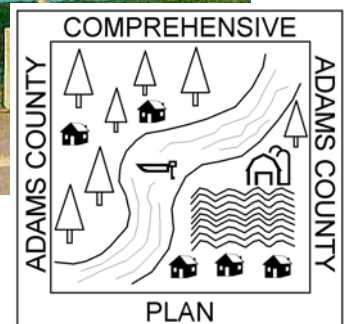
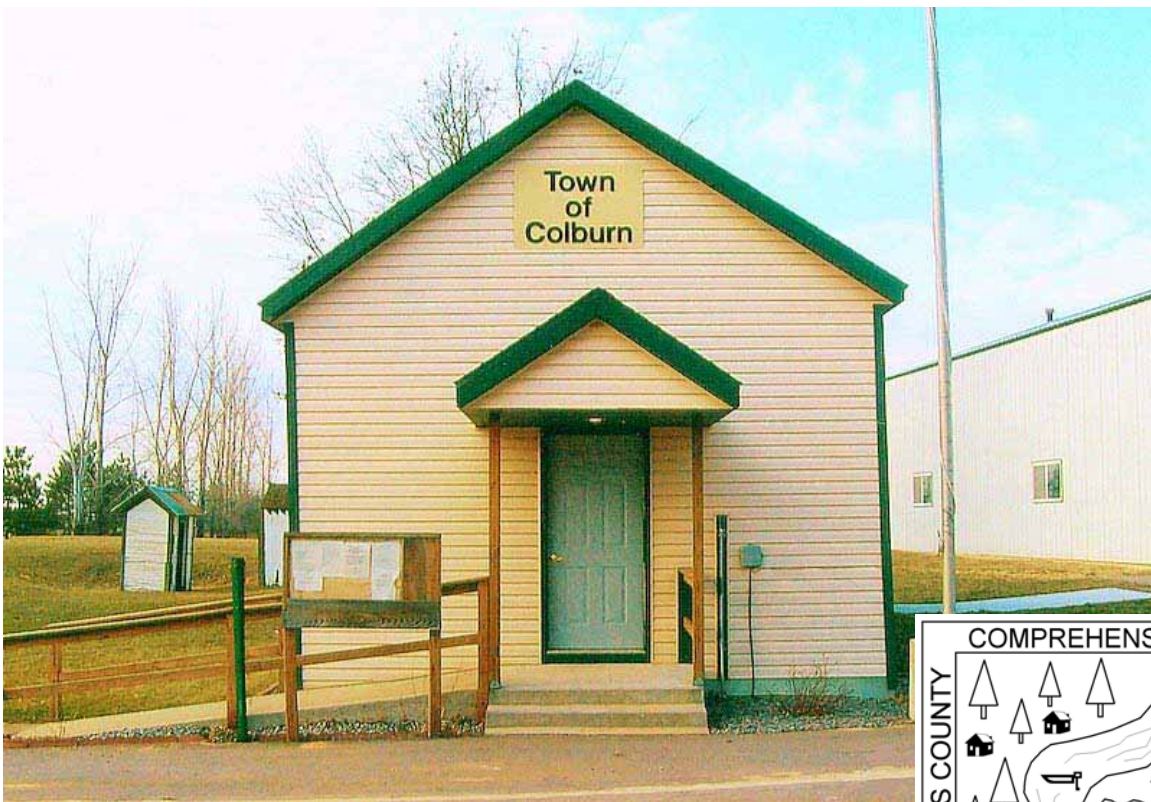


# TOWN OF COLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**ADOPTED 2006**



**Prepared by:**

**North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

## **TOWN OF COLBURN**

### Town Board

Kevin Sigourney, Chair

Richard Gold, Supervisor I

Ted Borkowski, Supervisor II

Sandra Rogers, Clerk

Terri Horacek, Treasurer

### Plan Commission

Gerald Schepp, Chair

Theresa Dahm

David Breitzkreutz

Ted Mattox

Lester Wichman

Photo Credits: Town Plan Commission

**Draft August 2004**  
**Revised Draft February 2005**  
**Revised Draft October 2005**  
**Revised Draft April 2006**  
**Adopted June 2006**

This plan was funded by a grant from the  
Wisconsin Department of Administration and Adams County

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JUN 9 2006

NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**66.1001 (4) \* Ordinance to adopt comprehensive plan.**

**(ONLY for use by towns authorized to exercise VILLAGE POWERS under s. 60.22).**

STATE OF WISCONSIN *ADAMS*  
Town of COLBURN County

**SECTION I – TITLE/PURPOSE**

The title of this ordinance is the Town of COLBURN Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the Town of COLBURN to lawfully adopt a comprehensive plan as required under s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

**SECTION II – AUTHORITY**

The town board of the Town of COLBURN has authority under its village powers under s. 60.22, Wis. stats., its power to appoint a town plan commission under ss. 60.62 (4) and 62.23 (1), Wis. stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., to adopt this ordinance. The comprehensive plan of the Town of COLBURN must be in compliance with s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats., in order for the town board to adopt this ordinance.

**SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE**

The town board of the Town of COLBURN, by this ordinance, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and roll call vote by a majority of the town board present and voting, provides the authority for the Town of COLBURN to adopt its comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., and provides the authority for the town board to order its publication.

**SECTION IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The town board of the Town of COLBURN has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by s. 66.1001 (4) (a), Wis. stats.

**SECTION V – TOWN PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

The Plan Commission of the Town of COLBURN, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the town board the adoption of the Town of COLBURN Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2), Wis. stats.

**SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING**

The Town of COLBURN, has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, with notice in compliance with the requirements of s. 66.1001 (4) (d), Wis. stats.

**SECTION VII – ADOPTION OF TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The town board of the Town of COLBURN by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled Town of COLBURN Comprehensive Plan Ordinance under pursuant to s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

**SECTION VIII – SEVERABILITY**

If any provision of this ordinance of its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision of application, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are severable.

**SECTION IX – EFFECTIVE DATE**

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting.

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats.

Adopted this 6 day of June 2006

[Signatures of town board]

*Kevin Sigourney*  
*Red Burdett*

Attest: [Signature of town clerk]

*Andrea Reyes,*  
*Town Clerk*

**66.1001(4)(b)\*Resolution by plan commission to recommend adoption of comprehensive plan**

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
Town of Colburn  
Adams County

The Plan Commission of the Town of Colburn, Adams County, Wisconsin, by this resolution, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and by a roll call vote of a majority of the town plan commission present and voting resolves and recommends to the town board of the Town of Colburn as follows:

[Choose one of the alternatives below]

(ALTERNATIVE ONE) Adoption of the Town of Colburn Comprehensive Plan.

(ALTERNATIVE TWO) Amendment of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Colburn Plan Commission, by this resolution, further resolves and orders as follows:

All maps and other materials noted and attached as exhibits to the Town of Colburn Comprehensive Plan are incorporated into and made a part of the Town of Colburn Comprehensive Plan.

The vote of the town plan commission in regard to this resolution shall be recorded by the clerk of the town plan commission in the official minutes of the Town of Colburn Plan Commission.

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this resolution as required under s. 60.80, Wis. Stats.

Adopted this 18 day of April 2006

[Signature of plan commission members]

Attest: {Signature of plan commission clerk]

Heath G. Schupp Clerk

Thomas L. Posh

David Brutter

Heath G. Schupp

Scott A. Wiseman  
Ted Mattoy

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APR 21 2006

NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**TOWN OF COLBURN**  
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ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Adams County Plan Process
- B. Public Participation Plan
- C. Community Survey
- D. 2000 Census Summary
- E. Colburn Drainage District
- F. Population, Household, Employment, & Land Use Projections
  - Maps: School Districts, Fire Service, & Bike Routes
- G. Addendum to Town of Colburn Comprehensive Plan
  - Map: Adams County Endangered Resources

## Map 1 Location Map

## **1. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Background**

The Town of Colburn is a traditional six-mile by six-mile town with 36 sections, located in the northeast corner of Adams County, Wisconsin. The Town of Leola to the north, Waushara County to the east, the Town of Big Flats to the west, and the Town of Richfield to the south bound the town. It is one of the seventeen towns in the county. See the locational reference map.

Over the years the town has been dominated by swampland conifers and lowland hardwood forest types, and some agricultural uses. Scattered residential development also has been locating in the town.

The town would not have farmable or buildable land if it did not have the drainage ditches. Information about drainage districts exists in the Issues & Opportunities element of the Adams County Comprehensive Plan.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan for more detailed information.

### **The Planning Process**

The Town of Colburn joined with all the local units and Adams County to apply for funding to complete a comprehensive plan. An application was prepared and submitted in 2002 and approved in 2003. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has coordinated this effort and is assisting with the development of these plans.

