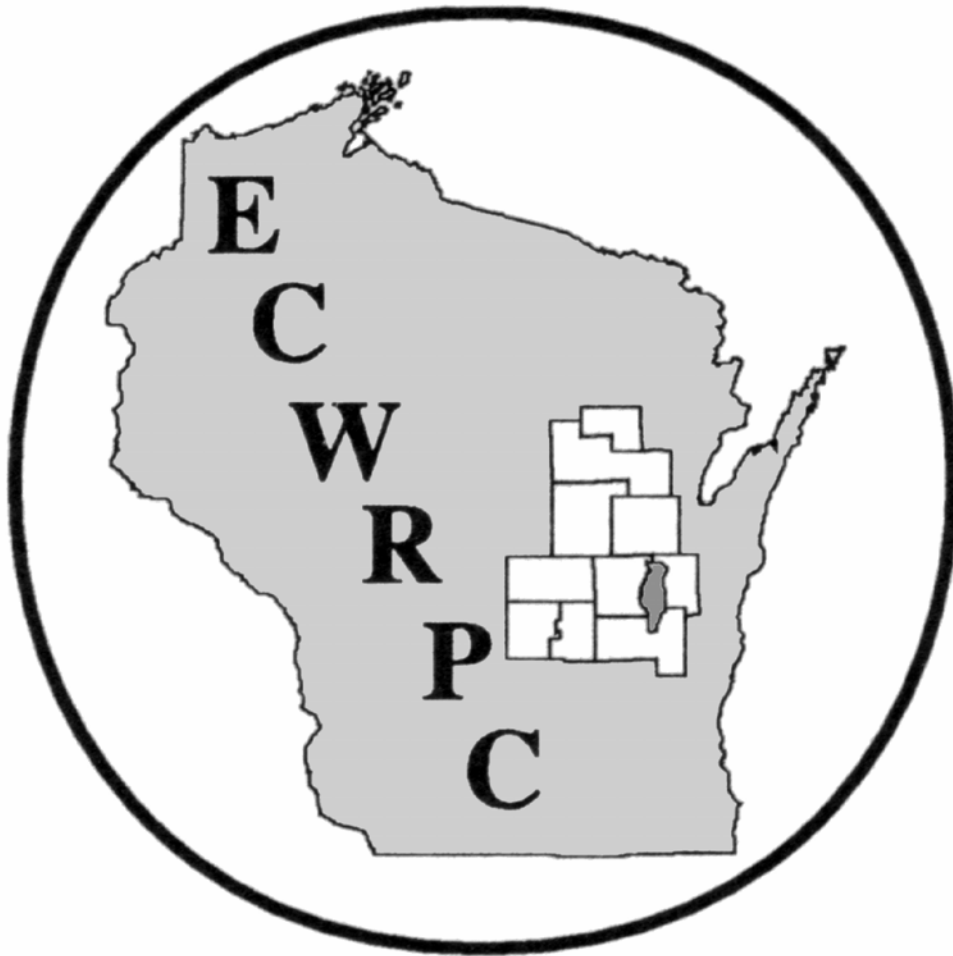


Milestone Report #2

Issues / Opportunities and Visioning

East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030



July 2004

EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**MILESTONE REPORT # 2
ISSUES / OPPORTUNITIES AND VISIONING**

**EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2030
Shaping our Future in the 21st Century**

**SUBMITTED FOR ADOPTION
JULY 30, 2004**

**SERVING THE TEN COUNTIES OF CALUMET, FOND DU LAC, GREEN
LAKE, MARQUETTE, MENOMINEE, OUTAGAMIE, SHAWANO, WAUPACA,
WAUSHARA, AND WINNEBAGO.**

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Milestone Report # 2: Issues / Opportunities and Visioning

CONTACT: Harlan Kiesow, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Presents a vision of our preferred future and explores the impacts on the east central region of current and anticipated trends. Core goals are developed to ensure achievement of the envisioned future in respect of economic development, housing, transportation, utilities and community facilities, agricultural, natural and cultural resources, and land use.

DATE: July 2004

PLANNING AGENCY: East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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Milestone Report #2 is the second in a series of four reports being produced to meet the requirements of the Wisconsin comprehensive planning legislation signed into law, by Governor Tommy Thompson, in 1999. Its main purpose is to develop a vision for the future of the region, explore the impacts that the trends identified in Milestone Report #1 will have on the region, and develop core goals. For those trends that are most likely to happen, for example, an aging population, an increase in the number of households, and a reduction in household size, we are asking, how do we respond? For those areas of greatest conflict, for example, regulation vrs private property rights, economic development vrs environmental protection, development vrs costs, residential development vrs preservation of rural character, we are reexamining our basic assumptions and asking, are there better ways to address these challenges. The preparation of this report was financed in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Office of Land Information Services (OLIS).

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In November 2001, the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (East Central) submitted an application to the WI Department of Administration: Office of Land Information Services (OLIS) for a state planning grant to help fund the preparation of its regional comprehensive plan. In January 2002, a grant of \$175,000 was awarded to East Central. These funds are assisting with a project, which will result in the adoption of a regional comprehensive plan document for our 10-county area (Exhibit I-1). Working together with citizens, local governments and interest groups, East Central's mission is to develop a comprehensive vision for the future of the area through 2030, as well as to provide strategic policy guidance to help that vision become reality.

Background information on the region, the East Central Regional Planning Commission, the policy context, the 1999 comprehensive planning legislation, and the purpose and guiding principles underlying the regional comprehensive plan, was provided in *Milestone Report #1: The State of the Region, (2003)*.

East Central's goal, as it prepares its new regional comprehensive plan, is to ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to be involved in deciding how to deal effectively with the growth management issues that will face the region. It's your region, your choice. Working cooperatively, East Central's objective is to develop a comprehensive, policy framework for planning issues. This framework, which will address issues such as regional transportation, energy production and distribution, and coordination of land use and public services, will provide a regional infrastructure upon which local governments may build local land use policies. It is anticipated that county and local governments will benefit from the regional planning effort with savings in the cost of data collection, public participation, and broad policy development. Targets include consistent, balanced, and cost effective land use decisions that will promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the region and all of its citizens, as well as helping communities to be smart about addressing growth management issues in both urban and rural areas, and balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.

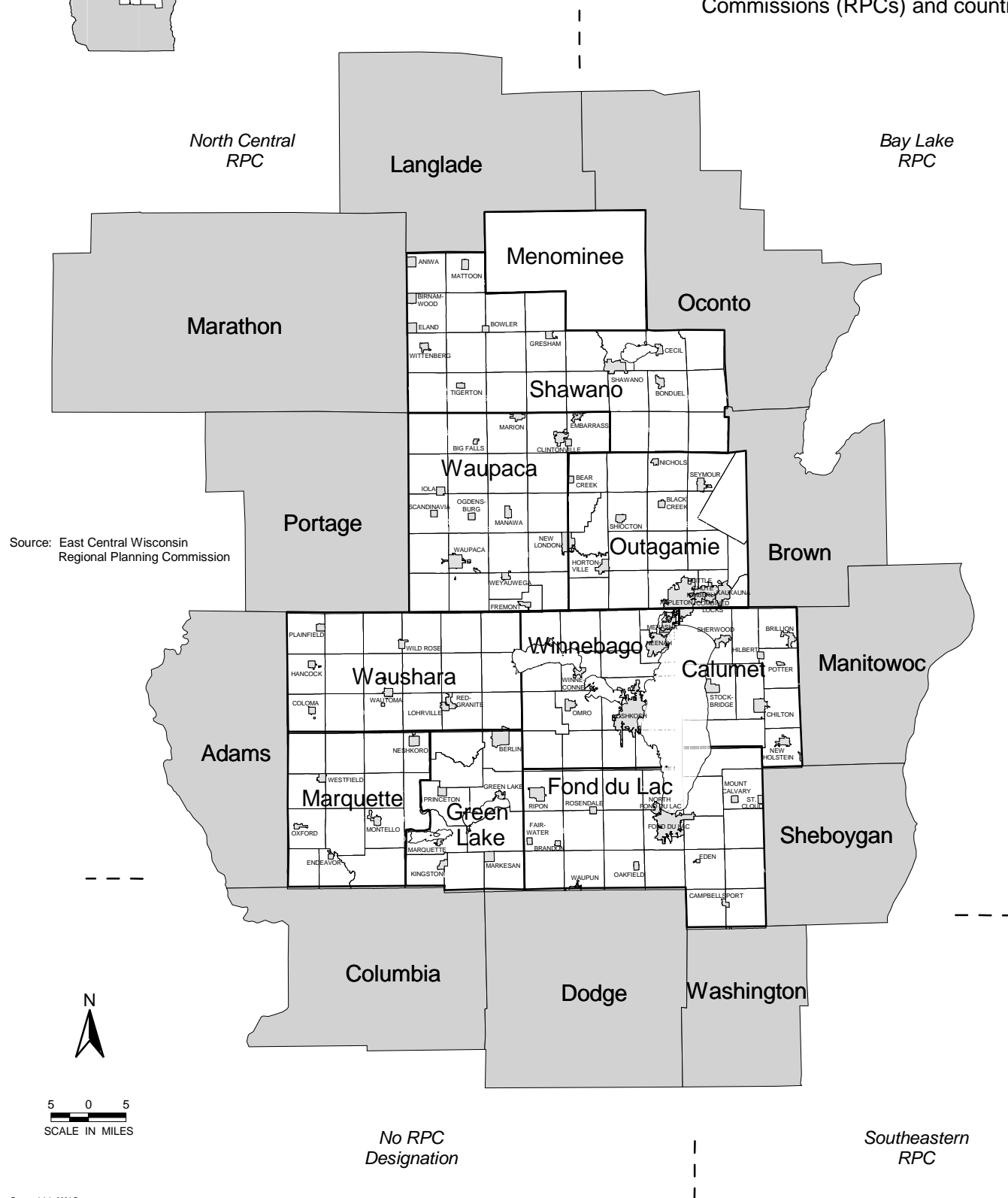
This chapter describes the regional comprehensive planning process, outlines the rationale and method adopted in the preparation of this report, and presents an introduction to the chapters that follow.

Regional Comprehensive Planning Process

To make the planning process more manageable, East Central has divided it into a number of stages. Each stage is being reported upon as it is completed. Figure I-1 outlines the overall planning process.

The final regional plan products will include the *ECWRPC Regional Comprehensive Plan Study Design and Public Participation Plan (2001)*, a review of current policy; *East Central Policy (2003)*, which is currently available on line at www.eastcentralrpc.org, a report on the public

Exhibit I-1
East Central Region
(with adjacent Regional Planning
Commissions (RPCs) and counties)



Prepared July 2004 By:

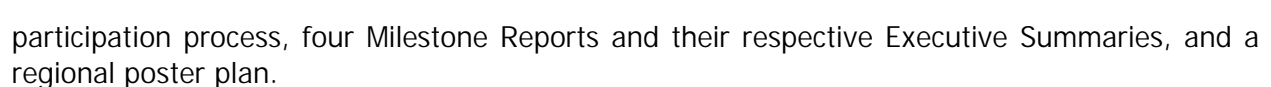


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NORTH DAKOTA c:\tim\milestone2\chapter1\chp1.apr

Schedule							Staffing	
2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	P	T



It may be helpful to think of these four distinct but overlapping planning phases as answering four basic questions. Milestone Report 1: has answered the question “Where are we?” Milestone Report 2: is answering the question “What do we want the region to look like in the year 2030?” Milestone Report 3 will answer the question “How do we get from where we are today, to where we want to be in 2030?” Finally, Milestone Report 4: will answer the question “Who will take the lead and support roles in taking the action necessary to achieve the envisioned future?”

Fig. I-2 Major Phases of the Regional Comprehensive Planning Process



Milestone Report #1

East Central produced the *State of the Region (2003)* report for two main reasons. First, to provide useful, accessible information to citizens, elected officials, local government staff, and interest groups. Second, to collate baseline information that would enable us all to understand the basic make-up of the region and provide the foundation on which we could begin to plan for the future. The first milestone report, along with input from the public participation process enabled East Central to begin the process of identifying the key issues and opportunities facing the region. For ease of reference a summary of the first Milestone Report is provided in Chapter 2 of this report.

Milestone Report #2

The next step in the regional planning process is developing a vision of our preferred future for the region. And this is the focus of Milestone Report #2.

The current report has three objectives.

- Develop a preferred vision for the future of the region.
- Explore the impact of current and projected trends on all issues identified to date in the regional planning process, including those presented in the State of the Region Report.
- Identify core goals to help us work toward the future we envision for ourselves and the next generation.

The current report is being produced to help us bridge the transition between the envisioned regional future and where the region actually looks likely to be heading, given current and anticipated trends.

There have been four main steps involved in the preparation of this report.

Step 1: Envisioning the future

Working cooperatively, we have developed thematic vision statements for each of the substantive smart growth elements. This involved clarifying aspirations of how we want the region to look in the future. Three specific questions were addressed.

- What would you like to be preserved in the region?
- What would you like to be changed in the region?
- What would you like to be created in the region?

The vision statements have been developed taking into account the state local land use goals (see Appendix B), input from the public participation events, specifically the regional focus groups and public information meeting, comments from technical advisory committee members, and staff input. East Central considers it crucial to offer all stakeholders the opportunity of being involved in clarifying a preferred future.

Step 2: Clarifying the Issues / Opportunities that will be addressed in the regional plan

In terms of the issues and opportunities identified, we have made decisions about what will be addressed in our plan: the focus is on regional issues. Where we have made the decision that issues are better handled by an agency or organization other than ourselves, we have provided information on how those issues have been handed off. The objective is to ensure that all issues raised receive due respect and consideration.

Step 3: Match / Mismatch between envisioned and likely future

For the remaining issues, we have explored the identified trends in some detail and provided an assessment of the match / mismatch between the likely future, given current and projected trends, and the envisioned future. As we worked toward producing this report there were two primary approaches that we used to explore the impact that identified trends may have on the region.

- First, for the trends that are most likely, for example, an aging population (by 2020, Wisconsin will be one of five states in the country with 20% of its population over 65 years), an increasing number of households and a reduction in household size, we have asked how do we respond?
- Second, for the areas of greatest conflict, we have reexamined our basic assumptions about the issues and asked are there better ways to address these challenges?
 - New construction, reconstruction and expansion of highways, at considerable cost, seem to be the dominant current trend in transportation. How do we rethink how we deal with transportation issues relating to sprawl? How do we promote compact, mixed land use patterns that provide access, reduce social exclusion, and create livable communities while being cost effective?
 - The number of residential units in the region increased by 43% in the 20 years between 1980 and 2000, however the amount of residential land increased by

173%. How do we promote cost-effective redevelopment and development of land with existing or nearby community facilities, while continuing to provide both housing choice and affordability?

- Approximately 320,000 acres of farmland were lost during this 20 year time period, an area larger than the entire area of Winnebago County. How do we protect farmland and preserve rural character, while ensuring the continued economic vitality of the region?
- The region's natural resources, groundwater and surface water, lakes and open spaces are under increasing pressure from both the urbanization of our rural areas and greater than ever recreational use. How do we ensure the protection of our natural resources in the face of competing demands?

Step 4: Identification of Goals

In addressing these questions, we have begun to identify the core goals that will enable us to achieve the envisioned future. To achieve real progress, we realize that goals for the various elements will need to be pursued in an integrated manner. Consequently, we have focused on identifying the links and interaction between the different elements of the plan. For example, transportation and land use planning will have to be taken forward together. There will need to be close links between housing and economic development. To preserve the environment, farmland, and rural character there will need to be a good understanding of the interaction between urban and rural goals etc.

Technical Advisory Committees

East Central established a number of Technical Advisory Committees to guide the preparation of this report. Each committee focused on a specific element of the regional comprehensive plan. Intergovernmental co-operation is considered to be fundamental to each of the elements. For three areas: housing, utility and community facilities, and natural resources, it was considered appropriate given the breadth of topics to be covered, to form a number of sub-committees. The committees and sub committees are listed below along with the name of the staff facilitator.

- Economic Development – Elizabeth Runge
- Regional Housing – Betty Nordeng
 - Rural Housing Policy
 - Urban Housing Policy
- Transportation/Land Use – Ann Schell
- Utilities and Community Facilities – Kathy Thunes
 - Education
 - Health and Childcare
 - Local Park and Recreation
 - Public Safety
 - Solid Waste
 - Telecommunications, Electric, and Gas
- Agricultural Resources – Harlan Kiesow
- Natural Resources - Eric Fowle
 - Geologic Resources
 - Groundwater and Water Supply

- Open Space, Recreation and Regional Character
- Regional Ecology
- Watershed and Wastewater
- Cultural Resources – Ed Kleckner

Approximately 300 individuals were invited to serve on the advisory committees. Key objectives have been to ensure a wide representation from public, private, and voluntary sectors at the state, regional, county, and local levels, as well as Tribes and citizens. Additionally, we wanted to guarantee a reasonable urban-rural balance. Detailed information, including members, meeting notices and summaries of proceedings relating to each committee is available on-line at www.eastcentralrpc.org.

We invited committee members to take a broad, long term, proactive approach. This included being aware of the broader context of our decisions, as well as being conscious of the forces of change, many of which may not originate within the region.

Structure of the Report

Chapter 2 provides a summary of Milestone Report #1: The State of the Region. Chapter 3 presents a summary of the vision statements for each of the elements: economic development, housing, transportation, utilities and community facilities, agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, and land use.

A chapter is devoted to each of the substantive topics listed above. Each chapter is divided into five main sections. After a brief introduction, each chapter describes the cooperation between the private, public, not-for-profit sectors and citizens during the second phase of the regional comprehensive planning process, outlines the interaction and links between the different elements of the plan, and presents the thematic vision statements.

The centerpiece of each chapter is a series of issue based fact sheets. For each issue that will be addressed in the regional plan we provide information on the “Key Facts”. This is followed by a section called “So What!” This is an explanation of why the issue matters: the key objective of this section is to communicate consequences. The aim is to heighten public awareness and begin to influence public opinion, which is crucial if we are to generate action. The “Current Action” section describes the main programs currently in place to address the problem and highlights possible gaps. The fact sheet concludes by identifying “Core Goals”.

The purpose of the fact sheets is to tell a good, solid story about the issues, complete with examples. The focus is on persuading a wider audience of the need for action. For example, a school district may take the position that the location of a new school is entirely a matter for the district based primarily on the acquisition of cheap land. However, when the potential consequences of a new school location are discussed from the perspective of the local government: the fact that sewer and water services may need to be expanded, that the existing road network may be inadequate thereby requiring major improvements, that the public transportation system may need to be expanded, that new schools in the countryside inevitably leads to new homes and possible sprawl, etc, it becomes apparent that there may be a number of wider considerations. The school district may begin to recognize that it may be useful to have an information sheet that would, for example, outline considerations to be borne in mind

and a list of people / agencies that it may be worthwhile to consult, which may lead to more cost effective decisions for the community. It is emphasized that while East Central cannot make peoples' decisions for them, what we can do is to provide concise, quality information that highlights the possible consequences of particular decisions, which will help facilitate informed decision making.

Each chapter concludes by presenting the thematic vision statement, summarizing issues and opportunities, identifying the match and/or mismatch between the likely and envisioned future, and the associated core goals that will enable us to overcome the mismatch.

These core goals will provide the starting point for *Milestone Report 3: Goals and Strategies for Action*. Given that we have identified what we want to achieve, the focus in the next report will be on determining how to achieve what we want. There will, of course, be many different ways to achieve the goals that we have set in this report: there is no one answer. The next stage of the planning process will be to discuss all the possibilities, affording each the same respect, and ultimately to reach a common way forward, to reach a conclusion on the preferred policies and strategies for action.

CHAPTER 2: SUMMARY OF MILESTONE REPORT #1

Introduction

The State of the Region report was produced to provide the baseline information required to enable Commissioners, staff, advisory committee members, interest groups, and citizens to understand the basic make-up of the region. The primary purpose of the first milestone report was to provide a broad description of the current state of the region: before we plan for the future, we needed a benchmark of where we are at the moment.

The report provides background information on the following:

- Issues and Opportunities
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Agricultural Resources
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Land Use

A chapter was devoted to each of the topics listed above. Each chapter was divided into five main sections. After a brief introduction, each chapter described the broad policy context for that particular area, and presented a statement on current intergovernmental cooperation. The presentation of background information, the assessment of current and future conditions, was the main focus. Each chapter concluded by summarizing current and future trends and presented a preliminary identification of the issues and opportunities, which the data analysis and public participation process indicated will need to be addressed in the regional plan.

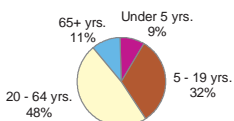
Given that Milestone Report #1 provides the foundation for the regional comprehensive planning process, the key conclusions, in terms of existing policies, major findings, regional issues and next steps are summarized below.

Major Findings 1:

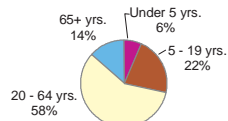
Current Trends:

- The region's population grew by 29% between 1970 and 2000.
- 70% of that growth occurred in the four urban counties: Calumet, Fond du Lac, Outagamie and Winnebago, which have the largest populations and highest population densities in the region (See map on right).
- Growth in the remainder of the region varied (See map on left).
- Although the non-white population grew from 6,000 to 33,000 between 1970 and 2000, whites still comprise 94.6% of the region's population.
- The region's population is aging.

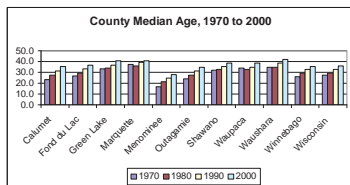
Population by Age, 1970



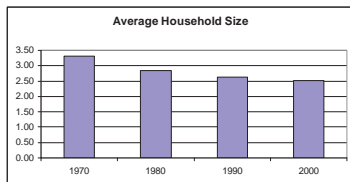
Population by Age, 2000



- Menominee County has the youngest population in the region.
- The remaining rural counties in the region have older populations than the urban counties and the state.

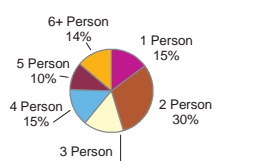


- Between 1990 and 2000, the region lost population in the 20 to 30 age cohort. The largest losses occurred in rural counties.
- Household size is decreasing.

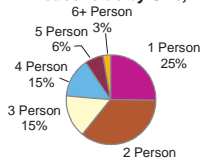


- Between 1970 and 2000, the share of one-person households in the region increased from 15% of all households to 25% of all households in the region.

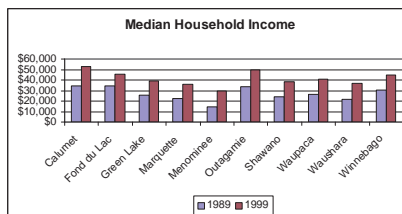
Households by Size, 1970



Households by Size, 2000



- All counties in the region experienced an increase in median household income between 1989 and 1999. However, the income gap between urban and rural counties increased.

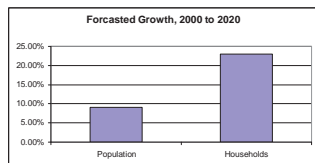


- Rural county residents were also more likely to live in poverty than urban county residents.

Major Findings 2:

Future Trends:

- The number of households in the region is expected to increase at a faster rate than the population.



- Due to the aging of the baby boom generation and the region's ability to attract retirees, it is anticipated that the elderly population may double during the planning period.
- The region's population will likely become more diverse, as minority groups have a larger share of their population in the prime child bearing years than the white population.

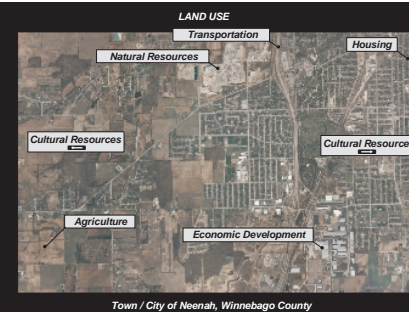
Regional Issues:

How do we?

- Accommodate the increased demand for services and land resulting from continued population and household growth?
- Promote recognition of the relationship between density and proximity of settlement and cost of services and land consumption?
- Protect the vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors in the context of decreasing open space?
- Address conflicts between urban growth and traditional rural economies?
- Promote a healthy, vibrant economy and quality of life for all residents?

What's Next?

The issues identified in this chapter will be addressed in the context of the remaining plan elements: economic development, housing, transportation, community and public facilities, agricultural resources, natural resources, cultural resources and land use.



Existing Policies:

Facilitate the expansion of existing businesses and encourage the establishment of new businesses.

Create new jobs and diversify local economies through the expansion of the retail trade, service sector and tourism development.

Provide job training/retraining to maintain a skilled, competitive workforce.

Facilitate agricultural diversification and stabilize the farm economy.

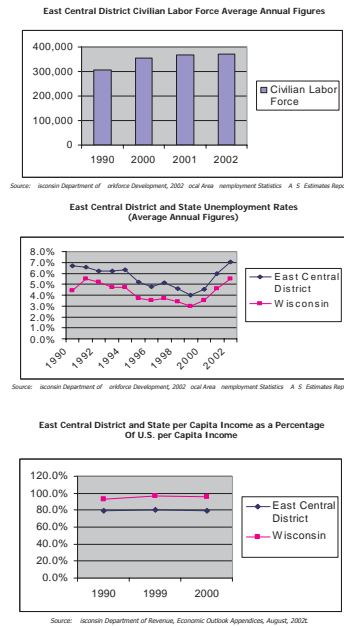
Maintain an adequate inventory of suitable sites for business and industrial expansion.

Develop and maintain the public facilities necessary to support economic development and sustain community growth.

Build and maintain a safe, efficient transportation system.

Maintain a quality living environment for residents of the region.

Major Findings:



Employment growth for the Metropolitan Statistical Areas is expected to continue for the 2001 to 2006 time period. The projections show a 5.1% employment growth increase resulting in 217,100 employees in the Appleton-Neenah-Oshkosh MSA.

The forecast for manufacturing employment is continued weakness. Factory jobs will continue to decline, but perhaps at a slower rate.

The strongest growth is expected in the finance, insurance, and real estate sector and in the services sector.

For both trade industries, retail and wholesale, growth will remain weak. It is anticipated that retail jobs will remain weak into 2003.

Agriculture and agricultural-related services industries are not diminishing within the region, but in some cases, these industries are experiencing small levels of growth. The increases in dairy farm operations could indicate the presence of large-scale farm operations.

Regional Issues:

How can we:

Address the impact of the global economy, which has resulted in the closing down and the exporting of local businesses: in turn leading to a decline in the manufacturing base in the Fox Valley?

Retain, preserve, and attract industry and businesses that will create good quality jobs that pay a living wage?

Address the conflicts that exist between economic development and environmental preservation, especially in the rural areas of the region, where citizens are concerned about retaining the rural character of their communities while ensuring economic vitality?

Address the "brain drain" from the region? Young people are leaving because there are limited good quality career and job opportunities and wages are low when compared with other areas.

Prepare for potential labor shortages?

Address the consequences of current farm economics, whereby the farm wage is insufficient to support a household and farmers are selling off their land for development to secure their retirements?

Assess the real costs and benefits of commercial development, including utilities and services, outside the urban area?

Ensure that communities take full advantage of opportunities to work together and share services to benefit the region as a whole?

Resolve the conflicts that exist between the desire for good public services and the aspiration for lower taxes?



Outagamie County Regional Airport



Kimberly Clark Corporation, Town of Grand Chute



SCA Tissue, City of Menasha



Secura Insurance Company, City of Appleton



Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, City of Appleton

What's Next?

June 2003:

- Create an Economic Development Vision Statement.

June/July 2003:

- Explore impact of current and projected trends identified in Milestone Report 1: State of the Region.
- Identify match/mismatch between envisioned future and probable future.
- Develop strategic economic development goals and submit to technical advisors for comment.

September 2003:

- Complete Draft Milestone Report 2: Economic Development Element.

October 2003:

- Submit Milestone Report 2: Issues/Opportunities and Visioning to East Central Commission for approval.

December 2003:

- Regional Public Informational Meetings.

Major Findings:

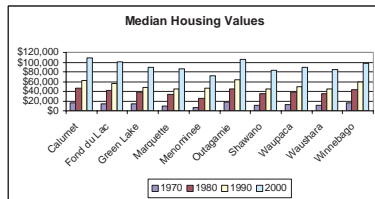
Significant building trends in the region have occurred in response to demographic and life cycle trends, such as the baby-boomers entering the housing market in the 1970's and their children, the "echo" boom generation, entering the housing market in the 1990's.

Single family housing units comprise 75% of all units in the region.

Traditionally, urban counties have maintained tight owner-occupied housing markets, which have low vacancy rates and limited choices.

Rental housing is not distributed equitably throughout the region, and rental markets have fluctuated widely over time.

Owner-occupied housing values have increased significantly over the last 30 years.



Affordable housing is becoming a significant issue in our region. In 2000, 27% of all renters and 15% of all homeowners paid a disproportionate share of their income for housing.

Non-family households (one person and two or more unrelated person households) comprise 31% of all households in the region and are the fastest growing household type.

Rural counties have a significant share of elderly one-person households.



Residential Condos, Calumet County



Traditional Housing, City of Menasha



Second Story Apartments Over Retail, City of Oshkosh

Existing Policies:

Ensure availability and choice in housing.

Promote preservation and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock.

Promote cooperation between the public and private sector.

Promote coordination among local governments.

Promote commitment by local government to meet the housing needs of low and moderate income residents.

How do we:

Ensure adequate provision of affordable housing?

Provide affordable housing for very low income households, which, in particular, is in very short supply?

Overcome the various barriers to affordable housing?

Redress the mismatch that exists between the economic development sector and the housing sector?

Address the trend that the rise in property values is placing many existing homes out of reach of first time home buyers, while wages are declining and few new starter homes are being constructed?

Ensure that housing choices are not limited?

Meet the housing needs and options for an aging population?

Promote more cooperation between governments, and between the government, private and nonprofit sectors?

Ensure that the relationship between housing location, transportation and other land uses is examined more closely?

Prevent inadequate funding and competition for scarce resources from leading to turf wars between agencies and communities and counties?

Meet the housing needs in rural areas, where staffing and resources may be limited?

Provide financial and life skills training for emerging households?

Mediate unintended negative impacts of policy decisions on housing choice, supply and affordability?



Starter Castles, Town of Grand Chute

What's Next?**June 2003:**

Complete draft report of potential solutions to barriers to affordable housing in the Fox Cities, Oshkosh & Fond du Lac urban areas.

Begin working with the Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee to identify barriers to affordable housing in rural areas.

Meet with the Regional Housing Technical Advisory Committee to:
discuss issues identified by focus groups and the Milestone Report #1 and
develop a regional vision for housing.

July/August 2003:

Continue working with the technical advisory committees to:

identify barriers to affordable housing in rural areas, identify the match/mismatch between the envisioned regional future and current trends in the housing sector, and begin to develop strategic goals to attain the envisioned future.

Present the report on potential solutions to the barriers to affordable housing in the Fox Cities, Oshkosh & Fond du Lac urban areas:

at the Wisconsin "Home for Everyone 2003" conference and
to ECWRPC's Economic Development Committee.

September/October 2003:

Work with the Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee to identify potential solutions to the barriers to affordable housing in rural areas.

Draft the housing element chapter for Milestone Report #2.

October 2003:

Milestone Report #2: Issues/Opportunities and Visioning submitted to East Central Commission for approval.

November 2003:

Continue working with the Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee to identify potential solutions to barriers to affordable housing in rural areas.

December 2003:

Draft report on potential solutions to barriers to affordable housing in rural areas.
Regional Public Information Meetings.

Existing Policies:

Recognize interrelationship between land use and transportation.

Plan for the travel needs of the all the region's population and determine effectiveness of various alternatives.

Provide a street and highway system that meets the long-term and short-term needs.

Reduce the potential for traffic accidents.

Encourage development of a system that minimizes environmental disruption.

Develop a system compatible with existing and future land use patterns.

Provide a system that promotes conservation of energy resources.

Provide an integrated system that enables best use of individual modes and multi-modal combinations (rail, truck, public transportation, bicycles, pedestrians, and air).

Major Findings:

Work trip travel times continue to increase, along with trip length.

Demands for urban paratransit services for persons with disabilities have increased, while cost of providing the service has increased significantly.

Lower density development on the urban fringes has sparked a difficult challenge to the provision of urban transit services, as well as bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Great strides have been made in the development of a regional trail system.

Rural services for the elderly and disabled are more difficult to serve and continue to be in great demand.

While no passenger rail service exists in the region, the Midwest Regional Rail System is through much of the planning process and is currently searching for funding to begin implementation.

There are two regional airports, and a number of transport/corporate, general utility, and basic utility airports located within the east central region, and two international airports outside of the region, all of which serve a strong economic development function in the region.

Truck movements account for 96 percent of all the region's freight attractions and destinations. Rail freight movement equals four percent with air-freight accounting for less than one-tenth of a percent.

Regional Issues:

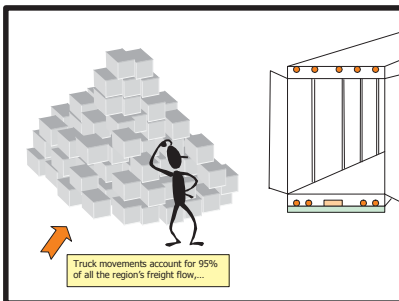
How can we?

Recognize transportation issues relating to development and congestion?
Focus on alternative transportation modes?
Promote mobility for all persons?

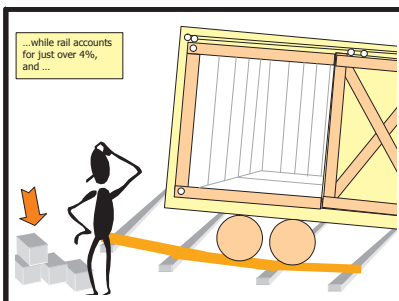
Respect the relationships between transportation and the environment?
Identify projects of regional significance?
Maintain existing funding levels and meet the demand for additional resources?

FREIGHT MOVEMENT

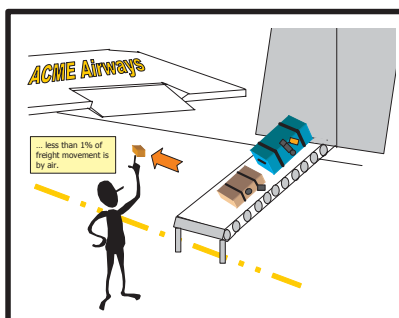
TRUCK



RAIL



AIR



A cost of sprawl development?

Aerial Photo of USH 10 provided by the Appleton Post Crescent

What's Next?

June 2003 – Visioning by Technical Committee.

July 2003 – Technical Committee:
o complete visioning.
o discuss issues identified by regional focus groups and Milestone Report 1.

July/August 2003 – Technical Committee:
o explore impact of current and projected trends.
o identify match/mismatch between envisioned future and probable future.
o begin to develop strategic goals relating to identified regional issues.

October – Milestone Report 2: Issues/ Opportunities and Visioning submitted to East Central Commission for approval.

December – Regional Public Information Meetings.



Topics:

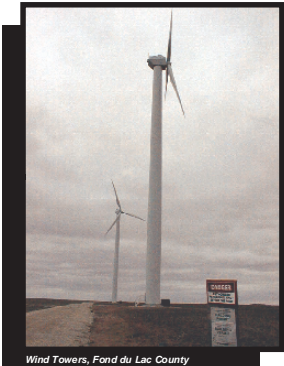
- Cemeteries
- Childcare Facilities
- Education
- Health Care Facilities and Services
- Libraries
- Police and Fire
- Sanitary Sewer and Wastewater Treatment
- Stormwater Management
- Solid Waste and Recycling Facilities
- Telecommunications
- Utilities - Gas, Electric

Major Findings:

- 25% of the Waste Water Treatment Facilities owners are concerned about plant capacity/ability to treat wastewater.
- Treatment of wastewater for future growth will be severely limited at some WWTF, unless system expansions are undertaken.
- Many drainage districts are concerned about the cumulative impacts of rural, scattered development on water quality.
- Solid waste tipping fees continue to be lower in Wisconsin than in any of the surrounding states.
- Trends show that there will be a continued demand for computers, cellular telephones & other digital communications devices, disposal of these devices is a cause for concern.
- A third of the public water systems have insufficient storage capacity in the event of power loss or equipment malfunction.
- Wisconsin does not have enough power generation within the State to meet the summer peak electricity demand and must rely on transmission lines to meet this demand and required reserve margin.
- The ANR gas pipeline on the west side of the Fox Cities and Lake Winnebago is constrained, while the pipeline on the east side has sufficient capacity to meet future needs.
- Natural gas usage is expected to increase dramatically over the next few years as new generation plants will be fueled almost exclusively by natural gas.
- Communities that work jointly with local school districts are able to stretch local dollars.

Existing Policies:

- Promote economical public facilities.
- Foster cooperation/coordination for services/utilities where, efficiency, equity and economies of scale can be obtained.
- Employ a comprehensive management approach for solid waste.
- Provide adequate facilities for a range of recreational activities compatible with the region's population and resources.



Wind Towers, Fond du Lac County



Johnston Elementary School, City of Appleton

Regional Issues:

How do we:

- Ensure availability of safe drinking water?
- Address the complexities of facility planning and siting?
- Promote public-private partnerships?
- Plan for natural disasters and terrorist activities?
- Deal with the demand and cost of utility and community facilities in rural areas as a result of increased residential development and urbanization?

How can we:

- Promote alternative energy sources?
- Promote the benefits of shared facilities and services?
- Promote communication and cooperative planning between municipalities and public and private organizations?
- Provide for adequate waste disposal and recycling facilities?
- Address the impacts of COMM83 on regional development patterns?
- Ensure that the impacts on existing facilities from future development proposals are taken into account?
- Promote the potential for non-profit organizations and faith based groups to increase their impact and work cooperatively with communities?



Sunnyview Landfill, Winnebago County



Waste Water Treatment Plant, City of Appleton



Water Tower, City of Waupaca

What's Next?

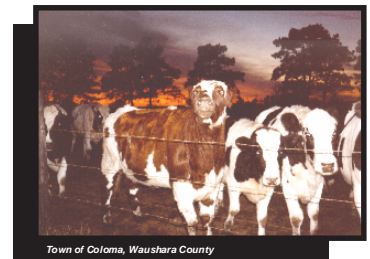
- June 2003 – Visioning by Technical Committees.
- July – Core Advisory Committee:
 - complete visioning.
 - discuss issues identified by regional focus groups and Milestone Report 1 & assign to technical committees.
- July/August – Technical Committees:
 - explore impact of current and projected trends.
 - identify match/mismatch between envisioned future and probable future.
 - begin to develop strategic goals relating to identified regional issues.
- September – Core Advisory Committee:
 - finalize work of technical committees.
- October – Milestone Report 2: Issues/ Opportunities and Visioning submitted to East Central Commission for approval.
- December – Regional Public Information Meetings.

Existing Policies:

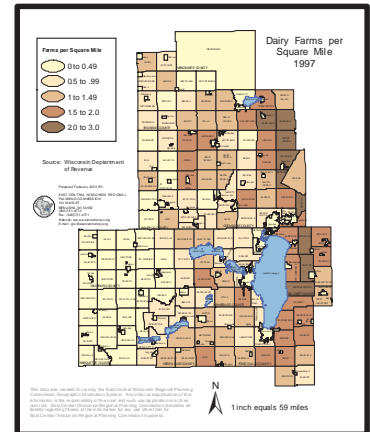
- Encourage appropriate and practical conservation oriented land and wildlife management practices.
- Promote management of renewable resources in ways compatible with sustained yield.
- Support land use patterns, which are consistent with soil suitability and other environmental considerations.
- Encourage development on lands not suitable for farming and community recreation.
- Maintain employment and increased income in the agricultural sector.
- Encourage contiguous planned development to eliminate the intermingling of farms and urban land uses.
- Preserve land suitable for the production of food and fiber to meet present and future needs.
- Promote adoption of exclusive agricultural zoning districts to insure that valuable farming lands are not lost or disrupted by incompatible urban land uses.

Major Findings:

- The majority of the region's soils are well suited for agriculture: dairy and grain farming are the primary agricultural operations.
- The number of dairy farms has decreased significantly. At the same time, production has increased slightly due to larger operations. The number of dairy mega farms will continue to increase, which may have significant land use impacts.
- Land taxed as agriculture has declined, especially near the major urban areas. Farmland losses will continue throughout the region and will accelerate near urban areas.
- Farmers will be retiring in greater numbers, resulting in potential greater losses of farms.
- Personal farm income is declining and lags the statewide average. Agricultural subsidies are an increasing proportion of farm income and will have greater impacts on agricultural production and farm operations in the future.
- Agricultural commodity sales are increasing due to the increase in farm size and more efficient farm operations.
- Dairy sales are predominant over crop sales while only representing approximately one-third of the farms.
- Agricultural land is being consumed and fragmented by urban expansion and scattered rural residential development



Town of Coloma, Waushara County



Regional Issues:

How can we:

- Protect prime agricultural soils that are under development pressure?
- Encourage young farmers to replace retiring farmers?
- Address the impacts that urban expansion and scattered development is having on agricultural land?
- Accommodate and address the impacts of mega-farms?
- Ensure that the 2002 Farm Act will have a positive impact on Wisconsin farmers?
- Improve the effectiveness of the farmland preservation and tax credit programs?
- Identify agricultural related initiatives that would support and promote farming in the region?



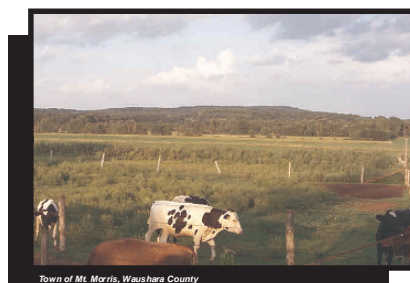
Town of Greenville, Outagamie County

What's Next?

- July 2003:
 - Begin visioning by Agricultural Advisory Committee.
- August 2003:
 - Complete visioning.
 - Discuss issues identified by regional focus groups and Milestone Report 1.
- August/September 2003 – Advisory Committee:
 - Analyze impact of current and projected trends.
 - Identify match/mismatch between envisioned future and probable future.
 - Develop strategic agricultural development goals.
- October 2003:
 - Milestone Report 2: Issues/ Opportunities and Visioning submitted to East Central Commission for approval.
- December 2003 – Regional Public Information Meetings.



Town of Greenville, Outagamie County



Town of Mt. Morris, Waushara County

Existing Policies:

Improve and protect surface and groundwater quality.

Improve and/or maintain high air quality.

Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas and promote the linking of these areas into environmental corridors.

Manage wildlife and wildlife habitat in a manner that maintains ecological stability and diversity while considering the social and economic impacts.

Protect non-metallic mineral deposit sites.

Ensure sufficient natural public open space is provided to meet the active and passive recreation needs of all residents while preserving and protecting the region's natural and cultural resources.

Promote the consideration of design and aesthetics as a means of ensuring that communities and the region as a whole remain attractive as places to live, work, and play.



Mecan River, Town of Richford, Waushara County

Major Findings:

Geologic Resources

The underlying bedrock and glacial geology (soils) serve as major determinants in the location and amount of future development within the region.

Unique geologic resources, such as the Niagara Escarpment and Terminal Moraine, are key features which define the aesthetics and character of the region.

Approximately 400 active and abandoned mines, pits and quarries exist within the region and are important sources of the raw materials necessary for the continued development of the region.

Groundwater Resources

The East Central region's communities utilize more than 170 million gallons per day of groundwater for public drinking needs.

Water use in Wisconsin has increased steadily overall for most categories of use since 1950 and that the quantity of groundwater from the deep aquifers has been declining rapidly (lowering as much as 2 feet per year) due to continued urbanization of the Fox Valley and impacts to recharge areas from rural development patterns.

The quality of groundwater within the region has generally been good, however; numerous areas of natural and man-made contaminants are present within various aquifer systems such as arsenic, nitrates, and bacteria.

Wetlands

The region's wetlands perform many important functions with respect to water quality, flood control, and wildlife habitat, as well as social functions such as open space, recreation and aesthetics.

Historic development trends have significantly impacted many of these wetland areas and continued urbanization and recreational development within the region will place pressure for the development or alteration of remaining wetland areas.

Floodplains

Floodplains not only store floodwaters, but they also reduce erosion and sedimentation. They can also help maintain water quality by filtering nutrients and promote infiltration and recharge of local and regional aquifers.

Floodplain areas have been considerably impacted within urbanizing portions of the region as a result of development over time.

Surface Waters

Seventeen out of sixty watersheds within the region have been designated as priority watersheds based on water quality concerns. Nearly all of the region's land area drains to the Lower Fox River system and then into Lake Michigan.

The use of the region's lakes for recreational purposes will continue to increase during the planning period bringing with it the potential for increased conflicts amongst their users (i.e., jet-skis vs. fishermen, etc.).

Ecological Resources

The region is classified as being part of seven (out of sixteen) distinct ecological landscape types. It has some of the highest concentrations of deer and pheasant in the state and supports large populations of ducks and geese.

Important warm-water fisheries in the region include the Fox River, Winnebago pool lakes and, the lower Wolf River.

Some of the best cold-water trout fisheries are found in the northern and western portions of the region and include 787.9 miles of Class 1 Trout streams, 332.3 miles of Class 2 Trout streams, and 30.1 miles of Class 3 Trout streams.

Woodlands & Grasslands

Approximately 30% of the region is covered in woodland or forest with Menominee, Shawano and Waushara Counties containing the most percentage of coverage.

The remaining woodland areas within the region continue to face severe pressures from development, with recreational demands for summer homes and hunting further dividing the ownership of large tracts, making them more vulnerable to fragmentation and increase user conflicts.

Endangered, Threatened and Concerned Species

A total of 2,317 "known occurrences", representing 615 different species and natural community types, have been listed by the WDNR as endangered or threatened within the region. Of these, four species types, (with 87 occurrences) have been listed as federally endangered or threatened by the State's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) database.

Open Space

There are about 125,000 acres of open space available to meet the needs of the region's 610,000 residents. This is twice the recommended standard adopted by the Commission in 1977.

There are over 3,000 acres of federally owned open space in the region which includes portions of the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge east of Waupun and the Fox River National Wildlife Area south of Montello. The Ice Age National Scenic Trail, which is designed as a footpath, also passes through the region.

Over 90% of the regional open space (113,000 acres) is owned by the WDNR, including two state parks, 47 State Natural Areas, and over 91,000 acres wildlife and fishery areas.

County-owned open space totals nearly 6,000 acres; school district lands contribute over 1,400 acres, and; over 100 miles of multi-use recreation trails exist in the region.

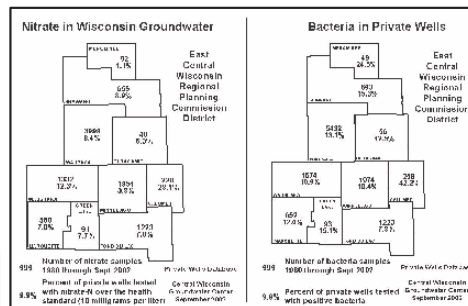
Declining levels of funding, from all sources, will need to be overcome in order to provide and maintain open space and recreational opportunities for existing and future residents of the region.

Regional Design & Aesthetics

Many areas of the region contain valuable natural and visual resources which leave positive impressions on those visiting the region or passing through, in turn supporting the regional economy, much of which is dependent on tourism-related activities tied to these resources.

About 30 different areas within the region were identified as "legacy places" by WDNR in a 2002 report, including such areas as the Niagara Escarpment – a highly visual geologic resource.

Man made structures such as housing, highways, telecommunication towers, wind power generation facilities, and billboards affect the region's landscape.



Regional Issues:

How can we:

Specifically identify and preserve non-metallic resources within the region, while proactively addressing land use conflicts associated with such resourcebased land uses?

Address the concern that exists about the future capability of the region's local and deep aquifer systems to provide the quantity and quality of groundwater required to meet the needs of the future population?

Maintain and improve surface water quality throughout the region?

Protect vegetation, habitats and endangered resources to maintain bio-diversity and preservation of the region's unique areas, such as the Niagara Escarpment?

Address the definition and application of "Environmentally Sensitive Areas" to ensure both adequate protection and continuity of resource corridors within the region?

Identify and preserve the overall quality of the region's natural resource base while facilitating economic development and recreational uses?

Promote coordinated, multi-jurisdictional planning efforts with respect to natural resources?

Address the shortfall in overnight and weekly camping sites, particularly in the western portions of the region, as well as provide additional trails and green spaces for the urbanizing portions of the region?

Promote the benefits of developing "community character" and a "sense of place" over homogenization and development that renders the region's landscape a hodgepodge of visual clutter insensitive to the region's resources?

Promote an understanding of the financial implications of sustaining the region's natural resource base? Specifically, as budgets become tighter, communities may wish to weigh in the balance, the relatively low costs of planning and protection versus the somewhat higher costs of clean-up and restoration.

Slow the loss of resources, and green space associated with them, as urban and rural development sprawl continues throughout the countryside?

What's Next?

June, 2003 - Core Committee:

- Review of Background Information (Milestone #1).
- Develop overall vision for the Natural Resources Element (Urban and rural).
- Develop draft sub-element vision statements for TAC consideration.
- Discuss identified issues/opportunities: clarify and amend; confirm those that move forward to TACs.

July/August, 2003 - TAC Workshops:

- Review Core Committee overall vision and sub-element visions.
- For identified issues/opportunities explore impact of current and projected trends.
- Identify match/mismatch between identified issues/opportunities and envisioned future.
- Develop goals to achieve future vision.

August, 2003 - Core Committee:

- Review TAC visions, issues, and goals.
- Develop general goals for Natural Resource Element.

September, 2003 - Core Committee:

- Review all previous work.
- Identify next steps in RCP process and additional information needs to assist in developing objectives and policy recommendations.
- Determine what information will be included in Milestone Report #2 (draft available for review at this time).

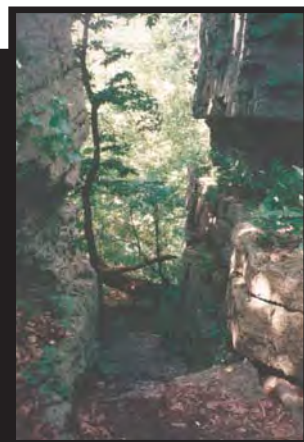
October, 2003 - ECWRPC Environmental Management & Open Space Committee:

- Review & Adoption of Milestone Report #2 (Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Elements).

October, 2003 - ECWRPC Full Commission:

- Review & Adoption of Milestone Report #2 (all elements).

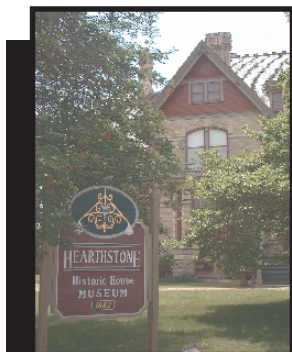
December, 2003 - Public Informational Meetings.



Niagara Escarpment, High Cliff State Park, Calumet County

Existing Policies:

- Identify and map all significant historical and cultural preservation areas within the region.
- Preserve areas of historical and cultural significance for public use and enjoyment.
- Minimize the impact of individual development proposals on historical and cultural resources.



Hearthstone - World's First Hydro Electric House, City of Appleton



Hockrodt Wetland Reserve, City of Menasha

Major Findings:

- There are 198 buildings, structures, objects, sites and districts, within the region, listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.
- The region is home to 2 National Historic Landmarks. The Fountain Lake Farm in the Town of Montello is associated with the life of naturalist John Muir. The Little White Schoolhouse in Ripon is where the Republican Party was founded in the 1850s.
- There are 18 Preservation Commissions.
- Four communities have Certified Local Government status through the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office.
- Three communities currently have Main Street status: Ripon, Tigerton and Waupaca.
- There are a number of local Historical Societies.
- It is important to know how to access relevant information when planning for cultural resources, and to have a sense of the distribution of each type of resource.
- It is important to be able to identify areas where surveys of cultural resources have not been conducted, or where surveys were conducted so long ago that the validity of the information is in question.

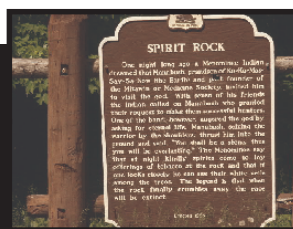
Regional Issues:

How can we:

- Improve the identification and inventory process for cultural resources, including archaeological sites?
- Address inadequacies in the surveying of cultural resources?
- How can we address some thematic holes in the historical record, particularly in terms of industrial sites along the waterways and lakes; agricultural sites associated with cheese-making; properties associated with indigenous populations and ethnic settlement groups such as the German, Dutch, and British?
- Ensure that local communities are aware of federal and state programs, such as the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program?
- How can we address communication and education issues to ensure that communities are aware of the existence and potential of Historic Preservation Programs?
- Promote networking and sharing of best practice examples between the preservation commissions within the region?
- Promote historic and cultural preservation as a means to benefit quality of life and create economic development opportunities?
- Promote historic preservation as an important tool in resisting the community homogenization that often results from "big box" developments?
- Plan for the preservation of government-owned historic buildings and the reuse of historic buildings over new construction?
- Support the three tribes within the region as they work to preserve their respective heritages?
- Address the fact that there are a number of communities in the region that are required to have local historic preservation ordinances, because of the presence of National Register listings, that do not have such ordinances in place?
- Assess the need for a regional clearinghouse for information relevant to local historic preservation commissions?
- Balance the benefits of cultural preservation with the costs involved?

What's Next?

- July, 2003:
 - Advisory Committee develops a vision for the protection and enhancement of our cultural resource heritage.
 - Identify issues and opportunities for preserving and enhancing the region's cultural resources.
 - Consider the impact of current and future trends, identified in the Milestone Report 1: State of the Region Report, on the long-term sustainability of our cultural resources.
- July/August, 2003:
 - Answer the question: Does our envisioned future coincide with our probable future based on current trends?
 - Advisory Committee begins to develop strategic goals that will help ensure achievement of the envisioned future.
- September, 2003:
 - Complete draft Milestone Report 2: Cultural Resources Element.
- October, 2003:
 - Submit Milestone Report 2: Issues/Opportunities & Visioning to the East Central Commission for adoption.
- December, 2003:
 - Regional Public Information Meetings.



Spirit Rock Monument, Menominee County



Lock No. 1, City of Appleton

Existing Policies:

Facilitate cost effective, centralized, compact and contiguous urban growth.

Encourage urban development that is environmentally sound and compatible with the natural resource base.

Facilitate urban levels of development where facilities and services are already available to support the development.

Encourage individual community character and identity.

Avoid intermingling urban and rural land uses.

Promote rural land development which meets the needs of rural residents and landowners in a compatible, cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

Provide government services in an efficient, environmentally sound, and socially responsible manner.

Ensure that sufficient open space is available to meet the recreational needs of all residents.

Preserve and protect natural and cultural resources.

Major Findings 1:

Between 1980 and 2000:

The amount of residential and commercial land more than doubled.

319,100 acres of farmland disappeared.

Equalized land values increased by 83%.

