

Town of St. Joseph
Comprehensive Plan 2026

Prepared for the Town of St. Joseph, WI | *December 16, 2026*



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING LAW

The Comprehensive Planning Law was enacted in 1999. Sometimes referred to as the "smart growth law," the Comprehensive Planning Law does not mandate how a community should grow; rather it leaves such decisions up to local communities.

A comprehensive plan is a local government's guide to community physical, social, and economic development. Comprehensive plans are not meant to serve as land use regulations in themselves; instead, they provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a twenty-year vision for future planning and community decisions.

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law does not mandate how a local community should grow, but it requires public participation at the local level in deciding a vision for the community's future. The uniqueness of individual comprehensive plans reflects community-specific and locally driven planning processes.

While a local government may choose to include additional elements, a comprehensive plan must include at least all of the nine elements below as defined by the Comprehensive Planning Law and described in Element Guides.

1. Issues and Opportunities Element
2. Housing Element
3. Transportation Element
4. Utilities and Community Facilities Element
5. Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element
6. Economic Development Element
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation Element
8. Land Use Element
9. Implementation Element

https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Comprehensive-Planning.aspx

RESOLUTION NO. [TO BE COMPLETED AT TIME OF PLAN ADOPTION]

RESOLUTION FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF ST. JOSEPH

The Plan Commission of the Town of St Joseph, St Croix County, Wisconsin, by this resolution, adopted by a majority of the town Plan Commission on a roll call vote with a quorum present and voting and proper notice having been given, resolves and recommends to the Town Board of the Town of St Joseph as follows:

Adoption of the Town of St Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2026.

The Plan Commission of the Town of St Joseph, by this resolution, further resolves and orders as follows:

All maps and other materials noted and attached as exhibits to the Town of St Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2026 are incorporated into and made a part of the Town of St Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2026.

The vote of the town Plan Commission in regard to this resolution shall be recorded by the clerk of the town Plan Commission in the official minutes of the Plan Commission of the Town of St Joseph.

The Town Clerk shall properly post or publish this resolution as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Ayes_____ Noes_____ Absent_____

_____

Plan Commission Member(s)

_____

Chair, Town Plan Commission

_____

Clerk, Town of St. Joseph
(or Secretary of the Plan Commission)

ORDINANCE NO. [TO BE COMPLETED AT TIME OF PLAN ADOPTION]

ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT TO THE TOWN OF ST. JOSEPH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SECTION I – TITLE AND PURPOSE

The title of this ordinance is the Town of St Joseph Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the Town of St Joseph, St Croix County, Wisconsin, to lawfully adopt a comprehensive plan as required under s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

SECTION II – AUTHORITY

The Town Board of the Town of St Joseph, St Croix County, Wisconsin, has authority under its village powers under s. 60.22, Wis. stats., to appoint a town Plan Commission under ss. 60.62 (4) and 62.23 (1), Wis. stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., to adopt this ordinance. The comprehensive plan of the Town of St Joseph must be in compliance with s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats., in order for the Town Board to adopt this ordinance.

SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

This ordinance, adopted by a majority of the Town Board on a roll call vote with a quorum present and voting and proper notice having been given, provides for the adoption by the town of a comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats.

SECTION IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town Board has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by s. 66.1001 (4) (a), Wis. stats.

SECTION V – TOWN PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Plan Commission of the Town of St Joseph, by a majority vote of the entire Commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the Town of St Joseph Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2), Wis. stats.

SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of St Joseph has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, with notice in compliance with the requirements of s. 66.1001 (4) (d), Wis. stats.

SECTION VII – ADOPTION OF TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Town Board, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled Town of St Joseph Comprehensive Plan Ordinance under s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats.

SECTION VIII – SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are severable.

SECTION IX – EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting.

The Town Clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats. and a copy of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan, shall be filed with at least all of the entities specified under s. 66.1001 (4) (b), Wis. stats.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

_____

Supervisor (s)

_____

Town Chair

Ayes_____ Noes_____ Absent_____

Published/Posted:_____

Attest:_____

Town Clerk

PLANS INCLUDED BY REFERENCE

The following plans are included by reference in the Town of St. Joseph 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

- Town of St. Joseph 2017 Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Town of St. Joseph 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Town of St. Joseph Chapter 81 Design Regulations, May 13, 2021
- Town of St. Joseph 1995 Comprehensive Plan
- Town of St. Joseph 2006 Comprehensive Plan
- Town of St. Joseph 2016 Comprehensive Plan
- Town of St. Joseph 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Implementation Study
- Town of St. Joseph Natural Areas Inventory/Land Cover Mapping
- Bass Lake Management Plan
- Bass Lake Management Plan Appendices
- Perch Lake Management Plan
- Houlton Area Wastewater Facilities Plan
- MS4 Houlton Storm Water Plan

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Town of St. Joseph is a unique, rural, and beautiful place. The Town has rich natural resources, agricultural lands, and homesteads. The Town faces several changes as regional improvements, such as the St. Croix Crossing Bridge, alter the landscape and increase access from the Twin Cities and neighboring areas. These improvements have the potential to alter the character of the Town. This Plan lays out the overall vision and goals for the Town through 2050 to ensure that the character of the Town is enhanced and maintained. The Town of St. Joseph Plan Commission, Town Board, and local residents prepared this plan with assistance from consultants at Bolton & Menk. The Plan was developed starting in February 2026 and concluding in December 2026.

This Plan updates the Town's previous Comprehensive Plans, which include:

- 1995 Comprehensive Plan
- 2006 Comprehensive Plan
- 2016 Comprehensive Plan

Two primary drivers led the Town in its comprehensive planning process: first, the 2008 economic downturn following the completion of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan slowed growth in both the Town and the region. The Town needed to analyze the new types of development pressure and establish new policies as the economy emerged from the 2008 recession. Second, the St. Croix Crossing Bridge was completed in August 2017. The potential development pressure resulting from the improved access to the surrounding communities, especially the Twin Cities Metro Area, presents an increasing need to plan how St. Joseph will grow and develop as a result. Additionally, Wisconsin state statute requires that the comprehensive plan be updated every 10 years.

2. PLAN ORGANIZATION

The plan chapters correspond with the nine elements required for comprehensive plans under the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning statutes §66.1001(2). Each of the nine elements and the items described in the statute are addressed within the contents of the chapters.

This chapter presents a brief introduction to the Town, provides a short summary of the planning process, and defines the setting in which this plan was developed.

Chapter 2: Issues and Opportunities Element presents the key issues and opportunities in the Town as identified during the kick-off and plan reviews, and identifies goals and policies for each of the subsequent sections. This chapter also details past efforts made by the town related to public input and visioning that informed previous versions of the Comprehensive Plan that the Town feels are still applicable. Demographic characteristics are important to understanding trends within the Town. Overall population characteristics, such as age and household size, will have significant implications on the needs of the Town and potential land use patterns. Population, household, and other demographic information help define existing conditions within the Town. This information also provides a basis for future expectations about growth, housing needs, economic development, land use needs, and other important components of the Comprehensive Plan.

Subsequent chapters focus on specific planning topics/elements including:

- Housing and Population Element
- Transportation Element
- Utilities and Community Facilities Element
- Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element
- Economic Development Element
- Land Use Element

Each of these chapters contains an inventory and analysis of existing conditions related to the respective topic. Existing conditions help define the current structure of the Town, and those areas that are available to the Town for development, redevelopment, or preservation.

Some of the chapters address intergovernmental coordination associated with specific issues such as transportation and economic development. Additionally, Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation Element includes general information about other jurisdictions and their role in working with the Town of St. Joseph.

Each of these chapters also contains a policy plan, which includes a set of goals and policies specific to that chapter's topic. General goals and policies defined in these chapters are included in Chapter 2: Issues and Opportunities Element.

Finally, Chapter 10: Implementation Element describes how the Town intends to execute this Plan and lists tools available to the Town to implement the plan.

3. PLANNING PROCESS

The process of updating the plan began in early 2026 by analyzing existing conditions, updating maps and statistics, and discussing key issues for the Town of St. Joseph. The background data is included as part of each of the chapters of this plan.

One of the significant features about the 2026 update is that a number of key issues carry forward from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. This includes:

Municipal Services – As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Town decided to analyze and discuss whether municipal sanitary sewer should be developed in the Houlton area in the western part of the Town. Discussions at the Plan Commission ultimately led to the Town deciding to not pursue this option.

Rural Character – As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Plan Commission devoted two meetings to discussing what constitutes "rural character" since that issue has been important in both the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and in the St. Joseph Planning Survey, 2013. This issue continues to inform the Issues and Opportunities chapter of this plan.

Natural Resource Inventory - A separate study was conducted to inventory the natural resources in the Town. A natural resource scientist mapped most of the various features on the ground and used maps, aerials, and other remote information. This inventory is discussed in Chapter 6 :Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element.

Market Overview - As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, a generalized market overview was prepared to analyze the potential demand for residential, office, retail, and industrial markets in the Town of St. Joseph. This analysis is summarized in Chapter 7: Economic Development Element in this Plan. In conjunction with St. Croix County, the University of Wisconsin Extension Center for Community and Economic Development studied the commercial and economic effects of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge.

This phase of discussion involved updating the Town's goals and policies, with the 2016 goals as the starting point. The Plan Commission held a Public Hearing on December 16, 2026, to review the background information and goals.

Following this, options for land use and transportation were discussed as well as drafts of the full plan document.

4. PLAN SETTING

The Town of St. Joseph is a community of about 4,524 people, according to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, in the western region of St. Croix County, Wisconsin. The Town is located in western Wisconsin and is bounded by the St. Croix River on the west side. The Town has ample natural resources including the St. Croix River and bluff lands, streams, wetlands, woodlands, and rolling agricultural fields. A large portion of the Town's landscape is devoted to agricultural production and large-lot single family residential homes.

The Town of St. Joseph is bordered to the north by the Town of Somerset, to the east by the Town of Richmond and the Town of Warren, and to the south by the Town of Hudson. The Town of St. Joseph includes the two rural, unincorporated hamlets of Houlton and Burkhardt. These two hamlets contain some smaller lot residential development and a small amount of commercial and retail space.

Although the Town is located in Wisconsin, there are several cities in Minnesota that are close to and provide services to the Town's residents. The City of Stillwater is located across the St. Croix Crossing Bridge from the Town of St. Joseph and provides the most accessible shopping alternatives for residents. The Town is also connected to Stillwater by a lift bridge which became a bicycle and pedestrian bridge after the St. Croix Crossing Bridge was completed in 2017.

In addition to Stillwater, there are several jurisdictions in proximity to the Town of St. Joseph. Minneapolis and St. Paul are the closest major metropolitan areas and are approximately 20 miles west of the Town. Within Wisconsin, other nearby cities and villages include the villages of Somerset and North Hudson and the cities of New Richmond and Hudson. (See Figure 1-1, Regional Context on page 1-6).

5. TOWN VISION

A Place Where Natural Resources are Preserved

The Town of St. Joseph prepared a natural resources inventory to understand and identify the significant natural resource areas in the Town. The Town has beautiful natural resources including the St. Croix River, various streams and rivers, woodlands, and rolling topography. The abundance of natural resources makes the Town a unique place to live, and these resources should be maintained to preserve the rural quality of the Town.

A Place Where Development is Compatible with the Environment

The residents understand that there is likely to be growth in the Town. The current residents are dedicated to maintaining the current natural and rural quality of the Town. The environmental quality of the Town is a part of what makes the Town desirable, and all growth and development should consider and respond to existing natural resources and topography.

A Place with an Accessible Town Center

The Town currently has two unincorporated hamlets at Houlton and Burkhardt, which provide minimal services to the Town. In the future, the Town would like to encourage small business opportunities that could support a small town center. A struggle persists in these areas for the Town to understand how to support development in this area to achieve what the Town envisions. This area would be walkable to encourage connectivity between adjacent homes and the town center. The town center could include various educational opportunities, small retail, and service businesses, life-cycle housing options, parks, and open spaces. This area would contribute to the quaint small town atmosphere the residents enjoy and want to maintain.

A Place that is Aesthetically Pleasing

Development should not only be sensitive to the natural surroundings, but also consider the impact it has visually on the character of the community. The Town has adopted Design Regulations as Chapter 81 of the Town Code to improve the quality of development through guidelines for building materials, signage, scale, placement of public art, landscaping and vegetation, and attractive and harmonious streetscapes that support the community vision.

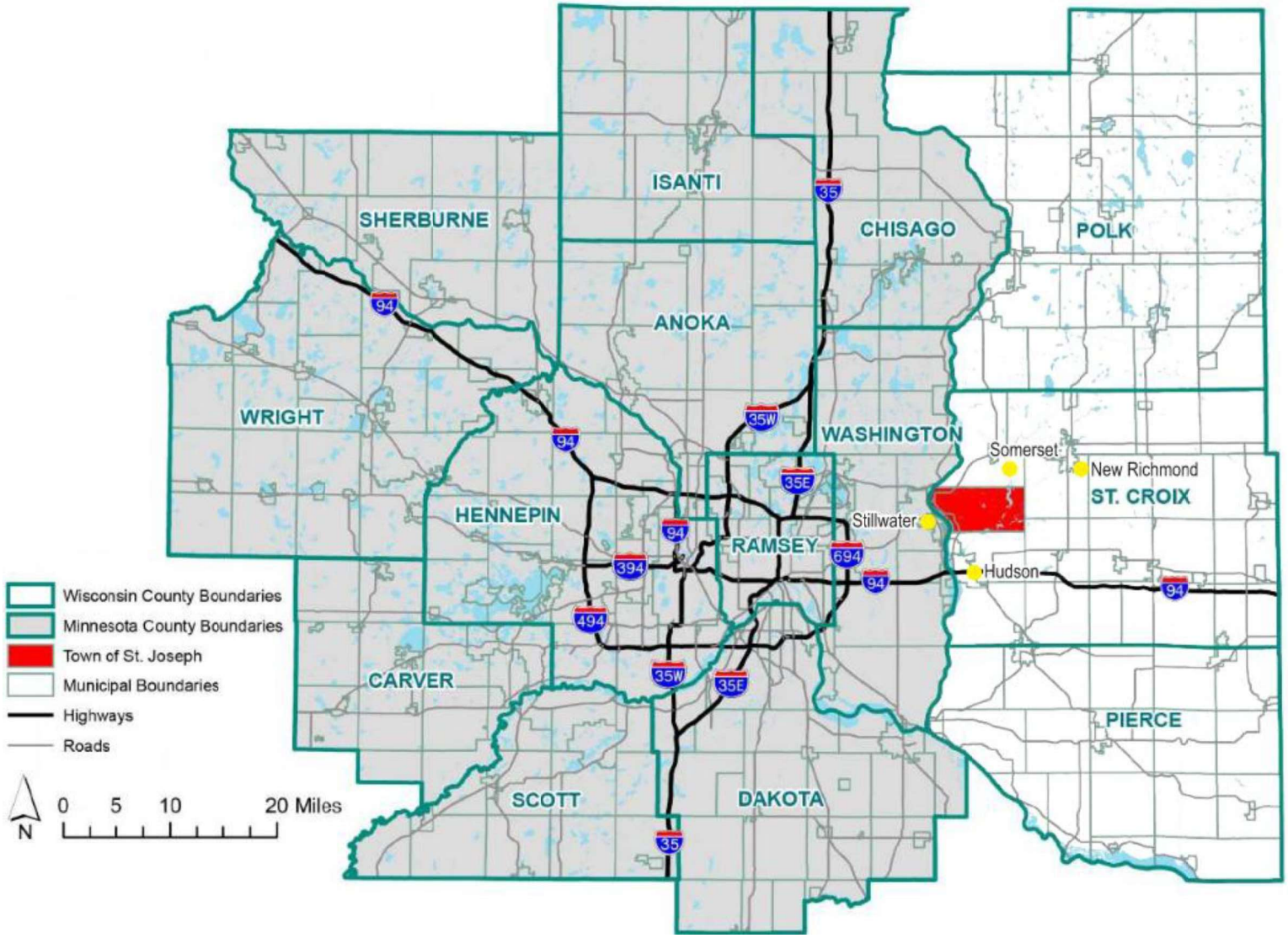
A Place Where Residents Can Live, Work, and Recreate

The Town would like to encourage a community that is sustainable and provides opportunities to live, work, and recreate within the community. The Town should provide basic service to its residents and should expand opportunities in the Town to meet the needs of the current and future residents.

A Place of Recreational Opportunities

The Town has the opportunity to provide and plan for passive and active recreational areas within the Town. There are several areas that have been identified as preferred locations to provide park and recreational facilities to its residents. The Town would like to enhance active and passive park lands to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

Figure 1-1 Regional Context



CHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ELEMENT

1. KEY ISSUES

Based on discussions with the Plan Commission, Town Board, community members, and other information and analysis, there are five major issues facing the Town of St. Joseph as it moves into its new future. These are not stand-alone issues but instead are connected and interrelated in many important ways. These include the following five issues:

Natural Resources

Protecting and preserving the natural beauty of the Town has always been important in St. Joseph. It was identified as one of the most important issues in the St. Joseph Planning Survey, 2013. A separate detailed Natural Resources Inventory was conducted in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan update which served as a basis for key policies in the Plan. One of the unseen natural resources is groundwater which is considered the most important element of rural character but is significantly affected by what happens above ground with the other natural features. Since the Town of St. Joseph established zoning authority, the Town has adopted ordinances that establish standards for the development and use of the Preservation Residential zoning district, which is directly tied to the Natural Resources Inventory.

Rural Character

The Town of St. Joseph has defined itself as a rural enclave and the term "rural character" is invoked frequently in describing its essence. What does this mean? As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Plan Commission had an in-depth discussion and made a list of ten characteristics that define rural character. These characteristics are summarized below and more fully detailed in a memorandum in Appendix A of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. These characteristics involve not just natural resources and farming, but detailed design elements as the Town develops. The top ten qualities that make up rural character, as ranked by the Plan Commission, in St. Joseph are:

1. Groundwater.
2. Quiet.
3. Natural features.
4. Viewsheds.

5. Farmland.
6. Hamlet of Houlton development.
7. Lighting.
8. Signage.
9. Architectural standards.
10. Parks, recreation, and trails.

Houlton Town Center

As part of the 2016 Comprehensive plan, there was considerable discussion about how the Houlton area might change in coming years due to the St. Croix Crossing Bridge and related street network changes. The realignment of roadways has already changed traffic patterns, which will affect business and economics and help determine the kinds of land uses that will thrive or not. The Loop Trail connecting to Stillwater and the St. Croix Crossing Bridge are expected to be a tourist attraction, bringing different kinds of traffic and customers. Traffic on the new highway may bring development pressure for businesses near the new interchange, but the growth is anticipated to be gradual instead of a large surge of development. The Town of St. Joseph considered the possibility of municipal services in the hamlet of Houlton, which was discussed in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan in Chapter 9: Land Use Element and further detailed in a memorandum in Appendix F of the same plan. The balance of allowing and encouraging a concentrated mix of uses in the area while maintaining the Town of St. Joseph's rural character elsewhere is an ongoing challenge that will unfold in coming decades. Recent developments in the Houlton area, specifically the closure of Houlton Elementary School, will have long-term impacts on the area that are yet to be determined.

St. Croix Crossing Bridge and Street Network

The character and location of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge and development of the street network are significantly different than the old Stillwater Bridge that has served to connect St. Joseph with Minnesota for so many years. There will be significantly more traffic and light around the new interchanges. The town is still anticipating impacts on traffic, economic development, tourism, visual aesthetics, noise, and other issues. The full impact of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge will likely take years to see.

Town Roadways

The St. Croix Crossing Bridge has an impact on the lesser roads in the Town as well. Several segments of road are now cut off from the main highway with the construction of the new highway. The opening of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge creates new patterns of movement and increases the amount of drive-by traffic, which can have both positive and negative impacts.

2. GENERAL POLICY PLAN

The General Policy Plan identifies overarching goals for the community that help define the characteristics and qualities of the Town. The General Policy Plan guides the specific goals presented in later chapters of this plan. The General Goals are deliberately broad and are supported through the specific goals and policies developed in the Policy Plans of each chapter.

General Goal #1: Enhance and maintain the rural character of the Town while providing opportunities to maintain and enhance St. Joseph as a unique and desirable place to live, learn, work, and recreate.

Policies:

1. Promote the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan that effectively and efficiently plans for land use, community facilities, transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental protection.
2. Formulate and enforce ordinances to ensure development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Review and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to ensure its usefulness as a practical guide for current and future development. Adhere to this Plan, which shall guide zoning changes, as closely as possible to ensure consistent development policy.

General Goal #2: Maintain and enhance the natural landscape by encouraging special consideration for places of natural significance in the Town.

Policies:

1. Preserve and protect key natural resources as identified through the natural resources inventory.
2. Provide incentives to developers and land owners to protect important natural resource areas.
3. Preserve and protect Bass Lake and Perch Lake by implementation and periodic updates to their respective Lake Management Plans.

General Goal #3: Encourage development that supports and enhances the Town's Vision.

Policies:

1. Update and refine current ordinances to be consistent with the goals set forth in this Plan.
2. Create and develop land use tools that promote development that is creative, unique, and consistent with the vision of the Town.
3. Maintain and utilize design and architectural standards that support and guide future development.

General Goal #4: Protect groundwater supplies and surface water to assure high quality groundwater for all residents.

Policies:

1. Encourage and promote improvements in monitoring of all private wells and private septic systems in the Town to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
2. Encourage and promote improvements in monitoring of all waste disposal and management systems and practices to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
3. Develop and implement a stormwater management plan and best practices to guide future development.
4. Encourage, promote, and implement the Lake Management Plans for Bass Lake and Perch Lake in the Town of St. Joseph.

General Goal #5: Support strong, ongoing working relationships between the Town of St. Joseph and surrounding cities, towns, St. Croix County, and other jurisdictions in matters related to planning and the provision of public services.

Policies:

1. Continue to discuss and identify potential intergovernmental relationships that help promote efficient services to the Town and adjacent jurisdictions.
2. Pursue new collaborative planning efforts among local governments and organizations to address existing issues and new issues as they arise with regard to land use, transportation, parks, natural resources, delivery of services, and other areas of mutual concern.
3. Promote information sharing between the Town of St. Joseph and surrounding towns, cities, and the county, and encourage them to participate in local issues.
4. Maintain communications, and collaborate where appropriate, with St. Croix County and state agencies involved in planning issues that affect the Town and region.

General Goal #6: Promote community input, information sharing, and collaboration.

Policies:

1. Actively encourage and utilize resident participation in the local decision-making process.
2. Continue to improve and enhance communication among the Town, residents, businesses, civic groups, and public agencies utilizing various media such as a Town newsletter, internet access, and a community web page.

General Goal #7: Encourage the creation of a Houlton town center that preserves and enhances the small-town, quaint atmosphere the Town values.

Policies:

1. Create a Houlton Town Center plan that identifies the types of businesses that the Town would like to support.
2. Encourage and support a compact development pattern in the Houlton Town Center to support a mix of residential, small retail, and businesses.
3. Encourage and support plans to improve accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles on existing roads within Houlton.

General Goal #8: Encourage a Burkhardt mixed use area which will provide increased business opportunities.

Policies:

1. Maintain the Rural Residential for residences on Old Mill Road, except for current Commercial area.
2. Encourage multiuse zoning for Scott Road parcels from Co Rd A to the Town Line.
3. Maintain Burkhardt as a distinct area with alternative businesses and structures.
4. Work with the State of Wisconsin and St. Croix County to address shared issues of concern including parking and access to facilities and services in Burkhardt from the Willow River State Park.

CHAPTER 3: HOUSING AND POPULATION ELEMENT

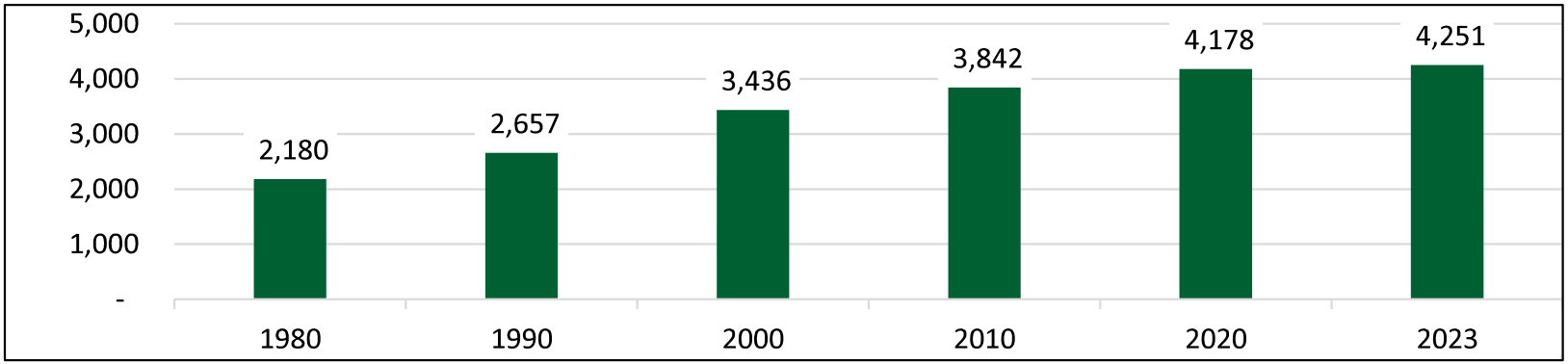
1. INTRODUCTION

The identification of trends in population growth and other demographic data is a very important part of the comprehensive planning process. It can provide clues to future growth patterns and indicate what types of housing and public facilities may be needed to support that growth. For example, an increase in young couples with children would require starter housing, new parks, schools, and new or upgraded community facilities, whereas an increase in the elderly population would lessen the need for schools and increase the need for accessible housing. Chapter 3: Housing and Population Element contains information on the Town of St. Joseph's population and household characteristics.

2. POPULATION

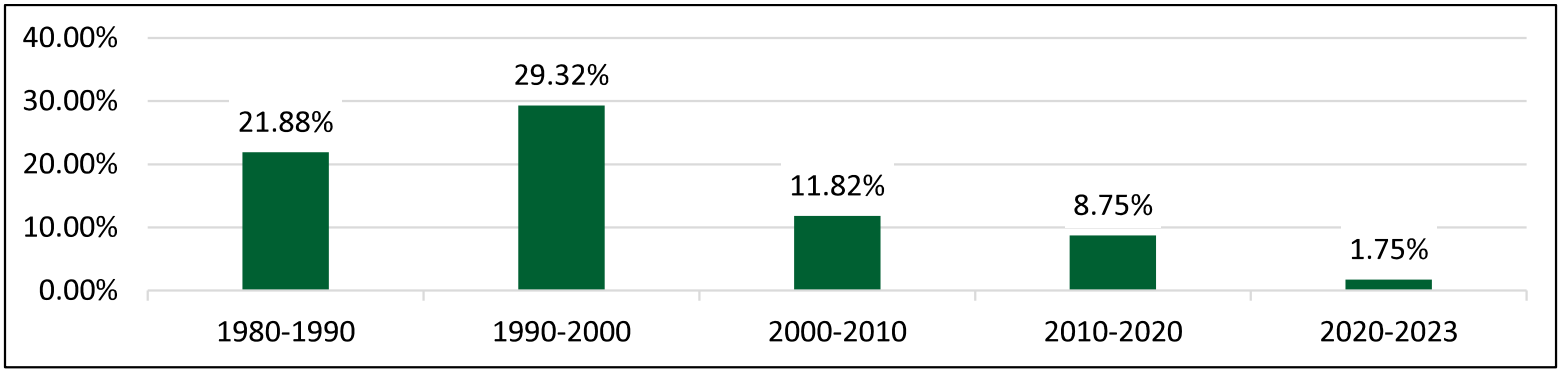
As shown in Figure 3-1, the population of St. Joseph has grown slowly since the completion of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. In 2020, an estimated population of 4,178 resided in St. Joseph. This increase of 742 people since year 2000 represents a growth rate of 21.59% within 20 years. Figure 3-2 shows the percentage change over the past several decades. While the greatest population growth in St. Joseph happened in the 1970s and the rate of growth has been on a general decline, the Town's growth slowed to 8.75% from 2010 to 2020. It is likely that this trend will continue in the near future.

Figure 3-1 Population Trends



Source: US Census

Figure 3-2 Population Percent Change



Source: US Census

Table 3-1 and Figure 3-3 show the 1980 - 2023 population growth in St. Joseph and surrounding communities, as well as in St. Croix County and the state of Wisconsin.

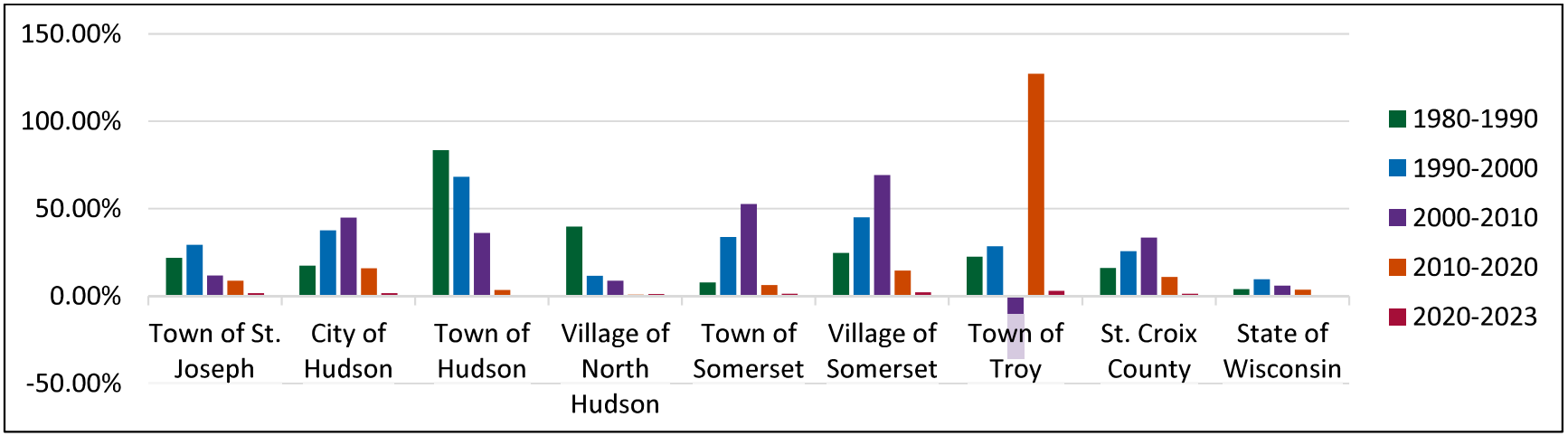
Table 3-1 Population Trends

Community	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2023
Town of St. Joseph	2,180	2,657	3,436	3,842	4,178	4,251
City of Hudson	5,434	6,378	8,775	12,719	14,755	15,004
Town of Hudson	2,012	3,692	6,213	8,461	8,757	8,735
Village of North Hudson	2,218	3,101	3,463	3,768	3,803	3,848
Town of Somerset	1,833	1,975	2,644	4,036	4,291	4,347
Village of Somerset	860	1,072	1,556	2,635	3,019	3,084
Town of Troy	2,326	2,850	3,661	2,353	5,345	5,508
St. Croix County	43,262	50,251	63,155	84,345	93,536	94,819
State of Wisconsin	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,892,023

Community	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020	2020-2023
Town of St. Joseph	21.88%	29.32%	11.82%	8.75%	1.75%
City of Hudson	17.37%	37.58%	44.95%	16.01%	1.69%
Town of Hudson	83.50%	68.28%	36.18%	3.50%	-0.25%
Village of North Hudson	39.81%	11.67%	8.81%	0.93%	1.18%
Town of Somerset	7.75%	33.87%	52.65%	6.32%	1.31%
Village of Somerset	24.65%	45.15%	69.34%	14.57%	2.15%
Town of Troy	22.53%	28.46%	-35.73%	127.16%	3.05%
St. Croix County	16.16%	25.68%	33.55%	10.90%	1.37%
State of Wisconsin	3.95%	9.65%	6.03%	3.64%	-0.03%

Source: US Census

Figure 3-3 Population Trends



Source: US Census

The population of the Town of St. Joseph has increased by 95% in the past 43 years from 2,180 people in 1980 to 4,251 in 2023. The Town's population grew considerably faster than the state of Wisconsin as a whole, which increased in population by 25 percent during the same time period. The growth rate of the Town of St. Joseph has dipped lower than St. Croix County as a whole, which grew by 119% in the same period.

Most of the communities around the Town of St. Joseph have experienced continued population growth. While growth in St. Joseph has slowed since 2000, some surrounding communities, the County, and the State grew at a faster rate.

The Town of St. Joseph's natural amenities, proximity to the Twin Cities, and location along the Highway 64 and 35 corridors have fueled much of its growth. It is reasonable to expect that the Town's population will continue to grow as people migrate from the Twin Cities area in search of a more rural lifestyle and as existing younger residents of the Town begin to establish families. In addition, the St. Croix Crossing Bridge opened in August 2017. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan detailed the expected growth from the bridge and anticipated gradual growth. The Town has not seen the level of pressure for growth and development that was anticipated with the opening of the bridge, but growth pressure is likely to continue in the future.

Population Share

The Town of St. Joseph and surrounding communities comprised 39% of the County's total population in 1980 as shown on Table 3-2. Their share increased overall through 2023 to 47%. This trend illustrates some of the land use and growth dynamics occurring in the community mentioned above.

The Town of St. Joseph's share of population in St. Croix County has declined somewhat since 2000 while those in some surrounding communities increased.

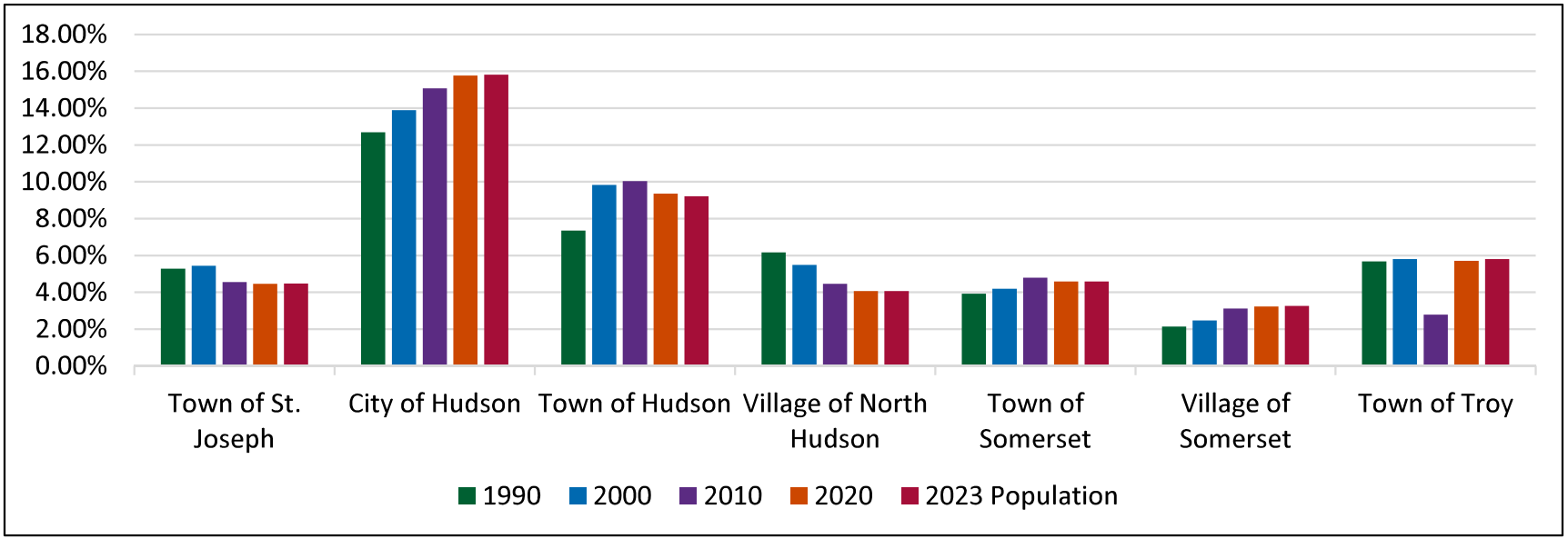
Table 3-2 Population Share

Community	1980 Pop.	1980 % of County	1990 Pop.	1990 % of County	2000 Pop.	2000 % of County
Town of St. Joseph	2,180	5.04%	2,657	5.29%	3,436	5.44%
City of Hudson	5,434	12.56%	6,378	12.69%	8,775	13.89%
Town of Hudson	2,012	4.65%	3,692	7.35%	6,213	9.84%
Village of North Hudson	2,218	5.13%	3,101	6.17%	3,463	5.48%
Town of Somerset	1,833	4.24%	1,975	3.93%	2,644	4.19%
Village of Somerset	860	1.99%	1,072	2.13%	1,556	2.46%
Town of Troy	2,326	5.38%	2,850	5.67%	3,661	5.80%
Subtotal	**16,863**	**38.98%**	**21,725**	**43.23%**	**29,748**	**47.10%**
St. Croix County	43,262		50,251		63,155	

Community	2010 Pop.	2010 % of County	2020 Pop.	2020 % of County	2023 Pop.	2023 % of County
Town of St. Joseph	3,842	4.56%	4,178	4.47%	4,251	4.48%
City of Hudson	12,719	15.08%	14,755	15.77%	15,004	15.82%
Town of Hudson	8,461	10.03%	8,757	9.36%	8,735	9.21%
Village of North Hudson	3,768	4.47%	3,803	4.07%	3,848	4.06%
Town of Somerset	4,036	4.79%	4,291	4.59%	4,347	4.58%
Village of Somerset	2,635	3.12%	3,019	3.23%	3,084	3.25%
Town of Troy	2,353	2.79%	5,345	5.71%	5,508	5.81%
Subtotal	**37,814**	**44.83%**	**44,148**	**47.20%**	**44,777**	**47.22%**
St. Croix County	84,345		93,536		94,819	

Source: US Census

Figure 3-4 Population Share



Source: US Census

Age Distribution

Trends in age impact a community's planning needs. These demographics help project the types of housing, schools, parks, and community facilities and services that may be needed in the future. Table 3-3 shows the median age in the Town of St. Joseph and surrounding communities. The table shows that St. Joseph's median age continues to be higher than those of surrounding communities, the County, and the State as a whole. The median age in the Town increased 8 years from 2000 to 2020. The table also shows that almost all adjacent communities, including the County and the State, are experiencing aging of the general population, a trend that is more pronounced in St. Joseph.

Table 3-4 shows the age cohorts for the Town of St. Joseph for 2010, 2020, and 2023. This is also illustrated in Figure 3-6. In 2023, the largest age cohort in the Town of St. Joseph was the 55- to 59-year-old group, followed by the 50- to 54-year-old, and 60- to 64-year-old groups. These three groups combined, comprise 33% of the Town's population. From 2010 to 2023, the majority of population growth in St.

Joseph occurred in age groups older than 70. In the 70- to 74-year-old and 75- to 79-year-old cohorts there was a growth of 348% and 360%, respectively. The third largest growth rate was the 5- to 9-year-old cohort, at 146% in the same time period.

