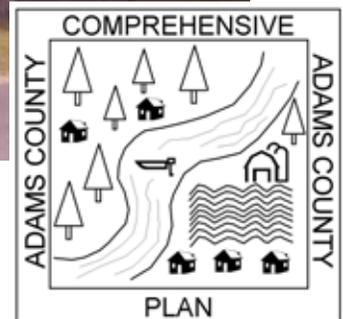


**TOWN OF PRESTON  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**ADOPTED 2006**



**Prepared by:**

**North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

## **TOWN OF PRESTON**

### Town Board

John J Pavelec, Chair

Bernard B Bays, Supervisor I

Jack Allen, Supervisor II

Scott Sorensen, Clerk

### Plan Commission

Nina Zelenski, Chair

Guy Groshek

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Ken Sabel

Elsie Sabel

Photo Credits: Town Plan Commission

**Draft August 2004**  
**Revised Draft February 2005**  
**Final Plan March 2006**  
**Adopted: July 2006**

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

SEP 08 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  
Town of Preston County  
In Adams

**SECTION I – TITLE/PURPOSE**

The title of this ordinance is the Town of Preston Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ 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 Preston 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 \_\_\_\_\_ 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 Preston, 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 \_\_\_\_\_ 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 Preston 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 Preston, 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 Preston Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2), Wis. stats.

SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of Preston, 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 Preston, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled Town of Preston 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 5 day of July 2006

[Signatures of town board]

Attest: [Signature of town clerk]

*Jack Allen*  
*Bernard Benz*  
*John G. Kuhn*

*Scott Sorensen*  
*clerk-treas.*

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

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Town of PRESTON

Adams County

The Plan Commission of the Town of Preston, 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 Preston as follows:

[Choose one of the alternatives below]

✓ (ALTERNATIVE ONE) Adoption of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_ Comprehensive Plan.

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

The Town of Preston 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 Preston Comprehensive Plan are incorporated into and made a part of the Town of Preston 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 Preston Plan Commission.

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

Adopted this 9<sup>th</sup> day of March 2005

[Signatures of plan commission members]

Attest: [Signature of plan commission clerk]

*Nina Zelenski*  
*Kenneth Stabel*  
*Elsie Stabel*  
*Margaret Froehke*  
*Don Stabel*

RECEIVED

MAR 10 2006

NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



**TOWN OF PRESTON**  
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ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Adams County Plan Process
- B. Public Participation Plan
- C. County Survey Summary
- D. 2000 Census Summary
- E. Population, Household, Employment, & Land Use Projection
- F. Addendum to Town of Preston Comprehensive Plan

# Map 1 Location Map

# **1. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

## **Background**

The Town of Preston is a traditional six-mile by six-mile town with 36 sections, located in the central part of Adams County, Wisconsin. The Town of Big Flats to the north, the Town of Richfield to the east, the Town of Strong's Prairie to the west, and the Town of Adams 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 forestry and scattered agricultural uses. However, recently, more and more non-farming uses, mainly scattered residential development, have been locating in the town.

Additional information on many of the topics within this town's comprehensive plan is described in more detail within the respective element in the Adams County Comprehensive Plan.

See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan for more detailed information.

## **The Planning Process**

The Town of Preston 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 sample Public Participation Plan in Attachment B.

The Town of Preston did not conduct a community survey, but held numerous public meetings and an open house meeting to collect public input. The Town is also utilizing the scientifically random survey conducted by the county. A copy of the survey is included in Attachment C.

## 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 Preston and Adams County.

## Town Demographics

### A. Population

The Town's population has increased over the last ten years according to the Census. As displayed in Table 1, the Town experienced a 29 percent increase between 1990 & 2000. Meanwhile the county grew at the rate of 27 percent over the same time period. All of the surrounding towns displayed grew at slower rates than Preston except for Big Flats, which grew at the same rate. Between 1990 and 2000, Preston added 303 persons. The town is about 7 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.

