



TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE
2010 – 2030



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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

**Prepared by:
St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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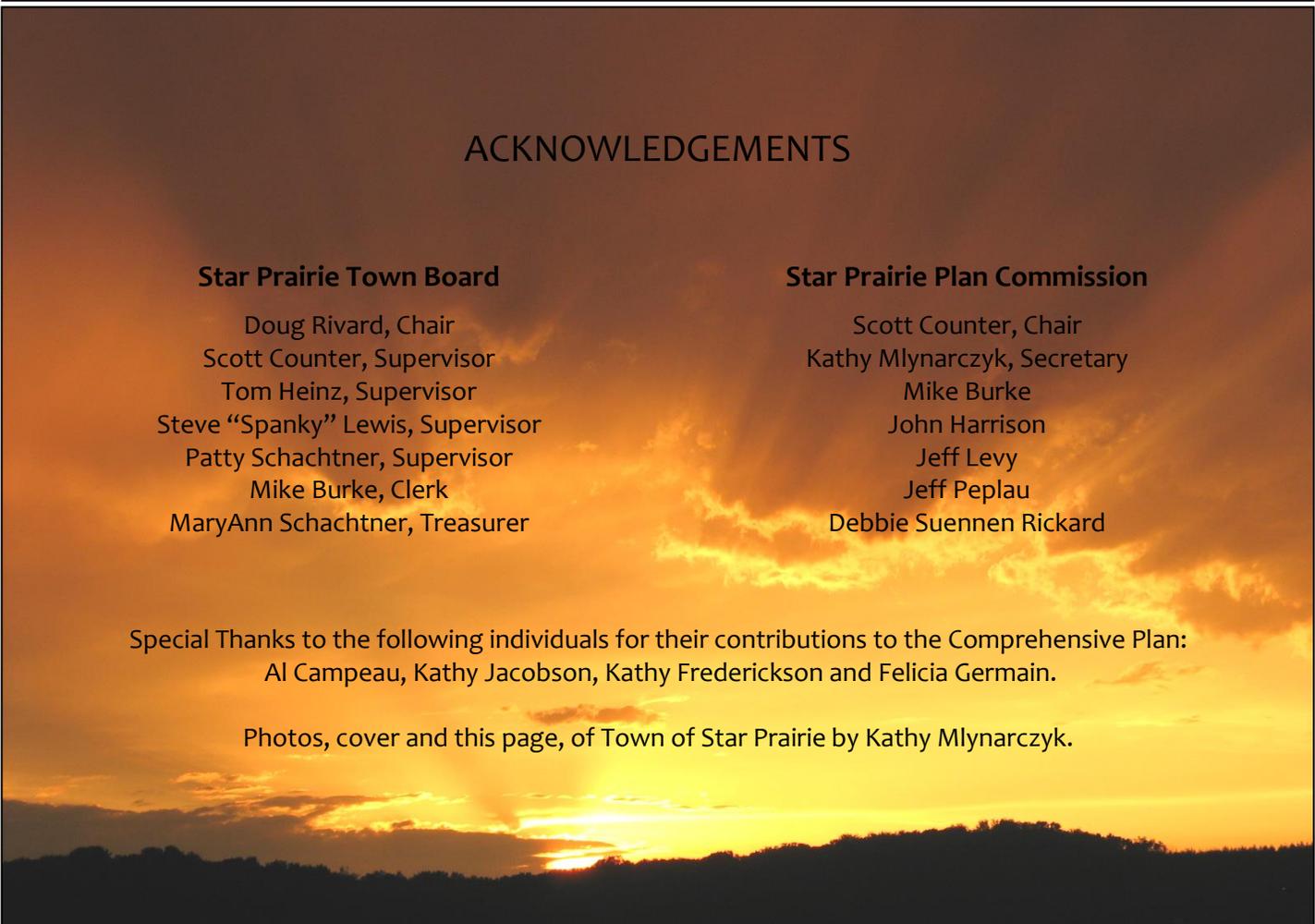


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INTRODUCTION

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 Star Prairie Town Board decided to become part of the West Central Wisconsin Collaborative Planning Project led by the West Central Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) out of Eau Claire. The WCWRPC along with four counties and 21 local communities applied for and received a comprehensive planning grant to complete local, county and regional plans.

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES WORKSHOP

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

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

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

Key conclusions from the survey include:

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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

HOUSING

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

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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

LAND USE

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

TRANSPORTATION

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

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

OTHER FINAL COMMENTS

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

Survey Methods

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

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

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

Profile of Respondents

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

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

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

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

As is frequently the case in surveys such as this, young adults (those under 35 years of age) are under-represented in this sample. Further, there are a substantial number of statistical differences in

the opinions of those under 35 compared to those over 35. In some instances, the opinions of younger residents align with those of women (both groups rate Town services somewhat lower and are more supportive of spending public funds to expand recreational activities than their respective counterparts). In other ways, however, younger residents diverge in their opinions from those of women. Younger residents are less supportive of additional land use policies (less opposed to allowing landowners to develop land in any way they want, less supportive of fees on new developments to pay for public services, less convinced that additional land use regulations are needed or that enforcement of current regulations should be stepped up) and less concerned about some issues (conflicts between farmers and their neighbors are a concern, groundwater contamination, need for senior housing) than are women. Because women in the sample are significantly younger than are men, a re-weighting based on age would result in women's opinions gaining excess influence over the results. Therefore, the SRC has not adjusted the results to account for the skewed age structure. Significant differences of opinions related to age will be noted throughout the report.

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

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

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

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

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

Quality of Life

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

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

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

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

Selected Comments about Quality of Life

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

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

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

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

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

Natural and Cultural Resources

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

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

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

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

Housing

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

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

Thus, a slight majority of Town residents are favorably disposed to residential growth but those opposed to growth appear to be a bit more vehement. There are no clear demographic distinctions between supporters of additional residential growth and those opposed (younger respondents are no different than older ones, men and women hold similar opinions, longer-term residents and newer arrivals are the same). The only demographic distinction is with respect to income – lower income respondents were substantially less supportive of residential growth than were the more affluent. The median household income in the Town of Star Prairie, as reported in the 2000 Census,

was \$53,468. If we look at the responses of those who reported household incomes of less than \$50,000 compared to those reporting more than this amount, we see that a higher percentage of those earning less than the median level of household income “disagree” or “strongly disagree” (45 percent) with the statement that residential growth is desirable in the Town of Star Prairie than are those earning more (40 percent). Likewise the less affluent are less likely to “agree” or “strongly agree” (42 percent) that residential growth is desirable than are the more well-to-do ((55 percent).

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

TABLE 4: ADDITIONAL HOUSING NEEDED

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

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

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

Agriculture and Land Use Issues

One set of questions in this segment of the questionnaire dealt with agriculture and farmland issues and a second set with more general land use issues. The first agricultural question asked respondents how they thought productive farmland should be used. Few residents are neutral on the issue of the uses for which the Town should allow farmland to be used. By nearly unanimous

consent, the residents of the Town of Star Prairie agree that productive farmland should be used for agricultural purposes. A slight majority feel that the Town should not allow productive agricultural land to be used for residential use (52 percent opposed versus 42 percent in favor) and relatively few feel that any use should be allowed for productive agricultural land (72 percent opposed versus 19 percent in favor). Respondents who don't have children are significantly less supportive of using productive farmland for residential or any (non-farming) use than are those with children. Respondents with household incomes less than \$50,000 are more likely to be in favor of allowing productive farm to be used for residential purposes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TABLE 6: LAND USE POLICY

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

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

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

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

The bottom portion of Table 6 summarizes the opinions of Town residents with respect to a number of land use policies. As the average values reported in the Table suggest, residents tend to be supportive or to have no opinion about all the land use policies about which we asked. There is overwhelming support for using land use regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas and

for imposing impact fees on new developments to cover the costs of additional public services (roads, emergency services, etc.). More affluent households are more supportive of using land-use regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas. While generally supportive, respondents under 35 years of age and those with kids are significantly more likely to disagree with a policy of impact fees on new developments.

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

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

Residents were asked if the current 2-acre minimum residential lot size should continue to be the standard throughout the Town. Of the 724 people who answered this question, 65 percent said that the 2-acre minimum should be continued, 29 disagreed and 9 percent had no opinion. Women and respondents with children in the home were more likely to support deviations from the 2-acre minimum than were their counterparts.

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

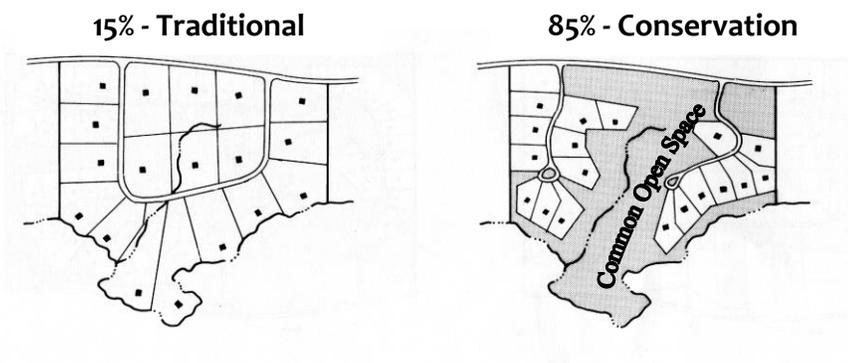
TABLE 7: VARIATIONS FROM THE 2-ACRE MINIMUM LOT SIZE IF:

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

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

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

Figure 1: Opinions about Conservation vs. Traditional Design Options



Transportation

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

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

Community Facilities and Services

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

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

TABLE 9: RATING OF TOWN PUBLIC SERVICES

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

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

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

TABLE 10: USE PUBLIC FUNDS TO EXPAND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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

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

in the home support expansion of snowmobile trails and those from higher income households favor hiking-skiing trails.

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

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

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

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

Economic Development

Table 11 summarizes the responses of Star Prairie residents with respect to the type of economic and commercial development they would like to see in the Town. More than 90 percent of respondents find agricultural production (crops and livestock) and direct farm marketing to be acceptable types of economic development. The third most popular business development option is also agriculturally focused, agricultural services (fertilizers, implement dealers, veterinarians, etc.). Interestingly, large scale farm operations are clearly not seen as desirable by a solid majority (62 percent) of the Town's population. So, Town residents want to retain the traditional agricultural base of the Town's economy.

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

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

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

TABLE 11: ECONOMIC/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCE

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

Specific Town Issues

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

Because there is a high level of agreement within Star Prairie Town that most of the items in Table 12 are important issues, it is not surprising that there are relatively few significant demographic differences of opinion. With respect to groundwater, while almost everyone recognizes this as an important issue, those older than 35 are significantly more likely to rate this as a “very important” issue than are those younger than this. Lower income households are significantly more likely to rate rural residential development and an addition to or expansion of trails and recreational facilities as “unimportant” or “very unimportant” than are those with higher incomes. Respondents who report having children in the home are significantly more likely to say that the city of New Richmond’s extraterritorial subdivision regulations are “unimportant” or “very unimportant” and that expansion of trails and recreational facilities are “important” or “very important.”

TABLE 12: SPECIFIC TOWN ISSUES

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

Conclusions

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

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

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

Different demographic subgroups in the Town have specific issues and perspectives that generally reflect their current situation. Those who have lived in the Town the longest tend to prefer fewer land-use restrictions. This may well be because they are expecting to retire soon and would like to sell their property and recognize that fewer restrictions on how their land can be used might mean a

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

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

VISIONING WORKSHOP

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

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

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

OPEN HOUSES

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

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

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

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

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

INTERACTIVE LAND USE WORKSHOP

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

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

Group 1 Report: Preferred Historical Growth Level

Residential Development:

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

Open Space:

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

Commercial & Industrial:

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

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

Residential Development:

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

Open Space:

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

Commercial & Industrial:

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

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

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

Open Space:

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

Commercial & Industrial:

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

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

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

Open Space:

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

Commercial & Industrial:

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

PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION

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

Wisconsin Land Information Office	Star Prairie Land Trust
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission	New Richmond Fire and Ambulance
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department	Somerset Fire and Ambulance
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	New Richmond Multipurpose Pathways Committee
Wisconsin Department of Transportation	New Richmond Economic Development Corp.
UW-Extension - Baldwin	St. Croix Economic Development Corp.
St. Croix County	New Richmond Preservation Society
Polk County	St. Croix County Historical Society
City of New Richmond	Wisconsin State Historical Society
Village of Somerset	New Richmond Airport Commission
Village of Star Prairie	Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics
Town of Alden	New Richmond School District
Town of Farmington	Osceola School District
Town of Richmond	Somerset School District
Town of Somerset	St. Croix Valley Builder's & Realtor's Associations
Town of Stanton	New Richmond Library
Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District	Osceola Library
Squaw Lake Management District	Somerset Library
Star Prairie Fish & Game Association	

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

ADOPTING ORDINANCE

Town of Star Prairie
Ordinance 54

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Douglas Rivard
By: Douglas Rivard, Town Chairman

Attest:

Michael Burke
Michael Burke, Town Clerk

Passed: 9/7/2010

Published: 9/16/2010

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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

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

The original Town Hall was located in the parking lot of the old Town Hall. It was a popular location for evening dances and plays. There was a wood stove right in the middle of the floor. The original Town Hall is now a part of the Outpost Bar and Grill. Local residents told the story as follows: In the

early 1970's the original Town Hall was moved one night to the Outpost Bar and Grill, it was the addition to the north side of the existing building, nearest the river, according to local citizens. The DNR refused to let the bar add on or expand because it was too close to the river, so local residents decided to take the matter into their own hands. During the night the building was floated down the river then hauled out of the water and connected to the existing structure to become the bar portion of the Bar and Grill.