A Planning Committee was created to oversee the development of the plan. The working group met to analyze and discuss information that was gathered and presented by the NCWRPC.

A three-phase process over a three-year period was developed for the completion of the Adams County Comprehensive Plan and all of the local unit plans (except for the Town of Rome, which completed a plan in 2002). Phase one was the inventory stage where data was collected, information was reviewed and maps were prepared. The second phase was the development of the 18 local unit plans, including this one. Finally, phase three was the creation of the County Comprehensive Plan, where the local unit plans were merged together to form a county level plan.

Draft local plans were provided to all local units in August 2004. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission staff met with each local unit over the fall and winter to review the draft text and maps. Revised drafts were prepared and distributed to the Towns in February 2005. See Attachment A for more detailed information.

## **Public Participation**

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of the town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and opinions on issues that they would like addressed on the future development of their town. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public's desires and consensus. See Public Participation Plan in Attachment B.

### Community Survey

The Town of Colburn Planning Committee mailed surveys in February 2003 to 290 property owners, with 112 surveys returned, providing a 38 percent response rate. This is the summary of how property owners in the Town of Colburn responded to the survey. See Community Survey in Attachment C.

Most respondents (49%) have owned property in the Town for 15 years or more. Twenty-four percent of respondents have owned property for 5 years or less. The remaining respondents lived or owned property in the Town for 6-10 years (13%), or for 11-15 years (12%).

The number and age of residents was listed as follows:

- Under 18 years old (17 people)
- 18 to 24 years old (1 person)
- 25 to 34 years old (11 people)
- 35 to 44 years old (6 people)
- 45 to 54 years old (34 people)
- 55 to 64 years old (4 people)
- 65 and older (31 people)
- On 45 properties there are no inhabitants.

Property in the Town of Colburn was listed by respondents as their primary residence (34%), their seasonal residence (29%), or undeveloped land (34%). Others listed tree farm (1%) and farm land (2%) as other uses.

Sixty-nine percent of respondents do not own water frontage, and 30 percent do; one of which is on a pond.

Most respondents (62%) own 30 acres of land or less. Eleven percent of respondents own 40 acres. Four percent own 45 to 78 acres. Ten percent of respondents own 80 to 83 acres, and 13 percent own 100 acres or more.

Sixty-one percent of respondents said their land was only one parcel; 27 percent said 2 parcels; 5 percent said 3 parcels; and 7 percent said 4 parcels.

Respondents want to have a say in where growth should occur (55%), but some do not want the Town to decide (19%), and others (26%) do not know.

The minimum lot size should be:  
 Less than 1 acre (7 respondents)      1 acre (17 respondents)      1½ acres (4 respondents)  
 2 acres (11 respondents)      Between 3 and 4 ½ acres (17 respondents)  
 5 acres (38 respondents)      10 acres (14 respondents)      More than 10 acres (14 respondents).

Most respondents (71%) would support creation of a subdivision ordinance.

The kinds of housing that respondents want the Town to encourage is:  
 Single family homes (45%), Subdivisions (9%), Seasonal (22%), Seasonal help (6%),  
 Apartment/ Condominium (4%), Duplexes (3%), Manufactured (3%), and Elderly (8%).

How do you feel about development in the Town of Colburn?

1. The current pace is just right (67%).
2. There is too much development (18%).
3. More development is necessary (15%).

Current land use development regulations are considered too strong (8%), adequate (24%),  
 or too weak (23%); others did not know (32%), or had no opinion (13%).

| <b>Land Use Issues prioritized by respondents</b>                              |               |                 |              |
|--|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Land Use Issue   | High Priority | Medium Priority | Low Priority |
| Preservation of environmentally sensitive land and natural resources.          | 66%           | 30%             | 4%           |
| Preservation of farmland.  | 56%           | 35%             | 9%           |
| Discouraging scattered residential subdivisions by locating new near existing. | 43%           | 42%             | 15%          |
| Protection and enhancement of existing & new parks.                            | 64%           | 21%             | 15%          |

23% would like to see retail/industrial development limited to state and county highways only.

52% would like retail/industrial development located in industrial parks.

25% see no need for changing how retail/industrial development is occurring.

Commercial/industrial developments should have aesthetic requirements (77%).

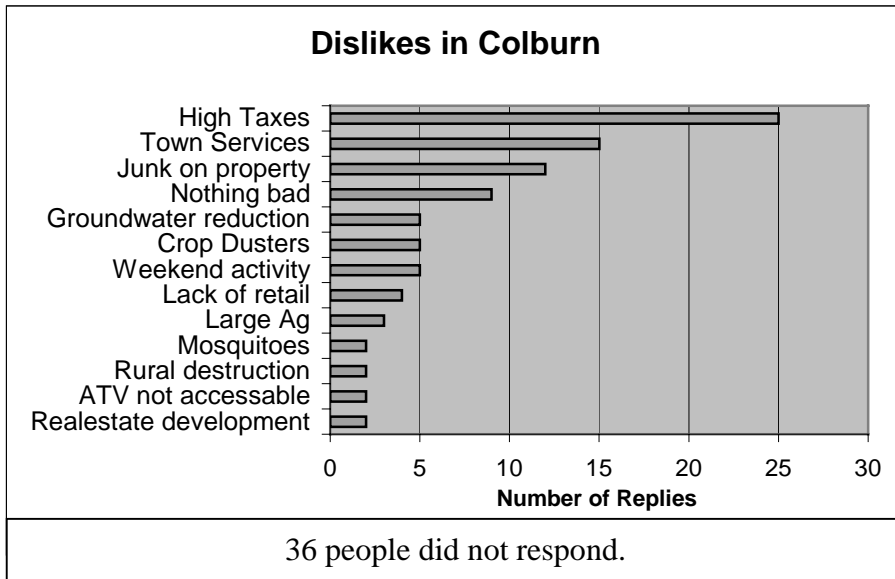
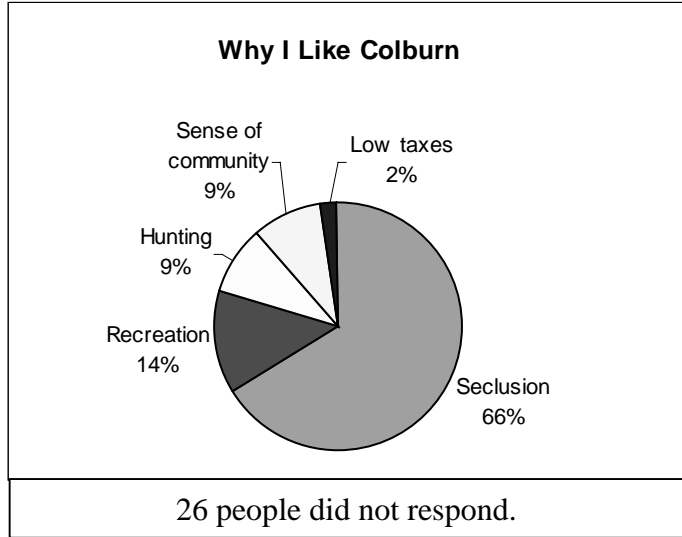
Business advertising signs should have specific standards related to size, location, & maintenance (85%).

Critical land use problems facing Colburn are:

- Need to maintain “rural aesthetics” (26%).
- Need zoning ordinances (21%)
  - To control parcel size subdivision;
  - To control junkyard appearance and groundwater contamination; &
  - To encourage neighborhood retail & discourage big box retail.
- Groundwater contamination/depletion (16%).
- Taxation too high (9%).
- Too much regulation (7%).
- Too much development (7%).
- Too much soil erosion (7%).



Secluded house – Town of Colburn



Fifty additional comments about future land use were written by survey respondents. All comments written throughout the survey were recorded and distributed to the town board to read.

## Relationship to County Plan

As mentioned earlier, this plan is part of a county-wide planning effort. The Adams County Comprehensive Plan contains much of the detailed background information that is briefly mentioned throughout this document. Although this plan refers to the County Plan, there is no change in the existing relationship between the Town of Colburn and Adams County.

## Town Demographics

### A. Population

The Town's population has grown slowly over the last ten years according to the Census. As displayed in Table 1, the Town experienced an 18 percent increase between 1990 & 2000. Meanwhile the county grew at 27 percent over the same time period. All of the surrounding towns displayed grew at greater rates, with the exception of Richfield, which declined by 9.4 percent. Between 1990 and 2000, Colburn added 27 persons. The town is about 1 percent of the total population of the county.

