

## Chapter 5 Utilities and Community Facilities

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of this chapter is to inventory the various public and community facilities within St. Joseph. This chapter includes a thorough documentation of existing utilities that serve Town residents as well as community facilities. The primary purpose is to understand what utilities and facilities currently exist, the location of the facilities and utilities, the use and capacity and to identify future needs. An overview of several facilities is given below. For each building or facility, its location is given and the use of the facility identified. The utilities are addressed similarly but also identify the capacity available. A set of goals, objectives and policies are included to guide future development and ensure that the needs of all residents are met.

### 2. PUBLIC UTILITIES

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#### **Sanitary Sewer**

There is no municipal sanitary sewer service the Town of St. Joseph. All wastewater is handled with on-site septic systems. The potential for municipal sanitary sewer and water in the Houlton Center area is discussed in Chapter 9: Land Use of this Plan.

A State Sanitary Permit is required for the installation of a private on-site wastewater treatment system (POWTS). A St. Croix County Sanitary Permit is required for the repair, reconnection or rejuvenation of a POWTS or for the installation of a non-plumbing sanitation (i.e. privy, composting toilet, etc.) The proper maintenance of a POWTS is essential to ensure the longevity of the private sewage system and to avoid premature failure.

A Sanitary Permit is required prior to obtaining a building permit from the Town Building Inspector. A Sanitary Permit may only be submitted by a licensed plumber. St. Croix County Staff will conduct at least one inspection for all work requiring a sanitary permit.

When obtaining a Sanitary permit, residents are required to submit a signed agreement indicating that the property owner will maintain the septic system properly and report this maintenance to the Community Development Office. This is done by sending in a card every three years that is signed by the inspector.

## **Stormwater Management**

### Review and approval of subdivisions, grading plans

Stormwater and erosion control are managed through the Town's subdivision ordinance. The ordinance requires that any major or minor land disturbance activity go through a plan review process. The review process includes an examination of existing conditions and proposed changes including new roads, utilities, and structures. The review process also examines grading, stormwater management and erosion control for all land disturbance activities. The Planning Commission reviews all plans to ensure that water and sediment are properly managed on the site. St. Croix County may adopt a Stormwater Mitigation Ordinance.

### Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program – MS4

MS4 is the acronym used to denote the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's permitting program to address stormwater discharge in urban areas. In Wisconsin, the program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Houlton Area in the Town of St. Joseph was designated as an MS4 in February of 2015. The Town is currently in the process of creating its plan to meet the requirements of the MS4 permit program, referred to as the Houlton Stormwater Plan. Typical operations throughout the Town in regards to stormwater management include culvert inspection and maintenance where needed, and resolving drainage and erosion control issues in the public right-of-way where applicable. The Town of St. Joseph is also supportive of the Bass Lake Management Plan and the Perch Lake Management Plan, which address runoff to these two high quality water bodies in the Town.

## **Solid Waste and Recycling**

The Town of St. Joseph does not have municipal trash or recycling removal. Instead, the residents in St. Joseph choose their waste hauling provider. There are several different companies that pick up waste. There are no official operating landfills or recycling facilities in the Town. However, there are two historic landfills that have since been closed.

## **Telecommunication Facilities**

There are two cell tower locations in the Town of St. Joseph: 1370 Highway V and 1190 County Road A.

## **Power**

There are no electric power plants in St. Joseph. Electricity in St. Joseph is provided by Northern States Power-Wisconsin, the St. Croix Electric Cooperative, and Excel Energy. There are no power-generating plants in the Town. There are two major transmission lines in the Town: the 113 kV Excel Energy transmission line runs east-west and is shown on the existing land use map and the 69kV transmission runs south of the 113kV line.

### 3. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

There are a wide array of community facilities in and around St. Joseph that serve the needs of its residents. Information about these facilities is included below and are mapped in Figure 5-1.

#### **St. Joseph Town Hall**

The St. Joseph Town Hall includes a meeting hall, clerk's office, fire station and rescue service, and is located at 1337 County Road V in St. Joseph. There are no expansion plans for the Town Hall. A small storage building to house road maintenance equipment may be constructed at the location in 2016-2017.

#### **Health**

There are no hospitals or clinics in St. Joseph. The nearest clinics are in the neighboring communities of Hudson, New Richmond and Somerset, and Stillwater. These clinics serve a wide array of medical issues including general care, dental and vision. Nearby hospitals include Hudson Hospital in Hudson, WI and Lakeview Hospital in Stillwater, MN. The St. Croix Health Center in New Richmond is a long-term nursing facility.

#### **Schools**

Houlton Elementary School is located at 70 Houlton School Circle in St. Joseph. Operated by the Hudson School District, it serves grades kindergarten through fifth grade and has an average enrollment of 225 students. It is the only public or private school in St. Joseph. Portions of the Town are also served by Somerset School District and New Richmond School District.