Huntingdon was named for the Canadian town of Huntingdon, and settled in 1854. It was known first as McClure's Rock. The first settlers were Mr. White, his wife Lydia and their daughter Lydia. Mr. White died in 1855 and was the first white man to be buried in the Town of Star Prairie. In 1856, C.H. Burrows and John McClure moved to Huntingdon. The community originally had a flour mill, built by the Bowron brothers in 1854. The Bowron family was from Huntingdon, Canada. It must be noted that the spelling of Huntingdon whether with a "t" or "d" has varied in various sources, however the plat of Huntingdon is the official record. The mill was situated on the creek that flows out of Cedar Lake. The mill, which operated until 1949, ground wheat for flour. During World War I it was the only source of flour for local residents. An area merchant said that the "best buckwheat flour in the world came from Huntingdon." People came from all around, even as far as Canada, to get wheat flour from there.

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

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

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

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

During the Prohibition Era, many Star Prairie residents needed to supplement their incomes. It became very popular to supply the Twin Cities with illegal liquor. People never really questioned or wondered about smoke coming out of a Chicken Coop – they knew people were making moonshine.

There is a local story about a moonshine run to Minnesota. A local resident had a Model T Ford auto that had a special “tank” on the bottom of the Model T. This tank would be filled with moonshine for deliveries. One day after crossing the Stillwater Bridge, the Model T got a flat tire. While stopped, a local cop stopped to help. He commented several times about how heavy that Model T was but luckily never tried to figure out why it was so heavy. The moonshine business died out when local residents “heard” that Al Capone was taking over. Local operations very quickly “dried up.”

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

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

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

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

The St. Croix County Health Center is also located in the Town. It was built before 1897 and was originally known as the St. Croix County Asylum for Insane. It provided a place for those with mental health problems and those who had no family or any place else to live. It also operated as an Old Folks Home for a while. For many years the Health Center operated in conjunction with the County Farm. The patients did all the work on the farm, gardening, butchering, dairy. They raised all their

own food. The farm was very renowned for its registered Holstein cattle. There are two cemetery plots on the Health Center property. Residents with no family members were buried there. Also well-known Administrator Sumner Bright is buried in the Cemetery that is on the hill. He served as the Administrator at the County Health Center for over 35 years.

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

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

Sources:

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

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

Natural Area Inventory, West Central Wisconsin 1976.

Remembering Rural Schools of St. Croix County

St. Croix County Extension Homemakers Rural School Committee 1991.

Rivertowns.net website.

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

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

Members of the Star Prairie Plan Commission.

POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION DATA

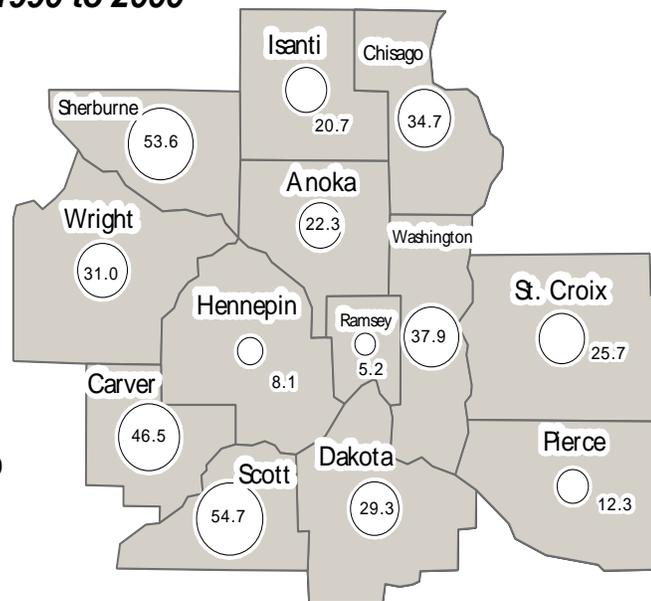
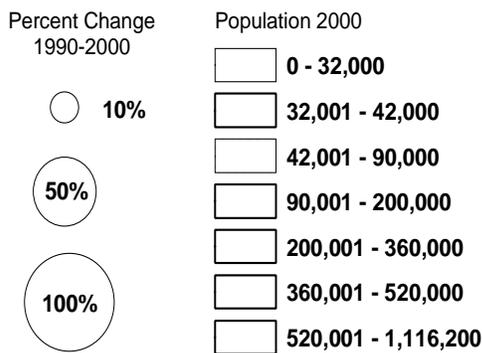
**Historical Population - 1970 to 2000
Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA**

COUNTIES	1970	1970-80	1980	1980-90	1990	1990-00	2000
Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA	1,965,159	8.8%	2,137,133	18.8%	2,538,564	16.9%	2,968,806
Counties:							
Anoka	154,556	26.8%	195,998	24.3%	243,641	22.3%	298,084
Carver	28,310	30.9%	37,046	29.3%	47,915	46.5%	70,205
Chisago	17,492	47.0%	25,717	18.7%	30,251	34.7%	41,101
Dakota	139,808	39.0%	194,279	41.2%	275,227	29.3%	355,904
Isanti	*	42.5%	23,600	9.8%	25,921	20.7%	31,287
Scott	32,423	35.0%	43,784	32.3%	57,921	54.7%	89,498
Sherburne	*	*	*	40.2%	41,945	53.6%	64,417
Washington	82,948	36.9%	113,571	28.5%	145,896	37.9%	201,130
Wright	38,933	50.7%	58,681	17.1%	68,710	31.0%	89,986
Hennepin	960,080	-1.9%	941,411	9.7%	1,032,431	8.1%	1,116,200
Ramsey	476,255	-3.5%	459,784	5.7%	485,765	5.2%	511,035
Pierce	*	*	*	5.2%	32,765	12.3%	36,804
St. Croix	34,354	25.9%	43,262	16.2%	50,251	25.7%	63,155

*Not included in the MSA at the end of the decade.

Source: Population Abstract of the United States, Androit Associates, 1980, U.S. Census Bureau 2002.

**Population - 2000
Percent Population Change - 1990 to 2000
Minneapolis - St. Paul MSA**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

- St. Croix County became part of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in 1973 based on the results of the 1970 census. The MSA now has just under 3 million people.
- St. Croix County ranks 10th in population among the 13 counties in the MSA.
- The county's proximity to the Minneapolis/St. Paul job market accounts for the population growth the County has been experiencing since 1960.
- From 1990 to 2000, the County grew 25.7 percent. That was about 10 percent faster than the metro area as a whole, but five to 10 percent slower than the nearest Minnesota counties.
- However, percentage changes do not always convey the complete picture. During the 1990's the County grew by about 13,000 people, but its westerly neighbor, Washington County grew four times as much, about 55,000 people, during the same period.
- From 1990-2000, St. Croix County was the second fastest growing county in terms of percentage growth and the 11th fastest growing county in numerical growth within the State of Wisconsin.

Historic Population by Minor Civil Division – 1960 to 2000
St. Croix County

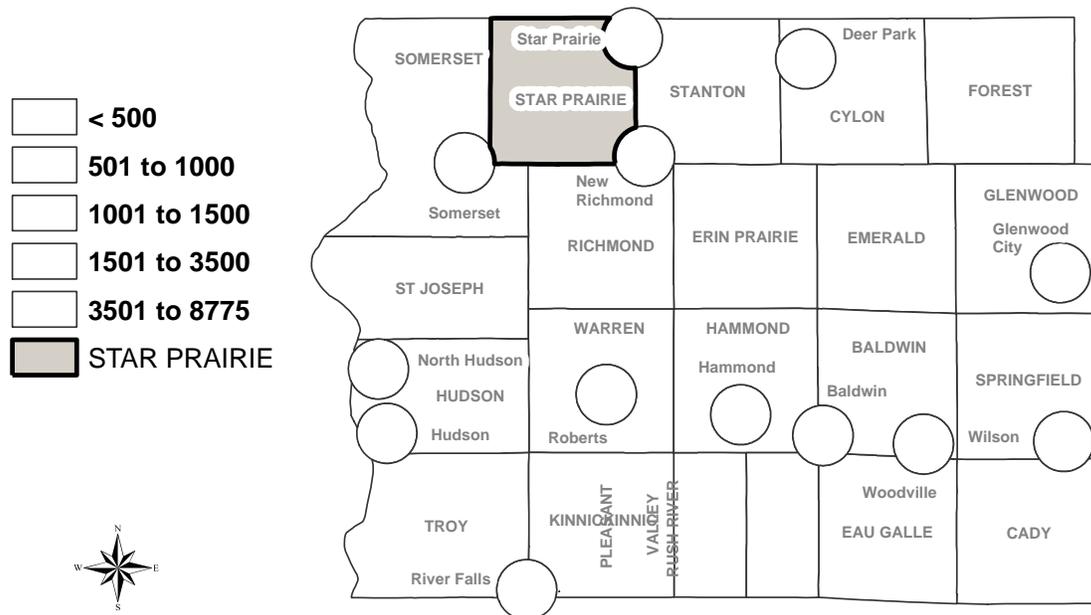
MUNICIPALITY	CENSUS					PERCENT CHANGE			
	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	60-70	70-80	80-90	90-00
<i>Towns</i>									
Baldwin	833	890	943	911	903	6.8	6.0	-3.4	-0.9
Cady	762	670	724	643	710	-12.1	8.1	-11.2	10.4
Cylon	614	620	717	639	629	.9	15.7	-10.9	-1.6
Eau Galle	717	720	897	756	882	.4	24.6	-15.7	16.7
Emerald	647	588	638	630	691	-9.1	8.5	-1.3	9.7
Erin Prairie	499	516	661	647	658	3.4	28.1	-2.1	1.7
Forest	674	649	631	614	590	-3.7	-2.8	-2.7	-3.9
Glenwood	835	764	715	700	755	-8.5	-6.4	-2.1	7.9
Hammond	773	764	822	819	947	-1.2	7.6	-.4	15.6
Hudson	649	925	2,012	3,692	6213	42.5	117.6	83.5	68.3
Kinnickinnic	667	755	1,051	1,139	1400	13.2	39.2	8.4	22.9
Pleasant Valley	310	330	360	384	430	6.5	9.1	6.7	12.0
Richmond	701	1,091	1,338	1,400	1556	55.6	22.6	4.6	11.1
Rush River	403	439	476	419	498	8.9	8.4	-12.0	18.9
St. Joseph	1,068	1,357	2,180	2,657	3436	27.1	60.7	21.9	29.3
Somerset	976	1,185	1,833	1,975	2644	21.4	54.7	7.8	34.3
Springfield	814	811	816	772	808	-.4	.6	-5.4	4.7
Stanton	640	975	1,083	1,042	1003	52.3	11.1	-3.8	-3.7
Star Prairie	1,015	1,390	1,900	2,098	2944	37.0	36.7	10.4	40.3
Troy	845	1,517	2,326	2,850	3661	79.5	53.3	22.5	28.5
Warren	614	622	897	1,008	1320	1.3	44.2	12.4	31.0
Subtotal	15,056	17,578	23,020	25,795	32,678	16.8	31.0	12.1	26.7
<i>Villages/Cities</i>									
Baldwin	1,184	1,399	1,620	2,022	2667	18.2	15.8	24.8	31.9
Deer Park	221	217	232	237	227	-1.8	6.9	2.2	-4.2
Hammond	645	768	991	1,097	1153	19.1	29.0	10.7	5.1
North Hudson	1,019	1,547	2,218	3,101	3463	51.8	43.4	39.8	11.7
Roberts	308	484	833	1,043	969	57.1	72.1	25.2	-7.1
Somerset	729	778	860	1,065	1556	6.7	10.5	23.8	45.1
Spring Valley	0	0	0	0	2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Star Prairie	331	362	420	507	574	9.4	16.0	20.7	13.2
Wilson	140	130	155	163	176	-7.1	19.2	5.2	8.0
Woodville	430	522	725	942	1104	21.4	38.9	30.0	17.2
Glenwood City	835	822	950	1,026	1183	-1.6	15.6	8.0	15.3
Hudson	4,325	5,049	5,434	6,378	8775	16.7	7.6	17.4	37.6
New Richmond	3,316	3,707	4,306	5,106	6310	11.8	16.2	18.6	23.6
River Falls*	625	991	1,498	1,769	2318	58.6	51.1	15.3	31.0
Subtotal	14,108	16,776	20,242	24,456	30,477	18.9	20.7	20.8	24.6
St. Croix County	29,164	34,354	43,262	50,251	63,155	17.8	25.9	16.2	25.7

Source: U.S. Census, 1960-2000 *portion in St. Croix County.

- In St. Croix County from 1960 to 2000, there was a pattern of greater population increases in the 70's and 90's and lesser population increases in the 60's and 80's reflecting national demographic and cyclical economic trends.
- Population growth in unincorporated areas grew slightly more and faster than incorporated areas between 1990 and 2000.
- From 1960-1980 the growth rate in the Town of Star Prairie was around 35%, it decreased to 10% during the 1980's and increased to 40% in the 1990's. Except for the 1980's, the rate was higher than St. Croix County's overall rate of growth.

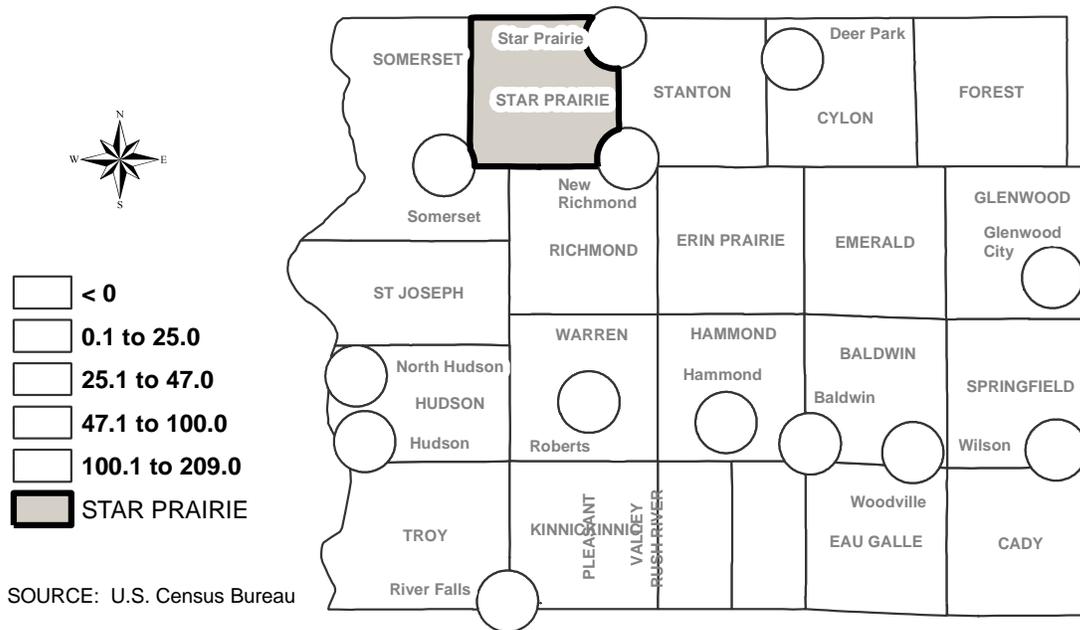
- Star Prairie’s population growth rate was also faster than most of its neighboring municipalities.
- The overall growth rates in the Town of Star Prairie generally reflect changes in the farm population, a decline in large farm families, an increase in farm size, an aging farming population and an increase in rural residential development taking advantage of the numerous water resources found in the town.

