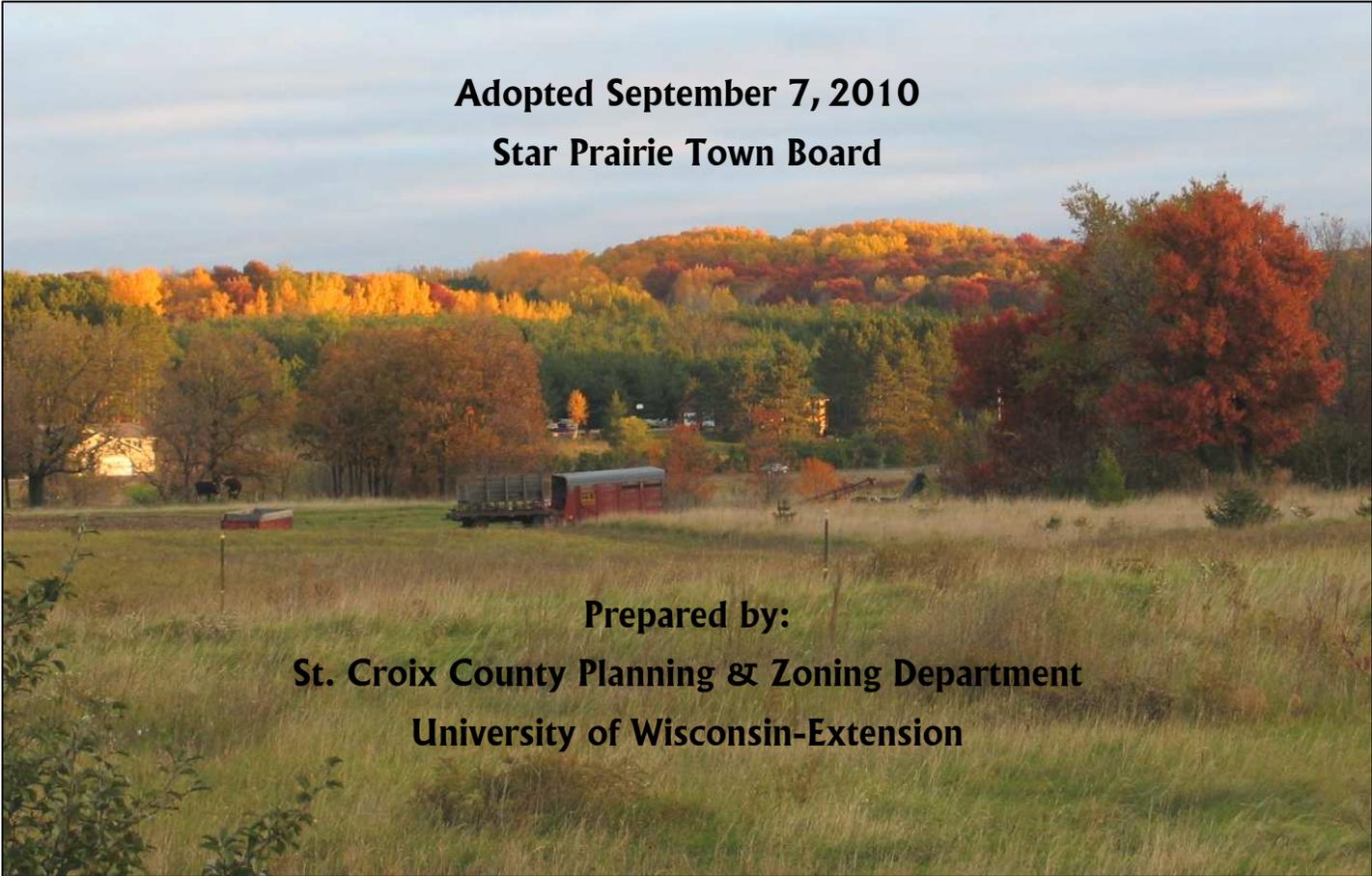




**TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE
2010 – 2030**



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



**Adopted September 7, 2010
Star Prairie Town Board**

**Prepared by:
St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department
University of Wisconsin-Extension**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Star Prairie Town Board

Doug Rivard, Chair
Scott Counter, Supervisor
Tom Heinz, Supervisor
Steve "Spanky" Lewis, Supervisor
Patty Schachtner, Supervisor
Mike Burke, Clerk
MaryAnn Schachtner, Treasurer

Star Prairie Plan Commission

Scott Counter, Chair
Kathy Mlynarczyk, Secretary
Mike Burke
John Harrison
Jeff Levy
Jeff Peplau
Debbie Suennen Rickard

**Special Thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to the Comprehensive Plan:
Al Campeau, Kathy Jacobson, Kathy Frederickson and Felicia Germain.**

Photos, cover and this page, of Town of Star Prairie by Kathy Mlynarczyk.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

INTRODUCTION	1
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	1
Issues & Opportunities Workshop	1
Public Opinion Survey	2
Visioning Workshop	16
Open Houses	16
Interactive Land Use Workshop	17
Public Hearing and Adoption	19
Adopting Ordinance	20
ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES	21
Community Background	21
Community Forecasts	25
<i>Population</i>	25
<i>Household</i>	26
<i>Housing Units & Acreage</i>	28
<i>Employment</i>	31
STAR PRAIRIE VISION	32
Element-Based Vision Statements	32
UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES	34
Utilities & Community Facilities Goals, Objectives & Policies	35
TRANSPORTATION	38
Local & County Transportation Services	38
Transportation Goals, Objectives & Policies	41
HOUSING	43
Housing Growth Projections	43
Housing Goals, Objectives & Policies	46
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	49
<i>Types of Local Employment</i>	49
Economic Development Goals, Objectives & Policies	50

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES	53
Agricultural Lands	53
Working Lands Initiative	56
Farmland Preservation & Exclusive Ag Zoning	57
Agriculture Goals, Objectives & Policies	59
NATURAL RESOURCES	62
Comprehensive Environmental Resource Protection	62
Natural Resources Goals, Objectives & Policies	63
CULTURAL RESOURCES	66
Historic Resources	66
Scenic Resources	68
Cultural Resources Goals, Objectives & Policies	70
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION	72
<i>Annexation</i>	72
<i>Boundary & Annexation Agreement</i>	72
Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives & Policies	73
LAND USE	77
Existing Land Use Regulations	77
Existing Land Uses	79
Future Land Use Projections	81
<i>Open Space Projections</i>	81
<i>Residential Projections</i>	82
<i>Agricultural Projections</i>	83
<i>Commercial & Industrial Projections</i>	84
Land Use Goals, Objectives & Policies	86
Future Land Use	94
IMPLEMENTATION	99
Plan Adoption	99
<i>Consistency of Plan Elements</i>	99
Implementation Recommendations	99
Plan Monitoring, Amendments and Update	104
<i>Procedures</i>	104
APPENDIX	105

INTRODUCTION

The most complete planning legislation in Wisconsin's history was enacted in 1999. The legislation provides communities with the framework to develop a comprehensive town plan as a tool to guide future growth. By January 1, 2010, all communities that make land use decisions, including zoning and subdivision ordinances, will need to base those decisions on an adopted comprehensive plan. The Star Prairie Town Board decided to become part of the West Central Wisconsin Collaborative Planning Project led by the West Central Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) out of Eau Claire. The WCWRPC along with four counties and 21 local communities applied for and received a comprehensive planning grant to complete local, county and regional plans.

In addition to coordination from the Regional Planning Commission, St. Croix County assisted the Town of Star Prairie in developing this plan. The town plan commission worked to develop the plan for four and a half years. The Town Board adopted the Plan on September 7, 2010.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning statute recognizes the necessity of effective public participation and requires the adoption of a written public participation plan as stated in Chapter 66.1001(4)(a).

"The governing body of a local governmental unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments."

The Town of Star Prairie adopted a written public participation plan as required by statute. Each of the activities described and carried out in the public participation plan is summarized below. St. Croix County created a webpage for Star Prairie's comprehensive planning project on its website and has posted public participation materials and plan documents to the page through out the project. The webpage is found on the community section of the county webpage, www.sccwi.us, under Town of Star Prairie, Community Planning. A copy of the public participation plan is found in the Appendix.

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES WORKSHOP

The town held an issues and opportunities workshop on November 8, 2005 at the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in New Richmond to introduce the comprehensive planning project to the public and identify issues and opportunities within the town. Approximately 55 citizens attended. The top issues identified were: parks, trails & open space; agriculture preservation & the rural community; groundwater protection; growth and development; property maintenance and junkyards; issues with the City of New Richmond; and airport expansion and operation. The results were used to create questions for the public opinion survey which gathered further input from citizens and property owners. The town's complete workshop results are available on the county webpage for the town, www.sccwi.us, under Town of Star Prairie, Community Planning.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

During January and February of 2006, the Survey Research Center at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls sent a comprehensive planning questionnaire to all households in the Town of Star Prairie for which there was a valid address. Of the 1,492 households receiving a questionnaire, a total of 755 (52 percent) were returned, entered and analyzed. Based on the adult population in the Town, the results are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3 percent, which is a very high level for this type of analysis. This means that if all residents had responded to the survey, then 95 out of 100 times the results for each question would be the same, plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Key conclusions from the survey include:

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- The two most important factors that lead residents to choose the Town of Star Prairie as a place to live are its small town/rural lifestyle and the natural beauty of the area.
- Residents feel that protecting all types of open space (lakes, wildlife habitat, woodlands, river corridors, prairie-grasslands, and wetlands) is important.

HOUSING

- Residents are almost equally split on the question “Is future residential growth in the Town desirable?”
- If residential growth is to occur, there is a relatively strong preference for single family homes and, possibly, for housing that caters to the needs of seniors.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Most residents would like to see productive farmland remain in agriculture.
- Most residents are not in favor of restricting agricultural operations near residences.
- Residents are not yet enthusiastic about creating compensation programs to compensate farmland owners for not developing their property. Interestingly, however, they are willing to use public funds to preserve open space.

LAND USE

- A solid majority (69 percent) agree that landowners should have some restrictions on the amount of their land they will be allowed to develop.
- One land use regulation with widespread support is to protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- There is solid support for charging private developers impact fees to cover the cost of providing them with public services (e.g. roads and emergency services).
- A solid majority of respondents said that they are in favor keeping a 2-acre minimum lot size throughout the Town.
- However, an even bigger majority are in favor of conservation design developments in which the individual lots would, generally, be less than 2 acres.
- Those willing to see deviations from the 2-acre minimum would do so in environmentally sensitive areas, along wildlife corridors, in conservation design developments, and if small scale sewage treatment systems are available.

TRANSPORTATION

- Residents are moderately satisfied with the current network of roads and their condition

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Residents are moderately satisfied with public services (ambulance, fire, snow removal, etc) in the Town.
- Residents are generally willing to expend public funds to expand parks and a few other recreational amenities in the Town (boat landings, ball fields, hunting and fishing access and trails for biking and hiking/skiing).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The economic development preferred by residents builds on the Town's traditional economic base of agriculture (crop/livestock production, direct farm marketing, farm services), is small scale in nature (home businesses, gas stations with convenience stores), and is environmentally conscious (composting, wind energy generation).

OTHER FINAL COMMENTS

- People are willing to see the Town board expand from three to five members and to see a new Town Hall built at the corner of Cook Drive and County Road C.
- People are almost evenly split with respect to the fate the old Town Hall and, based on the number of written comments on this topic, tend to feel passionately about its fate. Some would like to see the building sold or demolished and others would like to see it maintained and available to a variety of community groups.
- Residents are very concerned about groundwater contamination, loss of productive farmland and rural residential development.

Survey Methods

In January of 2006, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls, mailed comprehensive planning questionnaires to 1,492 households in the Town of Star Prairie. After two weeks, postcards were mailed to those from whom we had not received a completed questionnaire. Two weeks after the post card, a second questionnaire was sent to remaining non-respondents. The SRC received a total of 517 completed questionnaires from the first mailing and 238 from the second for a total of 755 completed questionnaires, which is a 52 percent response rate. Given an estimated Town population of 2,078 adults, the estimates included in this report should be accurate to within plus or minus three percent with 95 percent confidence.

Any survey has to be concerned with "non-response bias". Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who don't return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. Based on the statistical tests described in Appendix A, **the Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that non-response bias is not a concern for this sample with one possible exception.** Those who responded to the second mailing displayed a pattern of greater willingness to impose fees on developers, consider additional land use regulations and beef up enforcement of existing land use regulations. Results for these issues have been weighted to better reflect the overall opinions of the population as a whole.

In addition to the numeric responses, respondents provided a wealth of written comments. In fact, nearly 700 individual comments were compiled by the SRC from the residents' surveys. As appropriate, a few, select quotes were chosen by the SRC for some sections of the survey to illustrate these comments. A complete compendium of comments is included in the Survey Appendix on the county webpage for the town project.

Profile of Respondents

Tables 1 and 1A provide a summary of the demographic profile of those who responded to this questionnaire. We have also included, when comparable data are available, information from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing in Table 1.

GENDER	COUNT	MALE	FEMALE				
Sample	715	62%	38%				
Census	2,944	53%	47%				
AGE	COUNT	18 – 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65+
Sample	737	1%	13%	23%	28%	21%	15%
Census	2078	13%	23%	26%	20%	10%	8%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	COUNT	FULL	PART	SELF EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	RETIRED	OTHER
Sample	733	58%	7%	12%	2%	19%	1%
Census	2273		72%		2%		28%
INCOME	COUNT	<\$15,000	\$15 - \$24,999	\$25 – \$49,999	\$50 – \$74,999	\$75 – \$99,999	\$100,000+
Sample	687	2%	6%	23%	33%	20%	16%
Census	1,030	7%	12%	27%	27%	17%	11%

RESIDENCY	COUNT	NON-RESIDENT LAND-OWNER	RURAL, NON-FARM RESIDENT	RENTER	FARMLAND OWNER	OTHER		
Sample	740	11%	76%	1%	8%	5%		
NUMBER ADULTS	COUNT	1	2	3	4	5	6+	
Sample	735	18%	66%	12%	3%	1%	0%	
NUMBER KIDS	COUNT	0	1	2	3	4	5+	
Sample	676	60%	15%	17%	6%	1%	0%	
YEARS RESIDENT	COUNT	< 5 YEARS	5 – 10 YEARS	11 - 20 YEARS	21 – 30 YEARS	31 - 40 YEARS	41 - 50 YEARS	50+ YEARS
Sample	714	23%	22%	24%	14%	9%	4%	4%

One striking result from Tables 1 and 1A is that a disproportionate number of men are represented in the sample. A divergence of this magnitude in the expected proportion of males and females raises concerns about the representativeness of the sample. To test for “sample bias”, the SRC compared the responses of men and women using a standard T-Test, as described in Appendix B. We found a widespread pattern of gender differences with respect to how men and women in the Town of Star Prairie view land use issues. The differences tend to be ones of degree rather than direction. For example, the questionnaire asked for residents’ assessment of the quality of a variety of Town services (e.g. ambulance, fire, police) and men tended to rate these more highly than did women. However, in no case did men, on average, say that the quality of the service was good while women, on average, said it was poor. On a scale from 2 (= very good) to – 2 (= very poor), men rated the ambulance service as 0.72 (rounding to “good”) and women rated it as 0.59 (again, rounding to “good”). The data discussed in the balance of this report include, as appropriate, the re-weighted results to better account for the under-representation of women in the sample.

As is frequently the case in surveys such as this, young adults (those under 35 years of age) are under-represented in this sample. Further, there are a substantial number of statistical differences in the opinions of those under 35 compared to those over 35. In some instances, the opinions of younger residents align with those of women (both groups rate Town services somewhat lower and are more supportive of spending public funds to expand recreational activities than their respective counterparts). In other ways, however, younger residents diverge in their opinions from those of women. Younger residents are less supportive of additional land use policies (less opposed to allowing landowners to develop land in any way they want, less supportive of fees on new developments to pay for public services, less convinced that additional land use regulations are needed or that enforcement of current regulations should be stepped

up) and less concerned about some issues (conflicts between farmers and their neighbors are a concern, groundwater contamination, need for senior housing) than are women. Because women in the sample are significantly younger than are men, a re-weighting based on age would result in women's opinions gaining excess influence over the results. Therefore, the SRC has not adjusted the results to account for the skewed age structure. Significant differences of opinions related to age will be noted throughout the report.

Table 1 indicates that unemployment remains a relatively insignificant problem in the Town of Star Prairie since only 2 percent of the sample reported being out of work. There is a slightly higher percentage reporting being employed in one fashion or another than was true in the Census and a slightly lower percentage in the Retired or Other categories.

The final demographic variable for which comparable data from the Census are available is for household income. Table 1 indicates that the household income is somewhat higher in the sample than as reported in the census. In general, however, there is a relatively close match between the sample and Census given that 5 years have passed since the latter was taken.

More than three-quarters of those in the sample report being rural, land-owning residents in the Town and only 8 percent list themselves as farmland owners. Interestingly, there were more non-resident land-owners than farmland owners in the sample.

While the average household in the sample reported having slightly more than two adults and slightly fewer than two children, fully 60 percent of respondents had no children in the home. Only 18 percent of respondents reported a single adult in the household and within no age category is the percentage of single-adult households as high as one-quarter of the households and this peak is for those over 65. In short, the nuclear family of mom, dad and two kids seems to be stronger in the Town of Star Prairie than in most American communities.

Finally, similar percentages of those in the sample have lived in the Town for fewer than 5 years (23 percent), between 5 and 10 years (22 percent), between 11 and 20 years (24 percent), and more than 20 years (31 percent).

Quality of Life

The first question of the questionnaire asked respondents to identify the three most important reasons they chose to live in the Town of Star Prairie. Both in terms of the individual rankings and in terms of the percentage of households ranking a given feature as one of their top three reasons for choosing to live in Star Prairie, it is clear that residents value the atmospherics of the area. More than half of all households said that the small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle and the natural beauty of the area were key factors in their decision to live in Star Prairie.

Reasons	Most Important	2 nd Most Imp	3rd Most Imp	Total Top 3
Count	722	716	709	
Small town/rural lifestyle	21%	21%	19%	62%
Natural beauty	24%	18%	11%	53%
Near friends/family	11%	9%	7%	28%
Near job	7%	7%	9%	23%
Proximity to cities	2%	8%	13%	22%
Low crime rate	5%	8%	9%	22%
Property taxes	6%	10%	6%	22%
Cost of homes	7%	4%	5%	15%
Affordable housing	7%	4%	4%	15%
Quality of schools	4%	6%	6%	15%
Recreational opportunities	2%	3%	6%	11%
Appearance of homes	0%	2%	3%	5%
Other	3%	0%	1%	4%
Cultural/Community events	0%	0%	1%	1%

Roughly one-quarter of respondents identified the next 5 items as important in their choice of where to live: being near family and friends (28 percent as one of their top three reasons), being near their job (23 percent), the proximity of the Town to the Twin Cities (22 percent), the low crime rate in the Town (22 percent), and property taxes (22 percent). Somewhat surprisingly, the quality of schools and housing prices were relatively less important to this set of respondents.

Different demographic groups identify different aspects of the quality of life in Star Prairie Town as their motivations for living there. In general, these statistical differences conform to our expectations. For example, the probability that a respondent would identify being close to family and friends as a key reason for living in the Town increases with the length of time the person has lived in Star Prairie. When children are in the home, respondents are significantly more likely to identify the quality of schools and the low crime rate as key reasons. Those with no children and with higher incomes identified the Town's proximity to the Twin Cities in significantly higher percentages than other groups. Those with lower incomes were more likely to list proximity to their job as a reason for living in the Town. Finally, women are more likely to list natural beauty and housing affordability while men identified property taxes in somewhat higher proportions.

Selected Comments about Quality of Life

"The small town atmosphere is great. We should be concerned with keeping that . . ."

"Because of improvements made to Hwy 64 & the impending river bridge, our community needs to stay ahead of the game and be ready for the population explosion that will follow in the next few years-proactive not reactive! And we need to be able to meet the needs of urban population that is relocating to a rural area."

"The challenge is to maintain the unique character of Star Prairie (mix of farmland, residential dev, etc.) while development occurs"

"Keep the rural setting and small town atmosphere, protect residents from hazards of water contamination, noise pollution (airport) and control growth in the community."

"Please don't add so many services that young families get taxed out. There is (sic) enough parks and rec. facilities in the surrounding area that you can drive to."

Natural and Cultural Resources

This section of the questionnaire asked residents to rate the importance of protecting several types of open space in the Town. In Table 3 and most subsequent tables, the scale used for these ratings ranges from a negative two (very unimportant) to a positive two (very important). Average values close to zero indicate either that residents have no opinion or are closely divided between supporters and non-supporters. As Table 3 indicates, there is very broad agreement that protecting open space of all varieties is important to the Town. While protecting lakes is the type of open space with the highest average value, each of the six items about which we asked had more than 80 percent of residents indicating that it was important or very important to preserve it. Ten respondents added preservation of farmland as an open-space issue.

Because such large majorities of the population feel that it is important to protect all of these types of open space, it is not surprising that there are few statistically significant demographic differences. Residents who've lived in the Town for longer periods (40 or more years of residence in the Town) feel that protecting lakes is less important than newer arrivals (though 90 percent or more feel this is important or very important). Similarly, men feel less strongly than do women that it is important to protect prairie land/grassland.

TABLE 3: IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING OPEN SPACE IN THE TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Type	Average	Count	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	No Opinion	Important	Very Important
Lakes	1.61	741	1%	2%	1%	28%	68%
Wildlife Habitat	1.46	738	1%	4%	2%	35%	59%
Woodlands	1.44	736	1%	4%	2%	36%	57%
River Corridors	1.42	739	0%	5%	2%	38%	55%
Prairie - Grasslands	1.21	738	1%	9%	3%	43%	44%
Wetlands	1.18	737	2%	9%	3%	39%	46%

Housing

The first question in the housing section of the questionnaire asked for opinions about future residential growth in the Town. Residents are very evenly split on whether or not residential growth is desirable:

- 14 percent strongly disagree
- 29 percent disagree
- 7 percent have no opinion
- 43 percent agree
- 8 percent strongly agree

Thus, a slight majority of Town residents are favorably disposed to residential growth but those opposed to growth appear to be a bit more vehement. There are no clear demographic distinctions between supporters of additional residential growth and those opposed (younger respondents are no different than older ones, men and women hold similar opinions, longer-term residents and newer arrivals are the same). The only demographic distinction is with respect to income – lower income respondents were substantially less supportive of residential growth than were the more affluent. The median household income in the Town of Star Prairie, as reported in the 2000 Census, was \$53,468. If we look at the responses of those who reported household incomes of less than \$50,000 compared to those reporting more than this amount, we see that a higher percentage of those earning less than the median level of household income “disagree” or “strongly disagree” (45 percent) with the statement that residential growth is desirable in the Town of Star Prairie than are those earning more (40 percent). Likewise the less affluent are less likely to “agree” or “strongly agree” (42 percent) that residential growth is desirable than are the more well-to-do ((55 percent).

Table 4 summarizes the opinions of respondents to a series of questions about the need for additional housing units of various types. Again, the average value reported is based on assigning values to responses

ranging from -2 for “strongly disagree” to +2 for “strongly agree.” So, any value above zero indicates that the given option is favorable to a majority of respondents. The results in Table 4 are fairly clear – the residents of the Town of Star Prairie are generally favorably disposed to additional single family homes (71 percent agreed or strongly agreed compared to only 21 percent who disagreed or strongly disagreed). Respondents also seem to feel the need for more senior-oriented housing and housing that meet the needs of a variety of income levels. None of the other options about which we inquired received close to a majority of “favorable” votes and several (condominiums-apartments, freestanding mobile homes, and mobile home parks), were strongly opposed by residents.

TABLE 4: ADDITIONAL HOUSING NEEDED

Type	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Single Family Homes	0.64	727	7%	14%	7%	50%	21%
Senior Housing	0.40	721	10%	16%	11%	52%	12%
Housing for Variety Incomes	0.08	723	19%	18%	9%	46%	9%
Seasonal - Recreational Homes	(0.31)	715	20%	29%	13%	35%	3%
Subdivisions	(0.60)	722	32%	28%	11%	26%	3%
Duplexes	(0.72)	720	32%	35%	8%	23%	2%
Condos - Apartments	(1.01)	719	41%	35%	9%	13%	1%
Mobile Homes	(1.27)	725	57%	25%	8%	8%	2%
Mobile Home Parks	(1.40)	723	60%	27%	7%	4%	1%

Household income is statistically associated with a number of preferences regarding additional housing stock in the Town of Star Prairie. Respondents with less than \$50,000 in household income are **less positive about** additional single family homes (68 percent vs. 73 percent), duplexes (20 percent vs. 26 percent), or subdivisions (23 percent vs. 33 percent) than those with higher incomes. Lower income households are **less negative about** condominiums or apartments (72 percent vs. 78 percent), mobile home parks (79 percent vs. 91 percent), or mobile home parks (73 percent vs. 89 percent) than the more affluent.

Respondents who have lived in the Town for longer periods of time are more negative about additional seasonal and recreational housing and free-standing mobile homes, but more supportive of housing that fits the needs of a variety of incomes and additional senior housing. Those under 35 years of age are significantly less supportive of additional senior housing.

Agriculture and Land Use Issues

One set of questions in this segment of the questionnaire dealt with agriculture and farmland issues and a second set with more general land use issues. The first agricultural question asked respondents how they thought productive farmland should be used. Few residents are neutral on the issue of the uses for which the Town should allow farmland to be used. By nearly unanimous consent, the residents of the Town of Star Prairie agree that productive farmland should be used for agricultural purposes. A slight majority feel that the Town should not allow productive agricultural land to be used for residential use (52 percent opposed versus 42 percent in favor) and relatively few feel that any use should be allowed for productive agricultural land (72 percent opposed versus 19 percent in favor). Respondents who don't have children are significantly less supportive of using productive farmland for residential or any (non-farming) use than are those with children. Respondents with household incomes less than \$50,000 are more likely to be in favor of allowing productive farm to be used for residential purposes.

TABLE 5: AGRICULTURE AND FARMLAND ISSUES

Issue	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Use Productive Farmland For Ag Uses	1.66	730	0%	0%	2%	28%	69%
Use Productive Farmland For Residential Use	(0.24)	705	19%	33%	6%	36%	6%
Use Productive Farmland For Any Use	(0.82)	692	35%	37%	9%	14%	5%
Don't Restrict Ag Near Residences	0.71	742	4%	17%	6%	46%	27%
Compensation for Non-Development	0.03	745	11%	34%	10%	31%	14%
Public Funds Compensation for Non-Development	(0.18)	737	13%	39%	10%	28%	10%
Farm/Non-Farm Conflicts Are Concern	(0.29)	739	12%	42%	17%	23%	6%

The bottom portion of Table 5 looks at more general agricultural land use issues in the Town. Town residents are, in general, not in favor of placing restrictions on the use of agricultural land because of its proximity to residences (more than three times as many respondents agreed that no restrictions should be enacted than disagreed with this proposition). Women and residents who've lived in the Town for shorter periods of time are significantly more likely to disagree with the proposition that no restrictions should be placed on agricultural uses near residences.

Town residents are, effectively, divided in half with respect to the proposition that owners of farmland should be compensated for agreeing not to develop their land for purposes other than farming (45 percent on either side of this issue). Further, it doesn't make a great deal of difference if the source of compensation is from public or unspecified sources (52 oppose public funding versus 45 who oppose any sort of compensation program). Women are significantly more likely to be neutral on these questions than are men.

Finally, a majority of respondents rejected the contention that conflicts caused by farm dust, noise, and odors are a concern in the Town. However, nearly one-third of respondents felt that these conflicts were a concern. Men and residents under 35 years of age were more likely to say that farm-nonfarm conflicts are a problem in the Town.

In addition to the questions about farmland, respondents were asked to weigh in on a number of more general land use policy questions. The first set of land use policy questions summarized in Table 6 focus on the extent to which the Town should place restrictions on how land owners use their land.

Residents were asked if "landowners should have some restrictions on how much of their land they would be allowed to develop". As Table 6 indicates, a majority of respondents (69 percent) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Higher income households are significantly more supportive of restricting the amount of land an owner should be able to develop. A sizable proportion (29 percent), however, did not agree with placing restrictions on how much land an owner should be allowed to develop. Those who have resided in the Town for longer periods are significantly more opposed to such restrictions.

A fairly narrow majority (56 percent) are in favor of allowing landowners to subdivide their land into housing lots. Men and those from higher income households are more supportive of this proposition than women or lower income respondents.

TABLE 6: LAND USE POLICY

Opinions	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Restrict Amount of Development	0.55	737	7%	22%	3%	50%	19%
Use Land Subdivisions	0.16	735	13%	24%	7%	48%	8%
Use Land Any Way	(0.53)	742	23%	46%	2%	19%	10%
Land Use Regs for Environment	1.24	739	1%	3%	3%	54%	38%
Impact Fees	1.06	740	4%	10%	5%	40%	42%
Use Public Funds Preserve Open Space	0.60	737	5%	16%	12%	47%	20%
Additional Land Use Enforcement	0.41	726	4%	18%	27%	37%	15%
Additional Land Use Regulations	0.28	734	6%	20%	28%	29%	16%

Town residents are opposed to allowing land owners to develop their land in any way they choose. The results (Table 6) for this question are virtually a mirror image of the question asking about restricting the amount of land an owner should be allowed to develop:

- 69 percent either strongly disagreed (23 percent) or disagreed (46 percent) with the idea that landowners should have unrestricted choice regarding how to develop their land (69 percent agreed that landowners should have some restrictions on the amount of land they could develop)
- 29 percent felt land owners should be unrestricted in their land use decisions (29 percent disagreed that some restrictions should be placed on how much land an owner could develop)

This question, should landowners be allowed to develop their land in any way they want, also brought forth a number of significant demographic differences of opinion. Those who have lived in the Town for longer periods, lower income households, respondents under 35 years of age, and households with children were significantly more supportive of giving landowners unrestricted land use authority. It should be noted that there is a strong negative correlation between length of residence and household income level (longer-term residents tend to report lower household incomes) and between age and households with children (respondents under 35 are significantly more likely to have children than are older respondents).

The bottom portion of Table 6 summarizes the opinions of Town residents with respect to a number of land use policies. As the average values reported in the Table suggest, residents tend to be supportive or to have no opinion about all the land use policies about which we asked. There is overwhelming support for using land use regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas and for imposing impact fees on new developments to cover the costs of additional public services (roads, emergency services, etc.). More affluent households are more supportive of using land-use regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas. While generally supportive, respondents under 35 years of age and those with kids are significantly more likely to disagree with a policy of impact fees on new developments.

Residents are also quite supportive of a policy that would use public funds to preserve open space in the Town. More than three times as many agree or strongly agree with such a policy (67 percent) as disagree or strongly disagree with it (21 percent). Respondents from households reporting more than \$50,000 in income are significantly more supportive of using public funds to preserve open space.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the final two policies about which we asked – the need for additional land use regulations or for stepped-up enforcement of existing regulations – is that one-quarter of all respondents had no opinion about them. A majority of those with opinions were in favor of both more land use regulation and additional enforcement efforts but the large proportion that are sitting on the fence suggests that additional public educational efforts are warranted.

Residents were asked if the current 2-acre minimum residential lot size should continue to be the standard throughout the Town. Of the 724 people who answered this question, 65 percent said that the 2-acre

minimum should be continued, 29 disagreed and 9 percent had no opinion. Women and respondents with children in the home were more likely to support deviations from the 2-acre minimum than were their counterparts.

Those who disagreed were asked to identify the instances when they would like to see a deviation from the 2-acre minimum lot requirement. Their opinions are summarized in Table 7.

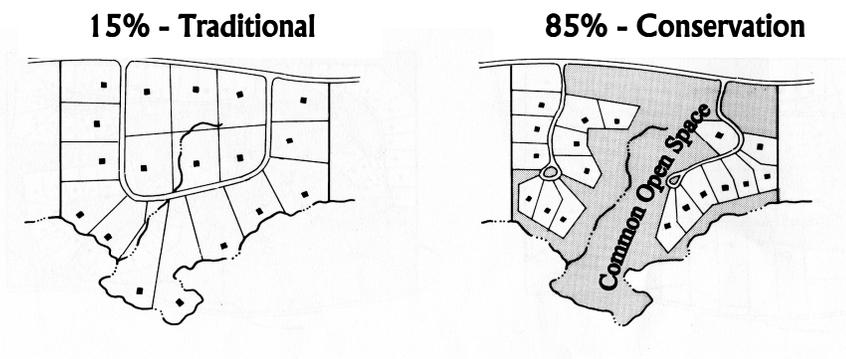
TABLE 7: VARIATIONS FROM THE 2-ACRE MINIMUM LOT SIZE IF:

Condition	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Environmentally Sensitive Area	1.36	227	1%	5%	2%	40%	52%
Wildlife Corridor	1.28	228	1%	7%	3%	40%	48%
Conservation Design Developments	1.22	217	2%	6%	6%	39%	47%
Small Scale Sewage Treatment Systems	1.03	223	4%	9%	6%	43%	39%
Near Higher Density Communities	0.73	230	9%	15%	3%	41%	32%

Remembering that only a bit more than one-third of all respondents are in favor of deviations from the 2-acre standard minimum lot size, Table 7 indicates that all of the reasons for deviating from this requirement about which we asked enjoyed considerable support. More than 90 percent suggest variations from the 2-acre minimum in environmentally sensitive areas. More than 80 percent support deviations to preserve wildlife corridors, in conservation design developments (see below), and if a small-scale sewage treatment facility is available. Nearly three-quarters would like to see deviations in areas adjacent to existing high-density communities such as New Richmond.

As noted in Table 7, there is considerable support among those willing to consider a deviation from the 2-acre minimum lot size standard for conservation design development. Figure 1, which illustrates what a conservation design might look like, suggests that support for this type of development is very widespread. Of the 679 people who answered this question, 575 (85 percent) favored the conservation design.

Figure 1: Opinions about Conservation vs. Traditional Design Options



Transportation

The only transportation related questions asked if the overall net work of roads, streets and highways in the Town meet the needs of its citizens and if the condition of that network is acceptable. Table 8 indicates there is general satisfaction with both the overall network of roads and their quality. However, about one-quarter of all respondents are not satisfied with the quality.

TABLE 8 – TOWN ROAD NETWORK

OPINION	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Network Meets Needs	0.79	742	3%	11%	4%	70%	13%
Conditions Acceptable	0.53	739	4%	20%	5%	62%	10%

Community Facilities and Services

The questionnaire asked for input from citizens on the quality of services (ambulance, fire, etc.) in the Town of Star Prairie, support for using public funds to expand a variety of recreational activities (parks, trails, etc.), and some specific issues (preferred size for the Town board, a new town hall, and uses for the old town hall).

With respect to public services, Table 9 indicates that residents are relatively satisfied with all of the services listed – all have positive average ratings and a majority rate all services as “good” or “very good”. Snow removal, which virtually everyone in the Town is likely to have had some personal experience, has the highest percentage (72 percent) of “good” or “very good” ratings. Ratings for ambulance, fire, and police are higher for those who’ve lived in the town for longer periods of time but this group gives lower ratings to public facilities (Town Hall).

TABLE 9: RATING OF TOWN PUBLIC SERVICES

Service	Average	Count	Very Poor	Poor	No Opinion	Good	Very Good
Ambulance	0.66	743	1%	3%	38%	44%	14%
Fire	0.66	740	1%	5%	33%	47%	14%
Snow Removal	0.63	740	5%	14%	9%	58%	14%
Police	0.49	742	3%	11%	27%	49%	9%
Recycling	0.44	740	5%	14%	23%	51%	8%
Parks – Recreation	0.43	738	4%	18%	19%	48%	11%
Public Facilities	0.38	742	4%	18%	21%	49%	8%

With the exception of snow removal, all of these services have relatively high percentages of the respondents indicating that they have no opinion. In some instances (fire, ambulance) this probably means that they have no direct experience with the service. In other instances (recycling, parks and recreation, public facilities (Town Hall)), it may suggest that the service is, in their opinion, neither particularly good nor particularly bad. Ambulance, fire, police and public facilities are services about which those under 35 years of age and those who have children are significantly more likely to say that they have no opinion. Women were significantly more likely to have no opinion about fire, police, and park and recreational facilities.

The results summarized in Table 10 indicate a willingness of residents to use public funds to expand recreational activities in the Town. While it is not clear what the source of public funds is (federal, state, county, town), majorities of 60 percent or more agreed with the suggestion to use public funds to expand parks, boat landing, ballfields, hunting and fishing access, bicycle routes, and hiking trails. Only snowmobile-ATV trails (49 percent), horse trails (38 percent), and publicly-owned campgrounds (38 percent), failed to garner the support of a majority of those responding. By a substantial margin, the top choice of Town residents seems to be to use funds to expand parks in the Town.

TABLE 10: USE PUBLIC FUNDS TO EXPAND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parks	0.81	745	3%	11%	7%	62%	17%
Boat Landings	0.53	742	4%	18%	10%	56%	11%
Ballfields	0.53	740	5%	17%	10%	57%	11%
Hunting - Fishing Access	0.52	745	5%	19%	10%	52%	14%
Bicycle Routes	0.49	743	6%	22%	9%	50%	14%
Hiking - Ski Trails	0.40	743	5%	25%	10%	49%	11%
Snowmobile - ATV Trails	0.11	744	11%	29%	11%	36%	13%
Horse Trails	(0.03)	739	8%	36%	18%	32%	6%
Publicly-Owned Campgrounds	(0.14)	740	9%	40%	13%	32%	6%

Those who've lived in the Town for more years are less supportive of using public funds to expand several of these recreational activities (parks, hiking - skiing trails, publicly owned campgrounds, and horse trails). Men are more supportive of expanding access to hunting and fishing in the Town but less supportive of trails for hiking-skiing, bicycling or horseback riding. Those under 35 years of age are significantly more supportive of biking-skiing and snowmobile trails. Respondents with children in the home support expansion of snowmobile trails and those from higher income households favor hiking-skiing trails.

The questionnaire also asked for input from residents about the size of the Town Board and the Town Hall. By a substantial majority, respondents favor a 5-person board (65 percent) over the current 3-person board (35 percent). Women and respondents from households with above average incomes are more supportive of the move to a 5-member board. Those who've lived in the Town for more than 20 years are relatively less supportive.

A narrower majority favor building a new Town Hall at the corner of Cook Drive and County Road C (57 percent in favor vs. 43 percent opposed). Those in favor of building a new Town Hall were asked if they would support putting a satellite facility for the Sheriff, meeting rooms and a community/senior center in it. More than 90 percent of respondents were in favor of including all of these facilities in the new Hall. As noted in Appendix D, respondents also noted a number of additional things that they would like to see in a new Hall. Several suggested the hall be available for rental for receptions and other events (16x), that it include ball fields (12x), and that it be available for youth groups such as Scouts or 4-H (11x).

Finally, residents were asked if the old Town Hall should be kept and maintained. Residents are closely divided on this question. After rebalancing the data to reflect actual gender splits (see Appendix B), 42 percent of respondents are opposed to keeping and maintaining it, 38 percent are in favor, and 21 percent have no opinion.

If kept and maintained, residents see the old Town Hall being used for meetings (52x), possibly as a museum (33x), or as a community/senior center (30x). In fact, a total of nearly 250 uses (some of which were far from serious) were suggested by respondents. Since they had to take the time and make the effort to write these in, this is a very high number. Further, respondents were asked at the end of the questionnaire if they had any additional comments about the Town and comprehensive planning and a number of their comments referred to the old Town Hall. In short, keeping and maintaining the old Town Hall is an issue about which people in the Town seem to hold strong and divergent opinions.

Economic Development

Table 11 summarizes the responses of Star Prairie residents with respect to the type of economic and commercial development they would like to see in the Town. More than 90 percent of respondents find agricultural production (crops and livestock) and direct farm marketing to be acceptable types of economic development. The third most popular business development option is also agriculturally focused, agricultural services (fertilizers, implement dealers, veterinarians, etc.). Interestingly, large scale farm

operations are clearly not seen as desirable by a solid majority (62 percent) of the Town's population. So, Town residents want to retain the traditional agricultural base of the Town's economy.

The next two most acceptable business developments are home based businesses (0.83 average value) and wind power generators (0.82 average value). Roughly three-quarters of all respondents said that they would find these types of developments acceptable.

Composting (0.46 average value), convenience stores and gas stations (0.41) and retail or commercial development (0.40) all have in excess of 60 percent support from respondents. Beyond these options, the proportion of respondents who find given options unacceptable increases markedly. So, while a slight majority (52 percent) would find the development dog kennels acceptable, 32 percent of Town residents would disagree.

Based on the overall pattern of responses, it appears that Town residents are most interested in development that builds on its traditional strengths (agricultural production, direct farm marketing, agricultural services), is small in scale (home-based businesses, convenience stores), and has a "green" tint to it (composting, wind power).

TABLE 11: ECONOMIC/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCE

Business	Average	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
Ag Production	1.20	738	1%	3%	5%	60%	32%
Direct Farms Sales	1.08	736	0%	3%	6%	69%	22%
Ag Services	0.97	732	1%	6%	8%	63%	21%
Home Based Businesses	0.83	736	1%	8%	11%	65%	15%
Wind Power	0.82	736	3%	10%	11%	52%	24%
Composting	0.46	731	4%	19%	12%	57%	8%
Convenience Stores	0.41	740	5%	22%	7%	58%	7%
Retail	0.40	734	8%	18%	9%	57%	8%
Dog Kennels	0.18	737	8%	24%	15%	48%	4%
Golf Courses	0.16	739	9%	26%	10%	47%	7%
Privately Owned Campgrounds	0.05	729	10%	30%	10%	44%	6%
Storage Businesses	(0.04)	735	12%	29%	12%	44%	3%
Industrial – Manufacturing	(0.05)	732	14%	29%	9%	44%	5%
Gravel Pits	(0.39)	734	13%	41%	15%	29%	2%
Large Scale Farms	(0.51)	736	20%	42%	11%	24%	4%
Junk Yards	(0.98)	736	36%	40%	9%	13%	1%

Specific Town Issues

Residents were asked to rate the importance of six specific issues facing the Town and their responses are summarized in Table 12. There is nearly consensus that groundwater contamination is an important issue facing the Town; 98 percent of all respondents said this is an important (15 percent) or very important (83 percent) issue. More than 80 percent of the population feels that the inter-related issues of the loss of productive farmland and residential development are important issues facing the town. Approximately two-thirds of the respondents felt that New Richmond's extraterritorial subdivision regulation and additions to recreation and trail facilities are important issues. Somewhat surprisingly, respondents were nearly equally split on the issue of the New Richmond airport expansion between those who see this as an important issue and those who don't.

Because there is a high level of agreement within Star Prairie Town that most of the items in Table 12 are important issues, it is not surprising that there are relatively few significant demographic differences of opinion. With respect to groundwater, while almost everyone recognizes this as an important issue, those older than 35 are significantly more likely to rate this as a "very important" issue than are those younger

than this. Lower income households are significantly more likely to rate rural residential development and an addition to or expansion of trails and recreational facilities as “unimportant” or “very unimportant” than are those with higher incomes. Respondents who report having children in the home are significantly more likely to say that the city of New Richmond’s extraterritorial subdivision regulations are “unimportant” or “very unimportant” and that expansion of trails and recreational facilities are “important” or “very important.”

TABLE 12: SPECIFIC TOWN ISSUES

Issue	Average	Count	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	No Opinion	Important	Very Important
Groundwater Contamination	1.81	745	0%	1%	1%	15%	83%
Loss Productive Farmland	1.16	740	1%	11%	4%	41%	44%
Residential Development	1.06	735	3%	12%	3%	41%	41%
New Richmond Subdivision Regulations	0.74	735	4%	12%	19%	34%	31%
Add/Expand Trail Facilities	0.70	734	3%	19%	8%	44%	26%
Airport Expansion	0.11	742	14%	30%	8%	25%	22%

Conclusions

Every household living in Star Prairie was given the opportunity to provide input into the key planning issues facing the Town. They responded in relatively high numbers; 755 responses out of 1,449 mailed out for an overall response rate of 52 percent. As a result, there should be a high level of confidence in these results.

The residents have told us that they value the rural lifestyle and natural beauty of the Town. Their responses also tell us that they are very interested in taking action to preserve these characteristics. Their desire to preserve their current way of life was manifested in the way they responded to a number of questions:

- They are very supportive of protecting all forms of open space (lakes, woodlands, grassland, etc.) and are willing to use public funds to preserve it.
- They are equivocal about the desirability of additional housing stock in the Town but if more is to be built, they expressed a strong desire to see more conservation design developments
- They are willing to consider restrictions on the amount land an owner will be allowed to develop. In particular, restrictions based on environmental concerns (environmental sensitivity of the parcel, wildlife corridors, etc.)
- They are strongly opposed to permitting landowners to use their land in any way they choose.
- They are strongly in favor of keeping productive land in agricultural production. They are not yet, however, persuaded that compensation for “transference of development rights” is a good idea.
- They don’t want to restrict agricultural production practices when residential development abuts farmland. The type of agricultural production they favor tends to be “family farming” operations rather than large-scale agriculture.
- The types of economic/business development preferred by the population in the Town tends to build on its agricultural base, is small in scale, and often has environmental leanings.
- There is nearly universal concern about groundwater contamination and high levels of concern about the loss of productive farmland and rural residential developments.

Different demographic subgroups in the Town have specific issues and perspectives that generally reflect their current situation. Those who have lived in the Town the longest tend to prefer fewer land-use restrictions. This may well be because they are expecting to retire soon and would like to sell their property and recognize that fewer restrictions on how their land can be used might mean a higher selling price. Respondents with children are much more concerned about the quality of the schools in the area,

the affordability of housing and the availability of recreational facilities than other groups. Respondents from higher income households tend to rate the accessibility of the Town to the Twin Cities and its environmental amenities as important to them. As a result, higher income households tend to be more willing to use public policy to maintain the amenities they value (open space, farmland, environmental quality).

In sum, the survey results reported here provide local officials with a wealth of information about the preferences of the people they represent. In large measure, the picture painted is consistent across the sections of the report and contains relatively few significant surprises.

VISIONING WORKSHOP

In October 2006 residents, plan commissioners and town board members participated in a two-part visioning workshop. Visioning is a process by which a community envisions the future it wants and plans how to achieve it. The workshop was held over two evenings. The second evening built on the results of the first.

During the first evening a facilitator helped participants identify their core values, describe where they see the future of the community and discuss how that future can be accomplished. Participants were specifically asked to focus on the elements and describe what should be preserved, changed or created in the Town of Star Prairie. The facilitator used these responses to develop and send out a draft vision statement between the first and second parts of the workshop.

On the second evening, the participants refined and expanded the vision statement to include all the elements of the plan and provide a framework for the community's goals, objectives and policies. Results of the visioning workshop are included in the Issues and Opportunities Vision Statement section.

OPEN HOUSES

The Town of Star Prairie held four open houses to review the sections of the plan with the public and obtain comments, questions and feedback throughout the process. Every open house was noticed in the town's official newspaper, the New Richmond News, and through a direct mailing to every property owner and resident in the town. The open house format provides an opportunity for direct dialogue between citizens and plan commission and town board members.

The Town of Star Prairie's first Informational Open House was held on June 26, 2006. It covered: Kickoff Workshop Results, Public Opinion Survey Results, Issues and Opportunities, and Community Forecasts. The information was well received.

The second Informational Open House was held May 15, 2007. It covered: Community Background, Vision Statement and Workshop, Utilities and Community Facilities, Transportation, and Housing. There were generally positive comments.

The third Informational Open House was held October 16, 2007. It covered: Housing, Economic Development, Agricultural Resources, Natural Resources and Cultural Resources. The information was well received and positive feedback resulted.

The fourth Informational Open House was held March 24, 2009. It covered Intergovernmental Cooperation, Land Use and Implementation. There was a very good turn out, especially of larger land owners. Some residents suggested changes to the Future Land Use Map and narrative which were reviewed and acted on by the Plan Commission.

INTERACTIVE LAND USE WORKSHOP

An Interactive Land Use Workshop to discuss future land uses for the Town of Star Prairie was held at the new Town Hall, on Tuesday, April 29, 2008 and Thursday, May 1, 2008. The workshop was conducted over two nights to allow participants sufficient time to review input information, develop mapping scenarios and provide feedback on specific future land uses. Individual flyers were sent to all residents and land owners in Star Prairie. Participants were encouraged to attend both evenings, but it was not required.

The first night of the workshop focused on an interactive slide show of land uses where participants generated a list of land uses they think are appropriate in the town. The second evening was a land use mapping exercise to identify potential locations for the list of identified land uses. Plan Commission and Town Board members participated. Results of the second night of the workshop are included below.

Group 1 Report: Preferred Historical Growth Level

Residential Development:

- Strong support for Conservation Design Development. Preferred conservation design and when ran out, converted developments into conservation design.
- Strongly protected farmland. Filled in poor land with housing and mostly near the city of New Richmond.
- Centralize development and stay away from agriculture. As town grows fill in on the poorest ground and use conservation design development.
- High density urban should be annexed.
- Long-time residents acknowledged the natural problems with travelling through the town – divided by the Apple River.
- Recognized higher density urban within the city and along the waterline. Also south of the Village of Star Prairie where it would be near sewer and water and probably annexed.

Open Space:

- Protected open space in conservation design development and along the Apple River.
- Left the U.S. Fish and Wildlife land and surrounding land alone. Felt USF&W would acquire and protect more land if the development was kept away from it.

Commercial & Industrial:

- Strip commercial and industrial along highway 65.
- Some industrial at the railroad line.
- Some commercial and industrial at the new highway interchange.
- Some next to the city expect annexation.

Group 2 Report: No preferred growth level -- Growth will come regardless and should be directed as shown on their map

Residential Development:

- Used conservation design development extensively, especially around wet or poorer lands.
- Tried to avoid the best farmland.
- Used a variety of lot sizes, felt larger lots more appropriate in some areas.
- Infilled around the water line and existing development.
- Generally, if parcel was largely environmental corridor used conservation design.

Open Space:

- Protected open space along the Apple River.
- Protected land around Strand Lake.
- Protected land along Cedar Creek between the County property and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust land.
- Protected the wetlands and estuary on Cedar Lake.
- Placed open space between all the higher density residential near the water line.
- Added several hundred acres of additional open space as they felt there was not enough resource protection and not enough open space for the developments.

Commercial & Industrial:

- Commercial and industrial around the airport, but expected to be annexed.
- Commercial at the new diamond interchange.
- Industrial near rail line.
- Commercial and industrial near Somerset and west of the City of New Richmond, expected much of it to be annexed.

Group 3 Report: Preferred Historical Growth Level*Residential Development:*

- Good discussion of residential development.
- Strong support for protecting farmland. Generally did not place any development on farmland if possible.
- Placed residential away from airport and corrections center and mostly south of the Apple River. Felt there should be nothing north of the Apple River for as long as possible to protect agriculture and the US Fish and Wildlife service lands.
- Used conservation design development used extensively. But would have preferred examples of conservation design on 40 or 80 acres as would prefer not to have larger subdivisions developed or allowed.
- Converted conventional subdivisions to CDD when ran out. Used extensively around water and wetlands.

Open Space:

- Protected open space along the Apple River and Strand Lake.

Commercial & Industrial:

- Commercial and industrial around new diamond interchange.
- Industrial around airport and expected to be annexed.
- Industrial around Somerset concerns.
- Created a small area of commercial around a town center at the town hall, maybe 50 acres.
- Did not use all of the commercial and industrial for accelerated growth. Did not want that much in the town. Will occur in the city/villages.

Group 4 Report: Preferred Historical Growth Level*Residential Development:*

- Recognition of conservation design development as preferred development type because of water and topography of the town. Was a way to allow development around water.
- Wanted more of it available and wanted to put more on the map.
- Left the U.S. Fish and Wildlife land and surrounding land alone. Felt USF&W would acquire and protect more land if the development was kept away from it.
- Was spread out somewhat due to number in the group. Didn't consolidate ideas as much as did for commercial/industrial/open space.

Open Space:

- Open space protection focused on water resources, mostly the Apple River. Open space adjoining the Apple River and north of River's Edge.
- Comments and clear focus on wanting better stewardship of the Apple River.
- Protected 100 acres around Strand Lake.
- Added to the conservancy land for Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust.
- Protected the SW corner of Cedar Lake and its estuary and wetlands.
- Protected the headwaters of Squaw Lake.

Commercial & Industrial:

- Commercial around new diamond interchange and along Hwy. 64.
- Industrial next to railroad line and around airport.

PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

The Plan Commission referred the a near final draft of the comprehensive plan to the Town Board for review in June and July 2009. The plan was also sent to neighboring communities and key organizations for review during the summer of 2009. On August 24, 2010 a public hearing was held. The public hearing draft of the comprehensive plan was sent to the governing bodies, agencies and organizations listed below for review and comment. The plan was made available at three local libraries and on the County and Town websites for public review. The hearing was well attended and numerous questions and public comments were aired. At a follow-up meeting on August 30, the Plan Commission adopted amendments to the plan based on public hearing comments and approved a resolution recommending the amended plan be approved by the town board.

Wisconsin Land Information Office
 West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning
 Commission
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
 Wisconsin Department of Transportation
 UW-Extension - Baldwin
 St. Croix County
 Polk County
 City of New Richmond
 Village of Somerset
 Village of Star Prairie
 Town of Alden
 Town of Farmington
 Town of Richmond
 Town of Somerset
 Town of Stanton
 Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District
 Squaw Lake Management District

Star Prairie Fish & Game Association
 Star Prairie Land Trust
 New Richmond Fire and Ambulance
 Somerset Fire and Ambulance
 New Richmond Multipurpose Pathways Committee
 New Richmond Economic Development Corp.
 St. Croix Economic Development Corp.
 New Richmond Preservation Society
 St. Croix County Historical Society
 Wisconsin State Historical Society
 New Richmond Airport Commission
 Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics
 New Richmond School District
 Osceola School District
 Somerset School District
 St. Croix Valley Builder's & Realtor's Associations
 New Richmond Library
 Osceola Library
 Somerset Library

The Star Prairie Town Board voted unanimously to adopt the Star Prairie Comprehensive Plan 2010-2030 by ordinance at its regular board meeting September 7, 2010. The adopted plan was also sent to the above list of agencies and organizations. A certified copy of the adopting ordinance is included below.

ADOPTING ORDINANCE

**Town of Star Prairie
Ordinance 54**

**An Ordinance to Adopt the *Town of Star Prairie 2010-2030 Comprehensive Plan*
St. Croix County, Wisconsin**

The Town Board of the Town of Star Prairie, Wisconsin, does ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to Sections 62.23(2) and (3), 61.35, and 60.22(3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Star Prairie is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in Sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 2. The Town Board of the Town of Star Prairie, Wisconsin, adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 3. The Plan Commission of the Town of Star Prairie, by a majority vote of the entire Commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a Resolution, dated August 24, 2010, recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "Town of Star Prairie 2010-2030 Comprehensive Plan," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Plan Commission of the Town of Star Prairie has held a public hearing at a meeting on August 24, 2010, on the proposed Comprehensive Plan in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 5. The Town Board of the Town of Star Prairie, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this Ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled "Town of Star Prairie 2010-2030 Comprehensive Plan," pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 6. This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members of the Town Board and posting as required by law.

Town Chairman Douglas Rivard moved for adoption of this Ordinance; such motion was seconded by Supervisor Steve Lewis, and the resulting vote was five members in favor, none in opposition and none abstaining.

This Ordinance is thereby adopted this 7th day of September, 2010.

TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Douglas Rivard
By: Douglas Rivard, Town Chairman

Attest:

Michael Burke
Michael Burke, Town Clerk

Passed: 9/7/2010

Published: 9/16/2010

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Town of Star Prairie has a long history of settlement from the time of lumber and railroad barons to the rich agricultural heritage and recreational opportunities offered by the town's many water resources. The following history is a compilation of historical resources, and personal accounts of local residents.

The Town of Star Prairie was created July 28, 1856. It was settled by German, Norwegian, Irish, French, English and Polish immigrants. It is located at latitude 450945N and longitude 0923536W. The town originally included the towns of Stanton and Erin Prairie. Stanton was divided off in 1870. The town has three large water bodies, Cedar Lake and Squaw Lake and the Apple River, which crosses the town diagonally from the northeast to the southwest.

At one time there were three dams on the Apple River within the town. There is only one remaining dam. The two dams that have been removed were built by the New Richmond Roller Mills Company for hydroelectric power generation. The Huntingdon Dam, located in Section 11, was built in 1903. The McClure Dam, located 1.5 miles downstream of the Huntingdon Dam in Section 14, was built in 1913. Both dams changed ownership a few times but eventually were abandoned in 1965 after a break in the dike separating the canal and the main river channel below the Huntingdon Dam diverted the water flow away from the powerhouse. The McClure Dam was removed in 1968 and the Huntingdon Dam was removed in 1969. The cost was \$50,000 and \$35,000 respectively. The Riverdale dam, located at the end of the Riverdale Flowage in Section 31, is still in operation producing hydroelectric power for the Xcel Energy Company. According to Xcel Energy, the Riverdale hydro plant is 0.6 megawatts. The plant is remote controlled. There is a powerhouse and two generating units and a narrow overflow spillway. It is interesting to note that despite having three hydro-electric dams in the Town of Star Prairie, not everyone was able to get electricity. It was expensive, \$25 per month, and sometimes people had to sign up for five years before they would be hooked up. Local residents noted that it wasn't until after World War II that everyone in the Town had electricity. Wall Street is believed to be the last area to receive service.

Another important water body in the Town is Strand Lake. Originally named Rose Lake, it was changed to Oakwood Lake and finally settled at Strand Lake. Numerous arrowheads have been found around the lake. It is probable that there was an Indian campsite or settlement there for a time. There is a possible Indian Mound in Section 23, very close to Strand Lake.

Within the Town of Star Prairie are two unincorporated hamlets Johannesburg and Huntingdon. Johannesburg was historically referred to as New Johannesburg by local residents. It was named for Johannes Johnson who settled there between 1870 and 1875. Johannesburg was generally located in Section 15 and around the old Town Hall and Outpost Bar in Section 21. It originally consisted of a school, icehouse, cheese factory, feed mill and combination grocery store and gas station. The school was used as the Star Prairie Town Hall until February of 2007. The cheese factory was below the old town hall along the Apple River. It is believed to have been built around 1919 and burned down around 1940. The feed mill was operated by Alvin "Six" Olson. He was so called because he was fascinated by 6-cylinder vehicles. The grocery store and gas station is now the Outpost Bar and Grill. It was a popular spot for locals to congregate to hear the latest news.

The original Town Hall was located in the parking lot of the old Town Hall. It was a popular location for evening dances and plays. There was a wood stove right in the middle of the floor. The original Town Hall is now a part of the Outpost Bar and Grill. Local residents told the story as follows: In the early 1970's the original Town Hall was moved one night to the Outpost Bar and Grill, it was the addition to the north side of the existing building, nearest the river, according to local citizens. The DNR refused to let the bar add on or expand because it was too close to the river, so local residents decided to take the matter into their own hands. During the night the building was floated down the river then hauled out of the water and connected to the existing structure to become the bar portion of the Bar and Grill.

Huntingdon was named for the Canadian town of Huntingdon, and settled in 1854. It was known first as McClure's Rock. The first settlers were Mr. White, his wife Lydia and their daughter Lydia. Mr. White

died in 1855 and was the first white man to be buried in the Town of Star Prairie. In 1856, C.H. Burrows and John McClure moved to Huntingdon. The community originally had a flour mill, built by the Bowron brothers in 1854. The Bowron family was from Huntingdon, Canada. It must be noted that the spelling of Huntingdon whether with a “t” or “d” has varied in various sources, however the plat of Huntingdon is the official record. The mill was situated on the creek that flows out of Cedar Lake. The mill, which operated until 1949, ground wheat for flour. During World War I it was the only source of flour for local residents. An area merchant said that the “best buckwheat flour in the world came from Huntingdon.” People came from all around, even as far as Canada, to get wheat flour from there.

In addition to the mill, Huntingdon also had several homes, picnic area, a ballfield, general store and two churches that were built not even a block apart. One was the Swedish Mission Church and the other the German Lutheran Church. Both were tall, white churches and the services were said in Swedish and German. Both churches are gone, one burned down and the other was tore down.

Many of the original homes still stand. People picnicked around the falls and dam and the Annual Spring School Picnic was held there. Huntingdon’s ball field was where the mobile home park is now located. It had concession stands and vendors. Huntingdon’s general store was in what is now the Cedar Creek Inn. There also used to be little cabins along the shoreline by the dam that were rented out to visitors. Boat rental was also available and many people used to fish along the dam. There was a Chicken Hatchery located between Huntingdon and the Village of Star Prairie.

In addition to the Outpost Bar & Grill and Cedar Creek Inn, there are two other local landmark restaurants in the Town of Star Prairie. Meister’s on Cedar Lake has been around since the 1920’s. It was originally called Cedar Lake Bar and it was built by Donnie Walsh. The top of the bar was very unusual. When it was built, locals were allowed to glue down silver dollars and put their names under them. When finished the whole top of the bar was covered in silver dollars. However, when the first owner, Walsh, died the next owner removed the top of the bar and no one knows where it is today.

The second local landmark is the River’s Edge Restaurant. It was originally built in 1921. The original name was Nig’s Shack, then it became River Dale. It has always been known for good food and fine dining. For a short while in the early 1940’s, it also provided gambling with 40 slot machines and five blackjack tables. Then in 1946, the Jack Raleigh family purchased the restaurant, changed the name to River’s Edge, removed the slot machines and blackjack tables and added floating down the Apple River. It has been in the same family ever since. The River’s Edge has had several famous visitors. There are rumors that John Dillinger and his gang stopped one afternoon during the 1920’s or 1930’s. It is documented that Alice Longworth Roosevelt, Fitzpatrick of “Voice of the Globe” and Charles Kuralt both visited. Additional information about the restaurant is available from the present owners who have documented its extensive history.

During the Prohibition Era, many Star Prairie residents needed to supplement their incomes. It became very popular to supply the Twin Cities with illegal liquor. People never really questioned or wondered about smoke coming out of a Chicken Coop – they knew people were making moonshine. There is a local story about a moonshine run to Minnesota. A local resident had a Model T Ford auto that had a special “tank” on the bottom of the Model T. This tank would be filled with moonshine for deliveries. One day after crossing the Stillwater Bridge, the Model T got a flat tire. While stopped, a local cop stopped to help. He commented several times about how heavy that Model T was but luckily never tried to figure out why it was so heavy. The moonshine business died out when local residents “heard” that Al Capone was taking over. Local operations very quickly “dried up.”

For many years, County Road CC from County Road C to Cedar Lake was known as “Swede Road” because almost everyone who lived along the road was Swedish. Wall Street was named that because a wealthy local doctor lived on the road. According to local residents, he was known as a “plaster” doctor and while he would generally not be considered legitimate today, at that time people came from all over to be treated by this famous doctor. He built a “fancy and expensive” farm and raised chester-white pigs which were famous and sought-after. He is also rumored to have been one of the investors in the Foshay Tower in Minneapolis. In the 1950’s the straight stretch of Wall Street was a popular spot for local boys to race their cars.

According to local resident Vern Nelson, the worst storm in local memory occurred in 1952 when seven barns were destroyed along County Road H, east of STH 35. The storm was thought to be a tornado, but that was not confirmed.

On January 1, 1975, local Town resident Ron Engh started a newspaper, The Apple River Journal. The newspaper was based out of the Village of Star Prairie, but covered parts of Polk and St. Croix County all around the Village, including the Town of Star Prairie. It ran through 1976 and provides a great deal of interesting information on life in the town during the 1970's, plus it offered historical sketches of early settlement days. Engh also started the Park Art Fair that now takes place each year in Mary Park in New Richmond. When Engh started the fair it was called the Barn Art Fair and was held in the barn on his property. Local artists displayed their arts and crafts and he also had a Children's Theater to get the local children involved and interested.

Star Prairie originally was served by several rural schools but only five were located within the Town's boundaries. All rural school were closed by 1961 when the state required country schools to attach to a high school district or suffer the loss of state aid. District #4 School, called Squaw Lake School was located in Section 9, in the southwest quarter. The building is now a single-family home. Old Mill Road which gave access to the school now ends at CTH CC and does not cross Section 9. The District #8 School was known as the Wall Street School. It was located in Section 23 in the southeast quarter. The school house is still there and it is now the Berget House, but it has been expanded and modified from the original structure. Local resident Genevieve Francois, who still lives on her family's original farm, indicated that before the Wall Street school was built her family's granary was the school house. It is believed to have been the first school in Star Prairie and that it was in that location since 1868. The District #3 School was known as the Riverdale School and was located in the northwest quarter of Section 29. It is a single-family home. The Riverview School, District #6, also known as Johannesburg, was located at the old Town Hall, it was built in 1923. Residents remember attending school for only about 6 months of the year. They were needed to help work at home and around the farm and also had no way to get to school during the worst of the winter weather. The Huntington School, District #5, was west of the intersection of County Roads C and H on the north side of the road. It has since been torn down.

The St. Croix County Health Center is also located in the Town. It was built before 1897 and was originally known as the St. Croix County Asylum for Insane. It provided a place for those with mental health problems and those who had no family or any place else to live. It also operated as an Old Folks Home for a while. For many years the Health Center operated in conjunction with the County Farm. The patients did all the work on the farm, gardening, butchering, dairy. They raised all their own food. The farm was very renowned for its registered Holstein cattle. There are two cemetery plots on the Health Center property. Residents with no family members were buried there. Also well-known Administrator Sumner Bright is buried in the Cemetery that is on the hill. He served as the Administrator at the County Health Center for over 35 years.

The Town's agricultural heritage is also very strong. Two farms in the town, have received Century Farm Awards through the Wisconsin State Fair award program. The Pamela and Bruce Emerson Farm, 2087 CTH CC, was established in 1889. The Lyle and Ruth Halvorson farm, 1987 93rd Street, was established in 1881. There are also several other historic farmsites in the town, including: Gerald Backes farm, 110th St.; Doug Rivard farm, Polk/St. Croix Road; and Jeff Levy & MaryEllen Stewart house and farm, CTH CC.

The Outpost Bar and Grill and owners Jim and Jan Jensen became famous recently for setting a new Guinness World Record for the world's longest hot dog. The Jensen's along with Jesse Waidelich of Deer's Food Locker in Deer Park, decided to try to break the record as part of a fund raiser for playground equipment for the new Star Prairie Town Hall. On September 2, 2006, the owners cooked and made the hot dog, including the bun. They were notified on September 20, 2006 that they had broken the record. The hot dog's official length was 83 feet, nine inches. The old record was 57.5 feet.

Sources:

St. Croix County...1976 A Bicentennial Report on St. Croix County...Past and Present; Historical Map of St. Croix County, published by the St. Croix County Historical Society, The Octagon House, 1004 Third Street, Hudson, WI October 1974.

Heritage Areas of St. Croix County, UW-Extension 1976.

Natural Area Inventory, West Central Wisconsin 1976.

Remembering Rural Schools of St. Croix County

St. Croix County Extension Homemakers Rural School Committee 1991.

Rivertowns.net website.

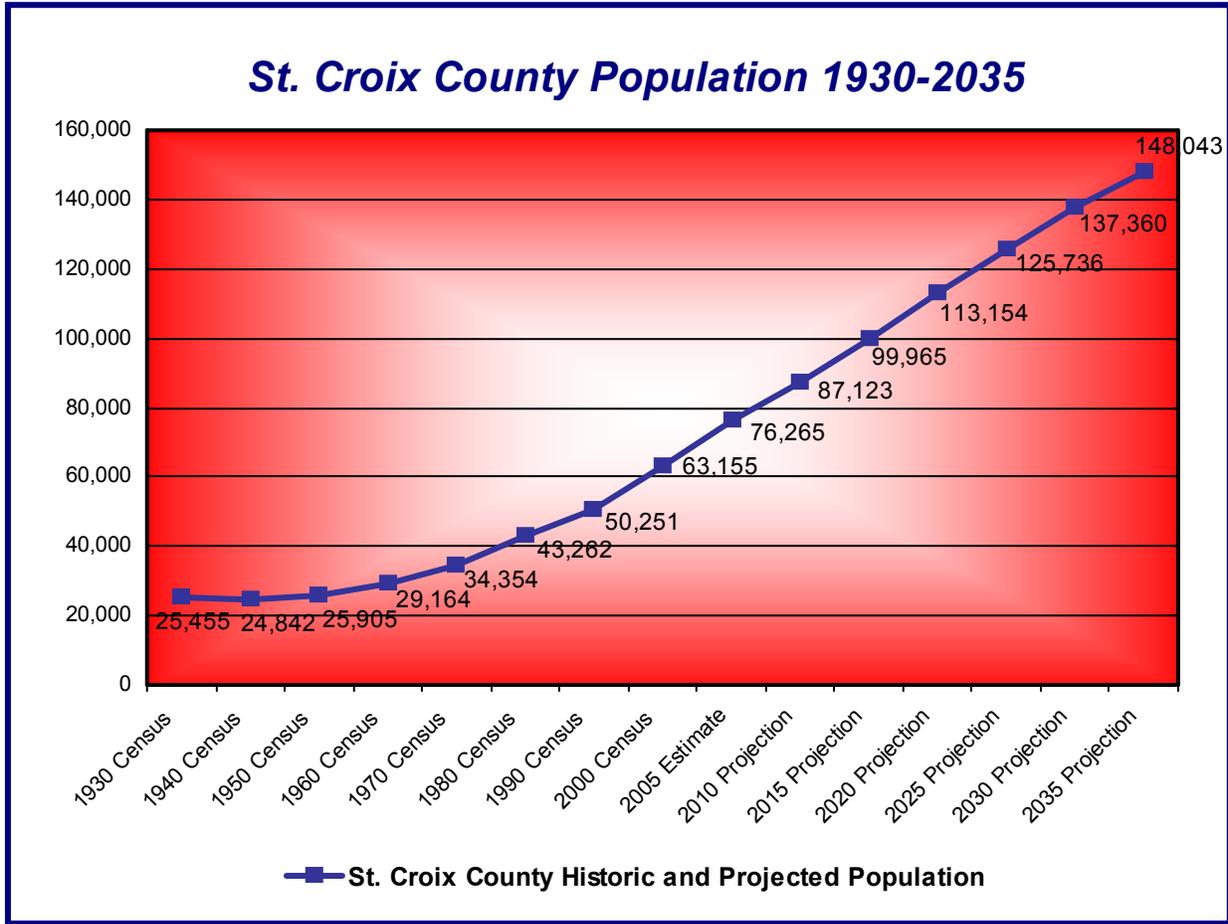
Oxcart Days, 1854-1940 by Wallace W. Silver, publication date unknown.

Life-long town residents, including: 21-year Town Board member Vern Nelson, Alice Talmage, Yvonne Brotzler, John Raleigh, Mike McNamara and Bruce Emerson.

Members of the Star Prairie Plan Commission.

COMMUNITY FORECASTS

POPULATION



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Projections - 2008

Population Projections - 2000 to 2030
St. Croix County

MUNICIPALITY	CENSUS		EST.		PROJECTIONS			# CHG		% CHG	
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	00-30	00-30		
TOWNS	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	00-30	00-30		
T Baldwin	903	958	999	1058	1116	1164	1202	299	33.1		
T Cady	710	785	846	921	997	1064	1124	414	58.3		
T Cylon	629	671	696	735	772	803	826	197	31.3		
T Eau Galle	882	995	1100	1209	1318	1419	1507	625	70.9		
T Emerald	691	781	851	939	1027	1109	1182	491	71.1		
T Erin Prairie	658	672	691	723	754	777	793	135	20.5		
T Forest	590	627	651	687	722	750	773	183	31.0		
T Glenwood	755	856	931	1026	1121	1210	1287	532	70.5		
T Hammond	947	1523	1871	2265	2675	3074	3453	2506	264.6		
T Hudson	6213	7533	8941	10,533	12,178	13,767	15,259	9046	145.6		
T Kinnickinnic	1400	1629	1829	2068	2312	2542	2752	1352	96.6		
T Pleasant Valley	430	480	523	579	634	684	730	300	69.8		
T Richmond	1556	2441	2974	3580	4210	4822	5401	3845	247.1		
T Rush River	498	526	560	604	649	688	721	223	44.8		
T St. Joseph	3436	3716	4095	4561	5035	5477	5873	2437	70.9		
T Somerset	2644	3252	3750	4334	4936	5513	6048	3404	128.7		
T Springfield	808	916	991	1085	1181	1268	1344	536	66.3		
T Stanton	1003	1014	1033	1062	1087	1101	1105	102	10.2		
T Star Prairie	2944	3495	3973	4539	5121	5675	6185	3241	110.1		
T Troy	3661	4385	5011	5748	6503	7224	7889	4228	115.5		
T Warren	1320	1540	1747	1990	2238	2474	2691	1371	103.9		
Subtotal	32,678	38,795	44,063	50,246	56,586	62,605	68,145	35,467	108.5		
VILLAGES/CITIES	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	00-30	00-30		
V Baldwin	2667	3441	4044	4746	5470	6170	6824	4157	155.9		
V Deer Park	227	224	225	229	232	234	232	5	2.2		
V Hammond	1153	1649	1951	2300	2661	3009	3337	2184	189.4		
V North Hudson	3463	3693	3988	4374	4763	5120	5432	1969	56.9		
V Roberts	969	1362	1585	1849	2123	2386	2631	1662	171.5		
V Somerset	1556	2204	2681	3225	3790	4339	4860	3304	212.3		
V Star Prairie	574	634	693	768	842	912	974	400	69.7		
V Spring Valley	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	50.0		
V Wilson	176	194	209	229	249	267	282	106	60.2		
V Woodville	1104	1292	1436	1630	1830	2018	2191	1087	98.5		
C Glenwood City	1183	1227	1303	1405	1506	1597	1672	489	41.3		
C Hudson	8775	11,432	13,473	15,865	18,337	20,725	22,967	14,192	161.7		
C New Richmond	6310	7566	8638	9917	11,230	12,485	13,643	7333	116.2		
C River Falls	2318	2549	2831	3179	3533	3866	4167	1849	79.8		
Subtotal	30,477	37,470	43,060	49,719	56,568	63,131	69,215	38,738	127.1		
St. Croix County	63,155	76,265	87,123	99,965	113,154	125,736	137,360	74,205	117.5		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Wisconsin Department of Administration 2008 Population Projections
 Project community is designated in bold type.

HOUSEHOLD

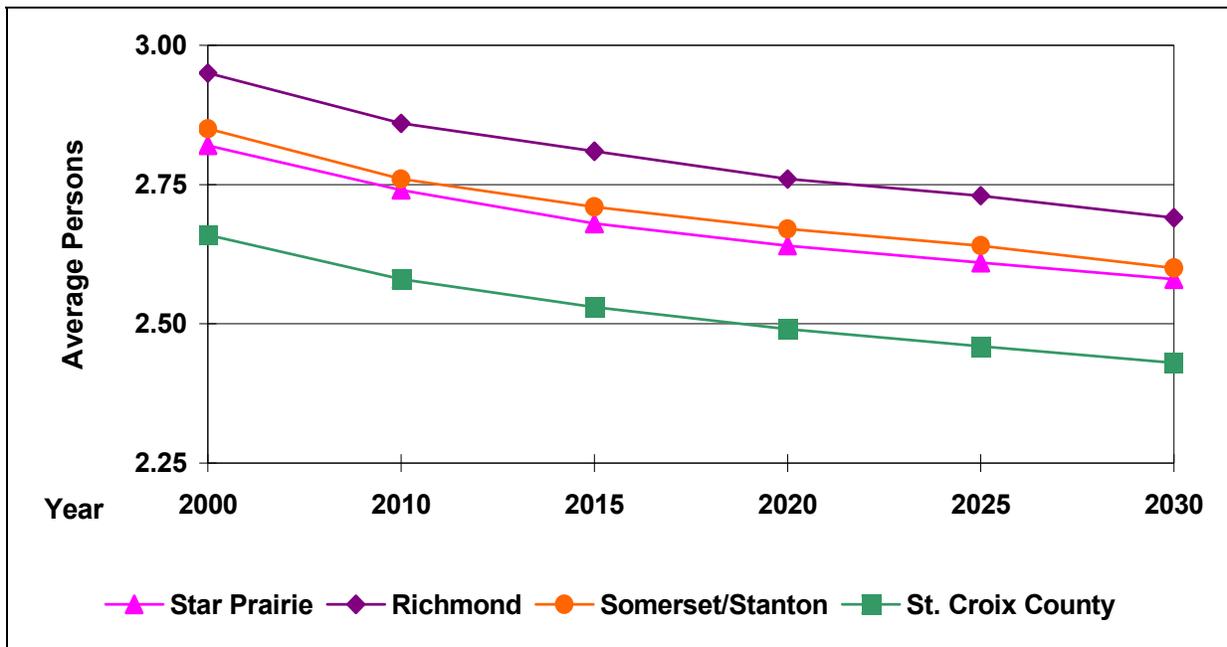
Persons Per Housing Unit – 2000 to 2030

Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Towns

TOWN	2000	PROJECTIONS				
		2010	2015	2020	2025	2030**
Star Prairie	2.82	2.74	2.68	2.64	2.61	2.58
Richmond	2.95	2.86	2.81	2.76	2.73	2.69
Somerset	2.85	2.76	2.71	2.67	2.64	2.60
Stanton	2.85	2.76	2.71	2.67	2.64	2.60
St. Croix County	2.66	2.58	2.53	2.49	2.46	2.43

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Wisconsin Department of Administration

** Unofficial Numbers



HOUSING UNITS & ACREAGE

The following presumptions were used to create the growth projections for the town, which are found in the charts on the next several pages.

- The *Historic Trends* projection is the official population projection for the town from the Wisconsin Demographic Services Center. It is based on historic growth rates and assumes no changes in land use policy.
- It should be noted that from 1960-2000 the Town of Star Prairie was usually just slightly above the County growth rate.
- The *Adjusted Rate Growth* projection is based on the average population projection for the town of Star Prairie and all of St. Croix County for the period 2000-2030 from the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. It is based on the average annual percentage change in population for St. Croix County and each of the municipalities within the County.
- The *Accelerated Growth* projection is based on the historical population growth from 1980-2000 for the three fastest growing towns in St. Croix County. In 1980 and 1990, there was a similar starting population in these towns and in Star Prairie. This projection assumes that Star Prairie would have the same location, transportation infrastructure, amenities and shopping opportunities as the fastest growing town in the county and that existing town land use policies will not change.
- The 3.0 acres per housing unit was used to estimate acreage used for residential development. The three acres represents the residential housing site and the associated infrastructure needed. It is not intended to represent lot size or to correspond to the actual acreage owned or taxed as residential or agricultural building site property.
- In 2005, Star Prairie's current population estimate was almost exactly at the *Historic Trends* estimate – 3,471 and 3,454.

The following notes regarding calculations will make it easier to read the charts on the next pages.

- Each of the calculations is cumulative. The baseline 2000 numbers are the starting point and are the 2000 Census official numbers.
- The number in the change column is the increase or decrease expected. The number for each time period is based on the previous time period.
- The Persons Per Housing Unit (PPH) number is the official estimate from the Wisconsin Demographic Services Center. This number was not adjusted; the official number was used for all calculations.
- The Population is divided by the PPH to calculate Housing Units for all the projections.
- The Housing Units is multiplied by 3.0 acres per Housing Unit to calculate the Acreage.

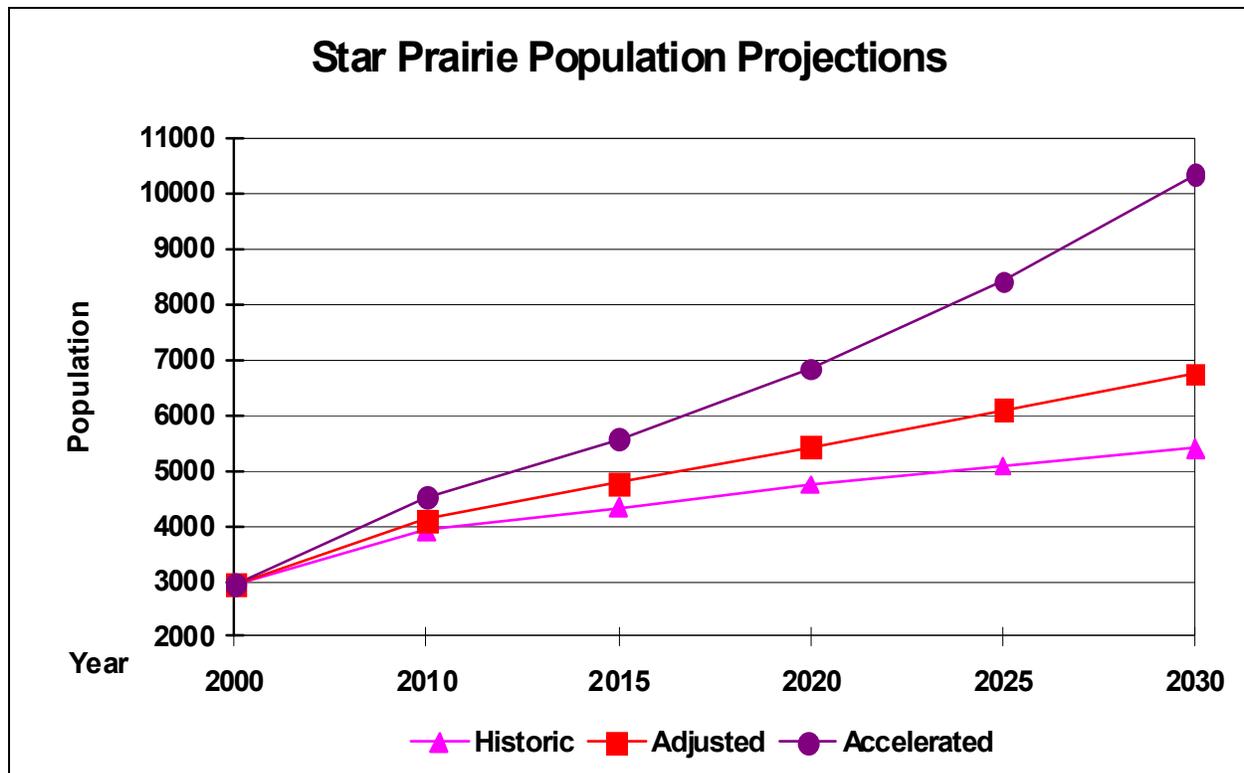
Growth Projections -- 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie

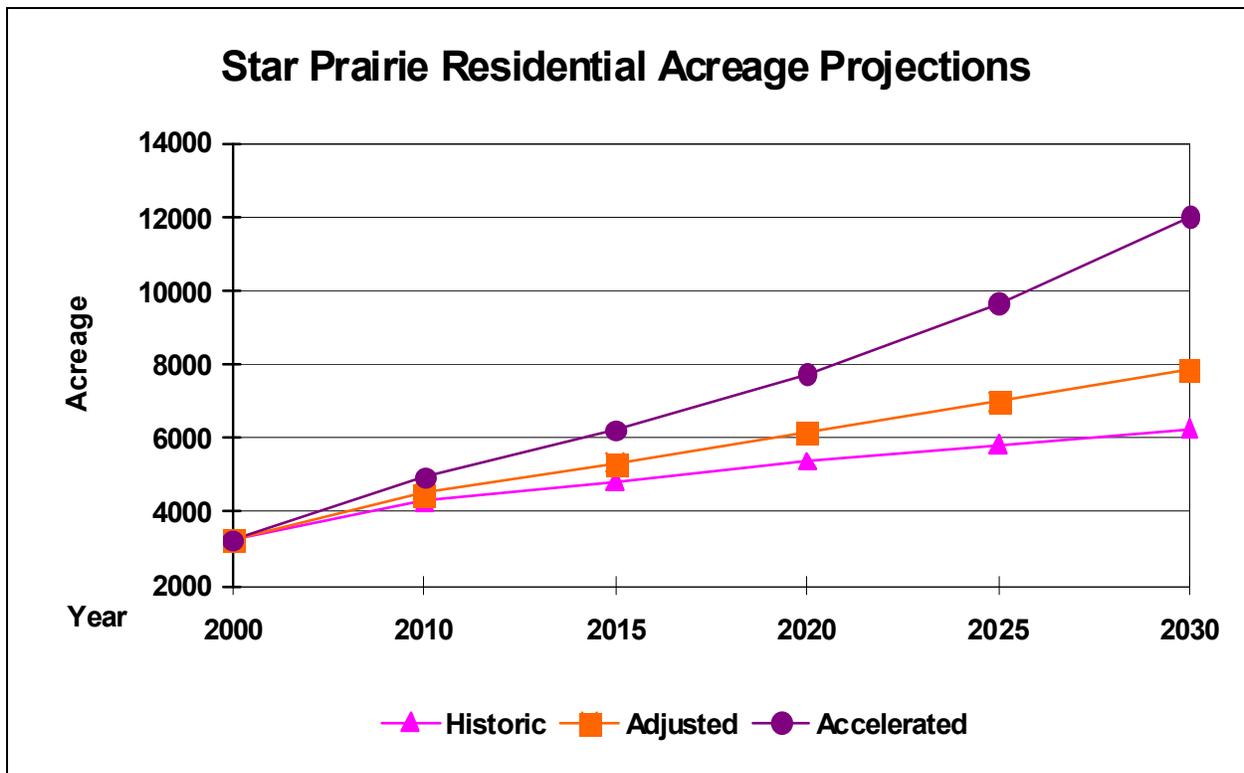
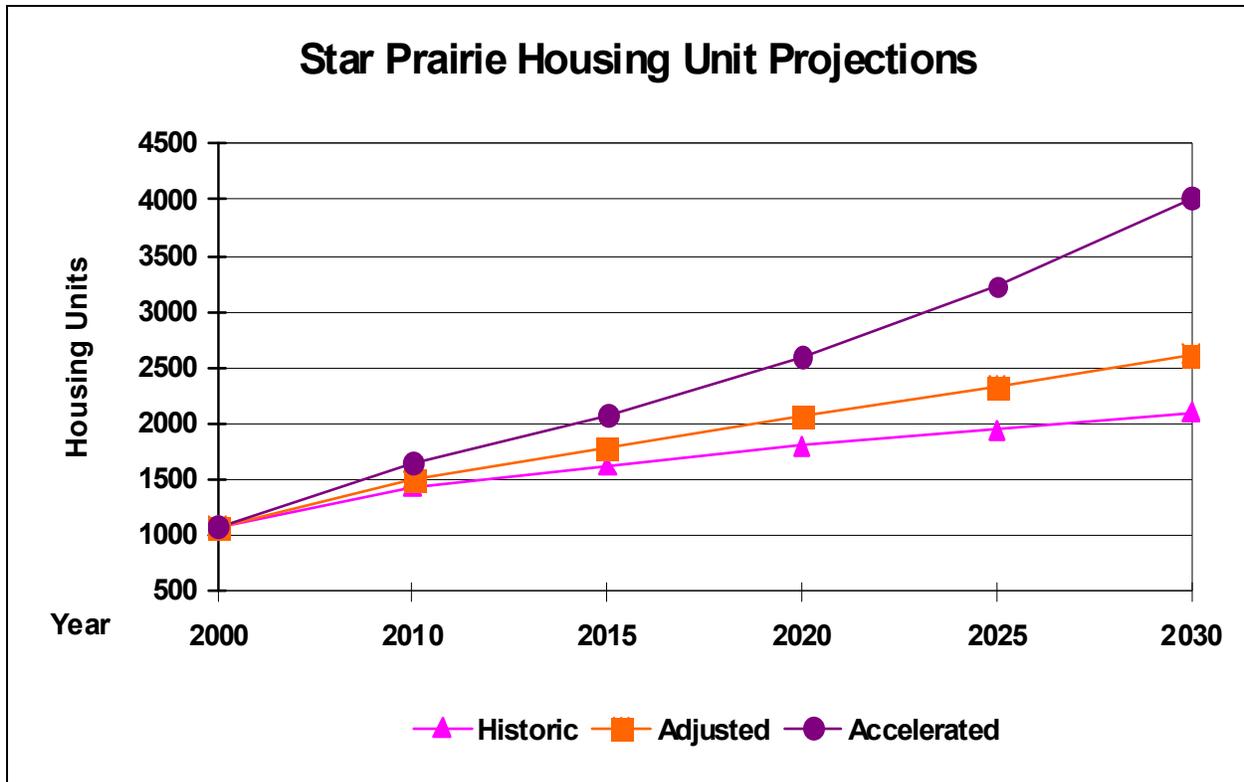
INCREASE BASED ON	PROJECTIONS						
	POPULATION		PPH	HOUSING UNITS		ACREAGE	
	CHANGE	TOTAL		CHANGE	TOTAL	CHANGE	TOTAL
Baseline 2000	2,944		2.82	1,079		3,237	
2010							
Historic Trends	981	3,925	2.74	353	1,432	1,060	4,297
Adjusted Growth	1,170	4,114		422	1,501	1,267	4,504
Accelerated Growth	1,582	4,526		573	1,652	1,719	4,956
2015							
Historic Trends	410	4,335	2.68	185	1,618	555	4,853
Adjusted Growth	660	4,774		280	1,781	840	5,344
Accelerated Growth	1,041	5,567		425	2,077	1,276	6,232
2020							
Historic Trends	412	4,747	2.64	181	1,798	542	5,394
Adjusted Growth	660	5,434		277	2,058	831	6,175
Accelerated Growth	1,281	6,848		517	2,594	1,550	7,782
2025							
Historic Trends	328	5,075	2.61	146	1,944	439	5,833
Adjusted Growth	660	6,094		277	2,335	830	7,005
Accelerated Growth	1,575	8,423		633	3,227	1,900	9,682
2030**							
Historic Trends	330	5,405	2.58	151	2,095	452	6,285
Adjusted Growth	660	6,754		283	2,618	849	7,853
Accelerated Growth	1,937	10,360		788	4,016	2,365	12,047

PPH = Persons Per Housing Unit

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration and St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department.

** Unofficial Numbers





EMPLOYMENT

Background information and analysis for the following employment forecasts are found in the section on Economic Development.

- Area-wide economic development activities may contribute to the local employment options for residents of the town.
- Most commercial and industrial activity is expected to occur in neighboring communities and provide employment opportunities to town residents.
- Some commercial and other nonresidential land uses can be expected in the town especially at the intersection of 110th Street and STH 64.
- However, extensive commercial or industrial development would not be consistent with the rural character and community goals of the Town of Star Prairie.
- Home-based businesses will continue to be important to the economy of the Town and should be encouraged where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.
- Alternative agriculture and nontraditional farming will be important to continuing agriculture's economic future in the Town of Star Prairie.
- The existing patterns for farm and nonfarm employment will likely to continue into the future.
- Many outside factors, which the Town of Star Prairie has little ability to influence or control, affect expansion or contraction of the farm economy and employment.

STAR PRAIRIE VISION

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie is rural, family-friendly and growing.

The Town of Star Prairie is a rural, green community proud of its heritage and identity. The town has retained its rural character as defined by its rustic nature and its sylvan spaces that are both quiet and peaceful. The town's greenspaces are many and varied ranging from plenty of scenic beauty, quality lakes and rivers to bike and walking trails, and parks and playgrounds. Residents have access to public hunting grounds and enjoy fishing on Cedar Lake, considered one of the top fishing lakes in the State of Wisconsin, and the many other lakes in the Town. The old health center has been redeveloped into a mixed use facility and all the original structures remain as part of the community's heritage. Part of the town's rural charm is the small, architecturally pleasing businesses and the old town hall meeting place. The town has maintained its identity in part through its rural character, but it also is an independent government with good communication and intergovernmental relations with neighboring communities.

The Town of Star Prairie is a family-friendly community. Town residents are proud that parents can bring up their children in a safe and rural quality of life.

The Town of Star Prairie is a growing community. Despite a growing population, the town has retained the quality of its groundwater, in part by its investment in water and sewage treatment systems. Its growth has allowed access to public transportation such as bus and light rail service along the highway to the Twin Cities, and the construction and maintenance of good roads.

ELEMENT-BASED VISION STATEMENTS

Utilities and Community Facilities

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie cooperates with its municipal neighbors. With the City of New Richmond, the recycling center is jointly operated. The Town operates a community and senior center. In order to keep and better our water quality and to maintain water quantity, our more developed lakes, such as Cedar Lake, have rural water systems and sewage treatment facilities. Access to our lakes is easy for all residents from boat landings. In addition, the town has worked with others to maintain the dam and power plant.

Transportation

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie has preserved its rustic roads such as Old Mill and Brave Drive, and has maintained its road infrastructure. The town has planned and developed additional roads as appropriate for current and future land uses. The town cooperates with the county and others to develop a light rail system to the Twin Cities and a bus system to area communities. The town and the city of New Richmond have developed an agreement regarding airport joint planning and are good neighbors.

Housing

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie has affordable housing for seniors and others. When subdivisions are built, natural features are preserved and parks are required within them.

Economic Development

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie has a number of healthy businesses, including small taverns and restaurants, and agriculture-related businesses. Business growth in the town has focused on rural-based businesses. The town has achieved this type of business growth through an environmental review process that limits impacts on natural resources, and a design review process to maintain the rural character of the community. Retail businesses project a positive image of the community.

Agriculture

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie has an active agricultural industry that especially focuses on plant and tree nurseries, small dairies and other types of animal production, and vegetable production.

Natural Resources

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie has preserved and enhanced the quality of its lakes (especially Cedar Lake and Squaw Lakes), groundwater, wetlands, rivers and streams (especially the Apple River and Cedar Creek), and forests and hills through various ordinances and other mechanisms. The Town has made efforts to recreate and maintain prairies. The residents recognize that the Town's natural resources are important to their quality of life and must be preserved and enhanced. In addition, the Town has worked with the County and other jurisdictions to maintain and create quality off- and on- road trails (for hiking, biking, horseback riding), parks (such as Apple River County Park), boat landings and hunting areas.

Cultural Resources

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie's historical society maintains and preserves historical records and the old town hall. The town's historic homes and other structures are maintained, preserved or reused.

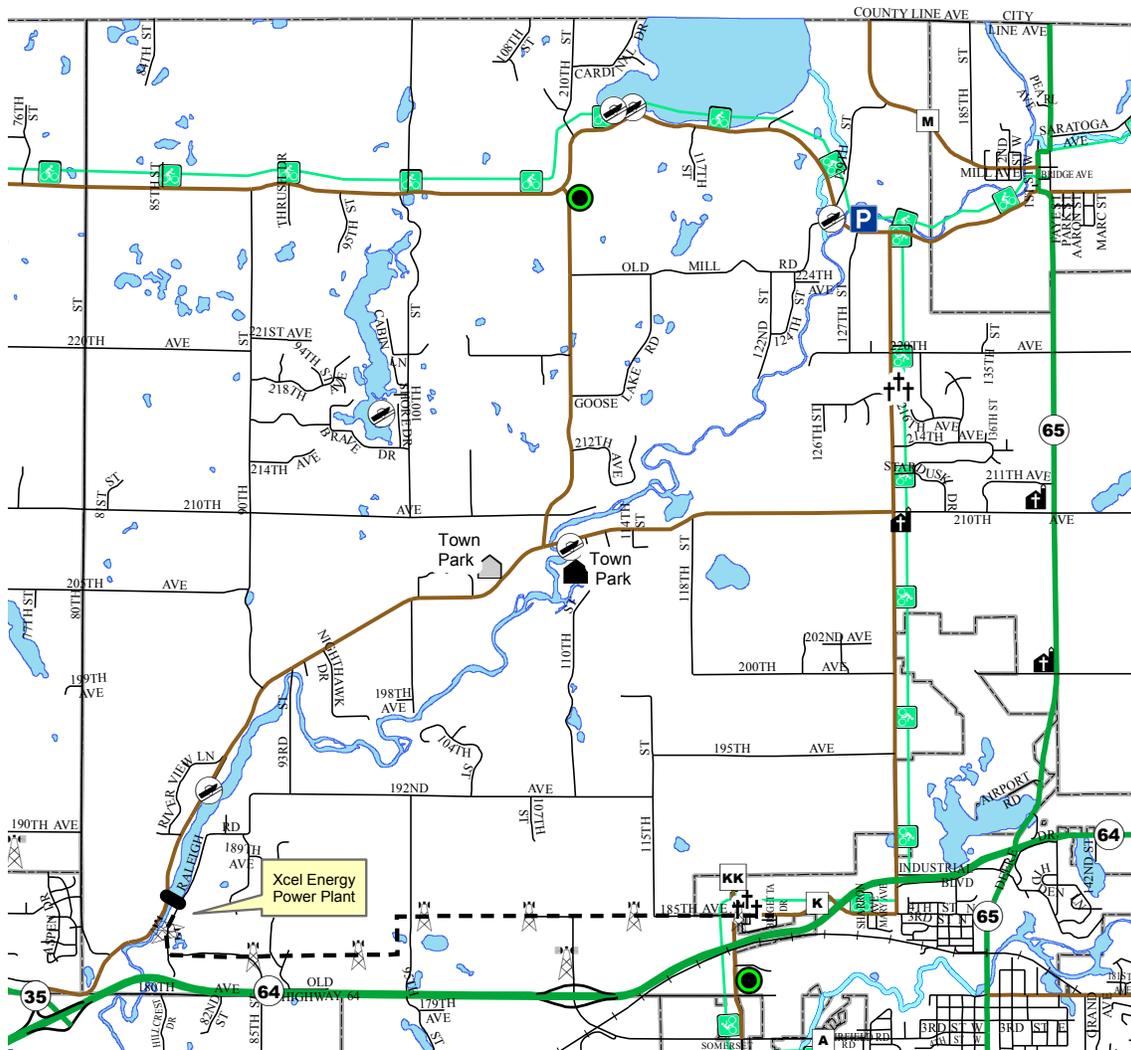
Land Use

In the year 2030, the Town of Star Prairie has successfully managed the growth pressure from the Twin Cities by allowing for a mix of housing, open space and recreation, agriculture (especially crop and pasture land) and commercial uses, and is still maintaining its rural character. The Town regulates this variable land use mix to prevent conflicts and pollution.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Star Prairie is a small rural community and does not provide extensive services for residents.

Utilities and Community Facilities: Star Prairie



	County Park		Cemetery		Transmission Line
	Old Town Hall		Church		Bike Route
	New Town Hall		Communication Towers		Canoe / Boat Landing
			Emergency Siren		



SOURCE: St. Croix County

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: Coordinate utility and community facility systems planning with land use, natural resource and transportation systems planning. Community facilities, services and utilities should focus on preserving the quality of life and satisfying core needs for public safety, health, education, social services, recycling, town facilities and recreation at reasonable cost. These facilities and services should support the town goals for land use, growth management and natural resources.

Objectives:

1. Provide the appropriate level of community services, facilities and practices within the town, while striving for a low tax levy and maintaining the rural character of the town.
2. Promote the use of existing public facilities, and managed expansion to those facilities, to serve future development whenever possible.
3. Support quality and accessible parks and recreational facilities and services and maintain dedicated open space for all residents.
4. Protect the town's public health, natural environment and groundwater and surface water resources through proper siting and regulation of wells, water utility services, wastewater disposal systems, recycling and other waste disposal in accordance with town, county and state laws and regulations.
5. Establish and maintain open communications with public utilities.

Policies:

1. Provide appropriate services for town residents, including public road maintenance and snow plowing on town roads, emergency services (fire, police, ambulance) and recycling.
2. Consider the objectives and policies of this plan, as well as the general welfare of all residents, to determine whether new town services or expansions may be appropriate in the future.
3. Work with St. Croix County Emergency Management to identify emergency siren coverage areas. If needed, provide an additional emergency warning siren to serve the western portion of the Town of Star Prairie.
4. As needed, identify storm shelters for residents, mobile home parks or campgrounds, execute formal agreements for shelter use and use local media and park or campground owners to help educate residents on availability.
5. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset, City of New Richmond, St. Croix County, state agencies and local organizations to develop, provide and support recreational facilities and opportunities within the town.
6. Adopt an ordinance to create a Town Park Committee to recommend park acquisitions, development activities and recreational facilities.
7. Explore various uses of the old town hall and develop an operational plan for it.

8. Complete planned recreational facilities at the new town hall.
9. Provide support to local volunteer and community organizations through access to the old and new Town Hall facilities.
10. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.



The town park at the Old Town Hall on the Apple River, near Johannesburg, is one of the many recreational resources in the Town of Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

11. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.
12. Established a 200-foot no construction buffer around any landfills in the town to allow for the expansion of methane gas underground and prevent contact with that gas.
13. Work with St. Croix County and state agencies to assure public health and groundwater quality when permitting and monitoring new and replacement private on-site wastewater systems and water wells.
14. Encourage property owners to test their drinking water annually or at least once every three years. Water testing kits are available at the County Planning and Zoning Department, Hudson; Land & Water Conservation Department, Baldwin; Public Health Department, New Richmond; or through private labs. A fee may apply.
15. Implement and evaluate town impact fees on new development projects to offset additional expenses to the town for adding, upgrading or expanding town parks, roads, services and facilities.
16. Residents will continue to be responsible for contracting for curbside solid waste and recycling collection and disposal.
17. Work with and through St. Croix County, (which serves as the town's Responsible Unit to implement the state recycling laws), to expand education, information, special collections and related services for recycling.
18. Contract with the City of New Richmond to provide a recycling drop-off center for town residents.
19. Offer spring road cleanup of white goods, appliances and tires.
20. Contract with the New Richmond Ambulance and Fire Service for ambulance and fire service for town residents.
21. Continue the mutual aid agreement with the Village of Somerset for fire protection service to town residents.
22. Work with the Village of Somerset and City of New Richmond in the provision of joint services when it will result in better services and/or cost savings.
23. Contract with the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department for a satellite office for law enforcement to encourage better service and response times for town residents.

24. Provide public road maintenance, repair and replacement and snow plowing on town roads through contractual services.
25. Consider development, operation and maintenance costs associated with construction or provision of municipal improvements and services usually associated with urban development and manage the financial impact of public expenditures or municipal debt on town residents from such improvements.
26. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities. Encourage business types which will benefit all the communities.
27. Encourage conservation design development to provide community facilities and services (e.g., school bus routes, snow removal, police patrol) in a cost-effective manner.



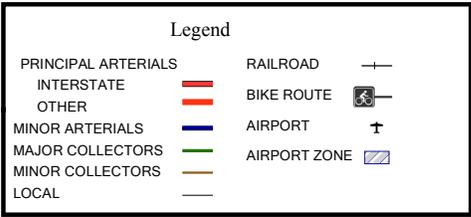
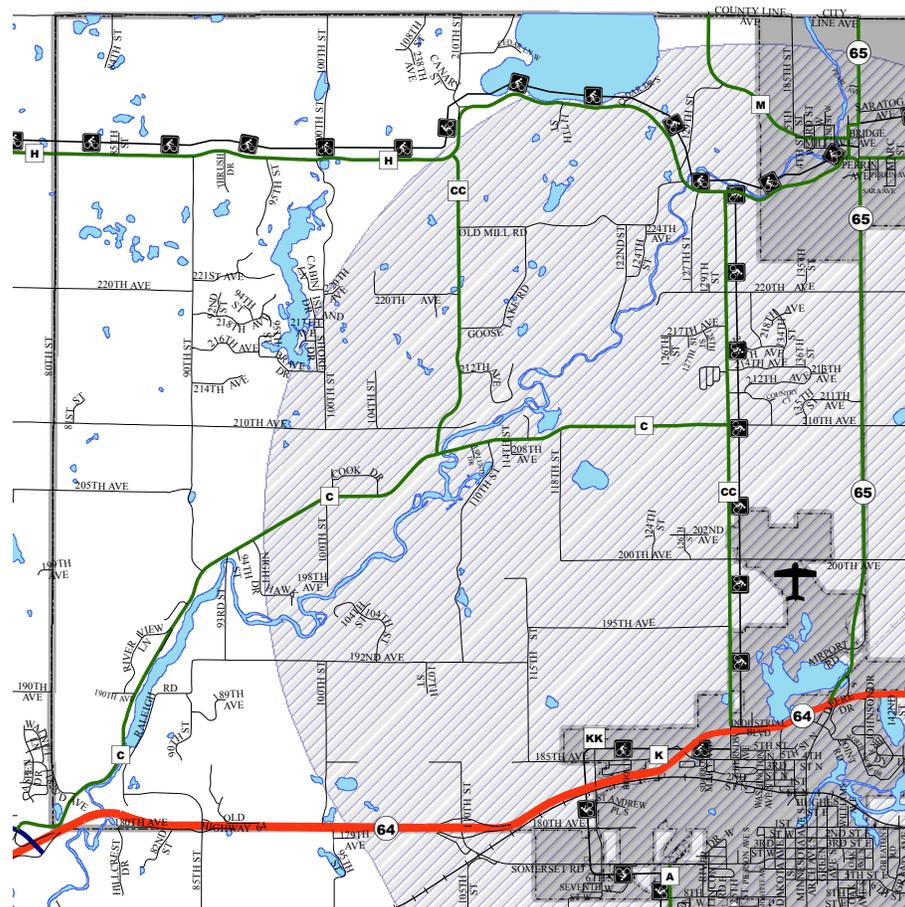
Snowmobile trails provide winter recreational opportunities for Star Prairie residents. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

TRANSPORTATION

LOCAL & COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

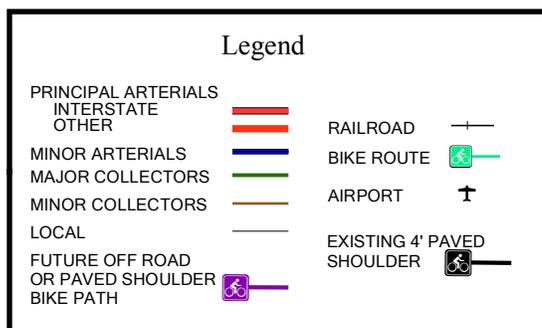
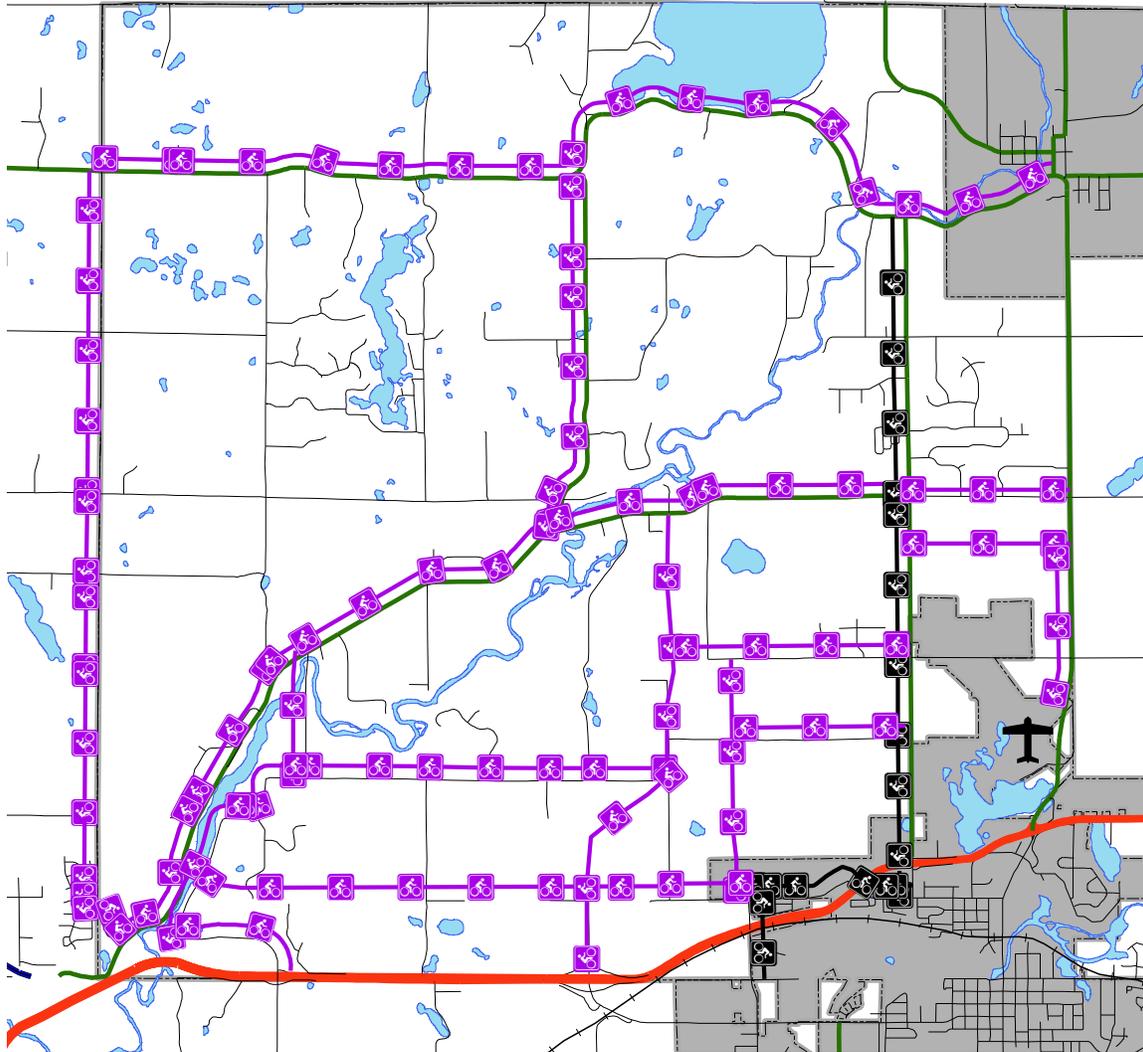
The transportation system of St. Croix County is a major factor in promoting, sustaining and directing the growth and development occurring in the county. It can have intended and unintended consequences on the manner in which a community grows; consequently, it should be addressed through planning. Planning can help manage transportation impacts by guiding and accommodating desired growth. Decisions about transportation improvements can affect land uses and land values. Similarly, economic, housing and land use decisions can increase or modify demands on transportation systems including highways, air, rail, pedestrian, bike and other modes. The Town of Star Prairie is heavily influenced by the easy access to the transportation system.

Transportation System: Star Prairie



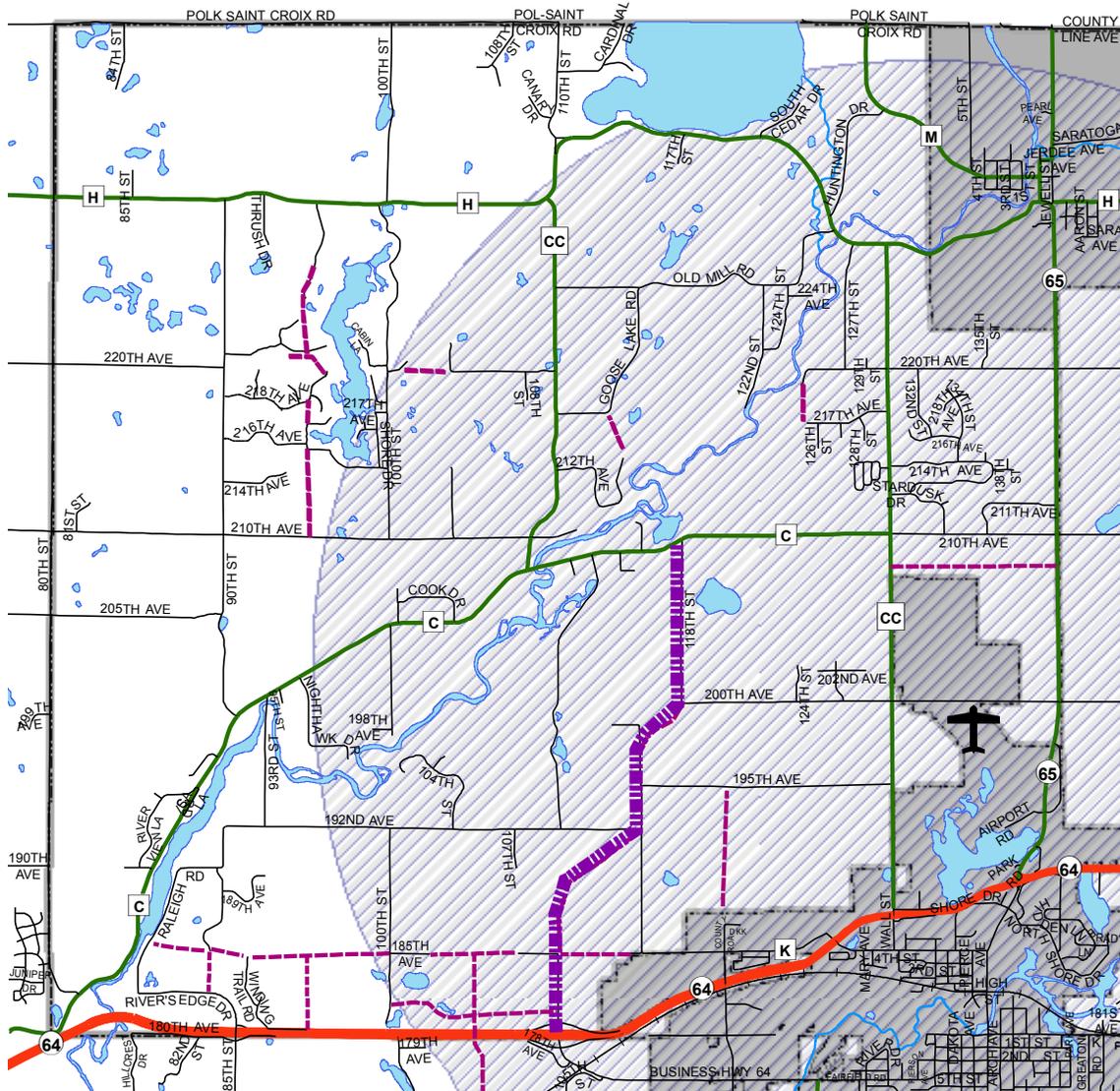
SOURCE: 1999 Functional Road Classification System, Wisconsin Department of Transportation. St. Croix County

Future Bike System: Star Prairie



SOURCE: 1999 Functional Road Classification System, Wisconsin Department of Transportation. St. Croix County

Future Transportation System: Star Prairie



Legend			
PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS			
INTERSTATE		RAILROAD	
OTHER		AIRPORT	
MINOR ARTERIALS			
MAJOR COLLECTORS		AIRPORT ZONE	
MINOR COLLECTORS		FUTURE ROAD	
LOCAL			



SOURCE: 1999 Functional Road Classification System, Wisconsin Department of Transportation. St. Croix County

TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: Star Prairie's transportation system should provide for the efficient and safe movement of people and goods; serve the planned land use pattern; minimize negative impacts such as congestion, noise and air pollution and meet the needs of multiple users and transportation modes.

Objectives:

1. Ensure that transportation system improvements are coordinated with land development desires.
2. Coordinate multi-jurisdictional (town, village, city, county, state) transportation system improvements and maintenance in the Star Prairie area.
3. Provide for safe and adequate road capacities and road conditions.
4. Support and encourage the development of transportation system improvements for biking, hiking, and other transportation modes.
5. Preserve the scenic value along certain roadways to protect and enhance the Town of Star Prairie's rural character.
6. Maintain a cost effective level of service.
7. Continue to support agricultural use of the transportation system.

Policies:

1. Plan and implement an interconnected road system consisting of extensions to existing roads and new roads to control highway access, provide for appropriate routes for trucks and emergency vehicles, preserve rural character, serve planned development areas, minimize extensive road construction and decrease road maintenance costs, as shown on the Future Transportation System map above.
2. Work with St. Croix County, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, neighboring towns, landowners and private developers to plan for and limit development and access along State Trunk Highways 64 and 65 to preserve them as throughways and scenic image corridors.
3. Adopt an official map for the Town of Star Prairie to protect future connecting road corridors and access, especially for State Highway 64 which is an expressway and will be upgraded to freeway status over the life of this plan.
4. Work with St. Croix County to update and implement Town Road Improvement Programs (TRIPs) and the Pavement Assessment Surface Evaluation Report (PASER) program to provide for the upgrading and maintenance of town roads.
5. Work, both as a town and with St. Croix County, to properly place and maintain road signs in the town so that these signs are in compliance with the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
6. Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards
7. Work with the county, state and private landowners in ensuring that road right-of-ways are clear of visual obstacles, particularly at road intersections. Road right-or-ways should be properly mowed and cleared.
8. Post weight restrictions on existing town roads as necessary and consider the weight limits on local roads when reviewing development proposals.

- 9. Discourage large amounts of “side of the road” residential and commercial development on State and County highways and arterial town roads to prevent congestion and preserve rural character and safety.
- 10. Encourage bicycle traffic to utilize less traveled town and county roadways.
- 11. Designate specific town and county roadways for bicycle traffic and improve designated bicycle routes with wide, signed shoulders or off-road bike paths, based on the Future Bike System map shown above. These changes would provide a coordinated system of bike routes to access the City of New Richmond, villages of Somerset and Star Prairie and park and school system serving town residents. It would provide better, safer connections for residents northwest and southeast of the Apple River.



There are numerous scenic roadways in the Town of Star Prairie that are popular for bicyclists, pedestrians and scenic driving. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

- 12. Pursue a bicycle/pedestrian crossing over the Apple River at 185th Street extended and Raleigh Road and connecting to CTH C.
- 13. Work with the City of New Richmond and the Multi-Purpose Pathway Committee to coordinate and sign bicycle/pedestrian routes into and out of the City of New Richmond.
- 14. Notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet height limitations and building construction standards for insulation and sound reduction. These sites may be required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.
- 15. Require developers to enter into a developers’ agreement and provide a letter of credit to repair damage to town roads caused by construction traffic.
- 16. Evaluate and implement town impact fees on new development projects to offset additional expenses to the town for adding, upgrading or expanding town parks, roads, services and facilities.
- 17. As new development occurs, discourage new private roads and explore options to make existing private roads public to improve access for emergency services, improve maintenance and decrease conflicts.
- 18. Work with St. Croix County to update, as necessary, standards for development of local and county roads to safely serve multiple functions while retaining rural character.

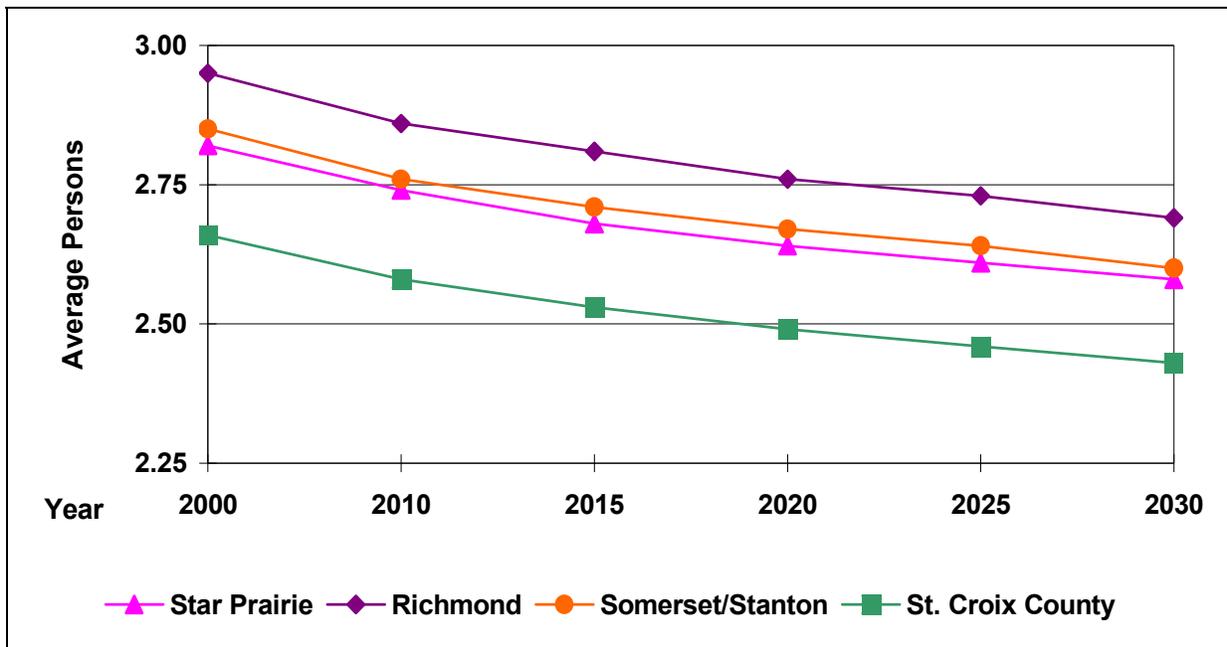
HOUSING

HOUSING GROWTH PROJECTIONS

**Persons Per Housing Unit – 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Towns**

TOWN	2000	PROJECTIONS				
		2010	2015	2020	2025	2030**
Star Prairie	2.82	2.74	2.68	2.64	2.61	2.58
Richmond	2.95	2.86	2.81	2.76	2.73	2.69
Somerset	2.85	2.76	2.71	2.67	2.64	2.60
Stanton	2.85	2.76	2.71	2.67	2.64	2.60
St. Croix County	2.66	2.58	2.53	2.49	2.46	2.43

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Wisconsin Department of Administration
** Unofficial Numbers



- The number of persons per housing unit has been declining since the 1980s. That trend is expected to continue and is reflected in the declining rates for Star Prairie and the surrounding municipalities.
- The decline is a result of smaller families with fewer children, more households with no children, more single households and elderly people living longer and remaining in their own homes longer.
- Star Prairie’s persons per housing unit rate is lower than the surrounding towns. This reflects the greater variety of housing choices available in the town and the diversity of its population.
- As population per housing unit continues to decline the town should evaluate its affect on provision of services such as road maintenance, school busing, access to health services, services for the elderly, etc.

**Housing Growth Estimates – 2000 to 2006
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Towns**

TOWN	2000	ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL UNITS			TOTAL	10-YR AVERAGE
		01-02	03-04	05-06		
Star Prairie	1079	109	116	57	1361	47
Richmond	530	178	222	146	1076	63
Somerset	963	167	168	89	1387	61
Stanton	363	6	4	5	378	3
All Towns in St. Croix County	11,443	1280	1410	869	15,002	529

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Summary File 1 and St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department

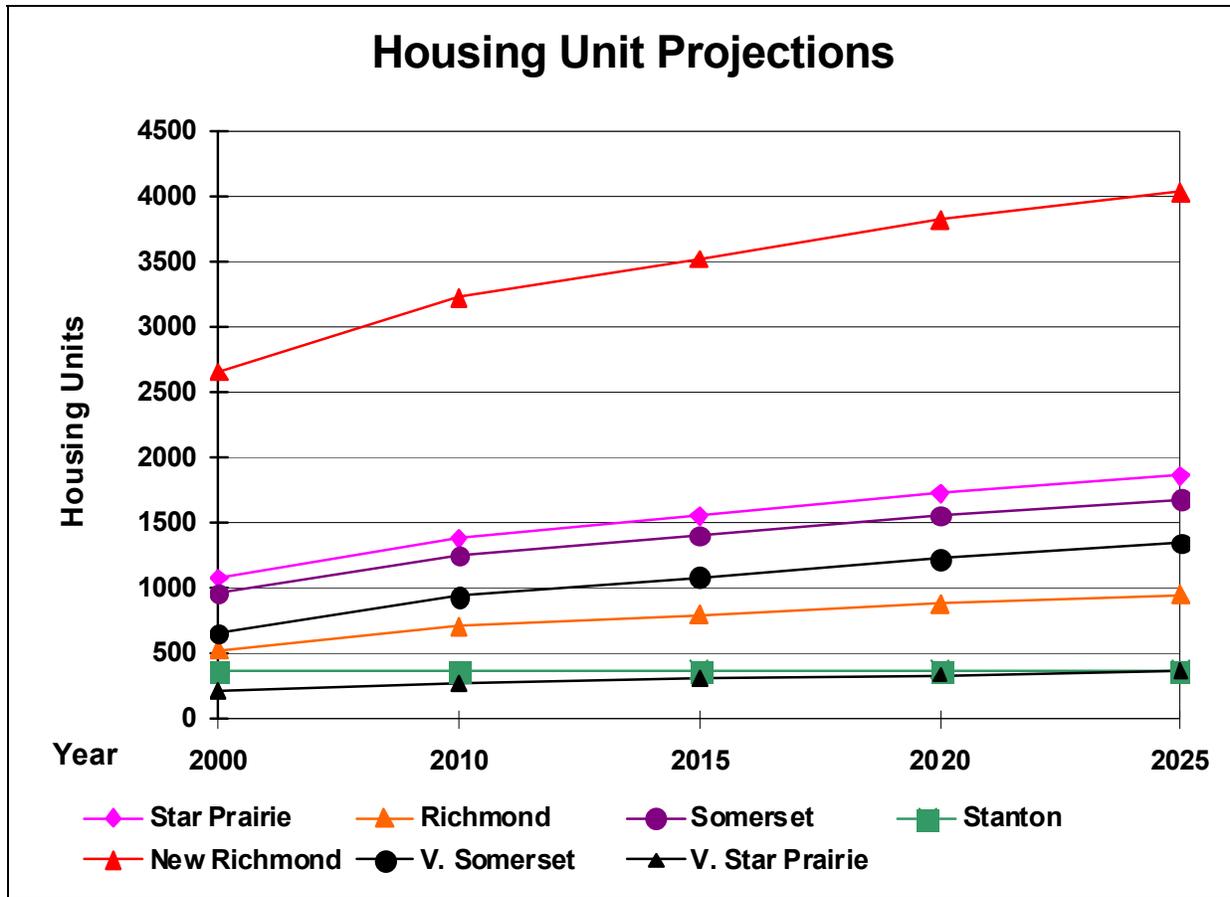
- Housing growth in Star Prairie remained fairly constant from 1998 through 2004, with about 50 new units each year. The highest number was around 65 units in 2003.
- However, housing growth in 2005 and 2006 dropped dramatically with about 40 new units in 2005 and about 20 in 2006. The recent downward trend reflects the slowing of the housing market and the economy nationwide.

**Housing Unit Projections – 2000 to 2025
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	CENSUS		PROJECTIONS			PERCENT CHANGE			
	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	00-10	10-15	15-20	20-25
Star Prairie	1079	1381	1555	1729	1863	28.0	12.6	11.2	7.8
Richmond	530	709	796	883	951	33.8	12.3	10.9	7.7
Somerset	963	1255	1408	1561	1683	30.3	12.2	10.9	7.8
Stanton	363	367	371	375	372	1.1	1.1	1.1	-0.8
C. New Richmond	2657	3225	3520	3817	4028	21.4	9.1	8.4	5.5
V. of Somerset	659	937	1081	1226	1346	42.2	15.4	13.4	9.8
V. of Star Prairie	215	278	308	339	363	29.3	10.8	10.1	7.1
St. Croix County	24,265	30,814	34,222	37,655	40,269	27.0	11.1	10.0	6.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2000 Summary File 1 and Wisconsin Department of Administration.

- The housing projections provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) are based on historic growth trends in each of the municipalities and are heavily weighted towards the most recent decade.
- Despite the recent downturn in the housing market, the Town of Star Prairie’s estimated housing units are almost at the WDOA’s estimate for 2010. Star Prairie’s growth is likely to exceed the WDOA’s projections.
- The same is true for the towns of Richmond and Somerset, which have already exceeded the WDOA’s projections.
- The towns of Star Prairie, Somerset and Richmond will likely experience similar rates of growth regardless of how much numeric growth occurs.



HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: Safe, quality housing for all Town of Star Prairie residents while maintaining a predominantly rural residential character.

Objectives:

1. All housing should be located and sited to enhance and maintain rural character.
2. All housing should be well designed and properly maintained.
3. Encourage high quality construction standards for housing.
4. Encourage owners to maintain or rehabilitate the existing housing stock.
5. Encourage housing sites in the town that meet the needs of persons within a variety of income levels, age groups, and special needs.
6. Support new developments that are primarily single-family homes or two-family homes.
7. Support a limited number of dwelling units with three or four units in a structure in conjunction with conservation design development.
8. Multi-family or multi-unit dwelling housing and additional mobile home parks are not compatible with the rural character of the town, except in those areas identified as the Boundary Agreement Area. Multi-family, multi-unit dwelling housing or a mobile home park is defined as five or more units in a structure or on a lot.
9. Ensure that home sites are safe from seasonal flooding or ponding.

Policies:

1. Plan for a sufficient supply of developable land for housing in areas consistent with town policies and of densities and types consistent with this plan.
2. To ensure high quality construction, require all housing construction to comply with the State of Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code.
3. The town may participate in and support programs and funding sources such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), that provide assistance to residents in maintaining and rehabilitating the housing stock.
4. Update land use regulations to guide the location of future residential development and protect important features of the natural environment without making existing houses nonconforming whenever possible.
5. Work with St. Croix County to maintain property to ensure a high-quality living environment within all residential areas and to address violations of applicable land use ordinances on residential, commercial or industrial properties.
6. Work with St. Croix County to update the County's and the town's land use regulations to require that relocated houses and new manufactured houses are sited on freestanding, separate parcels; are placed on permanent foundations; and are brought into compliance with the Uniform Dwelling Code to provide safe, quality housing.

- 7. Work to update county and/or town land use ordinances to require standards for manufactured or mobile homes such as: a minimum width and living space area for each unit and/or a roof on each unit with at least a 3:12 pitch.

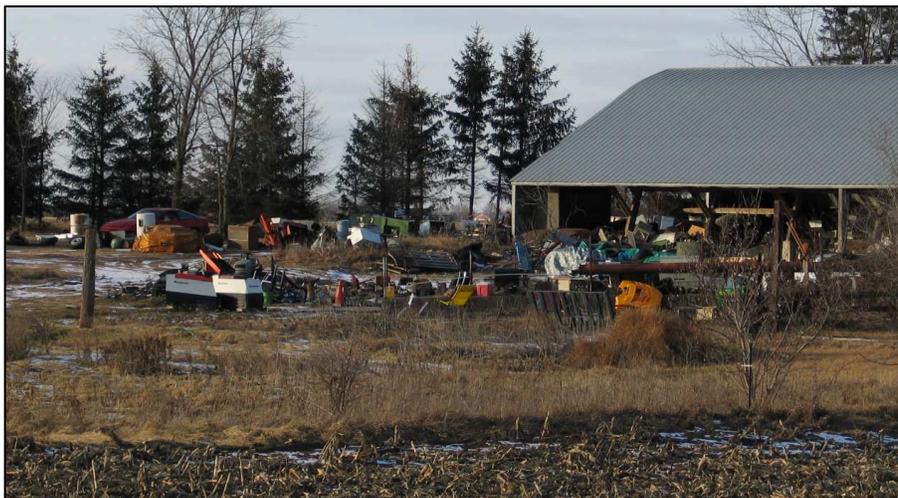
- 8. Encourage residents and mobile home park owners to ensure the safety of residents by anchoring mobile home units to frost-free foundations.

- 9. Coordinate with St. Croix County to pursue grant funding for anchoring older mobile or manufactured homes.

- 10. Additional mobile home parks or multi-family or multi-unit dwellings do not fit the rural

character of the Town of Star Prairie and should not be developed, except in the Boundary Agreement Area as designated on the Future Land Use Map. See Future Land Use section, page 235.

- 11. Promote conservation design development to preserve the rural character of the community to enable rural residential development and provide services in a cost-effective manner.
- 12. Encourage home site design that achieves rural character and farmland preservation objectives and ensures that home sites are safe from seasonal flooding or ponding.
- 13. Guide development away from hydric and alluvial soils, which are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding.
- 14. The maximum gross density for development shall depend on the location of the development. The gross density may not be the minimum lot size in all cases. In conservation design development the minimum lot size shall be 1/2 acre per dwelling unit, with a two-acre gross density. Two-acre density for conventional development and one-acre density for development in the Boundary Agreement Area as designated on the Future Land Use Map. See Future Land Use section, page 235.
- 15. Explore options to provide senior housing opportunities in the Boundary Agreement Area, as designated on the Future Land Use Map, at densities greater than one single-



Property maintenance issues are a high priority in the Town of Star Prairie. Photos by Kathy Mlynarczyk.



family unit per acre and more than four attached, single-family units. See Future Land Use section, page 235.

16. Notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet height limitations and building construction standards for insulation and sound reduction. These sites may be required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.
17. Work with St. Croix County to improve or expand St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding property maintenance and nuisance issues such as junk vehicles and dilapidated buildings.
18. Work with St. Croix County to expand the St. Croix County Animal Waste and the Zoning ordinances to regulate large-scale farms near existing residences.



Junk vehicles are also an important issue in the Town of Star Prairie. Photos by Kathy Mlynarczyk.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economy of a community can be an important determining factor driving land use and development. The incomes of Town of Star Prairie residents are directly related to employment and other economic opportunities, and employment is dependent on the local, county and regional economies. Property values and taxation rates can reveal economic trends and relative differences between communities.

TYPES OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

Commercial/Industrial Operations & Employment -- 2007 Town of Star Prairie

BUSINESS	ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT	PRODUCT
Apostle Septic Service	2	Septic Systems
B&E Welding	2-3	Welding Supply
Bristol Ridge Golf Course		Recreation & Food Service
Cedar Creek Inn	3 full-time, 7 part-time	Food Service
Cedar Lake Speedway	5 year-round, 50 seasonal	Car Racing
Chuck Nutzmann & Sons	4	Excavation
Eagle Storage	1	Storage Units
Flandrick Tree Nursery	1-5	Nursery
Garden Expressions	1-2	Greenhouse
Gary's Scrap Metal	1-4	Recycling Metals
Highway 65 Storage	1	Storage Units
Jackelen's Landing	1-2	Private Boat Landing
Kirk's Auto Body	3	Auto Body Repair
LaVigne Leather, 1502 CTH C	1-4	Leather & Leather Products
Meister's	6-10	Restaurant & Bar
Mondor Excavation	4	Excavating & Septic
Outpost Bar & Grill	5 full-time, 15 part-time	Restaurant & Bar
Oswald's Tractor Repair	1-2	Tractor Repair
Power's Septic	2	Septic Systems
Raboin's Auto Repair	3	Auto Body Repair
Riverbend Picture & Framing	1	Custom Framing
River's Edge	14-18 full-time, 35-40 full-time seasonal, 20-25 part-time seasonal	Restaurant, Campground & Tubing
Rosebud	1	Ceramics, Cakes
S&S Coating	55-99	Teflon finishing & Coating
Sandbox Inc.		Indoor Motocross Racing
St. Croix Harley Davidson	20-30	Motorcycle Sales, Service & Retail
The Patch	2 full-time, 10-15 full-time seasonal	Strawberries
Tom Kunz & Borgstrom	2-3	HVAC Services
T-N-T Metals	1-2	Welding
Valley Custom Oak	3	Cabinetry
Xcel Energy	1-2 part-time	Power Dam
Total	220 full-time,	

Source: Star Prairie Plan Commission Members

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: The Town of Star Prairie will support economic development activities appropriate to the resources, character and service levels of the town and that strengthen the local economy while maintaining its commitment to the town's environmental needs. Large-scale industrial and commercial development should be directed to St. Croix County's urban centers. Rural economic development should promote alternative agricultural and forestry-based opportunities and industrial and commercial development with minimal infrastructure needs.

Objectives:

1. Identify locations for future environmentally-friendly businesses to locate within the Town.
2. Encourage the redevelopment and reuse of the town's existing commercial sites.
3. Retain and help grow existing farms and businesses.
4. Support home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.
5. Plan for an adequate supply of developable land for commercial and industrial uses in logical areas consistent with the town's plan elements.
6. Consider the conservation of non-renewable resources and the rural character when evaluating a commercial development request.
7. Support economic development efforts for farming and farm-related businesses.
8. Prevent unplanned commercial development along major roadways.

Policies:

1. Support the continued operation and/or expansion of existing farms and businesses in Star Prairie.
2. Support the economic health of alternative agriculture in the Town of Star Prairie.
3. Support fruit, vegetable and tree farms and greenhouses in the town, designed to supply food to local farmers markets and grocery stores in the area.
4. Discourage factory-type, large-scale farms such as confinement hog, poultry and others that have the potential to degrade the air quality, water quality and current character of the town.
5. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities. Encourage business types which will benefit all the communities.



Star Prairie has many small businesses that serve the community. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

6. Direct new commercial and industrial development to those areas identified in the land use section of this comprehensive plan.
7. New commercial activities should be located in a node at the intersection of 110th Street and STH 64 and along STH 65 near the New Richmond airport.
8. Work with St. Croix Economic Development Corporation to assist in locating potential new businesses.
9. Promote higher quality development and minimize the negative impacts of commercial and industrial development in the Town through the use of restrictive covenants, zoning restrictions and design standards.
10. The Town should consider developing a site plan review process to identify minimum standards for commercial and industrial sites. These could include all commercial and industrial development in the Town but flexibility should be allowed to address the concerns of existing businesses. The Town should encourage St. Croix County to adopt similar requirements/regulations.
11. Commercial and industrial site plans should include parking preferably behind buildings and parking lot landscaping standards, including landscaped islands or rain gardens within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt.



A site plan review process would improve the design and layout of commercial operations in the town. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

12. Business signage, landscaping, screening and lighting should be compatible with the rural character of Star Prairie.
13. Lighting should be shielded and downward directed with no spillover onto neighboring properties and should have specific illumination timeframes to maintain dark skies.
14. Landscaping and screening should include visual screening standards and setback buffers between residential and industrial or

commercial land uses.

15. Work with businesses to maintain and protect the air quality, water quality and rural character of Star Prairie.
16. Require the disclosure of any soil or groundwater contamination on sites before approving development proposals.
17. Work together with private landowners and government agencies to clean up contaminated sites that threaten the public health, safety and welfare.
18. Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. When necessary, environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.
19. Commercial and industrial development should be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town's primary drainage corridors, which

include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. These parkways would allow the corridors to remain mostly undeveloped as wildlife corridors, contribute to preserving the Town's rural atmosphere, provide stormwater management areas and provide potential trail linkages to the rest of the Town. Where appropriate, the Town should require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.

20. Work with St. Croix County to permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.



Home-based businesses should not detract from the rural atmosphere of the Town. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

There are many different aspects of agriculture which could be evaluated as part of a discussion of this resource, farming practices, economic impacts, rural interaction, and aesthetics just to name a few. However, in evaluating those which can be influenced by local decision-makers it becomes immediately apparent that state and national policies have more impact on the future of agriculture than local land-use decisions. In spite of state and national influences, agriculture is still very important at the local level, whether as a “way of life,” due to job impact, as a tax base or because of the aesthetic values of the rural scene.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Prime farmland is the land that is best suited to food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. It may be cultivated land, pasture, woodland or other land, but it is not existing urban and built-up land, or water areas. The soil qualities, growing season and moisture supply are factors needed for a well-managed soil to produce a sustained high-yield of crops in an economic manner. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources, and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. Historically, soils that fall into classes I, II, and III of the Soil Conservation Service's capability unit classification system are considered prime agricultural lands. The value of these lands for agriculture is associated with not only their soil class, but also with their size, present use and any regulatory framework for their protection.

SUITABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in establishing a uniform, national identification of productive farmlands created a soil classification system that categorizes soils by their relative agricultural productivity. There are two categories of highly productive soils, national prime farmland and farmland of statewide significance. National prime farmland is well suited for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and has the soil qualities, available moisture and growing season required to produce economically sustained high yields of crops when properly managed. Farmland of statewide significance are those lands in addition to national prime farmland which are of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. Soils that fall into classes I, II, and III of the Natural Resources Conservation Service's capability unit classification system are considered prime agricultural lands.

In 1981, NRCS developed a new system for evaluating agricultural lands, “Land Evaluation and Site Assessment,” (LESA) which uses more detailed considerations of soil capability and potential yields, and provides for the assessment of factors beyond soil productivity in the determination of agricultural potential. The system is now widely used throughout the U.S. The LESA system presents the opportunity to define agricultural lands that have the most productive potential.

LAND EVALUATION AND SITE ASSESSMENT FOR AGRICULTURE

The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system is a point-based approach that is generally used for rating the relative value of agricultural land resources. In basic terms, a given LESA model is created by defining and measuring two separate sets of factors. The first set, **Land Evaluation**, includes factors that measure the inherent soil-based qualities of land as they relate to agricultural suitability. The second set, **Site Assessment**, includes factors that are intended to measure social, economic and geographic attributes that also contribute to the overall value of agricultural land. While this dual rating approach is common to all LESA models, the individual land evaluation and site assessment factors that are ultimately utilized and measured can vary considerably, and can be selected to meet the local or regional needs and conditions a LESA model is designed to address. The LESA methodology lends itself well to adaptation and customization in individual states and localities. Also in addition to ranking soils for agricultural potential, the LESA system can provide a systematic and objective way to evaluate and numerically rank soils for their relative value for any specific use.

The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system is an analytical tool used to assist decision makers in comparing agricultural sites based on their agricultural value. The LESA system provides an objective and consistent tool to aid decision-makers in evaluating the relative importance of specific sites for continued agricultural use. In this sense, it is a tool for determining the best use of a site. While in some cases the best use may be some type of development, there are many other situations where the best use is to remain in agriculture. Also, there may be instances where the land is not suitable for agriculture, but neither is it a suitable location for development. In such situations the LESA system is a valuable tool for determining the use with the least detrimental impact to the environment, economy and aesthetics.

As noted earlier, there are two components to the LESA system; the **Land Evaluation (LE)** portion of the system, which is based on soils and their characteristics, and the **Site Assessment (SA)** portion of the system, which rates other attributes affecting a site's relative importance for agricultural use. The Land Evaluation portion is stable and unchanging because the soils do not change and the data relative to those soils takes a long time to accumulate. The Site Assessment is dynamic and changes on a continual basis because there are regular changes in development, property ownership, roadway improvements, sewer expansions, etc. happening throughout an area.

A LESA system was developed for St. Croix County by a committee consisting of members of the Land and Water Conservation and Planning and Zoning committees; citizens; town officials; county staff from the Land and Water Conservation, Zoning and Planning departments; and NRCS staff. A detailed manual describing how the County's LESA system works and how it was developed is available from the St. Croix County Land Conservation Department. As an appropriate base of information for the agricultural productivity of land in the Town of Star Prairie only the Land Evaluation component of LESA is discussed here.

Many physical and chemical soil properties are considered in the LE rating, either directly or indirectly, including soil texture and rock fragments, slope, wetness and flooding, soil erodibility, climate, available water capacity, pH (alkalinity versus acidity), and permeability. Three soil property indexes are combined to produce the LE soil component rating, Productivity Index for corn and alfalfa, Land Capability Class and National Prime Farmland. This produces a rating that reflects the most important soil considerations for agricultural use in St. Croix County. Higher numbers mean greater value for agriculture. LE ratings reflect this productivity potential, as well as the economic and environmental costs of producing a crop. Possible LE ratings range from 0 to 100.

The LESA Committee with assistance from the St. Croix County Land Conservation Department and the District NRCS Soil Scientist selected soils with a score of 50 or more as the soils with agricultural production potential. The Potentially Productive Agriculture Map of the Physical Features map series depicts the LESA Agricultural Soils with a score of 50 or more. Please see the map below.

The LESA system is very flexible. It could be adapted to fit the needs of decision-makers at the local level. Procedures, and information on developing entire LESA systems, are in guidebooks, manuals and other literature, which are available from the NRCS. Local decision-makers can use the guidance to develop a LESA system, which evaluates land, based on local objectives for preservation and management. The Town of Star Prairie may want to address potential application of the LESA system in its goals, objectives and policies and may want to explore and evaluate its potential use within the town as part of the implementation section.

WORKING LANDS INITIATIVE

The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative was passed as a part of the state's 2009-2011 biennial budget process. The initiative can be found primarily in Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. The goals of the initiative is to achieve preservation of areas significant for current and future agricultural uses through successful implementation of these components:

- Expand and modernize the state's existing farmland preservation program.
- Establish agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs)
- Develop a purchase of agricultural conservation easement matching grant program (PACE).

Expand And Modernize The State's Existing Farmland Preservation Program

- Modernize county farmland preservation plans to meet current challenges
- Provide planning grants to reimburse counties for farmland preservation planning
- Establish new minimum zoning standards to increase local flexibility and reduce land use conflicts; local governments may apply more stringent standards
- Increase income tax credits for program participants
- Improve consistency between local plans and ordinances
- Simplify the certification process and streamline state oversight
- Ensure compliance with state soil and water conservation standards
- Collect a flat per acre conversion fee when land under farmland preservation zoning is re-zoned for other uses

Establish Agricultural Enterprise Areas

- Maintain large areas of contiguous land primarily in agricultural use and reduce land use conflicts
- Encourage farmers and local governments to invest in agriculture
- Provide an opportunity to enter into farmland preservation agreements to claim income tax credits
- Encourage compliance with state soil and water conservation standards

Develop A Purchase Of Agricultural Conservation Easement (Pace) Grant Program

- Protect farmland through voluntary programs to purchase agricultural conservation easements
- Provide up to \$12 million in state grant funds in the form of matching grants to local governments and non-profit conservation organizations to purchase agricultural conservation easements from willing sellers
- Stretch state dollars by requiring grants to be matched by other funds such as federal grants, local contributions and/or private donations
- Establish a council to advise the state on pending grants and proposed easement purchases
- Consider the value of the proposed easement for preservation of agricultural productivity, conservation of agricultural resources, ability to protect or enhance waters of the state, and proximity to other protected land
- Ensure consistency of state-funded easement purchases with local plans and ordinances

The Working Lands Initiative is still in the development stage. Up-to- date information is available from the State's website: <http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/workinglands/index.jsp>.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION & EXCLUSIVE AG ZONING

This section would not be complete without a discussion of farmland preservation and exclusive agriculture zoning in St. Croix County. In 1980 the St. Croix County Board of Supervisors adopted a Farmland Preservation Plan. The Plan was intended to guide development away from the most valuable agricultural resources in the County. The plan was written with extensive input from citizens and local officials, especially towns. The Farmland Preservation plan identified several tools for farmland protection. The only tool that was implemented was exclusive agriculture zoning. The other tools, identifying growth areas and setting development density in conjunction with smaller lot sizes, were not accepted. The plan was developed between 1978 and 1980 as a result of development pressures that had been accelerating since 1975. A Farmland Planning Advisory Committee was formed in September 1977. This committee met monthly for two years to apply for a grant, and develop the farmland preservation plan.

It is interesting that 25 years ago citizens were concerned with the same issues that are discussed today. The following are quotes from the Farmland Preservation Plan that illustrate some of the discussions and conclusions.

“Alarmed by rapid changes in the landscape, residents have expressed concern for controlling development.”

“The survey results confirm popular support for land use planning to preserve farmlands.”

“Development in rural areas has resulted in repeated conflicts between farm and nonfarm neighbors—complaints by nonfarm residents about odor and noise, increased valuations on farmland which can't be offset by increased production, dogs running loose bothering livestock—to name a few.”

“A farming area can comfortably withstand a certain amount of development. However, when the balance shifts away from agriculture, farmers left in the area often lose the alternative to continue farming. Farm service businesses move out of local communities and farmers find themselves having to drive several miles to replace parts, repair machinery and obtain supplies.”

“There are also social and environmental costs of rural nonfarm development.”

“From an environmental standpoint, land, once developed, is essentially lost forever to agriculture. Land being a finite resource, wise stewardship would dictate that the most productive land be saved to produce food for this and future generations.”

“In St. Croix County, there is still time to take measures to protect land and guarantee an agricultural community for future generations.”

“Throughout the last five years (from 1975 to 1980) citizen interest has been the key moving force behind the concern over loss of farmland, and the planning process.”

“The entire farmland preservation issue was initiated by citizens. Citizens have fostered measures to preserve agricultural land through the Task Force and the Advisory Committee.”

“There are many hard questions to be answered. The public good must be weighed against the presumed right of owners to use the land however they, as individuals, see fit.”

In a review of the community input from that time, it is clear that a substantial majority of rural residents supported protection of agricultural resources. Prior to 1974, St. Croix County ordinances required public sewer and water for all lots between one and five acres in size. In 1974, the County enacted a new set of ordinances that allowed one acre unsewered lots and set distinct requirements for minor and major subdivisions. As a result of these changes rural residential lot creation rose dramatically between 1975 and 1979. As a result, many towns took several steps to slow residential development.

The towns of Baldwin, Cylon, Kinnickinnic, Stanton and Warren adopted subdivision ordinances prohibiting major subdivisions unless they were located on municipal sewer and water. The towns of Cylon, Stanton, Baldwin and Pleasant Valley also adopted larger lot size provisions in their subdivision ordinances. Finally, the towns of Cylon, Stanton, Star Prairie, Somerset, St. Joseph, Erin Prairie, Baldwin, Troy, Pleasant Valley, Rush River and Eau Galle towns implemented exclusive agricultural zoning, in conjunction with the County. In one case the adoption of exclusive agriculture zoning occurred even before the Farmland Preservation Plan was adopted by St. Croix County. The Town of Star Prairie's exclusive agriculture zoning was adopted on November 12, 1986.

Historically there has been some confusion about the difference between exclusive agricultural zoning, farmland preservation contracts and the income tax incentive associated with each. The farmland preservation contracts are a contract between the farmer or landowner and the state, in return for agreeing not to develop his land the owner gets tax rebates based on a formula. The tax rebates are increased if a farmland preservation plan is adopted and certified by the state.

The farmland preservation plan was certified by the state for most of the towns in St. Croix County, including the Town of Star Prairie. Under the contract, the landowner can not get 100 percent of the formula, he can only get 50 or 70 percent.

Exclusive agriculture zoning is also based on the farmland preservation plan, it is adopted by ordinance enacted by both the town and county. With exclusive agriculture zoning a landowner may receive tax rebates at 100 percent of the formula. The chart at right shows the amount of land in exclusive agricultural zoning in Star Prairie and the other towns in St. Croix County.

***Acres in Exclusive Ag Zoning -- 2009
St. Croix County***

TOWN	EXCLUSIVE AGRICULTURE		AG RESIDENTIAL	
	ACRES	% OF TOWN	ACRES	% OF TOWN
Baldwin	14,827	71.8%	5,257	25.5%
Cady	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cylon	14,641	63.1%	4,855	20.9%
Eau Galle	4,958	23.6%	15,687	74.8%
Emerald	0	0.0%	22,385	100.0%
Erin Prairie	19,806	86.9%	2,231	9.8%
Forest	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Glenwood	0	0.0%	21,985	93.2%
Hammond	0	0.0%	20,943	98.9%
Hudson	0	0.0%	10,969	68.2%
Kinnickinnic	0	0.0%	22,070	98.2%
Pleasant Valley	8,718	75.6%	2,615	22.7%
Richmond	0	0.0%	19,249	93.2%
Rush River	9,254	81.3%	1,462	12.8%
Somerset	4,922	15.8%	25,270	81.4%
Springfield	0	0.0%	21,252	96.8%
Stanton	17,919	84.3%	1,196	5.6%
Star Prairie	3,547	17.5%	16,375	80.9%
St. Joseph	1,821	8.2%	18,405	83.3%
Troy	10,899	45.9%	12,598	53.1%
Warren	0	0.0%	21,332	96.2%
St. Croix County	111,782	25.0%	266,260	59.6%

Source: St. Croix County Planning & Zoning 2009

AGRICULTURE GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: Preserve the town's agricultural character while allowing residential development. Protect high quality agricultural resources and farming as an occupation in the Town of Star Prairie.

Objectives:

1. Allow development in locations, forms and densities, which supports the preservation of agriculture and rural character.
2. Preserve highly productive farmlands for continued agricultural use.
3. Encourage land preservation programs.
4. Discourage land uses that conflict with agriculture.
5. Encourage traditional and nontraditional farming.
6. Manage the pace of growth to help limit conflicts between agriculture and non-agricultural land uses.
7. Develop and support policies that strengthen and maintain a farm operator's right to farm with farm practices that do not threaten public health or safety.
8. Support preexisting farm operations in conflict with non-farm uses.
9. Protect surface and groundwater quality.

Policies:

1. Support the continued operation and/or expansion of existing farms in Star Prairie.

2. Support exclusive agriculture zoning, agricultural enterprise area designation and other land use measures, which discourage non-farm development in identified Agricultural Preservation Areas, specifically the Star Prairie Flats in sections 4, 5, 6, & 7, the west half of section 14 and the east half of section 15 up to the Apple River, and the west half of section 1 and east half of section 2. Please see the proposed Squaw Lake Agricultural Enterprise Area narrative and map on the Star Prairie Town website.



Traditional agricultural is still an important part of the economy and landscape in the Town of Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

3. Support buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas and between these areas and rural residential subdivisions consisting of gradually larger lot, lower density development. The variety in zones will increase compatibility with agricultural uses, provide a range of agriculture uses and greater choices in housing options in the town. Work with St. Croix County to implement these buffer zones through amendments to the zoning ordinance.
4. Support farmland tax credits, use value assessments, and other programs that encourage the continued use of land for farming.

5. Promote agricultural practices, which protect surface and ground water quality, including proper erosion control, manure management and storm water management strategies.
6. Support the economic health of alternative agriculture in the Town of Star Prairie.
7. Support fruit, vegetable and tree farms and greenhouses in the town, designed to supply food to local farmers markets and grocery stores in the area.
8. Discourage factory-type, large-scale farms such as confinement hog, poultry and others that have the potential to degrade the air quality, water quality and current character of the town.
9. Develop and support policies that strengthen and maintain a farm operator's right to farm with farm practices that do not threaten public health or safety.



Crop production is still viable in Star Prairie. Larger farm equipment and field sizes mean changes in the types and number of farms. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

10. Notify all new building applicants about the Right to Farm Law and that this is a farming area with associated smell, noise and dust.
11. Require that new residents receive a copy of St. Croix County's Rural Living Guide that outlines the traditional community norms and expectations for rural residents.
12. Develop a Rural Living Guide insert and provide copies to all new residents

as part of the building permit/inspection process.

13. Promote use of the forestry "best management practices" as minimum standards for logging and encourage forest landowners to enroll in the State's Managed Forest Land Program.
14. Restrict residential and commercial development to areas least suited for agricultural purposes because it is unproductive soils, there is no history of farming or it is inaccessible.
15. Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas and productive farm and forest lands.
16. Promote conservation design development/clustering as a method to preserve open agricultural ground.
17. Protect the visual quality of scenic roadways through site planning, driveway location, landscaping, signage, and other standards.
18. Prevent the layout of streets or driveways across and adjacent to agricultural land in order to reach non-farm development, unless no other alignment is possible. Place driveways along property lines, fencerows or existing vegetation wherever possible. Avoid stubbing roads for future development to agricultural land, especially agricultural preservation areas. Decrease conflicts between agricultural uses and non-farm uses by directing traffic to alternative routes.

19. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.
20. If authority is developed, establish a voluntary, market driven transfer of development rights program to discourage scattered development, promote rural residential development on the most suitable lands for development and encourage protection of prime agricultural lands. Generally sending areas would be those areas identified as remaining Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands or Open Space and the receiving areas would be the water service and Boundary Agreement areas.
21. Delineate, refine and protect “environmental corridors” as a composite of the Town’s most sensitive natural areas.
22. Identify environmentally sensitive areas most likely to be subject to rapid degradation and work to protect these areas first.
23. Prioritize the use of incentives and acquisition (land or easements) to protect environmentally sensitive areas, relying on regulations where necessary.
24. Before approving any changes in land use, consider the impact on wildlife habitat, rare plant and animal species, and archeological sites.
25. Undertake concerted efforts to improve water quality in the most impacted watersheds.
26. Protect and restore natural shoreline areas in the town.



Town of Star Prairie uplands are important wildlife habitat and are very compatible with agriculture. Photo by Mike Burke.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Star Prairie has a rich natural history, which is the basis for its present physical characteristics. Over 100 years of immigrant settlement and resource use have altered the physical characteristics of the landscape. The people who reside in it value the natural environment and the physical influences that make up the rural landscape. Natural features are important to consider when planning for future uses. The rural character of the Town of Star Prairie is an important consideration as well. This inventory of the physical features of the town describes the impacts of development on those features, and provides an analysis of systems that might be employed to mitigate the impacts of possible development on the landscape.

COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

Environmental corridors offer a mechanism to identify, evaluate and devise protection or management strategies for the most apparent valued resources in the county. However, considering environmental corridors does not address the overall natural resource base of the county including surface or ground water quality, fisheries, wildlife, manageable forests and the diversity of plants and animals.

The environmental corridors mechanism does not address retaining agriculture and rural character, managing stormwater better, preserving or creating a sense of place, and reducing infrastructure costs.

Rural residential development has the potential for creating the greatest impacts on the landscape of Town of Star Prairie. There are development patterns which are sensitive to the environmental resources and unique landscape contained in potential development sites which can address other issues, such as retaining agriculture and rural character, preserving or creating a sense of place, and reducing infrastructure costs.

Existing subdivision controls and zoning only provide for the distribution of roughly equal sized lots, which consume virtually the entire site, leaving no open space. Conventional subdivisions developed under these existing regulations are typically characterized by houses with mostly views of other houses.

Open Space or Conservation Design is an alternative site design technique which takes into account the individual environmental and landscape characteristics of the site, provides the same number of housing units built on smaller lots, and accommodates a variety of desirable objectives, including setting aside substantial amounts of open space, protecting environmental features and wildlife habitat, preserving rural character and scenic views, accommodating better stormwater management, preserving agricultural land, allowing shared wells and on-site wastewater treatment, creating a sense of place, and reducing the amount of roads and other infrastructure.

Through the management or, where necessary, prohibition of development in environmental corridors, and the flexibility of open space or conservation site design, there is the potential to dramatically reduce the negative impacts of development on the towns' natural resource base, scenic quality and rural character.

NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: To protect, preserve, conserve, enhance and carefully use the Town of Star Prairie's precious natural resources.

Objectives:

1. Recognize the environment as an integrated system of land, water and air resources, the destruction or disturbance of which can immediately affect the community by creating hazards, destroying important public resources and habitat or damaging productive lands and property.
2. Preserve Star Prairie's most important and sensitive natural resources and areas.
3. Protect and improve the quality of the surface water, groundwater and shoreline within the town.
4. Identify and protect unique natural resources such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands and prairies.
5. Encourage the use of soil conservation practices and the management of woodlands.
6. Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas, natural resources and productive forest lands.
7. Preserve the Town's scenic beauty, heritage and archeological resources.
8. Engage in intergovernmental cooperation to protect natural resources.

Policies:

1. Guide the location and design of development to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands, prairie and agriculture.
2. Preserve and protect natural landscape features such as wetlands, floodplains, streams, lakes, steep slopes, woodlands, prairies and oak savannas as essential components of the hydrologic system, valuable wildlife habitat, to restore degraded resources where possible and to emphasize their value to the community as potential focal points of natural beauty and recreation.
3. Discourage and where possible, prevent the altering of wetlands and floodplains by filling or developing.
4. Encourage the management of woodlands in an effort to promote further value for timber and wildlife; the State's Managed Forest Land Program is one option.



Preservation of unique natural resources such as the Apple River is a high priority in the Town of Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

5. Before approving any changes in land use, consider the impacts on wildlife habitat, potential locations of rare plant and animal species and archeological sites.
6. Delineate, refine and protect “environmental corridors” as a composite of Star Prairie’s most sensitive natural areas.
7. Identify environmentally sensitive areas most likely to be subject to rapid degradation and work to protect these areas first.
8. Prioritize the use of incentives and acquisition (land or easements) to protect environmentally sensitive areas, relying on regulations where necessary.
9. Work with other local, state, county and federal agencies to improve water quality in the most impacted watersheds, especially Squaw Lake and the Apple River.



Cedar Lake is also an important natural resource the Town plans to preserve and restore. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

10. Protect and restore natural shoreline areas in the town.
11. Encourage natural landscaping, especially along shorelines, utilizing native plant species and minimizing turf to protect and enhance surface and groundwater quality.
12. Promote the proper placement of new on-site wastewater systems and appropriate maintenance and replacement of older systems as a means to protect ground-water quality.
13. Consider protection and enhancement of sensitive natural resources, open and recreational space, large blocks of forestland and scenic vistas when reviewing development proposals and making public expenditures.
14. Support the continued identification and protection of key natural resources in Star Prairie.
15. Encourage the County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.
16. Encourage and support a buffer zone around public lands to mitigate conflicts between property owners and citizens utilizing public lands for recreation. Such a zone could be created with a principal structure setback of 150 feet from the lot line on properties adjacent to publicly-owned lands.
17. Coordinate and work with other governmental and private agencies such as the Squaw Lake Management District, Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, WDNR, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to protect natural resources, especially those that cross political boundaries such as rivers.
18. Support and work with the county on slope disturbance standards. Development should only be allowed on steep slopes with a grade from 12 to 20 percent where best

- management practices for erosion and sediment control and storm water management can be implemented successfully.
19. Direct proposed development in areas where soil characteristics are compatible with the proposed development.
 20. Promote development and agricultural practices, which protect surface and ground water quality, including proper erosion control, manure management and storm water management strategies.
 21. Encourage conservation design development for sites with unique or exceptional natural resources such as surface water, wetlands, steep slopes or highly productive agricultural soils.
 22. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.
 23. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.



Scenic countryside in Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Preservation of historic, archeological, cultural and scenic resources in the Town of Star Prairie will foster a sense of pride in the community, improve quality of life, contribute to the preservation of rural character, encourage low-impact tourism and provide an important feeling of social and cultural continuity between the past, present and future.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

In 1983, the Wisconsin State Historical Society compiled a historic resources list of historic sites in Wisconsin communities. The historic resources list for Star Prairie does not include any historic sites that are listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places. It does include archeological sites that are included in the Wisconsin Archeological Site Inventory database and many historic sites identified through local historical groups, newspaper stories and other resources. Since the list was created, many resources may have been moved, lost or changed.

Using the historic resources list as a starting point, the Star Prairie Plan Commission members identified additional sites using local residents, historic documents and other state resources such as the Century Farm and Home and Sesquicentennial programs. Much of the information was gathered during the development of the Community Background section. A final listing of Star Prairie's historic resources is identified below. Please note that some sites are not specifically identified to provide protection for the resource and property owners from trespassing, sight-seeing and looting.

- The old Town Hall, also known as the Riverview School, Johannesburg, built in 1923, CTHs C and CC, Section 21.
- Oakland Cemetery, platted in 1893, CTH CC, Section 13.
- Cemetery at the St. Croix County Health Center, CTH K, Section 35.
- Unnamed Gravesite, Section 25.
- Phillips' Graves, Section 36.
- Rivard Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 31.
- Maitrejean Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 30.
- SCA and other Unnamed Historic and Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 25.
- Orville Mosher Collection Prehistoric Campsite/village, Sections 8, 9 & 36
- Riverdale Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 30.
- Unnamed Site Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 11.
- Unnamed Site Prehistoric and Woodland Campsite/village, Sections 2 & 3.
- Airport Fill, Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 25.
- Hatfield Park, Prehistoric and historic Campsite/village, Section 36.
- Possible Indian Mound and Prehistoric Campsite/village around Strand Lake, Section 23.
- Riverdale Dam Powerhouse on Riverdale Flowage, CTH C, Section 31.
- Huntingdon dam structure footings & remnants located on the Apple River, St. Croix County's Apple River County Park Property, Section 11.
- McClure dam structure footings & remnants located on the Apple River, Harlan Vehrs & Leon Orr properties, Section 14.
- Campbell's Mill structure footings & remnants located near the flume and behind the Cedar Creek Inn on Cedar Creek, Section 11.
- Pamela & Bruce Emerson Century Farm, 2087 CTH CC, established 1889, 118 years, Section 24.
- Lyle and Ruth Halvorson Century Farm, 1987 93rd Street, established 1881, 126 years, Section 29.

- Ron Engh Barn, site of first Barn Art Fair.
- Squaw Lake School, now a single-family home, Section 9.
- First School in Star Prairie, now the Genevieve Francois Farm Granary, Section 23.
- Wall Street School, now a single-family home known as the Berget House, Section 23.
- Riverdale School, now a single-family home, Section 29.
- Gerald Backes Windmill & Farmstead, 110th St., Section 28.
- Doug Rivard Farmstead, Polk/St. Croix Road, Section 4.
- Jeff Levy & MaryEllen Stewart House & Farmstead, 110th St., Section 21.
- Genevieve Francois House & Farmstead, CTH CC, Section 23.
- Bob & Alice Talmage Windmill, 118th St., Section 18.
- Harlan Vehrs Windmill, CTH C, Section 14.

Mapped archeological sites are predominantly burial sites. Under Wisconsin law, Native American burial mounds, unmarked burials and all marked and unmarked cemeteries are protected from intentional disturbance.

The town should make a request to the State Historical Society for more detailed information when a specific development proposal is offered on land in an area where a known historic or archeological site has been mapped, if its location is not readily apparent.

The Town of Star Prairie should work with the developers, the county and the state to preserve the historic farmsteads, barns and outbuildings that contribute to the town's agricultural heritage, rural character and aesthetic beauty and create a unique community.

Additional historic or archeological resources could be identified in the town through an individual or joint effort to create a countywide survey of historic and archeological resources. The State Historical Society provides survey funding on an annual basis, with applications due in November. There is presently no local match requirement.

SCENIC RESOURCES

Scenic beauty is an important cultural resource in Star Prairie. There are numerous local areas that offer stunning views of the landscape, landmarks (i.e. hills) and bodies of water. In the following list, various resources and agencies have been consulted and the Town Plan Commission has identified areas of high scenic value where there should be preservation efforts.

**Scenic Resources
Town of Star Prairie**

SITE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION & SIZE
Apple River	The stream velocity of this short, steep river once powered as many as 70 mills, several of which became settlements. There are several very scenic sites. Canoeing from Huntingdon to the Riverdale Flowage is popular. Tubing also occurs on short stretches, especially below Huntingdon where there are short, fast waters. There are some wide wetlands below Johannesburg and several areas of the river are still very natural and undeveloped.	Sections 14, 15, 21 & 29
Louie Lake on the Apple River	Public land ownership and a public access to Louie Lake and its associated wetlands is very desirable for protection of the fishery and water resources.	Sections 15 & 22
Apple River Wetlands	Wetland complexes with broad grass wetlands provide water quality protection, fish habitat and open space.	Sections 21 & 22
Strand Lake	Possible historic Indian mound, potentially a significant fishery, may need aeration. A valuable resource for public access and water resource protection.	Sections 22 & 23
Apple River Unnamed Tributary Creek	There are three unnamed tributary creeks that feed into the Apple River. They are all identified as trout streams and have native brook trout in them. Two are in the Village of Star Prairie. The third is about 200 feet long located at the north end of section 14.	Section 14
Prairie Flats North WPA	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Waterfowl Production Area managed for waterfowl habitat with ongoing wetland and prairie restoration. Open for hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretation and wildlife observation and photography. Motorized vehicles and horseback riding are not allowed.	Sections 5, 6, & 8 220 Acres
Prairie Flats South WPA	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Waterfowl Production Area managed for waterfowl habitat with ongoing wetland and prairie restoration. Open for hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretation and wildlife observation and photography. Motorized vehicles and horseback riding are not allowed.	Section 7 320 Acres
Squaw Lake Wetlands	Wetlands are largely depressional areas in woodlands and in some cropland and pastureland. Soils are generally very light and wetlands are widely scattered. They are quite picturesque with many areas of open water with aesthetically pleasing aquatic plants such as water lilies and other emergents. Waterfowl use is high. Some of these wetlands are marginal fish ponds and serve as focal points for many resident and migratory forms of wildlife.	Sections 5, 6, 7 & 8
South Cedar Bay Landing	Boardwalk to winter ice-fishing and summer canoe access, benches, picnic tables & parking lot. Owned and maintained by the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust.	Section 3 1.3 Acres

SITE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION & SIZE
McMurtrie Preserve	Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust education property with access to Cedar Lake and Cedar Creek. Facilities being developed include improved road access, pavilion, toilet facilities, trails, pedestrian lake access and parking lot.	Section 2 65 Acres
Cedar Creek	Easement or acquisition along Cedar Creek between the McMurtrie Preserve and St. Croix County's Apple River Property to connect these two resources and protect the water quality.	Sections 2 & 11
Remnant Prairie Sites	There are two high-quality remnant prairie sites in the Town that would be a high priority for protection by the Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area of the DNR.	Sections 22 & 28
Wetlands	Wetlands along 110 th Street are valuable for waterfowl production and wildlife areas.	Section 27 80 Acres
New Richmond Archery Club	Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust is acquiring the land from the club for open space preservation.	Section 33 40 Acres
Star Prairie Flats	High quality agricultural production area with high historic and agricultural resource significance to Star Prairie and St. Croix County. Identified as an agricultural heritage area in 1976.	Sections 4, 5, 6 & 7 1,000 acres
110 th Street	This scenic road has wetlands, historic farmstead and native prairie along it and is an excellent candidate for the state's rustic road designation.	Sections 21, 22, 27 & 28, from CTH C to 192 nd Ave.
Old Mill Road	This scenic road has wetlands, historic farmlands, native prairie, the Apple River County Park and the remnants of the McClure Dam structure along it. It is an excellent candidate for the state's rustic road designation.	Sections 10 & 11, from CTH CC to CTH H

Sources: *Heritage Areas of St. Croix County*, UW-Extension 1976; *Natural Area Inventory*, West Central Wisconsin 1976; Wisconsin DNR, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, St. Croix County Parks Department and Town Plan Commission 2007

CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: Enhance and maintain the Town of Star Prairie's cultural and scenic resources and rural character.

Objectives:

1. Identify and preserve the town's agricultural, cultural, historic and archeological resources that recognize the community's pre-settlement and early settlement periods.
2. Identify and protect cultural, historic, archeological and scenic resources.
3. Work with other units of government to develop and enforce appropriate land use regulations to maintain rural residential quality.
4. Prohibit incompatible land uses from locating within or next to residential areas.
5. Encourage the preservation of historically and architecturally significant structures and sites in the town.
6. Encourage the preservation of the town's scenic resources.
7. Protect scenic roadways in the town.

Policies:

1. Explore various uses of the old town hall and develop an operational plan for it.
2. Cooperate with the State Historical Society, St. Croix County, surrounding communities and local agencies on a comprehensive survey of historic and archeological resources in the town.
3. Maintain an inventory of historic, archaeological and scenic resources.
4. Provide the inventory for reference and discussion before and during consideration of land development proposals.
5. Encourage private landowners to protect and, if necessary, rehabilitate identified cultural, historic, archeological and scenic resources when specific sites are proposed for development.
6. Support zoning and subdivision regulations that are intended to prohibit incompatible land uses.
7. Work with the county to enforce property maintenance codes to maintain rural residential quality and appearance.
8. Support local festivals, fairs, farm tours, farm breakfasts and markets that celebrate the town's farming heritage and rural way of life.
9. Encourage events that promote the town's historical past and rural heritage.



Star Prairie's Old Town Hall on the Apple River near Johannesburg is an important cultural resource for the town. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

10. Support the New Richmond Preservation Society as a local repository for historical materials; also encourage residents to donate items to the historic materials repository that the society maintains.
11. Support the designation of 110th Street and Old Mill Road as rustic roads to be added to the state's rustic road system.



The local business, River's Edge, has been in Star Prairie since 1921. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Intergovernmental communication, coordination and cooperation can make a significant difference in the implementation and administration of a comprehensive plan. Intergovernmental cooperation can be developed over time.

ANNEXATION

In Wisconsin, cities and villages cannot initiate annexations. Town landowners have to petition for annexation; then cities and villages have to determine whether or not they are willing to annex those parcels. Towns may object.

If towns are concerned about annexations, the towns should study why residents decide to petition for annexation:

- Do residents want services the town is unable to provide?
- Does annexation increase the marketability and value of their property?
- Is the annexing municipality more willing than the town to address their concerns?
- What other issues are involved?

Once the issues have been identified, a town needs to determine what measures it can, and is willing, to take to address them. Boundary agreements, shared tax revenue, or other forms of intergovernmental agreement can be pursued by the towns to protect boundaries from annexation. Likewise, an effort must be made to educate residents about the benefits and downfalls of annexation.

BOUNDARY & ANNEXATION AGREEMENT

Wisconsin Statute §66.0307 authorizes local municipalities to enter into an agreement that sets a mutual boundary line between the two municipalities. The Town of Star Prairie and City of New Richmond are drafting a boundary agreement that would allow specific areas of the town to be attached to the City of New Richmond and the remainder of the town to remain within the town's boundaries.

The agreement sets forth the timeframe, activities and terms under which land would be attached to the City. It also recognizes a separate Water Service Agreement between the City of New Richmond and the Town of Star Prairie which identifies the terms and conditions under which the City of New Richmond will provide water service to certain residential properties within the Town of Star Prairie, whose water has been contaminated from a closed New Richmond land fill. The boundary agreement will address land use control and zoning, extension of water or sanitary sewer service, assessments, fees, highway construction, revenue sharing, police and fire protection, a joint commission to oversee, and other administrative provisions. The Boundary Agreement Area is shown on the Future Land Use Map.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal: Establish mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with surrounding jurisdictions and the Town of Star Prairie.

Objectives:

1. Work with other local governments, state agencies, school districts, etc. on land use and community development issues of mutual concern.
2. Work with other units of government to develop and enforce appropriate land use regulations to maintain rural residential quality.
3. Engage in intergovernmental cooperation to protect natural resources.
4. Engage in and support processes to resolve conflicts between the plans of the town and other governments with overlapping jurisdiction.
5. Utilize, promote and enter into shared public service agreements where such agreements will provide improved services at lower costs.
6. Work with neighboring municipalities to resolve boundary issues and other conflicts that exist or may develop.
7. Coordinate multi-jurisdictional (town, village, city, county, state) transportation system improvements and maintenance in the Star Prairie area.

Policies:

1. Work with St. Croix County, adjacent towns and the regional planning commission to identify and resolve actual and potential conflicts between the Town Plan and other plans through open dialog, cooperative initiatives and amendments to the Town of Star Prairie Plan where appropriate.
2. Provide a copy of this comprehensive plan to all surrounding local governments.
3. Encourage and support towns that have not yet adopted Town Land Use Plans to do so in consultation with adjoining local governments.
4. Encourage the City of New Richmond, villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and other interested governmental units to consider this comprehensive plan and recommendations of the town officials in making future decisions about land use within or affecting the town.
5. Work with surrounding communities to encourage an orderly, efficient land use pattern that preserves farming and natural resources and minimizes conflicts between urban and rural uses.
6. Work with the City of New Richmond on an interconnected road system utilizing town and city official maps.
7. Develop and implement boundary and annexation agreements with the City of New Richmond and villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.
8. The town will stay aware of school building facility issues and encourage residents to use school facilities for public meetings and recreation when appropriate.

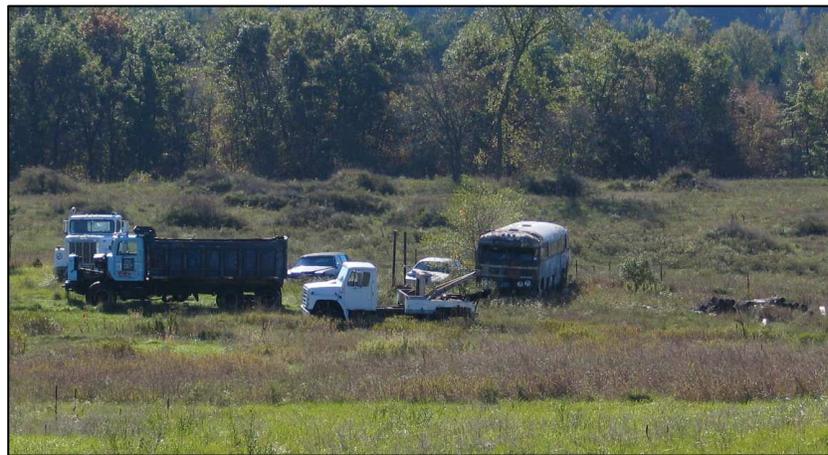
9. Coordinate and work with other governmental and private agencies such as the Squaw Lake Management District, Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, WDNR, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to protect natural resources, especially those that cross political boundaries such as rivers.



Star Prairie is a beautiful place to live. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

10. Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to ensure that the Town of Star Prairie's transportation system is coordinated with surrounding systems and that Star Prairie's interests are well served when major transportation facility improvements are proposed and constructed.
11. Communicate and work with the WisDOT on STH 64 and 65 corridor preservation projects.
12. Work with St. Croix County, WisDOT, landowners and private developers to limit development and access along State Trunk Highways 64 and 65 to help preserve them as throughways and scenic image corridors. Do not limit access over or under those highways.
13. Support the designation of 110th Street and Old Mill Road as rustic roads to be added to the state's rustic road system.
14. Work with the County Highway Department for road maintenance and to implement the Town Road Improvement Programs (TRIPs) for appropriate upgrading of town roads.
15. Work with the county, state and private landowners in ensuring that road right-of-ways are clear of visual obstacles, particularly at road intersections. Road right-of-ways should be properly mowed and cleared.
16. Continue the cooperative understanding with adjoining towns for road maintenance.
17. Designate specific town and county roadways for bicycle traffic and improve designated bicycle routes with wide, signed shoulders or off-road bike paths, based on the Future Bike System map. These changes would provide a coordinated system of bike routes to access the City of New Richmond, villages of Somerset and Star Prairie and park and school system serving town residents. It would provide better, safer connections for residents northwest and southeast of the Apple River.
18. Work with the City of New Richmond and the Multi-Purpose Pathway Committee to coordinate and sign bicycle/pedestrian routes into and out of the City of New Richmond.
19. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset, City of New Richmond, St. Croix County, state agencies and local organizations to develop, provide and support recreational facilities and opportunities within the town.

20. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.
21. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.
22. Work with and through St. Croix County, (which serves as the town's Responsible Unit to implement the state recycling laws), to expand education, information, special collections and related services for recycling.
23. Contract with the City of New Richmond to provide a recycling drop-off center for town residents
24. Contract with the New Richmond Ambulance and Fire Service for ambulance and fire service for town residents.
25. Continue the mutual aid agreement with the Village of Somerset for fire protection service to town residents.
26. Work with the Village of Somerset and City of New Richmond in the provision of joint services when it will result in better services and/or cost savings.
27. Utilize St. Croix County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement.
28. Contract with the Sheriff's Department for a satellite office for law enforcement to encourage better service and response times for town residents.
29. Work with St. Croix County and state agencies to assure public health and groundwater quality when permitting and monitoring new and replacement private on-site wastewater systems and water wells.
30. Work with St. Croix County to maintain property to ensure a high-quality living environment within all residential areas and to address violations of applicable land use ordinances on residential, commercial or industrial properties.
31. Work with St. Croix County to update the County's and the town's land use regulations to require that relocated houses and new manufactured houses are sited on freestanding, separate parcels; are placed on permanent foundations; and are brought into compliance with the Uniform Dwelling Code to provide safe, quality housing.
32. Work with St. Croix County to improve or expand St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding property maintenance and nuisance issues such as junk vehicles and dilapidated buildings.
33. Work with St. Croix County to expand the St. Croix County Animal Waste and the Zoning ordinances to regulate large-scale farms near existing residences.



Dealing with the clean up of junk vehicles and other debris on property requires cooperation between property owners, the County and the Town. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

34. Support buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas and between these areas and rural residential subdivisions consisting of gradually larger lot, lower density development. The variety in zones will increase compatibility with agricultural uses, provide a range of agriculture uses and greater choices in housing options in the town. Work with St. Croix County to implement these buffer zones through amendments to the zoning ordinance.
35. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.
36. Cooperate with the State Historical Society, St. Croix County, surrounding communities and local agencies on a comprehensive survey of historic and archeological resources in the town.
37. Support the New Richmond Preservation Society as a local repository for historical materials; also encourage residents to donate items to the historic materials repository that the society maintains.
38. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities. Encourage business types which will benefit all the communities.
39. Work with St. Croix Economic Development Corporation to assist in locating potential new businesses.
40. Work with St. Croix County to update land use regulations to improve site planning for commercial and industrial development.
41. Work with St. Croix County to permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.

LAND USE

EXISTING LAND USE REGULATIONS

The Town of Star Prairie has adopted a variety of regulations that effect land use in the town. The chart below summarizes the regulations that the town has adopted, the year the regulation was adopted or last updated and additional land use regulations available to the town. The chart also identifies the land use regulations adopted by St. Croix County, many of which affect the town.

Regulation by Minor Civil Division - 2009 Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities

REGULATION	STAR PRAIRIE	RICHMOND	SOMERSET	STANTON	ST. CROIX COUNTY
Village Powers Adopted	Yes '72	Yes '08	Yes '98	Yes '77	N/A
Official Map Ordinance	No	No	No	No	N/A
County Zoning	Yes '75	Yes '76	Yes '68	Yes '75	Yes '74
Exclusive Ag Zoning	Yes '86	No	Yes '	Yes '82	Yes
Standards to zone out of Exclusive Ag	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shoreland/Wetland Zoning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '74
Floodplain Zoning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '05
Land Division/Subdivision Ordinance	In Progress	No	Yes '09	Yes '96	Yes '06
Minimum Lot Size	N/A	N/A	Yes, 3 acre	Yes, 2 acre	Yes 1.5 acre min., 2 acre avg.
Allow Majors w/ POWTS*	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	Yes
Allow Minors w/ POWTS*	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes, 2 lots in 5 years	Yes
Monies in Lieu of Dedication	N/A	N/A	No	No	No
Erosion Control/Stormwater Mngt.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '06
Sanitary Ordinance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '05
Animal Waste Ordinance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '85
Nonmetallic Mining Ordinance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '04
Tire Management Ordinance	No	No	No	No	Yes '85
Agricultural Shoreland Mngt. Ordinance	No	No	No	No	No
Historic Preservation Ordinance	No	No	No	No	No
Town Mobile Home Park Ordinance	Yes '70	Yes '70	No	Yes '84	N/A
Development Impact Fees	Yes '06	Yes	No	No	N/A
Cooperative Boundary Agreement	In Progress	No	No	No	N/A
Water Utility District	In Progress	No	No	No	N/A
Reinvestment Neighborhoods	No	No	No	No	N/A
Business Improvement District	No	No	No	No	N/A
Architectural Conservancy Dist.	No	No	No	No	N/A
Sanitary District	No	Yes	No	No	N/A

*POWTS-- Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems

Sources: Town of Star Prairie, St. Croix County Development Management Plan, 2000, St. Croix County Planning and Zoning Department.

The Town of Star Prairie adopted exclusive agriculture zoning as one of the tools used to regulate land use. The decision to adopt exclusive agriculture zoning generally came from information provided in the St. Croix County Farmland Preservation Plan which was adopted in 1980 by the St. Croix County Board of Supervisors.

What is not well known is that the 1980 Farmland Preservation Plan was a very thorough and well thought out document. It covered farmland preservation, but it also looked at other land uses and the need for growth in St. Croix County. The following quotes from the Farmland Preservation Plan provide insight

into the thinking behind the plan, the justification for creating the plan, the concepts behind the land use designations in the plan and the comprehensive approach to land use that was part of the plan:

“St. Croix County has grown considerably in the last 30 years and some population growth is expected to continue. Provisions must be made to accommodate this growth for residential commercial and industrial uses as well as agricultural.”

“In order that good agricultural land remain in agriculture and sprawl development be discouraged the Farmland Preservation Plan identifies areas around incorporated centers where residential, industrial and commercial development should occur.”

“Detailed land use planning decisions for incorporated and extraterritorial areas will remain the responsibility of the cities, villages and townships. The plan will further identify transitional areas where low-density development may be encouraged.”

“By identifying prime agricultural lands and by delineating urban service areas and low density rural areas the plan should serve as a tool to guide growth and divert development from prime agricultural areas.”

“St. Croix County has developed a rationale for farmland preservation based on three premises:

“The land at our disposal should be scrutinized to determine its capabilities and consideration should be given to its best use for present and future generations—whether it be development or preservation for farmland.

“A certain degree of regional self-sufficiency is a wise goal for metropolitan areas.

“Planning for growth is necessary and desirable for all sectors of society.”

The Farmland Preservation Plan took a comprehensive approach to land use regulation, however the actual implementation of the plan was not comprehensive and much of what was in the plan was never used. St. Croix County is in the process of updating the 1980 Farmland Preservation Plan to address changes in agriculture and changes in the state laws regarding farmland preservation zoning and other programs to protect farmland.

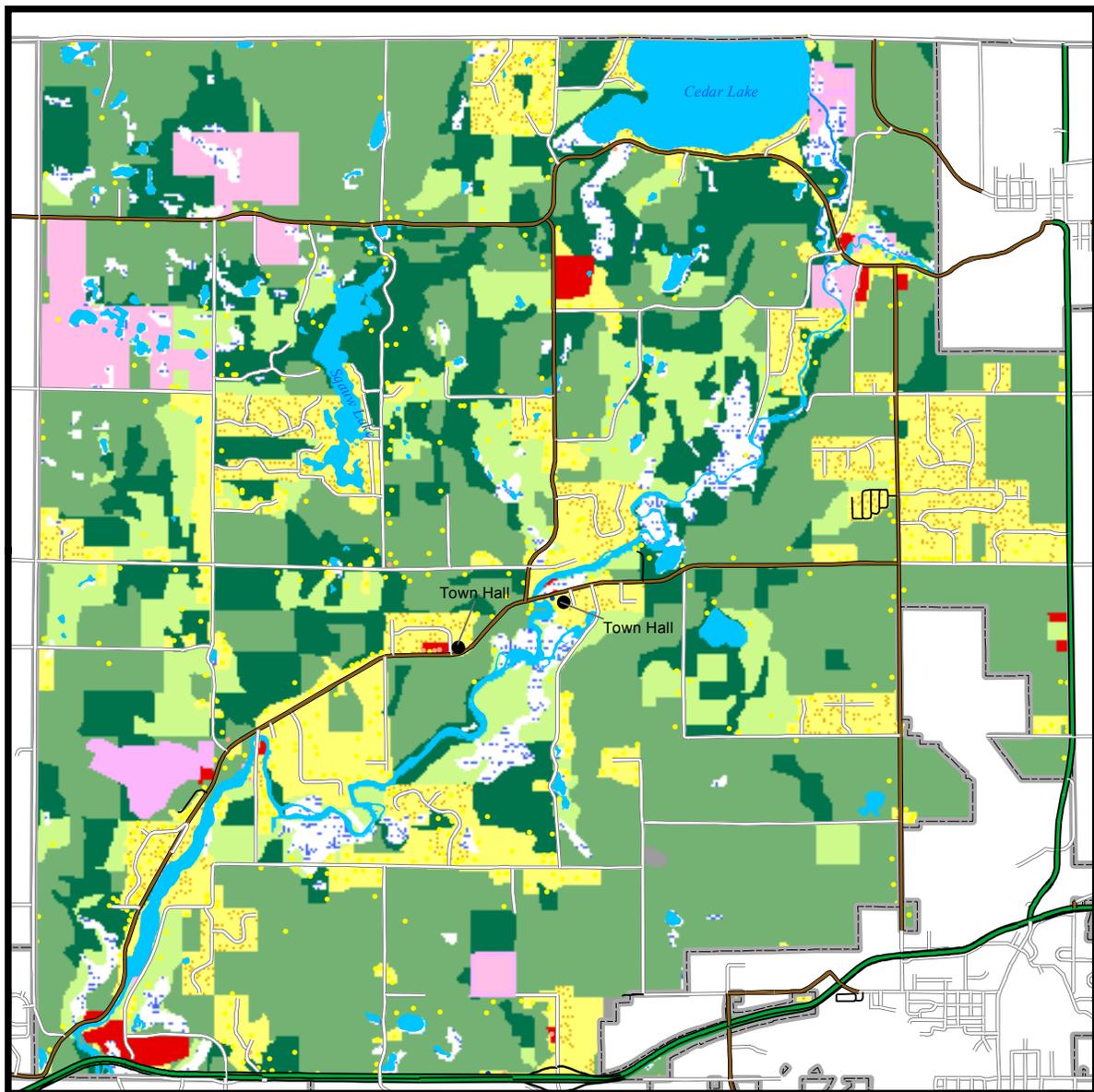
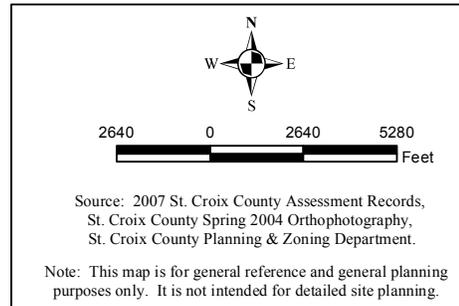
In addition to the regulations identified in the table above, the following County regulations are or can be in effect in the Town of Star Prairie. These regulations are adopted by the County and are in effect in all unincorporated areas of St. Croix County; no town adoption or action is required.

- St. Croix County Development Management Plan
- St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan
- St. Croix County Agriculture Preservation Plan
- St. Croix County Erosion Control Plan
- St. Croix County Solid Waste Management Plan
- St. Croix County Land and Water Conservation Plan
- St. Croix County Sanitary Ordinance
- St. Croix County Subdivision Ordinance
- St. Croix County Shoreland/Wetland District Regulations
- St. Croix County Floodplain District Regulations
- St. Croix County Erosion Control/Stormwater Management Regulations
- St. Croix County Nonmetallic Mining Regulations
- St. Croix County Animal Waste Regulations
- St. Croix County Solid Waste and Recycling Regulations

EXISTING LAND USES

The existing land uses in the Town of Star Prairie are shown on the following map. This map was created by combining the 1993 land use and land cover maps from the St. Croix County Development Management Plan with 2004 aerial photography, the 2007 data from the Real Property Lister's office on parcel assessment and the 2007 zoning maps for the town. Major subdivisions are categorized as residential while isolated rural homes and minor subdivisions of four lots or less are categorized as rural residential. Commercial and industrial land use is the land zoned commercial or industrial and/or used for commercial or industrial activities according to the town assessor. Parks, recreation and open space land uses include public, private and nonprofit parks, recreation and open space land uses.

Existing Land Use / Land Cover Town of Star Prairie, St. Croix County, WI



FUTURE LAND USE PROJECTIONS

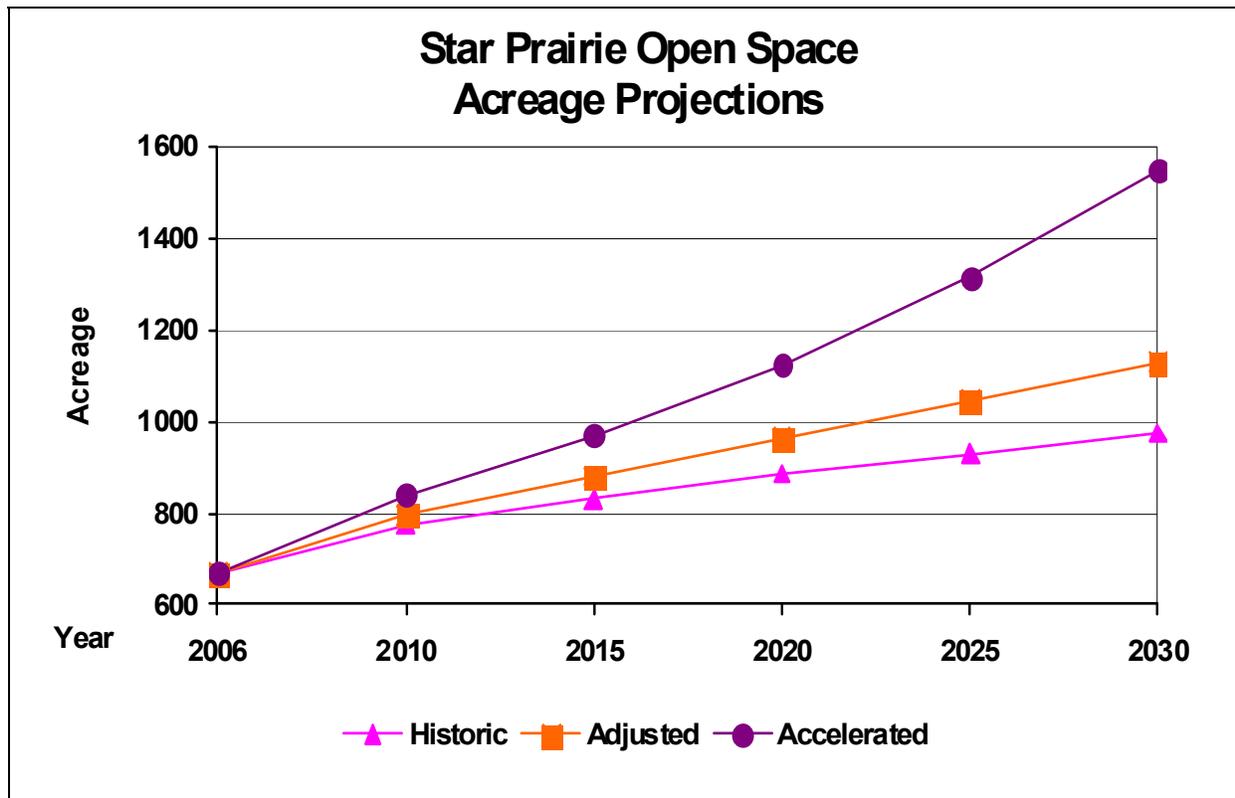
OPEN SPACE PROJECTIONS

The Town of Star Prairie anticipates that as residential growth occurs the demand for open space will also occur. The Plan Commission felt that generally open space should be preserved at a rate of 10 percent of residential growth. That ratio is used to estimate the open space that would be ideal for parks, recreation and natural areas for the three land use scenarios through 2030. Please see the chart below.

Open Space Acreage Projections – 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie

Year	HISTORIC TREND		ADJUSTED GROWTH		ACCELERATED GROWTH	
	Additional Acres Needed	Total Acreage	Additional Acres Needed	Total Acreage	Additional Acres Needed	Total Acreage
2006	0	670	0	670	0	670
2010	106	776	127	797	172	842
2015	162	832	211	881	300	970
2020	216	886	294	964	455	1125
2025	260	930	377	1047	645	1315
2030	305	975	462	1132	881	1551

Source: Star Prairie Plan Commission & St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.



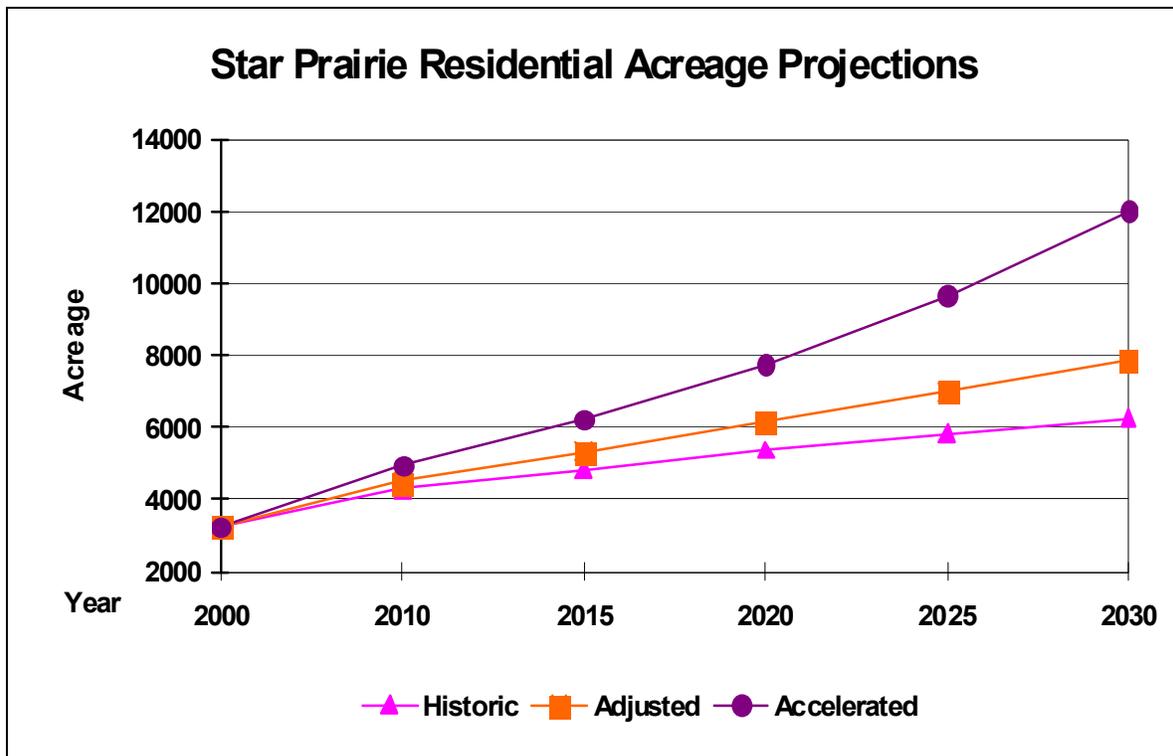
RESIDENTIAL PROJECTIONS

The residential land use projections for the Town of Star Prairie were developed as part of the population and housing projections in the Issues and Opportunities Element. They are provided here as a reference. The Acreage Projections are based on an average of three acres per housing unit. The 3.0 acres per housing unit was used to estimate acreage used for residential development. The three acres represents the residential housing site and the associated infrastructure needed. It is not intended to represent lot size or to correspond to the actual acreage owned or taxed as residential or agricultural building site property.

**Residential Acreage Projections – 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie**

YEAR	HISTORIC TREND		ADJUSTED GROWTH		ACCELERATED GROWTH	
	ADDITIONAL ACRES NEEDED	TOTAL ACREAGE	ADDITIONAL ACREAGE	TOTAL ACREAGE	ADDITIONAL ACREAGE	TOTAL ACREAGE
2000	0	3,237	0	3,237	0	3,237
2010	1060	4,297	1267	4,504	1719	4,956
2015	1616	4,853	2107	5,344	2995	6,232
2020	2157	5,394	2938	6,175	4545	7,782
2025	2596	5,833	3768	7,005	6445	9,682
2030	3048	6,285	4616	7,853	8810	12,047

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration & St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department Projections



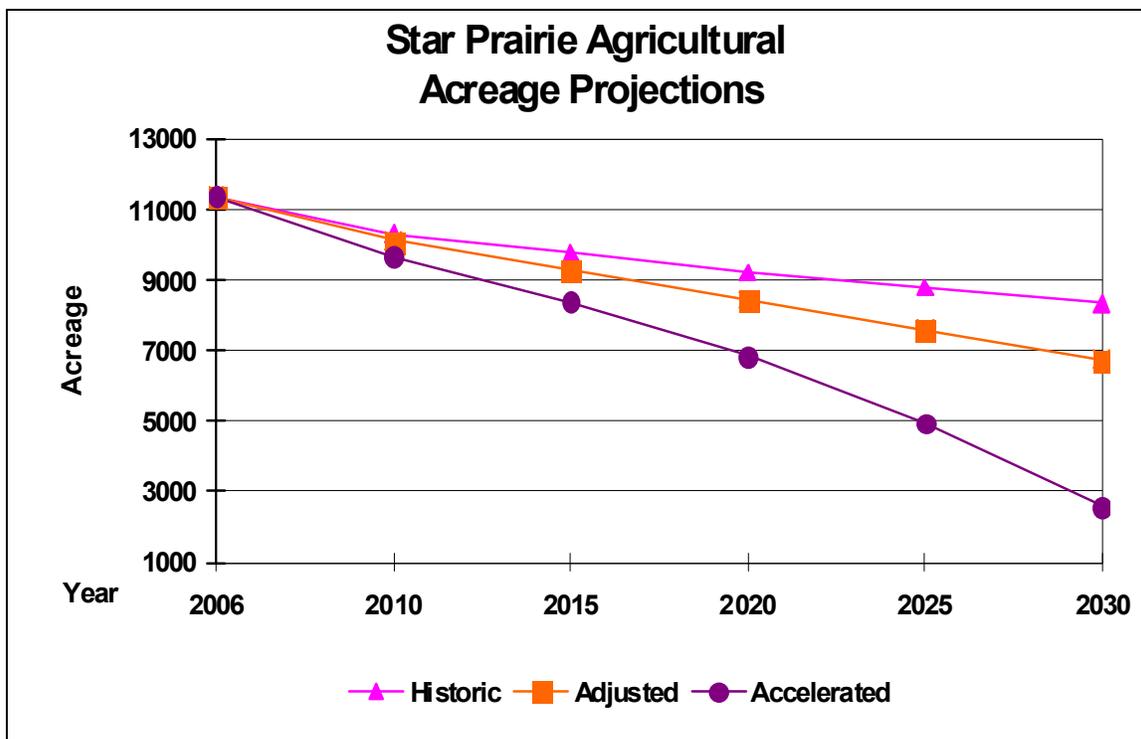
AGRICULTURAL PROJECTIONS

The Town of Star Prairie generally expects the amount of agricultural land to continue to decline in the town as land is converted to residential or other land uses. The amount of change will be directly related to the amount of residential land use that occurs and somewhat related to the growth in recreational, commercial and industrial land uses. The town has identified specific areas of agriculture that are on highly productive soils and should continue in agriculture and/or compatible open space within the town. The agricultural land use projections are a product of the residential land use projections and the existing agricultural land use statistics. They were created by subtracting the Historic Trends, Adjusted Growth and Accelerated Growth residential land use projections from the existing agricultural land use statistics.

**Agricultural Acreage Projections – 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie**

YEAR	HISTORIC TREND ACREAGE	ADJUSTED GROWTH ACREAGE	ACCELERATED GROWTH ACREAGE
2000	12,542	12,542	12,542
2003	11,205	11,205	11,205
2006	11,398	11,398	11,398
2010	10,338	10,131	9,679
2015	9,782	9,291	8,403
2020	9,241	8,460	6,853
2025	8,802	7,630	4,953
2030	8,350	6,782	2,588

Source: St. Croix County Statistical Report of Property Values 2000, 2003 & 2006 Wisconsin Department of Revenue and St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.



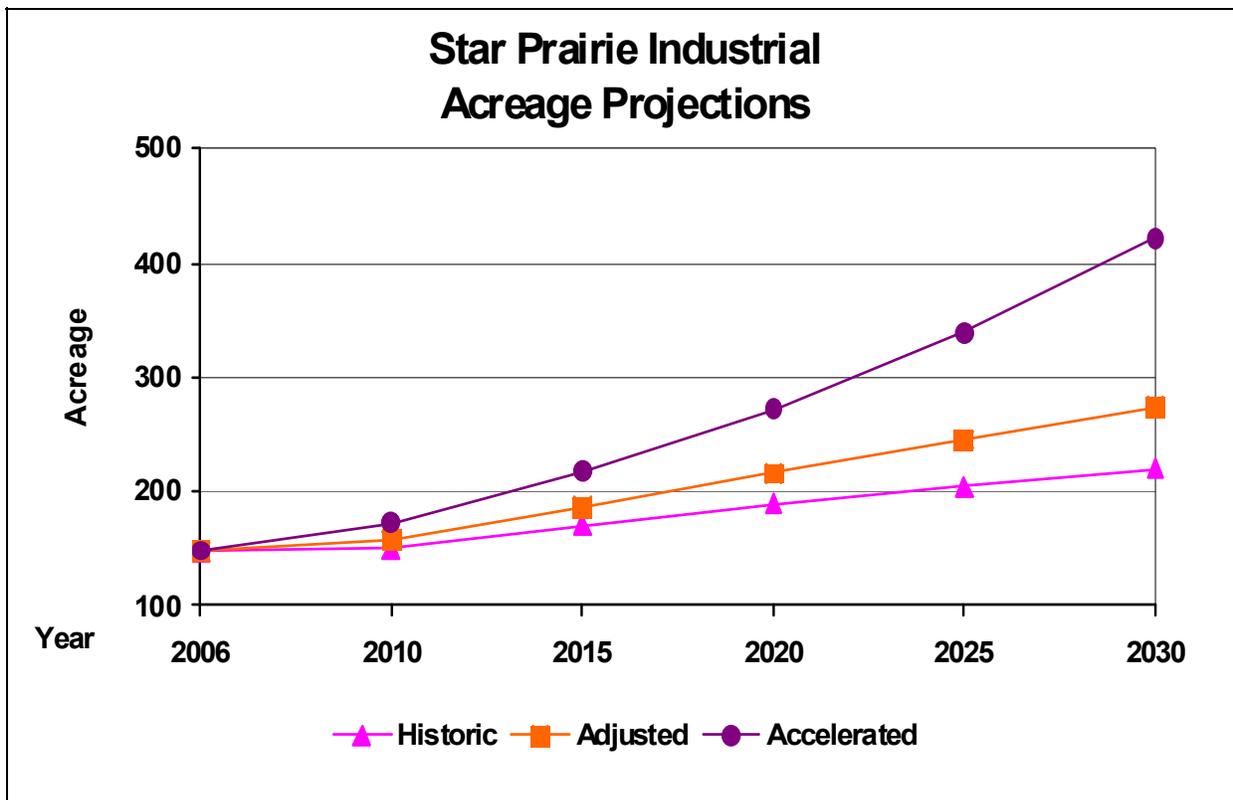
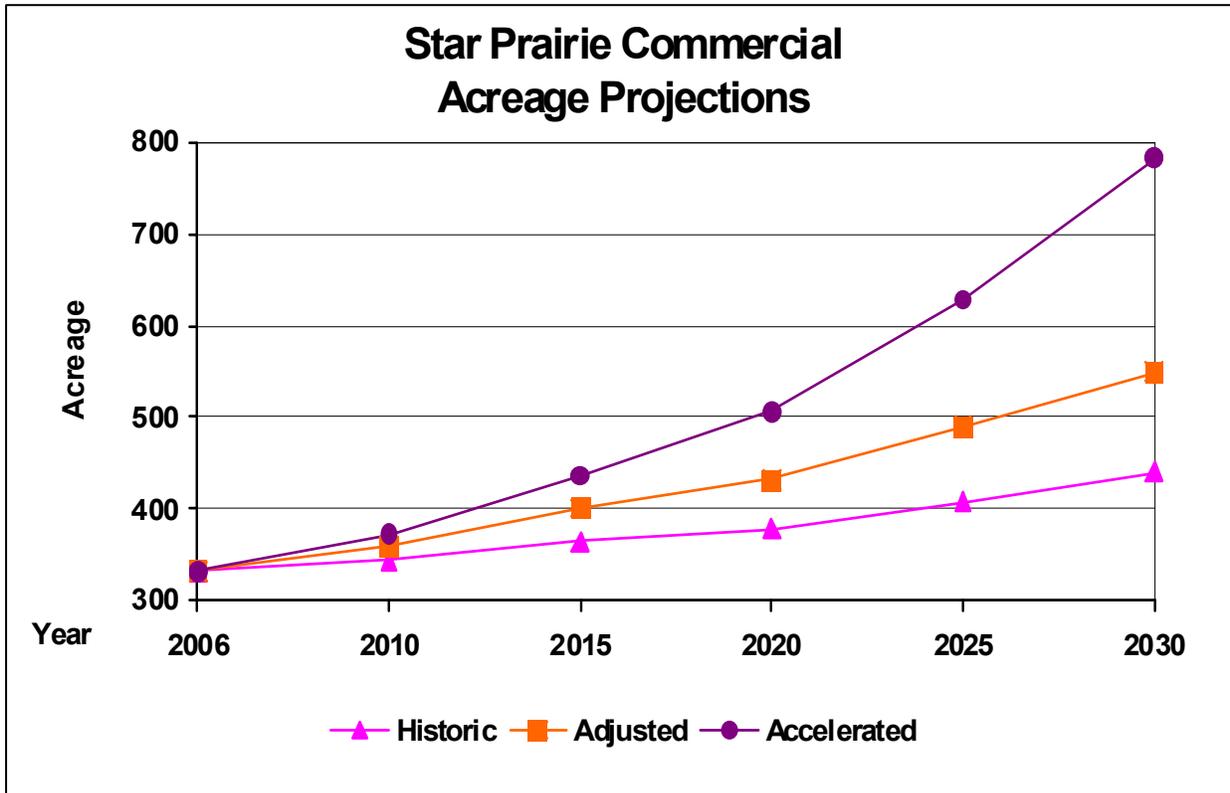
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL PROJECTIONS

The Town of Star Prairie has identified limited expansion of commercial and industrial uses in the town. These uses would center around major highway intersections and to a limited extent existing businesses. The town has also identified some expansion of home occupations. The town generally recommends any intensive new commercial and industrial development should be located in the neighboring city or villages. Extensive commercial and industrial development would not be consistent with the rural character and community goals of the town. The existing commercial and industrial land uses are two and one percent of the total land uses, respectively. Limited projections to accommodate expansion of commercial or industrial land uses are identified based on the recommendations in Star Prairie’s goals, objectives and policies regarding location and amounts of commercial and industrial land uses. The amounts of commercial and industrial land use will likely be driven by increases in residential development. To calculate these projections, ratios of commercial and industrial to residential land use were calculated and then used to estimate the change in commercial and industrial land use acreages. Please see the chart below.

**Commercial & Industrial Acreage Projections – 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie**

YEAR	HISTORIC TREND ACREAGE		ADJUSTED GROWTH ACREAGE		ACCELERATED GROWTH ACREAGE	
	COMMERCIAL	INDUSTRIAL	COMMERCIAL	INDUSTRIAL	COMMERCIAL	INDUSTRIAL
2000	290	51	290	51	290	51
2003	287	152	287	152	287	152
2006	332	148	332	148	332	148
2010	344	150	360	158	372	173
2015	364	170	401	187	436	218
2020	378	189	432	216	506	272
2025	408	204	490	245	629	339
2030	440	220	550	275	783	422

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue & St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department Projections 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.



LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

The following goal statements were developed by the Plan Commission to refine alternative land use scenarios and policies. These were developed with a heavy emphasis on the results of the public opinion survey, the vision statements, the interactive land use workshop results and the land use policies that have historically been followed in the Town. Based on all the public input activities, the Plan Commission members have concluded that the majority of town residents feel the historic rate of development is acceptable in the town but that there needs to be some policy changes regarding the type and location of residential, commercial and industrial growth and the protection of open space areas. The Plan Commission has identified changes that enhance and direct land use options that would best fit the future needs, growth and preferences of Star Prairie's residents while preserving the town's rural character.

Goals:

1. The Town of Star Prairie will encourage a desirable mix of land uses that will maintain the town's rural character and preserve its agricultural heritage, while allowing moderate residential, commercial and industrial development.
2. Protect the town's abundant and high quality natural and agricultural resources to maintain the town's rural atmosphere and community character.
3. Promote the continuation of agriculture and farming as one of the primary land uses.
4. Maintain the integrity of zoning districts by considering distinct uses and separation.
5. Direct land uses to designated areas to improve compatibility and decrease conflicts.
6. Consider equity and fairness to landowners with comparable resource and location characteristics when developing land use policies and ordinances.
7. Encourage limited residential development that keeps housing affordable.
8. Coordinate land use planning with utility and community facility systems, natural resource and transportation systems planning.
9. Large-scale industrial and commercial development should be directed to St. Croix County's urban centers.
10. Support a limited number of dwelling units with three or four units in a structure in conjunction with conservation design development.

Objectives:

1. Manage and control the rate of development to maintain a distinctive rural community in the Town of Star Prairie.
2. Retain rural features to protect rural character.
3. Minimize the visual impact of development to maintain rural, undeveloped character and feeling.
4. Discourage residential, commercial or industrial development that is incompatible with the rural character and agricultural heritage of the Town of Star Prairie or would cause land use conflicts and negative impacts to natural resources and agricultural.

5. Allow residential development in location, forms and densities, which supports the preservation of open space and prime agricultural soils.
6. Promote the use of existing public facilities, and managed expansion to those facilities, to serve future development whenever possible.
7. Support quality and accessible parks and recreational facilities and services and maintain dedicated open space for all residents whether developed by the town or in conjunction with neighboring communities.
8. All housing should be located and sited to enhance and maintain rural character.
9. Encourage housing sites in the town that meet the needs of persons within a variety of income levels, age groups, and special needs.
10. Encourage the maintenance, rehabilitation and reuse of existing housing stock.
11. Support new developments that are primarily single-family homes or two-family homes.
12. Promote conservation design subdivisions as the preferred method for rural residential development.
13. Ensure that home sites are safe from seasonal flooding or ponding.
14. Encourage high density development and other more intense land uses to locate where public utilities are available.
15. Rural economic development should promote alternative agricultural and forestry-based opportunities and industrial and commercial development with minimal infrastructure needs that is compatible with neighboring land uses
16. Identify locations for future environmentally-friendly businesses to locate within the Town.
17. Encourage the commercial redevelopment and reuse of the town's existing commercial sites.
18. Prevent unplanned commercial development along major roadways.
19. Encourage land preservation programs.
20. Preserve highly productive farmlands for continued agricultural use.
21. Manage the pace of growth to help limit conflicts between agriculture and non-farm land use.
22. Discourage land uses that conflict with agriculture.
23. Use density and minimum lot size regulations to allow growth and development while protecting productive farmlands on prime agricultural soils.
24. Discourage nonagricultural development on prime agricultural soils.
25. Preserve Star Prairie's most important and sensitive natural resources and areas.



Rural residential development. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

26. Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas, natural resources and productive forest lands.
27. Preserve the Town's scenic beauty, historical heritage and archeological resources.
28. Work with surrounding communities to encourage an orderly, efficient land use pattern that preserves farming and natural resources and minimizes conflicts between urban and rural uses.
29. Work with neighboring municipalities to resolve boundary issues and other conflicts that exist or may develop.
30. Work with other local governments, state agencies, school districts, etc. on land use and community development issues of mutual concern.
31. Work with other units of government to develop and enforce appropriate land use regulations to maintain rural residential quality.

Policies:

1. Direct new residential, open space, agricultural, institutional, commercial and industrial land uses to those areas that are designated in this comprehensive plan.
2. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities.
3. Promote conservation design development in major subdivisions and common septic systems to protect natural resources and highly productive agricultural soils and provide services in a cost-effective manner.
4. Require the low building opening (LBO) for each development site to be staked with a base elevation reference point for all ponding, elevations and driveways.
5. Work to change land division regulations to require new development to stub future driveways to the right-of-way line. This will prevent conflicts with stormwater management ponds, LBOs and construction site erosion and sediment tracking.
6. As new development occurs, discourage new private roads and explore options to make existing private roads public to improve access for emergency services, improve maintenance and decrease conflicts.
7. Review this plan prior to making a recommendation on a rezoning request.
8. When considering rezoning requests recommend rezoning only when there will be an immediate change in land use and only that portion of the parcel needed for development.
9. Encourage home site design that achieves rural character and farmland preservation objectives and ensures that home sites are safe from seasonal flooding or ponding.
10. Guide development away from hydric and alluvial soils, which are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding.
11. Require the disclosure of any soil or groundwater contamination on sites before approving development proposals.

12. Residences should be located adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges, if available. If not, homes should be clustered on the edges of farm fields. Tree lines should be preserved.
13. Encourage tree preservation and tree planting to screen new structures from neighboring properties and the public road in residential areas and require it in commercial and industrial areas.
14. Consider protection and enhancement of sensitive natural resources, open and recreational space, large blocks of forestland and scenic vistas when reviewing development proposals and making public expenditures.
15. Protect the visual quality of scenic roadways through site planning, driveway location, landscaping, signage, and other standards.
16. Permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.
17. To reduce the conversion of prime agricultural land to other uses, request that St. Croix County amend the County zoning ordinance so that the exclusive agriculture-zoning district would regulate based on both density and lot size rather than just lot size.



Scenes like this one represent the rural character of the Town of Star Prairie. Future development should try to protect and incorporate the traditional rural elements of treelines, hedgerows and fencelines. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.



The scenic Apple River in winter. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

18. Set the Town of Star Prairie’s development density to one lot per quarter –quarter section or “platted 40 acres” on land zoned exclusive agriculture.
19. Review St. Croix County’s Land Division Ordinance for conservation design development to determine if the regulations meet the Town’s needs. If St. Croix County’s ordinance does not meet the Town’s needs work with the St. Croix County Planning and Zoning Department in the development of the town subdivision ordinance.
20. The maximum gross density for

development shall depend on the location of the development. The gross density may not be the minimum lot size in all cases. In conservation design development the minimum lot size shall be ½ acre per dwelling unit, with a two-acre gross density. Two-acre density for conventional development and one-acre density for development in the Boundary Agreement Area.

21. Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. Environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.

22. Commercial and industrial development shall be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town's primary drainage corridors, which include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. These parkways would allow the corridors to remain mostly undeveloped as wildlife corridors, contribute to preserving the Town's rural atmosphere, provide stormwater management areas and provide potential trail linkages to the rest of the Town. Where appropriate, the Town shall require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.



This local business in Star Prairie blends well into the rural residential landscape. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

23. Continue to allow small-lot residential development of two to five acres to promote rural character and protection of natural resources on infill sites between existing development.
24. Update land use regulations to guide the location of future residential development and protect important features of the natural environment without making existing houses nonconforming whenever possible.
25. Explore options to provide senior housing opportunities in the Boundary Agreement Area at densities greater than one single-family unit per acre and more than four attached, single-family units.
26. Notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet insulation or sound reduction requirements and are required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.
27. Additional mobile home parks or multi-family or multi-unit dwellings do not fit the rural character of the Town of Star Prairie and should not be developed, except in the Boundary Agreement Area as designated on the Future Land Use Map. See Future Land Use section, page 235. Multi-family housing, multi-unit dwelling or a mobile home park is defined as five or more units in a structure or on a lot.
28. Business signage, landscaping, screening, and lighting should be compatible with the rural character of Star Prairie. Lighting should be shielded and downward directed with no spillover onto neighboring properties and should have specific illumination timeframes to maintain dark skies. Landscaping and screening should include visual screening standards and setback buffers between residential and industrial or commercial land uses.
29. Discourage large amounts of "side of the road" residential and commercial development on State and County highways and arterial town roads to prevent congestion and preserve rural character and safety.

- 30. New commercial activities should be located at the future diamond interchange at the intersection of 110th Street and STH 64 and along STH 65; coordinate with Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s highway plans.
- 31. The Town shall develop a site plan review process to identify minimum standards for commercial and industrial sites. These could include all commercial and industrial development in the Town but flexibility should be allowed to address the concerns of existing businesses.
- 32. Commercial and industrial site plans shall include sidewalks, parking preferably behind buildings and parking lot landscaping standards, including landscaped islands or rain gardens within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt.
- 33. Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards.
- 34. Prevent the layout of streets or driveways across agricultural land in order to reach non-farm development, unless no other alignment is possible. Place driveways along property lines, fence rows, or existing vegetation wherever possible.
- 35. Joint or shared driveways may be allowed where beneficial, but the shared amount should be the least amount necessary.
- 36. Support exclusive agriculture zoning, agriculture enterprise area designation and other land use measures, which discourage non-farm development in identified Agricultural Preservation Areas, specifically the Star Prairie Flats in sections 4, 5, 6, & 7, the west half of section 14 and the east half of section 15 up to the Apple River, and the west half of section 1 and east half of section 2. Please see the proposed Squaw Lake Agricultural Enterprise Area narrative and map on the Star Prairie Town website.
- 37. Support buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas and between these areas and rural residential subdivisions consisting of gradually larger lot, lower density development zones.
- 38. Require new non-farm residential lots to be located adjacent to existing development or grouped to preserve larger tracts of agricultural land, protect natural resources and improve the design, layout and functionality of development.



Protection of rural landscapes like this are important in Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

- 39. When possible, new homes should not be placed in the middle of open farm fields.
- 40. Continue to use Agriculture zoning to promote and protect agriculture for its economic contribution to the economy and as one of the primary land uses in the Town of Star Prairie.
- 41. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights

- program. If authority is developed, establish a voluntary, market driven transfer of development rights program to discourage scattered development, promote rural residential development on the most suitable lands for development and encourage protection of prime agricultural lands. Generally sending areas would be those areas identified as remaining Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands or Open Space and the receiving areas would be the water service and Boundary Agreement areas.
42. Guide the location and design of development to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands, prairie and agriculture.
 43. Preserve and protect natural landscape features such as wetlands, floodplains, streams, lakes, steep slopes, woodlands, prairies and oak savannas as essential components of the hydrologic system, valuable wildlife habitat, to restore degraded resources where possible and to emphasize their value to the community as potential focal points of natural beauty and recreation.
 44. Discourage and where possible, prevent the altering of wetlands and floodplains by filling or developing.
 45. Before approving any changes in land use, consider the impacts on wildlife habitat, potential locations of rare plant and animal species and archeological sites.
 46. Identify environmentally sensitive areas most likely to be subject to rapid degradation and work to protect these areas first.
 47. Prioritize the use of incentives and acquisition (land or easements) to protect environmentally sensitive areas, relying on regulations where necessary.
 48. Encourage and support a buffer zone around public lands to mitigate conflicts between property owners and citizens utilizing public lands for recreation. Such a zone could be created with a principal structure setback of 150 feet from the lot line on properties adjacent to publicly-owned lands.
 49. Encourage private landowners to protect and, if necessary, rehabilitate identified cultural, historic, archeological and scenic resources when specific sites are proposed for development.

50. Develop and implement a boundary and annexation agreement with the City of New Richmond and the villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.



A Star Prairie sunset. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

FUTURE LAND USE

The Town of Star Prairie's future land use map shows general land uses over the life of the plan. The map does not show exact locations, rather general areas of possible land use changes. These areas are intended to accommodate the historic growth projections of the town through 2030 including: 3,000 additional acres of residential land, 300 additional acres of protected open space land, 8,000 acres remaining in productive agriculture land (this includes crop land, forest land, grass or pasture land and alternative agriculture such as vegetables, flowers, llamas or organic), 100 additional acres of commercial land and 70 additional acres of industrial land.

There are eight future land use categories: Open Space; Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands; Limited Hobby Farm; Mixed Rural; Rural Residential; Commercial; Industrial; and Government – Institutional and Utilities; and a Boundary Agreement Area with specific land uses identified. They are described as follows:

Open Space (504 existing acres, 2,500 future acres): These are lands which may be used for passive or active recreation, but are more likely to be protected open space. The Apple River corridor is easily the most clearly identified resource in the town and it is representative of the community. Residents identify strongly with the Apple River as a resource enjoyed and utilized by most residents. It's still considered "their" river. The majority of the land along the river is undeveloped, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the shoreline. The Apple River corridor encompasses a very large area, those targeted as the most valuable to town residents and the most sensitive and in need of resource protection included the wetlands downstream from the St. Croix County Apple River Property; the wetlands upstream and downstream from the old town hall, especially the backwater known as Louie Lake; and the wetlands downstream from the old town hall to 93rd Street. In addition to resource protection there are also historic Indian sites along the Apple River and probably around Strand Lake too. Strand Lake, Cedar Lake, and Squaw Lake were also identified as very special water and land resources that local residents want protected. Many of the areas identified are unsuitable for construction, others are important for water quality protection. Hopefully all of these areas would be protected as open space for passive recreation such as hiking, nature study, bird watching, etc. There are some existing residential uses in these areas and there would probably



Louie Lake on the Apple River and Strand Lake are two of the areas Star Prairie residents identified as very high priority to preserve. Photos by Kathy Mlynarczyk and Mike Burke.



be some limited new residential uses but residential density would be very low to protect the resources.

In addition to the need for resource protection, there are specific areas in the town where there is a need for some public and/or private parks to serve existing and future residential areas with either small playgrounds or other active recreation facilities that would not be met by the regional park facilities in the City of New Richmond. These are also identified as open space on the future land use map.

The town, working in conjunction with state, federal and local non-profit agencies, will utilize a variety of techniques, including conservation design development, conservation easements, park dedication, and purchase to protect these environmentally sensitive and future park areas. If state and county programs are established, the town may encourage purchase of development rights or transfer of development rights programs as resource protection techniques.

Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands (3,846 remaining future acres): The existing primary land use in the Town of Star Prairie that will continue to occupy a significant part of the landscape. These areas include existing agricultural lands with soils classified by the Natural Resources Soil Conservation Service capability classifications as I, II or III, existing farms, and the majority of the land zoned Exclusive Ag. It also includes publicly-owned waterfowl production areas and areas adjacent to these areas to allow for expansion. It is characterized by large scale agriculture operations, hobby/small-scale farms and very low-density, small-lot rural residential development that is compatible with the agricultural activity and that does not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. It will generally include the Star Prairie flats area, in the northwest portion of the town, the area north of the Squaw Lake and near the Prairie Flats wildlife areas and those areas along the Apple River with excellent farmland and which can buffer sensitive ***Open Space*** lands along the Apple River. Most of this land should be zoned Exclusive Ag, with a limited amount infilled with Ag Residential or Ag II.



A Star Prairie farm in winter. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

Hobby/Small-Scale Agriculture (2,660 remaining future acres): Very low-density, large-lot, farm-related development. These areas are compatible with existing agriculture and provide a buffer to existing residential subdivisions. They generally have excellent soils, are very good existing farms lands and are in locations that provide a good buffer to residential and/or commercial areas. These are usually 10 to 20-acre small-scale farms but may be as low as five acres. They will buffer various agricultural and open space uses from the ***Mixed Rural*** and ***Rural Residential*** areas and transition to the ***Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands*** areas. The ***Hobby/Small-Scale Agriculture*** areas are generally in the eastern side of the town along STH 65 and south of CTH C between the residential areas and the industrial land around the airport. It will also be used to buffer the ***Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands*** of the Star Prairie flats from residential development and to buffer the ***Commercial*** area including the speedway on CTH CC. New residential subdivisions would not be appropriate in this area unless they were small groups of three to five lots. Most of this land should be zoned Ag II, with some remaining Exclusive Ag or Ag Residential depending on

lot size. Tools such as a specific new zoning district, deed restrictions or conservation easements should be developed or utilized to limit further division of these sites.

Mixed Rural (2,188 future acres): Medium-density, small-lot conservation design residential development that is compatible with agricultural activities and with sensitive environmental resources found throughout much of the town. This residential development does not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. For the amount of planned development in the Town, these are the locations where the development may occur but also where some type of agriculture or open space is continuing. There is some existing traditional residential development in these areas also. All new residential subdivisions in this area should be conservation design to preserve open space and rural character. Higher density development will be possible with the use of transfer of development rights from land zoned Exclusive Ag to the property in the Town Water Service Area. Based on the population projections and planned development in the Town, not all these areas will be needed for rural



Rural residential development in the Town of Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

residential development over the timeframe of this plan. These areas are generally lands presently zoned Ag Residential.

Rural Residential (2,940 existing acres, 3,859 future acres): Medium to high density, small-lot rural residential development that is generally comprised of existing traditional residential subdivisions and new major subdivisions. Conservation design may be used in these areas to preserve environmentally sensitive resources.

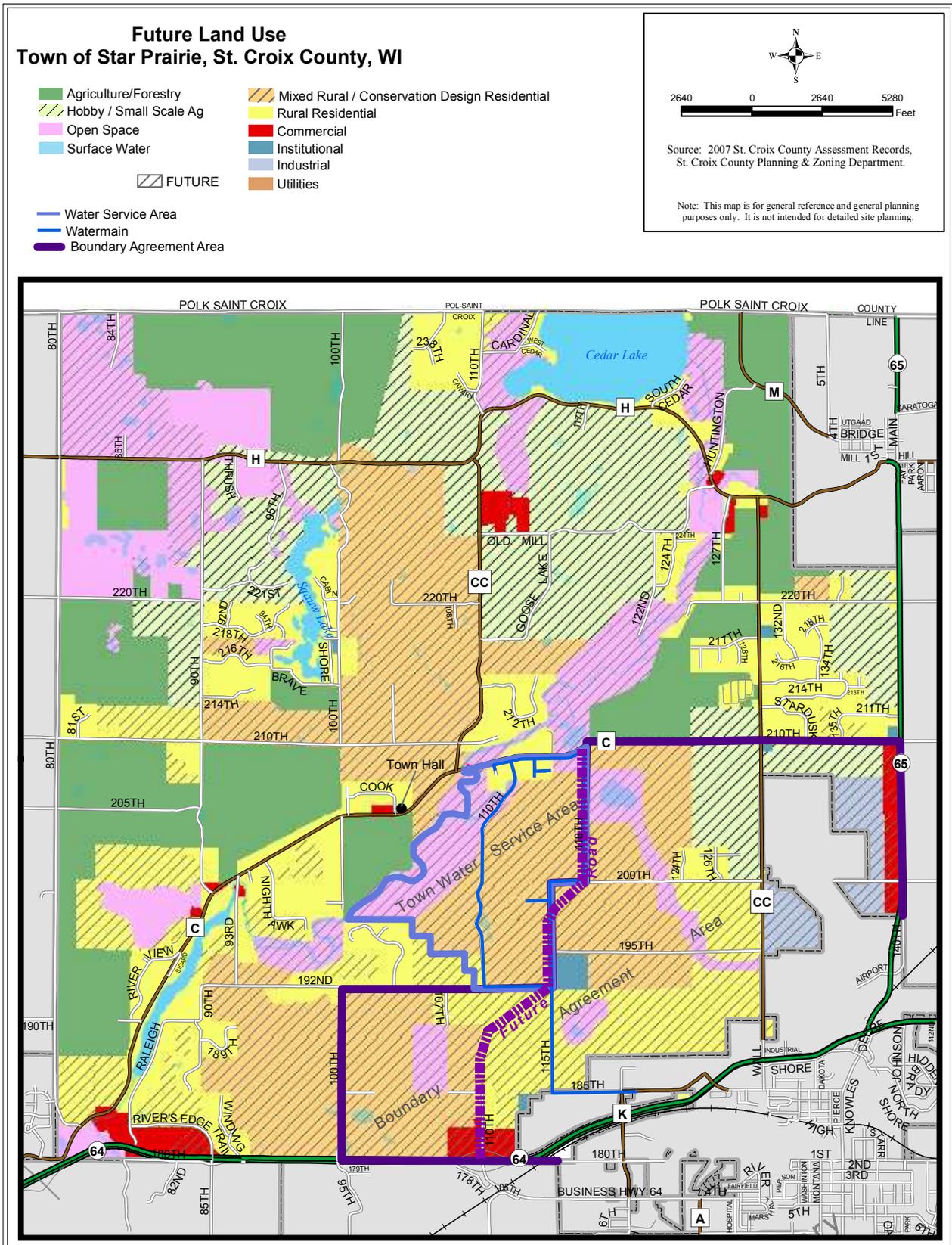
These areas are presently adjacent to existing residential subdivisions with existing infrastructure such as road connections and in locations where development concepts have been suggested. This development will occur through major subdivision creation. The area of the town south of CTH C and 210th Avenue should be the first area developed and it is where the town should encourage development to locate.

Government – Institutional (77 existing acres, no change): This land use area includes the new and old Town Halls, town boat landings, state, county and local parks and the federal lands that make up the Prairie Flats North and South Waterfowl Production Areas. Expansion of those existing uses has been identified as the future land use.

Commercial (157 existing acres, 256 future acres): Infill commercial development that is compatible with and supports the agricultural economy or rural character of the Town of Star Prairie and that does not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. Additional commercial development should generally be located at the new diamond interchange of STH 35/64 and 110th Street and along STH 65 north of New Richmond to 210th Street. Existing commercial sites may show some expansion but only if it is not in conflict with other surrounding land uses. No other new areas of commercial development are encouraged or planned. Generally large-scale or high-density commercial development should be located within or adjacent to the City of New Richmond or Villages of Somerset or Star Prairie where urban sewer and water services are present.

Industrial (3 existing acres, 113 future acres): Industrial land use in the Town of Star Prairie is limited to the areas south of the railroad line and STH 64 in the southwest portion of the town and infilling around the airport in the eastern portion of the town. It is expected that the area around the airport will be annexed to the City of New Richmond over time and industrial uses that should be on urban sewer and water services should locate in this area. The area around the railroad line would be appropriate for smaller scale, less intense industrial uses. Existing industrial areas may show some expansions but only if it is not in conflict with other surrounding land uses. It should be compatible with and support the agricultural economy of the Town and would not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. No other new areas of industrial development are encouraged or planned. Generally large-scale, dense or high impact industrial development should be located within or adjacent to the City of New Richmond or Villages of Somerset or Star Prairie where urban sewer and water services are present or readily available.

Boundary Agreement Area: The Boundary Agreement Area includes lands that will eventually be annexed to the City of New Richmond and receive urban services. The timing of when annexation will occur may be somewhat different from when development occurs. The area is bounded by the City of New Richmond and STH 65 to the east; 210th Avenue and CTH C to the north; 118th, 115th and 100 streets to the west, connected by 200th and 192nd avenues; and STH 64 and the City of New Richmond to the south. This area has specific land uses agreed to in conjunction with the City of New Richmond. There is an independent governing board consisting of members from the New Richmond City Council, Star Prairie Town Board and citizen members who live within the area will decide any land use changes. It is important to realize that while this area is still within the Town of Star Prairie geographically, it is under joint jurisdiction with the City of New Richmond. The projected development within this area is not calculated into the land use projections for the town. The future land uses for this area are discussed as part of the other future land use categories. There is a mixture of open space, rural residential, commercial and industrial.



IMPLEMENTATION

While some of the recommendations found in this plan will be automatically implemented, many others require changes to existing regulations or proposed regulations. Specific follow-up actions will be required for all the goals, objectives and policies to become reality. The Implementation section provides a roadmap and timetable for the implementation actions that will require additional actions.

PLAN ADOPTION

The first step in implementing the plan is making sure it is adopted in a manner which supports its future use for more detailed decision making. The second step is to provide copies of the adopted plan to neighboring cities, villages, towns and counties, local libraries and to the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

CONSISTENCY OF PLAN ELEMENTS

The state comprehensive planning statute requires that the implementation element describe how each of the elements is integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Because the various elements of the Town Plan were prepared simultaneously there are no known internal inconsistencies between the different sections on the elements of this plan. Also all elements of the plan were given a final review once the plan was completed to evaluate consistency between elements.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following charts depict a listing and timeline of the implementation actions for the Town of Star Prairie. The actions are divided up by each element and correlate to the sections in this plan. Each element contains specific suggestions for implementation but not all those require changes to regulation. Those that do will be identified below.

**Implementation Schedules – 2010 to 2025
Town of Star Prairie**

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Complete planned recreational facilities at the new town hall.	2010-2011
2. Adopt an ordinance to create a Town Park Committee to recommend park acquisitions, development activities and recreational facilities.	2012
3. Work with St. Croix County Emergency Management to identify emergency siren coverage areas. As needed, provide an additional emergency warning siren to serve the western portion of the Town of Star Prairie.	2010-2012
4. Explore various uses at the old town hall and develop an operational plan for it.	2010-2012
5. Identify storm shelters for residents, mobile home parks or campgrounds, execute formal agreements for shelter use and use local media and park or campground owners to help educate residents on availability.	2012
6. Provide appropriate services for town residents, including public road maintenance and snow plowing on town roads, emergency services (fire, police, ambulance), recycling, spring clean up and satellite law enforcement.	Ongoing
7. Consider the goals, objectives and policies of this plan, as well as the general welfare of all residents, to determine whether new town services or expansions may be appropriate in the future.	Ongoing
8. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset, City of New Richmond, St. Croix County, state agencies and local organizations to develop, provide and support recreational facilities and opportunities within the town.	Ongoing
9. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.	Ongoing
10. Established a 200-foot no construction buffer around any landfills in the town to allow for the expansion of methane gas underground and prevent contact with that gas.	Ongoing

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
11. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.	Ongoing
12. Encourage property owners to test their drinking water annually or at least once every three years. Water testing kits are available at the County Planning and Zoning Department, Hudson; Land & Water Conservation Department, Baldwin; Public Health Department, New Richmond; or through private labs. A fee may apply.	Ongoing
TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Adopt an official map for the Town of Star Prairie to assist in planning for, designating and protecting roadway corridors for planned road extensions and to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	2010-2011
2. Regularly review, expand and revise the future road plan map for the town to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	2010-2020
3. Designate specific town and county roadways for bicycle traffic and improve designated bicycle routes with wide, signed shoulders or off-road bike paths, based on the Future Bike System map in this plan.	2010-2020
4. Work with St. Croix County, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, landowners and private developers to limit development and access along State Trunk Highways 64 and 65 to help preserve them as throughways and scenic image corridors. Do not limit access over or under those highways.	Ongoing
5. Pursue a bicycle/pedestrian crossing over the Apple River at 185 th Street extended and Raleigh Road and connecting to CTH C.	Ongoing
6. Work with the City of New Richmond and the Multi-Purpose Pathway Committee to coordinate and sign bicycle/pedestrian routes into and out of the City of New Richmond.	Ongoing
7. Work with St. Croix County to update, as necessary, standards for development of local and county roads to safely serve multiple functions while retaining rural character.	Ongoing
8. Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards.	Ongoing
HOUSING ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Develop information to notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet height limitations and building construction standards for insulation and sound reduction. These sites may be required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.	2010-2012
2. Develop a town land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Guide the location of future residential development and protect important features of the natural environment without making existing houses nonconforming whenever possible.	2010-2012
Promote conservation design development to preserve the rural character of the community while continuing to enable rural residential development and provide services in a cost-effective manner.	2010-2012
Set standards for conservation design development, conventional development and development in the Boundary Agreement Area.	2010-2012
3. Develop town land use regulations regarding manufactured or mobile home development to bring it into compliance with the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	2010-2012
4. Explore options to provide senior housing opportunities in the Boundary Agreement Area at densities greater than one single-family unit per acre and more than four attached, single-family units.	2010-2012
5. To ensure high quality construction, require all housing construction to comply with the State of Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code.	Ongoing
6. Work with St. Croix County to update the County's land use regulations regarding manufactured or mobile home standards to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	Ongoing
7. Coordinate with St. Croix County to pursue grant funding for anchoring older mobile or manufactured homes.	Ongoing
8. Work with St. Croix County to maintain property to ensure a high-quality living environment within all residential areas and to address violations of applicable land use ordinances on residential, commercial or industrial properties.	Ongoing

HOUSING ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
9.	Review county land use regulations regarding lot size and density standards for multi-family housing, suggest changes if needed to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	Ongoing
10.	Work with St. Croix County to improve or expand St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding property maintenance and nuisance issues such as junk vehicles and dilapidated buildings.	Ongoing
11.	Work with St. Croix County to expand the St. Croix County Animal Waste and the Zoning ordinances to regulate large-scale farms near existing residences.	Ongoing
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Research and develop a site plan review process to identify minimum standards for commercial and industrial sites. These could include all commercial and industrial development in the Town but flexibility should be allowed to address the concerns of existing businesses. Encourage St. Croix County to adopt the same requirements/regulations in the zoning ordinance.	2011-2012
	Commercial and industrial site plans should include sidewalks, parking preferably behind buildings and parking lot landscaping standards, including landscaped islands or rain gardens within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt.	2011-2012
	Business signage, landscaping and lighting that is compatible with Star Prairie's rural character. Lighting should be shielded and downward directed with no spillover onto neighboring properties and should have specific illumination timeframes to maintain dark skies. Landscaping and screening should include visual screening standards and setback buffers between residential and industrial or commercial land uses.	2010-2012
2.	Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities.	Ongoing
3.	Work with St. Croix Economic Development Corporation to assist in locating potential new businesses.	Ongoing
4.	Promote higher quality development and minimize the negative impacts of commercial and industrial development in the Town through the use of restrictive covenants, zoning restrictions and design standards.	Ongoing
5.	Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. Environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.	Ongoing
6.	Commercial and industrial development should be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town's primary drainage corridors, which include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. Where appropriate, the Town should require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.	Ongoing
AGRICULTURAL ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Require that new residents receive a copy of the 'Rural Living Guide' that outlines the traditional community norms and expectations for rural residents. Develop a Rural Living Guide insert and provide copies to all new residents as part of the building permit / inspection process.	2010-Ongoing
2.	Work with St. Croix County to implement buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas through amendments to the county zoning ordinance.	2010-2012
3.	Develop and support policies that strengthen and maintain a farm operator's right to farm with farm practices that do not threaten public health or safety.	2010-2012
4.	Develop a land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Restrict residential and commercial development to areas least suited for agricultural purposes because it is unproductive soils, there is no history of farming or it is inaccessible.	2010-2012
	Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas and productive farm and forest lands.	2010-2012
	Promote conservation design development as a method to preserve open agricultural ground.	2010-2012

AGRICULTURAL ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
5.	Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards.	Ongoing
6.	Support exclusive agriculture zoning, agricultural enterprise area designation and other land use measures, which discourage non-farm development in identified Agricultural Preservation Areas, specifically the Star Prairie Flats in sections 4, 5, 6, & 7, the west half of section 14 and the east half of section 15 up to the Apple River, and the west half of section 1 and east half of section 2.	Ongoing
7.	Notify all new building applicants about the Right to Farm Law and that this is a farming area with associated smell, noise, and dust.	Ongoing
8.	Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.	Ongoing
NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Develop a land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Guide the location and design of development to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands, prairie and agriculture.	2010-2012
	Discourage and where possible, prevent the altering of wetlands and floodplains by filling or developing.	2010-2012
	Delineate, refine and protect "environmental corridors" as a composite of Star Prairie's most sensitive natural areas.	2010-2012
	Protect and restore natural shoreline areas in the town.	2010-2012
	Encourage conservation design development for sites with unique or exceptional natural resources such as surface water, wetlands, steep slopes, or highly productive agricultural soils.	2010-2012
2.	Research and review options to develop incentives and/or acquire land or easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas.	2010-2012
3.	Research and review options for implementing a buffer zone around public lands to mitigate conflicts between property owners and citizens utilizing public lands for recreation. Such a zone could be created with a principal structure setback of 150 feet from the lot line on properties adjacent to publicly-owned lands.	2010-2012
4.	Work with other local, state, county and federal agencies to improve water quality in the most impacted watersheds, especially Squaw Lake and the Apple River.	Ongoing
5.	Coordinate and work with other governmental and private agencies such as the Squaw Lake Management District, Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, WDNR, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to protect natural resources, especially those that cross political boundaries such as rivers.	Ongoing
6.	Support and work with the county on slope disturbance standards. Development should only be allowed on steep slopes with a grade from 12 to 20 percent where best management practices for erosion and sediment control and storm water management can be implemented successfully.	Ongoing
CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Support the designation of 110 th Street and Old Mill Road as rustic roads to be added to the state's rustic road system.	2010-2012
2.	Maintain an inventory of historic, archaeological and scenic resources.	Ongoing
3.	Provide the inventory for reference and discussion before and during consideration of land development proposals.	Ongoing
4.	Encourage private landowners to protect and, if necessary, rehabilitate identified cultural, historic, archeological and scenic resources when specific sites are proposed for development.	Ongoing
5.	Support the New Richmond Preservation Society as a local repository for historical materials; also encourage residents to donate items to the historic materials repository that the society maintains.	Ongoing
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Provide a copy of this comprehensive plan to all surrounding local governments.	2010
2.	Develop and implement boundary and annexation agreements with the City of New Richmond and villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.	2010-2012

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
3.	Work with St. Croix County, adjacent towns and the regional planning commission to identify and resolve actual and potential conflicts between the Town Plan and other plans through open dialog, cooperative initiatives, and amendments to the Town of Star Prairie Plan where appropriate.	Ongoing
4.	Coordinate, cooperate and communicate with surrounding municipalities, state and federal agencies and St. Croix County to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	Ongoing
5.	Monitor changes to state and county regulations to ensure compliance with the goals, objectives and policies of this plan	Ongoing
LAND USE ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Direct new residential, open space, agricultural, institutional, commercial and industrial land uses to those areas that are designated in this comprehensive plan.	Ongoing
2.	Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities.	Ongoing
3.	Develop a land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Promote conservation design development in major subdivisions and common septic systems to protect natural resources and highly productive agricultural soils and provide services in a cost-effective manner.	2010-2012
	The maximum gross density for development shall depend on the location of the development. The gross density may not be the minimum lot size in all cases. In conservation design development the minimum lot size shall be ½ acre per dwelling unit, with a two-acre gross density. Two-acre density for conventional development and one-acre density for development in the Boundary Agreement Area.	2010-2012
	Encourage home site design that achieves rural character and farmland preservation objectives and ensures that home sites are safe from seasonal flooding or ponding.	2010-2012
	Prevent development on hydric and alluvial soils. Encourage St. Croix County to adopt the same regulations	2010-2012
	Require the disclosure and cleanup of any soil or groundwater contamination on sites before approving development proposals	2010-2012
	Require new non-farm residential lots to be located adjacent to existing development or grouped to preserve larger tracts of agricultural land, protect natural resources and improve the design, layout and functionality of development.	2010-2012
	Residences should be located adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges, if available. If not, homes should be clustered on the edges of farm fields. Tree lines should be preserved.	2010-2012
	Encourage tree preservation and tree planting to screen new structures from neighboring properties and the public road in residential areas and require it in commercial and industrial areas.	2010-2012
	Consider protection and enhancement of sensitive natural resources, open and recreational space, large blocks of forestland and scenic vistas when reviewing development proposals and making public expenditures.	2010-2012
	Protect the visual quality of scenic roadways through site planning, driveway location, landscaping, signage, and other standards.	2010-2012
4.	Require the low building opening (LBO) for each development site to be staked with a base elevation reference point for all ponding, elevations and driveways.	2010-2012
5.	Work to change land division regulations to require new development to stub future driveways to the right-of-way line. This will prevent conflicts with stormwater management ponds, LBOs and construction site erosion and sediment tracking.	2010-2012
6.	As new development occurs, discourage new private roads and explore options to make existing private roads public to improve access for emergency services, improve maintenance and decrease conflicts.	Ongoing
7.	Review this plan, prior to making a recommendation on a rezoning request.	Ongoing
8.	When considering rezoning requests, recommend rezoning only when there will be an immediate change in land use and only that portion of the parcel needed for development.	Ongoing
9.	Work with St. Croix County to update county ordinances to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.	2011-2015
	To reduce the conversion of prime agricultural land to other uses, request that St. Croix County amend the County zoning ordinance so that the exclusive agriculture-zoning district would regulate based on both density and lot size rather than just lot size.	2011-2015

LAND USE ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
Set the Town of Star Prairie's development density to one lot per quarter –quarter section or "platted 40 acres" on land zoned exclusive agriculture.	2011-2015
10. Review St. Croix County's Land Division Ordinance for conservation design development to determine if the regulations meet the Town's needs. If St. Croix County's ordinance does not meet the Town's needs work with the St. Croix County Planning and Zoning Department in the development of the town land division ordinance.	2011-2015
11. Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. Environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.	Ongoing
12. Commercial and industrial development shall be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town's primary drainage corridors, which include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. These parkways would allow the corridors to remain mostly undeveloped as wildlife corridors, contribute to preserving the Town's rural atmosphere, provide stormwater management areas and provide potential trail linkages to the rest of the Town. Where appropriate, the Town shall require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.	Ongoing
13. Before approving any changes in land use, consider the impacts on wildlife habitat, potential locations of rare plant and animal species and archeological sites.	Ongoing
14. Identify environmentally sensitive areas most likely to be subject to rapid degradation and work to protect these areas first.	Ongoing
15. Prioritize the use of incentives and acquisition (land or easements) to protect environmentally sensitive areas, relying on regulations where necessary.	Ongoing
16. If authority is developed, establish a voluntary, market driven transfer of development rights program to discourage scattered development, promote rural residential development on the most suitable lands for development and encourage protection of prime agricultural lands. Generally sending areas would be those areas identified as remaining Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands or Open Space and the receiving areas would be the water service and Boundary Agreement areas.	Ongoing
17. Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards.	Ongoing

PLAN MONITORING, AMENDMENTS AND UPDATE

The Town of Star Prairie should regularly evaluate its progress towards achieving the recommendations of this plan and amend and update the plan as appropriate. This section suggests recommended criteria and procedures for monitoring, amending and updating the plan.

PROCEDURES

The Town should continuously evaluate its decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives and other actions against the recommendations of this plan.

Amendments may be appropriate in the years following initial plan adoption, particularly in instances where the plan is becoming irrelevant or contradictory to emerging policy or trends. Amendments are generally defined as minor changes to the plan maps or text. The plan will be specifically evaluated for potential amendments at least every five years and at most in 10 years. Frequent amendments to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided or else the plan will become meaningless.

The State comprehensive planning law requires that the town use the same basic process to amend the plan as it used to initially adopt the plan. This does not mean that new surveys need to be conducted. It does mean that the procedures defined under § 66.1001(4) Wis. Stats. need to be followed. The Town of Star Prairie should work with the County in monitoring the new state law for any changes that may clarify the amendment process. Before town adoption, any plan amendment must be forwarded to neighboring municipalities and the County for review and comment.

APPENDIX**Town of Star Prairie Comprehensive Plan
Public Participation Plan****INTRODUCTION**

Public participation is the process through which people who will be affected by or interested in a decision by a governmental body have an opportunity to influence its content before the decision is made.

The concept of citizens participating in government decision-making is fundamental to the functioning of a democratic system of government. While it is true that the United States is a democratic republic, where government officials are elected to represent citizens, it is also true that elected officials need to inform, be informed by, and interact with the public in an ongoing basis if their representation is to be meaningful. Public involvement in government through electing government representatives every two or four years clearly is insufficient to enable true representation. Successful public participation results in higher quality decisions because it taps the energies, knowledge, special insights, and resources of citizens in addition to reflecting their needs, values, and concerns.

Public participation goes beyond public information. The purpose of public participation is to inform the public as well as to solicit input and responses on public needs, values, and evaluation of proposed actions.

While public information is a key component to helping the citizenry become aware of background information and alternatives being considered by the governmental body, effective public participation is two-way communication. If the members of the public are to have the opportunity to influence the content of a decision, they need to be able to have input into the process and to respond to proposed actions.

Town governments in Wisconsin have a rich tradition of grassroots democracy based on the powers granted to the citizenry through the Town Meetings of colonial America and reflected in the modern-day Annual Meeting. In the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Star Prairie, the Town Board is committed to the continuation of this tradition by providing on-going opportunities for public participation throughout the planning process.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning statute recognizes the necessity of effective public participation and requires the adoption of a written public participation plan as stated in Chapter 66.1001(4)(a).

"The governing body of a local governmental unit shall adopt written procedures that are designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services, and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan. The written procedures shall provide an opportunity for written comments on the plan to be submitted by members of the public to the governing body and for the governing body to respond to such written comments."

Levels of public participation may be classified along a continuum as described below. The level of participation increases from left to right.

Public Awareness	Public Education	Public Input	Public Interaction	Public Partnership
Objective: Increase public awareness of the comprehensive planning process	Objective: Provide public with balanced and objective information and to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions	Objective: Obtain public feedback on issues, alternatives, and/or decisions	Objective: To work directly with the public to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered	Objective: To place decision-making responsibilities in the hands of the public
Example:* News releases Direct mail	Example:* Displays/exhibits Public presentations	Example:* Opinion surveys	Example:* Public forums Open houses	Example:* Plan Commission

Adapted from the *International Association for Public Participation*

*Not all methods fall neatly into one category. News releases may be used to increase public awareness or be written to emphasize a public educational objective. An open house may contain public education activities, public input activities, and offer public interaction in the same session.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

Stage 1: Start-up

In order to create public partnership the Town will create a Plan Commission to develop a comprehensive plan for recommendation to the Town Board.

Stage 2: Issues and Opportunities

The Town will organize an **Issues and Opportunities Workshop** to which the public will be invited through a direct mailing to all town residents. This activity is an example of public interaction. Participants will identify and prioritize those issues and opportunities that they believe ought be addressed in the comprehensive planning process. The items will be listed by topics corresponding to the required elements in a comprehensive plan. The direct mail flyer will contain a postage-paid mailer, which residents unable to attend the workshop may use to return their list of items to be included in the prioritization voting.

The Town will conduct a **Public Opinion Survey** of town residents regarding land use and development issues. The data from this survey will reflect public views about various issues related to comprehensive planning and will be incorporated as public input for consideration by the Plan Commission.

In order to further guide the development of goals for the nine elements of the plan, the Town will organize a **Visioning Workshop** at which the residents of the town will be invited to participate in the creation of a vision statement to reflect the desired future for the Town

Stage 3: Plan Elements

As the various elements of the comprehensive plan are drafted, three open houses will be scheduled for public participation. The topics of each open house will depend on the actual sequence of completion of the draft elements. That sequence will be dependent on the timing of relevant data availability, which is not yet known. The open house format will be designed to feature opportunities for public education, public input, and public interaction.

- **Public education.** County Planning Department staff and UW-Extension staff will present information about the elements under consideration at each open house. Presentations will include data, trends, maps, goals, objectives, policies, and programs. News releases to the local media will be used for public awareness and education to provide updates on the planning process and to communicate the content included in the above presentations. Materials will be posted on the County's Internet web site with an e-mail response form. Members of the Planning

Department and UW-Extension will be available upon request to give presentations to community groups.

- **Public input and public interaction.** Citizens attending the open houses will be able to make comments, ask questions, and engage in a dialogue with Town Plan Commissioners and Planning Department staff. Written comments and questions will be accepted during the open house. In addition, comments and questions may be submitted at any time during the planning process via surface mail, electronic mail, telephone, and FAX. Direct responses will be made to those who request it or where a response is appropriate. A record of all comments and questions will be retained and analyzed for similar content; the analysis will be presented to the Plan Commission for consideration.

Public partnership in Stage 3 will be accomplished through Plan Commission review and modification of draft analyses and alternatives prepared by the Planning Department. If appropriate, the Plan Commission may implement additional public participation activities following any of the open houses, particularly if public input and interaction results in substantial modifications to earlier documents, maps, proposals, or policies.

Stage 4: Plan Review and Adoption

News media will be used to inform and educate the public about the proposed comprehensive plan prior to adoption. Copies of the proposed plan will be available for review in the local public libraries and on the County's Internet web site. Information will be provided to describe how to request additional information or how to make comments.

Chapter 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes requires a public hearing prior to the Town Board vote regarding adoption of the proposed comprehensive plan. A notice of the hearing must be published at least 30 days before the hearing is held in a newspaper likely to give notice in the area. The notice must contain the date, time and location of the hearing; a summary of the proposed plan, the name of a person to contact for additional information; details relating to where or when the proposed plan may be inspected; and how a copy may be obtained for review.

Planning is a continuous process that does not end with the adoption of the plan. As future planning issues arise, the Plan Commission may organize additional public participation activities as it considers specific planning issues and amendments to the comprehensive plan.