#### **Libraries**

The nearest public libraries are in the neighboring communities of Hudson, WI, Somerset, WI, New Richmond, WI and Stillwater, MN. St. Joseph is a member of the Hudson Area Joint Library Board.

#### **Childcare Facilities**

There are no commercial day care or childcare facilities in the Town of St. Joseph. However, home occupations (including childcare) are permitted uses under the Rural Residential zoning district. This district includes much of the Town. There are a number of small home day cares in St. Joseph. There is a need for and potential for commercial day care in the Town of St. Joseph.

### **Emergency Services**

St. Joseph provides fire and emergency rescue services from its Town Hall at 1337 County Road V. The Town also participates in mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities for fire services if needed.

### **Cemeteries**

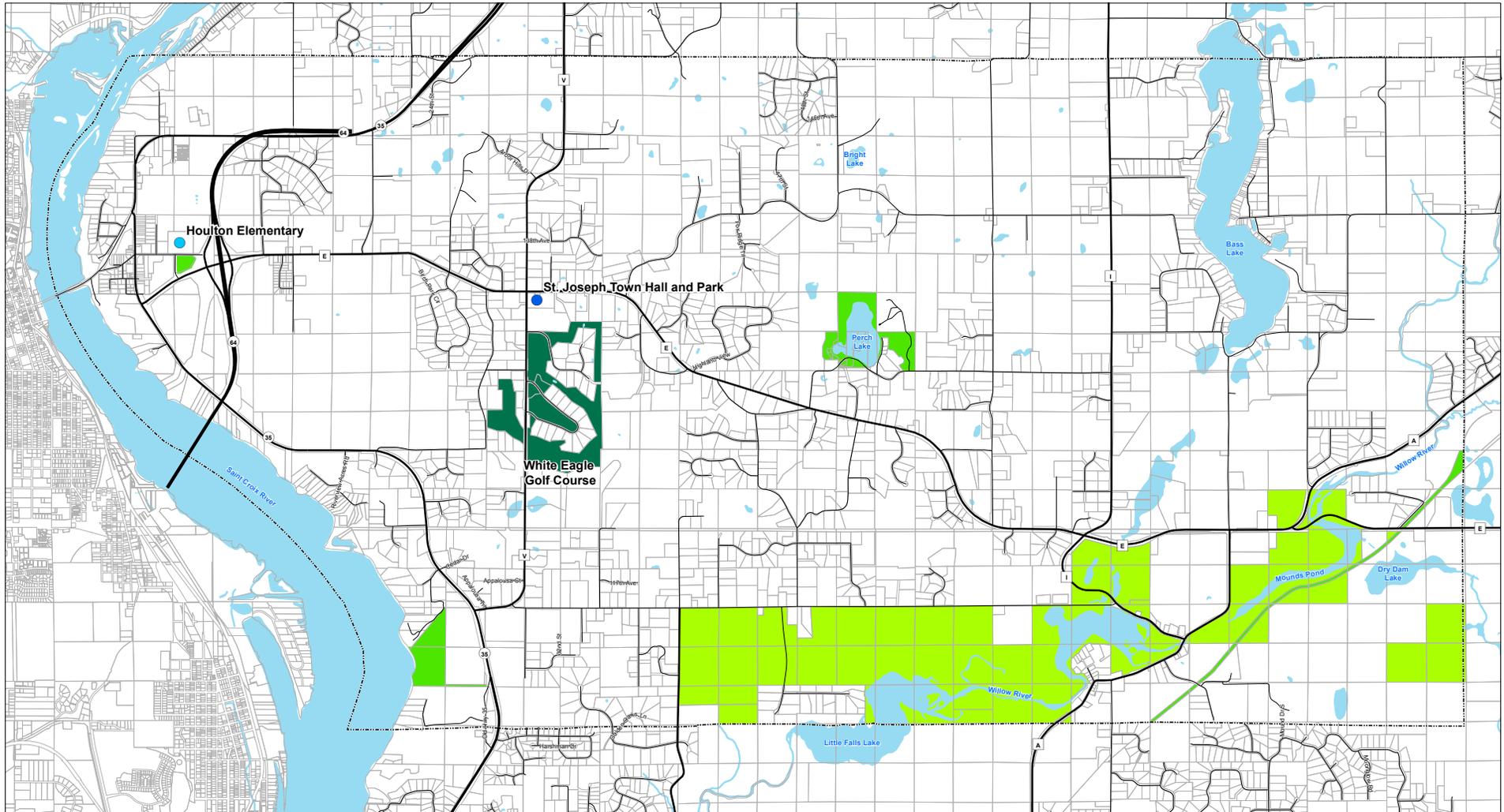
There are three cemeteries in the Town of St. Joseph. Houlton Cemetery, founded in 1881, is located at 1251 Highway 35. The Thelen Family Cemetery is located at Thelen Farm Trail and Settlers Way. The earliest burial there was in 1884. The Pioneer Cemetery is located on County Road V between 145th and 150th Streets.

