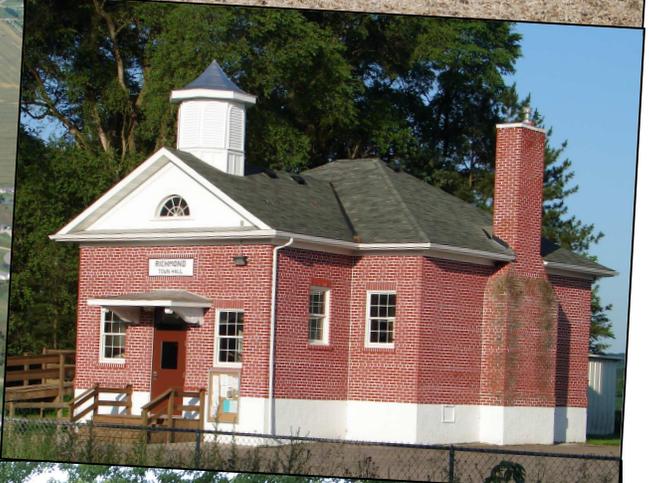




# TOWN OF RICHMOND



2010 – 2035

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN







Adopted on April 14, 2011

Richmond Town Board

Prepared by:

St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department

University of Wisconsin-Extension

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State of Wisconsin

Department of Administration

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Town of Richmond photos this page and on cover  
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## INTRODUCTION

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

In addition to coordination from the Regional Plan Commission, St. Croix County assisted the Town of Richmond in developing this plan. The town plan commission worked to develop the plan for three years. The Richmond Town Board adopted the Plan on April 14, 2011.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

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

The Town of Richmond adopted a written public participation plan as required by statute. Each of the activities described and carried out in the public participation plan is summarized below. St. Croix County created a webpage for Richmond's comprehensive planning project on its website and has posted public participation materials and plan documents to the page through out the project. The webpage link is: [www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan](http://www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan). A copy of the public participation plan is found in the Appendix.

## ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES WORKSHOP

The town held a joint issues and opportunities workshop with the other communities in the project, St. Croix County, Town of Emerald and Village of Deer Park, on November 11, 2008 at the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in New Richmond to identify issues and opportunities within the town. The results were used to supplement the results of the public opinion surveys in creating the vision statements for each community's future.

The top issues identified by the Town of Richmond were: alternative energy; town hall improvements; safe road design; affordable housing; new business start-up; balancing growth and agriculture; water quality and protection of riverbanks and wetlands; walkways and bike paths; education and separation for mining operations; protection of environmentally sensitive areas and parks; boundary agreement with the City of New Richmond; and land use for growth and development. The town's complete workshop results are available on the webpage.

## ***PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY***

In October 2008 the Survey Research Center at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls mailed comprehensive planning surveys to all residences and property owners in the Town of Richmond for which there was a valid address. The surveys were followed up with reminder postcards and a second mailing to non-respondents. Of the 1,053 Town residences and property owners receiving a questionnaire, a total of 650 (62 percent) were returned, entered and analyzed. Based on the adult population in the Town, the results are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.2 percent, which is a very high level for this type of analysis. This means that if all residents had responded to the survey, then 95 out of 100 times the results for each question would be the same, plus or minus 3.2 percentage points.

Any survey has to be concerned with “non-response bias.” Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who don’t return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. The demographic profile of the sample contains fewer young people than would be expected and respondents have more formal education and higher household incomes. However, based upon a standard statistical analysis that is described in Survey Report Appendix A, the Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that there is little evidence that non-response bias is a concern for this sample. In short, the data gathered in this survey is expected to accurately reflect public opinion about the planning issues facing the Town of Richmond.

The purpose of this study was to gather opinions of residents about community planning issues regarding the future of the Town of Richmond. The survey serves as a key component of the public participation portion of the comprehensive plan for the Town. The results of this survey indicate that, in large measure, Richmond residents are pleased with the quality of life they have in the Town. They particularly value the small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle, cost of housing, and the natural beauty of the Town. They value the natural and cultural resources in the Town and are willing to use tax dollars and regulations to protect the resources that make the Town a place they find attractive as a place to live. On the other hand, there is also a clear desire for lower taxes among property owners in the Town. The rate of growth this decade divides the residents of the town into a slightly larger group who said the growth rate of this decade is about right and a relatively large minority who said the Town is growing too rapidly.

