

**Buffalo County  
Land Information Plan  
2011 - 2015  
Table of Contents**

<b>I. Executive Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>A. Identification and Contact Information</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>B. Participants in Planning Process</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>C. Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>D. County Websites</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. Land Information Modernization and Integration Plan</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A. Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Goals and Objectives	3
2. County Technology	5
<b>B. Progress Report on On-going Activities</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C. New Initiatives</b>	<b>6</b>
1. Proposed Projects	6
2. Assistance Requested	7
3. Problems Encountered	7
<b>D. Custodial Responsibilities</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>E. Framework Data, System Implementation, and Statewide Standards</b>	<b>9</b>
1. Geographic Positioning Reference Frameworks	9
2. Orthoimagery and Georeferenced Image Base Data	10
3. Elevation Data Products and Topographic Base Data	10
4. Parcel Mapping	10
5. Parcel Administration and Assessment Information	11
6. Street/Road Centerlines, Address Ranges, and Address Points	12
7. Hydrography, Hydrology, and Wetlands Mapping	12
8. Soils Mapping, Land Cover, and other Natural Resource Data	12
9. Land Use Mapping	12
10. Zoning Mapping	13
11. Election and Administrative Boundary System	13
12. Critical Infrastructure and Facility Management	13
13. Database Design and System Implementation	14
<b>F. Public Access</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>G. Integration and Cooperation</b>	<b>15</b>
1. Integrative/Cooperative Relationships	15
2. Potential Partners/Projects	15
3. Data Shared/Used	16
<b>H. Communication, Education, Training and Facilitated Technical Assistance</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>I. Administrative Standards Not Associated With Foundational Elements</b>	<b>16</b>

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### **C. Summary of Plan**

The purpose of this document is to define and update Buffalo County's Plan for land records modernization as required by the Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP) and Wisconsin Land Information Board (WLIB). The format and content of our Plan is based upon the WLIB's 'Uniform Instructions for Preparing County Land Information Plans' from December, 2009. The intended purpose of this Plan is to provide county, town, and city officials, state agencies, private entities and any other interested parties with basic knowledge of Buffalo County's efforts in land records modernization. The Plan allows us to set goals and objectives which the County wants to pursue. It serves as a guide for future funding through the WLIP. Because this plan covers five years, it is understood that occasionally Buffalo County may request amendments to the plan as technology and issues advance and change.

As technology advances, there is a higher demand of access to data. Buffalo County is striving to continually update and improve the accuracy of County data. As opportunities arise, Buffalo County would like to create more feature classes which would increase the variety of data available. It is important to work with available organizations to access such data. The County has been working with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), Department of Transportation (DOT), counties, towns, municipalities, and private vendors to improve Buffalo County's Land Information. Other resources Buffalo County makes extensive use of ArcGIS Desktop, AutoCAD Civil 3D, GeoLynx E911 program, and other software. These software programs are used for the majority of tasks involved in developing the countywide land information. Other major elements of the Buffalo County Land Records program include maintenance of optical imaging/indexing. There are some new initiatives that are identified throughout the Plan that will dramatically improve the accuracy and availability of information to the public. Full implementation of this plan is contingent upon the availability of funds to meet all goals.

Buffalo County has benefited from the WLIP, most particularly through the competitive grant process. This Plan lays out a strategy for the County and users of land information to follow to continue moving forward.

### **D. Land Information Website**

Buffalo County Website

<http://www.buffalocounty.com/>

Buffalo County Land Records and Tax Parcel Information Website

<http://www.buffalocounty.com/Tax%20Information.htm>

## **II. LAND INFORMATION MODERNIZATION AND INTEGRATION PLAN**

### **A. Goals and Objectives**

1. It is the goal of Buffalo County to develop, implement, and maintain a modern geographic information system (GIS) that is horizontally and vertically integrated, as well as a geographic information system that provides useful quality land records data for its citizens, agencies, businesses and other users of land information in an equitable, efficient, and cost effective manner. It is desirable to provide access to this

geographic information through a web mapping application that can display data in a user-friendly format. The development of a modernized land information system will help reach these goals.