The largest increases in land values occurred in the swamp and wasteland, residential and commercial real estate categories.

Agricultural land values declined as a result of the change to use value assessment.

The average number of houses per square mile in the region increased from 33 houses per square mile to 43 houses per square mile.

Major Findings 2:

Additional land will be needed to accommodate future residential, commercial and industrial growth.

Accommodating this growth will require the conversion of existing agricultural, forest, swamp, waste and open space land to more intensive urban and exurban uses.

The amount of land needed to accommodate growth will be determined by the amount of growth coupled with policy decisions regarding net densities and intensities and zoning ordinance requirements.

The amount of land needed could be minimized by promoting redevelopment opportunities.

Regional Issues:

How do we:

Balance economic, environmental, and aesthetic considerations?

Address the conflicts that will arise given that the majority of future growth is expected to occur in the urban counties, which is where most of the region's more productive farmland is located?

Promote recognition of the relationship between the density of settlement and the amount and location of land consumed for housing, commercial and industrial uses and the cost of services?

Promote infill development, and redevelopment of vacant properties?

Promote land use patterns that maximize the delivery of effective and efficient public services (police, fire, roads, etc.)?

Provide adequate protection of natural, cultural and agricultural resources, while still accommodating the realities of exurban and rural development pressures?

Ensure the economic vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors in the context of a decrease in the amount of open space?

Balance the "right to farm" with expectations of exurban residents?

Reduce exurban and agricultural conflict issues?

Reduce conflicts between exurban and long term rural residents?

Balance property rights between individuals and balance property rights with broad community interests?

Maintain family farms in the face of increasing economic pressures and competition for land for other uses?

Protect surface waters and subsurface ground water from pollution resulting from rural and urban land uses?

Define rural character, then preserve it, once it is defined?



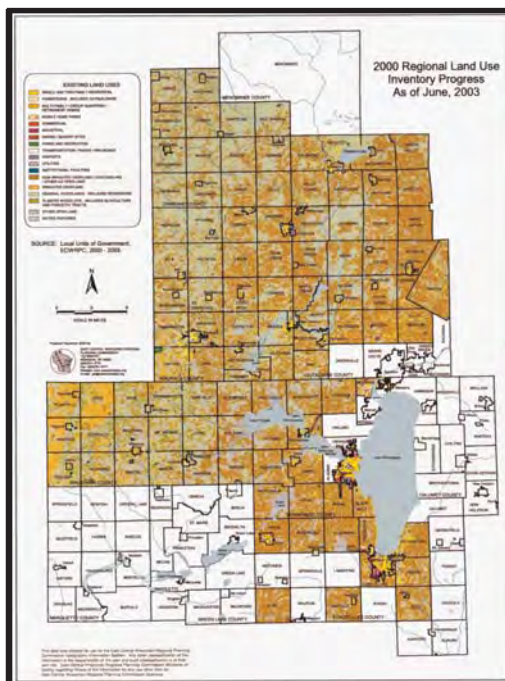
Lakeshore Development Iroquois Lake, Waushara County



Residential Encroachment on Farmland, Calumet County



Rural Land for Sale, Outagamie County



What's Next?

June 2003 – Visioning by Technical Committee

July 2003 – Technical Committee: complete visioning. Discuss issues identified by regional focus groups and Milestone Report 1

July/August 2003 – Technical Committee: explore impact of current and projected trends. identify match/mismatch between the envisioned future and probable future. begin to develop strategic goals relating to identified regional issues.

October 2003 - Milestone Report #2: Issues/Opportunities and Visioning submitted to East Central Commission for approval.

December 2003 - Regional Public Information Meetings

Purpose:

East Central has produced a State of the Region report for two reasons:

To provide useful, accessible information to people in their communities, local government staff and officials, and interest groups.

To collate baseline information that will enable us all to understand the basic make-up of the region and provide the foundation on which we will begin to plan for the future. This report along with input from the public participation process will enable East Central to take the next step in the regional planning process.

**Policy Integration:**

To achieve real progress, development of policies will need to be pursued in an integrated way:

Land use and transportation planning will have to be taken forward together. There will need to be close links between housing and economic development strategies.

Preserving rural character will require action on a variety of fronts.

In addition, protecting water quality, avoiding excessive long-term costs for infrastructure provision and maintenance, minimizing the fragmentation of ecosystems and curbing damage to environmentally sensitive areas will require a solid understanding of the interaction between urban and rural policies.

To move forward successfully will require close cooperation and partnership between the public, private, and voluntary sectors at the regional, county, and local levels.

**Regional Issues:**

There are two primary approaches that can be used to explore the impact that the trends identified in this report may have on the region.

First, for the trends that are most likely, for example, an aging population, an increasing number of households and a reduction in household size, we need to ask how we respond.

Second, for the areas of greatest conflict, we need to reexamine our basic assumptions about the issues and we need to ask are there better ways to address these challenges.

- New construction, reconstruction and expansion of highways, at considerable cost, seem to be the dominant current trend in transportation. How do we rethink how we deal with transportation issues relating to sprawl? How do we promote compact, mixed land use patterns that provide access, reduce social exclusion, and create livable communities, while being cost effective?
- The number of residential units in the region increased by 43% in the 20 years between 1980 and 2000, however the amount of residential land increased by 173%. How do we promote cost-effective redevelopment and development of land with existing or nearby community facilities while continuing to provide both housing choice and affordability?
- Approximately 320,000 acres of farmland were lost during this 20 year time period, an area larger than the entire area of Winnebago County. How do we protect farmland and preserve rural character while ensuring the continued economic vitality of the region?
- The region's natural resources, groundwater and surface water, lakes and open spaces are under increasing pressure from both the urbanization of our rural areas and greater than ever recreational use. How do we ensure the protection of our natural resources in the face of competing demands?

**What's Next?**

Developing a vision of our preferred future represents the next step in the regional planning process and will be the focus of Milestone Report #2: Issues, Opportunities and a Regional Vision. This report, which is scheduled for completion in October 2003, has three objectives:

To develop a vision for the future of the region.

Explore the impact of current and projected trends on the issues identified in the State of the Region report.

Identify core goals to help achieve the future we envision for ourselves and the next generation.

CHAPTER 3: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EAST CENTRAL WISCONSIN

Introduction

Visioning is a process in which the public discusses what type of future it wants to achieve. The vision statements presented in this report describe a year 2030 view of the sort of region we want to live in, in terms of our community, our environment, and our economy.

The regional vision and thematic vision statements presented in this chapter are based on the input received at a number of public participation events including regional focus groups, public information meetings, and technical advisory committees. The professional contribution of the East Central planning staff is also incorporated. A summary of the format and process of the public participation events, including representation is available on-line at www.eastcentralrpc.org. In addition, a full report on public participation in the planning process will be produced in due course.

The vision statements presented below reflect the issues the region is facing. These include the challenges of an aging population, the global economy and the loss of manufacturing jobs, the perceived lack of affordable housing, the environmental, social and economic consequences of sprawl, poor quality drinking water, and the desire to preserve rural character and maintain a distinct sense of place.

Core Concepts and Recurring Themes

Five core concepts run through the thematic vision statements that have been developed: choice, economy, equity, environment, and quality. These ideas reflect the beliefs, values, and priorities of people living and working in the region. They will therefore inform every aspect of the regional plan.

A number of key recurring themes have also emerged that are relevant across all areas of the plan. These include: provision of education/raising public awareness, merits of improved coordination and collaboration, importance of intergovernmental, interagency, and public/private sector cooperation, requirement for better communication, recognition of local responsibility, need for efficient and cost effective service provision, importance of communicating consequences, the value of best practice examples, necessity of exploring alternative and creative funding options, potential of regionalism, need for integrated, proactive, and sustainable planning that takes account of future generations, and the absolute necessity for implementation and monitoring.

An overall regional vision is presented below, along with the thematic vision statements for each substantive area of the plan.

A Regional Vision

In 2030, east central Wisconsin is a thriving, inclusive community. The region supports strong economic development while providing an excellent quality of life for all. The norms are consistent, balanced, and cost effective land use decisions, which promote the economic, social

and environmental well-being of the region and all of its citizens. Communities are smart about addressing growth issues in both urban and rural areas, and are successful in achieving a reasonable balance between individual property rights and community interests and goals.

The Economy

In 2030, the region has diversified employment opportunities including well paid knowledge based jobs. The regional economy benefits from advances in research and technology, and supports entrepreneurialism and local business ownership. The region conducts collaborative economic development efforts across jurisdictional boundaries of governments, educational institutions, and other economic development entities. The preservation of natural resource amenities supports tourism opportunities, assists in attracting an educated workforce and enhances the quality of place for residents in the region.

Housing

In 2030, a dynamic housing market fosters community and neighborhood cohesion. Varied types of quality housing are integrated with community facilities and various transportation alternatives. This housing market meets the needs of urban and rural households of all types, ages, income, cultures, and mobility status.

Transportation

In 2030, an efficient regional transportation network provides options for the mobility needs of all people, goods, and services.

Community Facilities

Efficient, cost effective community facilities are provided, which enhance the quality of life and ensure prosperity and economic stability for all. The emphasis in service provision is on cooperative planning, fostering collaboration, enhancing partnerships, sharing resources and transcending boundaries, as appropriate. In 2030, there are regional opportunities for the sustainable and safe management of solid waste and recycling, collection, processing and disposal activities. A well managed and planned public and private water supply provides for the region's citizens and industry. The region is served by a variety of well-functioning public and private wastewater treatment systems capable of accommodating future growth, while limiting the inherent conflicts caused by both urban and rural development patterns. Adequate, cost effective, environmentally friendly utility infrastructure exists to support industry and the general population. There are cost effective, efficient, quality, emergency and non-emergency services to ensure public safety. A variety of meaningful educational options and opportunities exist for all students. Children and adults in the region have access to educational, informational and recreational library services and materials. There is a collaborative regional forum to create and implement a strategic framework for the continuum of care for the health and well being of the residents of the region. Through cooperative efforts, park, open space, and recreational facilities and programs are protected and preserved and there are plans for new facilities. There are community facilities which meet the needs of various groups, including youth, elderly, and minorities, in a balanced and financially responsible manner.

Agricultural Resources

In 2030, agriculture is an important feature of the economy and lifestyle of the East Central region. Development pressures have been diverted away from farmland and ample, unfragmented, agricultural districts exist. Farming is practiced on the most productive soils. A variety of farm types and sizes are operating successfully. The region's farming community supplies both local and global markets. Citizens, local officials, and farmers are aware of and continuously address interrelated economic and land use issues. The viable and stable farm economy, in terms of farm income and prosperity, reflects concerted efforts by the private and public sectors to balance free market forces and government programs for land conservation.

Natural Resources

In 2030, the importance of natural resources, including their link to the regional economy and quality of life is recognized. Natural resource planning is sustainable, consistent and coordinated. The region's ecological resources are planned for and protected; there is a strong sense of ecological place. The Winnebago Pool Lakes and the Fox/Wolf River systems are recognized as the backbone of the region's ecological resources. Geologic resources significant from an aesthetic, scientific, cultural, historic, educational, or commercial extraction purpose have been identified and inventoried, and many are preserved and protected. The region proactively addresses public access, recreation, and trail facilities in order to meet the needs of its citizens; enhance the quality of life and environment; realize tax savings and other economic benefits; and maintain and improve the region's tourism economy. The region is comprised of well-defined urban and rural spaces which improve the individual's perception of 'sense of place', while communities within the region have maintained their individual character. Within the region, surface water resources are planned for in a comprehensive, watershed-based manner that embraces and encourages the use of 'green infrastructure' concepts. There is proactive protection of natural features that not only contribute to water quality, but also to the long term sustainability and economic benefit of the region. The region is served by a variety of well-functioning public and private wastewater treatment systems capable of accommodating future growth while limiting the inherent conflicts caused by both urban and rural development patterns.

Cultural Resources

In 2030, the region is recognized as a leader in the state, for preservation of its cultural resources, by providing public access to resource protection tools, and the political advocacy necessary to ensure protection for, and appreciation of, our diverse ethnic heritage.

Land Use

In 2030, efficient regional land use patterns foster healthy communities, individual community identity, and respect the natural environment.

Conclusion

Once an envisioned future was identified, we began to explore the impact of the trends identified in the *State of the Region Report (2003)*, and throughout the planning process to date. Specifically we identified the match or mismatch between the vision for the future and the likely future given current and anticipated trends. Through this process we have been able to move forward and determine the core goals that will enable us to achieve the envisioned future.

Chapters 4 through 11 of this report focus on this process for each of the substantive issues: economic development, housing, transportation, community facilities, agriculture, natural and cultural resources and land use.

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Until recently, east central Wisconsin, like the rest of the nation, benefited from the greatest national economic expansion in history. However, global and political events, and changes in both business cycles and world trade patterns have culminated into an evolution of the national economy. This economy has shifted the conditions that businesses must compete under in order to succeed and has caused thousands to lose their jobs who now face the challenge of re-training for new employment. One tool that can be used to deal with these dramatic changes and improve the economic well being of residents in our region is proactive economic development and planning to help weather the highs and lows of the global and national economy.

This chapter begins with a description of coordination that has taken place thus far in the planning process, as well as the interaction and connection between economic development and all of the other elements required in a comprehensive planning process. A vision statement was developed for economic development and is presented in this chapter. Five fact sheets address the economic development issues, which the regional plan will address. Key Findings and core goals conclude this chapter and point the way to *Milestone Report 3: Goals and Strategies for Action*.

Cooperation

Staff invited local staff of municipalities and economic development related organizations, University Extension staff and representatives from the private sector, particularly the paper industry, to provide input and guidance during this planning effort. As the need arose for a particular type of expertise, additional individuals were consulted during this process. East Central has completed a *Directory of Technical Advisory Committee Members*, October 2003, which list participants for all elements of the regional plan.

The Economic Development Technical Advisory Committee (referred to as committee) communicated via e-mail and in some cases U.S. mail, to conduct initial committee business of the regional comprehensive planning process. The topics and results of committee activities are as follows:

- Visioning Exercise (April 2003). The committee was asked to complete a 3 question visioning questionnaire. They were asked, in terms of economic development in the East Central Region, "What would you like to see preserved?", "What would you like to see changed?", and "What would you like to see created?" A master list of all responses was compiled to draw information from to complete the vision statement.
- Creation of an Economic Development Vision Statement (July 2003). From the visioning exercise, staff created a vision statement for the committee's review. The vision statement that resulted from these responses and reviewed by the Committee is included later in this chapter.

- Clarification of Issues (July 2003). Staff submitted to the committee the list of issues that were raised during public participation efforts, focus group discussions held thus far in the regional planning process. There were asked to review the issues and determine if the issues were regional in scope and if they were essential to formulating future policies directing economic development efforts. The committee elected to retain all of the issues that had been identified previously. These issues are listed later in this chapter.
- Review of Fact Sheets (April, 2004). To address the issues on a broader scale “Fact Sheets” were developed. These Facts Sheets are intended to provide a discussion of issues that have been raised, to provide an explanation of why action needs to be taken, describe some current actions to address all or part of the issues and to bring forward some core goals to consider during the planning process.

Statement of Interaction with Other Planning Elements

Economic development is connected with all of the elements in the comprehensive plan. This section updates discussion and progress made at this point between economic development and the seven other planning elements.

Housing

Economic growth in the region will generate more jobs and, consequently, a need for greater housing availability and choices. The issues associated with an increase in the number of households include the small range of available housing choices and the lack of affordable houses in the region's housing stock. Current and future changes in the demographics of the region indicate a need for housing beyond the traditional, single family residential, which is typically designed for two parent households with children. In terms of affordability, the housing committee has expressed concern regarding low wage employment and housing for these employees. Lower wage service sector industries, such as retail, leisure and hospitality, and accommodation and food services currently provide approximately 23 percent of the private employment in the region. As these industries expand and pay remains at the minimum wage level, housing affordability becomes a greater concern.

Transportation

Facilitating commerce in the state is a function of the region's transportation system. Adequate access to all transportation modes will be essential in supporting industry growth in the region. Regional investments for transportation infrastructure involve the direct construction costs followed by the maintenance costs and indirect costs. “Sprawl” development represents one of the primary indirect costs to the region. Faster travel opportunities on newly expanded or newly built roadways increases the likelihood that people will move further away from developed areas because they are able to travel more quickly to their place of work and on other related trips.

Community and Public Facilities

Shared issues between economic development and community facilities include thoughtful planning for the siting and/or expansion of facilities like sewer service and wastewater treatment plants, providing an adequate supply of municipal water, meeting the demands for telecommunication infrastructure and energy, and the provision of educational opportunities. The issue of the cost and supply of energy has been raised in terms of its impact on businesses and farming operations that use high volumes of energy for production processes. As a result of global and national events, the security and dependability of the region's energy supply is also of concern. For education, the most pressing short term need appears to be the re-training of displaced workers, most of who were formerly employed in manufacturing operations. Committee members have also stated the need for more health care workers to meet the demand for health care services. Additional consideration will need to be given to the educational needs of the region's future labor pool. The education and training of the region's children will need to meet the needs of employers and result in greater numbers of educated young adults who can, ideally, begin their careers in the state of Wisconsin.

Agricultural Resources

While agriculture and agriculture related industry groups are some of the smaller employment groups in the region, they are still very important as they represent a part of Wisconsin's heritage. One of the many challenges facing Wisconsin's agricultural community is the preservation of prime agricultural soils and altering the perception that development of these productive soils has no impact on the future of farming in Wisconsin. The future of family farms is of concern as fewer and fewer children are choosing to take over farming operations. Related to the decline of family farming is the increased industrialization of farming in the form of mega farms. Environmental impacts, land use conflicts and food safety issues are all tied to large scale farming and to the overall changes occurring in the farming industry.

Natural Resources

Balancing the demands of economic growth with the preservation of natural amenities is a challenge for the region. Feedback into this process and results of planning and projects at the local level have shown support for the preservation of open spaces, surface and ground waters such as the Fox River and Lake Winnebago, the Niagara Escarpment and vast woodland areas in the region. There is also the recognition that support for these amenities is necessary to maintain and in some cases improve the quality of life for residents and that they offer another attraction tool for workers to the region. Protecting resources also serves as an impetus for tourism opportunities.

Cultural Resources

Both the natural and cultural elements provide opportunities for enhanced quality of place for current residents, and can also serve as tools for expanding the educated workforce of the region. Diversity, art, and music are attributes identified by economic development experts as important qualities municipalities should focus attention to in order to improve and enhance cultural richness.

Diversity in people and diversity in design are important for transitioning into the future while honoring the architectural resources of the past. Historic preservation has been identified as a tool, one that is currently underutilized, that can be used to enhance unique qualities found in the region's communities. Design standards and historic preservation programs can help to minimize the homogenization of the region's downtown and commercial areas.

Land Use

The development of land can impact the value of land as well as the quality of life within that community. Ideally, the siting of commercial and industrial land uses should have minimal environmental impacts and are located near the necessary infrastructure. Redevelopment of areas classified as grey and brownfields, and restoring and supporting downtown areas are important to both large and small communities. Linking these ideal land use patterns is traditional neighborhood design which promotes the co-location of commercial, industrial and residential land uses. Traditional design offers alternative transportation and recreational opportunities in the form of walking and biking to, for example, a vibrant main street area!

Economic Development Vision Statement

The visioning exercise was described earlier in this report. From the overall list of responses, staff created a vision statement for the Committee's review. After two iterations, the economic development vision statement is:

"The East Central Region has diversified employment opportunities including well paid knowledge based jobs. The regional economy benefits from advances in research and technology and supports entrepreneurialism and local business ownership. The region conducts collaborative economic development efforts across jurisdictional boundaries of governments, educational institutions, and other economic development entities. The preservation of natural resource amenities supports tourism opportunities, assists in attracting an educated workforce and enhances the quality of place for residents in the region."

Issues / Opportunities – Fact Sheets

The following fact sheets discuss the key economic issues identified to date in the planning process. Some issues were combined, where appropriate. Each fact sheet presents information on key facts, why action is necessary, current activities and concludes by identifying core goals that will enable us to work toward achieving the envisioned future.

The Changing Regional Economy

FACT SHEET: ED1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Changes in the region's economic base have been occurring since the 1990s. Growth in service industries soared 50% between 1990 and 2000, compared with a 13% increase in manufacturing employment. In March of 2000, the region's manufacturing employment peaked. In the months that followed minor losses occurred. Since the recession, beginning in March 2001, there have been severe reductions in the number of manufacturing jobs. Between 2000 and 2003, there has been a loss of 22,575 manufacturing jobs in the region.¹ Nationally, between 2000 and 2002 there have been 2 million jobs lost.²

For the region, the impacts are evident. Unemployment levels are higher. Workers who have been able to find replacement employment earn lower wages. Studies have found that payroll per employee in manufacturing is 118% of the overall U.S. average.³ Manufacturing jobs in the region have traditionally been very well paid, thus making it even more difficult for families that have experienced manufacturing job losses.

Continued growth has, however, occurred in some service industries. The region overall experienced growth in Information, Finance Activities, Professional and Technical

Services, and Education and Health Service industry groups. These industries tend to pay higher wages, even more so in urban counties, and comparatively higher with respect to other service industries in rural counties.

So What!

There are two major concerns. First, is the loss of manufacturing jobs. Second, many of the industries that are growing pay lower wages, in some cases up to 20% less.⁴

A long term change in income levels will lower the standard of living for many families. It will erode the "middle class" income family, which was established primarily through the growth and development of manufacturing industries. Less income translates into fewer dollars for consumption, taxes, education, and healthcare for every member of Wisconsin families, especially our children.

Current Action

Many organizations, both public and private, are responding to these economic changes. This list is not all inclusive but highlights some initiatives that have taken place:

Governor Doyle's Grow Wisconsin Plan, September 2003. The Governor developed a plan outlining a vision and strategy to create good paying jobs and a "high end" economy. It focuses on: fostering a competitive business climate, investing in people to climb the economic ladder, investing in Wisconsin businesses to encourage job creation and

¹ WI. Dept. of Workforce Development, Table 202, 1st Quarters 2000 & 2003.

² "Challenges & Options for Wisconsin Component Manufacturing", June 2003, Center on Wisconsin Strategy.

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Job Watch: A Shift to Low Wage Jobs in Wisconsin", February. 2004, Center on Wisconsin Strategy.

making government responsive, and reforming regulation without sacrificing shared values.

Wisconsin Economic Summits I & II, Wisconsin University System & Partners, 2000-2002. During Governor McCallum's tenure, a "Build Wisconsin" initiative occurred to develop strategic direction for the state's economy. The effort included a public, private, nonprofit and educational partnership. Summits were held around the state to address these issues (and others): worker shortages, brain drain, venture capital investment, technology business development, and strengthening existing industries

Paper Industry Economic Cluster Initiative, 2003. The Wisconsin Paper Council was charged with developing specific recommendations to maintain and enhance the economic health of the paper industry in Wisconsin. The recommendations from this initiative included 3 priority issues: reforming the tax structure, streamlining the environmental regulatory system, and creating a low cost reliable energy system.

Building the New Wisconsin Economy, Civic-Journalism Project, 2003-2004. This is a 2 year project designed to foster public discussion about the importance of economic development in Wisconsin. It is a cooperative effort bringing media, education, business and labor together to provide information about ongoing economic development activities. The sponsors of this effort are American Transmission Company, Miller Brewing Company, Wisconsin Education Association, Wisconsin Realtors Association and the Wood Communication Group.

Northeast Wisconsin (N.E.W.) Economic Opportunity Study, 2003-2004. The Fox Valley and Bay Area Workforce Development Boards are working in partnership with local elected officials, economic development professionals to raise awareness about the new economy, the means to attract people and develop businesses in the region, and to develop economic and workforce related strategies for the new economy.

Core Goals

1. Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities.
2. Work to promote a positive, growth oriented image to attract businesses and to foster an entrepreneurially supportive environment.
3. Increase an awareness of on going economic activities in the area.

In terms of manufacturing:

4. Evaluate the potential for overall modernization, customized manufacturing, and component manufacturing.
5. More effectively link and apply research and development and technology to production processes.
6. Communicate that the foundation of industrial competitiveness lies in the value an employee adds to a product or service.
7. Strengthen linkages between industry needs and technical education initiatives.

For lower paying service industries:

8. Explore partnerships within industry groups, for example, leisure and accommodations, that focus on reductions in worker turnover and increases in worker mobility within the industry groups.

Workforce and the Regional Economy

FACT SHEET ED2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Essential to the success of the region's economy is access to a well-trained and educated workforce.

Experts contend that as the baby boom generation retires, the echo boom generation, similar in size, will become the next labor pool of workers. This new generation requires jobs that pay livable wages. Furthermore, the echo boom generation needs "replacement jobs" - jobs that will replace the manufacturing jobs that no longer exist and replacement jobs for positions that are currently being outsourced to other countries.¹ Outsourcing is no longer just lower paid service jobs, but has begun to include office positions such as human resources, book keeping and other financial management positions. The challenge will be matching the skills the market demands with the training and education provided to our future workers.

While we are bombarded with news of job losses and outsourcing, there has been some identified need for appropriately trained workers for now and in the future. For example, the National Association of Manufacturers has produced a report describing a projected shortage of skilled workers by 2010.² There is and will continue to be a need for workers in the field of health care for positions such as registered

nurses, radiologists, and home health care aides.

The region will need to provide opportunities for the training and education of its workers. Also important, especially to employee retention, is the opportunity for advancement within an industry. Finally, creating employment opportunities to attract educated workers from outside the region as well as for the future labor pool in the region is fundamental.

So What!

The Census Bureau reports that 23% of Wisconsin residents over 25 have a bachelor degree or higher. When comparing this figure to other states, Wisconsin ranks 30th and falls below the national average (25%). The Bureau also reports that a person with a bachelor degree can expect to earn \$2.1 million over the course of a career, nearly *double* what the expected earnings are for a high school graduate. These figures demonstrate the quantifiable economic strength a person develops by receiving an education. Whether the education is in the form of a four year degree, or specialized technical training, the relationship is undeniable that education is the key to greater earning potential. Earning potential aside, education and life-long learning benefits all of us.

In the past, manufacturing jobs required only a high school diploma. With manufacturing jobs declining and the importance of education beyond high school increasing a mismatch is occurring. To prevent our region

¹ "The New Exports: Office Jobs", Urban Land Institute, 2004.

² Keeping America Competitive: How a Talent Shortage Threatens U.S. Manufacturing." National Association of Manufacturers, 2003.

and Wisconsin from moving further away from the direction the economy is moving in, there will need to be a better connection between education and training and available jobs in the new marketplace.

Current Action

Many organizations, both public and private, are responding to these economic changes. This list is not all inclusive but highlights some initiatives that have taken place:

- H-1B Skills Training Program (From the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998), U. S. Department of Labor. This program was designed to increase the number of H-1B visas granted each year to highly skilled foreigners to work in the U.S. These workers were to fill positions that were not being filled with U.S. workers. The fees from the visas provided seed money to create training programs for U.S. workers to develop the skills that were in short supply.
- NEWERA Educational Resource Alliance. This effort is a consortium of leaders of 13 public colleges and universities in northeast Wisconsin. This group seeks to foster regional partnerships to better serve the educational needs of the 1.2 million people of northeast Wisconsin. Their goals are to collaboratively serve northeast Wisconsin with a quality, seamless education, provide essential resources for communities, business and government, and promote economic development and stability.
- Northeast Wisconsin (N.E.W.) Economic Opportunity Study, 2003-2004. The Fox Valley and Bay Area Workforce Development Boards are working in partnership with local elected officials, and economic development professionals to

raise awareness about the new economy, the means to attract people and develop businesses in the region, create stronger linkages between companies, and to develop economic and workforce related strategies for the new economy.

Core Goals

1. Encourage partnerships between the public and private sector to identify skills and knowledge needed for emerging jobs
2. Communicate with elected officials regarding increased training opportunities for dislocated workers
3. Work with school districts to evaluate the value of creating partnerships to track the path of high school graduates and those who do not complete high school
4. Continue partnerships with technical colleges to enhance training opportunities

Economic Impacts of Residential Development

FACT SHEET: ED3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The costs of developing land can, in some cases, be easily quantified. A new road, for example, has obvious construction and maintenance costs. However, the hidden costs such as the loss of land serving as habitat for plant and wildlife, the loss of flood control and aquifer recharge areas, the reduction in the quality of life, are not so easily quantified.

Continuing with the new road scenario, let's take the next step and build houses along the road. Add a few cul de sacs for that quasi neighborhood feel and we have the beginning of an unplanned, sprawl development. The superficially affordable cost of transportation paired with a perceived endless supply of undeveloped land in Wisconsin contributes to unchecked development. There is, however, a cost associated with residential development. Described below are two studies that assign some dollar values to these costs.

First is a study completed by University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Professor Kevin McGee. It found that residential uses outside of urban areas cost county governments about \$500 more per household than urban households. The study cites a \$180 per household differential for highway spending and a \$120 per household differential for public safety costs. This is essentially a subsidy ranging from \$150 - \$350 annually provided by urban residential households.¹

¹ "Taxpayers Subsidize Urban Sprawl," Post Crescent, September 10, 2003.

The second study is of 58 communities in 18 different states completed by the American Farmland Trust. The results of the study found that for every \$1 million in tax revenues these communities received from farm/forest/open space and from industrial/commercial land uses, the median amount they had to expend to provide services was \$370,000 and \$290,000, respectively. However, for every \$1 million in revenues received from residential development, the median expense for service provision was \$1,150,000.²

So What!

Development in outlying areas also detracts from downtown and/or main street areas. Undeveloped tracts of land attract "big box" retailers to meet the "needs" of the consumers living in the newly built housing developments. Therefore, in addition to the costs cited earlier, main streets are negatively impacted when shoppers no longer spend their time and money in downtown stores and restaurants.

Government budgets remain tight while the demand for services will at best remain stable, but more likely will increase. These service demands are largely from residential development which has been found to exacerbate not contribute to government budgets in many instances. In Wisconsin, property taxes are the largest source of

² "Parks and Economic Development", American Planning Association, PAS, 502 November, 2001.

state and local tax revenues. Property taxes pay for public schools, police and fire protection, parks, libraries, road construction and maintenance, health care and technical colleges. Residential property made up almost 50% of all taxable property in 1975. By 2002 it increased to 72%.³ There already is a heavy burden placed on residential property owners and when land values continue to rise the tax burden becomes even greater. In the end, something will change. Will it be the tax structure, tax rates or the level of service provision? All of these services contribute to our quality of life and provide us with imperative education and training for employment. The issue of service demand and strained government budgets will remain an ongoing debate; however, continued sprawl residential development will only make the financial questions more difficult to answer.

home values, attractive to "new" economy workers, attractive to tourists, and the health benefits.

4. Build community identity by revitalizing main streets and downtowns.
5. Engage in relationship building between communities to facilitate the provision of shared services.

Current Action

Wisconsin Smart Growth Law, 1999. This legislation updated Wisconsin's planning requirements. It includes a definition of a comprehensive plan, contains nine elements that must be addressed and provides some guidance to assist communities in preparing a plan.

Core Goals

1. Promote the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.
2. Encourage planning to guide community development to maximize the use of existing infrastructure, minimize costs, and minimize environmental impacts.
3. Promote the benefits of "walkable communities": higher density and mixed land uses. These benefits include higher

³ "Bigger Tax Burden Hits Home" Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, August 3, 2003.

Economic Benefits of Recreation & Natural Resources

FACT SHEET: ED4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The East Central Region is home to many wonderful natural resources including the Lake Winnebago System and the Niagara Escarpment, to just name a few. These resources and others found in the region contribute to the quality of life that makes east central Wisconsin such a unique and special place to live.

Listed below are three ways natural resources and parks add value to an area.

Enhancement of Real Estate Value and Property Tax Base. In some cases, increases in property values are linked to their proximity to parks, trails and/or natural resource areas. This increase in value translates into higher property taxes paid to the municipality. The real estate market has demonstrated how the value of land increases over time in areas, for example, close to lakes and trails.

Tourism Opportunities. Much of the time, pleasure travel is influenced by attractions. The abundance of natural resources in the East Central Region and elsewhere in Wisconsin is a tourism opportunity that should continue to be supported. While cultural and commercial events also provide opportunities for tourists, the strength in Wisconsin lies in its natural landscape. Natural resources and parks are managed by the public sector which means this sector can be a driving force to enhance access to and the preservation of resources that serve as attractions to visitors.

Attracting businesses and workforce. Business and workforce attraction are inextricably linked. One of the key factors cited by companies when evaluating communities to locate in is the "quality of life" or "quality of place". Quality of place is defined in part by access to parks, natural resources and recreational opportunities. Areas that can offer these things have an advantage in attracting businesses and the necessary workforce.

In terms of costs, open spaces do not require the same level of municipal services that residential or other developed uses require. Generally the greatest cost is the land acquisition and over time the cost will be returned through appreciation of adjacent land values.

So What!

Experts have reported that the quality of place is especially important to knowledge-based industries, which is an essential component of the "new" economy. It is also reported that this factor surpasses financial incentives offered to companies because all communities offer incentive packages, but the quality of life is a unique commodity a community can market to attract higher paying, knowledge based industries.

The public sector can make accessibility to parks, recreation and natural resources a priority. Not only does this serve as a business attraction tool, but it also enhances the community for residents who already live there.

Current Action

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, (WDNR) Stewardship Program. This program is a comprehensive approach to meet land conservation and recreation needs across the state. It is composed of 5 elements: land acquisition, local assistance, property development on State lands, Baraboo Hill (conservation of hardwood forests in this area) and bluff protection.

WDNR, Land Legacy Program. This program was initiated in 1999 to identify places in the state critical to meeting Wisconsin's conservation and recreation needs for the next 50 years. In 2002, a report was issued listing "Land Legacy Places". Chapter 8, Natural Resources, in Milestone Report 1 lists 40 identified "Land Legacy Places" in the East Central Region.

Green Infrastructure Planning: Green infrastructure is defined as the natural life support system that exists in a community or region. The concept represents an interconnected network of protected land and water that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to the health and quality of life for communities and people. Green infrastructure is a new conservation approach that allows land planners and conservation professionals to forge a stronger link between land use and land preservation. The Town of Greenville, Outagamie County has recently embarked on a 'GreenPrint' planning process which embraces some of the green infrastructure concepts. Once completed, this plan will assist the Town in making these vital linkages between existing land uses, future greenspace networks and natural functions of the environment.

Core Goals

1. Promote the economic benefits of natural resources, parks, and recreation.
2. Recognize the importance of open spaces by encouraging its inclusion into community design.
3. Elevate the value attached to parks and open spaces to that of the value placed on development.
4. Improve access and promote recreational activities along the Fox River corridor. Along river corridors, creating new ideas and meeting high standards for natural resource enhancement is an important challenge that should be met.

Buying Food Locally FACT SHEET:ED 5

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

While most industries are trying to expand their markets globally, there are small movements within the agriculture industry emphasizing the buying of food that is grown locally. Wisconsin and other states with strong agricultural sectors are responding in part to some of the negative impacts of globalization and to the shift away from family farming to the economically-induced industrial strength farming.

Support for community-based agriculture has been growing since the 1990s and is promoted in programs such as "Buy Fresh, Buy Local", a national campaign, and in Wisconsin's "Savor Wisconsin" program. The intent of these programs is to link consumers and businesses with food producers in local areas. These initiatives aim to reduce food imports and increase reliance on local and regional food production.

Positive economic impacts can be realized from community-based agriculture. For example, 30% of participating farmers in a pilot study of the Buy Fresh program in northeast Iowa experienced an 11% increase in gross sales and some even experienced 20% or greater sales increases.¹ For the individual farmer this is significant and for the restaurants and consumers buying directly this is an economically and socially beneficial relationship.

¹ Des Moines Register "Linking Growers and Consumers", April 2004.

When artificially low transportation costs provide us with food that has been shipped thousands of miles, it removes us from our own area's food specialization capabilities, removes us from the people who produce our food, and standardizes our food choices, which pushes us as a society toward uniformity and homogeneity.

So What!

The benefits of purchasing food locally are not just economic. Food is a powerful element of our culture and heritage. Corrado Barberis, the President of the National Institute of Rural Sociology, states it best by saying "...a cultural heritage also has an economic value...[Our local products] are the creation of a body of farmers and tradespeople who have expressed the spirit of the land, their ideologies, their way of living through their products. That's why it's a question of cultural heritage."²

Furthermore, eating produce that travels great distances can reduce vitamins and nutrients in these foods. This raises another consideration which is the relationship between nutrition and our health. Health care costs are rising (and obesity levels are rising too, especially in Wisconsin - see Governor Doyle's fitness challenge!) which strains household incomes and businesses' ability to provide health care coverage. Buying seasonal, locally grown food benefits the grower, the buyer, the consumer's health and, of course, our local economies.

² Pertini, Carlo. *Slow Food*. 2001.

Current Action

"Buy Fresh, Buy Local" is a national campaign that was started in the 1990s in Massachusetts and has expanded to 9 states. Its goal is to connect consumers, restaurants, supermarkets, and other retailers to sources of locally grown foods while seeking to increase the pool of participating farmers.

Savor Wisconsin is a project initiated in 2002. It is guided by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, U.W. Extension, and the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association. This program also focuses on linking consumers to producers in Wisconsin.

Core Goals

1. Look at ways to expand the market options for family farmers
2. Work with communities to promote the power they have to make food choices that support local farmers
3. Work to improve the accessibility of information about local growers and how consumers can purchase seasonal, locally grown food

Economic Development: Key Findings

Vision Statement

"The East Central Region has diversified employment opportunities including well paid knowledge based jobs. The regional economy benefits from advances in research and technology and supports entrepreneurialism and local business ownership. The region conducts collaborative economic development efforts across jurisdictional boundaries of governments, educational institutions, and other economic development entities. The preservation of natural resource amenities supports tourism opportunities, assists in attracting an educated workforce and enhances the quality of place for residents in the region."

Issues /Opportunities

The major regional issues listed below were presented in Milestone Report #1. From this list the technical advisory committee elected to keep all of the issues and chose to make some additions to pursue during this planning process.

To present and discuss the issues, "Fact Sheets" were created to summarize key points. Each fact sheet presents key information, why action is necessary, current activities and programs and concludes by identifying core goals. For the purposes of the fact sheet presentation, the issues were grouped together into the following categories:

The Changing Regional Economy

This fact sheet is a broader discussion of the decline and stagnation of the "old" economy which in East Central Wisconsin translates into the high number of manufacturing job losses. It also discusses the "new" economy and the need for business and industry expansion into knowledge-based employment.

- How can we address the impact of the global economy, specifically mergers and takeovers, which have resulted in the closing down and the exporting of local businesses: in turn leading to a decline in the manufacturing base in the Fox Valley?
- How can we retain, preserve, and attract industry and businesses that will create good quality jobs that pay a living wage?
- How can we encourage/support entrepreneurship and new business starts?

Economic Benefits of Recreation and Natural Resources

This sheet is intended to discuss the quantifiable benefits that natural resources contribute to our region and how the value of these areas should not be overlooked.

- How can we address the conflicts that exist between economic development and environmental preservation, especially in the rural areas of the region, where citizens are concerned about retaining the rural character of their communities while ensuring economic vitality?
- How can we provide ample and varied locations for new businesses and business expansions?

- How can we redevelop or revitalize existing older industrial areas?

Workforce and the Regional Economy

A very important component of the region's economy is the existing and future workforce. Exploring ways to prepare our workers to thrive in the region is essential to a healthy regional economy.

- How can we address the "brain drain" from the counties, region and state? Young people are leaving because there are limited good quality career and job opportunities. In addition, wages are low when compared with other parts of the state and region.
- How can we prepare for potential labor shortages?

Agriculture in the East Central Region

The agriculture and land use elements explore in greater detail the challenges facing the agricultural industry and family farming, therefore in this element the focus is on the steps that can be taken at the local and regional level to make a positive impact for local food producers and the local economy.

- How can we address the consequences of current farm economics, whereby the farm wage is insufficient to support a household and farmers are selling off their land for development to secure their retirements?

Economic Impacts of Residential Development

This fact sheet is addressing residential land uses and their associated costs. It also discusses the need for collaboration in tackling sprawl and balancing the expectations of service provision and the actual costs of providing services to residents.

- How can we assess the real costs and benefits of commercial development, including utilities and services, outside the urban area?
- How can we ensure that communities take full advantage of opportunities to work together and share services to benefit the region as a whole?
- How can we resolve the conflicts that exist between the desire for good public services and the aspiration for lower taxes?
- How can we create and strengthen public-private partnerships to provide services?

Match / Mismatch Between Envisioned and Probable Future

When looking at the current situation in our region there is cause for concern in that certain segments of the economy are not proceeding in the way the envisioned future is described in the economic development vision statement. Specific concerns that will need to be addressed for desired economic growth to occur include:

- Continued and increased emphasis will need to be made on supporting entrepreneurs and on fostering an environment for others to take risks and become entrepreneurs to increase local business start-ups.
- The region's economic base is composed of a large manufacturing sector that has been negatively impacted since the 2001 recession. Steps will need to be made to match worker skills with industry needs when hiring does occur. Also, advances in technology and company investment will need to occur to enhance industry competitiveness.
- The service sector is growing in the region overall; however, growth needs to occur in knowledge-based industries. These higher paying industries will need to become a stronger presence in the region in order to supplement employment losses in the high paying manufacturing sector and to increase the diversification of the economy.
- Collaborative efforts in the region are very present. The challenge lies in the effective implementation of group findings as well as the resources to proceed with implementation.
- Resources are also important to preserve natural amenities, create recreational opportunities and to enhance cultural attractions. This is a current need and will continue to be one in the future. The priority of maintaining and enhancing the region's "quality of place" is necessary to attract new workers and to retain the ones we have.

Core Goals

Fact Sheet 1: The Changing Regional Economy

1. Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities.
2. Work to promote a positive, growth oriented image to attract businesses and to foster an entrepreneurially supportive environment.
3. Increase an awareness of on going economic activities in the area.

In terms of manufacturing:

4. Evaluate the potential for overall modernization, customized manufacturing, and component manufacturing.

5. More effectively link and apply research and development and technology to production processes.
6. Communicate that the foundation of industrial competitiveness lies in the value an employee *adds* to a product or service.
7. Strengthen linkages between industry needs and technical education initiatives.

For lower paying service industries:

8. Explore partnerships within industry groups, for example, leisure and accommodations, that focus on reductions in worker turnover and increases in worker mobility within the industry groups.

Fact Sheet 2: Workforce and the Region

1. Encourage partnerships between the public and private sector to identify skills and knowledge needed for emerging jobs
2. Advocate with elected officials for increased training opportunities for dislocated workers
3. Consider partnerships with school districts to track the path of high school drop outs and graduates
4. Continue partnerships with technical colleges to enhance training opportunities

Fact Sheet 3: Economic Impacts of Residential Development

1. Promote the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.
2. Encourage planning to guide community development to maximize the use of existing infrastructure, minimize costs, and minimize environmental impacts.
3. Promote the benefits of “walkable communities”: higher density and mixed land uses. These benefits include higher home values, attractive to “new” economy workers, attractive to tourists, and the health benefits.
4. Build community identity by revitalizing main streets and downtowns.
5. Engage in relationship building between communities to facilitate the provision of shared services.

Fact Sheet 4: Economic Benefits of Recreation and Natural Resources

1. Promote the economic benefits of natural resources, parks, and recreation.
2. Recognize the importance of open spaces by encouraging its inclusion into community design.

3. Elevate the value attached to parks and open spaces to that of the value placed on development.
4. Improve access and promote recreational activities along the Fox River corridor. Along river corridors, creating new ideas and meeting high standards for natural resource enhancement is an important challenge that should be met.

Fact Sheet 5: Buying Food Locally

1. Look at ways to expand the market options for family farmers
2. Work with communities to promote the power they have to make food choices that support local farmers
3. Work to improve the accessibility of information about local growers and how consumers can purchase seasonal, locally grown food

Conclusion

The economic development vision statement, five major issues and their associated core goals will constitute the starting point for *Milestone Report #3: Goals and Strategies for Action*.

CHAPTER 5: HOUSING

Introduction

Previous chapters in this document discuss the regional comprehensive planning process, summarize the first report, which provided background data for the region, present a regional vision and identify the issues, opportunities, vision and core goals for economic development of the region. This chapter identifies housing issues and opportunities, provides a regional vision for housing and recommends core goals to address identified issues.

Well designed, decent, safe, affordable housing, which meets the needs of all residents, is important to healthy communities. It helps define a sense of place, lends character to communities and creates a sense of connection and ownership between residents and their neighborhood and community. Affordable housing is not only a quality of life consideration, but also an integral part of a comprehensive economic development strategy. Companies are reluctant to locate in communities without affordable housing for their workers. Communities in which wages are incompatible with the cost of housing and where housing choices are limited find that they are unable to attract an adequate labor force.

The demographic nature of our region is changing, and will continue to change during the planning period. Over the next thirty years, the number of households in the region is expected to grow at a faster rate than the population. Not only will we see a rise in the number of households, but demographic trends also indicate that the nature of those households and their housing requirements will also change. Our population is aging. We are also seeing an increase in the number of one person and two person households. Over the next thirty years, we will see an increase in the number of elderly households, frail elderly residents and the emergence of a number of new households as children of baby-boomers enter the housing market. Cultural changes will also occur as the number and percentage of residents from other racial and ethnic groups increase. Housing choices will need to increase to accommodate changing socioeconomic conditions. As a result, the next thirty years will present challenges and opportunities for the preservation of our existing housing stock and for growth in innovation and variation in design, style and integration of new housing units.

Current intergovernmental cooperative efforts to meet housing needs within our region, and the interaction between housing and other plan elements, are discussed below. That discussion is followed by a regional vision for the future of housing. The remainder of the chapter compares current trends to the identified vision, identifies goals to address identified issues and concludes by summarizing key findings.

Cooperation

All levels of government influence housing supply, availability, location, choice and access. Interaction between government, non-profit and private sectors can facilitate or discourage housing affordability, choice and access. In order to obtain as broad a perspective as possible, encourage greater communication and facilitate the development of new partnerships, citizens and representatives from the public, private and nonprofit sectors were asked to participate in the development of the housing element of this report. Individuals choosing to participate included citizens and individuals from all three sectors.

Representatives from the private sector included realtors, developers and housing consultants. Representatives from the nonprofit sector included housing authorities, housing providers, fair housing and financial service agencies. Representatives from the public sector included representatives from the Brothertown, Oneida and Stockbridge-Munsee Nations; elected officials; town, village, city and county staff from economic development, planning, human service, health and veterans departments; UW-extension staff; and one sanitary district representative. Other organizations participating included WHEDA (Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority) and USDA Rural Development.

Three committees were formed to address housing issues identified in Milestone Report #1: the Urban Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee, the Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee and the Regional Housing Technical Advisory Committee. The first of these committees, the Urban Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee, originated through cooperative efforts with Fox Cities housing providers in response to recommendations in an affordable housing needs study conducted for the Fox Cities as part of the Appleton Housing Authority's strategic plan update. This report, *Blueprint to Affordable Housing*, noted the increasing public sector involvement in housing development, and recommended that the appropriate public role in affordable housing development be identified. As a result, the Public/Private Role in Affordable Housing Development Committee was established in 2002 to identify the most appropriate roles for government, private and nonprofit sectors in meeting affordable housing needs in the Fox Cities.

The Public/Private Role in Affordable Housing Development Committee split into four subcommittees to develop implementation strategies to meet the objectives outlined by the broader committee. One of these subcommittees, the Model Policies Subcommittee, was formed to develop a "toolbox" of potential solutions to reduce barriers to affordable housing in the Fox Cities urban area.

Due to timing issues and overlap with the update of East Central's regional comprehensive plan, the committee's mission was expanded to address barriers to affordable housing, not only in the Fox Cities, but also in Oshkosh and Fond du Lac. By expanding the committee's mission, the committee had the opportunity to learn what methods other local urban communities have used to reduce barriers to affordable housing in their communities. The expansion also promoted consistency between recommendations to the Appleton Housing Authority, via the Public/Private Role in Affordable Housing Development Committee, and to the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. For regional planning purposes, the committee was renamed the Urban Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee. Identified barriers to affordable housing and potential solutions to reduce those barriers can be found in Part I of the report *Overcoming Barriers to Affordable Housing in the East Central Region (Jan. 2004)*.

A second technical advisory committee, the Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee, was formed in 2003 to identify barriers to affordable housing in rural areas of our region, and to identify potential solutions to those barriers. Identified barriers to affordable housing and potential solutions to reduce those barriers can be found in Part II of the report *Overcoming Barriers to Affordable Housing in the East Central Region (Jan. 2004)*.

The final housing committee, the Regional Housing Element Technical Advisory Committee, was also formed in 2003 to identify housing issues and opportunities, create a regional vision for housing and recommend core goals to address identified issues.

During the development of this report, information and progress updates were provided to the Appleton Housing Authority, Fox Cities Housing Coalition, Hispanic Interagency Group, Hmong Interagency Group, Public/Private Role in Affordable Housing Committee, Shawano County Housing Resource Partnership and the Winnebagoland Housing Focus Group. This provided individuals associated with these organizations, who were not participating on a technical advisory committee, the opportunity to provide comment. Staff also presented a synopsis of *Overcoming Barriers to Affordable Housing in the Fox Cities, Oshkosh and Fond du Lac Urban Areas* at the statewide "A Home for Everyone 2003: Creative Solutions for Challenging Times" conference held July 23-24, 2003. Materials were also provided at the conference which explained the regional planning process and identified key findings from the housing chapter of *Milestone Report #1: State of the Region*.

Through ongoing efforts, commission staff continues to work with three housing groups in the region to assess the housing needs for low and very low income residents and identify ways to meet those needs. These groups, the Fox Cities Housing Coalition, Winnebagoland Housing Focus Group and Shawano County Housing Resource Partnership, foster intergovernmental cooperation and coordination between the government and nongovernment sectors. Each organization includes local housing authorities, non-profit and for profit housing providers, local, county and state government representatives, UWEX staff, private citizens and service providers such as mortgage loan officers, financial counselors, employers and legal service representatives in their organizations. The Shawano County Housing Resource Partnership also includes a representative from USDA Rural Development.

Staff also continues to actively participate on the Public/Private Role in Affordable Housing Development Committee. This committee continues to refine the Fox Cities public and private role in developing affordable rental, owner, and life cycle housing. It strengthens relationships between the public, private and nonprofit sectors by building new partnerships, builds support for affordable housing through education and advocacy efforts and develops strategies to address affordable housing needs in the Fox Cities. Staff is also currently serving on the Northeast Wisconsin Fair Housing Advisory Committee, which meets with staff from the Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council and the local Northeast Wisconsin Fair Housing Center staff to discuss current activities and provide input regarding fair housing issues within the region.

Statement of Interaction with other Planning Elements

Housing cannot be considered in isolation from other elements. Meeting the housing needs of all our residents requires an adequate supply of reasonably priced land with the appropriate infrastructure, utilities and services, coupled with employment opportunities and community designs which allow for transportation choices. Decisions regarding economic development, transportation, community and public facilities development, environmental quality and land use have an impact on housing choice, supply and affordability. Likewise, decisions made in the housing sector can influence the cost and efficiency of other plan elements. Policy decisions in all sectors should facilitate the development of a built environment, which meets the needs of

persons of all income levels, age groups and persons with special needs. Concerns and recommendations regarding other plan elements were identified in the housing visioning exercise, issue and trend discussions and in the committees' recommendations. These comments have been organized in the order elements are presented in Milestone Report #2.

Economic Development

Housing TAC members stated that more discussion about housing must be included in economic development decisions. When bringing new businesses to the area, economic development professionals should correlate anticipated wages with the rental market. They should also consider the following questions: Where these people will live if the project is accepted? How much can they afford to pay for housing? Is there sufficient housing at that price level?

Frustration was expressed regarding the mismatch between the increase in low wage employment, the continued rise in housing costs, and the chamber of commerce's reluctance to examine the link between housing and economic development. As the economic climate worsens, businesses that heavily rely on human resources, will need to recognize that it is necessary to address the day-to-day personal struggles of their employees, on some level. Since human resource directors are more likely to be aware of these issues, they should be brought into the discussion regarding ties between economic development and affordable housing. Human resource directors also may be more effective than housing providers in convincing chambers to recognize the importance of affordable housing in obtaining and retaining a stable workforce.

Housing TAC members stated that the development and growth of living wage jobs should be encouraged. They recommended targeting government incentives to industries, which provide living wage jobs, and eliminating subsidies and incentives to attract low wage employers. National employers should be encouraged to move to the area and to create or expand their own training programs. At the same time, members noted that certain low wage jobs were important to maintaining the quality of life for all citizens in our communities.

For example, as the elderly population grows, so will the need to attract the lower wage service workers to care for them, and there will be competition from all other areas in this regard. If these workers cannot afford decent housing that is appealing to them, they will locate elsewhere. So creation of affordable housing in the area should be considered as an economic necessity for our area and not just a social service. Housing needs to be developed, which meets the needs of all income levels within the community, including entry level and low skill workers.

Members noted that certain areas within the region, such as vacant industrial or commercial sites and dilapidated, unsafe housing, present redevelopment opportunities. Intergovernmental cooperation, which promotes cost effective, socially responsible redevelopment, should be encouraged, along with public private partnerships that promote economic opportunities and provide for decent, safe affordable housing. As redevelopment occurs, care should be taken to promote urban structure changes and expansions that meet current and future business and community needs. Urban infrastructure must be developed to deal with a growing service/information based economy, not necessarily follow the former manufacturing/distribution format of years past if the East Central region is to be globally competitive.

Transportation

Housing TAC members stated that transportation corridors should be located in such a fashion that they minimize their impact on natural resources. Pedestrian/bicycle facilities should be provided in all housing developments.

Members also expressed a desire to see mixed income housing near public transportation links and communities designed with housing located in fairly close proximity to neighborhood businesses and services. Walk to Work programs should be created within the region. Members would like to see a new traditional neighborhood design project built that would function as a model for the region. If barriers prevent or slow the development of such a model, then, in the short term, an affordable mixed income project should be developed in the Fox Cities with Valley Transit providing access.

Some communities in the region are redeveloping older industrial area and some downtown areas. Public transportation networks should be developed and expanded in these areas to serve the redeveloped area and reduce the need for costly parking lots and additional street patterns.

Community Facilities

Housing TAC members stated that housing affordability and upscale employment are linked to education, experience and updating job skills. These attributes are connected to a good to excellent regional education system and trade unions training system. As a result, the regional college and university network should be preserved and expanded. Our region's population growth calls for additional educational facilities and class subjects. School systems should preserve and expand technology. They should expand training and economic opportunities by increasing knowledge and skill levels to meet the demands of our future workforce, and to attract higher wage industries to our area. Members also noted that retooling is needed for the current labor force, especially in regards to technology and computer skills.

The lack of financial literacy was identified as a major issue for all income levels. Life skills training is also needed for emerging households. It was recommended that curriculum in the K-12 education system be revised to incorporate financial literacy and life skills training. A course in financial literacy and other basic life skills should also be established as a core requirement for all post-high school curricula, including colleges, universities, technical schools and trade schools.