<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>1990 - 2000 % Change</b>	<b>1990 - 2000 Net Change</b>
Preston	1,057	1,360	1,418	29%	303
Big Flats	731	946	1,006	29%	215
Strong's Prairie	1,028	1,115	1,129	8%	87
Adams	1,170	1,267	1,282	8%	97
Richfield	159	144	143	-9%	-15
Adams County	15,682	19,920	20,452	27%	4,238

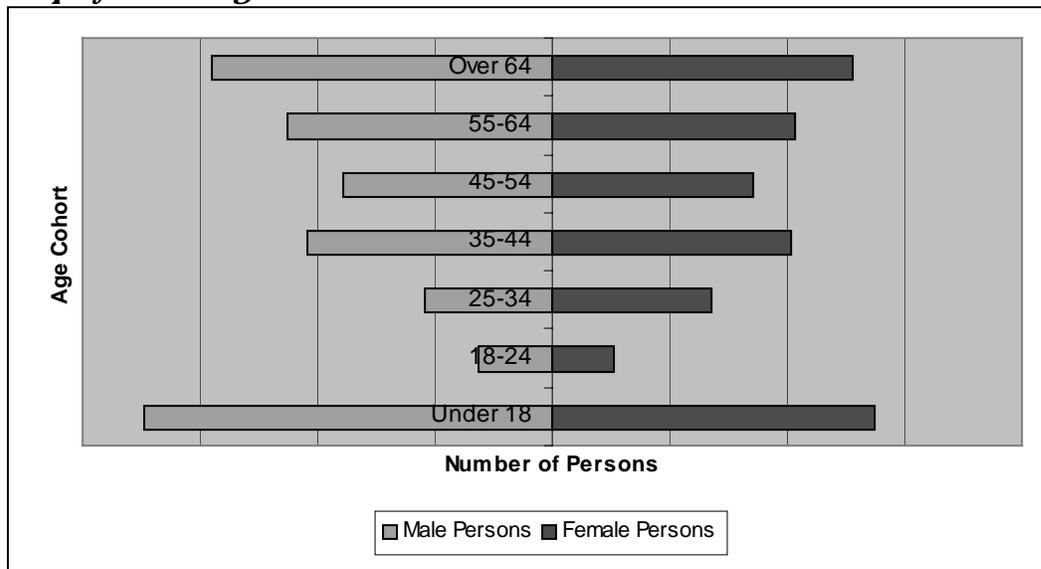
Source: U.S. Census, DOA 2003 estimate

If the ten-year growth trend were maintained, the town would expect about a 29 percent increase in population over the next ten years. Thus, 394 additional residents would reside in the town. However, if the town grew at the same pace as the county it would expect about 367 additional residents. See Attachment E for population projections.

B. Age

The number of people aged 65 and older that lived in the community increased from 220 in 1990, to 273 in 2000, an increase of 24.1 percent. Meanwhile the number of persons 5 and under decreased by 16.9 percent that same period from 71 in 1990 to 59 in 2000. Both are an indication of an aging population in Preston. According to the U.S. Census in 1990, Preston's median age was 41 and in 2000 the median age was 44. Compared to Adams County, in 1990 the median age was 40 and in 2000 the median age was 44. Over the decade, Preston's median age increased 3 years and stayed the same with the county's median age. Display 1 shows the majority of the population in 2000 to be in the upper ranges with a bulge in the 35-44 year range.

**Display 1: 2000 Age Cohorts**

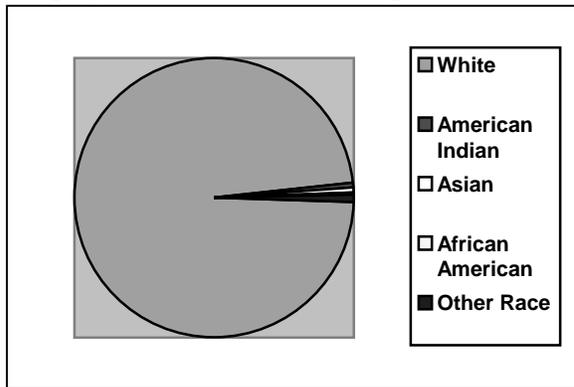


Source: U.S. Census

C. Race

In 1990, 1,040 of the Town's 1,057 residents were white, 1 was American Indian, 1 was African American, 5 were Asian and 10 were some other race. In 2000, 1,329 of 1,360 residents listed themselves as white, 8 as American Indian, 6 as Asian, 4 as African American, and 13 as some other race. Display 2 shows the percentage of race among the residents in Preston.

