

2. Land Use

To plan for the future land use of the Town, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the existing land uses. This section analyzes existing land uses, development densities, and the supply, demand and prices of land.

Agriculture and Forest Lands. As Table 2.1 and Map 2.1 illustrate, most of the Town of Medary maintains a rural atmosphere, as 76% of the land is assessed as agriculture, forestlands or undeveloped. The agricultural lands in the Town primarily consists of cropland, grazing-pasture, and forests. Popular crops grown are corn, alfalfa, and soybeans.



Productive Agricultural Soils

The productive or prime agricultural soils in the Town have been mapped using the U.S. Department of Agricultural, Natural Resource Conservation Service Soil Survey Capability System. This system shows the suitability of soils for most kinds of crops. In this capability system soils are grouped at three levels with “capability classes” being the broadest grouping. Soils are designated in one of eight broad classes. Class I soils have few limitations that restrict their use. Class II soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices. Class III soils have severe limitations that limit the choice of plants and require special conservation practices. Class IV-VIII soils have very severe limitations that generally make them unsuited for cultivation. For planning purposes Class I, II, and III are considered prime soils, as they are most suitable for productive agriculture. Map 2.4 shows the locations in the town of the Class I, II and III soils.

Table 2.1 2005 Land Use Property Assessment Inventory – Town of Medary

Land Type	Acres	Percent of Land Use
Residential	911	14.9
Commercial	162	2.6
Manufacturing	382	6.2
Agricultural	1674	27.4
Undeveloped/Other	817	13.3
Forest/Ag Forest	2141	35.0
Other (public land, etc.)	33	0.5
Total	6,120	100.0

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Bureau of Equalization, 2005 Statement of Assessments



In 2004-2005 the U.W.-La Crosse Geography Department’s Center for Geographic Information Science completed a land use inventory and mapping project for all of La Crosse County. This research used a much more detailed land use inventory system than the property assessment inventory reported above. Table 2.2 and Map 2.1 identify the acreages for each of the land use categories in this system: Woodlands 57%, Agriculture 11%, Wetlands 9%, Pasture 6% and Single Family Homes also comprising 6% of the 7,180 acres in the Town were the primary land uses based on this classification system.



Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028, 2. Land Use

Table 2.2 Town of Medary 2005 Existing Land Use Classifications

Land Use Category	Number of Acres	Percent of Total	Land Use Category	Number of Acres	Percent of Total
Single Family Residential	432.90	6.06	Interment, Cremation	0.00	0.00
2 - 4 Families Residential	0.00	0.00	Military Bases	0.00	0.00
5 or more Families Residential	0.98	0.01	Vehicle Movement	200.30	2.79
Mobile Home	3.35	0.05	Train or Rail Movement	29.85	0.42
Farmstead	47.63	0.66	Aircraft Movement Activities	0.00	0.00
Transient Living - Motels/Hotels	2.50	0.00	Spectator Sports Assembly	0.00	0.00
Institutional Living	0.00	0.00	Fairs/Exhibition	0.00	0.00
Retail	12.88	0.18	Social, Cultural, Religious	0.00	0.00
Wholesale	0.00	0.00	Active Leisure Activities	143.80	2.00
Services	19.61	0.27	Passive Leisure Activities	18.73	0.26
Restaurant Type Activities	0.00	0.00	Agricultural Activities - Crops, Nurseries, Orchards	822.10	11.45
Office Activities	0.56	0.01	Livestock Related Activities	5.07	0.07
Primarily Plant of Factory Type Activity	2.19	0.03	Pasture/Grazing	464.00	6.46
Primarily Goods Storage or Handling Activity	0.00	0.00	Quarrying	188.70	2.63
Solid Waste Management	0.00	0.00	Grasslands/Prairies	0.00	0.00
Schools, Libraries	0.00	0.00	Woodlands	4075.00	56.75
Municipal Activities	1.81	0.03	Wetlands	652.50	9.09
Emergency Response, Public Safety	0.00	0.00	Water	49.70	0.69
Utilities	1.81	0.03	Vacant of Human Activity or Structures	4.32	0.06
Health Care/Medical	0.00	0.00	Total Acres	7180.29	100.00

The following is a listing of businesses operating in the Town.

Table 2.3 Businesses in the Town of Medary

Location	Businesses
State Highway 16	Wieser – La Crosse Monument Company, Bitter Sweet Flower, RBS, Boettcher Insurance, Stevermens Motor Lodge, Northland Construction, Trees Today Nursery
Shiftar Road	H&S Redi Mix Inc. and Strupp Trucking Inc.
Peters Road	Medary Construction Inc.
Smith Valley Road	Allen Automatic Transmission and Tom's Bobcat & Snow Plowing, Bluebird Springs Recreation Area, Goldbeck Towing Service, Scotts Service
County Road B	G & B Plumbing LLC
Goodview Place	Options Realty Inc.
Verde Valley Road	Gray Area Inc.

Source: Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, 2007

**Table 2.4
Medary Zoning District Designations by Acreage**

Zoning Designation	Acreage
Exclusive Agriculture	0
Agriculture A	6,151
Agriculture B	284
Transitional Agriculture	0
Residential A	331
Residential B	0
Residential C	0
Commercial B	123
Commercial C	3
Industrial	62
Total	6,954

Zoning and Other Land Use Regulations

The Town of Medary is a zoned Town. The La Crosse County Zoning Department administers the County Zoning Ordinance in the Town of Medary. Table 2.4 provides a breakdown of the various zoning districts in the Town. Map 2.2 shows the location of these zones. The La Crosse County Zoning Department also administers regulations mandated by Wisconsin State Statute in the Town of Medary such as the Private On-site Sanitary Sewer Ordinance, Shoreland, Wetland and Floodplain regulations.

The Town of Medary has adopted several local ordinances that are enforced by the Town Board. Local Town ordinances listed on the La Crosse County web site include:

- Chapter 1 – Enabling Ordinance Regarding Codification
Ordinance 1.01- An Ordinance to Codify.
- Chapter 2 - Fire Department and Burning Ordinances.
Ordinance 2.01- An Ordinance Regulating the Setting of Fires in the Town of Medary.
- Chapter 3 - Police Department and Traffic Ordinances.
- Chapter 4 - Streets, Alleys and Sidewalks.
Ordinance 4.01 - Special Assessments - Streets and Highways.
Ordinance 4.02 - Load Limits on Bridges.
Ordinance 4.03 - Regulating Excavations and Openings in Streets, Sidewalks and Roadways in the Town of Medary
Ordinance 4.031 – Excavation and Grading
- Chapter 5 - Sanitary and Storm Sewers and Wells.
Ordinance 5.01 - Location of Wells and Sewage Systems.
- Chapter 6 - Public Peace, Morals and Safety.
Ordinance 6.01 - Handling and Use of Firearms.
Ordinance 6.02 - Regulation and Control of Dogs.
Ordinance 6.03 - Regulation of Devices to Frighten Birds, Etc.
- Chapter 7 - Health and Sanitary Regulations; Landfills.
Ordinance 7.01 - Regulation of Septic Tanks, Dry Wells, Etc.
Ordinance 7.02 - Regulation of Commercial Handlers of Dead Animals.
Ordinance 7.03 – Regulation of Application of Waste Water Sludge on Lands in the Town of Medary
Ordinance 7.04 – Health, Safety, and Welfare of Residents Relative to the Handling and Disposal of Solid Waste and Recyclable Materials
- Chapter 8 - Parks and Playgrounds.
- Chapter 9 - Subdivision Control and Platting.
Ordinance 9.01 - Providing for Subdividing Land.
- Chapter 10 - Building and construction Regulations.
- Chapter 11 – Gas Regulations and Code.
Ordinance 11.01 – Regulation of Gas Burners, Gas Burner Equipment and Gas Appliances, for the Licensing of Gas Contractors and Their Employees, and for Providing Penalties.
- Chapter 12 - Mobile Home and House Trailer Regulations.
Ordinance 12.01 - Licensing, Parking, Etc. of Mobile Homes.
- Chapter 13 - Elections and Voter Registration.
Ordinance 13.01 - Registration of Electors.
- Chapter 14 - Miscellaneous Ordinances.
Ordinance 14.01 - Providing for the Licensing and Regulation of a Community Antenna Television System.
- Chapter 15 - Licensing, Permit and Application Forms.
- Chapter 16 -
Ordinance 16.01 - An Ordinance Regulating the Storage of Personality
Town of Medary Road Specification

Residential and Non-Residential Density

Table 2.5, illustrates the residential density of the Town of Medary as compared to La Crosse County, adjacent towns and the State. In 2000, the Town of Medary had 124.9 people per square mile and 47.2 housing units per square mile. The population and housing density for the Town of Medary is less than that of La Crosse County and greater than the State of Wisconsin. The non-residential density of other uses was not calculated due to the lack of and negligible amount of such uses.



Table 2.5 Residential Density, 2000

	Population	Housing Units	Land Area in Sq. Mi.	Density (Units per Sq. Mi.)	
				Population	Housing Units
T. Barre	1,014	354	20.67	49.1	17.1
T. Campbell	4,410	1,823	3.84	1,148.0	474.5
T. Hamilton	2,103	732	50.07	46.0	14.6
T. Medary	1,463	553	11.71	124.9	47.2
T. Onalaska	5,210	1,834	37.0	140.8	49.6
T. Shelby	4,687	1,817	25.58	183.2	71.0
C. La Crosse	51,818	22,233	20.14	2573.40	1104.10
C. Onalaska	14,839	6,070	9.09	1,631.60	667.40
La Crosse Co	107,120	43,480	452.74	236.6	96.0
State of Wisconsin	5,363,715	2,321,144	54,310	98.8	42.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

Table 2.6 shows that from 1990 to 2000 the number of housing units per square mile increased by 1.7 units. This increase in housing density is much less than the County or State who had increases of 11.6 and 4.9 respectively.

Table 2.6 Housing Growth 1990-2000

	Housing Units 1990	Housing Units 2000	Net Change	% Change	New Housing Units Per Sq. Mi.
T. Barre	344	354	10	2.9	0.5
T. Campbell	1,731	1,823	92	5.3	24.0
T. Hamilton	585	732	147	25.1	2.9
T. Medary	533	553	20	3.8	1.7
T. Onalaska	1,978	1,834	-144	-7.3	-
T. Shelby	1,905	1,817	-88	-4.6	-
C. La Crosse	20,980	22,233	1,253	6.0	62.2
C. Onalaska	4,419	6,070	1,651	37.4	181.6
La Crosse Co	38,227	43,480	5,253	13.7	11.6
State of Wisconsin	2,055,676	2,321,144	265,468	12.9	4.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2000

LAND USE TRENDS

Land Supply, Demand, and Prices

Not all of the 4,600 acres of land in the Town classified as agricultural and forest and forest agricultural lands are suitable for development. The primary reason for this is due to the fact that much of this land is on slopes greater than 30%. It is estimated that 33% of all land in the Town is on slopes of 30% or greater where building is prohibited. Map 2.3 illustrates the extent of both 20% and 30% slopes in the Town. Despite the steep slopes the demand for land for development purposes is very high. From 2000 through 2005, the Town of Medary averaged nine new housing units and one new commercial building per year. Based on this rate of growth, it is reasonable to expect that over the next 20 years there will be a demand for 180 new housing units and 20 new commercial buildings that the Town should plan for.



Table 2.7 illustrates the land prices in all the Towns in La Crosse County between 1990 and 1997. The average cost of land per acre in the Town of Medary was not available for that time period. The 2002 USDA Census of Agriculture valued agricultural land at \$1,937 dollars per acre in La Crosse County. In recent years, prices per acre of land have soared due to the value of recreational property and the public demand for country living.

Four private property sales during the 2002 to 2006 time period to the Mississippi Valley Conservancy show property with bluffs selling from \$5,051 to \$14,083 per acre. Two of these properties were both 23 acres in size and sold in 2006 for \$5,051 and \$6,087 per acre respectively. The other two land sales were 5 and 12 acres in size and sold for \$9,000 and \$14,083 per acre respectively. The difference in the price of the land was influenced by how developable the land was. Steep sloped lands received less per acre and properties with flatter slopes received more per acre. In 2005, over 450 acres of woodlands, bluffs, and a former quarry was sold in the Town of Medary to the Mississippi Valley Conservancy for \$263,045 or \$2,708 per acre. Most of this transaction was considered a donation or gift and as such was much less an arm's length transaction than the four previously discussed transactions.

In 2005 the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection reported that in La Crosse County agricultural land without buildings and other improvements being sold for continued agricultural use sold for \$3,321 per acre and that agricultural land without buildings and improvements being diverted to other uses sold for \$9,663 per acre. These figures are based on 18 sales transactions.

Table 2.7 Farmland Sales 1990-1997

	# Parcels Sold	Total Acres	Acres Continuing in Agriculture	Acres Converted out of Agriculture	\$/Acre of land continuing in of Agriculture	\$/Acre of land converted out of Agriculture	% of Farmland Sold then Converted to other use
Town of Bangor	36	1,835	1,644	191	\$883	\$800	1.7
Town of Barre	17	1,185	1,007	178	\$1,008	\$632	2.1
Town of Burns	61	3,426	3,085	341	\$691	\$1,033	2.1
Town of Campbell	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	0.0
Town of Farmington	84	3,855	3,304	551	\$789	\$678	2.3
Town of Greenfield	37	1,877	1,675	202	\$936	\$1,273	2.4
Town of Hamilton	40	2,432	2,008	424	\$1,068	\$2,121	2.5
Town of Holland	36	1,494	733	761	\$1,378	\$3,959	7.8
Town of Medary	8	410	213	197	n/a	n/a	5.8
Town of Onalaska	47	2,404	1,635	769	\$1,082	\$1,204	6.8
Town of Shelby	8	220	194	26	\$718	n/a	.5
Town of Washington	30	2,283	2,010	273	\$825	\$773	2.0
All La Crosse Cnty Towns	404	21,421	17,508	3,913	\$885	\$1,609	3.0

Source: Wisconsin Town Land Use Data Project: Program on Agricultural Technology Studies, UW-Madison

Opportunities for Redevelopment

The Town of Medary Planning Commission analyzed the opportunities for redevelopment in the Town of Medary as part of the planning process. Based on the amount of newer development activity, annexation and the rural nature of the town no significant redevelopment opportunities were identified.

Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

An existing land use conflict the Town is confronted with is the situation residents revealed in the Town survey indicating the desire for the Town to maintain a rural character. All future development in the Town therefore in some way detracts from this desire by 82% of survey respondents. Defining “rural” in a practical manner within the context of the Town of Medary’s geographic situation needs to be undertaken to help resolve this potential conflict. This task is identified as an initiative for the Town to accomplish in the plan implementation schedule shown in Table 9.1.

The recommended land uses of Conservation Mixed Use (CMU) and Mixed Use (MU) on Map 9.1 Recommended Land Use may result in future land use conflicts. These areas are to be interpreted as areas where mixed uses involving higher density residential and commercial uses may be more appropriate and are not to be interpreted as areas where all types of residential and commercial uses are to be allowed due to impacts many forms of development within these land use classes can have. Working with La Crosse County on updating their development ordinances as spelled out in the Implementation Schedule in Table 9.1 will assist in resolving this potential issue.

Land Use Projections

Projecting acres needed for future land uses is a key part of the planning process. La Crosse County is in the process of preparing the County comprehensive plan and as part of that project projections were established for the Towns of Campbell/Medary/Shelby planning sub area. Those projections are listed on the following table (Table 2.8). It is forecast that 382 acres in these municipalities will be needed for residential, commercial and industrial uses in the next 20 years.

Table 2.8 Land Use Projections for the Towns of Campbell, Medary and Shelby Planning sub area

	2010	2015	2020	2025	Projected Total
Residential	92	43	55	85	275
Commercial	15	8	10	15	48
Industrial	17	12	13	17	59

Source: La Crosse County Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report, January 2006

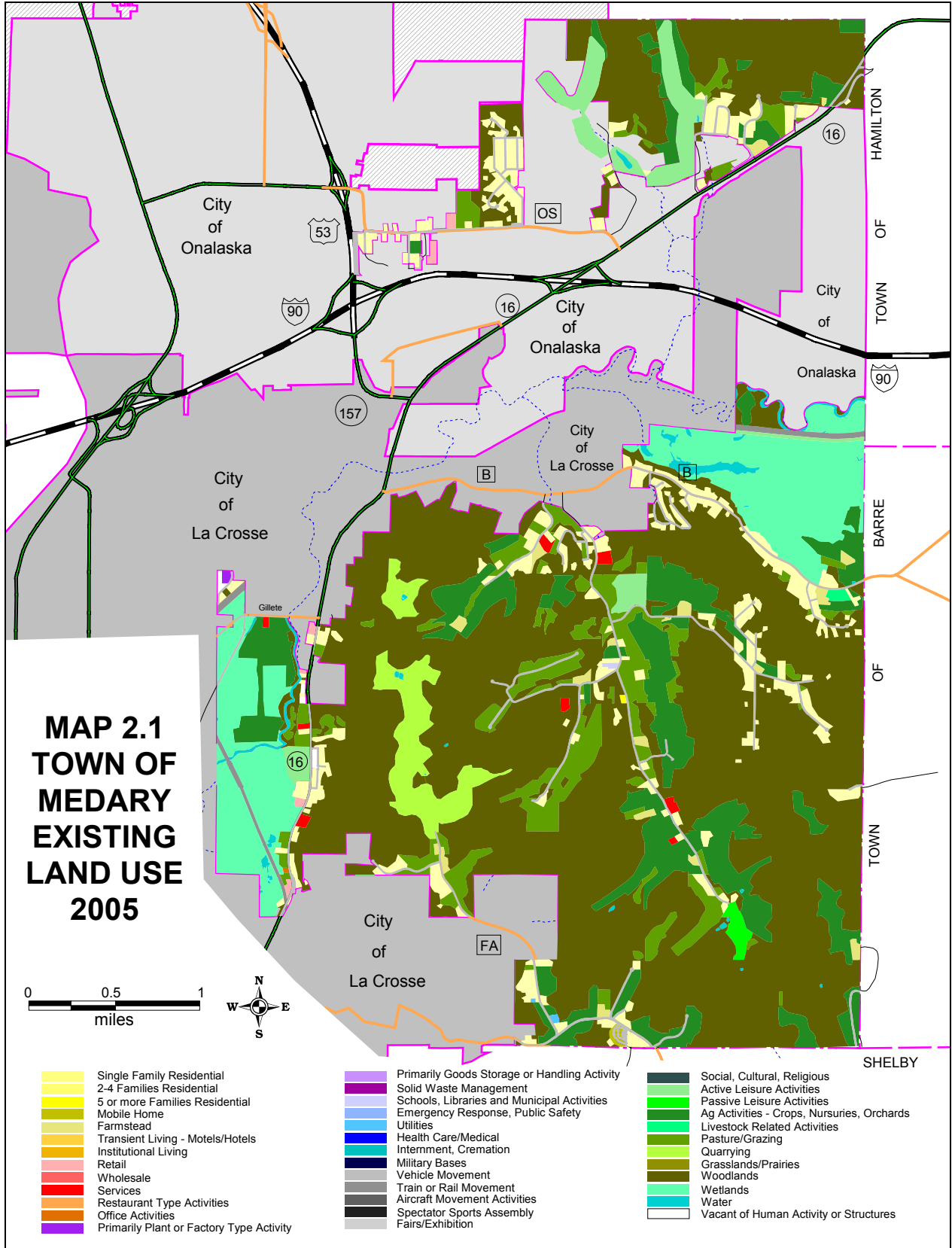
Town of Medary Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028, 2. Land Use

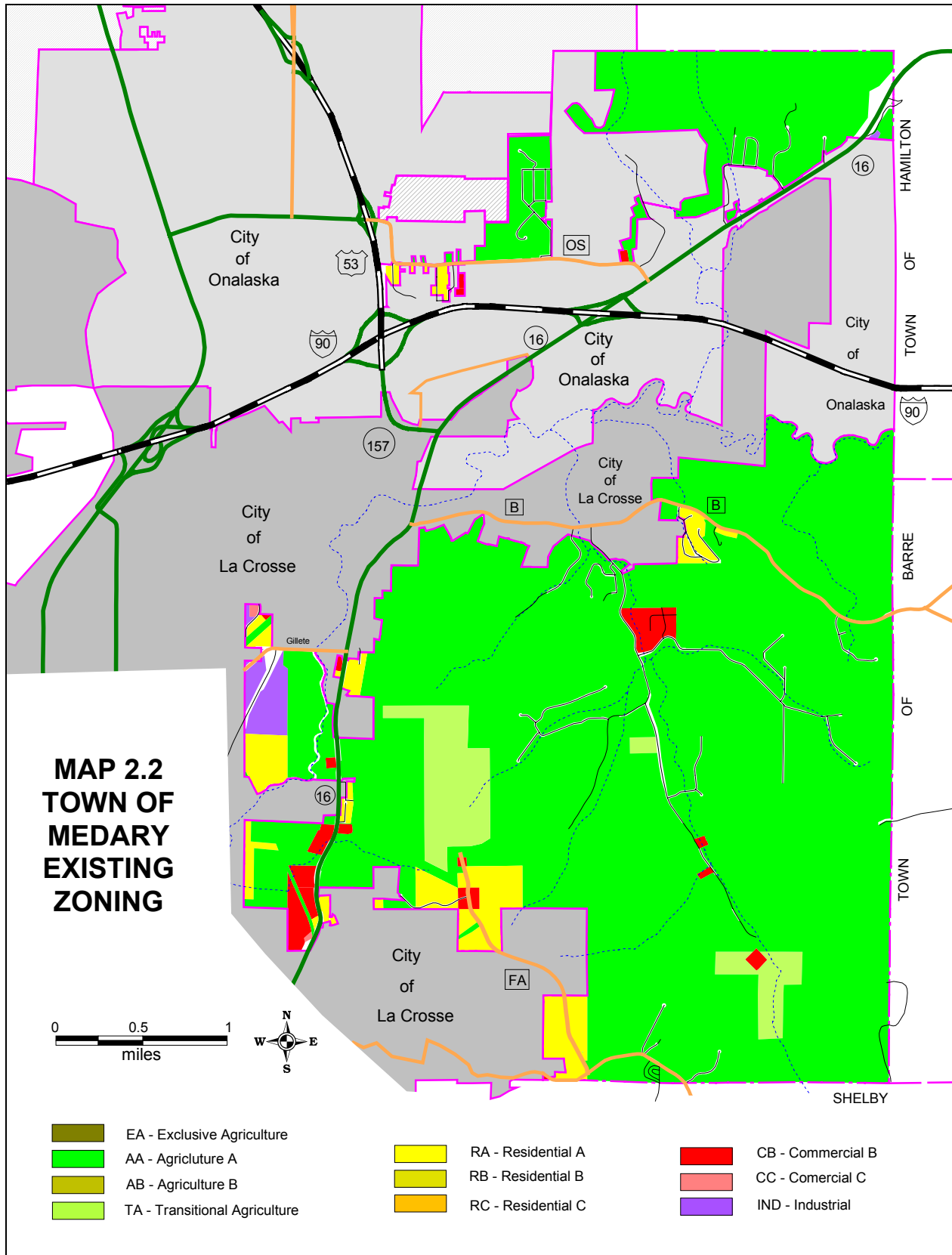
Using past housing building permit trends from 1997-2006 and projecting that ten year growth rate to 2025 generates another land use demand figure as shown in Table 2.9. This land use projection methodology estimates that approximately 217 acres of land will be consumed for housing in the Town of Medary. Plus an additional 43 acres will be consumed for commercial growth. Both of the housing and commercial projections assume each housing unit or building will consume 1.6 acres. This projected development activity will also result in a projected loss of 182 acres in agricultural lands.

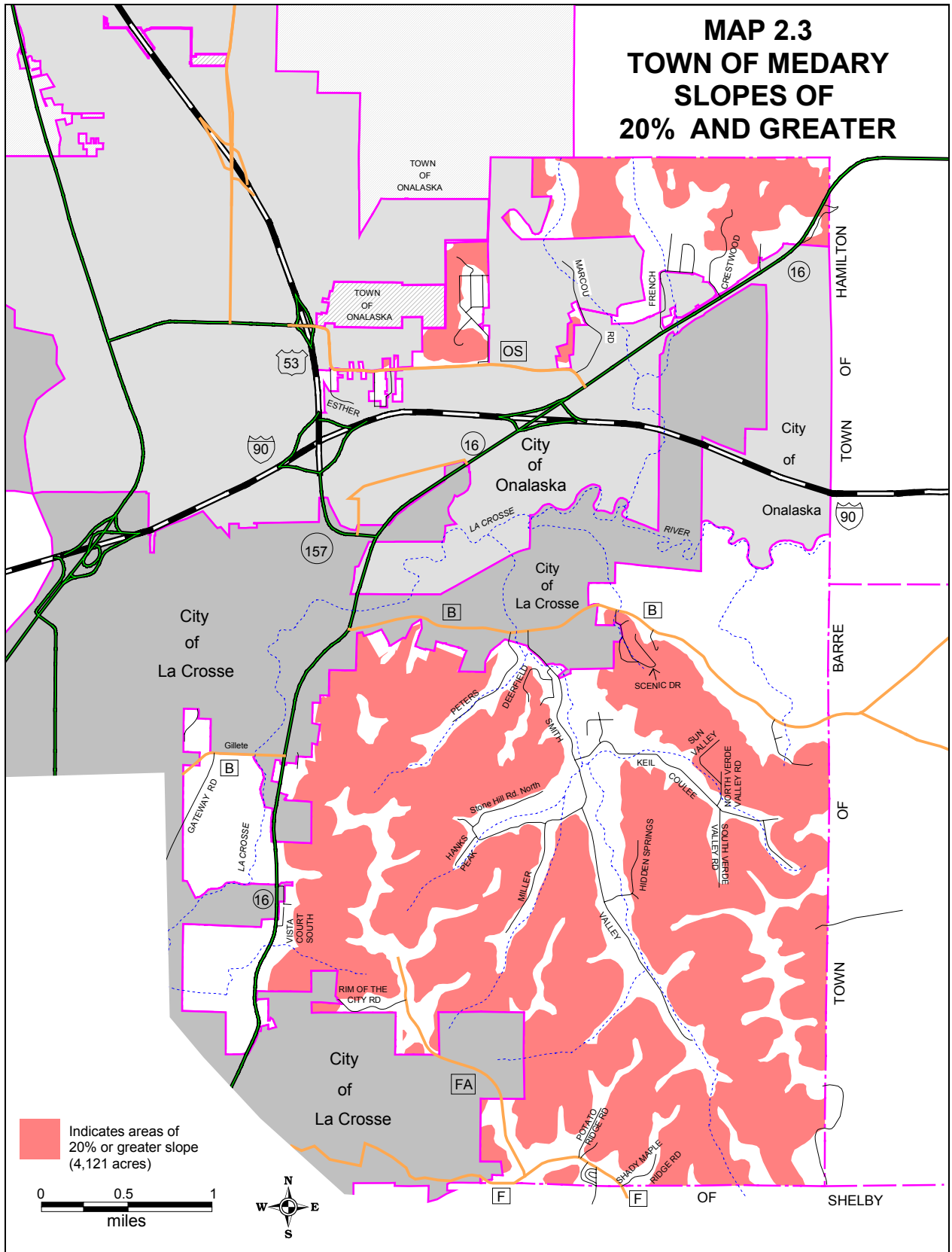
Table 2.9 Town of Medary Land Use Demand Straight Line Forecast

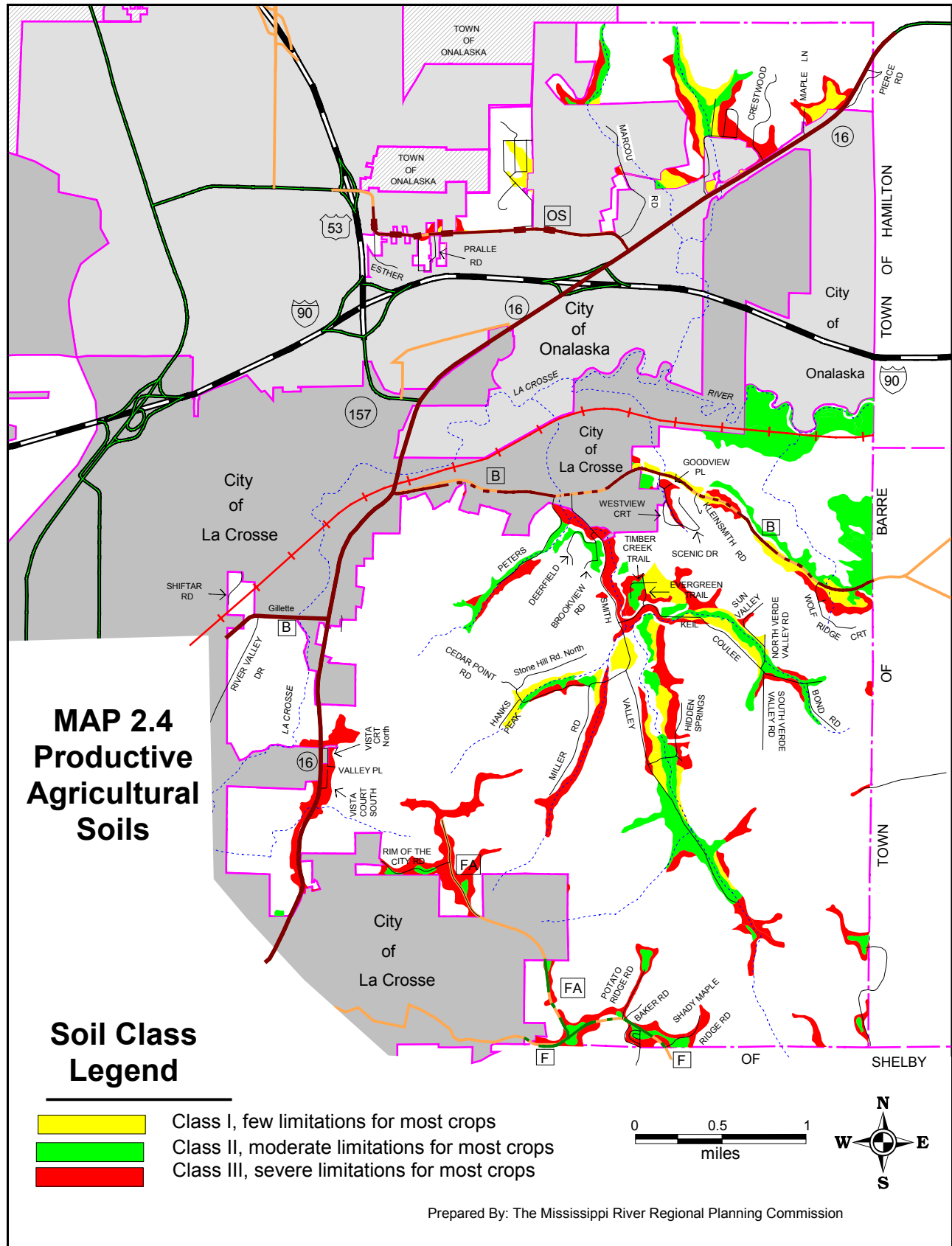
Residential Acres	2010	2015	2020	2025	Total Acres Needed
Residential Acres Needed based on 1.6 acres per housing unit	29 housing units x 1.6 = 46 Acres	65 housing units x 1.6 = 104 Acres	101 housing units x 1.6 = 162 Acres	136 housing units x 1.6 = 217 Acres	217 acres
Commercial Acres	2010	2015	2020	2025	Total Acres Needed
Commercial Acres Needed based on 1.6 acres per firm	6 Buildings x 1.6 = 10 acres	13 Buildings x 1.6 = 21 acres	20 Buildings x 1.6 = 32 acres	27 Buildings x 1.6 = 43 acres	43 acres
Agricultural Acres	2010	2015	2020	2025	Total Acres of Ag Land Lost
Assumes that for every acre gain in residential and commercial development, 70% of an acre of agricultural land will be lost. Existing undeveloped lots and developable land not in agricultural use resulted in the 70% estimate being used.	56 x 70% = 39	125 x 70% = 88	194 x 70% = 136	260 x 70% = 182	182