Intern programs should be expanded, and counselors, professors and students should be kept informed regarding local opportunities. Internships not only provide training and an opportunity for students to evaluate potential career fields, they also tie kids to communities. By providing and expanding internship programs, schools and companies are telling young adults that they are needed and wanted in their community. As a result, students will be more willing to stay in the region, rather than travel elsewhere for educational and economic opportunities. Unions could also provide training for young adults.

Members expressed a desire to retain community identity in the face of consolidation of government services. While consolidation of services and regionalization are important,

residents have to have ties to their community, otherwise we become one large impersonal urban area. Members also stated that all services should be able to provide adequate coverage to various housing districts.

Infrastructure for recreational activities such as walking, biking, jogging, skating, etc. should be provided in all housing developments. Developers would like the opportunity to choose the type of pedestrian/bicycle facilities and determine the placement of those facilities within their proposed development.

Agriculture Resources

Housing TAC members stated that farmsteads, farmhouses and family farms should be preserved. Members suggested that a Farmland Preservation project within the region similar to the one in the Town of Dunn in Dane County would preserve agricultural land without costing the farmer loss of income.

Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee members discussed issues surrounding migrant housing and housing for year round farm laborers, noting that housing for agricultural workers and food processing plant workers is easier to site in communities, which recognize the link between housing for these workers and local economic development. Members suggested that education is needed regarding the link between housing, the farm economy, economic development and cultural differences. They also suggested that communities should anticipate the need for seasonal or migrant workers and approach developers regarding the type of housing needed and the community's expectations for that housing. Communities should be willing to provide incentives to developers to encourage the type of housing they would like to see in their community for this workforce.

Natural Resources

Housing TAC members stated that as much green space as possible should be preserved, within the context of meeting the region's growth needs. An efficient balance must be determined, which preserves important natural resources, yet allows an adequate amount of land to be developed to accommodate anticipated growth. They noted that once green space is gone, it is virtually gone forever. Members recommended preserving hilltops, environmentally sensitive areas, environmentally unique areas and viewsheds. The state Stewardship Fund should also be preserved.

Members also noted that urban sprawl has engulfed much of the area surrounding the Fox Cities. Better land-use planning, along with local studies on the effect this sprawl has on the natural resources and community costs, needs to be implemented in order to prevent the loss of the beauty of this region.

Cultural Resources

Housing TAC members stated that historic housing districts, in particular, should be preserved, along with old hotels, motels, and room and boarding homes, which represented period architecture. Historic icons, such as industrial buildings, public facilities and schools, which no

longer met the needs of their original intent, should be preserved through adaptive reuse. The heritage and special land mark designation for historical housing districts should be expanded.

A desire was also expressed to preserve design aspects of older homes that are not seen in newer houses and/or represent building processes that may be unique in the region. One such example would be houses built in Chilton in the early 1900s. These houses were built with a cream-colored brick, called Chilton Brick. Chilton Brick is unique to the area and is no longer manufactured. As a result, losing these homes would be a loss of the City of Chilton's historical past.

Older homes and buildings in urban areas and farmhouses, farmsteads and family farms in the rural areas, which may not be of historical significance, but never the less have historic features, and represent the local character of the community should also be preserved. Rural character should be protected, along with existing urban forms, such as second story apartments in business districts and traditional neighborhoods.

Land Use

Housing TAC members recommended changing concentrated and centralized zoning laws that tend to lead to strip developments along major traffic routes and transportation corridors and separate land used into industrial parks, bedroom communities and shopping centers. Members recommended redeveloping these areas as mixed use to meet both regional housing and employment needs. They also stated that strip developments should be redesigned and redeveloped to disperse traffic patterns and concentrations.

Housing should be located in fairly close proximity to certain businesses and services. Distance and access to transportation and other services is an issue for low income households, persons with disabilities, the elderly and those who provide services to these populations. As people age, they are staying in their homes longer, and this is causing difficulty for service providers, as it is difficult to provide services for a scattered population. Current land use patterns promote/require automobile use to reach basic goods and services. As our population ages, the number of seniors is increasing and seniors continue driving as long as possible to meet their basic needs and to achieve social interaction. More studies are showing the dangers associated with seniors continuing to drive beyond their ability to safely do so.

Different zoning areas should be created with both maximum and minimum lot sizes. European-style coving, where individual houses are placed on the landscape to minimize lot sizes while maximizing views and privacy, is one design option that could be used to encourage social interaction. Subdivision placement should progress in a linear fashion and not "pop-up" haphazardly in rural areas. Existing building codes, zoning and subdivision ordinances and subdivision covenants should be reviewed with an eye towards removing overly restrictive barriers.

Vision Statement for Housing

In preparation for forming a vision statement, the Regional Housing Element Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?" and "What

would you like to see created in the region?". The committee's responses have been summarized into a best of all possible worlds scenario. The actual vision statement is provided at the end of this section.

Committee members envisioned a future where the region's history, local character, traditional neighborhoods and the existing housing stock are preserved. Increased planning, education, housing choice and affordability have resulted in housing which meets the needs of all residents. Waiting lists for affordable housing have been eliminated as changing attitudes toward low income housing/households and diversity have resulted in regional collaborations, which have encouraged the development of enough affordable housing to meet residents needs. These regional partnerships spread the cost of affordable housing, elderly housing and rental housing throughout all communities.

Older small single family housing districts have been renovated and updated to attract first time home buyers. The energy efficiency of existing housing has been improved. Substandard housing has been upgraded or replaced. Existing affordable multi-family units are preserved and upgraded. A range of housing options for elderly residents, which meet their needs and health circumstances, yet remains affordable exists at all income levels. These housing options provide the opportunity for elderly residents to move from their home through successive options that meet their needs as their mobility and health status changes and that still allows them to stay in the same neighborhood and integrated, not isolated, from the larger community.

Second story apartments in urban business districts provide a housing alternative for downtown retail business owners, young urban professionals, retail and service employees and others wishing to live downtown. Second story apartments in rural business districts provide a housing alternative for retail business owners, young adults who wish to remain in the community and retail and service employees. When used as rental property, they also provide additional income for local business owners.

Traditional neighborhoods with front porches, sidewalks and other features encourage social interaction. As new housing is created in the region, local neighborhood style living and community identities are preserved, and have not been completely replaced with the "suburban" style of housing development. New subdivisions no longer "pop-up" haphazardly in rural areas; but instead development progresses in a linear fashion. Conservation subdivisions, which are compatible with existing land uses and designed to fit into the natural landscape, provide a housing alternative in rural areas. Better planning has resulted in smaller lot sizes, greater densities and more clustering. Garages are built on the sides and backs of new housing, not on the front. A greater range of housing options within new developments increases housing choice and promotes mixed income and mixed use neighborhoods. Communities promote, rather than discourage, innovation from developers. Developers take advantage of new designs and construction materials. Communities think vertically as well as horizontally.

Housing districts are diverse, yet maintain some sort of continuity for fairly seamless transitions from neighborhood to neighborhood. All neighborhoods include infrastructure for recreational activities such as walking, biking, jogging, skating, etc. Physically active communities exist for all age levels.

This vision was summarized into the following housing vision statement for the region:

"In 2030 in the East Central Wisconsin region, a dynamic housing market fosters community and neighborhood cohesion. Varied types of quality housing are integrated with community facilities and various transportation alternatives. This housing market meets the needs of urban and rural households of all types, ages, income, cultures and mobility status."

It should be noted that the term "community facilities" in the vision statement, not only refers to community facilities such as schools, parks, daycare and medical facilities, but also to businesses, services and employment opportunities.

Issues/Opportunities - Fact Sheets

Committee members discussed housing issues, which were identified in Milestone Report #1 and during the visioning process. Where possible, similar issues were combined. Current housing activities and efforts were discussed, and core goals were identified to address each issue.

The identified housing issues fell into four larger categories: housing affordability, choice, preservation and cooperation and coordination. A fact sheet on each issue is presented below. Each fact sheet presents information on the key facts, why action is necessary, current activities and programs and concludes by identifying core goals.

Affordable Housing

FACT SHEET: H1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Housing affordability is one of the largest issues facing the region. In 2000, 15% of the region's homeowners and 27% of renters were paying a disproportionate share of their income for housing (more than 30% of income). Housing affordability is an issue not only for those with incomes of less than \$30,000, but is increasingly an issue for households with yearly incomes between \$30,000 and \$90,000. In some parts of the region, it is even an issue for households with incomes higher than \$90,000. Access to affordable housing is a problem that may well impact our parents, us, our children, and our grandchildren.

Affordability in our region is the result of a number of factors, both structural and social. The region is experiencing a major change in the make-up of the economy with a decline in manufacturing (higher wage) and an increase in service sector (lower wage) employment, resulting in households having inadequate income to meet their housing needs. This has been exacerbated by the current recession. An inadequate supply of small starter homes for the first time buyer has resulted in an increase in purchase price that is preventing young people from getting onto the property ladder. There appears to be a housing sector and an economic development mismatch, as housing prices continue to rise while the majority of job growth is in lower wage occupations. A spatial mismatch is developing as low income job growth occurs on outskirts of urban areas in low density commercial/industrial zones, which are

difficult to serve by transit, while low income housing continues to be predominately located in urban cores. Poor financial literacy and management skills across all income levels, as well as a desire to live above ones means coupled with easy credit, have created additional challenges. Existing barriers to affordable housing within our political, regulatory and economic sectors make it increasingly difficult to meet affordable housing needs in our communities. Research has shown that barriers to affordable housing increase the cost of housing by 35%. Housing affordability for those with challenges, such as mental illness, poor life skills, alcohol and/or drug addictions, is particularly problematic and challenging, as limited resources coupled with political opposition make it difficult for agencies to meet the needs of this population.

So What!

Access to affordable housing is not only a quality of life consideration - shelter is a basic human need, but also an integral part of a comprehensive economic development strategy. For example, a recent study in Minneapolis-St. Paul indicated that a lack of affordable housing could cost the Twin Cities as much as \$265 million a year in lost consumer spending and business income. Why? Companies are reluctant to relocate to communities without affordable housing for their workers. Existing companies may move out of the area if they cannot attract an adequate labor force. Labor shortages and high turnover rates reduce service and productivity, increase administration and

training costs, thereby discouraging business development and expansion. In addition, households, which must spend a disproportionate amount of their income on housing, will not have the resources to properly maintain their housing, nor will they have adequate disposable income for other living expenses, such as transportation, childcare, healthcare, food, and clothing. All this in turn has a negative impact on the overall economy.

Current Action

Within the non-profit sector, CAP services, Habitat for Humanity and the Housing Partnership for the Fox Cities build and rehabilitate housing for lower income households in an effort to meet the need for affordable housing, but their resources are not adequate to meet current demand. The Fox Cities Housing Coalition and the Shawano County Housing Resource Partnership are currently exploring public/private partnerships that could help meet the housing needs of the very low income. CAP Services has partnered with Habitat for Humanity chapters in Outagamie and Waushara Counties to make more efficient use of nonprofit resources. Housing professionals have identified barriers to affordable housing in urban and rural areas, and proposed potential solutions that could be used to address those barriers.

Existing homeownership programs provide closing cost, downpayment and homebuyer education for low to moderate income households. FISC provides budgeting and financial education for all income levels, but unfortunately people tend to come to them after they are already in financial difficulty. Predatory loan products have been developed, which appear to be quite attractive up front, but in reality may have high buyer fees, high or creeping interest rates and will over time

cost the consumer substantially more than a standard loan product. An economic summit was held in 2002, to discuss issues associated with the changing economy. A bill, AB94, was introduced in February 2003 to the state legislature, which would require students to have one semester of financial training before they graduated from high school. This bill is still in process. The Appleton School District is already initiating such a plan.

Core Goals

1. Promote collaboration between local governments, the private sector and non-profit agencies to ensure the provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing in both urban and rural areas.
2. Encourage government and other agencies to progressively pursue federal funding to meet the affordable housing needs of the very low income within the region.
3. Increase awareness of the issues surrounding affordable housing among decision makers, realtors and the public: specifically to overcome the stigma that affordable = social/ welfare housing, as well as to promote quality design that is cost effective.
4. Encourage liaison between economic development professional and housing providers to help promote the development of housing that meets the needs of all income levels within a community, including entry level and low skill workers.

Housing Choice

FACT SHEET: H2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Housing choices within the region are limited, particularly in rural areas. Most housing in the region is geared toward the two parent, two child household, yet other types of households are growing far more rapidly in our region. This has resulted in a lack of housing choice for singles, 1-parent families and young people. A need for larger housing units for those with larger families has also been identified. This is particularly important in Menominee County, where the 3-4 child family is the norm. As our population ages, current housing and land use patterns will make meeting the needs of the elderly difficult. Distance and access to transportation and other services is an issue not only for the elderly, but also for low income households, and those who provide services to these populations.

As the population in our region changes, our housing needs change also. Housing options need to be expanded to address housing needs of emerging households, the elderly, the growing minority population and an increasing variety of household types and preferences.

A perceived lack of assisted living housing for the elderly, disabled and mentally infirm exists in our region, especially in rural communities. While shortages do exist in some areas, facilities in other areas have high vacancy rates. Additional information is needed to determine if the high vacancy rates result from an oversupply, lack of affordability, poor location or the result of a facility/need mismatch.

Our region is experiencing a new wave of immigrants. Like those before them, these individuals may have different housing preferences from the general population and each other. For example, unlike popular American culture, Hmong have a preference for debt free living. As a result, they are more likely to defer purchasing a house until they have a substantial downpayment. In Laotian families, single children are expected to live with their parents until they marry, and the eldest son is expected to stay in home he grew up in to care for his parents. Some cultures prefer extended family households to nuclear family households. Building design, placement and color preferences may also vary. However, like the general population, individual preferences also exist.

Demand for small, sewerred lots has resulted in the depletion of the stock of buildable infill lots in our urban communities. At the same time, small sewerred lots are not being created in the urban fringe and growth areas. Many families moving into the area are moving into lower income housing and staying there, because it is more affordable to do so. As a result, this housing is not available for new families coming in, who may need lower cost housing. At the same time, new lower cost housing is not being built.

So What!

Housing is not a one size fits all commodity. Different types of households have different housing needs and preferences. A young, active, single person who has recently finished school will have different housing

needs than a young couple with preschool age children. This individual may prefer to live alone in a studio apartment, which requires little maintenance, while another young single person may prefer to share an apartment or house with others of like interests. In any eventuality, they will likely prefer to rent, rather than assume the responsibilities of homeownership, while a young couple with children may be looking to enter the owner-occupied market in order to provide stability and gain equity. Housing needs also change as we age and our lifestyles change. As children within a family grow, their space, organization and infrastructure needs also change. Toddlers may be satisfied with a backyard, while a young teenager may wish to rollerblade or bike down a trail to their friend's house. Similarly, as we age, maintenance issues associated with single family homeownership may become onerous.

Also, as our population ages, we will need to attract additional workers to our area to fill jobs and to care for the elderly. The competition for these workers is already increasing. Providing housing, which meets individual household needs and preferences, is one way of encouraging individuals to stay in our communities and to draw others to locate here.

Current Action

ECWRPC encourages communities to provide choice in lot size and dwelling unit size, and many urban communities allow the development of smaller lots. However, developers are not platting smaller lot subdivisions. The current development trend is to build bigger houses on bigger lots.

Developers are not meeting identified needs, because they do not recognize the income potential of meeting alternative markets. If

no one complains or demonstrates a need, developers may not realize that a problem exists, until housing markets become sluggish. Household expectations change over time. Expectations regarding the number of bathrooms, larger kitchens and size of garage are not the same as they were 20 years ago. Tracking these changes is difficult, and expectations are not necessarily realistic.

Elderly housing options are increasing. Facilities, such as Touchmark, which allows individuals to move from independent living to skilled nursing in the same facility, are being developed. Condos are also popular with the elderly, because they still receive the tax benefits associated with homeownership, but don't have the maintenance issues associated with single family housing. However, these facilities are expensive and may not meet the needs of elderly persons on fixed incomes.

Core Goals

1. Promote varied types of housing developments.
2. Encourage developers to recognize the income potential in meeting the needs of alternative markets in both new housing and rehabilitation of existing buildings.
3. Promote regional incentives for mixed income, mixed use housing developments.
4. Increase awareness of cultural and generational differences in housing preferences.

Housing Preservation

FACT SHEET: H3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

A strong desire has been expressed to preserve the existing housing stock of the region. Preserving the existing housing stock would help preserve the cultural identity of communities within the region and increase the housing stock diversity. Existing housing, which meets the housing needs of low income residents, in particular, needs to be preserved to cost effectively meet the housing needs of lower income residents.

Environmental regulations designed to protect the health and safety of individuals such as the lead base paint remediation and asbestos removal rules are extremely costly to implement. These regulations make it cost prohibitive to retain historical features on affordable properties, which are not on the historic register, yet contain period features. However, removing these historical features destroys the home's character and lowers its potential market value. Newer environmental regulations which are being drafted to alleviate mold are expected to drive up the cost of rehabbing newer units, which were built with newly engineered wood and construction techniques.

Vacant, abandoned residential, commercial and industrial properties exist within our region. In some cases, these properties are brownfields, and may no longer be on the tax rolls. In other cases, competition for residential, commercial and industrial properties in urban renewal areas are driving low income residents and the small businesses, which may employ these individuals, out of these areas.

A portion of the existing housing stock in the region is not built to code. The condition of some existing "affordable housing", especially in rural areas which have no code enforcement is very poor. Some property owners are reluctant to rehabilitate or upgrade their property, because the repair and renovation increases the value of the property, which in turn results in an increase in property taxes, which they may be unwilling to pay or unable to afford.

Access to financing and mortgages to preserve the region's older affordable housing stock may be limited. For example, it is difficult to finance and appraise homes on trust land. In some instances, locally funded affordable home buyer programs and CDBG funds are insufficient to meet demand. In other instances, funding may be available, but it is not fully utilized.

So What!

The existing housing stock in our region is an important resource. It provides community character and reflects the historical development of our region. In some instances, the material in some of these units is no longer available. To lose these units is to reduce housing choices and to lose a part of the region's history and cultural and community identity. Since the price of building materials continues to increase, the existing housing stock also helps maintain housing affordability. Poorly maintained housing lowers property values, detracts from the community's appearance, and may also pose as a health and/or fire hazard. Vacant

and abandoned properties also reduce tax revenues. Bringing properties back onto the tax rolls will increase revenue and improve the overall appearance of the community. In some instances, the adaptive reuse of vacant industrial and commercial properties may provide unique housing options and increase the supply of affordable housing. The Historic Fox River Mills Apartments in Appleton are an example of adaptive reuse, which produced attractive market rate and affordable rental units.

Current Action

Rehabilitation programs in some cities and villages exist for low to moderate income homeowners to rehabilitate their property using low-interest loans. Homeownership programs also exist within the region to help low to moderate income households purchase and rehabilitate property. However, some programs do not have the resources necessary to meet demand, and other programs do not efficiently or effectively distribute their funds.

Federal and state grants are available for brownfield redevelopment, downtown revitalization, rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of historic properties and housing rehabilitation of nonhistoric housing units. Organizations, such as WHEDA, USDA Rural Development and the Veteran's Administration, provide low interest loans, and in some instances grants, to qualified individuals to rehabilitate housing units. The Fox Cities Housing Partnership purchases and rehabs some residential properties. Habitat for Humanity also has a limited housing rehabilitation program. Some of these funds are available to individuals, others are only available to nonprofit organizations or governmental entities. In some instances, funds are too limited to meet needs, others

are underutilized due to lack of knowledge, interest, or the application process or program requirements may be considered to difficult.

Core Goals

1. Identify properties, which have historically significant features and are in need of rehabilitation.
2. Develop and adopt new building codes for houses built prior to the adoption of the Uniform Dwelling Code.
3. Identify additional funding sources and encourage better utilization of existing programs.
4. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation to promote cost effective, socially responsible redevelopment.
5. Promote urban structure changes and expansions that meet current and future business and community needs.
6. Encourage public private partnerships that promote economic opportunities and provide for decent, safe affordable housing.

Coordination and Cooperation

FACT SHEET: H4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

No one community, agency or firm within the region has the resources necessary to meet all the housing needs in the region. Identified mismatches exist between housing needs and housing supply, programs and funding.

Many rural areas are at a competitive disadvantage due to insufficient knowledge, resources and staffing to meet housing needs. A 1998 community survey conducted by ECWRPC indicated that most rural communities were unaware of existing housing programs that served their communities. The lack of knowledge likely results from the fact that many rural communities do not have paid staff. Also, most nonprofit agencies are located and work in urban areas of our region. Agencies, which serve the rural areas of our region, cover multiple counties. As a result, their resources and staffing are not always sufficient to meet existing needs. In some instances, agencies may not know how they fit into the community's hierarchy.

In-migration, which is occurring in our rural communities, is bringing changes. While some of these changes are considered positive, other changes have resulted in growth conflicts. Identified rural growth conflicts include: new residential subdivisions vs the farming community, especially mega-farms; lake residents vs non-lake residents; established residents vs new residents (retirees) and full-time vs part-time, or seasonal, residents.

Current urban area growth is low density, with separated land uses and economically segregated neighborhoods. New residential developments are being developed as satellites, rather than as a part of the community, which further fractures the existing social network. As redevelopment occurs and urban growth expands outward, development is occurring in locations with mapped and unmapped abandoned landfills.

Housing policies and accompanying residential ordinances and covenants are often designed with the intent of protecting a community or neighborhood's character. The end result may, in some instances, intentionally or unintentionally restrict housing choice, supply and affordability. Decisions regarding economic development, transportation, community and public facilities development, environmental quality and land use also impact housing choice, supply and affordability. Likewise, decisions made in the housing sector can influence the cost and efficiency of other plan elements.

So What!

Lack of data coupled with mismatches between housing needs and housing supply, programs and funding has resulted in some programs being under-funded and therefore not meeting household needs, while other programs are over-funded and therefore underutilized. Some housing units stand vacant, while others have waiting lists. This inefficiency increases government costs, while at the same time it does not serve the

individuals, who need assistance to meet basic needs. Inadequate funding and competition for scarce resources have also resulted in turf wars between agencies and communities and counties, which ties up valuable staff time, without meeting citizen needs.

Low density, segregated land uses discourage social interaction, isolate children, the elderly and others unable or unwilling to drive or own an automobile. This social isolation increases transportation costs and makes it difficult to address social dysfunctions and meet individual needs. It is also expensive to build and maintain, which increases development costs and government expenditures. Low density land use increases land consumption, putting additional pressure on existing natural resources and increasing competition between land uses.

In some instances, development has occurred over and around improperly capped landfills. Development in these areas may result in health problems, such as increased risk of cancer. Housing problems, such as sinking homes or basement issues, may also arise as the fill compacts

Current Action

United Way of the Fox Cities, the Public/Private Role in Affordable Housing Development Committee, Fox Cities Housing Coalition, Shawano County Housing Resource Partnership and the Winnebagoland Housing Focus Group promote cooperation between governments and between the public, private and nonprofit sector. They also engage in efforts to educate others regarding local housing needs. State funding programs rank cooperative efforts higher than individual efforts, which encourages groups to work together.

Traditional neighborhood ordinances are designed to provide opportunities for more

compact development. A subcommittee of the Private/Public Role in Affordable Housing Development Committee, the Model Project Subcommittee, is developing a study design for a model traditional neighborhood design project, which could be built in the Fox Cities.

ADVOCAP, CAP Services, NEWCAP and Habitat for Humanity help address housing needs in rural communities within the region. However, the type and amount of assistance varies by county and within counties. The Shawano County Housing Resource Partnership is developing the capacity to address identified housing needs in Shawano County. The Rural Housing Policy Technical Advisory Committee has developed a list of potential solutions to help address identified barriers resulting from insufficient knowledge and staffing capabilities.

Most communities within the region have zoning and subdivision ordinances, and many communities also have land use plans. The impact on housing choice, supply and affordability may or may not have been considered when these plans and ordinances were developed. Cooperation among communities varies. Little coordination exists between school districts and communities in terms of siting school facilities.

The state's comprehensive plan legislation states that plan elements should be consistent with each other. Local comprehensive plan goals encourage efficient land use patterns and the development of housing for all residents, regardless of age, income level or mobility status.

Core Goals

1. Build on existing cooperative efforts to conduct joint planning to meet housing needs.
2. Identify additional opportunities for coordination and cooperation between

governments and between the public, private and nonprofit sectors.

3. Increase/improve communications between funding sources, government and housing providers.
4. Address the relationship between housing and other land uses in both private and public planning arenas.
5. Encourage the creation of multi-organization partnerships that allow rural areas to share staff time and leverage housing development resources.
6. Identify broader, regional or state entities that have financial housing resources or grant writing capabilities, and link them up with local emerging partnerships that need development assistance.
7. Encourage communities to prepare well-thought out comprehensive plans, which provide an adequate supply of land dedicated to a range of housing options, as well as incentive for more contiguous development with higher density levels.
8. Encourage programs and designs, which promote energy conservation and more efficient circulation patterns.
9. Consider the potential impacts on housing choice, supply and affordability, as decisions are made regarding housing, economic development, transportation, community and public facilities development, environmental quality and land use.
10. Promote policy decisions, which facilitate the development of a built environment, which meets the needs of persons of all income levels and age groups, and persons with special needs.

Housing: Key Findings

Vision Statement

"In 2030 in the East Central Wisconsin region, a dynamic housing market fosters community and neighborhood cohesion. Varied types of quality housing are integrated with community facilities and various transportation alternatives. This housing market meets the needs of urban and rural households of all types, ages, income, cultures and mobility status."

Issues/Opportunities

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is one of the largest issues facing the region. Current trends indicate that although a rise in property values is placing many existing homes out of the reach of first time home buyers, fewer new starter homes are being constructed. In this context:

- How can we ensure adequate provision of affordable housing?
- How do we provide affordable housing for very low income households, which in particular, is in very short supply?
- How do we overcome the various barriers to affordable housing?
- How do we redress the mismatch that exists between the economic development sector and the housing sector?
- How do we provide financial and life skills training for emerging households?

Housing Choice

Housing choices within the region are limited, particularly in rural areas. The region's housing stock is dominated by single family housing. Most housing in the region is geared toward the two parent, two child household, yet other types of households are growing far more rapidly in our region. A demand for smaller houses on smaller lots is driving the purchase price of existing smaller homes beyond the reach of first time home buyers, yet current development trends favor bigger houses on larger lots.

- How do we ensure housing choices are not limited? In particular,
 - How do we consider housing preferences for the growing minority population?
 - How will we meet the housing needs and options for our aging population?
 - How do we promote small sewered lots, which are in extremely short supply?
- How do we ensure that the relationship between housing location, transportation and other land uses is examined more closely?

Preservation and Rehabilitation of Existing Housing Stock

Preserving the existing housing stock within the region would help preserve the cultural identity of communities within the region and increase the housing stock diversity.

- Health and safety regulations such as lead abatement and asbestos removal has made it extremely costly to preserve historical features in older homes, how do we respond to this?
- How do we address “urban decay” issues and rehabilitate or eliminate substandard housing in urban and rural areas?

Coordination and Cooperation

In order to effectively and efficiently meet affordable housing needs within the region, additional cooperation is needed between governments, and between governments, the private and nonprofit housing sectors.

- How can we promote more cooperation between the governments, and between the government, private and nonprofit sectors?
- Rural areas seem to be at a competitive disadvantage due to insufficient knowledge, resources and staffing to meet housing needs in rural areas. How do we plan to meet the housing needs in our rural areas?
- How do we become more aware of the direct and indirect impacts of policy decisions and their impact on housing choice, supply and affordability?

Match/Mismatch between Envisioned and Probable Future

Currently:

- Nonfamily households are the fastest growing household by type in the region.
- Rural counties have a significant share of elderly one-person households.
- During the planning period, the anticipated increase in new households in the region will require additional units.
- Demographic trends and economic conditions will likely result in the need for a greater share of rental units.
- Affordable housing is becoming a significant issue in our region, particularly for rental households.
- Owner-occupied housing values have increased significantly over the last 30 years.
- Counties with the greatest homeowner affordability issues are rural, recreation counties.
- Overcrowding is not an issue for most households in the region. However, the number and percentage of households living in overcrowded units in the region is increasing.

To meet the envisioned future:

- Developers not only need to increase the number of housing units, but also ensure that structural types and designs accommodate household life cycles and changes in household composition.
- Housing choices and options must also increase to accommodate the changing nature of our households.
- Overcrowding, due to cultural preferences, is acceptable within the context of the regional vision.
- Overcrowding, due to market conditions, needs to be addressed.
- Rising property values should increase equity, without resulting in affordability issues.
- Rental housing must be distributed equitably throughout the region.
- Housing affordability issues need to be addressed.

Core Goals

Fact Sheet 1: Affordable Housing

1. Promote collaboration between local governments, the private sector and non-profit agencies to ensure the provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing in both urban and rural areas.
2. Encourage government and other agencies to progressively pursue federal funding to meet the affordable housing needs of the very low income within the region.
3. Increase awareness of the issues surrounding affordable housing among decision makers, realtors and the public: specifically to overcome the stigma that affordable = social/ welfare housing, as well as to promote quality design that is cost effective.
4. Encourage liaison between economic development professionals and housing providers to help promote the development of housing that meets the needs of all income levels within a community, including entry level and low skill workers.

Fact Sheet 2: Housing Choice

1. Promote varied types of housing developments.
2. Encourage developers to recognize the income potential in meeting the needs of alternative markets in both new housing and rehabilitation of existing buildings.
3. Promote regional incentives for mixed income, mixed use housing developments.
4. Increase awareness of cultural and generational differences in housing preferences.

Fact Sheet 3: Housing Preservation:

1. Identify properties, which have historically significant features and are in need of rehabilitation.
2. Develop and adopt new building codes for houses built prior to the adoption of the Uniform Dwelling Code.
3. Identify additional funding sources and encourage better utilization of existing programs.
4. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation to promote cost effective, socially responsible redevelopment.
5. Promote urban structure changes and expansions that meet current and future business and community needs.

6. Encourage public private partnerships that promote economic opportunities and provide for decent, safe affordable housing.

Fact Sheet 4: Coordination and Cooperation

1. Build on existing cooperative efforts to conduct joint planning to meet housing needs.
2. Identify additional opportunities for coordination and cooperation between governments and between the public, private and nonprofit sectors.
3. Increase/improve communications between funding sources, government and housing providers.
4. Address the relationship between housing and other land uses in both private and public planning arenas.
5. Encourage the creation of multi-organization partnerships that allow rural areas to share staff time and leverage housing development resources.
6. Identify broader, regional or state entities that have financial housing resources or grant writing capabilities, and link them up with local emerging partnerships that need development assistance.
7. Encourage communities to prepare well-thought out comprehensive plans, which provide an adequate supply of land dedicated to a range of housing options, as well as incentive for more contiguous development with higher density levels.
8. Encourage programs and designs, which promote energy conservation and more efficient circulation patterns.
9. Consider the potential impacts on housing choice, supply and affordability, as decisions are made regarding housing, economic development, transportation, community and public facilities development, environmental quality and land use.
10. Promote policy decisions, which facilitate the development of a built environment, which meets the needs of persons of all income levels and age groups, and persons with special needs.

Conclusion

The vision, four major issues and core goals will be carried forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies. Any implemented policy will have intended and unintended consequences. As a result, during the Milestone #3 process, we will also try to identify those policy links in an effort to predict what impacts housing policies may have on other plan elements.

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

Previous chapters in this document discuss the regional comprehensive planning process, summarize the first report, which provided background data for the region, present a regional vision and identify the issues, opportunities, vision and core goals for economic development and housing respectively. This chapter identifies transportation issues and opportunities, provides a regional vision for transportation in the region and recommends core goals to address identified issues.

A safe, efficient, cost-effective, and easily accessible transportation system is important to the traveling public, as well as to the economic well-being of the region. A transportation system that provides mobility to citizens of all ages, physical abilities, and economic status allows for maximum productivity, with participation in work and educational opportunities, and opens the door to social, personal business, and recreational interaction that is necessary to maintain the high quality of life to which we have become accustomed. For low income individuals, persons with disabilities, the elderly, young people, the ability to attain and retain employment often rests on the availability of a reliable means of getting to jobs or educational facilities. If our roadways were to become crowded, deteriorated, and unsafe, our quality of life would be eroded by long travel times, poor air quality, high maintenance costs, and general frustration. In addition to personal mobility, a quality transportation system is critical to the economic vitality of the region. The attraction and retention of industry and commerce is largely based on connections to the larger, sometimes global market, the availability of a quality workforce, and the ease of moving goods in and out of the area. A healthy transportation system is key in the continued health and growth of our region.

As discussed in previous chapters, the demographic nature of our region is changing and will continue to change during the planning period. Over the next thirty years, the population will age. As the baby-boomers age, demands on the transportation system will change. Swelling numbers of older adults, coupled with greater mobility-expectations and the scattered pattern of development of the last 50 years, create a formidable challenge for the future of public transportation. We are maintaining our health to a much more advanced age than previous generations. Longer life-expectancies eventually force or persuade many older adults to give up their driving privileges while they are still able and want to live independently, often on the rural family farmstead, the low density subdivision that provided the desired environment for raising a family, now grown and moved away, or the secluded retirement home in the country.

Seemingly limitless increases in traffic volumes point to a need for capacity expansions on our roadways, yet the construction of new highways and additional lanes are meeting with obstacles including, funding shortages, induced development and traffic, land consumption, and environmental concerns. Current intergovernmental cooperative efforts to meet transportation needs within our region, and the interaction between transportation and other plan elements,

are discussed below. That discussion is followed by a regional vision for the future of transportation. The remainder of the chapter compares current trends to the identified vision, identifies goals to address identified issues and concludes by summarizing key findings.

Cooperation

All levels of government have responsibility for various types and sectors of the transportation system. Interaction between government, non-profit, and private sector must occur to provide the full range of transportation facilities, options, and programs. In order to obtain as broad a perspective as possible in our planning process, encourage greater communication, and facilitate the development of new partnerships, we solicited participation from all types of transportation, as well as from public, private, and non-profit transportation concerns, and from users of the system.

Representatives from the private sector included transportation providers, industries and shippers, development and real estate interests, as well as employers. Representatives from the nonprofit sector included agencies which fund, provide, or seek transportation for their clientele, and those representing persons with special transportation needs. Representatives from the public sector included representatives from public transportation systems, planning staff, and human service agency representatives. Because of strong linkages between the two elements, a joint transportation and land use committee was formed to assist in the development of this element.

Intergovernmental cooperation and coordination have a strong role in the development, interaction, and effective operation of all transportation modes. The lineal nature of trips and infrastructure causes a great deal of jurisdictional boundary crossing, leading toward an obvious need for coordination. Intergovernmental coordination in our highway system is evident in the jurisdictional responsibility schemes that exist. Federal highways were established largely to facilitate cross-country economic interactions between major metropolitan areas and across states. The interstate system was built ostensibly for national defense purposes in the early 1960s. Funding of the construction of this system continued to be a federal responsibility until quite recently, with the future responsibility shifting mainly into a maintenance mode. Wisconsin has a highly developed system of state highways, mainly intended to serve statewide and intercity commerce and travel. Local, county and municipal highways serve more local trip purposes, and connect travel to the higher level roadways. Coordination of this system is inherent in the hierarchical structure and interaction occurring in most trips. The interrelationship and codependence of the jurisdictional assignment of highways is recognized in cost-sharing policies at all levels of government.

Many public, non-profit, and private contractors of transit services have recognized the need for trips crossing classic jurisdictional boundaries, and have addressed such needs with coordination of services. Cooperation through sharing of information, coordination in sharing and standardizing of services and funding, and consolidation of duplicate services and functions have helped to provide more effective and efficient services. While such actions have occurred, it is likely that there are more, as well as new applications of intergovernmental coordination.

The lineal and cross-jurisdictional nature of transportation and trip-making is also evident in trail development, including bicycle and pedestrian travel. It is not unusual to see sidewalks coming

to an abrupt end, often resulting from conflicting municipal sidewalk policies. This is particularly evident in urbanized areas made up of numerous municipalities, such as the Fox Cities Urbanized Area. Trail development has faced similar challenges. These are being addressed through regional efforts toward a coordinated trail system.

Rail transportation, while largely under private ownership, has significant interaction with highways, both in terms of potential conflict at crossings, and through intermodal freight transfer. In this case, cooperation between the private sector and government is key in providing safe and viable freight movement.

Air transportation has been a recent hotspot for intergovernmental coordination. Coordination in airport function is being considered for Whitman Field (Oshkosh area) and Outagamie County Airport (Appleton area), and may have a critical role in the future economic strength of air transportation in the region.

Through ongoing efforts, commission staff continues to work with urban municipalities and counties for the coordination of transportation projects, and federal funding of projects on the urban functionally-classified system, within the urbanized areas of Fox Cities, Oshkosh, and Fond du Lac. Commission staff also works with rural jurisdictions and WisDOT on regionally significant corridor, and rural transportation issues. The urbanized areas have formally structured technical and policy committees, as well as processes for dealing with issues and promoting intergovernmental coordination. On a corridor basis, East Central staff brings together stakeholders within the corridor for jointly-adopted recommendations, which are primed for smooth implementation.

Staff also continues to serve on state-wide, and member county committees to promote intergovernmental coordination wherever it is likely to improve or maintain transportation service, or encourage the use of funding to effectively provide the highest possible level of services. Such participation strengthens relationships between the public, private and nonprofit sectors, and between governmental levels, by building new partnerships, building support for transportation services through education and advocacy efforts and developing strategies to address transportation needs in the urban and rural areas of the region.

Statement of Interaction with Other Planning Elements

Transportation, like the other elements included in this comprehensive plan, cannot be considered in isolation from all other elements. Meeting the transportation needs of all our residents requires wise use of land and resources, coupled with employment opportunities and community designs which, allow for transportation choices. Decisions regarding economic development, public services, environmental quality, and land use have a significant impact on transportation needs. Likewise, decisions made in transportation can influence the cost and efficiency of other plan elements. Policy decisions in all sectors should facilitate the development of a built environment, which meets the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups and persons with special needs. Concerns and recommendations regarding other plan elements were identified in the transportation visioning exercise, issue, and trend discussions and in the committees' recommendations. These comments have been organized in the order elements are presented in Milestone Report #2.

Economic Development

Transportation is commonly referred to as the backbone of economic development. Prospective companies considering location in the region, have a primary concern with transportation on several levels. Transportation costs are frequently a significant portion of production and distribution costs of a product. Paper mills have classically needed to have rail access to bring in raw materials. Highway access is required by many industries to meet their just-in-time needs for materials and to distribute their product to secondary producers and ultimate consumers. On another front, businesses will consider the availability of a pool of employees with access to their facility. Accessibility is especially important when jobs offered will be in a lower-wage category. These jobs are frequently filled by second wage-earners in the household, or by persons with limited job options, including untrained persons, persons with disabilities, or young persons, groups which frequently are not able to drive, or to afford a reliable vehicle. The fastest growing employment sector, service employment, encompasses many such jobs. It is important for such employers to have affordable and accessible transportation services available to their employees.

Housing

The linkages between housing and transportation are strongly based on the fact that either the origin, or the destination of most trips, is the home. It is particularly important that affordable housing is located in a manner that facilitates transportation access to services and employment. This would include the availability of a healthy public transit system, a common low-cost transportation alternative.

Mixed income housing should be located near public transportation links to encourage the use of services by all income levels. Walk to Work programs should be created within the region. New traditional neighborhood design should be considered to function as a model for the region, with strong ties to alternative travel modes, including public transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Some communities in the region are redeveloping older industrial area and some downtown areas. Public transportation networks should be developed and expanded in these areas to serve the redeveloped area and reduce the need for costly parking lots and additional street patterns.

Community Facilities

It is very important to have joint/coordinated planning of public facilities and transportation. Sewer service area planning, for instance, provides some direction for development direction and density. Coordinating transportation planning with sewer service area planning provides reasonable traffic projections and capacity needs on the transportation network.

The location of schools in a community is closely related to transportation. Ideally, primary and secondary schools should have safe pedestrian and bicycle access with trip distances reasonably expected to minimize the need for school busing and automobile transportation to the school. Also, consideration for accessibility by public transportation can help to minimize transportation costs for the school district. Colleges and universities can also benefit greatly by public transit accessibility by reducing the need for parking space and by making the campus accessible to a broader range of students, including local, low-income, and disabled students. Similar to

schools, it is important that government and human services be located with access to public transportation.

Agriculture Resources

Transportation TAC members discussed the relationship between transportation and agricultural resources. One relationship between the two elements involves the desire to minimize the severance of agricultural parcels by highway construction. Orphan parcels of agricultural land require unsafe highway crossing by farm equipment, or ultimately the loss of utility of the land in agriculture. There was also some discussion of the induced development effects of a new or expanded highway. While a “chicken and egg” argument can be made concerning the relationship between highway construction and sprawl development, it cannot be denied that shortened travel times, created by increased or new capacity, encourages more distant residential development. The committee expressed a need for measures that allow for meeting existing capacity needs while reducing the effects of induced development.

Natural Resources

Environmental and Transportation TAC members raised several issues with cross-relevance. These include air quality issues inherent in sprawl development and the resulting dependence on the automobile with longer trip lengths. The two elements are also related on the issue of water quality, run-off, and loss of wetlands. Historically, wetlands were considered wasteland and highway construction was directed through wetlands to avoid using prime agricultural or buildable land. As the importance of wetlands was recognized, regulations and programs have been developed to avoid or mitigate the loss of wetlands in highway development. Still, run-off from construction and operation of highways can be harmful to wetlands and wildlife habitat. Also, environmental requirements and paperwork are frequently cited as excessively slowing the transportation project implementation process. The committees felt that measures to balance these issues should be sought.

Members also noted that alternative transportation modes, and land use patterns that support alternative modes should be encouraged.

Cultural Resources

The most common interaction between our cultural resources and transportation comes to light during transportation construction projects that may threaten archeological and historic sites. As current regulations address these situations, this particular interaction is not taken further in this report. Another linkage exists in the provision of public access to our cultural resources, such as museums, historic sites, and cultural events. Whenever possible such events or facilities should be located where public transportation is available. Inversely, every reasonable effort should be taken to provide access to such events and facilities for all persons.

Land Use

Because of the inseparable nature of land use and transportation, a joint TAC was formed to address both elements. A primary purpose of the transportation system is to serve land uses. Inversely, the land use patterns are dependent upon the condition and effectiveness of the

transportation system. As such, the two need to be planned in concert to provide for effective functioning of both elements. The committee affirmed the need for a strong hierarchical system (functional classification) of highways to preserve the carrying capacity for through travel, while providing the best possible access to land uses.

There was also considerable desire for mixed land use development in urban areas to encourage the use of transportation modes other than the automobile, and the connection and location of new and existing employment centers to residential areas by trails, pedestrian facilities, and public transit services. Carrying this further, land uses should consider access by non-vehicular travelers in their placement and design. For instance, businesses which have a large parking lot in front of the facility, and requiring pedestrians, bicyclists, and bus riders to traverse this dangerous obstacle, should consider a more human scale, mitigating amenities, or alternative access for these trip-makers.

Vision Statement for Transportation

In preparation for forming a vision statement, the Transportation/Land Use Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?" and "What would you like to see created in the region?". The committee ultimately decided to develop two separate vision statements, one for the Transportation Element, and one for the Land Use Element. The resulting land use vision is presented in Chapter 11: Land Use, while the transportation vision is addressed below. The committee's responses recognize trade-offs, but have been summarized into a vision that presents a broad and utopian direction.

This vision was summarized into the following transportation vision statement for the region:

"In 2030, the East Central region will have an efficient regional transportation network which provides options for the mobility needs of all people, goods, and services".

The following section addresses the issues and opportunities that were developed as the basis for this vision and how each will be carried forward in this planning process.

Issues/Opportunities – Fact Sheets

The identified transportation issues fell into five larger categories: effects of sprawl development on transportation, funding, regional significance, transportation and the environment, and alternative modes of transportation.

Sprawl Development/Transportation

There is an ongoing controversy over the cause and effect relationship between sprawl development and highway construction. Regardless of which causes the other, however, it is inarguable that continued sprawl development presents challenges to the transportation system and to those who need to travel to work, school, and for other functions in our daily lives. How can we preserve our environment while meeting the transportation demands of our sprawling development patterns? Can something be done to change the development patterns of the last 40 years and change the future outlook of our cities? What policies would be necessary to

accomplish a more transportation-friendly development, and a more development-friendly transportation system?

Funding

One of the greatest challenges facing legislators, transportation professionals, the traveling public, and taxpayers, is how to pay for our enormous transportation needs. Much of the interstate highway system was built 30 to 40 years ago, and is in need of very expensive maintenance and major reconstruction. Complicating these great funding demands, is the fact that gas taxes, the primary source of transportation funding, are declining as cars become more energy efficient and alternatively fueled automobiles are coming on the scene. How can we retain the integrity of our existing transportation system, while meeting the future capacity needs evident in increasing volumes and congestion.

Regional Significance

It is widely recognized that a key factor in economic vitality is a healthy transportation system. Specifically, the connection of our region to a larger, even global, market is crucial. All modes of transportation play a part in the attraction of businesses, industry, and a dynamic and highly-educated workforce. How can we maintain and expand our connections to larger markets and hubs, such as Chicago and the Twin Cities? Can we, as a region, work together to increase our economic strength and provide services more efficiently? What roles can, and should, the various modes of transportation serve to ensure a well coordinated and regionally significant system?

Transportation and the Environment

Our transportation system has a significant effect on our natural environment. As traffic volumes increase and trip length become longer, the quality of our air can be threatened. The construction of highways and runoff from operating highways, can threaten surface and groundwater resources, as well as wildlife habitat and wetlands. Operating a viable transportation system, while maintaining a healthy environment, is a balancing act with many interests, arguments, and regulations on either side.

Alternative Modes and Mobility

Modes of transportation, alternative to the automobile, are essential in the daily lives of many of our region's residents. Older adults, persons with disabilities, low income individuals, and young people are often dependent on public transportation to be active members of the workforce, to get to school, or to make personal business or social trips. Can public transportation also be a mode of choice for larger numbers of the region's urban dwellers? How can we meet the growing demand for services as the population ages, both in urban and rural areas? What benefits can be gained from the development of facilities for increased pedestrian and bicycle use?

Fact Sheets

The following fact sheets provide some detail and discussion concerning the key issues that resulted from the technical advisory committee meetings, as well as from public input gathered through information meetings or general comments submitted to staff. Some issues were combined, where appropriate, so as to reduce redundancy, and core goals were identified to address each issue. Each fact sheet presents information on the key facts, why action is necessary, current activities and programs and concludes by identifying core goals.

Effects of Sprawl Development on Transportation

FACT SHEET: T1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

What is sprawl? Sprawl is defined as noncontiguous, low density development. Historically, sprawl development has been an issue of great concern throughout the region. Since the 1970's, sprawl development has been contained to some degree through the implementation of sewer service regulations, nevertheless, an area larger than the entire area of Winnebago County has been taken out of agricultural production in the region. According to the last Natural Resources Inventory conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, between the years of 1992 and 1997, land development in Outagamie County increased by 23.7 percent while population increased by only 7.4 percent.

Low density, scattered development is continuing to occur on the urban fringes and in rural areas, which increases travel distances. With this increase for commuters, the use of alternative modes of transportation has declined and the majority of our region's population is reliant on the automobile as the primary mode of transportation. With this reliance on the automobile, traffic volumes on our transportation network continue to escalate.

This trend of low density, scattered development also isolates non-vehicle users, especially the elderly and disabled, from being able to travel in a cost and time efficient manner to doctor appointments, grocery stores, and jobs, etc.

So What!

Sprawl development is inefficient and costs money! A recent analysis of nationwide metro-area traffic by the Texas Transportation Institute concluded that traffic congestion, which is primarily caused by sprawl, increases commute times by 34%. This increase in trip times results in an average of 53 hours of sitting in traffic per year for each commuter. A perfect example of how much this costs motorists is in the Twin Cities area, where roughly \$1.3 billion is wasted each year with regards to time and fuel. How would you rather spend your time and money? In many metro-areas like the Twin Cities, this issue has been listed as the number one concern among residents in terms of quality of life.

Sprawl development not only costs you money out of your pocket, but also uses your tax dollars to pay for its consequences. In a study conducted by University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh economist M. Kevin McGee, it was estimated that compact development would save Wisconsin taxpayers roughly \$25 million dollars per year. The extension of municipal services and new road constructions and improvements on existing corridors which are deteriorated by high traffic volumes are the major contributors to this increase in taxes. Sprawl development is costing you money and making travel less efficient.

Sprawl development also has a negative impact on economic competitiveness, especially important as the area tries to attract new investments to supplement the paper industry.

By working together on implementing current and future transportation policies and goals, we can help reduce sprawl development and congestion. This will lead to a safer, more efficient regional transportation network and save you time and money.

Current Action

Impacts of sprawl development may be greatly reduced through access control. Access control is a means of discouraging some sprawl development along highway corridors. East Central has made recommendations to control the access on several of the region's arterial routes. This will ensure that these corridors are protected from local trip use, and it will also discourage development except where interchanges allow access. A freeway is the safest and most efficient way to control access on major corridors. A freeway is defined as having highway access only at grade-separated interchanges.

A prime example in our region in terms of access control is the new U.S. Highway 10 from the Fox Cities to Stevens Point which was completed in 2003. It is recommended by the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission that U.S. Highway 10 be planned to ultimately be a divided 4-lane freeway. At this point in time, all municipalities, with the exception of one town, including three counties along the corridor have passed a resolution to support this recommendation. Currently, this corridor consists of stretches of freeway and expressway. An expressway is defined as having at-grade access crossings and highway

access from local roads and private driveways. By eventually making USH 10 a complete freeway, access will be controlled, which will discourage development along the corridor, reduce local trip congestion, and increase safety. A similar recommendation has been made for U.S. Highway 45 from U.S. Highway 41 to the new U.S. Highway 10 in Winnebago County.

Traditional neighborhood design ordinances also limit sprawl by requiring development to be compact and pedestrian friendly with mixed uses (single and multi-family residences, schools, grocery stores, post offices, libraries, etc). This type of neighborhood design was immensely popular in the 1950's and over the last decade has been reemerging. The City of Oshkosh, for example, has established a traditional neighborhood development ordinance to combat the effects of sprawl over the last several decades.

Another important factor in reducing the consequences of sprawl development is to ensure that an adequate local street system exists to protect the carrying capacity of highways.

Core Goals

1. Encourage new development in areas served by existing and adequate facilities
2. Encourage development of alternative modes of transportation and ensure they can co-exist with each other efficiently
3. Discourage the sprawl effects of highway expansion (induced travel)

Transportation Funding

FACT SHEET: T2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The State of Wisconsin's current annual budget in terms of the major highway construction program is roughly \$600 million dollars. In comparison, it costs roughly \$1 million dollars to put down one mile of highway. On a state-wide scale \$600 million does not go too far and doesn't satisfy everyone's funding requests.

Transportation funding is an extremely competitive process in terms of governments at all levels trying to obtain as much money as they can to improve their transportation networks, services, and facilities. Although there are a wide variety of sources available, funds are limited and virtually all levels of government are competing for them. Therefore, if all levels of government not only in the region, but outside the region work together to obtain these funds and utilize them in a cost-effective manner, we can ensure that our transportation networks, services, and other related facilities are safe and efficient.

The region currently receives funding for transportation planning from a variety of sources. The majority of funds for transportation planning in the region are received from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Not only do projects within our region compete with each other, but with other projects throughout the state.

A factor that could have a huge impact on the availability of funding in the near future will be the Marquette Interchange in Milwaukee. This project appears to be the top priority for the State of Wisconsin over the next

several years. This may greatly reduce the levels of available funds over the period of time in which it is constructed. This project is, however, crucial for mobility and economic development in our region as well as the state and much of the Midwest.

So What!

The effects on everyday life of inadequate transportation funding would be catastrophic. Our transportation network would be in rough shape physically. Vehicle maintenance and costs would increase. Travel times on our transportation system would increase. Accidents, injuries, and fatalities would most likely increase. Public transportation programs would cease to exist. Therefore, transportation funding sources must be maintained and expanded to aid all levels of government.

Local governments need to work together to maximize funding to maintain and improve our transportation systems and avoid the duplication of transportation services. It is not only important to maintain our current transportation network and services for ourselves, but also for future generations. If our regional transportation system is not maintained, future generations will be responsible for repairing it more frequently and at higher costs.

Hopefully, as technology expands and alternative energy sources generate more revenues, especially within the automobile industry, alternative funding sources will be expanded and the heavy reliance on the state's gas tax and various transportation fees will be decreased.

Current Action

Urban highway project funding is one way that local governments can work together to obtain state and federal transportation funds. Through the development of a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), urbanized areas list and prioritize transportation projects to determine which projects will be receiving state and federal funding for the next five years.

How will additional funds be obtained in the future? One theory is to increase various taxes, such as the gas tax. Wisconsin currently has one of the highest gas tax rates in the country at roughly 31 cents per gallon. The majority of the state's transportation funds come from this gas tax. Another is to increase transportation related fees, such as vehicle registration and license rates. This past year, vehicle registration rates in Wisconsin were increased by \$10.

Many major metropolitan areas across the country collect highway tolls. A perfect example of an area struggling to maintain its transportation network due to rapid growth rates is the Twin Cities metro-area. Some experts say that the area is 20 years behind in transportation expansions and improvements to support usage and alleviate congestion. The Twin Cities metro area has some of the highest commute times and congestion rates in the entire country. What are the Twin Cities doing to solve this dilemma? At this point in time, the Twin Cities are considering the inclusion of toll roads along several major corridors, such as

Interstate 494. With regards to the Marquette Interchange, the notion of including toll roads was proposed but rejected by Governor Jim Doyle. Without the increase of fees or taxes, transportation funding may cut into the budgets of other government programs.

Although the overwhelming majority of obtainable funds are used for road and highway construction and improvements, funds do exist to improve and expand public transportation services.

Planning can help save money and maximize funds for the future. By reevaluating current street design standards, such as building fewer roads with more efficient access, funding could be utilized in a more cost-effective manner. If right of way for future highway corridors is purchased now rather than later, future funds will go a lot further.

Core Goals

1. Provide a safe street and highway system which, together with other transportation facilities, will meet short and long-range needs, interests, and objectives of the region's citizens in a cost-effective manner
2. Protect future transportation corridors by purchasing right of way
3. Encourage consolidation and coordination of transportation projects and programs to improve efficiency and utilize tax dollars
4. Develop alternative funding sources to the gas taxes and related transportation fees
5. Review street and highway design standards

Regional Connectivity

FACT SHEET: T3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

A transportation network's primary purpose is to provide a connection between economic centers for people and freight. Our transportation network crosses multiple jurisdictional boundaries throughout the region and beyond.

What are the major corridors/facilities that serve our region and connect our economic centers with others across the state and Midwest?