Key results are summarized below. The full report on the Town of Richmond’s survey results is available on the town’s project webpage [www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan](http://www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan).

### **KEY SURVEY RESULTS**

- Richmond residents said they are generally pleased with the quality of life they enjoy. Nine in ten rated the quality of life as good or excellent, and few rate it as only fair or poor. The factors that induce people to live in Richmond are small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle, cost of housing, and natural beauty and surroundings.
- Public services and facilities were given positive ratings by a majority of the respondents. The highest rated services and facilities were garbage collection/clean up days, recycling, the public school system, and the New Richmond public library.
- A majority of Richmond residents are willing to use public funds for the following recreational facilities: off-road hiking and nature trails, hunting and fishing access on public land, ballfields and other facilities in New Richmond, and on-road bicycle routes.

- Large majorities of respondents indicated that they have a high level of concern about preserving the Town's various natural resources (groundwater, surface water, air, etc.) and cultural heritage. The majority of those who think it is important to protect the Town's natural and cultural resources are also willing to use regulations and taxes to protect those resources.
- Most respondents said the current network of roads in the Town meets current needs, and two-thirds said the condition of Town roads is acceptable. However, there is concern in the responses about specific streets and intersections. Four in ten said that improvement of the quality of the Town's roads was second among their top three priorities (behind reducing property taxes).
- Majorities of respondents agreed or strongly agreed there is a need for more single family housing and senior housing, but majorities said they did not see a need for more housing subdivisions, seasonal/recreational homes, multi-family units, or mobile homes.
- A majority of the respondents (56 percent) said the addition of 1,327 new residents since 2000 was "about right amount of growth." Among the 44 percent who did not agree with the current growth rate, most felt the growth was "too much." Balancing the opinions and desires of these two groups presents a particular challenge for the plan commission and the town board.
- Residents clearly preferred conservation design for rural housing developments, which features smaller individual lots with preserved common open space in the development. Richmond residents were also open to reducing the minimum lot size for housing near existing communities and raising the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Regarding appropriate types of businesses in the Town, respondents favored a variety of business types, including agriculture/agri-business, wind power, home based businesses, composting, convenience stores, golf courses, and retail.
- A large majority of respondents said productive agricultural land within the Town should be used for agriculture. At the same time 55 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the use of productive agricultural land for residential use as well. Respondents opposed use of productive farmland for commercial or industrial uses. A majority said they are concerned about the amount of farmland being converted to non-farm uses. Overall, nearly 70 percent disagreed that landowners should be able to develop their land any way they want, but a majority of farmland owners agreed with this proposition.
- A majority said they support programs to use public funds to purchase development rights from private landowners in order to preserve farmland, open space or environmentally important areas, but residents oppose programs that allow developers to purchase development rights in one area and transfer them to another area in return for being allowed to increase the density of development. Large majorities said they believe it is important or very important to cooperate with neighboring governments on land use issues and sharing public services.
- Direct mail is the preferred method of receiving information from the Town government.
- The top priority issue for Town residents was reduction of local property taxes. Improving the quality of the roads and developing a boundary agreement with New Richmond were a distant second and third.

- The Town’s relationship with the City of New Richmond is an important issue to the Town’s residents. Most gave high importance to cooperating on land annexations and emergency services and the development of a boundary agreement with the City.
- Residents expressed a wide variety of concerns when asked to list one thing they would like to change about the Town of Richmond. The most frequent topics were concerns about the recent amount of development in the Town and concerns about roads.

**DESIRED CHANGE IN RICHMOND**

Near the end of the survey, respondents were asked the following open-ended question, “If you could change one thing about the Town of Richmond, what would it be?” About half of respondents (305) chose to answer this question. The answers were grouped into specific topics by the SRC and are summarized in the table at right.

Although there were a variety of topics among the responses, three topics accounted for 56 percent of all comments. In a virtual tie for first place with 20 percent each were comments relating to development and growth in the Town and comments about roads and transportation.

