

# **Maple Grove AEA**

**Shawano County  
Town of Maple Grove**

**PART II. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE FOR AEA**

*DATCP will evaluate petitions under s. 91.86, Wis. Stats., and will consider information provided in response to the following questions.*

**1. What are the agricultural land use and development goals of the proposed AEA?**

*Include a discussion of proposed agricultural uses and agricultural-related uses, including a discussion of relevant infrastructure in the AEA. Explain how the proposed AEA will advance the state’s goal of agricultural preservation and development. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.*

The Town of Maple Grove seeks to ensure that agriculture remains a quality way of life, economic base, and land use within the town. The Town has identified the following primary means to guarantee that agriculture is a way of life for current and future generations:

**Maintain Agricultural Infrastructure**

Maintaining existing agricultural infrastructure is important to ensure the continued success of Maple Grove as an agricultural community. Agricultural infrastructure includes agriculture related business, farmland, and human resources.



*Maple Grove Landscape*

In as much as the State has identified the preservation of farmland as a priority and has, through the efforts of the Working Lands Initiative demonstrated that agriculture and agricultural related enterprises are a significant part of the Wisconsin economy. The Town of Maple Grove resonates with the States renewed efforts to revitalize the programs and plans that support the preservation of agriculture. The State has also allowed communities to demonstrate through the creation and implementation of their comprehensive plans via Smart Growth Planning their own destinies in regard to land use and the preservation of agriculture in regard to the Working Lands Initiative. Preserving and

protecting farmland from non-agricultural development is primary to ensuring that agriculture remains viable in the Town of Maple Grove. A key step to maintaining the agricultural land base is limiting the amount of residential and non-agricultural related commercial development within the Town.

Individuals interested in farming and farmers are necessary to ensure the continued viability of agricultural production in the Town of Maple Grove. As the average farmer age increases at the Town and County levels it is increasingly important to ensure lines of succession and that interested new farmers are supported and informed as they enter the industry.

Through the Agricultural Enterprise Area, the Town of Maple Grove intends to support existing farmers by identifying means to increase productivity and cooperation while promoting the sale of products produced within the AEA. The Town of Maple Grove has recently seen expansion and development of agriculture related businesses. Through the Agricultural Enterprise Area, the Town intends to support and expand local agriculture related businesses.

**2. What activities are planned in the proposed AEA to achieve the agricultural preservation and development goals?**

*Describe any planned activities within the AEA, including grants, development incentives, cooperative agreements, land or easement purchases, land donations, promotional activities, public outreach or other actions that will help achieve the stated goals. Identify other individuals and entities involved in these efforts and their level of commitment. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.*

Subsequent to receiving the AEA designation the Town of Maple Grove and Petitioners will hold a public meeting to discuss the next steps for the Enterprise Area and determine an appropriate leadership structure. Leadership within the Agricultural Enterprise Area is essential in identifying the AEA to the general public and planning future endeavors. Agricultural Enterprise Area leaders will focus on two primary goals; to educate the public, particularly area youth, on agriculture and to market and promote the agricultural enterprise area.

As part of the petitioning process it was quickly identified that area youth needed to be educated on agriculture and farming opportunities. Educational efforts will assist students in identifying future career paths in agriculture while instilling a respect for the protection of agricultural land. Agricultural Enterprise Area leadership will collaborate with the Pulaski School District to ensure that agriculture is a part of school curriculum. Additionally, Betley Farms, LLC has already offered to provide tours of their operations to area school children.

Marketing and promotion of the AEA is critical to its success. After designation of the AEA, the Town and University of Wisconsin-Extension staff will identify interested farmers and brainstorm ways that collaboration and marketing will assist in being more productive. Preliminary ideas include increasing communication between area farmers and agricultural related businesses, as well as, the creation of a “brand” associated with the AEA.

