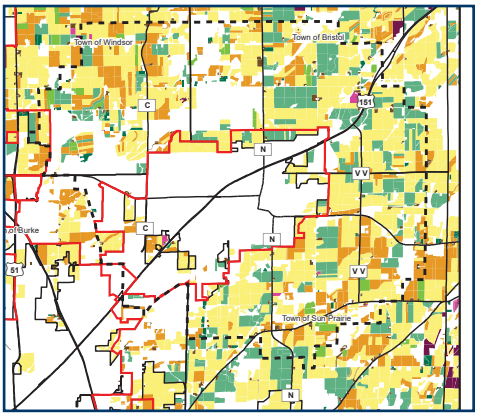
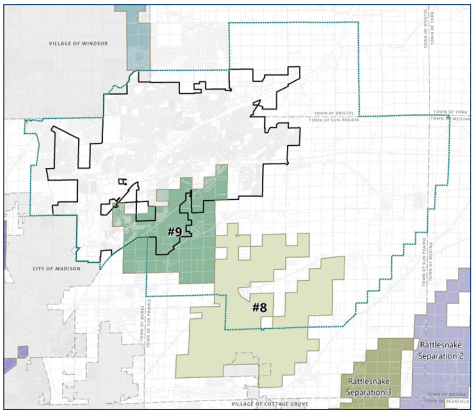
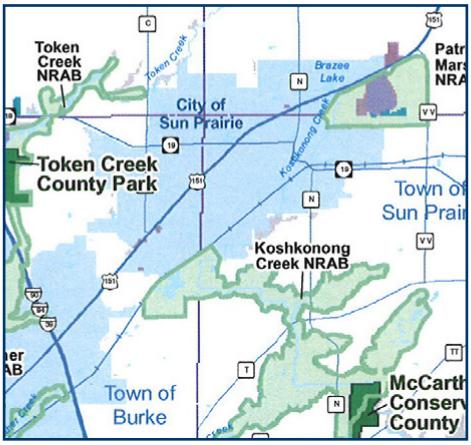


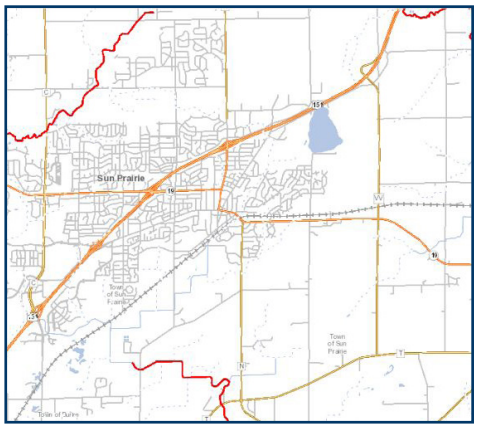
P.3-4 - Crop Type



P.3-5 - Drainage Districts



P.3-15 - Environmental Corridors & Stewardship Areas



P.3-18 - Impaired Waterways

CITY OF SUN PRAIRIE
Comprehensive Plan 2019-2039

Volume 1:
Community Indicators Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources

3

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Patrick Marsh Viewshed

This chapter examines the current state of the agricultural, natural and cultural resources within the Planning Area. This information will help to identify those resources that should be properly managed or protected as well as provide information regarding factors that may place natural limitations on development. These three types of resources have shaped the City's past growth and will likely continue to influence city growth into the future.

Volume 2 of this plan element contains the goals, objectives, policies and recommendations that are intended to guide the preservation, protection, expansion or improvement of natural and cultural resources in Sun Prairie.

Planning Area Farmland

Although Sun Prairie is considered an urban center within Dane County, agricultural uses and practices still exist within the City's corporate boundaries. As shown in Map 3.1, there is approximately 987 acres of land within the City's boundaries used for agricultural purposes with 225 acres surrounding the municipal Water Pollution Control Facility used to cultivate marsh grass and the City leases 20 acres of land within Sheehan Park for crop production. The remaining agricultural lands in the City limits are privately held and used for crop production.

As shown in Figure 3.1 (on the next page), there are significant portions of the planning area that are under agricultural production. The agricultural use of these properties is likely temporary until such time that these areas are developed for urban uses.

Urban Agriculture

As populations increase, communities will need to provide land for development both within the existing urban area through infill and redevelopment and in new areas adjacent to existing developed areas. Urban development can incorporate urban agriculture, such as community gardens, community supported farms, etc. The following section discusses the local urban agricultural amenities.

Community Gardens

Community gardens provide a number of benefits including an increased sense of community ownership, a cost effective source of fresh produce, a way to socialize with friends and neighbors, educational opportunities, and increased access to green space.

There are two community gardens within the City. One is run by the Sun Prairie Community Garden Organization (SPCGO). The gar-

den began in 1999 and is located on a city-owned property immediately east of the Sun Prairie Public Library (1340 Linnerud Drive). Plots are available for rent to people that reside or work within the City, or reside within the Sun Prairie School District. The second is Smith's Crossing Community Garden, located at 2481 Jenny Wren Trail. The garden was founded in 2013 and is dedicated to providing fresh produce to local food banks, building knowledge of gardening techniques, and fostering neighborhood cooperation.

Farmers Markets

There are three organizations hosting farmers markets in the City of Sun Prairie, including two Sun Prairie Farmers Markets and the Prairie Lakes Farmers Market. The markets provide locally sourced produce, meats, cheeses, flowers, and number of processed items (e.g., soap, honey, maple syrup, etc.).

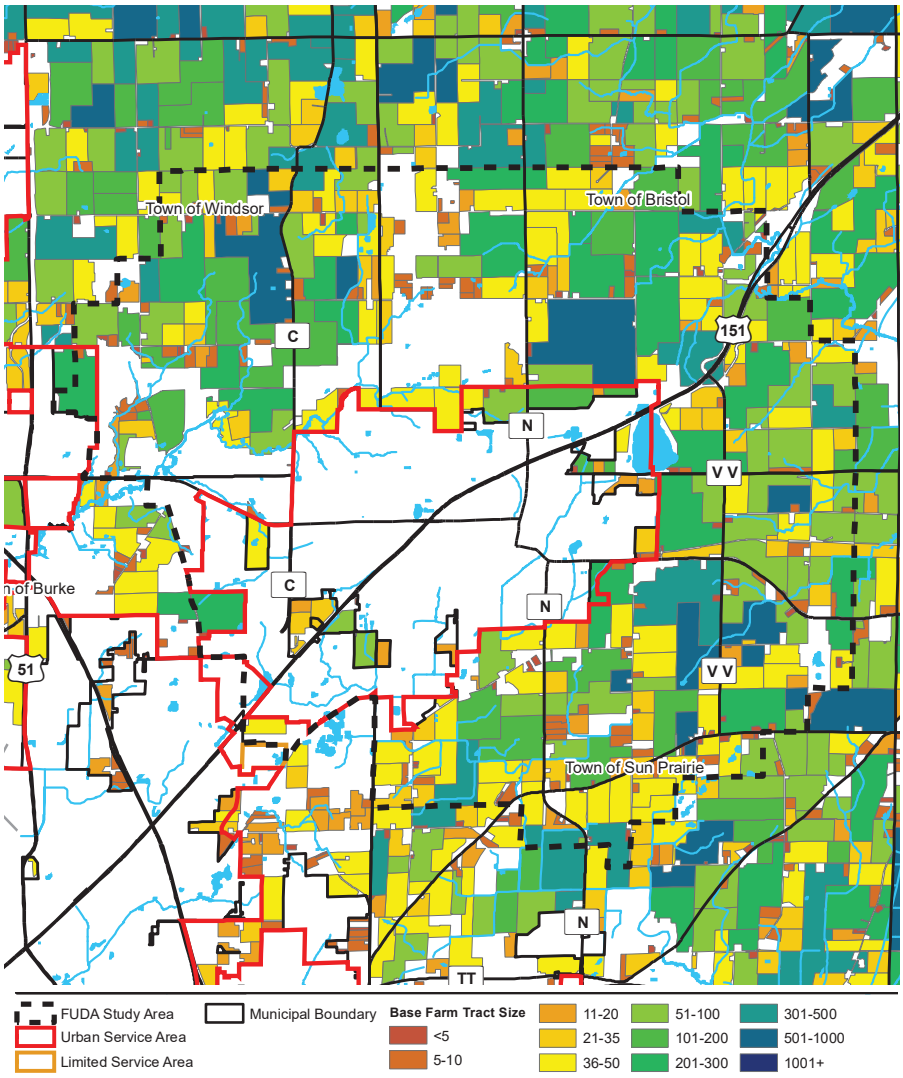
The Downtown Sun Prairie Farmers Market runs year round on Saturdays. The outdoor market runs from May through October at 330 E Main Street. The indoor winter market runs from November through April in the City Hall building.

DID YOU KNOW?

For agricultural operations to remain viable, a critical mass of relatively uninterrupted agricultural land may be necessary. This creates efficiency for businesses providing resources and services to farmers, and prevents conflicts with surrounding non-farm uses. Potential issues include farm noise and odor, traffic conflicts with slow-moving farm vehicles, trespassing and soil erosion. Agricultural land's important functions and benefits must be weighed when considering development, preservation and other land use decisions that may impact the agricultural sector.

Source: Sun Prairie Future Urban Development Area (FUDA) - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

Figure 3-1: Agricultural Land by Tract (2010)



Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

The Tuesday Sun Prairie Farmers Market (1110 Main Street) runs from May to October.

Prairie Lakes Farmers Market is run by Prairie Lakes and is held in the central courtyard and pavilion (2824 Prairie Lakes Drive). The market is open on Thursday late afternoons between mid-May and mid-October.

Industrial Food Market

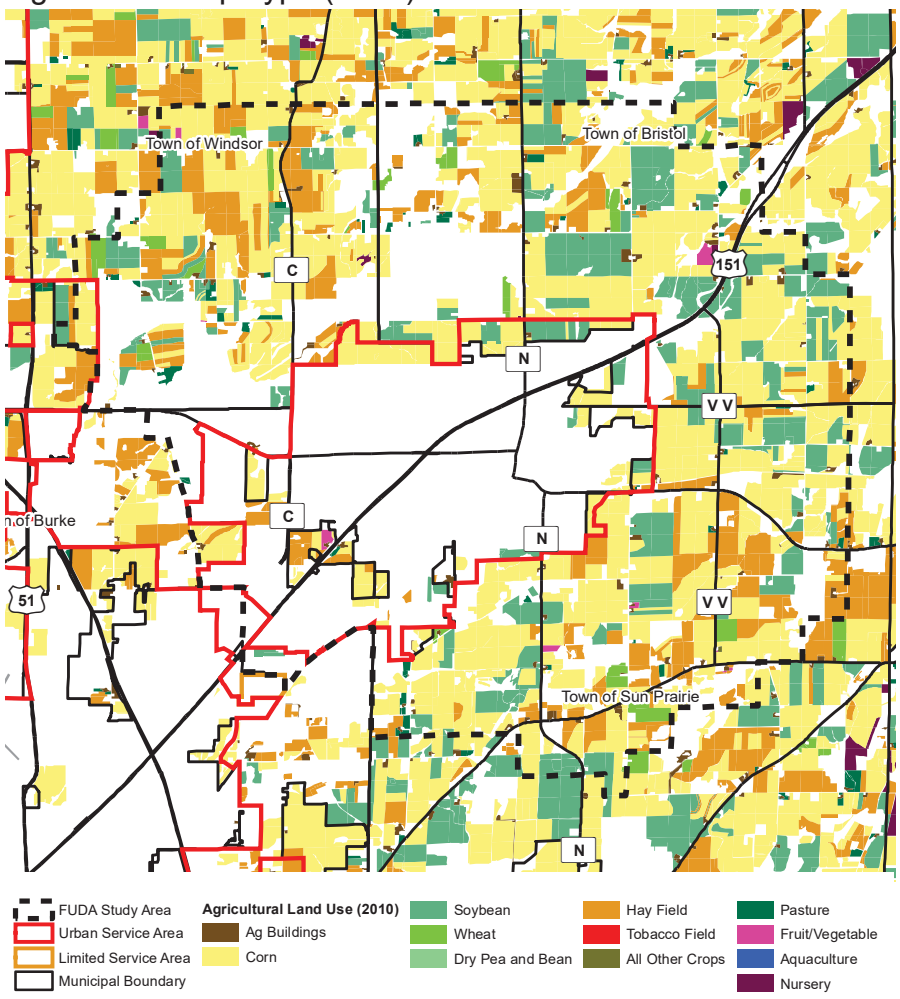
Another opportunity for connecting to area agricultural resources is through the Industrial Food Market Coalition (IFM), a project formed by the Dane County Planning and Development Department. Created in 2006, IFM works to connect large volume institutional buyers and large businesses with local and organically grown Wisconsin agricultural products, and increase market opportunities for local growers. IFM works through education and outreach to better connect buyers and sellers through the Badgerland Produce Co-op Auction.

