

CHAPTER 20: NEIGHBORHOOD J

INTERSTATE 43 & RACINE QUARRIES

Revisions approved by Council 11/15/16 via Ordinance #2579

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Highway Interstate 43 & Racine Avenue interchange offers numerous long-range planning issues and opportunities. On the one hand, any interstate interchange raises the specter of growth and development potential. On the other hand, this particular interchange is located in an area that has not experienced growth pressures and is not provided with urban services (Figure 20.1).

To the northwest is a former quarry, a portion of which was purchased by the City for a regional park. To the southeast is the Linnie Lac area, part of Neighborhood I. To the north, the historic Prospect Hill area, also part of Neighborhood I, is within close enough proximity that anything that happens at the interchange will affect it. The 4-lane improvements to Racine Avenue, and the reconstruction of the Racine/National Avenue intersection also have the potential to make this area more attractive to development. Lastly, given that the Citywide forecast for employment demand exceeds the current supply of business land, this area should be considered as a long-range job center. The way in which this is pursued while accomplishing the goal of protection of the rural character for western New Berlin is an important concern.

On October 28, 2003, the Common Council adopted Resolution 03-43 supporting the development of Mill Valley to be consistent with its Growth and Development Master Plan (GDMP) which depicts the site as a future business park. The resolution also directed the Department of Community Development for the City to study and report back to the Council the economic, engineering, legal feasibility of creating tax increment district financing and the cost and technical feasibility of sewer and water for the development, consistency with the City's adopted Master Plan and review of the site's current zoning. The City of Muskego also adopted a resolution on October 28, 2003 to support the study of redevelopment of Mill Valley on the cost and technical feasibility of extending sanitary sewer and water service to Mill Valley.

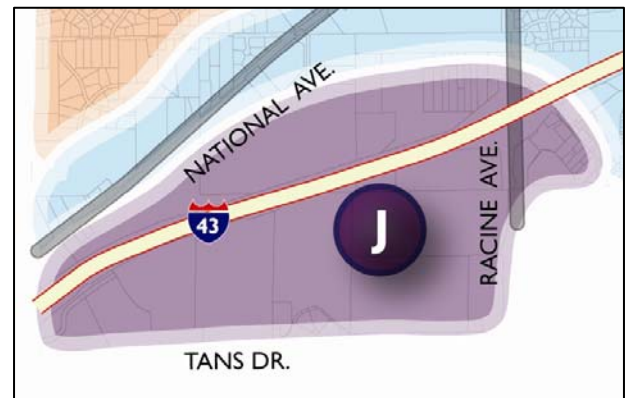


Figure 20.1. Neighborhood J Context Map.

The Plan Commission adopted Resolution PC 1-12 on March 1, 2004 that stated the redevelopment of Mill Valley including light manufacturing and shopping components would be essentially consistent with the duly adopted master plan and recommended development of a special plan overlay district to be consistent with a redevelopment project plan to be prepared by the New Berlin Community Development Authority (CDA).

Resolution 04-10 adopted by the Common Council on March 23, 2004 accepted the Plan Commission report and directed the CDA to create a redevelopment district for the Mill Valley site and prepare a redevelopment project plan and report back to the Council. The consultant firm Ruckert Mielke was selected to perform the study and the comprehensive redevelopment plan was submitted January of 2009. Presentations of the plan were brought before the CDA in January and November of 2009. The report was a culmination of detailed multi-faceted study of each of the various components that impact the development including an analysis of the potential environmental, sanitary sewerage, water supply, storm water management, traffic and transportation, land use, real estate market feasibility, geotechnical, groundwater and fiscal impacts of the redevelopment. See Appendix N for copies of the resolutions.

PUBLIC INPUT

During the Mill Valley planning process, there were three Public Information Meetings, and several meetings where the project status was presented to the Plan Commission, CDA or Common Council. The following is a summary of what was presented at the Information Meetings. All the meeting presentations can be found on the City's website.

Public Information Meeting #1

The first public information meeting for the Mill Valley Redevelopment Plan took place on April 26, 2006. The consultant team presented the project timeline, issues to be studied, and questions that would be addressed during the planning process. A list of existing studies within the City and region were identified as sources of information to be reviewed during the planning of Mill Valley.