The objectives of Buffalo County are to decentralize land records access; implement controls for dispersing land information; build a framework that supports parcel level activity; continually improve land records accuracy; maintain security and confidentiality where needed; minimize costs; reduce duplication; promote compatibility; increase efficiency and make land information readily available to users. Throughout this Plan, items are discussed that indicate our work related to achieving these objectives.

The internal and external needs of Buffalo County and its priorities include the completion of countywide digital parcel maps; identifying and acquiring control on public land survey system (PLSS) corners (an on-going process); digital orthophotography; imaging land records; maintenance of the existing digital base maps and data; and also the development of new initiatives as stated in Section II. C. on page 6.

The timeline for implementation is dependent on continuation of the WLIP grant program, amount of retained fees collected and funding from the local tax levy.

- a) Buffalo County acquires/exchanges control data with the DOT and local land surveyors. The USGS provides the National High Altitude Photography (NHAP) and National Elevation Dataset (NED). The WDNR is also a source to obtain valuable data in regards to lakes, streams, and other related data. As needs develop, we work with surrounding counties Land Information Departments to acquire necessary data.
- b) Some information and data we need that is not easily acquired is the remonumentation of PLSS section corners. Also, an address point file of all address throughout the County is something we would like to acquire. The County is limited in meeting these needs through time and funding restrictions.
- c) The County's GIS vendor is Environmental System Research Institute (ESRI). The ESRI product we most commonly use is ArcGIS Desktop, which is also the state standard. We currently own an ArcINFO level license of the product. ESRI is a member of the Open GIS Consortium and proposes to support open GIS data transfer and data share requirements. The County will continue to use commonly accepted hardware and software to facilitate data sharing. Beyond this, the County cannot ensure that transferred data will be useable in a system where the design is unknown or developed to meet a special purpose. Also, we have public access for tax assessment and Register of Deeds (ROD) data. We are planning for the public to be able to access County GIS data through a web mapping application.
- d) Buffalo County's data is based on the Wisconsin Buffalo County Coordinate System. This system is mathematically relatable to the North American Datum (NAD) 83(91).
- e) The County relies on tax levied funds and funding from the WLIP to continue maintenance of its digital land information. Also, the County is currently charging the \$2 fee designated for land information and housing the data. Customized hardcopy map requests are charged depending on the map size. Those types of fees charged also help continue the maintenance of the County's Land Information.

2. The County's GIS operating system and the tabular land records data is based on Microsoft Server 2003. The GIS database design incorporates key fields that are used to tie the two systems together, thereby ensuring integration. The database is setup in an organized manner which reduces data duplication. Metadata still needs to be created for each feature class in the GIS system and for the tabular land records data.

## **B. Progress Report on Ongoing Activities**

Buffalo County has completed many of the projects from the previous Plan. Some tasks that aren't completed have significant progress being made, and we are continually striving to complete these tasks and move on to new ones.

**Parcel Mapping** – About 45% of the countywide parcel mapping is complete, with an emphasis on the areas that are remonumented. Buffalo County is completing parcel mapping of each township as they are completed with the remonumentation process.

**Digital Orthophotography** –The County has obtained the 2008 NRCS imagery. Other aerials obtained are the 2006 MrSID imagery and 2004 NAIP orthophotography.

**Remonumentation** – PLSS remonumentation is an ongoing process in Buffalo County. Approximately 48% of the project is complete, and it is anticipated that it will continue until the County is completely remonumented. Priority of the work is determined by municipal appropriations. Upon completion of the remonumentation of PLSS corners, the County will further develop its parcel mapping.

**Highway Sign Inventory** – The Highway Department has completed its sign inventory project. The sign inventory data is stored in a sign management program called SimpleSigns, which has been used since 2006. This helps the Highway Department keep up with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and other traffic sign standards. Highway Department employees update the sign database on a regular basis.