Annually, the Wisconsin Department of Administration publishes population estimates for all minor civil divisions. These numbers vary slightly from the U.S. Census information. For the 2003 estimates, all of the towns, including the county were expected to grow.

| Minor Civil Division | 1990   | 2000   | 2003   | 1990 - 2000<br>% Change | 1990 - 2000<br>Net Change |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Colburn              | 154    | 181    | 185    | 18%                     | 27                        |
| Leola                | 217    | 265    | 273    | 22%                     | 48                        |
| Big Flats            | 731    | 946    | 1,006  | 29%                     | 215                       |
| Richfield            | 159    | 144    | 143    | -9.4%                   | -15                       |
| Adams County         | 15,682 | 19,920 | 20,452 | 27%                     | 4,238                     |

Source: U.S. Census, DOA 2003 estimate

If the ten-year growth trend were maintained, the town would expect about an 18 percent increase in population over the next ten years. Thus, 33 additional persons would reside in the town. However, if the town grew at the same pace as the county it would expect about 49 additional residents. See Attachment F for population projections.

### B. Age

The number of people aged 65 and older that lived in the community increased from 28 in 1990, to 37 in 2000, an increase of 32 percent. Also the number of persons 5 and under also increased by over 133% percent that same period from 3 in 1990 to 7 in 2000. Both are an indication of a stabilized population and median age for Colburn. According to the U.S. Census in 1990, Colburn's median age was 48 and in 2000 the median age was 47. Compared to Adams County, in 1990 the median age was 40 and in 2000 the median age was 44. Over the decade, Colburn's median age decreased by one year, but it is still higher

than the county's median age. Display 1 shows the "top heavy" appearance of the population in 2000 to be in the ages of 55 to over 64. The pyramid base of juveniles helps bring the median age down, along with the bulge of 35-44 year olds.

**Display 1: 2000 Age Cohorts**



Source: U.S. Census

C. Race

In 1990, 96.8 percent of the Town's 154 residents were White, 0.6 percent were American Indian, and 2.6 percent were another race. Racial composition of Colburn's population has changed very little in the last decade. In 2000, 92.8 percent of 181 persons listed themselves as White, 0.6 percent were African American, 3.9 percent were American Indian, and 2.8 percent were another race.

D. Educational Level

Educational levels in 1990 showed that 48 had completed high school and of those 48, 8 had some college and 0 had completed 4 or more years of college. The 2000 Census showed that 105 had completed high school and of those 105, 24 had some college, 6 had associate degrees, 5 had bachelor degrees and 2 had graduate or professional degrees. Only those 25 years of age and older are reflected in these statistics. Table 2 provides a summary of educational attainment in Colburn, Adams County, and the State.

| <b>Educational Attainment Level</b>                   | <b>Town of Colburn</b> | <b>Adams County</b> | <b>State of Wisconsin</b> |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade                       | 9.4%                   | 7.0%                | 5.4%                      |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade, no diploma | 20.1%                  | 16.4%               | 9.6%                      |
| High School Graduate                                  | 45.6%                  | 41.9%               | 34.6%                     |
| Some College, no degree                               | 16.1%                  | 19.9%               | 20.6%                     |
| Associate Degree                                      | 4.0%                   | 4.9%                | 7.5%                      |
| Bachelor's Degree                                     | 3.4%                   | 6.5%                | 15.3%                     |
| Graduate or Professional                              | 1.3%                   | 3.4%                | 7.2%                      |

Source: U.S. Census

The Town of Colburn has a higher percentage of high school graduates as a level of educational attainment compared to the county and state. It also has the highest percentage of persons with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education and no diploma, which could be a factor from having such a large percentage of residents over 64, since they are the bulk of this category. However, the town has a lower percentage of persons with an associate degree and a bachelor's degree than the county.

E. Households

The number of households in the town has grown by 38.3 percent, from 60 in 1990 to 83 in 2000. Of the 83 total households, in 2000, 67.5 percent were family households, while the other 32.5 percent were non-family households. Almost fifty-eight percent of family households were married couple households. See Attachment F for household projections.

Thirty-four percent of all households included someone 65 years old or older, while eighteen percent included someone 18 or younger. The average household size was 2.18 people.

F. Employment

Between 1990 and 2000 the town's employed residents increased 190.6 percent, from 32 to 93. The two employment sectors with the most employed in 1990 were Retail Trade and Agriculture & Forestry. In 2000, Agriculture & Forestry became the top employment sector along with Educational, Health, and Social Services. Retail Trade became the fourth most common type of employment behind Transportation and Warehousing. Another benefit to the employment sector in Colburn is that the number of unemployed went down. In 1990, 10 people reported they were unemployed, for a 9.3 percent of unemployed and in 2000 only 9 people reported they were unemployed, for a 5.2 percent of civilian labor force unemployed. See Attachment F for employment projections.

**Table 3: Total Employed**

| Minor Civil Division | 1990  | 2000  | 1990 - 2000 % Change |
|----------------------|-------|-------|----------------------|
| Colburn              | 32    | 93    | 190.6%               |
| Leola                | 86    | 122   | 41.9%                |
| Big Flats            | 254   | 370   | 45.7%                |
| Richfield            | 66    | 74    | 12.1%                |
| Adams County         | 5,640 | 7,847 | 39.1%                |

Source: U.S. Census

G. Household Income

The 1999 median household income in the town was \$35,250, which was greater than Adams County, but less than the State, which were \$33,408 and \$43,791 respectively.

Of the 86 households in the town, 24 reported incomes less than \$24,999 and 2 had incomes above \$200,000. The 2000 Census indicates that poverty is concentrated among individuals over 65 years. Five percent of this population is below the poverty rate.

**Table 4: Median Household Income**

| Minor Civil Division | 1990     | 2000     | Adj. Net Change* | % Change* |
|----------------------|----------|----------|------------------|-----------|
| Colburn              | \$12,143 | \$35,250 | \$19,251         | 120.3%    |
| Leola                | \$23,125 | \$36,607 | \$6,139          | 20.1%     |
| Big Flats            | \$18,289 | \$27,800 | \$3,704          | 15.4%     |
| Richfield            | \$27,917 | \$34,792 | -\$1,989         | -5.4%     |
| Adams County         | \$21,548 | \$33,408 | \$5,018          | 17.7%     |

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC. \*Adjusted for inflation

**Table 5: Per Capita Income**

| Minor Civil Division | 1990     | 2000     | Adj. Net Change* | % Change* |
|----------------------|----------|----------|------------------|-----------|
| Colburn              | \$5,586  | \$21,440 | \$14,080         | 191.3%    |
| Leola                | \$9,211  | \$15,699 | \$3,563          | 29.4%     |
| Big Flats            | \$9,411  | \$14,629 | \$2,230          | 18.0%     |
| Richfield            | \$9,676  | \$23,334 | \$10,589         | 83.1%     |
| Adams County         | \$11,945 | \$17,777 | \$2,039          | 13.0%     |

Source: U.S. Census & NCWRPC. \*Adjusted for inflation

**Table 6: Poverty Rate (%)**

| Minor Civil Division | 1989 Poverty Rate (%) | 1999 Poverty Rate (%) |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Town of Colburn      | 21.2%                 | 5.9%                  |
| Adams County         | 14.4%                 | 10.4%                 |
| State of Wisconsin   | 10.7%                 | 8.7%                  |

Source: U.S. Census

## H. Community Issues

There are a variety of influences in the town, from population growth, to residential development, to the future of farming. These issues are critical to the long-term success of the town. A four page summary from the U.S. Census is included as Attachment D.

The following sections of the document examine the many issues that impact the town.



Farmstead – Town of Colburn

## **2. NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **A. NATURAL**

The town lies in the mid-latitude continental climatic zone, which is characterized by long, snowy winters and short, warm summers. Spring and fall are often short with rapid changes from summer to winter and winter to summer. Annual precipitation, throughout the area, averages about 32 inches. About one-half to two-thirds of the annual precipitation falls between May and September. Snowfalls range between 45 and 80 inches annually, with a continuous snow cover from November to early April.

In terms of the physical landscape, the protection of certain natural features is necessary for the environment and for future generations. Certain environmental features and assets have more than merely aesthetic and leisure-time activity values. They are essential to long-term human survival and the preservation of life, health, and general welfare. As such, the protection and/or management of these environmental features and assets clearly are in the public's best interest.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element for more detailed information on this topic.

The environmental features and assets that were examined in this plan include soils, wetlands, floodplains, water and woodlands.

#### 1) Water, Wetlands & Floodplains

Together the ponds, lakes, streams, drainage ditches, and wetlands total about 7,749 acres in the town or 33.7 percent of the total acres. The major water body is the Big Roche a Cri Creek, its tributaries, and drainage ditches. See the Water Features Map.