The public submitted written comments in response to the presentation. The majority of the 17 written comments received were opposed to the Mill Valley redevelopment for several reasons:

- By far, the largest concern from the public involved the water table. Residents felt as though future development on this site equated to a lower water table, which would force existing residents to have their wells deepened. Concerns also included who would pay for individual well upgrades, and/or who would pay for the existing residents to connect to City sewer/water if mandated.
- Another concern from the public consisted of stormwater runoff from future development into the lakes and the creek in the vicinity of the Study Area. Lake residents had recently paid for a dam and dredging of the lake and were worried that the development would ruin the amenity on which they spent considerable money. One response noted that there are ongoing studies related to the water and environmental issues.
- Some felt that several business/industrial parks in the City were not filled to capacity, and wondered why a new business/industrial park would be developed before the existing facilities are full, or near capacity.

A few people were in favor of the redevelopment, as it would allow aesthetically improving the area, creating jobs, and possibly enhancing existing businesses that are currently in the area. A comment also indicated that large storage/warehouse type buildings not heavily dependent on water usage might be appropriate. Other concerns included:

- Property values/taxes
- Traffic volumes
- Possible increase in crime
- Rural nature of the area
- Possibility of a referendum on the development
- Full disclosure of financial benefits to decision makers
- The City's rights to stop development
- Whether the City would TIF the area to pay for it

Appendix O includes the public input forms received from this meeting.

Public Information Meeting #2

The second public information meeting for the Mill Valley Redevelopment Plan took place on October 11, 2006. The consultant team presented a project update including the following: economic assessment, comparative analysis of this site to other sites in the region, needs for new business park sites in New Berlin, proposed land uses, design guidelines, environmental assessment results, stormwater assessment and recommended techniques, and transportation recommendations. Proposed land uses include a business park, commercial retail, and a small amount of housing.

The majority of the public comments focused on concerns about the impact the development will have on the water table, the impact on stormwater runoff, and current business/industrial vacancies. Some of the other issues raised included: impacts on property taxes, traffic volumes, rural nature of the area, crime, and funding questions.

Public Information Meeting #3

The third public information meeting for the Mill Valley Redevelopment Plan was held on January 28, 2009. The consultant team presented the same topics as in Meeting #2, plus the financial data including project costs, opportunities for recovery, and funding options.

VISION

This area will be a third job center for the City of New Berlin. It will be a mix of light manufacturing, office, small-scale retail, and restaurant/hotel uses, much like Westridge, but on a smaller scale. It will be compatible with the historic and rural character of Prospect Hill. An eco-business park design approach will be encouraged which focuses on the use of renewable resources to maximize environmental preservation and sustainability. It will develop only after Westridge is substantially built out.

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. The City recognizes the long-range potential of this area for job producing business uses.
2. The City will explore options for providing sanitary sewer services to this area.
3. The development of this area will be prohibited at more than a rural density until services can be provided and an overall

master plan can be developed for the area. A “pause for planning” mechanism will be explored while the City plans for the development of the area and the provision of sewer services.

4. A transition of land uses should occur between businesses at the interchange and the National/Racine Avenue intersection. For example, medium-density residential townhouses, senior housing, or low-density office uses could create this transition, as well as supporting businesses in the Prospect Hill district.
5. The environmentally integrated development should incorporate green/sustainable and/or LEED Neighborhood Development standards where appropriate to promote water and energy efficient technologies.
6. Evaluate the potential sale of the Quarry Park land owned by the City. This area could potentially be developed as a Conservation Subdivision under the Country Residential Future Land Use category. The City should continue to explore the development feasibility of the land in regards to septic suitability and soil structural capacity. Please see “Land Use” section of this chapter for additional details.

AGRICULTURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

No lands are currently zoned for agricultural purposes in Neighborhood J. However, agricultural lands exist in the western half of the City and contribute to the rural and natural character of the community. Agricultural lands in New Berlin shall continue to be permitted uses in all land use districts.