Nearly all the comments about development and growth were concerns about the rate at which these have been occurring in Richmond. As noted earlier, 40 percent of the respondents said the Town has been growing too rapidly, and the comments within this topic contain the expressions of concern about that issue. Typical comments include:

*“Slow down the development of all those new houses.”*

*“Restrict and limit the number of housing and commercial developments.”*

The SRC divided the comments related to roads/transportation into two groups. First were a group related to specific roads and intersections, and within this group the most frequent issue was for improvements to 140<sup>th</sup> Street. The second group of transportation comments contained more general statements about streets and transportation. Typical comments include:

*“Widen the roads on 140th St. so that there is a center line and shoulders on both sides...it is dangerously narrow right now.”*

*“Please place a stop light or stop sign to break up traffic at Hwy 65/Hwy G junction. Something needs to be done!”*

Comments about local property taxes were in third place with 16 percent of the comments. Most responses related to taxes stated a specific desire for lower property taxation and concerns about inequitable assessments. Typical comments include:

*“Lower property taxes.” “Taxes are too high.”*

In addition to the numeric responses, respondents provided additional written comments which were compiled by the SRC from the surveys. Survey Report Appendix B contains the complete compilation of comments. Survey Report Appendix C contains a copy of the survey questionnaire with a quantitative summary of responses by question.

**One Change in Richmond by Topic**

| Topic                  | Count      | %           |
|------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Development/Growth     | 61         | 20%         |
| Roads/Transportation   | 60         | 20%         |
| Taxes                  | 49         | 16%         |
| Recreation             | 18         | 6%          |
| Police-Law Enforcement | 15         | 5%          |
| Appearance of Homes    | 13         | 4%          |
| Government             | 12         | 4%          |
| Shopping – Retail      | 10         | 3%          |
| Services – Utilities   | 9          | 3%          |
| Nothing/Like Richmond  | 9          | 3%          |
| Annexation             | 8          | 3%          |
| Communication          | 7          | 2%          |
| Environment            | 7          | 2%          |
| Town Hall              | 5          | 2%          |
| Employment             | 4          | 1%          |
| Miscellaneous          | 18         | 6%          |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>305</b> | <b>100%</b> |

## *VISIONING WORKSHOP*

In February 2009 residents, plan commissioners and town board members participated in a two-part visioning workshop. Visioning is a process by which a community envisions the future it wants and plans how to achieve it. The workshop was held over two evenings. The second evening built on the results of the first.

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

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

## *OPEN HOUSES*

The Town of Richmond held three open houses to review the sections of the plan with the public and obtain comments, questions and feedback throughout the process. The open house format provides an opportunity for direct dialogue between citizens, the town board and plan commissioners. All were attended by the public, town board and plan commission members. There were excellent dialogues between citizens and plan commission members. In addition, the community made the materials from the open house available for several months after the open house for citizen review and comment. Each open house was noticed in the Town's official newspaper, the New Richmond News, by posting at appropriate places in the community and through a direct mailing to every property owner and resident in the town.

The Town of Richmond's first Informational Open House was held on November 18, 2009 at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in New Richmond. It covered: Issues and Opportunities, Visioning Workshop Results, Survey Results, Utilities and Community Facilities element and Transportation element. After the open house the materials were moved to the town hall and posted for the next six months so residents could view information and provide comments. The information was well received.

The second Informational Open House was held August 9, 2010 at the Richmond Town Hall. It covered: Transportation, Housing, Economic Development, Agricultural Resources, Natural Resources, Cultural Resources and Intergovernmental Cooperation. The materials were left on display at the town hall for two months, after the open house, so more people would have an opportunity to view the information and provide comments. There were generally positive comments.

The third Informational Open House was held November 29, 2010. It covered Community Forecasts, Intergovernmental Cooperation, Land Use and Implementation. The materials were left on display at the town hall for two months, after the open house, so more people would have an opportunity to view the information and provide comments. The information was well received and positive feedback resulted.

## INTERACTIVE LAND USE WORKSHOP

An Interactive Land Use Workshop to discuss future land uses for the Town of Richmond was held at the town hall, on Monday, November 29, 2010. The workshop was conducted immediately following the open house to encourage more participants to attend and to tie all parts of the Land Use element together. Individual flyers were sent to all residents and land owners in Richmond. Participants were encouraged to attend both the open house and workshop, but it was not required.

Participants were given a visual preference survey, which is an interactive slide show of land uses. Each person was asked to vote on whether they liked or disliked photos of various land uses. The results show the land uses the participants think are appropriate in the Town of Richmond.