**Display 2: 2000 Race Makeup**



Source: U.S. Census

**D. Educational Level**

Educational levels in 1990 showed that 493 had completed high school and of those 493, 93 had some college, 33 had an associate degree, 28 had a bachelor degree and 29 had a graduate or professional degree. The 2000 Census showed that 771 had completed high school and of those 771, 217 had some college, 51 had an associate degree, 61 had a bachelor degree and 20 had a graduate or professional degree. Only those 25 years of age and older are reflected in these statistics. Table 2 provides a summary of educational attainment in Preston, Adams County, and the State.

<b>Educational Attainment Level</b>	<b>Town of Preston</b>	<b>Adams County</b>	<b>State of Wisconsin</b>
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7.4%	7.0%	5.4%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade, no diploma	16.7%	16.4%	9.6%
High School Graduate	41.6%	41.9%	34.6%
Some College, no degree	21.4%	19.9%	20.6%
Associate Degree	5.0%	4.9%	7.5%
Bachelor's Degree	6.0%	6.5%	15.3%
Graduate or Professional	2.0%	3.4%	7.2%

Source: U.S. Census

The Town of Preston has a higher percentage of residents compared to state and slightly higher than the county with an educational attainment of less than 9<sup>th</sup> grade, those with a 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade level with no diploma, and those with some college and no degree. The town also has a higher percentage of residents with an associate degree than the county as a whole.

E. Households

The number of households in the town has grown by 33.6 percent, from 420 in 1990 to 561 in 2000. Of the 561 total households, in 2000, 73.3 percent were family households, while the other 26.7 percent were non-family households. Almost sixty-five percent were married couple households. See Attachment E for household projections.

Thirty-four percent of all households included someone 65 years old or older, while twenty-eight percent included someone 18 or younger. The average household size was 2.42 people.

F. Employment

Between 1990 and 2000 the town's employed residents increased 53.8 percent, from 372 to 572. The two employment sectors with the most employed in 1990 were Manufacturing and Educational Services. That stayed the same in 2000, with Educational, Health & Social Services and Manufacturing as the top two. Over the decade, the percentage of unemployed went down in Preston. In 1990, 53 people reported they were unemployed, for a 6.3 percent of unemployed and in 2000, 59 people reported they were unemployed, for a 5.3 percent of civilian labor force unemployed. See Attachment E for employment projections.

<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990-2000 % Change</b>
Preston	372	572	53.8%
Big Flats	254	370	45.7%
Strongs Prairie	336	479	42.6%
Adams	500	632	26.4%
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 \$33,491, which was more than Adams County, but less than the State, which were \$33,408 and \$43,791 respectively.

Of the 563 households in the town, 206 reported incomes less than \$24,999 and 28 had an income above \$100,000. The 2000 Census indicates that poverty is concentrated among individuals over 65 years. Four percent of this population is below the poverty rate.

<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Adj. Net Change*</b>	<b>% Change*</b>
Preston	\$22,417	\$33,491	\$3,956	13.4%
Big Flats	\$18,289	\$27,800	\$3,704	15.4%
Strongs Prairie	\$21,447	\$30,048	\$1,791	6.3%
Adams	\$20,994	\$34,286	\$6,626	24.0%
Richfield	\$27,917	\$34,792	-\$1,989	-5.4%
Adams County	\$21,548	\$33,408	\$5,019	17.7%

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

<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Adj. Net Change*</b>	<b>% Change*</b>
Preston	\$10,347	\$19,117	\$5,485	40.2%
Big Flats	\$9,411	\$14,629	\$2,230	18.0%
Strongs Prairie	\$9,513	\$15,583	\$3,049	24.3%
Adams	\$9,331	\$18,225	\$5,931	48.2%
Richfield	\$9,676	\$23,334	\$10,586	83.0%
Adams County	\$11,945	\$17,777	\$2,039	13.0%

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

<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>1989 Poverty Rate (%)</b>	<b>1999 Poverty Rate (%)</b>
Town of Preston	14.6%	9.6%
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.

