

Town of Eileen, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan



10.23.09

Introduction

In 2008, the Town of Eileen began the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. This Plan seeks to create goals, policies and implementation strategies for the next 10 years. From August 2008 to November 2009, the Town of Eileen, along with 13 other Towns and Bayfield County held community meetings and sought input on the planning process related to the Plan. It was during these meetings that input related to issues and opportunities, land use, housing, economic development, transportation, utilities and community facilities, natural and cultural resources and implementation strategies were identified and developed.

Based upon the steering committee's input as well as an understanding of the project scope, a set of planning objectives was outlined as a part of the Comprehensive Plan process:

1. Make certain that the information presented as part of this process was developed in a transparent fashion. The use of a project website, community meetings, monthly steering committee meetings, a county-wide survey, open house meetings and a public hearing were key to the successful completion of this Plan.
2. Create uniform land use classifications that are clearly identified within the Plan.
3. Work with the County to ensure that the goals, objectives and implementation strategies are obtainable and realistic.

Community engagement activities were an essential aspect of the Plan. Below is a review of the community meetings and engagement activities associated with the Plan.

- Monthly community meetings held the last Wednesday and Thursday of each month from October 2008-October 2009.
- Community Survey sent to over 15,000 land owners within Bayfield County. The survey was also made available online.
- Community open house meetings were held in December 2008, April 2009 and July 2009. A public hearing was also held in November 2009.
- All information related to the Plan was available through the project website.

Acknowledgments

This Plan was developed in cooperation with Bayfield County, the Town Board, Town Plan Commission, and the consulting firm of Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH®).

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What is a Comprehensive Plan?

The Town of Eileen Comprehensive Plan offers a broad look at the elements of housing, land use, transportation, natural environment, utilities and community facilities, economic development, issues and opportunities, intergovernmental cooperation, and implementation. This Plan offers a "30,000 foot" elevated look at the Town related to trends and future needs through a series of goals and policies. The intent of this Plan is to offer guidance to the residents, stakeholders and landowners of the Town of Eileen as well as to ensure the long-term health, safety and well-being of the Town.

A Sense of Place

The Town of Eileen was formed on March 28, 1904. Prior to the formation of the Town, the Ojibwe, Ottawa, Sioux and Huron Tribes as well as early European explorers and fur traders all occupied the area at various periods of time...each taking advantage of the abundant hunting and excellent soils for farming.

The Town of Eileen has no lakes lying within its boundaries except for a very small coastal portion located in the extreme northeast corner on Chequamegon Bay on Lake Superior. The Town is drained by the two forks of Fish Creek and their numerous tributaries and flow toward Lake Superior. Nearly all the lands at the mouth of Fish Creek are held in public ownership and managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) as part of the South Shore Lake Superior Fishery Area

Issues and Opportunities

The issues and opportunities element provides background information about the Town of Eileen and its overall policies, programs, goals and objectives. The information provided in this section is critical to the development of the goals and objectives concerning the future direction of the Town. Issues and opportunities were identified as part of the 2008-2009 public engagement process. The following is a review of key issues and opportunities as they relate to the Town of Eileen.

Land Use Element Issues

- Ensure that land use decisions are consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
- Work with the County to develop zoning standards that allow for consistency between the Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Transportation Element Issues

- There is a need to continue to provide a transportation system that efficiently transports people within the Town and to destinations outside of the Town.
- Roads must be built to acceptable standards and maintained in a condition that is conducive to efficient transportation.

Housing Element Issues

- Need to retain the family farm while also allowing housing options for future generations.
- Lack of elderly and assisted living opportunities for an aging population.
- Increased property values are generating increasing real estate taxes and a population of lower and fixed incomes is finding these increases difficult to meet.

Agricultural and Natural Resources Element Issues

- Ensure that rivers and streams are protected within the Town.
- Protect, preserve, enhance and maintain a high level of environmental quality of lands, water, and wildlife habitat in the Town of Eileen.

Utilities and Community Facilities Element Issues

- There is a need for improvement for adequate telecommunications services.
- Lack of encouragement for individual alternative energy sources.
- Where possible, work with utility agencies to promote underground lines.

