

## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

When the developer of Hunter's Ridge expressed interest in developing a site that would maintain some sense of rural life style, such as the riding and keeping of horses, the town planner suggested using the clustering option for this tract. Washington County had previously adopted an open space development ordinance permitting bonus densities if land was set aside in permanent open space. However, the county's ordinance was viewed as permitting too much density for this tract (approximately 20 units vs. the 10 permitted under base zoning). In addition, the smaller lot sizes that would result from higher densities were deemed as undesirable. Township officials saw the Hunter's Ridge density and open space percentage (13 lots, 42% open space) as a more restrictive middle ground between the 100% bonus density and 50% open space requirements of the county's ordinance and the land-consuming 10-acre lot minimum of the underlying zoning.



Horses on one of the Hunter's Ridge 1st Addition lots.

Hunter's Ridge does not have the small cluster character of Fields of St. Croix, the architectural flash of Jackson Meadow or ecological mission of Wild Meadows. Ecologists would likely prefer that the woodlands were preserved as more natural open space and that the farm fields instead were compromised for housing. In addition, the project's infrastructure is relatively standard: individual wells and septic systems and a pipe and pond approach to stormwater management. However, it was the preference of the township's public policy and the developer to preserve the agricultural portion of the site. In addition, Hunter's Ridge accomplishes conservation and clustering in the context of conventional land development and rural land use preferences. It demonstrates that conservation design can be done in a diversity of settings and markets, as well as political landscapes.



## PROJECT STATUS

The lots went on sale in the summer of 2000, for a minimum \$800,000 package (house and lot). Within a year, six of the 13 lots had been sold, one house was constructed and one was nearly complete.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

Classic Home Design  
May Township  
Minnesota Land Trust

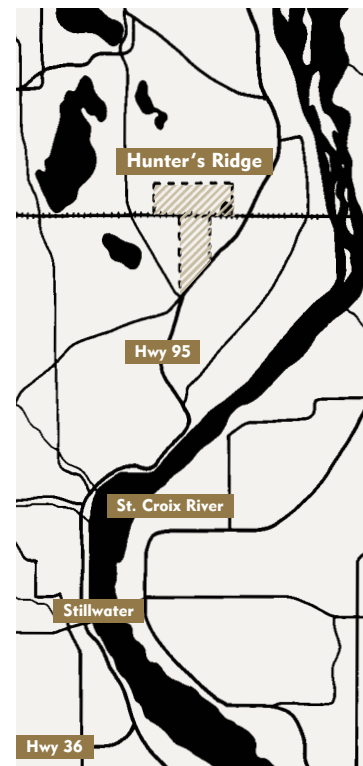
## HUNTER'S RIDGE 2nd addition

*HUNTER'S RIDGE 2ND ADDITION provides an important model for those communities that equate "clustering" with negative images of urban living. The development has relatively large lots, yet more than 40% of the tract was preserved in permanent open space. Not all developers or communities are able to commit to high densities and high design. Hunter's Ridge demonstrates that a project can achieve substantial conservation even if it is located in an area that is more resistant to smaller lots and tighter clusters.*

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

May Township, between Stillwater and Marine on St. Croix, is primarily zoned for rural living on large lots. Hunter's Ridge 1st Addition consists of conventional 10-acre lots dominated by large houses and extensive lawns. Hunter's Ridge 2nd Addition, on the other hand, provides smaller (though still ample) lots while maintaining nearly half of the acreage in permanent open space. Though modest in scope, the project's conservation objectives were to:

- Preserve more than 40% of the site in open space
- Maintain open space primarily for adjacent farm uses or horse pasturing;
- Arrange the open space in one extensive block
- Allow access to open space for all residents



The 13 lots have been laid out on rolling terrain where oaks and cedars grow on a grassy forest floor. Trees have been preserved to the extent possible throughout the lots. The land on the southeast corner slopes down to an open-water wetland. The farm fields on the west half of the property are maintained as one contiguous parcel of open space. The 2nd Addition is located far from the public's view on Highway 95 due to its position at the interior of the tract. The project's open space is adjacent to other farmland, thereby providing a buffer between the development and active agriculture.

## SPECIFICATIONS

### SITE SIZE:

100 acres

### NUMBER OF UNITS:

13 single family homes

### LOT SIZES:

2.3 – 6.5 acres

### OPEN SPACE:

42 acres, primarily farmland (42%)

### WASTE TREATMENT:

Individual sewage treatment systems

### WATER:

Individual wells

### TRAILS:

A path connecting homes to open space

### NATURAL FEATURES:

About four acres of wetland preserved



## ARCHITECTURE

The developer did not attempt to make a distinct architectural statement as in several other conservation developments. Instead, the home styles reflect the location and market of the project and builder's and homeowner's styles.



## OPEN FARM LAND

The Minnesota Land Trust and May Township jointly hold a conservation easement on the open space. It will be owned by the homeowners association and residents will be able to use it for horse riding, walking, skiing and other non-motorized recreation. In the meantime, a neighboring landowner farms the land, thereby maintaining its agricultural functions. The open space also provides an important buffer to adjacent agricultural lands.



## TREE PRESERVATION

The 13 lots located in the oak woodland preserve trees to the greatest extent possible on site, giving the project an immediate wooded character and adding to the privacy of the lots.

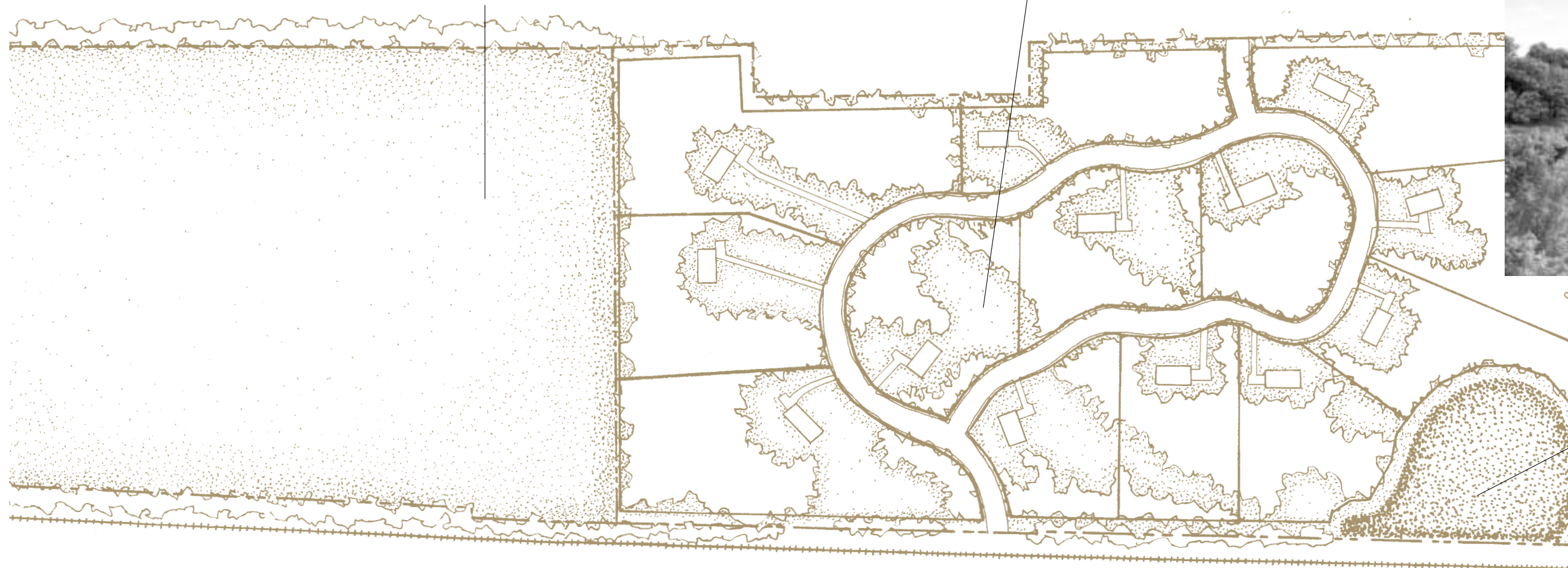
## RURAL CHARACTER

A barn and small field are located in Hunter's Ridge 1st Addition. This setting provides the entrance to the 2nd Addition



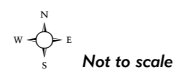
## CIRCULATION

The road is laid out as a gently-winding loop with connections at each end to neighboring property. Streets have curb and gutter, and stormwater is conveyed to the wetland in the southeast corner of the parcel. The common open space is accessible through a narrow strip that extends to the road.



## PRESERVED WETLAND

This wetland can be viewed from two of the homes and will be accessible by a walking path from the road. The wetland's shoreline will be buffered by open space.



HUNTER'S RIDGE 2ND ADDITION

Hunter's Ridge 1st Addition