**Web site** - The County has a web site that is developed and available to the public. We are looking for a program that will allow easier navigation and more security. We would like to launch a web mapping application for the public to view. This would allow more of the County services to be accessed over the internet.

**Transect Survey** – The survey is completed on an annual basis and soil loss data can be accessed through the Land Conservation Department.

**Public Recreational Trail Maps** – A recreational trail feature class has been created, but needs to be updated.

**Digital Imaging** - The Register of Deeds office has scanned all documents through August of 1997. We continue this project as time and funds allow. We also need to continue back keying information from these documents. It is important to continue this project to allow easier access, viewing, and purchasing of documents on line in the near future.

## C. New Initiatives

### 1. Proposed projects

**Parcel Mapping** – As previously stated, about 45% of the countywide parcel mapping is complete. We will continue parcel mapping. The goal is to complete countywide parcel mapping as the PLSS remonumentation is completed.

**Update Digital Orthophotography** - It is important for the County to have the most recent aerial photography. As stated before, the most recent orthophotography the County has is the 2008 NRCS imagery. The County would like to acquire the 2010 orthophotos.

**Remonumentation** - Ongoing work of PLSS remonumentation in the County is necessary. Local municipal funds are being appropriated to match county levied funds. Priority of work is determined by municipal appropriations. Upon completing the remonumentation project, the County can complete its parcel mapping.

**Addressing** - The County currently has hardcopy maps containing address point locations. These maps are broken down by townships and updated with each fire number issued. Buffalo County would like to start an addressing project which would create an address point feature class. This GIS layer would consist of all the address points in the county. This project can be done by collecting GPS address points with a GPS unit or using ArcGIS tools with appropriate orthophotography to place address points in the correct location. Coordinates of each address point can be calculated if desired. These addresses can be related to parcel identification number and other relative data.

**Wetland maps** - The County plans on acquiring updated digital data from the WDNR and incorporating it into the GIS mapping system.

**Web site** – As stated before, the County has a web site that is developed and available to the public. It is our goal to modernize the website and allow for easier navigation. We would like to launch a web mapping application for the public to view. This would allow designated data to be available to the public via the internet. With web mapping, decisions on charging user fees for access to certain data may be considered. Further discussion will be made during construction of the web mapping application.

**Census** - Incorporate the 2010 census data into our GIS and assist with the redistricting mapping process as requested by the County Board.

**Automated Permitting** - The County is interested in automating the Planning and Zoning permitting processes and integrating it with the GIS system.

**Digital Imaging** -The Register of Deeds would like to convert microfilm to digital images and back-keying of information into the document imaging database. This would allow users to do more detailed searches of the older digital images and make available for downloading documents via the website in the near future. Preservation/replacement of the existing tract index books will need to be done in the near future. We also need to study the process of electronically recording documents.

## **2. Assistance Requests**

- a) The County will continue to actively seek input from other counties, agencies and vendors prior to implementing projects and will continue to do so for our new initiatives. The Land Information Council will continue to meet and discuss projects and initiatives to improve the County's Land Information. Also, Buffalo County is currently participating in the WLIP's Techserv program to share and develop ideas and other valuable information.
- b) It is imperative that the WLIP continues so the retained fees and the grants are available for ongoing and new initiatives in Buffalo County. It is important for the WLIP to ensure the program continues to be focused on creation and maintenance of land information to support all land information uses not just a select few. The County looks to the WLIA and WLIP to provide practical standards along with a functional model for basic data sets. Also, the County is always looking for other funding opportunities and has made a commitment to modernize its land records by appropriating tax levy dollars to our Plan.
- c) The County currently offers a tax parcel database that allows the public to search through tax related data via the internet. Also, various County hardcopy maps are available through the Buffalo County website. We plan on adding a web cartography application that would be accessed through the County website in the future. This would grant public access to multiple data sets that we maintain.
- d) Buffalo County plans on participating in a statewide GIS repository. We feel it is important that every county participates in order for the process to be complete. A statewide repository would be an excellent location to share and access GIS data.
- e) The County currently maximizes resources by utilizing competitive procurement processes such as bids that are consistent with State of Wisconsin and local procurement rules.