Economic Development Element Issues

- Allow home occupations that are consistent with zoning regulations in residential areas provided they fit into the character of the neighborhood.
- Work to promote needed health care and child care facilities.
- Encourage development of home-based business that is consistent with zoning regulations.
- Ensure that new development is compatible with maintaining scenic views and local character, and have a "low-impact" on the environment.
- Encourage development of farm production, forestry and cottage industry.
- Promote development of public recreational opportunities in the Town.
- Utilize local natural resources to produce value-added products to support sustainable home-based businesses.
- Market information available for home-based businesses.
- Improve and develop partnerships with other communities and state agencies that share the same customers.
- Encourage development of small business, especially those that provide year-round employment.
- Enhance high-speed electronic networks and provide access to training for small and home-based businesses.
- Encourage eco-friendly tourism.
- Assist and facilitate economic development planning and coordination between local and regional partners.
- Encourage internet service providers to expand DSL services in the area.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Element Issues

- Cooperation between governmental units is becoming increasingly necessary in order to deal with issues that cross municipal boundaries and to establish mutual relationships that can benefit both entities.

Town of Eileen Demographic Profile

Historical Population and Population Projections

The population of Eileen was 640 in 2000, which was a four percent decrease from 665 in 1990. The population is projected to increase to 642 persons by 2030 which is less than a one percent increase.

Historic Population and Population Projections, 1950-2030

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
U.S. Census	654	618	599	664	665	640			
WI DOA							649	651	642

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and WI DOA

Household Characteristics Element Issues

An analysis of the households of a community helps establish an understanding of the community's character and provides insight into community life. Understanding household composition and conditions is essential to assessing future needs of the inhabitants of the community.

The 2000 Census identifies 249 households in the Town of Eileen. Of this total, 191 (approximately 77 percent) are identified as family households.

There was an increase of 15 households from 1990 to 2000 (234 in 1990). This is approximately a six percent increase in households. Households are expected to increase by about 13 percent between 2000 and 2030 to 281 households in 2030.

The following table projects the number of households out to 2030.

Town of Eileen Household Projections: 2000 to 2030

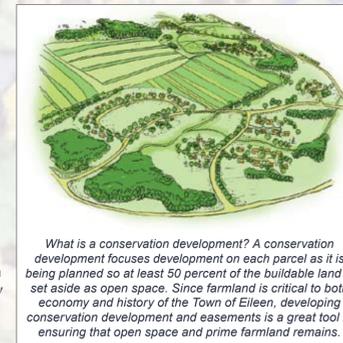
Census 1990	Census 2000	2005 Estimate	2010 Projection	2015 Projection	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection
234	249	259	267	276	281	283	281

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and WI DOA

Housing

The following goals and objectives have been developed to guide housing decisions within the Town of Eileen. Implementation of the identified actions will assist in achieving the housing vision stated above.

- Goal: Recognize and accommodate the housing needs in the Town of Eileen.
 - Objective: Encourage housing development in ways that make the type of development compatible with adjacent uses.
 - Objective: Help provide all types of housing in a manner that ensures contribution to the design quality standards and safety of the community.
 - Objective: Limited residential development along rivers and streams throughout the Town in an effort to protect water quality and protect natural resources



- Goal: The housing stock in the Town of Eileen should provide an adequate range of housing opportunities to meet the varied needs and desires of existing and future community residents.
 - Objective: Maintain viable, properly zoned areas that are available for new residential development.
 - In conjunction with Bayfield County, develop conservation subdivision standards for new development.
- Goal: Guide new housing development into areas that minimize impacts on sensitive natural resources (lakes and wetlands) so that the Town continues to be an attractive place to reside.
 - Objective: Encourage development in areas that will not result in property or environmental damage.
 - a. Utilizing information in the agricultural, natural, and cultural resources element, the Town of Eileen, in conjunction with Bayfield County shall inventory and map sensitive resources that should be preserved to the greatest extent possible.
 - b. Encourage "low-impact" development that strives to retain natural vegetation that can help reduce stormwater runoff, flooding, and minimize impact on water quality. Encourage the retention of natural vegetation, especially along lakeshores.
- Goal: Improve the existing housing stock to enhance quality, livability, and character of the Town of Eileen.
 - a. Encourage Bayfield County and the State of Wisconsin to further develop a housing rehabilitation program utilizing low or no interest loan program funds.

