

Section H: LAND USE

Village of Ridgeway 2018 Comprehensive Plan

SUMMARY:

This section’s purpose is to examine the Village of Ridgeway’s land use, based on the data from the other sections on this comprehensive plan. The goals, objectives, and policies of this section must be supported by all the other plan elements. This section will consider both current and future land use within the village, all of which are noted in *Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(h)*.

LAND USE POLICIES:

The following are the land use policies for the Village of Ridgeway.

- **Follow comprehensive plan regarding future land use & zoning decisions.**
See Maps H.1 and H.2 in the Appendices Section.
- **Revise village zoning to address lagging Main Street vitality.**
- **Strive to balance small-town character of Ridgeway with economic development.**
- **Encourage Main Street business development & update/repair its infrastructure.**
Main Street is the most visible part of the village to visitors, and unfortunately suffers from both a lack of things to do, and maintenance needs. Remediating this should be a priority.
- **Leverage the park, depot, and trail as pivots of future growth in the village.**
- **Foster the development of a village chamber of commerce.**
Village business owners can mentor new entrepreneurs, use funds to pay for advertising/outreach efforts, etc.

EXISTING LAND USE:

Per the land use map in appendix E.1, the Village of Ridgeway is primarily considered an agricultural and forestry-based community. The village’s land use can be broken down as follows:

Classification	Village of Ridgeway % of Land Area
Agriculture	48.7%
Residential (Single & Multi-Family)	12.1%
Commercial	0.3%
Manufacturing	0%
Production Forest	23.9%
DNR-MFL Forest	3.7%
Undeveloped (formerly Swamp/Waste)	0%
Other (Federal, State, County, School, Cemetery)	11.5%

(Source: Iowa County Tax Assessor Dept., SWWRPC—as noted on previous comprehensive plan)

Agricultural

With 48.7% of assessed area, agriculture is the dominant land use in the village. This category includes crop production land, agricultural forest, livestock production land, or land that's eligible for enrollment in specific federal agricultural programs.

Residential

12.1% of land use in the village is noted as residential.

Commercial

Commercial refers to any parcel that has a business on it, but does not include industrial properties. The commercial designation on the land use map doesn't differentiate between highway businesses, home occupations, or general businesses. In the Village of Ridgeway, commercial development occupies approximately 0.3 percent of the total land area.

Manufacturing

This land use denotes business & industry engaged in processing, manufacturing, packaging, treatment, and/or fabrication of materials and products. There is no manufacturing in the village.

Forested

This classification is Production Forests and DNR-MFL Forests acreages combined. In Ridgeway it is the second largest classified land use, with 27.6% of area being classified as such.

Undeveloped

This classification refers to areas that were formerly classified as swamp/waste. It is open land includes bogs marshes, lowlands brush land, and uncultivated land zoned as shoreland and shown to be wetland. There's none in the village limits.

Other

The remaining land types that do not fall into the above categories, including federal, state, and county lands, school property, and cemeteries are classified as "other". Approximately 11.5% of land in the Village of Ridgeway is listed under this classification.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE TRENDS:

With 12.1% of land use categorized as such, residential is a dominant developed land use within the village. The following shows the fluctuations in residential units for the past 30 years:

1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	Notes
244	286	293	There was a 17% (approx.) increase in housing stock from 1990 to 2000. However, from 2000 to 2010, housing growth slowed to about 2%.

(Source: 1990, 2000, & 2010 US Census)

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

None noted/identified at this time.

EXISTENCE OF BROWNFIELDS OR PROPERTIES SUITABLE FOR REDEVELOPMENT:

Per the Wisconsin DNR, there are five sites in Ridgeway (the database lumps the village with the town), including the following four categories:

LUST

A Leaking Underground Storage Tank that has contaminated soil and/or groundwater with petroleum. Some LUST cleanups are reviewed by DNR and some are reviewed by the Dept. of Commerce.

ERP

Environmental Repair Program sites are sites other than LUSTs that have contaminated soil and/or groundwater. Often, these are old historic releases to the environment.

SPILLS

Spills are discharges of hazardous substances that may adversely impact, or threaten to adversely impact public health, welfare, or the environment. Spills are usually cleaned up quickly.

No Action Required

There was or may have been a discharge to the environment and, based on the known information, DNR has determined that the responsible party does not need to undertake an investigation or cleanup in response to that discharge. Reports of UST closures with no action required are filed in state archives.