## **3. Problems Encountered**

We have successfully dealt with unanticipated problems as they have occurred. There would be a problem if the WLIP adopts policies that would limit the use of WLIP funds for our planned activities or concerns expressed in the "Proposed Projects" section starting on page 6. At this time, the only foreseeable problem would come from a decrease in funding for enhancing Buffalo County's Land Information.

## **D. Custodial Responsibilities**

The following are the Buffalo County departments which are active users of land records data. Also, under each departments listed is the custodial responsibilities they obtain, which allow Buffalo County to maintain accurate land information. The authority for custodianship is noted in ( ).

### **REGISTER OF DEEDS**

- Record deeds, mortgages, plat maps, certified survey maps, and other related documents (§59.43)
- Scan the above mentioned records into our imaging system as they are received and filed (§59.43)
- Maintain tract index of real property (§59.43)
- Maintain grantor/grantee index of property transactions (§59.43)

### **REAL PROPERTY**

- Maintain description and ownership information of all parcels of property (§70.09)
- Maintain information on school and other special district codes (§70.09)
- Maintain tax rates and special assessment information (§70.09)
- Maintain the limited hard copy parcel maps
- Maintain the limited digital parcel maps

### **LAND INFORMATION SERVICES**

- Develop and maintain Countywide GIS database
- Maintain MSAG
- Maintain aerial photos
- Complete data and map requests made by private firms and the public
- Orthophotography

### **COUNTY CLERK**

- File Certified Town Plat Records

### **COUNTY SURVEYOR**

- Maintain information on PLSS corners including monument record forms and section summary sheets (§59.45)
- Maintain information on the high accuracy network (HARN) densification in the county (§59.45)
- File private survey maps (§59.45)
- File field notes and other survey source documents (§59.45)

### **ZONING**

- Maintain zoning maps for unincorporated areas (§59.69)
- Maintain GIS zoning and related coverages (§59.69)
- Maintain private sanitary system site plans (§59.69)
- Maintain permit database
- File wetlands and FEMA maps
- Establish site addresses (§59.54)

### **LAND CONSERVATION**

- File soils maps and tables
- Files USGS 7.5 minute quad maps

## **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

- File right-of-way plats and construction plans
- Maintain road sign database (§59.54)

## **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

- Maintain Master Street Address Guide (MSAG) (§ 146.70)
- Maintain Emergency Service Number (ESN) boundaries and other E911 coverages

## **FORESTRY (WI DNR)**

- Maintain tabular and digital forest stand data
- Maintain historical aerial photos
- Maintain county trail maps/coverages

## **EMERGENCY GOVERNMENT**

- Maintain emergency service network data, maps and feature classes

## **TREASURER**

- Maintain tax information for all parcels (§59.25)

# **E. Foundational Elements and Statewide Standards**

## **1. Geographic Positioning Reference Frameworks**

***Geodetic control networks.*** In 1997 Buffalo County completed geodetic densification from stations within the Wisconsin High Accuracy Reference Network (HARN). The network consists of nearly 90 - 1 & 2 & 4 ppm stations which were established using the 'Guidelines to Support Densification of the WI High Accuracy Reference Network (HARN) using Global Positioning System (GPS) Technology' standards specifications, which were current at that time. There is adequate horizontal geodetic control strategically placed throughout the County to meet County and other users' needs. Coordinate values are available in State Plane and Latitude and Longitude, which can be converted to other coordinate systems. The County assumes the custodial responsibility for these densified control stations. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has set numerous other HARN stations throughout the County as a part of the Wisconsin Height Modernization Programs passive network. A portion of the County has been completed with the data published. The remaining portion of the County is anticipated to be published for use in the near future. The WISDOT Geodetic Survey Unit has developed WISCORS active network, which will also be utilized when available and appropriate for both horizontal and vertical needs.