Under natural conditions, aquifers receive water from rainfall that percolates through the soils. Contamination of groundwater can result from landfill liquids percolating through improperly designed landfills, private effluent disposal located near the water table, and petroleum products from leaking underground storage tanks, among other possibilities. Runoff from livestock yards and urban areas, or improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers can also add organic and chemical contaminants in locations where the water table is near the surface or where the soils drain fast as sandy soils usually do. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water for domestic, agricultural, and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result; thus, endangering the quality and supply of the water in the town.

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle, and local ecological systems. In a natural condition, they control floodwater by moderating peak flows, and some may act as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams as well as functioning in the reduction of water nutrients through

uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. They also have a buffering affect on water acidity or alkalinity and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria, which may be found in surface or groundwater. They also serve as breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and many other animals that depend on aquatic habitats; they are an important recreational, education, and aesthetic resource. In many instances, wetlands serve as the combined roles of flood moderation, water purification and aquatic habitat, wetlands are important to the maintenance of downstream habitat as well. See the Water Features Map.

Wetlands generally occur in areas where water stands near, at, or above the soil surface during a significant portion of most years. Vegetation is generally aquatic in nature and may vary from water lilies and rushes in marsh areas to alder and tamarack in lowland forest. Swamps, bogs, marshes, potholes, wet meadows, and sloughs are all wetlands. The soils in these areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface.

When drainage of wetlands occurs, the water table is locally lowered and soils are exposed to oxidation at depths previously saturated. Nutrients held in the wetland soils can then be leached away, and constant fertilization is necessary to keep the root zone of those soils productive for agriculture. Wildlife population and habitat in drained areas and downstream locations may negatively affect the recreational and aesthetic value of an area. Eradication of wetlands can also occur in urban locations through the use of fill material. This can destroy the hydrologic function of the site and open the area to improper development. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has delineated the location of wetlands and has standards for managing wetlands.

The Colburn Drainage District is approximately 9,880 acres in the Town of Colburn, Adams County, and the Town of Hancock, Waushara County. The ditch network contains approximately 72,750 feet of District operated ditches, and no private ditches. A WDNR Maintenance Dredging Agreement and ATCP 48 of the Wisconsin Administrative code under the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection regulate the construction and maintenance of District operated ditches. A drainage district map is in Appendix E.

Floodplains are a natural feature not conducive to development. Inappropriate location of roadways in floodplains can result in serious flood damage from elevated flood water levels and flood water velocities. Periodic roadbed saturation and embankment washing eventually lead to an increase in road maintenance costs. In addition to roads, floodwaters can create a number of problems by damaging foundations of homes, electrical equipment, heating units, etc. Basements constructed on permeable sands and silts of floodplains are especially susceptible to damage resulting from seepage through walls. Thus, it is advisable to restrict development in such areas. In the town, the areas that are designated as floodplains by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are mainly adjacent to the Big Roche a Cri Creek. See the Water Features Map.

## Map 2 Water Features

Map 3 Soils

Map 4 Soil Limitations for Septic Tank Absorption Fields

## 2) Soils

As with most areas in Central Wisconsin, the Town of Colburn has a variety of soil types within the town. According to the 1984 USDA Soil Survey of Adams County, the soil patterns include scattered areas of Adrian Muck (Ad), which is in most of the areas classified as DNR Wetlands and along the Carter Creek. Newson Loamy Sand (Ne) is also scattered in these same areas and normally borders the Adrian Muck. Scattered between the creek and wetland areas are Plainfield Sand [(PfB) and (PfC)], which cannot be used for cultivating crops or construction of houses. Some soils that potentially can be used as farmland include Brems Loamy Sand (BrA), Brems Newson Loamy Sand (BsA), Coloma Sand (CoB), Leola Loamy Sand (Le), Richford Loamy Sand (RfB), Au Gres Loamy Sand (Au), and Meehan Loamy Sand (MoA). Brems Loamy Sand, Richford Loamy Sand, and Coloma Sand are also suitable for construction of houses and with special precaution, can also be suitable for private onsite waste water treatment systems.

Soils are an important natural resource. Knowledge of the potential uses and/or limitations of soil types is necessary to evaluate crop production capabilities or when considering construction of buildings, installation of utilities, or other uses of land. Problems that limit development on certain soils include poor filtration, slow percolation, flooding or ponding, wetness, slope, and subsidence. A "severe" limitation indicates that one or more soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or difficult to overcome that a major increase in construction effort, special design, or intensive maintenance is required. For some soils rated severe, such costly measures may not be feasible. See the Soils with Limitations Map.

## 3) Woodlands

Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature. Forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, economic productivity (timber products), wildlife habitat, and protection of headwaters areas. From the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook*, of the 22,970 acres of land in Colburn, 28.3% or 6,500 acres are forests. In regard to the latter, tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses. See the Woodlands Map.

Some woodlands in the town are being maintained through the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program and the Forest Crop Law (FCL). This tax assessment program is available to landowners willing to manage their forest plot according to sound forestry practices as specified in a management plan. More information exists in the Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element of the Adams County Comprehensive Plan.

**Goals:**

1. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, ponds, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
2. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
3. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
4. All new development in the town must not negatively impact environmental resources or adjoining property values.

**Objectives:**

1. New development in the Town should not negatively impact natural resources.
2. Minimize impacts to the Town's natural resources from non-metallic mineral mining.
3. Encourage and support the preservation of natural open spaces that minimize flooding such as wetlands and floodplains.
4. Promote development that minimizes groundwater impacts from on-site septic systems and other sources.

**Policies:**

1. New development should be discouraged from areas shown to be unsafe or unsuitable for development due to flood hazard, potential groundwater contamination, loss of farmland, highway access problems, incompatibility with neighboring uses, etc.
2. Expansion of existing non-metallic mining operations or development of new sites should be allowed only on lands where the expansion will not conflict with preexisting development.
3. Reclamation of non-metallic mining sites should conform to the land use plan map in regard to the reclaimed use.
4. Discourage the draining or filling of wetlands.
5. Establish a relationship with the Drainage District to discuss common issues related to the Town.

Map 5 Woodlands

Map 6 Prime Agricultural Soils

Map 7 Farmland Preservation Areas

## **B. AGRICULTURAL**

According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook*, the Town of Colburn between 1991-1993 was 32.8 percent agricultural, 28.3 percent forested, and 34.7 percent wetlands. The town's total land area is 35.9 square miles. Of the 32.8 percent of town land in agriculture, 17.2 percent was used for row crops, 3.5 percent was used for foraging, and 12.1 percent was grassland.

In terms of farming trends, the town has lost 0.6 percent of its farmland acreage on tax rolls between 1990 and 1997. According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook* there are 28 active farms, and zero active dairy farms in 1997. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs and results in the least damage to the environment. None of the town's land is classified as prime farmland. See the Prime Farmlands Map.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element for more detailed information on this topic.



Cattle in the pasture with corn in the background – Town of Colburn

**Goal:**

1. Protection of economically productive areas that are farmlands and commercial forests.

**Objectives:**

1. Support diversification of farming types and practices to maintain agriculture as a viable economic activity.
2. Existing agricultural uses and buildings should be taken into consideration when locating new development to avoid conflicts.
3. Preserve productive farmland for long-term agricultural uses.

**Policies:**

1. Non-farm development, particularly subdivisions, will be encouraged in areas away from intensive agricultural activities, in order to minimize farm & non-farm conflicts due to noise, odors, nitrates in well water, pesticides, farm/vehicle conflicts on roadways, late night plowing, etc.
2. Consider the use of such tools to protect sensitive areas, such as transfer of development rights (TDR) or purchase of development rights (PDR).
3. Encourage landowners to develop forest management plans and enroll in the managed forest law program.
4. Inconveniences, such as aerial spraying, irrigation, dust, noise, odors, vehicles traffic, etc. that result from agricultural operations that are not a major threat to public health or safety, should not be considered a nuisance.

## **C. CULTURAL**

The Old Colburn Town Hall, located on the NE corner of County Highway C and County Highway G, is the only structure on the Historic Registry. The town hall is a front gabled style, with drop siding wall material. There are also several original farm homes and farm buildings in the town. A brief history of the Town of Oakridge is described on page 23 in this plan. A more extensive town history is maintained at the Old Colburn Town Hall.

Lands immediately adjacent to surface waters, but not man-made drainage ditches, may have an abundance of cultural and archeological significance because they were often the location of Native American and early European settlements.

In celebration of Wisconsin's agricultural heritage, long time farm and home owners are encouraged to register for Century Farm status. To qualify as a Century Farm the property must be proven to have been in continuous family ownership for the past 100 or 150 years. No farms are listed as Century Farms in town.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element for more detailed information on this topic.