- U.S. Highway 41 - This north-south highway extends through the Fox Valley (west of Lake Winnebago), connecting Green Bay and Milwaukee.
- U.S. Highway 10 - This east-west highway runs through the Fox Valley, which extends across the entire State of Wisconsin from Manitowoc to the Twin Cities.
- Interstate 39/U.S. Highway 51 - This north-south interstate/highway runs through Waushara and Marquette Counties, extending from Wausau and the Wisconsin northwoods to central Illinois.
- State Highway 29 - This east-west highway runs through the northern section of our region and connects Green Bay with Eau Claire.
- Outagamie County Airport - Located just west of the City of Appleton, this airport includes passenger and freight service to other airports throughout the state and Midwest.
- Canadian National Railroad - This rail corridor runs through the region connecting Chicago to the Twin Cities and Superior/Duluth.

Currently, 95% of the region's freight, both imported and exported, is transported by truck in comparison to roughly 4% by rail and 1% by air.

Intergovernmental cooperation between local units of government is necessary to maintain a successful transportation system. For decades, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination has played an important role in the success of transportation planning efforts throughout the region.

So What!

Our transportation system is the engine of our regional economy. As our transportation system becomes more efficient, the economy strengthens due to increased regional accessibility and economic development. This theory not only pertains to accessibility within the region, but also in connecting the region with economic centers in the rest of the state and beyond.

The biggest external transportation project which will have a major effect on not only our region, but the Midwest, is the Marquette Interchange in Milwaukee. A full reconstruction effort to improve Wisconsin's most used interchange will begin in the spring of 2004 and is scheduled to end by fall of 2008.

A heavy reliance on the trucking industry increases traffic and congestion volumes. By expanding our rail and air freight system, traffic and congestion on our regional transportation system could be greatly reduced. According to Dr. Richard Stewart, director of the Transportation and Logistic Research Center at the University of

Wisconsin - Superior, the Neenah inter-modal facility has the ability to load and transport the freight of 400 trucks per train. By expanding and utilizing our regional rail system and connecting it with other economic centers, we could decrease traffic volumes and congestion on our roadways.

By working together, municipalities can eliminate the duplication of services and their expenses, therefore saving taxpayers money. Also, when local governments work together on transportation projects or are aware of transportation projects in jurisdictions outside of their boundaries, communities have a better understanding of how it will affect not only their community, but the region as a whole.

Current Action

With regards to highway and transit planning, coordination efforts between municipalities throughout the region have been extremely beneficial. There are basically three primary forms of intergovernmental cooperation which help define transportation projects of regional significance. These include:

Urban Highway Project Funding - Through the development of a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), urbanized areas list and prioritize transportation projects to determine which will be receiving state and federal funding for the next five years.

Corridor Planning - A comprehensive analysis of land uses and access conditions along a highway corridor is undertaken.

Para-transit Coordination - Local units of government work together to provide transit services which cross multiple jurisdictions to maximize the use of funds and minimize the duplication of services.

Although there is no passenger rail service which exists in the region, the Midwest Regional Rail System is through much of the planning process and funding is currently being sought to begin implementation. This requires an enormous amount of cooperation and coordination between all levels of government.

Core Goals

1. Encourage consolidation and coordination of transportation projects and programs through intergovernmental cooperation.
2. Consider the potential benefits of promoting increased use of rail facilities for transporting freight.
3. Expand bus route services throughout the region to various urban areas throughout the state.
4. Identify and preserve transportation corridors and facilities.

Balance Between Transportation and the Environment

FACT SHEET: T4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Many local, regional, state, and federal regulations exist to protect the environment from the effects of our transportation systems, nevertheless some degree of pollution and disruption to the environment does occur. Various materials used in road construction and maintenance (such as chemicals and salt), along with automobile byproducts (such as exhaust and brake dust), can produce toxic runoff which can pollute surface water, groundwater, and habitats for wildlife.

Transportation planning and land use planning have been inseparable elements within the region for decades. Transportation projects go through extensive analysis to determine how levels of environmental interruption can be minimized. In 1970, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was created, which requires federal agencies to draft an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for projects that will greatly affect quality of life and the environment. Its main objective is to identify land uses, socio-economic data, environmental resources, and the potential impacts of various growth scenarios for a given area. This planning document is a valuable resource in ensuring that the level of negative impacts on the environment, ecosystems, wildlife, air, and human populations are minimized.

In terms of air quality, all of our urbanized areas are classified as attainment areas. This means that the air quality meets or exceeds federal requirements for air quality. Consequently, East Central is not required to analyze air quality impacts.

So What!

Without proper planning and regulations, the impacts of transportation construction and pollution on our environment would be overwhelming. In the past, the lack of planning destroyed much of Wisconsin's most diverse environments. According to the Clean Water Action Council of Northeast Wisconsin, over 50% of Wisconsin's original wetlands have been consumed by development. The destruction of wetlands greatly reduces habitats for wildlife, disrupts drainage patterns, and affects water quality due to the fact that wetlands play a major role in water filtration.

In terms of air quality, exhaust produced by automobiles contains harmful pollutants such as carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons, and nitrogen oxides. These byproducts greatly affect air quality, eat away at our atmosphere, and produce acid rain which greatly disrupts our waterways and ecosystems. Over the last several decades, stricter regulations pertaining to air and water quality have been drafted on a federal level to reduce air and water pollution.

As long as transportation planning and land use planning go hand in hand, the levels of environmental disruption created by transportation improvements and new constructions can be minimized. The environment and its resources play a huge role in our health and our quality of life. Planning regulations help keep our air breathable and our water drinkable.

Current Action

The most current example of minimizing the effects of highway construction on the environment, on a regional scale, is U.S. Highway 10. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was approved by the Federal Highway Administration in 1993. This document guided the construction process of the new 4-lane highway from the Fox Cities to Stevens Point which was completed in late 2003. Based upon data analyzed in the EIS document, it was recommended by the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission that U.S. Highway 10 be planned to ultimately be a freeway. By eventually making USH 10 a complete freeway, access will be controlled which will discourage development along the corridor, reduce local trip congestion and vehicle miles traveled, increase safety and greatly minimize environmental impacts.

Some urbanized areas, including Milwaukee, surrounding counties, and Sheboygan County, require vehicle owners to have their vehicle go through an emission test at the time of registration renewal. If the vehicle exceeds emission standards or if the owner fails to comply, then the vehicle registration renewal is suspended until it meets emission standards or is tested.

The use of alternative energies to gasoline is becoming more and more cost-efficient and

popular. Hybrid cars and fuel cell technology have been extremely successful within the automobile industry. Some incentives are available to vehicle owners using these technologies. As these technologies expand and become more popular, the reliance on gasoline and the effects of its byproducts could be greatly reduced.

Core Goals

1. Encourage land uses that minimize vehicle miles traveled.
2. Encourage development of a transportation system that minimizes environmental disruption and strives to maintain a quality environment.
3. Promote the conservation of energy, and recognize energy supply uncertainties in the future.
4. Promote full and efficient utilization of existing regulations and incentives to protect environmental resources.
5. Encourage impact mitigation in project development.
6. Provide education about production and use of more efficient vehicles, modes, and energies, as well as on the incentives available.
7. Attract industries to the region that do research on the use of alternative fuels to the region.

Alternative Modes of Transportation and Mobility

FACT SHEET: T5

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Not all of our citizens are able to travel from one place to another in an efficient manner. This fact has produced one of the biggest challenges within the region in terms of transportation planning. How can we provide, maintain, and promote diverse and cost efficient modes of transportation for everyone?

Obviously, the automobile is the most used mode of transportation in the region, let alone the United States. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, roughly 76 percent of Americans commuted to work alone in an automobile. This is an increase of 3 percent from the 1990 U.S. Census. Not all of the region's population can afford to own or maintain a reliable vehicle. Some cannot physically operate an automobile and some choose not to own a vehicle or regularly use one. In some urban areas, it is cheaper and more efficient not to own a vehicle.

Many individuals, especially those with low incomes, the elderly, children, and the disabled rely on modes of travel other than the automobile (public transportation services, taxi, walking, bicycles, etc). As an alternative to the automobile, roughly 5 percent of Americans used public transportation as their primary means of transportation to work, according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

While the demands for both urban and rural transportation services continue to increase, the costs of providing these services are escalating. Funding exists at various levels to

help alleviate the costs required to offer various transportation services. Our region has been relatively successful in the attainment of funding and in maximizing the use of those funds. Nevertheless, it is crucial to consider whether we are dealing with the issue as effectively as we can.

By the year 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that there will be roughly 52 million people considered to be elderly, compared to nearly 35 million in 2000. This figure also relates to an increase in the number of disabled citizens. Throughout our region, many of these individuals will be located outside the current service area of public transportation services. Therefore, it is important that the issue of mobility for the elderly is continuously addressed.

So What!

Mobility plays a huge role in an individual's quality of life. Many individuals rely on alternative modes of transportation to the automobile to move throughout the region efficiently to do everyday tasks such as go to the store, to the doctor, or to work, etc. They also rely on these modes to satisfy social and recreational needs. It is important that all individuals are included in the ability to take advantage of transportation services offered throughout the region.

Mobility also plays a huge rule in generating economic competitiveness throughout the region. By expanding levels of transportation services and reducing their costs to an affordable rate, people have choices in the attainment of goods and services. If

individuals are isolated without transportation options, they become less able to participate in the local economy, reducing the available pool of employees.

Many people rely on alternative modes of transportation to the automobile to get to work. The majority of these individuals are generally located within the inner-city due to affordable housing and easy accessibility to goods and services. On the other hand, an increasing number of jobs sought by these individuals are located on the urban fringes. The reliance on various transportation services plays a huge role in their ability to attain and maintain a job, a basic necessity for economic vitality.

Current Action

As municipalities compete for state and federal transportation funding, more and more highway projects are being submitted with alternative modes of transportation in mind. Projects that include bike lanes, pedestrian walkways, and bus-related amenities, are generally scored higher than projects without in a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document. This document helps urban municipalities prioritize and determine which projects will receive available federal funds.

Throughout the years, East Central has worked closely with Valley Transit, the City of Oshkosh Transit System, and other regional jurisdictions with regards to providing cost efficient public transportation services. This cooperation between these jurisdictions has allowed these services to exist in the counties of Outagamie, Winnebago, and Calumet while maximizing the use of state and federal funding and minimizing the duplication of such services throughout the counties. These participants were able to coordinate services to financially

benefit each participating entity over each providing service individually. These counties worked together to develop the grant applications for new services, such as those introduced under the Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP). These coordination efforts have been extremely successful in providing the funds necessary to maintain our regional transit services which are not only offered to the urbanized areas, but to urban fringe employment centers and more rural areas, which once were not served.

Another transportation service which has been heavily debated in the region is the creation of a passenger rail system. Although no passenger rail service exists in the region, funding is being sought for the implementation of the Midwest Regional Rail System, which would connect various economic centers throughout the Midwest. This multi-state initiative does include passenger rail service connecting Green Bay and the Fox Valley to Milwaukee and Chicago.

Technology continues to be an important tool in providing cost effective transportation service to the public. Valley Transit through contracted para-transit services, has implemented computerized scheduling software, and is exploring the use of automated locator devices to increase dispatching efficiency and reduce costs.

For individuals that want to use or rely on the use of their vehicles, but want to conserve fuel and money, rideshare programs exist throughout the state. These programs match individuals with similar work schedules, origins, and destinations so they can carpool. Through many of these programs, individuals meet at one of Wisconsin's 92 park and ride lots.

Core Goals

1. Encourage development and expansion of affordable, cost-effective alternative modes of transportation to the automobile.
2. Promote an integrated transportation network that makes mobility efficient.
3. Encourage coordinated transportation and land use planning that ensures housing options (for all people) near existing transportation services.
4. Continue to examine the funding options for the implementation of the Midwest Rail Initiative.
5. Maintain and expand our trail systems.

Key Findings: Transportation

The following is a summary of the key findings in this element, including the vision statement, issues and opportunities as updated for Milestone #2 report, a discussion of the match and mismatch between the vision and current trends, and a listing of the core goals which have resulted from this process.

Vision Statement

In 2030, the East Central region will have an efficient regional transportation network which provides options for the mobility needs of all people, goods, and services.

Issues and Opportunities

- effects of sprawl development on transportation
- funding
- regional significance
- transportation and the environment
- alternative modes of transportation.

Match and Mismatch Between Envisioned and Probable Future

- Current trends of lower density, scattered development create significant challenges to our transportation system. These challenges will be most certainly compounded by the aging of the population, and the resulting increase of demands on alternative modes of transportation, as driving becomes an unrealistic means of travel for more and more of the region's residents. This apparent, if not obvious, scenario, along with the current trend of freezing or declining budgets, will not lead us easily toward a goal of providing options for the mobility needs of all people.
- While exacerbating a number of other challenges facing transportation in the region, and nationwide, transportation funding is really facing its own set of challenges. Wisconsin's reliance on gas tax and registration fees to fund transportation is in question. As cars have become more energy-efficient, and alternatively fueled vehicles take a larger piece of the market, less fuel is purchased. It follows that gas tax revenues decline. New revenue sources, or methods of paying for increasing transportation demands, will likely be necessary to reach our vision.
- The economic significance of the East Central region is challenged by the factors of size and geographic location. An opportunity of coming together to create a region of significant enough size to have real economic impact in the state, nation, and even in the global arena, is certainly an ongoing economic goal. The same concept applies to the transportation system. A real recognition of the region as a continued economic force, will closely relate to coordination and cooperation between airports, freight transportation systems, key highways, etc. While much of the needed cooperation and coordination has begun, it has a fair distance to go to overcome years of, and some

remaining competition between municipalities and other entities within the East Central region.

- Current trends in transportation largely direct us toward our vision, in terms of transportation's impact on the natural environment. Environmental regulations, as well as improvements in the auto and fuel industry, have made enormous strides in protecting our air quality. New technologies are leading us further along, toward "no-emission" automobiles. Still, ever-increasing vehicle miles traveled, is a trend that shows little sign of slowing. Run-off from highways, and some degradation of wetlands and wildlife habitat continue to be a cost for our appetite for bigger and better roads.
- As noted above, trends of increasing demand for transportation services for the growing number of older adults, and stagnant or declining funds for public transportation programs will make the attainment of the vision of mobility for all people difficult. In terms of freight, increasing truck traffic, and the increasing use of trucks for freight movement (95% of all freight in and out of the region), may stand in the way of a vision for options for the transfer of goods. Trends of rail company mergers, the abandonment of miles of rail lines, and elimination of intermodal facilities in the region, have also narrowed such options significantly.

Core Goals

Fact Sheet T1: Effects of Sprawl Development on Transportation

1. Encourage new development in areas served by existing and adequate facilities
2. Encourage development of alternative modes of transportation and ensure they can co-exist with each other efficiently.
3. Discourage the sprawl effects of highway expansion (induced travel)

Fact Sheet T2: Transportation Funding

1. Provide a safe street and highway system which, together with other transportation facilities, will meet short and long-range needs, interests, and objectives of the region's citizens in a cost-effective manner
2. Protect future transportation corridors by purchasing right of way
3. Encourage consolidation and coordination of transportation projects and programs to improve efficiency and utilize tax dollars
4. Develop alternative funding sources to the gas taxes and related transportation fees
5. Review street and highway design standards

Fact Sheet T3: Regional Connectivity

1. Encourage consolidation and coordination of transportation projects and programs through intergovernmental cooperation.
2. Consider the potential benefits of promoting increased use of rail facilities for transporting freight.
3. Expand bus route services throughout the region to various urban areas in the state.

4. Identify and preserve transportation corridors and facilities.

Fact Sheet T4: Balance Between Transportation and the Environment

1. Encourage land uses that minimize vehicle miles traveled.
2. Encourage development of a transportation system that minimizes environmental disruption and strives to maintain a quality environment.
3. Promote the conservation of energy, and recognize energy supply uncertainties in the future.
4. Promote full and efficient utilization of existing regulations and incentives to protect environmental resources.
5. Encourage impact mitigation in project development.
6. Provide education about production and use of more efficient vehicles, modes, and energies, as well as on the incentives available.
7. Attract industries to the region that do research on the use of alternative fuels to the region.

Fact Sheet T5: Alternative Modes of Transportation and Mobility

1. Encourage development and expansion of affordable, cost-effective alternative modes of transportation to the automobile.
2. Promote an integrated transportation network that makes mobility efficient.
3. Encourage coordinated transportation and land use planning that ensures housing options (for all people) near existing transportation services.
4. Continue to examine the funding options for the implementation of the Midwest Rail Initiative.
5. Maintain and expand our trail systems.

Conclusion

The vision, major issues and core goals will be carried forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies. Any implemented policy will have intended and unintended consequences. As a result, during the Milestone #3 process, we will also try to identify those policy links in an effort to predict what impacts transportation policies may have on other plan elements.

CHAPTER 7: COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

Introduction

The economics and viability of the region are dependent on a highly developed infrastructure of community and public facilities. All development (residential, commercial and industrial) requires basic services. These include a dependable and safe water supply; the efficient removal and permanent storage of waste and recyclables; a dependable supply and the efficient transmission of natural gas and electric; a fast reliable telecommunications network that employs the latest technology; an environmentally safe and efficient method of sewage disposal; a reliable system that quickly responds to fire, police and other emergency situations and provides a safe environment; a diverse mixture of specialized recreational facilities; an adequate supply of parks or green infrastructure; a strong education and library system that provides meaningful opportunities for all residents; an accessible and affordable healthcare system; and affordable childcare that provides a safe and excellent alternative for all children to contribute to the vitality, and enhancement, of quality of life within the region.

This chapter discusses the cooperative effort of the different agencies, governmental entities, private businesses, non-profit organizations and private individuals; the relationships between community facilities and the other sections of the plan (economic development, housing, transportation, agricultural resources, natural resources, cultural resources and land use); provides regional thematic vision statements of what we want community facilities to look like in 2030; identifies community and public facilities issues and opportunities; and identifies core goals that will help us address the identified issues and achieve the envisioned future. The focus is on the regional context. Specific facilities that are considered include waste (garbage and recycling); water supply; wastewater treatment; utility infrastructure (electric, gas and telecommunications); public safety (police, fire and rescue services); education; libraries; health and childcare; and local parks and recreational facilities. While stormwater management falls within this chapter, according to guidance provided by the Office of Land Information Services (OLIS), East Central decided that it is better handled and discussed under Natural Resources, Chapter 9 of this report. Likewise, while cemeteries can be considered a community facility, discussion of the issues related to this topic is found in Chapter 10, Cultural Resources.

Cooperation

The development of an efficient, safe, effective and environmentally friendly public and community infrastructure system involves the combined efforts and partnership of many different agencies, governmental entities, private businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals. In order to obtain as broad as perspective as possible, citizens and representatives from the public, private and non-profit sectors were asked to participate in the development of the community and public facilities element of this report.

Representatives from the private sector included citizens, an attorney, a professor, utility (telephone, electric, gas) employees, school and hospital administrator, nursing home consultant, and employees from a recreational facility, nursing home, major health care provider, ambulance service, waste hauler, and a utility cooperative.

Representatives from the non-profit sector included a pastor, staff from the Nature Conservancy, American Cancer Society, Fox Wolf Watershed Alliance, ARC, emergency shelter, housing authority, economic development and financial service agency and childcare and referral.

Representatives from the public sector included administrators, deans, principals and employees from primary and secondary education, college and technical colleges. A representative from the Menominee Nation, elected town, village and county officials and employees from administration, parks, health, public works, libraries, housing, emergency management, fire, sheriff, solid waste and recycling, public utilities, county drainage board, elderly services, federal and county nursing homes, and sanitary districts were involved. UW-extension staff, a library system director, Cooperative Educational Service Agency staff and state employees from the Public Service Commission, Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Society, Wisconsin Department of Commerce and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources also participated.

A core committee and eight subcommittees were formed to address the community and public facilities issues that were identified in Milestone Report #1. The core committee consisted of representatives from the sub-committees; solid waste and recycling; groundwater and water supply; wastewater treatment; utility infrastructure; public safety; education (including libraries); health and childcare; and parks and recreational facilities.

Through ongoing efforts, commission staff actively participates in sewer service area planning activities and the development of municipal and county outdoor recreation plans. Day to day planning requests include such things as, public facility (electric, gas and schools) siting issues, park planning, etc. An East Central employee is a member of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA).

Statement of Interaction with Other Planning Elements

Economic Development

Rising health care costs directly impact a company's ability to compete in a global market. High quality, affordable, accessible health care that is available to all residents is important to the vitality of the region. As our region's residents become older, the importance of healthcare will increase. Residents who live and work in healthy communities are more active, have fewer health problems and are more productive. Studies have shown that productivity for working parents increase if they have access to safe, reliable, quality daycare for their children. Childcare centers that are operated by businesses usually provide more flexible hours for parents who work night or evening shifts. In addition, it seems parents benefit by having their children closer to them.

A vital, safe, clean and healthy environment is an economic draw for new industry and residents. It aids in the retention of existing residents and businesses. Parks or green space add to the local economy by maintaining or increasing property values; providing a place where local citizens can socialize, play sports or relax; and promoting healthy active lifestyles that encourage physical activity. In addition, local parks and recreational facilities draw visitors to an area. These visitors spend money at local restaurants, motels and businesses.

A good educational system has the ability to respond to the ever changing job market, to educate or retrain the residents and to form partnerships between business and schools.

Citizens, businesses and industries need accessible, reliable gas and electric services. To enable economic growth and open up new markets and opportunities for diverse and innovative services, access to fast, reliable, cost effective, and cutting edge telecommunications must be available.

Housing

Preplanning can save municipalities time and money. Infill of housing units or reuse of existing buildings in areas that already have the needed infrastructure, such as streets, sewer, water, emergency services and schools, saves taxpayers the cost of extending these services to new areas.

Housing developments should be provided with infrastructure that promotes healthy community lifestyles. It is important that housing, businesses and schools be interconnected with a network of sidewalks, green space and parks to encourage active lifestyles. School and libraries should be located near existing residential housing and should be within walking distance for both children and adults. Parks and green space not only promote more active lifestyles but may increase housing values in the area.

However desirable it may seem at the time, housing should not be located in floodplains, in areas of high groundwater or in other areas that are susceptible to flooding. Not only does this increase insurance costs, but it may also increase the cost to install basements and on-site sewage systems.

Transportation

A well maintained, efficient and safe transportation network provides access for emergency service providers (police, fire and ambulance) and insures a timely response. By incorporating pedestrian and bicycling facilities in the design of a transportation system, active healthy lifestyles can be promoted as an alternative to the automobile. Regional multi-use corridors are a method that can combine transportation with recreational and utility corridors for a more efficient use of available land.

The siting of a local park, recreational facilities, schools, libraries, solid waste or recycling facilities may have an impact on the adjoining transportation network or facility. Sometimes the siting of these facilities brings increased (vehicular, pedestrian and transit) traffic, birds or other wildlife, the need to build new roads, signalized intersections, pedestrian facilities and lengthened transit routes.

The Fox River, an important waterway within the state, has historically been an important mode of transportation for people and goods. Today, the Fox River provides an important mode of transportation for recreational boaters. This river along with other lakes and rivers within the region, are an important resource that can be developed into a multi-use area that provides not only wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities but also can be used for electric generation and commercial/industrial uses.

Agricultural Resources

Preplanned development leads to the efficient use of public infrastructure and reduces the spread of sprawl, which leads to the consumption of the rural countryside. Educating the local officials and citizens about local land use decisions and their implications for farming is essential if farmland and the ability to grow or raise food are to be preserved. Farmland losses are not just a local concern; if the food that we need to survive can not be grown in the United States, where will the food be grown and what will be the implications of going to a global food supply? The future farmers will need to be educated and trained to manage efficient, cost effective operations in order to survive in this new market.

Communities are land spreading bio-solids, which remain after the wastewater treatment on farmland. However, diminishing farmland, especially in urban areas, is making this practice more costly since the distance that communities must travel to get rid of their waste is steadily increasing.

Large farming operations are helping to provide electricity to our communities. They are generating energy from animal waste residues. This electricity is not only generated from a by-product of farming but is considered a renewable energy source, since it comes from natural resources that do not diminish with use and are continually replenished.

Natural Resources

Waste that is generated must be collected in a manner that encourages both recycling and disposal in a licensed landfill; recycling or compost facility; or incinerated in a safe manner. Waste that is not collected is sometimes dumped along roadside ditches and on vacant lots or burned in backyard barrels. Open burning can cause significant health problems, reduce visibility, contaminate the soil or water table and contribute to air pollution. Recycling is good for the environment, it saves landfill space, reduces energy consumption to manufacture new materials and aids in the preservation of our limited natural resources. Many items such as mercury thermometers, fluorescent lamps, treated wood products, cell phones, computers, televisions and other electronics are harmful to the environment and should not be stored in landfills. Corporate education is needed to reduce packaging materials, buy back products that contain harmful materials (such as computers and cell phones) and to encourage companies to use recycled materials in their manufacturing process.

While waste should be properly disposed of, in order to protect the environment and our water supply, the proximity to streams, lakes, rivers, wetlands, floodplains and wells must be considered when siting these facilities.

Our natural resources are limited and are being used up at an alarming rate. Renewable energy, or green energy, an alternative energy source, comes from natural resources that do not diminish with use since they are naturally and continually replenished. Fossil fuel emissions lead to persistent health and environmental problems including diseases of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems, regional haze, acidification of lakes, streams and forests, mercury in fish and other wildlife, acidic damage and erosion of buildings, statuary and other materials, ozone damage to forests and eutrophication of water bodies. Conversely, renewable energy

sources such as the sun, wind, water and biomass produce little or no air emission or toxic wastes.

There are more than 76 million residential buildings and nearly 5 million commercial buildings in the United States. Together these buildings use one-third of all the energy and two-thirds of all the electricity consumed in the United States and are a major source of air pollution. However, green buildings, an alternative to traditional buildings, are smart buildings. They protect our environment and are cheaper to operate in terms of energy and water consumption. Green buildings promote resource conservation, consider environmental impacts and water minimization, create a healthy and comfortable environment, reduce operation and maintenance costs and address issues such as historic preservation, access to public transportation and other community facilities.

Parks, recreational areas and open space preserve and protect green areas for future generations to enjoy. They protect wildlife habitat within our communities, enhance water and air quality, lower heating and cooling costs, are helpful in controlling stormwater runoff, enhance property values, contribute to the vitality of a community and encourage active lifestyles.

The ability to accommodate growth while protecting the natural environment is essential if our quality of life is to be maintained or improved. The quality of the region's surface and groundwater resources are linked to the proper siting, installation and maintenance of individual on-site wastewater treatment systems. Improper treatment can result in the discharge of excessive human waste and bacteria into the groundwater system, which in turn can contaminate public and private water supplies. The cumulative impacts of development and well density can not only affect the level of aquifers but also the rate at which the aquifer is recharged due to increased amounts of impervious surface. Problems with groundwater quality, including naturally occurring man-made contaminants exist throughout the region. In addition, improperly abandoned wells provide a direct link between the upper and lower aquifers and can be the cause of leakage between the two.

Cultural Resources

Cultural and historical resources often help to determine the identity of a community. Renovating or preserving an existing historic structure or building and reusing it not only enhances the area, but is often coveted by future tenants. Forming partnerships between public and private sectors to encourage development or redevelopment in already developed areas can make better use of existing public infrastructure and allow for an idea to become reality. Historic buildings are often converted to restaurant, business and residential use. Reuse of these buildings contributes to the tax roll; as they are in close proximity to existing facilities; it eliminates the need to expand infrastructure to new areas; cuts down on urban sprawl and the consumption of farm and open land; and saves taxpayers money. Cemeteries preserve the history of a community or area and are invaluable in the search for individual family history. In addition to their historical significance they also contribute to the green space within a community.

Land Use

Preplanned development leads to an efficient use of our region's resources, reduces urban sprawl, utilizes existing public infrastructure and helps to eliminate land use conflicts. Concerns regarding the siting of solid waste and recycling facilities; gas, electric and telecommunications facilities; cemeteries; schools and other public facilities are often raised by local citizens. However, education of local citizens and officials may result in a better general understanding of the issues and an acceptance of a solution that ultimately benefits everyone. Compact development in urban areas reduces the cost to install public and private infrastructure and deliver public services such as garbage pickup; sewer and water; emergency; transit; electric, gas and telecommunications and elderly services.

Forming partnerships between schools, park departments, libraries, non-profits and others benefits the community and saves the local taxpayer money. In some instances, if these facilities are located near each other, additional cost savings and avoidance of duplicative services can be realized.

The new Comm83 regulations (affects private on-site systems) have brought about state-level concerns regarding the promotion of "sprawl" development patterns and the ability to develop in or near sensitive areas. While most areas of the region currently have adequate groundwater supplies, well density in both urban and rural areas can impact the level of the aquifers. The rate at which they are recharged is influenced by the amount of impervious surface. Within the Fox River Valley area, groundwater is being utilized at such a rate that the deep sandstone aquifer is being withdrawn at a rate of approximately 2 feet per year. Therefore, when making land use decisions, it is imperative that the cumulative impacts of development on the natural resources of the region be examined carefully.

Vision Statement for Community and Public Utilities

In preparation for forming a vision statement, the committees were asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?" and "What would you like to see created in the region?" Using input from visioning questions and comments from the advisory committee members, vision statements were developed for each of the subcommittee areas. Finally an overall vision statement was developed that incorporated common themes from each of the subcommittees. This is presented below.

"Efficient, cost effective community facilities are provided, which enhance the quality of life and ensure prosperity and economic stability for all. The emphasis in service provision is on cooperative planning, fostering collaboration, enhancing partnerships, sharing resources and transcending boundaries, as appropriate. In 2030, there are regional opportunities for the sustainable and safe management of solid waste and recycling, collection, processing and disposal activities. A well managed and planned public and private water supply provides for the region's citizens and industry. The region is served by a variety of well-functioning public and private wastewater treatment systems, which are capable of accommodating future growth, while limiting the inherent conflicts caused by both urban and rural development patterns. Adequate, cost effective, environmentally conscientious utility infrastructure exists to support industry and the general population. There are cost effective, efficient, quality emergency and

non-emergency services to ensure public safety. A variety of meaningful educational options and opportunities exist for all students. Children and adults in the region are provided with accessible educational, informational and recreational library services and materials in an economically efficient and timely manner. There is a collaborative regional forum to create and implement a strategic framework for the continuum of care for the health and well being of the residents of the region. Through cooperative efforts, park, open space, and recreational facilities and programs are protected and preserved and there are plans for new facilities. There are community facilities which meet the needs of various groups, including youth, elderly, and minorities, in a balanced and financially responsible manner."

Issues/Opportunities

Committee members discussed current and anticipated trends and issues relating to solid waste and recycling; utility infrastructure (gas, electric and telecommunications); public safety; education; local parks and recreational facilities; libraries; health; and childcare; public and private wastewater treatment; and municipal and private water supply. The Committees spent some time clarifying and developing the information on current and anticipated trends, which was presented in Milestone Report 1. A record of their discussion is presented in [Appendix B](#).

Some of the identified issues were referred to other committees within our planning process. Others, where appropriate, were referred to agencies and organizations outside the Commission.

The fact sheets presented below identify core goals for those issues that will be addressed in the regional plan. For each issue, the fact sheets include a consideration of the key facts, a discussion of why we need to take action, and a description of the current activities and programs.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The identified issues addressed the following: a regional waste management strategy, waste reduction, coordination and collaboration, siting, education, alternative financing options and marketing.

Two issues were referred to other committees within the community and public facility committee structure. The first related to alternative energy sources and was referred to the "Utility Infrastructure" (gas, electric and telecommunications) sub-committee. The second was concerned with drinking water supply and quality and was referred to the "Groundwater and Water Supply" sub-committee, which is meeting under the Natural Resources element of this planning process.

Public & Private Wastewater Treatment

The identified issues addressed the following: assessment and possible improvement of the region's public wastewater treatment systems, possible regionalization of existing wastewater treatment facilities, conflicts between urbanizing areas and existing on-site rural development, and a regional assessment of the location and amount of rural development based on the ability to treat sewage with private systems.

Public & Private Water Supply

The identified issues addressed the following: drinking water supply, the affect of urban and rural development patterns and the amount of development on aquifer levels and the quality of available drinking water, evaluation and expansion of local and regional municipal water supply systems, conservation of water supplies, direction of rural development away from known groundwater contamination areas, and education and regulation.

Utility Infrastructure

The identified issues addressed the following: cost effective regional delivery of services; promotion of alternative energy sources; regional planning, coordination and cooperation; promotion of multi-use corridors; and education. Planning for natural disasters and terrorist activities was referred to the "Public Safety" subcommittee.

Public Safety

The identified issues addressed the following: planning for natural disasters and terrorist activities; providing cost efficient services; consistent long-term planning; communication, cooperation and coordination; sharing of regional resources and specializations; and regional purchasing.

Education and Libraries

The identified issues addressed the following: communication, cooperation and long-term planning and siting of future facilities; promotion of multi-use facilities; and equitable funding for public libraries.

While East Central has been involved in the siting of new educational facilities, education per se is not a traditional focus of the Commission. Consequently, further liaison with the committee is required to determine how best the region could address issues raised, such as:

- Ensuring that universities and technical colleges work together to continue to provide meaningful, affordable education that encompasses a variety of career choices and learning opportunities. (This issue will likely be referred to the Northeast Wisconsin Educational Resource Alliance. NEW ERA is working to foster regional partnerships between the public colleges, universities and technical schools.)
- Providing students with the necessary tools to succeed.
- Maintaining a high academic standard among students, including those with different needs and backgrounds, especially in the face of difficult fiscal circumstances.
- Encouraging people to work in the childcare and health care industry. This includes options for increasing income for low paying jobs, encouraging people from minorities to work in the health and childcare industry, training people locally for needed employment in the area, providing non-college bound healthcare opportunities, providing additional professional training programs and promoting stronger affiliations between education and healthcare. (This issue was referred from the health and childcare subcommittee.)

Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

The identified issues addressed the following: coordination among providers; preservation and protection of open space; funding; and balancing the interests of various user groups.

Health and Childcare

The identified issues included the promotion of healthy communities and the siting of childcare facilities.

As with education, East Central has not traditionally been involved with health and childcare. Involvement to date has centered on the siting of new facilities. Consequently, East Central will work with the committee to determine how best to move forward on the following issues:

- Ensuring access to social services (health care facilities, childcare, eldercare, family resources, financial advisory services, multi-cultural facilities for migrant workers, especially in rural western counties, and youth services) and affordable health care.
- Reducing duplication of services and promoting regional planning for facilities (nursing homes, CBRF's, hospitals, and other medical facilities).
- Building on the established relationship between **faith-based facilities** and minority residents.
- Promoting planning and coordination of childcare in the community and workplace and expanding the program to provide additional care for disabled children and young adults, infants (0-2 years), sick children, after school care, as well as care for children of workers who work varied shifts and for children of low and middle income families.
- Promoting community and government awareness of health and childcare issues.

Waste: Garbage and Recycling

FACT SHEET: CF1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

In 2000, municipal solid waste (MSW) generation in Wisconsin was estimated at 4.37 million tons or 4.46 pounds per person, per day. It is projected to continue to increase to 4.63 million tons in 2005 or 4.7 pounds per person per day and to 4.87 million tons in 2010. This is a lot of waste, however due to a successful recycling program Wisconsin was able to recover about 33 percent of MSW generated. In addition, approximately 3 million tons of industrial waste is generated in Wisconsin each year. Some 72% of coal ash, 45% of foundry products and 63% of paper mill sludge is beneficially used.

The region is generally following state trends. The majority of counties, which are involved in solid waste collection, are seeing increases. However, unlike the state, the majority of counties within the region are seeing a decrease in recycling. This may be due to changes in packaging materials, the economic recession, or cuts in state and local recycling education program budgets. The exception is Winnebago County, which has experienced an increase in recycling since the beginning of 2003, when the county expanded its recycling program to include additional paper products. Shawano County is seeing a decrease in both waste generation and recycling. It is difficult to determine, however, if county residents are truly generating less waste and recycling less or if more waste is being diverted to areas outside the county.

Open burning and backyard dumping is regarded as a significant problem in parts of the region. Even though burning trash has been illegal under state law for more than 30 years, uniform enforcement of existing rules is proving difficult.

So What!

Waste that is generated must be collected and be permanently stored in landfills, recycled, composted or incinerated in a safe manner. These processes give rise to a number of issues.

Costs: The financial implications for communities and therefore for the taxpayer are substantial. Cooperation between counties and other responsible units has the potential to decrease overall costs to individual communities by facilitating the sharing of resources, expertise, and services.

Facility Siting: While landfills within the region are estimated to have sufficient capacity to meet future needs, it may be necessary to site other facilities such as transfer stations and organic composting facilities. Increasingly the siting of waste management facilities has become a challenge due to public opposition. People typically associate solid waste and recycling facilities with birds, traffic, noise, dust, smell, and other environmental concerns. Public hearings are held to gather input into the location of proposed facilities and generally there is active opposition. Locating these facilities requires consideration of a number of environmental facts, such as, proximity to

existing streams, lakes, rivers, wetlands, floodplain, wells and land stability. It is also important to consider the presence of airports, parks and highways. It is becoming increasingly difficult and, therefore, costly to weigh the public opposition, environmental and business considerations in the balance when siting new facilities.

Environmental Health: Open burning is not environmentally sound and the smoke generated by a large number of simultaneous leaf fires can cause significant health problems. Leaf smoke not only irritates the eyes, nose and throat of healthy adults, reduces visibility, creates safety hazards and causes a nuisance but it contains many hazardous chemicals including carbon monoxide and benzo(a)pyrene a cancer causing agent. Burn barrels often emit acid vapors, carcinogenic tars, heavy metals and unhealthy levels of carbon monoxide. Since burn barrels do not generate enough heat to completely burn all materials in the barrel, ash disposal can cause problems. This is especially true if it comes in contact with water and results in ground or surface water contamination.

In addition, some products such as mercury thermometers, fluorescent lamps, and treated wood products, which are currently being disposed of in state landfills, are considered harmful to the environment. The disposal of cell phones, computers, televisions and other electronics in state landfills is becoming a growing concern, given the possible health consequences of lead, mercury, hexavalent chromium, and dioxin.

Recycling: Recycling saves landfill space and therefore extends the life of the existing landfills within the region. It also saves energy and other resources. For example, recycling one ton of aluminum saves the

equivalent of 2,350 gallons of gasoline or the amount of electricity used by the typical Wisconsin home over a period of 10 years. Recycling paper produces 73 percent less air pollution and requires 60 percent less water consumption than does manufacturing paper from virgin materials. Using recycled aluminum in the manufacturing process saves even more; it cuts down on water pollution by 97 percent, air pollution by 95 percent and energy needs by 92 to 97 percent.

Organics: Removing organic material, particularly food and clean wood, which represent 10.2% and 12.8% of the organic waste stream, from landfills will also extend the life of existing facilities, be more environmentally friendly and cost effective. Land that is available for land spreading of organics is decreasing due to development. As available land decreases, it becomes more costly to spread material on the land that remains.

Waste Reduction: Curbside recycling is well established in the state. Reducing the potential amount of waste to be collected and processed by increasing the reuse of existing industrial by-products and goods is also important. Similarly, it also seems appropriate to reduce the potential amount of waste that requires collection and processing. Focusing on the front end of the process, the design and packaging decisions of manufacturers, for example, can have a large impact on waste quantities. Reusing products and byproducts helps preserve resources, conserve energy, and reduce or eliminate the need to dispose of materials in landfills.

Education: Given the controversy associated with waste management facilities, there is a role for educational programs. It is important to inform local politicians,

residents, special interest groups, and businesses about the benefits of a well structured solid waste and recycling management plan. Education also plays an important role in recycling in that it influences the amount of effort that the public will put into this program. Corporate education is beneficial in reducing the amount of packaging material, by encouraging companies to use recycled materials in their manufacturing process or to institute a buy back program. Education in the schools teaches our children, at an early age, that conserving our limited resources is important and what they can do to help.

Current Action

The state has targeted landfill bans on certain materials, given local responsible units¹ control and placed an emphasis on education. Wisconsin has a popular and successful recycling program. With the current funding programs in place, recovery of MSW is expected to increase to 35% in 2005 and 38% in 2010².

In 2000, Outagamie, Winnebago and Brown counties entered into a cooperative recycling and solid waste agreement that is projected to save \$35 million in disposal costs over 25 years and \$8 million in recycling over a 12 year period. This agreement has already resulted in efficiencies and cost savings that no one county could have realized individually. These costs have allowed Winnebago County to lower 2004 tipping fees for paper and

processing from \$29 per ton, in place since 1996, to \$25.50 per ton.

Brown County currently handles hazardous waste collection in the area. Shawano County has an agreement with Brown County that allows its residents to dispose of their hazardous waste at a Brown County facility, resulting in cost savings for Shawano County. Grants, such as the Recycling Efficiency Incentive Grant (NR 544.04), are available to Responsible Units who consolidate or enter into a cooperative agreement with at least one other Responsible Unit.

Recycling is currently working in Wisconsin. However, within the region, recycling tonnages are decreasing at the same time that solid waste generation rates are increasing. Funding for recycling education is being cut in some areas of the region and recycling is receiving negative publicity at the state level.

A regional organic recycling facility was considered for the Fox Cities area, however to date no action has been taken. It was proposed that the by-product of this facility could be processed into a high-quality soil amendment. However, other materials that could be included in an organic recycling facility are abundant in the region and were not included in the 2001 study³. These include food and green waste from schools, hospitals, restaurants, grocery stores, and construction and demolition materials.

Many Responsible Units collect computers during special collection times and some computer manufactures such as Dell and HP

¹ A Responsible Unit is any municipality, county or other unit of government that is designated to establish and operate a solid waste management system.

² Wisconsin Waste Characterization & Management Study Update 2000, by Franklin Associates, LTD, July 2002.

³ Fox River Valley Organic Recycling Project: Feasibility of Cooperative Acquisition and Processing of Diverse Organic Waste Streams in WI Fox River Valley. 2001

are taking responsibility for the collection and processing of used computers that carry their name.

Wisconsin's Beneficial Use of Industrial By-products Program is a voluntary program that encourages the reuse of ash, paper mill sludge, and foundry sand and slag as an alternative to placing these materials in landfills.

Used clothing, furniture and various household items are collected by non-profit organizations and private businesses for resale. These organizations and businesses provide a valuable service to the community while keeping unwanted items from state landfills.

Financial assistance is available to Responsible Units to fund local recycling and yard waste management programs.

Several municipalities have local ordinances in place to ban mercury thermometers from landfills and the EPA is currently conducting studies on the health and environmental effects of treated wood.

Core Goals:

The following core goals have been identified for waste. They are based on what we want to see, our vision, a consideration of the key facts, a discussion of why we need to take action, and a description of current activity and programs.

Support the establishment of an integrated regional planning strategy for waste management that will:

1. Encourage efforts to promote collaborative, regional collection and processing strategies for solid waste and recycling

that involves residents, the public, private and non profit sectors.

2. Encourage consideration of alternative financing options to reduce budget shortfalls.
3. Limit the conflicts between existing solid waste and recycling facilities and new development.
4. Effectively address the public health and environmental concerns associated with the location of new waste management facilities.
5. Encourage the uniform enforcement of existing state law on solid waste and recycling
6. Support a shift in focus, from waste disposal to waste recovery, by promoting recycling, waste reduction, organic waste composting, and reuse of products.
7. Encourage the improvement of product design and manufacture to facilitate their reuse, recycling, and disposal.
8. Promote educational campaigns to increase corporate and public awareness of solid waste and associated environmental issues as well as foster sustainable behaviors.

PUBLIC & PRIVATE WASTEWATER TREATMENT

FACT SHEET: CF2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Public Systems

A "sewerage system" is the collection of all structures, conduits and pipes, by which sewage is collected, treated, and disposed of. A total of 79 public and 5 privately-owned wastewater treatment facilities (WWTFs) are in operation within the region. While the majority of WWTFs are municipally owned, some are owned and operated by other entities including sanitary districts and metropolitan sewerage districts. Sixty-six separate sanitary districts exist within the region in both rural and urban areas. These districts are involved in some aspect of wastewater collection and/or treatment and are primarily located in rural or lakeshore environments.

Of the 84 WWTFs in the region, twenty-one, or approximately 25%, have some type of concern regarding the plants' capacity or other ability to treat wastewater. Also, according to a report issued by the WDNR in March, 2001, of the 482 sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) - or bypass - occurrences recorded statewide between 1996 and 2000, twenty-seven (or 5.6%) of these occurred at facilities within the East Central region. These discharges directly impact water quality as they send untreated sewage into lakes and streams. Many of these SSOs occurred as a result of clear-water infiltration and inflow problems during heavy rain and flooding events which stresses the need for additional stormwater management planning and sewer re-habilitation work in the future.

Private Systems

Private on-site wastewater treatment systems, or POWTS, are systems that receive domestic

wastewater and either retains it in a holding tank, or treats it and discharges it into the soil, beneath the ground surface. POTWs service a majority of the development within the region's rural areas and, depending on the type and maintenance frequency, can function for anywhere from 15 to 30 or more years. They can, in fact, be a very cost-effective method to treat waste in rural areas, which are not serviced by public sewers.

Typically, individual systems are designed for each household based on the site's soil characteristics and capabilities. On-site systems exist in a variety of engineered types and configurations. The most common include conventional septic, at grade system, mound system, and holding tank. Recent changes to Comm83 regulations at the state level now allows for other technology to be used including recirculating sand filters, aerobic treatment units, and others.

Between 2000 and 2002 alone, it is estimated that over 4,700 permits were issued at the county level within the region for new on-site systems. Known problems with older failing systems do occur at some level within every county of the region, but efforts continue to improve these systems through a variety of inspection and replacement programs.

So What!

Public Systems

The ability to treat wastewater and plan for associated infrastructure are of key importance to both the future development of the region and the protection of its surface and groundwater resources. The ability of communities to accommodate

growth while protecting the natural environment is of high priority. Maintaining the quality of life in the region is dependent upon this basic urban service.

The provision of, or access to, public sanitary sewer is also a major factor in the location and timing of urban growth. Consequently, the decision on whether to provide sewer service should be taken into consideration during all phases of land use planning and implementation. Wastewater treatment is a major expense and investment for a community. It must be seriously considered at all levels of planning, particularly, with respect to providing cost-effective service and maximizing the use of existing investments in this infrastructure. For example, a recent planned upgrade of the Heart of the Valley WWTF is estimated at \$24 million to accommodate population demands out to the year 2027!

On a regional basis, WWTF capacity does not seem to pose a significant constraint on economic growth. Overall, the capacity of most plants can accommodate projected growth within the region. However, some of the more rural areas may have temporary or long-term limitations until such time as conscious decisions regarding growth and municipal expenditures are made to expand or improve their systems' capabilities.

Private Systems

The overall quality of the region's surface and groundwater resources are linked directly to the proper siting, installation, and maintenance of individual on-site wastewater treatment systems. Improper management of these systems can result in the discharge of excessive human waste and bacteria into the groundwater system, which in turn, can contaminate public and private water supplies. The recently approved Comm83 rules that govern on-site systems stirred heated

debates on the relationship between private wastewater rules and urban/rural sprawl. Several counties within the region have allowed significant amounts of rural development to occur using this technology and, while this may not be of great initial concern with regard to water quality, the other cumulative effects of rural developments on natural resources and public service can be severe.

The continued permitting of private on-site treatment systems will certainly be needed to accommodate new and existing development within the rural portions of the region; however, many issues regarding the effectiveness of these systems, and the impacts of rural development overall, will require additional debate during the planning process.

Current Action

Public Systems

Most municipal sewerage systems in Wisconsin are subject to the administrative rules of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), which stem from the Federal Clean Water Act. Decisions regarding the extension, or expansion, of the wastewater collection and treatment systems are made by local elected officials with oversight provided by East Central and the state agencies under the following programs.

NR-121 Sewer Service Area Plans - Sewer Service Area (SSA) Plans are in place for 26 of the 84 WWTFs within the region and are developed and administered by East Central through an agreement with the WDNR. These are long-range plans that have been prepared to address general growth and water quality issues, as well as being the basis for the overall Areawide Water Quality Management Plan and '208' sewer extension review process.

NR-110 Facilities Planning - This system is used to assess the condition of a sewerage system, establish a need for improvement, evaluate options to address system needs, and to identify the cost-effective alternative. In conjunction with the WDNR's WWTF permitting process and annual Compliance Maintenance Annual Reporting (CMAR) program, assurances are made as to the performance and maintenance of these public waste treatment systems.

At the local level, many communities have regulatory provisions regarding the installation of, or connection to, its sewer system as well as financial planning procedures and intergovernmental agreements to ensure responsible operation and maintenance of the collection system and wastewater treatment plant. Due to recent state law changes and local zoning decisions, issues are also becoming more prevalent regarding the land spreading of bio-solids that remain after the liquid treatment process.

Private Systems

Wisconsin Administrative Code Comm 83 was revised during the 1990's to add provisions for new system technologies and land suitability criteria. It came into effect on July 1, 2000. Unlike the code it replaced, the new rules prescribe end results - the purity of groundwater discharged from the system - instead of the specific characteristics of the installation. These new rules have been a subject of major debate in terms of if, and how, they contribute to issues of rural development and sprawl.

Several counties, including Calumet and Waushara have limited some rural development by not allowing holding tanks systems for new construction, although they are considered to be an option for replacement situations. The new Comm 83 rules do allow the use of holding tanks for

new construction, however, individual counties and municipalities can continue to enforce such a ban at their discretion. Some counties have effectively used their wastewater regulations to curb rural development altogether. For instance, Calumet County has regulations that prevent the creation of 'unsewered' subdivisions which, in turn, directs much of their growth to areas provided with public sewer.

Several communities take a role in the general management and maintenance of individual on-site systems by ensuring that they are maintained properly (pumpage and inspection reporting, etc.)

The Commission has little in the way of formal regional policies regarding development with on-site systems at this time and may want to consider addressing this issue in more detail as the regional plan develops.

Core Goals

1. Promote sanitary sewerage systems that will effectively and economically serve urban and rural development within the region.
2. Promote the regionalization of public wastewater treatment facilities where proven to be cost-effective.
3. Support and maintain the state-level review and planning process for public wastewater treatment facility and collection systems.
4. Resolve issues associated with conflicts between rural, on-site, development which is in close proximity to publicly sewerred areas.
5. Achieve consistency in the application of rules governing rural, on-site development throughout the region.

PUBLIC & PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY

FACT SHEET: CF3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Public Water Systems

There are 73 municipal water systems in the region which pump an average of 59.7 million gallons per day. These systems serve 64 incorporated communities, seven sanitary districts, one water utility, one private water commission, and six settlements located in Menominee County. Collectively, about 157,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers - representing approximately 343,000 people (or 55% of the region's total population) - are provided with municipal water.

With the exception of the cities of Appleton, Menasha, Neenah and Oshkosh, who utilize surface water from Lake Winnebago, all of the municipal water systems rely on groundwater as their sole source of supply. Because of possible well malfunctions it often is recommended that communities have at least two fully developed water supply sources (wells or intakes). Nine of the region's smaller community systems do not meet this standard. What's more is that a full one-third of the region's municipal systems do not have sufficient storage capacity to provide continuous service in the event of a general power loss or equipment malfunction.

Private Wells

Private wells occur in great numbers within the rural portions of the region. According to WDNR databases, over 37,000 private, low-capacity wells and 1,500 high capacity wells (over 70 gpm) exist within the 10-county area.

For the most part, these private wells provide sufficient amounts of water for personal and business consumption, however; localized geologic factors may limit water production in some areas of the region.

The quality of the water derived from private wells may be of higher concern, as numerous instances of localized, naturally occurring and man-made contaminants exist throughout the region. According to the UW-Extension Private Well Project, Calumet and Waushara Counties contained the highest levels of nitrate in the region with many wells exceeding the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Act standards (for municipal supplies) of 10 mg/l. Bacteria testing programs show that contamination problems exist in every county of the region, with the highest incidences present in Calumet County - likely due, in part, to the highly fractured bedrock geology and relatively thin soils.

So What!

Drinking water supply, whether provided through municipal (public) or individual (private) systems, is one of the most important infrastructure components within the region. Without access to sufficient drinking water of good quality, little development would have occurred within the region and future development would be non-existent.

Public Water Systems

Municipal water systems consist of four main components; supply, treatment, storage and distribution. Each of these components is engineered to work together and numerous

factors can affect how well they work in supplying water. Planning for the 'water supply' part of these systems is likely to be the most difficult, as it is not easy to 'engineer' the impacts associated by land use decisions, particularly if aquifers are drawn from by multiple communities and private entities.

Planning for the wise use and conservation of the region's water resources is of utmost importance. As urbanization continues, these demands, and impacts, will increase over time. Currently the urbanized portions of the Fox River Valley are utilizing groundwater at a rate which lowers the deep sandstone aquifer by about 2 feet per year! These lowering aquifer levels are further exacerbated by locational factors of existing and new high-capacity wells that create 'interference zones' of two or more cones of depression.

Ensuring quality water, even from a municipal treatment system, is becoming more expensive and difficult to achieve. The region's aquifers are susceptible to leakage and localized contamination for a variety of reasons and, as such, some problems with natural contaminants such as arsenic, saline, radium and radon have shown up in these public systems. In many cases, the contaminated wells are abandoned and new wells are drilled in the hopes that they too, will not be contaminated in the future. Those communities, which get their water from surface sources, also need to worry about contamination from algae, sediments, and zebra mussels.

Private Wells

While most areas of the region have adequate supplies for individual wells, the cumulative impacts of ongoing rural development patterns could be of serious concern in some areas of the region over the next 20 to 30 years. Increases in well densities can affect

not only the level of the region's aquifers, but also the rate at which the aquifer is recharged due to increased amounts of impervious surface.

These wells are also typically more susceptible to contaminants due to their more shallow nature. If not constructed or abandoned properly, leakage can actually occur from the upper aquifers to the lower aquifers, leading to possible contamination of the deeper aquifers. Some of the 'urbanizing' portions of the Fox Cities and Fond du Lac still allow development using private wells instead of municipal systems due to their relatively low expense and cost-effectiveness as compared to a municipal system.

Current Action

Public Water Systems

Programs and research activities have been initiated within the region over the last few years which will assist in dealing with issues related to growth, water usage, and water supply. Reports examining the Fox Cities & Fond du Lac area hydrologic conditions and well optimization possibilities are just the first of many small steps which need to be taken to address the long-term water supply concerns facing the urban portion of the region.

From a regulatory perspective, new legislation and programs have been developed for 'source water protection' by the WDNR. As of April, 2002, twenty-two well-head protection plans were completed and approved by communities within the region. New legislation is also being developed related to high capacity well siting issues. At the county level, discussions have also occurred regarding the ability, or need, for establishing private well permitting programs due to smaller scale siting issues for residential and business development.

Efforts are also aimed at providing information and education on groundwater topics as they relate to municipal water supply by such entities such as the State's Groundwater Coordinating Council, Resource Conservation & Development Councils (RC&Ds), UW-Extension, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Geologic & Natural History Survey.