The New Berlin Landmarks Commission and the City jointly identified and mapped a series of cultural landmarks within the City. The City-wide New Berlin Landmarks map is provided in Chapter 4. The Interstate 43 and Racine Quarries neighborhood has no designated landmarks or historic districts, although the neighborhood borders the Prospect Hill Settlement and the Linnie Lac Mill District, both located in Neighborhood I.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Mill Valley site contains an existing creek and wetlands which form an environmental corridor extending from the south central edge of the

site to the northeast corner. In addition, potential soil limitations exist on the fringes of Neighborhood J that should be considered when reviewing plans for redevelopment. According to the Mill Valley Redevelopment Plan (“Mill Valley Plan”), these corridors contain “almost all of the best remaining natural resources in the area.” The Mill Valley Plan recommends the protection of this corridor, much of it in the C-3 Permanent Open Space and Conservation District in Area 3 with the remainder residing in Area 1. More information on these areas/districts can be found in the Land Use section of this chapter, below.

Furthermore, the Mill Valley Plan contains extensive recommendations for stormwater management, the goals of which are to reduce downstream flooding, recharge the aquifer with pretreated stormwater run-off through infiltration, and to comply with all necessary standards and ordinances.

In preparation of the Mill Valley Plan, 94 test pits were dug for the purpose of conducting subsurface investigations, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was performed, and nine groundwater monitoring wells were installed. According to the Mill Valley Plan, “no significant environmental or geotechnical issues were encountered.”

The Environmental Impact Analysis performed for the Mill Valley Plan indicated that “with good design, the environmental impacts of the proposed development may be expected to be minimal.”

Refer to Chapter 5 – Agricultural & Natural Resources and the applicable regulating agencies for natural resources maps and additional information.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The existing transportation system in Neighborhood J is comprised of the following roadway network.

Roadway Network

The roadways in Neighborhood J are comprised of a principal arterial, primary arterial and local streets as listed below:

Principal Arterials accommodate inter-community traffic moving through New Berlin to another community or destination outside New

Berlin. They tend to be highways or freeways carrying more traffic on more lanes at higher speeds than other streets. Access to and from principal arterials in the Milwaukee area is generally limited to primary arterials at controlled interchanges.

New Berlin has one principal arterial, which is IH-43 with two access points at Racine Avenue (County Hwy Y) in Neighborhood J and Moorland Road (County Hwy O) in Neighborhood H. IH-43 is a high-speed freeway connecting the Milwaukee Metropolitan area with the City of Beloit.

Primary Arterials accommodate inter-community and intra-community trips and traffic. Design speeds tend to be between 35 and 55 miles per hour. Access is not limited as in principal arterials. The primary arterials in Neighborhood J are summarized below.

- Racine Avenue (CTH Y) – varies between two and four travel lanes

Local Streets comprise all land access streets designed to serve local traffic that is not part of the higher classified street network. In New Berlin, this includes streets serving residential, commercial and industrial areas. Local streets operate at the lowest posted speed limits and provide the most direct access to individual parcels of land.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are currently not provided in Neighborhood J.

Public Transit

Currently the local transit systems (MCTS, WMT and WCTS) do not provide bus service within Neighborhood J.

School busing is provided for the public, private and parochial schools in the City.

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Roadway Network

In Neighborhood J, the SEWRPC Year 2035 Recommended Regional Transportation System Plan identifies additional capacity needed on IH-43. The plan recommends widening IH-43 to a six-lane facility, within

the existing right-of-way, from the Hale Interchange to Racine Avenue (County Hwy Y).

SEWRPC staff is currently preparing a major review and update of the regional land use and transportation plans for Southeastern Wisconsin. This effort, called VISION 2050, is expected to be completed in 2016. Vision 2050 will replace the current year 2035 plans, extending the design year of the plans to 2050. It should be noted that the SEWRPC plans are advisory only. Refer to the SEWRPC VISION 2050 plan for the most updated information related to their regional planning efforts and recommendations.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

As shown on Figure 6.16, in Chapter 6, an on-road bicycle facility is proposed along Racine Avenue in Neighborhood J.

