. Provisions should include:**
 - a. Establishment of maximum lot sizes, with exceptions where necessary due to local land conditions, for all land rezoned out of exclusive agriculture.
 - b. Require that new development of housing be limited to land less suited to agriculture.
 - c. Development of a county conservation subdivision ordinance that sets minimum standards for areas preserved for agriculture or natural resource protection. Consider requiring that new development follow conservation design standards in buffer or transitional farming areas.

- d. Permanently protect from sprawl the areas not developed because of clustering or high-density alternative development
 - e. Develop and distribute a Dane County model conservation subdivision ordinance for voluntary use by local governments.
 - f. Create a zoning category for rural subdivisions utilizing joint septic systems on non-productive farm lands (rocky drumlins, etc.). Base density on character of land, slope, soil, etc.
 - g. Require all towns to have a subdivision ordinance, so we're all prepared for subdivision requests.
 - h. Require that rezones from A-1(ex) zoning be reviewed against objective standards to ensure separation of incompatible uses.
 - i. Allow farmers to develop on less productive lands to provide cash inputs to working farms – better utilize small, non-conforming parcels; round up for splits, i.e. 45 acres would have two splits.
- 15. Review existing and proposed local codes to evaluate impact on agricultural operations.**
- a. Revise county zoning, land division, sanitary and other codes as necessary to make sure nuisance and other provisions related to odor, noise and similar impacts do not apply to agricultural areas.
 - b. Work with towns to amend local building, nuisance and other codes to accommodate agricultural practices.
 - c. Conduct county-wide hearings to explore ways that new county-level actions could improve landowner control of decisions affecting their land
 - d. Examine zoning process, administration and procedural requirements to make sure zoning decisions support farmers.
- 16. Amend the county zoning ordinance to make it easier to establish agricultural service and other industries that promote appropriate, sustainable rural and farm economic development. Examples include:**
- a. biotech industries;
 - b. value-added enterprises;
 - c. agricultural tourism;
 - d. forestry and sustainable timber harvest;
 - e. agriculture feed mills;
 - f. agricultural supply and product distributors;
 - g. ethanol plants;
 - h. soybean and other processing plants;
 - i. implement dealers;
 - j. mixed use developments involving both traditional agriculture and retail/processing uses
- 17. Landowners rezoning land from A-1(ex) should pay a significant rezoning fee to Dane County, which will go to staff costs & into the Conservation Fund for purchase of conservation easements.**
- 18. Expand and enhance county planning assistance to towns to provide a broader range of tools and resources to meet local challenges. Measures could include:**
- a. Establish a county grant and assistance program for towns to amend their portions of the Farmland Preservation Plan.
 - b. Work with towns to identify Farm Priority Areas where limited or no rezones out of exclusive agriculture would be permitted, in order to protect large, contiguous blocks of traditional production farmland. Use TDR, PDR and other mechanisms to help compensate landowners in these areas.
 - c. Work with towns to identify and map Small-Acreage Farming Areas. Develop planning, zoning and economic development techniques to encourage and support small-scale agriculture.

- d. Enhance ability of county staff to provide low-cost or free planning services directly to rural town governments, including mapping, comprehensive plan text drafting and meeting facilitation.
 - e. Develop a coordination plan that takes town plans and shares bordering areas with other towns – no incompatible used on edge of towns.
 - f. Make computer modeling programs available so towns/villages can play with different development / build-out scenarios to see how it affects their community.
 - g. Work with towns to develop land division ordinances, building codes, driveway codes, intergovernmental agreements and other tools to implement local and county planning goals.
 - h. Establish a “best practices” sourcebook for use by town plan commissions and town boards that would include model plan language, ordinances and intergovernmental agreements, as well as policy guidelines for programs like TDR or PDR, density caps, etc.
- 19. Enforce existing tax credit penalties under state law for land rezoned out of exclusive agricultural zoning.**
- a. County Treasurer should collect penalties and distribute to local municipalities.
 - b. Tax credit penalties will be enforced & fees collected will go to the Dane County Conservation Fund to fund purchase of ag easements from interested land owners.
- 20. Work with the DNR & any future water quality planning agencies to establish objective standards for Urban Service Area approvals that take into account potential agricultural impacts.**
- 21. Form agricultural districts (other than zoning)**