



INTRODUCTION

TAYLOR COUNTY, WISCONSIN

On March 4, 1875, Taylor County was created from parts of Clark, Marathon, Chippewa, and Lincoln counties. Located in north central Wisconsin it is bounded by Price County to the north, Lincoln County to the east, Marathon County to the south, Chippewa County to the west, Clark County to the South, and Rusk County to the northwest. The county boundaries are the same as those established at its creation in 1875. The county is 42 miles long and 24 miles wide with an area of 979 square miles, totaling 628,480 acres. The county contains twenty-two townships, four villages and one city.



Table 1 details the municipalities within Taylor County and their dates of organization.

	Incorporation Date		Incorporation Date
Towns		Medford	1875
Aurora	1899	Molitor	1886
Browning	1895	Pershing	1919
Chelsea	1875	Rib Lake	1885
Cleveland	1896	Roosevelt	1905
Deer Creek	1880	Taft	1909
Ford	1917	Westboro	1875
Goodrich	1903	Villages	
Greenwood	1895	Gilman	1914
Grover	1895	Lublin	1915
Hammel	1897	Rib Lake	1902
Holway	1895	Stetsonville	1949
Jump River	1923	Cities	
Little Black	1875	Medford	1889
McKinley	1902		
Maplehurst	1905		

Source: <http://www.co.taylor.wi.us/county/history>

BACKGROUND

Taylor County and its Departments have over the years conducted specialized studies to address specific issues affecting topics such as outdoor recreation, forest land management, and farmland preservation. In addition to developing their county plans, Taylor County Departments have partnered and worked with state and federal agencies on their (state and federal) land development and management policies.



Preparing land use plans is not new to Taylor County. In fact, in January of 1931 *Making the Most of Taylor County Lands* was published. The document was in response to a problem of land utilization, the constantly increasing burden of tax delinquency and the maintenance of the ordinary functions of county government. Developing the plan set forth essential facts and figures basic to any plan or program in the development of Taylor County resources.

In October 1999, a significant piece of state legislation was created that outlined the minimum requirements for a “comprehensive plan.” Under the Comprehensive Planning legislation, beginning on January 1, 2010, if a local governmental unit engages in any of the following actions, (listed below) those actions shall be consistent with that local governmental unit’s comprehensive plan. Taylor County’s response and initiative to develop a comprehensive plan is similar in ways to that of the county initiating and developing *Making the Most of Taylor County Lands*.

- ◆ Official mapping established or amended under s.62.23(6)
- ◆ Local subdivision regulation under s.236.45 or 236.46
- ◆ County zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s.59.69
- ◆ City or village zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s.62.23(7)
- ◆ Town zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s.60.61 or 60.62
- ◆ Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s.59.692, 61.351 or 62.2131

In the fall of 2005, the Taylor County Zoning Department invited local units of government to a meeting to discuss the development of a comprehensive plan. From this meeting began the initiation of the planning process that started in January 2006. Utilizing representatives from through the county on a Land Use Advisory Committee, the committee embarked on 18-month process that sought public input from citizens to elected officials.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Land Use Advisory Committee, Zoning Department and Northwest Regional Planning Commission assumed specific roles and responsibilities to effectively deliver a process and document that represents interests of Taylor County residents and property owners. The general roles and responsibilities of each entity involved are as follows.

- **Taylor County Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC)**
 - a. Provide feedback and direction to Northwest Regional Planning Commission in developing the plan, actions/policies/recommendations and other implementation measures
 - b. Hold meetings for the purpose of discussing plan issues and components
 - c. Develop the comprehensive plan framework and content and recommend it to the Taylor County Board of Supervisors for adoption
 - d. Represent the County at joint-jurisdictional planning meetings
- **Taylor County Zoning Department**
 - a. Provide information, direction, and feedback to the LUAC and Northwest Regional Planning Commission on process and plan development
 - b. Provide necessary funding and staff support to meet all logistical needs
- **UW-Extension, Taylor County**
 - a. Assist in developing and coordinating public participation, press releases, survey, visioning and education process
- **Northwest Regional Planning Commission:**



- a. Provide staff services and project management for process
- b. Produce written documentation and supplementary information based on LUAC input
- c. Assist in coordination and staff information meetings
- d. Attend meetings with the LUAC, County Board of Supervisors, and Towns Unit
- e. Complete final plan to LUAC specifications

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

As part of the Comprehensive Planning legislation, local units of government developing a comprehensive plan must create a public participation plan. The purpose of the public participation plan is to outline procedures for public involvement during every stage of the planning process. The Taylor County Board of Supervisors adopted the Taylor County Public Participation Plan on April 18, 2006. A copy of the Public Participation Plan is included in the appendix.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

To gain greater insight into topics related to the comprehensive plan components, a survey was conducted. To assist the Land Use Advisory Committee in developing suitable questions, Taylor County UW-Extension, NWRPC, and The Center for Land Use Education – UW Stevens Point were called upon. As a result of the meetings and input with the LUAC, a final Taylor County survey was developed in early 2006. This survey was thoroughly reviewed, discussed and approved by consensus by all participating partners. Tax roll mailing addresses were obtained from Taylor County and after businesses and duplicate landowners were removed, the survey was distributed randomly to 40 percent of the landowners in each of the 27 local units of government. The intent of the survey was to provide an opportunity for Taylor County residents and landowners to express opinions related to community development and land use.

A total of 4,445 surveys were circulated to Taylor County residents and absentee landowners with 868 surveys remitted for an overall response rate of 19.5 percent. Survey results were used to:

- 1) Form the basis for the development of planning goals and objectives;
- 2) Identify potential future land use trends and conflicts;
- 3) Define differences in land-use preferences for various areas of the county;
- 4) Determine community desires and expectations; and
- 5) Gain input of citizens and landowners concerning land uses and rural residential development.

Listed below are the response rates for local units of government in Taylor County.

Town of Aurora – 14.6%	Town of Goodrich – 16.6%
Town of Browning – 22.2%	Town of Greenwood – 22.5%
Town of Chelsea – 23.4%	Town of Grover – 15.3%
Town of Cleveland – 15.2%	Town of Hammel – 21.1%
Town of Deer Creek – 18.6%	Town of Holway – 10.0%
Town of Ford – 12.8%	Town of Jump River – 22.6%



Town of Little Black – 16.4%
Town of Maplehurst – 14.3%
Town of McKinley – 10.6%
Town of Medford – 24.7%
Town of Molitor – 20.5%
Town of Pershing – 10.1%
Town of Rib Lake – 14.1%
Town of Roosevelt – 14.3%

Town of Taft – 15.5%
Town of Westboro – 20.5%
Village of Gilman – 26.9%
Village of Lublin – 36.1%
Village of Rib Lake – 27.6%
Village of Stetsonville – 18.4%
City of Medford – 23.7%

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The following chapters and information represent the overall development of the Taylor County comprehensive planning process. Its development represents information specific to Taylor County and covers the minimum elements or components required through the State of Wisconsin comprehensive planning legislation (66.1001).

As Taylor County Departments utilize the comprehensive plan and as county trends and issues change, revisions to the plan should be considered. The plan document can be revised at any point in time following the processes specified within the Public Participation Plan.