DID YOU KNOW?

All town jurisdictions have some form of agriculture conservation and some have agricultural preservation. All except for Burke participate in Agricultural Exclusive Zoning at the 1/35 acre standard. Windsor also has a Purchase of Development Rights Program and a designated Agricultural Enterprise Area. The City of Sun Prairie has cooperative or boundary agreements with both Windsor and Bristol, and is party to (with Madison and DeForest) a cooperative plan for the dissolution of Burke in 2037.

Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

Figure 3-2: Crop Type (2010)



Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

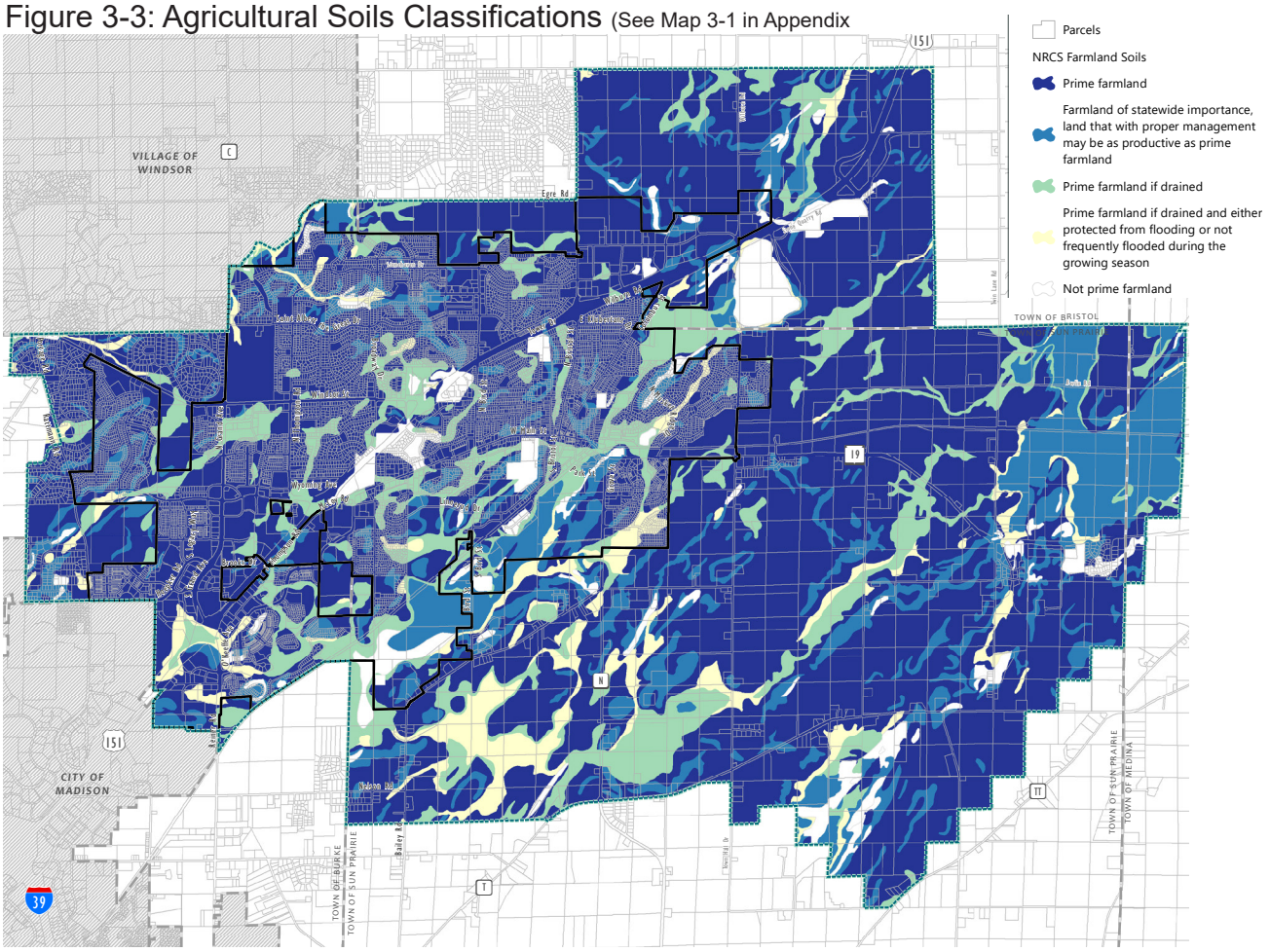
Prime Farmland

Figure 3-3 (see Appendix D) illustrates the soils in Sun Prairie and the surrounding area that are classified as prime farmland. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oil seed crops. Although preserving productive farmland is important, this needs to be balanced against the long-term need for the continued growth and development of the City. Due to political and physical barriers to growth to the north, west and southwest, it is likely that some areas of prime farmland to the south, southeast and east will be displaced by urban development at some point in the future.

Drainage Districts

Drainage districts are areas of land that are drained for agriculture or other purposes using open ditches, tiles, pumps or levees. Districts are governed by drainage boards who have the authority to levee assessments against landown-

Figure 3-3: Agricultural Soils Classifications (See Map 3-1 in Appendix



ers within the district who receive benefits from the drainage. Those assessments are used to cover the cost of constructing, maintaining, and repairing the drainage system. As shown on the graphic on the right, there are two Dane County Drainage Districts in the planning area (Districts #8 and #9), including 1,090 acres of land within the City of Sun Prairie that is in Drainage District #9. The City maintains the stormwater infrastructure within the corporate boundaries and residents are charged for this service through the City's stormwater utility. Questions have been raised as to whether City property should continue to be taxed by two different entities for stormwater management services.

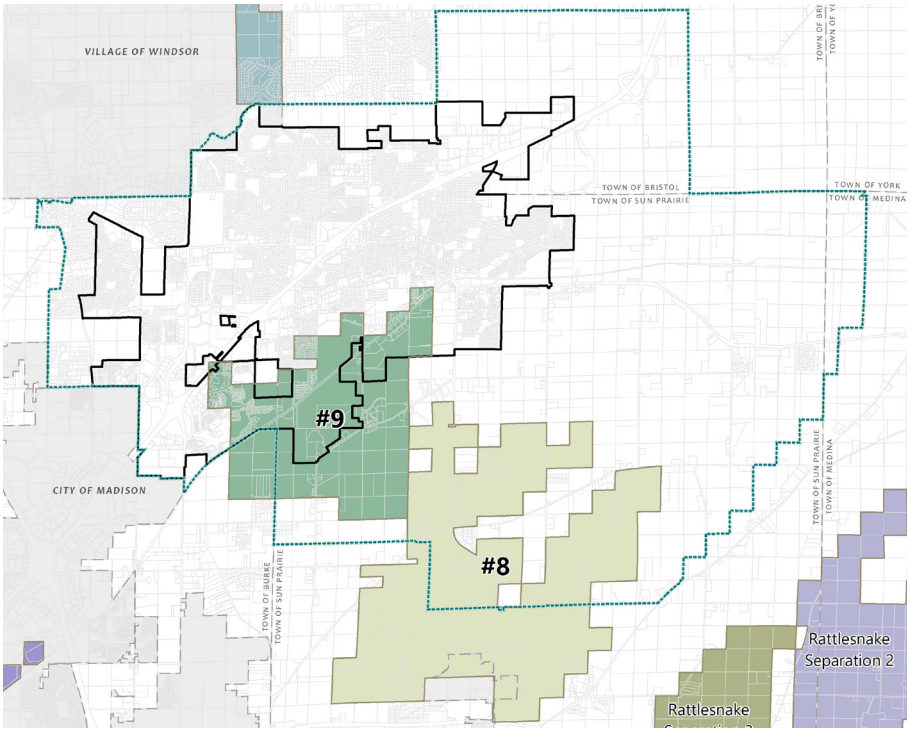


Figure 3-4: Dane County Drainage Districts

NATURAL RESOURCES

Patrick Marsh

Physical Characteristics

Geology

Dane County has a varied and unique geologic and physiographic setting. In the center of Dane County is the Yahara River Valley, which encompasses some of the City of Sun Prairie and the surrounding area. In this area, deep glacial deposits dammed up large valleys and formed a chain of large lakes and wetlands.

The eastern part of Dane County is known as the drumlin and marsh physiographic area and includes most of the City of Sun Prairie. The deposits found in this area include general glacial deposits with extensive areas of marsh deposits. This area consists of many low drumlin hills interspersed with shallow glacial deposits and scattered wetlands. The only lakes in this area are small stream impoundments or shallow marshy lakes.

According to the National Resources Conservation Service, there are very few occurrences of bedrock issues. These are generally located on the western and northeastern boundaries of the City where the bedrock lies between zero and three feet of the land surface. However, there are known areas around the City where bedrock has been a problem for development. Specific areas have been encountered during construction to the west of the CTH C corridor, and north of the Sun Prairie Business Park.

DID YOU KNOW?

Understanding the community's inventory of natural resources and the rules and regulations that are in place to protect these resources is a critical step in the process of planning for future growth and development. A balance is needed between the economic growth of the City and the preservation of important natural resources that contribute to the environmental health of the community and the quality of life for city residents. Identifying critical resources and potential conflicts now will help all involved in future development decisions to be better prepared to address and resolve such conflicts, and will help to ensure that critical resources are adequately protected.

Topography

The topography in Sun Prairie and the surrounding area is generally flat with some gentle slopes. There are several high points in the City. The topography of the land west of Schuster Road reaches an elevation of 1,040 feet above sea level and is the City's highest point. A second high point is located in the southwest corner of the Wyndham Hills subdivision. The lowest

point in the City is located in the far northwest corner of the City where the Token Creek crosses these lands. The topography in this area is 899 feet above sea level. Other low points in the City are located along the Koshkonong Creek and the Canadian Pacific Railroad on the south side of the City. Areas of steep slopes represent challenges to urban development and should be considered for preservation. Refer to Map 3-2 for location of slopes greater than twenty percent.

Minerals

Mineral resources in Dane County are non-metallic in nature. Non-metallic aggregate resources provide essential material for the construction of roads, buildings, utilities and community facilities. Mineral deposits having potential for extraction are usually located in land zoned agricultural and are subject to state and county regulations with regard to mining extraction and restoration. Increasing urbanization near resource areas represents the predominant barrier to efficient extraction of these important resources.