Private Wells

Currently, both federal and state drinking water standards apply to public water systems, (most cities and villages, schools, businesses, etc.). Private wells (individual wells serving < 25 persons) are not required to be protected by these federal standards. People with private wells are responsible for making sure that their own drinking water is safe!

Wisconsin has had well regulations since 1936, and today is recognized as a national leader in well protection. The WDNR regulations (NR-812) are based on the sound premise that if a well and water system is properly located, constructed, installed and maintained, the well should provide safe water continuously without the need for treatment. Current rules however do not adequately address siting or density issues regarding individual private wells nor do they impose quality standards as with municipal wells.

Information and education is also a major focus of current actions. Specific programs and research activities have been initiated within the region over the last few years and include the Calumet County private well testing project for nitrates and bacteria, and for arsenic testing within Outagamie and Winnebago Counties. The results of these studies are shared with residents and communities in hopes of increasing awareness and stimulating more proactive planning.

Core Goals

1. Investigate, encourage and promote efficient water conservation programs that will assist in addressing regional water supply issues.
2. To clearly identify issues and opportunities for water supply which lend themselves to regional solutions versus local ones.
3. To preserve and protect both surface water and groundwater resources that are used for public and private water supplies.
4. To support and assist in coordinated local planning and decision-making that acknowledges local concerns and issues.
5. To support existing state level water supply regulations and their continued improvement.
6. To support and assist in the development of new state, regional, county, and local programs and regulations that effectively protect public and private water supplies in a consistent manner.
7. To ensure that existing and future public water systems are planned for and developed in a cost-effective manner.
8. To effectively inform and educate the public and decision-makers on water supply issues.

Electric, Gas and Telecommunications

FACT SHEET: CF4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Energy demand in the region is growing, and seems likely to continue to do so. This is a consequence both of increased demand and new residential, commercial and industrial development. Total electric sales grew 28.5 percent over the past decade¹. It is anticipated that our statewide peak summer electric demand will increase from 12,421 MW in 2000 to 14,845 MW in 2004².

The region supports four natural gas companies, 17 electric companies, an electric transmission company, and a gas pipeline company. Approximately 87% of the power in the region is generated by the five existing fossil fuel (oil, gas and coal) sites. About 13% is generated by the 22 hydroelectric sites. The remaining power is generated from other sources; wind and biomass. New generating plants entering operation in the state through 2004 are expected to consist predominately of natural gas-fired turbines.

Summer peak demand and supply conditions ordinarily determine the need for either new electric generating plants or new transmission facilities. For summer peak demand, Wisconsin does not have enough generation within the state to meet its demand and must rely on transmission lines to meet the required

demand and to achieve the desired reserve margin. The experience of recent summers has highlighted constraints in the movement of power between western and eastern Wisconsin and between Illinois and eastern Wisconsin.

There are 15 telephone companies, and numerous cellular and digital phone providers within the region. Business is increasingly being conducted electronically. Fast, reliable and cost effective telecommunications can attract new businesses and enable economic growth by opening up new markets and new opportunities for diverse and innovative services.

So What!

People have come to rely on modern conveniences and the latest technology. They are not only an essential element in the quality of life of the people of the east central region but they are also crucial to a vibrant regional economy.

Utility Infrastructure:

Existing gas and electric facilities will need to be maintained and updated and new facilities will need to be constructed while minimizing the environmental impact. However, opposition by the public to new or expanded existing facilities is increasing and becoming more organized. Reasons for this sentiment include visual (aesthetic), health, and environmental concerns.

There are benefits if land can be earmarked for utility development before other development occurs or if existing trans-

¹ Wisconsin Energy Statistics - 2002

² Strategic Energy Assessment Final Report, December 2002. The demand and supply conditions surrounding the summer peak usage period usually determine the requirement for either new electric generating stations or new transmission facilities.

portation or utility corridors can be used. These benefits may include lower costs, reduced conflicts and greater public acceptance. Planning for the future of our utility infrastructure, providing education and facilitating public involvement, and communicating with counties, municipalities, local officials, state officials and the general public are important. Educated people can make better informed decisions.

Renewable Energy:

Currently 87% of the power in the region is generated by fossil fuels which are a limited natural resource and will not last forever. As conventional sources are depleted or as conventional extraction methods become inadequate, unconventional methods or sources will need to be used, which are more costly.

Fossil fuel plant emissions lead to persistent health and environmental problems. Within the United States, for example, power plant generation is responsible for 63% of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), 22% of nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and 37% of mercury released to the environment by human activity³. These pollutants are believed to cause environmental and public health problems including diseases of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems, regional haze, acidification of lakes, streams and forests, mercury in fish and other wildlife, acidic damage and erosion to buildings, statuary and other materials, ozone damage to forests and eutrophication⁴ of water bodies.

Consequently, there appears to be a need to consider the potential of alternative energy sources. Renewable energy (sometimes referred to as green or clean energy), comes

from natural resources that do not diminish with use since they are naturally and continually replenished. They produce little or no air emissions or toxic wastes. Renewable energy sources include the sun, wind, water and biomass.

Hydroelectric power does not create air pollution, is one of the lowest cost sources of energy and the water can be used for recreation, irrigation and drinking. Biomass energy is energy generated from organic matter such as switchgrass, wood, other vegetation and animal and municipal waste residues. Some sources of organic matter can be used on a continual basis for conversion to electricity, some forms can be burned directly as a fuel source and other sources can be used to produce a fuel when they decompose. Capturing methane gas and using it as a fuel also helps protect the environment since this greenhouse gas is not released into the air. Wind energy is converted into electrical energy when the wind turns turbine blades which are attached to an electric generator.

Green buildings are "smart buildings"; they promote resource conservation, consider environmental impacts and waste minimization, create a healthy and comfortable environment, reduce operation and maintenance costs and address issues such as historical preservation, access to public transportation and other community infrastructure.

Telecommunications:

Major changes in the region's economy, specifically the decline of the manufacturing sector and the transition to the new economy make it essential to meet the growing demand for better communications. To compete effectively, it is essential that affordable access to cutting-edge telecommunications is

³ USEPA

⁴ The aging process of a lake, pond, or slow moving stream, in which nutrients accumulate leading to oxygen depletion.

available to the region. The economic and social benefits of advanced telecommunications to the region can only be achieved if the necessary infrastructure is developed. It is particularly important that the new infrastructure be developed in a way that provides the region with first class telecommunications services, while at the same time minimizing the impact of new or replacement equipment on the environment.

Current Action

In order to provide the necessary utility service to the region, long-range regional planning is essential. Utility companies are making a conscientious effort to work with public agencies, public officials and the public whenever an existing facility needs to be updated or a new facility is required to meet the energy and telecommunication demands of the region.

American Transmission Company (ATC) holds a series of planning meetings twice a year to gather public input on their proposals for strengthening the electric transmission system to meet anticipated energy delivery needs. ATC annually issues a 10-year Transmission System Assessment report that identifies electric transmission needs, existing and anticipated constraints to the system and potential solutions. They also meet with local officials to discuss updates or provisions for new facilities to meet the needs of the area, region or state.

Wisconsin Electric, SBC and other utility providers also meet with government agencies, public officials and private citizens when a specific need arises in the system. These companies are also readily accessible to local developers and communities so that the anticipated energy needs for new growth are met.

Open communication and coordination between developers, municipalities, planners, public agencies and officials and the general public is essential.

The 1970 Clean Air Act is a comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions, including those from the fossil fuel generating plants in the region. The 1990 amendments to this act were made to address problems such as acid rain, ground-level ozone, stratospheric ozone depletion and air toxics. Currently EPA is proposing two integrated air rules that would significantly reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and mercury for utilities. These proposed rules; the Interstate Air Quality Rule and the Utility Mercury Reduction Rule would cut emissions of SO₂ and NO_x in the eastern US, provide options that would reduce mercury emissions and set a mandatory, declining cap on the total mercury emissions allowed for power plants nationwide.

In Wisconsin the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Air and Waste, Bureau of Air Management is charged with enhancing, managing and protecting the air quality of the state.

The 1999 Wisconsin Act 9 (Wis. Stat. 196.378(2)), has impacted the power industry. This act required retail electric providers to provide a minimum portion of their total retail sales from renewable resources. This portion is set to increase from 0.5% by December 1, 2001 to 2.2% by December 31, 2011.

Within our region, new wind tower farms have been proposed in the towns of Marshfield, Calumet and Eden in Fond du Lac County. The two existing wind turbines located in the Town of Byron, can generate over 3,000 MWhr of electricity per year. If this energy had been generated using conventional fossil fuels it would have produced approximately

1,956 tons of carbon dioxide emissions⁵. However, the siting of wind farms is not without controversy. Visual aesthetics, noise, potential decreases in property values, ice throws, shadow flicker and the impact to wildlife (birds) have been raised as issues.

Fuel cell development is another renewable energy source that is being researched. Fuel cells can harness the chemical energy of hydrogen to generate electricity without combustion or pollution. Fuel cells can be used for backup power for remote locations, stand-alone power plants for towns or to power individual homes. While stationary fuel cells for residential use are not currently available, research is being carried out which suggests that they may provide a solution to cost-effectively provide power to rural residences and communities.

Many areas of the region, especially rural areas, do not have access to broadband or high speed internet access. When it is available, it is essential that this access be affordable. While companies such as SBC currently provide broadband service to many urban and rural areas, until technology and the economics of providing broadband service improve, expansion into additional urban and rural areas may be somewhat restricted. The state is currently considering legislation that would provide incentives for companies to install the necessary infrastructure and therefore encourage competition so that affordable high speed or broadband internet access is available throughout the state.

Core Goals

Utility Infrastructure:

1. Promote regional long-term planning and improved coordination and communication between government agencies, developers,

municipalities and utilities to ensure efficient cost-effective utility service provision to both urban and rural areas.

2. Promote the development and use of regional multi-use corridors.
3. Develop and promote an effective educational campaign to raise awareness among all the stakeholders of the issues involved in utility infrastructure provision, including facility expansion and relocation.

Renewable Energy:

4. Promote the development and use of alternative energy, such as wind, water, biomass, fuel cells and solar, to meet the needs of the region.
5. Promote energy awareness in the design of new development, for example, "green buildings"
6. Promote energy conservation practices.

Telecommunications:

7. Facilitate the continuing development of telecommunications infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner.
8. Ensure that the visual and environmental impact of telecommunications development is kept to a minimum.
9. Encourage and support the advancement of affordable broadband or high speed internet access to all areas of the region.
10. Encourage appropriate provision for telecommunications systems in the design of new development.

⁵ WE energies

Public Safety

FACT SHEET: CF5

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Maintaining and protecting public safety in the region requires that there are services in place to deal with natural and human incidents in both emergency and non emergency situations.

Wisconsin is vulnerable to a variety of natural disasters. Within the last 30 years, there has been nearly \$3 billion worth of disaster related damages in the state.

Since 1971, 53 major natural disasters have occurred within the region, 43 of which were declared "Presidential Disasters" and were eligible for federal aid. Of these natural disasters, over half were due to flooding and 20% were due to drought.

Natural disasters do not end at municipal boundaries or county lines. In the region, a disaster in one community can affect a hospital in an adjoining county or a fire department in another community. When a disaster strikes, it is too late to plan how to handle it.

Fire protection in Wisconsin is a major responsibility of local governments. There are about 126 fire departments or districts within the region. About 94 percent of the fire departments or districts within the region are staffed by volunteer fire fighters.

First responders, people who are the first to respond to the scene of an emergency disaster or other dangerous situations, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and

paramedics are also volunteers, especially in smaller cities, towns and rural areas.

Within some urban areas of the region, private ambulance service operates, such as Gold Cross in the Fox Cities.

So What!

An important issue facing local departments, agencies and communities within the region is the provision of affordable emergency and non emergency services, especially in the rural areas. As budgets continue to tighten, the push to decrease or at least hold costs constant while providing the level of service that citizens are demanding is a constant challenge for local communities.

It seems important to accept that it is not economical for every community to provide every service or own every piece of equipment. There seems to be a potential to combine fire departments and/or to share personnel, equipment, technical resources, and specializations and to offer joint training opportunities, while maintaining or improving the level of service. There also seems to be some value in instituting joint purchasing and vehicle maintenance agreements that could further stretch the limited budgets.

There is a shortage of volunteers who can be available 24 hours for fire protection and EMT services. Volunteer fire fighters, first responders and EMT's, like everyone else, are typically commuting longer distances from their homes to places of employment and are therefore unavailable to respond to incidents during working hours. In addition, many fire

departments are reporting that the number of people willing to volunteer their time is falling. This may, in part, be due to the fact that people are increasingly working longer hours and working further from home. In 1999, for example, an average American family (married couple with two kids) annually worked 3,600 hours, or 18 percent higher than the hours of work for those families in 1979¹. Additionally, EMTs and first responders are required by the state to have a certain number of annual hours of training. This training, completed during a volunteer's free time reduces time for leisure activities.

When an emergency, such as a fire or accident occurs during the daytime, many local communities are required to seek mutual aid from adjoining communities. It is therefore important that sheriff departments, police departments and other emergency service providers are able to quickly and efficiently communicate with each other.

Consistent, long term, public safety planning is important. As communities plan for new development it is crucial to involve emergency providers so that services and facilities can be cost effectively planned and located.

Current Action

For natural disasters declared after November 1, 2003, a local unit of government must have an approved hazard mitigation plan in place in order to receive funding through the National Post Disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. This means that a community must have an approved hazard mitigation plan before it can receive federal funding for response and recovery following a presidential declared disaster due to a tornado or flood.

¹ The State of Working Wisconsin 2000.

Money from this fund can be used to build detention ponds, replace culverts, and relocate homes and other structures. Without an approved hazard mitigation plan, money for these projects must come from the local tax payers.

Winnebago and Fond du Lac counties, Village of North Fond du Lac and the Menominee Nation are currently working on Hazard Mitigation Plans. Calumet County has applied for funding. The remaining counties within the region are not currently working on developing a plan. Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) reinforces the importance of hazard mitigation planning and emphasizes planning for natural disasters before they occur.

Many communities and departments are already working to decrease costs. A review of the fire departments and districts in the region, indicates that a number of departments have combined to form a joint fire district. In the Fox Cities, the communities of Neenah and Menasha have combined their fire departments to maximize cost savings while at the same time providing quality service to their residents. In Waushara County, the Redgranite Fire Department owns a ladder truck, while the nearby Tustin Fire Department has a boat for water rescues. In the Fox Cities, the City of Appleton has a hazmat team and equipment that responds to emergencies in other communities.

Outagamie, Calumet, Winnebago and Brown counties jointly set up a four county high speed 911 emergency dispatch system, Fox Com. Besides dispatching emergency personnel, the high speed system also allows the four counties to share and access police records from any of the other three member counties.

Medicare has recently enacted a new fee scale for reimbursement. EMT's will now be reclassified to "basic level". Currently Medicare reimburses approximately 40% of the cost of an ambulance call. Under Medicare's new reimbursement scale, the amount will be lower; this may affect the ability for many ambulance providers to remain in business in the near future.

Membership to the Mobile Healthcare Providers Alliance includes 17 counties within the state (9 of the 10 counties within the region) and 40 to 60 providers. This alliance looks at group purchasing and works with the North Central Buying Coop. Education and training at a reasonable price is also provided by the alliance.

The Wisconsin Hospital Association is working to increase the level of hospital preparedness for disasters (biological and chemical) with funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration, a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This funding can be used for both disaster planning and resource acquisition.

In order to maximize cost savings and maintain and improve service levels, counties, municipalities and emergency service providers recognize the value of long term planning. To avoid reactionary planning, it is essential that there is more communication and coordination between developers, municipalities, public agencies and officials and the general public with respect to public safety.

Core Goals

Disaster Planning:

1. Encourage counties and local governments to work together to develop regional disaster plans.

2. Encourage all counties and local governments within the region to develop and adopt Hazard Mitigation Plans.

Fire Protection and Cost Effective Services:

3. Encourage cooperation and sharing of technical resources, specializations and personnel between the various departments and between municipalities and counties.
4. Promote the development of regional purchasing programs.

Communication:

5. Encourage efforts to promote an efficient regional and statewide communications network.

Long-Term Regional Planning:

6. Promote consistent long-term regional planning, communication and cooperation between the various counties and municipalities and public safety officials.

Education and Libraries

FACT SHEET: CF6

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Twenty-eight public schools have been built in the region since 1993. Seventeen of these were high schools. The majority were built on land at the outskirts of the community.

The planning and siting of new school facilities generally involves the partnership of the local school district, the community and others. Access (vehicular, pedestrian and transit), traffic concerns, drainage, zoning, access to public utilities (water, sanitary and storm sewer) and facilities (fire) are some of the many issues that are considered in siting a new school.

School districts provide opportunities for students to participate in sports and most schools have recreational facilities. Some of these facilities include swimming pools, baseball fields, soccer fields, etc.

There are 52 public libraries and four library systems in the region. All the counties within the region participate in a federated library system, which is designed to provide expanded library services to more people without making additional large expenditures. Library budgets are shrinking, yet employee wages and benefits, insurance, utility and material costs are increasing. Of the 52 public libraries in the region, over 40% percent do not spend the minimum amount of budget on material expenditure^{1,2}. Basic or less than basic services are provided by over 40% of the libraries in the region in terms of

adequate staff, minimum number of volumes owned, or periodical titles received, and the number of hours that the library is open per week.

Within the Outagamie Waupaca Library System (OWLS), people typically use more than one library. More than 50 percent of those visiting a library do not reside within the municipality where the library is located. The largest non-resident use comes from county residents who live outside of municipal boundaries.

Standards specify that all residents should be within a 15 minutes drive of a public library in metropolitan area or within a 30 minute drive of public library in a rural area.² However, a more realistic guide for locating a public library may be that it is within walking or riding distance from home so that children have access.

So What!

Building new schools on the fringes of the community encourages urban sprawl, encourages the use of the automobile in favor of students biking or walking to school, lengthens bus routes, and leads to the consumption of the rural county side.

Preplanning of school facilities can save municipalities and the school district and ultimately the taxpayer money. When school districts and communities plan together available land near existing public facilities and utilities may be identified or purchased while the land is still affordable. As a

¹ Department of Public Instruction.

² Wisconsin Public Library Standards, Third Edition, March 2000.

consequence, students may be able to walk or ride bikes to school, instead of driving or being bused. This decreases the reliance on automobiles and buses which leads to an increase in congestion, the need to upgrade local roads, and air pollution.

While it is important to work together in the siting of school facilities it is equally important to form partnerships in the design of the school facilities. School districts and communities have limited budgets. Facilities designed for community use can be incorporated into new school buildings. These facilities could include a community swimming pool, auditorium or even a library. School facilities can also be designed as community facilities for after school use. These facilities make excellent meeting places for community meetings and have a valid use for community recreational activities.

Libraries are often used as community centers and may be a symbol of a community's identity. They provide a meeting place for people to meet socially and in a more formal setting. The materials that they offer for patron's use is not only free, but provides many hours of enjoyment and enrichment. In the Chicago area, a library is often used as a focal point around which a neighborhood is built. Libraries are good for business, they provide a draw to bring people into a community, thus generating income for local businesses.

Current Action

Municipal park districts, school districts and other non-profits are already working together. In some communities, schools have been built next to parks and schools have been built next to other schools to share common open space. Park departments are utilizing schools to hold classes and using

gyms, swimming pools and outdoor fields for recreational sports and activities.

However, more can be done to consolidate programs and to form partnerships between private organizations, non-profits, schools and municipal park departments.

As a result of budget cuts many libraries within the region are either providing basic or less than basic services. Funding for public libraries comes primarily from local property taxes. Counties are required by law to reimburse municipalities within their county at 70 percent of the cost of service for non-municipal residents who use the library. However as towns grow, the percentage of use by non-municipal residents is exceeding municipal residents in some areas. This is resulting in municipal residents paying a disproportionate share of funding for their local library.

Core Goals

1. Promote communication and collaborative long term planning between municipalities, private organizations, non-profits, public agencies, school districts and libraries.
2. Promote the multiple use of both recreational, school facilities and libraries.
3. Promote equitable funding for public libraries.
4. Provide conveniently located libraries with quality services for all people within the region.

Health and Childcare

FACT SHEET: CF7

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Poor diet and physical inactivity are becoming epidemic and were the second leading cause of deaths in the United States between 1990 and 2000. In 2000, 400,000 deaths were attributed to poor diet and lack of physical exercise¹. Approximately 59 million adults and 9 million young people are obese. More than 60 percent of adults and a third of high school students do not get enough exercise.

There is a shortage of affordable, quality childcare within the region. 64% of the women within the region and the state are in the workforce compared to 58% in the nation².

So What!

Unhealthy diets and physical inactivity increase a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, hypertension, heart disease, sleep disorders, breathing problems, stroke, breast cancer, colon cancer, gallbladder disease and arthritis. In 2000, the total cost of obesity in the United States was estimated to be \$117 billion.

Today's communities are designed with the automobile in mind. Sprawl³, a major issue in the United States, discourages physical activity while it encourages the use of the automobile over walking or bicycle riding.

¹ Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

² 2000 Census.

³ Sprawl is defined as low density, automobile dependent, consumptive development.

Local zoning laws often are designed to separate residential uses from commercial and industrial. Instead of different land uses in close proximity to each other, they are often spread out. Roads are usually designed to move motor vehicles quickly and efficiently, making riding a bicycle unsafe. In some newer neighborhoods, sidewalks are not built, further discouraging walking as both a leisure activity and a mode of transportation.

Parents in the workforce with children in childcare are more productive if their children are placed in a safe, reliable environment. However, zoning regulations and land use planning can impact the location of childcare facilities. Depending on local zoning regulations childcare facilities may be permitted in residential areas or may be restricted to a commercial business park. Some subdivision covenants may prohibit licensed childcare providers from running a daycare from their home. This is important because there are two major areas where people seek childcare, either near their homes, in a residential setting, or near their place of employment.

Current Action

Americans are eating poorly and not getting enough exercise, this results in obesity and staggering health care costs. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides funding to states to prevent and reduce the prevalence of obesity and the chronic diseases associated with it, to manage statewide coordinated school health programs and to encourage young people to adopt healthy behaviors.

Local ordinances and zoning laws encourage separation between residential, commercial and industrial development which promotes an automobile dependent population. In addition, current practices encourage building on undeveloped farmland on the fringes of a community where it costs the developer less. However, in reality, while it may cost the developer less to build on the outskirts of a community, it may cost the community more when the costs to extend public infrastructure and services, extend public transportation and transportation costs are added in.

A worldwide health promotion initiative called the "Healthy Communities" movement is a way to improve the health of both the community and the residents. In a "healthy community" you will find strong schools, strong families, safe streets, a clean environment, a diverse and vibrant economy and high quality affordable health care.

Another new concept "green infrastructure" is also being promoted. Similar to the "healthy communities" movement, "green infrastructure" is an interconnected network of streetscapes, plazas and parks that are accessible, safe, support diverse uses, ecologically sound, promote cultural understanding, foster community pride, are well maintained and are community funded⁴. Given a choice, people want to live in a "healthy community" or a community that incorporates "green infrastructure".

Core Goals

1. Promote community planning that will encourage a healthy, safe, vibrant, diverse environment for its residents.

2. Review consequences of local ordinances and zoning practices in regard to placement of childcare facilities.

⁴ Paint the Town Green: A plan for Open Space Reinvestment in Wisconsin Communities".

Local Parks & Recreational Facilities

FACT SHEET: CF8

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Parks and recreational facilities are provided by the public, non-profit and private sectors.

In 1993, about 8,500 acres of public land within the region was owned by the local municipalities and school districts and used for park and recreational land.

School districts, for example, provide opportunities for students to participate in sports and most schools have recreational facilities at each of their school properties. Some of these facilities include swimming pools, gymnasiums, baseball, football and soccer fields, indoor/outdoor basketball, volleyball and tennis courts and natural areas.

Municipal park departments provide opportunities for both adults and children to participate in organized sport activities, recreational swimming and lessons in a variety of areas including golf, tennis, gymnastics, chess, karate, dance and boating. They also own and maintain the local parks in their communities.

Park and recreational facilities and programs are not, however, limited to school districts and park departments. Many private and non-profit organizations also own excellent facilities and provide quality programming at a reasonable cost. Some of these organizations include the YMCA or YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, churches, nature centers, 4 H Chapters, golf courses, soccer, sports and health clubs, and senior centers.

The region also supports a number of specialized recreational facilities. Some of these facilities include the Fox Cities Stadium in Grand Chute, Calder Stadium in Menasha, Wisconsin International Raceway in Kaukauna, Performing Arts Center in Appleton, Pickard Auditorium in Neenah, Grand Opera House in Oshkosh, Mielke Theater near Shawano, Nordic Mountain in Mt. Morris, Calumet County tubing hill near Stockbridge, Navarino Ski Hill in Shawano County, Shawano Area indoor ice arena, the Waupaca Curling Club, Gravity Park in Chilton and USA Youth Sports Complex in Appleton.

The waterways of the region have historically been important to the local communities, region and state in terms of transportation, trade and industry. However, as times change, the significance of these areas has also evolved. Since 1959, commercial navigation has been almost non-existent, and today, the river is used almost exclusively for recreational navigation.

So What!

Park and recreational facilities attract visitors from throughout and beyond the region. These visitors have a major economic impact on the local economy. Parks or green infrastructure can also vitalize the local economy by maintaining or increasing property values; promoting community and cultural identity by providing a place where local citizens can socialize, play sports or relax; promoting healthy active lifestyles by encouraging physical activity; and by providing a location for controlling stormwater,

protecting water and air quality and providing wildlife habitat.

Providers of recreational and educational services and facilities have limited budgets. Municipal park departments, school districts and other non-profit organizations often have to make difficult decisions when it comes to providing and maintaining quality programs. They are required to balance the diverse interests of various user groups, maintain existing facilities and address the increased demand for new services and facilities.

Towns have not traditionally provided the same level of services and facilities as incorporated communities. As towns expand, and growth expands beyond municipal boundaries, there may be a benefit in towns recognizing the importance of setting aside open space and preserving these areas for future generations.

It is also important for both towns and incorporated communities to be alert to the location of new development and to ensure that significant natural features are protected for future generations.

Current Action

One traditional barometer of the overall adequacy of a local park system is that it contain at least 10 acres of land per 1,000 residents. Experience has shown that this ratio needs to be higher in smaller communities if they want to accommodate even a basic range of recreational facilities.

Municipal park districts, school districts and other non-profits are already working together. In some communities, schools have been built next to parks and schools have been built next to other schools to share common open space. Park departments are

utilizing schools to hold classes, use gym space and outdoor fields.

However, more can be done to consolidate programs and to form partnerships between private organizations, non-profits, schools and municipal park departments. It is important to remember that not every community needs to provide every service or have every different kind of facility. It makes economic sense for one community in an area to provide one high cost or specialized service or facility and for a nearby community to provide another.

Core Goals

1. Identify mechanisms or incentives to encourage the coordinated development of parks and recreational facilities between the various governmental units.
2. Promote better communication and cooperative planning between municipalities, private organizations, non-profits, and schools.
3. Ensure that adequate and important open space areas are preserved and protected for future recreational use.
4. Ensure optimum use of available funding for acquiring, developing and maintaining parks and recreational facilities.
5. Provide a balance of programming and facilities to accommodate the diverse interests of the various user groups.
6. Promote our region's waterways as important recreational and environmental assets.

Community Facilities Key Findings

Vision Statement

"Efficient, cost effective community facilities are provided, which enhance the quality of life and ensure prosperity and economic stability for all. The emphasis in service provision is on cooperative planning, fostering collaboration, enhancing partnerships, sharing resources and transcending boundaries, as appropriate. In 2030, there are regional opportunities for the sustainable and safe management of solid waste and recycling, collection, processing and disposal activities. A well managed and planned public and private water supply provides for the region's citizens and industry. The region is served by a variety of well-functioning public and private wastewater treatment systems capable of accommodating future growth, while limiting the inherent conflicts caused by both urban and rural development patterns. Adequate, cost effective, environmentally conscientious utility infrastructure exists to support industry and the general population. There are cost effective, efficient, quality, emergency and non-emergency services to ensure public safety. A variety of meaningful educational options and opportunities exist for all students. Children and adults in the region are provided with accessible educational, informational and recreational library services and materials in an economically efficient and timely manner. There is a collaborative regional forum to create and implement a strategic framework for the continuum of care for the health and well being of the residents of the region. Through cooperative efforts, park, open space, and recreational facilities and programs are protected and preserved and there are plans for new facilities. There are community facilities which meet the needs of various groups, including youth, elderly, and minorities, in a balanced and financially responsible manner."

Issues/Opportunities

Solid Waste and Recycling

Regional planning, focusing on recycling, waste reduction and product re-use, cooperation and coordination between public, private and non-profit sectors, facility siting, corporate and public education, alternative financing options, and regional marketing of products and by-products are the key issues facing our region in terms of solid waste and recycling.

Public & Private Wastewater Treatment

Assessment and possible improvement of the region's public wastewater treatment systems, possible regionalization of existing wastewater treatment facilities, conflicts between urbanizing areas and existing on-site rural development, and a regional assessment of the location and amount of rural development based on the ability to treat sewage with private systems are the key issues facing our region in terms of public and private wastewater treatment.

Public & Private Water Supply

Drinking water supply, the affect of urban and rural development patterns and amount of development on aquifer levels, the quality of available drinking water, evaluation and expansion of local and regional municipal water supply systems, conservation of water supplies, direction

of rural development away from known groundwater contamination areas, education and regulation are the key issues facing our region in terms of public and private water supply.

Electric Gas and Telecommunications

Cost effective regional delivery of utility infrastructure, promotion of alternative energy sources, regional planning, coordination and cooperation between the various stakeholders, promotion of multi use corridors, stakeholder awareness/education, and assurance of continued electric and gas service during times of crises are the key issues facing our region in terms of utility infrastructure.

Public Safety

Planning for natural disasters and terrorist activities; providing efficient cost effective police, fire and emergency services, particularly in rural areas; consistent long-term regional planning; communication, cooperation and coordination between local, regional and statewide agencies and departments; sharing of regional technical resources and specializations; and the development of a regional purchasing program are the key issues facing our region in terms of public safety.

Education and Libraries

Communication, cooperation, and long-term planning in siting future facilities; promotion of multi-use facilities; equitable funding for public libraries; communication and cooperation between universities, technical colleges, high schools and communities, provision of quality education that is linked to the needs of the community are the key issues facing our region in terms of education and libraries.

Health and Childcare

Healthy communities, access to social services and affordable healthcare; cost-effective service provision, regional planning for facilities, convenient siting and increased provision of childcare facilities; promotion of health and childcare issues in the community and workplace, and the encouragement, education and retention of people to work in the health and childcare industries are the key facing our region in terms of health and childcare.

Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

Coordination between providers, preservation and protection of open space, adequate funding for acquisition/development/maintenance/programming, and balancing the interests of various user groups are the key issues facing our region in terms of local parks and recreational facilities.

Match/Mismatch between Envisioned and Probable Future

Solid Waste and Recycling

Currently:

- Government regulations are in place to protect our state's resources.
- Some counties within the region are forming partnerships to manage their solid waste and processing activities.
- Some companies are instituting a buy back program that removes items such as computers from the waste stream.
- Some corporations are seeing the advantages of recycling to both business and the environment.
- Goodwill Industries, the Salvation Army, Saint Vincent De Paul, the Thrift Shop and others collect used household furnishings, clothing, and recycle this material, extending the life of the local landfills.
- Wisconsin has a popular and successful recycling program.
- Certain materials have been banned from landfills by state regulations.
- Collection of household hazardous waste programs are expanding in some areas of the region.
- Financial assistance is available from the state to fund local recycling and yard waste programs.

To meet the envisioned future:

- More needs to be done to protect our environment against the possible health consequences of mercury, lead, hexavalent chromium and dioxins.
- A statewide ban on mercury thermometers, computers, treated wood and other items should be instituted to protect our environment.
- A regional inventory of solid waste and recycling facilities and services should be done so that possible partnerships can be formed in the area of shared equipment, regional purchasing, and shared services.
- Communities and counties should approach enforcement of state laws uniformly as it relates to open burning.
- Recycling rates need to be increased and waste generation amounts need to be decreased.
- There needs to be additional support of recycling activities at both the local and state levels.
- Citizens and businesses need to see that the advantages of recycling far outweigh any minor inconveniences.
- More focus needs to be placed on removing certain items from the waste stream such as organics, and construction and demolition materials.
- Siting issues need to be resolved in terms of odor, noise, dust, birds, traffic and public health.
- Complexities in the laws relating to solid waste and recycling need to be addressed to facilitate the locating of new facilities.
- Local and state public officials need to be involved in solid waste and/or recycling issues from the beginning and be part of the development of solutions.
- Some communities still allow open burning to occur within their communities.

Public & Private Wastewater Treatment

Currently:

- Eighty-four wastewater treatment facilities (WWTF) in the region.
- Overall the capacity of the majority of existing plants can accommodate projected growth within the region.
- Most municipal sewage in Wisconsin is subject to the administrative rules of the Department of Natural Resources which stem from the Federal Clean Water Act.
- Decisions regarding the extension, or expansion, of the wastewater collection and treatment systems are made by local elected officials with the oversight provided by East Central and state agencies.
- Sewer service area plans are in place for 26 of the 84 WWTFs within the region. These plans have been prepared to address general growth and water quality issues.
- An NR-110 facility planning assesses the condition of a sewerage system, establishes the need for improvement, evaluates options to address systems needs, and identifies the cost-effective alternative.
- Many communities have regulatory provisions regarding the installation of or connection to its sewer system as well as financial planning procedures and intergovernmental agreements.

To meet the envisioned future:

- The majority of the region's public wastewater treatment systems will need to be assessed and improved to some degree.
- Communities may need to look at regionalized wastewater treatment facilities.
- Conflicts between urbanizing areas and existing on-site rural development will need to be addressed.
- Locations and amounts of rural development will need to be considered, in part, on the ability to treat sewage with private systems.
- The monitoring, assessment and effectiveness of older on-site systems will need to be addressed.
- The decision to provide public sewer service should be taken into account during all phases of land use planning.
- Issues regarding the land spreading of bio-solids that remain after the treatment process will need to be addressed.
- We will need to promote sanitary sewerage systems that effectively and economically service development.
- Support and maintain the state-level review and planning process for public WWTF and collection systems.

Public & Private Water Supply

Currently:

- There are 73 municipal water systems in the region.
- The majority of these communities rely on groundwater as their sole source of supply.
- Nine communities do not have at least two fully developed water supply sources.

- A third of the region's municipal systems do not have sufficient storage capacity to provide continuous service in the event of a general power loss or equipment malfunction.
- 3,700 private, low capacity wells and 1,500 high capacity wells exist within the region.
- Programs and research activities have been initiated within the region, to assist in dealing with issues related to growth, water usage and water supply.
- Both federal and state drinking water standards apply to public water systems.

To meet the envisioned future:

- Access to sufficient drinking water of good quality, needs to be available throughout the region.
- It is important to plan for the wise use and conservation of the region's water resources.
- Well densities and aquifer recharge rates will need to be monitored.
- Quality standards, siting and density issues will need to be addressed for individual private wells.
- Issues and opportunities for water supply will need to be addressed on the regional level.
- It will be important to preserve and protect both surface water and groundwater resources.
- It will be important to support and assist in coordinated local planning and decision making processes that acknowledges local concerns and issues.
- It will be important to support existing state water supply regulations and to update these regulations as needed.
- Existing and future public water systems need to be planned for and developed in a cost-effective manner.
- The public and decision-makers will need to be effectively informed and educated on water supply issues.

Electric Gas and Telecommunications

Currently:

- Utilities are planning into the future and looking at ways that their systems can be maintained and improved to meet the energy needs of the future.
- Federal laws regulate air emissions from fossil fuel plants to protect the environment.
- EPA continues to review current regulations and update them when new information is discovered.
- Wisconsin has passed regulations that require electric providers to look at renewable energy resources.
- Renewable energy sources have been built and new facilities are proposed within our region.
- Research is being undertaken on different renewable energy sources, to develop these sources more thoroughly and to make them more affordable and readily available.
- Limited use of multi-use corridors by public utilities and new recreational facilities has increased people acceptance of these utilities, in some instances.

To meet the envisioned future:

- Existing gas and electric facilities will need to be maintained and updated and new facilities will need to be constructed while minimizing the environmental impact.
- Public opposition to the development of new, and expansion of existing, facilities will have to be balanced with the need to provide electric, gas and telecommunication service to the region.
- Long-term regional planning for utility infrastructure will need to become standard so that utilities can be planned before land development occurs.
- Development of alternative energy sources will need to be pursued and more fully supported by the public and government.
- Green buildings or “smart buildings” will have to become more common.
- Access to an affordable cutting-edge telecommunication network will need to be available throughout the region.
- Utilities need to build upon the work that they are doing to educate and provide a vehicle for communication and public participation.
- Regional multi-use corridors will have to be developed and utilized.
- Energy conservation practices will need to be promoted.

Public Safety

Currently:

- Services are in place to protect our region and to deal with natural and human incidents, in both emergency and non-emergency situations.
- Some counties and tribes are developing Hazard Mitigation Plans so that they can be better prepared for natural disasters before they happen.
- Some police and fire departments have already combined with departments from neighboring communities to share equipment, personnel and specializations.
- The counties of Outagamie, Winnebago, Calumet and Brown have set up a joint 911 emergency dispatch system (Fox Comm) to dispatch personnel, and to share and access police records.
- The Mobile Healthcare Providers Alliance has brought together a group of 17 counties and 40 – 60 providers to look at group purchasing, education and training.
- The Wisconsin Hospital Association is working to increase the level of hospital preparedness for disasters.

To meet the envisioned future:

- A balance needs to be achieved between declining budgets and the need to provide citizens with the level of emergency and non-emergency service that they need and demand.
- Police and fire departments may need to form partnerships or consolidate with other departments to share personnel, equipment, technical resources, specializations and offer joint training opportunities.
- A solution will have to be found to address the shortage of people willing to volunteer for public safety related areas.
- Government reimbursement amounts for Medicare will need to more closely reflect the cost of providing services.
- An efficient regional and statewide communications network will need to be established.

- Consistent long-term regional planning, communication and cooperation between the various counties, municipalities and public safety departments will need to be promoted.
- Alternatives must be found to the incarceration of people at the municipal, county and state levels.

Education and Libraries

Currently:

- Students are being trained earlier in the use of computers.
- High schools are providing students with educational opportunities beyond the traditional high school setting.
- The majority of schools districts within the region have done a good job renovating existing schools and updating their school facilities.
- In some communities school facilities have been built next to other schools or parks so that facilities can be shared.
- School districts are working with communities and park departments for the sharing of their facilities.
- School districts are responding to alternative ways to educate at risk (non-traditional) students.
- Institutions of higher education are doing a good job upgrading their physical infrastructure.

To meet the envisioned future:

- Funding mechanisms for primary and secondary education will need to be addressed.
- State and federal governments should be encouraged to fund mandates that are designed to improve education.
- The escalating costs of health insurance need to be brought under control.
- States will need to reevaluate the certification process for teachers.
- Schools and educators will need to keep abreast of the latest technology and information.
- Teachers should be well versed in the needed subject knowledge and skills in order to teach effectively.
- Students will need to be educated to meet the needs of a global society and economy.
- As society moves toward globalization, students must be prepared to interact with individuals from other cultures and languages.
- Schools of higher education need to recognize that the demographics of the student population and the economy is changing and therefore modifications to traditional class structure (graduating requirements, meeting times) need to be made.
- The business community needs to recognize that while students need higher education, not all students need a traditional four year degree to be successful employees.
- High schools need to better prepare students to succeed in institutions of higher education.
- School districts need to be involved in long-term planning with municipalities, libraries, non-profits and other public and private agencies.
- Multi-use and sharing of municipal, school and library facilities will become increasingly important.

- Counties will need to recognize that all residents within the county and beyond utilize libraries.
- Funding for libraries needs to be equitable so that all residents have access to quality facilities.
- Communities and school districts will need to see the benefits of renovating existing facilities instead of building new schools on the outskirts of communities.

Health and Childcare

Currently:

- There are enough hospitals to handle the healthcare needs of the region.
- There are enough nursing homes in the region to accommodate our current population.
- High quality health care is available in the region.
- There are a number of non-profit and public health agencies that are working to improve the health care needs of the region.

To meet the envisioned future:

- Government reimbursement amounts for Medicare will need to more closely reflect the cost of providing services.
- Accommodations will need to be made for people that are being released from hospitals but are not yet self-sufficient.
- Rising insurance and healthcare costs will need to be addressed.
- Uninsured, underinsured and elderly people will need to have access to affordable health, dental, prescription drugs and eye care.
- Health care caps may need to be placed on services to limit the amount of money that can be spent on any one individual.
- The shortage of childcare, nurses and other health workers and educators will need to be addressed.
- In determining assisted cost-effective care needs, the specific health needs of the individual will need to be evaluated.
- Additional mental health care providers and facilities may need to be available to the general public.
- Affordable quality childcare will need to be available throughout the region.
- Care for sick, infants (0-2 years), disabled children and young adults, children of low income workers, and children of shift workers will need to be available and affordable.
- The business industry and childcare providers need to work together to resolve childcare issues.
- The promotion of regional planning for facilities and issues will need to be addressed.
- Existing relationships between faith based facilities and minority residents will need to be utilized.
- Healthy communities and green infrastructure will need to be promoted.
- People and communities will need to be educated about the health benefits of active healthy lifestyle.
- Local ordinances and zoning laws will have to be reevaluated to promote healthy lifestyles.

Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

Currently:

- Parks and recreational facilities are provided by the public, non-profit and private sectors.
- School districts provide opportunities for students to participate in sport activities.
- Municipal park departments and non-profit organizations provide opportunities for both adults and children to participate in organized sport, recreational and instructional activities.
- Municipal park departments, school districts and non-profit organizations have many similar as well as different recreational facilities.
- A number of specialized recreational facilities are found around the region.
- Park and recreational facilities attract visitors from throughout and beyond the region.
- Coordination between municipal park departments and schools is being done.
- Sharing of recreational land between different schools and between parks and schools is being done.

To meet the envisioned future:

- The major waterways within the region (Fox, Wolf, Embarrass, and Pigeon Rivers) need to be promoted as a valuable recreational and economic resource.
- The importance of parks and green infrastructure on the local economy and vitality of the region needs to be realized.
- Municipal park departments, communities, schools, faith based groups, and non-profit and private organizations need to work together to increase their impact and provide quality programs and facilities for the residents of the region.
- A balance of facilities and programs needs to be established between public and private interests, special interest groups, non-profits, schools and the general public.
- A mechanism or incentive needs to be found to encourage the coordinated development of parks and recreational facilities by the various units of government.
- Communities need to work together to draft ordinances, policies and procedures that are consistent across the various municipal boundaries.
- Adequate and important open space areas and locally important natural features need to be set aside and preserved and protected to meet the future needs of the region.
- Existing local parks, open space and recreational facilities need to be protected and preserved.
- Adequate funding must be available for acquiring, developing and maintaining parks and recreational facilities and programming.
- The benefits of shared facilities and services, especially as it relates to the development of regional facilities, sharing of information and joint purchasing power must be promoted.
- The complexities of facility planning and siting and public and private partnerships needs to be addressed.
- The role local park systems play in providing recreational facilities and programming opportunities for residents in outlying rural areas need to be defined.

Core Goals

Fact Sheet CF1: Waste: Garbage and Recycling

Support the establishment of an integrated regional planning strategy for waste management that will:

1. Encourage efforts to promote collaborative, regional collection and processing strategies for solid waste and recycling that involves residents, the public, private and non profit sectors.
2. Encourage consideration of alternative financing options to reduce budget shortfalls.
3. Limit the conflicts between existing solid waste and recycling facilities and new development.
4. Effectively address the public health and environmental concerns associated with the location of new waste management facilities.
5. Encourage the uniform enforcement of existing state law on solid waste and recycling.
6. Support a shift in focus from waste disposal to waste recovery by promoting recycling, waste reduction, organic waste composting, and reuse of products.
7. Encourage the improvement of product design and manufacture to facilitate their reuse, recycling, and disposal.
8. Promote educational campaigns that increase corporate and public awareness of solid waste and associated environmental issues and foster sustainable behaviors.

Fact Sheet CF2: Public & Private Wastewater Treatment

1. Promote sanitary sewerage systems that will effectively and economically serve urban and rural development within the region.
2. Promote the regionalization of public wastewater treatment facilities, where proven to be cost-effective.
3. Support and maintain the state-level review and planning process for public wastewater treatment facilities and collection systems.
4. Resolve issues associated with conflicts between rural, on-site development which is in close proximity to publicly sewered areas.
5. Achieve consistency in the application of rules governing rural, on-site development throughout the region.

Fact Sheet CF3: Public & Private Water Supply

1. Investigate, encourage and promote efficient water conservation programs that will assist in addressing regional water supply issues.
2. Clearly identify issues and opportunities for water supply which lend themselves to regional solutions versus local ones.
3. Preserve and protect both surface water and groundwater resources that are used for public and private water supplies.
4. Support and assist in coordinated local planning and decision-making that acknowledges local concerns and issues.
5. Support existing state level water supply regulations and their continued improvement.

6. Support and assist in the development of new state, regional, county, and local programs and regulations that effectively protect public and private water supplies in a consistent manner.
7. Ensure that existing and future public water systems are planned for and developed in a cost-effective manner.
8. Effectively inform and educate the public and decision-makers on water supply issues.

Fact Sheet CF4: Gas Electric and Telecommunications

1. Promote regional, long-term planning and improved coordination and communication between government agencies, developers, municipalities and utilities to ensure efficient cost-effective utility service provision to both urban and rural areas.
2. Promote the development and use of regional multi-use corridors.
3. Develop and promote an effective educational campaign to raise awareness among all the stakeholders of the issues involved in utility infrastructure provision, including facility expansion and relocation.
4. Promote the development and use of alternative energy, such as wind, water, biomass, fuel cells and solar, to meet the needs of the region.
5. Promote energy awareness in the design of new development, for example, "green buildings".
6. Promote energy conservation practices.
7. Facilitate the continuing development of telecommunications infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner.
8. Ensure that the visual and environmental impact of telecommunications development is kept to a minimum.
9. Encourage and support the advancement of affordable broadband or high speed internet access to all areas of the region.
10. Encourage appropriate provision for telecommunications systems in the design of new development.

Fact Sheet CF5: Public Safety

1. Encourage counties and local governments to work together to develop regional disaster plans.
2. Encourage all counties and local governments within the region to develop and adopt Hazard Mitigation Plans.
3. Encourage cooperation and sharing of technical resources, specializations and personnel between the various departments and between municipalities and counties.
4. Promote the development of regional purchasing programs.
5. Encourage efforts to promote an efficient regional and statewide communications network.
6. Promote consistent long-term regional planning, communication and cooperation between the various counties and municipalities and public safety officials.

Fact Sheet CF6: Education and Libraries

1. Promote communication and collaborative, long term planning between municipalities, private organizations, non-profits, public agencies, school districts and libraries.
2. Promote the multiple use of both recreational, school facilities and libraries.
3. Promote equitable funding for public libraries.
4. Provide conveniently located libraries with quality services for all people within the region

Fact Sheet CF7: Health and Childcare

1. Promote community planning that will encourage a healthy, safe, vibrant, diverse environment for its residents.
2. Review consequences of local ordinances and zoning practices in regard to placement of childcare facilities.

Fact Sheet CF8: Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

1. Identify mechanisms or incentives to encourage the coordinated development of parks and recreational facilities by the various governmental units.
2. Promote better communication and cooperative planning between municipalities, private organizations, non-profits, and schools.
3. Ensure that adequate and important open space areas are preserved and protected for future recreational use.
4. Ensure optimum use of available funding for acquiring, developing and maintaining parks and recreational facilities.
5. Provide a balance of programming and facilities to accommodate the diverse interests of the various user groups.
6. Promote our region's waterways as important recreational and environmental asset.

Conclusion

The vision, major issues and core goals will be brought forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies. We will also take another look at issues that were raised in both the education and libraries, and health and childcare subsections of the report and were not included on the fact sheets. Any implemented policy will have intended and unintended consequences. Therefore we will also consider what impacts the identified policies may have on other plan elements try to identify those policy links in an effort to predict.

CHAPTER 8: AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Previous chapters in this document discuss the regional comprehensive planning process, summarize the first report that provided background data for the region, present a regional vision and identify the issues, opportunities, and core goals for development of the region. This chapter identifies agricultural issues and opportunities, provides a regional vision for agriculture and recommends core goals to address identified issues.

Agriculture is an important natural, economic and cultural resource in the East Central region. Most of the soils of the region are well suited for agricultural production. The majority of the prime farmland is in the southeast one-half of the region, an area that is also the most densely populated. This area contains three major urban areas, the Fox Cities, Oshkosh and Fond du Lac. These are significant economic development centers and are generating significant amounts of land consumption. This primary urban development and its sprawl impacts are resulting in a substantial loss of prime farmland and, left unchecked, a significant loss of agricultural potential.

Agriculture is a valuable part of the region's economy. The market value of agricultural products sold in the region in 1997 was approximately 800 million dollars. While this market value continues to increase, it is only about one-half the statewide rate of increase. This difference reflects the loss of the most valuable farmland to development. The average per farm income has been increasing, primarily due to an increase in the size of farms. Agriculture only accounts for about 1.5 percent of total employment in the region. While this number is low, most of these employees are owner/operators.

The character and culture of agriculture is changing. Farming is no longer the predominant economic and employment activity that defines community lifestyle. The local community and surrounding farm interdependence has diminished due to increased technology, better transportation and global agricultural marketing. The family dairy farm, once commonplace, is now relegated to a few portions of the region and is changing in size and characteristics. Many farmers are retiring or nearing retirement and their children are not continuing the farm. This puts more pressure on farm sale for land development or alternatively conversion to larger farms. While grain farming is an important agricultural activity, it is also a supplemental income for many farmers and transitional land use for others. For numerous farmers, agriculture is a second income as they have other primary employment. The agriculture sector is also changing with value added activities supplementing traditional farms and specialized activities such as horticulture supply and nurseries becoming more dominant.

Current intergovernmental cooperative efforts to meet agricultural needs within our region, and the interaction between agriculture and other plan elements, are discussed below. That discussion is followed by a regional vision for the future of agriculture. The remainder of the chapter compares current trends to the identified vision, identifies goals to address identified issues and concludes by summarizing key findings.

Cooperation

All levels of government, federal, state, and local play a significant role in the success or failure of agriculture and farming. A key to successfully addressing agricultural issues is cooperation and coordination not only between different governments but also between government and private agricultural interests. The establishment of a shared vision for agriculture is critical to form partnerships and promote consistent approaches and actions.

A shared vision between different parts of government is important because of the multitude of responsibilities and programs at different levels of government and between government departments. The federal programs provide a broad base support but do not necessarily address regional issues and needs. The state programs sometimes overlap the federal programs and sometimes conflict or reflect different priorities.

Government and private sector initiatives also need coordination. There may be competition or overlap between government and private sector programs such as government and commercial guaranteed loans. Also, there are many shared government partnerships in agricultural marketing especially in respect of global exports.

Statement of Interaction with Other Planning Elements

Agricultural change is a major issue facing the East Central region. It is therefore addressed as a separate element in the regional comprehensive plan. This issue however, can not be addressed on a standalone basis as it interacts with many other issues. The regional comprehensive plan contains eight elements, economic development, housing, transportation, community and public facilities, agricultural resources, natural resources, cultural resources, and land use. The elements most closely interacting with agriculture are economic development, natural resources and land use and special efforts have been made to coordinate the work on these elements. The agriculture element overlaps, impacts, or is impacted by all of the eight elements. Following is a summary of this interaction.

Economic Development

Agriculture is an important segment of the regional economy. Farming and agricultural related businesses provide proprietor income and generate jobs. Farming is a basic industry; it is a producer that brings new money into the region and a consumer that requires local support services. A decline in farm production will have ripple effects that will impact overall income and employment.

Farming also requires financial assistance to remain viable. There are numerous governmental support programs that provide grants, loans and commodity subsidies. While these programs benefit most farmers they sometimes are counter productive because they interfere with free market forces. There is a continuing need for farmer education in farm management, business practices and agricultural commodity markets.

Housing

The linkage between agriculture and housing is the consumption of farmland by urban and rural residential development. Most of the undeveloped land in the region is farmed. Lands in the southeastern half of the region are prime agricultural lands and are under residential development pressure. Because the value of land is greater for residential development than agriculture, many farms and portions of farms are lost to housing development.

Undeveloped land is a prerequisite to the development of new housing. The question is not whether farmland should be used for housing but how much farmland is used. Housing development should not be located in prime agricultural areas. Individual homes and subdivisions should not fragment large agricultural areas because housing and intensive farming do not mix.

There is an increasing need for migrant housing and housing for year round farm laborers as farm size and labor requirements increase. It is difficult and expensive to house these workers on the farm therefore other low cost alternatives are needed.

Transportation

Agricultural commodity movement is dependent upon good modes of transportation. While dairy and grain shipments are primarily highway oriented, good rail service is also important. A good highway system provides the farmer access to processors, suppliers, haulers and various support industries. Farmers in the region have good highway access to local and regional markets, good rail access to national markets and good port access on the Great Lakes to global markets. If the cost of shipping increases because of the cost of fuel or shipping opportunities are lost. Similarly, rail abandonment could have a devastating effect on those farmers who rely on national or global markets.

The location of new transportation corridors can also have a negative effect on individual farmers. New highways not only consume farmland but can split farm ownership and make farm operations impractical. Highways, by providing better access, can also induce rural development that consumes and fragments farmland.

Community Facilities

Agriculture is a rural activity that requires less community and public facility support than developed land uses in communities and the countryside. Agriculture operations, which are not labor intensive, do require basic health and safety services such as police, fire and rescue. They also require good transportation, communication and utility service.

Farm families and farm employees need access to a full range of community service functions. These services include retail, financial, medical, educational, and cultural resources. Good primary education is important to farm families in extremely rural areas that do not have a large property tax base for support. Also important are governmental facilities and functions to provide legal services, zoning and land use services, and social services. Other service examples are financial aid and technical assistance through the USDA and NRCS, and agriculture education and outreach through the UWEX.

Natural Resources

Agriculture is natural resource based. Agriculture production is dependant upon the quality of the soils, water availability and terrain. Approximately one-half of the region has natural conditions suitable for good agricultural production. In western portions of the region less fertile soils require special applications such as irrigation and greater fertilizer use.

Farming needs to be environmentally friendly and farmers need to be stewards of the land. All lands are not conducive to farming. Environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, stream corridors, steep slopes, unique forests and wildlife habitat need to be preserved. Farm practices also need to address land conservation techniques to prevent soil erosion, to protect surface and groundwater quality through manure management and fertilizer and pesticide application techniques, and to maintain a mix of land covers to prevent wind erosion and provide wildlife habitat.

Cultural Resources

Farming is part of the Wisconsin culture. Agriculture, succeeding logging and lumber as the predominant land use, is responsible for developing the character and economy of the state over the last 100 years. The traditional Wisconsin family farm depicts a lifestyle of the pastoral countryside. The picturesque dairy farmstead, once commonplace, is now becoming a scarcity in the Wisconsin countryside. Various efforts are underway to preserve historic farmsteads. One effort called "Barn Again" is attempting to identify historic and architecturally significant barns and provide assistance to restore and preserve them.