Economic Element

The primary goal and objective of economic development is to support and enhance the quality of life for residents through maintaining and expanding the local tax base, supporting existing businesses, attracting new complimentary businesses, and to attract jobs that provide a living wage. The combination of economic development applications with other units of government and related organizations leverages public investment and often increases the success of economic development initiatives. The following set of goals, objectives and policies have been developed through working groups during the comprehensive process and will strengthen the overall economic development efforts of the Town.

- Goal: Develop a successful economic development plan as it is critical in the discussion of property taxes and expanding the property tax base.
 - Objective: Understanding our current economic status. Most ongoing businesses are:
 - Small, service-orientated and several are home-based.
 - In the last decade there has not been any new industry in the Town.
 - Agriculture is a driver in the Town economy, but not the primary.
 - Objective: Assess and plan for the potential needs of commercial development along the US 2 corridor including lot parcels, zoning changes and frontage roads.
 - Land is available along Highway 2 and Highway 63.
 - Policy: Expand property tax base.
 - Policy: Create successful Economic Development Plan.
- Goal: Create a Town website
 - Objective: Communicate with constituents via the Town website once created.
 - Objective: Market and advertise businesses in the Town.
 - Objective: Tout the Town as it is a "Great Place to Live."

- Objective: Link the Town's site to Bayfield County's website and Ashland's Chamber website.
 - Policy: Encourage development of Town website.
- Goal: Continue to encourage new or potential businesses (large, medium, small) to locate in Town.
 - Objective: Targeted businesses include but are not limited to:
 - Recreation
 - ATV/Snowmobile sales and service
 - Boat sales and service
 - Boat Storage
 - Renewable Energy
 - Agricultural endeavors
 - Technology related businesses
 - Research Facilities
 - Niche markets could result from hobby farms through products such as fruits, vegetables, meat.
 - Objective: Encourage Bayfield/Ashland Counties to quickly and expeditiously sell the Agricultural Research Station allowing for the start up of additional businesses in the Town.
 - Objective: Meet with the Great Lakes Visitor Center to develop plans and to build a sandwich/coffee shop at the Center.
 - Policy: Concentrate on maintaining and creating new home-based and small businesses.
 - Policy: Encourage the County/State to develop signage guidelines allowing visible signage along all roadways without need for the business to be in a commercial zone.
 - Policy: Encourage the County to develop a zoning code especially for small businesses located in non-commercial zones which will meet the Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements for visible signage.
- Goal: Encourage the development of promotional programs regarding the positive attributes of the Town for both new businesses and home ownership.
 - Objective: Develop promotional mediums to be featured in:
 - Newspapers
 - Magazines
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Town website
 - Policy: Produce promotional items for multiple mediums of advertising/marketing.

Transportation

- Goal: The Town of Eileen has a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system that provides a safe, environmentally sensitive, and economical movement of people and goods.
 - Objective: Continue the present program of road improvements through the implementation of goals outlined in the Town's five-year roadway plan.
 - Objective: Constant assessment of existing roads infrastructure and associated storm drainage infrastructure.
 - Objective: Assessment of funding sources the Town may take advantage of through both state and federal sources for roadway improvement.
 - Objective: Develop park and ride, car pools/bus service with adjoining Towns.
 - Objective: Ensure the connectivity of all roads where appropriate.
 - Objective: Assess the need for brushing and clearing along town road right-of-ways for motorist safety.
 - Objective: Assess the need for additional safety signage, particularly for deer crossing areas.



Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Goals and Objectives

A set of recommended goals, objectives, and action steps has been developed to assist the Town of Eileen in the conservation and promotion of effective management of the local natural, agricultural, and cultural resources.

- Goal: Conserve, protect, manage, and enhance the Town's natural resources.
 - Assess new residential, commercial and industrial developments for their impact upon the natural resources of the Town.
 - Discourage land use practices that have a detrimental effect on the land, soil or air quality of the Town.
 - Objective: Endorse the WDNR watershed initiatives to educate shoreland and basin property owners on the appropriate safe levels, application, timing and safe types of fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and fields in the Town.
 - Objective: Endorse the WDNR watershed initiatives to restore altered shoreland vegetation and prohibit removal of natural vegetation in critical shoreland areas.
 - Objective: Promote the establishment and maintenance of natural buffers along water resources.
 - a. Collaborate with state and local organizations whose charge is to enhance water quality.
 - b. Work to control wastewater and septic systems.
 - c. Work with farmers and educators in developing Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to agricultural runoff.
 - d. Control runoff during construction projects through the establishment of erosion control standards found within the Bayfield County Code.