## **4. EXPANSION OF EXISTING UTILITIES OR FACILITIES**

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The Town of St. Joseph does not provide municipal utilities. Its main physical facility is the Town Hall at 1337 County Road V in St. Joseph. There are no expansion plans for the Town Hall other than the small storage building noted above. The possibility of providing municipal sewer and water for a portion of the Houlton area is discussed in this Plan, requiring a sewage treatment facility. Developing such a facility would depend on a number of factors and is not anticipated soon.

**Figure 5-1  
St. Joseph Community Facilities**



**Community Facilities**

Town of St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2016



0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet

Community Facilities	
● Institutional	■ Water
● School	■ Golf Course
▭ Municipal Boundary	■ Park
▭ Land Parcel Outline	■ State Park

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June 30, 2016

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## 5. PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

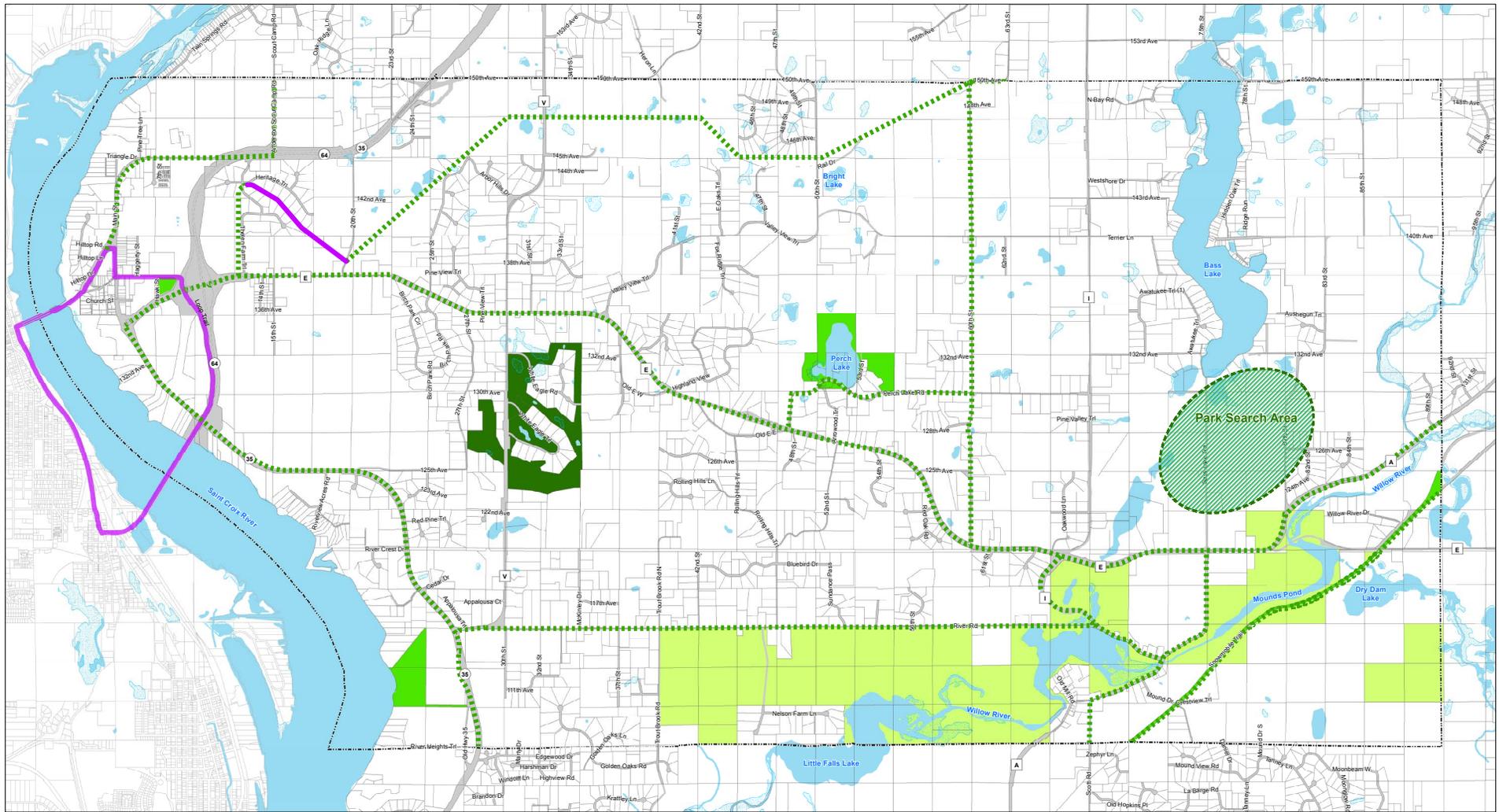
The Town has an abundance of natural resources which provide recreational opportunities to the residents. The Town of St. Joseph provides some of these services directly, and some opportunities are administered at the State, County, or National Park Service level. The following table identifies the parks and recreational opportunities that are currently available to residents (Table 5-1). The table also includes existing and proposed bicycle facilities (shown in Figure 5-2). Proposed future park areas are also addressed in the future land use plan in Chapter 9: Land Use.