***Public Land Survey System.*** The County has an active corner remonumentation program. Buffalo County coordinates are being established on the PLSS corners using a combination of conventional survey techniques and GPS technology meeting or exceeding the FGDC Third-order, class I accuracy standards. Coordinates are maintained in the Wisconsin Buffalo County Coordinate System that is mathematically relatable to the North American Datum (NAD) 83(91). We plan to continue work in those municipalities that are appropriating funds to match Buffalo County funds. Other areas will be controlled as need and budget allows. The County maintains the custodial responsibility for the PLSS.

## **2. Orthoimagery and Georeferenced Image Base Data**

*Photogrammetric Base Maps* – We have photogrammetric base maps of certain areas of the County from the 1995 NHAP flight. It is not a complete flight of the County.

*Digital Orthophotography* - The County has obtained the 2008 NRCS imagery. Other aeriels obtained are the 2006 MrSID imagery and 2004 NAIP orthophotography.

*Digital Raster Graphics* - Acquired scanned quadrangle maps from DNR. We plan on doing an image transformation and adding them as image backdrop in our system.

*Satellite Imagery.* We will be evaluating the new satellite imagery technology as a possible tool for base map updates, land classification, etc.; however, we are unable to make any commitment to the technology at this time.

*Oblique Aerial Imagery* – There is no plan to acquire oblique aerial imagery at this time. This imagery would be useful if appropriate funding was available.

## **3. Elevation Data Products and Topographic Base Data**

*Contours* – The County has 1:24,000 topographic images from the USGS. The images are used as a base for contour information throughout the County. This is the best data available for the County at this time.

*Digital Elevation Models (DEM)* – We have acquired 30 meter resolution DEM from the USGS. The County would like to obtain other elevation data. It is important to have up to date elevation data and the County would like to acquire such data in the near future.

## **4. Parcel Mapping.**

Completion of parcel mapping is a primary focus. Currently, about 45% of the countywide parcel mapping is complete, with an emphasis on the areas that are remonumented. The goal is to complete countywide parcel mapping as the PLSS remonumentation is completed. Parcel data is maintained in both AutoCAD and ArcGIS environments with parcels having complete polygon topology and using the parcel number (tax parcel ID) as the unique identifier.

All parcel maps will be referenced to the PLSS lines and will minimally be suited for assisting with boundary issues. Our parcel maps are *not intended* to be a substitute for a certified land survey or guarantee title to property. Included in the metadata or attribute database will be information that directs users to the original source document or recorded instrument. We will be monitoring the efforts of the WLIB in adopting parcel mapping standards, which are anticipated to meet FGDC's standards, and we will attempt to comply where practical. **All maps** that are disseminated will include the following disclaimer:

'PARCEL BOUNDARIES AND FORTY LINES SHOWN ON THIS IMAGE ARE GENERAL REPRESENTATIONS AND SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANY LEGAL DOCUMENTATION, BOUNDARY DETERMINATIONS, OR OTHER PROPERTY-RELATED ISSUES. BUFFALO COUNTY IS

NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY USE OF THIS DATA. ALL DATA IS DISTRIBUTED IN “AS IS” FORMAT WITH NO GUARANTEES OR WARRANTIES.’

***Coordinate System*** - The parcels are referenced to the Wisconsin Buffalo County Coordinate System which is mathematically relatable to the North American Datum (NAD) 83(91).

***Parcel ID*** - Each parcel mapped is given its associated Parcel Identification Number (PIN) from the tax database. This will enable users to gain parcel information and physical location of the piece of land.

***Address*** - Addresses are maintained as an attribute in the assessment database. As a result, parcels can be searched in the database by their property address.

***Tax exempt lands*** - A code exists as an attribute in our assessment database.

***Topology*** – Topology has been built for the parcels and will need to be maintained as we complete more parcel mapping. All parcel, township, and corporate boundaries created are referenced to PLSS section corners. This will prevent overlaps and undershoots within the data.

## **5. Parcel Administration and Assessment Information**

Buffalo County’s database supports integration of digital parcel maps with property and ownership information by linking data through key fields.