### **Goals:**

1. Preservation of cultural, historic, and architectural sites.
2. Respect farms within town by allowing farming to continue without residential intrusion nearby.

### **Objective:**

1. Work with the Adams County Historical Society and others to provide guidance in the identification and protection of historic and cultural resources.

### **Policy:**

1. Development proposals should be reviewed relative to the potential impacts to the historical and cultural resources of the Town.

# HISTORY

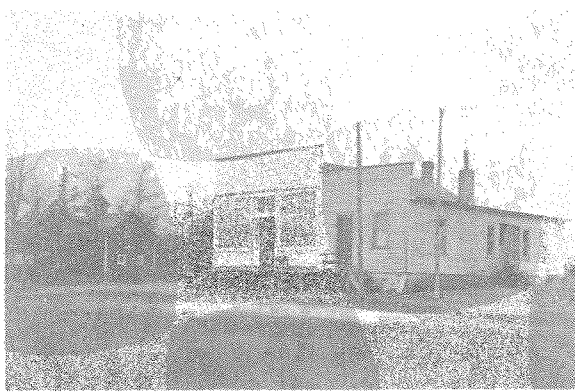
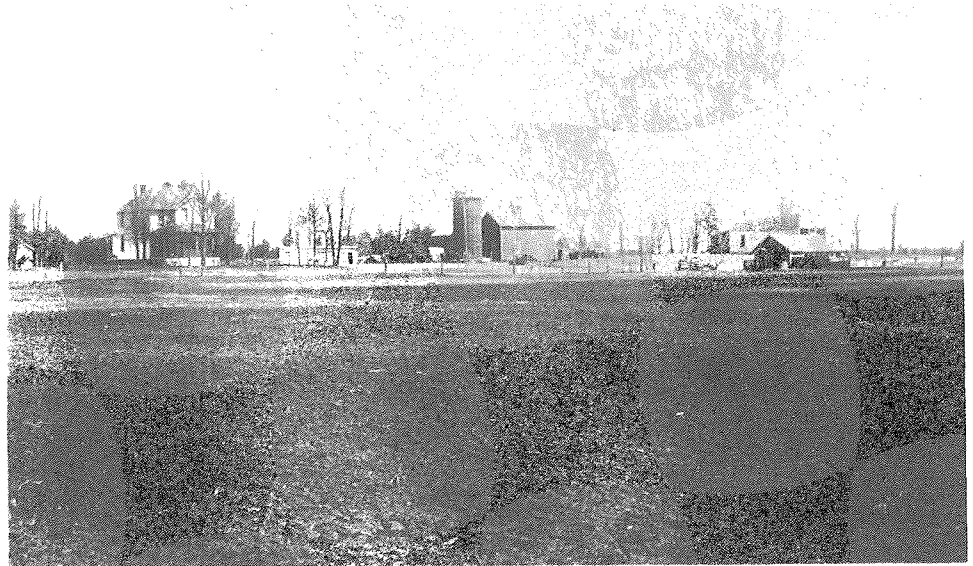
## Town of Oakridge In Colburn Township

The town of Oakridge was built by the Peter Nelson Family in the early 1900's

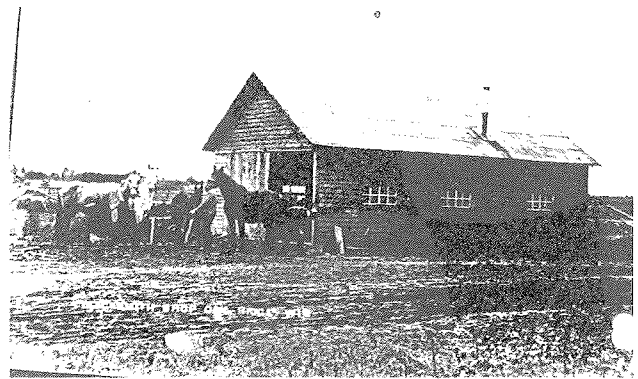
What is now known as Oakridge Farm is the original house that was also built by Peter Nelson., in 1908.

The location of the former town is in Sec. 8; south west corner.

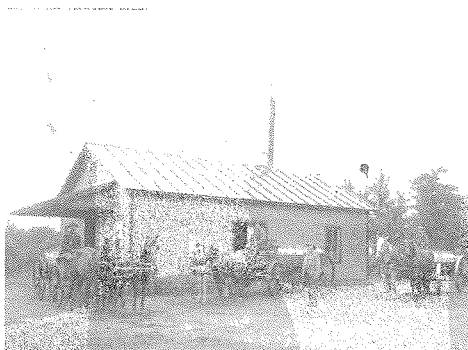
Stones from the general store can still be seen.



**The general store was built in the early 1900's by Peter Nelson. He ran the store and was also the postmaster.**



**The town also had a blacksmith. The site for this as in Sec. 17 on the Northwest corner of the section. This is now 589 Big Horn Ave.**



To the west of the Oakridge Farm was a skimming station. This was also built by Peter Nelson.

The town also had its own school. It was known as the Oakridge School. No pictures have been found at this time.

### **3. HOUSING**

#### **Background**

The 1990 Census indicates that there were 166 housing units in the town. Sixty of these housing units were occupied, none were vacant for sale or rent, 104 were vacant for occasional use, and 2 were other vacant housing units. About 66 percent of all occupied housing units in the town were owner-occupied. The average household size was 2.57 people.

In 2000, there were 155 housing units in the town. Eighty-three of these housing units were occupied, none were vacant for sale or rent, 71 were vacant for occasional use, and 1 was other vacant housing units. About 77 percent of all occupied housing units in the town were owner-occupied. The average household size was 2.18 people.

As a result of the projected 5-person population increase, the town might need to add an additional 2 housing units to accommodate population growth. However, as the persons per household drops the overall number of new units will increase. It is expected that there will be less than 1 new housing unit per year for the next several years. The amount of land consumed by future residential development would vary depending on where the development would take place.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Housing element for more detailed information on this topic.

#### **Goals:**

1. Discourage residential development in farmland areas.
2. Allow adequate affordable housing for all individuals consistent with the rural character of the community.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Ensure that local land use controls and permitting procedures do not discourage or prevent the provision of affordable housing opportunities.
2. Support development of senior and special needs housing within the Town.
3. Direct residential development away from existing agricultural uses and buildings to avoid conflicts.

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town should work with developers to provide a variety of housing types for all income and age groups.

## 4. TRANSPORTATION

### Background

The transportation system in the town includes county and local roads. A state highway does not run through the town. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as to the physical development of the town. There is no transit, rail, air or water transportation service within the town's jurisdiction.

The nearest transit system is in the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Union Pacific provides commercial rail service. Amtrak passenger rail service is available in Wisconsin Dells. The nearest commercial air service is at the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) in the City of Mosinee, and in Madison at Dane County Regional Airport (MSN). There are no water transportation facilities in the area.

State and Regional Transportation Plans:

#### 1. State Plans

*Corridors 2020* was completed in 1989. The plan was designed to meet Wisconsin's mobility needs for the future. The 3,200-mile state highway network was comprised of two elements: a multilane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. The backbone system is a 1,650-mile network of multilane divided highways interconnecting the major population and economic centers in the state and tying them to the national transportation network. The connector system is 1,550 miles of high-quality highways that link other significant economic and tourism centers to the backbone network. All communities over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone system via the connector network. Within Adams County, STH 21 is a *Corridors 2020* connector route, and the only highway in the County designated as part of the *Corridors 2020* system.

Another state plan was *Translinks 21*, completed in 1994. This effort began developing more detailed modal plans that include in-depth analysis of a specific mode and its relationship to the other modes. Completed plans include the *Wisconsin State Highway Plan 2020*, the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*, the *Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020*, the *Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020* and the *Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report*. Each modal plan includes extensive analysis of land use related issues.

Another state level plan related to the highway system is the *Wisconsin Access Management System Plan*. This is a plan for managing access on portions of the State Trunk Highway System that designates 5,300 miles of state highways on which access will be managed through the purchase of access rights or the designation of "controlled access highways". It shows where WisDOT intends to control access points as new development occurs and to consolidate or eliminate existing access as necessary and feasible.

The access management plan is composed of two tiers. Tier 1 consists of the routes that make up the *Corridors 2020* system, including STH 21 in Adams County. Access management on these routes is seen as essential to maintaining the required high level of service. Because these highways are generally the main routes between communities and

have higher traffic volumes than other state highways, they tend to experience the greatest development pressure. Tier 2 is comprised of other State Trunk Highways that meet specified criteria, including STH 13 and STH 73 in Adams County. These routes are roadways where limiting access is seen as a cost-effective strategy to improve safety, reduce congestion, facilitate planned access to developing land, and delay or avoid future construction expenditures.

