

Chapter 2 Future Land Use

The overall future development pattern for the County directs development to areas adjacent to municipal boundaries, in particular medium density residential development. Industrial and commercial development is reserved for key transportation corridors and nodes. The majority of future development is contained within existing and proposed Facility Planning Areas (FPA), which indicate that wastewater service is available, or planned, for those areas. Much of the Future Land Use Map has also taken into consideration the land use plans of the incorporated municipalities and reflects the desired growth patterns of the cities and villages.

Table 2: Future Land Use Analysis by Township describes future land use policy by township. It should be noted that Table 2 highlights future land use only.

For example, in Laona Township, additional land is planned for forest preserve, while the majority of the township will remain primarily agriculture. Therefore, Table 2 indicates only that there is additional land area reserved for open space and forest preserve, and no additional residential, commercial or industrial land uses are planned. It is important to remember, when looking at this map, that the intent is to plan for development over the next 20 years. There are areas of significant growth planned, but these are anticipated to occur gradually, not all at once. It is also not the intent of this map to immediately rezone these areas to a zoning district that matches the future land use category. For example, much of the area shown as future residential development will remain in an agricultural zoning district until such time as conditions are right and development requirements can be satisfied to rezone that area. This Future Land Use Map allows for informed decision-making on future land use policy and to shape specific regulations within the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and other development controls. It is important to note, however, that the map remains a policy document and not a specific regulatory control.

TABLE 2: FUTURE LAND USE ANALYSIS BY TOWNSHIP
 (SEE FIGURE 1 FOR TOWNSHIP LOCATIONS)

Township	Future Land Use
Laona	<p>Laona Township is a rural township. Existing agriculture-rural residential uses are absorbed into the agriculture land use to preserve their more agricultural character and prevent the fragmenting of large swaths of farmland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Additional land is reserved for forest preserve → The eastern boundary of the township is within the River Corridor Protection Overlay → No new residential, commercial or industrial development
Durand	<p>Future development within Durand Township is adjacent to the Village of Durand. Medium density residential development is the predominant type of new development planned adjacent to the Village. Agriculture-rural residential uses have been absorbed into farmland, which is the majority land use in the township.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Additional medium density residential development is planned adjacent to Durand’s municipal boundaries → Commercial retail development, adjacent to Durand, is planned along Center Road
Pecatonica	<p>The future development of land in Pecatonica Township is planned for areas adjacent to the Village of Pecatonica’s boundaries. Significant amounts of new residential uses are anticipated south of the current Village boundaries. There are also plans for commercial or a mix of office and commercial uses along Pecatonica Road and along Highway 20. Some of the Village’s planning extends into Seward Township.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Significant land area along the Pecatonica River is reserved for open space and forest preserve, and land along the river is within the River Corridor Protection Overlay → A variety of commercial land uses are planned for areas along Pecatonica Road and Highway 20 (which is just south of the township’s boundaries) → Future medium density residential is planned for areas north of Highway 20 and low density residential is planned for areas south of Highway 20
Seward	<p>Seward Township is a rural township that contains the Town of Seward (not incorporated) in its boundaries. However, there is a significant amount of land designated for industrial use, expanding upon the town’s current industrial areas. Additional medium-density residential development in the town is planned for areas along Pecatonica Road. (The Village of Pecatonica has planned for areas in the northwest corner of the township – see Pecatonica Township summary above.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Additional land planned for open space/forest preserve → Along the CC&P railroad spur, through the Town of Seward, land is reserved for medium and heavy industrial uses → Medium density residential uses are planned along the town’s western edge, along Pecatonica Road
Shirland	<p>Shirland Township is rural in character and includes the Town of Shirland (not incorporated) in its boundaries. With the exception of additional forest preserve land along the river, including land within the River Corridor Protection Overlay, no new development is planned for the future. The agriculture-rural residential land uses seen in the existing land use map are absorbed into farmland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Significant land is reserved for open space/forest preserve along the river (also within the River Corridor Protection Overlay) → No new residential, commercial or industrial development → No expansion of the town is anticipated