Public Transit

The City should work with the local transit systems to maintain the existing routes within the City and look for opportunities to expand and improve the transit system.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The 2002 Economic Development and Revitalization Plan process hosted a series of visioning workshops to discuss desired businesses and industries with the New Berlin Economic Development Corporation, Focus New Berlin and the New Berlin Plan Commission. The framework for economic development policies in the Interstate 43 and Racine Quarries neighborhood were laid out in the 2002 Plan. Based on the Plan, economic development on the northeast corner of Racine Avenue and College Avenue should focus on providing a long-range job center. Uses should include a small-scale mix of light manufacturing, office, retail, and restaurant or hotel uses. The northwest portion is planned for a regional City Park; however, the City is evaluating the potential sale of this land for single-family development. Medium density residential townhouses or senior housing could provide a transition between the businesses and the Interstate 43 Interchange.

Estimated tax levies for 2009 reveal that the Interstate 43 and Racine Quarries neighborhood comprises 0.2% of the total tax levy for the City.

Neighborhood J has an estimated assessment value of approximately \$11 million, with a tax levy of approximately \$56,000.

The Rural Commercial Design Guide (“Guide”), adopted by the City in 2001 will be applied to Neighborhood J. The Guide serves as a design tool for the built environment of most of the western half of the City between Cleveland Avenue on the north and College Avenue on the south. The Rural Commercial Design Area also includes land within Neighborhood I (National Avenue West Neighborhood) and Neighborhood B (West Lincoln Avenue & Western Area). The area is further defined and a map of the area is provided in Chapter 12 (Neighborhood B). Two areas of Neighborhood J are included in the study area:

- North of Interstate 43
- East of Racine Avenue

The intent of the Design Guide is to maintain the “rural theme” in designing retail and office-oriented developments that emphasize the rural surroundings and historical origins of the area. Developments shall strive to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access as well as quality visual appearances. More details on the design standards and recommendations are provided in Chapter 12 (Neighborhood B).

The Mill Valley Redevelopment Plan includes a three part market analysis. The first part analyzed the “overall structure of the subject property.” The second part identified “specific market segments” that would be “likely customers for the subject site.” The final part assessed the “competitive market condition” for the market segments identified in part two. The future land use plan was created based on the findings of this analysis. This analysis indicated a potential estimated value of development in excess of \$150 million.

Brownfields

According to a 2008 listing by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, no brownfields have been identified within Neighborhood J.

Recommendations

The financial analysis performed within the Mill Valley Plan estimated a total capital cost of \$25.4 million. Additional financial analysis and funding alternatives will need to be studied when the City of New Berlin decides to pursue this project.

HOUSING

The Mill Valley Plan includes recommended land uses for three distinct Areas. Area 2, which is ten acres in size, is designated to include a limited amount of housing in a rural conservation single-family residential district with R-1/R-2 zoning. This area is located adjacent to Tans Drive along the southern perimeter of the New Valley Sand and Gravel site. The 200' deep site contains an existing wooded area and topography which naturally slopes toward the quarry. With an allowable density of one unit per five acres, this area can accommodate two residential lots. These lots would be accessed from Tans Drive.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the above housing provisions be encouraged to proceed as determined in the Mill Valley Plan.

LAND USE

The Mill Valley Plan includes a proposed future land use plan for the New Valley Sand and Gravel site as well as the adjacent commercially zoned property along IH-43, east of Racine Avenue (Figure 20.4). The plan was based on analysis and findings of the other sections of the Mill Valley Plan, including market research and traffic analysis.

The general recommendation proposed in the Mill Valley Plan is that the site be redeveloped as a "long range job center, similar to the Westridge Business Park" which is planned as "an attractive destination that is compatible with the area's natural resource and land use patterns."

Within this general land use recommendation, the Mill Valley Plan makes specific recommendations for each of three areas within the overall site. These areas are labeled in the Plan as Areas 1, 2, and 3.

Area 1 is located east of Racine Avenue and north of College Avenue. The 18 acre site includes an existing gas station on College Avenue, six acres of existing environmental corridor, and two acres of public streets, two commercial retail areas straddling the existing creek and environmental corridor. It is recommended that a public cul-de-sac street bridging the creek be utilized to access the commercial sites from College Avenue. The Mill Valley Plan further recommends that a recreational trail through the environmental corridor be built to connect

with the Mill Valley Business Park to the west, and to future trail systems in the cities of New Berlin and Muskego. The proposed zoning for this area is B-2 General Retail Sales and Service.