## 2. Regional Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan: A Framework for the Future, 2002 – 2020 was adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2003. The RCP looks at transportation in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Adams. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address transportation issues.

The RCP identifies a number of transportation issues including growing traffic volumes and congestion. Moderate levels of congestion, see MAP 4 are expected by the year 2020 on STH 13 in Adams/Friendship and north of the lakes area in the Town of Rome as well as STH 21 west of STH 13, assuming no capacity improvements. Moderate congestion indicates that speeds and distance between vehicles are reduced, constricting traffic flow. Freedom of drivers to maneuver within the traffic stream or enter the highway is noticeably limited. Minor incidents can result in traffic jams because the traffic stream has little space to absorb disruptions. Traffic volumes continue to swell, especially in summer months due to the local tourism and seasonal housing growth. The RCP shows 72 to 77 percent increase in average daily traffic on major routes in Adams County between 1980 and 2000.

The RCP addresses other modes of travel as well as highways, including bicycle transportation. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan is incorporated in the RCP by reference. The plan envisions development of a regional system of new interconnected bicycle facilities for the ten county area including Adams. The proposed network will encompass routes on bicycle paths, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders and wide curb lanes which will link existing and potential traffic generation sites and points of interest, as outlined in the plan, to make bicycling a more attractive and safer transportation alternative. A map displaying highway suitability for bike routes is included in the attachments.

The goals of the regional bike plan are to generate public interest in using existing and developing new bike trails across the Region and state and to provide county and municipal officials with guidance in planning and establishing bike facilities at the local level.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Transportation element for more detailed information on this topic.

### **Road Network**

The road system in the Town of Colburn plays a key role in development by providing both access to land and serving to move people and goods through the area. The interrelationships between land use and the road system makes it necessary for the

development of each to be balanced with the other. Types and intensities of land-uses have a direct relationship to the traffic on roadways that serve those land-uses. Intensely developed land often generates high volumes of traffic. If this traffic is not planned for, safety can be seriously impaired for both local and through traffic flows. See the Transportation Map.

The Town of Colburn road network consists of roughly 13.51 miles of county highway and 39.02 miles of local roads. WisDOT requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and WISLR are tools that local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. Towns can use this information to develop better road budgets and keep track of roads that are in need of repair.

Traffic generated and attracted by any new land-use can increase the volume throughout the highway system and increase congestion on the roadway system keeping property from reaching its full potential value. Even without the creation of new access points, changes in land-uses can alter the capacity of the roadway because more, and possibly different, kinds of vehicles than before, enter, leave, and add to the traffic flow. Uncontrolled division of land tends to affect highways by intensifying the use of abutting lands, which impairs safety and impedes traffic movements.

In terms of traffic volumes, there is the Department of Transportation annual average daily traffic counts for three areas in the town. In 2001, County G between Beaver and Bighorn Courts the AADT count was 340; County C east of County G the AADT count was 420 and County C west of County G the AADT count was 530. These counts need to be monitored as a way to gauge the increase of traffic in the town. Two state highway segments in Adams County are shown as moderately congested. Both highway segments have AADTs above 4000. Other factors also affect congestion such as lane widths, shoulder paving, alignment, and adjacent land use.

Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize this relationship between highway operations and the use of abutting lands. Under Chapter 233, the Department of Transportation (WisDOT) was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining state trunk highways or connecting highways. Regulations enacted by the WisDOT establish the principles of subdivision review. They require new subdivisions to: (1) have internal street systems; (2) limit direct vehicular access to the highways from individual lots; (3) establish building setbacks; and (4) establish access patterns for remaining unplatted land. This rule has recently been suspended.

As development continues and land use changes, the cost of maintaining the road system must be increased. More traffic requires more maintenance and expansion of the local road system.

## Map 8 Transportation

**Goals:**

1. Utilize PASER software to inventory and rate the local roads.
2. Widen and improve existing roads before constructing new roads.
3. Limit both town and private road development until existing infrastructure is brought up to a common level.
4. Develop standards for new roads.
5. Establish a maximum number of miles of paved roads that can be maintained, based upon existing tax base and projected growth of the town.

**Objectives:**

1. Support and maintain a safe and efficient Town road system.
2. Promote the development of multi-use trails, trail linkages, wide shoulders, or sidewalks as part of new development proposals, where appropriate.
3. Support the Adams County Transit System.

**Policies:**

1. Continue to prepare and update a 5-year Road Improvement Plan.
2. The Town should work with the county on any project that affects the Town.
3. Land uses which generate heavy traffic volumes will be discouraged on local roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
4. Roadway access will be better spaced along the existing Town road network to increase safety and preserve capacity.
5. Future road locations, extensions or connections will be considered when reviewing development plans and proposals.
6. All Town roads must accommodate access requirements for emergency services (fire, EMS, ambulance, etc.) as well as school bus and snowplows.

## 5. UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Background

As a small rural town relatively few public utilities exist. There is no sanitary sewer, storm water systems, water supply, wastewater facilities, parks, power plants, major transmission lines, health care facilities, child care facilities, schools, or libraries. The town does not provide for curbside refuse collection; however, that service is made available with private firms who offer curbside refuse and recycling collection for a fee.

The Town of Colburn contracts with Hancock for fire service and contracts with Mound View Hospital for ambulance service. A map displaying the fire service areas is included in the attachments.

Community facilities include Town Hall, and a shared transfer station with Richfield. The town hall building is owned and maintained by the town. The Town Hall functions as a multi-purpose building. The transfer station with recycling is picked-up bi-weekly in the Town of Colburn at Buttercup Court and CTH G between May & September. From October through April the transfer station is located by the Richfield Town Hall at Cumberland and CTH G and has one pickup per month. See the Utilities & Community Facilities Map.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Utilities & Community Facilities element for more detailed information on this topic.



Town garage – Town of Colburn

### Goals:

1. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
2. Continue to provide ambulance, volunteer fire and first responder services to residents.
3. Encourage recycling by residents.

**Objectives:**

1. Make information available to residents on the proper maintenance of septic systems.
2. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on groundwater quality and quantity.
3. Explore opportunities to develop integrated, multi-use trail systems and recreational facilities.
4. Share equipment and services across Town boundaries, where possible.

**Policies:**

1. Work with adjoining towns, the county, the state, and individual landowners to address known water quality issues.
2. The feasibility of wastewater collection and treatment systems on water quality should be considered by major developments.
3. Develop and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan for major equipment purchases.

## Map 9 Utilities & Community Facilities

## 6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Background

As discussed in previous sections, the town has been an agriculturally based community for generations. Farming is still the dominant economic sector occurring in the town. Nearly 33 percent of the total land is used for agriculture. According to the *Wisconsin Town Land Use Databook*, there were 28 active farms in Colburn in 1997; none were dairy farms.

Scattered throughout the town there are about a dozen small businesses, other than farms, that employ a few people. Most of the town's residents commute to employment areas outside of the town. There are several industrial parks nearby in the Cities of Wisconsin Rapids, Stevens Point, and Adams, as well as the Village of Friendship, and the Town of Rome that provide employment opportunities. There are no major redevelopment areas in the town.

There are a variety of county, regional, state and federal economic development programs available to businesses in the Town. These programs range from grants to loans, to general assistance.



Cattle feeding – Town of Colburn

#### 1. County:

##### *Adams County Rural & Industrial Development Corporation (ACRIDC)*

ADRIDC is a non-profit organization that promotes the economic development of Adams County, Wisconsin, and its respective cities, villages, and towns. ACRIDC is comprised of area businesspersons, citizens, local government, utility company representatives, state agencies and elected officials, educational institutions and other organizations essential to the growth of Adams County. ACRIDC is prepared to serve the needs of new businesses coming to the area as well as to assist existing companies.

##### *JAM Development Zone*

Adams County was awarded designation as a Wisconsin Development Zone in association with Juneau and Marquette Counties. Known as the JAM Zone (Juneau-Adams-Marquette), Adams County qualifies for special state incentives available to businesses that locate or expand within the Zone. The extent of the credits for any given business is determined during the certification process. This program is administered by the ACRIDC.

##### *Adams County Revolving Loan Fund*

A Wisconsin Department of Commerce Economic Development Grant was awarded to Adams County in 1996. This grant enabled Adams County to establish a revolving loan fund in order to assist local businesses and is administered by the ACRIDC.

*Adams County Chamber of Commerce*

The Adams County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the development of the business community in Adams County. The Chamber offers information on local business and industry and also provides a variety of programs designed to assist business development.