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Township	Future Land Use
Harrison	<p>Harrison Township's future development is very similar to that of Shirland Township. The township is rural in character and includes the Town of Harrison (not incorporated). Additional forest preserve land is planned along the river, where the River Corridor Protection Overlay is also applied, and no new development is anticipated. Agriculture-rural residential uses are absorbed into farmland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Significant land is reserved for open space/forest preserve along the river(also within the River Corridor Protection Overlay) → No new residential, commercial or industrial development → No expansion of the town is anticipated
Burritt	<p>Burritt Township is very rural in nature and does not contain any hamlets, as similar townships like Shirland and Harrison do. With the exception of additional forest preserve land and land area within the River Corridor Protection Overlay, the primary development change in Burritt Township is the absorption of agriculture-rural residential into the agriculture land use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Land is reserved for open space/forest preserve along the river and IL Rte. 70 → No new residential, commercial or industrial development
Winnebago	<p>Future development in Winnebago County is driven primarily by the Village of Winnebago, which is located within the township, and the expansion of the City of Rockford from the east. The Village has planned for development along the major roadways of Highway 20 to the north and the CC&P railroad spur to the south. Light industrial and commercial uses are planned for the areas along these roadways, and medium density residential is anticipated adjacent to the Village's boundaries in between. The Village also maintains the open space to the east of the Village boundaries, some of which is cemetery land, to create a community separation area from Rockford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Open space land uses exist and are planned for the eastern boundary of the Village to maintain a community separation area between Winnebago (Village) and Rockford → Medium density residential development is planned adjacent to the Village as well as areas to the east of the open space community separation area, between Highway 20 and Cunningham Road → Significant commercial is planned along Highway 20 and heavy commercial or light industrial along the CC&P railroad spur → Some light industrial development is planned along the railroad spur and behind commercial development along Highway 20 <p>Along the eastern boundary of the township there is significant development of both industrial and residential uses. Industrial development is planned north of Highway 20, as well as along Meridian Rd. at Cunningham Rd., and at the CC&P railroad spur. Medium density residential development is planned east of the community separation area created by open space approaching the municipal boundary. Finally, low density residential development, intended to transition from the more developed areas in Rockford to the more rural parts of the County are planned between Montague Rd. and Kelley Rd. in the area between Meridian Rd. and Weldon Rd.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Areas near key transportation assets are planned for industrial land uses → Medium density residential land uses are planned for areas where that pattern of development currently exists → Low density residential in the southeastern portion of the township transitions from more urban to rural development patterns → Additional land is reserved for open space/forest preserve in the southeast corner

TABLE 2: FUTURE LAND USE ANALYSIS BY TOWNSHIP
 (SEE FIGURE 1 FOR TOWNSHIP LOCATIONS)

Township	Future Land Use
Rockton	<p>Areas adjacent to the City of South Beloit and the Village of Rockton are planned for additional medium density residential with some low density residential planned for the area north of Roscoe Rd. and east of Rockton Ave., as well as industrial along key roadways such as Main Rd./IL Rte. 2. Heavy commercial or light industrial is planned for the northeast corner of the township. Along the Rock River, significant land area is set aside either as forest preserve or within the River Corridor Protection Overlay to minimize the impacts of development on the river.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The western portion of the township is planned for additional open space/forest preserve along the Rock River and the River Corridor Protection Overlay → Industrial land uses are planned in the southeast with heavy commercial or light industrial in the northeast → Residential development is planned for areas adjacent to the nearby municipalities
Owen	<p>A large amount of medium density residential development is planned for the southern and eastern boundaries of the township, correlating with the expansion of IL Rte. 2 to four lanes, making it a key north-south access road for the County, and the extension of the Rock River Water Reclamation District sewer expansion. There is also a transition to the more rural parts of the County with low density residential along the western boundary of the township. Retail, heavy and light industrial uses are reserved for key intersections along IL Rte. 2 (Roscoe Road, Gleasman Road, Latham Road and Elmwood Road) in an effort to accommodate anticipated demand for residential land in areas where infrastructure is or will be available. Along the river, areas of low density residential and open space are planned for, as well as designation within the River Corridor Protection Overlay, out of concern for impacts on the watershed.</p> <p>In order to encourage mixed-use development, the TND Land Use Overlay has been applied along IL Rte. 2 from Roscoe Rd. to just south of Latham Rd. and between Halley Rd. and Elmwood Rd., east and west of Owen Center Rd. Strictly residential uses in these areas may not necessarily be the most desirable land use. However, designating all of this land area non-residential has the potential to create large swaths of anonymous big box commercial uses. Residential areas located between key intersections along the corridor break up the non-residential land uses and prevent large-scale uncoordinated commercial users. For example, the TND design would permit additional commercial along Rt. 2 (outside of the intersections) but that commercial would have to be integrated within a mixed-use development, providing a well-designed community character along the roadway as opposed to strip commercial.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The majority of planned residential in the township is medium density → Along the river, limited low density residential and open space is designated to mitigate impacts on the watershed → Along IL Rte. 2, commercial and industrial uses are planned at key intersections, with significant residential development to the rear → TND design is encouraged along the Rt. 2 corridor, and between Halley Rd. and Elmwood Rd., east and west of Owen Center Rd. → A large park is proposed in the northwest corner of the township