***Real estate transactions, Liens, Evidence of Title, Easements, and Covenants*** - Register of Deeds maintains a tract index. Searches can be made by grantor, grantee, legal description, document number or property address.

***Tax data*** – Tax data can be accessed through the county website. The tax database is designed so information can be accessed by PIN, owner name, property address, or legal description. This can be linked to the GIS parcel coverage and bring up related documents and images from January 1999 and forward.

***Assessment class & Tax exempt lands*** - These are carried as an attribute in the assessment database and can be linked to the GIS parcel coverage.

***Document Imaging*** - Imaging of documents relating to property transactions in the Register of Deeds started in 1999. We have completed the imaging of documents up through August of 1997. The images can be linked to the GIS parcel dataset. As time and budget allows, we plan on inputting documents from prior years. Imaging may also be expanded to include other land records such as building permits, tax records, survey maps etc.

***Address*** - Site address information can be accessed through the assessment database.

***Parcel ID*** - The PIN is the primary attribute which can allow access to all other information related to parcel information. This can be used to link tax information from the tax database and view documents relative to each parcel. (See 4 above)

## **6. Street/Road Centerlines, Address Ranges and Address Points**

*Transportation Network* – The County has a transportation dataset that consists of roads and railroads. Various departments use this dataset. The sheriff’s department and E911 depend highly on the accuracy of this dataset. The roads layer is derived from the centerlines of the public and private roads throughout Buffalo County. The roads are classified as federal, state, county, town, city, village, or private roads. Other fields include the road name, address ranges, township, etc. The MSAG is compared with the roads feature class for quality checks.

*Right of way* – Currently we have a table with ROW data, but no feature class available. The right-of-way of public roads will be developed as part of the parcel mapping process. This will be created as time and funding permit.

*Address ranges* - The County is currently developing address ranges of roads for E911 mapping. We are working with the 911 Coordinator to compare the MSAG and road feature class to ensure quality data. Also, we plan to keep working with local municipalities and the DOT in reconciling conflicting addresses and road names as we become aware of them.

*Address Points* – Site addresses can be searched in the tax database. There are no address points for driveways or houses at this time. It is necessary that we begin and continue to work on the creation of an address point feature class. Its primary use would be used in emergency situations to locate specific points from where the call is being made.

## **7. Hydrography, Hydrology, and Wetlands Mapping**

*Hydrography* – The County obtains the most current 1:24,000 hydrology and watershed data from the WDNR website. Also, the county has acquired digital Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Floodplain maps. These will continually be updated as data becomes available.

*Wetland mapping activities* - The County will be acquiring updated wetland data from the WDNR.

## **8. Soils Mapping, Land Cover, and Other Natural Resource Data**

*Soils mapping activities* - The County has acquired soil mapping data in cooperation with, and consistent with, the NRCS standards and specifications. We are working with the NRCS to update this information.

*Non - Metallic Mining* - We are currently working on the gathering data to create a non – metallic mining feature class for Buffalo County. Land cover and forests are other features that would be of interest of the county to obtain. Other natural resource related data will be obtained as necessary.

## **9. Land Use Mapping**

*Mapping of land use* - The County does not currently have a formal land use plan. Maps are not developed at this point. The University of Wisconsin Extension is working with Towns to develop their plans. These will be used to develop a countywide land use plan.

The County's assessment database is designed to include the Dept of Revenue Land Use Classification assessment code for land use (i.e. residential, commercial, agriculture, etc.) for each parcel of land. As parcel mapping is completed, a land use feature class can be developed based on this assessment code. However, this feature class will not be completed until the parcel mapping is finished.

## **10. Zoning Mapping**

The County has hard copy maps that depict zoning districts. As amendments are made, these changes are made on the map to the proper district. Also, there is a Zoning feature class within the County geodatabase that is updated periodically. As parcel mapping proceeds and better control is developed for the PLSS, we will develop more accurate maps down to the parcel level. All towns follow the zoning districts adopted by the County Board. Zoning districts are mapped in accordance with the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinances.