**Table 5-1  
 Park and Recreation Facilities in St. Joseph**

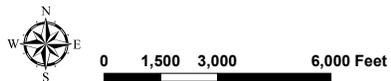
Name	Acres	Access	Facilities
St. Joseph Town Park	34	Public	Softball/Little League Baseball diamond, benches, winter sliding, cross country skiing.
Nelson Farm Road Park	1.5	Semi-Public	Undeveloped open space
Houlton Elementary School	10	Public	Playground, ball field, basketball court
City of Stillwater's Legion Beach	20	Semi-Public	None
Perch Lake Boat Landing	0.5	Public	Landing, parking lot and waste receptacle
Homestead Parklands at Perch Lake	80	Public – user fees	Camping, canoe rentals, fishing, swimming beach, boat launch, toilet facilities
Bass Lake Boat Landing (Somerset)	0.5	Public	Landing, parking lot and waste receptacle
Willow River State Park (DNR)	1,600	Public – State Park Fees	Trout stream, boat launch, picnicking, 78 camp sites, nature center, parking, restrooms, hiking trails, sight-seeing, passive recreation areas, ice skating, sliding, cross-country skiing.
Name	Acres	Access	Facilities
Game Unlimited	760	Semi-public	Members-only, licensed shooting preserve. Chalet, hunting, cross-country skiing.
Bicycle Routes/Trails	County Trunk Highways E, I, A, V, Hwy 35, St. Croix River Crossing loop		
Snowmobiling Routes (Local Club Maintains)	Southeast Section of town along the Willow River		
Scenic Routes	Trout Brook Road, Rustic Road 13		

Source: Town of St. Joseph

**Figure 5-2  
St. Joseph Parks and Bicycle Facilities**



**Parks and Bicycle Facilities Map**  
Town of St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2016



<b>Bike Routes</b>	Golf Course	Right-of-Way
<b>From St. Joseph Outdoor Rec. Plan</b>	Town/County Park	Open Water
Existing Routes	State Park	NWI Wetland
Proposed Routes	Park Search Area	St. Joseph Town Boundary

**Draft**

August 23, 2016



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## 6. POLICY PLAN

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The Town is committed to providing efficient and adequate services to the residents of the Town of St. Joseph. The policy plan will provide goals and policies to support the continuation of providing residents with a safe, healthy, and active place in which residents live.

*Community Facilities Goal #1: Enhance and maintain community facilities to provide meeting and gathering spaces for Town residents.*

Policies:

1. Maintain and monitor community gathering and meeting spaces to ensure appropriate facilities are available to conduct Town Business and other community building activities.
2. Encourage the use of Houlton Elementary School as a community gathering space and facility that provides benefit to all Town residents.
3. Encourage Town participation in the Hudson Area Joint Library Board.

*Community Facilities Goal #2: Maintain the educational quality and accessibility to the Town's residents.*

Policies:

1. Work with the School Districts to monitor and project the number of students entering the school systems to ensure the educational levels are maintained.
2. Encourage families and residents to actively participate in the schools to ensure quality educational opportunities are available to students.

*Community Facilities Goal #3: Work with adjacent jurisdictions, the County and the State to ensure that services and utilities are being provided to residents in the most efficient and effective manner.*

Policies:

1. Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to identify ways to provide services and utilities to residents in a way that is cost-effective and efficient.
2. Participate with intergovernmental groups to identify and monitor issues and concerns of residents and adjacent jurisdictions to ensure the adequacy of services and utilities in the area.
3. Support the work of the Highway 64 Corridor Communities Stormwater and Wastewater Coalition.

Community Facilities Goal #4: Maintain and enhance adequate park and recreational opportunities for residents that encourage an active and healthy lifestyle.

Policies:

1. Enhance and maintain current recreational facilities in the Town.
2. Work with Town Parks Commission to ensure the development of interconnected trails and paths that allow Town residents to easily walk and bicycle throughout the Town safely.
3. Work with residents to identify and obtain park lands for current and future needs.
4. Cooperate with other governmental agencies for development of park property.
5. Work with State DNR to identify potential park lands within Willow River State Park that might better function as active parkland in the area.

Community Facilities Goals #5: Explore the need for municipal services for Houlton

Policies:

1. Prepare a municipal sewer facility study for the Houlton area.
2. Support the work of the Highway 64 Corridor Communities Stormwater and Wastewater Coalition.

## Chapter 6 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Town of St. Joseph includes significant natural resources. It is bordered by the St. Croix River to the west and the Willow River on the southeast, and includes high quality lakes, native prairie, and woodland areas. While it is close to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the growing community of Hudson, much of the Town is still rural in character.

The Town Board and residents recognize the role that natural areas and rural vistas play in maintaining a healthy community, in attracting people to the area, and in contributing to the quality of life in the Town. They also recognize that these natural areas offer concrete benefits as well: they help to protect ground and surface water quality, provide wildlife habitat, maintain property values and provide buffers between land uses, and provide opportunities for active and passive recreation. The Town's natural landscape gives it a special character and is an important part of its history and heritage.