As with many of the towns in Adams County the dominant question facing Preston is the degree to which the town will grow in the coming years, and the shape that growth will take. In the 1990s the town grew faster than the county and at the same rate as the adjoining Town of Big Flats, but at a considerably higher rate than several other surrounding towns (Adams, Strongs Prairie, Richfield). It seems likely that will continue. The factor most probable to affect the growth rate is the high percentage (62%) of seasonal residences in the town. If, over the next twenty years, many of these are converted to year-round homes then

the population in the town will continue to grow, and perhaps at an even higher rate than in the past.

The question then becomes what shape this growth should take. Agriculture is practiced in the town, but it is not a major use – only 28 percent of the land in the town is in agricultural use. More than seventy percent of the land in the town is either forest or wetlands. The southern edge of the town reaches almost to the Village of Friendship; in fact, much of the north shore of Friendship Lake is in Preston. It is possible that at some point in the future some or all of these properties will be annexed by the Village, or compelled to do so by DNR, so that sewer service can be extended to them because of failing septic systems. Most of the lakeshore residences within the Town of Preston are newer and so are less likely to have their systems fail than are those in the Town of Adams.

There is a concentrated residential cluster in Cottonville, and halfway between is the most prominent intersection in the county, where state Highways 21 and 13 cross. Also in the Town of Preston is the county's most iconic asset, Roche a Cri and the State Park that surrounds it. A commercial/industrial node has developed at the 21 & 13 intersection. Commercial development is stretched along Highway 13 north of the village, and fairly high-density residential development is spread around the margins of the urbanized areas and the State Park. Much of the eastern portion of the town is undeveloped woodlands. To accommodate expected growth, which could be fifty percent or more, there is a question of whether the existing more concentrated pattern of development should be expanded or a more dispersed pattern is appropriate.

One obstacle to development is the site of a former junkyard along Highway 13 at Czeck Lane. Over the years fluids have leaked from the junked cars and contaminated the soils on the site, making it difficult to redevelop the property. Because of the location along the main commercial corridor through the town it prevents this section of the highway from reaching its full commercial potential. Alternatives for financing the clean up of this site should be explored by the Town.

## **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.

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 and wetlands total about 2,130 acres in the town or 9.3 percent of the total acres. The major water bodies are the Big Roche a Cri Lake and Friendship Lake. These surface water resources replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. See the Water Features Map.

Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal located near the water table, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from some types of mining operations into the aquifer. Runoff from livestock yards and urban areas and improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers can also add organic and chemical contaminants in locations where the water table is near the surface. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water to 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, or drainage patterns are altered, the water table is locally lowered and soils are exposed to oxidation at depths usually saturated. Nutrients held in the wetland soils can then be leached away. Heavy siltation can occur downstream as water previously held by the soils is swept away. Wildlife population and habitat in drained areas and downstream locations may be negatively affected, lowering the recreational and educational value. 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 (WisDNR) has delineated the location of wetlands and has standards for managing wetlands. There are two lakes in the town Big Roche a Cri Lake and Friendship Lake. There are a number of streams in addition to Big Roche a Cri Creek, including Little Roche a Cri Creek and Fordham Creek in the southeast corner of the town, and Carter Creek and Bingham Creek that run generally from the northeast to the southwest across the center of the town. See the Water Features Map.

Floodplains are a natural feature not conducive to development. Inappropriate location of roadways in floodplains can result in serious flood damage. 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, Little Roche a Cri Creek and Forham Creek, as well as the Carter-Bingham Creek system.