Table 3-3 Median Age

Community	2000	2010	2020	2023
Town of St. Joseph	37.4	42.9	45.2	50.8
Town of Somerset	36.0	38.5	45.7	47.7
Village of Somerset	27.4	29.6	31.9	27.8
Town of Troy	36.5	45.5	46.1	47.7
Village of North Hudson	34.6	38.9	41.8	49.2
Town of Hudson	34.2	38.1	42.6	40.4
Hudson City	33.3	35.4	40.4	37.6
St. Croix County	35.0	36.7	39.9	39.8
State of Wisconsin	36.0	38.5	40.1	40.1

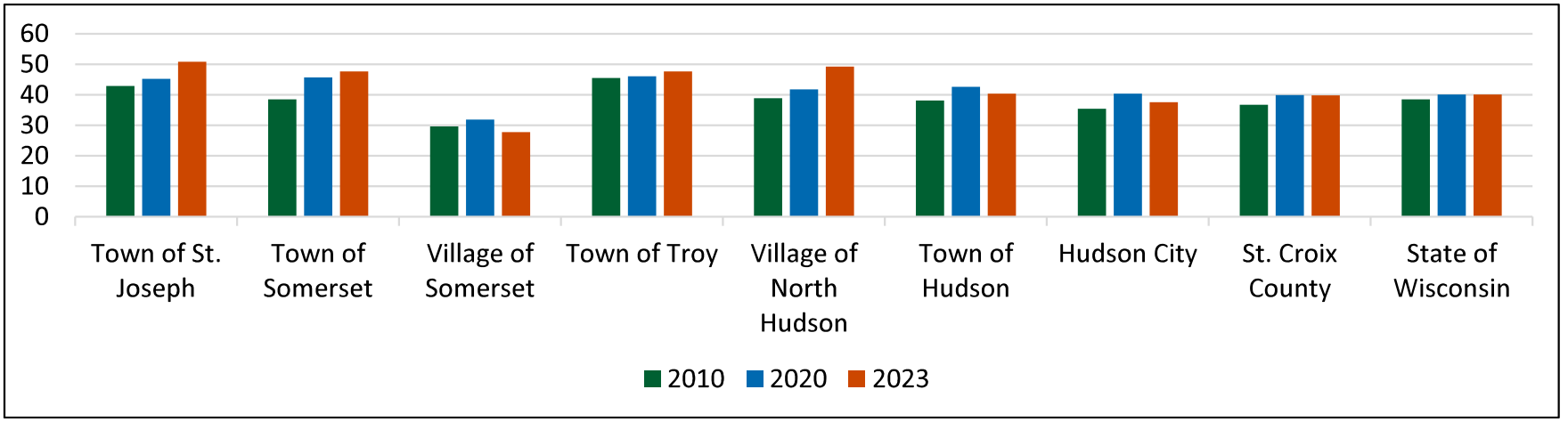
Source: US Census

Table 3-4 Population by Age

Age	2010 Pop.	2010 Percent	2020 Pop.	2020 Percent	2023 Pop.	2023 Percent	2010-2023 Percent Change
Under 5 years	336	8.7	55	1.3	158	3.7	-52.96%
5 to 9 years	112	2.9	246	6	275	6.5	145.60%
10 to 14 years	232	6	225	5.5	207	4.9	-10.64%
15 to 19 years	309	8	479	11.7	402	9.5	30.15%
20 to 24 years	135	3.5	155	3.8	73	1.7	-45.98%
25 to 29 years	108	2.8	92	2.2	100	2.4	-7.50%
30 to 34 years	266	6.9	191	4.7	165	3.9	-38.07%
35 to 39 years	174	4.5	158	3.9	318	7.5	83.03%
40 to 44 years	228	5.9	219	5.3	204	4.8	-10.45%
45 to 49 years	537	13.9	266	6.5	169	4	-68.51%
50 to 54 years	297	7.7	468	11.4	457	10.8	53.72%
55 to 59 years	440	11.4	520	12.7	490	11.5	11.32%
60 to 64 years	266	6.9	389	9.5	456	10.7	71.17%
65 to 69 years	286	7.4	194	4.7	324	7.6	13.40%
70 to 74 years	39	1	234	5.7	173	4.1	348.07%
75 to 79 years	46	1.2	139	3.4	213	5	359.73%
80 to 84 years	31	0.8	70	1.7	67	1.6	116.91%
85 years and over	27	0.7	0	0	0	0	-100.00%
Total population	3,861		4,100		4,251		10.10%

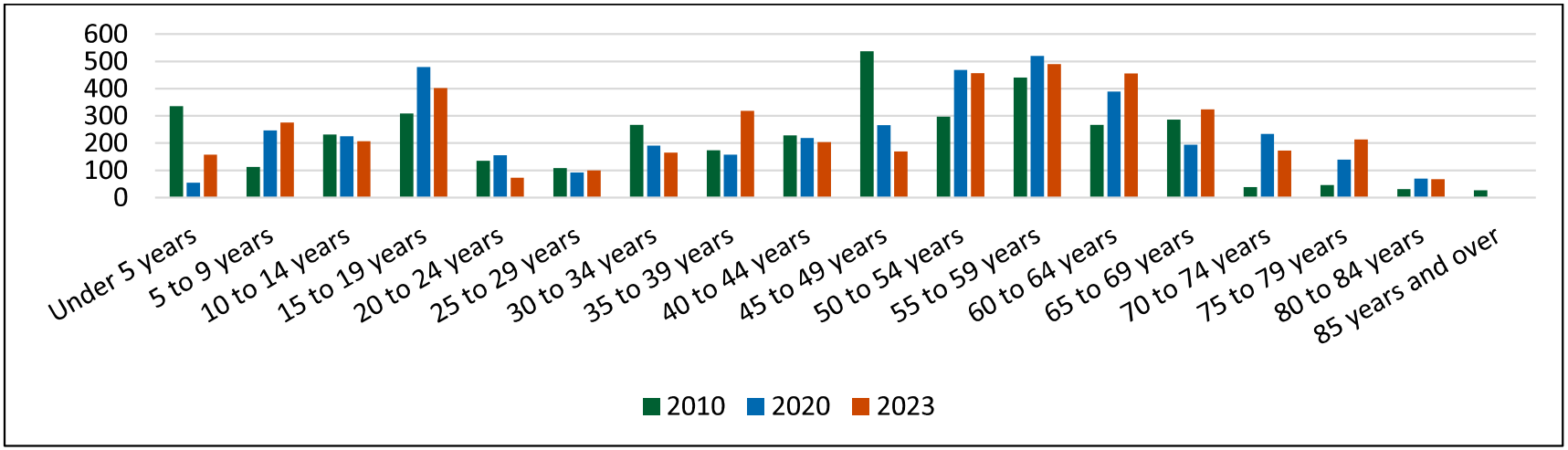
Source: US Census

Figure 3-5 Median Age by Community



Source: US Census

Figure 3-6 Population by Age



Source: US Census

Population Projections

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center (DSC) population projections, dated 2024, the Town of St. Joseph is projected to have an 8.28% increase in population between 2020 and 2050, with a population in 2050 of 4,524. However, the current population estimates completed by the DSC on January 1, 2026, estimate the 2026 population of the Town to be 4,524. This higher population in 2026 is consistent with the level of residential development that the Town has seen in the past two years. The Town will continue to monitor the estimates and projects from DSC to best understand development patterns and themes within the Town.

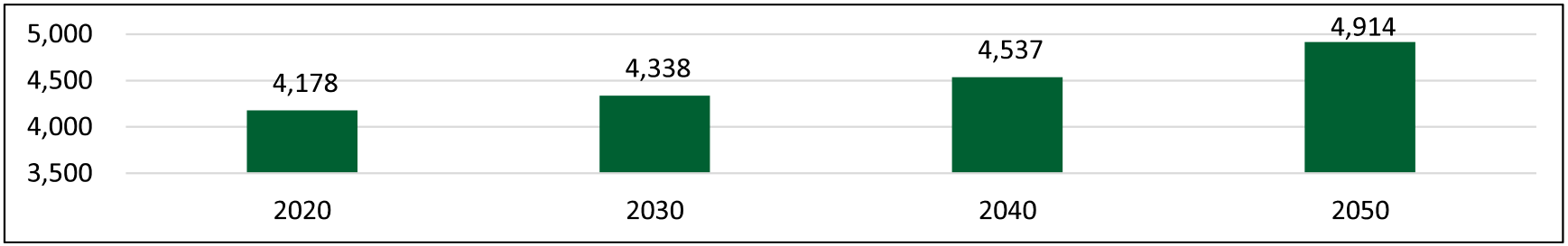
The growth rates from DSC are expected to gradually slow down within the Town and St. Croix County over the next two decades. St. Joseph is expected to grow at a higher rate than the County and the State through 2040. Population projections for the County declines heavily between 2040 and 2050 and DSC is projecting that the Town's growth rate will be negative, with the population declining. DSC has published their methodology on their website. DSC has observed a higher death rate than a birth rate for many communities and makes a special note of the "baby boomer" generation entering a higher-mortality age group in coming decades. This is likely what causes the population to drop in the 2050 projections. Its growth is expected to exceed that of the state as a whole but is expected to be less than that of the county as a whole.

Table 3-5 Population Projection

Year/Period	Town of St. Joseph	St. Croix County	State of Wisconsin
2020	4,178	93,536	5,893,718
2030	4,338	97,775	5,890,915
2040	4,537	102,820	5,841,620
2050	4,524	102,980	5,710,120
2020 - 2030 % Change	3.83%	4.53%	-0.05%
2030 - 2040 % Change	4.59%	5.16%	-0.84%
2040 - 2050 % Change	-0.29%	0.16%	-2.25%
2020 - 2050 % Change	8.28%	10.10%	-3.12%

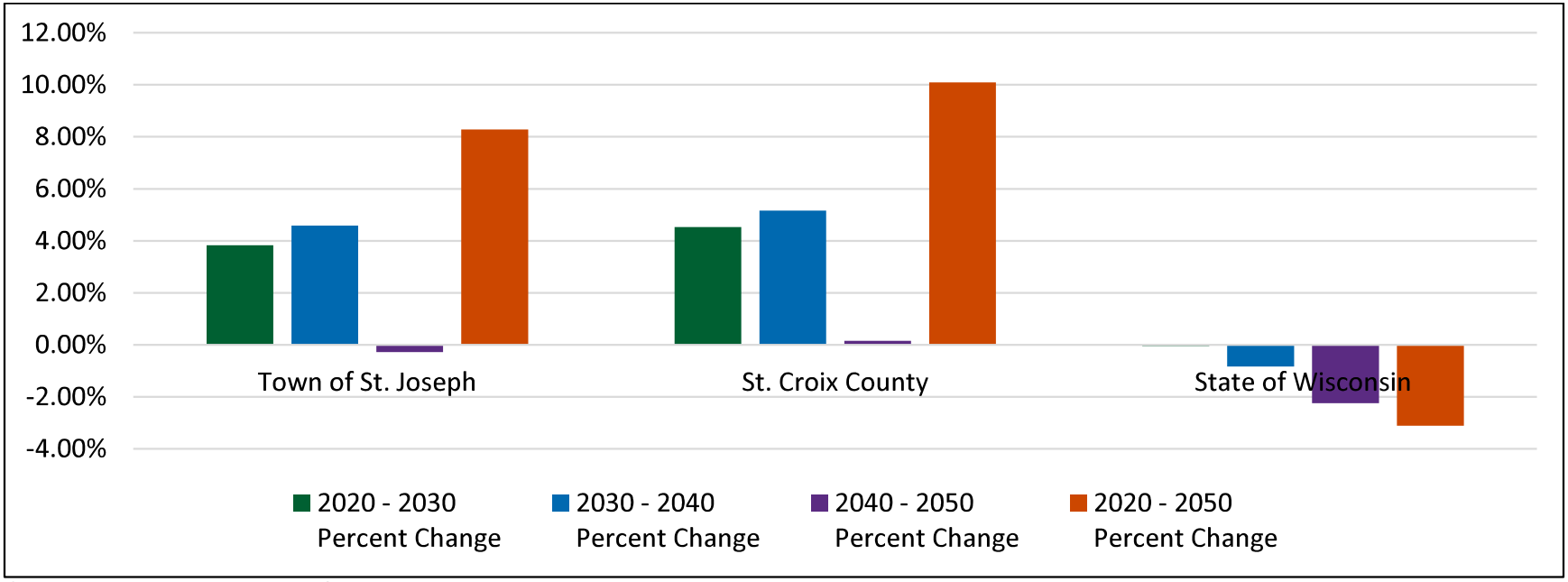
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2024

Figure 3-7 Population Projection



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2024

Figure 3-8 Projected Population Percent Change



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2024

3. HOUSEHOLDS

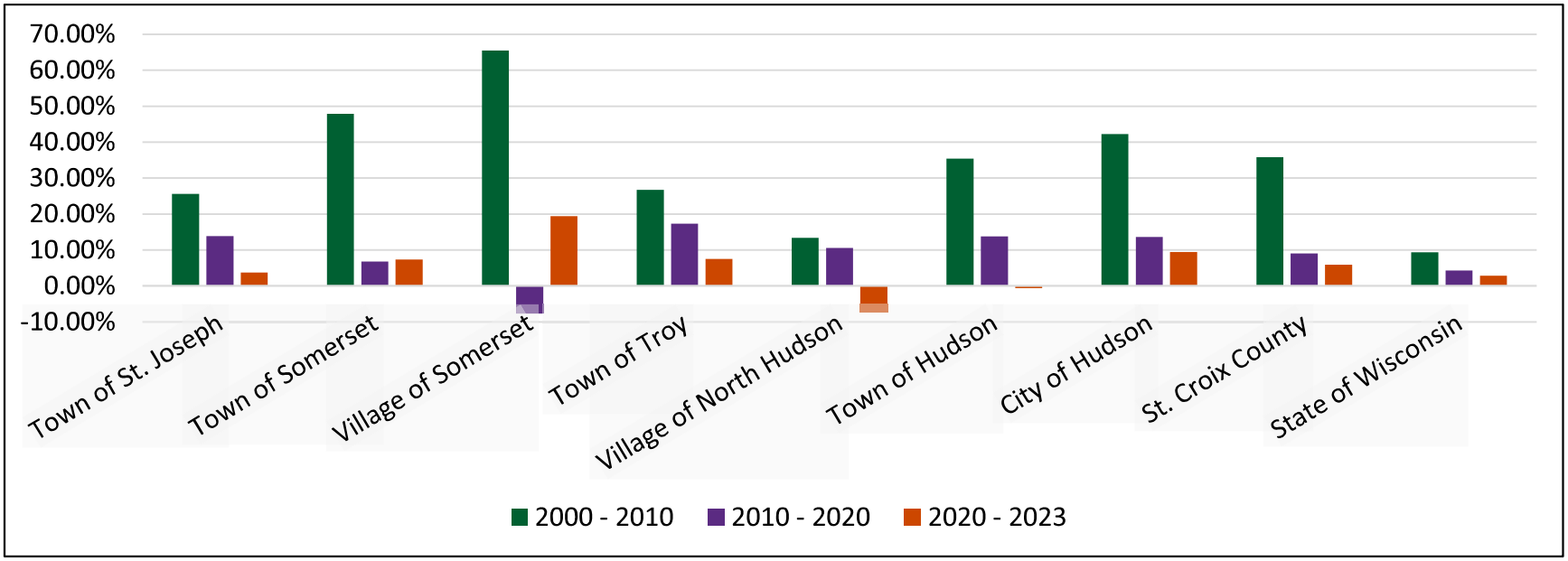
Table 3-6 shows that from 2010 to 2023, St. Joseph continued to grow in number of households. This pattern is also present in nearby communities, the County, and the State. The Town experienced a household growth rate of approximately 18%. This was significantly higher than the statewide average of 7%, but lower than some neighboring communities and the County as a whole. Overall, the rates of household growth of all these communities have generally slowed in the past two decades.

Table 3-6 Household Trends

Community	Town of St. Joseph	Town of Somerset	Village of Somerset	Town of Troy	Village of North Hudson	Town of Hudson	City of Hudson	St. Croix County	State of Wisconsin
2000	1,193	927	635	1,250	1,315	1,925	3,687	23,410	2,084,544
2010	1,498	1,371	1,051	1,584	1,491	2,607	5,243	31,799	2,279,768
2000-2010 Change	305	444	416	334	176	682	1,556	8,389	195,224
2000-2010 % Change	25.57%	47.90%	65.51%	26.72%	13.38%	35.43%	42.20%	35.84%	9.37%
2020	1,706	1,464	970	1,858	1,648	2,966	5,955	34,683	2,377,935
2010-2020 Change	208	93	-81	274	157	359	712	2,884	98,167
2010-2020 % Change	13.89%	6.78%	-7.71%	17.30%	10.53%	13.77%	13.58%	9.07%	4.31%
2023	1,770	1,572	1,158	1,998	1,529	2,947	6,518	36,729	2,446,028
2020-2023 Change	64	108	188	140	-119	-19	563	2046	68,093
2020-2023 % Change	3.75%	7.38%	19.38%	7.53%	-7.22%	-0.64%	9.45%	5.90%	2.86%

Source: US Census

Figure 3-9 Household Trends in Percent Change



Source: US Census

Size and Characteristics of Growth

The character of households can change over time in two ways related to a community's population growth: by number and by size. If, over time, population growth is coupled with an increase in both the number and size of households, it generally indicates a community is growing from within (i.e., a high birth rate). However, if population growth is reflected by an increase in the number of households and a decrease in the size of the household, then it may indicate that the community is growing due to an influx of new residents.

Tables 3-1 and 3-7 show an increase in the Town of St. Joseph's population and number of households, and a decrease in the number of persons per household. This is consistent with the national trends of smaller family sizes and more single-person households. There is a decline in the number of households in the Town with individuals under 18. In 2000, 43% of households had an individual under 18, while in 2020 this percentage decreased to 32%. A decline in the number of people per household and a growing population indicates that the Town of St. Joseph is growing due to an influx of new residents.

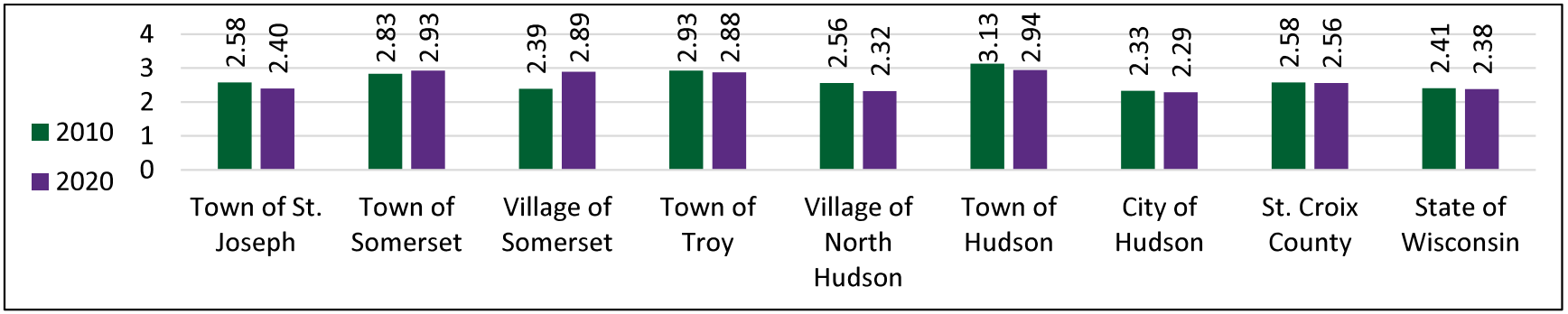
Table 3-7 Household vs. Population

Category	2000	2010	2000-2010 Change	2000-2010 Percent Change
Total Households	1,193	1,498	305	25.57%
Average Household Size	2.86	2.58	-0.28	-9.79%

Category	2020	2010-2020 Change	2010-2020 Percent Change	2023	2020-2023 Change	2020-2023 Percent Change
Total Households	1,706	208	13.89%	1,770	64	3.75%
Average Household Size	2.40	-0.18	-6.98%	2.70	0.30	12.50%

Source: US Census

Figure 3-10 Household Trends by Community



Source: US Census

Household Projections

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center, the Town of St. Joseph is expected to have a 43% increase in households between 2020 and 2040.

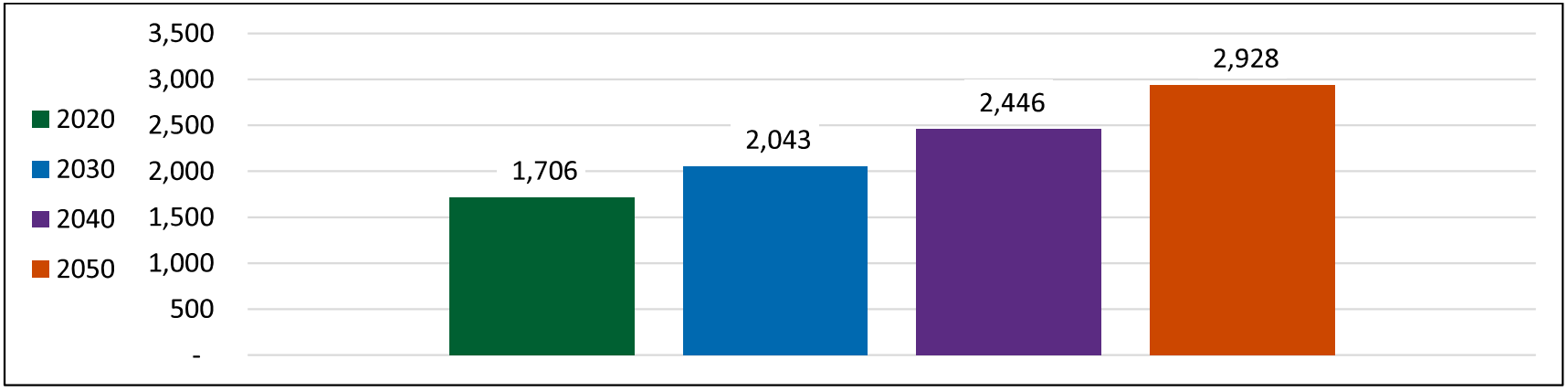
Similar to the population projections, the number of households in St. Joseph is expected to grow at about the same rate as the County and the State through 2050. Its growth is expected to exceed that of the State as a whole but is expected to be less than that of the County as a whole.

Table 3-8 Household Projections

Community	2020	2030	2040	2050	2020 - 2050 Percent Change
Town of St. Joseph	1,706	2,043	2,446	2,928	71.64%
St. Croix County	34,683	42,469	52,004	63,679	83.60%
State of Wisconsin	2,377,935	2,540,586	2,714,362	2,900,024	21.96%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

Figure 3-11 St. Joseph Household Projections



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

4. HOUSING

Available, affordable, and safe housing is necessary for a community to accommodate the growth of all segments of its population. It provides a vital link between the community's population growth, economic development goals, and its land use priorities. The average age of the residents of the Town of St. Joseph is higher than the surrounding communities. The Town has a low inventory of affordable housing for young families and downsized homes desirable to empty-nesters, retirees, or the elderly. Currently the Town of St. Joseph has a three-acre minimum requirement per single-family residence in the subdivision ordinance. In order to encourage growth in the population and local economy, housing may be needed in the Town of St. Joseph for residents of differing income levels, multi-family and single-family units, and for purchase or rent.

Housing Types

In the Town of St. Joseph, more than 90% of the housing stock consists of single-family units. Table 3-9 describes the total number of occupied housing units in the Town for years 2010 and 2023. During this period, the housing stock in the Town of St. Joseph increased by 261 units. Single-family homes grew by 344 units, which was a 23.74% increase.

The Houlton area was excluded from the Town of St. Joseph multi-family and mobile home counts in the 2020 census. The census does not provide mobile home data for unincorporated census-designated places, but includes them with urban areas such as cities and towns. In 2020, the census counted Houlton as part of the City of Stillwater, MN, which shows a decrease in multi-family and mobile home units for the Town of St. Joseph.

The Town experienced a 60% growth in single-family units and a 26% decline in 2+ units from 2000 to 2020.

Table 3-9 Housing Types (in Total Units)

Housing Type	2010 Total	2010 Percent	2020 Number	2020 Percent	2010-2020 Change	2010-2020 Percent Change
Single family	1,449	93.67%	1,696	96.25%	247	17.05%
Multi-family	46	2.97%	66	3.75%	20	43.48%
Mobile homes	52	3.36%	-	0.00%	-52	-100.00%

Housing Type	2010 Total	2010 Percent	2020 Number	2020 Percent	2010-2020 Change	2010-2020 Percent Change
Total	1,547	100.00%	1,762	100.00%	215	13.90%

Housing Type	2023 Total	2023 Percent	2020-2023 Change	2020-2023 Percent Change	2010-2023 Change	2010-2023 Percent Change
Single family	1,793	99.17%	97	5.72%	344	23.74%
Multi-family	-	-	-66	-100.00%	-46	-100.00%
Mobile homes	15	0.83%	15	-	-37	-71.15%
Total	1,808	100.00%	46	2.61%	261	16.87%

Source: US Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration

Ownership/Occupancy Characteristics

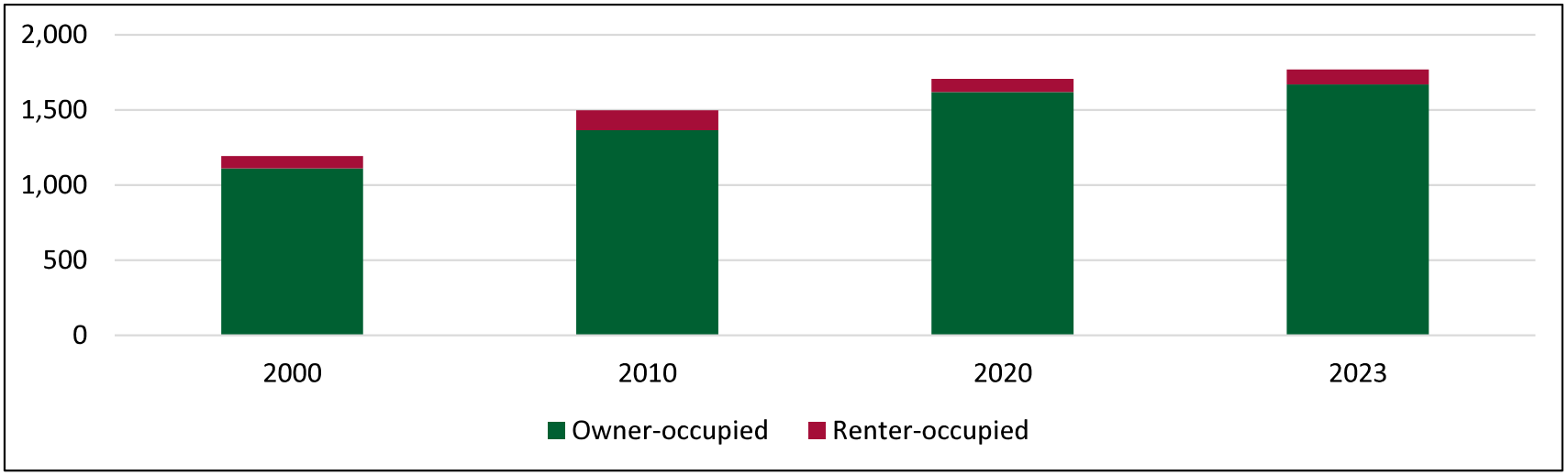
Figure 3-12 shows that in 2023, 94% of the Town's housing is owner-occupied. In Figure 3-13, the vacancy rate for owner-occupied units was less than 1.0% in 2000 and 2020. This decline may indicate a need for additional housing units in the Town.

The Town of St. Joseph has very few renter-occupied housing units. Eighty-one existed in 2000 and the total increased to 133 ten years later in 2010. In 2020, the number of renter-occupied housing units declined to 88. It increased to 101 only three years later in 2023. Overall, the share of renter-occupied housing has been small since 2000. The vacancy rate of rental units has quickly increased from 1.2% in 2020 to 4.8% in 2023.

There is a decline in the number of households in the Town with individuals under 18. In 2000, 43% of households had an individual under 18, while in 2020 this percentage decreased to 32%.

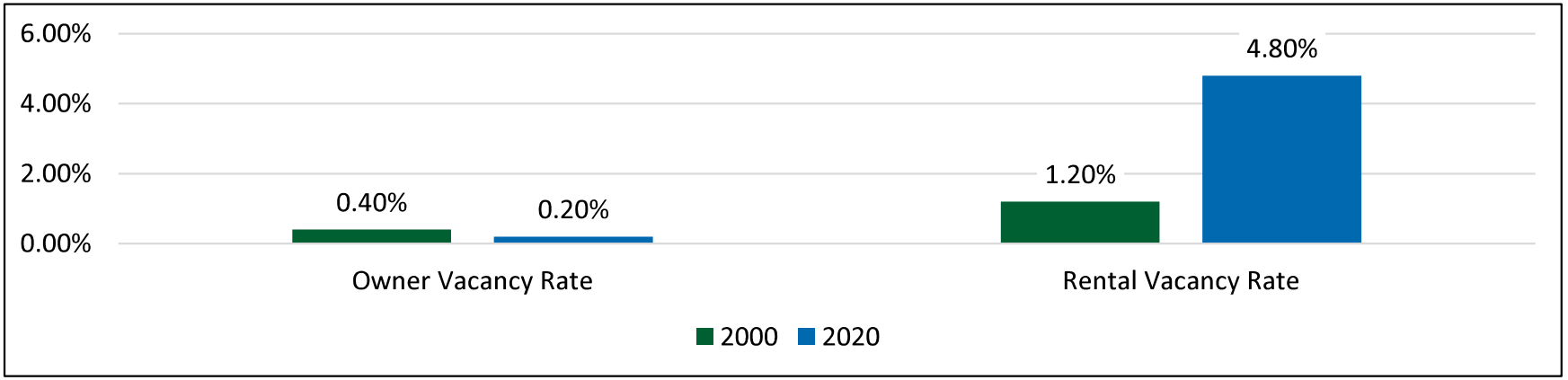
A healthy residential vacancy rate typically hovers around 5% to 8%. The 0.2% owner vacancy rate is well below the healthy range, while the 4.8% renter vacancy rate is just below. Residential vacancies below the healthy range typically mean a lack of residential dwelling supply and can lead to higher housing costs.

Figure 3-12 Ownership/Occupancy Characteristics



Source: US Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration

Figure 3-13 Housing Vacancy Rates



Source: US Census Bureau, Wisconsin Department of Administration

Housing Age Characteristics

Table 3-10 shows the age of the Town of St. Joseph's housing stock. Over 50% of the Town's total housing units were constructed between 1970 and 2000. While over 30% of the units are fairly new (less than 30 years old), there is a sizable portion, about 20%, that is significantly older (over 50 years old).

Table 3-10 Housing Age Characteristics

Year Built	Number	Percent
Built 2020 or later	34	1.90%
Built 2010 to 2019	58	3.23%
Built 2000 to 2009	484	26.99%
Built 1990 to 1999	303	16.90%
Built 1980 to 1989	390	21.75%
Built 1970 to 1979	255	14.22%
Built 1960 to 1969	47	2.62%
Built 1950 to 1959	53	2.96%
Built 1940 to 1949	30	1.67%
Built 1939 or earlier	139	7.75%
Total Housing Units	1,793	100.00%

Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey, 2023)

Value Characteristics

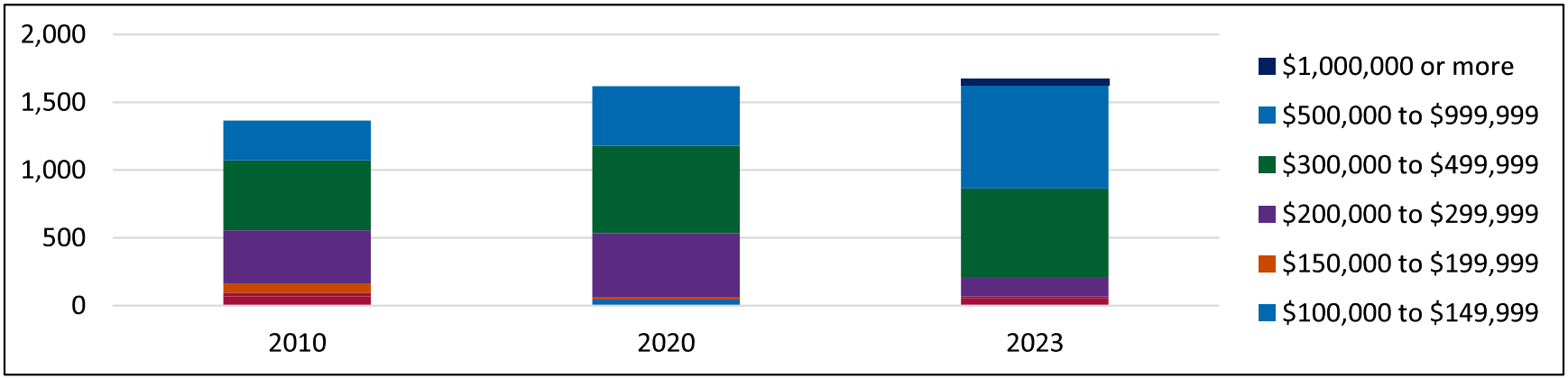
Table 3-11 and Figure 3-14 illustrate housing values for the years 2010, 2020, and 2023 in the Town of St. Joseph. From the component proportions, it is obvious that as time passes, the Town's supply of housing has skewed towards higher-priced homes. In 2010 and 2020, the largest group of homes was those that were valued between $300,000 to $499,999. This has now changed in 2023 with 45.5% of housing values in St. Joseph between $500,000 and $999,999.

Table 3-11 Owner Occupied Housing Values

Type	2010 Number	2010 Percent	2020 Number	2020 Percent	2023 Number	2023 Percent
Less than $50,000	67	4.9%	0	0.0%	53	3.2%
$50,000 to $99,999	25	1.8%	0	0.0%	15	0.9%
$100,000 to $149,999	2	0.1%	44	2.7%	0	0.0%
$150,000 to $199,999	69	5.1%	14	0.9%	0	0.0%
$200,000 to $299,999	392	28.7%	475	29.4%	142	8.5%
$300,000 to $499,999	516	37.8%	646	39.9%	654	39.2%
$500,000 to $999,999	294	21.5%	439	27.1%	759	45.5%
$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	46	2.8%
Total	1,365		1,618		1,669	

Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey, 2023)

Figure 3-14 Owner Occupied Housing Values



Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey, 2023)

Adjusted to 2023 dollars, the median home value in the Town of St. Joseph was $329,400 in 2010, as shown in Table 3-12. By 2023, the value rose to $492,500. This represents a 49.5% increase in housing values since 2010, with the highest increase occurring between 2020 and 2023.

Table 3-12 Median Housing Values (in 2023 Dollars)

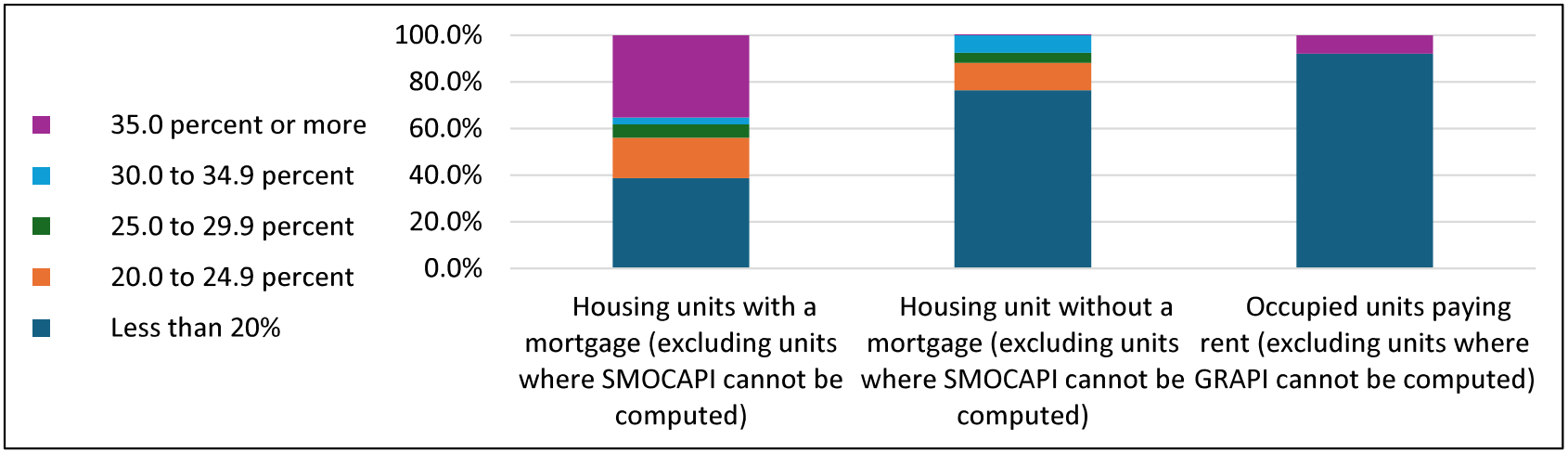
Median Value (dollars)	2010	2020	2023
Town of St. Joseph	329,400	363,200	492,500
St. Croix County	225,700	264,100	389,600
State of Wisconsin	169,000	189,200	294,700

Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey)

Affordability Trends

Housing is often considered affordable if a household does not have to spend more than 30% of its gross income on housing. Over half of the Town's households, 54.0%, spend less than 20% of their income on housing. Of this 55.9%, 47.4% of the households are housing units without a mortgage. Figure 3-15 shows that in 2023, 27.9% of the Town of St. Joseph's residents spent 30% or more on housing. This is lower than the 31% reported in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

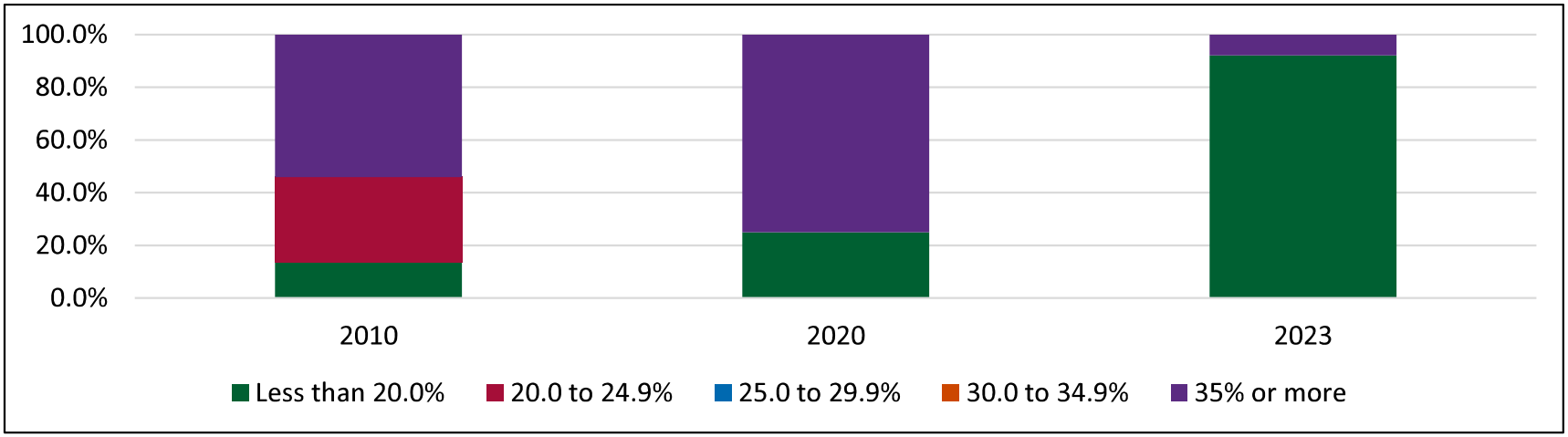
Figure 3-15 Overall Percent of Income Spent on Housing 2023



Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey 2023)

As discussed previously, renters occupy a very small portion of the Town of St. Joseph housing market. Figure 3-16 shows how the amount of a renter's income spent has changed since 2010. Rental prices appear to have spiked in 2020 with 75% of renters spending over 35% of their income on housing. Data from 2023 shows this decreasing though with 81.5% of renters spending under 30% of their income and 74.8% of renters spending less than 20%. It appears that the rental market in St. Joseph has become healthier than previous decades. It should be noted though that data sets with very small quantities in ACS data tend to have higher levels of error. The Town will continue to monitor the number of rental units within the Town to understand the impact on housing need and the need for diversity in housing.