Population - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

**Percent Population Change - 1980 to 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

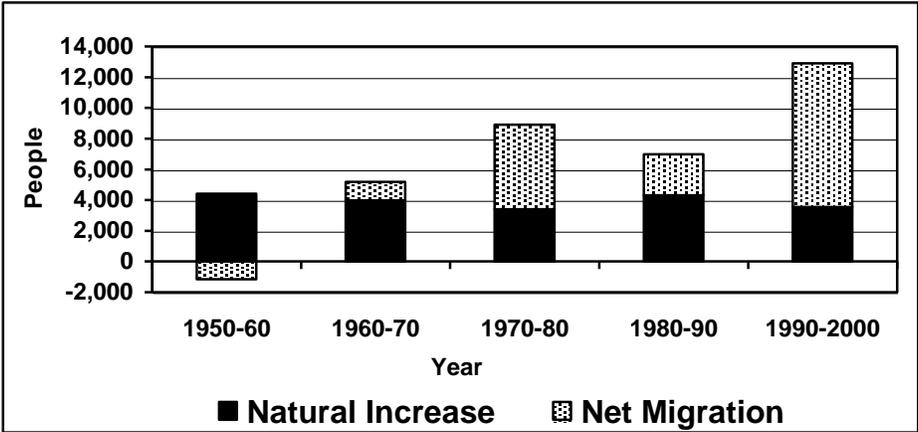
- The fastest population growth in St. Croix County occurred in the western communities. The eastern communities generally grew slower and some lost population.
- The Town of Star Prairie was in the second fastest growth tier for all communities in St. Croix County.
- From 1980 through 2000, the Town of Star Prairie’s growth rate exceeded all surrounding municipalities except the Village of Somerset.

**Components of Population Change -- 1950 to 2000
St. Croix County**

COMPONENT	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000
Births	7,016	6,872	6,544	7,859	7,696
Deaths	2,606	2,880	3,136	3,542	4,144
Total Natural Increase	4,410	3,992	3,408	4,317	3,552
Natural Increase Rate*	15.1%	11.6%	7.9%	8.5%	7.1%
Net Migration	-1,151	1,198	5,500	2,671	9,353
Net Migration Rate*	-4.0%	3.5%	12.7%	5.3%	18.6%
Total Population Change	3,259	5,190	8,908	6,989	12,904
Percent Population Change	12.6%	17.8%	25.9%	16.2%	25.7%

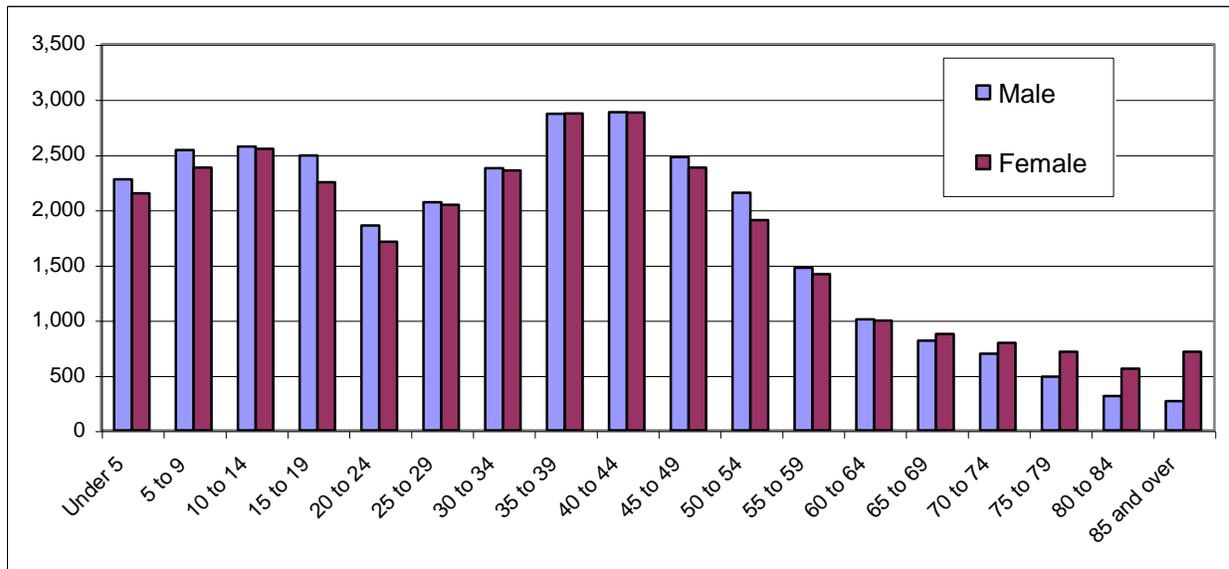
*Calculated as a percent of the County's population.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950-2000

Components of Population Change -- 1950 to 2000
St. Croix County

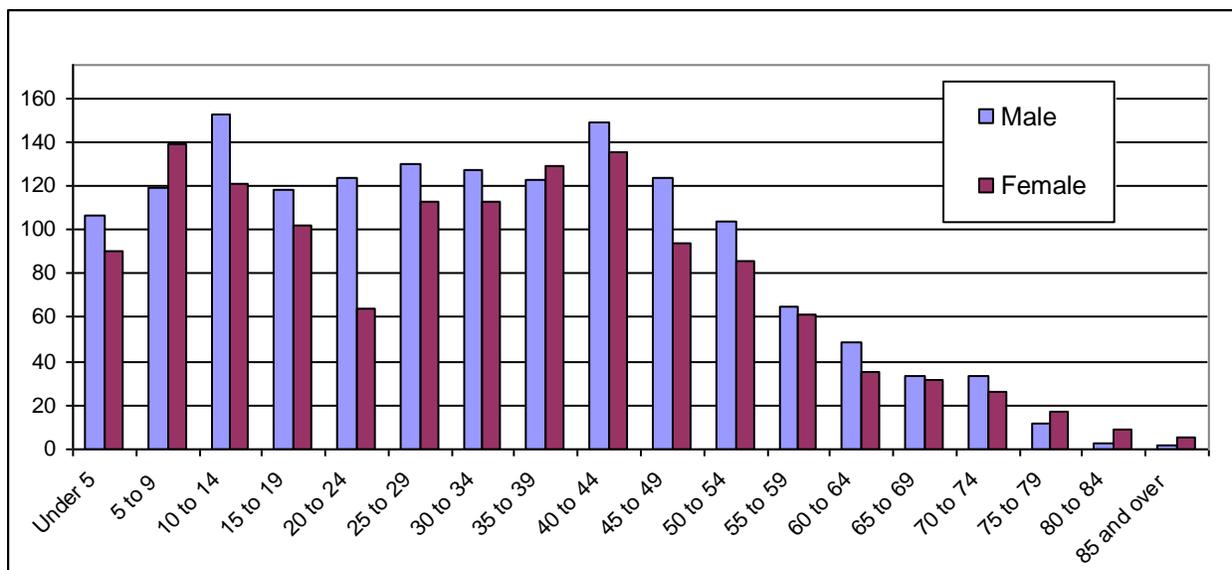


- The population growth due to natural increase has remained close to 4000 people per decade for the last 50 years.
- From 1960 to 2000, there was a pattern of greater population increases in the 70’s and 90’s and lesser population increases in the 60’s and 80’s reflecting national demographic and cyclical economic trends.
- In the 1970’s and 1990’s in-migration was greater than the natural increase.
- In the 1980’s in-migration dropped by over seven percent and the natural increase rate surpassed the in-migration rate.
- The 1990’s decade saw the largest numerical population increase.
- From 1990 to 2000, migration into St. Croix County accounted for almost three times as much population growth as the natural increase.

**Age – Sex Structure -- 2000
St. Croix County**



**Age – Sex Structure -- 2000
Town of Star Prairie**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

- St Croix County’s population structure includes the typical national pattern reflecting the baby boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) found in the 35 to 54 age groups.
- The County’s population structure also reflects the next two population trends, the baby bust generation (those born from the mid-60’s to mid70’s) found in the 20 to 34 age groups and the boomlet of children which occurred since the mid-80’s.
- These patterns are also reflected in the Star Prairie population structure.

- The school age cohorts, ages 5 to 19, are generally equal at the County level. However, at the town level there are some distinct differences.
- The Town of Star Prairie has an increase in the 5 to 9 and 10 to 14 age cohorts over the lower and higher age groups. This suggests an in-migration of parents with children in these age groups.
- There is also a spike in the number of males in the 20 to 24 age cohort that suggests there may be job opportunities that bring young adults to live and work in the Town.
- Over the next 20 years the baby boomers will be moving into the retirement age groups in very large numbers and the number of elderly in the county should increase significantly.
- The sharply declining numbers in the 75 and over age groups in the Town of Star Prairie versus the county as a whole suggests the elderly are more likely to live in urban areas that offer more services than in a rural community.
- Some of the over 75 age group may also be moving out of the county to other areas designed for retirement living.

EDUCATION DEMOGRAPHICS

**Education Level by Minor Civil Division -- 2000
Town of Star Prairie**

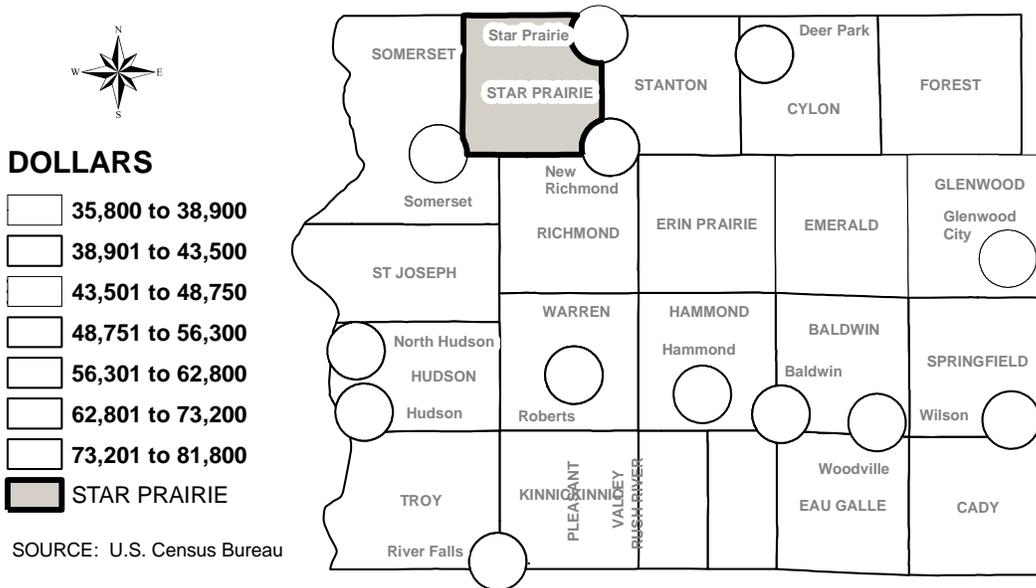
TOWN	HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS	ASSOCIATES OR BACHELOR'S DEGREE	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE
Baldwin	81.8%	13.9%	4.3%
Cady	75.9%	16.6%	7.5%
Cylon	72.2%	23.1%	4.6%
Eau Galle	75.9%	20.5%	3.6%
Emerald	80.5%	16.7%	2.8%
Erin Prairie	69.9%	26.5%	3.6%
Forest	84.2%	15.3%	0.6%
Glenwood	80.7%	16.7%	2.6%
Hammond	71.1%	26.0%	2.9%
Hudson	52.5%	38.0%	9.5%
Kinnickinnic	58.7%	31.8%	9.6%
Pleasant Valley	62.8%	29.2%	7.9%
Richmond	73.1%	21.1%	5.9%
Rush River	80.5%	17.1%	2.4%
St. Joseph	58.5%	29.8%	11.7%
Somerset	65.8%	27.5%	6.7%
Springfield	78.6%	16.2%	5.3%
Stanton	73.1%	21.1%	5.8%
Star Prairie	76.0%	19.0%	5.0%
Troy	47.4%	42.0%	10.5%
Warren	66.5%	28.5%	5.0%
St. Croix County	64.8%	28.2%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census 2000. Project community is indicated in bold type.