*Shorelands* - We hope to develop a GIS zoning coverage to include shoreland (1000' buffer from lakes, 300' from streams).

*Floodplain and floodway* - We currently have Digital Q3 Flood Data, which was obtained from the FEMA. This data is a digital representation of certain features of FEMA's hardcopy Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). We will update this data as it becomes available through FEMA.

*Burial sites* – The County recently completed a burial site feature class. This was done by request of the Buffalo County Zoning Department. Other sites requested by County departments will be created and maintained as needed.

## **11. Election and Administrative Boundary System**

*Boundaries* – The County continually updates and maintains its boundary dataset. It consists of state, county and civil division boundaries. The state and county data was acquired from the DNR. The civil boundaries within Buffalo County were constructed using PLSS data. These boundaries will be updated as we continue with PLSS corner remonumentation and data is created. This will ensure topologically correct data.

*Election* - The County has the 2000 census data and will integrate the 2010 data as time permits.

*Other Administrative Boundaries* - Utility districts, tax incremental financing districts, school districts, lake districts, public lands are all coded within the assessment database on a parcel level. We have created feature classes for school districts and public land within the county. Others will be created in our dataset as parcel mapping is completed.

## **12. Critical Infrastructure and Facilities Management**

The county has data relating to critical infrastructure. These layers consist of ambulance boundaries, fire department locations, fire department boundaries, fire department extrication boundaries, Emergency Service Networks (ESN), roads signs, parks, child care facilities, healthcare facilities, railroads, and trails. The County's Administrative Coordinator and Maintenance employees keep hardcopy building plans and hazardous material sites. We would like to continue to keep these features updated and also keep creating infrastructure data that we do not have.

### **13. Data Base Design and System Implementation**

*Design Evaluation* - The County utilizes databases on a Microsoft platform. Land Record information is stored in Microsoft Server 2003. It has built-in security that is managed by the Information Systems vendor contracted by the County. County staff and the vendor review the design to ensure proper functionality of the database and its components.

*Security/Privacy* – This is a high priority for the County. In order to maintain accurate data, it is important that the data is secure. There are limited individuals that have the appropriate permission to access particular information. Of those with permission, few have editing rights to the land information data. Other licenses with permission are allowed view only rights.

*Needs Assessment* - Our GIS data base design was done through much thought. As new datasets and feature classes are requested, we will follow a modified needs assessment process to aid in the design and implementation.

*Timeline* – We establish and follow designated timelines to the best of our ability. Timelines are developed given consideration to needs assessment and design evaluation.

*Metadata* – We are planning on creating metadata for each feature class that is developed within the County geodatabase.

*Structure* - It is our goal to create seamless data that is as accurate as possible. Topology is being created for all GIS datasets and databases are relationally structured.

*Transaction management* - A date field is carried in most feature classes to track changes and updates in information.

*Integration.* The County identifies key fields and data elements needed to support data sharing and incorporates them in our databases whenever practical to promote integration.

### **F. Public Access**

*Use of technology to facilitate efficient access* - The County currently has four public access computer terminals available to the public for searching tabular tax parcel data and Register of Deed's document listings. Three computers are located within the ROD Office and one is located in the lobby. The tax data and a listing of documents from the ROD can also be accessed through the Buffalo County Web Portal on the County website. In the near future, a link will be added to allow the purchasing of the ROD documents online. Also, we plan to add the capability of accessing a GIS mapping application through the County website. Although not all of our data is complete (parcel mapping, PLSS corners), we would still like to make the data we do have available through web cartography. We would continuously update the data as it is completed. The County is also evaluating the possibility of further development to make our GIS data easily accessible. Upon request, digital data can be obtained through CD/DVD's from the Land Records Department. We have considered allowing the public to download digital data from the county website. There are security concerns that are delaying this access to digital data via the internet.

*Open access to data in existing format* - Buffalo County adheres to the Wisconsin Open Records Law for access to any land record.