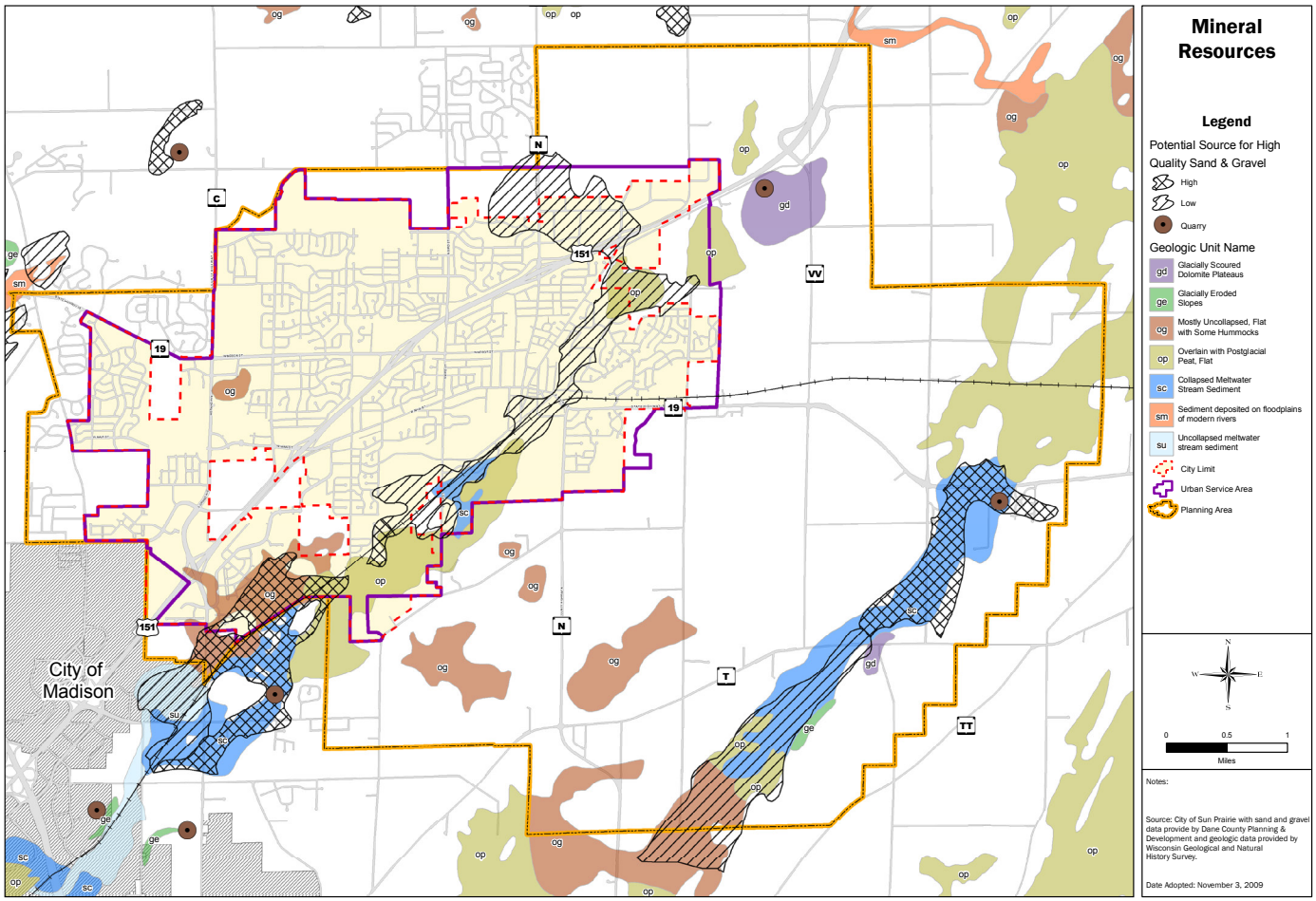
Mineral extraction potential within the Sun Prairie extraterritorial jurisdiction area includes an area of potential sand and gravel deposits along the eastern edge of the City. As shown in Figure 3.5, the southern end of this area has the highest potential as an extraction site, with the balance of the area having a lower potential.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mineral resources are important economic assets. These areas provide significant opportunities for regional infiltration practices to replenish the groundwater. These areas should be protected from development until after the mineral resources have been utilized and the site reclaimed.

Source: Sun Prairie Future Urban Development Area - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

Figure 3-5: Mineral Resources



Source: Sun Prairie Comprehensive Plan (2008)

Soils

Soil data is used to understand permeability and drainage, evaluate the ability of land to replenish groundwater supplies and filter contaminants, and to determine suitability and stability for development.

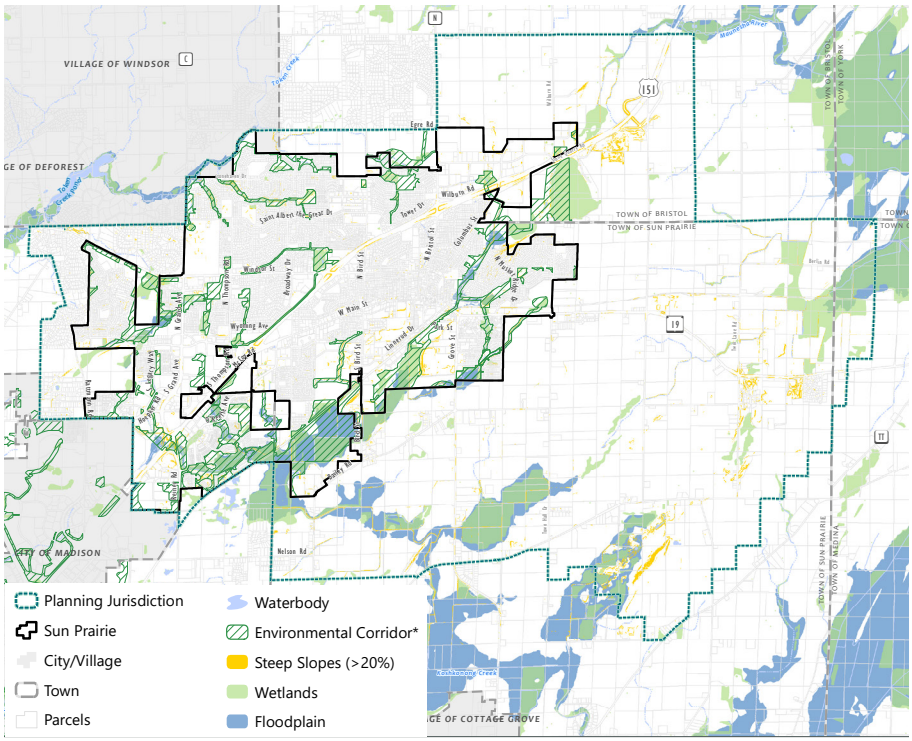
Most of Sun Prairie's soils are very deep, well-drained soils with slight to moderate limitations for urban uses. An exception exists where hydric soils are found. Hydric soils are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions. Hydric soils typically correspond with designated environmental corridors, floodplains, wetlands and low areas surrounding creeks that have severe limitations for urban development. Figure 3-6 depicts the location of non-hydric and hydric soils in Sun Prairie and the surrounding area.

Vegetation

Vegetation in this landscape has been significantly changed due to agricultural and urban land use practices. Land cover within and surrounding Sun Prairie that had once been dominated by prairies, brush, oak openings, and marshes are now primarily developed or used as agricultural cropland. Most riparian zones have been degraded through forest clearing, urban development, and intensive agricultural practices. Most wetlands have experienced widespread ditching, grazing, and infestation by invasive plants.

Efforts are being made to plant native species on some public open space lands. Examples include native plantings on stormwater management lands, and prairie restoration efforts on lands adjacent to the public library and at some area schools. In addition, the City is planning a large-scale wetland and habitat restoration effort on lands located west of S. Bird Street and south of Sheehan Park.

Figure 3-6: Development Limitations (See Map 3-2 in Appendix D)



Water Resources

Regulation

Water resources are regulated and protected at all governmental levels. The Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission and the Dane County Board of Supervisors have authority, by Chapter 33 of the Wisconsin Statutes, and the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission, by NR 121 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, to recommend minimum water quality regulation standards and guidance of water quality programs that apply within the county and cities.

The County administers these regulations unless a City chooses to adopt and administer their own regulations that are at least as restrictive, or more so, than the County's. The City of Sun Prairie has chosen to adopt such regulations through the City's Shoreland and Wetland, Floodplain, and Stormwater Runoff, Erosion and Non point Source Pollution Ordinances.

DID YOU KNOW?

Precipitation that soaks into the ground and recharges the groundwater, eventually discharges to streams and other water bodies, helping keep water temperatures low and enhancing oxygen supplies. This favors habitat for fish and other sensitive aquatic species. Development without mitigation measures can disrupt the ground/surface water balance resulting in less recharge and more stormwater runoff.

Groundwater

Groundwater serves many purposes, including development consumption, irrigation, and flow to lakes, streams and rivers. In Dane County, nearly all water supply sources originate from groundwater resources stored in aquifers. Rural, shallow domestic wells draw from the upper sandstone and unconsolidated aquifers. Municipal wells draw their water supply from the deep sandstone (Mt. Simon) aquifer. Infiltration from precipitation is the major source of local groundwater recharge for both levels of aquifers. Figure 3-7 shows groundwater depth in the Sun Prairie area ranges between 0-50 feet. The relative shallow depth to groundwater may pose a risk of basement flooding and ponding in certain areas of the City.

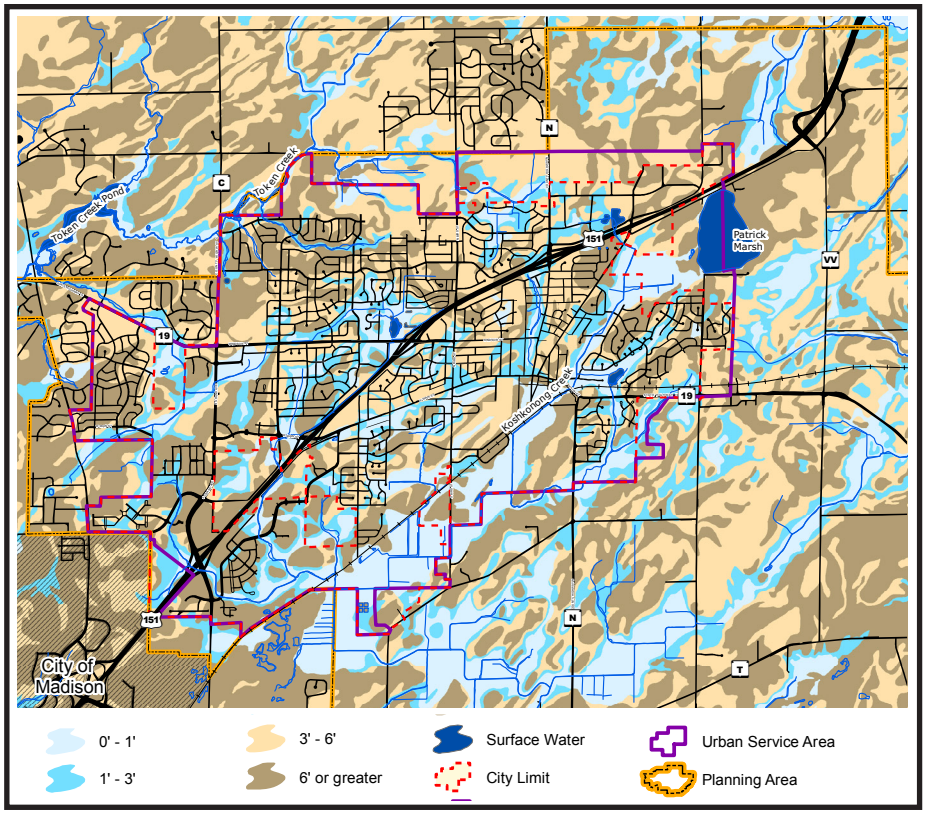
Although Chapter 106 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code authorizes the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as the primary regulatory agency overseeing groundwater controls, local land use decisions and water utilities have increasing responsibility to protect ground and surface water.

Figure 3-8 indicates where infiltration enhancement potential may be the greatest (from Sun Prairie's FUDA Report). These areas highlight opportunities where more permeable soils (e.g., sand and gravel deposits) may be present deeper in the soil column. These may be ideal locations for regional stormwater facilities that could be used to infiltrate stormwater generated in other parts of the watershed.