Another important characteristic of St. Joseph is its rural, agricultural character. Much of the Town is currently farmed and residents enjoy the rural and natural landscape. However, the Town is becoming more residential, with pressures from the Twin Cities, Hudson, and other nearby suburban areas. The Town hopes to remain rural in character and celebrate its agricultural and natural resources.

In order to better understand the Town's environment, a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) was conducted, discussed in subsection 3 of this chapter. This inventory will help to guide future land use and development to ensure that St. Joseph's important natural resources are protected and enhanced.

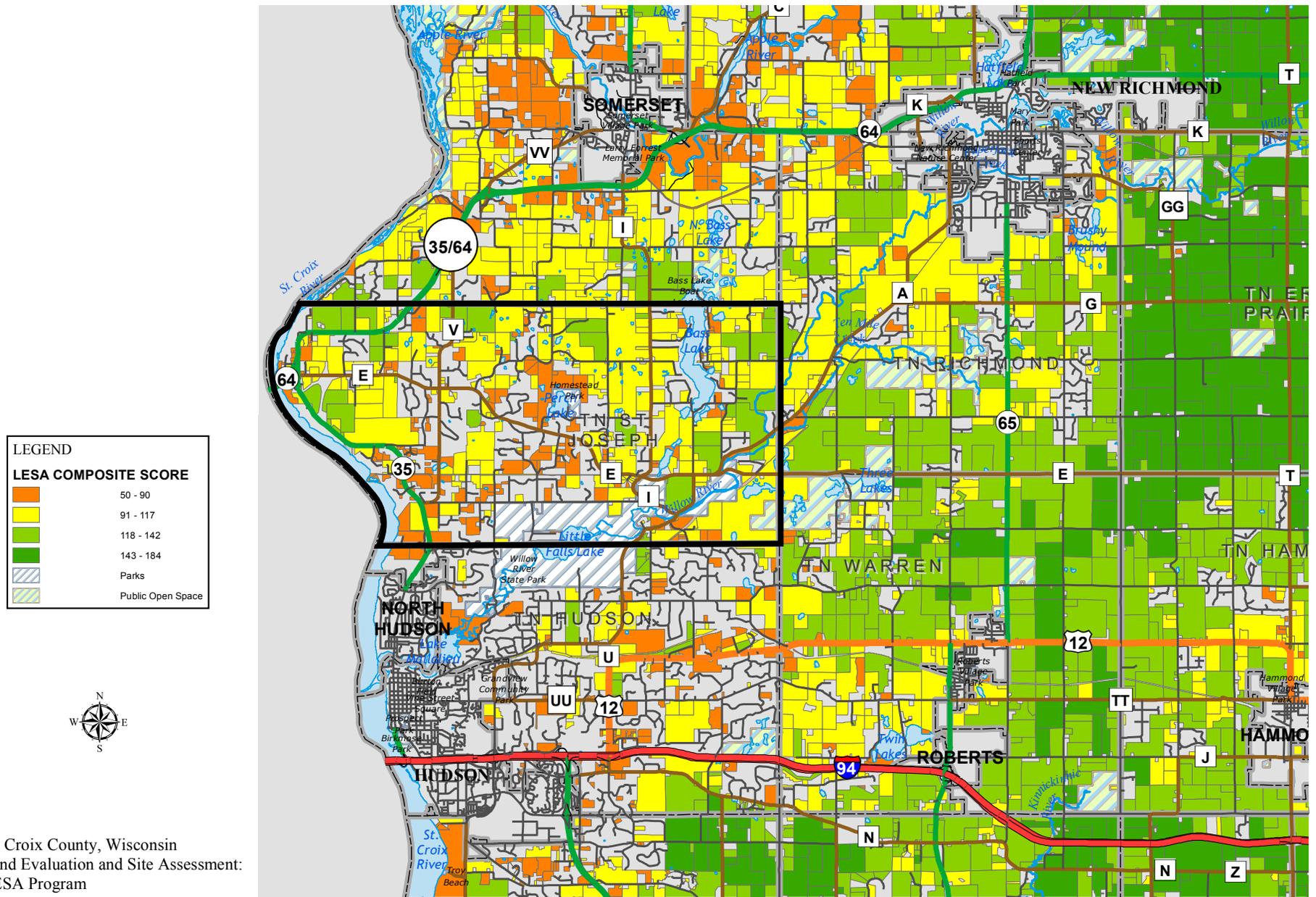
### 2. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Historically, St. Joseph and St. Croix County have been predominantly agricultural communities. However, with the growth of the Twin Cities Metro, the western parts of St. Croix County have experienced a reduction in the amount of agricultural land. Similarly, there has been a shift in the type of farming from small dairy farms to large-scale corn and soybean farms.