There are numerous archeological sites located on farmlands. While the upper soil surface of many of these sites have been disturbed there are still many remnants and artifacts present. These sites are recorded by the State Historical Society and more detailed maps are being prepared to systematically investigate important sites.

Land Use

Agriculture is the predominant land use in the region. With the exception of some forest lands, agriculture is the land use most converted to development including residential, commercial and industrial uses. The conversion of prime farmland is one of the largest and most controversial issues facing the region. Almost all stakeholders agree that prime farmland should be preserved however the methods to reach this goal widely differ.

Farmland near the urban centers of the region is under extreme development pressure. Once prosperous farms located on prime agricultural soils are currently being converted to housing and shopping centers. Other farms are transitional, waiting for development market opportunities. Still other farmland areas are being fragmented with scattered residential development that poses farm operational conflicts and limits farm expansion. While right-to-farm laws have been passed to protect farmers the political pressure from rural residential populations will pose increased constraints on farm operation and expansion.

Vision Statement for Agriculture

The purpose of a vision statement is to present an ideal future that serves a basis for determining goals and strategies for achieving the vision. Public input is crucial in developing a vision. All viewpoints positive and negative, focused and diverse, conflicting and supporting should be included. In preparation for forming the agricultural vision statement, a variety of sources were used including the regional comprehensive plan focus groups, the key facts from Milestone Report #1, and the Agricultural Resources Technical Advisory Committee (ARTAC). The ARTAC was asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?" and "What would you like to see created in the region?" The committee's responses have been summarized into a best of all possible worlds scenario. The vision statement is presented below.

"In 2030, agriculture is an important feature of the economy and lifestyle of the East Central region. Development pressures have been diverted away from prime farmland and ample, unfragmented agricultural districts exist. Farming is practiced on the most productive soils. A variety of farm types and sizes are operating successfully. The region's farming community supplies both local and global markets. Citizens, local officials, and farmers are aware of and continuously address interrelated economic and land use issues. The viable and stable farm economy, in terms of farm income and prosperity, reflects concerted efforts by the private and public sectors to balance free market forces and government programs for land conservation".

Issues/Opportunities – Fact Sheets

The Agricultural Resources Advisory Committee identified issues and opportunities after reviewing the key findings in Milestone Report #1 and the results of the regional focus groups. Where appropriate similar issues were combined into broader issue categories. The identified issues and opportunities fall into four major categories; preservation and protection of agricultural lands, development of sustainable farming opportunities, government support mechanisms for agriculture, and importance of education in agriculture's future.

The following fact sheets summarize the key facts, discussion, current activities and programs, and core goals of the issues that were identified by the Agricultural Resource Technical Advisory Committee.

Preservation and Protection of Agricultural Lands

FACT SHEET: A1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Most of the East Central region is well suited for agriculture with the most productive soils in the east/southeast portion. Approximately fifty percent of the land in the region is being farmed. The best farmland is also under the most development pressure as urban expansion and scattered rural residential development are both consuming and fragmenting agricultural land. Farmland losses in the East Central region totaled almost two million acres between 1970 and 1999. Over 5000 farms were lost, one-third of the total number in 1970.

The loss of farms and agricultural lands throughout the region is further evidenced by declined agricultural production. While the value of product sales was \$796,263,000 in 1997, the increase from 1992 was only 3.2 percent, half the statewide average of 6.1 percent. Real declines in sales for this period were shown in Calumet and Green Lake Counties.

Farm income has been insufficient to protect farmland from development pressure. Therefore incentive and regulatory farmland protection efforts have been undertaken at the state, federal and local levels. While some of these programs have been in existence for many years, they have had mixed success.

So What!

There is a limited supply of prime farmland in the region. The loss of this supply is accelerating because these lands also surround

the region's primary urban centers where the most development pressures exist. Once lands are converted to urban and rural residential uses they are lost forever. Even lands that remain undeveloped in these areas are lost to traditional farming as they become too fragmented for efficient operation.

The loss of farmland also leads to the loss of agricultural production and declining significance of farming in the economy. This trend has a compounding effect on farmland loss as lands become more valuable for development than agriculture. This potential is even more threatening as over 35 percent of farmers in the region are over 60 years of age and family farm succession is becoming less common.

Without a strong farmland protection strategy, prime farmland will continue to be lost. Past programs have only been sporadically successful and new programs are not targeting prime agricultural areas.

Current Action

There are numerous programs targeting agricultural preservation and protection at the federal, state and local levels. The federal 2002 Farm Bill provides various kinds of conservation and farmland management assistance and various commodity subsidies. Through this program limited financial assistance is provided for the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) that can directly preserve farmland.

The Wisconsin Farmland Tax Credit Program provides direct property tax relief to farmers. Farmland is assessed for its use

value based upon agricultural production capabilities rather than its conventional market value. Significant property tax reductions reduce the incentive to sell farmland in high growth/land value areas.

The Wisconsin Legislature enacted a number of bills in the last two years to financially assist farmers. By improving income more farmers may remain in business and not be forced to sell off farmland.

The Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program protects farmland through financial incentives and zoning. The program relies on voluntary farmer participation and/or county or town zoning. The program is being reviewed because of mixed success throughout the state. All told only about 37 percent of the farmers in the region have participated in the program that is the same as the overall state average. The most success in the program is in Fond du Lac County where approximately 75 percent of the farmers are participating.

Some counties, such as Calumet, are addressing farmland protection at the local level. Calumet County has an advisory committee that is addressing siting standards for large farms. The intent is to identify and protect portions of the county where more intensive farming can occur, while minimizing conflicts with other land uses.

Core Goals

1. Protect prime agricultural soils for current and future farm use.
2. Preserve farms and farmland for productive agricultural use.

Development of Sustainable Farming Opportunities

FACT SHEET: A2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The face of agriculture is changing in the East Central region as well as the state and nation. The traditional Wisconsin family farm is disappearing as small farms struggle to stay in business, while larger farms, producing more but stirring local controversy, are growing.

The predominant farming activity in the region involves dairy and grain production. While dairy farms only represent 35% of the region's farms, they account for the majority of agricultural dollar sales. However dairy farms are changing. Many smaller dairy farms are going out of business or converting to grain or specialty farming. Smaller farms are also expanding to larger farms for more efficiency and profit. Grain farming has become more prominent in recent years. Marginal dairy operations have converted to grain farming and many grain farmers can supplement their income from a second non-farm occupation. Grain farming has also become a transitional use on the urban fringe as farmers hold their land for future development.

Over the last 30 years there has been a steady decrease of farms in the region with 5,125 lost between 1970 and 1999. While much of this loss is due to economic factors, farm lifestyle change has also played a role. Over 35% of the farmers are over 60 years of age and are not being sufficiently replaced by family descendants or young start-up farmers.

Farmers, representing two percent of the population, are feeding the nation. Agriculture

market prices put strains on farm income and on consistent and continued production. Market prices vary widely and are not predictable. For example, recent milk prices have varied from \$11 to \$18 per hundred weight, a 64% difference. Small and marginal farmers find it more difficult to handle these market changes.

So What!

There is much debate about the future of farming and agriculture in East Central Wisconsin. On one side public opinion and some farm interests support the small family or traditional Wisconsin farm. On the other side, economic competition supports larger, more efficient, business farm operations. Other interests call for value added and specialized farm diversification.

The family farm epitomizes rural character in Wisconsin's agricultural heritage. Yet these are the very farms that are disappearing. Fragmented land uses that intermingle farms and rural residences lead to conflicts with farm operations and eventual farm loss. This fragmentation thus also destroys the rural character that people value. This loss is most evident in the urbanizing areas of Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago Counties but also throughout the region.

Small dairy farms, while receiving increased financial support to stay viable, are increasingly becoming larger in order to economically prosper and compete in a more global environment. As farms grow in size, they are sometimes referred to as mega-farms. These farms move away from conventional farm practices and encompass

large facilities and equipment. They also change the character of their locality as they accumulate land acreage and institute more intensive operations.

As farms become larger and more business like, larger capital and labor investments are required. This investment needs farm owners who are operating on a long term basis. There is a growing shortage of farmers willing to commit these resources because many of them are nearing retirement and descendants are not willing to continue farming and assume debt. The result is a continuing decline in traditional family farms.

Current Action

Numerous initiatives are underway to preserve farming and assist farmers in Wisconsin. The federal 2002 Farm Bill provides various kinds of conservation and farmland management assistance and various commodity subsidies. There are also a number of national organizations that provide financial, technical and educational assistance to farmers such as the American Farmland Trust and the American Farm Bureau.

The Wisconsin Legislature enacted a number of bills in the last two years to financially assist farmers. By improving income, it is anticipated that more farmers will remain in business as they will not be forced to sell off farmland. The Wisconsin Department of Commerce has the Dairy 2020 Program that provides monies for start-up, modernization and expansion of dairy operations. The Agricultural Development Zone also assists in the development of agri-business to promote "value-added" agriculture. The statewide use

value property tax program also relieves a financial burden on farmers.

Core Goals

1. Preserve and promote a mix of farm types and sizes.
2. Provide economic incentives to assist farmers and stabilize income and promote new operations.

Government Support Mechanisms for Agriculture

FACT SHEET: A3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

There seems to be no clear cut farm policy at any governmental level. The policies and programs are as diverse as the types of agriculture and farms throughout the country. Major programs, many with long histories of mixed success, continue to direct major financial resources and subsidies to select farm commodities and sectors. This practice many times disrupts the free market for agricultural products and makes farmers dependent upon government subsidy.

Government is initiating new programs to address specific issues and adapt to changing needs. Support for diversified marketing and value added products is one example.

So What!

Farming and agriculture are changing and it is important that government recognizes and reflects these changes. There are numerous programs at all levels of government with substantial investment and involvement. However, many of the current programs retain vestiges of long time government subsidy and support efforts that sometimes increase problems for farmers rather than assist them.

As an example, federal commodity programs are directed to subsidize the income of specific producers. However, they cover less than fifty percent of total farms. This is because the commodities involved are a few primary crops. Also, there is no direct relationship between access to program benefits and the financial status of the farmer. The results are that approximately

50 percent of the program payments go to large commercial farms. Because the subsidies are targeted, they do not reflect the increasing diversity of agriculture and many times encourage boom and bust cycles of production that stress smaller farms.

Many of the government programs are intended to reduce the cost side of farming. Examples are the conservation and wetland reserves program, and the various financial support programs such as farm credit and tax credits. These programs benefit all sizes of farms but are many times directed to smaller family farms where financial assistance plays a more important role. However, certain environmental regulatory policies without financial assistance may increase costs because of administrative costs for permits and increased costs of environmental improvements.

Property tax abatement has been a prime cost issue with farms in the State and especially in portions of the East Central region. High property taxes put burdens on farms of all sizes and expedite the demise of marginal farms. The use-value property tax program reduces the property tax based on the value of the land in production. This reduces operating costs by the market value of the land minus the agricultural production value. A greater benefit of this program is the preservation of farmland that may be forced to sell through high taxes. A downside to the current program is that lands in urbanizing areas can be cheaply held for speculative purposes thus causing leapfrog development and disruption of orderly development.

Current Action

Federal, state and local government play a significant role in supporting agriculture and farm preservation.

The federal 2002 Farm Bill reauthorized and expanded a number of programs to assist farmers. The major emphasis of Farm Bill is the promotion of environmental and land conservation incentives that protect and enhance the farmland resource. Most important of these are the Conservation Reserve and Wetland Reserve Programs and the Environmental Quality and Wildlife Incentives Programs. Another important aspect of the Bill is the Farmland Protection Program designed to initiate preservation techniques such as transfer or purchase of development rights.

The Commodities Program within the Farm Bill provides various subsidies and direct economic incentives to farmers. Important to Wisconsin farmers are direct subsidy payments for various grain crops and milk production. Various other assistance programs include farm credit for ownership, operation and emergency loans, forestry assistance and crop insurance.

Wisconsin has a number of assistance programs for farmers. The farmland preservation program protects farms through tax relief and preservation zoning. The program is voluntary and is implemented at the town and county level. Within the East Central region approximately 37 percent of the eligible farmers participate in the program.

Another recent program at the state level is Farmland Tax Relief. Approximately 7,800 farmers in the region participated in the program in 2002 with tax relief totaling over 1.7 million dollars.

Wisconsin has recently provided additional incentive programs for farmers. The Agricultural Renewal Initiative provides guidance to farmers and local government for the establishment and siting of larger livestock facilities. The state has created a website called SavorWisconsin.com that connects agricultural consumers with producers in an attempt to promote Wisconsin grown products. Other efforts include additional tax credits for dairy farm modernization, ethanol production incentives, and cooperative management. There are also a number of active proposals for a cooperative farmer health care program, rural tax incremental financing, Wisconsin Rural Finance Authority, and a virtual dairy team for new technology application.

At the local level, counties and towns have adopted farmland preservation plans and agricultural zoning. The new Comprehensive Plan initiative provides a mechanism for integrating farming and farmland preservation into a community long range plan.

Core Goals

1. Provide market-oriented economic governmental support programs for agriculture and farmers.
2. Promote tax and land use policies that support the enhancement of agricultural activities and the preservation of farms.

Importance of Education in Agriculture's Future

FACT SHEET: A4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

While significant resources have and are being applied to agricultural educational efforts, there is still a general misunderstanding of the significance and plight of agriculture and farming in the region. There needs to be a more concerted and coordinated effort between the education providers to reach the primary stakeholders. The need for greater education was identified as a priority in public focus groups and by the Agricultural technical Advisory Committee.

So What!

People take the food they eat and the agricultural products they buy for granted. They are generally not concerned with where the products come from as long as they are available, the quality is reasonable and the pricing is right. Only when a problem develops, such as BSE (Mad Cow Disease) or a shortage appears, do people become concerned and ask questions about how and where the food is produced and at what cost.

An awareness of agricultural issues is not just an issue for the typical consumer but also for many farmers; the producers. There are many farmers who have used the same farming techniques and business practices for generations. Times have changed and if farming is to survive, there is a need to adapt through education. Issues requiring consideration include environmental regulation, land stewardship, finance and business practice, new and value added products,

cooperative benefits and community interaction. While farming has traditionally been a lifestyle, if that lifestyle is to survive long-term it must also be a viable business.

Government officials could also benefit from education that would provide a greater appreciation of agriculture and farming. Within the East Central region agriculture is an important part of the local economy. Farming provides jobs and income and tax base that affects the prosperity of local communities. It is important that local officials understand how the decisions they make impact farming in their area. It is critically important that they understand the complex relationship between the interests of farmers, who own most of the land, and citizens, who make up the voting majority. Local officials need to balance these interests when they make land use, economic and government service decisions.

Current Action

There are numerous educational efforts and programs addressing agriculture and farming. Individual farmers, farm groups, state and national associations, educational institutions and state and federal government are all involved in providing education.

Individual farmers have opened their farms to the public to promote awareness of farm practices and products. As only about two percent of the population in the region is involved in agriculture most people are unaware of farm life. The "Breakfast on the Farm" event held on Outagamie County farms

is an example where the public consumes locally produced food and tours the farm. Many farmers also host school children to view their facilities and operations.

Farming groups and associations also play an increasing role in education and marketing. Groups like the Farm Bureau, not only represent farmers interest in the political process but provide educational materials to the public on the value and plight of farmers. The Farm Bureau also supports farmers directly in such matters as marketing, business plans and farming methods. The Farmland Trust is a national organization that works to advance the cause of farmland protection. The Farmland Trust provides research and support to farmers and farm groups and provides educational materials to the public on farmland loss and preservation efforts.

Schools and universities play a dual role in agricultural education. First, they directly educate people for farm and agricultural related occupations. This education is not just in farming techniques and management but in agricultural science involving new products and secondary industries. Agricultural education participation rates at the high school level have declined due to a decrease in the number of farm families but also a failure of the next generation to enter the business.

Second, schools and universities also educate the public. As an example, the University of Wisconsin Extension has outreach projects that provide agricultural materials and seminars on general and critical agricultural matters. There are a variety of methods used including pamphlets, mass media, and the internet. UW Extension offices and staff assistance are available in most counties throughout the region.

Federal and state government also put significant resources into education. The United States Department of Agriculture provides research and educational materials ranging from international markets for agriculture to specific applications on individual farms. The National Resource Conservation Service provides educational information on conservation practices directed to farmers and local governments. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Department of Commerce provide materials to farmers and the public on agricultural issues and government program support.

Core Goals

1. Increase the public and local officials' awareness of the significance of agriculture and farming in their community.
2. Provide greater education opportunities and assistance to farmers and agricultural business.

Agriculture: Key Findings

Vision Statement

In 2030, agriculture is an important feature of the economy and lifestyle of the East Central region. Development pressures have been diverted away from prime farmland and ample, unfragmented agricultural districts exist. Farming is practiced on the most productive soils. A variety of farm types and sizes are operating successfully. The region's farming community supplies both local and global markets. Citizens, local officials, and farmers are aware of and continuously address interrelated economic and land use issues. The viable and stable farm economy, in terms of farm income and prosperity, reflects concerted efforts by the private and public sectors to balance free market forces and government programs for land conservation.

Issues/Opportunities

- Preservation and protection of agricultural lands
- Development of sustainable farming opportunities
- Government support mechanisms for agriculture
- Importance of education in agriculture's future.

Match/Mismatch between the Envisioned and Probable Future

What should be preserved?

1. Prime agricultural land
2. Rural atmosphere
3. Commitment of local officials
4. Agricultural infrastructure
5. Farm lifestyle opportunities
6. Mix of farm types and sizes
7. Government programs (limited basis as safety net)
8. Agriculture economic structure (regional and global)
9. Quality products for local markets

What should be changed?

1. Government rules and regulations (local zoning)
2. Perception of public and local officials
3. Education, locally grown food (schools)
4. Educate towns of agricultural industry impacts
5. Educate public on healthy meals
6. Educate farmers on community impacts and business practices
7. Promote financial institution support
8. More animal crop damage control

9. Incorporate more environmentally oriented land practices with govt. financial support

What should be created?

1. Planning incorporating agriculture
2. Agriculture development districts
3. Government financial support for agricultural education
4. Curriculum for food supply – CESA
5. State and regionally supported centralized purchase
6. Identify and create added value initiatives for farmers
7. Create new products and markets
8. Promote the coop idea
9. Streamline environmental permit programs

Core Goals

Fact Sheet A1: Preservation and protection of Agricultural Lands

1. Protect prime agricultural soils for current and future farm use.
2. Preserve farms and farmland for productive agricultural use

Fact Sheet A2: Development of Sustainable Farming Opportunities

1. Preserve and promote a mix of farm types and sizes.
2. Provide economic incentives to assist farmers and stabilize income and promote new operations.

Fact Sheet A3: Government Support for Mechanisms for Agriculture

1. Provide market-oriented economic governmental support programs for agriculture and farmers.
2. Promote tax and land use policies that support the enhancement of agricultural activities and the preservation of farms.

Fact Sheet A4: Importance of Education in Agriculture's Future

1. Increase the public and local officials' awareness of the significance of agriculture and farming in their community.
2. Provide greater education opportunities and assistance to farmers and agricultural business.

Conclusion

The vision, four major issues and core goals will be carried forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies. Any implemented policy will have

intended and unintended consequences. As a result, during the Milestone #3 process, we will also try to identify those policy links in an effort to predict what impacts agricultural policies may have on other plan elements.

CHAPTER 9: NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The region's natural resources are a complex system of individual components and physical characteristics that serve specific ecosystem functions and fulfill part of the region's economic and social needs. The wealth and variety of resources available within the region not only provided for its initial settlement and development, but now, hundreds of years later, still furnish its residents with the basic needs of life: food, water, power, and raw materials for human consumption. Most natural resources can be categorized as being either renewable or exhaustible and must be managed accordingly. Natural resources often act as both a physical constraint to development, as well as a commodity that enhances rural and urban environments by providing recreational, social, and economic opportunities. Individually and collectively, these resources also contribute to the region's overall 'sense of place' and 'quality of life' that is beloved by most of its residents.

Smart Growth statutes [66.0295(2)(e)] define the Natural Resources element as being comprised of the 17 sub-elements, of which 15 are addressed in the context of the regional plan. It should be noted that although they are technically part of this element, 'productive agricultural areas' and 'historical and cultural resources' are addressed separately in Chapters 7 and 9, respectively.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Groundwater | 9. Wildlife habitat |
| 2. Forests | 10. Metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources (note – no metallic resources in region) |
| 3. Environmentally sensitive areas | 11. Parks (regional) |
| 4. Threatened and endangered species | 12. Open spaces |
| 5. Stream corridors | 13. Community (regional) design |
| 6. Surface waters | 14. Recreational (regional) resources |
| 7. Floodplains | 15. Other natural resources |
| 8. Wetlands | |

Cooperation

A majority of the identified issues concerning natural resources are regional in nature, and as such; require a comprehensive view from a variety of governmental and citizen levels. Based on the issues identified in *Milestone Report #1* and the fifteen natural resource sub-elements, five individual Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) were formed to further discuss regional concerns and further develop the regional plan's natural resources element. Each TAC was comprised of local, county and state agency staff and elected officials, as well as more localized and state-wide non-profit organization representatives and general citizens. A complete listing of entity representation and participation is contained on the East Central website (www.eastcentralrpc.org). The diverse representation and expertise present on the TACs allowed for variety of perspectives to be considered when discussing issues associated with natural resources.

It should also be noted that many natural resource issues are related to a combination of one or more of the fifteen previously mentioned statutory sub-elements. In many cases, these sub-elements relationships overlap and need to be addressed in more than one context. These

Table NR-1: Natural Resources Element Technical Advisory Committees

Natural Resources Sub-Element	Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)				
	Geologic Resources TAC	Groundwater & Water Supply TAC	Watershed Planning & Wastewater TAC	Ecological Resources TAC	Open Space, Recreation and Regional Character TAC
GROUNDWATER	X	X	X	X	N/A
FORESTS	N/A	N/A	X	X	X
ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS	N/A	X	X	X	X
THREATENED/ENDANGERED SPECIES	X	N/A	X	X	N/A
STREAM CORRIDORS	N/A	N/A	X	X	X
SURFACE WATERS	N/A	X	X	X	X
FLOODPLAINS	N/A	N/A	X	X	X
WETLANDS	N/A	X	X	X	X
WILDLIFE HABITAT	X	X	X	X	X
NON-METALLIC MINERALS	X	X	X	N/A	N/A
PARKS (Regional)	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	X
OPEN SPACES (Regional)	X	X	X	N/A	X
COMMUNITY (Regional) DESIGN	X	X	X	N/A	X
RECREATIONAL RESOURCES (Regional)	X	N/A	X	N/A	X
OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES (Regional)	X	X	X	X	X

linkages were considered in the creation of the five TACs. Table NR-1 lists the five TACs which were created and their relationship and responsibility to specific sub-elements.

Statements Interaction with Other Planning Elements

The generalized subject of Natural Resources, from a land use planning perspective, relates to all eight remaining 'smart growth' plan elements. As illustrated in Table NR-2, many natural resource relationships exist between the individual sub-elements and the major plan elements, including the two items which were separated from the natural resources element - agriculture and cultural/historic resources. Most of these relationships are based on their geographic proximity to development or some aspect of the resources function.

Vision Statement for Natural Resources

In preparation for forming a vision statement, the individual Technical Advisory Committees were asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?" and "What would you like to see created in the region?". The committee's responses have been summarized into vision and goal statements for each sub-element of the Natural Resources Element and are listed at the end of this section.

Natural Resources Sub-Element	Smart Growth Planning Elements									
	Issues & Opportunities	Agriculture*	Cultural Resources*	Economic Development	Housing	Transportation	Public & Community Facilities	Land Use	Intergovt. Cooperation	Plan Impl.
GROUNDWATER	ASSESS DEMANDS, CAPACITIES, VALUES, VISIONS AND EXISTING PROGRAMS	Irrigation / contamination / rural development	N/A	Water quality / quantity / development of recharge areas	Drinking water quantity / quality / development of recharge areas	Development of recharge areas	Public and private drinking water quality / quantity / wastewater treatment	Avoid recharge areas / limit withdrawals / avoid & reduce contamination	DEVELOPMENT OF CONSISTENT/COOPERATIVE PLANS, AGREEMENTS, TASKS, POLICIES & PROGRAMS	DEVELOPMENT OF TASKS, POLICIES & PROGRAMS
FORESTS		Windbreaks	Lumber history	Lumber industry	Forest fragmentation	Forest fragmentation	Encroachment on / development of	Preserve / create corridors		
ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS		Non-point source pollution / water quality	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Water quality / habitat impacts	Encroachment on / development of	Stormwater management	Preserve / create corridors		

TABLE NR-2: Relationship of Natural Resource Sub-elements to Other Plan Elements

THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES		Habitat impacts	N/A	Quality of life / tourism	Water quality / habitat impacts	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Preserve habitats		
STREAM CORRIDORS		Non-point source pollution / water quality	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Water quality / habitat impacts	Encroachment on / development of	Stormwater management	Preserve / create buffers and corridors		
SURFACE WATERS		Non-point source pollution / water quality	Lock and dam systems / mills	Water quality / quality of life	Non-point source pollution / water quality / water quantity	Water quality / quantity	Stormwater management / recreation	Point & non-point source pollution / water quality / recreation / aesthetics		
FLOODPLAINS		Water quantity / flooding	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Water quality / habitat impacts	Encroachment on / development of	Stormwater management	Water quantity / flooding		
WETLANDS		Water quantity / quality / flooding / habitat / restoration	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Water quality / habitat impacts	Encroachment on / development of	Stormwater management	Water quality / flooding		
WILDLIFE HABITAT		Idle acreage	Hunting history	Quality of life / hunting / tourism	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Preserve / hunting		
NON-METALLIC MINERALS		Preserve deposits / site reclamation	Historical / educational values	Necessity for development / industry sector	Encroachment on / development of	Future material needs	Encroachment on / development of / future needs	Preserve access / expansion / reduce conflict		
PARKS (Regional)		N/A	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Recreation sites / needs	Encroachment on / development of	Supplement local recreation	Identify areas / create networks		
OPEN SPACES (Regional)		Aesthetic value / rural character	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Preserve agriculture / development patterns		
COMMUNITY (Regional) DESIGN		Aesthetic value / rural character	Archeological / historical sites	Quality of life / tourism	Housing style / lot size	Aesthetics / quality of life	Aesthetics / quality of life	Identify / create greenbelts / design guidelines		
RECREATIONAL RESOURCES (Regional)		Snowmobiling / hunting / hiking	Tourism	Quality of life / tourism	Recreation sites / needs	Encroachment on / development of	Supplement local recreation	Preserve existing / create buffers / build networks		
NATURAL RESOURCES (Regional)		N/A	Archeologic and historic sites	Quality of life / tourism	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Encroachment on / development of	Identify / preserve / create buffers		

* This element is actually a sub-element of the Natural Resources element, but is addressed in a separate chapter

Committee members generally envisioned a future where the region's natural resources are placed high on the list of individual and community values. They had recognized that these resources are an integral part of the economy and quality of life and that much of the variation in character and identity of the region is due to the natural environment. Major river and lake systems, large blocks of natural areas, woodlands and wetlands, and even the smaller isolated or unique features were all identified as being part of a well functioning ecosystem that, if preserved and managed correctly, can provide the region with benefits associated with their inherent 'natural capital'. The resources themselves would provide both environmental services and economic value in the form of tourism and quality of life.

It was also recognized that the region's resources are used on a daily basis to support the actual development of the region. The region's mineral, wood, and water resources are all prerequisites to development and are a necessary commodity for urbanizing environments. It is also an accepted fact that natural resources are often considered as a major factor in locating development in the first place. Rural development occurs largely because of the individual's desire to have open space and a natural environment surrounding them, but usually at a cost to the community overall. The TAC recognized that these demands need to be balanced with the ecological needs of the region and that a move towards sustainability is warranted.

The vision expects that natural resources are meaningfully integrated into regional, county, and local level plans as a foundational element from which to build the rest of the plan upon. The TAC's acknowledge that each resource is not only an independent system, but is also functional part of a larger ecosystem. Each resource needs to be planned for in a manner which is best suited to its particular values and functions, as well as for its role and value within region overall. Identifying and acknowledging these relationships, along with the impacts of development, will lead to more sustainability within the region. Most importantly, the envisioned future relies on coordinated regional planning efforts which go beyond political boundaries and more closely match the natural boundaries of the environment. New tools and techniques for implementing the vision, such as watershed management and green infrastructure, will ensure that the region retains and improves its ecological 'sense of place' and moves towards sustainability.

Lastly, the vision assumes that state agency and local government entities would be responsible for more efficient and coordinated decision-making, but that the general public plays a large role in the management and stewardship of our region's resources. These concepts and ideas are summarized in the following Natural Resources Vision Statement:

"In 2030, the importance of natural resources, including their link to the regional economy, quality of life, and cost effective service provision is recognized. Natural resource planning is sustainable, consistent and coordinated in order to protect and build a strong sense of ecological place. The Winnebago Pool Lakes and the Fox/Wolf River systems are recognized as the backbone of the region's ecological resources. Geologic resources that are significant from an aesthetic, scientific, cultural, historic, educational, or commercial extraction purpose, have been identified, inventoried, preserved and protected to meet the development and societal needs of the region. The region has proactively addressed public access, recreation, open space, and trail facilities in order to meet the needs of its citizens; enhance the quality of life and environment; realize tax savings and other economic benefits; and to maintain and improve the region's tourism economy. The region is comprised of well-defined urban and rural spaces

which improve the individual's perception of 'sense of place', while communities within the region have maintained their individual character and identity. Within the region, surface water resources are planned for in a watershed-based manner that embraces and encourages the use of 'green infrastructure' concepts. The proactive protection of natural features not only contributes to water quality, but also to the long term sustainability and economic benefit of the region".

Issue and Opportunities

TAC members generated numerous statements regarding individual natural resource issues and opportunities. Wherever possible, similar statements were combined into a single idea. The TACs also discussed current natural resource related activities and regulatory topics in an effort to identify and develop core goals to address each regional issue. The identified natural resource issues fell into six broad categories which relate to some aspect of the fifteen statutorily required sub-elements:

- 1) Non-metallic mining / unique geologic features
- 2) Groundwater management and protection
- 3) Surface water quality / watershed based planning
- 4) Wildlife habitat / fragmentation
- 5) Regional open space and recreation
- 6) Regional aesthetics and character

A review of these major issue areas, as compared to the 2002 Focus Group results and the TAC visioning exercise results, show that little, if any of the identified issues will not be addressed under these headings. Issues and opportunities originally identified will move forward through the process and will be discussed in more detail as plan goals and policies are developed. The only exception to this is with regard to the topic of air quality. This environmental aspect is not going to move forward through the natural resources element for several reasons: 1) it is not required to under current smart growth statutes, and 2) it is more directly related to actual land use and transportation functions. Air quality issues will likely be addressed at some level within these two plan elements.

A series of fact sheets which summarize each issue more comprehensively are presented in the next section of the document and are titled as follows:

- Geological Resources & Non-Metallic Mining
- Do You Know What You're Drinking?
- Water Quality, Stormwater & Watershed Management
- Wildlife Habitat, Forests, and Ecological Resources
- Regional Open Space & Recreation
- Regional Character & Aesthetics

GEOLOGICAL RESOURCES & NON-METALLIC MINING

FACT SHEET: NR1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

During the Pleistocene period, between 15,000 and 25,000 years ago, several separate glacial advances and retreats took place over northeastern and central Wisconsin. These glaciers deposited large amounts of unsorted tills and stratified gravel, sand and clay materials throughout the region. Lying below these glacial sediments is a series of much older bedrock layers ranging from highly fractured limestones and sandstones, to shales and granite.

The bedrock geology of the region provides high quality materials - stone and aggregates - which are used in road construction, housing and commercial developments, as well as agricultural products. Approximately 400 active and inactive stone quarries, sand and gravel pits, and topsoil/clay borrow areas exist within the region and are important sources of the raw materials necessary for its continued development. These sites are typically located in close proximity to the major urban centers of the region due to the high transportation costs.

As a result of encroaching urban and rural development, it has become increasingly difficult for existing mining operations to expand, or to site new operations, due to real or perceived conflicts such as noise, traffic, dust and private well impacts. Many of the glacial and bedrock features which provide these materials also exist within landscapes that are somewhat unique to the region and give it much of its character, thereby threatening some of the social values.

So What! ¹

Access to aggregates is critical to Wisconsin's and the region's economy. While there are literally hundreds of uses of aggregates, most are used as a raw material for construction. Over 90% of asphalt is aggregate. In addition, about 80% of concrete - a key component of homes and commercial buildings - is aggregate. Approximately 38,000 tons of aggregate are used in building one lane mile of interstate and 400 tons are used in constructing the average new home.

Because they are heavy and bulky, it is often cost prohibitive to transport these materials long distances. Consequently, high transportation costs generally dictate that the material source be near the market where it is actually used.

While most agree that these materials are important to society, the mining industry is still facing major challenges in protecting access to these deposits. Currently, it appears that the permitted non-metallic resources are being used faster than approvals can be obtained for opening new resource deposits. Some areas containing significant deposits are being re-zoned to prevent mining or are being built over, which effectively prohibits their extraction in the future.

In the absence of long-term comprehensive planning for non-metallic resources, it is possible, and perhaps even likely that zoning or growth will prohibit the use of these materials when they are needed.

1 - Adapted from Wis. Transportation Builders Assoc. - Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law and its Implications for Non-Metallic Mining, Oct., 2003).

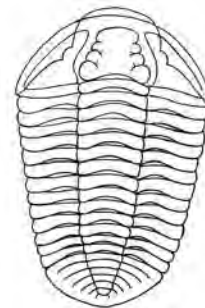
Current Action

Other than local zoning regulations and the WDNR's new NR-135 Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation and Mineral Registration Program, little if any action is being taken to ensure that the remaining, marketable deposits will be available for use in the future development of the region. Zoning approvals are typically given in the form of 'conditional uses' rather than as a 'use by right' which makes siting or expanding a quarry somewhat difficult and time consuming - although these procedures do allow for significant oversight by the community. The NR-135 Mineral Registration Program is voluntary and allows sites with marketable deposits to be protected from development via the issuance of building permits.

The Wisconsin Geologic & Natural History Survey (WGNHS), an advisory academic agency, has done much work in this field and is one of the agencies being relied upon to inform and educate decision makers so that social needs and land use conflicts are balanced. Private educational efforts are, also becoming more common as the annual 'Quarry Quest' event and Menasha's Weis Earth Science Museum provide hands-on venues for children to learn about these materials and needs. East Central staff will be working with these agencies, other academic institutions, industry, and county representatives to further assess these issues and find balanced solutions through the regional planning process.

Core Goals

1. Preserve and protect unique geologic sites within the region for aesthetic, cultural/historic, scientific, and educational purposes.
2. Preserve and protect mineral resources within the region to meet projected short and long-term needs.
3. Emphasize non-metallic mining activities as a 'transitional' and 'interim' use of the land and achieve maximum benefits from the reclamation of these sites.
4. Develop and support County and local plans which support and emphasize the regional context associated with non-metallic mining activities and needs.
5. Promote the regulation and operation of non-metallic mining in a manner, which balances the needs of the region, minimizes the effects on the environment, and maximizes compatibility with nearby land uses.
6. Collect, develop and distribute regional level information to assist counties and communities on non-metallic mining issues.
7. Achieve better communication and intergovernmental coordination / cooperation amongst local officials, citizens, and operators on non-metallic mining issues.
8. Educate the region's local officials and citizens on distribution of, access to, uses of, and the extraction process of non-metallic mineral resources.



DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DRINKING?

FACT SHEET: NR2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

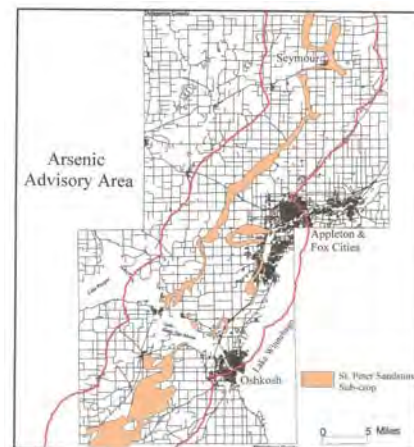
Key Facts

Groundwater represents one of the most abundant and treasured resources within Wisconsin as it is used not only for domestic consumption, but also to serve the needs of industry and agriculture, as well as tourism associated primarily with recreational fishing activities. The region is comprised of a system of five distinct groundwater aquifers which, are recharged through surface runoff or the movement of groundwater between aquifers. The numerous bedrock layers and compositions cause many variations in both the vertical and horizontal flow of this groundwater throughout the region.

According to a recent report by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Wisconsin has approximately two quadrillion (2×10^{15}) gallons, or about one-third the volume of Lake Superior, stored as groundwater. Groundwater use in Wisconsin has increased steadily overall for most use categories since 1950. Irrigation water use more than doubled between 1980 and 2000 as irrigated acreage increased. In general, groundwater use has increased within the region as urban areas continue to grow and require significant quantities of water for residential, commercial, and industrial users. The use of groundwater within the region has reached an upper end estimate of more than 170 million gallons per day (this figure soars to 253 million gallons per day if surface water sources - such as Lake Winnebago - are taken into consideration for municipal water supplies). In 1990, the Fox Cities was estimated to withdraw approximately 5.6 million gallons per day.

In general, the quality of the groundwater used for domestic purposes is relatively good throughout the region, although specific locations may have localized problems due to the geologic or aquifer characteristics. Some areas within the region are subject to certain types of natural and artificial contaminants such as arsenic, radon, total dissolved solids, nitrates, and bacteria. Many of these problems are of a highly serious nature.

For example, the WDNR has recently identified portions of the central part of the region in Winnebago, Outagamie, and Shawano Counties as an "Arsenic Advisory Area" and special casing regulations exist which call for stronger, deeper wells with extra steel casing that can reach as deep as 260 feet where necessary. Ingested arsenic is a known cause of cancer, including cancer of the skin, lungs, bladder and kidneys. It was recently determined that about 18 percent of all private wells in Outagamie and Winnebago County exceed the Federal EPA's 10 parts per billion limit which applies to all municipal water supplies!



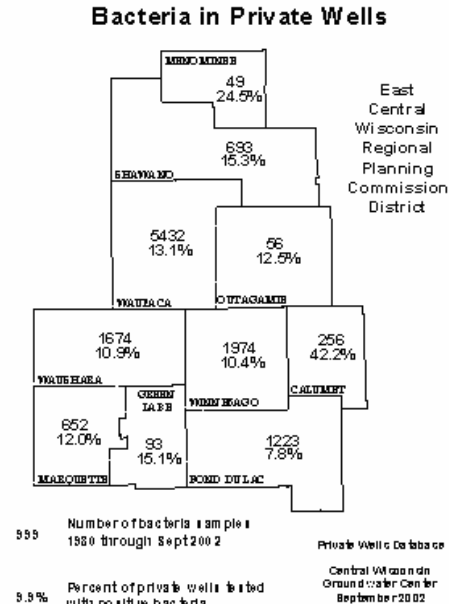
Many of the region's areas are considered to be highly susceptible to aquifer contamination based on conditions such as sandy soils, thin soils or fractured bedrock.

So What!

Groundwater resources can be significantly altered or damaged by human influence on the land. Over the years, more and more research has shown that land use activities affect groundwater quality and quantity. Some impacts occur in a relatively short period of time, while others may take years or decades to show up. These impacts fall under three general categories: quality, quantity, and surface/groundwater interactions:

- **Quantity** - While the amount of available water is not of concern immediately, the future supply is being diminished rapidly due to continued urbanization. A report produced in 1998 by the U.S. Geological Survey estimated that the deep sandstone aquifer system which serves the Fox Cities is being lowered by two feet per year, mostly as a result of increased pumpage by municipalities and industry, but also as an effect of interfering cones of depression from high capacity wells. The main recharge areas for this aquifer system lie in the western portion of the region, and in some cases, outside of the region; thereby stressing the importance of future regional development patterns and intergovernmental cooperation. Municipal and private well placement, density, and pumping rates contribute to these drawdown levels as well as to groundwater quality problems.
- **Quality** - Groundwater quality and susceptibility to contamination is of concern in numerous parts of the region due to the presence of highly fractured bedrock deposits and karst topography. Arsenic, nitrate, and bacteria

contamination negatively affect the health of individuals and therefore, may also have long term impacts on both the economy and quality of life associated with the region.



- **Surface/Groundwater Interaction** - The addition of impervious surfaces as a result of development and urbanization can negatively affect groundwater recharge as well as stream-base flow and horizontal/vertical groundwater flow. With many streams being used for recreational fishing and other recreation activities, a portion of the region's economic future (tourism) may be at risk strictly due to our desire for accommodating development.

The East Central region has the greatest extent and variety of groundwater problems within the State and as such, its residents should be concerned about the future of this resource. If concerns are not acted upon quickly and comprehensively, irreversible damage can occur to this important and necessary resource.

Current Action

Groundwater issues have become more prominent across the region and state as a whole and, as such, more efforts have been directed to assessing and dealing with problems in a proactive manner. A major component of current actions relates to the provision of information and education by entities such as the State's Groundwater Coordinating Council, Resource Conservation & Development Councils (RC&Ds), UW-Extension, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources and the Wisconsin Geologic & Natural History Survey.

More specific programs and research activities have been initiated within the region over the last few years and including, but not limited to: Calumet County groundwater testing and mapping; Fox Cities & Fond du Lac area hydrologic studies and; arsenic testing and modeling.

From a regulatory and funding perspective, new legislation has been, or is being, developed by the WDNR related to special well construction zones/requirements, municipal well-head protection, and high capacity wells. Groundwater remediation and clean up activities are also of high priority and funding has been made available in the past to assist public and private entities with such remediation projects.

Core Goals

1. To preserve and protect the quantity and quality of the region's groundwater supply.
2. To support existing state level groundwater regulations and their continued improvement.
3. To support and assist in the development of new state, regional, county, and local programs and regulations that protect

groundwater resources in a consistent manner.

4. To identify, protect and integrate aquifer recharge areas into the development patterns of the region
5. To support existing and foster new, efforts to improve multi-jurisdictional planning, assessment, and management projects for the region's aquifers.
6. To support the development and use of existing and new programs to educate landowners and decision-makers within the region on groundwater issues and solutions.
7. To assist in the coordinated development and distribution of new data, mapping, and other information pertaining to the region's groundwater resources.



WATER QUALITY, FLOODING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

FACT SHEET: NR3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Watershed management is defined as an ongoing process of integrated decision-making regarding uses and modifications of lands and waters within a geographic drainage area so as to balance diverse goals and uses for environmental resources, and to consider how their cumulative actions may affect long-term sustainability of these resources. Stormwater management is often a sub-component of any watershed-based plan that is typically carried out by individual governmental entities. Stormwater management is typically defined as addressing functions associated with planning, designing, constructing, maintaining, financing, and regulating the facilities (both constructed and natural) that collect, store, control, and/or convey storm water. Stormwater management deals with both water quantity and water quality issues.

Within the region, numerous areas are subjected to seasonal flooding. Many of these areas are located within urban environments and, to some degree, are caused by the displacement of water due to development. Examples of flooding resulting from development have been apparent in the Fox Cities over the years. Stream flows through ravines in the Village of Combined Locks, for example, have been exacerbated by the 'upstream' development that occurred in the Darboy area.

Surface water quality problems also exist within the region, but vary drastically. Many of the smaller 'headwater' streams in the northern and western portions of the region have good to excellent water quality, while the main river and lake systems (Fox River,

Wolf River & Winnebago Pool Lakes) have serious water quality problems related to sediment and nutrient loadings. These problems are often referred to as 'non-point source pollution' which stem from contaminated runoff generated by agricultural lands and urban areas. These loadings can have significant impacts on stream and lake systems.

The health of the region's sixty watersheds have been measured and monitored to varying degrees over the years and the most prominent impairments are related to elevated levels of phosphorus, sediments and toxins. For example, it is estimated that sediment loadings to Green Bay from the Fox-Wolf Basin are in excess of 165,000 tons per year, or more than 27 dump trucks per day (UW-Sea Grant, 2003)! Another example is that 55% of the phosphorus load (a common nutrient responsible for algae blooms) at the mouth of the Lower Fox River (Green Bay) originates in the 'upstream' sub-basins of the Upper Fox and Wolf Rivers (UW-Sea Grant, 2004)!

Of additional note, the topography of the East Central region is such that all surface waters eventually drain into Lake Michigan via Green Bay, with the exception of southwestern Fond du Lac County and northwestern Waushara County, which flow to the Wisconsin/Mississippi River system. The Fox-Wolf River Basin is, in fact, the largest tributary to Lake Michigan and 3rd largest to Great Lakes. Unfortunately, it is also the largest source of pollutants to Green Bay and Lake Michigan.

So What!

The water quality of the region's streams and lakes are directly linked to the economy and quality of life. Without clean water, recreation and fishing opportunities will be limited for both residents and visitors.

In the future, as development and the associated impervious (non-absorbent) surface areas increase, water quality will be negatively impacted. This in turn will influence natural system functions drastically. According to studies by the Center for Watershed Protection, as little as 10% impervious cover (streets, roofs, parking lots, etc.) within a watershed can negatively impact fish habitat, while 25% cover overloads the natural functions of the watershed and can permanently degrade stream quality. If stormwater is not managed properly, the streams and lakes will become choked with algae due to excessive nutrient inputs, or they will resemble 'chocolate milk' due to sedimentation problems. Fisheries and habitats will also become unproductive. This in turn will affect a significant sector of the tourism economy within the region.

Watershed planning and stormwater management is an expensive, but necessary, activity that addresses problems created by nearly every person and entity within the region. The future of water quality within the region is dependent on solutions at every level, from the individual to the federal government. Communities of the region must also remember that a majority of their water drains to Lake Michigan and, therefore; they must be particularly conscious of the fact that they are part of a larger scale system and larger-scale water quality problems.

Current Action

Stormwater management and watershed planning have begun to gain more attention as an environmental concern. As such, numerous actions are being taken by all levels of government to address problems.

WDNR Basin Plans and 'Partnership' Teams exist for each basin and information regarding inventories, assessments, and rankings, of individual watersheds for both surface and groundwater quality and impairments were generated as part of these efforts.

EPA Phase I & Phase II Stormwater regulations were developed and are being implemented by the WDNR through Wisconsin Administrative Codes NR 216, NR 151, and Trans401. Along with a state-level permitting process, municipalities primarily associated with the Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, and Fox Cities urbanized areas will be required to have adequate stormwater provisions and programs in place.

A number of regional efforts have also been made to control and manage stormwater runoff resulting from urbanization. Two such examples include the Garner's Creek Stormwater Utility - a watershed based utility - and the Northeastern Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium (NEWSC) which is leading efforts on consistent information and education for citizens and officials.

At the local level, many county and local level ordinances or rewrites, have occurred or are proposed to address both urban and rural stormwater issues. While individual communities have done much already along the path of stormwater management, many have done so only within the defined area of their own municipality.

Although some multi-jurisdictional watershed plans have been created, much more needs to be done in terms of linking the region's land use and development decisions with water quality and thus, creating true 'watershed plans'.

Core Goals

1. Maintain and enhance surface water quality within the region's streams, rivers, and lakes.
2. Preserve and protect the region's natural resources, and their related programs, which directly, or indirectly relate to the protection and enhancement of surface water quality.
3. Invest in, and promote, water quality management activities that are cost-effective and obtain significant, short-term and long-term improvements.
4. Achieve better integration of watershed planning concepts and existing watershed-based plans into local/county smart growth comprehensive plans.
5. Promote consistency amongst communities' and counties' stormwater management regulations and programs.
6. Improve inter-governmental coordination to reduce stormwater impacts and management costs.
7. Improve education efforts on stormwater and water quality planning issue for communities and landowners.
8. Increase water quality monitoring for streams that are, and are not, impacted by wastewater discharges.

WILDLIFE HABITAT, FORESTS, & ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

FACT SHEET: NR4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The region's ecological resources are made up of many individual, yet inter-related, aquatic (water-based) and terrestrial (land-based) features and habitats. Ecological resources include forests, woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, savannas, prairies as well as other unique habitats, sensitive areas, and their associated common and unique species of plant and animal life.

The region contains seven (of sixteen) distinct ecological landscape types. Based on a system of land classification developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), each landscape type has numerous smaller 'natural communities' defined by the presence of certain types of common and rare plant and animal species. Each natural community has different characteristics and as such, different issues associated with their management and protection. Land use impacts in particular can have significant effects on these natural community systems and can occur at a site level, or at a regional level as a result of cumulative development over time.

Within the region's remaining habitats, a total of 2,317 'known occurrences', representing 615 different species and natural community types, had been listed in 2003 by the WDNR as 'endangered' or 'threatened' within the region. The highest concentrations, in terms of both number of species types and occurrences, are located in Marquette, Waupaca and, Waushara Counties. Four of these species types, with 87 'occurrences', have been listed as federally endangered or threatened within the region.

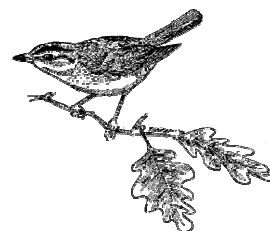
So What!

Small, individual changes in the landscape resulting from development may not necessarily impact wildlife and their respective habitats immediately. However, the cumulative impacts (many small changes over time) can have significant implication on both animal and plant communities, as well as the resources they depend on such as wetlands, stream corridors, and groundwater.

Many ecological resources are also related directly or indirectly to sectors of the regional economy. Large and small-scale commercial forestry and silvaculture remain a prominent land use and economic activity within the northern and western portions of the region, while significant areas of remaining woodlands provide ideal habitats which contribute to recreational hunting activities.

In addition to direct losses of the existing ecological resources, other threats include non-native invasive species introduction; forest fragmentation; habitat and resource mis-management, and; wildlife barrier creation resulting from new development or road construction.

Unless landscape scale ecosystem management concepts are successfully integrated into regional, county, and local level land use plans and regulations, these concerns will persist.



Current Action

No specific responsibility exists for 'ecological management' within Wisconsin, however; within the state and region, the WDNR has taken much of the lead in this arena. Coupled with Federal agency regulatory programs through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USF&W), these efforts are being directed to sustainable forestry, public ownership and management, fisheries management, endangered species, and habitat restoration. These programs often complement the many wildlife related projects which occur at the local level, mostly through volunteer efforts of sportsman's clubs and civic organizations and private land stewards.

However, many of the ecological desires held by citizens of the region conflict with those of the development community and citizen landowners when it comes to land use planning. For example, hunting is a common recreational activity which requires that safety prevail. New housing developments located in rural areas can conflict with this use of neighboring lands and, in some cases, safety can be jeopardized.

Some county and local level land use plans have not adequately addressed these types of issues and much more needs to be done to achieve a better balance between the ecological and wildlife needs with those of region's human population.

Core Goals

1. Protect the integrity and biodiversity of the region's main ecological corridors.
2. Preserve and enhance the region's remaining natural shorelines along lakes and river corridors.

3. Preserve existing quasi-public lands, or at least the ability to access and use them in the future and/or bring them into public ownership.
4. Promote the protection and enhancement of urban wildlife areas and corridors.
5. Promote additional non-consumptive, nature-based tourism (eco-tourism) development programs.
6. Create and promote more comprehensive efforts on controlling exotic and invasive species.
7. Better integrate wildlife habitat protection and enhancement with storm-water management planning activities.
8. Better emphasize the creation / maintenance of the local and regional 'ecological sense of place'.
9. Better incorporate ecological issues and opportunities associated with agricultural uses and activities.
10. Promote more coordinated planning efforts to reduce the effects of development on natural areas.
11. Promote wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement through additional public/private partnership.
12. Create and support adequate levels of programming and funding for education regarding ecological features and land use issues for elected officials and other decision-makers throughout the region.

REGIONAL OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

FACT SHEET: NR5

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

About 125,000 acres of public recreation and open space lands are available within the region (excluding local parks) to meet the needs of its existing 610,000 residents. There is also an excellent distribution of public open space throughout the region, even though the largest tracts are resource-based. All counties except Menominee, which is heavily forested, have at least 5,800 acres of regional open space.

These lands equate to about 200 acres per 1,000 residents, which is twice the standard that was adopted in the *Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan for East Central Wisconsin* in 1977. However, if the 91,000 acres of WDNR wildlife and fisheries areas, along with the 3,000 acres of federally owned lands (Horicon Marsh and Fox River National Wildlife Areas) are removed from this total, it effectively leaves only 31,000 acres to accommodate some of the most common recreational activities. This lowers the average to about 50 acres per 1,000 persons - far below the current adopted standard.

Based on the standards, and with the addition of the numerous local recreation facilities, the East Central region has a fair to ample amount of recreation opportunities for its current residents.

So What!

Regional recreation and open space areas serve many purposes, but a prime reason that many of these sites exist in public ownership is to ensure that important scenic features, natural and cultural resources, and habitat areas are preserved for the enjoyment of both

present and future generations of Wisconsin residents and visitors. With minor exception, the vast majority of available recreation/open space acreage is virtually undeveloped, providing opportunities for passive (less intensive) forms of recreation; i.e., activities such as hunting, fishing, and hiking, which typically do not seriously tax the resource base.

Many forms of active recreation (hiking, biking, soccer, etc.) occur within the region and demands are expected to increase in the future. Gaps in lands availability for such uses may be of concern in the future, but mostly at a local level. The ever-increasing mobility of the large 'baby-boomer' sector of the population, coupled with the projected addition of 50,000 residents (by 2020), will also change the types and locations of recreational activities. Recreational features have become an important amenity to those that live within the region as well as those who may move here in the future.

Although the standards indicate no measurable deficiency at current or projected levels, continued demands for public open space and recreation areas, as well as trails, will continue to occur throughout the region, particularly within and near areas of more dense population. At a time when demand is increasing, the opposite is occurring regarding funding for such facilities. Declining levels of funding from all sources will need to be overcome in order to provide and maintain existing open space and recreational opportunities much less the development of new sites and facilities.

Lastly, many of the remaining opportunities which capitalize on larger tracts of

undeveloped/natural areas, may be in jeopardy due to the high levels of rural development occurring throughout much of the region. As equally important are the regional networks which have been, or need to be, created that link individual features. Identifying and preserving these suitable sites and network linkages until the 2030 plan horizon will be critical if they are to remain as an option to server longer-term (40-50 year) needs.

Current Action

At the State level, funding continues to be available through the WDNR to assist counties and communities in the acquisition of lands for recreation and open space purpose. However, as with most programs, these funding levels have been decreasing and more burdens are being placed on county and local units of government to fund these activities.

The WDNR recently released its 'Land Legacy' report which utilized significant state-wide public input in order to identify major natural resource areas and recreation opportunities that should be considered for preservation or incorporated into recreation and open space plans by county and local units of government.

