

**Discussion Draft  
Document**

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# **The Riley Township Land Use Plan – Year 2020**

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**Prepared by and approved by:**

**The Riley Township Planning  
Commission**

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**DRAFT**

**The Riley Township Land Use Plan -- Year 2020**

**6/2/98**

Professional planners often learn from their own experiences and data gathered from reliable sources. We are not professional planners, but have adopted a similar approach. Information gathered from many sources ( survey of Riley Township residents, meeting and conversing with major land owners, County Board, Conservation District, Riley School Board, plus representatives from the City of Marengo and Coral Township) has had a profound influence in formulating a Land Use Plan with strengths, objectives and long-term goals.

We feel this Plan has a solid grass-roots foundation and do, hereby, respectfully present the *draft* Riley Township Land Use Plan -- Year 2020 to the Riley Township Supervisor and Trustees for their consideration and final approval.

**RILEY PLAN COMMISSION**

**John T. Banghart, Chairman**

**Nick Bernardi**

**Wally Butenschoen**

**Arlene Genell**

**Thomas Tucker**

## PREFACE

Illinois Compliance State Statutes, 1996, Book II, Chapter 60, gives townships with a population of more than 500 located in counties with a population less than 600,000, the ability by resolution to create a township plan commission. Riley Township began this process in 1997, by establishing the Riley Township Plan Commission.

The Land Use Plan is a general guide for development with significant impact in the land use decision making process. While the Plan will be implemented through the enforcement of the McHenry County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, it is a policy document and does not directly regulate land use in the Township. (The McHenry County Zoning Ordinances should be referenced to determine permitted zoning uses in Riley Township).

When a rezoning request, which is out of conformity with the Riley Land Use Plan occurs, the Riley Township Trustees may submit written objection(s) to the McHenry County Board within thirty (30) days after the submission of a proposed zoning ordinance or resolution by the County Zoning Commission to the county board. In such case, the county board shall not adopt zoning provisions which affect the unincorporated areas of Riley Township, except by the favorable vote of 3/4 of all the members of the county board.

This plan should be used as a whole; no one part is meant to be used alone and shall be the official plan of Riley Township. We provide for the orderly development of residential, commercial and light industrial land uses (see attached map) while making an effort to preserve the many resources of Riley Township. Let it also be known our Plan does reflect construction of a full interchange at State Route 23 and Interstate Highway I-90, some time within the future.

In 1999, McHenry County will adopt the McHenry County Land Use Plan -- Year 2020 an update of the 2010 Plan. The purpose of the 2020 Plan is to guide development activities and land conversion in the County. The McHenry County 2020 Plan will follow the criteria set forth in previously adopted goals and objectives. In many ways, the Riley Land Use Plan will adopt much of the McHenry County Plan with regard to maintaining extensive areas of farming and open space. The Riley Township Plan will identify specific features, which make Riley Township unique.

## RILEY TOWNSHIP LAND USE PLAN

This Land Use Plan is a guide for development and preservation. It will be updated from time to time. The basic assumption of the plan is that wise use of the land is in the best public interest. Upon approval of the Riley Township Board of Trustees this will be the official Riley Township Plan.

### GOALS

The Land Use Plan goals are the foundation of the plan from which policy directives are developed. The directives are then used to implement the goal through County ordinance regulations, laws, and education. The goals recognize the need to obtain a balance between accommodating and preserving the environment. The main objective of the Land Use Plan is to encourage compact and orderly growth. Listed below are goals:

#### A. Agricultural Uses

Maintain a wide variety of agricultural uses within the township and avoid conflicts between agriculture and other land uses. A large portion of the township is expected to remain in farming through the Year 2020.

#### B. Natural Resources

Protect and restore prime agricultural soils, groundwater, wetlands, woodlands, natural areas, fish, wildlife habitat, and water quality of township creeks and streams. Prevent dramatic grade changes and draining or excavating of natural springs and bogs.

#### C. Historical and Cultural Features

Protect historic and unique features as Riley Township Hall, Church, cemeteries, old farmsteads and natural areas.

#### D. Economic Development

Promote retail, commercial, and light industrial development that diversifies the property tax base and does not adversely impact Township roads and/or services. Most of this focus will be along State Route 23 from Marengo to Interstate Highway I-90 and beyond to the southern boundary of the Township.

*E. Transportation*

Plan for the smooth flow of traffic on major arterial and township roads and encourage public transportation availability.

*F. Drainage Systems*

Maintain existing drainage systems and properly manage stormwater without damaging, overloading or clogging natural or artificial waterways. Special attention should be given to the Coon Creek Watershed. Any subdivision approved for Riley Township should include substantial storage for runoff as the Coon Creek watershed is currently over taxed and must be protected.

*G. Residential Development*

Provide for various types of single-family housing with little, if any, multifamily uses.