*Adams - Columbia Electric Coop (ACEC) Revolving Loan Fund*

The ACEC established a USDA - Rural Development IRP revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

2. Regional:

*North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation*

The North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

*North Central Advantage Technology Zone Tax Credits*

Adams County has been designated a Technology Zone by the Department of Commerce. The Technology Zone program brings \$5 million in income tax incentives for high-tech development to the area. The North Central Advantage Technology Zone offers the potential for high-tech growth in knowledge-based and advanced manufacturing clusters, among others. The zone designation is designed to attract and retain skilled, high-paid workers to the area, foster regional partnerships between business and education to promote high-tech development, and to complement the area's recent regional branding project.

3. State:

*Rural Economic Development Program*

This program administrated by Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides grants and low interest loans for small business (less than 25 employees) start-ups or expansions in rural areas, such as Adams County. Funds may be used for "soft costs" only, such as planning, engineering, ad marketing assistance.

*Wisconsin Small Cities Program*

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to eligible municipalities for approved housing and/or public facility improvements and for economic development projects. Economic Development grants provide loans to businesses for such things as: acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.

*Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)*

The UW SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small business in Wisconsin.

*Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)*

This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvements necessary for major economic development projects.

*Other State Programs*

Technology Development grants and loans; Customized Labor Training grants and loans; and Major Economic Development Project grants and loans.

4. Federal:

*U.S. Dept. of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA)*

EDA offers a public works grant program. These are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.

*U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development (USDA – RD)*

The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

*Small Business Administration (SBA)*

SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development element for more detailed information on this topic.

**Goals:**

1. Building of community identity by revitalizing community character and enforcing building standards.
2. Promote the stabilization of the current economic base.
3. Discourage retail commercial use that may create excessive traffic flow through the town.
4. Encourage new retail, commercial & industrial development to locate adjacent to county or state highways.

5. Industrial development must not negatively impact environmental resources or adjoining property values.
6. Encourage new ordinances that establish minimum aesthetic standards to eliminate commercial, industrial, and agricultural property with excessive debris, blighted property, and dilapidated buildings.

**Objectives:**

1. Encourage new retail, commercial & industrial development to locate in designated areas and adjacent to county highways.
2. Encourage businesses that are compatible in a rural setting.

**Policies:**

1. Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
2. Review the costs and benefits of a proposed development project prior to approval.
3. Commercial and industrial development should be directed to designated planned areas consistent with the Future Land Use Map.
4. Intensive industrial uses should be steered to areas that have the service capability to support that development.

## 7. LAND USE

### Background

The Town of Colburn covers an area of about 22,969 acres in Adams County. The area is characterized by thin till and pitted outwash. The typical terrain is rolling and covered with hardwoods or open for agricultural use with a general north to south drainage pattern. The natural resource base of the area is dominated by timber. Agricultural uses of the land are prominent.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use element for more detailed information on this topic.

### Existing Land Use 2004

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within a town is necessary to develop a desired “future” land use pattern. The Existing Land Use Map was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 1992/1998, with updates by the locals in 2004. Woodlands dominate about 64 percent of the area, followed by Agriculture with about 30 percent, and Residential with about 3 percent.

In general, agriculture is located in the northeast quarter of the town, and forested lands exist throughout the rest of town. Residential development is distributed fairly evenly along the road network.

A potato processing facility exists within Section 15 of Colburn, and is surrounded by agricultural lands.

The 4,965-acre Colburn Wildlife Area is in the south half of the town.

### Future Land Use 2005-2025

The Future Land Use Plan Map represents the long-term land use recommendations for all lands in the town. Although the map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate and manage future development of the town.

The Plan groups land uses that are compatible and to separate conflicting uses. To create the Plan, nine basic future land use categories were created. The majority of the classifications generally correspond to the districts within the Adams County Zoning Ordinance, to ease future implementation of the plan. Again, the classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning. However, the preferred land use map and classifications are intended to be used as a guide when reviewing lot splits, re-zoning requests, and revisions to the town zoning map or official map if one exists.

**Table 7: Existing Land Use, 2004**

| Land Use Type      | Acres  | Percent |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| Agriculture        | 6,840  | 29.8%   |
| Commercial         | 0      | 0.0%    |
| Governmental       | 3      | 0.0%    |
| Industrial         | 60     | 0.3%    |
| Open Grassland     | 173    | 0.8%    |
| Outdoor Recreation | 0      | 0.0%    |
| Residential        | 711    | 3.1%    |
| Transportation     | 514    | 2.2%    |
| Water              | 9      | 0.0%    |
| Woodlands          | 14,660 | 63.8%   |
| Total Acres        | 22,970 | 100.0%  |

Source: NCWRPC GIS

Map 10 Existing Land Use

Map 11 Future Land Use

A general description of each land use classification follows:

**1. Residential**

Identifies areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of smaller lot sizes.

**2. Rural Residential**

Identifies areas that are recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the residential category. These areas will also allow a mixture of residential uses, and provide a good transition from more dense development to the rural countryside.

**3. Commercial**

Identifies areas recommended for commercial development, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the Town.

**4. Industrial**

Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial areas located throughout the Town.

**5. Governmental/Public/Institutional**

Identifies existing or planned governmental/public/institutional facilities within the Town, including recreational facilities.

**6. Agricultural Areas**

Identifies areas to be preserved for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock.

**7. Forestry Areas**

Identifies areas of large woodlands within the Town.

**8. Transportation Corridors**

Identifies the existing road network along with the recommendations for improved and safe traffic movement in the town, including airports and rail facilities.

## 9. Preservation & Open Space

Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, DNR wetlands, steep slopes of 12 percent or greater, and open water. This could include endangered species habitat or other significant features or areas identified by the Town.

Using these categories the Land Use Planning Committee participated in a mapping exercise to identify the desired land use. Committee members were asked to indicate their thoughts on a map by drawing shapes or circles to place these different land uses on a map. Specifically, they used their broad knowledge of the town, the series of maps that were prepared as part of the planning process and their interpretation of the current trends. The goal was to produce a generalized land use plan map to guide the town's growth in the next decade. The Year 2025 Land Use Plan Map represents the desired arrangement of preferred land uses for the future.

### Future Land Use Plan Map Overview

The future land use plan map has identified approximately 6,755 acres of land for agriculture, 8,576 acres of land for forestry, 5,595 acres of land for preservation & open space, 1,061 acres for rural residential development, 324 acres for residential development, 126 acres of land for industrial development, and no land for commercial uses. See Attachment F for land use projections.

**Commercial** development is not desired within the Town of Colburn. All types of consumer needs will be served by businesses in adjoining towns.

**Farming** on a grand scale is encouraged to expand within the northeast quarter of the town. Small scale agriculture is allowed in small patches throughout the rest of the town.

**Forestry** is viewed as a commodity for use and as wildlife habitat. Active management of forestry areas in town using approved management plans and placed in Managed Forest Law are encouraged.

**Preservation & open space** areas generally buffer all floodways in town, and also includes the 4,965-acre Colburn Wildlife Area.

**Rural residential** development is allowed within large and small pockets that are mapped throughout the town.

**Residential** development on small lots of about 3 acres or less and located next to other small residential lots exists generally in linear patterns along a variety of roads in town. One cluster of small housing lots exists within the southwest part of section 8, and is contiguous to rural residential land. Other clusters of small housing lots are also mapped.

**Industrial** development exists within one area located in sections 10 & 15. Expansion of industrial development is encouraged on land contiguous to the existing industrial development.

Map 12 Existing Zoning

## **Zoning**

### County Shoreline Jurisdiction

All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land-use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the county outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any town ordinance, unless the town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain whichever distance is greater.

### No General Zoning (Shoreland Only)

The Town currently has no general zoning, either with the county or its own. All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land-use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the county outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any town ordinance, unless the town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain whichever distance is greater.

The Town has other implementation tools that could be used to implement some of the recommendations from the comprehensive plan. Those tools include such things as purchase of land or easements, subdivision ordinance, mobile/manufactured home restrictions, nuisance regulations, design review for commercial and industrial developments, infrastructure improvements (sewer and water, utilities), road construction and maintenance, and public services, among others.

If there was a need to create general zoning the Town could either join County Zoning or create its own zoning. Both have advantages and disadvantages. The Town of Colburn has expressed interest in joining county zoning.

### Join County Zoning

The Town could pass a resolution to join County Zoning. The advantages of this would be that zoning could put in place, and the County would cover the cost for administration. The disadvantage would be that the Town would need to utilize the districts within the County Ordinance.