- Objective: Educate the public on BMPs that will ensure the protection of natural resources.
 - Publish or obtain information that can be distributed to residents on the disposal of hazardous materials, such as paint, waste oils, computers, insecticides, etc.
- Objective: Protect and manage local forested areas and other wildlife habitats.
 - Encourage selective cutting in forest stands.
 - Coordinate with WDNR to identify and protect wildlife habitats.
 - Encourage "low-impact" development that strives to retain natural vegetation.
 - Discourage habitat fragmentation by encouraging development on the fringes of identified habitat areas.
 - Work and cooperate with local land trust and similar organizations on forest and wildlife habitat protection, management, and preservation.
- Goal: Maintain safe quality drinking water.
- Goal: Preserve and enhance cultural resources, including historical and archeological sites and resources.
 - Objective: Coordination with the Eileen Area Historical Society to update the inventory of historic properties within the Town and share this information with the State of Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory.
 - Develop a list of eligible or registered historical places in the Town.
 - Work with private landowners on the preservation of historic buildings.

Utilities and Community Facilities

The maintenance and enhancement of public facilities and public recreational facilities encourages a healthy community environment. The leadership and growth is vital to maintaining the desired characteristics of the Township. This element serves as an inventory that describes what is and what has been. The Town of Eileen will continue to establish and enhance mutual relationships with Federal, State, County and local governments to develop solutions to issues within the Town as well as issues that involve multiple jurisdictions or cross municipal boundaries.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Development Element Goals and Objectives

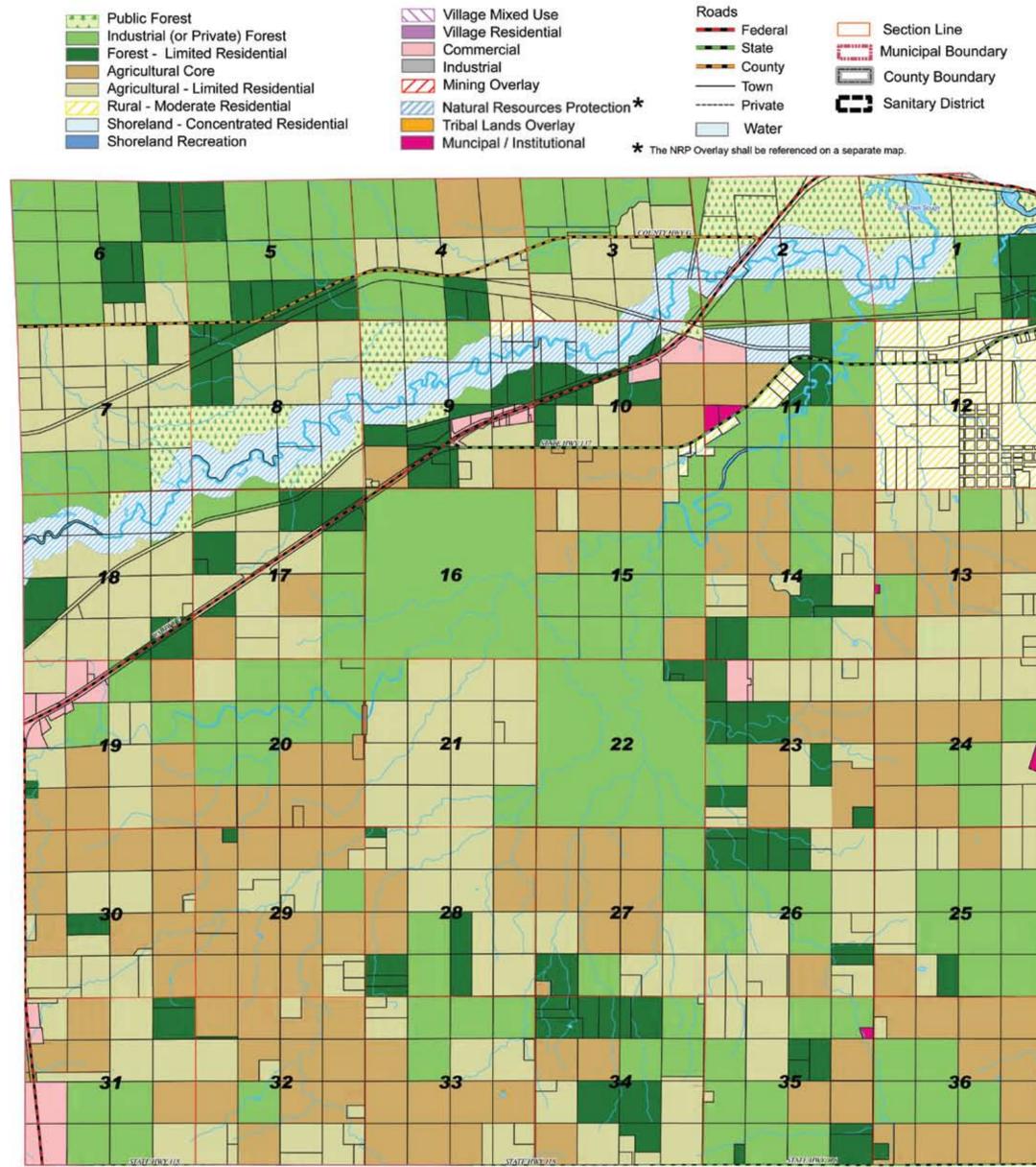
- Goal: Improve communication with neighboring Towns, Bayfield County, area school districts, and state agencies.
 - Objective: Notify the area school districts about proposed residential developments so the districts may plan accordingly. Encourage the school district to provide input into these decisions.
 - Cooperate with WisDOT of proposed development projects adjacent to state trunk highways so they can plan accordingly for future improvements.
 - Coordinate with WisDOT and WDNR to ensure transportation facilities are safe and natural resources are protected.
 - Objective: Seek ways to share community facilities and services with neighboring communities and coordinate on multi-jurisdictional applications whenever possible.
 - Inventory equipment and services of adjacent jurisdictions.
 - Develop formal agreements when sharing and developing services.
 - Explore the potential for mutual services with neighboring Towns including road development/maintenance, garbage collection, etc.
 - Seek funds for housing rehabilitation in coordination with other jurisdictions.
 - Objective: Identify existing or potential conflicts between local governmental units, including future land use trends, and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.
 - Establish a conflict resolution process with adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions.
 - Work with Bayfield County and the surrounding Towns on land use and zoning issues. Address potential annexation and boundary adjustments with neighboring municipalities before they become an issue.
 - Address potential annexation with surrounding Towns before it becomes an issue.