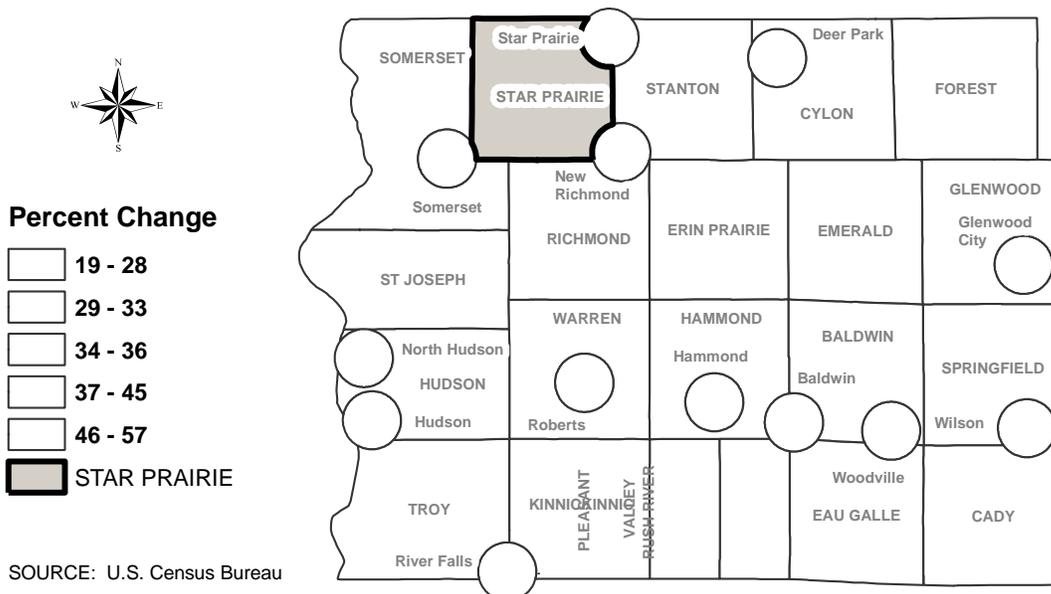
- Education levels in the Town of Star Prairie are somewhat lower for post-secondary degrees, than the rest of St. Croix County. This is somewhat surprising considering the ease of access to the technical college in New Richmond.
- The Town’s education levels are very similar to those in the towns adjacent to Star Prairie.

INCOME DEMOGRAPHICS

**Median Household Income - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



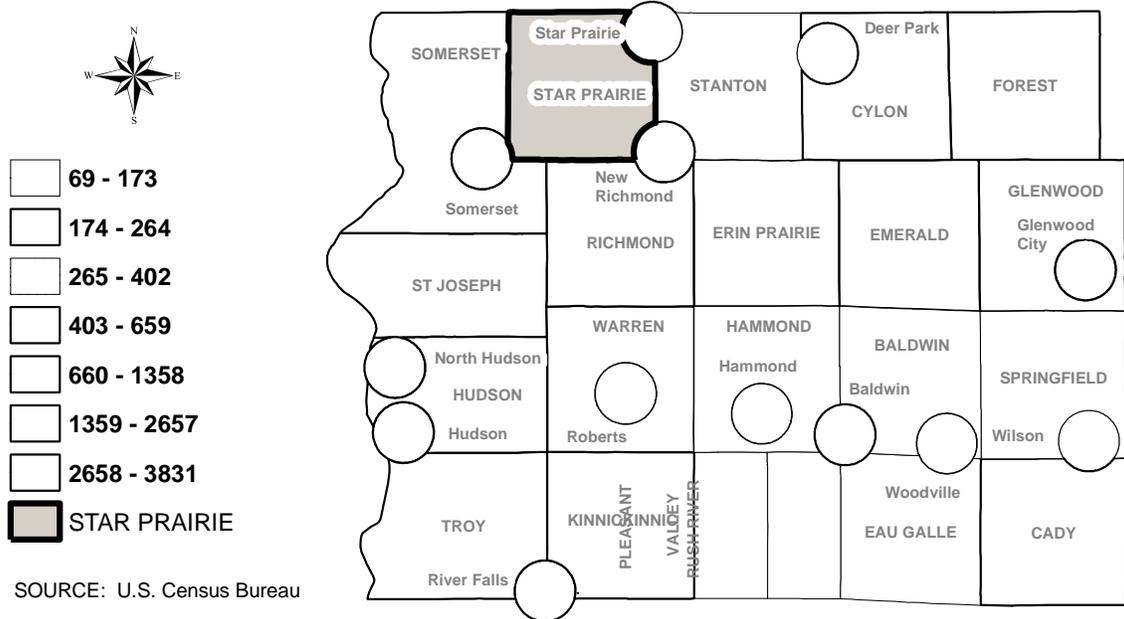
**Percent Change in Median Household Income - 1990 to 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



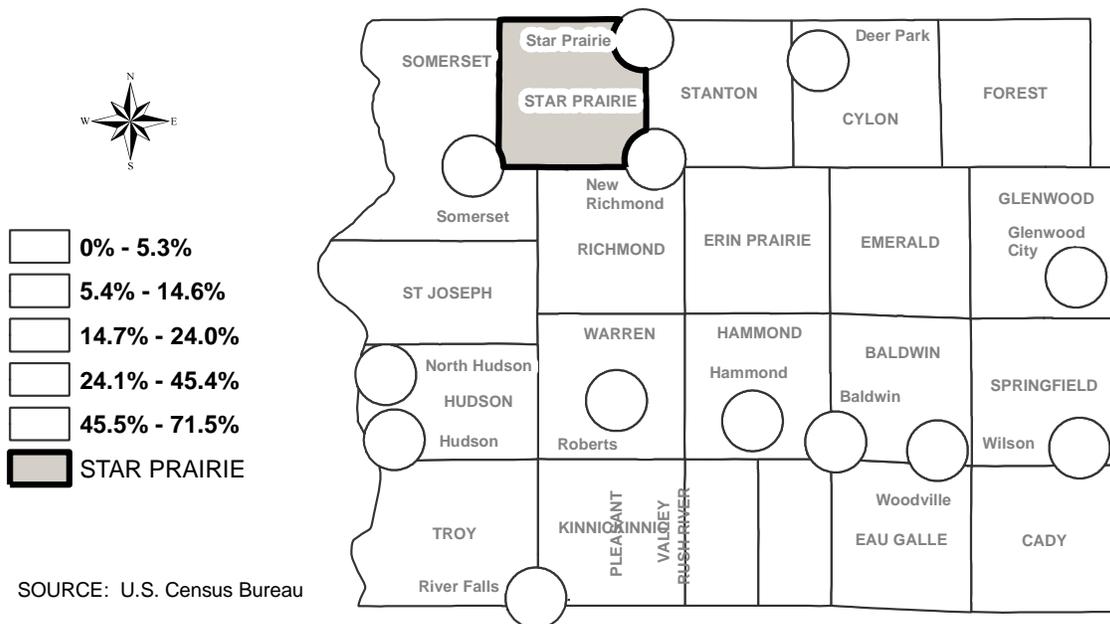
- Incorporated areas have lower median incomes than their surrounding unincorporated areas.
- The median household income for St. Croix County was \$19,568 in 1980, \$36,716 in 1990 and \$54,934 in 2000, increases of 88% and 50% respectively.
- The Town of Star Prairie’s median income of \$53,468 was slightly below the County median income level of \$54,934, for 2000.

HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

**Total Housing Units - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



**Percent Change in Total Housing Units - 1990 to 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



Total Housing Units -- 1970 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities

COMMUNITY	1970	1980	1990	2000	AVG PER YR 1970-2000	PERCENT CHANGE		
						70-80	80-90	90-00
Star Prairie	412	558	761	1079	22.2	58.4%	36.4%	41.8%
Baldwin	250	278	288	315	2.2	11.2%	3.6%	9.4%
Cylon	181	228	227	232	1.7	26.0%	-0.4%	2.2%
Eau Galle	210	280	269	320	3.7	33.3%	-3.2%	19.0%
Emerald	163	191	203	244	2.7	17.2%	6.3%	20.2%
Erin Prairie	128	197	208	234	3.5	53.9%	5.6%	12.5%
Hammond	200	251	271	318	3.9	25.5%	8.0%	17.3%
Pleasant Valley	87	110	128	150	2.1	26.4%	16.4%	17.2%
Richmond	271	385	467	530	8.6	42.1%	21.2%	13.5%
Rush River	119	153	151	173	1.8	28.6%	-1.3%	14.6%
St. Joseph	437	703	974	1259	27.4	60.9%	38.5%	29.3%
Somerset	297	559	722	963	22.2	88.2%	29.2%	33.4%
Stanton	263	340	353	363	3.3	29.3%	3.8%	2.8%
C. New Richmond	1223	1665	2025	2657	47.8	36.1%	21.6%	31.2%
V. Baldwin	522	678	822	1144	20.7	29.9%	21.2%	39.2%
V. Deer Park	79	90	98	94	0.5	13.9%	8.9%	-4.1%
V. Hammond	267	367	406	438	5.7	37.5%	10.6%	7.9%
V. Somerset	232	318	417	659	14.2	37.1%	31.1%	58.0%
V. Star Prairie	122	163	201	215	3.1	33.6%	23.3%	7.0%
St. Croix	10,376	14,710	18,519	24,265	463.0	41.8%	25.9%	31.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2000

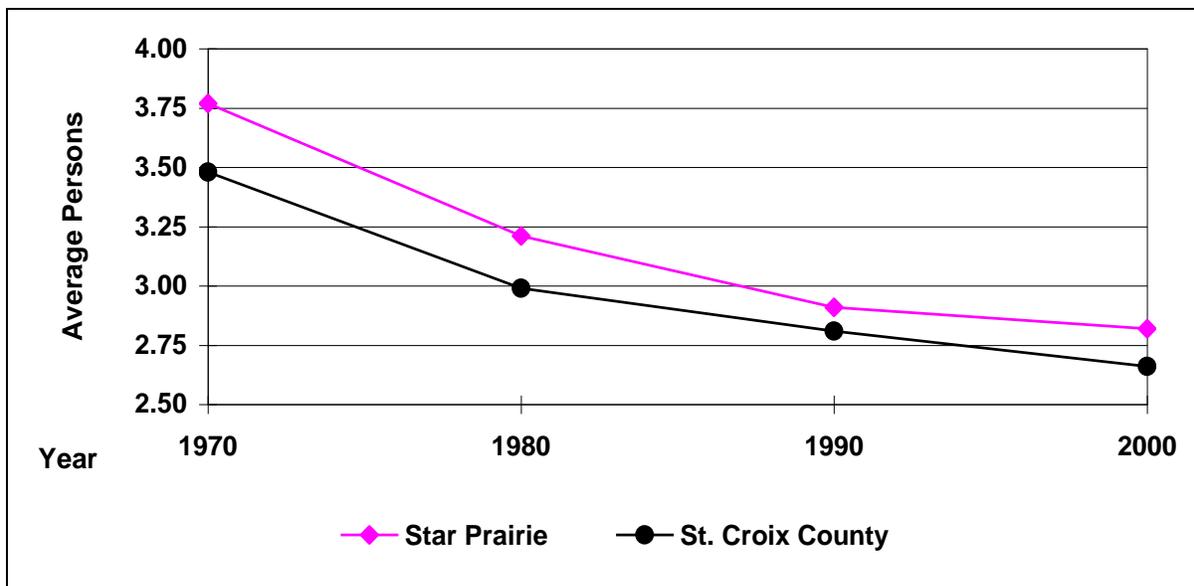
- In St. Croix County the number of housing units increased by 5,746 units from 1990 to 2000, a 31 percent increase.
- From 1970 to 2000 an average of 463 units per year were constructed in St. Croix County.
- The Town of Star Prairie experienced its fastest housing growth in the 1970's and its lowest in the 1980's. This can generally be attributed to lower interest rates for housing in the 70's and higher interest rates in the 80's.
- During the 1990's the Town had its largest numerical increase, 318 housing units, but its second highest rate due to the increasing base number.
- The Town of Star Prairie's increase in housing units was similar to neighboring towns to the west but exceeded those to the east.

**Persons Per Housing Unit -- 1970 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

TOWN	1970	1980	1990	2000	PERCENT CHANGE		
					70-80	80-90	90-00
Star Prairie	3.77	3.21	2.91	2.82	-14.9	-9.3	-3.1
Erin Prairie	4.23	3.46	3.27	2.90	-18.2	-5.5	-11.3
Richmond	4.16	3.56	3.07	2.95	-14.4	-13.8	-3.9
St. Joseph	3.71	3.21	2.98	2.86	-13.5	-7.2	-4.0
Somerset	4.36	3.46	2.96	2.85	-20.6	-14.5	-3.7
Stanton	3.88	3.26	3.08	2.85	-16.0	-5.5	-7.5
C. New Richmond	3.04	2.63	2.53	2.38	-13.5	-3.8	-5.9
V. Somerset	3.55	2.79	2.62	2.45	-21.4	-6.1	-6.5
V. Star Prairie	3.20	2.82	2.63	2.71	-11.9	-6.7	-3.0
St. Croix County	3.48	2.99	2.81	2.66	-14.1	-6.0	-5.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2000 Summary File 1

**Persons Per Housing Unit -- 1970 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie**



- The average number of people per household has continued to decline in most of St. Croix County.
- The Town of Star Prairie had a higher average number of people per household than the county average.
- The average number of people per household in Star Prairie has been declining since the 1970's at a very similar rate to St. Croix County.
- The town continues to have mostly single-family style housing, while neighboring cities and villages continue to offer other types of housing such as multifamily, condominiums and town homes which are usually occupied by retirees, singles, or others with generally smaller household sizes.

EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Employment of Residents -- 1970 to 2000
St. Croix County

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES	YEAR				PERCENT CHANGE		
	1970	1980	1990	2000	70-80	80-90	90-00
Ag., Forestry & Mining	1,993	2,077	1,820	1,093	4.2%	-12.4%	-39.9%
Construction	786	1,029	1,438	2,581	30.9%	39.7%	79.5%
Manufacturing	3,277	5,669	7,274	8,268	73.0%	28.3%	13.7%
Trans., Utils. & Comm.	738	1,135	1,736	2,131	53.8%	53.0%	22.8%
Wholesale/Retail	2,425	3,676	5,019	4,598	51.6%	36.5%	-8.4%
Finance, Ins. & Real E.	374	820	1,753	2,471	119.3%	113.8%	41.0%
Services	2,983	4,589	7,843	12,036	53.8%	70.9%	53.5%
Government	407	529	849	1,117	30.0%	60.5%	31.6%
Information	*	*	*	610	*	*	*
Total	12,983	19,524	27,732	34,905	50.4%	42.0%	25.9%

Source: U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 *New Employment Category in 2000 Census

Employment of Residents -- 1980 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie

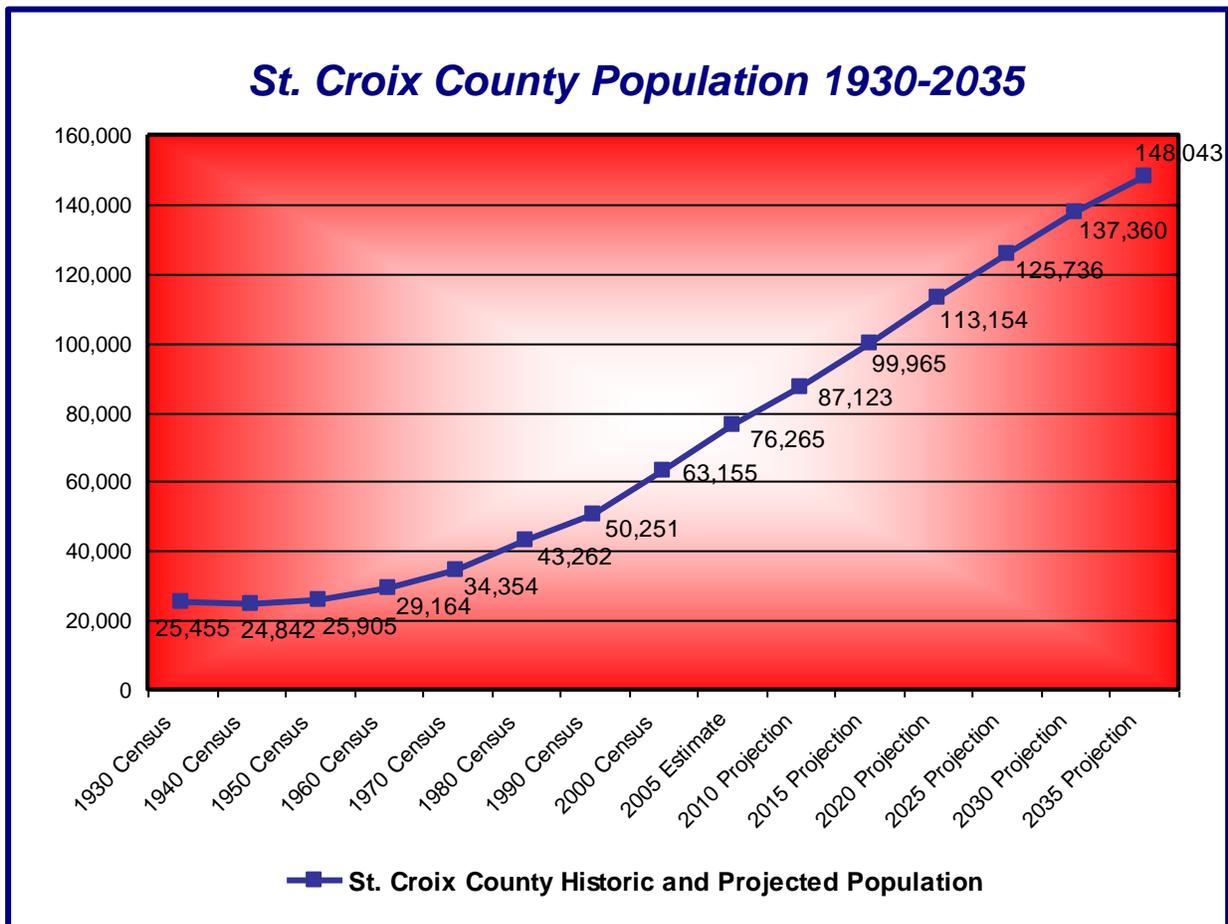
EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES	YEAR			PERCENT OF TOTAL			PERCENT CHANGE	
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	80-90	90-00
Ag., Forestry & Mining	65	61	17	8.4%	6.4%	1.1%	-6.2%	-72.1%
Construction	50	60	164	6.5%	6.3%	10.3%	20.0%	173.3%
Manufacturing	313	339	492	40.4%	35.7%	30.9%	8.3%	45.1%
Trans., Utils. & Comm.	35	35	59	4.5%	3.7%	3.7%	0.0%	68.6%
Wholesale/Retail	153	175	229	19.8%	18.4%	14.4%	14.4%	30.9%
Finance, Ins. & Real E.	12	36	36	1.6%	3.8%	2.3%	200.0%	0.0%
Services	134	211	510	17.3%	22.2%	32.0%	57.5%	141.7%
Government	12	32	62	1.6%	3.4%	3.9%	166.7%	93.8%
Information	*	*	23	*	*	1.4%	*	*
Total	774	949	1,592	100%	100%	100%	22.6%	67.8%

Source: U.S. Census 1980, 1990, 2000 *New Employment Category in 2000 Census

- From 1990 to 2000, employment of St. Croix County residents increased in most categories.
- The greatest increases were in the construction and services industries.
- Decreases in employment were seen in the agriculture, forestry and mining industry and the wholesale/retail trade.
- The Town of Star Prairie saw similar trends with generally much larger increases. There were some differences, including an increase in wholesale/retail trade and no change in Finance, Insurance and Real Estate industries, both very different from the County's numbers.
- The two largest employment areas are services and manufacturing, which are generally not located within the town.

COMMUNITY FORECASTS

POPULATION



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

Population Projections - 2000 to 2030
St. Croix County

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

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

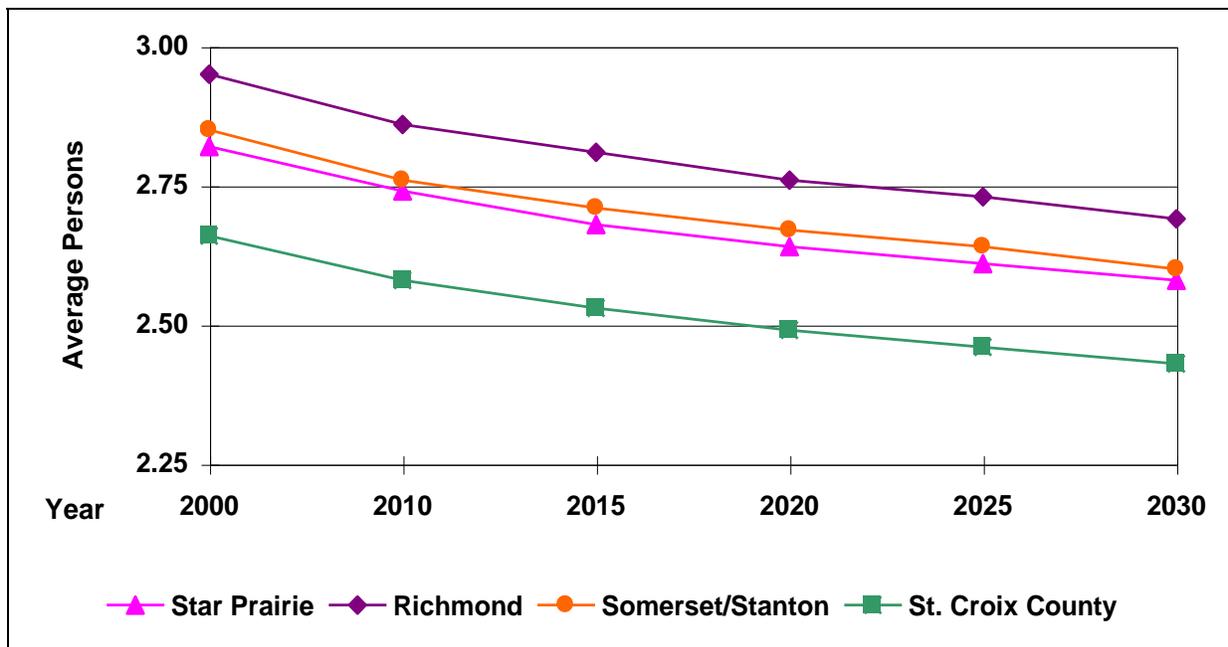
HOUSEHOLD

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

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

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

** Unofficial Numbers



HOUSING UNITS & ACREAGE

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

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

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

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

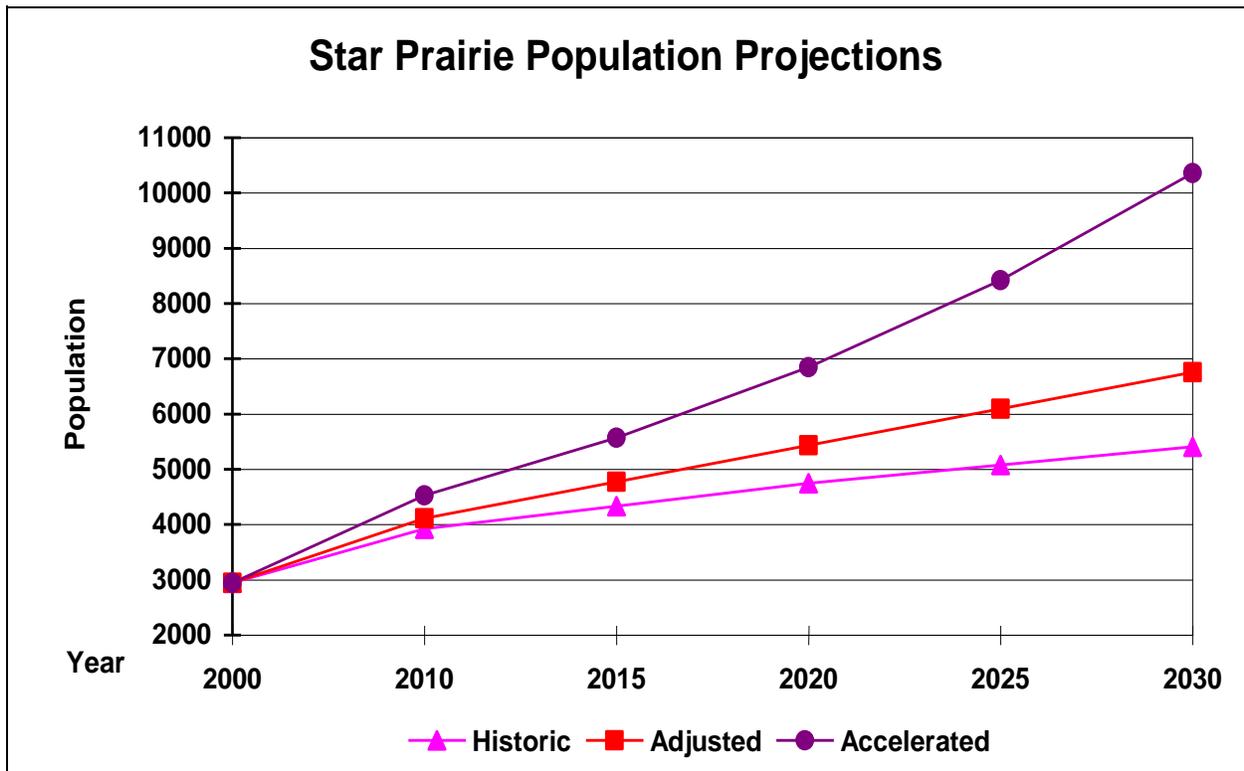
Growth Projections -- 2000 to 2030
Town of Star Prairie