*Optional production of customized data on cost-recovery or other basis* - Buffalo County offers both tabular and graphic data for purchase in industry accepted interchange formats. Digital data requests are handled through our Land Records Department. Buffalo County is currently charging the \$2 fee designated for land information and housing the data. The county will be updating the pricing information for customized data requests.

*System security* - The County utilizes databases on a Microsoft platform. Land Record information is stored in Microsoft Server 2003. It has built-in security that is managed by the Information Systems vendor contracted by the County.

*Right to privacy* - Buffalo County adheres to the Wisconsin Open Records Law and complies with State statutes for access to restricted records. As technology advances, information becomes more easily accessible. The county will be monitoring the industry and public concerns related to privacy and distribution of data.

## **G. Integration and Cooperation**

*Formal data sharing agreements* - Buffalo County has data sharing arrangements with other counties, state agencies, towns, cities, and consultants working for towns or the County. The County will continue these arrangements and pursue others as opportunities arise. The County encourages others to use our digital data by setting a nominal cost or no cost. We encourage cost-free exchanges of information that will enhance our system and those of other counties and local municipalities. All shared information will include the County disclaimer displayed on page 10 and 11. The County is continuing to attempt to publicize the land information data, allowing the public to benefit from allowing access to this data. Also, we are continuing to find ways to improve and develop the County departments by integrating land information and technology wherever applicable.

*Cooperative arrangements* - The County has participated in a number of cooperative projects and plans on pursuing others as opportunities arise.

*Collaborative arrangements* - The County actively participates in collaborative arrangements for data creation particularly with other County departments. We plan to continue our participation in the WLIA and their technical committees. We are subscribed to the WLIP's Technical Assistance List Server user group and will join others as opportunities arise.

*Integrative/Cooperative relationships* - Buffalo County has actively encouraged and supported integration and cooperation activities related to land records modernization as cited elsewhere in this Plan and as indicated in past WLIP grant applications. The County plans to continue these relationships as opportunities arise.

Potential Partners/Projects – We would be interested in finding potential partners to obtain digital orthophotography if appropriate funding allows.

*Data shared/used* – Some data that might be shared or used would be orthophotos or any GIS data. The data shared depends on the project. Buffalo County is willing to work with other levels of government and agencies to share and use data. This allows both parties to benefit by saving time and money.

## **H. Communication, Education, Training, and Facilitated Technical Assistance**

*Documentation of County data* - The County maintains a data dictionary for data sets we create and will continue to update and maintain the dictionary to ensure certainty and accuracy of the data.

*Resources available* - We will continue to participate in seminars, user groups, etc. as appropriate and where budget allows. This is a way to continually gain exposure to new technologies and concepts related to land information.

*Identification of customers needs* - The County has an active Land Information Committee made up of the elected County Board Chairman, elected and appointed officials who have land related interests, and realtors. The committee discusses ideas and concerns about current and future projects related to land information within the county.

*Education/Training* – It is important that the Land Records department continue education and training. As opportunities arise and funds allow, we will participate in education and training. Also, we will use training via the Internet whenever possible. This decreases travel and other related costs that occur when participating in out of office training. The Land Records department will take responsibility to keep other departments up to date with current technology and land information programs.

*Use of Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance List Server* - The County has access to the Internet and e-mail that allows for use of the clearinghouse and technical assistance list server. We are participating and will continue to monitor the development of the clearinghouse and standards adopted.

## **I. Administrative Standards Not Associated With Foundational Elements.**

- 1) The County agrees to observe and follow the statutes relating to the Wisconsin Land Information Program (WLIP) and other relevant statutes.
- 2) The County agrees to permit the Wisconsin Department of Administration access to books, records, and projects for inspection and audit.
- 3) The County agrees to complete the GIS Inventory Survey (survey required annually by WLIP).
- 4) The County agrees to update the plan every 5 years and in the interim if the plan should change.
- 5) Development and implementation of an acceptable plan confers certain benefits on local government within a county, including continued eligibility for Program funding. A peer review process will be used to assess plan acceptability by the land information community.