In the second part of the workshop there was a land use mapping exercise to identify potential locations for land uses. Using two trends, conservative and aggressive, of future land use projections, residents were asked to develop two future land use maps for the town. Open space, commercial, industrial, residential and agricultural land uses were identified as part of the exercise. Two dozen people working in three groups prepared three sets of maps. Plan Commission and Town Board members participated with the public.

At the end of the evening, participants were asked to vote on which trend they preferred to see in the town. They voted for each type of land use and overall. The clear winner was trend 1, conservative. The visual preference survey and draft maps were posted to the county website's Town of Richmond webpage, [www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan](http://www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan), for other residents to review.

The thinking that went into each group's map development and land use decisions is important to understanding the maps and trying to create a combined map for a future land use map for the town. Thoughts and concepts for each group are reported below:

### Group 1 Report:

*Open Space: The group felt open space should provide a buffer to land with limitations that would not allow development. The group agreed to add additional open space for Trend 2 of 40 acres per person.*

- Identified the Anderson Springs area and a buffer around it for protected open space.
- Provided additional open space along and as a buffer to the Willow River in sections 8, 9, 17 and 18.
- Added open space to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife lands around Ten Mile Creek.
- Provided open space adjacent to existing residential development in sections 4, 25 and 36.
- Identified open space around Brushy Mound Pond in Section 12.
- Provide a buffer to the Willow River Rod and Gun Club by protecting open space to the west in sections 5 and 6.
- Identified open space adjacent to suggested residential development in sections 7 and 8.



- Protect sensitive lands by using conservation design development to provide open space within subdivisions.

*Commercial & Industrial: The group agreed commercial development should be on STH 65 and some in unincorporated Boardman.*

- Strip commercial placed on STH 65 in sections 11, 14 and 15. About 35 acres with a similar configuration as the existing commercial around CTH G. No additional commercial was suggested at the STH 65 and CTH G intersection.



- A small four-acre commercial site for a convenience store and gas station was identified in Section 34 for residential development heading south on STH 65.
- Discussion of additional commercial the whole length of STH 65 but it was rejected.
- Neighborhood commercial was suggested for south of unincorporated Boardman on the west side of CTH A, 10 to 20 acres.
- The group discussed expansion of commercial at the diamond interchange on USH 64 but decided not to place any there as the existing commercial was sufficient.
- A small amount of commercial also place on CTH A in Section 17 as part of Trend 2.
- Industrial development was limited to expansion of the nonmetallic mining operations in the town in sections 15, 16, 21 and 22.

*Residential Development: Residential development was placed throughout the town in large subdivisions of 50 to 100 lots and small subdivisions of 10, 15 or 25 lots. About half the large subdivisions were conservation design.*

- Residential development was placed around the new high school.
- Subdivision development as added adjacent to some existing developments in sections 23, 27, 28, 33 and 34.
- Some group members focused residential development on the northwest corner of the town as they felt that was rougher topography and poorer farm ground.
- Conservation design development was scattered throughout the town and placed adjacent to resources like Brush Mound Pond, Willow River, wetlands and some farmland. Conservation design subdivisions were also placed around the nonmetallic mining operation.
- Conventional development was also scattered throughout the town and placed on resources like the Willow River, wetlands and farmland.

*Agriculture:*

- Protection of farmland was generally not identified as a factor in future land use locations.

**Group 2 Report:***Open Space:*

- Protected three open space sites along the Willow River in sections 9 and 17.
- Protected additional open space along the Willow River to the north east in section 1.
- Chose not to add to the publicly held land in the town.
- The group was reluctant to add open space without knowing how it would be accomplished



given the extent of existing publicly owned open space in the town. Consistent with the sites identified, the group agreed that it made the most sense to look for acceptable open space opportunities along water bodies with adjoining sensitive resources that are otherwise difficult to develop.

*Commercial & Industrial:*

- Commercial infill and expansion along STH 65 from the New Richmond city limits to south of 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Industrial development included all the land owned by the nonmetallic mining operation north of CTH G in sections 15 and 16.

*Residential Development:*

- Used conservation design and conventional development equally both in groupings of 100 lots.
- Used conservation design south of the high school, around Brushy Mound Pond, along the Willow River and around other wetland and environmental areas.
- Used conventional development to infill around existing and proposed subdivisions throughout the town.

