

2030 Land Resource Management Plan

For

*Winnebago County,
Illinois*

May 2009

*Proposed for Adoption
by County Board*



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INTRODUCTION. PLANNING PROCESS & ORGANIZATION

The 2030 Land Resource Management Plan Planning Process

As Northern Illinois faces increasing development pressures, it is crucial that Winnebago County seize this opportunity to direct its future growth and update its land use plan to address this trend. The *2030 Land Resource Management Plan* offers a vision of how the unincorporated areas of the County will grow and develop over the next 20 years. The goals, objectives and policies of this Plan will be further implemented through three complementary planning efforts. First, the drafting of a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) will follow the adoption of this *Plan* and update the County's land development regulations to implement these land use policies. Second, the creation of a Comprehensive Financial Plan (CFP) will provide a framework for financing public infrastructure, informing future developers of expectations and costs, and protecting the County from unnecessary legal challenges. Finally, land use decisions will be further informed by the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), recently completed by the County, which catalogues environmentally sensitive areas within the County.

The *2030 Land Resource Management Plan* ensures that change in the region occurs pursuant to the consensus of area stakeholders, such as civic and business leaders, various interest groups, citizens, and the County's municipalities and townships. Winnebago County has worked towards a plan that coordinates a vision for the future of the region as a whole, which seeks to achieve balanced growth in the most rational and efficient manner possible. The Plan looks to accommodate an increased population with proportional economic development, preserve and enhance both the urban and rural characters of the County, and minimize the impact of future development on natural resources, agriculture and the environment.

This process began on July 19, 2006 with a kick-off meeting of the Long-Range Plan Steering Committee and the consultants - the team of Camiros, Ltd. and Nicolosi & Associates. The Steering Committee consisted of representatives from various County departments and entities, including the Regional Planning and Economic Development Department,

Highway Department, Forest Preserve District, County Board and Zoning Committee.

Phase one of this process began with a background analysis to document demographic trends and characteristics related to population, housing, employment, education, transportation and agriculture. A series of key person interviews were held to identify the issues, concerns and perceptions of County stakeholders. These interviews consisted of 12 meetings held in November 2006, with the staff and elected officials of the County's municipalities and persons representing the following interests: environment, agriculture, economic development, real estate, transportation, schools and infrastructure. In addition, from August through December, the County gave presentations to other governmental and interest groups including the townships, the League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club, the Rockford Area Association of Realtors, the Lady Landowners, and various building and development interests.

The final component of phase one was an analysis of previous planning efforts to identify established land use policies of different municipalities and various planning interest groups within Winnebago County. These policies were catalogued to illustrate the relationships between past and future policy decisions.

The results of the demographic and planning policy analyses, key person interviews and presentations were compiled in a *Findings Report*, which provides a snapshot of the existing and established conditions within Winnebago County. In February 2007, a public workshop was held to present an overview of the *Findings Report*.

Phase two of the process established the framework for the *Plan*. This phase developed goals, objectives and policies for future land use and development. In November 2006, Community Focus Groups were convened, consisting of more than 40 individuals who represented a cross-section of the County. Individuals were divided into seven different Community Focus Groups and charged with determining goals, objectives and policies for the different elements of the land use plan: agriculture, residential land use, economic development, growth and annexation, natural resources, public utilities and facilities, and transportation. The groups submitted their recommendations to the County in March 2007. The consultants analyzed the results and presented a memorandum that condensed the reports into the core goals, objectives and policies that make up the framework of this *Plan*. The results of the Community

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Focus Groups efforts were presented at two public workshops in May and June 2007.

Phase three of the planning process consisted of the creation and adoption of the final document and future land use map. These maps were presented to the Community Focus Groups and the public in a series of workshops conducted in February and March of 2008. In October 2008, the Community Focus Groups and the public reviewed the *Plan*, finally culminating in a public hearing on ____ and adoption by the County Board on ____.