TABLE 1: EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS BY TOWNSHIP
 (SEE FIGURE 1 FOR TOWNSHIP LOCATIONS)

Township	Future Land Use
<p>Rockford</p>	<p>Future land uses in Rockford Township generally locate additional medium density residential in the northern half of the township adjacent to Loves Park and Rockford. Significant industrial or heavy commercial and/or light industrial development is planned along the western boundary beginning just north of Highway 20 and extending to the northern boundary, including the area surrounding the airport. The township also includes the Springfield Rd. Corridor, for which the County has adopted a land use plan, which is reflected in the map. A TND Overlay is also located along Rotary Rd. to encourage developments that integrate commercial and residential uses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Residential land uses are planned for the northwest portion of the township, adjacent to Rockford and Loves Park → Additional forest preserve land is planned along the Kishwaukee River, as well as designation of the River Corridor Protection Overlay → Industrial land uses are reserved for areas surrounding the airport, and along Highway 20 and Baxter Road
<p>Cherry Valley</p>	<p>The primary future development in Cherry Valley Township is medium density residential. The industrial development planned along Baxter Road, the majority of which is located in Rockford Township, also extends into Cherry Valley Township.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Medium density residential land uses are planned adjacent to Cherry Valley and Rockford → Industrial land uses are planned along Baxter Rd. to Perryville Rd. → Additional open space/forest preserve land is located along the Kishwaukee River, including designation of the River Corridor Protection Overlay
<p>Roscoe</p>	<p>The majority of future development in Roscoe Township is medium density residential, including the redevelopment of existing low density residential developments in the southeast corner of the township. The residential development is planned adjacent to South Beloit and Roscoe. Industrial uses are planned along I-90, and also at 2nd St. where the C&NW railroad spur intersects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Medium density residential land uses are planned adjacent to municipalities → Industrial and heavy commercial land uses are planned for unincorporated areas along I-90, 2nd St. and Highway 51
<p>Harlem</p>	<p>The majority of Harlem Township is incorporated (Roscoe, Machesney Park and Loves Park). Medium density residential land uses are planned for both the northern and southern areas of the township's eastern boundary, with TND design encouraged in the residential areas south of IL Rte. 173. Some commercial and industrial uses are planned along I-90 where limited unincorporated land remains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The majority of future land use is medium density residential adjacent to municipal boundaries → Some industrial and commercial is planned along the I-90 Corridor where there is unincorporated land

Chapter 3

Agriculture



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Agriculture is part of Winnebago County's identity and its economy. As Tom Jennings, the director of Agriculture for the State of Illinois has said, "Agriculture is a rewarding and challenging industry which employs a quarter of the state's workforce and is critical to the economy here in Illinois. We are a leading producer of crops such as corn and soybeans and also a leading producer of livestock. In addition, we are one of the top states for exports, making agriculture a key component to the bottom line here in Illinois."

Preserving prime agricultural land and maintaining the rural character of the County was identified as a top priority throughout the planning process. Therefore, the agricultural land use policy exerts significant influence over other land use policies, in particular future residential development (Chapter 4).

Established Planning Policies

Previous land use policies regarding agriculture, as established by earlier County, regional and municipal plans, sought to accomplish three objectives: 1) emphasize the importance of agriculture to the County's economy; 2) acknowledge and manage the pressure to develop prime agricultural farmland as a non-agricultural use; and 3) reinforce the need to protect prime farmland, even with continued growth. The strategies proposed a variety of methods to conserve



Agriculture is valued by Winnebago County as both part of its economy and identity.

farmland, such as revising development regulations, prohibiting incompatible uses adjacent to farms, encouraging cluster development, and encouraging infill development within incorporated municipalities and existing towns to reduce sprawl into rural areas. This *Plan* builds upon those policies and also the "Principles of Balanced Growth: Winnebago County Balanced Growth Initiative," previously adopted by the County, in an effort to further implement smart growth strategies.