St. Croix County has developed the Land Evaluation Site Assessment System (LESA) for rating the relative value of agricultural land resources. Based on this assessment, there are portions of the Town of St. Joseph that score high on the LESA ranking, as "most suitable for long-term agricultural use". See attached Figure 6-1. These areas are relatively small in comparison to the large expanses of prime farm land in the central and eastern portions of the County.

In 2012, St. Croix County completed their Comprehensive Plan, which included a Farmland Preservation Plan. Using the LESA rankings and current land uses across the County, the Plan designated farmland preservation areas. These areas are particularly valuable as agricultural land and development of these parcels is discouraged. While St. Joseph still has active farming in much of the Township, the County did not designate any of its land as farmland preservation.

Figure 6-1  
 St. Croix County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA)



6.2

### 3. NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

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The Town of St. Joseph is a vibrant rural town located along the St. Croix River in St. Croix County, Wisconsin. In an effort to plan effectively for natural resources, the Town requires accurate information about the type and quality of open space and natural areas within the Town. This information was gathered, analyzed and presented as part of the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI). The following subchapter summarizes the methodology and findings of the NRI.

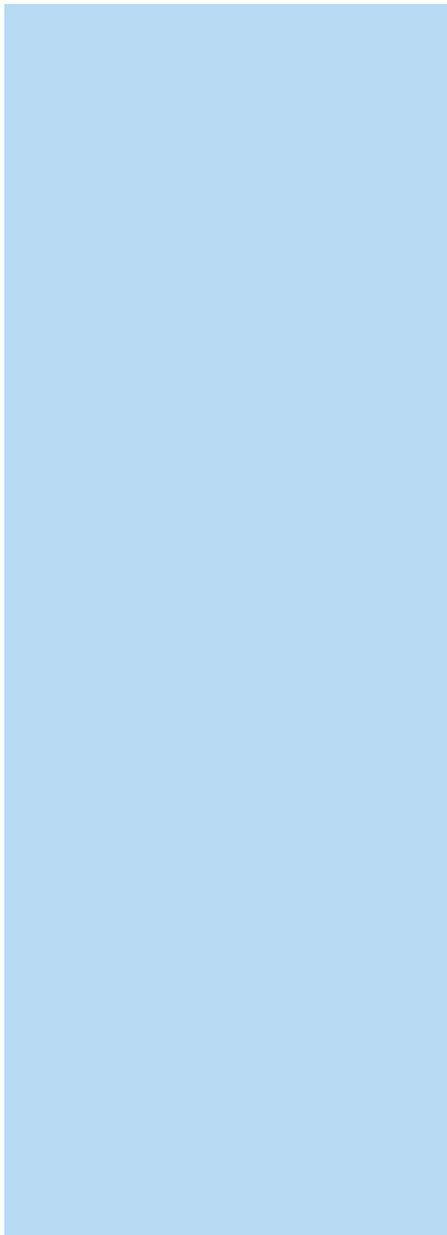
#### ***About the NRI***

Typically, communities rely on aerial photography and land classification data to understand where important natural resources are present. In St. Joseph, the National Park Service staff completed Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) mapping in the western-most portion of St. Joseph and the St. Croix River. In these areas, natural resources were only identifiable using aerial photos and a very limited field review. In 2015 the Town retained Stantec to conduct land cover mapping and natural resources inventory to gather more complete and accurate data of areas not included in the MLCCS. The inventory was conducted for portions of the Town that fall within previously identified natural resource corridor areas and have potential for development. Owners of parcels in the NRI area were contacted by the Town in late summer 2015 to request permission for property access. Work to investigate sites where access was permitted occurred in fall 2015.

The field inventory documented a variety of distinct natural community types including forest, woodland, shrubland, herbaceous wetlands, and grasslands, as well as areas of open water (lakes and ponds). The most common upland cover type is oak woodland/brushland, while the most common lowland cover type is cattail marsh. The most unique plant communities identified during the NRI include several rich fens sites and one oak savanna (an ecosystem type that is considered imperiled).

After conducting the field inventory, a total of 174 natural areas received quality ranks. Of these, 13 (7.5 percent) were considered to be Exceptional (highest quality rank possible). A total of 24 (13.8 percent) sites were given a High quality rank. Moderate quality sites totaled 113 (64.9 percent) – the majority of these were Oak Woodland-brushland sites. A total of 24 (13.8 percent) were mapped as Low quality – these areas typically exhibited significant signs of human disturbance and/or invasive plants. These sites are listed in Table 6-1.

Natural areas tend to be concentrated in the previously mapped natural resources corridors. Other natural areas can be found around the lakes, along the rivers, and in scattered locations. The NRI provides some general guidelines and information for management of natural areas. These natural areas are illustrated in Figure 6-2.