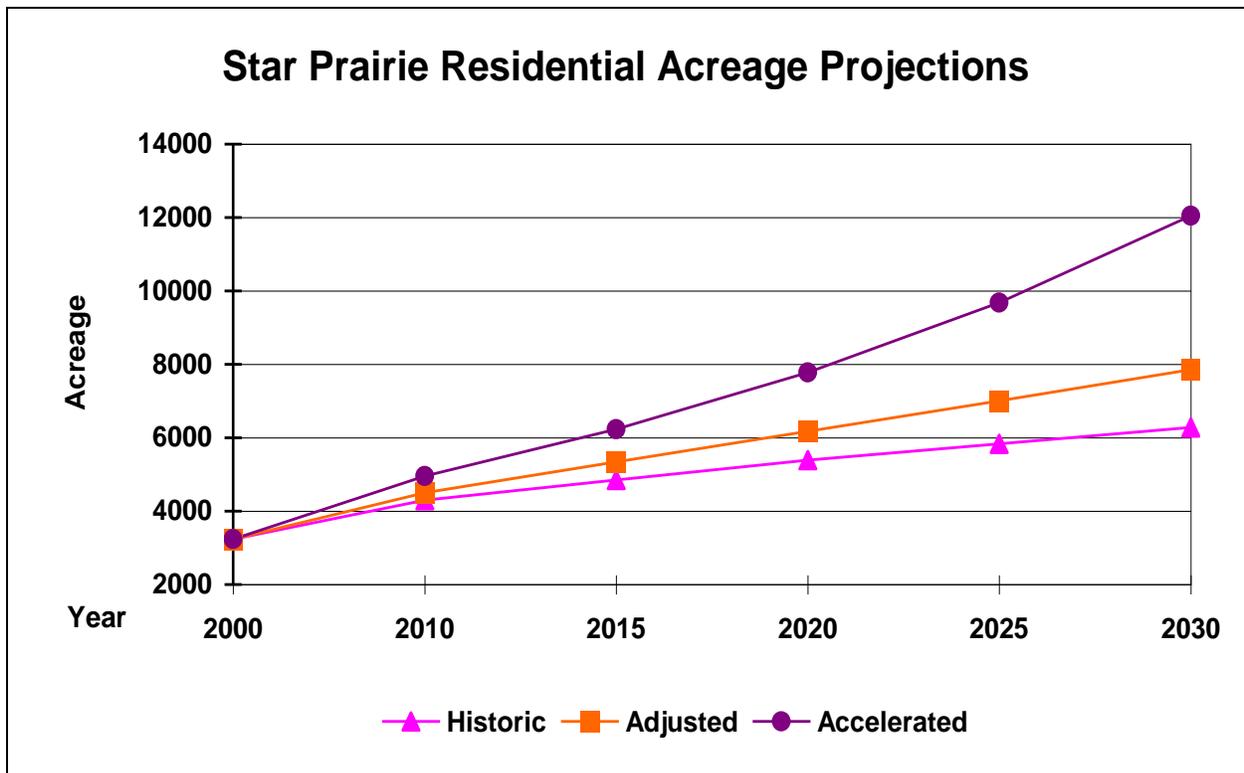
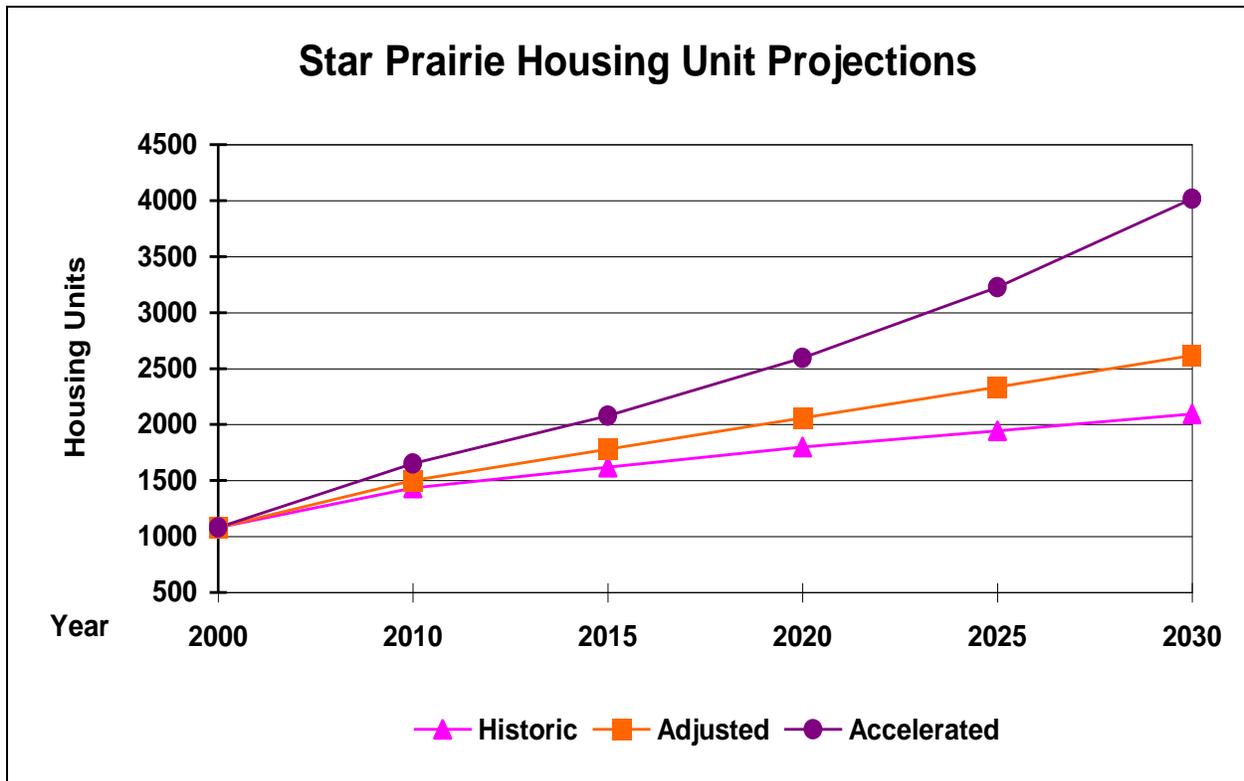
INCREASE BASED ON	PROJECTIONS						
	POPULATION		PPH	HOUSING UNITS		ACREAGE	
	CHANGE	TOTAL		CHANGE	TOTAL	CHANGE	TOTAL
Baseline 2000	2,944		2.82	1,079		3,237	
2010							
Historic Trends	981	3,925	2.74	353	1,432	1,060	4,297
Adjusted Growth	1,170	4,114		422	1,501	1,267	4,504
Accelerated Growth	1,582	4,526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

PPH = Persons Per Housing Unit

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

** Unofficial Numbers





<i>EMPLOYMENT</i>

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

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

STAR PRAIRIE VISION

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

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

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

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

ELEMENT-BASED VISION STATEMENTS

Utilities and Community Facilities

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

Transportation

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

Housing

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

Economic Development

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

Agriculture

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

Natural Resources

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

Cultural Resources

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

Land Use

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

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

EXISTING FACILITY ASSESSMENT

The Town of Star Prairie is a small rural community. The town does not provide extensive services for residents. What services are provided are discussed in the following sections.

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES & CEMETERIES

- The Town of Star Prairie has a new Town Hall that was completed in February of 2007. The new Town Hall is located on a 3.5 acre site located at the corner of Cook Drive and County Road C. It has meeting rooms, town offices, kitchen facilities and permanent voting facilities. The hall was dedicated during the fall of 2007.
- The old town hall is a former school; it was known as the Johannesburg or Riverview School and was built in 1923. It is located on approximately two acres along the Apple River just southeast of the intersection of County Roads C and CC.
- The old town hall has very limited kitchen facilities, a large parking lot and has a handicapped entrance ramp. The hall was used for most public meetings and voting.
- The old town hall is utilized by local organizations for meetings.
- The town owns about two acres at this site. It is also used to access the Apple River for fishing, canoeing, picnicking, sight-seeing and unsupervised swimming.
- Discussion continues on the future of the old town hall, it could have a variety of uses, such as meeting hall, voting center, community or senior center or a rental facility.
- There are two cemeteries located in the Town of Star Prairie.
- The Oakland Cemetery is located in section 13 off CTH CC. It was platted in 1893 and was deeded by the Town of Star Prairie to the Oakland Cemetery Association in 1899. The Association is responsible for maintenance of the cemetery.
- There is also a cemetery at the St. Croix County Health Center on CTH K. It was established when the Health Center operated as a poor farm and sanatorium. It is owned and maintained by St. Croix County.
- Please see map below for siting of these facilities.

PARKS & OPEN SPACES

- There is one existing public town park and one planned public town park in Star Prairie.
- There will be a park at the new town hall. Planned facilities include a picnic pavilion with tables and a children's playground structure.
- The Town of Star Prairie provides access to the Apple River for fishing, canoeing, sight seeing, picnicking and unsupervised swimming from the old town hall site. Other than two picnic tables, there are no park facilities on this two-acre site.
- The Prairie Rich subdivision has a 2.6 acre site of land dedicated as a private park for the subdivision residents. There are no facilities.

- There are six public boat and/or canoe accesses in the town. The Town of Star Prairie owns three of them.
- In the Wigwam Shores subdivision, the town owns 0.87 acres at the end of 217th Avenue, which is utilized as a boat landing to Squaw Lake. The town also owns a 3.55 acre parking lot for about 20 vehicles and trailers just a short distance from the landing.
- The town owns 0.277 acres, Lot 41B, off CTH H on Cedar Lake which is used as a winter ice fishing drive-on or walk-in access. It is closed off in the summer. There are no parking facilities and parking on CTH H is a safety issue and is prohibited. There are no facilities at this site.
- The third public access is the canoe access to the Apple River at the old town hall.
- The newest public water access in the town is South Cedar Bay Landing, located off CTH H on Cedar Lake. The Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust owns 1.3 acres, Lot 41AB-2, it is west of the town's access. Working with the Town of Star Prairie, the Star Prairie Fish and Game Club, St. Croix County and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the land trust constructed a boardwalk across wetlands to reach the lake to allow canoe access in the summer and walk-in ice fishing access in the winter. Additional facilities include benches for wildlife viewing, picnic tables and a parking lot for approximately 12 vehicles.
- The Riverdale Flowage on the Apple River has a boat access off CTH C which provides access to the flowage. The site is owned by the power company.
- There is a canoe access to the Apple River off CTH H on the County's Apple River Property in Huntingdon. It is maintained by St. Croix County. Facilities include a parking lot, picnic tables and rough trails.
- For active recreation, town residents usually utilize park and recreation facilities in the City of New Richmond, or villages of Star Prairie or Somerset.
- St. Croix County's Apple River Property at Huntingdon, 59 acres, is also available for passive recreation. The County's facility provides fishing, a canoe access, picnic tables, parking and rough trails. There is an easement for a 15-foot wide walking trail from the Apple River Property north along Cedar Creek through Vern Nelson's former property. The County Parks Department hopes to work with the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to expand the easement along Cedar Creek and someday connect the County's Apple River Property to the McMurtrie Preserve.
- The Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust owns and maintains the 65-acre McMurtrie Preserve off CTH M, east of Cedar Lake. The Land Trust is in the process of improving the access to



The Old Town Hall is located on the Apple River near Johannesburg. This site is a canoe access, swimming area and has limited picnic facilities. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

the McMurtrie Preserve and will provide trails, a pavilion, toilet facilities and a parking lot for 20 cars. The site will be open to the public for educational purposes.

- The Land Trust is also in the process of acquiring approximately 40 acres from the New Richmond Archery Club for future public use.
- There are bicycle routes along County Roads H, C, CC and K in the Town of Star Prairie. They are designated and marked by the St. Croix County Highway Department in conjunction with the Town. Future bike routes are discussed in the transportation section.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service owns two large Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) located in the Town of Star Prairie. These areas are managed to provide important feeding, breeding, nesting, cover and other habitat values to a wide variety of plant and animal species. They also provide a recreational and open space function to local communities. Prairie Flats North WPA is 220 acres in sections 5, 6 and 8. Prairie Flats South WPA is 320 acres in section 7. WPA lands are purchased with duck stamp dollars and therefore the primary purpose is to provide waterfowl production habitat which consists of large tracks of grassland interspersed with numerous wetlands. Management on WPAs includes ongoing wetland and prairie restoration, water level manipulation, prescribed fire, tree removal, mowing and sometimes grazing. They are open to the public for hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretation, and wildlife observation and photography. Motorized vehicles, mountain bikes and horses are not allowed in WPAs.
- Please see map below for siting of these facilities.

SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING FACILITIES

Recycling Tonnages – 2005 to 2008
St. Croix County Responsible Unit Communities

COMMUNITIES	2005	2006	2007	2008	SERVICES
<i>Towns</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TONS</i>	
Baldwin	46.09	49.58	48.62	48.77	Town Drop Off Center
Eau Galle	72.41	77.69	86.78	86.20	Curbside Collection
Emerald	14.56	12.94	13.61	10.93	Town Drop Off Center
Erin Prairie	0.00	21.66	19.43	19.34	Town of Richmond Drop Off Center / Curbside Collection*
Glenwood	30.08	28.22	33.53	30.94	Town Drop Off Center
Hammond	71.22	89.49	171.09	147.18	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Hudson	983.07	941.73	955.92	931.62	Curbside Collection
Kinnickinnic	88.05	105.91	102.97	99.93	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Pleasant Valley	41.46	49.29	23.90	49.53	Town Drop Off Center
Richmond	29.54	167.46	178.91	173.67	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Rush River	22.53	22.26	22.71	25.93	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
St. Joseph	375.75	383.88	380.11	369.63	Town of Richmond Drop Off Center/Curbside Collection*
Somerset	90.30	249.27	249.70	251.08	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Springfield	12.98	10.84	12.03	11.13	Town Drop Off Center
Stanton	17.80	42.82	45.33	69.34	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Star Prairie	0.00	174.79	167.05	168.09	City of New Richmond Drop Off Center / Curbside Collection*
Troy	115.11	318.74	364.06	395.50	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Subtotal	2010.95	2746.57	2875.75	2888.81	
<i>Villages/Cities</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TONS</i>	<i>TONS</i>	
V. Baldwin	328.98	305.02	295.84	279.62	Curbside Collection
V. Deer Park/T. Cylon	17.82	17.76	17.56	13.60	Village/Town Drop Off Center
V. Hammond	162.87	160.16	168.39	186.76	Curbside Collection
V. North Hudson	491.53	497.31	480.20	480.60	Curbside Collection
V. Somerset	77.40	47.52	48.90	51.57	Curbside Collection
V. Star Prairie	86.87	86.88	86.88	86.88	Curbside Collection
V. Woodville	127.89	104.71	87.45	103.79	Curbside Collection
C. Hudson	1758.33	1907.98	1530.06	3210.40	Curbside Collection
C. New Richmond	455.50	456.56	523.00	715.00	Drop Off / Curbside Collection
Subtotal	3507.19	3583.9	3238.28	5128.22	
St. Croix County	5518.14	6330.47	6114.02	8017.04	N/A

Source: St. Croix County Recycling Note: The Towns of Cady, Cylon, Forest and Warren, Villages of Roberts, Spring Valley and Wilson and Cities of Glenwood and River Falls are not part of the County Responsible Unit. * Denotes numbers that represent curbside collection totals only.