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 Preston 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 creeks and lakes. Newson Loamy Sand (Ne), and Houghton Muck (Hm) are also scattered in these same areas and normally border the Adrian Muck. Scattered between the creek and wetland areas is Plainfield Sand [(PfB), (PfC) and (PfD)] and Algansee Loamy Sand (AlA), which cannot be used for cultivating crops or construction of houses. Some soils that potentially can be used as farmland include Au Gres Loamy Sand (Au), Brems Loamy Sand (BrA), Wyeville (WeA), Delton Sand [(DeA) and (DeB)], Coloma Sand (CoB), Brems-Newson Loamy Sand (BsA), Meehan Loamy Sand (MoA), Wautoma Loamy Sand (Wa), and Plainfield Sand (PfA). Brems Loamy Sand (BrA), Delton Sand [(DeA) and (DeB)], and Coloma Sand (CoB), are also suitable for construction of houses and with special precaution, can also be suitable for private onsite waste water treatment systems. Boone Rock Outcrop Complex (BpF) is found on very steep hills and is unsuitable for development and cultivated crops because of the steep elevation.

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 commodity (timber products), and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. From the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook*, of the 22,929 acres of land in Preston, 62.3 percent or 14,284 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.

Map 5 Woodlands

**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 should 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.
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.

**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.

## **B. AGRICULTURAL**

According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook*, the Town of Preston was 28 percent agricultural. According to this document, 6.6 percent of the town's total land (35.4 square miles) is used for row crops, 0.9 percent is used for foraging and 20.5 percent is grassland, for a total of 28 percent. The report also found that 62.3 percent of the town was in forest cover and 8.5 percent is wetlands.

In terms of farming trends, the town has lost 6.0 percent of farmland acres on tax rolls between 1990 and 1997. According to the *Wisconsin Land Use Databook* there were 7 active farms in 1997; none of those farms were dairy farms. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs and results in the least damage to the environment. Much of the town is determined to contain 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. See Farmland Preservation Areas Map.

### **Goal:**

1. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and commercial forest.

### **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.

Map 6 Prime Agricultural Soils

Map 7 Farmland Preservation Areas

## **C. CULTURAL**

There are three structures in the town that are on the State Historical Inventory. The Cedar Lodge is a Two-Story Cube style house, the Shelter Building #1614 is an Astylistic Utilitarian Building built in 1935 and the Eight Avenue Bridge was built in 1910. There are also several original farm homes and farm buildings in the town, which have not been examined for inclusion on the Historical Inventory.

Three Century Farmsteads exist within the town. A century farmstead has maintained family ownership for at least 100 years. The Wisconsin State Fair recognized the Robert Ebert farmstead in 2000, the Sharon Gasienica farmstead in 1995, and the Oscar & Evelyn Voboril farmstead in 2000.

### Preston century farmsteads

- Robert Ebert on 40 acres in T18N R6E Sec 14 was settled in 1893.
- Sharon Gasienica on 160 acres in T18N R6E Sec 16 was settled in 1895.
- Oscar & Evelyn Voboril on 156 acres in T18N R6E Sec 23 was settled in 1876.

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.

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. Support upgrading Roche a Cri state park facilities and its integration into an area wide trail plan.
3. Respect Century Farmsteads 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.

### 3. HOUSING

#### Background

In 1980, there were 471 housing units in the town. Three hundred fifty-eight of these housing units were occupied, 17 were vacant for sale or rent, 87 were vacant for occasional use, and 9 were other vacant housing units. About 81 percent of all occupied housing units in the town were owner-occupied. The average household size was 2.70 people.

The 1990 Census indicates that there were 844 housing units in the town. All but 71 of these units had complete plumbing facilities, 51 lack complete kitchen facilities and 32 of them did not have telephone service. One hundred and sixty-four of these units were built between 1980 and 1989, and sixty-six units were built before 1939. The average household size was 2.50 people.

In 2000, there were 992 housing units in the town, an increase of 17.5 percent since 1990. Five hundred and sixty-one of these were occupied, while only 46 were vacant. Three hundred and fifty-three units were identified as seasonal. Over 89 percent of all housing units in the town are owner-occupied. The average household size was 2.42 people.

