

CHAPTER 2: INVENTORY, TRENDS, AND FORECASTS

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INTRODUCTION

This section of the *Town of Brazeau 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* provides a summary of the town's resource elements, which are also inventoried in *Volume II: County Resources*. The town's past trends and potential forecasts for population, housing, economic development, etc. are also illustrated in this chapter.

Ultimately, the information described in this portion of the town's comprehensive plan provides the foundation for the development of the Town of Brazeau 20-Year General Plan Design (Chapter 3 of this document).

COMMUNITY INVENTORY

Description of Planning Area

The town of Brazeau is located in the north-central portion of Oconto County encompassing an area of approximately 72 square miles, or approximately 45,822 acres. Natural resources are plentiful in this large Oconto town, including Oconto County Forest land and an abundance of lakes and streams. State Highway 64, a major east/west corridor within Oconto County, dissects the town. **Map 2.1** illustrates the general location of the town of Brazeau in Wisconsin, while **Map 2.2** focuses on the town of Brazeau planning area.

Past Planning Efforts

The *Town of Brazeau* has adopted several ordinances that address local conditions or issues within the town. These ordinances either support or expand upon county ordinances and will be instrumental in the implementation of the town's updated comprehensive plan.

Town of Brazeau 20-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan:

In August of 2008, the town of Brazeau adopted its first comprehensive plan entitled the Town of Brazeau 20-Year Comprehensive Plan. This plan was developed with planning assistance from Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission and Oconto County Planning staff as part of a county wide planning project. In 2018, the town of Brazeau began working with Oconto County Planning staff to complete the first major update to the comprehensive plan. The plan update was completed and adopted in 2019.

Town of Brazeau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan:

In June 2014, the town of Brazeau adopted an outdoor recreation plan entitled the town of Brazeau Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2014 – 2018. This plan has served as a guide to assist the town in assuring that adequate park, open space, and recreational resources are available for both present and future residents of the town.

Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan: In 1985, Oconto County adopted the Oconto County Farmland Preservation Plan prepared by Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. This plan served as a guide for preserving farmland, woodlands and significant environmental areas within the county and to help maintain and expand the agricultural economy. In 2014, Oconto County amended the Oconto County 20-Year Comprehensive Plan to include all statutorily required components of the Farmland Preservation Plan. The Oconto County Comprehensive Plan includes all requirements of Chapter 91.

Community Resources

Natural Resources

The following text describes the types and locations of town's many resources and briefly discusses the importance of them when planning for future growth of the town of Brazeau.

Bedrock type, overlying soil composition and depth to bedrock can impact excavation; foundations; location and effectiveness of site wastewater treatment systems; provision of clean and abundant supply of groundwater, and residential development locations.

- The bedrock found in the northern portion of Brazeau is part of the Northern Highlands region that is comprised of granite and a mixture of igneous rocks; whereas the southern portion of the town is part of the Central Plain region, which is comprised mostly of sandstones.
- Some of the highest elevations in the state can be observed in the Northern Highlands region. Butler Rock which is found in the north central portion of the town of Brazeau is a significant geologic feature of the Northern Highlands region. The Central Plain region of the town is covered by a hilly, undulating end moraine.
- Surface waters are abundant in the northern and central portion of Oconto County and play a significant biological and economic role in the everyday life of the town of Brazeau's residents and visitors. Table 2.1 contains a list of named lakes and streams in the town of Brazeau, while **Map 2.3** illustrates the surface water features in the town.

Table 2.1: Surface Water Features

Bass Lake	Pickerel Lake
First Lake	Ranch Lake
Frog Lake	Reader Lake
Gaffney Lake	Rost Lake
Halfmoon Lake	Round Lake
Holt Lake	Second Lake
Jocko Lake	Shay Lake
Kelly Lake	Underwood Lake
Kobus Lake	White Potato Lake
Leigh Flowage (Lee Lake, Marl Lake, & Rice Lake)	Yankee Lake
Little Bass Lake	McDonald Creek
Little Pickerel Lake	Messenger Creek
Long Lake	North Branch Peshtigo Brook
Lost Lake	Peshtigo Brook
Marsh Lake	South Branch Beaver Creek
Montana Lake	Spring Creek
Perch Lake	West Branch Peshtigo Brook
	Whiskey Creek

Source: "Surface Water Resources of Oconto County" Wisconsin Conservation Department, 1977; Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007; Oconto County Planning, 2020.