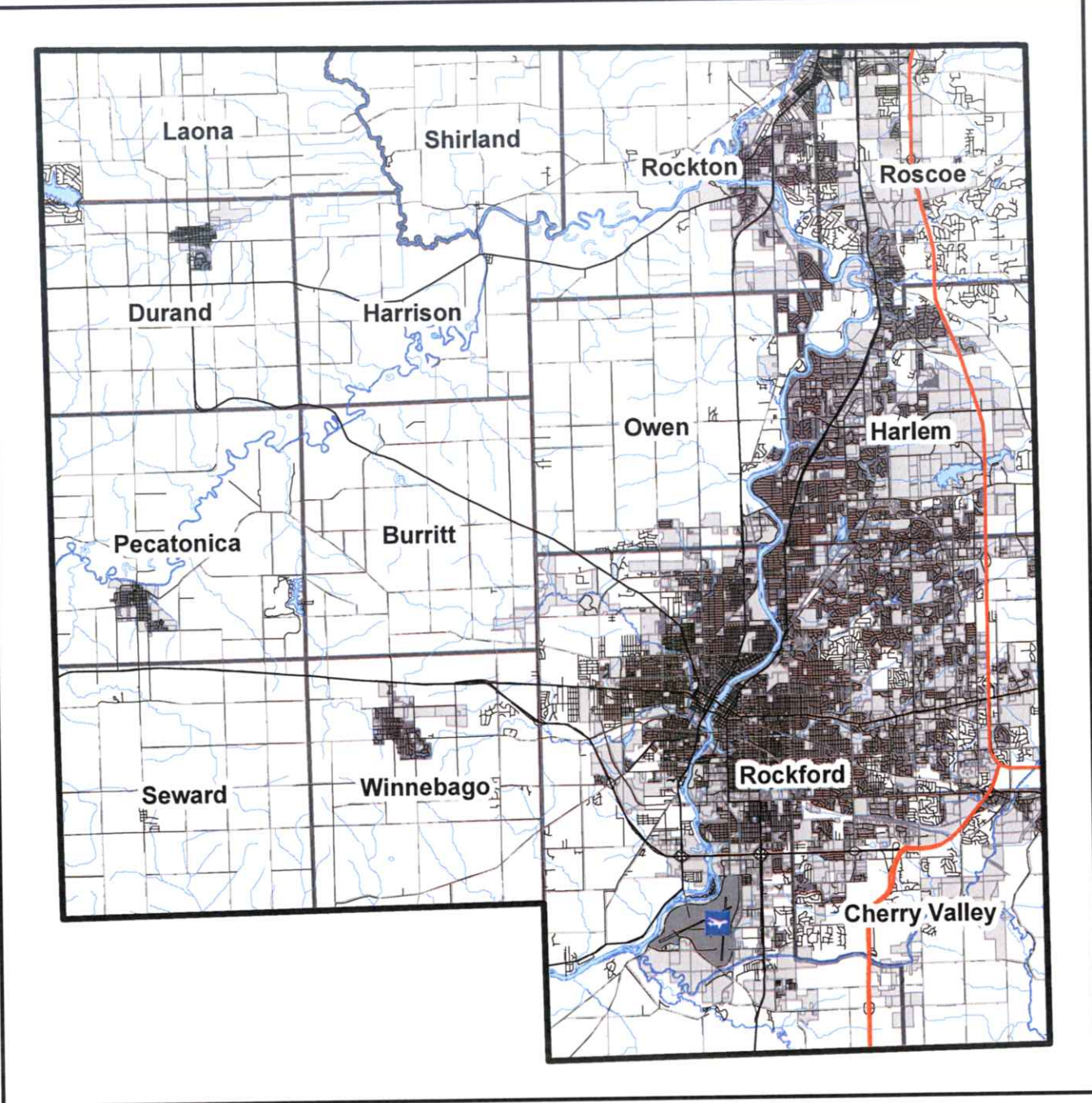
2030 Land Resource Management Plan Organization

This *Plan* is organized according to the requirements of the State of Illinois Local Planning Technical Assistance Act, which encourages local governments to engage in planning, regulatory and development approaches that promote and encourage comprehensive planning, and the supporting planning efforts of various units of local government working together. Plans developed in accordance with these guidelines may be eligible for additional funding preferences under various state programs.





This *Plan* is organized as follows:

- Chapter 1: History & Existing Land Use
- Chapter 2: Future Land Use Map
- Chapter 3: Agriculture
- Chapter 4: Residential Land Use
- Chapter 5: Economic Development
- Chapter 6: Growth
- Chapter 7: Natural Resources
- Chapter 8: Public Utilities & Facilities
- Chapter 9: Transportation
- Chapter 10: Telecommunications & Technology

Because this *Plan* covers the unincorporated land within the County, presenting the future land use information on a single map within this document lacks sufficient detail. Therefore the future land use map (Chapter 2) is broken down into township maps after presentation of the full County map. The location of each township within the County is indicated in [Figure 1: Township Map](#), as well as in a location key on each individual township map. Other *Plan* maps are not broken down by township.



Legend

-  Winnebago County
-  Townships
-  Airport Property
-  Incorporated Boundary

*Data Source Courtesy of WinGIS



Figure 1: Townships Map

2030 Land Resource Management Plan
 Winnebago County, Illinois

CAMIROS

Introduction