As a result of the projected 691-person population increase, the town might need to add an additional 286 housing units to accommodate population growth. However, as the persons per household drops the overall number of new units will increase. 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.



Houses – Town of Preston

**Goals:**

1. Discourage residential development in prime farmland areas.
2. Allow adequate affordable housing for all individuals consistent with the rural character of the community.
3. Encourage creation of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices, if applicable.

**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.
4. Because of the predominance of seasonal dwellings in the Town plans should consider the effects of conversion of many of these housing units to year-round residences.

**Policy:**

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



Lakefront development – Town of Preston

## 4. TRANSPORTATION

### Background

The transportation system in the town includes all the state, county and local roads. 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 and Portage. 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.

Map 8 Transportation

## **Road Network**

The road system in the Town of Preston 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 Preston road network consists of roughly 11.99 miles of state highway, 1 mile of county highway, and 71.74 miles of local roads, including a section of Cottonville Avenue that has been designated by the State as a Rustic Road. Of the 71.74 miles of town roads, approximately ten miles are unpaved. The town utilizes a WisDOT PASER computer program to maintain an inventory of its local roads and monitor conditions and improvements of its roads. Ideally, this system will enable the Town to better budget 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 seven areas in the town. In 2001, Highway 13 between Highway 21 and Cree Avenue the AADT count was 5,400; Highway 13 between Cypress Avenue and Cumberland Court the AADT count was 5,600; Highway 21 between Highway 13 and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue the AADT count was 4,500; Highway 21 between Highway 13 and 13<sup>th</sup> Drive the AADT count was 4,800; Chicago Drive west of Highway 13 the AADT count was 180; Czech Avenue east of Highway 13 the AADT count was 280 and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue between County J and Czech Avenue the AADT count was 230. These counts need to be monitored as a way to gauge the increase of traffic in the town.

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.

**Goals:**

1. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
2. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.
3. Utilize PASER software to inventory and rate the local roads.
4. Widen and Improve existing roads before constructing new roads.
5. Limit both town and private road development until existing infrastructure is brought up to a common level.

**Objectives:**

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

**Policies:**

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

## 5. UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Background

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

The Town of Preston has agreements with Adams Volunteer Fire Department for fire suppression and first responder services; and the town has an agreement with Moundview Hospital to provide ambulance service. A map displaying the fire service areas is included in the attachments.

Community facilities include only a Town Hall and a transfer station located on the site of the former town dump in the northwest corner of the town. The building is owned and maintained by the town. The Town Hall functions as a multi-purpose building. 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 Preston

**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. Explore opportunities to develop integrated, multi-use trail systems and recreational facilities.
3. Consider sharing equipment and services across Town boundaries.

**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.
4. Concentrated residential and other development should consider the feasibility and water quality impacts of a wastewater collection and treatment system.
5. Pursue development of a recreational trail link between the Village of Friendship and Roche a Cri State Park.

## 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 an important economic sector occurring in the town. Nearly 28 percent of the total land is used for agriculture. According to the *Wisconsin Town Land Use Databook*, there were seven active farms in the town in 1997.

There are a number of employers located near the intersection of State Highways 12 & 13, most prominently Terrace Homes, which is among the largest private employers in the county. Scattered throughout the town there are several small businesses, other than farms, that employ a few people. Many of the town's residents commute to employment areas outside of the town. There are several industrial parks nearby in the Cities of Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids, and Adams, as well as the Village of Friendship that provide employment opportunities.

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. There are no major redevelopment areas in the town.

#### 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.

**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. Establish appropriate minimum/maximum lot sizes for commercial development, taking parking requirements into consideration.
8. 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 adjacent to county or highways.
2. Encourage businesses, especially those that are compatible in a rural setting.

**Policies:**

1. Consider 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.
5. Foster a commercial/industrial cluster at the intersection of State Highways 21 & 13.
6. Pursue grant funding to clean-up possible contaminated commercial locations along State Highway 13 within the Town.