Area 2 is designated by the Mill Valley Plan for use as a Rural Conservation Single-Family Residential District containing two five acre lots accessed from Tans Drive. See the Housing Section of this chapter above for more information.

Area 3, with a size of 209 acres, is far and away the largest of the three areas designated by the Mill Valley Plan. Per the Plan, Area 3 is intended for use as the Mill Valley Business Park. The Business Park will occupy the majority of the existing New Valley Sand and Gravel quarry site. The two primary entrances into the park will occur at Racine Avenue on the north via an extension of College Avenue, and also from Racine Avenue on the south from the re-aligned Tans Drive. A secondary entrance/exit will be located at the Racine Avenue/College Avenue intersection. Internal vehicular circulation will be provided by a boulevard system with roundabouts at key locations. A future road connection is proposed to link the site to the adjacent Johnson Sand and Gravel site to the west, at the time of that site's development. The IH-43 and Racine Avenue frontages of the Business Park are intended be to treated as a landscaped corridor to create a "unified design theme and identity."

The Mill Valley Plan recommends that Area 3 be divided into three distinct districts: A) a B-1 Shopping Center District of 18 acres, B) an M-1 Light Manufacturing District of 100 acres, and a C-3 Permanent Open Space and Conservation Lands District of 42 acres.

The B-1 Shopping Center District is to be located at the College Avenue entrance to the Business Park. This district may be subdivided for use by either large or small commercial retail uses with an internal circulation system.

The M-1 Light Manufacturing District is intended to include a variety of lot sizes, similar in configuration to the Westridge Business Park. Highly visible locations along Tans Drive and IH-43 may be developed as corporate offices depending on market demand.

Located along the southern edge of the Mill Valley site, the C-3 Permanent Open Space and Conservation District includes existing

natural features such as wooded areas, sloping topography, a creek, and wetlands, as well as stormwater detention facilities and other open space. The Mill Valley Plan further recommends the construction of a recreational trail system through this district for connection with City of New Berlin and Muskego trail systems. It is also recommended that lots bordering this district provide common space along common lot lines to allow for future connections between the public street system and the recreational trail system.

The Mill Valley Plan recommends the establishment of design guidelines for Area 3, the Mill Valley Business Park, as a Special Overlay District. The Design Guidelines are intended to regulate architecture, building use, building size, materials, site design, and other features to “ensure a high-quality and coordinated development design.” Special attention is given to pedestrian walkability and sustainability in the proposed guidelines.

Johnson Sand & Gravel: The Johnson Sand & Gravel mine to the west of the Mill Valley area and south of I-43 should be considered and extension of the Mill Valley Plan/Area. Exploring the expansion of the Business Park/Industrial land use to the west would be an appropriate future land use for the area upon adequate reclamation. No utilities are anticipated to serve this area, so septic suitability would need to be analyzed, as well as the potential to develop using a holding tank. It is unlikely that any reclaimed/filled areas would be able to support a POWTS. Holding tanks are not allowed to be used for single-family development, making non-residential land use served by holding tanks an appropriate and likely future land use.

Quarry Park: In 1999 the City used Park & Open Space funds to purchase 117 acres of quarry land on the far south west corner of the City, known as Quarry Park, with the intent to develop it as a park. The City has owned this parcel for 17 years and has determined that the original plans to develop this parcel into a public park are not practical and; therefore, it remains closed to the public. Based on this and other factors, it has been determined that it is in the best interest of the public to investigate whether or not to sell this park for a single family conservation subdivision and use those resources for parkland that the public can use. The first step in determining the viability and value of any potential for future single-family residential development is to determine septic suitability for Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) to service any newly platted lots. The City has hired

an expert to conduct septic suitability testing and will then map out what areas are suitable for POWTS. This information will be used to determine the total number of new lots that could be platted and then a potential asking price. If the City decides to sell the Quarry Park land, the appropriate Future Land Use designation for a conservation subdivision would be Country Residential.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the above Land Use provisions from the Mill Valley Plan be executed as defined by the Plan. Figure 20.4 illustrates these recommendations in context of the City's future land use map.