Figure 3-16 Renters' Percent of Income Spent on Housing



Source: US Census Bureau (American Community Survey)

Housing Conditions

No in-depth assessment of housing condition has been conducted in the Town of St. Joseph. Anecdotal information from Town staff and residents indicates that the majority of housing in St. Joseph is in good or excellent condition, with older homes in the Houlton area and Burkhardt area.

4. HOUSING POLICY PLAN

The Town of St. Joseph recognizes the importance of maintaining and expanding its housing stock in order to foster economic growth and sustain a high quality of life for area residents. Below are the goals and policies of the Town to address housing and neighborhoods.

Housing Goal #1: Promote cooperative efforts and utilize existing resources to foster housing development within the Town.

Policies:

1. Continue to study housing needs and resources; and monitor and update goals as needed.

2. Work closely with federal, state, and local agencies and organizations that can help the Town meet its housing goals.
3. Encourage public and private partnerships to expand affordable housing and housing rehabilitation opportunities in the Town.
4. Explore county-wide and other intergovernmental options to develop regional strategies and incentives to promote the expansion of affordable, workforce, rental, life cycle, and other housing opportunities.

Housing Goal #2: Promote a variety of housing types in the Town for citizens of all income levels, ages, abilities, and needs.

Policies:

1. Encourage the appropriate mix of a variety of housing types throughout the Town's growth areas in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.
2. Develop policies that allow neighborhoods with mixed housing types and/or other appropriate uses within residential areas.
3. Examine policies and other development standards to ensure they encourage the provision of affordable housing.
4. Encourage housing developments that serve unique populations including seniors, low income residents, and residents with physical disabilities.

Housing Goal #3: Encourage well-maintained residential neighborhoods.

Policies:

1. Develop and enforce the necessary codes to ensure the continued maintenance of the housing stock.
2. Identify or develop methods and funding options to encourage the rehabilitation or redevelopment of substandard housing.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies existing and future roads and other transportation infrastructure that serve the Town. This analysis will help guide land use and development in the Town that is concurrent with an accessible and efficient road network. The Policy Plan identifies future and current aspirations of the Town with respect to the transportation system.

2. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADWAYS

Functional Classification of a roadway system involves determining what function each roadway should be performing with regard to travel within and through a community. The intent of a functional classification system is to create a roadway hierarchy that collects and distributes traffic from local roadways and collectors to arterials in a safe and efficient manner. Such classification aids in determining appropriate roadway widths, speed limits, intersection control, design features, accessibility, and maintenance priorities. Functional classification helps to ensure that non-transportation factors, such as land use and development, are taken into account in planning and design of the roadway system.

St. Croix County Road Classification System

The Town of St. Joseph maintains a Roadway Map with slightly different roadway classification categories than St. Croix County. The County's classification is described here. A balanced system is desired, yet not always attainable due to existing conditions and characteristics. The criteria of the Functional Classification System are intended to be guidelines and are to be applied when plans are developed for the construction or reconstruction of a given route. It can and does occur that different roadways with very similar design characteristics may have different functional classifications. Some roadways, for a short segment, may carry higher volumes than a roadway with a higher classification. Spacing guidelines may not follow recommendations for a variety of reasons such as topography, land use type and density, and environmental concerns.

The two major considerations in the classification of roadway networks are access and mobility. Mobility is of primary importance on arterials, thus limitation of access is a necessity. The primary function of a local roadway, however, is to provide access which in turn limits mobility. The extent and degree of access control is a very important factor in the function of a roadway facility. The functional classification types utilized are dependent upon one another in order to provide a complete system of streets and highways.

A complete functional design system provides a series of distinct travel movements. Most trips exhibit six recognizable stages. These stages are as follows:

- Main movement
- Transition
- Distribution
- Collection
- Access
- Termination

Using the functional classification system, roads in the Town of St. Joseph have been divided into four categories. These categories include principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, and local streets. The following paragraphs describe these classifications, highlight key roadways, and describe traffic projections for principal and minor arterials. The roads are mapped in Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2.

Principal Arterials

Principal Arterial roadways serve major activity centers, higher traffic volumes, longer trips, and carry a higher proportion of total urbanized travel on a minimum of mileage. Along these facilities, access needs to be limited in order to preserve the ability of the roadway to accommodate the volumes and to maximize safety. Spacing varies from 2 to 3 miles for a fully developed area to 3 to 6 miles for a developing area. The management criteria require that a 40 mph average speed be achieved during peak traffic periods. Also, little or no direct land access should be allowed within an urban area. Grade-separated intersections are required for freeways and highly desired for other principal arterial roadways. There are two principal arterials in the Town of St. Joseph:

- Highway 64: Segment along the St. Croix Crossing Bridge from the St Croix River to the Highway 35/County Road E Interchange
- Highway 35/64: Segment from the Highway 35/County Road E Interchange to the Town of Somerset, WI.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)

AADT for 2040 has been projected for principal arterials and listed below in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Projected AADT for Principal Arterials

Street Type	Road Segment	Projected AADT in 2040
Highway	64 (St. Croix Crossing Bridge)	35,500
Highway	35/64	24,250

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation: Planning-Level Traffic Forecast

Minor Arterials

Minor Arterial roadways connect the urban service area to cities and towns inside and outside the region and generally serve medium to short trips. Minor Arterials may also provide an alternate route for congested Principal Arterial roadways. Minor Arterials connect principal arterials, other minor arterials, and connectors. The spacing ranges from ¼ to ¾ of a mile in metro centers to 1 to 2 miles in a developing area. The desired minimum average speed during peak traffic periods is 20 mph in fully developed areas and 30 mph in developing areas. The emphasis for Minor Arterial roadways is on mobility rather than on land access. In urban areas, direct land access is generally restricted to concentrations of commercial/industrial land uses. There is only one minor arterial roadway in the Town of St. Joseph:

- Highway 35: Highway 64 to Town of Hudson, WI.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)

AADT for 2040 has been projected for minor arterials and listed below in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2 AADT for Minor Arterials

Street Type	Road Segment	Projected AADT in 2040
Highway	35 (South Houlton)	3,650

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation: Planning-Level Traffic Forecast

Major Collectors

Major Collectors provide more land access than arterials and provide connection to arterials, although not in all cases. As is the case with any roadway system, there will always be exceptions to the planning guidelines that are used to classify a roadway system. Collectors serve a dual function of accommodating traffic and providing more access to adjacent properties. Mobility and land access are equally important and direct land access should predominantly be to development concentrations. Collector road spacing ranges from ¼ to ¾ miles in fully

developed areas, to ½ to 1 mile in developing areas. Major Collectors generally connect to minor arterials and serve shorter trips within the County. These roads supplement the arterial system in that mobility is slightly emphasized over access. Major collectors are:

- County Road A
- County Road E
- County Road I
- County Road V
- Trout Brook Road (south of River Road)

Local Streets

The lowest classification of roadways is the local roadway where access is provided with much less concern for control, but land service is paramount. Spacing for local streets is as needed to access land uses. Local roadways generally have lower speed limits in urban areas and normally serve short trips. Local streets will connect with some minor arterials but generally connect to collectors and other local streets. The development of local streets will be guided by the location of the existing and proposed minor arterials and collectors as well as by development and the expansion of local utilities.

Town of St. Joseph Road Classification System

The Town's map is used to catalog the various roadways in the Town and document the different setbacks for structures abutting various classifications of roadways. The Town's Existing Roadway map – before the new bridge and new highway – is attached as Figure 4-2. St. Croix County's Roadway Classification map is attached as Figure 4-1. The differences in the categories are as follows:

St. Croix County has four classifications of roadways:

- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Local Road

The Town of St. Joseph's system has six classifications:

- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Sub Collector
- Access Roads (greater of 108’ from CL or 75’ from ROW)
- Houlton/Burkhardt Access Roads (30’ from ROW)
- Private Roads

The differences between the two maps as far as specific roadways are concerned are numerous, but not significant, and do not conflict with planning or maintenance of the roadways. Three County Roads are classified Major Collectors at the County level but designated Minor Arterials at the Town level. The most common difference is that many roads considered Local at the County level are considered Town Collectors or Sub Collectors. There are also many roads shown as Local on the County map that are private roads. The differences between the St. Croix County classification and the Town of St. Joseph classification are:

Major Collector on the County map and a Minor Arterial on the Town map:

- County Road E
- County Road I
- County Road A

Major Collector on the County map and a Collector on the Town map:

- County Road V

Major Collector on the County map and a Sub Collector on the Town map:

- Trout Brook Road (south of River Road)

Local Road on the County map and Collector on the Town map:

- Valley View Trail
- River Road

Local Road on the County map and Sub Collector on the Town map:

- Andersen Scout Camp Road
- Thelen Farm Trail/Settlers Way
- Heritage Trail
- 145th Street
- 20th Street
- 24th Street
- 150th Avenue (24th Street to Heron Lane)
- Arbor Hills Drive
- 27th Street
- 125th Avenue
- Trout Brook Road (north of River Road)
- 50th Street (plus short contiguous segment of 150th Avenue)
- 60th Street (plus short contiguous segment of 150th Avenue)
- Old E West (north half only)
- Old E East
- 126th Avenue
- Rolling Hills Trail
- 52nd Street
- Perch Lake Road
- Scott Road
- Bass Lake Road
- 132nd Street (Bass Lake Road to County Road I)
- 80th Street/132nd Avenue/83rd Street
- 140th Avenue (83rd Street to eastern Town limits)
- 85th Street
- 150th Avenue (northeast corner of the Town)

Local Road on the County map and Private Road on the Town map:

- Too numerous to list

Figure 4-1 St. Croix County Roadway Functional Classification

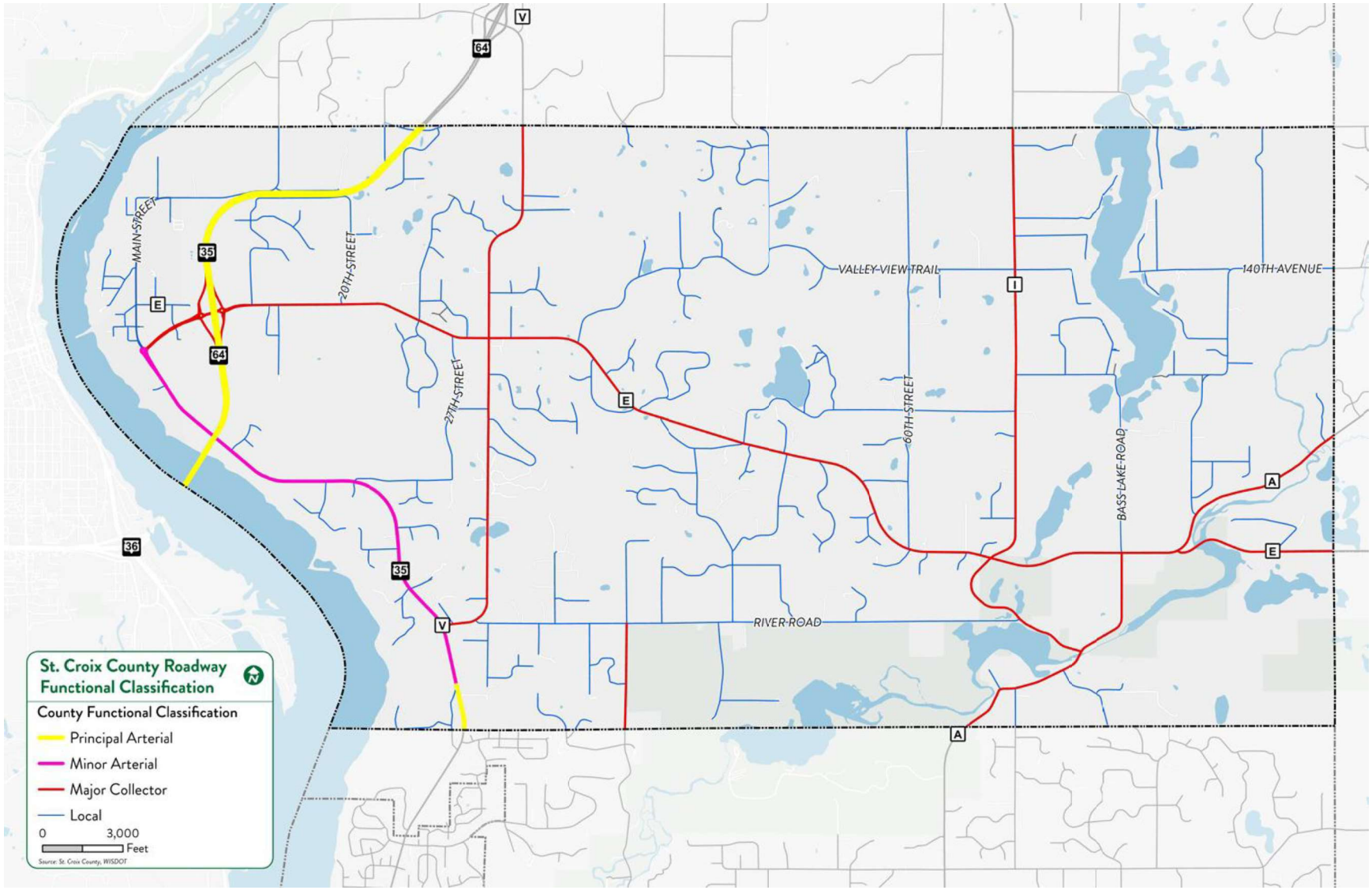
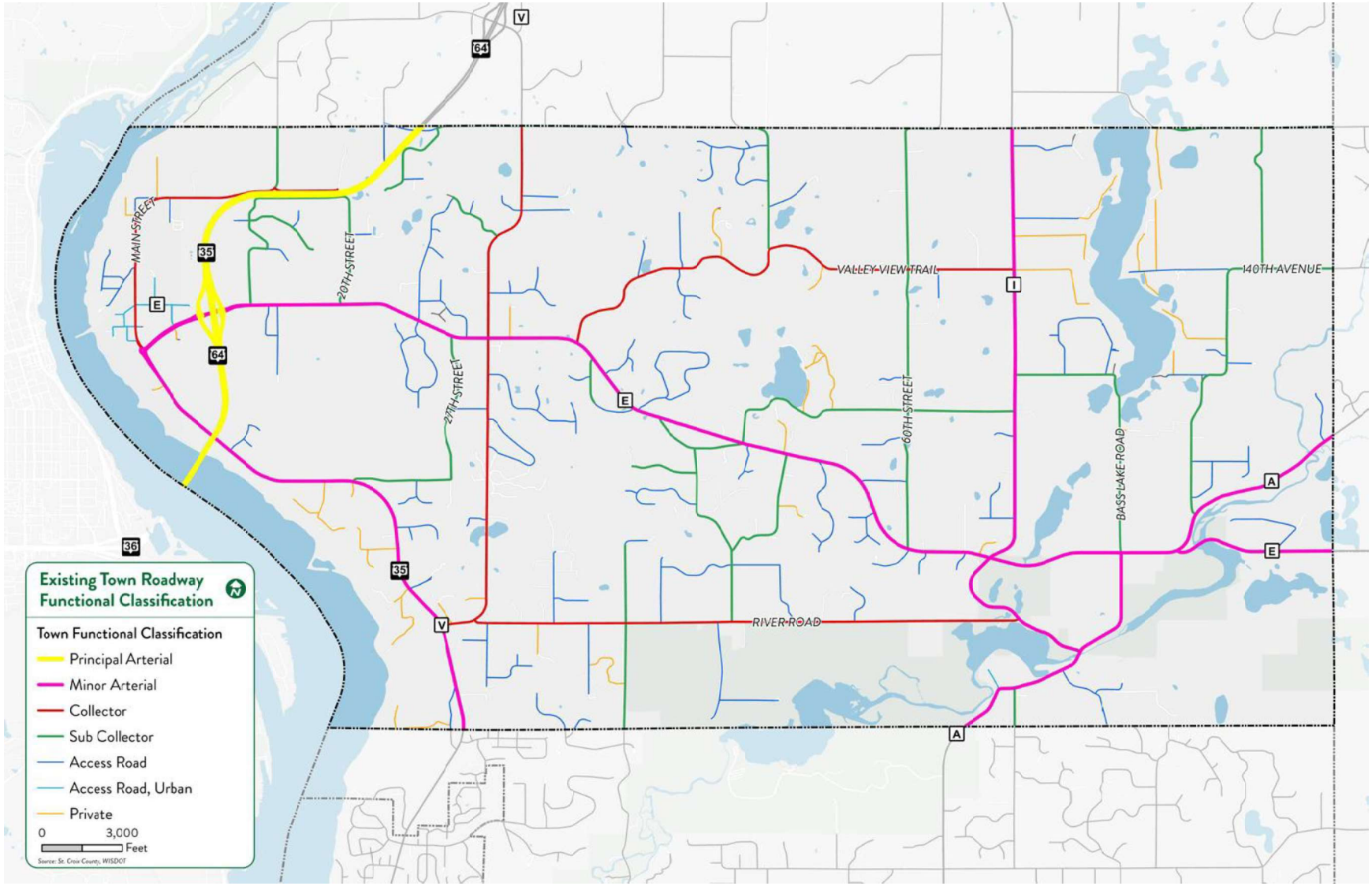


Figure 4-2 Existing Town Roadway Functional Classification



3. ACCESS MANAGEMENT

The management of access along roadway systems, particularly arterial and collector roadways, is an important component of maximizing the capacity of a roadway and decreasing the accident potential along those facilities. Arterial roadways have a function of accommodating larger volumes of traffic and often at higher speeds. Therefore, access to such facilities must be limited in order to protect the integrity of the arterial function. Collector roadways provide a link from local streets to arterial roadways and are designed to provide more access to local land uses since the volumes and speeds are often lesser than arterial roadways.

Studies have shown that as the density of accesses increases, whether public or private, the traffic-carrying capacity of the roadway decreases and the vehicular crash rate increases. Businesses suffer financially on roadways with poorly designed access. Well-designed access to commercial properties supports long-term economic vitality.

As with many transportation-related decisions, land use activity and planning are integral parts of the creation of a safe and efficient roadway system. Land use decisions have a major impact on the access conditions along the roadway system. Every land use plan amendment, subdivision, rezoning, conditional use permit, or site plan involves access and creates a potential impact to the efficiency of the transportation system. Properties have access rights and good design will minimize the deleterious effect upon the roadway system. Access management is a combination of good land use planning and effective design of access to property.

The granting of access in the Town of St. Joseph is shared by the Town, St. Croix County and Wisconsin Department of Transportation, with each having the permitting process responsibility over roadways in their jurisdiction. The Town, along with the County and State, produces access spacing quality that does provide benefits to the traveling public. In order to strengthen the goal of good access management, a set of access spacing guidelines has been prepared for use in the access permitting process.

The guidelines are presented for functionally classified arterial and collector roadways without reference to the jurisdiction over these roadways. The basic references for the spacing guidelines are the St. Croix County guidelines. The stated values are meant to be “minimum” values. It is also recognized that some existing connections, both public and private, may not meet these guidelines. It is also recognized that, due to various circumstances, access may need to be granted that cannot adhere to these guidelines. The access guidelines are presented in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3 Access Management Guidelines

Functional Classification of Intersecting Road Or Highway	Freeways & Expressways	Principal & Minor Arterials	Major & Minor Collectors	Subcollector	All Access Roads
Minimum Separation from Centerline for Driveways	No Access Allowed	500 feet	500 feet	200 feet	200 feet

4. STATE AND COUNTY PLANS

Town of St. Joseph In Relation to State and County Transportation Plans

Traffic volumes have been generally increasing throughout the County. The State Highway Plan 2020 identified WIS 35 from Hudson to Houlton as a facility that would experience moderate congestion by 2020 if no capacity expansion improvements were made. Extreme or severe congestion was projected for WIS 64 from Houlton to New Richmond. A legislatively approved major project on this road has since been completed.

Recent studies have indicated the intersection of WIS 35 and County Road V as having a relatively high crash history and is planning on reconstructing the intersection into a single-lane roundabout. This project is anticipated for 2030.

St. Croix County has conducted studies and identified the need for a roundabout at County Road E and County Road I due to traffic back ups and safety concerns. This project is in design to be constructed in 2028.

The Town of St. Joseph has a total of 92.32 miles of road. 19.98 miles belong to the County and 72.34 miles belong to the Town. Within the County's miles, 0.19 miles are arterials and 19.79 miles are collectors. Of the Town roads, 9.95 miles are considered collectors and the remainder, 62.39 miles, are considered local roads.

The St. Croix Crossing Bridge opened in 2017 which designated WIS 64 as a freeway from the St. Croix Crossing bridge to 150th Avenue.

The Town of St. Joseph will cooperate with St. Croix County and the State of Wisconsin in implementation of their transportation plans.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues in State and County Plans

The St. Croix County Parks and Recreation Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was adopted in 2017. Multiple improvements were identified in the Town including paths, paved shoulders, advisory bike lanes, and minor enhancements. In addition to the recommendations in the plan, two corridors are identified in the County's plan that are located in the Town of St. Joseph: the Loop Trail-Willow River State Park Connection and Wis-35 Connection to Hudson. St. Croix County also adopted the St. Croix County 2026-2030 Outdoor Recreation Plan which provides further details regarding the Wisconsin Highway 35 Off-Road Trail including improvements, costs, and a phasing plan.

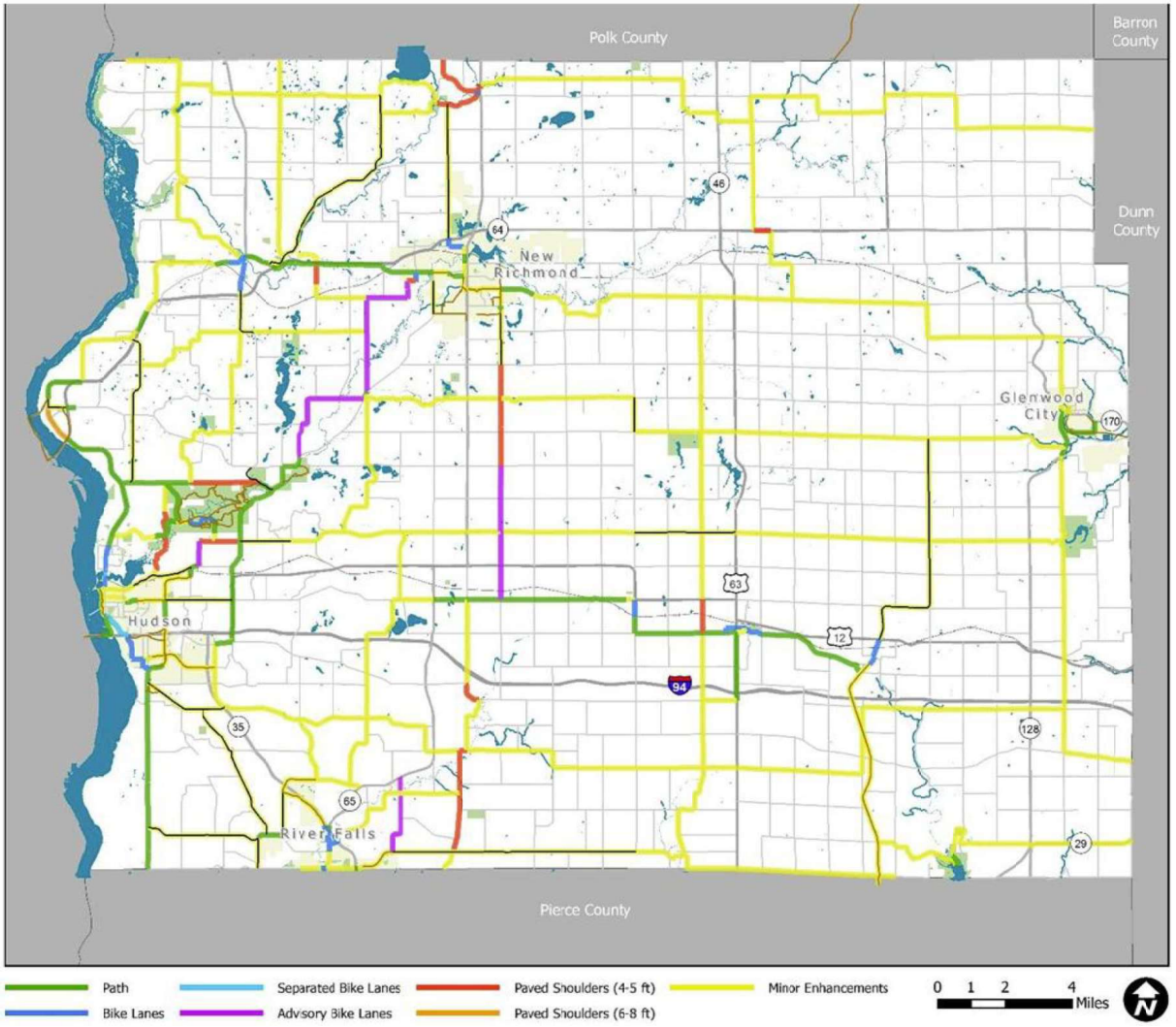
The 2014 Town of St. Joseph Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Implementation Study was adopted by the Town of St. Joseph in November 2014. The Town also adopted the Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan in 2017. Both of these plans are generally consistent with the County's plans. The Town adopted a more recent Outdoor Recreation Plan in 2023 which was informed by the two previous plans and effectively replaces them.

All Wisconsin towns, cities, and villages must address the need for pedestrians to safely cross state or county highways. A federal program, Safe Routes to School, is available to assist communities with planning infrastructure improvements, enforcement and education to make walking and biking to school safer and to encourage students to do so.

The St. Croix Crossing Bridge plan included a bicycle and pedestrian Loop Trail utilizing the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge, which includes the Town of St. Joseph. This Bicycle and Pedestrian Loop Trail became an integral part of the Town of St. Joseph. St. Croix County along with other governmental agencies will have the development responsibility of the Loop Trail project in the Town of St. Joseph.

In anticipation of expected growth, the Loop Trail was designed to provide a viable multi-modal transportation option for non-motorized commuting trips in the area. Currently, there are no safe bicycle/pedestrian connections to the Loop Trail in Wisconsin. Since the St. Croix Crossing Bridge was completed in 2017, the Town of St. Joseph has monitored the need for safe and cost effective commuting alternatives for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Town will continue to explore options to further increase connectivity to the bike trails throughout the community.

Figure 4-3 St. Croix County Figure 2-10 Bikeway and Trail Network Recommendations



Source: St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan - 2017

5. TRANSIT

There are no public transit services in St. Joseph but the St. Croix County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) coordinates several demand-responsive specialized transportation services for the elderly and handicapped. These services include the Volunteer Medical Transportation program, Interfaith Volunteers of St. Croix County, New Freedom Transportation Program, and the Specialized Van Transportation program. No regular public transit program is being considered for St. Joseph at this point. The nearest long-distance commuter service is Jefferson Lines in Hudson.

The workforce in the Town of St. Joseph and in St. Croix County that commutes to and from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area continues to grow. The Town supports efforts by the County to investigate commuter transit linkages to that area and is interested in the provision of park-and-ride lots for this purpose. Such park-and-ride lots will help to decrease the volume of personal vehicle commuter traffic to/from the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

6. ELECTRIC PERSONAL ASSISTIVE MOBILITY DEVICES

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has adopted ordinances guiding the use of electric personal assistive mobility devices on state roadways. The ordinances allow for the use of these devices on roadways and sidewalks provided that the user exercises caution and stay as far to the right of the road as possible. In the case of two-way highways, users of these devices must ride in the left shoulder of the road so they are visible to oncoming traffic. Electric mobility devices are prohibited along certain state roadways as marked by a sign, such as interstate highways. St. Croix County has adopted these ordinances for their roadways as well.

7. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAILS

Active living improves physical and mental health and can be a key component of overall economic health of the community as well. In order to be effective, sidewalk and trail connections for bicyclists and pedestrians need to be continuous and serve key commercial and service destinations. On the St. Croix County bicycling suitability map (Figure 4-6), several roads in the Town of St. Joseph are considered suitable for bicycling, including County V, 60th Street, Andersen Scout Camp Road, and former Highway 64 from the historic Stillwater Bridge to 150th Street. Highway 35 and County E are considered unsuitable for bicycling due to narrow roadway shoulders.

Incorporating trail connections in new developments is important to ensure continuity and connections to as many points as possible in the community. The Town is committed to increasing the opportunities for walking and biking in the community and recognizes the importance of

healthy, active living. The 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan and Chapter 5: Utilities and Community Facilities Element further address bicycling and walking in the Town.

8. RAILROADS

There are no railroads in the Town of St. Joseph.

9. AIR TRANSPORTATION

There are no public airports in the Town of St. Joseph, but there is one small private airstrip in the southeast part of the Town. The Beer airport, located in the southwest quadrant of County Roads A and E, has a single 2,200-foot turf runway. There is another similar small private airstrip, the Irlbeck airport, located a mile north of St. Joseph in the Town of Somerset, at the northeast quadrant of County Road I and 63rd Street. It has a single 1,800-foot turf runway. The nearest public airport is the New Richmond Regional Airport in New Richmond, about ten miles northeast of St. Joseph. The nearest major airport with regularly scheduled commercial flights is the Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport.

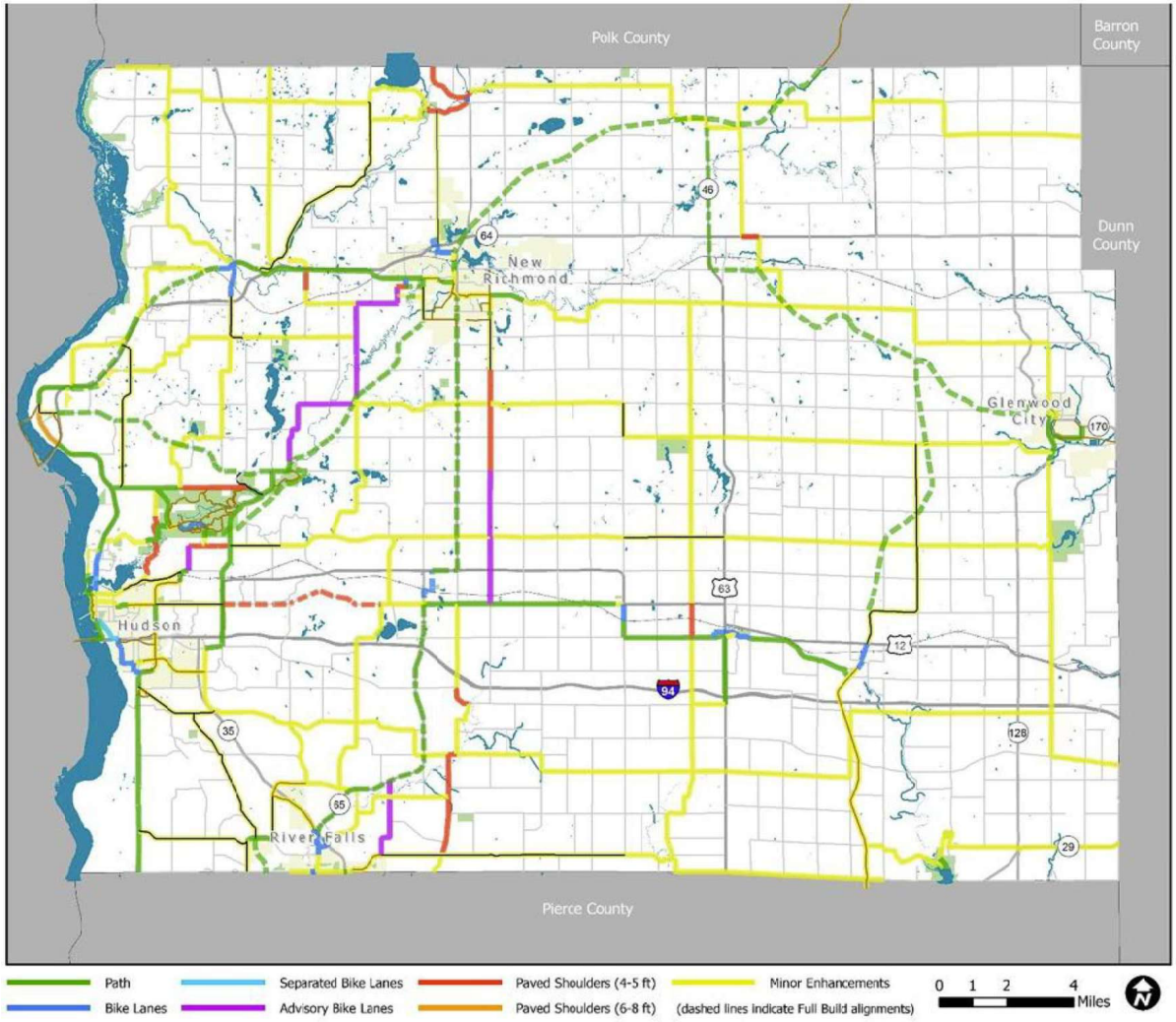
10. TRUCKING

WIS 35 and WIS 64 are designated truck routes in the Town of St. Joseph. No St. Croix County highways are designated as truck routes, nor does the Town of St. Joseph designate truck routes on any of its Town roads. Since the St. Croix Crossing bridge has opened, the Town has observed an increase in the amount of trucks within the Town. The Town will continue to monitor the number of trucks going through the Town to understand potential issues and increases in truck traffic.

11. WATER TRANSPORTATION

The St. Croix River forms the Town of St. Joseph's western border. There is no commercial water transportation access to the river in the Town of St. Joseph.

Figure 4-4 St. Croix County Figure 2-11 Bikeway and Trail Network Recommendations – Full Build



Source: St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan - 2017

12. POLICY PLAN

Transportation Goal #1: Provide a safe, convenient, and efficient multi-modal transportation system that:

- Ensures transportation system improvements are coordinated with land development plans.
- Maintains a cost-effective level of service.
- Coordinates multi-jurisdictional transportation system improvements and maintenance.
- Plans for the extension of town roads and other arterials and collector streets as necessary to efficiently serve the users.
- Controls access through the road system to ensure the access, mobility, and safety of affected road systems.

Policies:

1. Plan for the extension of Town roads and other arterials and collectors in order to complete connections and provide for future planned development access.
2. Consider planning and implementing a network of interconnected new roads to control highway access, preserve rural character, improve access to new development, minimize extensive road construction, and decrease road maintenance costs.
3. Develop plans and new funding strategies for the regular structural maintenance of Town roads, including implementation of the WISLR Pavement Management program as required by WisDOT to provide for the upgrading and maintenance of Town roads.
4. Continue implementing Town road impact fees on any new building permit that places a burden on or requires the upgrading of subcollector roads.
5. Continue implementing Town road fees on new developments that place a burden on or require the upgrade of Town roads.
6. Continue posting weight restrictions on existing Town roads and consider the weight limits on local roads when reviewing development proposals.

Transportation Goal #2: Work to develop transportation system improvements for walking, hiking, biking, and other transportation modes.

Policies:

1. Develop a shared community vision for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and recreational opportunities and build capacity to fund these activities in addition to utilizing Park Impact Fees for this purpose.
2. Encourage the connection of the Town of St. Joseph residents, economic opportunities, and recreational destinations with the Loop Trail.

3. Encourage the connection to other recreational and trail facilities outside the Town of St. Joseph.
4. Encourage the connection of the Loop Trail with Willow River State Park.
5. Support the efforts of the St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition.
6. Follow and update as warranted the 2023 Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan as it pertains to hiking, biking, and other transportation modes.
7. Follow and update as warranted the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan.
8. Support the implementation of the St. Croix County Parks and Recreation Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

CHAPTER 5: UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to inventory the various public and community facilities within St. Joseph. This chapter includes a thorough documentation of existing utilities that serve Town residents as well as community facilities. The primary purpose is to understand what utilities and facilities currently exist, where the facilities and utilities are located, their use and capacity, and future needs. An overview of several facilities is given below. For each building or facility, its location is given and the use of the facility identified. The utilities are addressed similarly but also identify the capacity available. A set of goals, objectives and policies is included to guide future development and ensure that the needs of all residents are met.

2. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Sanitary Sewer

There is no municipal sanitary sewer service in the Town of St. Joseph. All wastewater is handled with on-site septic systems. The potential for municipal sanitary sewer and water in the Houlton Center area is discussed in Chapter 9: Land Use Element of this Plan.

A State Sanitary Permit is required for the installation of a private on-site wastewater treatment system (POWTS). A St. Croix County Sanitary Permit is required for the repair, reconnection or rejuvenation of a POWTS or for the installation of a non-plumbing sanitation (e.g., a privy or composting toilet). The proper maintenance of a POWTS is essential to ensure the longevity of the private sewage system and to avoid premature failure.

A Sanitary Permit is required prior to obtaining a building permit from the Town Building Inspector. A Sanitary Permit may only be submitted by a licensed plumber. St. Croix County staff will conduct at least one inspection for all work requiring a sanitary permit.

When obtaining a Sanitary permit, residents are required to submit a signed agreement indicating that the property owner will maintain the septic system properly and report this maintenance to the St. Croix County Community Development Office. This is done by sending in a card every three years that has been signed by an inspector or licensed septic hauler.

Stormwater Management

Review and Approval of Subdivisions, Grading Plans

Stormwater and erosion control are managed through the Town's subdivision ordinance. The ordinance requires that any major or minor land disturbance activity go through a plan review process. The review process includes an examination of existing conditions and proposed changes including new roads, utilities, and structures. The review process also examines grading, stormwater management, and erosion control for all land disturbance activities. The Town of St. Joseph Plan Commission reviews all plans to ensure that water and sediment are properly managed on the site. St. Croix County may adopt a Stormwater Mitigation Ordinance.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program (MS4)

MS4 is an acronym used to denote the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's permitting program to address stormwater discharge in urban areas. In Wisconsin, the program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Houlton Area in the Town of St. Joseph was designated as an MS4 in February of 2015. The Town is currently in the process of creating its plan to meet the requirements of the MS4 permit program, referred to as the Houlton Stormwater Plan. Typical operations throughout the Town with regard to stormwater management include culvert inspection and maintenance, inspection of drainage easements as needed, and resolving drainage and erosion control issues in the public right-of-way where applicable. The Town of St. Joseph culvert survey includes location and status information, maps, and photos. More information about the MS4 program is included in Appendix F of this plan.