Surface Water

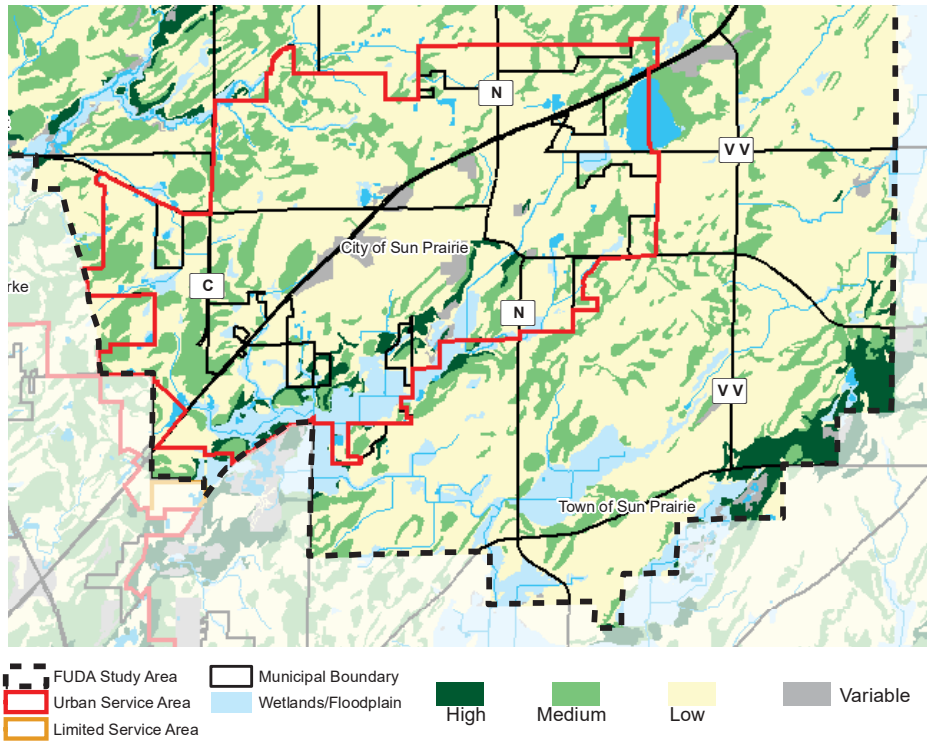
Surface water resources (i.e., lakes, rivers, wetlands and watersheds) require a regional level planning approach. The City of

Figure 3-7: Depth to Groundwater



Source: Sun Prairie Mapping (2008)

Figure 3-8: Relative Infiltration - Potential for Enhancement



Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

KOSHKONONG CREEK

Koshkonong Creek is approximately 42 miles long and the upper portion of the creek flows from the headwaters at the east edge of the City through the southern portion of the City. The stream has an average width of twenty feet and an average depth of one foot. The creek flows through an open channel through most of the City with short enclosed sections in the Linnerud Drive area. The creek supports a warm water sport fishery in all but the first six miles of its length where it flows through the City and the Water Pollution Control Facility, which discharges treated effluent. A Sun Prairie Stormwater Utility Ordinance is in force to help control unfiltered runoff from storm sewers into the creek.

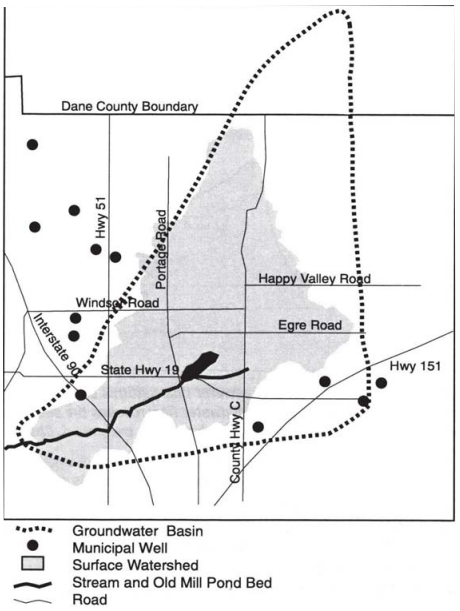
TOKEN CREEK

Token Creek is a significant natural resource feature in the Sun Prairie area unique for its freshwater spring-fed stream ecosystem and many inherent ecological and aesthetic values. Passing through mostly agricultural land, the main stem of Token Creek is approximately ten miles long and flows from just north of Sun Prairie to Cherokee Marsh, and is the primary tributary to the Yahara River. The creek has an average width of fifteen feet and an average depth of 1.5 feet. Water from the springs and other groundwater sources from Token Creek contributes the most significant amount of base flow to Lake Mendota.

The Token Creek area is subject to a high level of development pressure from adjacent communities, including the City of Sun Prairie. Stormwater runoff from these areas and three major highways is often warmer than lakes and streams, and can raise water temperatures and degrade fish habitat. Surrounding lands that drain to Token Creek have been designated as Thermally Sensitive Areas. The City has taken several measures to help mitigate the impact of development, including the construction of a greenway near STH 19 and CTH C, and improved stormwater management practices that place an emphasis on infiltration.

Token Creek

Figure 3-9: Token Creek Watershed Relative to Groundwater Basin



Source: Water Resources Atlas for Token Creek (1997)

Sun Prairie is intersected along its length by both surface water and groundwater divides. General water flow to the north and west of these divides is in a south-westerly direction toward the City of Madison. Water flow on the south and east side of the divides is generally toward the communities of Deerfield and Marshall. See the side bar describing the two major creeks that run through the City of Sun Prairie.

Watersheds

As shown in Figure 3-10, a majority of the City of Sun Prairie is within the Lower Rock River Basin encompassing portions of the Yahara River/Lake Mendota and Upper Koshkonong Creek Watersheds.

Most of the original wetlands of the Lower Rock River Basin have been drained to accommodate agriculture and many streams sections had been ditched and

straightened to provide more efficient drainage. These conditions, coupled with warm temperatures, erosion of sediment and nutrients from cropland, discharge of treated wastewater from urban development (and hydrologic modifications) contribute to overall poor water quality. Additionally, erosion from construction sites and runoff from urban land uses as a result of increased urban development will continue to exhibit more strain on the quality of the basin.

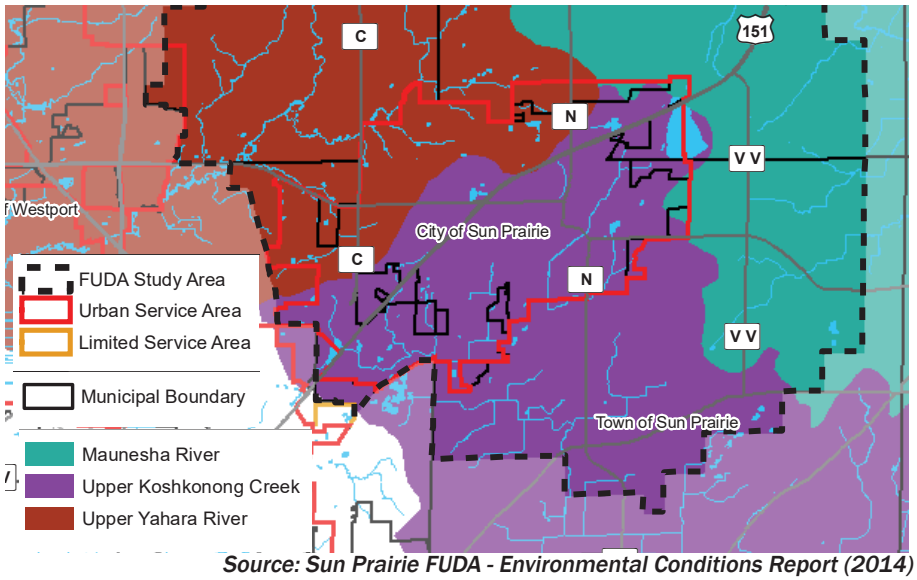
The **Upper Yahara-Mendota Watershed** was designated in 1995 as a Priority Watershed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Covering 85 square miles in north central Dane County, this watershed touches a mixture of urban, suburban, and agricultural land. Based on DNR groundwater susceptibility mapping, the watershed has a medium susceptibility for groundwater contamination. As urban development expands on Sun Prairie's west side, there is raising concern about decreased groundwater recharge and altered base flow in Token Creek.

The **Yahara River Watershed** drains almost 467 square miles in Dane County and includes parts of the north and west sides of the City of Sun Prairie. This watershed includes Token Creek, which empties into the Yahara River and ultimately the Rock River after flowing through Lakes Mendota, Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa.

The **Koshkonong Creek Watershed** drains approximately 279 square miles of mostly agricultural land in the far eastern part of Dane County and includes eastern, central and southern portions of the City of Sun Prairie. This watershed includes the Koshkonong Creek, which empties into the Rock River after flowing through Lake Koshkonong. Although erosion control regulations are in effect, development, along with agricultural uses in the City and adjacent municipalities, continue to be a concern in this area. The DNR identifies the watershed with a medium susceptibility for groundwater contamination.

The most northeastern tip of the City along US 151, and portions of the eastern boundaries, are within the Maunesha River Watershed within the Upper Rock River Basin. As the City continues to grow in these directions, development will have more influence and effect on this watershed.

Figure 3-10: Subregional Watersheds



Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

The **Maunesha River Watershed** drains 88 square miles of northeastern Dane County that is characterized as seventy percent agricultural land created from drained wetlands. Twenty miles of the Maunesha River flows through Dane County, before eventually joining the Crawfish River. The river is a shallow, meandering, wetland drainage stream with a low gradient. The river is classified as a warm water sport fishery and rates fairly good water quality in comparison to other monitored streams in Dane County, but is subject to runoff of agricultural fertilizers and erosion.

DID YOU KNOW?

Polluted urban runoff takes two general forms:

1. Stormwater running off impervious surfaces such as rooftops, parking lots and streets, carrying sediments, nutrients, and other pollutants; and
2. Sediment-laden water flowing from development sites into streams and lakes.

Source: DNR, Lower Rock River Basin-wide Issues

Wetlands

Wetlands provide valuable wildlife habitat and contribute greatly to the aesthetic appeal of an area. They are natural filters for storm-water runoff and provide many additional benefits in the areas of pollution control, drainage, and hydrologic function.

Wetlands are regulated and protected at all governmental levels and development is generally prohibited within wetland areas. Dane County and the City of Sun Prairie both enforce a buffer zone from wetlands, shorelands and bodies of water, within which only limited uses may be located.

According to the Wisconsin Wetlands Inventory, the wetlands in the City of Sun Prairie are generally found along Koshkonong Creek and Token Creek.

In 2012, RPC Restoration Ecologist identified and mapped wetlands in the Sun Prairie area. Figure 3-11 (on the next page) illustrates the valuable wetlands grouped by their present or potential biological condition, scientific value, public use, extent of degradation, and immediate or long-range threats. While all wetlands have value, decisions must sometimes be made as to where specific approaches and efforts are best tailored or targeted

Other potential wetlands may exist, however, it is likely that not all of them are mapped and further investigation is needed at the time of development. Map 3-2 (Figure 3-6) identifies the general location of known wetlands in the Sun Prairie area. Also see the City's Official Zoning Map: Environmental Corridor - Natural Resource Protection (sheet 2).

Wetland Feature in Meadow Crossing

DID YOU KNOW?

The hydrology of a particular site is determined by the amount, flow, frequency, duration, and depth of water. Wetland, or 'hydric' soils are saturated or waterlogged for all or part of the year.

Source: Dane County Wetlands Resource Management Guide

Floodplains

Cities are required by section 87.30 of Wisconsin Statutes and Chapter NR 116 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code to adopt floodplain zoning ordinances to meet the minimum standards provided by the state. The City's floodplains zoning provisions are found in Chapter 17.28 of the Zoning Ordinance. Floodplains are identified as the 100-year floodplain as designated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The City also requires the identification and preservation of the flood carrying capacity of drainage areas that are not mapped by FEMA through its platting and development ordinances.

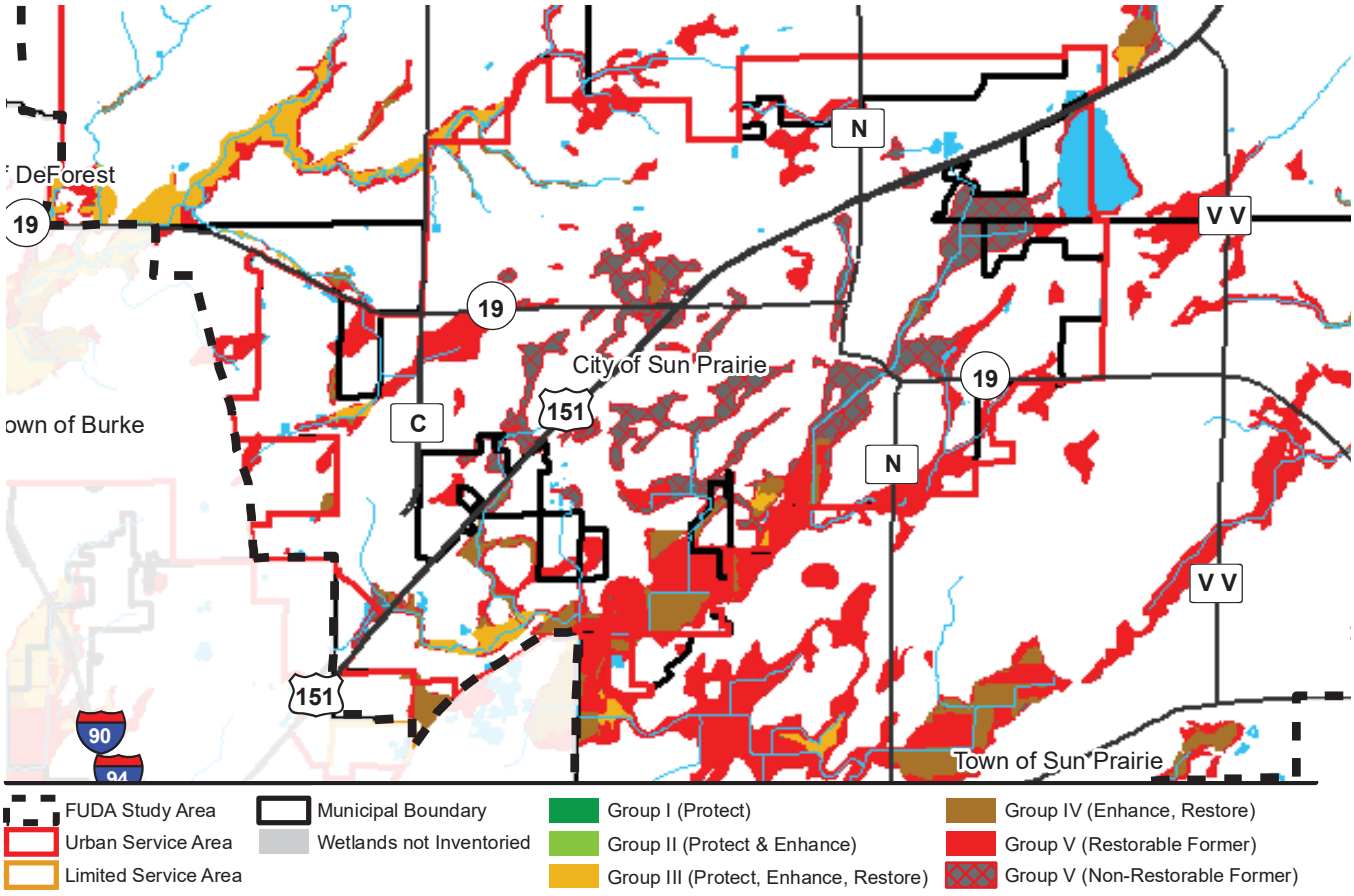
General floodplain boundaries are depicted on Sheet 2 of the City's Official Zoning Map: Environmental Corridor-Natural Resource Protection. Map 3-2 (Figure 3-6) includes the FEMA-mapped floodplains as well as other natural resources in Sun Prairie and surrounding areas. A detailed site analysis is required whenever development is proposed on any property that contains a floodplain area shown on either the City Zoning Map or the FIRM. It is sometimes necessary to seek amendments to these mapped floodplains when a proposed development area can be shown to be outside the floodplain. This process starts with City zoning staff and involves the Department of Natural Resources (a regional water management engineer) and FEMA.

Land Resources

Environmental Corridors

Environmental corridors in the Sun Prairie Urban Service Area have been mapped by the Capital Area

Figure 3-11: Wetland Groups



Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

Regional Planning Commission (CARPC). Once delineated and adopted, local, state and federal agencies use the corridors to help make decisions regarding the location of urban development and major facilities.

Title 17 of the City of Sun Prairie Zoning Ordinance establishes natural resource protection regulations for defined Environmental Corridors. Map 3-2 (Figure 3-6) shows the natural resource features included on Sheet 2 of the City's Official Zoning Map: Environmental Corridor-Natural Resource Protection.

There are approximately 1,269 acres throughout the City of Sun Prairie defined as environmen-

DID YOU KNOW?

To address flooding and control water quantity, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires municipalities to perform floodplain mapping and management plan development to receive federal flood insurance.

tal and open space corridors that are additionally serving to function as drainageways and stormwater management. Some of the corridors include the 100-year floodplain, wetlands and detention ponds.

Sun Prairie's Environmental Conditions Report (2014) suggests areas for environmental corridor expansion due to existing high-quality resources (i.e., wetlands, prairies, savannas, woodlands), as well as optional stewardship areas that have medium-quality resources that potentially could require protection through site design and review recommendations. See Figure 3-12 (on the next page) for these identified areas.

It is sometimes appropriate to reduce or revise the CARPC-mapped environmental corridor when detailed site data is available showing the exact locations of floodplain and wetland boundaries. As described in the CARPC Environmental Corridor Policies and Criteria, there are both "major changes" that require Wisconsin DNR approval and "minor changes" which can be approved administratively by CARPC staff. Applicants with questions about this process should talk to City planning staff and the CARPC Director for Environmental Resources Planning.

Open Space

In addition to providing parkland for the public, open space serves to protect and preserve water quality and quantity, reduce non point source pollution, and enhance scenic beauty and wildlife habitat through both managed and natural areas. The City of Sun Prairie has 411 acres of city-owned parks and additional open space adjacent to schools.

Greenway

DID YOU KNOW?

"Environmental Corridors" are contiguous systems of open space in urban and urbanizing areas that include environmentally sensitive lands and natural resources requiring protection from disturbance and development, and lands needed for open space and recreational use.

Source: Dane County Department of Planning and Development Environmental Corridors Fact Sheet

In 1991, The City of Sun Prairie and City of Madison executed an intergovernmental agreement regarding community separation with the intent of designating and maintaining a permanent open space corridor along US 151 between the two municipalities. This agreement has been altered several times, most recently through the adoption of the Town of Burke, Village of DeForest, City of Sun Prairie and City of Madison Cooperative Plan, adopted by all four communities in January 2007. The agreement establishes goals for the establishment of a landscape buffer along the highway and the preservation of key lands for open space and recreation uses, among other things. Refer to Exhibits 11 and 12 of the Cooperative Plan for more detailed information.

Urban Forest

There are just a few areas classified as woodlands scattered throughout the City, but they contribute to the fabric of an urban forest. An urban forest is defined as all of the trees and other vegetation in and around a community, including tree-lined streets, trees in home landscapes, school yards, parks, riverbanks, cemeteries, vacant lots, utility rights-of-way, and adjacent woodlands.

With the assistance of a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Urban Forestry Grant, the City of Sun Prairie Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department completed a Tree Inventory and Management Plan in November 2007. All street, park and public space trees, and planting sites were cataloged. Since 2007, there have been many new planting of trees, which has bolstered the City's inventory; however, it has also created an imbalance in the

recommended tree diameter ratio that provides a sustainable pattern of growth and coverage. Based on Sun Prairie's tree inventory, the majority (57%) are less than six inches in diameter with over forty percent of City trees comprised of maples (25%) and ash (19%). Sixty-eight percent of the ash trees are classified in fair to worse condition and should be monitored for susceptibility to Emerald Ash Borer infestation.

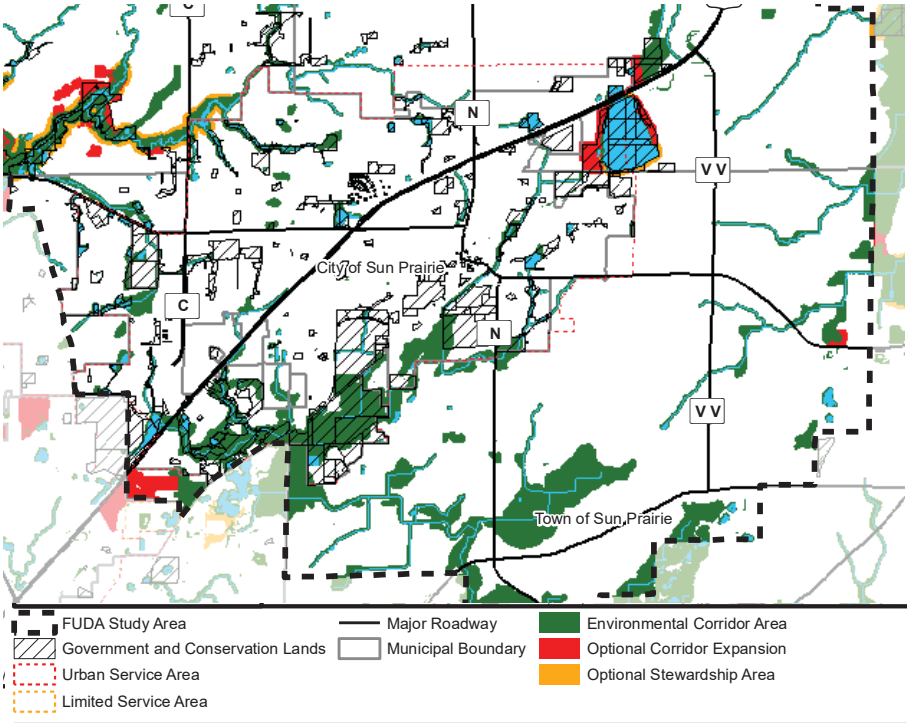
Patrick Marsh Natural Resource Area Boundary (NRAB) (est. 2001)

Located just south of US 151 on the eastern edge of the City of Sun Prairie, this resource area encompasses 990 acres of both public and private land. Approximately 330 acres are protected for wetland and prairie preservation and restoration. The majority of public land around the marsh is owned by the DNR (225 acres), Dane County (25.5 acres), and the Natural Heritage Land Trust (79.5 acres). The City of Sun Prairie Parks and Open Space Plan 2009-2013 identifies lands to the west and south of Patrick Marsh as planned open space.

The shallow marsh encompasses approximately 2.3 miles of shoreline length and is home to more than 100 varieties of waterfowl and grassland nesting birds. The Patrick Marsh resource area was included in the DNR Land Legacy Report (2006) as one of the 229 places that are critical to protect "to meet Wisconsin's future conservation and recreation needs in the next 50 years."

The Dane County Parks Department worked with several area stakeholders to prepare the Pat-

Figure 3-12: Environmental Corridors & Stewardship Areas



Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

Figure 3-13: 2017-2022 Park and Open Space Plan

rick Marsh Project Plan, adopted in June 2003. The plan encourages ongoing purchase of land at the site to restore the wildlife habitat, create trails that connect the protected properties at the Marsh with surrounding neighborhoods, and open the land to the public for hiking, nature study, and other activities.

A local conservation group, the Patrick Marsh Conservancy, has been working with the Natural Heritage Land Trust to raise funds to acquire lands surrounding the marsh, with the intent of restoring wetland and wet prairie habitat on these lands in the future. Funding has been obtained through various sources, including grants through the State of Wisconsin, the Dane County Conservation Fund Grant program, and contributions from the City of Sun Prairie and numerous private donors.

Token Creek NRAB (est. 1970)

Located adjacent to Sun Prairie, within the Towns of Windsor and Burke, and covering an area of 890 acres, this resource area extends from I-90/94 on the west along the creek to CTH C on the east. The Token Creek valley is characterized by several wetlands, which remain close to their natural state, and heavily wooded mature hills identified as a significant natural and recreational preservation potential at the edge of an urbanized area.

Land preservation, stream restoration, and fish habitat improvement efforts have been a priority for this natural resource area. In 1997 the Token Creek Watershed Association was formed and has worked with the DNR, Dane County, and neighboring communities, including the City of Sun Prairie, in efforts to mitigate growth and development impacts. Development lands within the City eventually drain into this portion of Token Creek, and as a result, stormwater treatment has been scrutinized very closely within this corridor in recent years.

The Token Creek Conservancy was created to include lands preserved through purchases, conservation easements, and land donated by property owners. The Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan 2018-2023 recommends the following actions:

- Continue working with Wisconsin DNR and conservation organizations on streambank restoration and fish habitat improvement projects;
- Dane County work towards acquiring lands north and east of Token Creek County Park to STH 19; and,
- Begin implementation of the 2011 master plan.

Patrick Marsh

DID YOU KNOW?