The following sites are located in the Town or Village of Ridgeway and contain the DNR Activity Number, Activity Type, Activity Name, Municipality, County, and a Priority Level:

DNR Act. #	Activity Type	Activity Name	Priority	Notes
03-25-187997	LUST	BADGER MART	HIGH	
04-25-038582	Spills	CTH T PIKES PEAK RD		
09-25-244999	No Action Required	RIDGELAND FARM	HIGH	
02-25-242037	ERP	RIDGEWAY VIL		Site closed by Dept. of safety; Site transferred to DNR jurisdiction in 2013
03-25-207263	LUST	TALLMAN SERVICE CENTER	LOW	

(Source: Wisconsin DNR's BRRTS, updated on 2018-02-05)

FUTURE EXPANSION:

A municipality's expansion/growth is somewhat determined by its infrastructure—both existing & proposed. For the Village of Ridgeway, future growth for retail, commercial, and industrial development is most suitable on the east and west sides of the Village for transportation, in all directions for water service and on the south, west, and east sides of the Village for sewer service. The previous planning & development committee noted the south side as potential sewer service, but no details were given as to its purpose, selection criteria, etc. Housing is best suited for all sides of the Village for transportation and water, but according to the table, sewer service for housing would only be suitable on the south, east, and west sides of Ridgeway.

Best Directions for Future Village Expansion				
Infrastructure Type	Retail	Commercial	Industrial	Housing
Transportation	East, West	East, West	East, West	North, East, South, West
Water	North, East, South, West	North, East, South, West	North, East, South, West	North, East, South, West
Sewer	East, South, West	East, South, West	East, South, West	East, South, West
Other				

Business, commercial, industrial/manufacturing are the primary land uses that will help the Village grow. Sole focus on housing and agriculture will not benefit the village, long-term. As seen elsewhere, growing populations demand/depend on services expected of the municipality to provide. However, those services are expensive, and the same residents asking for the service also expect their tax burden to drop. Businesses, however, can be leveraged to cover those costs, while not having the same service expectation as residents. Therefore, the village should make it a priority to attract businesses to operate in the village, in order to thrive.

Future housing location should be located away from major roads, business/industry, and near the school.

Locating future businesses should be dictated by access to transportation routes. Businesses, from daycare to factories all depend on people being able to get there quickly and safely. As such, the planning & development committee recommends that businesses primarily be located along Main Street and near/on the highway frontage. Said businesses should also be tied to municipal utilities. Zoning may have to be revised to accomplish this.

EXISTING AND POTENTIAL LAND USE CONFLICTS:

Neighboring land uses can sometime cause conflicts. Two common acronyms used to describe these conflicts are NIMBY's (Not in My Back Yard) and LULU's (Locally Unwanted Land Uses). In rural areas like Ridgeway, agricultural operations near non-farm populations are the most common source of problems. Some common irritants are odors, light pollution, weed infestation, agricultural chemicals, etc. Others can be landfills, highways, cell towers, transmission lines, etc.

Ridgeway currently has a land use conflict with alleged inaccessibility to the B-2 and M-1 districts (dictated by WisDOT) within the Village. The previous planning & development committee foresaw this as a continual source of future conflict. There was also concern with segregation of multi and single-family housing in the village.

INTEGRATED LAND USE:

It's recommended that the village ordinance require landscape buffers between incongruent land uses to avoid conflicts.

Other strategies would require landowners with potentially conflicting land uses to acknowledge their impacts and then design their operations or development to account for them. A community approach utilizing physical solutions, planning strategies, and a long-term vision for the land will enable multiple and differing land uses to exist.

FUTURE LAND USE:

The principal reasons people choose to live in the Village of Ridgeway are the cost of living, affordable housing, and the recreational opportunities provided by the Military Ridge Trail—which was tied with making use of local/walkable businesses in a recent survey.

While it's understandable that residents will want low point of entry into property ownership, protect their investment, and improve their standard of living, this cannot be accomplished without attracting businesses to the village. Ridgeway, as a dormitory town will ultimately atrophy; the low cost of properties will ultimately backfire as a means to generate revenue for both the municipality, and property owners.

In order to achieve its vision for the future, Ridgeway will need to focus on revitalizing its downtown, maintain & upgrade village infrastructure. People will visit the area due to its scenic beauty and recreational advantages. Having things for them to do, in an attractive package may just be what's needed to have them and businesses stay.