

CHAPTER PURPOSE

Quality food is required for a thriving society. Agricultural preservation in the Sauk Prairie Area is essential to its economic, land use, and cultural future. Area communities will cooperate with farmers, Sauk County, allied non-profits, and the State on a multi-faceted farmland preservation strategy to ensure adequate farmland and promote a thriving farm economy. This chapter contains policies and initiatives to guide farmland and farming preservation, and is supplemented by the Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan and zoning code.

AGRICULTURE POLICIES

1. Maintain an urban growth boundary via intergovernmental plans and agreements, with farming being the predominate land use and activity beyond this boundary.
2. Guide homes, driveways, and other uses in long-term agricultural areas to less productive soils, farm field edges, and other spots that preserve rural character.
3. Limit homes in long-term agricultural areas via design, density, lot size, and clustering policies in Chapter 7: Land Use, the Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan, and applicable zoning and land division ordinances.
4. Allow home occupations, farm family businesses, and worker housing on farms to supplement farming income, consistent with zoning and State rules.
5. Promote maintenance and success of local farm support businesses, like equipment sales, service, and repair; farm product sales and distribution; mixing, blending, and storage of feeds, seeds, and fertilizers; livestock and commodity shipping; and sales of nursery stock.
6. Continue to allow farming to adapt to changing needs and markets, for example to expand crops to perennials where appropriate and extract sand for animal bedding.
7. Support State and federal fiscal policies that encourage the continued use of land for farming in planned long-term agricultural areas.
8. Support agricultural education and information exchange where practical and in collaboration with Sauk County and the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP).
9. Expand the linkages among sustainable agriculture, natural resource preservation and restoration, and cultural and artistic endeavors.



Homes placed in woodlots instead of farm fields help preserve farmland and rural character, while increasing housing options.



5. IMPLEMENT DESIGN STANDARDS FOR LIMITED HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS

For a variety of reasons, new residential subdivisions are not encouraged in the Town of Prairie du Sac, outside of the limited areas specifically designated for “Rural Single Family” residential development on the Future Land Use maps (Map 9A and 9B). The land between Highway 78 and the River, north of the Village of Prairie du Sac, is the most prominent area where the “Rural Single Family” future land use category is mapped. Another area crossed by Dam Heights Road east of Highway 78 is planned for “Mixed Use/Flex” development on the Future Land Use maps, and could also be developed with rural single family residences.

Housing quantities and densities beyond these areas are limited by County and extraterritorial zoning rules, and by County, Town, and Village subdivision regulations. The Town allows a maximum density of one new home per 35 acres in areas planned for “Agriculture” use on the Future Land Use maps. However, instead of lots sized at least 35 acres as the only option to achieving this density, the Town allows clusters of smaller lots, up to a maximum density of one lot per 35 acres, with individual lot sizes dictated by applicable zoning and subdivision regulations. Within the County’s zoning jurisdiction, the Planned Rural Development (PRD) is the tool. A PRD is defined as one or more lots or parcels of land to be developed as a single entity, which is a combination of a PRD development area and a PRD preservation area. See Figure 7-1 in the Land Use chapter for more detail.

Where homes are permitted in planned “Agriculture” areas, careful home siting and clustering are important to limit the impact on farmland and rural character. The following techniques will be encouraged in the siting of new residences:

- Site residences adjacent to tree lines where available and at the edge of open fields rather than the middle.
- Avoid multiple homesites side-by-side along existing roads with multiple driveways and modest building setbacks.
- Limit tree clearance in wooded areas to the area required for the residence, a cleared yard area generally not exceeding one acre, and an area for the driveway.
- Place new lots to allow for driveways suitable in length, width, design, and slope for emergency vehicle travel, per the Town’s driveway ordinance, and use shared driveways where possible.
- Avoid building placement within wetlands, floodplains, and slopes greater than 20%, as depicted on Map 5 of Volume 1.

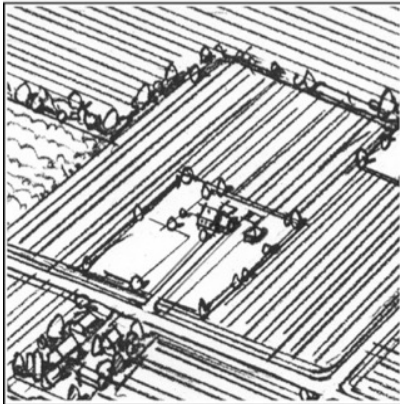
The graphics in Figure 6-2, prepared by Vandewalle & Associates in the early 2000s as part of the Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Project, illustrate many of these techniques in both a single-lot and multi-lot examples.



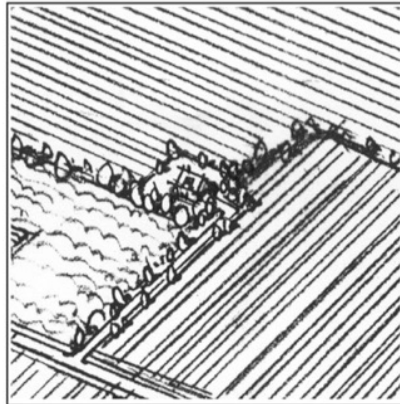
Figure 6-2: Rural Housing Design Standards, Single- and Multiple-lot Examples

The siting and treatment of a single residential lot in the Town's exclusive agriculture preservation districts will have an impact on valuable farmland and the existing visual character of the Town. Utilize the following strategies and "preferred" illustration below to guide proposed development in these situations.

- ☐ Minimize loss of valuable farmable land
- ☐ Optimize the shape and configuration of farmable parcels
- ☐ Minimize visual impact of development from roadside
- ☐ Integrate development with existing landscape patterns (fields, fencerows, farmsteads, natural features)
- ☐ Use existing vegetation to screen new development

Typical

- Large isolated lot
- Homes and outbuildings visible from roadside
- Fragmented farmland and wildlife habitat

Preferred

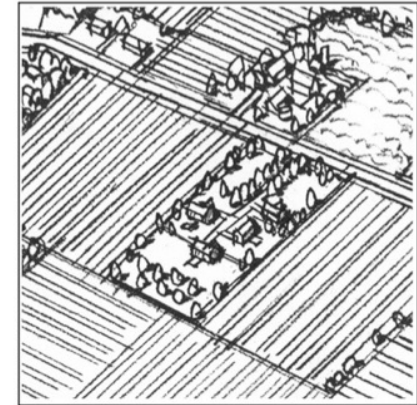
- Cohesive farm fields
- Homes and outbuildings set back from road
- Development located at edge of farmland
- Driveway located along fencerow
- Homes screened with existing vegetation or new landscaping

The siting and treatment of multiple residential lots in the Town's exclusive agricultural districts will have an impact on valuable farmland and the existing visual character of the Town. The following guidelines are modeled after a typical farmstead building arrangement. Utilize the following strategies and "preferred" example below to guide proposed development in these situations.

- ☐ Resemble typical farmstead arrangement
 - Clustered buildings
 - Single shared drive or cul-de-sac street
 - Fence rows and formal landscaping
- ☐ Minimize loss of valuable farmable land
- ☐ Optimize shape and configuration of farmable parcels

Typical

- Roadside lots with all homes visible from roadside
- Multiple driveways
- Perception of large amount of development

Preferred

- Residences clustered in the form of a typical farmstead
- Shared driveway or cul-de-sac (Tree-lined)
- Development set back from road
- Residences screened with new "farmstead" vegetation
- Cohesive farm fields
- Fence rows define parcels and developed area