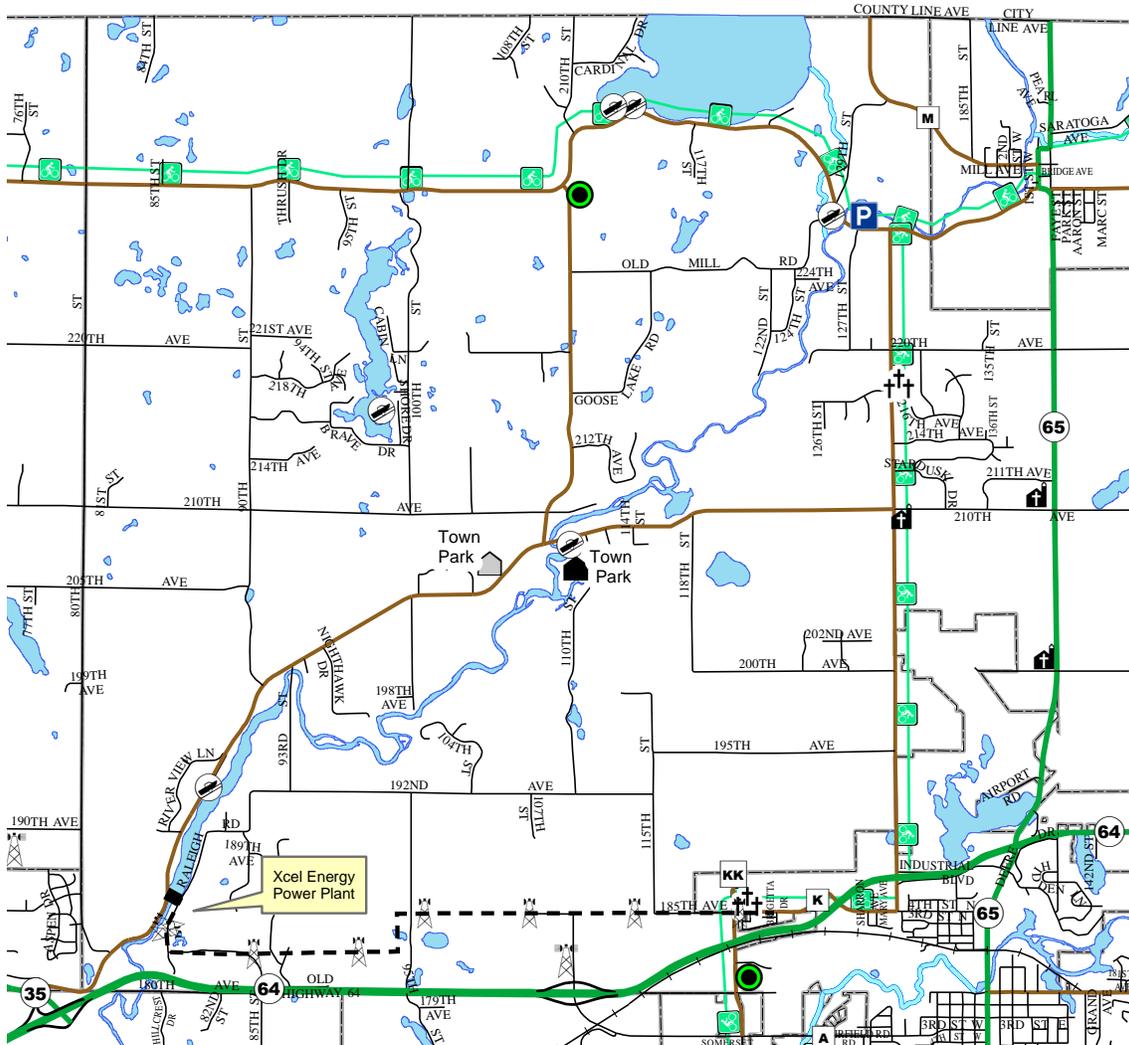
- There are no active municipal solid waste disposal sites operating in the Town of Star Prairie or St. Croix County.
- There is a battery drop-off site located in the Baldwin-Woodville area.
- Hazardous wastes are strictly regulated and are usually kept out of ordinary waste disposal facilities.

- To reduce the burden on solid waste disposal facilities, the State of Wisconsin has mandated recycling of a variety of household-generated materials. St. Croix County is the Responsible Unit for recycling in 26 county municipalities, including the Town of Star Prairie.
- St. Croix County assists local municipalities in operating their recycling programs; provides education and information to the public and special interest groups such as apartments and schools; manages, disperses and reports on grant funds; and holds special collections throughout the year for hazardous wastes, tires, appliances, electronics, toner cartridges and cell phones.
- Residents contract privately for curbside solid waste collection and disposal in the Town of Star Prairie. They can also contract for curbside collection of recyclables.
- The Town of Star Prairie contracts with the City of New Richmond to use its recycling center. Town residents who show identification can drop off their recyclables every Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon.
- The waste materials most frequently recycled are aluminum, mixed paper, tin, steel, glass, plastic, cardboard and newspaper.
- The town holds a spring road debris collection at the town hall. Residents who remove large white goods, tires, appliances or other waste items from the road ditches can bring them to the town hall for disposal.
- There are three former dumps in the town. Two are owned by the City of New Richmond and were used for its waste disposal. The largest, a 40-acre site, is located in Section 27 at the intersection of 115th Street and 195th Avenue. The second was a 10-15 acre site, found in Section 34 off 185th Ave.
- The Town of Star Prairie had a one to two acre dump site in Section 9, south of CTH H.
- The Department of Natural Resources recommends a 200 foot “no construction” buffer be established around the landfills to allow for the expansion of methane gas underground and prevent contact with that gas.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS & POWER LINES

- There is one telecommunication tower in the town, located in Section 33 off 110th Street.
- There are two emergency warning sirens that serve the Town of Star Prairie. One is in Section 10 east of CTH CC in front of the Cedar Lake Speedway, it was installed in 2006. The town owns and maintains it. The second in Section 35 east of CTH KK, is owned and maintained by the City of New Richmond. Both sirens are tested the first Wednesday of every month at 11 a.m.
- There is a hydroelectric power generating plant owned by Xcel Energy in Section 33 off Raleigh Road. It creates and regulates the Riverdale Flowage.
- There is an overhead transmission line running from the Xcel Energy Power Plant to the City of New Richmond. It goes across country or follows 185th Ave. in Sections 31, 32, 33 and 34.
- There are no electrical substations located in the Town of Star Prairie; there is one in the City of New Richmond.
- Please see map below for the location of these facilities.
- The Northern Natural Gas company owns a natural gas transmission line that runs from north to south through the Town of Star Prairie and ends at the City of New Richmond. This pipeline is marked with permanent yellow markers that say "Warning Gas Pipeline." The gas pipeline crosses private land by easement. According to materials provided by the Northern Natural Gas Company, the easements generally allow the landowner the right to use and enjoy the property, as long as that use does not interfere or conflict with Northern's rights. The width of the easements varies from 70 to 120 feet wide depending on the number and diameter of the pipes in the pipeline. The gas line easements have specific provisions or limitations regarding construction over, under, and near transmission lines. It is in the property owner's best interest to contact Digger's Hotline or Northern Natural Gas prior to any land alterations. Due to safety concerns the pipeline is not mapped.

Utilities and Community Facilities: Star Prairie



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



SOURCE: St. Croix County

ON-SITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems – 1990 to 2008
St. Croix County

MUNICIPALITY	EXISTING SYSTEMS	NEW SANITARY SYSTEMS INSTALLED				% CHANGE		TOTAL SYSTEMS Thru 12/31/2008
		Pre-1960	1960-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2008	90-00	
<i>Towns</i>								
Baldwin	187	62	21	34	60	62%	76%	364
Cady	172	49	11	38	68	245%	79%	338
Cylon	129	61	9	32	25	256%	-22%	256
Eau Galle	181	55	27	61	110	126%	80%	434
Emerald	145	42	13	48	62	269%	29%	310
Erin Prairie	128	43	32	37	23	16%	-38%	263
Forest	156	41	13	9	38	-31%	322%	257
Glenwood	149	67	21	20	56	-5%	180%	313
Hammond	184	52	26	66	405	154%	514%	733
Hudson	370	223	600	816	851	36%	4%	2860
Kinnickinnic	212	68	64	141	129	120%	-9%	614
Pleasant Valley	86	16	12	29	39	142%	34%	182
Richmond	230	97	73	121	615	66%	408%	1136
Rush River	104	18	15	34	27	127%	-21%	198
Somerset	371	159	165	304	486	84%	60%	1485
Springfield	172	64	13	48	75	269%	56%	372
St. Joseph	431	244	248	322	248	30%	-23%	1493
Stanton	278	59	22	39	21	77%	-46%	419
Star Prairie	421	165	163	325	333	99%	2%	1407
Troy	446	203	261	373	465	43%	25%	1748
Warren	149	72	92	120	138	30%	15%	571
Subtotal	4701	1860	1901	3017	4274	59%	42%	15,753
<i>Villages/Cities</i>								
Subtotal	112	87	72	41	66	-43%	61%	378
County Total	4813	1947	1973	3058	4340	55%	42%	16,131

Sources: St. Croix County Planning & Zoning. *New systems installed is not based on housing units -- includes all uses.
 Project community is designated in bold type.

- Waste water in the rural areas of St. Croix is usually treated by private onsite wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) more commonly referred to as septic systems. The state of Wisconsin, through the counties, permits onsite treatment systems. There are many different types of treatment permitted, but the most common are traditional septic tanks with drainfields or modified drainfields called mound systems.
- In 2000 there were 11,791 private onsite treatment systems in St. Croix County, an increase of 35 percent in total number of systems over 1990.
- Through 2008, there were 16,131 private treatment systems in the County. This is an increase of 42 percent in total number of systems over 2000.
- All POWTS are required to be inspected every three years, and most will need to be pumped at that time. Improper use of a septic system could lead to premature failure of the system, expensive repairs and groundwater contamination. St. Croix County reminds residents of the septic system inspection requirement on a three-year rotational basis and requires proof that the system has been inspected.

- The increased number and density of POWTS can lead to nitrates in the groundwater, if these systems are improperly installed or are not maintained.
- All the wastewater treatment needs in Town of Star Prairie are met by private onsite wastewater treatment systems.
- The total number of sanitary systems in Star Prairie was over 1400 in 2008, this is an increase of about 31 percent in the total number of systems from 2000. The rate new systems were installed remained steady in the 1980's, with about 160 systems. Then it doubled in the 1990's and since 2000 increased to about 330 systems. The 2000-2008 rates and numbers were significant but somewhat slower than neighboring towns to the west and south.

WATER SUPPLY

- Most drinking water needs in the Town of Star Prairie are met by private wells that utilize groundwater from the Prairie du Chien aquifer.
- Landowners should test their drinking water annually or at least every three years. Water testing kits are available at the County Planning and Zoning Department, Hudson; Land & Water Conservation Department, Baldwin; Public Health Department, New Richmond; or through private labs. A fee may apply.
- A former municipal landfill, northwest of the City of New Richmond, has impacted approximately 14 private wells in the Town of Star Prairie with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at levels above state drinking water standards. Some trace amounts of VOCs below drinking water standards have been found in additional wells further north. The VOCs have caused significant groundwater contamination. Effects of short-term exposure to VOCs can include symptoms of intoxication (dizziness, headache, confusion, nausea), anemia and fatigue. Effects of long-term exposure to VOCs can include cancer, liver damage, spasms, and impaired speech, hearing and vision. For additional information please see the WDNR website: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/pubbro.htm>.
- Since 2002, the plume of groundwater contamination has been identified and a Special Deep Casing Requirement Area identified. All new wells in this area are required to drill a deep well and have additional testing done. As a temporary mitigation measure, approximately 15 existing private wells in this area have installed whole-house, point-of-entry, activated carbon filter treatment systems. In some cases, existing landowners elected to use bottled water, while the extension of municipal water from the City of New Richmond was being planned for this area.
- The New Richmond Landfill Remediation Group has constructed water lines to provide municipal water to this area. Approximately 45 homes in the groundwater contamination area were hooked up to the water line in early 2008.
- The Town of Star Prairie has established a water utility district, Star Prairie Water District #1, to manage the water service and any expansion to additional sites. Please see the Future Land Use Map page 239, for the water utility district boundaries and the water service lines.
- A report entitled "An Introduction to Groundwater in St. Croix County" completed in May 2006 by the UW-Extension and UW-Stevens Point provides a more complete analysis of St. Croix County's groundwater. The report looks into a broader range of water quality measurements such as coliform bacteria, arsenic, nitrates, triazine, arsenic, chloride, hardness and pH. The report may be access on St. Croix County's website, under the Land

and Water Conservation Department’s Drinking Water program, www.sccwi.us/lwcd choose Drinking Water Testing.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Emergency Service Headquarters
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

MUNICIPALITY	AMBULANCE	FIRE DEPARTMENT	LAW ENFORCEMENT
Star Prairie	New Richmond	New Richmond	County Sheriff
Richmond	New Richmond	New Richmond	County Sheriff
Somerset	Stillwater	Somerset	County Sheriff
Stanton	New Richmond	New Richmond & Deer Park	County Sheriff
C. New Richmond	New Richmond	New Richmond	New Richmond PD
V. Somerset	Stillwater	Somerset	Somerset PD
V. Star Prairie	New Richmond	New Richmond	Star Prairie PD

NOTE: PD - Police Department
Source: St. Croix County Emergency Response Center

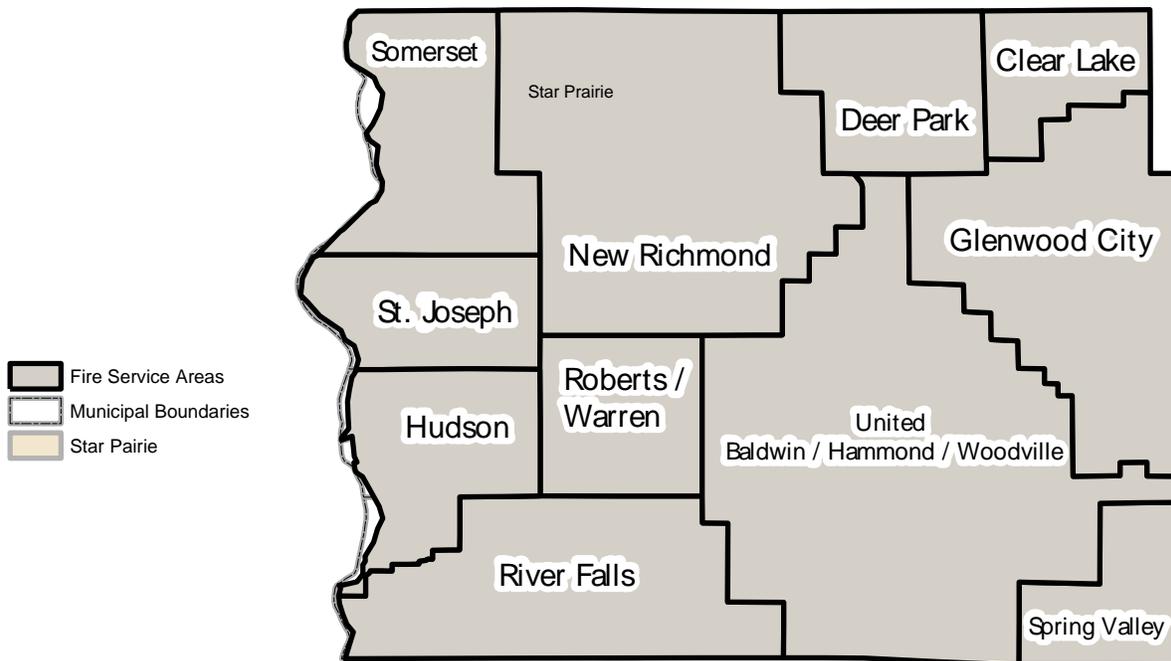
- The Town of Star Prairie is in one ambulance-service area and one fire-service area.
- The town receives direct ambulance service and a combination of a first responder unit, a group of local citizens that volunteer to be contacted in case of an emergency, and back up ambulance service from neighboring communities.
- The Town of Star Prairie is part owner of the New Richmond Fire and Rescue Service.
- The Town of Star Prairie contributes about \$10,000 per year to the ambulance service budget and about \$45,000 per year to the fire service budget.
- City of New Richmond ambulance service receives back up from the New Richmond First Responders Unit.
- The New Richmond Fire and Rescue provides and receives mutual aid from neighboring fire departments.
- The town and village of Somerset have entered into a mutual aid agreement for additional fire protection. This agreement will provide faster fire response to a portion of the town that is in close proximity to the Somerset Fire Department.
- The St. Croix County Sheriffs Department has authority in all areas where there is no other active police force.
- The Town of Star Prairie contracts with the St. Croix County Sheriff’s Department for a satellite law enforcement office at the town hall to encourage better service and response times for town residents.
- The Town does not have a town constable.