### Create Own Zoning

The Town could draft its own zoning ordinance. This would require establishment of village powers by a referendum vote, and County Board approval. Also, the County Board would continue to have “veto” power over future amendments to the Town’s ordinance [§60.62(2), Wis. Stats.]. The advantages of this option include providing the greatest amount of local control over zoning decisions. The zoning districts and other ordinance provisions could be tailored to best achieve the desired future conditions in each land use area. Administration

of this option could be achieved in a variety of ways. The Town could fund its own administration. The County and Town could jointly administer this ordinance by having a Town zoning administrator that is also a County deputy zoning administrator. Another alternative could involve §66.30, Wis. Stats., intergovernmental agreements to contract with the County or an adjacent town for zoning administration and enforcement.

The obvious disadvantage would be cost. Creating town enforced zoning would be a more expensive option, as it would require funding zoning administration and enforcement (including legal expenses) at the local level instead of at the county level. The Town would likely need to hire at least a part time zoning administrator, and would need to establish a Board of Appeals. Any revision to the zoning ordinance would require County Board approval. There still would be some areas of overlap between the County and Town ordinances for shoreland and floodplain areas.

### Land Use Vision

*The Town of Colburn boasts a safe, peaceful, country-style environment as a special place to raise a family. The Town's wish is to ensure our strong family farming tradition, preserve and conserve our most valuable resource of agricultural land, and to protect food, fiber, livestock production, and wildlife conservation.*

The purposes of this land use plan are to balance individual private property rights with the town's need to protect property values community-wide, minimize the conflicts between land uses and keep the cost of local government as low as possible. An essential characteristic of any planning program is that it be ongoing and flexible. Periodic updates by the town plan commission to this plan are necessary to reflect current trends.

### **Goals:**

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
3. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial uses.
4. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
5. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve the rural community.

**Objectives:**

1. Maintain orderly, planned growth which promotes the health, safety and general welfare of residents and makes efficient use of land and efficient use of public services, facilities and tax dollars.
2. New development should not negatively impact the natural environment or existing property.
3. Provide for a mix of land uses within the Town.
4. Promote new land development that is consistent with this plan.

**Policies:**

1. The Town will maintain the comprehensive plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use decisions. New development will be permitted based on consideration of this Plan, as well as other Town, County, Regional, and state plans and other regulations.
2. Land uses and building locations that minimize both the loss of productive farmland and the potential for conflicts between existing and proposed land uses will be encouraged.
3. Land uses and building locations that minimize fragmentation of large contiguous forest tracts will be encouraged.
4. Use conservancy zoning to protect natural resources in the Town.
5. Encourage conservation easements and other tools to protect environmentally sensitive or unique resources.
6. Update existing land use regulations to be consistent with this plan.

## **8. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

### **Background**

Governmental relationships can best be described as “vertical” relationships, such as between federal, state and local units (county/city/town) are relatively well established in law. Unfortunately, there is little public policy in Wisconsin law that requires, horizontal governmental relationships such as town to town and municipality to county or town. The result is that towns, municipalities, and counties act more as adversaries than as partners. Comprehensive planning is one effort that has as its goal encouraging intergovernmental cooperation.

Wisconsin Statute s.66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation", does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Typically, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination refers to the management and delivery of public services and facilities. It is also dependent upon a defined geographic area within which cooperation and coordination may be feasible. Often the area is a central city and its surrounding area, or several similar towns. It is a collection of local communities in which the citizens are interdependent in terms of their employment, residence, health, and medical care, education, recreation and culture, shopping and other experiences.

A variety of other factors, some long-standing and some of fairly recent origin, are combining to force citizens and local governments in both urban and rural area to confer, cooperate, and in some cases, to join together in a search for better ways to deliver public services in their respective areas. These factors include:

- population settlement patterns;
- local government structure, finance, and politics;
- high population mobility;
- economic and environmental interdependence; and
- high cost, capital-intensive functions.

School districts are one of the most common intergovernmental organizations since they cross-traditional local municipal boundaries. Adams County is served by five school districts. A school district map is included in the attachments.

### **Adjoining Units of Government**

The Town of Rome completed its comprehensive plan in 2000, and the Towns of Big Flats and Leola are in the same stage of completing their own comprehensive plans. Waushara County is just beginning the process for the Town of Hancock. No conflicts have been identified.

**Goal:**

1. Encouragement of coordination & cooperation among nearby units of governments.

**Objectives:**

1. Promote communication with other units of government, including adjoining towns, the county, the state, and federal government.
2. Join together with other units of government to provide services in a more cost-effective manner.

**Policies:**

1. Regularly meet with adjoining unit of government to discuss issues of mutual concern.
2. Periodically review existing shared service agreements, and explore additional agreements.

## **9. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Background**

Implementation of this Comprehensive Plan depends on local officials. It is also important that local citizens and others become aware of this plan.

Some steps have already been accomplished toward implementing this plan, such as the adoption of written public participation guidelines, the formation of a Plan Commission, hosting an open house meeting, passing a Plan Commission resolution recommending Plan adoption by the Town Board, holding a formal public hearing, and approval of the Plan by ordinance by the Town Board.

The following recommendations are made to further implement this Comprehensive Plan:

#### Recommendation 1:

The Town Board should use this plan as a guide when making decisions, especially those that relate to growth and development. The Planning Commission and any other official committee of the Town should also use this plan in their efforts as well.

#### Recommendation 2:

The Town should encourage citizen awareness of the comprehensive plan by making copies available, making reference to this plan at public meetings and in the Town newsletters, and displaying a copy of the future land use map in the Town Hall. Neighboring local units of government and others will receive copies of this plan. A website should be established to allow Internet access to this plan document and maps.

#### Recommendation 3:

The Town currently has no zoning, except for the shoreland areas covered under county zoning. Beyond that, there are some additional tools and approaches that can be utilized by the Town to achieve the goals of the plan. These include but are certainly not limited to the following: land division, official mapping, fee simple land acquisition, easements, deed restrictions, land dedication, and ordinances or programs regulating activities such as building permits, erosion control, or septic pumping, etc. The Town should consider these tools as needed.

#### Recommendation 4:

Amendments to this Plan may include minor changes to the plan text or maps, and or major changes resulting from periodic review. Wisconsin Law requires that the same process used to adopt the plan will be used to make any amendments. The steps are outlined below:

- An amendment or change may be initiated by either the Town Board or Plan Commission, a request from a resident, or may result from a regular review of the plan.
- The Plan Commission prepares the specific text or map amendment being considered, holds a public meeting and votes to recommend approval or disapproval of the proposed amendment, by resolution to the Town Board.
- A copy of the proposed Plan amendment is sent to all affected government units, including Adams County.
- Town Clerk publishes a 30-day Class 1 notice announcing a Town board public hearing on the proposed changes.
- The Town Board conducts the public hearing and votes to either approve, disapprove or approve with changes, by ordinance.

Any approved changes are sent to affected government units, including Adams County. Frequent minor changes to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided.

#### Recommendation 5:

Periodic updating of the plan is necessary to insure that it reflects the desires of the Town's residents. The Plan Commission should review this plan on an annual basis, and conduct an in-depth review of this plan every five years. At a minimum this plan must be updated every ten years.

The annual review should compare how decisions, especially land use related, made during the year relate to the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan. If decisions are inconsistent with this plan, then changes need to be made.

The update should consider the following to maintain consistency in the land development process:

- Revision should be made to bring decision-making back in line with the Plan's goals, objectives, and policies.
- The goals, objectives, and policies should be reviewed to ensure they are still relevant and worthwhile in the Town.

- New implementation tools should be considered to gain more control over decisions.

The above recommendations provide a general process for the Town to best implement the findings of this plan. The process to develop the plan consisted of countless hours of time from elected, non-elected staff and the general public; however, the ability to implement the plan lies with the Town Board. In the end, it is the Town Board's responsibility to uphold and promote this plan.

#### Consistency Among Plan Elements

The comprehensive planning law requires that the implementation element describe how each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan shall be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive Plan. The nine sections (elements) of this Plan were prepared simultaneously to achieve integration and eliminate any inconsistencies between the different sections.



Corn field – Town of Colburn

ATTACHMENT A  
ADAMS COUNTY PLAN PROCESS

ATTACHMENT B  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

ATTACHMENT C  
COMMUNITY SURVEY

ATTACHMENT D  
2000 CENSUS SUMMARY

ATTACHMENT E:  
COLBURN DRAINAGE DISTRICT

ATTACHMENT F

POPULATION, HOUSEHOLD, EMPLOYMENT, & LAND USE PROJECTIONS

ATTACHMENT G

ADDENDUM TO TOWN OF COLBURN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN