



CITY OF VERONA

111 Lincoln Street
Verona, WI 53590-1520

Jamie J. Aulik, City Administrator

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MEMORANDUM

To: Sarah Gaskell, Town Administrator
From: Jamie J. Aulik, City Administrator
Date: April 6, 2026
Re: Concerns Regarding Proposed Future Land Use Map Amendments

Dear Administrator Gaskell,

The City of Verona staff are writing to express its significant concern regarding the Town's proposed amendments to its Future Land Use Map, specifically the conversion of lands currently planned for agricultural use to rural residential development.

These changes appear to be inconsistent with both the spirit and, in several instances, the explicit provisions of the Boundary Agreement between the City and the Town, as well as the current Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Inconsistency with the Town's Existing Comprehensive Plan

From a planning perspective, the proposed conversion of highly productive agricultural lands to rural residential use represents an inefficient use of land and resources. The Town's own Comprehensive Plan identifies these areas as containing some of the most productive soils and explicitly prioritizes their preservation. Indeed, Chapter 6 of the Town's Comprehensive Plan is titled Agricultural Resources. Notably, this chapter contains the following language, "Map 6.1 shows the best agricultural soils in the Town. The highest productive soils are found along the Badger Mill Creek, the Sugar River, and north and south of Whalen Rd. Farmland of Statewide Importance is defined as land that with proper management may be as productive as prime farmland." Looking at Map 6.1, the vast majority of land that the Town now seeks to identify as rural residential is on land with some of the highest productive soils, per the existing Comprehensive Plan.

The shift away from agricultural designation appears to directly conflict with the goals and policies outlined in Chapters 6 and 9 of the Plan, which call for limiting development in Agricultural Preservation Areas and protecting farmland of statewide importance.

Inconsistency with the Boundary Agreement

The Boundary Agreement clearly establishes a shared commitment to orderly development and the preservation of rural character and agricultural resources. Section 4.02 emphasizes the importance of maintaining the Town as predominantly rural, while Section 4.03 recognizes farmland and natural resources as assets to the entire Verona community that should not be diminished by unrestrained development. Section 15 further reinforces the Town's obligation to prioritize the preservation of farmland in areas conducive to agricultural use.

Additionally, Section 12 of the Agreement requires that both communities maintain Comprehensive Plans that are consistent with the Agreement and prohibits amendments that would create inconsistencies without mutual approval. The City is concerned that the proposed land use changes may not meet this standard.

Other inconsistencies between the proposed Land Use Map and the Boundary Agreement include:

- Section 4.02 affirms that the Town's vision is to remain predominantly rural while allowing for some growth without expansion of sewer and water service. The conversion of large swaths of agricultural land to residential designations – including land on the east side of the Town, near the City of Fitchburg – is difficult to reconcile with this stated vision.
- Section 4.03 recognizes that the Town's rural character, including farmland, woodlands, and wetlands, is a valuable asset to the entire Verona community and that unrestrained development can destroy that asset. The proposed amendment moves in the opposite direction.
- Section 8.03 governs the City–Town Interest Area (Area B) and makes clear that interim and long-term Town development must not conflict with future City expansion.
- Section 12.01 requires the Town and City to share and collaborate with staff when amending a comprehensive plan. The City was not consulted in advance of the state mandated public notice.
- Section 12.03 expressly prohibits either party from amending its Comprehensive Plan in a manner inconsistent with the Boundary Agreement “unless that provision is explicitly approved by action of the other party's Board or Council.” The City has not approved this amendment. The proposed land use reclassification, as described, does not have the City's approval and cannot move forward consistent with the Agreement's terms.

- Section 15 commits the Town to prioritizing the preservation of farmland in portions of the Town conducive to farming. Reclassifying those very lands to residential use is directly at odds with this commitment.

Beyond policy inconsistency, the proposed approach raises broader concerns about long-term land use efficiency, infrastructure planning, and the potential for fragmented development patterns within the City-Town Interest Area. While the Boundary Agreement allows for interim development, it clearly contemplates that such development should not conflict with future urban growth or undermine coordinated planning efforts.

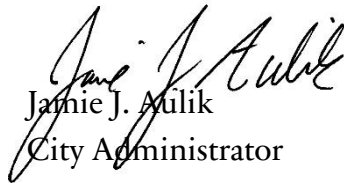
Conclusion and Request

The City values its longstanding partnership with the Town and remains committed to collaborative, thoughtful planning that benefits the entire Verona community. However, the proposed changes represent a departure from that shared vision and warrant careful reconsideration.

We respectfully request that the Town pause further action on these amendments and engage in a collaborative discussion with City staff and elected officials to ensure alignment with the Boundary Agreement and both communities' long-term planning goals.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to continued dialogue.

Sincerely,



Jamie J. Aulik
City Administrator