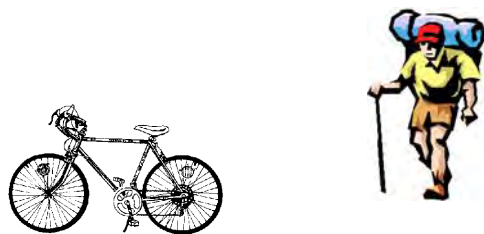
In 1977 the Commission adopted the Open Space and Recreation Plan for East Central Wisconsin. This report outlined the master plan for the development of regional park and (trail) facilities throughout the 10 county area based on a number of factors, including population distributions / projections; assessments of existing regional facilities, and; natural resource characteristics. Many of this plan's recommendations were implemented since its creation and the new Regional Plan will replace this document once completed.

County and local park/open space plans are prepared and updated regularly throughout

most of the region. These plans, however, are typically directed to locally driven needs, although some local recreation facilities draw users from extensive distances and, in some ways, may be considered 'regional' in nature, particularly those located along water features.

Core Goals

1. Preserve and protect the region's important and unique parklands, natural features and open spaces in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life within the region.
2. Create a common vision for a highly accessible regional trail network which includes both land and water features.
3. Develop creative solutions for the funding and implementation of park, recreation, and trail facilities.
4. Inform and educate the general public and elected officials on the financial and social benefits of open space and recreation.
5. Foster increased levels of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination with regard to the planning for, and protection of, regional and local natural areas, open spaces, and trail networks.



REGIONAL CHARACTER & AESTHETICS

FACT SHEET: NR6

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The region has a variety of resources which contribute to its aesthetic or 'scenic' character. Some of the most prominent features include the bluffs of the Niagara Escarpment in Calumet and Fond du Lac Counties; the woodlands of the more northern Menominee and Shawano Counties, and the glacial moraines located in western Waushara County. Scenic resources are comprised of many natural and man-made features and can be difficult to define due to the subjectiveness of the term. For the most part, aesthetic resources can be divided into two major categories: rural character and urban design.

Rural character is typically comprised of topography, farmlands, woodlands, wetlands, prairie, and other open spaces. Many of the region's natural resources or open spaces are large enough to be considered 'regionally significant'. As such, they contribute to the overall aesthetics of both the region and their associated communities.

Urban design relates to aspects of urban development such as tree planting, signage, neighborhood density and design, street patterns, building setbacks, architectural style, and construction materials. These factors contribute to the overall feeling and uniqueness, or livability, of an urban community or neighborhood.

Of mutual concern to both rural and urban areas are those types of man-made facilities which, in some person's eyes, result in the blight of the landscape. These include structures such as telecommunication towers,

wind power generation facilities, and billboards.

Substantial amounts of both urban and rural growth have occurred throughout the region in the last several decades. The land uses, densities, locations, and styles of this development have noticeably begun to affect the 'scenic resources' of the region. Debates on such issues as rural subdivision development, 'big box' retail stores, strip commercial development, housing designs, and billboards have become more commonplace in the region.

So What!

Lands with high environmental or aesthetic qualities have historically been those most sought after for homesites and development. The region is rich with unique glacial and geologic features that have been, and continue to be, threatened by development. The region also has extensive surface water and shoreline resources which have been prime areas for residential or seasonal development. These areas are an important part of the region's economy and quality of life.

At a regional level, the patterns and spacing of development and preserved agricultural and natural areas play a large role in defining its character. Many highway corridors contain valuable natural and visual resources, which leave positive impressions on those visiting the region or passing through. Although much value is placed on the region's 'scenic resources' it is difficult to plan for them in a local context as many traverse the man-made political boundaries of

municipalities and counties. Billboards, cellular communication towers, strip commercial development and monotonous, cookie cutter houses and subdivisions persist in many communities and along rural highways and affect the overall aesthetic qualities of the region. This type of development can often lead to a sense of 'nowhereness'.

Urban design issues are commonly addressed at the local level, primarily by larger communities that contain significantly sized downtowns or other historic resources. Design aspects of newly developing areas however, have not been considered to a great degree in most areas. Residential developments alone have many components which affect community character. Street and road widths, lot size, building setbacks and orientation are all design features which determine whether or not livable, healthy neighborhoods are created. Developments that are more pedestrian friendly and aesthetically pleasing can translate into healthier (and wealthier) communities that have a distinct 'sense of place'.

Current Action

Few examples exist of actions taken to plan for, protect, or enhance community character or that of the region. Several communities have design standards or guidelines developed and implemented at the local level, however; broader, landscape scale efforts have not been initiated.

Most of the land use or facility types which have the most impact on scenic resources are regulated at the local level with the exception of those that are precluded by federal and state laws. For instance, the regulation and siting of telecommunication facilities are typically handled at the local level, but under strict guidance from the FAA and FCC. Billboards can also be regulated at a local level; however several billboard related

provisions are being debated at both the federal and state level and may restrict the ability of communities to do so.

Some initiative however, has begun at the national level on this subject. In 2002, the Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee recommended passage of Senate Bill 975, the Community Character Act which would authorize up to \$50 million per year in grants to state, tribal and local governments to help them update and improve their land use plans. Among the criteria for awarding grants is that the proposed plans "...to the maximum extent practicable...enhance community character and conserve historic, scenic, natural and cultural resources."

Statewide efforts include the new WDNR Land Legacy program which has identified statewide features of concern for either environmental or aesthetic reasons. Additionally, the Scenic Wisconsin Chapter of the nation-wide organization, Scenic America, was formed to build awareness and promote actions by the state and communities to limit impacts on scenic resources.

Core Goals

1. To protect and improve the aesthetic qualities and features of the region and its communities while balancing the needs of private industry, government, and the general public.

Natural Resources Key Findings

Vision for Natural Resources

"In 2030, the importance of natural resources, including their link to the regional economy, quality of life, and cost effective service provision is recognized. Natural resource planning is sustainable, consistent and coordinated. The region's ecological resources are planned for and protected; there is a strong sense of ecological place. The Winnebago Pool Lakes and the Fox/Wolf River systems are recognized as the backbone of the region's ecological resources. Geologic resources that are significant from an aesthetic, scientific, cultural, historic, educational, or commercial extraction purpose, have been identified and inventoried, and are preserved and protected to meet the needs of the region. The region has proactively addressed public access, recreation, and trail facilities in order to meet the needs of its citizens; enhance the quality of life and environment; realize tax savings and other economic benefits; and to maintain and improve the region's tourism economy. The region is comprised of well-defined urban and rural spaces, which improve the individual's perception of 'sense of place', while communities within the region have maintained their individual character. Within the region, surface water resources are planned for in a watershed-based manner that embraces and encourages the use of 'green infrastructure' concepts. The proactive protection of natural features not only contributes to water quality, but also to the long term sustainability and economic benefit of the region".

Geologic Resources & Non-Metallic Mining

"The East Central region has inventoried and identified the significant geologic resources which are to be preserved and protected for aesthetic, scientific, cultural, historic, educational, and commercial extraction purposes. Local and county plans adequately and realistically address the future local and sub-regional needs for non-metallic minerals, while balancing the concerns of its citizenry. Plans incorporate non-metallic mining uses as transitional land uses – one that is regarded as critical to the future economic development of the region and which may add value to the site, once reclaimed. Mining sites are operated and managed in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner, with long-term reclamation of sites integrated into the planned needs of the community and region. Local plans clearly identify existing sites, expansion areas, and future marketable deposits so as to reduce future conflicts in rural and urbanizing areas. The access to these resources has been preserved and enhanced to aid in their removal and transport within, and outside of, the region. Decisions regarding the siting of new mines, or expansion of existing sites, are: 1) sensitive to the environment; 2) more uniform throughout the region, and; 3) based upon factual and objective information. This vision was achieved through improved intergovernmental coordination, communication, and education of local officials, citizens, and the mining industry".

Groundwater Resources

"The groundwater resources of the region are managed, planned for, preserved and/or enhanced to meet the current and future needs of its citizens and environment"

Water Quality & Watershed Management

"In the east central region surface water resources are planned for in a comprehensive, watershed-based manner that embraces and encourages the use of 'green infrastructure' concepts. This has been achieved by improving intergovernmental cooperation, creating more uniform and cost-effective programs for water resource management, which include the proactive protection of natural features that not only contribute to water quality, but also to the long-term sustainability and economic benefit of the region. This occurs through a comprehensive and targeted educational strategy that emphasizes 1) local responsibility and investment; 2) the need to look at the whole picture and not just special or individual interests when making decisions related to water quality, and; 3) the need for improved and maintained monitoring programs in order to gauge water quality changes over time".

Ecological Resources

"The East Central region plans for and protects its ecological resources through the implementation of balanced regional land use concepts such as corridors and buffers, for both private and public lands. The integrity of the region's biodiversity and the preservation of unique natural areas and features are addressed from a natural systems standpoint and are closely linked to the region's economy and quality of life. The consistent incorporation of planned green spaces and natural areas, including agricultural lands, by the region's counties and communities serve the needs for wildlife and recreation, as well as, contribute to the region's ecological sense of place. The Winnebago Pool Lakes and the Fox/Wolf River systems are recognized as the backbone of the region's ecological resources and are planned for and managed through coordinated efforts, using incentives wherever possible".

Open Space & Recreation

"The East Central region proactively addresses future public access, recreation, open space, and trail facilities in order to meet the needs of its' citizens; enhance the quality of life and environment; realize tax savings and other economic benefits through the usage of natural systems (natural capital), and maintain and improve the region's tourism economy. Future public and private open space and trails will focus on the physical connectivity of the existing natural resource base and the expansion of local and regional trail links. The region's open space and recreation system will be enhanced through continued education; the application of consistent recreation standards; the promotion of coordinated planning; the recognition for local responsibility in providing such facilities; the maintenance of existing funding sources, and; the application of creative financing techniques."

Landscape Character & Aesthetics

"The region is comprised of well-defined urban and rural spaces which improve the individual's perception of 'sense of place'. Existing rural hamlets, towns, villages, and cities have individually addressed their own community character assets and needs, while also considering the effects of development on the region that surrounds them. Regional and local plans consistently address, and balance, issues associated with the (perceived) need and desire to have growth, and the placement of utilities, communication facilities, and billboards which contribute to the 'visual clutter' along its highways and byways".

Match / Mismatch Between Envisioned and Probable Future

Geological Resources

- Unique geologic sites continue to attract development, yet these distinctive resources are highly appreciated for their scenic value;
- Currently, more materials are being used than sites are being approved;
- Mining sites must be strategically located to minimize material costs yet continued rural development near urbanizing areas cause more conflicts;
- The reclamation of quarry sites is based on zoning and not on longer term comprehensive land use plans, which communities are investing in;
- Mining sites are viewed as nuisances yet they provide materials necessary to nearly every resident in the region;
- Efforts have been made to allow for registering properties with significant mineral deposits, yet not many have taken advantage of this program;
- Many communities wish to accommodate development, but they also wish to determine mining activities and therefore create undue pressures on other communities within the region for this resource;
- Public perceptions about non-metallic mining sites and operations are typically negative and limited opportunities are given to meet educational needs;
- Information and data regarding potential mining sites is limited and additional mapping, assessments, and analyses need to occur for a community to make informed decisions.

Groundwater Resources

- Rural development continues to occur within much of the region regardless of the numerous, localized groundwater quality problems;
- Development continues at a rapid pace within the region's urban areas, yet communities have not acknowledged the regional impacts on the deep sandstone aquifer;
- Urbanization is paving over valuable groundwater recharge areas, yet no significant information exists to inform communities of where these areas are, and what impacts development will have on them;
- Local and county plans have not adequately acknowledged the regional nature of groundwater resources and the need for coordinated management and decision-making;
- Many problems exist in rural areas with respect to groundwater quality or quantity, yet few new homeowners seem to know of these problems or their associated health risks;

Water Quality & Watershed Management

- Numerous requirements are in place for controlling non-point source pollution resulting from construction and development, however, limited enforcement is in place to effectively implement practices.
- Many communities have embarked on stormwater planning efforts, yet little communication or coordination exists between those in the same drainage areas;
- Many environmental resources which provide for natural stormwater management continue to be developed or impacted by development rather than being preserved or integrated into developments;

- Scientific information continues to be generated regarding the effects of development on water quality, yet few communities assess these impacts (and alternatives) as part of their land use planning activities;
- Wetlands have been proven to be an integral part of the natural stormwater management system, yet permits continued to be issued on a regular basis to accommodate development activities.

Ecological Resources

- High value is placed on developing adjacent to public natural and wildlife areas, yet this development negatively affects the value of the protected resource;
- Wildlife resources are dependent on habitats that are comprised of interconnected corridors however; urban, rural, and transportation related developments continue to divide and fragment these networks;
- Undeveloped stream and lake properties are a high value commodity from a real estate perspective, but in many cases may have more value from a community perspective in terms of aesthetics, recreation, water quality, and habitat.
- Numerous, larger tracts of remaining habitat are threatened by development due to the lack of funding or organized grassroots (and government supported) initiatives.
- Biodiversity of the region's resources are threatened by new development and the introduction of non-native (exotic) species.

Open Space & Recreation

- The numerous economic and social benefits of trail systems, including that of alternative transportation, have been well document for years, yet many communities have not fully embraced the creation of trail systems through the development process;
- Rural development continues without much regard to well ingrained rural recreational activities such as snowmobiling and hunting;
- Park and recreation lands are in high use and demand throughout much of the region, however; funding levels for land acquisition and development have declined in recent years;
- Open space is often considered to be a high value amenity to rural and urban residents, yet more efforts are placed on accommodating development rather than directing it in a manner which preserves, protects, or enhances this valued resource;

Landscape Character & Aesthetics

- New highway and interchange plans are typically developed years in advance of construction, yet communities are slow to react in terms of setting standards and guidelines which address the overall character and design of these areas;
- Rural character is typically viewed as being an important resource, however; development continues at a rapid pace on many of the unique and scenic resources of the region;
- Urban redevelopment and revitalization has occurred in many communities, but more needs to be done to spur the use of brownfields rather than greenfields to accommodate new development;

- Major urban areas continue to expand and will, someday, connect in a seamless non-descript corridor of urbanization rather than being well defined and separated by multi-purpose greenbelts;
- 'Big Box' and strip development pressures continue to exist within the region, yet with an aging population, more pedestrian oriented communities and mixed uses will be needed in the future;
- Cellular communication and wind energy facility demands are steadily increasing, yet no one seems to agree on where these facilities should be located;

Core Goals

Fact Sheet 1: Geological Resources and Non-Metallic Mining

1. Preserve and protect unique geologic sites within the region for aesthetic, cultural/historic, scientific, and educational purposes.
2. Preserve and protect mineral resources within the region to meet projected short and long-term needs.
3. Emphasize non-metallic mining activities as a 'transitional' and 'interim' use of the land and achieve maximum benefits from the reclamation of these sites.
4. Develop and support county and local plans which support and emphasize the regional context associated with non-metallic mining activities and needs.
5. Promote the regulation and operation of non-metallic mining in a manner which balances the needs of the region, minimizes the effects on the environment, and maximizes compatibility with nearby land uses.
6. Collect, develop and distribute regional level information to assist counties and communities on non-metallic mining issues.
7. Achieve better communication and intergovernmental coordination / cooperation amongst local officials, citizens, and operators on non-metallic mining issues.
8. Educate the region's local officials and citizens on the distribution of, access to, uses of and the extraction process of non-metallic mineral resources.

Fact Sheet 2: Do You Know What You're Drinking?

1. Preserve and protect the quantity and quality of the region's groundwater supply.
2. Support existing state level groundwater regulations and their continued improvement.
3. Support and assist in the development of new state, regional, county, and local programs and regulations that protect groundwater resources in a consistent manner.
4. Identify, protect and integrate aquifer recharge areas into the development patterns of the region.
5. Support existing and foster new, efforts to improve multi-jurisdictional planning, assessment, and management projects for the region's aquifers.
6. Support the development and use of existing and new programs to educate landowners and decision-makers within the region on groundwater issues and solutions.
7. Assist in the coordinated development and distribution of new data, mapping, and other information pertaining to the region's groundwater resources.

Fact Sheet 3: Water Quality, Flooding and Watershed Management

1. Maintain and enhance surface water quality within the region's streams, rivers, and lakes.
2. Preserve and protect the region's natural resources, and their related programs, which directly, or indirectly relate to the protection and enhancement of surface water quality.
3. Invest in, and promote, water quality management activities that are cost-effective and obtain significant, short-term and long-term improvements.
4. Achieve better integration of watershed planning concepts and existing watershed-based plans into local/county smart growth comprehensive plans.
5. Promote consistency amongst communities' and counties' stormwater management regulations and programs.
6. Improve inter-governmental coordination to reduce stormwater impacts and management costs.
7. Improve education efforts on stormwater and water quality planning issue for communities and landowners.
8. Increase water quality monitoring for streams that are, and are not, impacted by wastewater discharges.

Fact Sheet 4: Wildlife Habitat, Forests, & Ecological Resources

1. Protect the integrity and biodiversity of the region's main ecological corridors.
2. Preserve and enhance the region's remaining natural shorelines along lakes and river corridors.
3. Preserve existing quasi-public lands, or at least the ability to access and use them in the future and/or bring them into public ownership.
4. Promote the protection and enhancement of urban wildlife areas and corridors.
5. Promote additional non-consumptive, nature-based tourism (eco-tourism) development programs.
6. Create and promote more comprehensive efforts on controlling exotic and invasive species.
7. Better integrate wildlife habitat protection and enhancement with stormwater management planning activities.
8. Better emphasize the creation / maintenance of the local and regional 'ecological sense of place'.
9. Better incorporate ecological issues and opportunities associated with agricultural uses and activities.
10. Promote more coordinated planning efforts to reduce the effects of development on natural areas.
11. Promote wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement through additional public/private partnership.
12. Create and support adequate levels of programming and funding for education regarding ecological features and land use issues for elected officials and other decision-makers throughout the region.

Fact Sheet 5: Regional Open Space and Recreation

1. Preserve and protect the region's important and unique parklands, natural features and open spaces in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life within the region.
2. Create a common vision for a highly accessible regional trail network which includes both land and water features.
3. Develop creative solutions for the funding and implementation of park, recreation, and trail facilities.
4. Inform and educate the general public and elected officials on the financial and social benefits of open space and recreation.
5. Foster increased levels of intergovernmental cooperation and coordination with regard to the planning for, and protection of, regional and local natural areas, open spaces, and trail networks.

Fact Sheet 6: Regional Character and Aesthetics

Protect and improve the aesthetic qualities and features of the region and its communities while balancing the needs of private industry, government, and the general public.

Conclusion

The vision, major issues and core goals will be carried forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies.

CHAPTER 10: CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Our historical and cultural resources are at the very core of our being. They represent what we value from our past, what we appreciate now, and what we intend to preserve for our future. In Milestone Report #1, we identified a number of cultural resource issues.

This chapter examines those issues in detail, presents a regional vision for cultural resources, and outlines core goals. The chapter considers how public and private interests can cooperate to protect, preserve and enhance our cultural resource base, and how the cultural resource element may interact with, and relate to, the other elements of the regional plan. Five fact sheets explore the issues that will be addressed in the regional plan.

Our region of the state has a very diverse, ethnically rich, cultural history that is evident in our architecture, in how we make our livelihood, and in our cultural festivals. The existence of strong cultural resources has a tremendous impact on how we view the attractiveness of where we live, and on our perceived quality of life.

People are attracted to a region that can offer cultural amenities. The wonderful classical architecture of the Lawrence Campus Main Hall and the Lawrence Chapel contribute to the unique character of Appleton. The great diversity of our ethnic architecture, and the influences of building style/material selections that represent our ethnic heritage, are very wonderfully preserved in the churches and downtowns of communities like, Menasha, Neenah, Chilton, Ripon and Fond du Lac. Our agricultural background is reflected in rustic, rural landscapes, which gracefully incorporate scenic barn architecture. These barns and farmsteads represent the many ethnic building types and styles that settlers brought with them from their homelands.

Our historical traditions relating to the paper industry, the early generation of electricity, cheese and sausage making, and hunting and trapping have made these and other vocations an integral part of our employment work-force today. The people who settled in our region brought with them skills, which they continued to practice here, and this has had implications for our regional economy, which is still strong in many of these same fields today. The region has the world's greatest concentration of paper manufacturers, a large number of electrical equipment suppliers, and is known for its quality cheese production, and an active hunting and sport fishing tourism industry. These are just a few of the influences these cultural traditions have had on the region's employment patterns.

The Lawrence Chapel, the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, and the Weidner Center in Green Bay, which serves our region, all provide venues for cultural entertainment, and are most certainly very valuable assets to the region. Institutions like the Paine Art Center & Arboretum, the Hearthstone House, the Heidel House, Oshkosh Public Museum and the Bergstrom-Mahler Paperweight museum all contribute to the diversity of unique cultural experiences. The ability to attract new economic development is enhanced by the cultural opportunities that a community or a region can offer. Our cultural amenities help to attract new businesses to the region.

Northeast Wisconsin is notorious for knowing how to celebrate with ethnic festivals. There are cultural events ranging in variety from Polka festivals and Brat Fests, to traditional Native American POW Wows and Hmong dance programs. These events are sponsored by groups that are proud of their cultural heritage and work to keep it alive through public celebrations. In addition to celebrating our cultural diversity, these events often become economic generators for the local and regional economy. Northeast Wisconsin also has a rich history of exploration that includes historically famous names such as Jean Nicolet who began exploration of the region when he landed here in 1634, and Fr. Marquette and Joliet who discovered the Fox River – Wisconsin River route to the Mississippi River. These explorers, and others that followed, have given the region a historical legacy that today has strengthened our economy by giving it a heritage tourism dimension.

The region also has interest-focused economic generators such as the world famous EAA, the Experimental Aircraft Association located in Oshkosh, which sponsors the annual fly in event and the Air Venture Museum all year round. The Hearst Museum in Appleton focuses on the early development of electricity in the nation and our area's connection to Thomas Edison. The Bergstrom-Mahler Museum in Neenah is a specialized art museum with a renowned glass paperweight collection. The International Paper Hall of Fame in Appleton recounts the region's proud history of producing paper. The Oshkosh Public Museum and the Paine Art Center and Arboretum are located in the mansions of former lumber barons, an industry which contributed greatly to the region's economic prosperity. The Harry Houdini Museum has a focus on all things associated with magic and this world famous magician who grew up in Appleton. High Cliff State Park draws persons interested in prehistoric effigy mounds and the history of Chief Red Bird, a respected Native American leader. All of these interest-focused cultural resources, when taken collectively, make significant financial contributions to our regional tourism economy and provide recreation for area residents.

Tourism is the second largest part of the Wisconsin economy and also the fastest growing. These cultural resources and the natural resources we possess are the underpinnings of the tourism economy in Northeast Wisconsin and they need to be protected and enhanced if we are to remain economically healthy.

Cooperation

The cultural resources of our region are impacted by the actions of both public and private organizations, and at several different levels of government. Consequently, a Technical Advisory Committee was formed with invitations being extended to the many interested parties that are involved in historic and cultural resource preservation in Northeast Wisconsin. Some of these individuals are volunteers who serve their communities by fostering the protection of cultural resources, while others are public professionals who administer the state and local regulations, and still others are private professionals who can offer expertise and assistance to volunteers.

Two committee volunteers were invited from each county of the region to assure a good geographic representation. In addition, one of the two individuals was drawn from a small, rural area community and the other from a larger community. This assured a good mix of large and small community experience. Actual committee members represented a very diverse range of backgrounds which included the following:

- Two members with an academic background: an anthropologist and an archaeologist.
- Several historic preservation advocates, who are citizen volunteers, including: a small community mayor, local historical society members, and historic preservation commission members.
- Two main street program directors.
- Three Native American tribal representatives.
- A county zoning administrator.
- A representative of the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Most committee members agreed that local historic preservation commission members and local historical society volunteers could benefit from increased cooperation between themselves and local zoning administrators, State Historical Society staff, and federal officials from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

A lack of coordination and regular interaction between grass roots, volunteer organizations, regional area public and private professionals, elected officials, academic experts, and state and federal resource persons was cited by the committee as one of the primary areas where improvements could be made. Representatives of these diverse groups are certainly very willing to cooperate, but felt that what they lacked was regular programmed opportunities where this interaction and resource sharing could take place.

Statement of Interaction with Other Planning Elements

The cultural resources element of the regional plan interacts with other plan elements in a number of ways. Protection and enhancement of our cultural resources can be integrated into successful economic development initiatives, creative affordable housing programs, as well as into making sound land use decisions. The partnership between cultural resources and these other related elements can yield stronger and more attractive solutions. What follows is a short discussion of how each regional planning element takes account of cultural resource considerations to enhance quality of life in the region.

Economic Development

Perhaps the most obvious interaction between economic development and cultural resources is the tremendous opportunity that beautiful old architectural buildings offer for redevelopment into high quality retail commercial and office space. A commercial district that retains a comfortable feel and a unique character can create a sense of place that is not often found in newer developments. In many cases, funds may be available from Wisconsin's Department of Commerce and other economic development programs as an incentive for renovation of an abandoned or vacant historic building as blight mitigation. Historic preservation and renovation projects can take advantage of tax credits available from the state and federal government, which can make redevelopment more attractive and financially feasible. When a historic district is adopted it helps to keep property values high which generates more tax base for the community and helps to keep residential taxes in check.

Residential projects can also benefit from the same type of historic preservation tax credits and incentives, which can play an important role in the making a restored or renovated building

both affordable to residents, and profitable for the developer. Preservation of good architecture will reinforce the value of a historic neighborhood and help to keep property values strong.

Another way that cultural resource preservation can support a community's local economy is the tremendous economic boost that heritage tourism can provide. Tourism is the second largest economic generator in Wisconsin's economy. Tourist areas must provide a setting that will attract visitors. Preservation easements and historic districts provide protections for buildings, archaeological sites and natural and cultural landscapes, which are important to maintaining an attractive environment. Cultural resources such as the many landmark buildings we have in the region, the Native American effigy mounds in our parks, and the Niagara escarpment landform, all are attractions that draw visitors. The 150 plus year old historic Fox River locks heritage corridor adds a water dimension to the tourism of the region. The many lakes and rivers in the region also contribute to sport fishing tourism and recreational boating. In addition, the region has a history associated with experimental flight which has now grown into the multi-million dollar Experimental Air Association annual Fly-In event. The region's proud heritage as the only publicly held football franchise in the nation, the Green Bay Packers, is also a major cultural icon in our regional economy.

Housing

Older neighborhoods with houses representing a certain period style, or an ethnic construction type, often offer the best opportunities for low income housing that can be rehabilitated using community fix-up program grants. These repairs and renovations help to keep the cultural heritage of a neighborhood intact. Similarly, abandoned historic industrial buildings, old school buildings, etc. can be preserved as adaptive reuse projects, which provide attractive and affordable housing for the community. Design guidelines may be useful in helping whole districts retain their original character so that they can attract developer investment. Much of the single-family and multi-family housing need may be met by analyzing the older housing stock and rehabilitating it. In addition, it is often less expensive to rehabilitate existing homes than to build new ones.

A prime example is the Omro School building where a neighborhood's cultural resource was rehabbed into housing and became a part of this small community's economic development. Similarly in Appleton, the Historic Fox River Mills, a national register property, and a significant part of the valley's paper industry heritage, was converted from a vacant industrial building to some very attractive high end condominiums, which are interspersed with low income apartment units. The \$13 million complex has a waiting list for new residents and is a significant addition to the tax base of the Appleton Riverfront Redevelopment TIF district.

Natural Resources

Cultural resources are often the major focus of a local, county, or state park. Quite a number of parks in our region contain Native American effigy mounds, archaeological sites, or, they commemorate a historic event. Some of the most notable include: the effigy mounds at High Cliff State Park in Calumet County which overlook Lake Winnebago and Waushara County's Whistler Mounds Park where a variety of ceremonial mounds are interpreted as a part of a recreational open space. Appleton's Vulcan/Edison Heritage Park represents the first place in the world where an Edison dynamo was turned by water power to generate electricity for a

factory and a home. The historic landmark, Grignon Mansion in Kaukauna, represents the early trader/trapper heritage of the Fox River Valley, which followed closely on the heels of the 17th century explorers of this region. The Native American cultural heritage is well represented by cultural museums on tribal lands in Shawano and Oneida counties and in exhibits at the Neville Museum in Green Bay, which serves our region. Historic events like the Treaty of the Cedars are now commemorated by small wayside parks with interpretive markers. The Kankaput recreational trail is named after a Stockbridge-Munsee Native American who was decorated by George Washington for his service in the Revolutionary War of 1776, before he moved to our region.

Natural resources such as the remnant pine forests are reminders of the extensive forests that once covered Wisconsin and fueled our lumber industry history for Oshkosh and many other northern communities.

Our abundance of great sport fishing and hunting today is an extension of the hunting fishing and trapping history of our past ancestors. We have managed to protect these natural resources and today they are an important element of our tourism economy.

The Historic Fox River Locks system, which is being transferred to a state authority will be managed for the use of boaters and fisherman as a working museum and is a wonderful recreational amenity. The adjoining lands and lock tender houses will become a part of the Fox River Heritage Corridor Parkway, which will be a major recreational asset for local communities, and will provide unprecedented public access to the water.

Transportation/Land Use

The committee recognized the importance of ensuring that the impact of expanded transportation corridors and new land use development patterns on our historical and cultural resources is minimized. They recognized that sensitivity must be shown for historic buildings, historic markers and other cultural resources as growth occurs. The integrity and identity of a community is dependent upon the preservation of the historic character and unique features of that community. In addition to maintaining a community's cultural heritage and distinctive character, cultural resource preservation can lead to tangible economic benefits through increased tourism and the ability to attract convention groups.

The cultural identity of a historic neighborhood can easily be threatened by a street widening project, which would take down large trees that are integral to its aesthetics. Transportation routing decisions should make this a serious consideration. Land use decisions for downtown redevelopment and new peripheral growth into rural areas need to be sensitive to the cultural identity of historic downtowns and our rural character landscape.

Agriculture

Wisconsin's license plates promote the state as "America's Dairyland", celebrating our proud agricultural heritage, which we have embraced since it became the predominant use over the past 150 years. The picturesque rural scene is that of a red barn, a traditional farmstead home set among rolling fields, which are dotted with dairy cows and rows of crops that stretch off into the distance to where a wood lot stands. With the trend toward larger farm operations and the

decline of the family farm, this pastoral landscape, which is a part of our cultural heritage, is threatened. Architecturally significant or historically important barns are being identified and assistance with restoring them is being provided by a program called "Barn Again".

Community and Public Facilities

Often public buildings, particularly older buildings, such as city or town halls, county courthouses, schools, water treatment plants, fire stations, etc. are architecturally significant landmarks in a community and are an important part of the community's image of itself. Even when these buildings have outgrown their original use, they are often converted into a community center, senior center or some other productive use because of the community's attachment to them. These longstanding structures, which are usually aesthetically pleasing, give the community a "sense of place" that residents identify with.

Vision Statement for Cultural Resources

To facilitate the development of a vision statement for cultural resources the committee was asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?", and "What would you like to see created in the region?" From the discussion that followed the committee developed the following vision statement.

"In the year 2030, the region is recognized as a leader in the state for preservation of its cultural resources. It provides public access to resource protection tools and the political advocacy necessary to ensure protection for, and appreciation of, our diverse ethnic heritage, both historic and prehistoric."

Issues / Opportunities

The committee identified and discussed many cultural resource related issues, which fell into five broad categories: preservation of indigenous and ethnic cultural heritage, access to cultural resource protection tools, educational opportunities, communication and cooperation, and historic building inventories.

Preservation of Indigenous and Ethnic Cultural Heritage

The committee felt that one of the great strengths of our cultural heritage is its ethnic diversity. This diversity ranges from our prehistoric archaeological finds of early indigenous cultures, to Native American cultures, to ethnic groups that immigrated to the region within the past few hundred years including: Europeans, African Americans, Hispanics, and more recently Hmong refugees, etc. It is this diverse mix of cultures that contributes to the richness of our architecture, our celebrations, and our food and music. The committee felt it was important that the regional plan explore ways that could help ensure that ethnic traditions are passed successfully from one generation to the next avoiding generational loss.

Access to Cultural Resource Protection Tools

The committee concluded that resource protection tools exist and are available to those who have need of them, but stressed that making them easier to find and matching them with existing needs was a key issue. Many volunteers are unfamiliar with what is available, where to find it, and whether their project meets eligibility requirements. The time consuming complexity of the search for support tools often leads to frustration. Any improvement that could be made to identify all potential funding and staff support resources, and consolidate them in a readily accessible location, would help to simplify the process.

Educational Opportunities

With every election new decision-makers, who may not be knowledgeable with regard to the value of cultural resources, are elected. There is a need to provide educational information. There are many different constituent groups that need to be served, and the information must be delivered at periodic intervals determined by turn-over in these groups. The recipients may include persons and organizations such as historic preservation committee members, planning commission members, alderman and alderwomen, mayors, county supervisors and other elected officials. Other possible beneficiaries of educational programs could include zoning administrators, new home owners, and school children. As each new generation of children and young adults grow up we cannot assume that they will have an appreciation for our cultural resources unless they have had some exposure to them, perhaps through the school curriculum.

Communication and Cooperation

The cultural resource committee noted that although many organizations and individuals share an interest in cultural resource protection and enhancement, and are perfectly willing to support each other, there are not many opportunities for interaction and sharing of experiences. The committee felt this was an area where coordination and interaction could be increased with real benefits to all involved. More frequent and closer relationships could lead to greater understanding of each others needs and concerns, as well as serving to energize each other with new ideas.

Historic Building and Archaeological Site Inventories

One of the primary functions of the Wisconsin Historical Society is to continue to develop historic building and archaeological inventories. Documenting a community's or a region's cultural heritage strengthens the ability to protect important cultural resources as new development occurs. These resources contribute to the attractiveness of a community and its ability to attract new businesses, industries and tourism. The Wisconsin State Historical Society has developed an ever-growing data base called WisARHD which affords licensed users on-line access to these inventories and records.

Preservation of Indigenous and Ethnic Cultural Heritage

FACT SHEET: CR1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

With the passing of each successive generation, the cultural heritage of our region is diluted, if it is not passed successfully to the next generation. This is as true for the Native American indigenous populations, as it is for the wave of European immigrants that swept across Wisconsin after the 1840's, and for the more recent arrivals, the Hispanic and Hmong immigrant groups.

What makes Wisconsin interesting and a good destination for tourism are our cultural influences. Our "Badger State" nick name is a reflection of our early Welsh mining heritage. The archaeological vestiges of early settlements, such as the effigy mounds found at High Cliff Park and the Whistler Mounds in Hancock, remain as reminders of past cultures, and serve as attractions for cultural tourism. Over the last half century a revival of Native American cultural traditions has taken place and given birth to area Native American celebrations, festivals and cultural museums in Keshena, as well as on the Oneida tribal lands. The Tribal Nation status also makes possible the gaming and resort casino economy that contributes so much to our regional economy. Many of our city and county names are a reflection of the Indian names as established by French and English Traders. Names like Manitowoc, Outagamie Co., Lake Winnebago, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Calumet and the Fox River are pervasive in our everyday experience.

The various regional, European cultural influences are also well represented in things we take for granted. Western Europe has a wide range of influences from early French

trappers and traders, to the business and mercantile background of the New England settlers, which followed. Significant Irish and Scottish craftsmen and laborers are known for their beautiful stonework on projects like Northeast Wisconsin's Lock system and numerous churches. Northern Europe is well represented by the German, Dutch, Polish and Belgium communities located throughout our region. The Southern European and Eastern European influences are provided by people, who came from Italian, Swiss, Greek, and Czech and, various Slavic backgrounds.

Much of our popular culture, such as the Green Bay Packer "cheese-head" reference, comes from our strong, cheese making, and dairy focused culture. Similarly, who can deny the power of the beer and brat culture in Wisconsin, or the popularity of Pizza, with double cheese, of course. Where else in the US would the Legislature consider making "polka" the official state music? Whatever else you think about these regional icons of Northeast Wisconsin, they do make us an interesting and enjoyable place to visit, strengthening our cultural tourism economy.

As the face of our region continues to evolve with a larger African American population, a growing Hispanic population and the Hmong immigration, our cultural heritage grows ever more diverse.

So What!

Why is it important to retain our culturally diverse heritage? Primarily there are two reasons why this is important. One is economic, and the second is value oriented.

Economic Reasons: Tourism is the second biggest economy in the state and it continues to play an ever expanding role in our regional economy. Local economies like Manitowoc and Sheboygan promote themselves using their maritime heritage and ethnic foods. Native American effigy mounds help to draw visitors to the region. Colorful tribal performances and quality museum displays have always enhanced tourism attraction efforts. Heritage tourism destinations like the Grignon House in Kaukauna, the Hearthstone House in Appleton and the Octagon House in Fond du Lac, help to reinforce other factors, which cause tourism to thrive in the region. The restoration of the historic Fox River Locks system will be an economic generator and provide a great recreational asset for the adjoining communities.

Value Oriented Reasons: Many families have an interest in their cultural roots. Relating to the experiences of immigrant forbearers gives families a sense of belonging and social purpose, which helps to reinforce community values. Having an attractive downtown with beautifully restored landmark buildings provides a sense of place and helps to maintain the stability and property values of adjacent neighborhoods. Our cultural heritage gives us a sense of continuity and social responsibility that are important to maintaining a strong quality of life in our local communities and our region.

Current Action

Local historic preservation organizations, boards of directors and Landmark commissions have sponsored local historical and cultural events to keep the history alive with subsequent generations. Historical monuments and interpretive signage also reinforce the memory of important events and people, which shaped the communities growth. Cultural events and celebrations also carry on ethnic traditions from one generation to the next. Oral histories are yet another way to preserve and transfer cultural experiences to the young.

Core Goals

Continue to enhance the preservation of indigenous and ethnic heritage cultures in the region.

1. Find ways to support the work of local/regional historic preservation organizations, boards and landmark preservation commissions.
2. Support ethnic and cultural events programming to ensure that traditions are passed on.
3. Determine ways in which prospective buyers could be made aware of the historic status and the tax credits available to encourage restoration and reuse of significant buildings.

Access to Cultural Resource Protection Tools

FACT SHEET: CR 2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

There are currently tax credits available to qualifying historic landmarks and other eligible commercial and residential properties. The Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program provides for a state and federal tax credit, which when combined totals up to 25%. Certain protections and obligations are afforded with the State and National Register designation, although these are not ironclad. Local communities with a certified ordinance are eligible to participate in the Certified Local Government program, which allows them to apply for special grant funds available from the State. The general public and even some landmark commissions are not as aware of these tax benefits and the limits of protection as they could be.

The WisARHD data base, a computerized resource of historical and cultural resource data throughout the state, is now available. Currently, however, it is only accessible on-line to those who can afford a \$1,500 licensing fee. This is a concern because many individuals and organizations cannot afford this expense given their tight budgets. Therefore, the data base is being underutilized and is not providing the level of information that it potentially could to provide greater protection for our cultural resources. This is particularly true of those resources which are more obscure.

A significant source of frustration for those advocating for cultural resource preservation is the difficulty experienced in locating assistance and support materials.

Most people are unaware of a single readily accessible source where they can start their search. While the technology exists, at present, there is no one on-line location where resources are all listed, with contact information.

So What!

To be effective in preserving and protecting our cultural heritage we need to make support resources and financial incentives easy to understand and as readily available as possible. If this information is not easily accessible new owners of historically or culturally significant properties may not realize what their obligations are. Consequently, modifications may be made, which destroy a property's eligibility for future tax credits or preservation benefits. All of the useful information, tax benefits and incentives in the world will not contribute to the preservation and enhancement of historical and cultural resources if they are not made known and more accessible to the public. The WisARHD data base information could be very useful to Zoning Administrators who are responsible for issuing building permits. They need a practical, efficient way of determining if a property has any historical or cultural significance before a permit is issued. If such information is not easily available to them, misinformation, or just no information, may leave some historic properties at risk.

Current Action

At present information is available on the Wisconsin SHS web site and by contacting their staff for personal assistance. Residential homeowners have nothing to alert them to any historical or architectural significance their newly acquired home may have. There is currently no single resource that coordinates all of the resources available from the Wisconsin SHS, University programs and private professionals.

Core Goals

1. Improve access to cultural resource protection tools and resources. This entails making the resource materials, grants and staff assistance easy to find from a central source.

Cultural Resource Educational Opportunities

FACT SHEET: CR3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Every election cycle there is a turnover of some of the elected officials, local alderman, County Board Supervisors and appointees to local historic preservation commissions. These decision makers can have an important impact on the protection and enhancement of our most treasured historic and cultural resources. New persons taking office may not have any background or understanding of the importance of cultural resources in their community, and yet, they can profoundly influence the future survival of these same resources. An informational package emphasizing some of the economic and social benefits of cultural resources could provide an understanding of, and appreciation for, cultural resource protection among newly elected officials.

Similarly, when a historic property is sold, the new homebuyer should be made aware as to what his/her tax advantages, benefits and obligations are. If the significance of a historic site or national register property is not transmitted to the new owners in a timely fashion, a historic building or important archaeological or cultural resource could be modified or destroyed due to a lack of knowledge.

Local zoning administrators and officials who issue building permits need an easy and efficient way to identify historic or culturally significant buildings and sites so that they can carry out their responsibilities and protect the cultural resources.

As each new generation of children and young adults grows up we cannot assume that they

will have an appreciation for history and our cultural resources. We have to ensure that they have had some exposure to it. Generational loss of our cultural heritage will occur unless we have in place a curriculum in the schools, which incorporates an appreciation for cultural resources in the social studies and history classes offered.

So What!

Why does it matter if our elected officials and appointed commissioners, local zoning administrators, professional planners and school children do not know much about our cultural resources and how to protect them?

If local elected officials who make the budget decisions do not understand the value of our cultural resources programs they may be subject indiscriminant budget cuts. Appointed commissioners on the Historic Preservation Commission, and zoning administrators who do not have a convenient way to identify important cultural resources, will not be in a position to make others aware of cultural resources that need to be protected when permits are issued. The Register of Deeds staff could assist in flagging key properties, and with the distribution of useful information to prospective new property owners. When new Historic Preservation Commissioners are appointed they need to have access to resources and preservation tools in order to adequately review projects that come before them. As there may be regular turnover in each of these positions, it is important to offer regular training seminars and programs

A greater emphasis could be placed on improving resource education at the elementary and high school levels. It is felt that current curriculums do not do enough to educate students as to the importance and value of cultural resource preservation. If students are introduced to historic preservation and provided with a proper understanding in this area, these students may be prepared to go on to serve as preservation volunteers and some may even choose to make historic preservation their future career.

Current Action

The Technical Advisory Committee indicated that in many cases alderman, plan commissioners, historic preservation commissioners, zoning administrators, register of deeds directors and other elected or appointed officials who serve the public, did not have a sufficient knowledge of the information and available resources needed to allow them to be fully supportive of cultural resource preservation.

At present, the elementary school and high school curriculums are woefully inadequate in providing students with an understanding and appreciation for the value of the cultural resources to be found in their environment.

Core Goals

1. Provide education on cultural resource issues to elected, appointed, and professional staff. This includes persons, such as aldermen / alderwomen, county supervisors, mayors, appointed commissioners, public planning, zoning and register of deeds staff.
2. Minimize generational loss of our cultural resource heritage by providing students with an appreciation for cultural resource preservation at all levels of education.

Communication and Cooperation

FACT SHEET: CR4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Local historic preservation commissions and community historical societies provide a valuable service to their communities. There are talented individuals, with very specialized historic preservation skills, working in the private sector. The Wisconsin State Historical Society and academics at higher education institutions play a valuable role in preserving our heritage by providing advice, expertise and services to others. We have State and Federal staff and programs that continue to provide guidance and support for local and statewide preservation efforts. The committee's consensus was that although all of these individuals, from local to federal, are all independently contributing to protecting and enhancing our heritage, there is a real lack of coordination and few opportunities for interaction between these interested parties. More frequent opportunities for interaction and exchange of information and ideas would provide real benefits for all.

So What!

Why is it important to have interaction between all of the active participants in preservation of our cultural resources? What do we stand to gain from having more frequent dialogue between interested groups?

The committee concluded that having a greater awareness of the services and funding support available from state and federal sources could significantly improve assistance to local groups in achieving their goals and objectives.

Greater interaction could enhance state and federal understanding of what local commissions and organizations value. Local historical societies, committees and commissions could also be energized by the exchange of ideas that results from greater communication.

Current Action

Current budget cuts at the state and local levels have made the cooperative public private relationships more important than ever before. Citizen groups and volunteers need good access to information and professionals. Improving communication and making tools readily available is critical. One of the biggest challenges we currently have is that although information and resource materials and programs exist, the means to let people know about them does not.

In addition, insufficient action has been taken to locate and protect archaeological sites that have not yet been discovered. A closer relationship, and more frequent communication between local groups and state and private professionals would expand our ability to protect sites that have archaeological potential.

Continuous turnover on local commissions creates a need for having ready access to a regional cultural resource base, and for offering instructive programs on a regular schedule that new appointees could avail themselves of.

Core Goals

1. Establish a cultural resource center for the ECWRPC region that builds upon the resources currently available.
2. Work to attract a National Trust field office to the region.
3. Encourage greater interaction and sharing of ideas and resource materials between the various levels of the private and public sector, among both volunteers and professionals.

Historic Building & Archaeological Site Inventories

FACT SHEET: CR5

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

The region, like every other part of the world, has a unique settlement history. Ours is made especially rich because of both the ancient cultural influences of a Native American indigenous population, and the diversity of the many immigrant groups who came here from eastern states, and many parts of the world, primarily Europe. The remnants of our settlement history are evidenced in our archaeological sites and in our unique landmark or historic buildings.

The inhabitants of north east and central Wisconsin brought with them their own unique cultural characteristics, which all contributed to the diversity of our cultural background. There are four significant periods of cultural influence that shaped our present cultural resource experience. Each of these periods is characterized by unique, architectural building types representative of those four settlement periods.

These are:

- 1) The indigenous settlement group period (3000 BC - Pre-European).
- 2) The French, English and American exploration period (1634 - 1830's).
- 3) The European immigration period (1830's - 1950)
- 4) The Growing diversity period (1950 - present)

So What!

Why should this cultural diversity matter to us and why should we inventory it? These cultural influences have had significant

impacts on our lives. Cultural values and differences between early European immigrants shaped the character of our cities and downtowns.

The architectural styles and materials of the community were determined by the customs and construction skills of those who built them. The available street width in our downtowns is a function of what was customary in the region of the world people came from. Language barriers among early immigrants resulted in churches of the same faith being built just blocks from each other. Today the language barriers have disappeared but our downtown skylines are dominated by many beautiful works of architecture, which give each urban area a unique character. These older buildings with character can be magnets for reuse when they have outlived their original purpose. The reuse and renovation of historic buildings require labor and reinvestment, which contribute to the tax revenue base.

Our ethnic heritage contributes to the strong work ethic that we are known for and therefore makes this region attractive to employers whose businesses are labor intensive.

As our society becomes ever more mobile, and families are spread out over great distances, many people are interested in having greater knowledge of their family history or cultural roots. Access to historical records and resources can help them research their genealogy. In addition, cultural festivals and events can help to give them a sense of who they are and the culture they come from.

Current Action:

The Wisconsin State Historical Society has created the WisARHD database, which affords the licensed users on-line access to the inventory data base records of the Society. The general public can use these records also, but have to go to the Madison location. The SHS also provides staff assistance and grants for conducting inventories of historical and cultural resources in local communities.

There are a number of archaeological digs currently being excavated and studied by professionals who add continuously to our knowledge and understanding of the state's prehistoric past and geological history. Individual local historical organizations and committees keep collections of local or statewide interest, and records of notable past events and people. Local preservation commissions also have a responsibility to identify and inventory potential historic resources and advocate for their preservation.

Core Goals

1. Preserve our historic buildings, which contribute to the special character of our downtowns and provide economic development opportunities for renovation and reinvestment in our communities.
2. Ensure that our culturally diverse ethnic heritage is preserved for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.
3. Develop strategies for increasing awareness and appreciation for cultural heritage resources.
4. Encourage identification of cultural influences that are important to preserving our unique and diverse cultural heritage on a regional scale.

Key Findings: Cultural Resources

The following is a summary of the key findings of the cultural resources element of the regional plan, including the vision statement, issues and opportunities, as updated for the Milestone Report #2, a discussion of the match and mismatch between the vision and current trends, and a listing of the core goals.

Vision Statement

“In the year 2030, the region is recognized as a leader in the state for preservation of the region’s cultural resources. It provides public access to resource protection tools, and the political advocacy necessary to ensure protection for, and appreciation of, our diverse ethnic heritage, both historic and prehistoric.”

Issues and Opportunities

A comprehensive list of issues and opportunities was developed and analyzed. The issues were consolidated into five general areas of focus that require action.

- Preservation of our Indigenous and Ethnic Cultural Heritages
- Improving Access to Cultural Resource Protection Tools
- Cultural Resource Education Opportunities
- Communication and Cooperation
- Historic Building and Archaeological Site Inventories

Match and Mismatch Between the Envisioned and Probable Future

- The committee noted that the current trend is that the unique cultural diversity of the region is gradually being lost from one generation to the next. Indigenous cultures are taught by Native American tribes but the constant barrage of cultural influences from television, internet, and peer pressure threaten the integrity of the original cultures. European, African American, Hispanic and Hmong cultures are still in evidence in many respects but are similarly being threatened by the homogenization caused by mass media communications advances and the peer pressure to be like others, which is fueled by television and marketing trends. The trend toward globalization is undermining the uniqueness and diversity of our ethnic cultures. This trend is likely to continue but we can counter it by reclaiming our cultural diversity and interest through the promotion of cultural festivals, celebrations, family traditions, and the recording of oral histories. With a proactive program of cultural enhancements, perhaps the cultural diversity loss can be minimized.
- Although some modest level of cultural resource protection tools exist, they are not easy to find in the current unorganized environment. In the absence of action to improve accessibility, volunteers will continue to be frustrated by how difficult it is to find suitable funding sources and staff support, and more cultural resources will be lost. The committee envisioned ways that resource protection tools and staff support could be researched and consolidated in locations and in media that would make them more accessible and easier to use.

- Currently, political and financial support from elected officials, as well as staff support from appointed or paid professional staff is constantly being disrupted by public elections and personal career changes. Such changes are inevitable. The committee envisions an ongoing program to educate new officials, appointees and staff to help make the transition more seamless and minimize the impact on local preservation efforts.
- At present, there are many private and public volunteers, appointees, public officials and professionals working independently to preserve our cultural resources. There are not many opportunities for interaction and communication. If nothing changes, current budget cuts at both the state and local level will further isolate cultural resource preservationists and make them more dependent on private funding. The availability of the latter is substantially influenced by economic trends. Consequently, it is more important than ever that communication and cooperation is promoted to ensure that scarce financial resources can be targeted to the most effective priorities. More opportunities for interaction will increase the potential for useful connections to be made, and new information about resources to be shared between participants.
- The Wisconsin Historical Society has lost some staff positions and budget cutting has limited operation budgets and grant availability. If this were to continue for an extended period the State's ability to continue historic building and archaeological site surveys could be severely curtailed. If local staff responsible for issuing building permits do not have good information on the existence and/or location of cultural resources, they could be destroyed before they are documented, and our pool of cultural resource treasures will continue to shrink. The committee envisions a future where we continue to document the cultural resources of the many communities and rural areas that have not been studied yet. The committee cited the economic development benefits of restoration of historic buildings for new productive uses, and suggested that our future activity should include developing strategies for increasing public awareness and appreciation for the protection of our cultural heritage resources.

Core Goals

Fact Sheet CR1: Preservation of Indigenous and Ethnic cultural Heritage

1. Find ways to support the work of local/regional historic preservation organizations, boards and landmark preservation commissions.
2. Support ethnic and cultural events programming to ensure that traditions are passed on.
3. Determine ways in which prospective buyers could be made aware of the historic status and the tax credits available to encourage restoration and reuse of significant buildings.

Fact Sheet CR2: Access to Cultural Resource Protection Tools

1. Improve access to cultural resource protection tools and resources. This entails making the resource materials, grants and staff assistance easy to find from a central source.

Fact Sheet CR3: Cultural Resource Educational Opportunities

1. Provide education on cultural resource issues to elected, appointed, and professional staff. This includes persons, such as aldermen / alderwomen, county supervisors, mayors, appointed commissioners, public planning, zoning and register of deeds staff.
2. Minimize generational loss of our cultural resource heritage by providing students with an appreciation for cultural resource preservation at all levels of education.

Fact Sheet CR4: Communication and Cooperation

1. Establish a cultural resource center for the ECWRPC region that builds upon the resources currently available.
2. Work to attract a National Trust field office to the region.
3. Encourage greater interaction and sharing of ideas and resource materials between the various levels of the private and public sector, among both volunteers and professionals.

Fact Sheet CR5: Historic Building and Archaeological Site Inventories

1. Preserve our historic buildings, which contribute to the special character of our downtowns and provide economic development opportunities for renovation and reinvestment in our communities.
2. Ensure that our culturally diverse ethnic heritage is preserved for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.
3. Develop strategies for increasing awareness and appreciation for cultural heritage resources.
4. Encourage identification of cultural influences that are important to preserving our unique and diverse cultural heritage on a regional scale.

Conclusion

The vision, major issues and core goals will be carried forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone Report #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies. Any implemented policy will have intended and unintended consequences. As a result, during the Milestone Report #3 process, we will also try to identify those policy links in an effort to predict what impacts cultural resource policies may have on other plan elements.

CHAPTER 11: LAND USE

Introduction

Previous chapters in this document discuss the regional comprehensive planning process, summarize the first report, which provided background data for the region, present a regional vision and identify the issues, opportunities, vision and core goals for economic development, housing, transportation, community facilities, agricultural, natural and cultural resources of the region. This chapter identifies land use issues and opportunities, provides a regional vision for land use and recommends core goals to address identified issues.

Current intergovernmental cooperative efforts to address land use issues within our region, and the interaction between land use and other plan elements, are discussed below. That discussion is followed by a regional vision for the future of land use. The remainder of the chapter compares current trends to the identified vision, identifies goals to address identified issues and concludes by summarizing key findings.

Cooperation

Existing land use patterns are the end result of a multitude of decisions made by local and county governments, for profit and nonprofit developers, financial institutions, business owners and consumers. Land use decisions are often made on a project by project basis. They may be made within the context of a locally adopted land use plan, or they may be made outside of a long term community vision. They are influenced by federal, state and local government regulations and subsidies, access to financial support, anticipated economic gains and individual and community values. They can not be and are not made in isolation. Any land use has an impact, not only on that particular parcel and that particular landowner, but also on the adjacent parcels, their owners, on the community, and sometimes, on the region as a whole. Therefore, cooperation between governments and between the public, private and nonprofit sectors is critical to minimize the negative effects and maximize the positive benefits of changing land uses.