*H. Intergovernmental Cooperation*

Pursue intergovernmental cooperation with other public and private agencies and organizations involved with planning for the use of land in the Township, including the County, other Townships, the City of Marengo and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

**LOCATION IN MCHENRY COUNTY**

Riley Township is thirty-six square miles and is located from the south Marengo City limits to Interstate Highway I-90 and beyond to the DeKalb County line. We expect a future interchange for State Route 23 at Interstate Highway I-90. It is logical to expect future annexations by the City of Marengo during the next two decades. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that either the City of Marengo or even the City of Hampshire will annex to I-90 at State Route 23 by the Year 2020.

*A. General Planning Objectives*

1. Support existing agricultural uses.
2. Adhere to the recommendations provided by the McHenry County Soil and Water Conservation District in any natural resource inventory report prepared for a

subject property. Adhere also to any watershed protection recommendations in the Coon Creek Watershed

3. Provide an ecologically appropriate buffer strip between any portions of a given parcel to be developed and any portions of a given parcel to be developed and any existing streams, wetlands and ponds.
4. Protect groundwater resources.
5. Maximize private open space areas.
6. Development in floodplain and environmentally sensitive areas is to be avoided. Development in severe or very severe soils for specific disposal is also to be avoided whenever possible.
7. Develop intergovernmental cooperation between the City of Marengo, Coral Township, the McHenry County Conservation District and McHenry County.
8. New Developments should provide adequate water retention areas for runoff.

*B. Residential Land Use*

1. Substantially all residential development is encouraged to occur within or adjacent to the City of Marengo on the South, West, and East to Coral Township.
2. Sufficient acreage should be planned within appropriate density categories to ensure timely and orderly development and to maximize open space without destroying tillable land
3. Medium density development is planned – 1 to 3 acre sites.
4. Feathering, as described in the McHenry County 2010 Plan, is encouraged. Low-density residential developments of more than three acres per dwelling unit are planned for non-prime soil areas.

*C. Agricultural and Agricultural Rural Use*

1. Farm operations should be protected from non-farm land use activities in areas designated as “agriculture” in the 2020 Plan.
2. Prime farmland beyond potential municipal services is to be protected.
3. Residential use on individual parcels may be permitted in areas designated as “agriculture” or “agriculture/rural” on sites where agricultural activities are limited due to poor soils, slopes, etc. Residential conversions should always be compatible with the surrounding area(s).

*D. Commercial and Industrial Land Use*

1. Light industry and mineral extraction uses are appropriate uses in Riley Township along State Route 23 and several other areas.

2. Clustering of light industrial and commercial activities in the proximity of Coral Road south beyond Interstate Highway I-90 on State Route 23 is encouraged.

*E. Open Space and Natural Resource Land Use*

1. Encourage protection of environmentally sensitive land.
2. Limited acquisition, development and management of areas for active and passive recreation are encouraged.
3. Locations for at least two additional public school sites should be provided in the Plan.
4. A system of environmental corridors should be established to connect sensitive areas and to allow for movement of wildlife populations.
5. Encourage open space.

*F. Transportation*

1. Planning should include a Marengo bypass and a full interchange at State Route 23 and Interstate Highway I-90.
2. Reintroduce rail passenger service to Marengo.

*G. Riley Township Profile*

1. Agriculture is a major factor in Riley Township and its economy. The soil is a valuable resource. Agricultural land and rural landscapes also define the environment and character of the township. The same factors make it desirable for development in non-prime soil areas. Land in the east one third of the township is less suitable for agriculture because of tree coverage, less productive soils, and other factors. Use of this area can provide a significant number of residential homesites without adversely affecting the agricultural uses.
2. Residential use is mostly single-family units. The only high-density development occurs in the City of Marengo. Over 1,400 people reside in the township. Riley Township has a small amount of medium density development (one to three-acre sites). The areas for commercial and industrial development and mineral extraction are found mainly along State Route 23 to the South of Marengo.

*G. Conservation*

The McHenry County Conservation District controls very little land in Riley Township, but has indicated additional interest in acquiring more land in the area.



**CHECKLIST FOR PROPOSED LAND USE CHANGES**

The following statements may be used to ensure a consistent evaluation of land use changes and an ongoing review of the basic criteria in the Plan:

1. Will the land use change fulfill a significant need in Riley Township?
2. Will the land use change be beneficial to the general welfare, safety and health of the general Riley Township population and residents of the immediate area?
3. Will the land use change constitute an "entering wedge" of incompatibility and prove detrimental to adjacent property owners?
4. Will the land use change create an isolation of the specific land use?
5. Will the land use change adversely influence adjacent property values?
6. Will the land use change contribute to "undue traffic congestion?"
7. Will the land use change the economy of Riley Township?