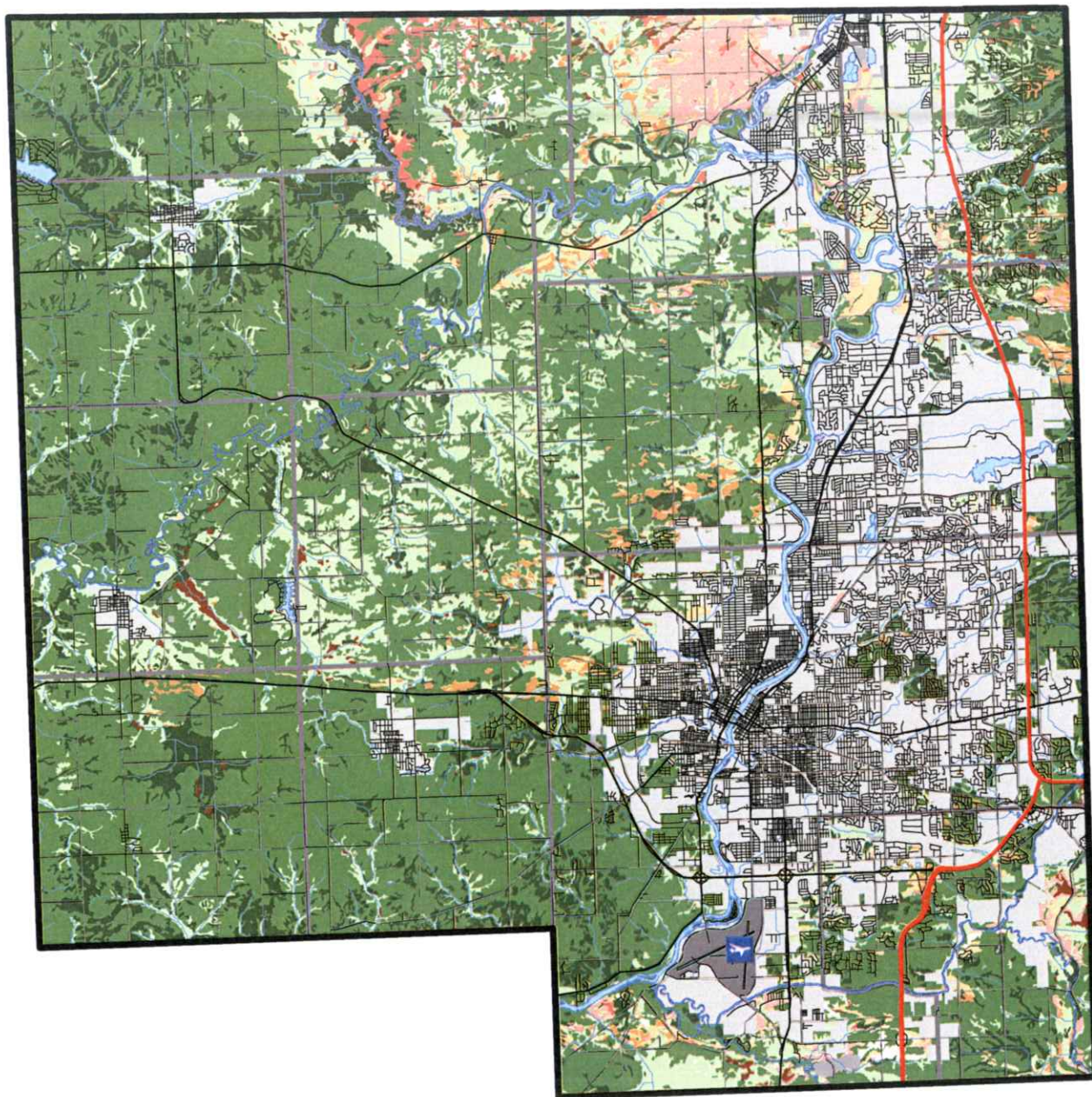
Overview of Agriculture

According to the US Department of Agriculture, in 2002, 58% of the County's total land area was devoted to agriculture, with 53% of the total land area used specifically as cropland. However, over the past 30 years, the amount of land devoted to farming has been decreasing, along with a decrease in the number of farms. Between 1969 and 2002, Winnebago County lost 20% of its farmland (acres) and 41% of its farms (number of farms).