## 7. LAND USE

### Background

The Town of Preston covers an area of about 22,929 acres in Adams County. The area is characterized by thin till and pitted outwash. The typical terrain is flat with prominent outcroppings and covered with hardwoods or open for agricultural use with a general east to west drainage pattern. The natural resource base of the area is dominated by timber. Agricultural uses, while still viable, are under some development pressure in the areas closest to the Village of Friendship.

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 71 percent of the area, followed by Residential with 9 percent, and Agriculture with about 9 percent.

In general, agricultural, forest lands and residential uses are scattered in a “mixed” pattern. Residential development is distributed fairly evenly along the road network. The most significant public land is Roche a Cri State Park located on State Highway 13 in the southwest part 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 as necessary.

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

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	2,133	9.3%
Commercial	101	0.4%
Governmental	43	0.2%
Industrial	0	0.0%
Open Grassland	661	2.9%
Outdoor Recreation	604	2.6%
Residential	2,057	9.0%
Transportation	841	3.7%
Water	309	1.3%
Woodlands	16,181	70.6%
Total Acres	22,929	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

Map 10 Existing Land Use

Map 11 Future Land Use

A general description of each 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 1,520 acres of land for agriculture, 12,338 acres of land for forestry, 831 acres of land for preservation & open space, 4,156 acres for rural residential development, 2,113 acres for residential development, 633 acres of land for government/public/institutional development, 71 acres of land for industrial development, and 117 acres of land for commercial uses. See Attachment E for land use projections.

The Town of Preston will grow by more than fifty percent over the next twenty years if current trends continue. To accommodate this level of growth a significant amount of residential development will have to take place. Residential development in the future would be focused near existing residential clusters in Cottonville, on the outskirts of the Village of Friendship, and generally along State Highway 13, with a commercial node at the intersection with State Highway 21. The higher-density residential in Cottonville would expand to the north and south, and lower-density residential would stretch along Cottonville and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Higher-density residential would also extend east along Highway 21 from the commercial node and south along Highway 13 filling the entire area north of Roche a Cri State Park, with lower-density residential to the west along most of the length of 13<sup>th</sup> Drive. South of the State Park, higher-density residential would fill much of the area east of Friendship Mound and north of Friendship Lake, with lower-density residential filling most of the non-agricultural land along Czech Avenue. There would also be lower-density residential development around the intersection of Cypress and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Much of the eastern section of the town would remain in forestry use. Conservation areas would exist around Friendship Mound, below the Cottonville dam, and along Fordham and Little Roche a Cri Creeks above Friendship Lake.

The goal of this land use plan is 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 to the plan are needed to maintain that it is reflective of current trends

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.

### County General Zoning

Nearly all of the counties in Wisconsin have established a general county zoning ordinance for lands outside of the shoreland jurisdiction. A town can join under this ordinance by resolution.

The Town of Preston is currently under Adams County zoning. Zoning is the major implementation tool to achieve the proposed land uses. Other implementation 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. See the Existing Zoning Map.

To achieve the proposed land uses under the existing comprehensive County zoning authority, two basic options are available. Both options however would require County approval for implementation.

1. Utilize existing County zoning ordinance/districts.

The Town could carefully review the existing district descriptions to determine which “best fit” or are most appropriate to each of the proposed land uses. The advantages of this option are that the existing zoning ordinance can be used. County Board approval of proposed zoning map amendments might be easier to achieve. The disadvantages of this option are that the existing zoning districts may not enable the Town to achieve the preferred future condition of the proposed land uses. For example, permitted uses in an existing district may not fit well with the proposed land uses, causing conflicting land uses.

2. Propose new zoning districts or modifications to existing district descriptions for the countywide ordinance.

### Extra-territorial Jurisdiction

The Village of Friendship has authority to provide extraterritorial review of subdivision requests in the town within one and one-half miles of Friendship’s corporate limits. There is also the potential for extra-territorial zoning to be implemented within this area. To do this requires the creation of a joint committee consisting of representatives from the Village and

the Town. This joint committee prepares a proposed plan and regulations for the extraterritorial area and submits it to the Village, which may adopt it as proposed or resubmit the proposal to the joint committee for changes. In either case, the proposed regulations must receive a favorable majority vote from the joint committee before the Village can adopt them. At this time the Village has not expressed any intention to implement extra-territorial zoning authority.