For more information regarding these water resources see Chapter 5 and Appendix A of *Volume II: County Resources*.

The town of Brazeau contains approximately 28,283 acres of woodlands. Over 12,000 acres of these woodlands are part of Oconto County forestlands, meaning that approximately 40 percent of the town's woodlands are owned and managed by Oconto County.

Other areas of environmental significance in the town are referred to as “plan determinants.” Plan determinants consist of the following features which are illustrated on **Map 2.4**:

- wetlands (2 acres or greater);
- 100-year floodplains;
- steep slope (12% or greater); and
- surface waters with a 75-foot building setback.

The individual plan determinants merged together forms a single feature known as “environmental corridors”, which is displayed on the town’s General Plan Design map (**Map 3.1**). These corridors serve a vital role in protecting local water quality; serving as buffers between different land uses; controlling, moderating, and storing floodwaters; providing nutrient and sediment filtration; and providing fish and wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

For more information regarding wetlands, floodplains, soils, surface waters, and environmental corridors please see Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Agricultural Resources

There are areas in the town of Brazeau that are designated as having prime agricultural soils (i.e., lands that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing agricultural crops, with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, etc). **Map 2.5** illustrates the location of the prime agricultural soils in the town of Brazeau. Areas that have been designated as farmland preservation areas within the town are shown on **Map 3.5** and **Map 3.6** found in Chapter 3 of *Volume I: County Plan*.

More information regarding agricultural resources and farmland preservation in the town and the county can be viewed in Chapter 3 of *Volume I: County Plan* and Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources are typically sites, features, and/or objects of some importance to a culture or a community for scientific, aesthetic, traditional, educational, religious, archaeological, architectural, and historic reasons.

The town of Brazeau contains a number of sites of historic and culture significance to the town.

- *White Potato Lake Garden Beds Site*, which dates back to 1200 - 1600 AD, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; *Bedora Mound Group* is an archeological site dating back to 100 AD; *Butler Rock* is a significant geological feature; *Brazeau Cemetery* located on CTH B and the *Brazeau Pioneer Cemetery* located on N. White Potato Lake Rd; and the *Brazeau Town Hall* which dates back to the early 1900's.

Economic Resources

Being a rural community, the town’s primary economic components consist of its vast amount of natural resources including, water features, forestlands, open space lands, and recreational resources that bring seasonal residents and tourism.

Transportation

The town of Brazeau should continue to ensure that its transportation amenities are maintained and improved to allow for safe and efficient movement.

- The town of Brazeau contains approximately 123 miles of roadway, with STH 64 being the main transportation corridor through the community.

Table 8.2 found in Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources* lists the mileage of roads under the jurisdiction of the town of Brazeau by function. **Map 8.1** found in Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources* provides the location of the roads by function within the town.

Utilities and Community Facilities

An assessment of the town's existing utilities and community facilities is made to determine any current or future issues that may cause potential problems in meeting future development needs. The availability, quality, and level of service of the town's existing utilities and community facilities are all contributing factors to the attractiveness of the community. The following are facilities and services provided to the town of Brazeau residents and businesses.

- The Brazeau Town Hall is located 10892 Parkway Road. The town hall serves as the town business office and is used as a place to hold Town Board meetings, elections, and other meetings related to town business. The facility also contains the town garage, town of Brazeau Fire Department, recycling center, and dump site. **Map 2.6** illustrates the locations of the town's public facilities.
- All of the water used by the town of Brazeau and its residents comes from groundwater. There is no municipal water supply in the town; therefore, all water is supplied via private wells.
- The town contains the Kelly Lake Sanitary District and the Brazeau Sanitary District (both illustrated on **Map 2.6** and **Map 3.1**) for collection and treatment of waste from properties within each district. The remainder of the residential/commercial developments in the town maintain private onsite sewage systems.
- The Oconto County Sheriff's Department provides police services to the town's residents. The town of Brazeau is also part of the northern seven towns (Brazeau, Doty, Townsend, Breed, Riverview, Lakewood, and Mountain) which contract with the Oconto County Sheriff's Department for a Northern Oconto County Community Officer. This officer is then dedicated this area of northern Oconto County. The town of Brazeau has a municipal court agreement with the village of Coleman, village of Crivitz, town of Pound, and town of Beaver. The intergovernmental municipal court has been entitled NE Wisconsin Joint Municipal Court. This municipal court assists with the enforcement of town laws and ordinances.
- The town does provide its own fire protection and maintains a rescue squad. The fire houses are located at 10892 Parkway Rd (Station 1) and 12128 Parkway Rd. (Station 2). The Brazeau ambulance service is located at 12128 Parkway Rd. and the Dive Rescue Squad is located at 12071 Parkway Road. The town maintains mutual aids agreements with the Coleman, Suring, Oconto Falls, and Mountain fire departments. The town fire and ambulance have service agreements with the town of Bagley and the town of Beaver.

- Residents and visitors of the town of Brazeau can seek medical attention at HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital in the City of Oconto Falls or at the HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital Prevea Suring Health Center in the Village of Suring.

Parks and Recreation

- Brazeau Memorial Field Park and Parkway Golf Course are several of the recreational sites located in the town. The town of Brazeau also contains 15 public boat landings serving its many lakes. The Dusty Trails ATV trail meanders throughout the northern portion of the town. The Pickeral Lake Trail as well as the Butler Rock Summit and Trail provide walking and hiking opportunities. The town's recreational facilities are illustrated on **Map 2.6**.

Land Use Inventory

A detailed field inventory of existing land uses in the town of Brazeau was completed by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission in 2007. In 2017, as part of the plan update a detailed existing land use inventory was completed by Oconto County Planning. A consistent standard land use classification methodology and process was used to determine existing land uses. Please refer to Chapter 11 of *Volume II: County Resources* for a description of these categories.

- A breakdown of the town's land uses and acreages is shown in Table 2.2 while **Map 2.7** displays the town of Brazeau existing land use.

Table 2.2: Existing Land Use

Land Use Type	Total Acres	Percentage Total Land	Percentage Developed Land
DEVELOPED			
Single Family	1,604.6	3.5	67.4
Mobile Homes	89.6	0.2	3.8
Multi-Family	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vacant Residential	2.1	0.0	0.1
Total Residential	1,696.2	3.7	71.2
Commercial	24.7	0.1	1.0
Industrial	20.6	0.0	0.9
Transportation	342.5	0.7	14.4
Communications/Utilities	35.0	0.1	1.5
Institutional/Governmental	5.1	0.0	0.2
Recreational	135.0	0.3	5.7
Agricultural Structures	122.2	0.3	5.1
Total Developed Acres	2,381.3	5.2	100.0
 UNDEVELOPED			
Percentage Undeveloped Land			
Croplands/Pasture	12,161.9	26.5	28.0
Woodlands	28,282.6	61.7	65.1
Other Natural Areas	972.5	2.1	2.2
Water Features	2,023.2	4.4	4.7
Total Undeveloped Acres	43,440.2	94.8	100.0
Total Land Area	45,821.6	100.0	

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Population

Historic Population Trends

Analyzing changes in the trends and characteristics of a community's population and housing is important in understanding the needs of its current and future populations.

The town of Brazeau has experienced an increase in population by approximately 850 people between 1900 and 2010. The town's population increased in almost every decade between 1900 and 2010, however the town did experience declines between 1940 and 1950 and then again between 2000 and 2010.

For more information on population trends in Oconto County and the town of Brazeau refer to Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*. For town specific population data refer to Tables 6.14 – 6.18 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Population Projections

By inventorying past population trends it is possible to project future growth. Population projections allow the town of Brazeau to realize the area's future needs for housing, utilities, transportation, recreation, and a number of other population influenced services. For this comprehensive plan, the town has utilized Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) population projections. Based on these WDOA projections, the town of Brazeau can anticipate continued but limited new resident growth.

More information on population projections for Oconto County and the town of Brazeau can be found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources* with town specific projections shown in Table 6.18.

Seasonal Population Projections

Given the town of Brazeau's significant estimated year 2010 seasonal population, it is important for the town to review and be aware of the seasonal population. For this comprehensive plan, the town has utilized Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) seasonal population projections. Based on these seasonal population projections, the town can anticipate continued growth in the seasonal population from an estimated 2,034 in 2010 to 2,224 in 2035. These projections also show a decrease from 2,224 in 2035 to 2,161 in 2040.