The sheer number of contradictory political and economic pressures, potential impacts from intended and unintended consequences, coupled with the difficulty of analyzing information to make informed choices, makes it far easier for decision makers to deal with individual projects in isolation, or plan in a reactive, rather than proactive mode. While it may seem more difficult and expensive to consider development choices upfront, in reality informed choices now will pay long term benefits through better quality of life and sustained intrinsic value, as well as in terms of pure economics. It therefore benefits the public and private sectors to cooperatively make decisions within the context of a long term, community wide vision.

East Central works hard to facilitate communication and coordination between communities and overlapping districts, particularly in regards to transportation and sewer service area planning, as transportation and sewer service infrastructure have broad regional impacts. Transportation and sewer service expenditures are also some of the largest public expenditures made. They also provide the basic infrastructure for development to take place. East Central works closely with communities, counties, and various regional and state agencies to foster intergovernmental

cooperation and communication on a variety of other land use projects and initiatives, such as housing, economic development, park and trail planning and natural resource protection. Where possible, East Central also encourages cooperation and communication between those government entities and the private and nonprofit sector. East Central aids communities and counties by providing a variety of data, mapping, technical advice, and additional information and support for local planning efforts. Many of our current efforts have been noted in previous chapters of this report. Staff also coordinates an aerial photography program, which provides low altitude photography of the region. A portion of our work program is devoted to helping communities develop their own land use plans, and staff has been instrumental in getting state grants to greatly reduce the local share of doing these local plans. Staff coordinates with UW-Extension staff to sponsor three mini-conferences a year to provide information on pertinent planning and land use issues throughout the region. Staff also works with UW-Extension staff to facilitate other educational opportunities to help local officials make more informed choices on land use issues.

The close link between transportation and land use, along with past joint efforts, led staff to develop a joint transportation/land use planning committee to provide input into the transportation and land use elements of the regional plan. This technical advisory committee identified land use and transportation issues, created a regional vision for land use and transportation and recommended core goals to address identified issues. The committee included elected officials, city, county, town and village planning staff, private consultants, highway commissioners, representatives from the transit, trucking and freight and railroad sectors, the Realtors association, UW-Extension, DNR, WisDOT and interested citizens. Transportation issues and opportunities were discussed in chapter 6. The remainder of this chapter will focus on land use.

Statement of Interaction with Other Planning Elements

Land use cannot be considered in isolation from other elements. An adequate supply of reasonably priced land with the appropriate infrastructure, utilities and services, coupled with employment opportunities and community designs which allow for transportation choices are all necessary for maintaining our quality of life. Decisions regarding economic development, housing, transportation, community and public facilities development and environmental quality have an impact on land use patterns, supply, affordability and consumption. Likewise, decisions made in the land use sector can influence the cost and efficiency of other plan elements. Policy decisions in all sectors should facilitate the development of a built environment, which meets the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups and persons with special needs, while still providing protection for natural and cultural resources. Concerns and recommendations regarding other plan elements were identified in the land use visioning exercise, issue and trend discussions and in the committees' recommendations. These comments have been organized in the order elements are presented in Milestone Report #2, and are followed by a short discussion of the environment in which planning decisions take place.

Economic Development

Committee members noted that the region has vacant industrial or commercial sites and dilapidated, unsafe housing. These sites present redevelopment opportunities to improve the quality

of our built environment, make use of existing infrastructure and bring delinquent properties back on the tax rolls.

Members also noted that industrial land with rail access is relatively scarce and should be preserved for industrial use. They stated that this will likely become more important in the future. Members noted that the just-in-time business philosophy has created substantial truck traffic, which is not sustainable as fuel costs and driver shortages increase.

It was also suggested that the region should focus economic attention on keeping business local and unique. Supporting “mom & pop” establishments provides unique shopping opportunities and features, which contribute to community character and identity. It also focuses on wealth creation within the region, rather than exporting money out to large chain establishments. Rural businesses that capture economic benefits, while preserving open space, should be assisted and trained to prosper for the benefit of the whole community.

Housing

Committee members noted that new development along our highway system has displaced households. They stated that some areas should be preserved, rather than redeveloped. Additional housing and lot choices are needed, particularly for middle and low income households. Opportunities for those incapable of buying a new home should be provided in rural areas. Committee members also stated that everyone deserves a chance at homeownership, regardless of the size or nature of the home. Not every low income person wants to live in a mobile home or apartment building. Providing smaller homes to middle and low income individuals, who are ready for homeownership, allows them to enter the market and begin building equity.

Committee members also favored residential options downtown, mixed housing near public transportation links, walk-to-work programs and traditional neighborhood design projects. Members would like to see less unplanned residential development in rural areas and limitations placed on the development of cul-de-sacs in residential areas.

Community Facilities

Committee members would like to see consolidation of small governments and/or greater inter-governmental cooperation, and regional policies to discourage sprawl. Both of these recommendations would have an impact on facility size, location and extension of facility infrastructure. The development of an extensive regional park system was highlighted.

Members felt that too many decisions regarding the development of facilities and our built environment lacked a human approach to the living environment; and as a result, our sense of community is disappearing. Members stated that the social interaction inherent in walking and riding to school and recreational facilities needs to be encouraged. They recommended that facilities be developed and placed so that more kids will have the opportunity to bike and walk to school.

Transportation

Members stated that more bike and other use trails are necessary, especially along highway corridors. A transportation system that focuses on bike and pedestrian movement should be developed. Giant parking lots and pedestrian unfriendly areas should be discouraged.

Unused rails should be removed and replaced, where appropriate with trails. Where rails are still needed, grade separation should be developed in order to improve rail safety. Public transit should be enhanced. Members would like to see bus links to a mid-west regional rail system established. Minimally used airports should be closed, and air traffic should be confined to larger airports, because it is difficult for small airports to survive without great and expensive expansions.

Members stated that the integrity of the highway system needs to be preserved. Our current transportation/land use patterns place too much local traffic on our arterials. We need less highway access and better mobility. Better east west access is also needed to connect the region to I-94. Members would also like to see another lane added to USH 41 and better turn lanes provided off of USH 10/ STH 114. It was also suggested that adding a bypass would allow traffic to get from USH 41 in Kaukauna to USH 10 without going through the congestion in and around Appleton. At the same time, members stated that large highway construction has placed too much development pressure on non-urbanized areas and contributed to the loss of community character and some of our best farmland. Members noted that too often transportation/land use decisions are made with no understanding of the total regional impact. They suggested that developing a regional database of all existing and proposed road networks, with proposed land uses, would allow officials to see the big picture.

Agricultural Resources

Committee members were divided over preservation of agricultural resources. Some members stated that prime farmland should be preserved for agriculture, and noted that preserving these lands has the added benefit of preserving our rural character. They stated that we are paying a huge price for sprawl and suggested that the true cost of our current development patterns should be reviewed. Other members opposed farmland preservation measures adjacent to urban areas, even though that is where the region's best farmland is located.

Committee members stated that conventional farms are being undermined by huge, vertically integrated corporations. They noted that commodity agriculture will probably not return to the levels we have seen in the past. However, niche product farming and other open space enterprises, such as hunting and fishing can and are thriving. They recommended that local niche product farming be encouraged.

Natural Resources

Committee members expressed a desire to preserve environmentally sensitive areas such as the Niagara Escarpment, wetlands and woodlands. They recommended preserving viewsheds, open space and access to waterways. They stated that our farmland, wetlands and woodlands are disappearing faster than projected, especially along major highways and near cities. They

stated that the state stewardship fund should be preserved. However, we need to recognize that not enough money exists in the world to “buy” all the existing green spaces we would like to preserve. Instead, they recommended that we take advantage of existing programs that encourage open space, such as CRP, EQIP and Forest Management programs. Taking advantage of these programs will ‘buy’ time to develop truly sustainable land use practices. They noted that greater respect for the environment and environmental ethics is needed.

Committee members would like to see fewer billboards, and recommended that scenic easements be established along highways. It was also suggested that a large wildlife area near the USH 41 congestion would allow travelers a place to stop and break up the blacktop/rooftop monotony.

Cultural Resources

The transportation/land use committee expressed a desire to preserve and enhance our cultural resources, historic buildings and historic markers. They recommended that the integrity of historic areas be maintained. New development should not be allowed to encroach on our historical and cultural resources. The committee expressed a desire to protect community identity, community character and unique features. New development should preserve and enhance, not destroy community character.

Other

The transportation/land use committee also commented on government form and social values. Consolidation of small governments and/or greater intergovernmental cooperation was recommended. They stated that joint planning and zoning between jurisdictions, and more intergovernmental agreements, particularly boundary agreements, should be encouraged. Committee members recommended that town officials be elected for four-year terms, rather than two-year terms. It takes time to understand the system and make good land use planning decisions. A good land use plan can take two years to develop. If a change over in elected officials occurs at the end of that period, the new official coming in may not understand the plan development process and may be unwilling to implement the plan as a result. They recommended that planning and zoning committee members be certified, and suggested that citizen committees be formed to review and comment on development proposals. They also recommended that “Youth in planning” programs be developed to educate the next generation.

Committee members lamented the lack of human approach that too often occurs in the planning process. They stated that the focus tends to be on projects or “things”, rather than people. They noted that this alienates people from the process, which in turn results in a landscape that favors facilities over a human scale environment. They also stated that we, as a society, encourage individual’s rights more than community needs. “Individualists” also tend to be more outspoken than those who have a more balanced viewpoint, and politicians listen to them as a result. Committee members stated that too much importance is placed on individual rights at the expense of community good. We need a new sense of community and future of communities, coupled with a greater respect for the environment.

Vision Statement for Land Use

In preparation for forming a vision statement, the Regional Land Use/Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was asked to consider three questions: "What would you like to see preserved in the region?", "What would you like to see changed in the region?" and "What would you like to see created in the region?". The committee's responses have been summarized into a best of all possible worlds scenario. The actual vision statement is provided at the end of this section.

Committee members envisioned a future where efficient regional land use patterns provide a landscape, which protects our natural resources, provides sufficient land for farming, forestry, open space and other land uses and contains well integrated communities. The mix of land use and transportation facilities allows all individuals to move freely throughout their day and requires fewer public and private dollars than needed by current development patterns.

Unsightly development along highway corridors has been replaced by development patterns, which run perpendicular to the highway along side roads. Scenic views from roadways have been preserved. Billboards are restricted, and in some places, eliminated all together. Local traffic moves along a network of local streets and pedestrian ways, while regional traffic flows smoothly along arterials and highway corridors.

The built environment fosters "healthy communities". These communities support strong families and contain cohesive neighborhoods, with high quality affordable housing, safe streets, green space, good schools, a clean environment, a diverse and vibrant economy and high quality affordable health care. Land use patterns and facilities encourage more physical activity. Children are encouraged to walk or bike to school and adults can easily walk or bike to work and other destination sites. Rather than a built environment, which isolates and alienates people, we now have one that encourages people to interact with one another, feel welcome, safe and secure.

We have learned to balance individual rights with community needs and the focus is on people, not things. Respect for the natural environment has increased, and we make decisions that protect the natural resources that make this region a great place to live. Individual community identity has been retained and every community is unique. You know when you have left one community and entered another, because each place has its own unique environment. Communities no longer look the same. Each community has its unique style and blend of housing, shopping, entertainment and cultural facilities. Chain establishments exist, but no longer dominate the landscape. Instead, local establishments provide unique shopping, eating and entertainment venues and contribute to the growing wealth of our region.

This vision was summarized into the following land use vision statement for the region:

"In 2030 in the East Central Wisconsin region, efficient regional land use patterns foster healthy communities, individual community identity, and respect the natural environment."

Issues / Opportunities - Fact Sheets

Committee members discussed land use issues, which were identified in Milestone Report #1 and during the visioning process. Wherever possible, similar issues were combined. Current land use activities and efforts were discussed, and core goals were identified to address each issue.

The identified land use issues fell into five larger categories: land consumption, the relationship between development and natural resources, development and farm and forest lands, balancing property rights and community needs and community character. A fact sheet on each issue is presented below. Each fact sheet presents information on the key facts, why action is necessary, current activities and programs and concludes by identifying core goals.

Land Consumption

FACT SHEET: L1

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

As our region has grown, residential, commercial and industrial land uses have expanded at a rate greater than the growth in population and households. Between 1980 and 2000, the amount of residential and commercial land more than doubled, although the population itself only grew by 19%. Larger lot sizes resulted in residential land use alone increasing by 173%, while the number of residential units increased by 43%. During this same time period, the region lost 319,100 acres of farmland¹. Forests and open space declined, and the remainder of our natural environment, including lakes and streams, were also impacted.

Government and other public facilities have grown in order to meet the service and mobility needs of our population. Our transportation and utility infrastructure has expanded. New schools and medical facilities have been built on the outskirts of communities. Other government facilities, such as state and county offices, jails and highway departments have moved from urban areas and downtowns to fringe areas consuming additional lands.

As our built environment continues to grow, more land will be converted from farms, forests and open space to other uses. The amount of land converted will vary depending on the choices we make in terms of the density, design and placement of that new development.

So What!

Greenfield development is, and must, occur in order to accommodate the amount of growth the region is experiencing. However, the density and design of urban/suburban land uses not only impacts the amount of land consumed for development. It also impacts the effectiveness and efficiency of public services (police, fire, roads, etc.), the cost of public and social services, the quality of the environment, the ease of access to goods and services and the mobility of those unable or unwilling to drive automobiles.

The density and location of rural development impacts the amount of land consumed for development, can fragment farm and forest land, increase the cost of services and place undue pressure on our natural resources.

As humans consume more land, the amenities, such as the open space and farm and forest land that attracted initial settlement disappears. Human animal interaction also increases. Communities must deal with a rising number of complaints about bird feces in parks, on beaches and lawns; deer and rabbits damaging trees, shrubs and gardens; and in some instances bears foraging through dumps and garbage cans. Pressure is also placed on fragile wildlife habitats, such as migration corridors.

Residential, commercial and industrial demand for land also increases the value of that land. As land prices rise, converting that land from farm, forest and open space lands becomes more attractive; and long term consequences such as farm and forest land shortages, increased public costs, changes in community

¹ These figures are from Milestone Report #1.

character and lack of open space are often not considered. Neither are unintended consequences, such as increased health risks and health care costs, etc.. Rising land values may also make it more difficult to attract new businesses and provide affordable housing.

Current Action

Some communities have invested in infill development and redevelopment of vacant properties, which not only reduces consumption of farm, forest and open land and makes use of existing infrastructure investments, but also relieves visual blight and promotes the cleanup of potential environmentally degraded lands.

While some communities are trying to promote more efficient development patterns, current development favors large lot single family homes and big box retail development. Much of the pressure for this type of growth exists on the outer fringes of the region's urban areas, where the best farmland is located. As this development expands outward, more farmland is converted to urban and suburban uses.

Many urban and rural towns have established large minimum lot sizes in an effort to preserve rural character. However, the demand for large lot subdivisions, scattered site housing and seasonal homes is, in reality, fragmenting wildlife habitats and changing the appearance and character of the landscape.

Concerns regarding land use and development resulted in environmental groups, realtors, planners and government representatives working together to update Wisconsin's planning laws. The new comprehensive planning legislation emphasizes the importance of intergovernmental cooperation, and promotes redevelopment and new development, which is

designed to limit service costs, support a range of transportation alternatives and minimize environmental impacts.

Decisions and choices regarding growth and development, however, are the responsibility of individual communities and counties. The final decision-makers in this context are elected officials, developers and individual market choices. So, ultimately, the decisions regarding land use consumption patterns are the result of local choices.

Core Goals

1. Educate the public on potential conflicts and trade-offs associated with alternative development patterns.
2. Encourage efficient development in order to reduce land use conflicts and contain community costs.
3. Encourage cooperation and coordination, not only between governments, but also between the government and the private and nonprofit sectors.
4. Encourage infill development and redevelopment of vacant properties; and promote the expansion of public facilities within urban areas, without reducing affordable housing options and the presence of local business establishments.
5. Encourage the development and enhancement of programs, which promote affordable housing, efficient transportation alternatives and development patterns, at all local government levels.

Development vs Natural and Cultural Resources

FACT SHEET: L2

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Accommodating the realities of urban growth and exurban and rural development pressures, while providing adequate protection of natural and cultural resources, will be a major challenge in the years ahead. As our built environment expands, more land must be converted from farmland, forestland and/or open space to accommodate that expansion. Building materials, such as lumber and nonmetallic resources will be needed. Open space land may be converted to farm and forest land to compensate land losses in those sectors to other forms of development. The type and amount of land converted will depend on market conditions and land use decisions regarding location, density and design.

While preserving natural and cultural resources consistently ranks high in citizen surveys, few monetary resources are allocated to preserve and protect these resources. A lack of understanding exists regarding the interaction between geology, soil characteristics, water chemistry, habitats, ecosystems and wildlife. Few communities inventory, maintain and set aside local natural and cultural resources for preservation. At the same time, the amenity factor provided by the proximity of scenic natural and cultural resources raises the attractiveness and market value of land, which increases the likelihood that it will develop. The combination of these factors make it difficult to establish policies and encourage forms of development, which protect natural and cultural resources and limit negative health and environmental impacts, such as decreases in water and air quality, habitat fragmentation and invasive species.

In order to meet development pressures, maintain our heritage, protect our quality of life and limit negative impacts, choices must be made regarding which land will develop, how it will develop and which land and features will be preserved.

So What!

Land is a fixed commodity. Additional urban and rural growth is expected throughout most of our region. This growth will fuel the need and desire for additional land conversion. Once land is converted from its natural state to a built environment, the likelihood that it will ever return to its native state is extremely small. Returning land from a built environment to its natural state is extremely expensive. It may take more than one generation to reestablish an ecosystem; and in some instances, rare ecosystems cannot be recreated. Environmental cleanups, such as the current proposed cleanup of the Fox River, are also very expensive. So while it may seem more expensive to consider development choices up front, the reality is that informed choices now will pay long term benefits through better quality of life and sustained intrinsic value, as well as in terms of pure economics.

The pursuit of growth, coupled with a lack of attention to natural resources, has had negative consequences within our region. Water quality has declined due to soil erosion, surface runoff, groundwater infiltration and aquifer draw downs. Continued development in arsenic advisory zones and in areas with fractured bedrock has led to further ground water contamination. A number of contaminants found in the region's water such as arsenic,

nitrates, radium, petroleum byproducts and atrazine have been associated with various cancers, circulatory disorders, stomach pain, nausea, diarrhea and increased birth defects. Other health risks are associated with water contamination from parasites and bacteria.

Many of our more scenic rural communities are experiencing growth pressures from second homes, retirees and tourism related businesses. Additional scattered site development is occurring throughout the region, as many commuters either prefer to live in a more rural area, yet work in an urban setting, or as two income families try to split the distance between different employment centers. The scattered site development increases the costs of providing services, and reduces the amount of open space, farm and forest land, which, in turn, increases conflict between homeowners, farmers, hunters, recreationalists and environmentalists.

When development occurs in and around natural resource areas without proper design and planning, the amenity factor, which attracted individuals to that area, decreases, and certain recreational and economic activities, such as fishing, hunting or tourism may no longer be viable. Plant and wildlife habitats are disrupted and additional costs to life and property, such as increased flooding, wildfires and damage from invasive species, are incurred.

The auto dependent land use patterns so prevalent in our expanding urban areas also increase air pollution through increased auto usage and increased vehicular miles traveled. Recent articles in health journals also suggest that these development patterns contribute to the increased obesity that is predicted to cause major health care costs in the future.

Current Action

Federal or state laws provide limited protection of some natural and cultural resources.

However, the decision to protect or develop these resources lies within the purview of local and county governments.

Nonprofit and government agencies such as the Nature Conservancy, Wild Ones, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the State Historical Society help identify and protect our natural and cultural resources. Other organizations such as Citizens for a Better Environment encourage more environmentally friendly land use patterns and development.

State stormwater and site control regulations have been strengthened to reduce erosion during new construction and runoff after the development is in place. Best Management farm and forestry practices are encouraged.

Nevertheless, much of the development within our region continues to occur without consideration of the interaction between the natural and built environment; and low density, auto dependent land use continues to be the norm. Continued development without regard to geologic conditions is decreasing our water quality. Agricultural practices and landscaping, which require significant chemical inputs, also continue to be the norm, rather than the exception, again adding to the decrease in water quality. In addition, the lack of knowledge and attention to underlying bedrock conditions increases engineering and construction costs during development.

Little protection is provided to private well users, as water testing of private wells is only required for bacteria and only at certain times such as the point of development or sale. Tests for arsenic, nitrates and other known contaminants are only conducted at the request of well owners, and when a potential buyer requests that the test be performed as part of the offer to purchase. Individuals

may not realize that their water chemistry can change over time.

Community heritage and landmarks are lost as viewsheds change and older structures, which represent historic development patterns and economic activity, give way to the ubiquitous suburban landscape.

Core Goals

1. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and coordination to identify, preserve and protect key natural and cultural resources.
2. Encourage development patterns, designs and technologies, which minimize pressure on our natural and cultural resources.
3. Encourage the enforcement of existing regulations to preserve and protect natural and cultural resources.
4. Increase educational efforts throughout the region and encourage informed choices.

Development vs Farm and Forest Lands

FACT SHEET: L3

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

As our built environment expands, farm, forest and/or open space lands will decrease. These lands, however, are an integral part of our landscape, heritage and economy; so if we are to retain our regional character and ensure the economic vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors, growth must be balanced with preservation.

Most of our region's future growth is expected to occur in urban counties, where the majority of jobs are located. It is also more efficient and cost effective to locate new development next to existing development. Most of the region's more productive farmland is also located here. This creates conflict, as prime farmland is also usually the best building soils. Opposition to farmland preservation is strong, as urban growth is perceived as necessary for a strong economy and tax base. Profits on land sold for development are also higher than profits on land sold for farming.

Commercial, industrial and residential land uses have higher property values than farm and forest land, so their expansion is seen as an opportunity to increase tax revenues. Little attention is paid to net tax gains, even though various Farmland Trust studies have shown that the cost of services for other forms of development, particularly single family residential, typically exceed tax revenues generated by that development, while taxes generated by farmland exceed the cost of services for farmland.

Farmland in rural areas is under pressure from residential development, both in the form of

large lot subdivisions and scattered site residential development.

The average age of farmers in our region is over 50, and many of these individuals see farmland conversion as a quick, easy retirement option, especially in the face of increased conflicts between the realities of farming and the expectation of exurban residents. Modern day industrial farming requires substantial monetary investments, which makes it difficult for young farmers to enter the field. Farming is also under considerable economic pressure, as production costs rise and profits from food sales shift away from farmers to food processing and sales.

The majority of the region's forest land is located in rural counties of the region. Recreational demand for summer homes, hunting and camping encourages the fragmentation of forests and raises land use conflicts between producers of forest products and recreationists.

So What!

Farming is an important economic resource. In 1997, the market value of agricultural products sold in the region exceeded \$790 million dollars. The presence of farming is also important for maintaining the food processing sector, whose annual sales exceeded \$2,300 million dollars in 1997.¹

While technology allows food products to be shipped long distances, in reality the quality and freshness of food is impacted by distance traveled, as chemical additives or genetic

¹ U. S. Census Bureau, 1997 Economic Census.

modification is necessary for food to withstand shipping. Producing food locally, not only provides a convenient source of high quality fresh produce, our growing farmer's markets indicate that urban residents consider this an important amenity. Direct marketing from the farm to consumers also increases the grower's profit margin.

Farming is a part of Wisconsin's cultural heritage and landscape. Architecturally distinctive houses, barns or farmsteads may reflect a significant time period, be associated with a notable person, particular ethnic group, or agricultural specialty. People value the open agricultural landscape, the concept of the family farm and benefits associated with maintaining wildlife habitats. To lose these features and landscapes is to lose a part of the region's heritage and identity.

Forests are an important economic resource as well, as the forest products sector contributes 6% to Wisconsin's economy¹. Local forest products may also reduce costs within other industrial sectors, such as paper, furniture manufacturing and construction.

Forest fragmentation can be costly, as it increases the risk of property damage from wildfires. It also affects wildlife, water and air quality. Forests generate little runoff and certain species of trees remove environmental contaminants from the soil. Forests are also part of the carbon sequestration cycle, which means that they reduce carbon emissions in our atmosphere.

Current Action

While programs such as farmland preservation and transfer of development rights are available, they have not proven to be particularly effective in our region.

¹ DNR Forest management plan.

Low density residential, commercial and industrial development has become the norm for the region, and continues to consume large amounts of farm and forest land. Low interest rates, coupled with easy credit, have fueled the development of large homes on large lots. The presence of big box retail stores continues to grow as large retailers vie for increased market shares.

As baby-boomers age, the number of new retirement homes within the region is increasing, particularly in rural counties. The influx of retirees is changing the nature of local communities, and housing costs are rising faster than rural wages. As this aging process continues, health and transportation services may become important issues.

Core Goals

1. Educate the public regarding the realities of the farm and forest sectors and cultural and economic benefits of farm and forest land.
2. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and coordination to facilitate the development of innovative, efficient land use patterns, which reduce land use conflicts and support the economic vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors.
3. Encourage alternative agricultural methods and entities to meet niche markets and provide educational and recreational opportunities for urban residents.

Balancing Community Interests and Property Rights

FACT SHEET: L4

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Private property rights is a deeply ingrained, fundamental aspect of American culture, which is based on the accepted principle that private property is the key to human dignity. While most Americans take the concept of private property rights for granted, transferring that concept into reality has created constant tension within our society. Governments at all levels have struggled to determine how to protect property rights, and, at the same time, balance property rights between individuals, as well as between individuals and the broader community interest.

Courts and elected officials have struggled over a number of questions. Whose property rights should prevail, the current landowner's rights or his neighbor's rights? Do the current generation's property rights supercede the rights of future generations? Where does one individual's rights end and another's rights begin? How do we balance property rights between individuals and balance property rights with broad community interests? Who pays the costs of ownership and who reaps the benefits? How does society treat those who can't afford property?

The notion of property rights involves several assumptions. Property exists, it has value and it can be possessed by more than one individual. An owner has the right to possess and use the property. They may sell, devise, lease, mortgage, subdivide or grant easements on their property. Governments reserve the right to tax, take for public use, control the use of or escheat property. Property rights include three spheres (air, surface and subsurface)

and three broad resource categories (land, mineral and water). Legally, each of these aspects can be held separately and each has its particular characteristics.

So What!

Resources as property can be used in a variety of compatible and incompatible ways. Each use has positive and negative effects; and these effects do not stay within a particular sphere or resource category. It is these overlaps and spillover effects that create conflict.

Resources have intrinsic and economic value. They can be preserved in their natural state; modified, as when prairie becomes a farm field; or converted into other forms entirely, as when a tree becomes a chair. Intrinsic value is hard to measure, and humans more easily think in terms of current economic value. As a result, a resource's worth tends to be measured by its current value within the market place; and traditionally, much of our property rights legislation favors the land use which provides the highest, immediate, private economic gain.

Within the context of land use implementation, the majority of zoning and permitting decisions are made by elected officials. Elected officials often wish to remain in office. As a result, votes sometimes carry more weight than pure economics, and may carry more weight than overall community interests. This caveat has created conditions and terms such as NIMBYs (not in my backyard) and LULUs (locally undesirable land uses).

Ownership can and does change over time. Conflicts arise when land use activities by one

user have a real or perceived impact on another user's utility or appreciation or when a user's activities conflict with the broader community interest.

For example, forestland can be used for timber production, watershed protection, tourism, bird watching, vacation homes and hunting. Forestland can be owned by federal, state, tribal or local governments, corporations or individuals. A different owner may own the water or mineral rights. Cutting the forest for timber production creates economic wealth for the owner and well paying jobs and tax revenue for the local community. However, cutting the forest may negatively impact tourism businesses, reduce the value of vacation homes, and may decrease water quality through soil erosion. That parcel of forestland may be underlain by a significant mineral resource. Extracting that resource might generate jobs, tremendous wealth for the owners and tax revenue that could substantially offset state deficits and significantly lower, if not eliminate, local property taxes for as long as the extraction process continues. However, the extraction process may preclude other land uses for one or more generations, decrease water quality and destroy the current viewshed.

Each of these land uses and combination of ownerships are legal. Each provides economic gain and aesthetic values for different owners and segments of society, and each has its own set of costs. However, these land uses are not necessarily compatible with one another. What benefits one owner runs contrary to the preferences and benefits of another, and both may run contrary to what is best for the community as a whole.

Current Action

Land use decisions in this country are fundamentally tied to the concept of private prop-

erty rights. The focus on individualism without the balance of community turns the question regarding who bears the cost of those decisions and who reaps the benefits into a legal issue. As a result, our legal system is constantly reevaluating existing property rights assumptions and laws, and revising and establishing new laws as cultural values change, new issues emerge or to offset negative consequences, such as water and air pollution.

The phrase "It's my land I can do what I want with it." echoes through most land use planning or implementation proceedings. This phrase may be offset by neighbors who do not wish a particular type of development, such as a factory, utility plant or multifamily units in their neighborhood. The very presence of vocal opposition may be enough to kill a project, regardless of the community benefit which would be derived from that project. When new developments are proposed and public opposition is not present, communities focus on income generation and tax revenues, and rarely expect a cost benefit analysis to be performed. As a consequence, the discussion focuses on the economic gains to be accrued by the owner and the community. Little attention is paid to environmental and social costs or the increase in infrastructure and service costs to be borne by the taxpayer.

Core Goals

1. Encourage a balance between individual property rights and community interests and goals.
2. Encourage public participation in comprehensive planning.

Changing Community Character

FACT SHEET: L5

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2030

Key Facts

Community character is the social, economic and physical characteristics of a particular place. It not only includes size, density, climate, landscape and architectural styles and the condition and layout of buildings and infrastructure. It also includes existing educational, economic and social opportunities. It reflects the community's heritage, cultural identity and the health, economic well being and values of its current residents.

Community character is a nebulous concept, as it is defined through the experiences and preferences of individuals, who may look at the exact same environment, yet see it from entirely different viewpoints. A resident from a large, densely populated urban area might view the City of Appleton as a rural community, while a resident from a more rural community will see it as urban. A wealthy resident may be completely unaware of the daily struggles of residents whose incomes are well below the poverty level. A young, active single person may not be aware of the impact schools have on a community or the needs of elderly residents who can no longer drive.

So What!

Without strict definitions, these differences in perception make it difficult for local government officials to assess residents' preferences, react consistently to different development proposals (particularly in a competitive environment), plan for the future and determine the appropriate levels of investment for community growth and development.

Communities change over time, declining and growing as population and economic opportunities change. Those changes can induce conflict between residents, particularly if those residents hold very different views regarding community. For instance, commuters, seasonal residents or retirees often favor non-commodity uses of farm and forestland, while residents tied to the local economy favor a working landscape that provides jobs. Both sets of residents say they value rural character; but they value a different set of characteristics, density and likely also expect different levels of government services.

These conflicts are rooted not only in the potential aesthetics of the community and property rights conflicts, they have an economic component as well. For example, the seasonal resident, commuter or retiree may favor development policies, which promote tourism over forestry and nonfarm uses over active farms. However, the average yearly wage within the tourism sector is \$11,000, while the average yearly wage within the wood based industry is \$25,000¹. For the community to say we want to promote tourism and reduce our dependence on the timber industry, without considering other opportunities, is to ask residents dependent on the local economy to accept a substantial cut in wages. Allowing a farmer to develop his land provides housing opportunities and cash benefits for that farmer. However, it also increases the need for additional public services and may cause economic, land use and transportation conflicts for the farmer who wishes to maintain or expand his operation. Local officials determine the amount and type of community investments, in the context of

¹ DNR Forest management plan.

available public dollars and input from businesses, staff and residents. Available public dollars are determined in part by tax base and the amount residents can and are willing, to pay in the form of taxes. How and where those public dollars are invested is challenging. Communities can invest most of their resources in growth areas, thereby letting older portions of the community decline; invest most of their resources in existing neighborhoods, or try to balance community dollars between existing neighborhoods and growth areas. They may be fiscally conservative and insist on compact, contiguous development or speculatively fund low density leapfrog ventures.

Communities may benefit from philanthropic individuals or nonprofit organizations, who invest private dollars and time into parks, schools and poorer neighborhoods, or suffer because wealthier residents are isolated and unaware of problems that exist outside of their immediate neighborhood.

Communities within the region have expressed a strong desire for growth. That growth will change the character of every community within our region by changing community structure, demographics and creating a demand for additional infrastructure, services and taxes to meet those demands. As our region continues to grow, the challenge lies in how do we accommodate change while protecting our aesthetics and environment, and provide for a vibrant economy and high quality of life for all citizens.

Current Action

The lack of a common frame of reference coupled with pressure from businesses who want to lower their costs and maintain a corporate style and market acceptance has resulted in communities throughout the country losing their individual character and identity to a homogenized cookie-cutter landscape. The

social, economic and cultural costs associated with this ubiquitous, low density, auto-dependent landscape prompted James Kunstler to write "Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape". Several authors have published books on community design and the importance of public and private spaces. In response to concerns with rising obesity and health risks associated with our modern landscape, the medical community has joined with other professionals to develop the concept of a "healthy community".

Successful Main Street and downtown redevelopment projects, such as those in Ripon and Oshkosh are providing opportunities to preserve the traditional downtown. Little Chute is investing in features to emphasize and preserve their Dutch heritage.

Core Goals

1. Educate the public on potential cultural, economic and land use conflicts.
2. Encourage comprehensive planning, which includes significant public involvement in the planning process.
3. Develop a community character guide to provide residents, staff and officials with a common frame of reference in which to make land use decisions.
4. Identify techniques, which can be used to preserve local community character.
5. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and coordination.
6. Encourage the uniform administration of quality building code standards to eliminate visual blight in an efficient, cost effective manner.

Land Use Key Findings

Vision Statement

"In 2030 in the East Central Wisconsin region, efficient regional land use patterns foster healthy communities, individual community identity, and respect the natural environment."

Issues/Opportunities

Land Consumption

Growth within the region will not only present redevelopment opportunities, but will require more land to be converted as well. The amount of land converted to meet future growth will vary depending on intensity, density and design of future development projects. Competition will occur between land uses, and design and placement will impact land costs as well as our quality of life and the cost effectiveness and efficiency of public services.

- How do we promote recognition of the relationship between the density of settlement and the amount and location of land consumed for housing, commercial and industrial uses and the cost of services, so that we can promote land use configurations that maximize the delivery of effective and efficient public services (police, fire, roads, etc.)?
- How do we promote infill development, and redevelopment of vacant properties?
- How do we reduce the movement of government facilities from urban areas and downtowns to fringe areas, and promote the expansion of government facilities within urban areas, without reducing affordable housing options?
- How do we attract new businesses and provide affordable housing in the face of rising land values?

Development vs Natural Resources

Accommodating the realities of urban growth and exurban and rural development pressures will impact natural and cultural resources. The choices made regarding which land develops and how it develops will determine which features will be preserved, and which will be lost. Attention must be paid to the natural resource base and proposed uses in order to limit negative environmental and health impacts.

- How do we provide adequate protection of natural, cultural and agricultural resources, while still accommodating the realities of exurban and rural development pressures?
- How do we protect surface waters and subsurface ground water from pollution resulting from rural and urban land uses?

Development vs Farm and Forest Lands

Farm, forest and open space lands are an integral part of the region's landscape, heritage and economy. As our built environment expands, farm, forest and open space lands will decrease and may be fragmented as well. The majority of development pressure will occur in our urban counties where the best farmland is located. Opposition to farmland preservation exists. Yet balance must be achieved to meet development needs and protect the economic vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors.

- How do we address the conflicts that will arise given that the majority of future growth is expected to occur in the urban counties, which is where most of the region's more productive farmland is located?
- How do we ensure the economic vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors in the context of a decrease in the amount of open space?
- How do we maintain family farms in the face of increasing economic pressures and competition for land for other uses?
- How do we address conflicts that arise from balancing the right to farm with expectations of exurban residents?

Balancing Community Interests and Property Rights

All land use has an impact, not only on that particular parcel and that particular landowner, but also on the adjacent parcels, their owners, on the community, and sometimes, on the region as a whole. Therefore, balancing community interests and property rights is necessary to protect the rights of all citizens, minimize the negative effects of various land uses and maximize the positive benefits of changing land uses.

- How do we reduce conflicts between exurban and long term rural residents?
- How do we balance property rights between individuals and balance property rights with broad community interests?

Changing Community Character

The low density, auto-dependent, heavily franchised growth occurring within the region has lent a quality of sameness to many of our communities. Many residents have become concerned about the loss of individual community character and identity. Continued growth and development will continue to change the character of our communities and our region. Residents have expressed a desire to accommodate that growth, yet protect the region's aesthetics, environment, economy and unique characteristics.

- How do we balance economic, environmental, and aesthetic considerations?
- How do we define rural character?
 - Once it is defined, how do we preserve rural character?

- How can we develop and administer quality building code standards and eliminate visual blight in an efficient, cost effective manner, particularly in rural areas, with limited staff?

Match/Mismatch between Envisioned and Probable Future

Currently:

- Infill development and redevelopment is occurring in our urban communities.
- However, low density residential, commercial and industrial development is consuming forest, farm and open space land faster than anticipated.
- Forest, farmland and wildlife fragmentation is taking place.
- Government costs are rising to serve inefficient development patterns.
- State stormwater and site control regulations have been strengthened to help improve water quality.
- A variety of organizations including health organizations and planning, environmental and housing groups are banding together to promote "healthy communities".

To meet the envisioned future:

- Additional land will be converted from farm, forest and open space lands to accommodate urban and exurban growth.
- Infill development, increased densities and efficient development patterns can maximize existing infrastructure and promote ease of movement between land uses, while minimizing the amount of land converted.
- Redevelopment projects should improve the quality of our built environment, make use of existing infrastructure and bring delinquent properties back on the tax rolls, without threatening historical and cultural resources and affordable housing opportunities.
- New development should promote individual community character and lend itself to a more people friendly environment.

Core Goals

Fact Sheet 1: Land Consumption

1. Educate the public on potential conflicts and trade-offs associated with alternative development patterns.
2. Encourage efficient development in order to reduce land use conflicts and contain community costs.
3. Encourage cooperation and coordination, not only between governments, but also between the government and the private and nonprofit sectors.
4. Encourage infill development and redevelopment of vacant properties; and promote the expansion of public facilities within urban areas, without reducing affordable housing options and the presence of local business establishments.
5. Encourage the development and enhancement of programs, which promote affordable housing, efficient transportation alternatives and development patterns, at all local government levels.

Fact Sheet 2: Development vs Natural Resources

1. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and coordination to identify, preserve and protect key natural and cultural resources.
2. Encourage development patterns, designs and technologies, which minimize pressure on our natural and cultural resources.
3. Encourage the enforcement of existing regulations to preserve and protect natural and cultural resources.
4. Increase educational efforts throughout the region and encourage informed choices.

Fact Sheet 3: Development vs Farm and Forest Lands

1. Educate the public regarding the realities of the farm and forest sectors and cultural and economic benefits of farm and forest land.
2. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and coordination to facilitate the development of innovative, efficient land use patterns, which reduce land use conflicts and support the economic vitality of the agricultural and forestry sectors.
3. Encourage alternative agricultural methods and entities to meet niche markets and provide educational and recreational opportunities for urban residents.

Fact Sheet 4: Balancing Community Interests and Property Rights

1. Encourage a balance between individual property rights and community interests and goals.
2. Encourage public participation in comprehensive planning.

Fact Sheet 5: Changing Community Character

1. Educate the public on potential cultural, economic and land use conflicts.
2. Encourage comprehensive planning, which includes significant public involvement in the planning process.
3. Develop a community character guide to provide residents, staff and officials with a common frame of reference in which to make land use decisions.
4. Identify techniques, which can be used to preserve local community character.
5. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation and coordination.
6. Encourage the uniform administration of quality building code standards to eliminate visual blight in an efficient, cost effective manner.

Conclusion

The vision, five major issues and core goals will be carried forward into the next report, *Milestone Report #3: Policies for Action*. During the Milestone #3 process, we will develop policies for action to achieve the identified goals, and develop targets, or performance measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies. Any implemented policy will have intended and unintended consequences. As a result, during the Milestone #3 process, we will also try to identify those policy links in an effort to predict what impacts land use policies may have on other plan elements.

CHAPTER 12: CONCLUSION

East Central produced *Milestone Report #1: State of the Region (2003)* for two primary reasons.

- To provide useful, accessible information to people in their communities, local government staff and officials, and interest groups.
- To collate baseline information that enabled us all to understand the basic make-up of the region and provide the foundation on which to plan for the future. It explored current and future trends, and identified issues in nine broad categories: demographic and socioeconomic data, economic development, housing, transportation, community facilities, agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, and land use. It also examined examples of intergovernmental cooperation currently in place throughout the region.

Along with input from the public participation process the first report enabled East Central to take the next step in the regional planning process; to develop a vision of our preferred future. This has been the focus of the current report.

Milestone Report #2 has been produced for three main reasons

- To clarify our aspirations for how we want the region to look in the future, specifically: "What would we like to be preserved"? "What would we like to be changed"? and "What would we like to be created"?
- To explore the impact of current and projected trends on the region. This enabled us to identify the match and / or mismatch between our envisioned and probable future.
- To identify core goals to help us work toward the future we envision for ourselves and the next generation.

In beginning to think about the future, we have taken a broad, long term, proactive approach. Our goal has been to become aware of the broader context of our decisions and conscious of the forces of change, which more often than not, may originate outside the region. In addition, we attempted to embrace many uncertainties as we involved all stakeholders in clarifying a preferred future.

Two primary approaches were adopted.

- First, for the trends that are most likely, for example, an aging population, an increasing number of households and a reduction in household size, we asked how we respond.
- Second, for the areas of greatest conflict, we reexamined our basic assumptions about the issues and asked are there better ways to address these challenges.

The core component of Milestone Report #2 is a series of fact sheets on the issues identified, which will be addressed in the regional plan. Each fact sheet presents information on the key facts, explains why action is necessary, outlines current action and concludes by identifying core goals.

Regional Vision Statement:

"In 2030, east central Wisconsin is a thriving, inclusive community. The region supports strong economic development while providing an excellent quality of life for all. The norm is consistent, balanced, and cost effective land use decisions that promote the economic, social, and environmental well being of the region and all of its citizens. Communities are smart about addressing growth issues in both urban and rural areas. They are successful in achieving a reasonable balance between individual property rights and community interests and goals".

Action is required for a variety of reasons, including the following:

- The loss of manufacturing jobs along with the fact that many of the industries that are growing, pay lower wages has the potential to lower the standard of living for many middle-class families.
- A lack of affordable housing makes it difficult for companies to attract and retain workers.
- Sprawl development results in longer trips to work and shop, increases the vehicle miles traveled, and leads to more congestion, which wastes time and money.
- The economic viability of the region is dependent on a highly developed infrastructure of community and public facilities: such as water, utilities, telecommunications, and waste water disposal.
- There is a limited supply of prime farmland in the region and the farm economy is going through major changes.
- The region's water supply is at risk. Portions of the region are in an "Arsenic Advisory Area" and many of the regions' areas are considered to be highly susceptible to aquifer contamination.
- The loss of historic buildings and cultural resources detracts from the region's distinctive sense of place.
- Growth and development is impacting farm, forest and open lands and natural resources. It is generating land use conflicts and creating a demand for additional public facilities and services.

Core Goal:

- East Central's core goal is to promote communities that are better places in which to live. That is communities that are economically prosperous, have homes at an affordable price, respect the countryside, enjoy well designed and accessible living and working environments, and maintain a distinct sense of place and community.

What's Next?

The envisioned future and the core goals identified in *Milestone Report # 2*, will provide the starting point for the next report: *Milestone Report #3: Goals and Strategies for Action*.

Between May and January 2005, staff, working cooperatively with stakeholders, will develop strategies and policies for action to help move us toward the envisioned future.

There are, of course, many different ways to achieve the goals that have been established: there is no one right answer, there are many answers. The next stage of the planning process will require us to consider and discuss all the possibilities, affording each the same respect. The ultimate objective of *Milestone Report #3* will be to reach a well reasoned conclusion on how to achieve the goals; the preferred policies and strategies for action. To achieve real progress, development of policies will need to be pursued in an integrated way. There is a need for close cooperation and partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors at the regional, county and local levels. The policy choices that are made will have long-term impacts on residents' quality of life: socially, economically and environmentally. Consequently, it is crucial that we are all involved in the decision making process.

As we develop policies and strategies for action, we will also develop targets, or performance measures. This step is essential to enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies over time. Plans are useless without targets, but they must be the right ones.

APPENDIX A

Local Comprehensive Planning Goals

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitat, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit dependent and disabled citizens.

APPENDIX B

Solid Waste and Recycling

The committee felt that one of the key findings from Milestone Report #1 should be reworded to clarify the activities of the counties involved. The new statement should read "Winnebago, Outagamie and Brown counties have recently entered into a 25-year agreement to handle the disposal of solid waste and process of recyclables in their respective counties".

Additionally, time was spent by the committee reviewing the future trends that had been identified in the Milestone Report #1 and identifying additional trends. A change was made to the second trend that was listed in the first report. Therefore the following trends were identified for this sub-element:

- There is enough landfill space remaining to meet the future needs of the region. However, further consideration may need to be given to the impacts of accepting waste from outside the region or state.
- The large number of electronics as a whole that need to be disposed of is a cause for concern.
- Consolidation of solid waste and recycling facilities will continue to be a viable option for counties to consider.
- The percentage of people recycling in Wisconsin in 2002 has decreased slightly since the peak in 1998.
- The amount of solid waste generation per person in Wisconsin is increasing.
- The economy has influenced waste generation rates, following September 11, 2001, a decrease in the amount of solid waste generation was experienced by the state.
- Year-round disposal of household hazardous waste is becoming a more standard practice.
- In the future, it will be important to capture the organic waste stream.
- There is a trend toward single stream collection.
- There is a trend by private haulers to collect recyclables more frequently.
- Rural areas are still utilizing drop off sites and burning of materials.

Utility Infrastructure

The committee spent time reviewing the future trends that had been identified in the Milestone Report #1 and identified new trends. When identifying new trends, the committee tried to anticipate how current trends or possible trends that they were seeing, could be brought forward through the year 2030. Revisions to the trends outlined in the first report are included below.

Telecommunications

- Broadband and fiber fed services will increase in use. SBC will be installing more fiber optics in the ground. In the future higher speeds and more band width will be available.
- The trend will be toward increased cell phone use but some form of land lines will continue to be used in home.
- Data transport will increase.
- There will be a mix of land lines, satellites and cell phones.

Utilities

- Following national trends, gas usage is expected to increase substantially over the next several years, as new generation plants will likely be fueled by natural gas.
- Gas consumption will increase because of residential and commercial growth.
- Base load, peaking plants and industrial power plants will contribute to the future gas demand.
- Increase in natural gas prices may slow growth and usage, and may cause other energy sources to be utilized.
- Unless additional currently restricted sources of natural gas are utilized, natural gas usage will be reduced due to high prices caused by an inadequate domestic supply.
- Fuel cell power plants may be common in the future.
- The trend since the mid 80's has been to shy away from new nuclear power plants, but this trend may reverse in the future.
- Conventional electric utilities will continue to be viable for residential and commercial usage.
- Due to the growing multi state market for power; there will be a growing need for power transfer facilities.
- In the future there could be a trend toward decentralized generation.
- In the future, the need for and growth of conventional utility infrastructure will continue.
- New utilities will need to rely more on existing utility corridors.
- There will be a trend toward multi use utility corridors.
- Landowners, government agencies and others will continue to make demands that increase costs for installation of facilities.
- There is an increasing concern regarding aesthetics of utility infrastructure.

Alternative Energy

- It is anticipated that there will be some increase in the demand for alternative energy sources, such as fuel cells and wind farms.
- Hydroelectric power generation will not increase significantly and will garner a small share of the energy market.
- There is increasing interest in wind power generation.
- The increasing viability of other alternative energy sources is evident.
- Opposition by the public to new or expanded existing facilities is increasing and becoming more organized.

Public Safety

The committee spent time identifying current trends in relation to public safety issues and how these trends and how these trends may be influenced in the future. The following trends were identified for this sub-element:

Jails – county and municipal

- There are an increasing number of people being incarcerated at both the county and municipal level, thus putting a strain on jail and office space.
- There are an increasing number of people being incarcerated at the state level.

Police

- There is a trend toward regional police forces.

Fire

- Fire departments continue to be relatively small sized in nature.

Emergency Medical

- In the future, emergency medical service areas will be smaller.
- In the future, more First Responders will be needed.
- There is a need to reduce the cost of providing emergency medical services.
- Since emergency providers work during the day in other communities, communities are less protected during the day.
- The level of Emergency Medical Services that currently exists may not be around in the future, because of escalating costs and training of personnel.

Education and Libraries

The committee felt that it was important to clarify that small districts could be just as efficient as larger districts and that Menominee Tribal College was located within the region. The following trends were identified for this sub-element:

- There may be an increased reliance on user fees to fund higher education.
- The funding mechanisms for primary education (K – 12) may remain the status quo.
- As constraints on budgets increase, school funding may rely more on alternative funding.
- Enrollment in secondary education is increasing.
- Higher education facilities are at capacity; therefore consolidation of higher educational facilities to save costs may not be possible.
- Funding may have a major impact in the consolidation of primary educational facilities and programs.
- Charter schools may continue to be an alternative for at risk (non-traditional) students.
- All day kindergarten is becoming more widely accepted and popular among the various school districts.
- Schools are seeing more ESL students, which is putting additional pressure on the public schools.
- As employment in an area changes, the student demographics of an area change.
- The population of the Fox Cities continues to increase due to influx of new people.
- The number of children living in poverty is increasing in the Clintonville area.
- Due to the depressed economy, there is an increasing demand for higher education by non-traditional students (people who have been laid off, mid-level management)
- The committee feels that there is a growing need to educate educators.
- Standardized tests, that are used to evaluate students' knowledge, are making schools more accountable.
- It was the committees feeling that the increase in state and federal mandates is resulting in loss of local control for school districts.
- The committee felt that the year-round educational system will not be popular in this area.

- In the summer, parents seem to prefer summer school to daycare.
- Many districts that have tried year round schools; return to the traditional school year because parents do not want to give up family time (ease of scheduling family vacations).
- It is more economical to use school facilities year round.
- Some students begin their education at a technical college, and then transfer to a 4 year college to finish.
- While other students start at a 4 year college, and then transfer to the technical college system.
- With the sluggish economy, more students are staying home and attending 2-year colleges.

Health and Childcare

The committee identified health and childcare issues and examined how these may be influenced in the future. The following trends were identified for this sub-element:

Hospitals - general

- Many procedures that were originally performed in the hospital as an inpatient are now performed on an outpatient basis.
- Hospitals no longer have specific areas of expertise; today urban hospitals are experts in all fields and have equipment to treat all illnesses.
- Hospitals are no longer independents, but are affiliated with clinics or healthcare providers.
- Hospital closures increase transportation costs, since people need to travel further for services.
- People are leaving hospitals sooner and/or using outpatient services, therefore people are being released before they are self sufficient.

Hospitals - Rural

- Rural areas are losing their local hospitals.
- Physicians are traveling to rural clinics to see patients but do not live in the area.
- There are fewer providers in rural areas.
- Rural hospitals are forming alliances or partnerships with major hospitals.
- Rural hospitals provide fewer services than larger metropolitan hospitals.
- Rural hospitals receive a smaller reimbursement from Medicare than larger metropolitan hospitals.

Health Care Costs

- The influx of new providers may increase health care costs further as providers are competing for the same limited number of workers.
- New facilities will need to be paid for.
- Rising health costs are forcing businesses to relocate (overseas) in order to stay competitive.
- More people are finding themselves without health or dental insurance.
- Increasing numbers of people living at or below poverty level will require care. Who will pay for this care? Hospitals will need to set up indigent funds; this money will be recovered from everyone else who uses this facility.

- Companies are no longer extending health care insurance to retired workers.
- In the future, health care caps may have to be placed on services to limit the amount of money that can be spent on any one individual.

Nursing Shortage

- There is a current shortage of nurses.
- Nurses work long hours which often fluctuate between day, night and evening shifts.
- Nurses frequently work in understaffed situations and have difficulty completing all the tasks that are assigned them.
- Nursing instructors are aging and retiring from the workforce

Nursing Homes:

- The regions nursing homes are nearing capacity.
- There is an increase in the number of assisted living facilities.
- Nursing homes are geographically disbursed and are not necessarily affiliated with a provider.
- Nursing homes provide progressive care.
- Nursing homes are providing interim care between hospitals and home.

In-Home Care

- Medicare will not pay for in home care; therefore even though people prefer to stay in their own homes, they are forced to live in nursing homes.
- Twenty-four hour professional in home care is more costly than care in nursing homes.
- Funding for elderly/disabled care is shifting from the traditional to evaluating what does the individual need and how can this be done in the cheapest manner.

Mental Health Care:

- There is a lack of mental health care providers, especially psychologists and psychiatrists.

Childcare:

- There is a shortage of affordable quality childcare in the Fox Cities.
- There does not appear to be a need in the area to provide evening childcare.
- There is a need to provide care for sick children when parents work.
- There are not enough adequately trained childcare providers in the Fox Cities.
- A larger percentage of women are continuing to enter the workplace.

Local Parks and Recreational Facilities

The committee felt that while Milestone Report #1 mentioned a number of recreational facilities and events throughout the region, other notable facilities and events also exist and should be included in this report. These facilities and events included the Calumet County tubing and sledding hill near Stockbridge; Navarino Ski Hill in Shawano County; Shawano indoor ice arena; Waupaca Curling Club; local soccer tournaments (Upper Midwest, Flat Grass, etc.); local baseball tournaments (Kimberly ISA International Softball Congress) and "blueways", a non-motorized water trail on Little Lake Butte des Morts that is in the planning stages.

The committee spent time reviewing the future trends that had been identified in the Milestone Report #1 and identified new trends. When identifying new trends, the committee tried to anticipate how current trends or possible trends that they were seeing, could be brought forward through the year 2030. The following trends were identified for this sub-element:

Elderly

- The elderly share of the population will continue grow and to be more active, therefore impacting the recreational facilities that will be required.
- The elderly share of the population will be looking less for organized team sports, and more for facilities for individual activities, hiking trails and short organized trips.

Cost Recovery:

- As local budgets continue to become more restrictive, fees may need to be charged to cover maintenance costs. (Cost Recovery)
- Non-profits, who have enjoyed the free use of certain recreational facilities, may need to be charged to use these same facilities.
- Due to smaller budgets and less staff, communities may need to contract out for more services in order to offer the same amount of programming.
- Communities will need to form partnerships with private organizations to continue to maintain the same level of programs. (tap dancing)
- Communities and schools will need to continue to form partnerships to share facilities and to provide quality recreational programs.
- School and recreational facilities will need to be shared and should be designed to accommodate more than one use.
- The use of development fees for park acquisition and development in new growth areas.

Future Recreational Needs:

- The public will continue to demand sports, recreational and educational programs.
- Communities will probably continue to offer recreational programs and the use of recreational facilities to the public for less than cost.
- In the future, additional dog park facilities may be needed.

Other:

- In the future there may be more privatized facilities, such as the YMCA.