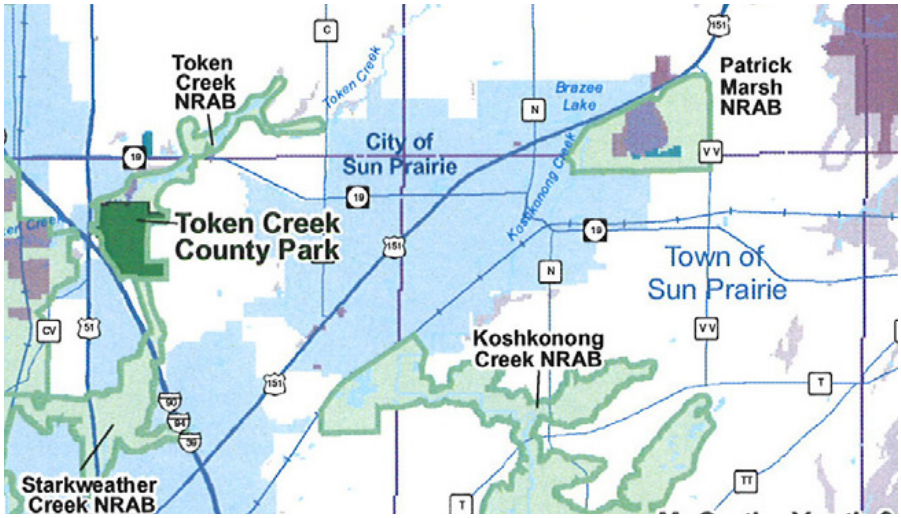
Patrick Marsh overflow is directed away from the natural outlet on the west side of the marsh to a watershed spillway culvert to the northeast that pipes water under Stone Quarry Road and US 151, discharging it to a wetland north of the highway and into the Maunesha River watershed.

Koshkonong Creek NRAB (est. 2006)

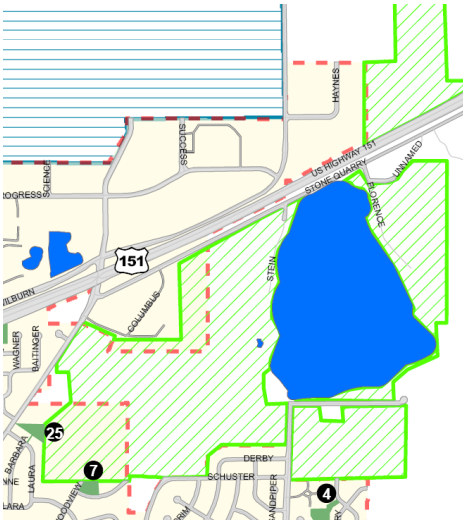
Located in the Town of Sun Prairie, and covering almost 3,600 acres, the resource area is intended to provide a greenbelt open space between the City of Sun Prairie, Madison and the Village of Cottage Grove, and could help provide a long-term rural transition into the Town of Sun Prairie.

This project area extends from the City of Sun Prairie south to I-94 and the northern tip of the Blooming Grove Drumlin Natural Resource Area. It also includes environmental corridor lands northeast of McCarthy County Park that drain into the Koshkonong Creek. This corridor could provide a diversity of benefits including flood mitiga-

Figure 3-14: Patrick Marsh Open Space Plans



Source: Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan 2006-2011



Patrick Marsh Planned Open Space

tion, wetland restoration potential, and future recreation opportunities such as shore fishing and trails. Protection of these lands is also expected to include working farms that exist throughout the drainage district areas.

Impact of Built Environment

Threatened & Endangered Species

Wisconsin State Statute 29.604 and Administrative Rule NR 27 established the Wisconsin Endangered and Threatened Species Law that is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) program maintains a statewide database representing the known occurrences of rare species and natural communities. Where there is the possibility or likelihood that an endangered resource may be present, an Endangered Resources Review by DNR may be necessary.

The City of Sun Prairie's planning area contains a diverse array of streams, wetlands, woodlands, and grassland habitats that support numerous wildlife species, and some are threatened or endangered. Finding a threatened or endangered species does not indicate that development cannot occur. Rather, prescribed management practices can be used to avoid impact. Table 3-1 on the following page shows the threatened and endangered resources in Sun Prairie's planning area.

Navigable, Designated, & Impaired Waters 303(d)

The Yahara River, Token Creek, Koshkonong Creek, and Maunesha River are classified as navigable waters. Token Creek and Koshkonong Creek are also considered Areas of Special Natural Resource Interest and therefore require state permits for any construction activity as governed by the DNR through Chapters 30 and 31 of the state statutes.

Token Creek

Koshkonong Creek Tributary at Sheehan Park

Per Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, the DNR must report all impaired waters in the state that are not meeting water quality standards. The DNR maintains a list of impaired waters, and reports every two years to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on its priorities for dealing with impaired waters through the Dane County Land and Water Resource Management Plan. See Figure 3-15.

Invasive Species

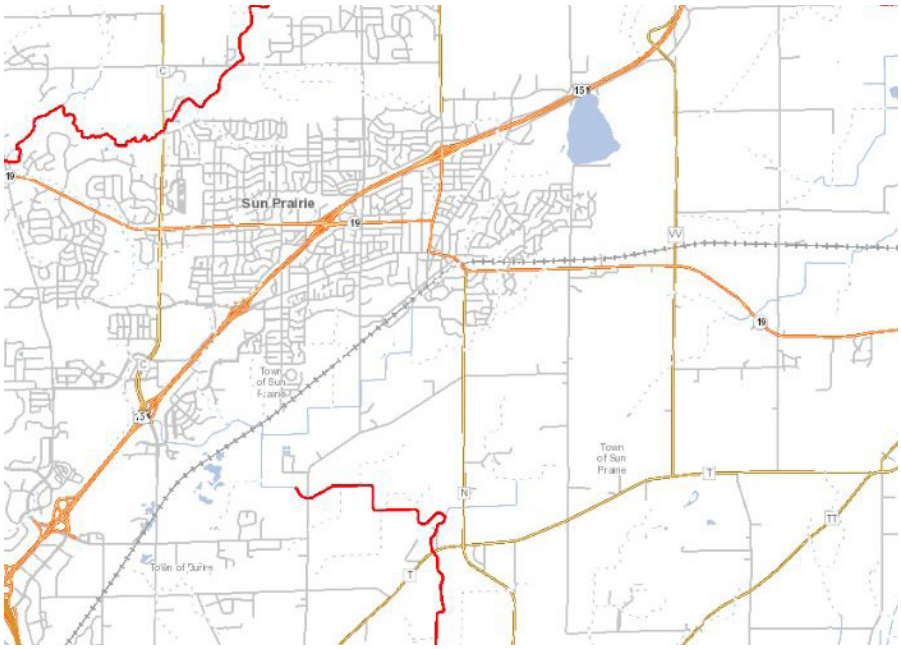
Invasive species are any plant, animal, fish, insect, or pathogen not indigenous to a region. When introduced, these non-native species negatively affect native species, ecosystems, recreational activities, commercial, agricultural, and aquacultural resources. The absence of predators and competitors lead to rapid and aggressive dispersion. Native species with limited population size or ecological range can be particularly susceptible.

The DNR and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection have authority to regulate invasive species and the DNR has proposed an Invasive Spe-

Table 3-1: Threatened & Endangered Resources

Endangered	Threatened	Special Concern	Natural Communities
None	Prairie Parsley (plant)	Least Darter (fish)	Calcareous Fen
	Small While Lady's Slipper (plant)	Western Harvest Mouse (mammal)	Southern Sedge Meadow
	Tufted Bulrush (plant)		Wet-Mesic Prairie

Figure 3-15: Impaired Waterways



DID YOU KNOW?

According to the Bureau of Endangered Resources, 90% of the occurrences of threatened and endangered species in Dane County are located within 300 feet of streams and 700 feet of wetlands or small ponds. In general, most natural resource objectives can be accomplished within these zones (i.e., 300 feet from the edge of a stream/wetland, and 700 feet from the edge of an exceptional wetland/pond greater than two acres with quality upland habitat nearby). The overall conservation objective should be to direct development away from sensitive and critical resource areas. If that is not possible, it is incumbent on planners and engineers to design developments to provide equal or greater natural resource protection. This can be accomplished through advanced conservation design techniques, restoration of other areas, and more based on the type of development, site characteristics, and options available.

Source: Sun Prairie FUDA - Environmental Conditions Report (2014)

DID YOU KNOW?

Invasive plants and animals are the second major threat to biodiversity in the United States.

cies Identification, Classification and Control Rule to allow for more rapid collaboration with local governments and landowners to contain and prevent infestations. The City of Sun Prairie municipal code requires by law the destruction of all noxious weeds by landowners. Examples of invasive plant species known to be present in Sun Prairie include purple loosestrife, a wetland perennial that grows in a wide range of habitats; and reed canary grass, a wetland perennial grass often found in moist organic soils.

The migration of the Asian Beetle and Gypsy Moth are currently being monitored. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was first identified in Wisconsin in Ozaukee County in August 2008. Urban concentrations and areas immediately adjacent face the highest risk of EAB infestation.

Air Quality

The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). By means of a statewide Air Monitoring Network, the DNR is responsible for monitoring six NAAQS criteria pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. They are Carbon Monoxide, Lead, Nitrogen Dioxide, Particulate Matter (PM10) and (PM2.5), Ozone, and Sulfur Oxides. The closest monitoring station recording particle pollution (PM2.5) levels for the area is located on the east side of Madison.

On October 1, 2015, the EPA lowered the eight-hour ozone standard. Because the ozone standard has been lowered to 70 ppb (from 75 ppb), there may be more air quality advisories issued, even if the air quality itself has not changed. Violation of these standards would require more strict pollution emission controls. Major factors affecting air quality include vehicle, industrial, power plant, and farm emissions.

Environmental Contamination

Industrial and commercial properties are a potential source of release of contaminants that affect natural resources and the environment. The DNR Remediation and Redevelopment program ensures proper cleanup of the release of hazardous substances to land, water or air. Degradation of groundwater is the primary concern for environmental impacts from contamination. Releases are most often discovered at the time of property transfer and during building expansion/demolition and infrastructure activities.

As of August 2018, the DNR database of contaminated and cleaned up sites identified 173 open and closed sites within the corporate boundary. As noted in Table 3-2 (on the next page), Sun Prairie has four sites listed as open sites involving ongoing cleanup.

Purple Loosestrife

Reed Canary Grass

Contaminated Property Remediation

Parcels of industrial or commercial property with identified contaminants have the potential to become viable redevelopment sites. Typically located in urban areas, the remediation of these infill properties makes best use of existing infrastructure and contributes to the minimization of community sprawl.

Funding for the assessment, remediation, and planning of under utilized and environmentally contaminated sites is available to local governments through county, state and DNR grant programs. Some of these programs are listed below.

Tax incremental financing (TIF) districts have been created to finance downtown revitalization efforts in Sun Prairie. The Downtown Master Plan, adopted in 2001, was made possible in part with funding awarded from two Better Urban Infill Land Development (BUILD) Grants and a Site Assessment Grant for planning, implementation, and remediation of industrial sites within the project area. Redevelopment included a new public gathering open space and the rehabilitation of an historic cannery building.

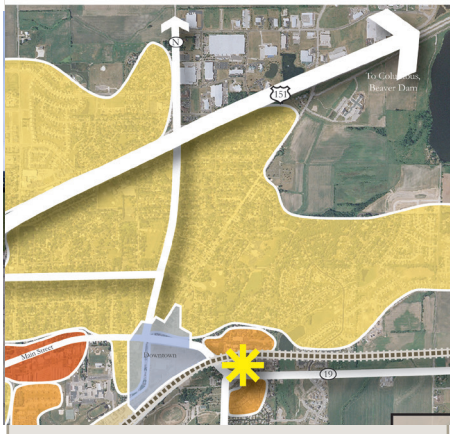
Table 3-2: Sun Prairie Contaminated Sites (Open Status in 2018)

Activity Number	Address	Type
06-13-402124 Chiquita Processed Foods	151 Market St.	Open VPLE
03-13-193977 Davison C-Store	423 Columbus St	Open LUST
02-13-195919 CGC Bulk Plant	220 E Linnerud Dr	Open ERP
03-13-548068 Prairie Foreign Cars	400 W Main St	Open LUST

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PROGRAMS

- *Blight Elimination and Brownfields Redevelopment Grant - as part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.*
- *Community Development Zone program*
- *Petroleum Environmental Cleanup Fund*



DNR PROGRAMS

- *Brownfield, Green Space and Public Facilities Grant*
- *Brownfield Site Assessment Grant*
- *Land Recycling Loans*
- *Stewardship Grants*

DANE COUNTY PROGRAMS

- *Better Urban Infill Land Development (BUILD)*
- *Commercial Revitalization Loan Funds*
- *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)*

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural and historic resources can help define a community's sense of identity and link the present with the past. This section will examine the places, events and organizations that contribute to the City's history and uniqueness.