More information on seasonal population projections for Oconto County and the town of Brazeau can be found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources* with town specific projections shown in Table 6.18.

Housing

Housing Trends and Characteristics

As reported by the U.S. Census, the town of Brazeau housing units have continued to increase over the years.

The U.S. Census housing counts from both 2000 and 2010 indicate that there were more seasonal housing units in the town of Brazeau than there were full-time occupied units.

- In 2000, the town had 745 seasonal housing units compared to 602 full-time occupied units. This is 1.2 seasonal units to a 1 occupied unit ratio.

- In 2010, the town had 904 seasonal housing units compared to 571 full-time occupied units. This is 1.58 seasonal units to a 1 occupied unit ratio.

Housing Projections

Utilizing the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) occupied housing unit projections, the town can expect to see a continued, but limited increase in occupied housing units.

- In 2010, the town had 571 occupied housing units. WDOA projections show 589 in 2020, 675 in 2030 and 668 in 2040.

More information on housing projections for Oconto County and the town of Brazeau can be found in Table 6.20 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Seasonal Housing Projections

Due to the number of seasonal housing units currently located in the town of Brazeau, it is important to consider the number of additional housing units that may potentially be built for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use in the future.

- In 2010, the town had 904 seasonal housing units. Seasonal housing projections for the town are 983 in 2020, 1,069 in 2030, and 1,058 in 2040.

More information on seasonal housing projections for Oconto County and the town of Brazeau can be found in Table 6.21 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Economic Development

The town of Brazeau's economy is heavily influenced by its forest and water resources. The woodlands and lakes promote tourism and attract a number of seasonal residents which further enhances opportunities for local retailers and service providers.

Of those town residents that are part of the town's labor force, the majority, 26 percent, are employed in management, professional and related occupations. A large percent, 22.8, are employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations and 22 percent are employed in sales or office occupations. More information on employed persons by occupation for Oconto County and the town of Brazeau can be found in Table 7.11 found in Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

For more information regarding economic characteristics of Oconto County and the town of Brazeau refer to Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

LAND USE TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Existing Land Use Issues and Conflicts

- Development pressures on natural features, primarily surface waters and woodlands, along with development infringing on environmental corridors, impacting surface and groundwater quality.
- Difficult to anticipate trends of seasonal population. Housing market could have major impact on future development of seasonal units. Also unknown how many seasonal units will be converted to year-round residences.
- Conversion of agricultural lands to other uses.

- Incompatibilities with farm and non-farm developments as development pressures increase.
- Work cooperatively with Oconto County and surrounding towns regarding development patterns at boundaries.

Anticipated Land Use Trends

- Push for more lake development, particularly secondary tier growth. There may be additional pressure to develop other natural areas, including woodlands, as the lakeshore property becomes scarce.
- Need for more commercial/light industrial development along STH 64 along with intersection of CTH's B and Z for commuter traffic and local residents.
- Need for additional and/or enhanced municipal services including stormwater, shoreland management, emergency services, sanitary districts and community facility. The community facility could be education satellite, law enforcement satellite, UW-Extension satellite or senior center.
- Increasing presence of subdivisions.
- The presence of two sanitary districts. This is important in terms of development that the community may attract as opposed to neighboring communities.
- Need for additional/enhanced municipal services including sanitary, emergency services, stormwater management, etc.
- Fragmentation of woodlands and other large areas of contiguous open space.
- Development pressure around public lands.

Development Considerations

- Need to maximize use of the sanitary districts. Guide as much future development within the boundaries where service can be provided. However, it is important to remain aware of the service's capacity to ensure it is not exceeded.
- Land prices will likely continue to increase, particularly around lakes and in wooded areas.
- Ability to alert residents of emergencies and supply location to provide shelter.
- Current condition of roads. Consider which roads are currently capable of handling increased traffic flows and those that may need to be upgraded to accommodate future growth.
- The town will need to continually monitor and expand when necessary existing telecommunications related infrastructure to ensure the needs of their residents and businesses are met. Broadband enhancement with additional towers locating in the town and neighboring communities will support existing and future home based businesses as well as the needs of area residents.