On the other hand, there has been a steady increase in average farm size. Winnebago County's average farm size increased from 202 to 275 acres between 1969 and 2002 - a 36% increase in size. Farms larger than 1,000 acres more than tripled in Winnebago County. In 1969 there were only 14 farms with 1,000 acres or more, but by 2002 there were 60. Generally, these statistics indicate a trend of a decrease in the amount of overall farmland within Winnebago County but an increase in the average farm size.

Figure 4: Soil Types shows the different soil types present within the County. The County soils are some of the richest agricultural soils in the Midwest. Much of Winnebago County is made up of upland soils, rich in minerals and organic matter as a result of the last ice age, and now covered by rolling hills, wooded areas and flat lands. Winnebago County's soils are loam, which are the deep, rich soils that typically make up the fertile agricultural lands of the Midwest. They are comprised of material which is gritty and high in organic matter, often with nutrients and a consistency highly suitable for farming.

Loamy soils vary in composition, with different amounts of sand, silt or clay contained within them, which impact water permeability, likelihood for erosion, and suitability for septic systems. Sand is the coarsest granular material and fastest draining of these naturally-occurring materials, followed by silt,



Legend

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|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Winnebago County | Loamy sands | Loam |
| Townships | Loamy Coarse Sand | Loam |
| Incorporated Boundary | Loamy Fine Sand | Silt Loam |
| | Sandy loams | Silty Clay Loam |
| | Sandy Loam | Other Soil Types |
| | Fine Sandy Loam | Pits/Quarry/Limestone |
| | | Muck/Peat |

*Data Source Courtesy of WinGIS



Figure 4: Soil Types

2030 Land Resource Management Plan
Winnebago County, Illinois

which is more sedimentary in nature and can occur as a component of soil or at the bottom of a water body. Clay is the finest soil component of the three. It is very fine-grained material with a high level of plasticity due to its water retention capabilities. Clay



Winnebago County contains some of the best agricultural soil in the country. Valuable topsoil must be protected from erosion. (Photo by Lynn Betts, USDA-NRCS)

is traditionally least suitable soil for agricultural uses due to its high density and inability to drain water. The majority of the County is covered by a silt loam, on plains of level to gently sloping land that was once grass prairie and marsh land. Silt is a sedimentary rock particle, or rock dust, created by the weathering of rock due to glacial, wind or water activity. Silt loam is a moderately permeable soil type and is slightly susceptible to erosion. The largest soil associations with this soil type is the Griswold-Winnebago loam, which covers the central region of the County, and the Tama-Ogle-Plano silt loam, in the southern portion of the County.