The Town of St. Joseph is also supportive of the Bass Lake Management Plan and the Perch Lake Management Plan, which address runoff to these two high-quality Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) in the Town.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Town of St. Joseph does not have municipal trash or recycling removal. The residents in St. Joseph are responsible for choosing their waste hauling provider. There are several commercial companies that pick up waste. There are no operating landfills or recycling facilities in the Town. There are two closed historic landfills.

Telecommunication Facilities

Telecommunications facilities are located in the Town of St. Joseph at 1370 Highway 35, 1190 County Road A, and Trout Brook Road North.

Power

There are no electric power plants in the Town of St. Joseph. Electricity in the Town is provided by the St. Croix Electric Cooperative and Xcel Energy. There are no power-generating plants in the Town. There are two major transmission lines in the Town: the 113 kV Xcel Energy transmission line runs east-west and is shown on the existing land use map and the 69kV transmission line runs 5.2 miles south of the 113kV line.

3. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

There are community facilities in and around the Town of St. Joseph serving the needs of its residents. Information about these facilities is included below and is mapped in Figure 5-1.

St. Joseph Town Hall

The Town of St. Joseph Town Hall was constructed in 2025 and is located at 1337 County Road V. The Town Hall includes a meeting hall and the offices for town staff and elected officials. There are no expansion plans for the Town Hall building. The site also includes a Fire Hall, ball diamond, pavilion, playground equipment, and a 24-acre park. A small storage building to house road maintenance equipment was constructed in 2019 and it is located north of the fire hall.

Emergency Services

The Town of St. Joseph Fire Emergency and Rescue EMS provides services from the Fire Hall located at 1339 County Road V. The Town also participates in mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities throughout St. Croix County and eastern Washington County in Minnesota for fire and emergency response services.

Emergency Medical Services

Ambulance services are provided to the citizens by Lakeview Ambulance Service, Stillwater, MN.

Police Services

Law enforcement and protective services are provided by the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department. Statewide law enforcement mutual aid services exist if needed.

Health

There are no hospitals or clinics in St. Joseph. The nearest clinics are in the neighboring communities of Hudson, New Richmond, and Somerset, WI, and Stillwater, MN. These clinics provide medical services including general care, dental, and vision. Nearby hospitals include Hudson Hospital in Hudson, WI, Westfields Hospital and Clinics in New Richmond, WI, and Lakeview Hospital in Stillwater, MN. The St. Croix Health Center in New Richmond is a long-term care and short-term care facility.

Schools

Houlton Elementary School previously operated in the Town, but closed in 2026. The residents of the Town are served by three school districts: Hudson, Somerset and New Richmond, as determined by the residents' address.

Libraries

Public libraries are located in the neighboring communities of Hudson, Somerset, and New Richmond, WI.

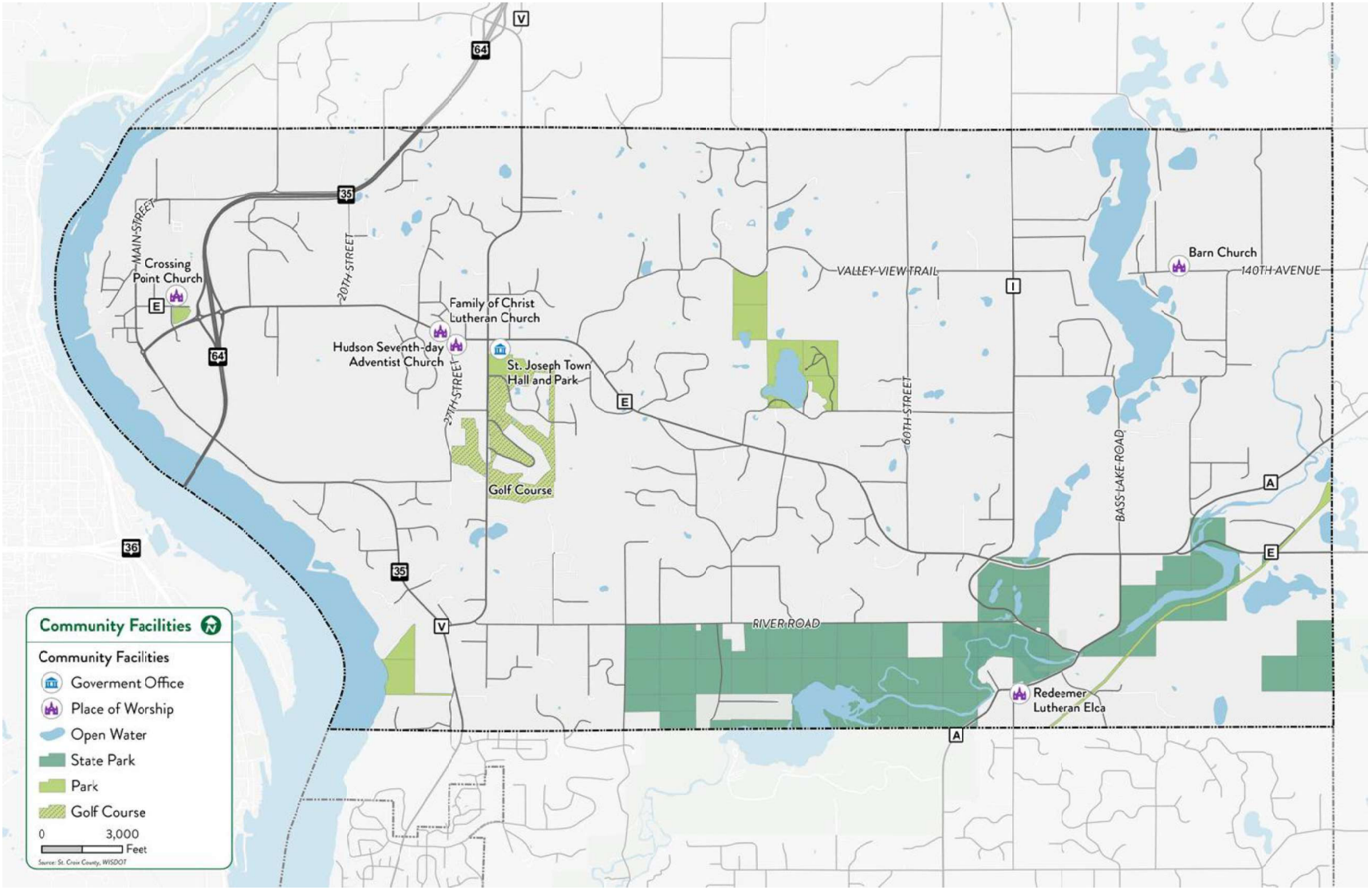
Childcare Facilities

There are no commercial day care or childcare facilities in the Town of St. Joseph. Home occupations (including childcare) are permitted uses in multiple zoning districts in the Town. There are a number of small home day cares in St. Joseph. There is potential for commercial day care in the Town of St. Joseph, which will likely be driven by market demand; however, the population under the age of five has decreased since 2010.

Cemeteries

There are three cemeteries in the Town of St. Joseph. The Houlton Cemetery, founded in 1881, is located at 1251 Highway 35. The Thelen Family Cemetery is located at Thelen Farm Trail and Settlers Way. The Pioneer Cemetery is located on County Road V between 145th and 150th Streets.

Figure 5-1 Town of St. Joseph Community Facilities



4. EXPANSION OF EXISTING UTILITIES OR FACILITIES

The Town of St. Joseph does not provide municipal utilities. The Town Hall is located at 1337 County Road V in the Town of St. Joseph. There are no expansion plans for the existing Town Hall. The possibility of providing municipal sewer and water for a portion of the Houlton area was discussed as part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, but the Town decided creation of the system was not feasible for the time being.

5. PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

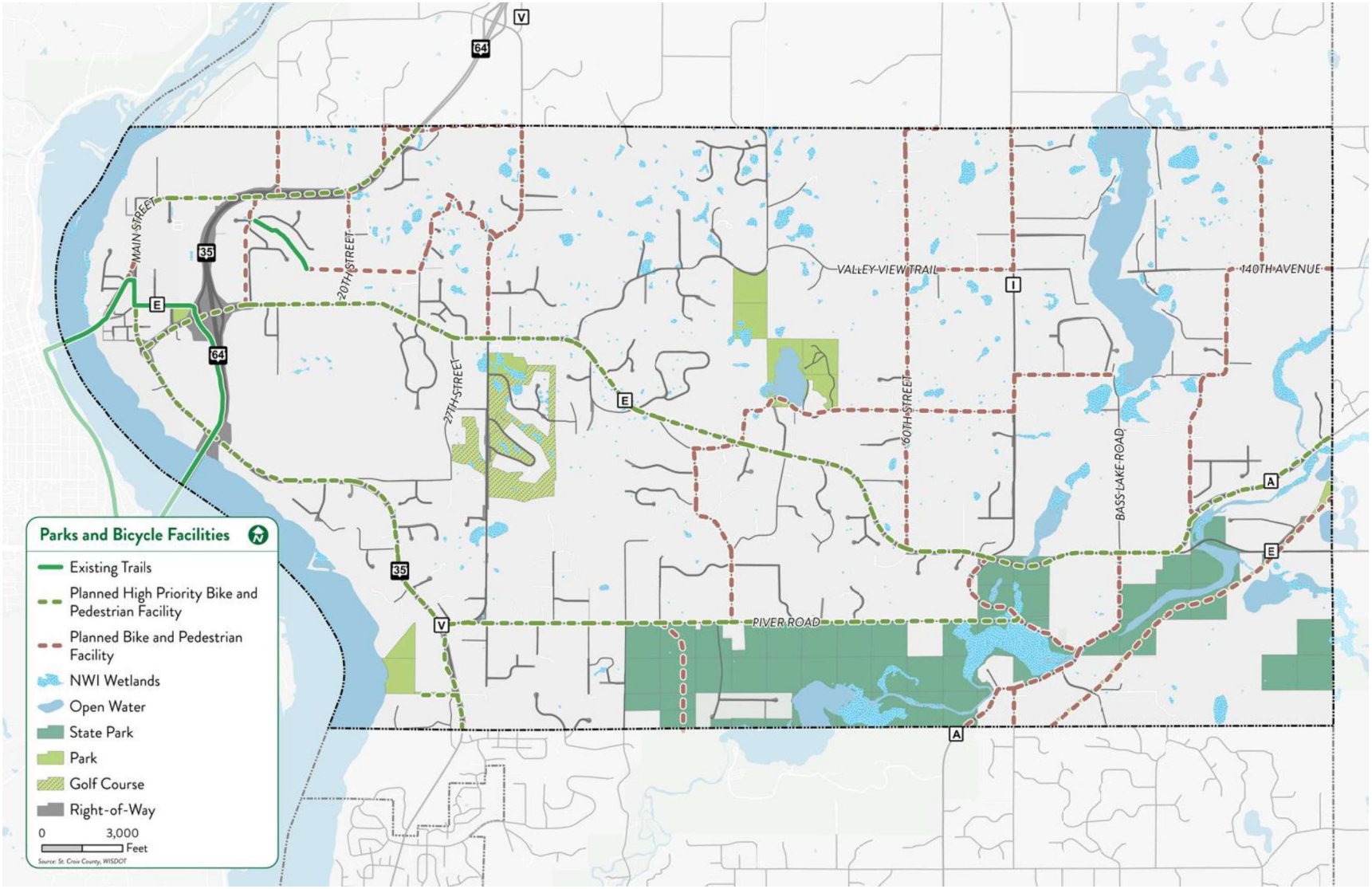
The Town of St. Joseph has an abundance of natural resources which provide exceptional recreational opportunities including St. Croix County's Homestead Park at Perch Lake, Bass Lake, Willow River State Park, and the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. State and National Parks and Recreational Areas are shown on Figure 5–1. They include playgrounds, ballfield, walking trails, swimming, boating, and many scenic views and opportunities.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Opportunities in the Town of St. Joseph

Current and future bicycling and pedestrian trails are shown in Figure 5-2. The Town of St. Joseph plans to pursue funding to design and construct bicycling and pedestrian facilities, identified in the Town's 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan. The completion of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge adds to the community's desire to implement the planned trail network. Nearby road realignments and bicycling facilities incorporated into the bridge's design create an opportunity to enhance the Town's bicycling network. After bridge construction, portions of State Trunk Highway 35 were turned over to the Town, creating an opportunity to reexamine right-of-way allocation for bicycle and motorized travel. Meanwhile, the new Loop Trail presents an opportunity to connect destinations in St. Joseph with a wider trail network. The five-mile multi-use trail runs on both sides of the river between the St. Croix Crossing Bridge and the existing Stillwater Bridge, connecting bicyclists in St. Joseph to the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and destinations in Minnesota.

Development of trails creates opportunities for economic benefit and a higher quality of life for St. Joseph residents. Many communities that have implemented trails have found that their wide-ranging, long-lasting benefits to individuals and communities validate the expense of trail construction. The St. Joseph Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee will continue to seek opportunities to partner with county, state, federal, and private agencies to enhance the town's bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan provides more information on planned facilities.

Figure 5-2 Town of St. Joseph Parks and Bicycle Facilities



The following table identifies the parks and recreational opportunities that are currently available to residents (Table 5-1). The table also includes existing and proposed bicycle facilities.

Table 5-1 Park and Recreation Facilities

Name	Acres	Access	Facilities
Town of St. Joseph Town Park	34	Public	Softball/Little League Baseball diamond, benches, bleachers, and upper parking lot; picnic shelter and tables; playground equipment; hiking trail; restroom facilities
Settler's Glen Hiking Trail	Trail ~1.5	Private	Hiking trail, no parking
St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail (4.5 miles) in both MN & WI	~ 2 miles	Public	Bicycle and walking trail, parking available.
Nelson Farm Road Park	1.5	Semi-Public	Undeveloped open space
City of Stillwater's Legion Beach	20	Semi-Public	None
Perch Lake Boat Landing	0.5	Public	Landing for non-motorized boats, port-a-potty & waste receptacle. Town maintains.
Homestead Parklands at Perch Lake	135	Public – County park user fees	Swimming beach, playground, hiking trails, picnic shelter, handicap accessible fishing pier, canoe and boat rental facilities, and scuba diving. County maintains
Bass Lake Boat Landing (Somerset)	0.5	Public	Landing, parking lot and waste receptacle
Willow River State Park (DNR) in both Town of St. Joseph and Town of Hudson	1,582 in St. Joseph (2,891 total)	Public – State Park Fees	Lake, trout stream, boat launch, picnicking, 120 camp sites, bath house & swim beach, nature center, parking, restrooms, hiking trails, sightseeing & passive recreation areas, sliding, rock climbing, handicapped fishing piers, hunting, canoe, kayak and water craft rental & cross-country skiing. DNR maintains & operates.
Game Unlimited	760	Private	Licensed shooting preserve. Members-only
St. Croix County Trailhead	8	-	-
Eckert Blufflands Park	114	Public	Parkland along the St. Croix River which includes natural areas and shoreland. Park was acquired in 2015.

Name	Acres	Access	Facilities
Kolliner Park	49	Public – Closed	Owned and maintained by the City of Stillwater, but located in the Town of St. Joseph, closed to the public, access by water only.
Bicycle Routes/Trails			County Trunk Highways E, I, A, V, Hwy 35, St. Croix River Crossing loop, trails located within Willow River State Park
Snowmobiling Routes			Northeast and southeast section of town along the Willow River, local club maintains
Highway 35 Off-Road Trail	33 miles	Public	An off-road trail that will provide safe off-road access to neighborhoods, schools, libraries, churches, commercial areas, and parks at all levels—local, county, and state.
Highway 35 Overlook	6	Public	Owned by Town of St. Joseph, no current improvements.

Source: Town of St. Joseph

6. POLICY PLAN

The Town is committed to providing efficient and adequate services to the residents of the Town of St. Joseph. The policy plan will provide goals and policies to support the continued provision of a safe, healthy, and active place for residents to live.

Community Facilities Goal #1: Enhance and maintain community facilities to provide meeting and gathering spaces for Town residents.

Policies:

1. Maintain and monitor community gathering and meeting spaces to ensure appropriate facilities are available to conduct Town business and other community building activities.

Community Facilities Goal #2: Maintain the educational quality and accessibility for Town residents.

Policies:

1. Work with the School Districts to monitor and project the number of students entering the school systems to ensure the educational levels are maintained.

2. Encourage families and residents to actively participate in the schools to ensure quality educational opportunities are available to students.

Community Facilities Goal #3: Work with adjacent jurisdictions, the County and the State to ensure that services and utilities are being provided to residents in the most efficient and effective manner.

Policies:

1. Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to identify ways to provide services and utilities to residents in a way that is cost-effective and efficient.
2. Participate with intergovernmental groups to identify and monitor issues and concerns of residents and adjacent jurisdictions to ensure the adequacy of services and utilities in the area.

Community Facilities Goal #4: Maintain and enhance adequate park and recreational opportunities for residents that encourage an active and healthy lifestyle.

Policies:

1. Enhance and maintain current recreational facilities in the Town.
2. Work with the Town Parks Commission to ensure the development of interconnected trails and paths that allow Town residents to easily walk and bicycle throughout the Town safely.
3. Work with residents to identify and obtain park lands for current and future needs.
4. Cooperate with other governmental agencies for development of park property.
5. Work with the Wisconsin DNR to identify potential park lands within Willow River State Park that might better function as active parkland in the area.
6. Encourage and promote the goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan.
7. Pursue funding to design and construct bicycling and pedestrian facilities as identified in the 2023 Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan.

CHAPTER 6: AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Town of St. Joseph includes significant natural resources. It is bordered by the St. Croix River to the west and the Willow River on the southeast, and includes high-quality lakes, native prairie, and woodland areas. While it is close to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area and the growing community of Hudson, much of the Town is still rural in character.

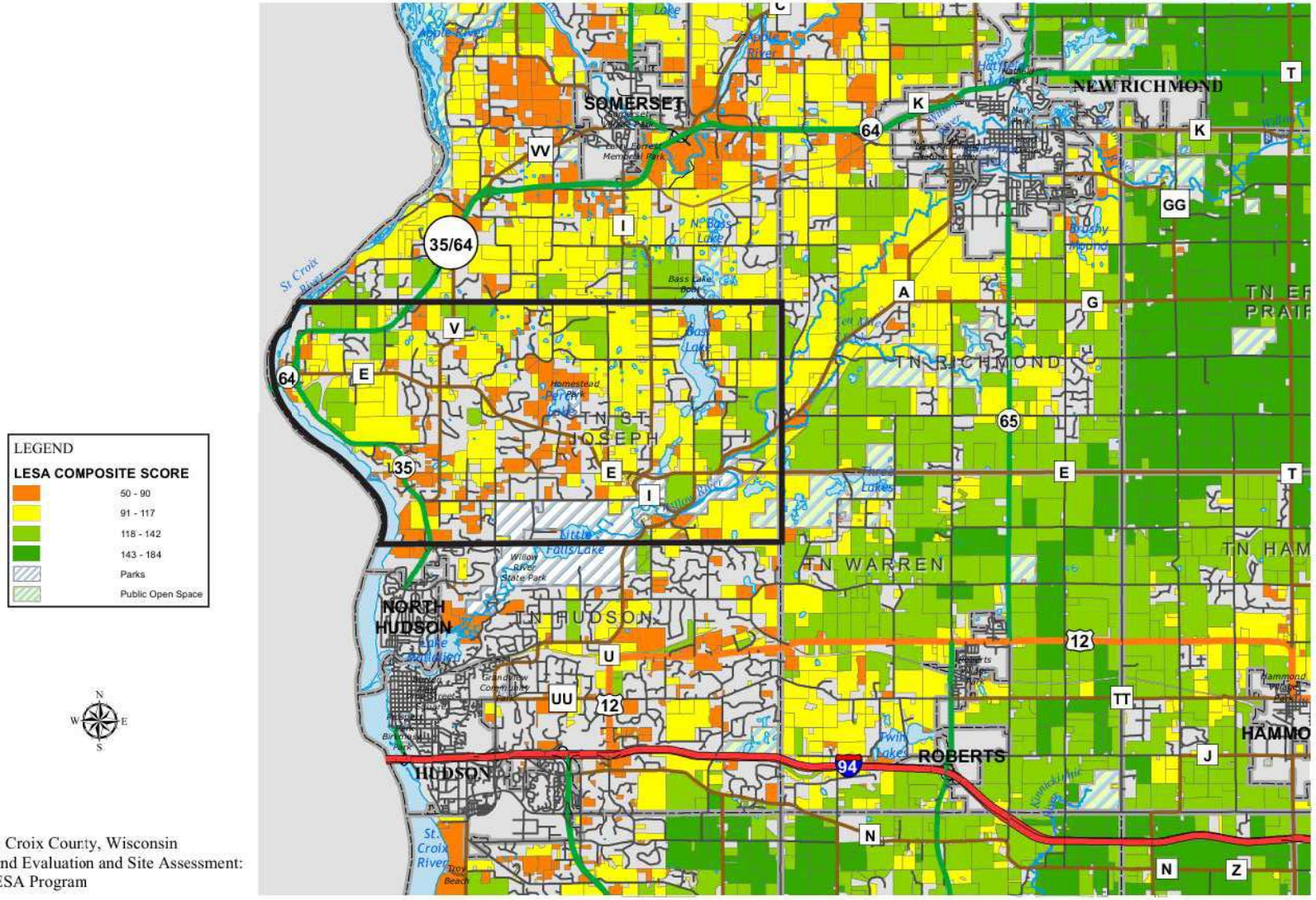
The Town Board and the residents recognize the role natural areas and rural vistas play in maintaining a healthy community, in attracting people to the area, and in contributing to the quality of life in the Town. They also recognize that these natural areas offer concrete benefits including:

- Protecting ground and surface water quality
- Providing wildlife habitat
- Maintaining property values and providing buffers between land uses
- Providing opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Another important characteristic of the Town of St. Joseph is its rural, agricultural character. Much of the Town is currently farmed and residents enjoy the rural and natural landscape. This could change if the Town becomes more residential, with pressures from the Twin Cities and Hudson. Based on the 2013 St. Joseph Planning Survey results, Town residents hope the Town will remain rural in character and celebrate its agricultural and natural resources.

In order to better understand the Town's environment, a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) was conducted; see subsection 3 of this chapter. This inventory will help to guide future land use and development to ensure that the Town of St. Joseph's important natural resources are protected and enhanced.

Figure 6-1 St. Croix County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA)



St. Croix County, Wisconsin
Land Evaluation and Site Assessment:
LESA Program

2. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Historically, the Town of St. Joseph and St. Croix County have been predominantly agricultural communities. However, with the growth of the Twin Cities Metro area, the western parts of St. Croix County have experienced a reduction in the amount of agricultural land. Similarly, there has been a shift in the type of farming from small dairy farms to large-scale corn or soybean operations and alternative farming practices.

The Town has a strong agricultural community. The land and soils in the Town have moderate crop yields and are classified as moderately producing agricultural land. In addition, even though there is strong development pressure within the Town, there remain large tracts of farmland. The primary agricultural uses are active farmland, farmsteads, and large-lot single-family residential development.

St. Croix County uses the Land Evaluation Site Assessment System (LESA) for rating the relative value of agricultural land resources. Based on this assessment, there are portions of the Town of St. Joseph that score high on the LESA ranking, as "most suitable for long-term agricultural use". See attached Figure 6-1. These areas are relatively small in comparison to the large expanses of prime farmland in the central and eastern portions of the County.

In 2024, St. Croix County completed its Comprehensive Plan, which included a Farmland Preservation Plan. Using the LESA rankings and current land uses across the County, the Plan designated farmland preservation areas. These areas are particularly valuable as agricultural land and development of these parcels is discouraged. The Town of St. Joseph still has active farming in much of the Town. However, none of the land is zoned as farmland preservation. In the future, agricultural activities could include limited small-scale traditional agriculture and agriculture-related activities.

3. NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

The Town of St. Joseph is a rural town located along the St. Croix River in St. Croix County, Wisconsin. To plan effectively for natural resources, the Town requires accurate information about the type and quality of open space and natural areas within the Town. This information was gathered, analyzed, and presented as part of the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI). The following subchapter summarizes the methodology and findings of the NRI (see Appendix G).

About the NRI

Typically, communities rely on aerial photography and land classification data to understand where important natural resources are present. In the Town of St. Joseph, the National Park Service staff completed Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) mapping in the westernmost portion of the Town of St. Joseph and the St. Croix River. In these areas, natural resources were only identifiable using aerial photos and a very limited field review. In 2015 the Town retained Stantec to conduct land cover mapping and a natural resources inventory to gather more complete and accurate data about areas not included in the MLCCS. The inventory was conducted for portions of the Town that fall within previously identified natural resource corridor areas and have the potential for development. Owners of parcels in the NRI area were contacted by the Town in late summer 2015 to request permission for property access. Work to investigate sites occurred in the fall of 2015.

The field inventory documented a variety of distinct natural community types including forest, woodland, shrubland, herbaceous wetlands, and grasslands, as well as areas of open water (lakes and ponds). The most common upland cover type is oak woodland/brushland, while the most common lowland cover type is cattail marsh. The most unique plant communities identified during the NRI include several rich fen sites and one oak savanna (an ecosystem type that is considered imperiled).

After conducting the field inventory, a total of 174 natural areas received quality ranks. Of these, 13 (7.5%) were considered to be Exceptional (highest quality rank possible). A total of 24 (13.8%) sites were given a High-quality rank. Moderate-quality sites totaled 113 (64.9%) – the majority of these were Oak Woodland-brushland sites. A total of 24 (13.8%) were mapped as Low-quality – these areas typically exhibited significant signs of human disturbance and/or invasive plants. These sites are listed in Table 6-1.

Natural areas tended to be concentrated in the previously mapped natural resources corridors. Other natural areas can be found around the lakes, along the rivers, and in scattered locations. The NRI provides some general guidelines and information for management of natural areas. These natural areas are illustrated in Figure 6-2.

Table 6-1 Quality Natural Areas

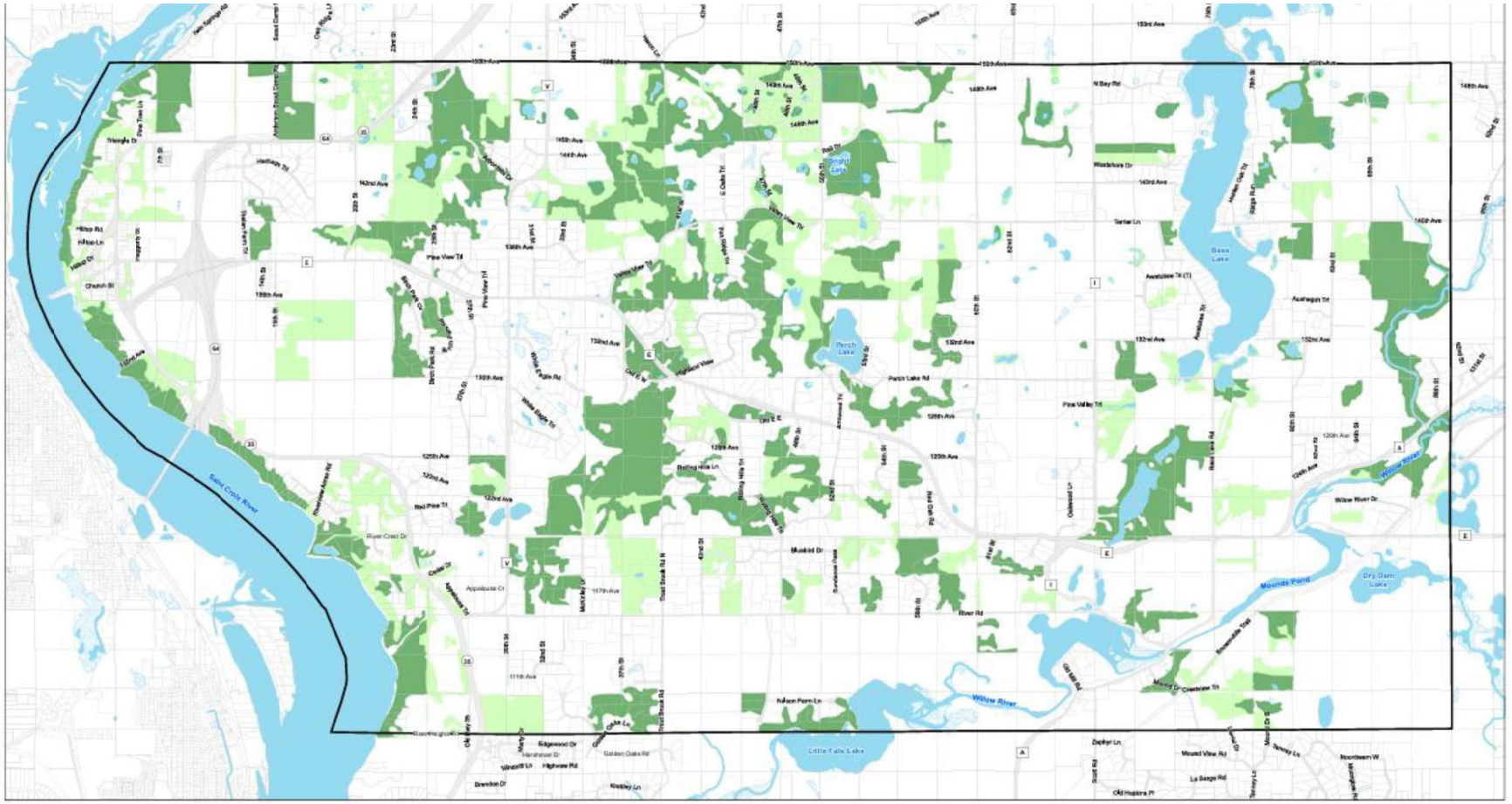
Quality Rank	Number of Sites
Exceptional (341)	13
High (342)	24
Moderate (343)	113

Quality Rank	Number of Sites
Low (344)	24

Developing a Natural Resource Corridor

Once natural areas were identified, as an update to the 2006 and 1995 Comprehensive Plans, a Natural Resource Corridor was established. Rather than simply designate natural areas for protection, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan identifies a Natural Resource Corridor (NRC) that focuses on connecting the identified exceptional and high-quality areas. This provides a network of habitat and encourages animal migration. By creating corridors, the Town of St. Joseph is protecting its natural amenities and rural character, while supporting the growth of native plant and animal species. Delineation of an NRC will guide future land use and development to ensure that natural resources and critical habitat are protected. Natural areas are mapped in Figure 6-2. The NRC has implications for land use and future development, which are discussed further in Chapter 9: Land Use Element.

Figure 6-2 Natural Areas in the Town of St. Joseph



Natural Resources Inventory Natural and Semi-Natural Areas

Town of St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan 2016

N W E S

0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet

Municipal Boundary
Natural Areas
Semi-Natural Areas
Right-of-Way
Open Water
NWI Wetland

September 20, 2016

Stantec

V:\1938\active\193803109\GIS\Projects\NRI Natural SemiNatural Areas 22X34.mxd

4. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are four places listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (SRHP and NRHP, respectively) within the Town of St. Joseph. Three are residential farms, located in the Houlton and Burkhardt areas, and the fourth is the Stillwater Bridge, which crosses the St. Croix River. These sites are listed below.

John Nicholas and Hermina Thelen House

This home is located at 1383 and 1405 Thelen Farm Trail in the Houlton area of the Town of St. Joseph.

- NRHP: Listed on 02-12-09
- SRHP: Listed on 07-18-08

Louis C. and Augusta Kriesel Farmstead

This farmstead is located at 132 STH 35/64 in the Houlton area of the Town of St. Joseph.

- NRHP: Listed on 02-12-09
- SRHP: Listed on 07-18-08

The Lewis Farmhouse

This farmhouse is located at 1270 County Road A in the Boardman area of the Town of St. Joseph.

- NRHP: Listed on 03-19-82
- SRHP: Listed on 05-29-81

Stillwater Bridge

This bridge follows MN 36/WI 64 over the St. Croix River. Traffic was redirected to the St. Croix Crossing Bridge in 2017.

- NRHP: Listed on 05-25-89
- SRHP: Not listed on the State Register

The St. Croix County Historical Society is located in Hudson, WI. The society provides tours in the area, has a research center and library, and hosts events. Most of the events and tours are centered on architectural features in Hudson, though the museum and research area host information and artifacts from across the County. The Town of St. Joseph does not have a historical society.

5. POLICY PLAN

The Town of St. Joseph recognizes that growth and change will occur in the future. Growth can have negative impacts on natural resources, including fragmentation and destruction of natural habitats, increased impervious surfaces and resulting flooding and pollution of surface waters, impacts on the quantity and quality of groundwater, and other impacts.

The Town also recognizes that it can manage growth and seek to avoid and minimize impacts to significant natural resources. The Town has completed a Natural Resources Inventory and Map to identify the significant resources remaining in the community. The Town has also adopted the following Policy Plan to manage growth and protect these important resources.

Natural Resources Goal #1: Agricultural Resources: Enhance and maintain the rural character of the Town of St. Joseph by encouraging the preservation of agricultural lands and uses.

Policies:

1. Create a land use category that preserves traditional agricultural practices on a limited scale in keeping with the agricultural and residential character of the community.
2. Encourage the development of ag-related and ag-tourism uses.

Natural Resources Goal #2: Improve and protect the quality of surface waters.

Policies:

1. Work in partnership with the County's Priority Watersheds Program and local lake protection efforts.
2. Support and review Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinances as needed to protect surface waters.
3. Develop and adopt a wetland protection and buffer ordinance that sets minimum buffer standards.
4. Use park and open space dedication to protect significant water resources and adjacent habitat areas.
5. Promote wetland and shoreland restoration by private landowners.
6. Educate residents and developers regarding Best Management Practices and state and local stormwater regulations.

7. Support the development and implementation of a County Stormwater Management Ordinance to complement the Town's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.
8. Support development designs that protect the quality of surface waters and other natural resources, and minimize development impacts.
9. Apply for DNR grants that support local efforts to control nonpoint source pollution.
10. Support the implementation and periodic updates to the Lake Management Plans for Bass Lake and Perch Lake.
11. Create a new ordinance for stormwater management to protect Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) Bass Lake and Perch Lake.

Natural Resources Goal #3: Encourage preservation and restoration of sensitive natural resource areas and wildlife habitat.

Policies:

1. Encourage public and private landowners and developers to restore native habitats and control invasive species.
2. Seek state and other funding for habitat protection and control of invasive species.
3. Incorporate natural resource areas in parks and open space areas.
4. Adopt incentives and regulations to protect environmental corridors and natural resource areas.
5. Work with other conservation agencies and organizations, both public and private, to further this goal.

Natural Resources Goal #4: Protect groundwater supplies and surface water to ensure high-quality groundwater for all residents.

Policies:

1. Encourage monitoring of all private wells and private septic systems in the Town to ensure the highest standards are maintained.
2. Encourage monitoring of all agricultural waste disposal and management systems and practices to ensure the highest standards are maintained.
3. Encourage enforcement of state rules regarding wellhead and groundwater protection.
4. Encourage protection of wetlands and other groundwater recharge areas.

Natural Resources Goal #5: Provide for future open space and recreation needs.

Policies:

1. Implement the Town's Outdoor Recreation Plans and, when possible, coordinate and support St. Croix County's Outdoor Recreation Plans.
2. Develop the proposed bicycle and pedestrian trail systems identified in the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan.
3. Review and update park dedication requirements and fees included in the Town's impact fees, and use these fees along with grants, land dedication, and donation to develop the Town's park and bicycle/pedestrian trail system as growth occurs.

Natural Resources Goal #6: Preserve the character of the Town's landscape and examples of native woodlands, prairies, and wetlands.

Policies:

1. Identify important views and implement subdivision and zoning ordinances to protect valued views and viewsheds.
2. Incorporate scenic areas and native habitats in parks and open space.
3. Encourage development of County regulations that protect the night sky.
4. Encourage development of St. Croix County telecommunications tower regulations that encourage towers that blend in with the landscape.
5. Implement landscaping standards for commercial development that support the Town's character.
6. Develop and use the tools identified in Chapter 10: Implementation Element to manage land use and natural resources for the long term.

CHAPTER 7: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Economic health is an important component of a thriving community. A strong commercial and industrial base provides jobs to community residents, contributes to a community's tax base, and can be a source of psychological strength to a community. One can also measure the economic health of a community by taking a look into a community's employment and household income. New construction of housing and businesses in the community are also good indicators of growth and vitality. These are covered in the following sections of this chapter.

Economic development blends economic opportunity with local infrastructure, land, housing, and education. The primary objectives of most economic development plans are to increase the local tax base, provide job opportunities, and provide the goods and services local residents and visitors desire. However, these objectives are inherently linked to the availability of skilled and educated workers, affordable housing, developable land, and infrastructure.

2. EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Employment

In 2000, the manufacturing industry employed 415, or 22%, of the Town of St. Joseph's labor force, more than any other industry. Manufacturing was also the largest employer within St. Croix County. Between 2000 and 2013, the residents of the Town of St. Joseph experienced a shift from manufacturing jobs to more social services jobs.

In 2013, the largest employment sector was educational services, health care, and social assistance. This trend is similar to that of St. Croix County.

In 2024, educational services, health care, and social assistance continue to be the largest industry in which residents of St. Joseph work; however, the percentage has dropped by approximately 6%. Transportation and warehousing, and utilities, information, and other services, except public administration have also seen increases since 2013. Table 7-1 indicates in which industries Town of St. Joseph residents worked in 2024.

Table 7-1 Employment by Industry

Industry	Town of St. Joseph Employees	Town of St. Joseph Percent	St. Croix County Employees	St. Croix County Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	36	1.6%	1,118	2.1%
Construction	112	5.0%	4,684	9.0%
Manufacturing	281	12.6%	8,010	15.4%
Wholesale trade	84	3.8%	1,539	3.0%
Retail trade	153	6.9%	6,041	11.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	159	7.2%	1,986	3.8%
Information	54	2.4%	895	1.7%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	184	8.3%	3,106	6.0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	254	11.4%	4,689	9.0%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	471	21.2%	12,064	23.2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	110	4.9%	3,412	6.6%
Other services, except public administration	188	8.5%	2,254	4.3%
Public administration	137	6.2%	2,264	4.3%
Total	2,223	100.0%	52,062	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2024

As shown in Table 7-2, in 2024, over half of the labor force in the Town of St. Joseph engaged in management, business, science, and arts occupations. This percentage was 52.1% in 2013 and 40% in 2000. Since 2013 the percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher education has increased from 39.18% to 44.9% as shown in Table 7-3.

Table 7-2 Occupations in the Town of St. Joseph

Occupation	Person	Percent
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	792	59.0%
Service occupations	115	8.6%
Sales and office occupations	266	19.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	110	8.2%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	60	4.5%
Total	1,343	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2024

Table 7-3 Education Attainment for the Town of St. Joseph Population 25 Years and Older

Education Level	Person	Percent
Less than 9th grade	10	0.3%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	94	2.9%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	656	20.2%
Some college, no degree	649	20.0%
Associate's degree	380	11.7%
Bachelor's degree	984	30.3%
Graduate or professional degree	473	14.6%
Total	3,246	100.0%
High school graduate or higher	3,142	96.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,457	44.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 2024

Table 7-4 shows the number of the Town of St. Joseph residents who are employed. This table also shows the percentage of women in the workforce and the number of two-parent working households. In 2013, 62.4% of the population over 16 years old in St. Joseph were active in the labor force, all in a civilian capacity. 58.5% of females 16 years and over were in the labor force and the 2024 ACS shows 100% of those in the labor force as being employed. In 62.9% of families with children, both parents were in the labor force.

Table 7-4 Employment Status

Type	Persons	Percent
Population 16 years and over	3,578	100.0%
In labor force	2,232	62.4%
Civilian labor force	2,232	62.4%
Employed	2,223	62.1%
Unemployed	9	0.3%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	1,346	37.6%
Females 16 years and over	1,871	100.0%
In labor force	1,094	58.5%
Civilian labor force	1,094	100.0%
Employed	1,094	100.0%
Own children of the householder under 17 years	873	100.0%
All parents in family in labor force	549	62.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 2024

St. Joseph is mostly a rural residential town and does not have significant employers itself, so residents typically leave the Town for employment opportunities.

Table 7-5 shows where residents in the Town of St. Joseph are working. Over the years there has been a slight increase in people working in their state and county of residence and a corresponding decrease in people working out of state. However, the general pattern has not changed since 2010. 28.5 percent of the people work outside the state, presumably mostly in the Twin Cities Metro Area in Minnesota. The other 71.5 percent worked in the state of Wisconsin, the vast majority within St. Croix County.

As shown in Table 7-6, the majority of the Town of St. Joseph's residents commute to work by automobile, driving alone. The average time for traveling to work is 28.6 minutes, a slight increase from 27 minutes in 2000.

Table 7-5 Place of Work

Type	2010 Persons	2010 Percent	2020 Persons	2020 Percent	2024 Persons	2024 Percent
Worked in state of residence	798	38.6%	1,151	49.7%	1,572	71.5%
Worked in county of residence	717	34.7%	1,137	49.1%	1,449	65.9%
Worked outside county of residence	81	3.9%	25	1.1%	123	5.6%
Worked outside state of residence	1,268	61.4%	1,164	50.3%	627	28.5%
Total	2,066		2,315		2,199	

Source: American Community Survey, 2010, 2020, 2024

Table 7-6 Form of Transportation

Commute to Work	Persons	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	2,199	100.0%
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	1,497	68.1%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	94	4.3%
Public transportation	0	0.0%
Walked	8	0.4%
Other means	0	0.0%
Worked from home	600	27.3%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	28.6	

Source: American Community Survey, 2024

Income

Table 7-7 shows that the largest income bracket for households in the Town of St. Joseph is $100,000 to $149,000. While 20.3 percent of households earn more than $200,000, a large number (21.1 percent) earn between $35,000 and $75,000.

Table 7-7 Household Income

Income	Household	Percent
Less than $10,000	0	0.0%
$10,000 to $14,999	0	0.0%
$15,000 to $24,999	44	2.5%
$25,000 to $34,999	100	5.7%
$35,000 to $49,999	81	4.6%
$50,000 to $74,999	291	16.5%
$75,000 to $99,999	259	14.7%
$100,000 to $149,999	323	18.3%
$150,000 to $199,999	305	17.3%
$200,000 or more	358	20.3%
Total households	1,761	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey, 2024

The Town of St. Joseph's median household income has stayed significantly higher than the statewide average and St. Croix County as a whole, as shown in Table 7-8. In 2024, the median income in St. Joseph was $113,316, compared to $97,229 and $77,488 for the county and state, respectively. However, between 2010 and 2024, the median income in the Town of St. Joseph increased much less than it did in the County during that period.

Table 7-8 Median Household Income

Community	2010	2020	2024	2010 - 2024 Change
Town of St. Joseph	$87,949	$119,211	$113,316	28.8%
St. Croix County	$67,446	$84,985	$97,229	44.2%
State of Wisconsin	$51,598	$63,293	$77,488	50.2%

Source: American Community Survey, 2010, 2020, 2024

3. ST. JOSEPH PLANNING SURVEY, 2013

In the St. Joseph Planning Survey, 2013, conducted by the UW-River Falls Survey Research Center, residents generally favored limiting growth in the Town, and agricultural-related production was the only business development type favored by a majority of residents. Home-based cottage industries, light industrial/business park, and commercial uses were favored by less than half of the respondents. A quarter of the respondents said business development should not be encouraged. Excerpts from the St. Joseph Planning Survey, 2013 are attached as Appendix B.

The Town may be interested in attracting business to the Town of St. Joseph in the area around the new interchange, in the Houlton area on the west side of the community. In 2016, before the opening of the St. Croix Crossing bridge, there was uncertain what type or scale of development might be pursued here or how quickly. The resulting development has been slower than previously anticipated. One of the Town of St. Joseph's strengths in attracting business is its location immediately across the river from the Twin Cities metropolitan area, a connection which will improve significantly with the opening of the new St. Croix River bridge. The idea is that people could "live here, work there". One of the weaknesses is the relatively low density of residential development in the Town, which means that there are relatively few customers or employees for businesses compared to more densely developed urban areas.

Since the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has not seen the push for development from the St. Croix Crossing Bridge opening that was anticipated. The Town remains open to additional residential and commercial development stemming from the connections created as part of the construction of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge.

4. UW-EXTENSION ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

St. Croix County commissioned a study of the potential economic impacts on the region as a result of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge. The study concluded that the region, including the Town of St. Joseph, was likely to see population and employment increases, but likely not dramatic or quickly. Even with new, easier access across the River, the region is likely to grow at rates closer to historic trends than to dramatic new rates. An executive summary of the study, "Community and Economic Impacts of the St. Croix River Crossing," conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Extension Center for Community and Economic Development and Gillaspy Demographics, is included in Appendix C of the Plan. The study offered several key findings:

1. Infrastructure improvements, like the new bridge, alone will not guarantee economic and population growth.
2. Larger trends suggest St. Croix County is unlikely to return to growth rates of the 1990s and 2000s.
3. Despite slower growth rates, population in St. Croix County and the Corridor communities will continue to grow.
4. Population projections are not certain and should guide development of policies.

5. The new river crossing will improve access to jobs in the region, but communities need to attract and retain residents based on local economic vitality and quality of life issues.

6. Population growth will attract new commercial development but also create demand for government services.

7. New development will occur incrementally through the growth and expansion of small businesses, and not by large firms relocating to the Corridor.

The overall conclusion of the study is that population and employment growth are possible, but will not be dramatic. No specific numbers for population, household, or employment growth for the Town of St. Joseph were provided by the study. The Town has not yet seen development stem from the construction of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge, but remains open to the possibility.

5. MARKET CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

In order to better understand the economic context of the Town of St. Joseph, a market conditions assessment was completed prior to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan being adopted. The market conditions analysis was prepared by Maxfield Research & Consulting, LLC and is included in Appendix D of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. It analyzed employment in the larger region, consisting of several counties. It noted that employment was likely grow in St. Croix County as a result of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge with increased ease of access to major highways. That analysis noted that construction, manufacturing, and wholesale distribution businesses were the most likely candidates to be attracted to the Town of St. Joseph at the new highway interchange, in the area in the southwest quadrant of the intersection that has been suggested for a future business park.

In addition, traffic at that interchange was expected to attract highway commercial uses such as a convenience gas station, a coffee shop with drive-thru, fast food restaurant, and other small service-related businesses. If a denser mixed-use area were to be developed in the Houlton area near the interchange, which would require municipal services to be provided, the increased housing would likely attract other commercial uses as well. This Plan does not include an estimate of the number of jobs which could potentially be added by the development of businesses under these proposed scenarios.

Key findings from the Maxfield Research & Consulting, LLC assessment are described within the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. A large commercial development push has yet to be seen in the Town. Future efforts from the town regarding economic development would benefit by completing an analysis of these findings and what actually happened in the area.

6. POLICY PLAN

The Town of St. Joseph recognizes the importance of each component of the economic development cycle in the overall health and economic stability of the community. The following are the goals and policies of the Town of St. Joseph to address economic development issues.

Economic Development Goal #1: Promote cooperative efforts and utilize existing resources for economic growth in the Town.

Policies:

1. Continue to identify and tap into local, state, and federal resources to enhance economic development.
2. Explore county-wide economic development coordination options.
3. Promote coordination of the educational system and the business community to ensure the availability of qualified workers.

Economic Development Goal #2: Promote economic stability and diversity that provides job opportunities to residents.

Policies:

1. Support efforts to retain existing businesses and facilitate their expansion.
2. Support efforts to recruit new businesses and industries at appropriate locations and scales.
3. Recognize the need to maintain, upgrade, and expand existing infrastructure in the Town, including but not limited to roadways, parks/trails, utilities, and telecommunications infrastructure, to support and promote continued economic development.
4. Target financial resources and programs to attract businesses that have an emphasis on job creation and businesses that meet or exceed livable wage requirements.
5. Encourage the availability of a range of housing types and values to accommodate an ample workforce.
6. Encourage adoption of new technologies and policies that support telecommuting.

Economic Development Goal #3: Promote efficient planned commercial and light industrial development.

Policies:

1. Identify key commercial and light industrial development opportunities within the unincorporated hamlets and the Town's planned growth areas in locations with access to major transportation systems.
2. Encourage and facilitate infill development on vacant parcels to ensure maximum efficiency of land use.
3. Encourage compact commercial developments that will make efficient use of infrastructure and resources.
4. Encourage industrial and office/business commercial development to locate within master-planned light industrial parks or business parks or at the Houlton Town Center.

Economic Development Goal #4: Enhance the character of the Town's commercial and light industrial development.

Policies:

1. Implement and monitor the use of architectural, design, or other development standards such as landscaping, screening and other standards within the Town's commercial, business park, and industrial developments.
2. Support the provision of open/green space within commercial and industrial development.
3. Promote the rehabilitation and redevelopment of older existing commercial facilities by pursuing and making available various financial programs and assistance.

CHAPTER 8: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The Town of St. Joseph is bordered by the Towns of Somerset, Richmond, Warren, Hudson, and the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The Town has the opportunity to work with adjacent jurisdictions specifically with respect to planning for future utility and community facility improvements, including an interconnecting bicycle and pedestrian trail system. During preparation of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the Town identified the interrelated aspects of existing utilities and potential for future services that would require discussions with adjacent municipalities, as well as extensive discussions with St. Croix County and the State of Wisconsin.

The Town relies on and shares services and facilities located in adjacent towns, cities, and St. Croix County. Therefore, it is necessary for the Town to encourage positive relationships as well as coordination with those jurisdictions. The Town's children attend schools in three different school districts, Hudson School District, School District of Somerset, and the School District of New Richmond. It is the Town's desire to maintain its relationships with those school districts. In addition, as the Town develops, it may be beneficial to discuss providing services and utilities in conjunction with adjacent municipalities.

The Town of St. Joseph has a volunteer fire department, which was established in 1964. It is located at 1339 County Road V, Hudson, WI. Since 1995 the Town of St. Joseph Fire Rescue EMS department has had an automatic aid agreement with the Town and Village of Somerset and City of Hudson. The department participates in and complies with the St. Croix County mutual aid policy. Manpower or equipment can be requested from any department in St. Croix County as well as Stillwater, Bayport, and Lower St. Croix Valley from Washington County, Minnesota. The Town of St. Joseph Fire Rescue EMS is a member of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS), a consortium of area Fire and Rescue Departments in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Town recognizes the importance of maintaining and encouraging these relationships with other municipalities to ensure that residents are served in the best and most efficient capacity possible.

2. POLICY PLAN

The Town of St. Joseph recognizes that growth and change will occur in the future. Cooperating with other government agencies will help the Town to develop in a way that is complementary to and consistent with neighboring jurisdictions.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #1: Work with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure that Intergovernmental Cooperation and activities are pursued.

Policies:

1. Participate with Intergovernmental groups to identify and monitor issues to find common ground to more effectively manage separate and diverse opportunities within the Town of St. Joseph with similar Best Management practices.

2. Support and actively participate in the Highway 64 Corridor Trail Coalition, the St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Coalition, the Bass Lake Rehabilitation District, , and the Sportsman's Alliance.
3. Work closely with St. Croix County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and State staff.
4. Work with the three school districts which serve the Town of St. Joseph.

CHAPTER 9: LAND USE ELEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a land use inventory is to quantify and analyze existing development in the community. An examination of current land uses reveals development patterns, current densities, and shows prevalent uses in the Town of St. Joseph. This information can help the Town identify development and redevelopment opportunities based on the current pattern and locations of land uses. The Town of St. Joseph residents are interested in maintaining and enhancing the current small-town, rural character. Utilizing the current land use and natural resources information will help guide future development to be consistent with this goal. This inventory, combined with other background information, is used to suggest where, at what intensity, and at what rate growth should occur. The inventory can also help to classify areas that should remain undeveloped or should be preserved. The kind of development and how that development is allowed to progress should be a reflection of the community's needs and desires. Existing land use and natural resource information as well as the Town's goals shape the Future Land Use Plan.

Development of the Future Land Use Plan

The Town of St. Joseph's natural amenities and rural character make it an attractive place to live and work. Due to these factors, its proximity to the Twin Cities metropolitan area, and location along County Road E and proximity to Highway 35, the Town of St. Joseph has experienced steady growth over the past decades. The Highway 64/County Road E Interchange and the St. Croix Crossing Bridge located within the Town will also have a significant effect on the Town's future land use. This makes the land use analysis and proposed land use plan an integral piece of developing the Comprehensive Plan.

Continued growth pressure in the Town of St. Joseph will pose many land use challenges. The conflict between the demands for increased development and retaining the rural and agricultural character of the Town is central to this issue. Pressure on existing natural areas will also generate conflict over environmental preservation. As a part of this land use analysis, the Town conducted an extensive Natural Resources Inventory and developed a corresponding Natural Resource Corridor. Chapter 6: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Elements devoted to this discussion. However, this corridor is summarized in this chapter because it will be used to support parts of the Land Use Plan.

The Land Use Plan includes a map that identifies and guides the types of future land use patterns desired by the community. The map is divided into land use categories that reflect these patterns and the Town's needs.

2. EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Town of St. Joseph's existing land use map in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan described the following primary land uses within the Town:

- Ag/Residential Farming
- Ag/Residential Natural
- Residential
- Mobile Homes
- Home Occupation
- Commercial
- Power Line
- Public/Semi-Public
- Golf Course
- Parks
- Open Water
- Right-of-Way
- Vacant (platted)

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan also has a Future Land Use Plan map, included in Appendix E, which identifies future areas for growth in the Town. In 2016, the Town of St. Joseph's predominant land use was Ag/Residential Farming, which comprised 36% of the Town's land. The 2016 Future Land Use Plan accurately reflects much of what has happened in the Town over the past 20 years, with the exception of the Business Park located west and north of the St. Croix Crossing Bridge.

3. LAND USE INVENTORY

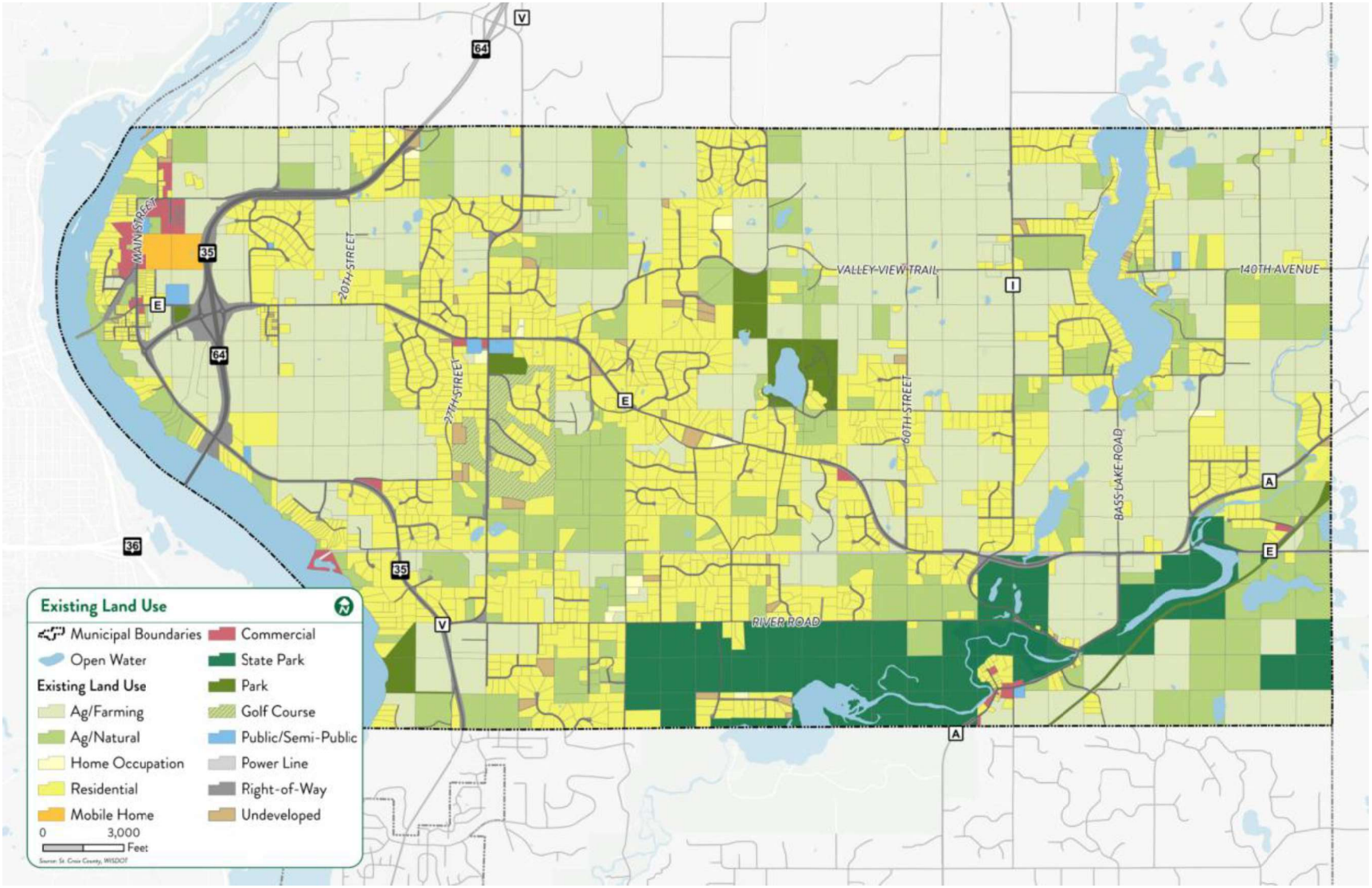
There are currently 14 existing land use categories within the Town of St. Joseph. Notably, data for existing land uses comes from St. Croix County which does not appear to have been updated since 2015. The St. Croix County Land Info Plan states the Existing Land Use data is in a "Maintenance Phase." Town staff have worked to update the existing land use information using the information available on St. Croix County Beacon GIS, which resulted in over 60 changes, approximately 860 acres, with the changes being almost exclusively "Undeveloped" parcels changing to "Residential".

The most predominant land use is Ag/Farming, which includes agricultural land and very low-density residential development. This use comprises 36.5% of the Town's land. Other predominant uses include Residential and Ag/Residential Natural. The Residential land use category refers to platted and developed residential properties and comprises 28.2% of the Town. Ag/Residential Natural includes currently undeveloped land with important natural features (14.1% of the Town). In this area, property owners are encouraged to protect nearby natural resources. All existing land uses are listed below in Table 9-1 and mapped in Figure 9-1.

Table 9-1 Existing Land Use Inventory

Existing Land Use 2015	Acreage	Percentage
Ag/Farming	8,062	36.5%
Ag/Natural	3,126	14.1%
Commercial	120	0.5%
Golf Course	187	0.8%
Home Occupation	56	0.3%
Mobile Home	67	0.3%
Open Water	1,149	5.2%
Park	313	1.4%
Power Line	63	0.3%
Public/Semi-Public	53	0.2%
Residential	6,235	28.2%
Right-of-Way	827	3.7%
State Park	1,700	7.7%
Undeveloped	140	0.6%
Total	22,098	100.0%

Figure 9-1 Existing Land Use



4. LAND USE PLAN

In order to plan for future development that met the Town of St. Joseph's needs, a Future Land Use Plan was prepared. This plan includes a discussion of new land use categories and their relationship with the Natural Resource Corridor identified in Chapter 6: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element. The Future Land Use Plan is described below.

This Future Land Use Plan focuses on providing additional areas for residential, commercial, and light industrial growth in the Town of St. Joseph. The Land Use Plan and associated map describe the future land use designations for the Town. The designations guide the Town's future land use form and provide a general framework for growth and development. The goals and policies stated in this plan will provide the framework from which the Town can create land development controls. The Future Land Use Plan map illustrates the land use categories for which the policies will apply. The land uses will each be described to help ensure that the types of uses and developments are consistent with the vision for the Town.

Objectives

The Future Land Use Plan accomplishes several objectives: (a) it clearly represents the existing land use pattern and location of existing developments, (b) it provides clearly defined areas that the Town would like to preserve as important natural resources, (c) it supports the continuation of rural land uses and rural characteristics as desired by the Town, and (d) it encourages a land use pattern that is cognizant of the unique characteristics of the Town. The land use and growth recommendations contained in this plan provide for a balance between these components. It is the intent of this plan to create a community within which these elements exist:

- Housing options to encourage a diversity of residents
- Rural character and a unique place
- Areas engaged in farming on a large or small scale or with agricultural related uses
- Adequate parks and community facilities
- Business and commercial opportunities to residents and visitors
- An efficient roadway system

Basic Planning Provisions

In addition to the goals and strategies, there are a number of basic principles that are important to implementing the Land Use Plan. These are described below:

- Maintain and update the Town's ordinances, specifically the subdivision and zoning ordinances, to be consistent with the elements of this plan.
- Create ordinances that support the goals and objectives laid out in each section of the plan.
- Ensure adequate roadway connections for new developments.
- Update the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan, as needed, to ensure the interconnectedness of neighborhoods and residents with other Town amenities.
- Work cooperatively with surrounding municipalities and the County to plan development of the Town's service areas and staging.

Physical Character

There are five major elements that define the physical character of the Town: (a) development pattern (intensity and use), (b) major road pattern, (c) neighborhood design, (d) future growth pattern of major community facilities/open space, and (e) location and nature of business and commercial areas. Several guiding principles have been established for each element as follows:

Development Pattern and Neighborhood Form

- Promote innovative design and conservation techniques through adopted ordinances in key natural resource areas.
- Create connectivity between neighborhoods in and around Houlton and Burkhardt to promote a small 'town center' feel.
- Encourage the preservation of large agricultural tracts to enhance the rural character in the Town.
- Encourage open or green space in new residential neighborhoods.
- Explore options for workforce housing and more compact options to increase housing diversity.

Road Pattern

- Promote the development of roadways that provide connections throughout the Town.
- Establish collector roads through the Town's key growth areas.
- Encourage a diversity of roadways while maintaining a consistent roadway network that promotes connectivity and safety.

Neighborhood Open Space/Community Facilities

- Strategically locate community and neighborhood sized parks and open space.
- Plan pedestrian and bike corridors that connect commercial areas, parks, and other points of interest.
- Continue and plan for upgrading and maintaining parks and open spaces.

Business Districts

- Guide commercial and light industrial expansion primarily to areas with adequate transportation access and infrastructure availability.
- Strengthen existing commercial areas and introduce small-scale retail services and commercial uses in the Houlton Center.

5. FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The Future Land Use Plan identifies areas where the Town would like to guide growth, and those areas in which the Town would like to maintain its rural character. In developing this plan, the Town was dedicated to responding to citizen preferences and being cognizant of significant natural resources in the community. The Town has identified eleven land use designations for future land use. These designations are described within this chapter. These land use designations will help to balance the rural character of the community with continued growth and major transportation changes in the area.

Updating the 2016 Future Land Use Plan

In 2016, a Future Land Use Plan was updated for the Town of St. Joseph, identifying 14 different land use types. The plan identified three different agricultural/residential districts. When developing the 2016 Future Land Use Plan, the Town wanted a Plan that would be clear to residents and property owners, while managing growth and protecting natural areas.

When the 2016 Comprehensive Plan was written, the County had zoning authority over the Town of St. Joseph. In 2021, the Town took over zoning authority to establish standards that better serve the community. Certain areas of the Town exhibit special characteristics, making them eligible for different land use designations that are then reflected in zoning districts. Some of these areas include:

Historic Housing along the St. Croix River

Land along the St. Croix River has been developed for many years and reflects a different development type than other parts of the Town. Lots in this area tend to be much smaller with older residential development. St. Croix County retains authority over the Shoreland Overlay District and the Lower St. Croix Riverway Overlay District, both of which impact these areas.

Burkhardt, Houlton, and the Intersection of County Roads V and E

These areas reflect a cluster of local services in the Town, not found elsewhere in the rural residential area.

St. Croix Crossing Bridge and Surrounding Areas

This new St. Croix Crossing Bridge and interchange in Houlton may increase development in the area. Clustering new businesses and industry near the highway would be beneficial to both the Town and the local businesses.

Eleven land use designations were developed for the 2050 Future Land Use Plan and are listed in Table 9-2. These areas correspond to Figure 9-2 Future Land Use. Subsection 5 of this chapter further describes these land use categories and allowed uses.

Agriculture and Rural Residential

The vast majority of the land in the Town is guided as Agriculture and Rural Residential. In this land use category, agricultural and very low-density residential uses are most prominent. The Town historically has had a strong agricultural community. The land and soils in the Town have moderate crop yields and are classified as moderately producing agricultural land. Although there is strong development pressure within the Town, there remain large tracts of farmland. The primary agricultural uses are active farmlands, farmsteads, and large-lot single family residential. Other uses are allowed by the Town's Zoning Ordinance in these areas and include small-scale agriculture-related businesses, commercial and service-related uses, parks and public uses, and extractive or light industrial uses. Approximately 10,499 acres of land are in this designation, approximately 47.5% of the land in the Town.

Traditional Residential

The Traditional Residential guidance is intended to provide for the orderly continuation of the platted area of higher-density residential development established and zoned residential by action of St. Croix County prior to the Town establishing zoning authority. Examples would be the Hamlets of Houlton and Burkhardt, as well as historic housing along the St. Croix River and surrounding Bass Lake. The Traditional Residential Zoning District is characterized by smaller lots less than three acres, with proximity to employment and amenities to improve livability. Approximately 135 acres of land are in this designation, approximately 0.6% of the land in the Town.

Preservation Residential

The Town worked through an extensive process during the 2016 Comprehensive Plan preparation to identify key natural resource areas and connections within the Town. The Preservation Residential land use responds specifically to the natural resource areas and corridors. The land uses in the Preservation Residential areas will be dedicated to creative subdivision and development techniques that seek to preserve a larger portion of the natural resources. This area could include lots that are smaller than in the Rural Residential district due to the preservation of open space and natural resources through a variety of tools. The land use pattern in this area will primarily be residential

uses and open spaces that preserve natural resource amenities for the entire town. Over the past several years the Town has experienced increased growth pressure and this trend is projected to continue. The St. Croix Crossing Bridge has increased accessibility to the Town and demand is expected to increase slowly over time. The overall density of this designation will remain at one dwelling per three acres but will allow the development of lots in conjunction with preservation of significant natural resource areas. Lot sizes in the preservation residential land designation may vary.

The Town of St. Joseph adopted Chapter 168, Subdivision of Land, that allows land to be developed in a way that protects the natural features. Under Chapter 168, properties fully or partially included in the Natural Resource Corridor (NRC) are required to set aside an area within a subdivision to preserve the natural character and resources of the parcels. The ordinance and the NRC serve as a strong implementation tool to meet the unique needs of the Town. More information about the NRC and the NRI can be found in Chapter 6: Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Element. Approximately 6,023 acres of land are in this designation, approximately 27.3% of the land in the Town.

Rural Mixed Use

Rural Mixed Use areas have been identified to support small-scale, rural businesses and services. Uses in this category will include offices, commercial retail and services, small scale restaurants, and public uses mixed with residential uses. There are two identified Rural Mixed Use areas in the Town, located in the southeast and central parts of the Town at the intersections of county roads to allow for easy access for residents and employees. The north side of the Houlton area, in the northwest corner of the Town, and Burkhardt, in the southeastern part of the Town, are examples of these Rural Mixed Use areas. Approximately 176 acres of land are in this designation, approximately 0.8% of the land in the Town.

Business Park

The Business Park land use designation serves to guide future commercial, warehousing, and light industrial uses in the Town. The Business Park zoning district was created to concentrate development and maintain the rural character of the community. The Business Park district is adjacent to the new Highway 64, providing convenient transportation access for future businesses while serving as a buffer to residential neighborhoods closer to the St. Croix River. Approximately 180 acres of land are in this designation, approximately 0.8% of the land in the Town.

Town Center Commercial

The Town Center Commercial land use designation allows for new development of the unincorporated area of Houlton in the Town of St. Joseph near the St. Croix River and the new Highway 64/County Road E Interchange. This area includes a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses and is intended to be the focus of new growth in the community. Uses in this area could include single family residential, townhomes, multifamily residential, restaurants, offices, services, and public institutions. While this district will support a mix of

uses, it is intended that it will feature more intense commercial or retail uses than other areas of the Town. Approximately 108 acres of land are in this designation, approximately 0.5% of the land in the Town. Dense growth in this area is currently limited by reliance on septic systems. The Town investigated the possibility of sewer development in Houlton, which is detailed in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Ultimately, it was determined that the development of sewer was not reasonable at the time. The idea may be further explored or reevaluated in the future.

Traditional Commercial

The land designated for Commercial uses, about 111 acres and 0.5% of the Town, includes existing business and commercial uses of various kinds throughout the Town. This land use is not expected to grow and is instead a continuation of existing development patterns. If multifamily dwellings develop in the Town, they are expected to be located in the Commercial districts. Most of these uses are concentrated in Houlton and Burkhardt.

Other Public Land Uses

There are six other land use districts and overlay districts in the Town of St. Joseph, all relating to public or semi-public uses. These districts include Public/Semi-public, Town/County Parks, State Parks, Right-of-Way, and Open Water. These districts are described below.

Public/Semi-public

The Public/Semi-public land use category is dedicated to public and institutional uses within the Town of St. Joseph. These uses include government buildings, schools, churches, and other community facilities. There are limited public uses in the town which generally include the Town Hall and places of worship. These facilities are discussed and mapped in Chapter 5: Utilities and Community Facilities Element. The Public/Semi-public use is approximately 28 acres of land (0.1%) in St. Joseph.

Conservancy

The Conservancy designation includes both local and state parks.

Town/County Parks

The three public parks currently owned by the Town: the Town of St. Joseph Nature Preserve located on Valley View Trail, St. Joseph Town Park located at the Town Hall on County Road V; and the Perch Lake Road Boat Launch located on the south banks of Perch Lake; Highway 35 Overlook located on Highway 35 east of the intersection with 125th Avenue; St. Croix County Bike Trailheads located at the intersection of Hawk Street and Houlton School Circle, south of the intersection of WIS 35 and Hawk Street, and the intersection of Main Street and Hilltop Drive; and Homestead Parklands located around the north, west, and east side of Perch Lake. Additionally, the County intends to establish the Eckert Blufflands Park in the coming decade.

Parks and trails within the Town are detailed in Chapter 5: Utilities and Community Facilities Element. Approximately 254 acres of land are dedicated to Town/County Parks, approximately 1.2% of the Town's land. This figure may not match tables elsewhere in this document as Open Water is not considered in all measurements done by various organizations.

State Parks

The land use designation State Parks designates public land within the Town's boundary that is not owned or maintained by the Town. This park land is accessible to residents, but charges a fee for use. In the Town of St. Joseph, there is one State Park, Willow River State Park. Parcels in the State Parks areas are primarily categorized as Rural Residential or Rural Mixed Use, but their current use is State land. While Willow River State Park is approximately 2,800 acres, approximately 1,700 acres of land are dedicated to State Parks in the Town of St. Joseph.

Right-of-Way

The Right-of-Way use is dedicated to State, County, and Town roadways within the Town of St. Joseph. Roadways and other modes of transportation are discussed in Chapter 4: Transportation Element. Approximately 1,256 acres of land (5.7%) are dedicated to right-of-way in the Town of St. Joseph.

Open Water

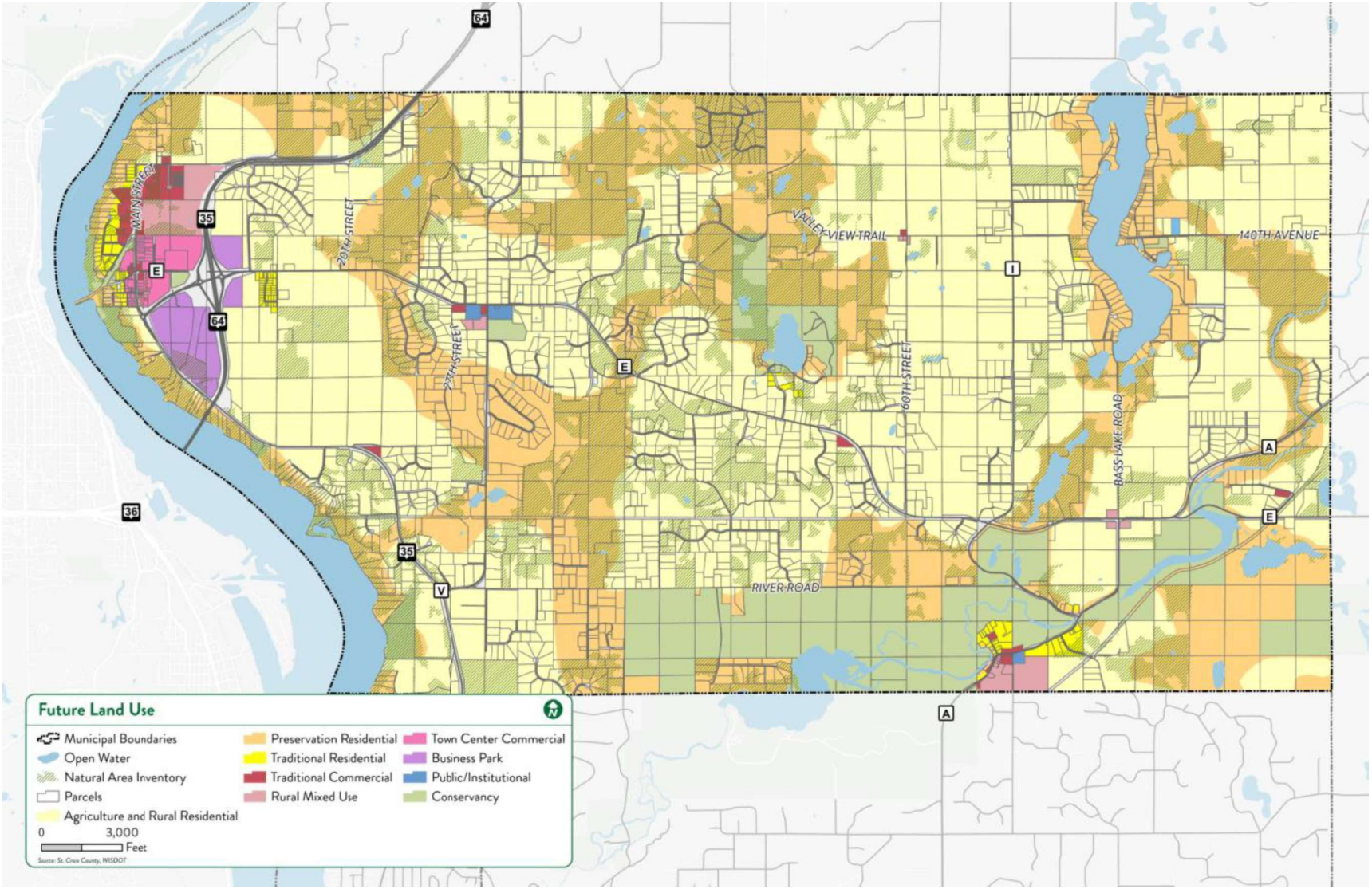
There are numerous lakes, rivers, and wetlands throughout the Town of St. Joseph. These bodies of water include the St. Croix River, Willow River, Perch Lake, Bass Lake, and Little Falls Lake. Approximately 1,541 acres are dedicated to open water, comprising 7.0% of the Town.

Table 9-2 Future Land Uses

Future Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percentage
Agriculture and Rural Residential	10,499	47.5%
Preservation Residential	6,023	27.3%
Traditional Residential	135	0.6%
Traditional Commercial	111	0.5%
Rural Mixed Use	176	0.8%
Town Center Commercial	108	0.5%
Business Park	180	0.8%
Conservancy	2,042	9.2%

Future Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percentage
Public/Institutional	28	0.1%
Right-of-Way	1,256	5.7%
Open Water	1,541	7.0%
Total	22,098	

Figure 9-2 Future Land Use Map



Based on projected household growth and potential commercial development, the following changes in land use are anticipated, estimating future residential and commercial growth. These numbers assume a growth of 1,222 households from 2020 to 2050. Future development is expected to be relatively consistent with the historic development pattern seen in the Town. The exception to this may be in the areas guided as Preservation Residential.

The intention of the Town is to maintain the same density within the Preservation Residential guided land while allowing for smaller lots and requiring contiguous areas of land to be preserved. This will lead to more preservation development than has previously been seen.

Generally, the Town anticipates that land currently used for agricultural purposes is the most likely to transition into additional residential development. This will lead to the existing land uses of Ag/Farming being the most likely to convert. With the projected growth at a density of three acres per unit, 3,666 acres would be needed to accommodate the additional housing. With the implementation of the Preservation Residential standards, the amount of land converted to residential lots will be less than would be seen with traditional subdivision due to the preservation of natural resources.

Commercial growth is difficult to predict, but is estimated at four acres every five years. These projected land use changes are reflected in Table 9-3.

Table 9-3 Projected Land Use Changes Over Time

Land Use	2015 Acreage*	2020 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2040 Estimate	2050 Estimate
Ag/Farming	8,062	7,321	6,580	5,838	5,097
Ag/Natural	3,126	2,943	2,760	2,576	2,393
Commercial	120	128	136	144	152
Golf Course	187	187	187	187	187
Home Occupation	56	56	56	56	56
Mobile Home	67	67	67	67	67
Open Water	1,149	1,149	1,149	1,149	1,149
Park	313	313	313	313	313
Power Line	63	63	63	63	63
Public/Semi-Public	53	53	53	53	53
Residential	6,235	7,151	8,068	8,984	9,901
Right-of-Way	827	827	827	827	827

Land Use	2015 Acreage*	2020 Estimate	2030 Estimate	2040 Estimate	2050 Estimate
State Park	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,700
Undeveloped	140	140	140	140	140
Total	22,098	22,098	22,098	22,098	22,098

*2015 data with edits from town staff

6. HOULTON TOWN CENTER MIXED USE CONCEPT

As part of the planning process prior to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update, a potential development of a portion of the Houlton area as a mixed use town center which could be served with municipal sanitary sewer and water was discussed. A generalized study area for this analysis was identified to include most of Houlton plus an additional area within a half mile or so of the interchange at Highway 64 and County Road E. Additional information about the development of these concepts and municipal services was included in Appendix F of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

7. POLICY PLAN

The purpose of the land use policy plan is to develop a set of goals and policies that directly support how the Town would like to develop and use land in the future. The Town has the ability to shape and guide growth in the manner it prefers, and the subsequent goals and policies will help identify a way to encourage a development pattern that is consistent with the Town Vision.

Land Use Goal #1: Promote and encourage a development pattern that is responsive to the Town Vision.

Policies:

1. Work with developers and land owners to encourage development that maintains a rural, small town character.
2. Develop and enforce community site planning/architectural standards that maintain the rural character in the Town.
3. Administer and promote design standards for the Preservation Residential guided land to create residential growth that considers and protects the Natural Resource Corridor and results of the NRI.

Land Use Goal #2: Encourage a diversity of land uses within the Town to provide business development, living, and recreational opportunities.

Policies:

1. Develop ordinances that support the new land use designations identified in this Plan.
2. Work with landowners to ensure that the land uses designated in the Plan are understood and accepted.
3. Work with adjacent towns and jurisdictions to ensure that land uses are consistent with neighboring communities.

Land Use Goal #3: Enhance and encourage the preservation of open spaces and agricultural lands to maintain the rural character.

Policies:

1. Implement and monitor land protection tools that support the preservation of important natural resources and agricultural lands.
2. Work with agencies, adjacent jurisdictions, the County, and state to identify ways to preserve open spaces in the most effective way.
3. Implement developer's agreements that reflect the context of the project and the goals of the Town.

Land Use Goal #4: Develop and promote the Houlton Town Center which provides business, residential, and recreational opportunities.

Policies:

1. Create a Houlton Town Center Plan that responds to the business and residential needs of current and future residents.
2. Attract small business owners to the Houlton Town Center to maintain the rural, small town character of the Town.
3. Work to make the Houlton Town Center a destination with attractive businesses and structures.

Land Use Goal #5: Encourage a Burkhardt mixed use area which will provide increased business opportunities.

Policies:

1. Maintain the Rural Residential for residences on Old Mill Road, except for the current Commercial area.
2. Encourage multiuse zoning for Scott Road parcels from Co Rd A to the Town Line.
3. Maintain Burkhardt as a distinct area with alternative businesses and structures.
4. Work with the State to address shared issues of concern including parking and access to facilities and services in Burkhardt from the Willow River State Park.

CHAPTER 10: IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT

1. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan for the Town of St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan Update identifies specific action steps that the Town can take to implement key recommendations in the Plan. Within the various chapters are goals and policies laying out the Town's vision and aspirations for the future. Many of these goals and policies are generalized, and some describe ongoing activities that will be carried on in any event by the Town Plan Commission, Town Board, or others. But the action steps below are more concrete steps that will address some of the most important issues facing the Town.

Not all goals and not all policies have action steps in this Implementation Plan. However, the action steps that are included below indicate the goal or policy in this Plan to which they relate to (colored by chapter), who would be responsible for taking action, and a time frame for accomplishing them. See table 10-1 for the Implementation Plan and associated action steps.

The Goals and Policies section of this chapter lists the goals and policies from Chapters 2 through 9 for reference.

Table 10-1 Implementation Plan

	Action Step	Related Goal/Policy	Who	When
1	Implement, monitor, and improve Subdivision Regulations that require a conservation-based approach to development, referencing and implementing the 2016 Natural Resource Inventory	General Goal #1 – Policy 2 General Goal #2 – Policies 1 & 2 General Goal #3 – Policies 1 & 2 Natural Resources Goal #1 - Policies 3, 4, & 5 Natural Resource Goal #3 – Policies 1, 4, & 5 Natural Resources Goal #6 - Policy 7 Land Use Goal #1 - Policy 3 Land Use Goal #2 - Policy 1 Land Use Goal #3 - Policy 1	Plan Commission, Town Board	Ongoing
2	Meet regularly with St. Croix County Community Development staff to ensure the Town's goals and expectations are consistent with St. Croix County's policies, standards, and ordinances that apply within the Town	General Goal #1 - Policy 2 General Goal #3 - Policies 1, 2, & 3 General Goal #5 – Policies 2, 3, & 4 Natural Resources Goal #2 – Policies 3 & 8 Natural Resources Goal #3 – Policy 6 Land Use Goal #2 - Policy 1 & 3	Plan Commission Chair and Town Board Chair and/or	Twice yearly, ongoing

	Action Step	Related Goal/Policy	Who	When
		Land Use Goal #3 - Policy 2 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #1 – Policies 1 & 3	selected members	
3	Create recommendations and an information package to communicate to Town residents, related to the 2016 Natural Resource Inventory, with recommendations on how best to preserve and protect natural resources in the community	General Goal #2 - Policy 1 & 2 General Goal #6 – Policy 2 Natural Resources Goal #2 - Policy 2 Natural Resources Goal #3 – Policies 1, 2, & 5 Natural Resources Goal #6 – Policy 7	Plan Commission	2028
4	Create recommendations and an information plan to communicate to Town residents, on how best to protect groundwater in the community	General Goal #4 - Policies 1, 2, 3, & 4 Natural Resources Goal #3 - Policies 1-4	Plan Commission	2029
5	Establish and support a Houlton Area Task Force to promote business and mixed use development in the Houlton area; contact potential businesses, developers, and housing builders; engage with current residents and property owners; and explore ways to capitalize on tourism and other visitors to the area as a result of the highway, interchange, and Loop Trail.	Goal #7 - Policies 1-4 Housing Goal #2 - Policies 1-5 Transportation Goal #1 - Policy 1 Transportation Goal #2 - Policy 2 Community Facilities Goal #5 - Policies 1 & 2 Natural Resources Goal #4 - Policy 2 Natural Resources Goal #5 - Policy 5 Economic Development Goal #1 - Policies 1 & 2 Economic Development Goal #2 - Policies 1-6 Economic Development Goal #3 - Policies 1-4 Economic Development Goal #3 - Policies 1-4 Land Use Goal #4 - Policies 1-4	Plan Commission, Town Board	2027, ongoing
6	Monitor and support development design standards that implement the Comprehensive Plan goals	General Goal #1 - Policy 2 General Goal #3 - Policies 1, 2, & 3 General Goal #7 - Policies 2, 3, & 4 Economic Development Goal #4 - Policy 1 Natural Resources Goal #5 - Policy 6 Land Use Goal #1 - Policy 2 Land Use Goal #4 - Policy 2	NRDC Committee, Plan Commission, Town Board	Ongoing
7	Establish a Town of St. Joseph Housing Task Force to research and make recommendations on	Housing Goal #1 - Policy 1 Housing Goal #3 - Policies 1 & 2	Plan Commission	2029, ongoing

	Action Step	Related Goal/Policy	Who	When
	housing maintenance and rehabilitation, including potential funding sources	Economic Development Goal #2 - Policy 5		
8	Contact the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) to research State and Federal funding opportunities for housing-related programs	Housing Goal #1 - Policies 2, 3, & 4 Housing Goal #3 - Policy 2	Plan Commission	annually
9	Review the Comprehensive Plan annually to assess how the plans and policies have been implemented, and to determine if changes need to be made	General Goal #1 - Policy 3	Plan Commission	Annually

Amending the Comprehensive Plan

To keep the Comprehensive Plan current, it will be necessary to make amendments from time to time. However, as the foundational document guiding development, most amendments should occur through a comprehensive effort to address changes to the community over time.

When required, amendments to this plan shall follow the process established in s. 66.1001 of Wisconsin State Statutes, as it may be amended. The Town Board shall have a large amount of discretion in amending this plan and should consider, at minimum:

1. The specific policies and provisions of the Town's adopted Comprehensive Plan, including public facilities and capital improvement plans.
2. Whether the proposed action meets the purpose and intent of the Policies and Goals established in the Comprehensive Plan, or in the case of a map amendment, it meets the purpose and intent of the Future Land Use map and descriptions of the uses found in Chapter 9: Land Use Element.

2. GOALS AND POLICIES

This Plan has resulted in the development of numerous goals and policies, outlined in Chapters 2 through 9. All goals and policies are included here, listed by chapter, for reference for the implementation plan above.

General Goals

General Goal #1: Enhance and maintain the rural character of the Town while providing opportunities to maintain and enhance St. Joseph as a unique and desirable place to live, learn, work, and recreate.

Policies:

1. Promote the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan that effectively and efficiently plans for land use, community facilities, transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental protection.
2. Formulate and enforce ordinances to ensure development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Review and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to ensure its usefulness as a practical guide for current and future development. Adhere to this Plan, which shall guide zoning changes, as closely as possible to ensure consistent development policy.

General Goal #2: Maintain and enhance the natural landscape by encouraging special consideration for places of natural significance in the Town.

Policies:

1. Preserve and protect key natural resources as identified through the natural resources inventory.
2. Provide incentives to developers and landowners to protect important natural resource areas.
3. Preserve and protect Bass Lake and Perch Lake by implementation and periodic updates to their respective Lake Management Plans.

General Goal #3: Encourage development that supports and enhances the Town's Vision.

Policies:

1. Update and refine current ordinances to be consistent with the goals set forth in this Plan.
2. Create and develop land use tools that promote development that is creative, unique, and consistent with the vision of the Town.
3. Maintain and utilize design and architectural standards that support and guide future development.

General Goal #4: Protect groundwater supplies and surface water to assure high quality groundwater for all residents.

Policies:

1. Encourage and promote improvements in monitoring of all private wells and private septic systems in the Town to assure the highest standards are being maintained.

2. Encourage and promote improvements in monitoring of all waste disposal and management systems and practices to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
3. Develop and implement a stormwater management plan and best practices to guide future development.
4. Encourage, promote, and implement the Lake Management Plans for Bass Lake and Perch Lake in the Town of St. Joseph.

General Goal #5: Support strong, ongoing working relationships between the Town of St. Joseph and surrounding cities, towns, St. Croix County, and other jurisdictions in matters related to planning and the provision of public services.

Policies:

1. Continue to discuss and identify potential intergovernmental relationships that help promote efficient services to the Town and adjacent jurisdictions.
2. Pursue new collaborative planning efforts among local governments and organizations to address existing issues and new issues as they arise with regard to land use, transportation, parks, natural resources, delivery of services, and other areas of mutual concern.
3. Promote information sharing between the Town of St. Joseph and surrounding towns, cities, and the county, and encourage them to participate in local issues.
4. Maintain communications, and collaborate where appropriate, with St. Croix County and state agencies involved in planning issues that affect the Town and region.

General Goal #6: Promote community input, information sharing, and collaboration.

Policies:

1. Actively encourage and utilize resident participation in the local decision-making process.
2. Continue to improve and enhance communication among the Town, residents, businesses, civic groups, and public agencies utilizing various media such as a Town newsletter, internet access, and a community web page.

General Goal #7: Encourage the creation of a Houlton town center that preserves and enhances the small-town, quaint atmosphere the Town values.

Policies:

1. Create a Houlton Town Center plan that identifies the types of businesses that the Town would like to support.
2. Encourage and support a compact development pattern in the Houlton Town Center to support a mix of residential, small retail, and businesses.
3. Encourage and support plans to improve accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles on existing roads within Houlton.

General Goal #8: Encourage a Burkhardt mixed-use area which will provide increased business opportunities.

Policies:

1. Maintain the Rural Residential for residences on Old Mill Road, except for current commercial area.
2. Encourage multiuse zoning for Scott Road parcels from Co Rd A to the Town Line.
3. Maintain Burkhardt as a distinct area with alternative businesses and structures.
4. Work with the State of Wisconsin and St. Croix County to address shared issues of concern including parking and access to facilities and services in Burkhardt from the Willow River State Park.

Housing Goals

Housing Goal #1: Promote cooperative efforts and utilize existing resources to foster housing development within the Town.

Policies:

1. Continue to study housing needs and resources; and monitor and update goals as needed.
2. Work closely with federal, state, and local agencies and organizations that can help the Town meet its housing goals.
3. Encourage public and private partnerships to expand affordable housing and housing rehabilitation opportunities in the Town.
4. Explore county-wide and other intergovernmental options to develop regional strategies and incentives to promote the expansion of affordable, workforce, rental, life cycle, and other housing opportunities.

Housing Goal #2: Promote a variety of housing types in the Town for citizens of all income levels, ages, abilities, and needs.

Policies:

1. Encourage the appropriate mix of a variety of housing types throughout the Town's growth areas in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.
2. Develop policies that allow neighborhoods with mixed housing types and/or other appropriate uses within residential areas.
3. Examine policies and other development standards to ensure they encourage the provision of affordable housing.
4. Encourage housing developments that serve unique populations including seniors, low income residents, and residents with physical disabilities.

Housing Goal #3: Encourage well-maintained residential neighborhoods.

Policies:

1. Develop and enforce the necessary codes to ensure the continued maintenance of the housing stock.
2. Identify or develop methods and funding options to encourage the rehabilitation or redevelopment of substandard housing.

Transportation Goals

Transportation Goal #1: Provide a safe, convenient, and efficient multi-modal transportation system that:

- Ensures transportation system improvements are coordinated with land development plans.
- Maintains a cost-effective level of service.
- Coordinates multi-jurisdictional transportation system improvements and maintenance.
- Plans for the extension of town roads and other arterials and collector streets as necessary to efficiently serve the users.
- Controls access through the road system to ensure the access, mobility, and safety of affected road systems.

Policies:

1. Plan for the extension of Town roads and other arterials and collectors in order to complete connections and provide for future planned development access.
2. Consider planning and implementing a network of interconnected new roads to control highway access, preserve rural character, improve access to new development, minimize extensive road construction, and decrease road maintenance costs.
3. Develop plans and new funding strategies for the regular structural maintenance of Town roads, including implementation of the WISLR Pavement Management program as required by WisDOT to provide for the upgrading and maintenance of Town roads.
4. Continue implementing Town road impact fees on any new building permit that places a burden on or requires the upgrading of subcollector roads.
5. Continue implementing Town road fees on new developments that place a burden on or require the upgrade of Town roads.
6. Continue posting weight restrictions on existing Town roads and consider the weight limits on local roads when reviewing development proposals.

Transportation Goal #2: Work to develop transportation system improvements for walking, hiking, biking, and other transportation modes.

Policies:

1. Develop a shared community vision for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and recreational opportunities and build capacity to fund these activities in addition to utilizing Park Impact Fees for this purpose.
2. Encourage the connection of the Town of St. Joseph residents, economic opportunities, and recreational destinations with the Loop Trail.
3. Encourage the connection to other recreational and trail facilities outside the Town of St. Joseph.
4. Support the efforts of the St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition.
5. Follow and update as warranted the 2023 Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan as it pertains to hiking, biking, and other transportation modes.
6. Follow and update as warranted the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan.
7. Support the implementation of the St. Croix County Parks and Recreation Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Community Facilities Goals

Community Facilities Goal #1: Enhance and maintain community facilities to provide meeting and gathering spaces for Town residents.

Policies:

1. Maintain and monitor community gathering and meeting spaces to ensure appropriate facilities are available to conduct Town business and other community building activities.

Community Facilities Goal #2: Maintain the educational quality and accessibility to the Town's residents.

Policies:

1. Work with the school districts to monitor and project the number of students entering the school systems to ensure the educational levels are maintained.
2. Encourage families and residents to actively participate in the schools to ensure quality educational opportunities are available to students.

Community Facilities Goal #3: Work with adjacent jurisdictions, the County and the State to ensure that services and utilities are being provided to residents in the most efficient and effective manner.

Policies:

1. Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to identify ways to provide services and utilities to residents in a way that is cost-effective and efficient.
2. Participate with intergovernmental groups to identify and monitor issues and concerns of residents and adjacent jurisdictions to ensure the adequacy of services and utilities in the area.

Community Facilities Goal #4: Maintain and enhance adequate park and recreational opportunities for residents that encourage an active and healthy lifestyle.

Policies:

1. Enhance and maintain current recreational facilities in the Town.
2. Work with the Town Parks Commission to ensure the development of interconnected trails and paths that allow Town residents to easily walk and bicycle throughout the Town safely.
3. Work with residents to identify and obtain park lands for current and future needs.
4. Cooperate with other governmental agencies for development of park property.
5. Work with Wisconsin DNR to identify potential park lands within Willow River State Park that might better function as active parkland in the area.
6. Encourage and promote the goals, objectives, and policies outlined in the Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan.
7. Pursue funding to design and construct bicycling and pedestrian facilities as identified in the 2023 Town of St. Joseph Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Natural Resources Goals

Natural Resources Goal #1: Agricultural Resources: Enhance and maintain the rural character of the Town of St. Joseph by encouraging the preservation of agricultural lands and uses.

Policies:

1. Create a land use category that preserves traditional agricultural practices on a limited scale in keeping with the agricultural and residential character of the community.

2. Encourage the development of ag-related and agritourism uses.

Natural Resources Goal #2: Improve and protect the quality of surface waters.

Policies:

1. Work in partnership with the County's Priority Watersheds Program and local lake protection efforts.
2. Support and review Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinances as needed to protect surface waters.
3. Develop and adopt a wetland protection and buffers ordinance that sets minimum buffer standards.
4. Use park and open space dedication to protect significant water resources and adjacent habitat areas.
5. Promote wetland and shoreland restoration by private landowners.
6. Educate residents and developers regarding Best Management Practices and state and local stormwater regulations.
7. Support the development and implementation of a County Stormwater Management Ordinance to complement the Town's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.
8. Support development designs that protect the quality of surface waters and other natural resources, and minimize development impacts.
9. Apply for DNR grants that support local efforts to control nonpoint source pollution.
10. Support the implementation and periodic updates to the Lake Management Plans for Bass Lake and Perch Lake.
11. Create a new ordinance for stormwater management to protect Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) Bass Lake and Perch Lake.

Natural Resources Goal #3: Encourage preservation and restoration of sensitive natural resource areas and wildlife habitat.

Policies:

1. Encourage public and private landowners and developers to restore native habitats and control invasive species.
2. Seek state and other funding for habitat protection and control of invasive species.
3. Incorporate natural resource areas in parks and open space areas.
4. Adopt incentives and regulations to protect environmental corridors and natural resource areas.
5. Work with other conservation agencies and organizations, both public and private, to further this goal.

Natural Resources Goal #4: Protect groundwater supplies and surface water to assure high quality groundwater for all residents.

Policies:

1. Encourage monitoring of all private wells and private septic systems in the Town to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
2. Encourage monitoring of all agricultural waste disposal and management systems and practices to assure the highest standards are being maintained.
3. Encourage enforcement of state rules regarding wellhead and groundwater protection.
4. Encourage protection of wetlands and other groundwater recharge areas.

Natural Resources Goal #5: Provide for future open space and recreation needs.

Policies:

1. Implement the Town's Outdoor Recreation Plans and, when possible, coordinate and support St. Croix County's Outdoor Recreation Plans.
2. Develop the proposed bicycle and pedestrian trail systems identified in the 2023 Outdoor Recreation Plan.
3. Review and update park dedication requirements and fees included in the Town's impact fees, and use these fees along with grants, land dedication and donation to develop the Town's park and bicycle/pedestrian trail system as growth occurs.

Natural Resources Goal #6: Preserve the character of the Town's landscape, and examples of native woodlands, prairies, and wetlands.

Policies:

1. Identify important views and implement subdivision and zoning ordinances to protect valued views and viewsheds.
2. Incorporate scenic areas and native habitats in parks and open space.
3. Encourage development of County regulations that protect the night sky.
4. Encourage development of St. Croix County telecommunications tower regulations that encourage towers that blend in with the landscape.
5. Implement landscaping standards for commercial development that support the Town's character.
6. Develop and use the tools identified in Chapter 10: Implementation Element to manage land use and natural resources for the long term.

Economic Development Goals

Economic Development Goal #1: Promote cooperative efforts and utilize existing resources for economic growth in the Town.

Policies:

1. Continue to identify and tap into local, state, and federal resources to enhance economic development.
2. Explore county-wide economic development coordination options.
3. Promote coordination of the educational system and the business community to ensure the availability of qualified workers.

Economic Development Goal #2: Promote economic stability and diversity that provides job opportunities to residents.

Policies:

1. Support efforts to retain existing businesses and facilitate their expansion.
2. Support efforts to recruit new businesses and industries in appropriate locations and scales.
3. Recognize the need to maintain, upgrade and expand existing infrastructure in the Town, including but not limited to roadways, parks/trails, utilities and telecommunications infrastructure, to support and promote continued economic development.
4. Target financial resources and programs to attract businesses that have an emphasis on job creation and businesses that meet or exceed livable wage requirements.
5. Encourage the availability of a range of housing types and values to accommodate an ample workforce.
6. Encourage adoption of new technologies and policies that support telecommuting.

Economic Development Goal #3: Promote efficient, planned commercial and light industrial development.

Policies:

1. Identify key commercial and light industrial development opportunities within the unincorporated hamlets and the Town's planned growth areas in locations with access to major transportation systems.
2. Encourage and facilitate infill development on vacant parcels to ensure maximum efficiency of land use.
3. Encourage compact commercial developments that will make efficient use of infrastructure and resources.
4. Encourage industrial and office/business commercial development to locate within master planned light industrial parks or business parks or at the Houlton Town Center.

Economic Development Goal #4: Enhance the character of the Town's commercial and light industrial development.

Policies:

1. Implement and monitor the use of architectural, design or other development standards such as landscaping, screening and other standards within the Town's commercial, business park, and industrial developments.
2. Support the provision of open/green space within commercial and industrial development.
3. Promote the rehabilitation and redevelopment of older existing commercial facilities by pursuing and making available various financial programs and assistance.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal #1: Work with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure that Intergovernmental Cooperation and activities are pursued.

Policies:

1. Participate with Intergovernmental groups to identify and monitor issues to find common ground to more effectively manage separate and diverse opportunities within the Town of St. Joseph with similar Best Management Practices.
2. Support and actively participate in the Highway 64 Corridor Trail Coalition, the St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Coalition, the Bass Lake Rehabilitation District, and the Sportsman's Alliance.
3. To work closely with St. Croix County, the Wisconsin DNR, and State staff.
4. Work with the three school districts that serve the Town of St. Joseph.

Land Use Goals

Land Use Goal #1: Promote and encourage a development pattern that is responsive to the Town Vision.

Policies:

1. Work with developers and landowners to encourage development that maintains a rural, small town character.
2. Develop and enforce community site planning/architectural standards that maintain the rural character in the Town.
3. Administer and promote design standards for the Preservation Residential guided land to create residential growth that considers and protects the Natural Resource Corridor and results of the NRI.

Land Use Goal #2: Encourage a diversity of land uses within the Town to provide business development, living, and recreational opportunities.

Policies:

1. Develop ordinances that support the new land use designations identified in this Plan.
2. Work with landowners to ensure that the land uses designated in the Plan are understood and accepted.
3. Work with adjacent towns and jurisdictions to ensure that land uses are consistent with neighboring communities.

Land Use Goal #3: Enhance and encourage the preservation of open spaces and agricultural lands to maintain the rural character.

Policies:

1. Implement and monitor land protection tools that support the preservation of important natural resources and agricultural lands.
2. Work with agencies, adjacent jurisdictions, the County, and state to identify ways to preserve open spaces in the most effective way.
3. Implement developer agreements that reflect the context of the project and the goals of the Town.

Land Use Goal #4: Develop and promote the Houlton Town Center which provides business, residential, and recreational opportunities.

Policies:

1. Create a Houlton Town Center Plan that responds to the business and residential needs of current and future residents.
2. Attract small business owners to the Houlton Town Center to maintain the rural, small town character of the Town.
3. Work to make the Houlton Town Center a destination with attractive businesses and structures.

Land Use Goal #5: Encourage a Burkhardt mixed-use area which will provide increased business opportunities.

Policies:

1. Maintain the Rural Residential for residences on Old Mill Road, except for current commercial area.
2. Encourage multiuse zoning for Scott Road parcels from Co Rd A to the Town Line.
3. Maintain Burkhardt as a distinct area with alternative businesses and structures.

Work with the State to address shared issues of concern including parking and access to facilities and services in Burkhardt from the Willow River State Park.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: RURAL CHARACTER MEMORANDUM

Memorandum

DATE: July 13, 2015

TO: Town of St. Joseph Plan Commission

FROM: Phil Carlson, AICP, Stantec

RE: St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan, Rural Character Discussion

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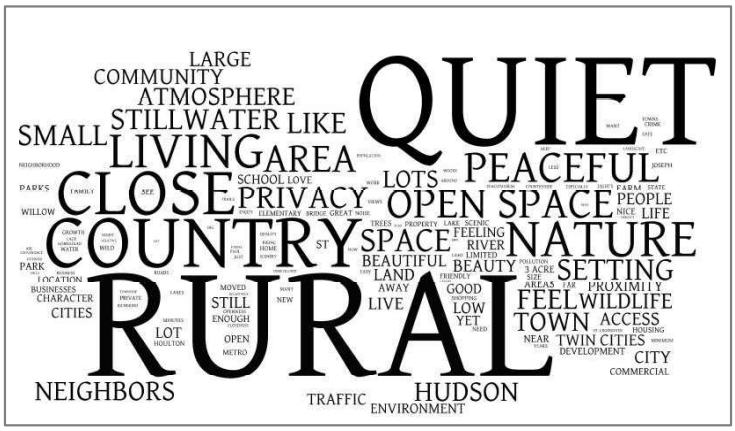
Introduction

One of the issues the Town agreed to discuss in the Comprehensive Plan Update is what is meant by "rural character". The issue was raised in part because the first goal in the 2006 Comp Plan is:

> *General Goal #1: Enhance and maintain the rural quality of the Town while providing opportunities to grow and develop into a unique and desirable place to live, learn, work, and recreate.*

The Plan Commission discussed the issue at their June 10, 2015 meeting, which included several resources:

- Selected Goals & Policies from the 2006 Comp Plan (see attached):
  - General Goals #1 and #2
  - Natural Resources Goal #5
  - Land Use Goals #1 and #3
- The Vision Statement from the 2006 Comp Plan (see attached).
- Summary of selected issues from the 2013 St. Joseph Planning Survey conducted by the Survey Research Center at UW-River Falls (see attached).
- The word cloud (at right) from the 2013 Planning Survey of the 150 most commonly used words among the 733 written responses to the question, "What do you like most about living in St. Joseph?".



Re: Rural Character Discussion

Discussion

After discussion of various issues and ideas, the Plan Commission assembled a list of the top ten qualities that make up rural character in St. Joseph:

1) *Groundwater.* This issue was placed first because it is so vital to basic living. It was noted that groundwater is invisible and that the Town's natural resources help protect groundwater.

2) Quiet. Including discussion of the lack of intrusive noise, such as traffic.

3) *Natural features.* Including vegetation and wildlife.

4) *Viewsheds*. Including lack of cell towers interrupting views.

5) *Farmland*.

6) *Limited, focused development in Houlton*.

7) *Lighting*. Including a generally dark sky at night and lack of intrusive street lights and other urban light sources.

8) *Signage*. Including a general lack of intrusive commercial signage.

9) *Architectural standards*.

10) *Parks, recreational and trails*.

GENERAL POLICY PLAN

The general policy plan identifies overarching goals for the community that helps define the characteristics and qualities of the Town. The General Policy Plan guided the specific goals presented in later chapters of this Plan. The General Goals are deliberately broad and are supported through the specific goals and policies developed in the Policy Plans of each chapter.

General Goal #1: Enhance and maintain the rural quality of the Town while providing opportunities to grow and develop into a unique and desirable place to live, learn, work, and recreate.

Policies:

1. Promote the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan that effectively and efficiently plans for land use, community facilities, transportation, housing, economic development and environmental protection for the Town of St. Joseph.
2. Formulate and enforce ordinances to ensure development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Review and amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to ensure its usefulness as a practical guide for current and future development. Adhere to this Plan, which shall guide all zoning changes, as closely as possible to ensure consistent development policy.

General Goal #2: Maintain and enhance the natural landscape by encouraging special consideration for places of natural significance in the town.

Policies:

1. Preserve and protect key natural resources as identified through the natural resources inventory.
2. Provide incentives to developers and land owners to protect important natural resource areas.

General Goal #3: Encourage unique and innovative development that supports and enhances the Town's Vision.

Policies:

1. Update and refine current ordinances to be consistent with the goals set forth in this Plan.
2. Create and develop land use tools that promote development that is creative, unique and consistent with the vision of the Town.
3. Work to develop design and architectural standards that support and guide future development.

Natural Resources Goal #4: Provide for future open space and recreation needs.

Policies

1. Develop the proposed parks and trail system for the Town.
2. Review and update park dedication requirements and fees included in the town's impact fees, and use these fees along with grants, land dedication and donation to develop the town's park and trail system as growth occurs.

Natural Resources Goal #5: Preserve the character of the Town's landscape, and examples of native woodlands, prairies, and wetlands.

Policies

1. Identify important views and implement subdivision and zoning ordinances to protect valued views and viewsheds.
2. Incorporate scenic areas and native habitats in parks and open space.
3. Develop and implement an outdoor lighting ordinance.
4. Develop and implement a wireless telecommunications tower ordinance.
5. Develop and implement a landscaping ordinance.
6. Revise the Town's sign ordinance.
7. Develop and use the tools identified in the Implementation Section to Manage land use and natural resources for the long term.

POLICY PLAN

The purpose of the land use policy plan is to develop a set of goals and policies that directly support how the Town would like to develop and use land in the future. The Town has the ability to shape and guide growth in the manner in which it prefers, and the subsequent goals and policies will help identify a way to encourage a development pattern that is consistent with the Town Vision.

Land Use Goal #1: Promote and encourage a development pattern that is responsive to the Town Vision.

Policies:

1. Work with developers and land owners to encourage development that responds to the rural, small town character.
2. Develop and enforce community site planning/architectural standards that are responsive to the rural character in the town.
3. Plan for residential growth that directly responds to the natural resource inventory.

Land Use Goal #2: Encourage a diversity of land uses within the Town to provide business development, living, and recreational opportunities in the Town.

Policies:

1. Develop ordinances that support the new land use designations identified in this Plan.
2. Work with land owners to ensure that the land uses designated in the plan are understood and accepted.
3. Work with adjacent Towns and jurisdictions to ensure that land uses are consistent with neighboring communities.

Land Use Goal #3: Enhance and encourage the preservation of open spaces and agricultural lands to maintain the rural character.

Policies:

1. Create land protection tools that support the preservation of important natural resources and agricultural lands.
2. Work with agencies, adjacent jurisdictions, the county, and state to identify ways to preserve open spaces in the most effective way.

TOWN VISION

(From 2006 Town of St. Joseph Comprehensive Plan)

The Town Vision is one that encompasses several central themes and ideas that were generated during the first community kick-off forum. There were several central ideas that became the core of the discussion at the initial kick-off meeting and survey of visual preferences. The following vision for the Town was developed in response to these central issues. This vision is meant to help define subsequent goals and policies defined throughout this plan.

The Town of St. Joseph shall be…

A Place Where Natural Resources are Preserved

The Town of St. Joseph prepared an extensive natural resources inventory to understand and identify the significant natural resource areas in the Town. The Town is blessed with beautiful natural resources including the St. Croix River, various streams and rivers, woodlands, and rolling topography. The abundance of natural resources makes the Town a unique place to live, and these resources should be maintained to preserve the rural quality of the Town.

A Place Where Development is Compatible with the Environment

The residents understand that there is likely to be growth in Town. The current residents are dedicated to maintaining the current natural and rural quality of the Town. The environmental quality of the Town is a part of what makes the Town desirable, and all growth and development should consider and respond to existing natural resources and topography.

A Place with an Accessible Village Center

The Town currently has two small unincorporated hamlets at Houlton and Burkhardt, which provide minimal services to the Town. In the future, the Town would like to develop small business opportunities that could support a small village center. This area would be walkable to encourage connectivity between adjacent homes and the village center. The village center will include various educational opportunities, small retail and service businesses, life-cycle housing options, and some parks and open spaces. This area would contribute to the quaint small town atmosphere the residents currently enjoy.

A Place that is Aesthetically Pleasing

Development should not only be sensitive to the natural surroundings, but also consider the impact it has visually on the character of the community. The community would like to improve the quality of development through consistent guidelines that address building materials, signage and scale, placement of public art, landscaping and vegetation, and attractive and harmonious streetscapes that support the community vision.

A Place that Residents Can Live, Work and Recreate

The Town would like to encourage a community that is sustainable and provides opportunities to live, work, and recreate within the community. The Town should provide basic service to its residents and should expand opportunities in the town to meet the needs of the current and future residents.

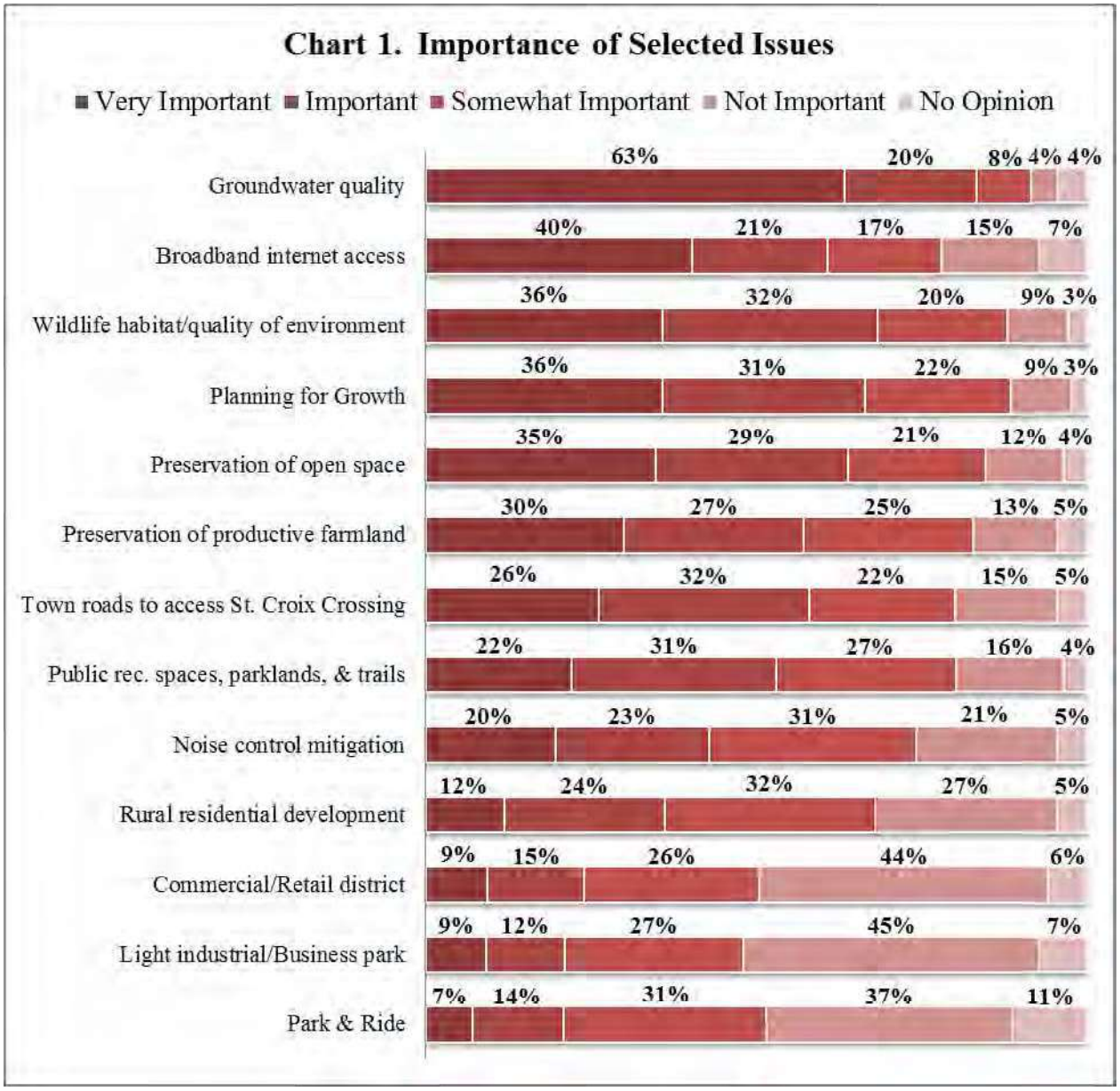
A Place of Recreational Opportunities

The Town has the opportunity to provide and plan for passive and active recreational areas within the Town. There are several areas that have been identified as preferred locations to provide park and recreational facilities to its residents. The Town would like to enhance active and passive park lands to meet the needs of existing and future residents.

Issues and Opportunities

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of 13 issues and whether they would support a tax increase to address each of the listed issues. Chart 1 summarizes the importance ratings on a scale of very important to not important plus an option for those with no opinion.

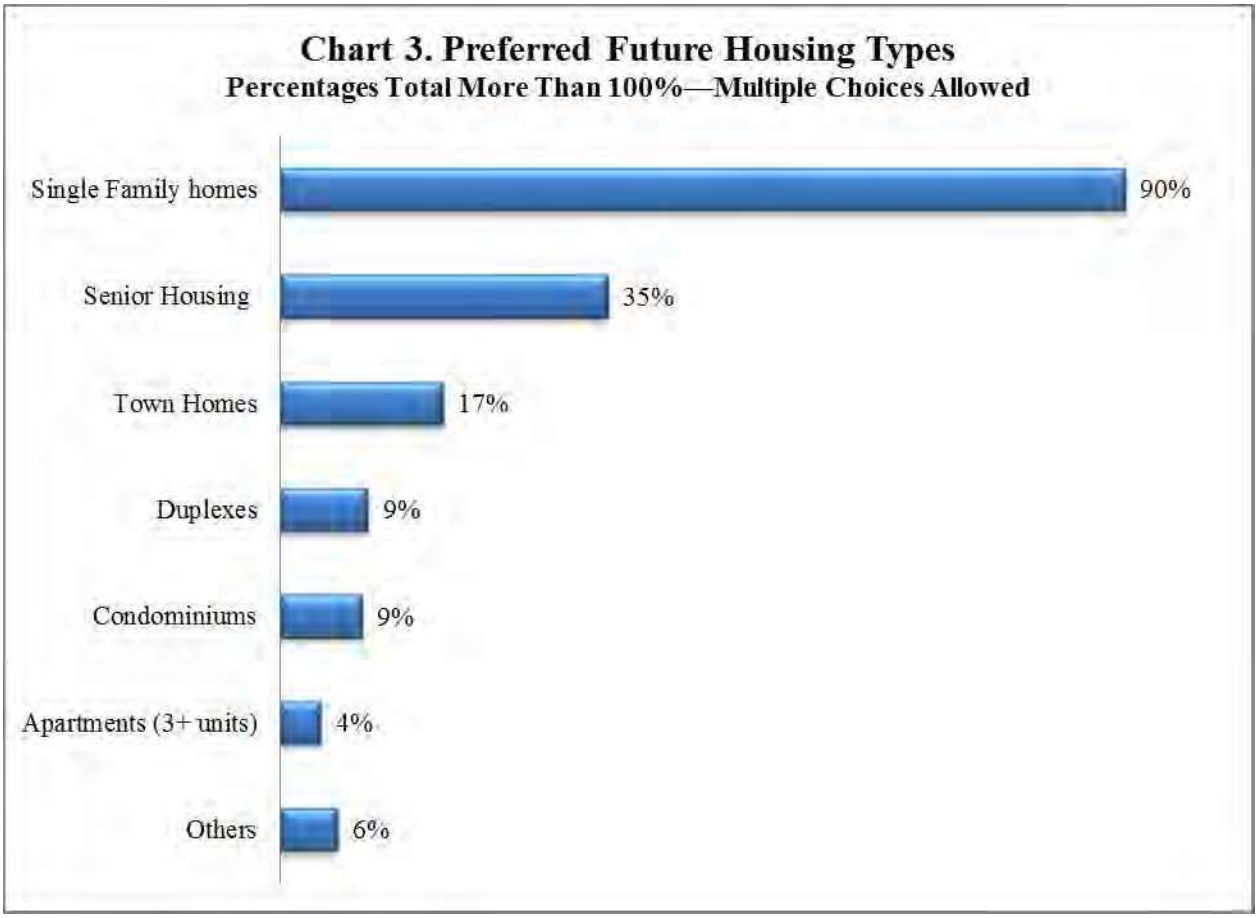
Groundwater quality stood out at the top of the importance ratings, with four in five respondents saying it is very important (63%) or important (20%). Since groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for Town residents, this result is not surprising. Broadband internet access placed second in the ratings. About 40% of respondents rated it as very important, and an additional 21% said it is important.



Housing

When asked for the types of housing that they would like to see encouraged in the Town, Chart 3 shows that respondents only favored single-family homes (90%). Senior housing came in a distant second with 35%. Multi-family housing types were substantially lower among the respondents' preferences, ranging from 17% for townhomes to 3% for apartment buildings with 3 or more units.

Among the written comments in the "other" category the most common themes were to keep large lot sizes for single-family homes and to oppose additional housing development.



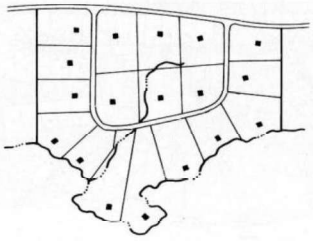
Demographic comparisons. Not surprisingly, a much larger proportion of respondents age 45 and above said they favor senior housing (41%) compared to younger respondents (12%). Over half of renters supported additional senior housing.

Respondents were asked to indicate their design preferences for rural housing developments. Two options were presented. The first design was for traditional rural housing development on large individual lots. The second option was for open-space design with smaller individual lots in which the remaining area is held as shared open space.

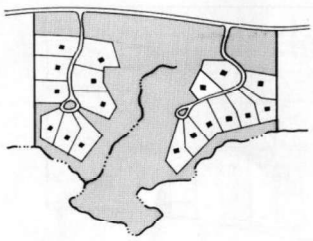
As shown in Figure 1 below, respondents were evenly split in their preference. The SRC has asked a similar question in nearly 100 other surveys. About two-thirds of respondents in those surveys favor the open-space design. So, the result for St. Joseph Town is somewhat anomalous.

Figure 1. Preference for Rural Subdivision Design

51% Conventional



49% Open-space

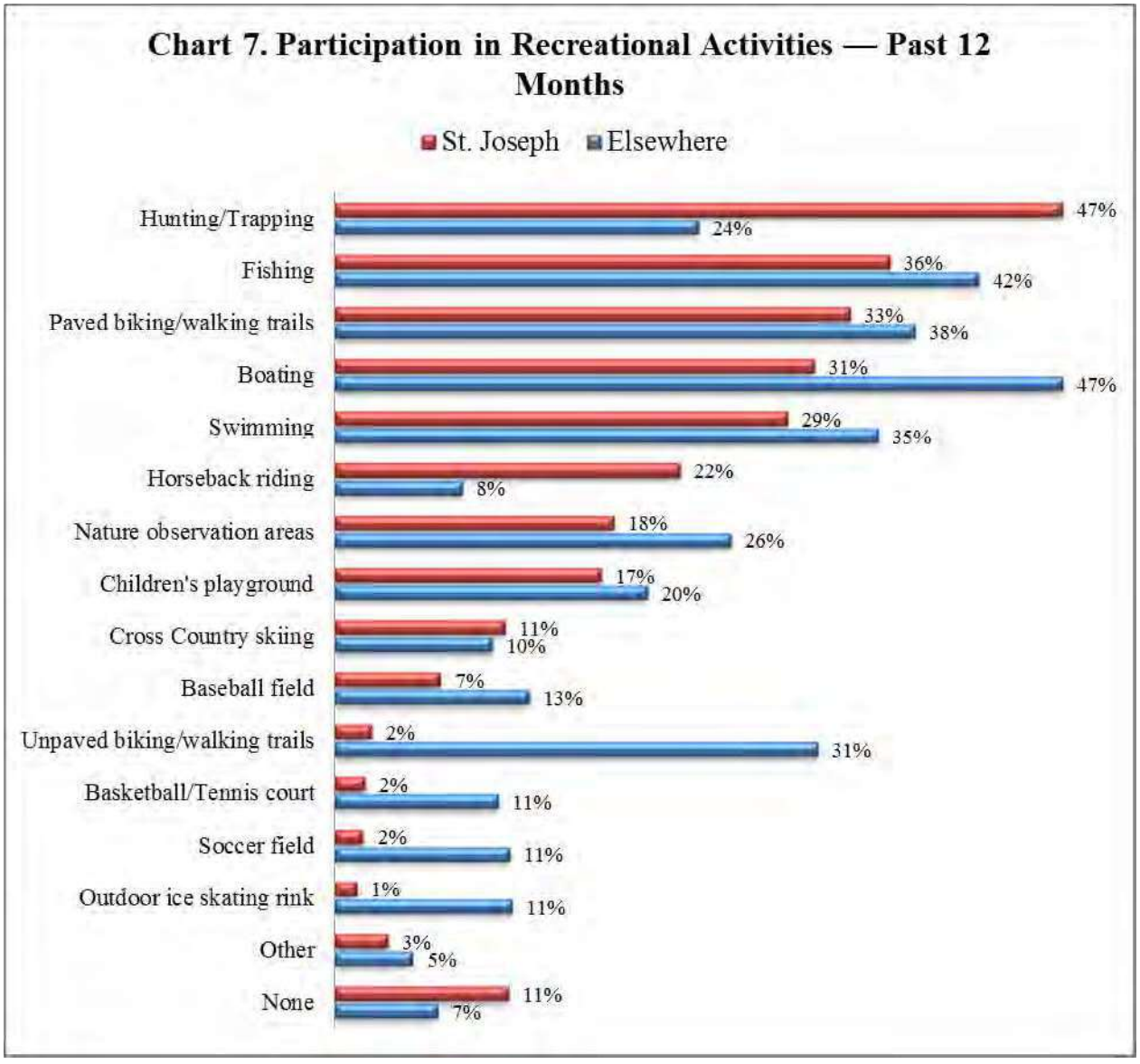


Demographic comparisons. Compared to respondents from the other three ZIP codes, respondents from the New Richmond ZIP code (54017) favored the open space subdivision design. Eight in ten respondents from 54017 chose the open space design, while 48% to 58% of respondents from other ZIP codes favored the open space design.

Respondents were next asked a similar question that focused on the types of recreational activities in which they or family members had participated in the past 12 months. Results are shown in Chart 7. Fourteen activities were listed and respondents were asked to indicate whether any family members had participated within St. Joseph (top bar) or at a location outside of St. Joseph (bottom bar).

With respect to activities within St. Joseph, hunting/trapping was the top ranked activity with 47% participation. About a third of respondents said a member of their family had participated in fishing (36%), biking/walking on paved trails (33%), boating (31%), and swimming (29%).

About one on five participated in horseback riding, nature observation trails, and children's playgrounds. Participation rates within St. Joseph were lower for cross-country skiing, baseball, biking/walking on unpaved trails, basketball, tennis, soccer, and outdoor ice skating.



With respect to recreational activities outside of St. Joseph, boating was the most popular (47%) followed closely by fishing (42%). About a third of respondents particpated in biking/walking on paved trails (38%), swimming (35%), and biking/walking on unpaved trails (31%).

Among the written comments in the "other" category, the most frequent activiteis were snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

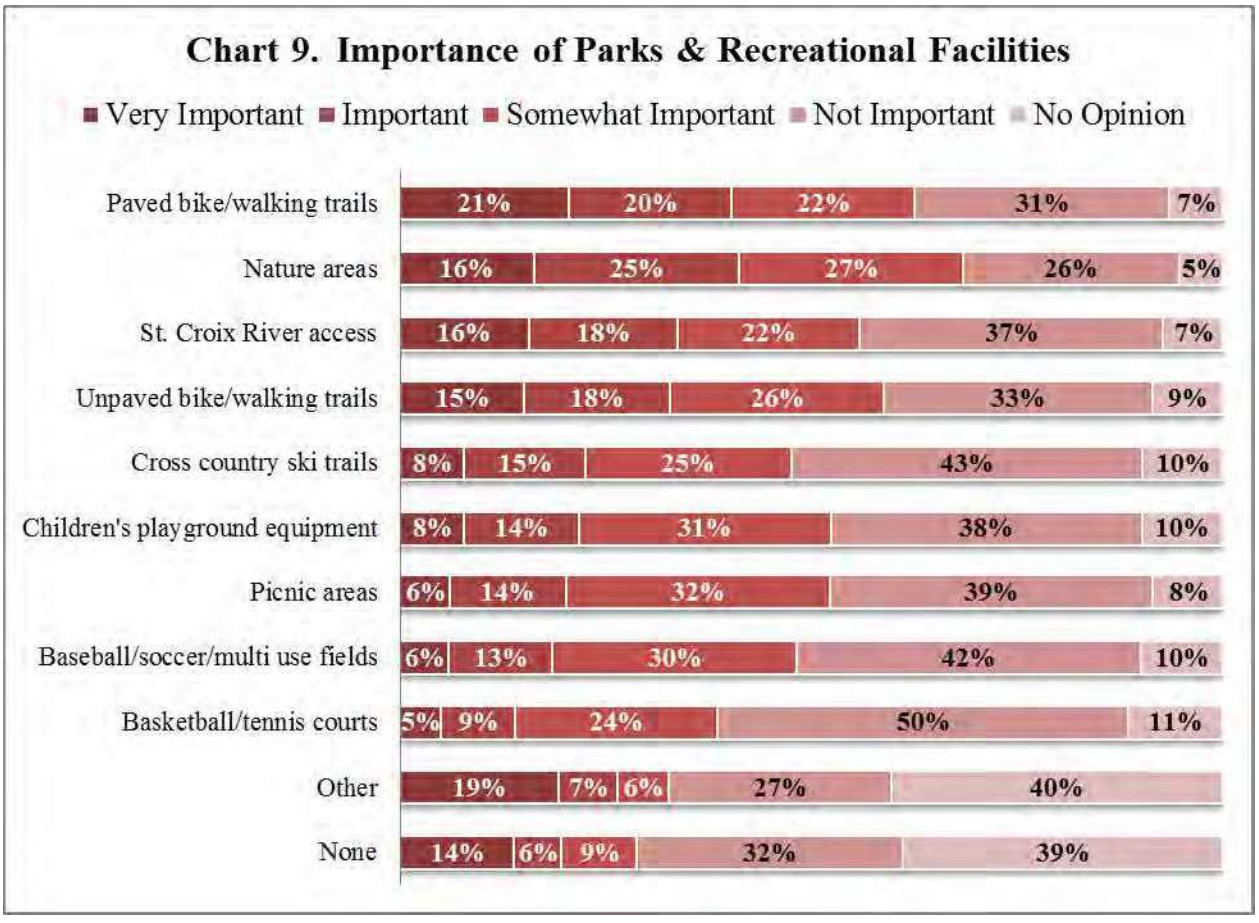
Demographic comparisons. Respondents under age 45 were more likely to participate in swimming outside of the Town (50%) than older respondents (34%). Slightly over half of respondents under age 45 have gone fishing outside of St. Joseph compared to 42% of respondents age 45 and older. About four in ten of younger respondents have used a playground both in the Town and elsewhere compared to about 14% of older respondents.

Over half of households with children have participated in swimming in St. Joseph in the past 12 months compared to 29% of respondents from households without children. Households with children were more likely to have used a children's playground within St. Joseph (34%) compared to households without children (12%). Similarly, 40% of households with children have used a children's playground outside of St. Joseph compared to 13% of households without children.

Respondents were next asked to rate the importance of nine types of parks and recreational facilities in St. Joseph. Answer choices were on a scale from very important to not important, plus no opinion. As shown in Chart 9, parks and recreational facilities tended to be viewed as somewhat important or not important, and none of the listed facilities were rated as important or very important by a majority of residents. The highest importance ratings were given to paved walking and biking trails (21% very important and 20% important) and to nature areas (16% very important and 25% important).

At least two-thirds of respondents said the following facilities were only somewhat important or not important: cross-country ski trails, children's playground equipment, picnic areas, baseball/soccer fields, and basketball/tennis courts. Twenty percent of respondents said no parks and recreational facilities are important or very important.

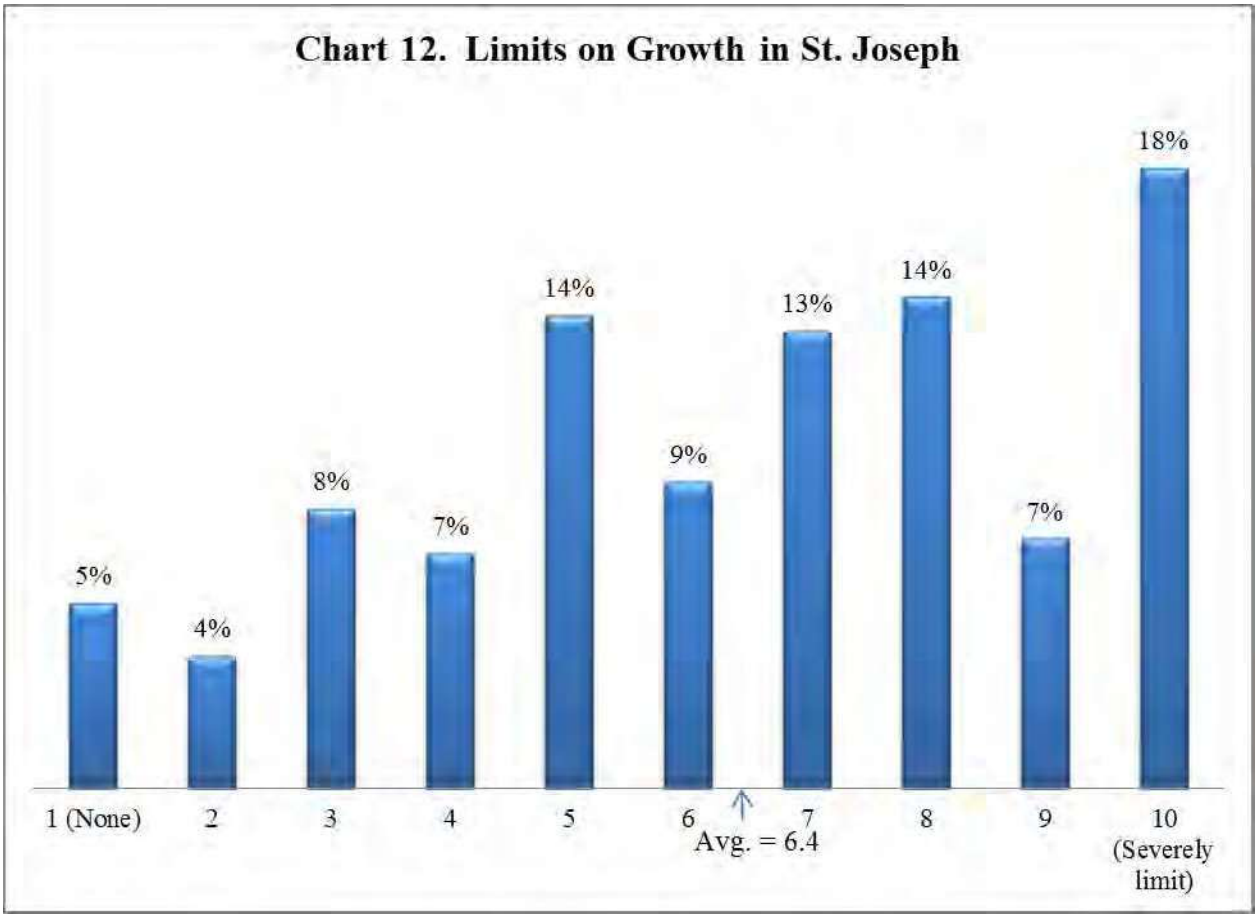
Among the written entries in the "other" category, the most frequently mentioned were horseback riding and snowmobile trails. Importance ratings were relatively low for the handwritten entries (26% important or very important).



Demographic comparisons. Majorities of farmland owners ranging from 56% (nature areas) to 67% (St. Croix River access) rated all the facilities in this question as not important. The combined average of the other groups who said these facilities are not important was between 30% and 41%. Non-resident respondents were more likely to have no opinion about children's palyground equipment, baseball/soccer multi-use fields, and basketball/tennis courts.

Economic Development

Respondents were asked to use a 10-point scale to indicate the degree to which they believe the Town should place limits on growth and development in St. Joseph. The results in are shown in Chart 12 (1=no limits on growth; 10=severe limits on growth). Although the largest percentage (18%) for any single score was for the severe limits ("10" category), the overall average was 6.4. Taken as a whole, respondents said they favored more limits than fewer limits, but not dramatically so.

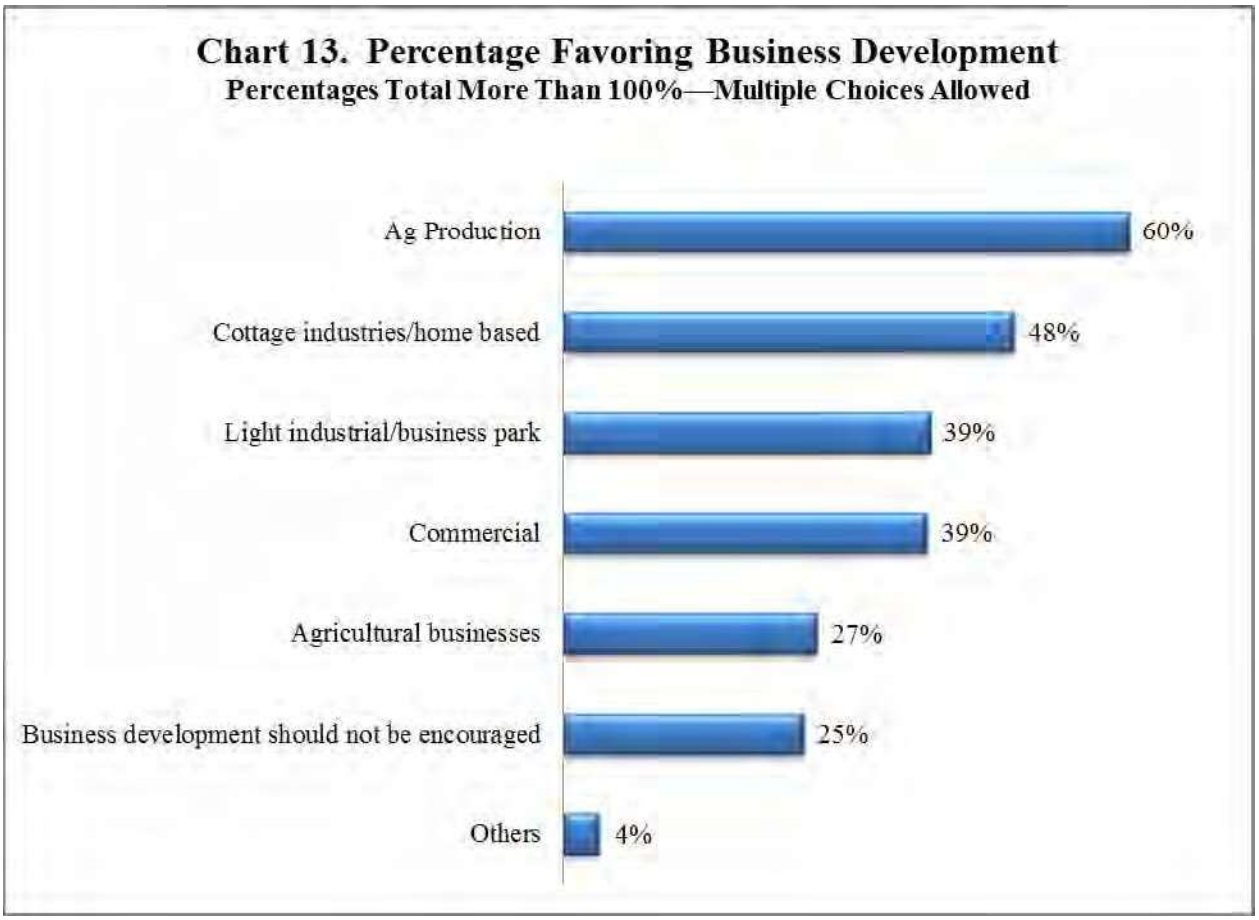


Demographic comparisons. Farmland owners were slightly more likely to prefer fewer limits on growth in the Town. Their average was 5.5, which is at the mid-point on the 10-point scale, and lower than the overall 6.4 average.

The questionnaire listed five types of businesses, and respondents were asked which types the Town Board should support (multiple choices were allowed) or if business development should not be encouraged. The results in Chart 13 show that agricultural production was the only type of business favored by a majority of respondents (60%). About half (48%) said cottage industries and home based businesses should be supported by the Town Board.

Four in ten respondents favored a light industry/business park and commercial development. Agricultural businesses (e.g., farm equipment, food processing) were favored by 27% of respondents. A quarter of respondents said no type of business development should be encouraged in St. Joseph.

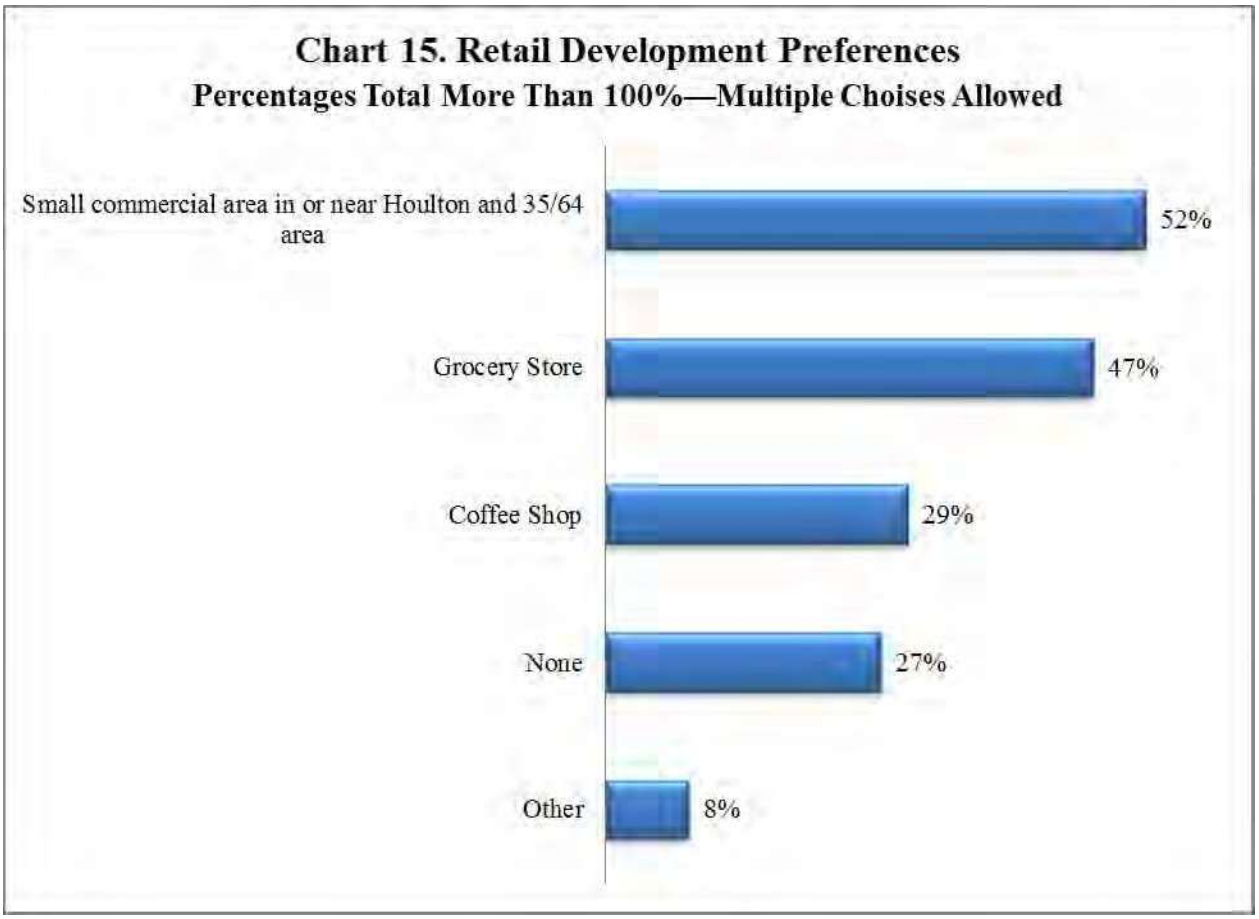
Among the written comment in the "other" category, the most frequent were for a grocery store or to oppose any additional commercial development.



Demographic comparisons. Respondents age 45 and older were more likely to favor light industry/business park (42%) compared to those under age 45 (27%). Respondents from ZIP code 54017 (56%) and ZIP code 54025 (50%) were more likely to favor light industrial/business park development than those from 54016 (36%) or 54082 (37%). Forty-one percent of farmland owners included agricultural businesses among their choices, while only 7% of non-resident respondents included agricultural businesses among their choices.

Asked specifically about retail development, Chart 15 indicates about half of respondents favored a small commercial area in or near Houlton (52%) or a grocery store (47%). A coffee shop was chosen by only 29% of respndents. Among the responses in the "other" category, the most frequent were a gas station/convenience store and a restaurant.

At the same time, 27% of respondents said they would not favor any commercial development in the Town.



Demographic comparisons. A majority of men (56%) said they would like to see a small commercial area in or near Houlton and the Highway 35/64 area compared to 47% of women. A majority of respondents under age 45 (57%) favor a grocery store compared to 47% of older respondents. Support for a coffee shop was also stronger among younger respondents (40%) compared to 27% among older respondents.

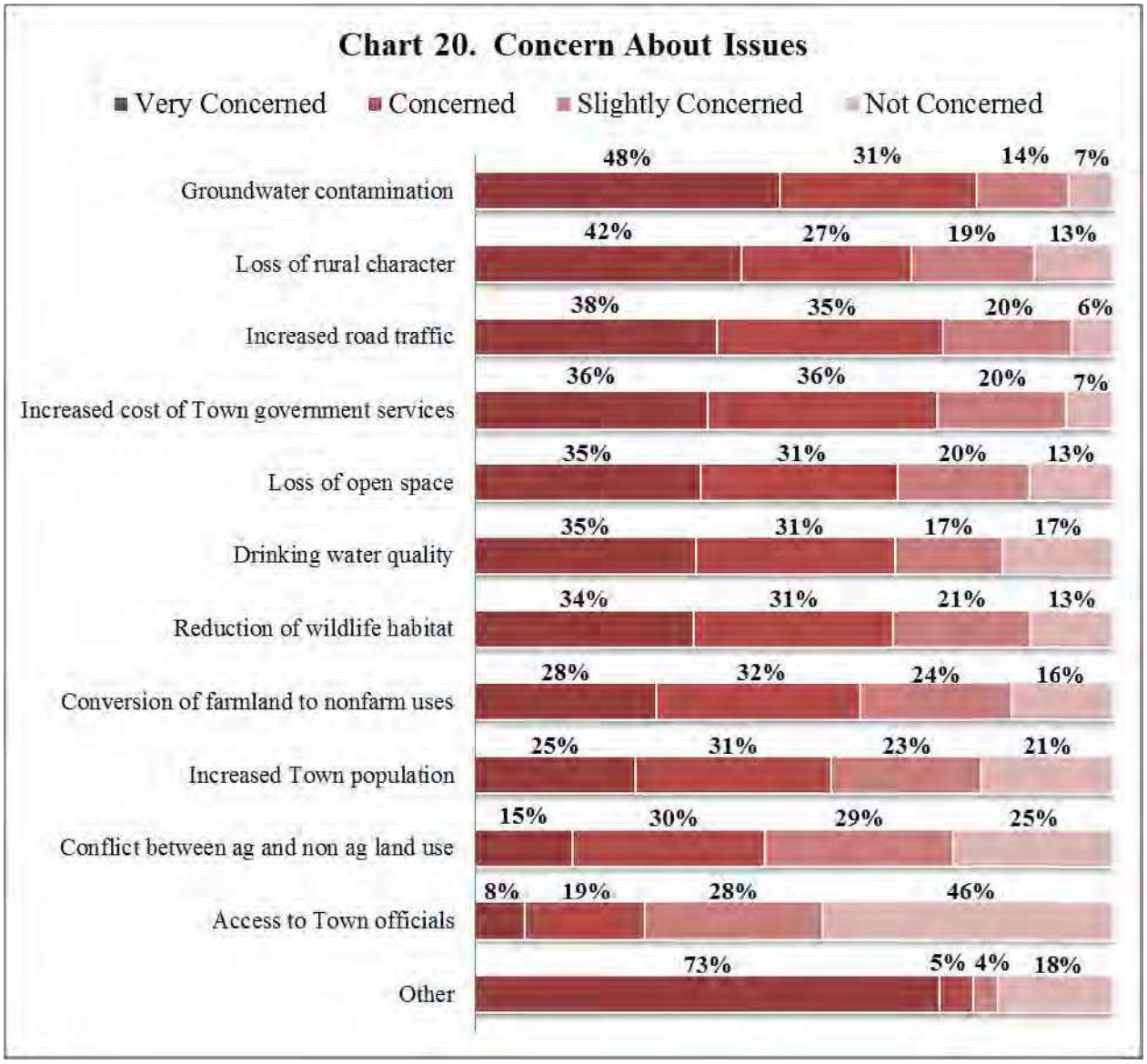
A grocery store was more strongly favored by respondents from ZIP code 54082 (53%) and 54016 (48%) compared to respondents from 54017 (40%) and 54025 (32%). Fifty-five percent of Houlton respondents favored a grocery store compared to 46% of non-Houlton respondents.

Houlton respondents were less supportive of a small commercial area near Houlton and the Highway 35/64 area than were respondents from outside Houlton. While 55% of non-Houlton respondents said yes, only 42% of Houlton respondents said yes.

Respondents were next asked their level of concern about 11 issues in St. Joseph on a four-point scale of very concerned to not concerned. As shown in Chart 20, at least half of the respondents said they are concerned or very concerned about nine of the 11 issues listed. The top concern is groundwater contaminiation, with more than eight in ten respondents saying they are concerned or very concerned. Majorities between 65% and 73% said they are concerned or very concerned about loss of rural character, increased road traffic, increased cost of Town government services, loss of open space, and reduction of wildlife habitat.

On the other end of the spectrum, three-fourths of respondents said they are slightly concerned or not concerned about access to Town officials.

Among the written responses in the "other" category, the most frequent were internet access and taxes. Among all the handwritten issues, 73% of respondents said they are very concerned. Not surprisingly, 73% said they were very concerned about the other issues.



The survey contained two open-ended questions for respondents to indicate what they like *most* about living in St. Joseph and what they like *least* about living in St. Joseph.

With respect to what they like *most* about St. Joseph, 733 respondents provided written comments. Nearly all comments related to a single common theme centered on the rural character of the Town of St. Joseph. Over 90% of the individual comments contained words and phrases associated with this theme, including rural, quiet/quietness, space/open space, country, peace/peaceful, nature/natural and private/privacy. The frequency distribution of the most frequent words and phrases is shown in Table 2. A single comment sometimes contained more than one word or phrase related to the common theme.

Table 2 also shows that 16% of the comments contained the words close or proximity. These words were often used in the context of nearness to the amenities of larger places such as Stillwater, Hudson, and the Twin Cities.

The following quotes are examples of these this theme:

"Rural, quiet, out in the country"

"Convenience of the country, but close to the city"

"The peace and quiet of a rural setting."

"The mix of open spaces and larger lot sizes"

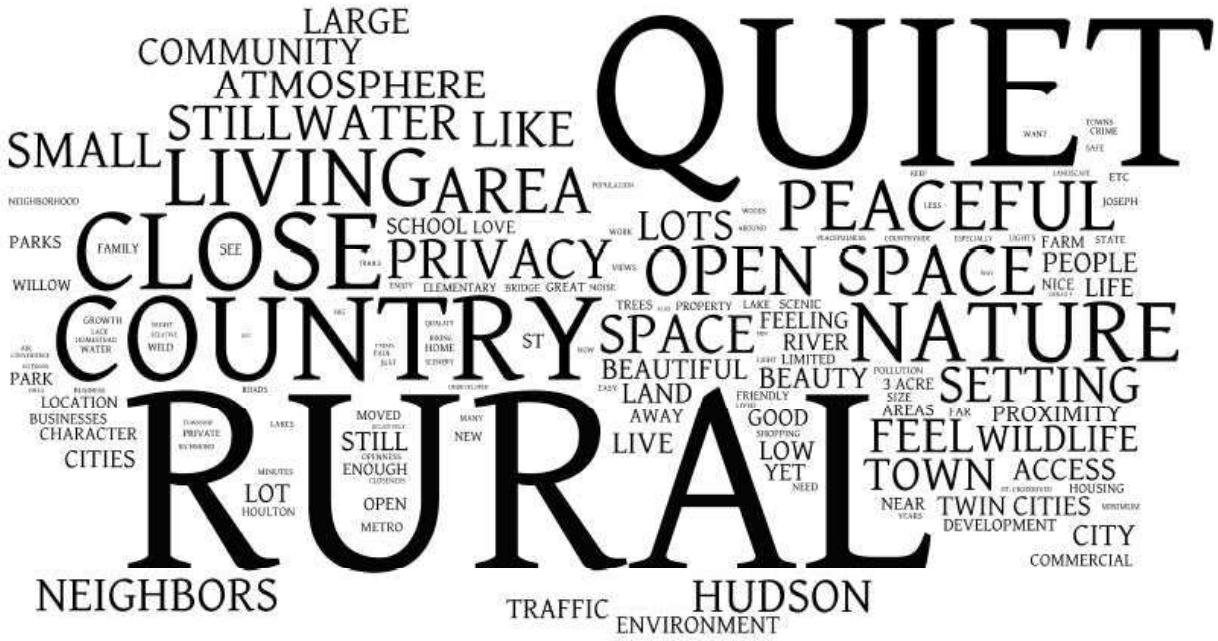
"We love the quiet country setting away from the pressures associated with overpopulation"

Table 2. What respondents <u>most</u> like about living in the Town of St. Joseph – Common Descriptors

Word	Count	%
Rural	232	32%
Quiet/Quietness	204	28%
Space/Open Space	137	19%
Close/Proximity	120	16%
Country	114	16%
Peace/Peaceful	71	10%
Nature/Natural	76	10%
Private/Privacy	60	8%

Figure 2 is a word cloud of the 150 most commonly used words among the 733 written responses to this question. (A word cloud is a visual representation in which the font size of the word or phrase is proportional to its frequency in the text). The words rural, quiet, country, close, nature, open space, and peaceful stand out in this word cloud and confirm degree to which respondents like St. Joseph because of the attributes associated with living in the country.

Figure 2. Word Cloud: What Respondents Most Like About Living in St. Joseph



Conclusions

Respondents said they like St. Joseph because of the rural character but are particularly concerned or very concerned about the loss of rural character and loss of open space. They place importance on factors associated with maintaining the country atmosphere they value, including groundwater quality, maintaining environmental quality, preservation of open space, and preservation of productive farmland. A majority said it is important or very important to plan for growth.

Respondents expressed a cautious view about additional business and economic development in the Town. They want any commercial/retail development restricted to designated areas.

The largest percentage of respondents generally do not support tax increases to address issues. However, there often was a substantial proportion of respondents who said they are not sure about tax increases, which suggests their opinion depends on the particular circumstances.

Although a majority of responding households participate in some form of outdoor recreational activity, a majority of respondents rated recreational facilitites or parks as somewhat important or not important rather than important or very important. Again, the majority do not support tax increases for expenditures on recreation.

Solid majorities believe that Town services are generally good or excellent, though many lack first-hand experience and, hence, an opinion about the quality of many Town services.

Broadband internet access is a concern for many respondents.

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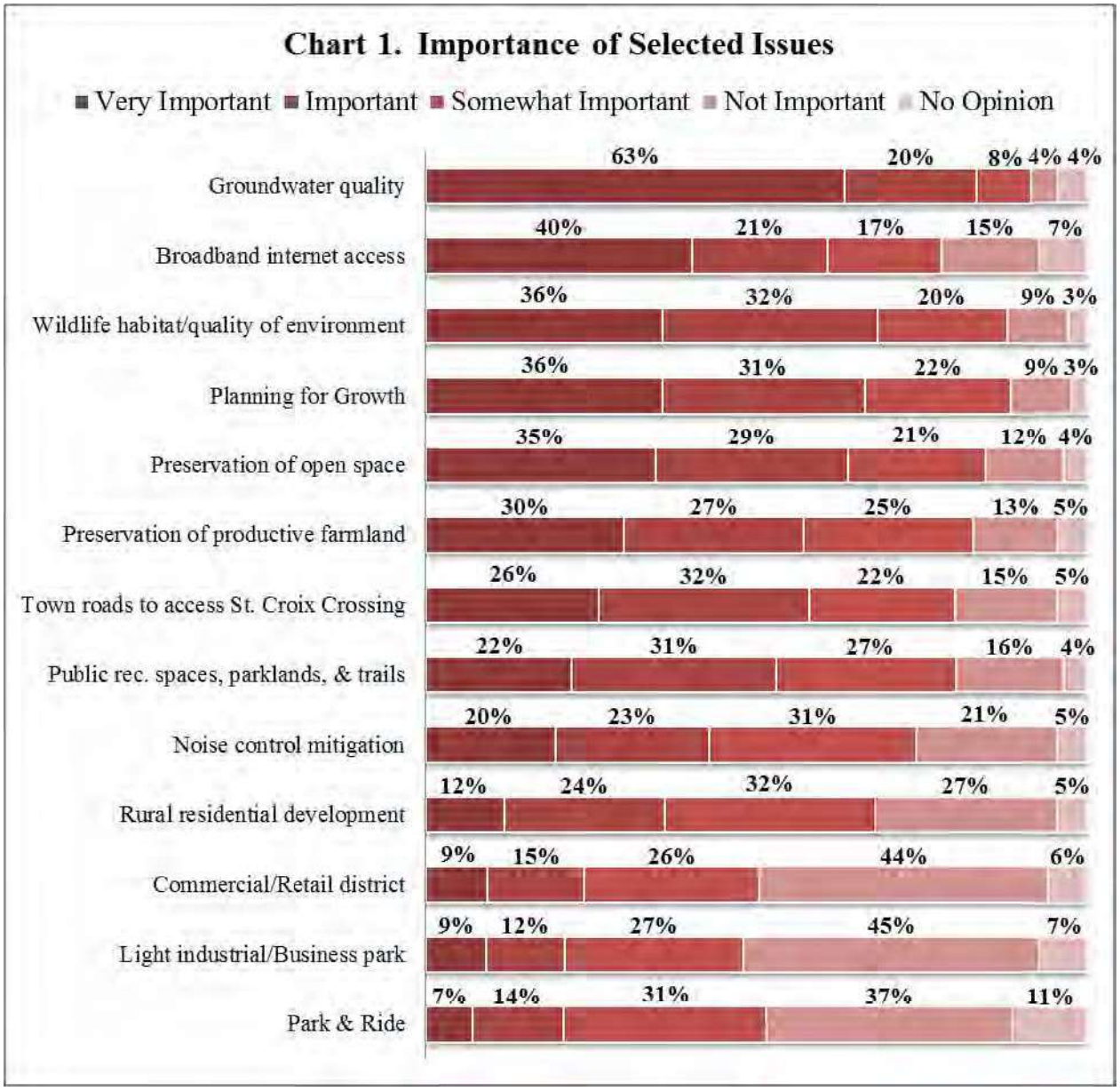
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APPENDIX B: ST. JOSEPH PLANNING SURVEY, 2013 EXCERPTS

Issues and Opportunities

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of 13 issues and whether they would support a tax increase to address each of the listed issues. Chart 1 summarizes the importance ratings on a scale of very important to not important plus an option for those with no opinion.

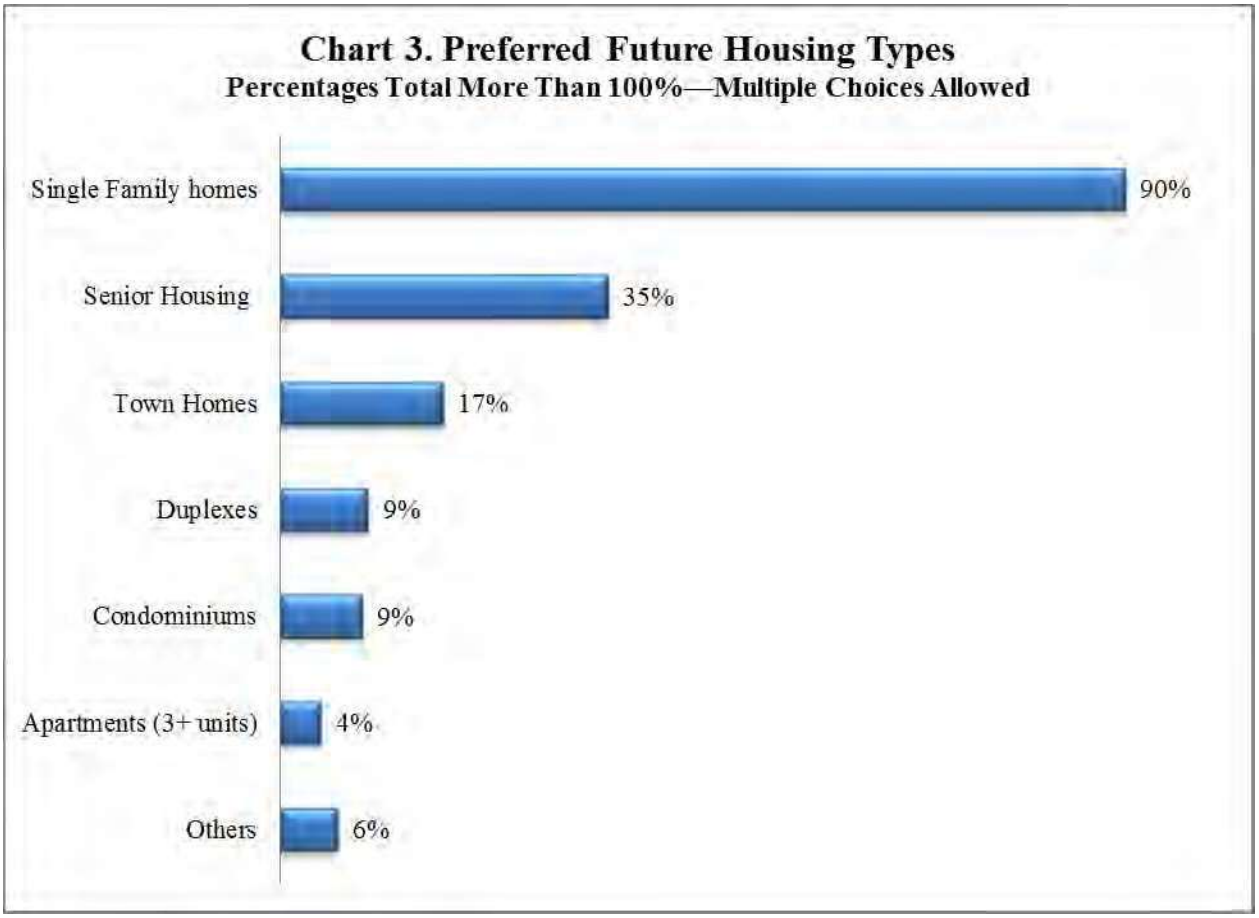
Groundwater quality stood out at the top of the importance ratings, with four in five respondents saying it is very important (63%) or important (20%). Since groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for Town residents, this result is not surprising. Broadband internet access placed second in the ratings. About 40% of respondents rated it as very important, and an additional 21% said it is important.



Housing

When asked for the types of housing that they would like to see encouraged in the Town, Chart 3 shows that respondents only favored single-family homes (90%). Senior housing came in a distant second with 35%. Multi-family housing types were substantially lower among the respondents' preferences, ranging from 17% for townhomes to 3% for apartment buildings with 3 or more units.

Among the written comments in the "other" category the most common themes were to keep large lot sizes for single-family homes and to oppose additional housing development.



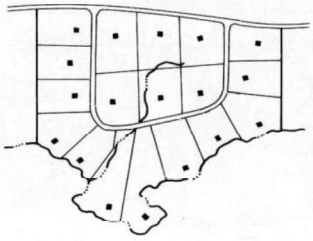
Demographic comparisons. Not surprisingly, a much larger proportion of respondents age 45 and above said they favor senior housing (41%) compared to younger respondents (12%). Over half of renters supported additional senior housing.

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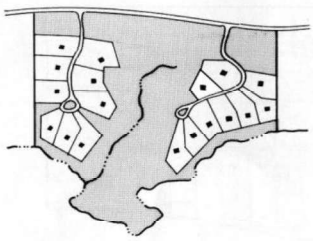
As shown in Figure 1 below, respondents were evenly split in their preference. The SRC has asked a similar question in nearly 100 other surveys. About two-thirds of respondents in those surveys favor the open-space design. So, the result for St. Joseph Town is somewhat anomalous.

Figure 1. Preference for Rural Subdivision Design

51% Conventional



49% Open-space

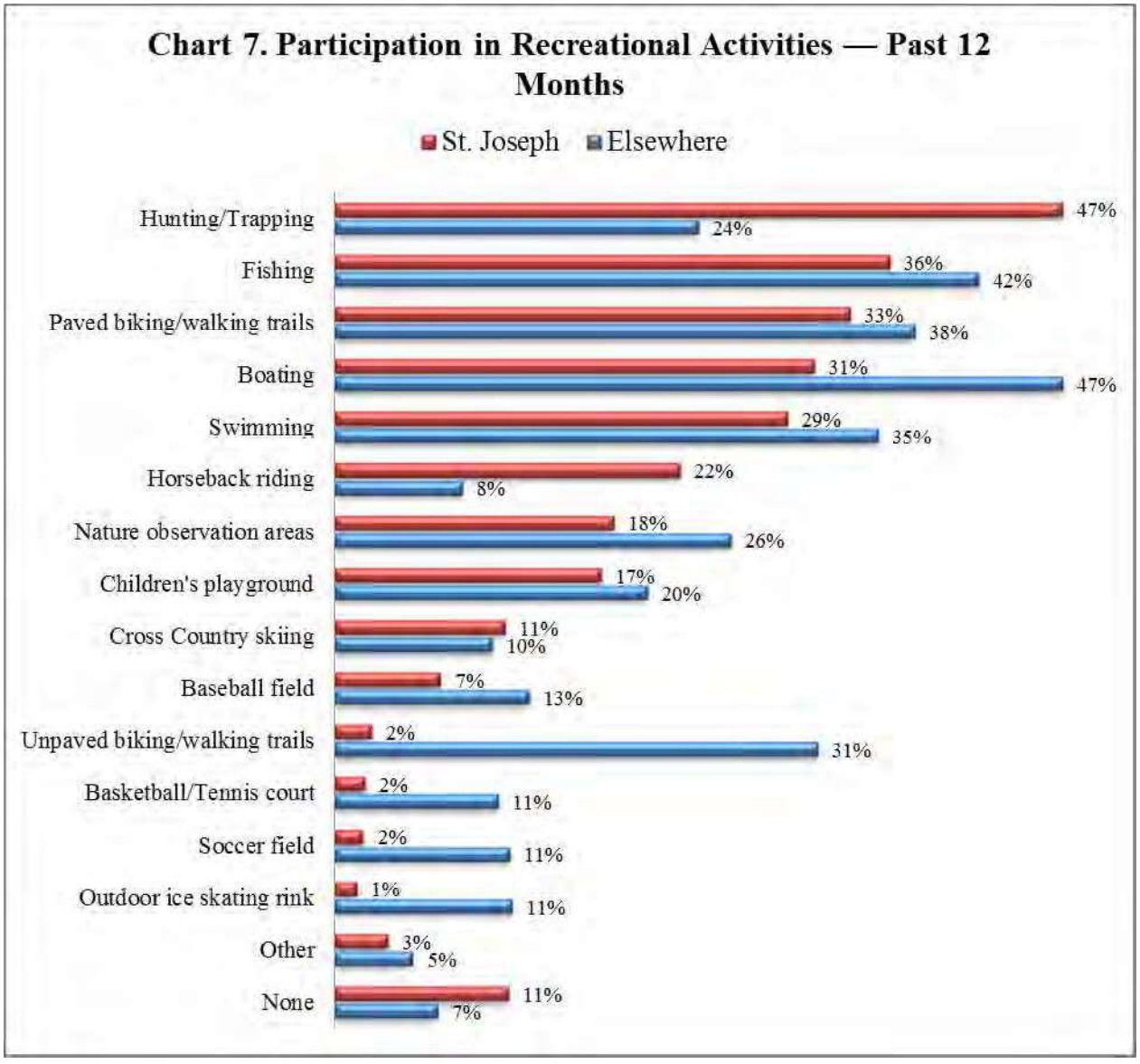


Demographic comparisons. Compared to respondents from the other three ZIP codes, respondents from the New Richmond ZIP code (54017) favored the open space subdivision design. Eight in ten respondents from 54017 chose the open space design, while 48% to 58% of respondents from other ZIP codes favored the open space design.

Respondents were next asked a similar question that focused on the types of recreational activities in which they or family members had participated in the past 12 months. Results are shown in Chart 7. Fourteen activities were listed and respondents were asked to indicate whether any family members had participated within St. Joseph (top bar) or at a location outside of St. Joseph (bottom bar).

With respect to activities within St. Joseph, hunting/trapping was the top ranked activity with 47% participation. About a third of respondents said a member of their family had participated in fishing (36%), biking/walking on paved trails (33%), boating (31%), and swimming (29%).

About one on five participated in horseback riding, nature observation trails, and children's playgrounds. Participation rates within St. Joseph were lower for cross-country skiing, baseball, biking/walking on unpaved trails, basketball, tennis, soccer, and outdoor ice skating.



With respect to recreational activities outside of St. Joseph, boating was the most popular (47%) followed closely by fishing (42%). About a third of respondents particpated in biking/walking on paved trails (38%), swimming (35%), and biking/walking on unpaved trails (31%).

Among the written comments in the "other" category, the most frequent activiteis were snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

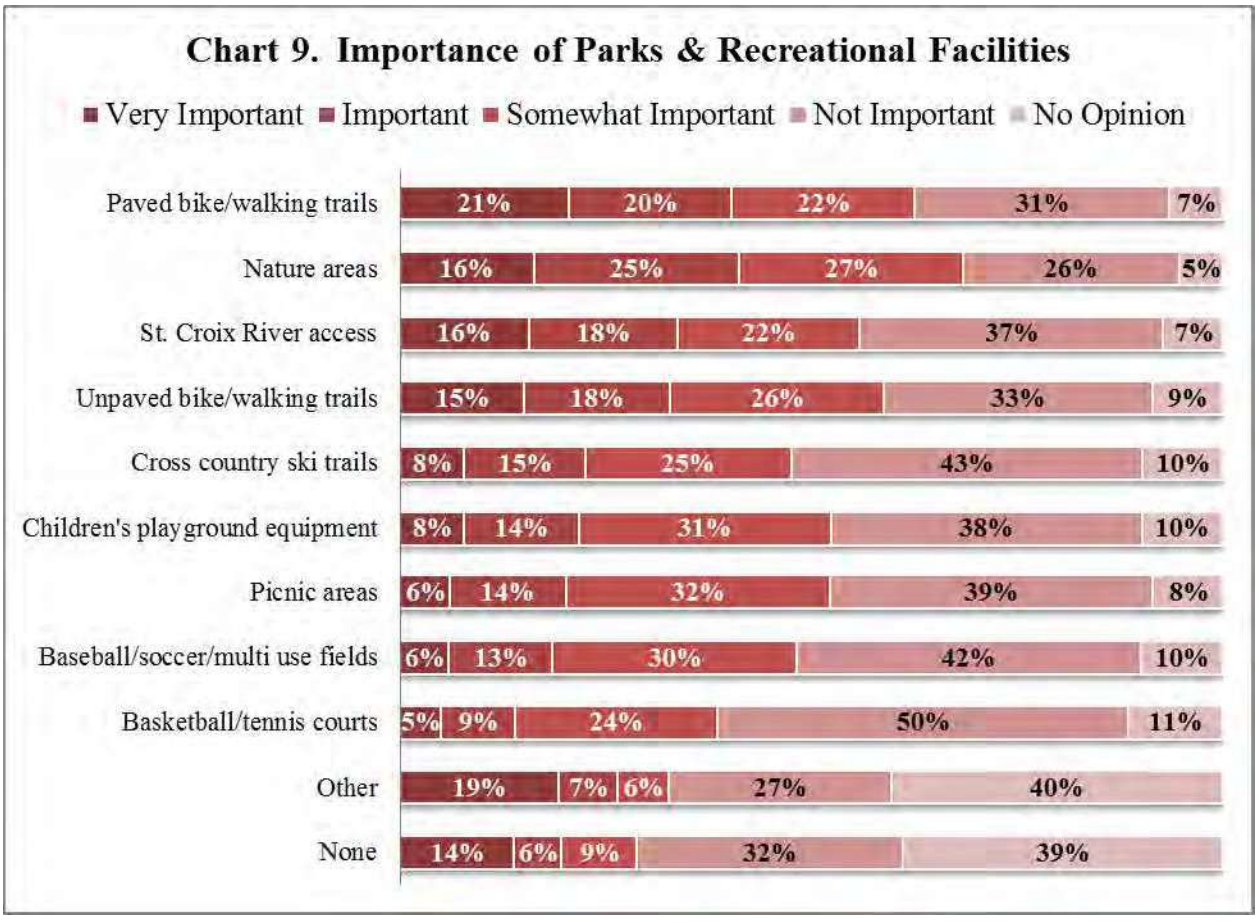
Demographic comparisons. Respondents under age 45 were more likely to participate in swimming outside of the Town (50%) than older respondents (34%). Slightly over half of respondents under age 45 have gone fishing outside of St. Joseph compared to 42% of respondents age 45 and older. About four in ten of younger respondents have used a playground both in the Town and elsewhere compared to about 14% of older respondents.

Over half of households with children have participated in swimming in St. Joseph in the past 12 months compared to 29% of respondents from households without children. Households with children were more likely to have used a children's playground within St. Joseph (34%) compared to households without children (12%). Similarly, 40% of households with children have used a children's playground outside of St. Joseph compared to 13% of households without children.

Respondents were next asked to rate the importance of nine types of parks and recreational facilities in St. Joseph. Answer choices were on a scale from very important to not important, plus no opinion. As shown in Chart 9, parks and recreational facilities tended to be viewed as somewhat important or not important, and none of the listed facilities were rated as important or very important by a majority of residents. The highest importance ratings were given to paved walking and biking trails (21% very important and 20% important) and to nature areas (16% very important and 25% important).

At least two-thirds of respondents said the following facilities were only somewhat important or not important: cross-country ski trails, children's playground equipment, picnic areas, baseball/soccer fields, and basketball/tennis courts. Twenty percent of respondents said no parks and recreational facilities are important or very important.

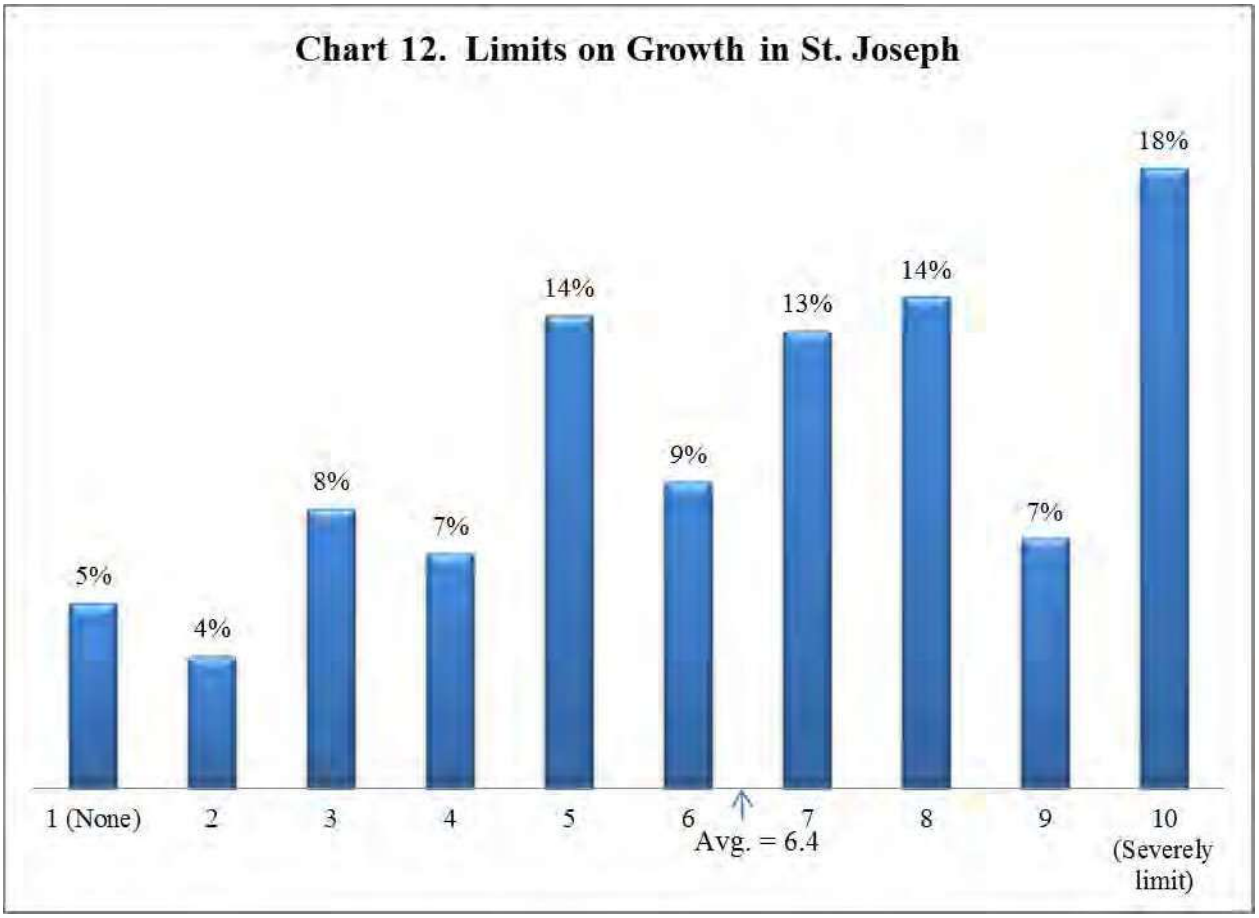
Among the written entries in the "other" category, the most frequently mentioned were horseback riding and snowmobile trails. Importance ratings were relatively low for the handwritten entries (26% important or very important).



Demographic comparisons. Majorities of farmland owners ranging from 56% (nature areas) to 67% (St. Croix River access) rated all the facilities in this question as not important. The combined average of the other groups who said these facilities are not important was between 30% and 41%. Non-resident respondents were more likely to have no opinion about children's palyground equipment, baseball/soccer multi-use fields, and basketball/tennis courts.

Economic Development

Respondents were asked to use a 10-point scale to indicate the degree to which they believe the Town should place limits on growth and development in St. Joseph. The results in are shown in Chart 12 (1=no limits on growth; 10=severe limits on growth). Although the largest percentage (18%) for any single score was for the severe limits ("10" category), the overall average was 6.4. Taken as a whole, respondents said they favored more limits than fewer limits, but not dramatically so.

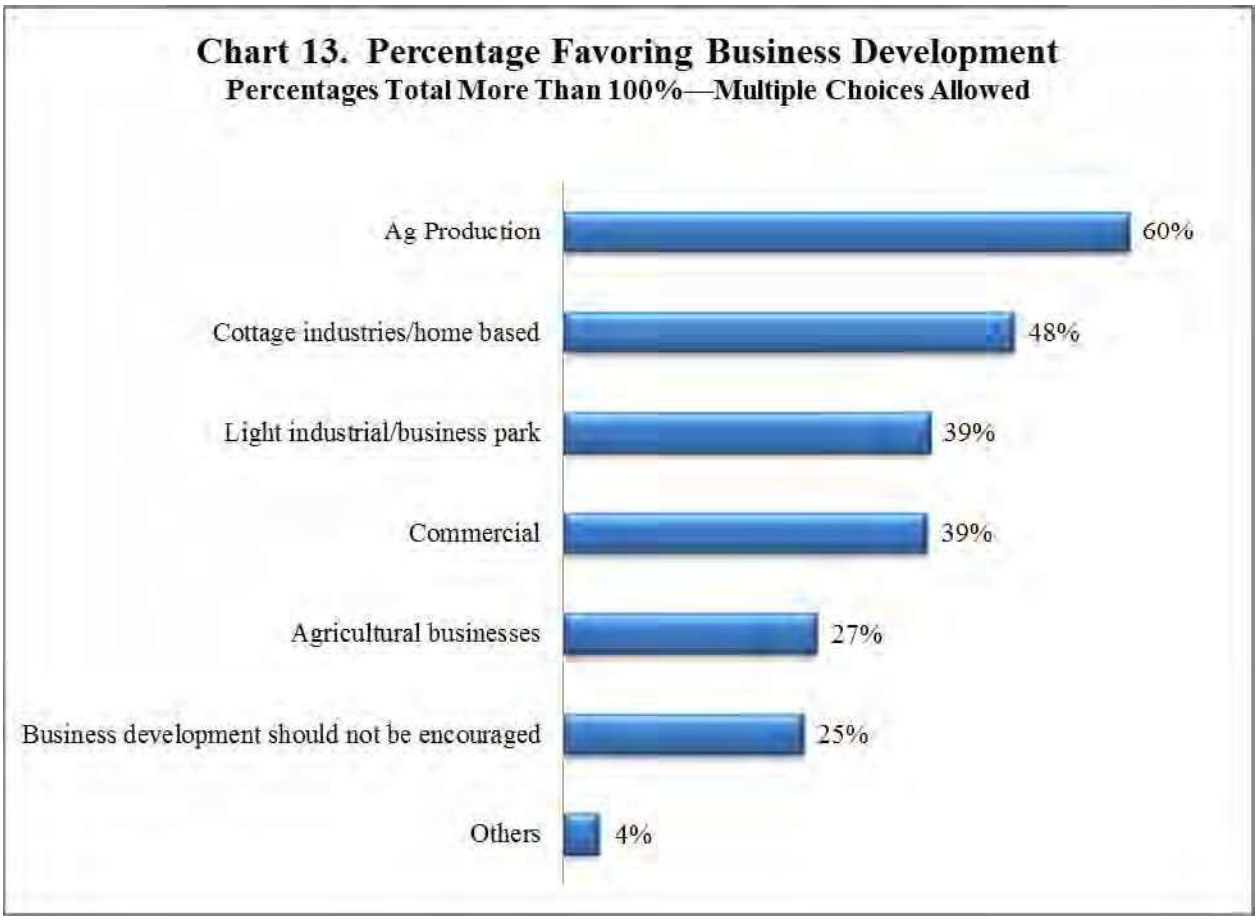


Demographic comparisons. Farmland owners were slightly more likely to prefer fewer limits on growth in the Town. Their average was 5.5, which is at the mid-point on the 10-point scale, and lower than the overall 6.4 average.

The questionnaire listed five types of businesses, and respondents were asked which types the Town Board should support (multiple choices were allowed) or if business development should not be encouraged. The results in Chart 13 show that agricultural production was the only type of business favored by a majority of respondents (60%). About half (48%) said cottage industries and home based businesses should be supported by the Town Board.

Four in ten respondents favored a light industry/business park and commercial development. Agricultural businesses (e.g., farm equipment, food processing) were favored by 27% of respondents. A quarter of respondents said no type of business development should be encouraged in St. Joseph.

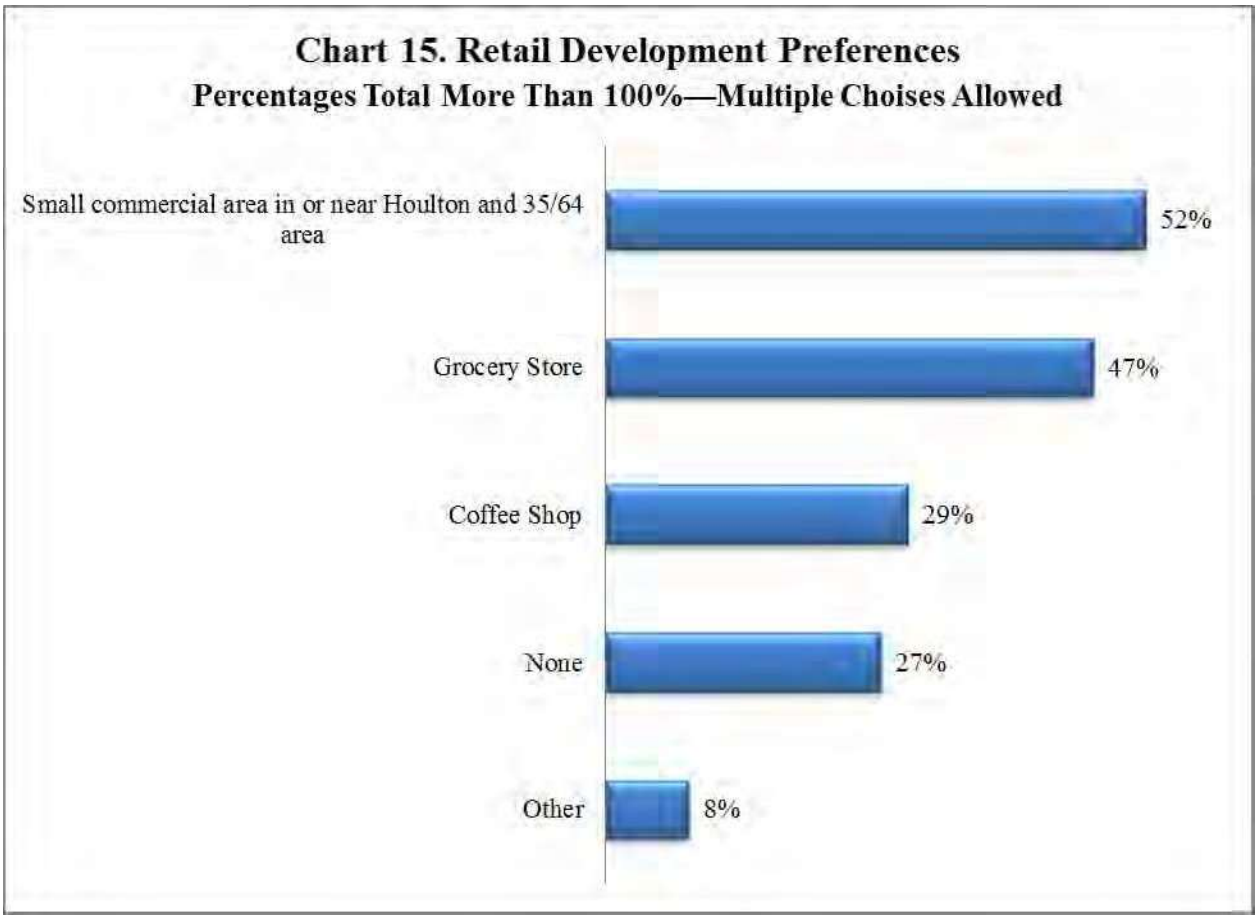
Among the written comment in the "other" category, the most frequent were for a grocery store or to oppose any additional commercial development.



Demographic comparisons. Respondents age 45 and older were more likely to favor light industry/business park (42%) compared to those under age 45 (27%). Respondents from ZIP code 54017 (56%) and ZIP code 54025 (50%) were more likely to favor light industrial/business park development than those from 54016 (36%) or 54082 (37%). Forty-one percent of farmland owners included agricultural businesses among their choices, while only 7% of non-resident respondents included agricultural businesses among their choices.

Asked specifically about retail development, Chart 15 indicates about half of respondents favored a small commercial area in or near Houlton (52%) or a grocery store (47%). A coffee shop was chosen by only 29% of respndents. Among the responses in the "other" category, the most frequent were a gas station/convenience store and a restaurant.

At the same time, 27% of respondents said they would not favor any commercial development in the Town.



Demographic comparisons. A majority of men (56%) said they would like to see a small commercial area in or near Houlton and the Highway 35/64 area compared to 47% of women. A majority of respondents under age 45 (57%) favor a grocery store compared to 47% of older respondents. Support for a coffee shop was also stronger among younger respondents (40%) compared to 27% among older respondents.

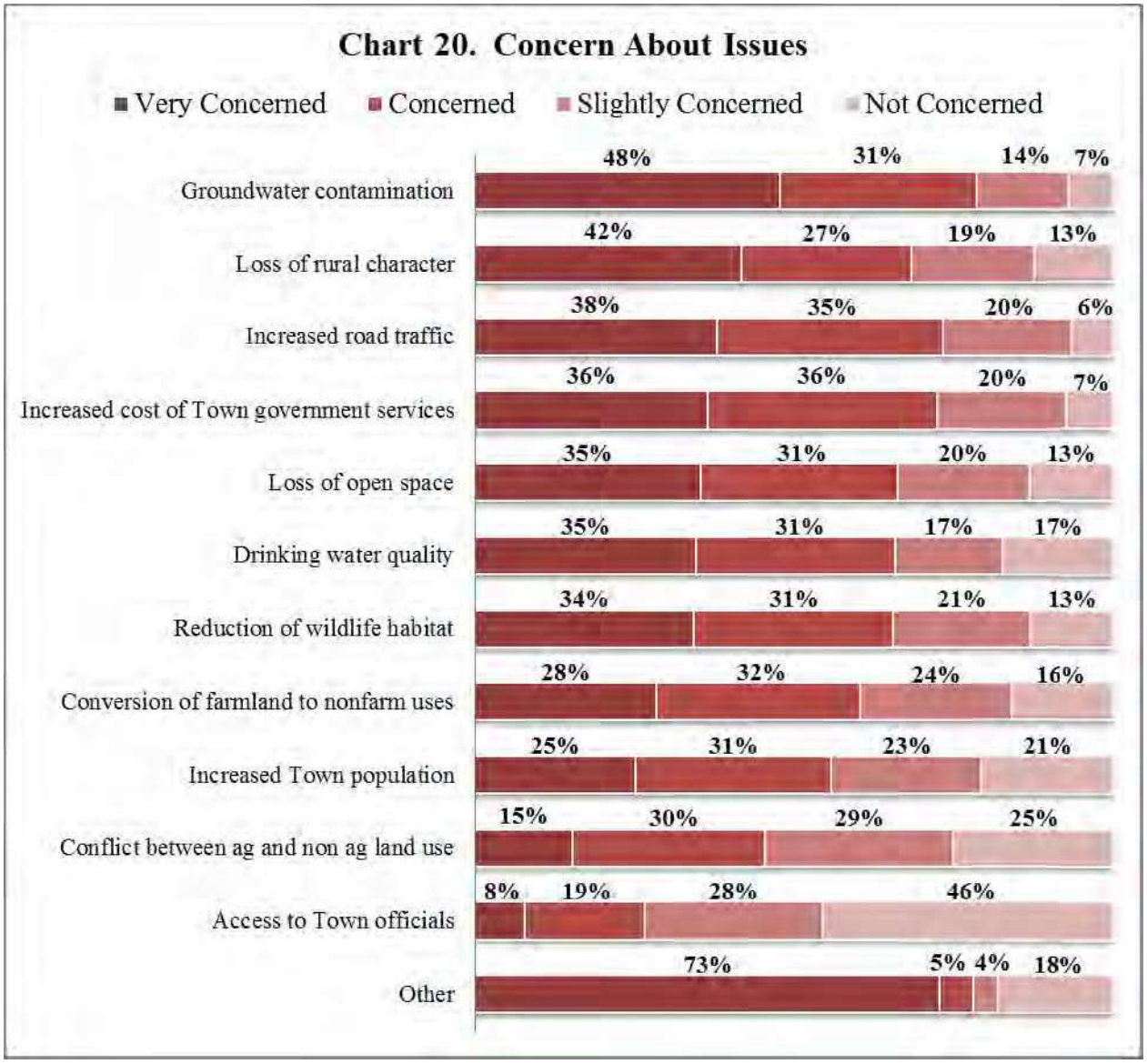
A grocery store was more strongly favored by respondents from ZIP code 54082 (53%) and 54016 (48%) compared to respondents from 54017 (40%) and 54025 (32%). Fifty-five percent of Houlton respondents favored a grocery store compared to 46% of non-Houlton respondents.

Houlton respondents were less supportive of a small commercial area near Houlton and the Highway 35/64 area than were respondents from outside Houlton. While 55% of non-Houlton respondents said yes, only 42% of Houlton respondents said yes.

Respondents were next asked their level of concern about 11 issues in St. Joseph on a four-point scale of very concerned to not concerned. As shown in Chart 20, at least half of the respondents said they are concerned or very concerned about nine of the 11 issues listed. The top concern is groundwater contaminiation, with more than eight in ten respondents saying they are concerned or very concerned. Majorities between 65% and 73% said they are concerned or very concerned about loss of rural character, increased road traffic, increased cost of Town government services, loss of open space, and reduction of wildlife habitat.

On the other end of the spectrum, three-fourths of respondents said they are slightly concerned or not concerned about access to Town officials.

Among the written responses in the "other" category, the most frequent were internet access and taxes. Among all the handwritten issues, 73% of respondents said they are very concerned. Not surprisingly, 73% said they were very concerned about the other issues.



The survey contained two open-ended questions for respondents to indicate what they like *most* about living in St. Joseph and what they like *least* about living in St. Joseph.

With respect to what they like *most* about St. Joseph, 733 respondents provided written comments. Nearly all comments related to a single common theme centered on the rural character of the Town of St. Joseph. Over 90% of the individual comments contained words and phrases associated with this theme, including rural, quiet/quietness, space/open space, country, peace/peaceful, nature/natural and private/privacy. The frequency distribution of the most frequent words and phrases is shown in Table 2. A single comment sometimes contained more than one word or phrase related to the common theme.

Table 2 also shows that 16% of the comments contained the words close or proximity. These words were often used in the context of nearness to the amenities of larger places such as Stillwater, Hudson, and the Twin Cities.

The following quotes are examples of these this theme:

"Rural, quiet, out in the country"

"Convenience of the country, but close to the city"

"The peace and quiet of a rural setting."

"The mix of open spaces and larger lot sizes"

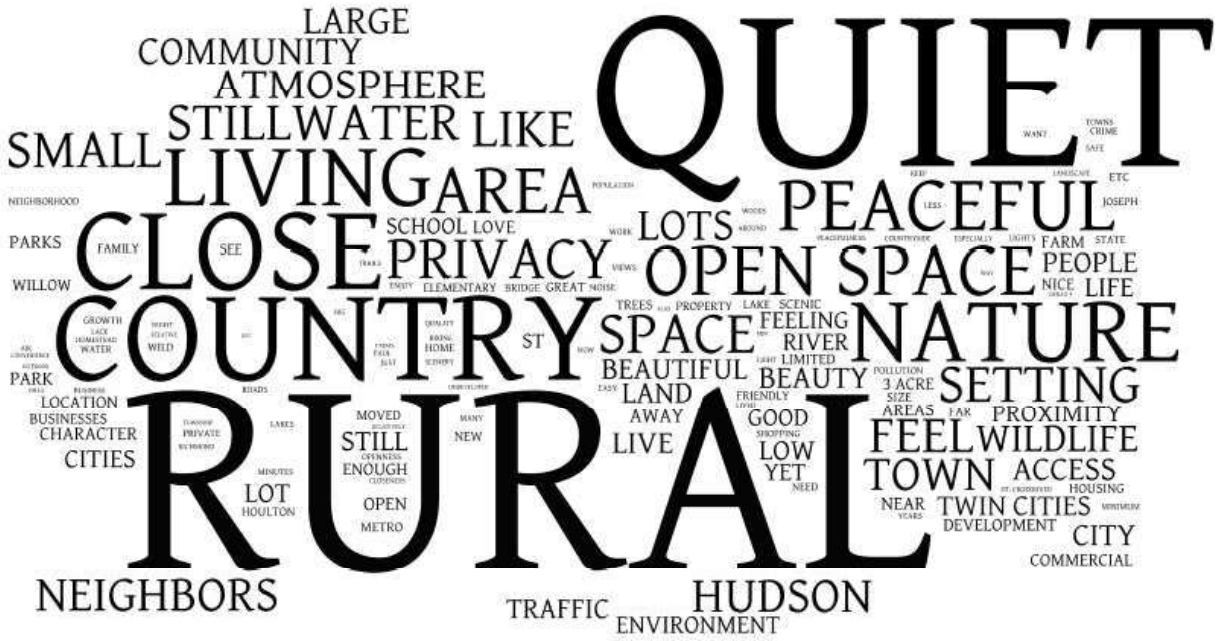
"We love the quiet country setting away from the pressures associated with overpopulation"

Table 2. What respondents <u>most</u> like about living in the Town of St. Joseph – Common Descriptors

Word	Count	%
Rural	232	32%
Quiet/Quietness	204	28%
Space/Open Space	137	19%
Close/Proximity	120	16%
Country	114	16%
Peace/Peaceful	71	10%
Nature/Natural	76	10%
Private/Privacy	60	8%

Figure 2 is a word cloud of the 150 most commonly used words among the 733 written responses to this question. (A word cloud is a visual representation in which the font size of the word or phrase is proportional to its frequency in the text). The words rural, quiet, country, close, nature, open space, and peaceful stand out in this word cloud and confirm degree to which respondents like St. Joseph because of the attributes associated with living in the country.

Figure 2. Word Cloud: What Respondents Most Like About Living in St. Joseph



Conclusions

Respondents said they like St. Joseph because of the rural character but are particularly concerned or very concerned about the loss of rural character and loss of open space. They place importance on factors associated with maintaining the country atmosphere they value, including groundwater quality, maintaining environmental quality, preservation of open space, and preservation of productive farmland. A majority said it is important or very important to plan for growth.

Respondents expressed a cautious view about additional business and economic development in the Town. They want any commercial/retail development restricted to designated areas.

The largest percentage of respondents generally do not support tax increases to address issues. However, there often was a substantial proportion of respondents who said they are not sure about tax increases, which suggests their opinion depends on the particular circumstances.

Although a majority of responding households participate in some form of outdoor recreational activity, a majority of respondents rated recreational facilitites or parks as somewhat important or not important rather than important or very important. Again, the majority do not support tax increases for expenditures on recreation.

Solid majorities believe that Town services are generally good or excellent, though many lack first-hand experience and, hence, an opinion about the quality of many Town services.

Broadband internet access is a concern for many respondents.