**3. How will the AEA location promote agricultural preservation and development?**

*Explain what is special about this location. Include why the proposed AEA is geographically well “targeted” for agricultural preservation and development. Explain how the geographic distribution of existing agricultural uses and related infrastructure helped determine the location (see next). Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.*

The designation of an Agricultural Enterprise Area within the Town of Maple Grove will demonstrate to other jurisdictions that it is possible to have the political will necessary to maintain and preserve agriculture. So many jurisdictions in the region have caved to development pressure. The Town of Maple Grove is unique in that the Town faces development pressure, primarily due to the Town’s proximity to Green Bay and Pulaski Schools, but has consistently refused to allow non-farm development. As depicted in Exhibit 6 this stance is very unique within the vicinity and has lead to remarkably less development than what has been allowed in other jurisdictions, even jurisdictions under farmland preservation zoning.



*Development in the Town of Angelica*

So many local towns offer the same reasons for allowing non-agricultural development. The rational

for permitting development generally centers on increasing the tax base, remaining economically stable and allowing farmers to profit from the sale of land. It is important that jurisdictions have knowledge of a local government that has successfully prohibited non-agriculture development.

Ironically, it is the fact that Maple Grove has and will continue to face development pressure that makes it the best candidate for designation of an agricultural enterprise area. Maple Grove is located at the transition between fringe development and rural land uses. If not for the Town's stance on agricultural preservation, residential and commercial development would have outpaced development in adjacent jurisdictions given the proximity to the Green Bay metropolitan area. The Town has had the initiative to hold that line for the past 36 years. Acknowledgement and support of that distinction at the State level will validate and assist their efforts.

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#### **4. How did you determine the size and the boundary of the proposed AEA?**

*Explain why the size and boundaries are appropriate, and will help “focus” preservation development efforts. As part of the explanation, include a discussion of agricultural uses and infrastructure, unique land resources, soil productivity, proximity to viable farm markets or processing facilities, and other relevant factors. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.*

Of all the decisions and questions necessitated as part of the Agricultural Enterprise Area Petition, this was the most difficult for the Town of Maple Grove to answer. Determining the boundary of the AEA forced the Town to analyze their guiding principle that all productive agricultural land is deserving of preservation and protection.

The Town discussed multiple options to reduce the area of the proposed AEA. Ranging from excluding sections further from major roadways, allowing greater expansion area for the Village of Pulaski, to hope that petitioners would be located in one area of the Town and the AEA could simply be drawn around their property.

After several meetings, the Town of Maple Grove quickly ascertained that there was not an objective rationale for limiting the size of the AEA. The Town determined that it would be best to size the proposed AEA in accordance with the Town and County adopted Comprehensive Plans and Shawano County's Farmland Preservation Plan.

As depicted in Exhibit 1, the Shawano County and Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plans depict the vast majority of the Town of Maple Grove within the Agriculture and Resource Preservation Future Land Use Category. This is the most restrictive resource based future land use category contained within the Town and County comprehensive plans, allowing non-agriculture residential development at a density of one dwelling unit per 35-acres owned. The proposed AEA boundary reflects the area designated for agriculture or agriculture related development within the Town. The proposed AEA boundary, similar to the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan, allows for further expansion of the Village of Pulaski, travel related commercial development at the interchange of Highway 55 and Highway 29 and excludes existing development in the hamlet of Hofa Park. The proposed AEA also correlates with the location of the petitioners and participants in the existing farmland preservation plan.

Additionally, the size of the proposed AEA was supported by the Shawano County Farmland Preservation Plan which depicts the entirety of the Town as Prime Agriculture – First Class, with the exception of the Hofa Park area and the area immediately surrounding the Village of Pulaski. The Town of Maple Grove contains the most productive soils within Shawano County substantiating the Town's inclination towards a larger, almost town wide, Agricultural Enterprise Area.

The Town recognized the importance of including areas for agricultural related commercial development and included an area between Highway 29 and Main Laney Drive within the proposed AEA for agriculture related commercial activities. To date two retailers have been permitted within this area for the sale of locally grown produce.

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The Town also wanted to ensure that there was area for growth of the Agricultural Enterprise Area. Although the adjacent Towns of Lessor and Angelica have not demonstrated strong support for agricultural preservation, the Town of Pittsfield in Brown County has demonstrated interest in eventually having a portion of their Town be situated within an Agricultural Enterprise Area. The adjacent Town of Seymour, in Outagamie County is also primarily agricultural in use, has a certified farmland preservation zoning district and could be a feasible area for expansion of the AEA. Reflecting potential growth the entirety of the eastern and southern boundaries was included in the proposed AEA boundary.

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## **5. What are the current land uses within the proposed AEA?**

*Provide documentation to show that the proposed AEA is primarily in agricultural use. Describe the percentage and distribution of agricultural and agriculture-related uses; residential uses; transportation, utility, energy and communications uses; undeveloped natural resource and open space uses; and other uses as applicable. Identify the principal types of agricultural use and describe the location, geographic scope, size, significance and compatibility of those agricultural uses. Describe current trends and emerging issues within the proposed area. Attach a land use map for the area to support this explanation (at the town or county scale).*

Agriculture and related activities are the primary land uses within the Town of Maple Grove. As depicted in Exhibit 3: Existing Land Use in the Town of Maple Grove Enterprise Area, 87.4% of the proposed area is in agricultural use and 6.5% is undeveloped natural resource and open space. The remainder of the Enterprise Area is primarily comprised of right-of-way and rural residences (5.7%).

Agricultural activities in the Town of Maple Grove are primarily centered on both small and large scale dairy operations. Dairy operations within the Agricultural Enterprise Area are at a variety of scales from small family farms to larger operations such as the Betley Farms, LLC with 1820 animal units. Agricultural related businesses in the area support dairy operations and are comprised of cash croppers, milk haulers, implement dealers, and feed sales.

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## **6. How is the proposed AEA consistent with your other local land use plans?**

*The entire proposed AEA must be located within a farmland preservation area designation in the county's certified farmland preservation plan (please document). Explain how the proposed AEA is consistent with existing county and local land use plans. If there are inconsistencies, explain how they will be reconciled. Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.*

As stated under question number 4, the AEA was sized in accordance with relevant land use plans, including the Town of Maple Grove and Shawano County Comprehensive Plans as well as the 1982 Shawano County Farmland Preservation Plan.

The Town of Maple Grove has not altered its stance on agricultural protection and all historic land use plans, including the 1974 Comprehensive Plan, 1996 Land Management Plan, and the 2008 Comprehensive Plan have outlined the same vision for the preservation of agriculture. The 2008 Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan, prepared in conformance with Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes, centers around retaining the Town's agricultural land. The Town planned collaboratively with Shawano County and 26 area municipalities. By design the County Comprehensive Plan incorporates the provisions contained within the local comprehensive plans. Designation of the Agricultural Enterprise Area would assist in implementing the goals and policies contained within the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan. Excerpts from the relevant chapters of the Town of Maple Grove's Comprehensive Plan are attached as Exhibit 7.

Pursuant to section 66.1001 all land use decisions need to be consistent with the jurisdictions adopted comprehensive plan. All attempts have been made to make decisions consistently with the comprehensive plans and to have the comprehensive plan correlate with all other land use plans. The Wisconsin

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Department of Transportation Highway 29 Corridor Preservation Study outlines only a single access point to Highway 29 at the State Highway 55 interchange. This correlates with the Town's rural vision for their community and provides for an appropriate use of State and Town infrastructure. While inconveniencing existing property owners, limiting access to the major transportation route will help prevent future non-agricultural development.

The Town of Maple Grove understands that the health of rural communities is intrinsically connected to the health of incorporated areas. The Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan provides for growth of the Village of Pulaski and this area was also excluded from the proposed Agricultural Enterprise Area and the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the Village of Pulaski's Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the Village of Pulaski has submitted a letter in support of the designation of the Agricultural Enterprise Area.

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## **7. What nonagricultural development trends affect the proposed AEA?**

*Explain current development trends affecting the proposed AEA. Describe the likelihood that land in the AEA will transition out of agriculture in the foreseeable future (note that an AEA may not include any area planned for nonagricultural development within the next 15 years). Attach supporting documentation, where appropriate.*



*Desired Development Pattern in the adjacent Towns of Angelica and Lessor*

The East Central region, like so much of the State, has faced the conversion of farmland to sprawling residential development. As depicted in Exhibit 6, the majority of Towns in the vicinity of Maple Grove have seen significant increases in the construction of new single family residences. Residential development pressure in this area is related to several factors, the most prevalent of these being improvements to State Highway 29 and draw of being located in the Pulaski School District.

As Towns in the vicinity of Maple Grove embrace development drawn to the area by the ease of commuting to the Green Bay area via Highway

29 and Pulaski System, the area available for individuals seeking a rural setting also diminishes. This situation drives the demand for residential development into rural areas and farther from urban amenities.

To varying degrees, the towns adjacent to Maple Grove have accommodated rural residential development. From the Town of Pittsfield which mapped "Estate Residential" as a desired future land use and the Towns of Angelica and Lessor which allow a new single family residence per 290-feet of frontage on an existing public road.

The Town of Maple Grove's response has not altered from 1974, when the Town determined that non-farm residences would only be allowed if they were for the parents or off spring of a farm operator. This stance has ensured that farm land in production has remained consistent for the past 36 years.

Designation of the Agricultural Enterprise Area will provide an example of agricultural preservation in a region with limited jurisdictions willing to strongly support farming. Additionally it would provide area property owners both within and near the Town of Maple Grove with certainty that agriculture will remain

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a protected and promoted land use within the area.

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**8. How will current or proposed land use controls support the proposed AEA?**

*Describe current and proposed land use controls such as zoning ordinances (farmland preservation, shoreland, wetland), farmland preservation agreements, easements, subdivision ordinances, natural area protections or other similar controls. If the area is zoned, attach a zoning map for the area (at the town or county scale). Attach documentation, where appropriate.*

On August 13, 1974, the Maple Grove Town Board officially adopted the Exclusive Agricultural Zoning district. Maple Grove was the first town in Shawano County to adopt the Exclusive Agriculture zone.

The Town of Maple Grove has remained staunch in their support of the Exclusive Agricultural zoning district which was transitioned into the AG-2 zoning district in 2005. The AG-2 zoning district was maintained for the exclusive use of the Town of Maple Grove, who wanted greater protection of agricultural lands than other towns within Shawano County.

The current land use control supporting the proposed Maple Grove Agriculture Enterprise Area as well as the entirety of the Town of Maple Grove is the AG-2 Exclusive Agriculture Zoning District. According to the Shawano County Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of the Agricultural Zoning District is to provide for and encourage agricultural uses of land, related uses, and certain residential uses in a rural environment. The difference in zone depends upon the intensity of the land use and proximity to urbanizing development. The zones of the Agricultural Zoning District include:

- 1) A-G General Agriculture
- 2) A-R Agricultural Residential
- 3) A-G-1 General Agriculture – First Class Zone
- 4) A-290 Agriculture – Residential Zone
- 5) A-G-2 Exclusive Agriculture – Restricted

The most restrictive of the agricultural districts is the AG-2 Exclusive Agriculture–Restricted District. The purpose of the AG-2 Exclusive Agriculture District is to:

- 1) Preserve agricultural land for food and fiber production
- 2) Protect productive farms from non-farm development
- 3) Maintain a viable agricultural, base to support agriculture processing and service industries
- 4) Prevent conflicts between farm and non-farm land uses
- 5) Reduce costs of providing services to scattered non-farm uses
- 6) Implement the provisions of the county farmland preservation plan when adopted and periodically revised
- 7) Comply with the provisions of the Farmland Preservation Law to permit eligible landowners to receive farmland preservation income tax credits

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The AG-2 Zoning District requires a minimum lot size of 35 acres, except for farm consolidation and in

those instances where a single family dwelling is to be established for one of the following reasons:

- a. A person who, or a family at least one adult member of which, earns the majority of his or her grows income from conducting the farm operations on the parcel
- b. A parent or child of an owner who satisfies certain income criteria, and
- c. A parent or child of an owner who resides on the parcel and who previously satisfied the income criteria.

The main permitted uses of the AG-2 Exclusive Agricultural District are Agriculture including animal and poultry husbandry, beekeeping, dairying and grazing, field crops, forestry, green houses, orchards and wild crop harvesting, truck farming, horticulture or viticulture, and structures accessory to farm operation.

### **Proposed Land use Controls**

The County is currently in the process of rewriting the zoning code. The County will be creating a code that reflects the wishes of the town through their comprehensive plan. Specifically the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan recognizes that the town is overwhelmingly agricultural in nature, with 87 percent of the land currently being used for this purpose. In 2000, approximately 28% of the Town's population lived on farms, and 25% of the adult population worked on farms, according to data provided from UW Program on Agricultural and Technical Studies (PATS).

Given the existing land use and population statistics, the Town of Maple Grove set the following Agricultural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies in their Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Goal:**

1. Preserve the majority of land in the Town for continued agricultural use.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Protect intensive farm operations from incompatible uses and activities.
2. Preserve the capacity of the most productive agricultural areas.
3. Work to preserve farming as a viable occupation, way of life, and open space preservation strategy.

#### **Policies:**

1. Direct non-farming uses away from areas with productive agricultural soils and into limited areas identified on Map 5 through land use planning, enforcement of zoning, and other mechanisms.
2. Promote the continuation of agriculture in the Town through encouraging agricultural-related businesses, value-added agriculture, and other farm family business opportunities to supplement farm income.

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### **9. How will the proposed AEA promote compliance with the state's soil and water standards for nonpoint source pollution?**

*Farmers in an AEA who enter into a farmland preservation agreement must meet the following state standards (ATCP 50, Wis. Adm. Code), to claim a tax credit. Please indicate whether any of the petitioners are already in compliance with these standards. Explain how the proposed AEA will promote compliance with conservation standards. Attach documentation, where appropriate.*

- *Control of soil erosion*
- *Nutrient management planning*
- *Prevention of direct runoff from feedlots or stored manure into state waters*
- *Prevention of overflowing manure storage structures*
- *Repair of failing and leaking manure storage structures and closure of abandoned manure storage structures*
- *Construction of new or substantially altered manure storage structures to technical standards*

- *No stacking of manure in unconfined piles in water quality management areas*
- *Diversion of clean water from feedlots, manure storage areas and barnyards in the water quality management area*
- *Maintenance of self-sustaining sod cover along waterways*

The proposed AEA will promote compliance with the state's soil and water standards for nonpoint source pollution through increased communication and onsite evaluation with landowners/operators. The Shawano County Land Conservation Department (LCD) has worked closely with many of these petitioners over the years to maintain eligibility for farm programs including but not limited to EQIP, CSP and FPP. Shawano County already requires these soil and water conservation standards are met through adoption and DATCP approval of the 2009 Shawano County Land & Water Resource Management Plan (Chapter 5 pg. 36-37) and Shawano County Animal Waste Management Ordinance (Sec. 5 pg. 8-9). See appendix. Farmland Preservation Program participants (zoning & individual agreements) will be subject to the required annual self certification process along with a complete evaluation once every four years where the Shawano County LCD will complete a farm evaluation checklist to determine compliance with the states' soil and water conservation standards. If certain conservation standards are not being met, landowners may continue to claim a tax credit as long as they:

- Certify to the county that they have or will develop a schedule of compliance to meet state conservation standards by a deadline established by the Shawano County LCD.
- Are working toward compliance in keeping with their schedule of compliance through a conservation plan or other method acceptable to the Shawano County LCD.
- Ultimately comply with all standards before the deadline set by the Shawano County LCD.

New participants and landowners who skip one or more years in claiming tax credits beginning with their 2009 tax return will need a certificate of compliance to be issued by the Shawano County Land Conservation Committee (LCC). The certificate will be issued only if compliance with the standards is achieved. Landowners must be actually in compliance, and cannot be treated as in compliance based on commitment to enter into a schedule of compliance. The Shawano County LCD will continue to offer landowners technical assistance along with helping locate cost sharing opportunities in attaining compliance with the state's soil and water standards.

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**10. How will the proposed AEA promote agricultural and related investment?**

*Describe current and proposed investment within the AEA. Identify key current and potential investors and their level of commitment. Explain how the AEA will promote or facilitate agricultural and related investment. Attach documentation, where appropriate.*

As of January 18, 2010, there are forty six agricultural livestock operations in the Town of Maple Grove. Thirty eight of the operations are less than 200 animal units. Six operations are between 200 and 500 animal units. One operation falls into the 501 to 999 animal unit category. There is one operation that exceeds 1,000 animal units. The following permits were issued between 2004-2009 for new agriculture related development:

**Table 1: Permits Issued within the Town of Maple Grove 2004-2009.**

Animal Waste Management Permits			Agriculture Related Land Use Permits	
Year	Number of Permits	Type	Number of Permits	Type
2004	2	2 - Feed Storage	2	2 - Barns
2005	0	N/A	6	2- Feed Storage 2- Barn Addition 2 - Machine Shed
2006	2	1 - New Barn 1 - Feed Storage	4	2 - Machine Sheds
2007	4	2 - Manure Storage 2 - New Barn	6	3 - Machine Sheds 2 - Animal Shelters 1 - Barn Addition
2008	6	4 - New Barn 1 - Feed Storage 1 - Manure Storage	6	4 - Machine Sheds 1 - Feed Storage 1 - Barn
2009	1	1 - New Barn/Feed Storage	7	2 - Machine Sheds 4 - Barns 1 - Milk House

The table demonstrates that agriculture and agricultural related investment are strong within the Town of Maple Grove. In fact, over the past two years agricultural investment has increased despite a sluggish economy. This trend is a testament to the commitment and staying power of the existing base line infrastructure that exists in the Town of Maple Grove. Farm operations may change as agriculture evolves, but farm operations remain within the community. These facts do not go unnoticed with agricultural related industries looking to invest in communities with a sustainable customer base.

The people, location and designation of an Agricultural Enterprise Area would render the Maple Grove AEA poised for economic success. As stated in other sections of this application, the Town of Maple Grove recognizes its strengths and weaknesses regarding economic development and identified issues in their Comprehensive Plan. Accordingly, the Town established goals and objectives to support economic development.

**Town of Maple Grove Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development**

- Excellent agricultural land and strong support for continued farming
- Good visibility and accessibility from STH 29 for the area around the STH 29/160 interchange
- Good transportation grid in Town
- Potential for future residential development could threaten continuation of farming
- Access from STH 29 to some potential commercial areas is indirect

- No public utilities

### **Economic Development Goals and Objectives from the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan**

**Goal:** Encourage high quality economic development opportunities appropriate to the Town’s resources, character, and service levels.

**Objectives:**

1. Focus economic development efforts on farming and farm-related businesses, and small, highway oriented businesses.
  2. Encourage small scale business in Hofa Park, Rose Lawn, and certain areas along STH 29, identified on Map 5.
  3. Seek economic development opportunities related to agriculture and natural resources.
  4. Discourage unplanned, continuous strip commercial development.
  5. Promote the careful placement and design of future mineral extraction sites, wireless telecommunication, facilities, and other uses that may have a significant visual, environmental, or neighboring property owner impacts.
  6. Accommodate high quality employment opportunities in areas planned for commercial uses.
  7. Establish design guidelines for new commercial and industrial development, particularly along STH 29.
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### **11. How will the proposed AEA support economic activity within the community?**

*Explain how the AEA will promote economic activity between agricultural enterprises or between agricultural and nonagricultural enterprises. This may include, for example, joint marketing opportunities, purchase of feed, shared facilities and equipment, custom manure spreading or other opportunities. Attach documentation, where appropriate.*

Agriculture accounts for over 23% of Shawano County’s total economic activity, an increase of 1% since 2004. The Town of Maple Grove is predominantly agricultural, with over 80% of the land used for this purpose. Establishment of an AEA in Maple Grove will provide the opportunity to support multiple types of agriculture in one area. These types of agriculture include conventional dairy, specialty crops (vegetables & flowers), managed grazing (dairy & beef), roadside stands (organic produce) and cash crops. At least one dairy farm within the proposed AEA is large enough to consider manure digestion and co-generation of electric power or natural gas. As the technology improves and downsizes other area farms may be able to pursue it as well. By designating an AEA it provides farmers and agricultural related businesses some additional assurances that agriculture is a priority here and will aid their long term investment decisions. These local businesses and professionals include but are not limited to: Pulaski-Chase Cooperative, Riesterer & Schnell Inc. John Deere Sales & Service, Tri County Roasters (Nutritional Services Inc.), P&D Service, agronomists, seed dealers, veterinarians, livestock consultants, feed and fuel suppliers, barn builders, agricultural lenders and ag-waste haulers. Pulaski-Chase Cooperative, originally established in 1938 and located within one mile of our proposed AEA, has evolved into diversified farm and home supply cooperative serving the agricultural, consumer and commercial markets in Pulaski and surrounding areas. It is one of the largest fertilizer blending plants in Wisconsin and one of the biggest feed and grain dealers in the area. This longevity is directly related to support of the surrounding agricultural community. Agricultural tourism has increased recently with the addition of two roadside farm markets within the proposed AEA along State Highway 29. Community support of these agricultural businesses was shown through conditional use permit approvals and follows the agricultural resource goals, objectives and policies listed in Chapter 2 along with the economic development goals, objectives and policies listed in Chapter 7 of The Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan adopted on August 14, 2008.

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**12. What is the level of cooperator support for this petition?**

*Describe the level of support by other farmers, and by affected businesses, community organizations, and government entities. Attach cooperator "signature pages," if any.*

There has been incredible support of the Town of Maple Grove's Petition for an Agricultural Enterprise Area at a multitude of levels. Individual property owners within the Town to Congressional Representatives have seen the value in supporting the Town's petition.

The first public Town meeting regarding designation of the AEA was held on December 14, 2009. Approximately 50 individuals attended the meeting and were asked if they were interested in being petitioners or supporters of the Town's petition. The vast majority of the audience indicated their support of the petition, 8 individuals were willing to be petitioners and additional 31 individuals signed a statement supporting designation of the Agricultural Enterprise Area. The adjoining Towns of Seymour, Pittsfield, and Angelica passed resolutions in support of the Agricultural Enterprise area as did the Town of Maple Grove and Shawano County.

Through the public meetings related to designation of an Agricultural Enterprise Area it was very apparent that the Town Board and area residents view designation of the AEA as an extension of the Town's historic commitment to farming. The Petitioners are committed to the continuation and expansion of agricultural activities in the area.

At a State level, letter of support have been received from State Conservationist Patricia Leavenworth, U.S. Congressman Steve Kagen, State Representative Gary Tauchen, and the East Central Regional Planning Commission. At the local level, letters of support were received from the Shawano County Drainage Board, Village of Pulaski, and the Towns of Angelica, Lessor and Pittsfield.

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**Are there any other compelling reasons to choose this AEA proposal from among competing AEA proposals? Explain, and attach documentation where appropriate.**

How can you convey in words that a place is different? That it is unique and embodies what is best in rural Wisconsin? How can words describe the physical experience of knowing where jurisdictional boundaries are because the development pattern alters so greatly? Or experience the feeling of attending a meeting with people who are united in belief in what they are doing is correct that they are willing to be the object of ridicule by their colleagues?

Throughout this Petition, every attempt has been made to relay to individuals half a state away that Maple Grove is unique and worthy of identification and protection. To encourage reward and recognition of individuals who for generations have done their best to be good stewards of agriculture.

In October 1974, University of Wisconsin-Extension Staff prepared an education flyer entitled Land Use Planning and Citizen Involvement: The Case of Maple Grove, Wisconsin. The flyer describes the Town meeting to address the loss of agricultural land and states, "...between 1969 and mid 1973, 38 non-agricultural residences were built and 1400 acres of land were removed from agricultural production. These statistics warned town leaders of future urban sprawl and the associated increases in cost of providing public services, of increases in assessed land values, and of possible conflicts between nonfarm home owners and farmers. Further, the major economic sector in the township-production agriculture-was losing its resource base." In reading this publication, it is impossible to not wonder what the regional landscape would look like if 36 years ago more jurisdictions had also proactively addressed urban sprawl.

As surrounding jurisdictions in Shawano County and in East Central Wisconsin have embraced non-

agriculture development, the Town of Maple Grove has remained unyielding in its support of agriculture. Maple Grove has consistently refused to allow non-agricultural development which has occasionally led to the Town being ridiculed by adjoining local governmental officials who often view regional urban towns such as Grand Chute or Greenville as an ideal.

By maintaining the agricultural land base, the Town of Maple Grove has been able to foster innovation and leadership in farming at the State level. The Janquet's were named first runners-up at the Wisconsin Outstanding Farmer program in 2009 and in 2004 Jeff and Jena Betley (AEA Petitioners) were named Outstanding Young Farmer. Although maintaining the agricultural land base is the first step in ensuring that farming remains economically viable, having innovative, dedicated and passionate farmers is a necessary component in achieving agricultural preservation.

The Town of Maple Grove's Petition for designation of an Agricultural Area is relatively simple. The majority of agricultural operations within the Town are traditional in nature. However, there is grace in good people, dedicated to a common cause, with the strength to be unique under extraordinary pressure. The Town's long term support of agriculture is deserving of recognition, honor and support.

The Town of Maple Grove, Shawano County, area municipalities, and elected officials all encourage the Wisconsin Department of Trade, Agriculture and Consumer Protection to join us in honoring and furthering the Town of Maple Grove's dedication to agriculture by designation of an Agricultural Enterprise Area within the Town.

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The following exhibits are offered to illustrate and support the Town of Maple Grove's Petition for designation of an Agricultural Enterprise Area.

## **EXHIBITS**

- Exhibit 1:** Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map
- Exhibit 2:** Excerpts from the Shawano County 1982 Farmland Preservation Plan
- Exhibit 3:** Existing AEA Land Use Map
- Exhibit 4:** Town of Maple Grove Zoning Map
- Exhibit 5:** Land Use Planning and Citizen Involvement 1974 prepared by University of Wisconsin-Extension
- Exhibit 6:** New Residential Development in the Vicinity of the Maple Grove AEA Petition Map
- Exhibit 7:** Chapter Two: Agricultural Resources and Chapter Seven: Economic Development form the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Plan
- Exhibit 8:** Description of the AG-2 Zoning District from the Shawano County Zoning Ordinance
- Exhibit 9:** Petitioner Signature Pages (8 Total)
- Exhibit 10:** Cooperator Signature Pages (6 Pages)
- Exhibit 11:** Resolutions in Support of the AEA (5 Total)
- Exhibit 12:** Letter in Support of the AEA (9 Total)