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN

FIGURE 4-3

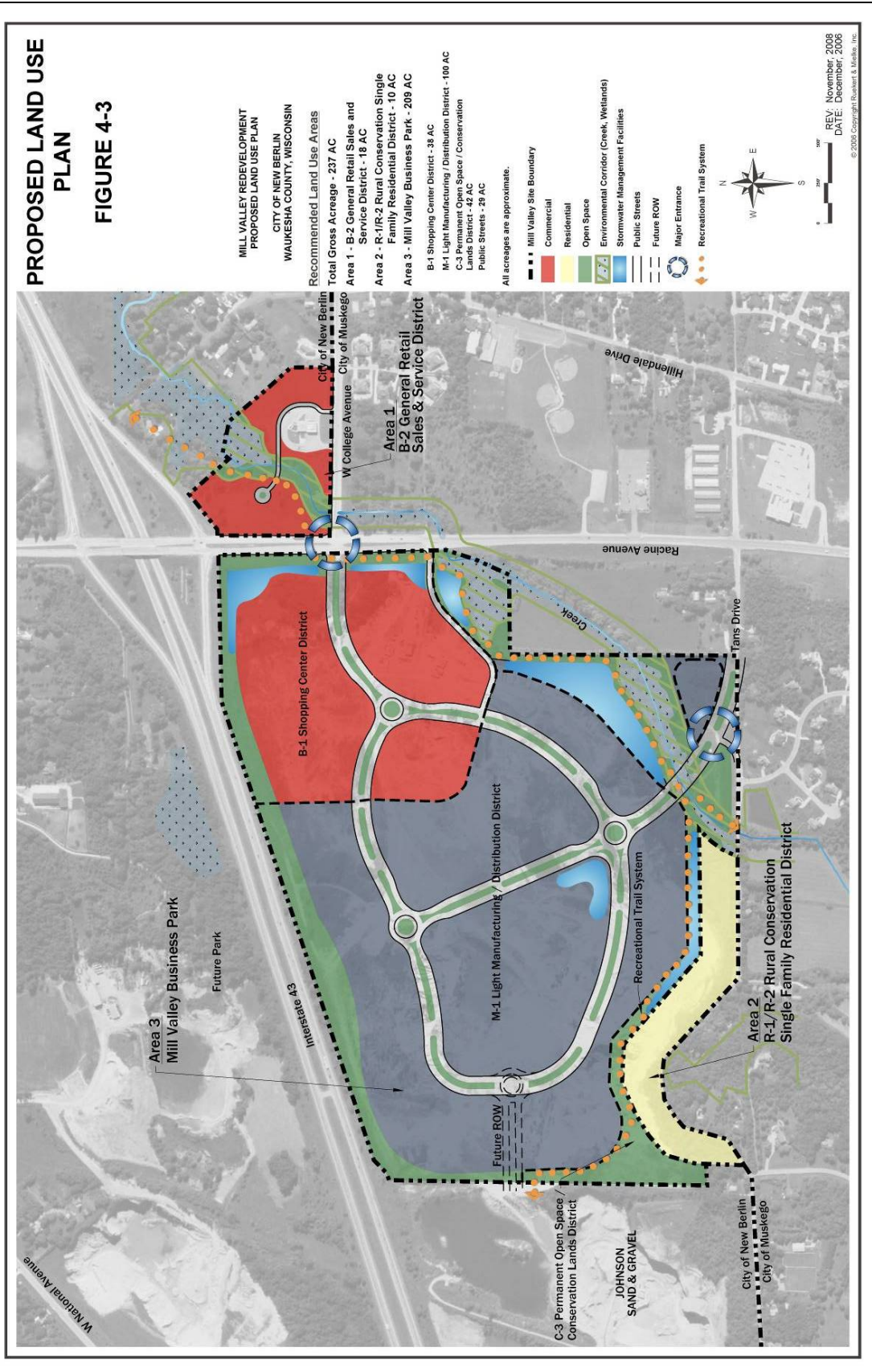


Figure 20.4. Proposed Land Use Plan
Source: Mill Valley Redevelopment Plan