DESIGN YEAR LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections

Wisconsin Statutes require Comprehensive Plans to include projections in five year increments for future residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses in the community over

the 20-year planning period. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) projections were used to determine anticipated future growth within the town. The town of Brazeau future land use projections can be viewed in Table 2.3.

It is **not** the intent of this comprehensive plan to see an entire area within a land use classification noted on the General Plan Design to be developed. The specified uses should be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of existing development. Some of the land within the designated land use classifications is not developable due to natural features, easements, setbacks, existing preferred land uses, or availability of supporting infrastructure. Within developing areas, these additional considerations and land uses generally account for approximately 25 percent of the gross land area. Given these considerations, the gross land use needs for residential, commercial, and industrial development for the town of Brazeau by 2040 is 424.37 acres. The net acreage total for each of the illustrated land uses is 318.3 acres.

Table 2.3: Five-Year Incremental Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	Residential		Commercial		Industrial	
	Acres	Total	Acres	Total	Acres	Total
2020	125.0		1.8		1.5	
2025	96.0	221.0	1.4	3.2	1.2	2.7
2030	77.0	298.0	1.1	4.3	0.9	3.6
2035	12.0	310.0	0.2	4.5	0.1	3.8
2040	-	310.0	-	4.5	-	3.8

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Residential Projections

The town's future residential land use acreage was projected utilizing the following methodology:

- the town's projected housing needs were based on the WDOA projections,
- an average lot size of 2 acres per dwelling unit,
- a multiplication factor ranging from 1.25 to 2.25 to allow for market flexibility.

Table 2.4: Five-Year Incremental Housing Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	New Housing Units	Acres/DU	Market Value	Acres Needed
2020	50	2	1.25	125.0
2025	32	2	1.5	96.0
2030	22	2	1.75	77.0
2035	3	2	2	12.0
2040	0	2	2.25	0.0
Total	107			310.00

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Note: The new housing units shown for 2020 would be the increase from the number of housing units determined in the 2010 census and the projected number of housing units in 2020. From 2010 thru 2020 it is projected the town will see 50 new housing units. From 2020 thru 2025 it is projected the town will see 32 new housing units.

Commercial Projections

To calculate commercial land use projections, the current ratio of residential acreage to commercial land use acreage is compared by parcel in the town based on the existing land use inventory. That ratio was 68.7 acres of residential land to every one acre of commercial land for an 68.7:1 ratio. Based on this ratio, the town can anticipate allocating 4.5 net commercial acres and 6.02 gross commercial acres during this planning period.

Table 2.5: Five-Year Incremental Commercial Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	Res. Acreage	Ratio	Acres Needed
2020	125.0	68.7	1.8
2025	96.0	68.7	1.4
2030	77.0	68.7	1.1
2035	12.0	68.7	0.2
2040	0.0	68.7	0.0
Total			4.5

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Industrial Projections

Industrial lands are projected in the same manner as the commercial lands by using the current ratio of residential acreage to industrial land use acreage by parcel in the town based on the existing land use inventory. That ratio was 82.3 acres of residential land to every one acre of industrial land for an 82.3:1 ratio. Based on this ratio, the town can anticipate allocating 3.8 net industrial acres and 5.02 gross industrial acres during this planning period.

Table 2.6: Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	Res. Acreage	Ratio	Acres Needed
2020	125.0	82.33	1.5
2025	96.0	82.33	1.2
2030	77.0	82.33	0.9
2035	12.0	82.33	0.1
2040	0.0	82.33	0.0
Total			3.8

Source: Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020.

Agricultural Projections

With over 12,000 acres of agricultural land within the town, it is the intention to preserve as much of these agricultural lands as possible over the next 20 years. As development pressures continue to grow, any non-agricultural development should be directed to areas not designated for farmland preservation. This generally means areas not considered as prime productive agricultural land, where services are more readily available needed to support the non-agricultural use, and/or where the non-agricultural use will not promote conflict with existing agricultural uses. The conversion of agricultural lands to other land uses can be influenced by the strategies of local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Map 2.1: Location Map

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Map 2.2: Planning Area

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Map 2.3: Surface Water Features

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Map 2.4: Plan Determinants

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Map 2.5: Prime Agricultural Soils

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Map 2.6: Public and Community Facilities

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Map 2.7: Existing Land Use

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