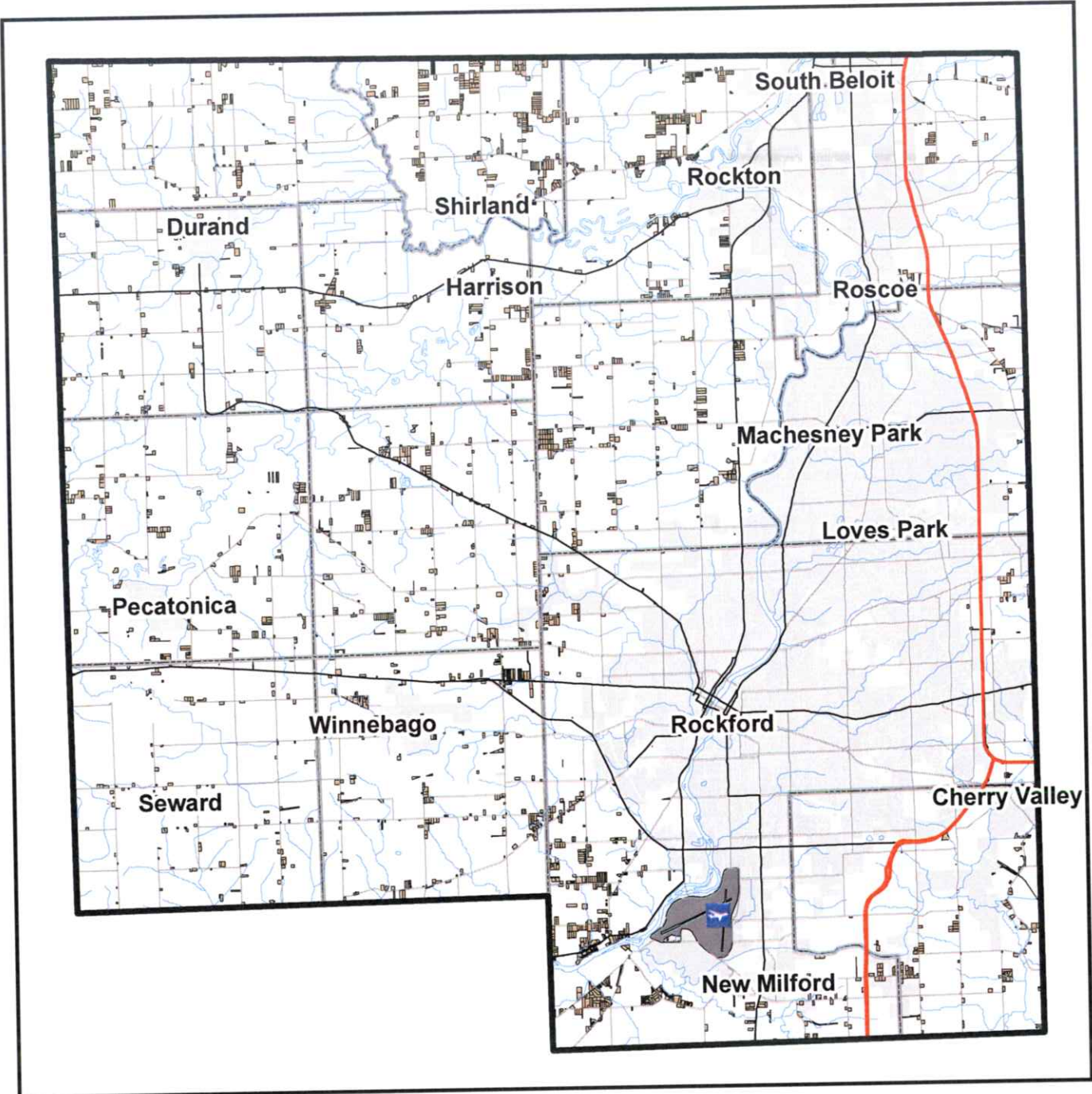
Sandy loams occur less frequently, and are generally better drained than the silt loam variety more common

across the County. The sandy and fine sand loam soils are found predominantly in north central Winnebago County on moderate to steep slopes. This soil type is suitable for agricultural land, as well as pasture land and timber production. Sand has larger grain particulate matter than silt or clay, and as a result has excellent drainage characteristics.

The texture of soil is also a key factor in determining the appropriateness of agricultural use. Texture is determined by evaluating the proportion of clay, silt and sand particles within the soil. Generally, coarse-textured soils are sandy, medium-textured soils contain mainly silt, and fine-textured soils have a high percentage of clay.

- Medium-textured soils are the most desirable for agriculture. Medium-textured soil includes clay loam, silty clay loam, sandy clay loam, silt, silt loam, loam, and sandy loam.
- Coarse-textured soil, which includes sand and loamy sand, is a poor plant nutrient supplier; it readily absorbs water but does not retain much for plant uptake. This is important because, with reduced plant uptake, the potential for leaching – and therefore, the potential for contamination – is increased. As water moves through the soil rapidly, fertilizer nutrients can be leached from the soil. Coarse-textured soils are less desirable for agricultural use.
- Fine-textured soils include clay, silty clay, and sandy clay. If organic matter is low, the rate of water intake is slow and water erosion may be serious, even on gentle slopes. Again, clay is traditionally least suitable for agricultural uses due to high density and inability to drain water. Fine-textured soils are not generally suitable for agriculture.

Preservation is the focus of agricultural land use policies; however, one of the major challenges is the encroachment of incompatible development, in particular new residential development, in particular new residential development. There are two different types of residential development occurring within the County that are having significant impact on existing agricultural uses and removing prime farmland from agricultural use. The first is single lot, very low density single-family residential development, located in more rural, remote areas throughout the unincorporated County. In this *Plan*, that type of development has been labeled “agriculture - rural residential.” These scattered residential sites cause conflict with existing agricultural uses by breaking up the continuity of large areas devoted to farming and increasing the potential for nuisance conflicts between



Legend

- Winnebago County
- Townships
- Incorporated Boundary
- Airport Property
- Agriculture - Rural Residential

*Data Source Courtesy of WinGIS

Figure 5: Agr. - Rural Residential Development

2030 Land Resource Management Plan
 Winnebago County, Illinois



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