Implementation

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of goals, objectives, and action items were developed that when implemented are intended to build stronger relationships and give direction to the Town Board and its residents. As is stipulated in 1999 Wisconsin Act 9, a Comprehensive Plan must be updated at least once every 10 years. However, in order to ensure that the Town's Plan is an effective management tool, the Town of Eileen Plan Commission will review the Plan goals and objectives annually to track those activities that have been completed to realize its accomplishments and identify areas where additional resources or actions are needed. Part of this effort, will also include addressing conflicts which may arise between the elements of the Plan.



Town of Eileen Future Land Use



Housing Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** The housing stock in Eileen should provide an adequate range of housing opportunities to meet the varied needs and desires of existing and future community residents. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Work to promote and maintain safe and affordable housing to all residents through communication with the Bayfield County Housing Authority and the City of Ashland. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Support efforts and new programs that will provide additional elderly and disabled resident housing opportunities and services. **2010-2015**
- **Action:** Coordination with nearby Towns to direct large alternative and multiple family developments to these environments where appropriate municipal services are available. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Guide new housing development into areas that minimize impacts on sensitive natural resources so that the Town continues to be an attractive place to reside. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Encourage development in areas that will not result in property or environmental damage. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Utilizing information in the agricultural, natural, and cultural resources element, the Town shall inventory and map sensitive resources that should be preserved to the greatest extent possible. **2010-2011**
- **Action:** Encourage "low-impact" development that strives to retain natural vegetation that can help reduce stormwater runoff and flooding. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Encourage landscaping and natural screening between building sites. **Ongoing**