The Town would need to petition the County for zoning ordinance amendments that would be in effect for the entire county. The advantage of this would be that other towns may be in support of similar modifications and could provide political support for the changes. If approved, the Town would be able to create a better match between the zoning districts and proposed land uses. County staff would continue to administer zoning. The disadvantage would be that the changes would affect the entire county and may not be politically supported by other towns, the County Planning & Zoning Committee, Zoning staff, or the County Board. More zoning districts may make the existing County ordinance more complex and difficult to administer.

## Land Use Vision

*The Town of Preston 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 prime agricultural land, and to protect food, fiber and livestock production.*

## **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.
6. Continue to work with the Village to monitor "boundary" issues and to plan for the future.

**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. This Plan, as well as other Town, County, Regional, and state plans and other regulations will be considered with new development.
2. The Town will actively participate in zoning and subdivision review decisions at the County level, which affect the Town. This plan will be cited as the basis for all such actions including "disapproval" of proposed zoning amendments.
3. 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.
4. Land uses and building locations that minimize fragmentation of large contiguous forest tracts will be encouraged.
5. Use conservancy zoning to protect natural resources in the Town.
6. Encourage conservation easements and other tools to protect environmentally sensitive or unique resources.
7. 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.

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.

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

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.

### **Adjoining Units of Government**

The Towns of Big Flats, Colburn, Richfield, Lincoln, Adams, and Strongs Prairie are in the same stage, as the Town of Preston, of completing their own comprehensive plans. The Village of Friendship has land division/parceling or subdivision plat approval authority within the mile and a half extraterritorial area.

**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. Research together with other units of government to provide services in a more cost-effective manner.

**Policies:**

1. Pursue cooperative agreements regarding boundary agreements, annexation, expansion of public sewer and water services, and growth management between the City/Village and the Town.
2. Identify alternative solutions to existing or potential land use, administration or policy conflicts that may hinder intergovernmental cooperation.
3. Regularly meet with adjoining unit of government to discuss issues of mutual concern.
4. Periodically review existing shared service agreements, and explore additional agreements.
5. Explore boundary agreements with the Village of Friendship in anticipation of possible annexation of properties along the north shore of Friendship Lake.

## **9. IMPLEMENTATION**

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 at public meetings and Town newsletters, and displaying a copy of the future land use plan map in the Town Hall. Neighboring local units of government and others will receive copies of the plan. A website could be established to allow Internet access to the plan document and maps.

### Recommendation 3:

The primary implementation tool for this plan is the Adams County Zoning Ordinance, which provides the regulatory framework that supports many of the Plan's policies. It is important that the Town review the existing zoning and initiate change to achieve consistency between the plan and the zoning ordinance.

The Town Board and Plan Commission should review local zoning petitions and forward recommendations to Adams County for consideration. Although the County makes the decision on the zoning petition, the Town has veto authority over zoning changes approved at the county level. The Comprehensive Plan should be cited at the basis for all Town zoning actions, including review and recommendations to the County Board and exercise of veto power.

Additional tools and approaches 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 ordinance, 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 the plan on an annual basis, and conduct an in-depth review of the plan every five years. At a minimum the 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 the plan. If decisions are inconsistent with plan, 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 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.



Rolling hills – Town of Preston

ATTACHMENT A  
ADAMS COUNTY PLAN PROCESS

ATTACHMENT B  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

ATTACHMENT C  
COUNTY SURVEY SUMMARY

ATTACHMENT D  
2000 CENSUS SUMMARY

ATTACHMENT E

POPULATION, HOUSEHOLD, EMPLOYMENT, & LAND USE PROJECTIONS

ATTACHMENT F

ADDENDUM TO TOWN OF PRESTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN