

STAFF ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT
TO THE DANE COUNTY REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE,
FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND WATER QUALITY PLANS
**REVISING THE CENTRAL URBAN SERVICE AREA BOUNDARY
IN THE CITY OF FITCHBURG**

1. Applicant: City of Fitchburg.
2. Location and Description of Amendment

The City of Fitchburg has requested that the Central Urban Service Area be amended to include a 9.65-acre site for a proposed elementary school for the Verona Area School District. The site is located on the north side of Lacy Road approximately 3/8 mile east of Seminole Highway, in the E 1/2 of the SW 1/4, SE 1/4, Section 8, T.6N., R.9E. The proposed amendment is shown on Maps 1 and 2.

3. Existing Environment

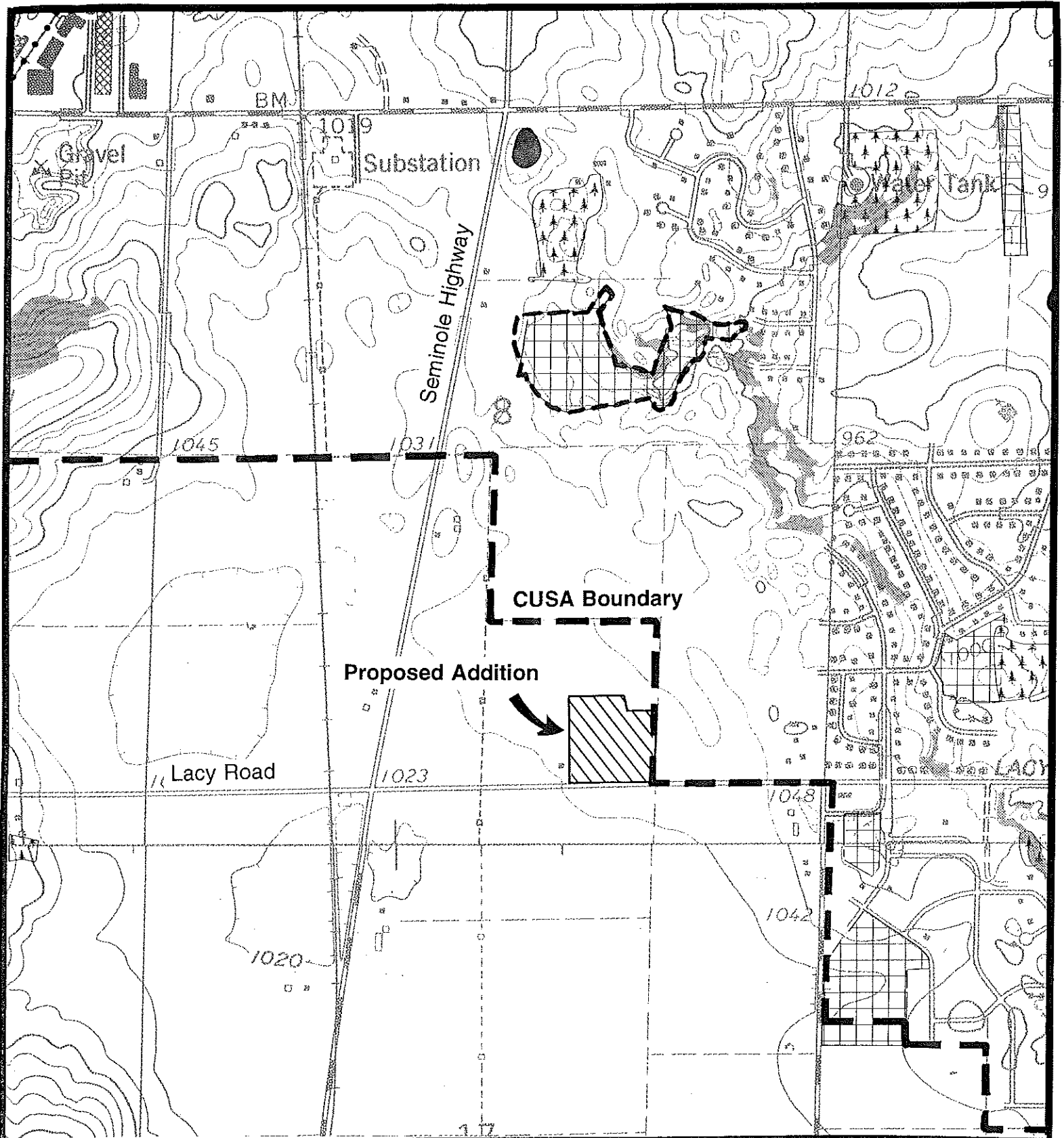
Land Use. The site is a level vacant site, until recently in agricultural use. Adjacent land uses include agricultural lands to the west and south, the existing Stoner Prairie Elementary School and single-family residences being developed to the east, and agricultural transitional lands and city park land to the north.

Soils, Geology, Water Resources. The site is located near the boundary between the glacial end moraine and outwash plain, and the basin divide between the Sugar and Yahara River basins. Soils on the site consist of Plano silt loams, with zero to two percent slopes and gravelly substrate. The site is located on the Sugar River side of the basin divide, so surface drainage is southwest into a non-contributing or closed basin in the Sugar River basin immediately southwest of the site. The water table is at a depth of approximately 100 feet, and the shallow groundwater flow pattern is east-northeast towards Nine Springs Creek. The groundwater flow pattern reflects the fact that the site is in the zone of contribution to the Fitchburg and Madison wells and probably part of a significant groundwater recharge area.

There are no wetlands, water bodies, floodplains, steep slopes, woodlands or other environmental resources on the site. Archeological information on file at the RPC does not list any prehistoric cultural sites in or near the proposed site. Available information on endangered resources does not indicate any threatened or endangered species which would be affected by the amendment.

4. Consistency With Plans

The proposed site is within a future CUSA expansion area identified in the City's 1984 General Land Use Plan and the 1986 Plan amendment. The City, with the assistance of the RPC staff, is currently in the process of revising its Land Use Plan, which will identify future growth areas. The proposed site is adjacent to the present CUSA boundary and to the Stoner Prairie Elementary School, the only school in the City. In the future, the proposed school may be converted to a middle school, and another elementary school site developed to serve the area.

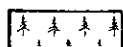


FITCHBURG CUSA AMENDMENT

— — Urban service area boundary

- - - Isolated resource feature

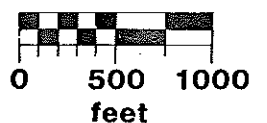
Existing parks and greenways



Woodlands



Steep slopes (>12%)



The City intends to immediately provide a full range of urban services to the site, with the exception of public transit service, which is presently not provided at this location. The amendment is requested in order to allow the provision of public sewer and water service to the site. The proposed amendment does not exceed the CUSA size limits, appears to be generally consistent with the objectives and policies of the *Dane County Regional Development Guide*, and there do not appear to be any significant conflicts with adopted regional plans.

5. Impacts and Effects of the Proposal

Water Resources Impacts. The overall water use and wastewater generation figures for the Central Urban Service Area already include an allowance for necessary public facilities such as the proposed elementary school, so the amendment has no effect on water demand and wastewater generation forecasts for the area. The proposed K-5 elementary school, with a capacity of 600 students and staff of approximately 40, is of the same size and impacts as the adjacent existing Stoner Prairie Elementary School. Estimated water consumption and wastewater generation for this type of public facility is approximately 10,000 to 13,000 gallons per day, within the capacity of water and sewer facilities which will serve the site. The elevation of the school, and location in the Sugar River drainage basin, may necessitate the use of a sewage grinder pump to convey wastewater to the adjacent public sanitary sewer in Chicory Drive. This sanitary sewer is tributary to MMSD's Nine Springs Interceptor, and there is no problem with capacity in MMSD's facilities.

Developing the site for school purposes will result in increased impervious area, loss of groundwater recharge, increased surface runoff, and potential temporary erosion during construction. The City has an erosion/runoff control ordinance which can mitigate the impacts of construction erosion and surface runoff increases. The City has indicated that their ordinance would probably require the construction of a stormwater detention basin on the school site. Since the site is part of a closed basin in terms of surface water runoff, a greater concern is loss of groundwater recharge. The site is located in an area of significant groundwater recharge for the Fitchburg and Madison and other municipal wells in the Central Urban Service Area. It probably would be more appropriate to direct the City's stormwater management requirements toward developing infiltration and maintaining groundwater recharge on the site, perhaps utilizing the proposed playing fields and open space north of the site, rather than requiring stormwater detention on the site.

Other Environmental Impacts. There are no significant environmental features on the site, so no delineation of environmental corridors is necessary or proposed. As part of the City's revision of its Land Use Plan, the question of delineation of environmental corridors on adjacent park lands and playfields will be examined on a comprehensive basis.

Transportation Facilities and Impacts

Roadways. The proposed area and school is bordered by Lacy Road on the south and Chicory Drive to the east. Lacy Road is functionally classed as an urban collector street from Seminole Highway to Fish Hatchery Road and had an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume of 2,600 vehicles in 1993. Chicory Drive is a short, cul-de-sac, local street.

Access to the site is to be provided by a driveway directly from Lacy Road and from a special bus drop-off driveway connecting to Stoner Prairie Elementary School. The driveway access from Lacy Road is proposed to have one lane entering the site and two turn lanes leaving the site. School buses would drop off students first at Stoner Prairie Elementary School, which has its main access point from Devoro Road, and then at the proposed school site via the special bus drop-off driveway connection. The school buses would then exit the site to Lacy Road. To the right of the main access driveway, it is proposed to provide a parking area with 100 spaces which would be screened from Lacy Road by a landscaped buffered area.

Based on the total number of students and staff expected at this facility, the total number of vehicle trips expected to be generated at this site ranges from 350 to 500 trips per day. The eight school buses currently going to Stoner Prairie Elementary School would also go to the new school along the special school bus driveway. As a result of the new school, only two additional buses would be added to the existing fleet because of extra capacity in each of the current eight buses. If the proposed school is eventually changed to a middle school, six to eight additional buses would be required. There is sufficient roadway capacity in the existing roadway system to handle the additional traffic volumes.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities. Sidewalk presently exists on the south side of Lacy Road between Richardson Street and Osmundsen Road. School children living south of Lacy Road use the sidewalk along Lacy Road and cross Lacy Road at Osmundsen Road (which has a crossing guard) and then use sidewalk on Osmundsen Road and Devoro Road to reach Stoner Prairie Elementary School on Devoro Road. Osmundsen Road, both north and south of Lacy Road, is a designated bikeway. A paved pedestrian/bike path also connects the school to the residential neighborhood to the north. Presently, 35 percent of the school children at Stoner Prairie Elementary School walk to school. It is anticipated that this same percentage of school children walking would apply to the new school site.

Lacy Road from Fish Hatchery Road to Mutchler Road is scheduled for improvement with bike lanes in 1996 and from Mutchler Road to Seminole Highway in 1998. Sidewalk along Lacy Road from Osmundsen Road to the school site is also being considered. The paved bike path north of Stoner Prairie Elementary School would also be extended to connect to the new school site.

Transit. There is no public transit in this area and none is expected in the near future.

6. Alternatives

The Verona Area School District has attempted to locate this school on other sites within the Central Urban Service Area that met its siting criteria. Two other sites within the urban service area faced significant opposition before the proposed site was considered.

7. Controversies, Comments Received and Unresolved Issues

The City of Fitchburg held a public hearing on the conditional use permit for the proposed school on January 17, 1995. No significant opposition or controversy was reported. A school bond referendum to finance the construction of this school was recently approved by voters. The Regional Planning Commission has scheduled a public hearing on this proposal

for their February 9, 1995, meeting and notified affected governments and agencies. No significant controversies or objections have been noted to date, nor have any comments been received. There do not appear to be any significant unresolved issues remaining.

8. Staff Recommendation

It appears that the proposed amendment satisfies the criteria and requirements for urban service area amendments, is consistent with the objectives and policies of adopted plans, and would not result in any significant impacts that cannot be adequately mitigated. Therefore, the staff recommends approval of the requested amendment with the recommendation that the City emphasize infiltration and maintenance of groundwater recharge in their site stormwater and drainage management requirements.