Transportation Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** Establish open line of communication with Bayfield County, WisDOT, and local or regional transit authorities to maintain and enhance transportation facilities throughout the Town of Eileen. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Continue to establish a local network of roads that is connected, coordinated, and affordable that will link residents to important community facilities and regional highways. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Develop park and ride, car pools/bus service with adjoining Towns. **2010**
- **Action:** Facilitate discussion with BART to improve transit locations throughout the County. **2010**

Utilities and Community Facilities Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** In association with Bayfield County, work to improve awareness of water quality issues in Bayfield County and design enhancement features that assist in the preservation of natural areas as well as a reduction in stormwater runoff. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Continue to establish a local network of roads that is connected, coordinated, and affordable that will link residents to important community facilities and regional highways. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Maintain essential emergency services to protect the public health, safety and welfare of the community. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Ensure there are adequate emergency services of police, fire, rescue, hazardous event responders and emergency medical services. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Meet with representatives of utility companies to seek system upgrades in a timely and cost-effective manner when they are necessary. **Ongoing**

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** Educate residents about the importance of natural areas and wildlife corridors. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Endorse the WDNR watershed initiatives to educate shoreland and basin property owners on the appropriate safe levels, application, timing and safe types of fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and fields in the Town of Eileen. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Endorse the WDNR watershed initiatives to restore altered shoreland vegetation and prohibit removal of natural vegetation in critical shoreland areas. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Inventory and map sensitive resources that should be preserved to the greatest extent possible. Specific preservation areas and development standards should be developed for the north and south fork area. **2010**
- **Action:** Encourage "low-impact" development that strives to retain natural vegetation. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Discourage habitat fragmentation by encouraging development on the fringes of identified habitat areas. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Provide adequate amount of parkland or greenspace to serve existing and new development. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Develop a list of eligible or registered historical places in the Town. **2010**
- **Action:** Work with private landowners on the preservation of historic buildings. **Ongoing**

Economic Development Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** Support the retention and enhancements of existing businesses through various means including provision of necessary services and utilities at the lowest possible cost and efficient access to surface transportation. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Continue to work collaboratively with the Great Lakes Visitors Center to connect the nature trail system. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** As appropriate, provide financial assistance and/or incentives through state and federal grants, low interest loans and other financial instruments to existing and new companies. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Ensure that the zoning code adequately addresses development standards that reflect the characteristics of the Town (e.g. appropriate building materials, setbacks from natural resources, signage, lighting, landscaping, etc.) **2010**
- **Action:** New commercial activities should be limited to those areas designated for such use on the Future Land Use Map in order to minimize adverse impacts upon surrounding land use, particularly residential use. **Ongoing**

Intergovernmental Cooperation Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** Improve communication with neighboring towns, Bayfield County, area school districts, and state agencies. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Notify appropriate state agencies of proposed land use changes and development plans. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Coordinate with WisDOT regarding proposed development projects adjacent to state trunk highways so they can plan accordingly for future improvements. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Explore the potential for mutual services with neighboring towns including road development/maintenance, garbage collection, etc. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Seek funds for housing rehabilitation in coordination with other jurisdictions. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Identify existing or potential conflicts between local governmental units, including future land use trends, and describe processes to resolve such conflicts. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Establish a conflict resolution process with adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Work with Bayfield County and the surrounding Towns on land use and zoning issues. Address potential annexation and boundary adjustments with neighboring municipalities before they become an issue. **Ongoing**

Land Use Implementation Schedule

- **Action:** Develop and administer a site plan review process to ensure a uniform image throughout the community. **2010**
- **Action:** With the assistance of Bayfield County, develop conservation subdivision standards for the Town of Eileen. **2010-2011**
- **Action:** Determine if existing zoning classifications are sufficient to meet the future needs of the Town that are consistent with the land use classifications of the Future Land Use Plan. **2010-2011**
- **Action:** Encourage "low-impact" development especially in areas near sensitive natural resources. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Coordinate with Bayfield County to consider additional requirements for conservation considerations in lakeshore areas. These requirements and should establish a minimum percentage of area that shall be preserved in a development and create buffer zones and screens along roads and sensitive natural resources (i.e. steep slopes, wooded areas, wetlands, lakes, etc.) **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Provide continual public review and a public-based amendatory process to the Comprehensive Plan. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Conduct a review of the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis. **Ongoing**
- **Action:** Utilize the Plan commission to inform the Town Board on recommended changes needed within the Comprehensive Plan as land use patterns or trends change. **Ongoing**