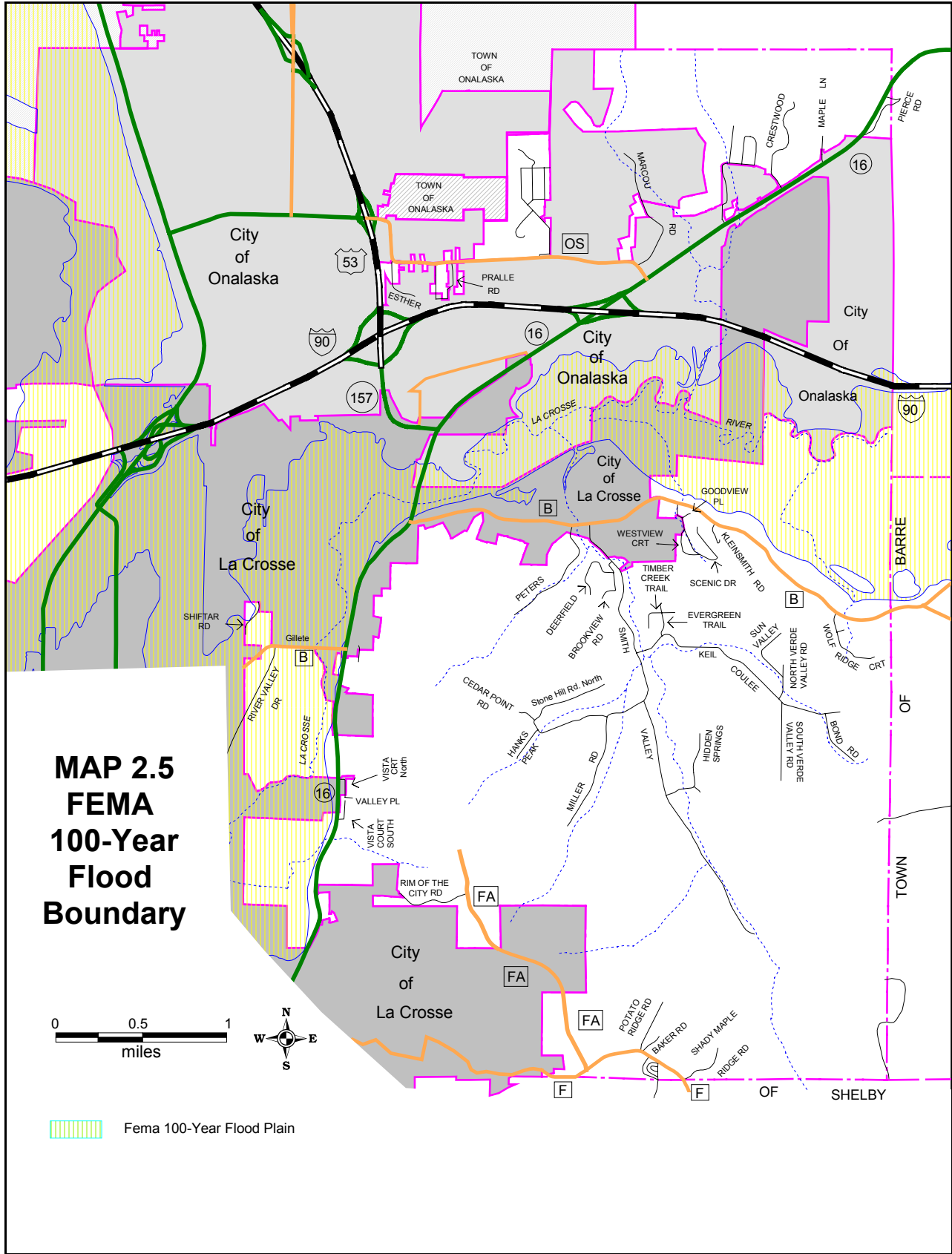
Source: Straight Line Projection Based on 1997-2006 Building Permit Data, see Table 1.5b



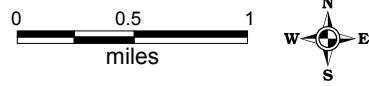









**MAP 2.5
FEMA
100-Year
Flood
Boundary**



 Fema 100-Year Flood Plain

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