Pre-History

The first inhabitants to Wisconsin followed the larger animals into the area as the glaciers retreated more than 10,000 years ago. Evidence of early residents can be found through pottery, arrowheads, burial mounds and other archaeological finds. According to the State Historical Society records, the area around what is now known as Patrick Marsh was used as a campsite during prehistoric times.

In fact, according to the Patrick Marsh Project Plan developed by the Dane County Parks Department, a major Ho-Chunk village that included the confluence of three major Native American trails was located on the southwest corner of the marsh. The village may have still been used by the Ho Chunk during the early settlement days.

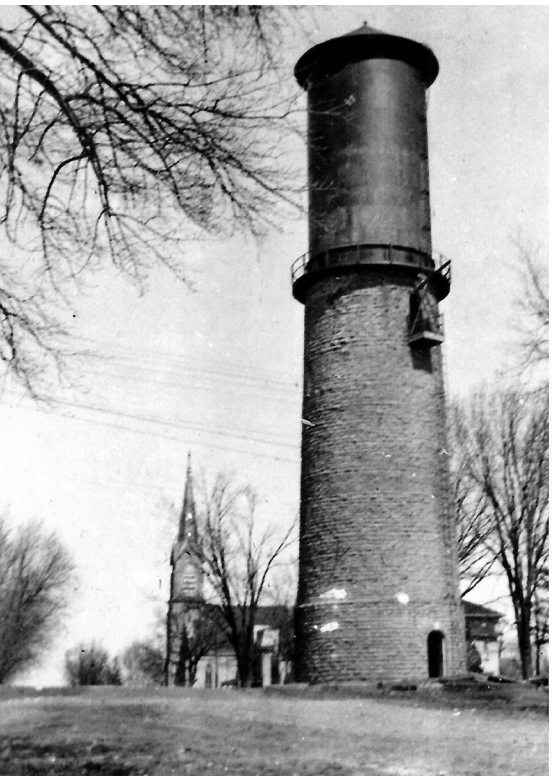
Community History

Sun Prairie, Our Home: By Peter Klein

Sun Prairie's settlement in 1837 was preceded by Native American settlements in this area for more than 12,000 years. Native American history is important to understanding the development of early Sun Prairie. Caucasian settlers Native American trails became roads. Burial Mounds, village sites, and artifacts still remain in this area. Native American people continued to visit this area into the 1960s; they remembered their history through oral tradition

Madison and Sun Prairie were born out of the influence of developers in the Wisconsin Territorial government. James Doty, who owned many acres of land in the four-lakes area of what is now Dane County, convinced the ter-


City Hall, Sun Prairie, Wis.



ritorial legislators to build the new Wisconsin Territory capitol in the "paper city of Madison." The territorial legislature commissioned Augustus A. Bird as the architect and construction foreman of the new capitol.

In 1837 Bird assembled carpenters and mechanics in Milwaukee for the construction of the new territorial capitol in Madison. After days of rain that rendered the trip memorable, the sun came out when they entered the lobe of a small prairie. A member of the expedition inspired by the sun on the prairie named the site Sun Prairie on June 9, 1837.

Sun Prairie was the western frontier when the first white settlers arrived here. Local stories and legends are replete with the difficulties involved in the settlement of the Sun Prairie area. The Sun Prairie Squatters Protective Society formed on March 5, 1845. Another society was the Sun Prairie and Token Creek Anti-Horse Thief Society. When the survey of the newly incorporated Village of Sun Prairie was completed on Nov. 20, 1868, it marked the separation of the village from the Town of Sun Prairie.

Sun Prairie was primarily a farming community as late as the 1960s. The village served as an economic, religious, and cultural center for the farming community. Rural Schools and rural settlements such as Pierceville, North Bristol, East Bristol, and Burke Station became community centers. Sun Prairie had the first Rural Free Delivery Route in Wisconsin, which started on November 17, 1896.

The formation of the Sun Prairie Canning Company in 1900 gave farmers another way of preserving their crops and extending their markets away from the Sun Prairie area.

The village's dependence on the farming community experienced a major change with the formation of the Sun Prairie Spark Plug Factory in 1919. This factory, later known as the Sun Prairie Porcelain Company, provided a major alternative to employment in the agricultural community. The company provided women with full-time employment. Women comprised about half of the factory's employees.

German Prisoners of War worked in the factory during the war. Canning Company employment records in the 1950s listed many categories of employees that worked in the factory. The factory later depended upon Hispanic employees and constructed housing units for some of its employees.

The village of Sun Prairie incorporated into a city in 1958. The need to provide housing for military personnel stationed at Truax Field in the 1960's was the catalyst for Capehart, a housing area consisting of 280 units off of North Bird Street, an area now known as Vandenburg Heights and Prairie Homes. Capehart brought Sun Prairie's residents their first major contact with people of different ethnic and racial groups.

New industries developed in the community during the 1950's & 60's, these industries including: the Wisconsin Cheeseman, Diesel Injection Service, Foulke Rubber Products and General Telephone Company. Admiral opened a television component factory in Sun Prairie in 1965, which was later redeveloped in 1967 as Goodyear. General Casualty opened a two-story building containing 120,000

square feet in 1982. Sun Prairie has continued to diversify with steady growth of new business establishments and business expansions in the Sun Prairie Business Park.

Sun Prairie changed from a farming community of 2,263 residents in 1950 to a community of 4,008 in 1960. In 1970 city residents increased to 9,935. Approximately 25,370 residents in 2008. Two periods of significant population increase have taken place: from 1960 to 1970 and from 1990 to the present. Much of this growth has occurred to the west and northwest, most likely influenced by the proximity of this area to transportation corridors that connect Sun Prairie with the rest of the Madison region. The majority of the recent increase has occurred on the City's west side, in concert with Madison's outward expansion.

The growth of the city over time has led to a great deal of change in the community, as example of this change can be illustrated by the changes in the community's school facilities. In n 1950, the Sun Prairie School Public School System consisted of one building serving grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. In 2019, the eighth and ninth public elementary schools were constructed. The district operates two middle schools, one upper middle school and one high school. In April, a referendum to construct a second high school for the community passed. There are also several private schools in the city offering alternatives for the student population.

Sun Prairie's history will continue to evolve, changing its employment opportunities, housing, and community services, to meet future needs.

Crosse House

Adam and Mary Smith House | Pre and Post Relocation

DID YOU KNOW?

The State Historical Society conducted a survey of Sun Prairie's architecture beginning in 1977. The inventory currently lists 55 sites with historic architecture; however, a number of the buildings are no longer in existence. A full list of these sites can be obtained through the State Historical Society. More detailed information about these and other sites can also be obtained at the Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum.

Places

National & State Register of Historic Places

The City of Sun Prairie has five properties listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places. The Crosse House, built in 1883 and located at 133 West Main Street, is a two-story frame structure trimmed in the Victorian, Carpenter Gothic style. The building architecture is unique in Sun Prairie. Historically the house has been used for a number of purposes including a doctor's office and pharmacy, a grocery store, and a creamery and ice cream shop. Due to the construction of the new Water & Light Commission (SP Utilities) building in 1999, the Crosse House was moved approximately one lot to the west of its original location.

Another Sun Prairie home on the National and State Register of Historic Places is the Adam and Mary Smith House, originally located along USH 151 between Madison and Sun Prairie. This brick structure was built in late 1800's of the Italianate architectural style and was recently moved approximately one half-mile as a result of an expansion of Highway 151. It now serves as the anchor and namesake for the Smith's Crossing development on the City's southwest side.


Cargill Granary (Chase Grain Elevator)

Historical Museum c.1920's

On April 6, 2000, the Columbus Street Water Tower was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The water tower is a 60-foot high structure rising from a two foot rusticated foundation, which is almost entirely below the level of the plaza and the street. The tower is topped with a steel tank, which adds 30 feet to its overall height of 92 feet. The water tower is significant to the history of the community because this modern structure and the necessary administrative organization to manage it marked the development of the community from a village into a municipality.

The fourth property, listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places in 2004, is the Fuhrmann Canning Company Factory located at 151 Market Street. The factory, constructed in the early 1900's and active into the 1970's, served the surrounding agricultural industry through vegetable processing and canning. The building now serves as the anchor for Cannery Square, part of the City's downtown redevelopment project.

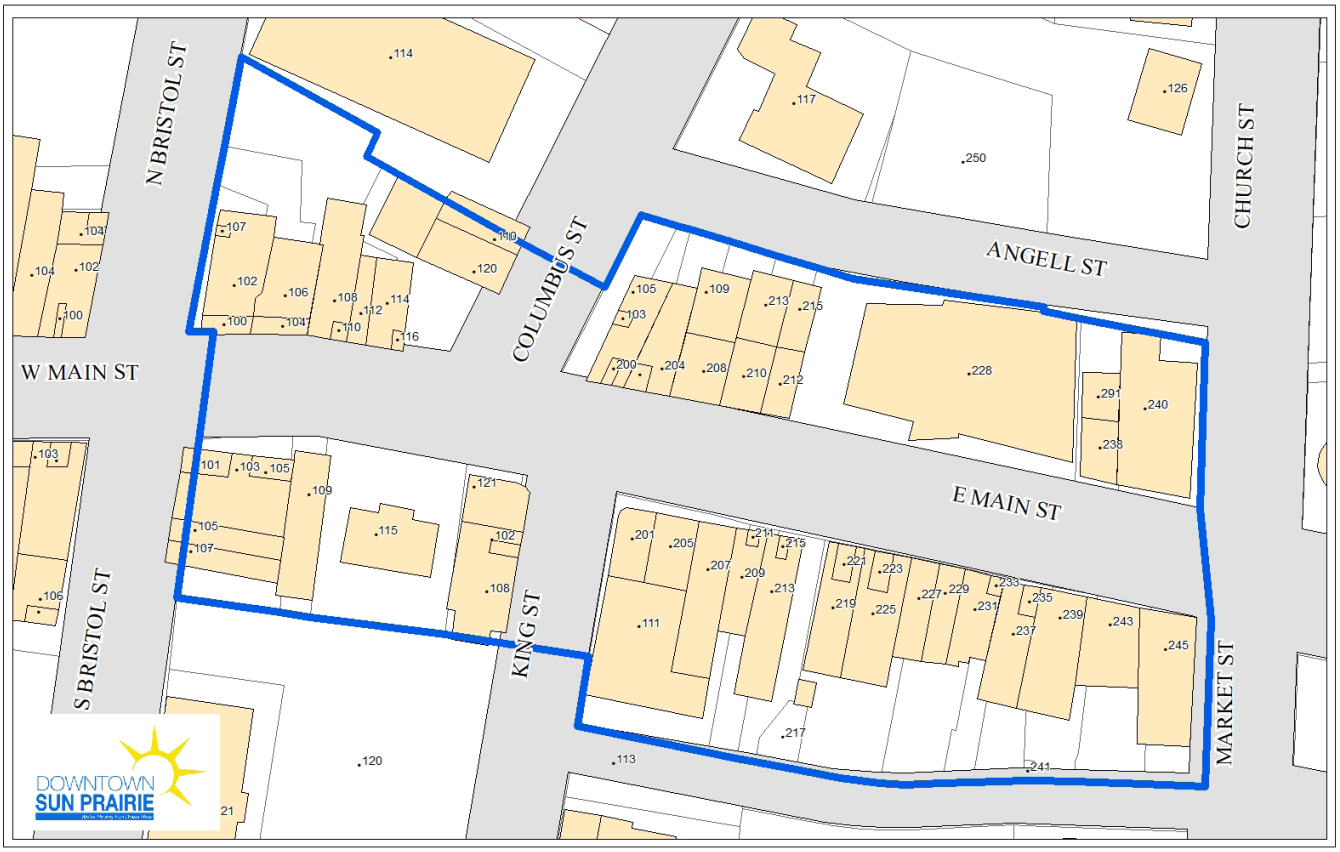
The Chase Grain Elevator located at 123 Railroad Street is the fifth property on the National Register and it was added in 2010. The unique design incorporated the silos, workhouse, office and conveyors into one structure when it was built in 1922.

