



PLAN COMMISSION REPORT

Proposal: Land Use Amendment

Description: Consider an amendment to the Village’s Land Use Plan as part of the Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan for Racine County: 2035 creating a new land use category, Transition Light Industrial, for the purpose of providing opportunities for low-traffic industrial, and employment uses including data centers within the Village.

Applicant(s): Village of Caledonia

Address(es): N/A

Suggested Motions: That the Plan Commission adopts Resolution 2025-01 which recommends to the Village Board an amendment to the 2035 Land Use Plan to create a land use category, Transition Light Industrial, for the purpose of providing opportunities for low-traffic industrial and employment uses including data centers within the Village for the following reasons:

1. This Land Use category can provide a buffer between heavy industrial areas and less intense land use categories.
2. This land use category provides opportunities for light industrial uses with minimal noise, pollution, and/or traffic impacts without the environmental impacts of more intense industrial uses and can help maintain the Village’s character.

Owner(s): Village of Caledonia

Tax Key(s): N/A

Lot Size(s): N/A

Current Zoning District(s): N/A

Overlay District(s): None

Wetlands: Yes No

Floodplain: Yes No

Comprehensive Plan: N/A

Background

Last fall, staff proposed a text amendment to the M-1, Light Industrial District, redefining "warehousing" to include establishments used for the storage, management, processing, and transmission of digital data. This redefinition specifically incorporates facilities housing computer network equipment for digital data storage and operation, commonly known as data centers, as a permitted use within the Village. Since the adoption of this ordinance, staff has identified interest from potential users in locating such facilities within the Village.

As the Comprehensive Plan is currently written, any parcel proposed for a data center would need to be rezoned to M-1. This rezoning would require the parcel to be designated within the Industrial land use category on the Village's Land Use Map. However, using the broader Industrial land use category could create challenges for future land use planning, as it would permit heavy industrial uses that may conflict with neighboring properties.

Introduction of the Transition Light Industrial Land Use Category

The creation of a "Transition Light Industrial" land use category in the Village's Comprehensive Plan provides a proactive solution to address evolving community needs, economic trends, and land use compatibility. This new category establishes a framework for sustainable growth, economic diversification, and the integration of industrial activities in harmony with surrounding land uses.

To mitigate concerns regarding how parcels can be rezoned for industrial purposes, staff proposes the addition of this new category, titled "Transition Light Industrial." This designation would limit industrial uses to light industrial operations and require large open-space buffers and heavily landscaped areas for any proposed developments. Furthermore, adopting this category would restrict property owners from requesting a rezoning to more intense industrial classifications, such as M-2 (General Manufacturing District) or M-3 (Heavy Manufacturing District).

This approach aligns with best practices, such as those implemented in Loudoun County, Virginia—a region known for hosting the highest concentration of data centers in the world. Below is a proposed description of the Transition Light Industrial land use category, which could be adopted as part of the Village's Comprehensive Plan:

Transition Light Industrial

Purpose: Transition Light Industrial areas provide opportunities for low-traffic industrial and employment uses. Predominant uses include data centers, contractor establishments, and small-scale assembly or production operations. Suitable uses do not generate excessive noise or air pollution and avoid outdoor storage. Developments in this category will incorporate significant open space and landscaping to create effective visual buffers, reduce noise, and ensure environmental protection. Trails and passive parks may also be included.

Core Uses:

- Light Production
- Data Centers
- Flex Space
- Contractor Establishments

Complementary Uses:

- Ancillary Retail and Service Commercial
- Institutional Uses

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- Civic, Cultural, and Community Facilities
 - Public Facilities
 - Parks and Recreation

Conditional Uses:

- Special Activities

Design Characteristics:

- Industries and businesses will operate within environments dominated by open spaces, established forests, or thickly vegetated buffers, ensuring effective visual screening from roads and adjacent developments.
- Buildings will maintain heights that transition appropriately to less intense residential uses.
- Noise-generating activities and outdoor operations will be separated from residential areas by buildings, berms, and vegetative buffers.
- Developments will include large, wooded buffers, berms, and setbacks from adjacent residential uses and sensitive environmental or water supply areas.

Benefits of the Transition Light Industrial Category

By defining this category, the Village positions itself to adapt to future growth and technological advancements. The category enables the creation of tailored zoning regulations and development standards that evolve with changing needs, without compromising long-term planning goals.

Additionally, the Transition Light Industrial category will act as a critical buffer between traditional heavy industrial zones and residential or commercial areas. By encouraging light industrial uses with strict design and operational standards, the Village can reduce potential land use conflicts such as noise, odor, traffic, and visual disruptions, promoting harmonious coexistence.

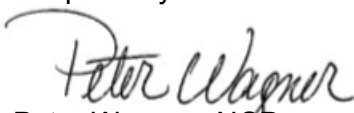
The Comprehensive Plan's overarching goal is to ensure balanced development that enhances the Village's quality of life. The Transition Light Industrial category aligns with this vision by fostering responsible economic activity, protecting neighboring properties, and supporting a vibrant, sustainable community.

Conclusion

The introduction of the Transition Light Industrial category represents a forward-thinking approach to planning that balances economic opportunity with environmental and social responsibility. Its creation is a vital step to ensure that the Village remains competitive, attractive, and livable for current and future generations.

If the Plan Commission is comfortable with the proposed creation of the new land use category, staff recommends adopting a resolution approving the Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Respectfully submitted:



Peter Wagner, AICP
Development Director

RESOLUTION NO. PC2025-01

RESOLUTION OF THE PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR RACINE COUNTY CREATING AND DEFINING A NEW LAND USE CATEGOARY, TRANSITION LIGHT INDUSTRIAL IN THE VILLAGE OF CALEDONIA, RACINE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

The Plan Commission for the Village of Caledonia, Racine County, Wisconsin resolves as follows:

WHEREAS, the Village Board adopted “A Multi-Jurisdictional Comprehensive Plan for Racine County, 2035” as the Village Comprehensive Plan on June 22, 2009 (the “Comprehensive Plan”) and has amended the Comprehensive Plan from time-to-time; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Caledonia has proposed an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to create a new land use category, Transition Light Industrial, for the purpose of providing opportunities for low-traffic industrial and employment uses including data centers as part of the Comprehensive Plan as adopted by the Village Board, as depicted on the attached Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the Village has duly noticed a public hearing on the aforementioned amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and the Plan Commission held a public hearing on January 27, 2025, regarding the plan amendment following the procedures set forth in Section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission finds that the Comprehensive Plan, with the proposed amendment, contains all of the required elements specified in Section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes and that the Comprehensive Plan, with the proposed amendment, is internally consistent and is in the public’s best interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Village of Caledonia Plan Commission hereby recommends approval of the proposed amendment and further recommends adoption of an ordinance by the Village Board amending the Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this _____ day of January, 2025.

Ayes _____ Noes _____ Absent _____

VILLAGE OF CALEONDIA PLAN COMMISSION

By: _____
Thomas Weatherston
Plan Commission President

Attest: _____
Joe Kiriaki
Plan Commission Vice-President

EXHIBIT A

“(w) Transition Light Industrial

Transition Light Industrial areas provide opportunities for low-traffic industrial, and employment uses. Predominant uses are data centers, contractor establishments, and small-scale assembly or production. Appropriate uses do not generate excessive noise or air pollution or require outdoor storage. Open space with landscaping that creates effective visual buffers, reduces noise, and environmental protection on the site will encompass the business. Trails and passive parks are also appropriate.

Core Uses	Complementary Uses	Conditional Uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Light Production• Data Centers• Flex Space• Contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retail & Services Commercial (Ancillary retail)• Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civic, Cultural, & Community• Public Facilities• Special Activities• Parks & Recreation

DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

Industries and businesses within an environment dominated by open space of established forests or thickly vegetated buffers that screen such uses from roads and adjacent development.”