*Agriculture:*

- Agricultural land use was generally not part of the discussion of future land uses.



**Group 3 Report:**

*Open Space:*

- The group added additional open space to the DNR land in the center of the town.
- They designated open space protection along the Willow River from unincorporated Boardman north.
- There was initial difficulty in adding open space due to the idea of taking or designating someone's land for open space or public use.

*Commercial & Industrial:*

- Most commercial was placed east of the diamond interchange on STH 64.
- Commercial development was located along STH 65 adjacent to existing sites and centered around CTH G where there is existing commercial.
- Some additional commercial was placed immediately south and adjacent to New Richmond. This would most likely get annexed if development did occur.
- Industrial land use was limited to expansion of the limestone, sand and gravel mining.

*Residential Development:*

- Residential development occurred through the use of large major subdivisions with no bias for or against conservation design.
- Some conservation design was used along the Willow River.
- It was the consensus of the group to place most of the residential subdivision growth north and south east of STH 65 to complete the residential development that has already occurred.



- Some residential development was scattered through the town with no land use decision making.

*Agriculture:*

- Residential development was generally concentrated east of STH 65 and infilled with existing development to reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses.

## PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

The Plan Commission referred the final draft of the comprehensive plan to the Town Board for review in February 2011. After Town Board review and subsequent revisions by the Plan Commission, a public hearing was held on March 28, 2011. The public hearing draft of the comprehensive plan was sent to the government bodies, agencies and organizations listed below for review and comment. Also, the plan was made available at the local libraries and on the county website's Town of Richmond webpage, [www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan](http://www.sccwi.us/richmondcompplan), for public review.

Wisconsin Land Information Office  
 West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
 Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
 UW-Extension - Baldwin  
 Wisconsin State Historical Society  
 St. Croix County Historical Society  
 St. Croix County  
 City of New Richmond  
 Town of Erin Prairie  
 Town of Hammond  
 Town of Somerset  
 Town of Stanton  
 Town of Star Prairie  
 Town of St. Joseph  
 Town of Warren  
 New Richmond School District  
 Somerset School District

St. Croix Central School District  
 New Richmond Library  
 Roberts Library  
 Somerset Library  
 St. Croix County Sportsmen's Alliance  
 Willow River Rehabilitation District  
 New Richmond Preservation Society  
 New Richmond Fire and Ambulance  
 New Richmond Multipurpose Pathways Committee  
 New Richmond Airport Commission  
 Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics  
 New Richmond Economic Development Corp.  
 St. Croix Valley Builder's & Realtor's Associations  
 St. Croix Economic Development Corp.  
 Cemstone Ready-Mix Nonmetallic Mining  
 Tammec Nonmetallic Mining  
 Utecht's Sand & Gravel Nonmetallic Mining

The plan commission passed a resolution recommending the plan to the town board on March 28, 2011. The Richmond Town Board adopted the 2010-2035 Comprehensive Plan by ordinance on April 14, 2011. A certified copy of the adopting ordinance is included below. Copies of the adopted comprehensive plan were sent to the government bodies, agencies and organizations listed above.

**RICHMOND ADOPTING ORDINANCE**

**ORDINANCE TO ADOPT  
TOWN OF RICHMOND 2010 – 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
Ordinance No. 11-1**

The Town Board of the Town of Richmond of St. Croix County, Wisconsin, does ordain as follows:

**Pursuant** to sections 62.23(2) and (3) of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Richmond is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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

The Town Plan Commission has held a public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

The Plan Commission of the Town of Richmond, by a majority vote of the entire commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled TOWN OF RICHMOND 2010 – 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN containing all the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

The Town Board of the Town of Richmond, does by the enactment of this ordinance formally adopt the document entitled, TOWN OF RICHMOND 2010 – 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN public hearing draft dated 3-28-11 pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes and also adopts any amendments that are identified in the attached list, Recommended Amendments, and that are or may be recommended by the Plan Commission or Town Board as a result of the public hearing comments.

This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members of the Town Board and published as required by law.

ADOPTED this 14th day of April 2011.

  
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Todd Rehnelt, Chair Town of Richmond

Effective: May 6, 2011  
(Date)

Published: May 5, 2011  
(Date)

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna Preece, Clerk Town of Richmond