In June 2019, the 100 and 200 blocks of East Main Street, were added to the National Register of Historic Places as the Sun Prairie Downtown Historic District. The District is comprised of 26 contributing buildings that retain historic significance.

Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory

The State Historical Society conducted a survey of Sun Prairie's architecture beginning in 1977. The AHI currently lists 55 sites with

Figure 3-16: Sun Prairie Historic District



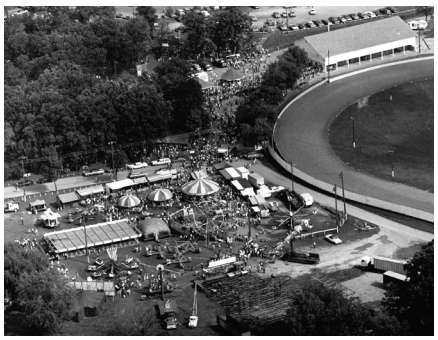
historic architecture; however, a number of the buildings are no longer in existence. A full list of these sites can be obtained through the Wisconsin State Historical Society. More detailed information about these and other sites can also be obtained at the Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum.

Cemeteries

Cemeteries are another example of a resource that can add to a community's sense of history. Formally catalogued burial sites are protected from disturbance by State law.

The location of many area cemeteries can be found on Map 3-7. The Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum maintains a 'death list' on its website that includes a more detailed description and location of the many area cemeteries.

Harness Racing



Angell Park: Corn Fest 1970's

Native American Mounds

Although there are no documented Native American burial mound sites in the area, a cluster of mounds is said to be located approximately ½ mile southwest of Patrick Marsh in the wooded area of what is known as Carriage Hill - according to the Patrick Marsh Project Plan developed by the Dane County Parks Department in 2003. The mounds are located on private property and are somewhat protected by the existing residential development.

Angell Park

Angell Park, located between CTH N and the railroad tracks on the City's east side, was created in the early 1900's when Colonel William Angell donated 15 acres of 'Angell's Grove' to the village Volunteer Fire Department. The official dedication of the park took place on June 20, 1903.

The Volunteer Fire Department finished construction on the first park pavilion in 1904, to coincide with the 2nd annual harvest festival in August of that year. In 1919, the pavilion was moved and expanded to its present location. The reconstruction at that time doubled its original size and added a lower floor. The pavilion currently houses the National Midget Auto Racing Hall of Fame Historical Display.

The park was and continues to be the site of many community events. The park has hosted harness racing, auto racing, industrial fairs, high school athletics, recreation classes, and was the site of the city pool from 1958-1992.

Now at approximately 62 acres in size, Angell Park continues to host the Midget Auto races throughout the summer months, is home to the Sun Prairie Sweet Corn Festival, and now includes the recently constructed Firemen's Park In the Prairie.

Sun Prairie Historical Library & Museum

This Georgian Revival Style red brick building, located at 115 E. Main St., was constructed in 1924 and serves as the headquarters of the Museum. The museum building has served many purposes over the years including use as a library, city offices, the village council chamber, World War II Red Cross center, and as the original site of the Colonial Club.

Downtown Sun Prairie contains a number of historic buildings and in June 2019 the 100 & 200 blocks of East Main St were recognized by being placed on the National Register of Historic Place as an Historic District. The City has recently implemented an overlay district as part of the adoption of the Business District Revitalization Plan to encourage the preservation and enhancement of historic buildings in the downtown area.

Events

There are numerous events that occur in the community, both on a regular basis and as one-time events with a sampling of events summarized below. For additional community events see the Chamber of Commerce's and/or the City of Sun Prairie's website.

Community Tree Lighting

A tradition since 1915, this event marks the beginning of the holiday season. The lighting ceremony currently takes place the Friday after Thanksgiving in front of the Sun Prairie Historical Library and Museum.

There are numerous other events that occur in the community, both on a regular basis and as one-time events, such as the Cannery Square Block Party, Strawberry Fest, Maxwell Street Days, the Art Fair in Sheehan Park, and many more. The Chamber of Commerce is a good resource for information regarding community events.

Groundhog Day

For over 60 years, the Sun Prairie community has proclaimed Sun Prairie to be "The Groundhog Capital of the World." The tradition of Groundhog Day is tied to Candlemas Day, a centuries old celebration day in Europe. Folklore states: "If the day is bright and clear there'll be two winters in the year."

The Groundhog Day tradition in Sun Prairie dates back to 1948, when Wisconsin celebrated its centennial year. The centennial event was commemorated in various ways, both public and personal.

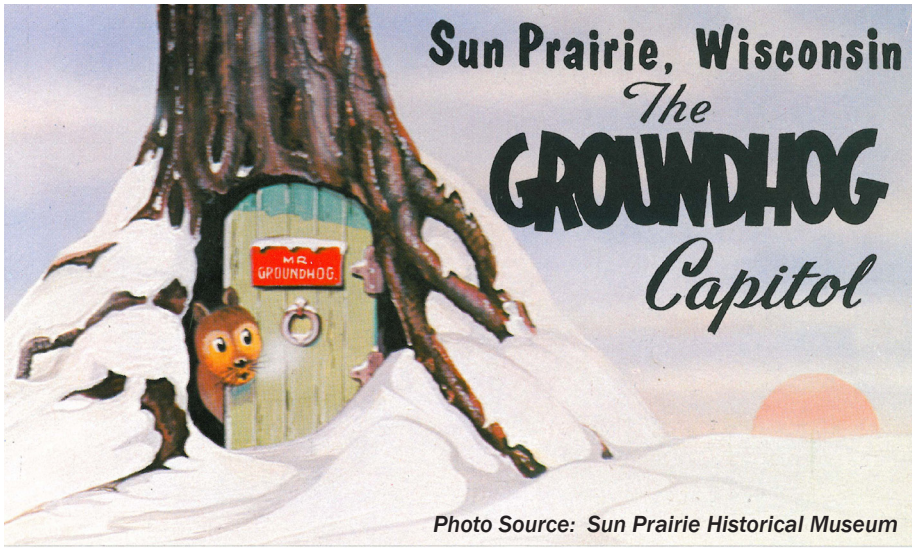


Photo Source: Sun Prairie Historical Museum

One such effort was created by commercial artist Ira Bennett of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. With his young son, bennett decided to create a series of commemorative post cards relating various locations in Wisconsin to the holidays throughout the year. Sun Prairie was selected to celebrate Groundhog Day because the groundhog sees his shadow when the sun comes up on the prairie. Thus, Sun Prairie was picked for the honor.

Associated events and promotions over the years have included the formation of a Sun Prairie Groundhog Club, a groundhog wedding, a groundhog funeral, a moon rocket launch, and on occasion some pomp & circumstance. In addition, there has been an annual commemorative USPS postmark.

For many years the Sun Prairie Chamber of Commerce partnered with local organizations to host the Groundhog Day event, and member businesses participated via booth displays and promotion. A community breakfast with approximately 1,000 people on hand was regularly held to hear Jimmy the Groundhog predict an early spring or six more weeks of winter. Jimmy the Groundhog boasts an 80% accuracy rate in predicting what type of weather is in store!

Since 2012, the City of Sun Prairie and the Business Improvement District have hosted the annual prognostication downtown in Cannery Square on February 2nd.

Sweet Corn Festival

The first annual Sweet Corn Festival was held on August 29 and 30 in 1953. It is the oldest sweet corn festival in Wisconsin. The 1953 and 1954 festival grounds extended along the two blocks of Angell Street, just north of Main Street. The 1953 festival served 13,000 ears of corn and two hundred pounds of butter to 6,000 people on Saturday, August 29.

The first corn festivals set the format for future festivals. Future events, included a corn eating contest, music, and local talent shows. Each festival ended with fireworks on Sunday evening. Later festival additions included a festival parade, a Corn Boiler Run, and the extension of the festival to four days.

The festival moved to Angell Park's more spacious grounds in 1955, the third year of the festival. The 1957 corn festival committee assignments included eight committees: dance, corn, butter, queen, concessions, corn sales, rides, and advertising. Bingo in the Angell Park pavilion was added to the roster of events in 1973.

The festival is the major event of the year in Sun Prairie. A corn building staffed by volunteers remains the center of the festival. Local service clubs and organizations use the festival to gain operating funds for their community projects. In 1997, Stokely USA, expanded their facilities. Stokely had cooked the corn for the festival for years so the festival had the challenge of finding a new location to steam over 70 tons of sweet corn. The so-

lution came in constructing a new "community owned" corn cooking building with the help of local businesses and residents interested in taking "stalk" in the Sun Prairie Sweet Corn Festival. The community rallied to protect the future of the time-honored tradition that the festival had become. The new corn steaming facility was completed in 1997.

Today, approximately 100,000 people attend the four day Sweet Corn Festival on the 3rd full weekend of August. Nine local organizations still use the festival as one of their major fundraisers during the year and utilize hundreds of volunteers to staff the fest. On Saturday and Sunday nearly 80 ton of sweet corn are served on the grounds. The corn and the carnival continue to be the major attractions on the grounds.

Midget Auto Racing

Midget Auto Racing originated in 1934 at the Gilmore Stadium in Los Angeles, CA. Soon thereafter, the sport spread throughout the country and began in Wisconsin at the Blue Mound Dog Racing Track in Brookfield, WI.

Midget Racing came to Angell Park in 1946 when the harness racing track was shortened from a one-half mile to a one-third mile semi-banked, clay oval. Over the years, concrete walls and double steel barriers have replaced the hay bales and trees that once lined the perimeter of the course. Modern concession and restroom facilities, coupled with a remodeled public pavilion at trackside have added to spectator comfort and enjoyment.

Races are generally held every Sunday evening between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Organizations

A number of organizations exist to promote and maintain a range of cultural resources within and around the city. Some examples include:

Friends of the Sun Prairie Historical Library & Museum

The purpose of this organization is to support the on-going efforts of the Public Museum located at 115 East Main St. The Friends sponsors fund-raising events which include tours of the Downtown Historic District and historic homes within the City.

Sun Prairie Historical Restorations

This non-profit group was organized in 1976 for the purpose of preserving the historic Crosse House on at 133 West Main Street. Its on-going mission is to preserve and restore any improvement in the City that has a special character or historical interest as apart of the cultural characteristics of Sun Prairie.

Sun Prairie Civic Theatre

This community theatre group was organized in 1970 and performs four different productions per year. They are headquartered within the repurposed Bradley farm barn located at 550 South Bird Street adjacent to Sheehan Park East. Performances are held at the Cardinal Heights Upper Middle School auditorium and the Sun Prairie High School Performing Arts Center.

The Colonial Club

This organization originated in 1969 to establish a meeting place and activities for seniors. The Colonial Club Senior Activity Center is now located at 301 Blankenheim Avenue and services the surrounding area senior population with a wide range of activities. More information about the organization can be found by visiting their website.

Sun Prairie Area Community Band

The Community Band, was formed in 1961 and is a volunteer organization comprised of 40-50 musicians. They provide free performances throughout the Sun Prairie area which includes everything from traditional and contemporary concert band music, marches, show tunes, jazz and holiday music.

Sunshine Place

This charitable, non-profit organization directs and administers the operation of a facility located at 18 Rickel Road within the city. The building currently houses the city's food pantry, and provides beds and mattresses, clothes for school-aged children, toys and school supplies. Additional space is provided for Dane County human services offices. It is intended to provide a single point of access to help meet the needs of underserved residents. In addition, a community meal, Sunshine Supper, is served weekly to provide a healthy nutritious meal and fellowship, and all are welcome to attend.

Northeast YMCA of Dane County

The YMCA, 1470 Don Simon Dr, is a cause-driven organization that is for youth development, for healthy living and for social responsibility. The programs are designed to build health spirit, mind and body for all.

The American Legion Post #333, VFW Post #9362 and a list of other organizations and their contact information can be obtained by contacting the Sun Prairie Chamber of Commerce.

Flags of Freedom Parade

Sun Prairie Rotary Club Breakfast

Sun Prairie Civic Theater

Concerts in the Park