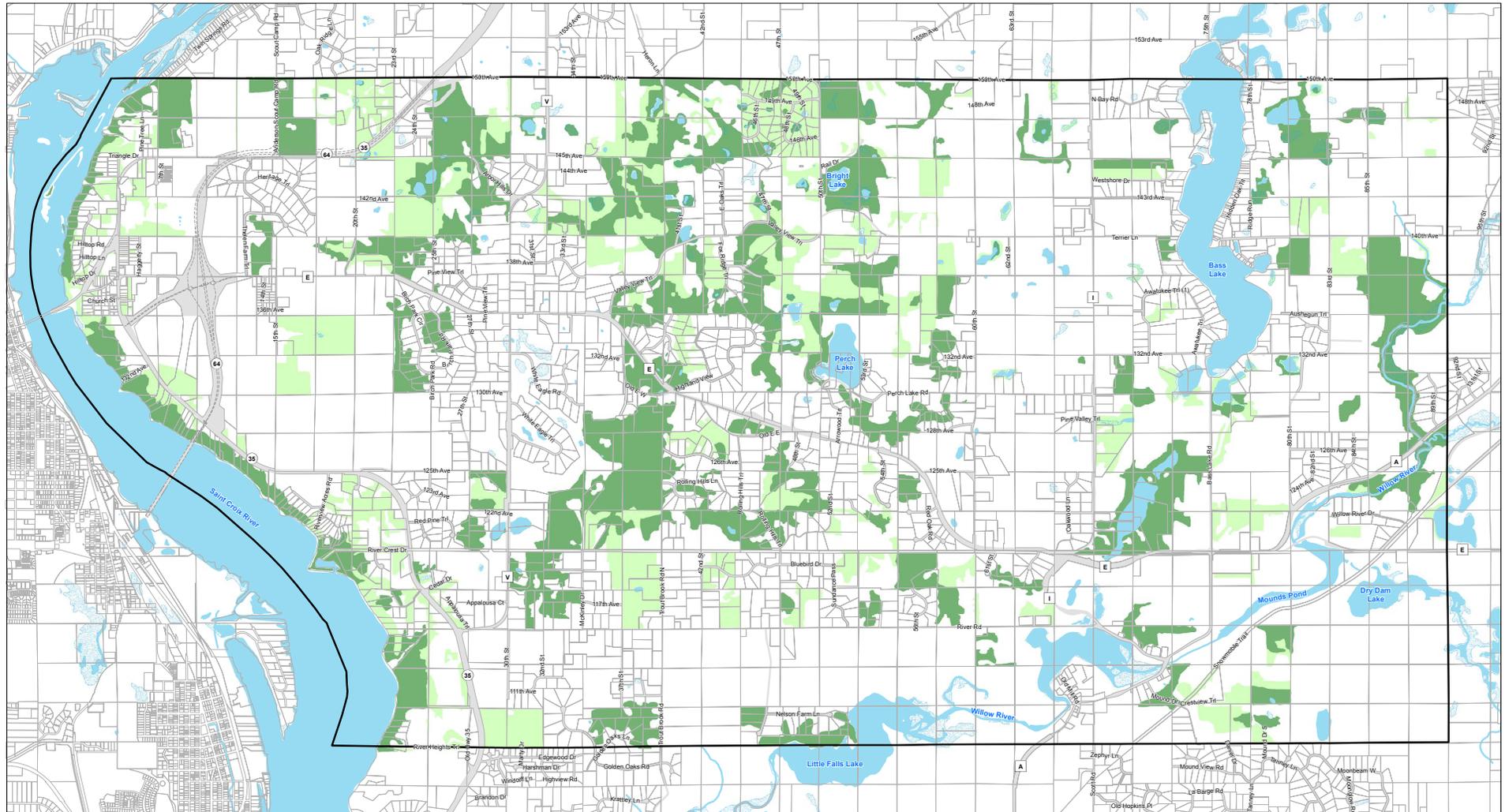
**Table 6-1  
Quality Natural Areas**

Quality Rank	Number of Sites
Exceptional (341)	13
High (342)	24
Moderate (343)	113
Low (344)	24

### ***Developing a Natural Corridor***

Once natural areas were identified, a Natural Corridor was established. Rather than simply designate natural areas for protection, this Plan identifies a Natural Corridor that focuses on connecting the identified exceptional and high quality areas. This allows for a network of habitat and encourages animal migration. By creating corridors, St. Joseph is protecting its natural amenities and rural character, while supporting the growth of native plant and animal species. Delineation of this Corridor will guide future land use and development to ensure that natural resources and critical habitat are protected. Natural areas are mapped in Figure 6-2. The Natural Corridor has implications for land use and future development which are discussed further in Chapter 9: Land Use.

**Figure 6-2  
Natural Areas in St. Joseph**

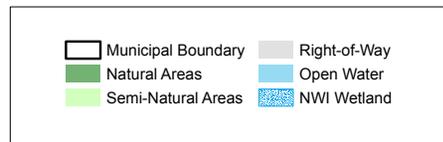


**Natural Resources Inventory Natural and Semi-Natural Areas**

Town of St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2016



0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet



April 14, 2016

**Draft**



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## 4. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are four places listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places (SRHP and NRHP respectively) within St. Joseph. Three are residential farms, located in the Houlton and Burkhardt areas, and the fourth is the Stillwater Bridge which crosses the St. Croix River. These sites are listed below.

### John Nicholas and Hermina Thelen House

This home is located at 1383 and 1405 Thelen Farm Trail in the Houlton area of St. Joseph.

- NRHP: Listed on 02-12-09
- SRHP: Listed on 07-18-08

### Louis C. and Augusta Kriesel Farmstead

This farmstead is located at 132 STH 35/64 in the Houlton area of St. Joseph.

- NRHP: Listed on 02-12-09
- SRHP: Listed on 07-18-08

### The Lewis Farmhouse

This farmhouse is located at 1270 County Road A in the Boardman area of St. Joseph.

- NRHP: Listed on 03-19-82
- SRHP: Listed on 05-29-81

### Stillwater Bridge

This bridge follows MN 36/WI 64 over St. Croix River. Traffic will be redirected to St. Croix Crossing Bridge in 2017.

- NRHP: Listed on 05-25-89
- SRHP: Not listed on the State Register

The St. Croix County Historical Society is located in Hudson, WI. The society provides tours in the area, has a research center and library and hosts events. Most of the events and tours are centered on architectural features in Hudson, though the museum and research area host information and artifacts from across the County. St. Joseph does not have a historical society.

## 5. POLICY PLAN

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The Town of St. Joseph recognizes that growth and change will occur in the future. Growth can have negative impacts on natural resources, including fragmentation and destruction of natural habitats, increase impervious surface and resulting flooding and pollution of surface waters, impacts to the quantity and quality of groundwater, and other impacts.

The Town also recognizes that it can manage growth, and seek to avoid and minimize impacts to significant natural resources. The Town has completed a Natural Resources Inventory and Map to identify the significant resources remaining in the community. The Town has also adopted the following Policy Plan to manage growth and protect these important resources.

*Natural Resources Goal #1: Improve and protect the quality of surface waters.*

Policies:

1. Develop and implement a Surface Water Management Plan and policies, including the MS4 permit process in Houlton.
2. Work in partnership with the County's Priority Watersheds Program and local lake protection efforts.
3. Support and review Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinances as needed to protect surface waters.
4. Develop and adopt a wetland protection and buffers ordinance that sets minimum buffer standards.
5. Use park and open space dedication to protect significant water resources and adjacent habitat areas.
6. Promote wetland and shoreland restoration by private landowners.
7. Educate residents and developers regarding Best Management Practices and state and local stormwater regulations.
8. Support the development and implementation of a County Stormwater Management Ordinance to complement the Town's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.
9. Support development designs that protect the quality of surface waters and other natural resources, and minimize development impacts.
10. Apply for DNR grants that support local efforts to control nonpoint source pollution.
11. Support the implementation and periodic updates to the Lake Management Plans for Bass Lake and Perch Lake.

Natural Resources Goal #2: Preserve and restore sensitive natural resource areas and wildlife habitat.

Policies:

1. Adopt the Natural Resources Inventory Map and Management Policy.
2. Encourage public and private landowners and developers to restore native habitats and control invasive species.
3. Seek state and other funding for habitat protection and control of invasive species.
4. Incorporate natural resource areas in parks and open space areas.
5. Adopt incentives and regulations to protect environmental corridors and natural resource areas (described in the implementation section).
6. Work with other conservation agencies and organizations, both public and private, to further this goal.

Natural Resources Goal #3: Protect groundwater supplies and surface water to assure high quality groundwater for all residents.

Policies:

1. Encourage monitoring of all private wells and private septic systems in the Town to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
2. Encourage monitoring of all agricultural waste disposal and management systems and practices to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
3. Encourage enforcement of state rules regarding wellhead and groundwater protection.
4. Encourage protection of wetlands and other ground water recharge areas.

Natural Resources Goal #4: Provide for future open space and recreation needs.

Policies:

1. Implement the Town and St. Croix County's Outdoor Recreation Plan.
2. Develop the proposed bicycle and pedestrian trail systems identified in the St. Joseph Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Implementation Study.
3. Review and update park dedication requirements and fees included in the Town's impact fees, and use these fees along with grants, land dedication and donation to develop the town's park and bicycle/pedestrian trail system as growth occurs.

Natural Resources Goal #5: Preserve the character of the Town's landscape, and examples of native woodlands, prairies, and wetlands.

Policies:

1. Identify important views and implement subdivision and zoning ordinances to protect valued views and viewsheds.
2. Incorporate scenic areas and native habitats in parks and open space.
3. Encourage development of County regulations that protect the night sky.
4. Encourage development of County wireless communications tower regulations that encourage towers that blend in with the landscape.
5. Work with the County on developing and implementing landscaping ordinances for commercial development that support the Town's character.
6. Implement the Town's sign ordinance.
7. Develop and use the tools identified in Chapter 10: Implementation to manage land use and natural resources for the long term.