Ambulance Service Areas St. Croix County



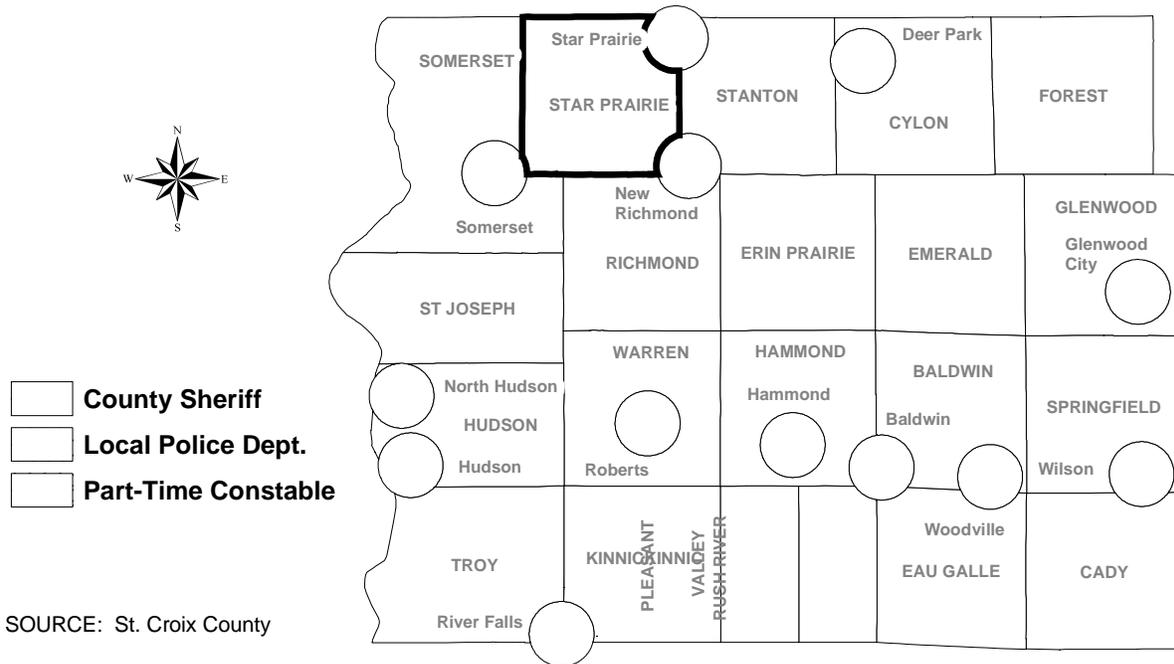
Source: St.Croix County Planning and Zoning / Land Information

St. Croix County Fire Protection Areas



SOURCE: ST. Croix County Planning and Zoning / Land Information

St. Croix County Law Enforcement

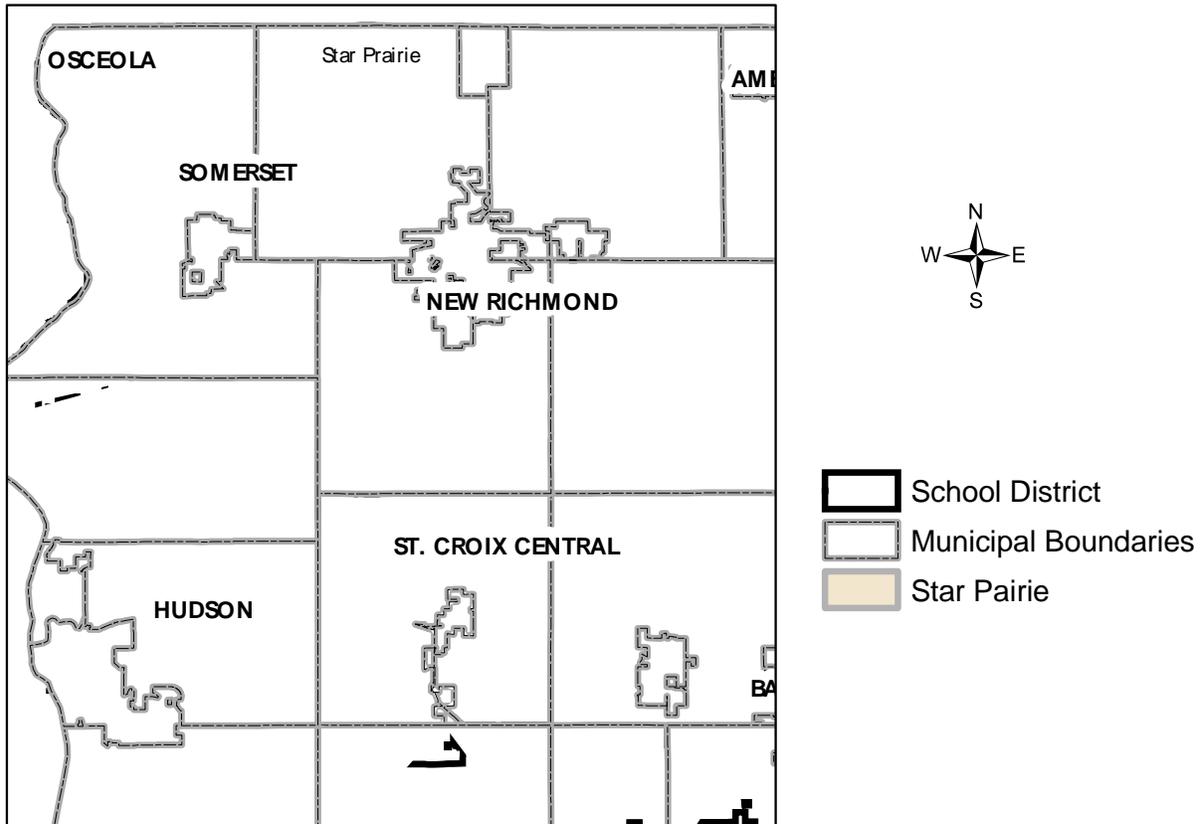


LIBRARIES

- Star Prairie residents utilize the New Richmond, Osceola and Somerset public libraries.
- There are 1,127 Town of Star Prairie library card holders at the Friday Memorial Library in New Richmond; this is about 13% of all New Richmond’s cardholders. In 1999 Star Prairie residents accounted for 9,756 circulation items. In 2004 they accounted for 16,465 circulation items and in 2005 that number rose to 21,757 circulation items. In 2004 that amounted to 10% of the library’s total circulation items and in 2005, 11% of the library’s total circulation items. Circulation numbers have been increasing because of increased population in the City and surrounding communities and because of easier access, including internet access, to other materials at other libraries.
- The number of Star Prairie residents who are cardholders at the Somerset Public Library was not available. In 2004 Star Prairie residents accounted for 4,760 circulation items from the Somerset Public Library. In 2005 Star Prairie’s circulation items rose to 4,867. In both 2004 and 2005 that was slightly over 10% of the library’s total circulation items.
- There are approximately 22 Town of Star Prairie library card holders at the Osceola Public Library. In 2004 Star Prairie residents borrowed 4 circulation items from the Osceola Library. In 2005 Star Prairie’s circulation items rose to 30 items and in 2006 the circulation items rose to 105 items. In 2005 this amounted to 0.3% of the library’s total circulation items and in 2006 1%.

SCHOOLS

SCHOOL DISTRICTS



SOURCE: ST. Croix County Planning and Zoning / Land Information

- There are three public school districts in the Town of Star Prairie, the New Richmond School District, the Somerset School District and the Osceola School District.
- The New Richmond School District Business Manager said enrollment has been increasing for the past five years in all grades. Generally they see larger graduating classes than Kindergarten classes, with the most growth at the middle school and high school levels.
- New Richmond’s projections for the next five years are growth of about 2 percent per year. The school district is at capacity at the elementary and secondary levels and is looking for land to purchase for both a new elementary school and a new high school. They are presently using portable classrooms at the elementary level.
- The Assistant to the Superintendent at the Somerset School District said their enrollment has been increasing rapidly for the past five years and that trend is expected to continue for the next five. Somerset’s enrollment increases have been at all grade levels with the largest numbers at the elementary level. The school’s projections indicate anywhere from 200 to 1000 additional students in the next five to 10 years.

- Somerset is in the process of acquiring additional land for a school expansion sometime in the next five years. However since both the elementary and high schools are at capacity it is uncertain at this time what type of expansion would be approved.
- The Osceola School District Superintendent is expecting steady growth for the next five years. The elementary school added approximately 60 students during the 05-06 school year. The majority of the growth occurs in the elementary grades.
- The superintendent said their growth projections show approximately 40 additional students each year for the next five years. The Osceola School District reorganized a little over three years ago into four facilities, an elementary school consisting of grades K-2, intermediate school consisting of grades 3-5, a middle school consisting of grades 6-8 and a high school consisting of grades 9-12. This has worked very well and there will be adequate capacity to accommodate additional growth. No expansion is planned at this time.

**School Enrollment -- School Years 1989-90, 1994-95, 2000-01& 2005-06
Town of Star Prairie School Districts & Neighboring School Districts**

SCHOOLS	ENROLLMENT						% CHANGE		
	1989-90	1994-95	2000-01	2002-03	2004-05	2005-06	90 - 95	95 - 01	01-06
Amery	1,715	1,836	1944	1,852	1824	1788	7.2	5.9	-8.0
New Richmond	2,173	2,361	2435	2,443	2568	2628	8.7	3.1	7.9
Hudson	3,051	3,472	4133	4,426	4803	4953	13.8	19.0	19.8
Osceola	1,255	1,499	1725	1,757	1759	1881	19.4	15.1	9.0
Somerset	811	965	1142	1,196	1455	1488	19.0	18.3	30.3
Saint Croix Central	937	1,035	968	1,050	1112	1219	10.5	-6.5	25.9

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

The Town of Star Prairie does not provide health care services. Health care services are provided by St. Croix County or private entities. Public health care services are provide by St. Croix County Health and Human Services Department and include: alcohol and drug abuse treatment, early childhood intervention, economic support, family and children services, mental health services, nursing home and public health services. Private health care facilities including hospitals, clinics, nursing homes and assisted living facilities are located in the cities or villages of Amery, Baldwin, Hudson, New Richmond, Osceola, Somerset and Stillwater, MN. The Town does not want to become involved in the provision of health care services.

CHILD CARE FACILITIES

There are no publicly-owned child care facilities in the Town of Star Prairie or St. Croix County. Child care services to residents of the Town of Star Prairie are provided by private or non-profit entities in the neighboring cities of Hudson and New Richmond; the villages of Osceola, Somerset, Star Prairie and Roberts; and in the Town of Star Prairie. The Town does not want to become involved in the provision of child care services.

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

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

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



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

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

22. Work with the Village of Somerset and City of New Richmond in the provision of joint services when it will result in better services and/or cost savings.
23. Contract with the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department for a satellite office for law enforcement to encourage better service and response times for town residents.
24. Provide public road maintenance, repair and replacement and snow plowing on town roads through contractual services.
25. Consider development, operation and maintenance costs associated with construction or provision of municipal improvements and services usually associated with urban development and manage the financial impact of public expenditures or municipal debt on town residents from such improvements.
26. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities. Encourage business types which will benefit all the communities.
27. Encourage conservation design development to provide community facilities and services (e.g., school bus routes, snow removal, police patrol) in a cost-effective manner.



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

TRANSPORTATION

LOCAL & COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

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

ROAD SYSTEM

The local, county and state road system in the Town of Star Prairie is shown on the Transportation System map below. The connectivity of the road system is impacted by the Apple River which divides the town diagonally. There are a limited number of river crossings in the town and additional ones are not planned to be developed. The south and east half of the town has easy access to STHs 64 and 65 and parts of CTH C and CC. The west and north half of the town has access to CTHs H and parts of C and CC.

Star Prairie works with the County Highway Department and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) on street and road maintenance and improvements utilizing two state programs for assistance, these are described below. There are also several state and federal programs which offer financial assistance for road improvements and reconstruction, further information is available on the WisDOT website.

- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has developed two systems to assist local governments in collecting information, monitoring, maintaining, upgrading and replacing local roads and budgeting for those activities. According to the WisDOT website, the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) is an Internet-accessible system that helps local governments and WisDOT manage local road data to improve decision-making, and to meet state statute requirements. With Geographic Information System technology, WISLR combines local road data with interactive mapping functionality. The result is an innovative system that allows local communities to display their data in a tabular format, on a map, or both. WISLR is a receptacle for local road information, such as width, surface type, surface year, shoulder, curb, road category, functional classification and pavement condition ratings.
- WISLR can be used with another WisDOT program, the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating System (PASER). PASER provides a uniform way of determining and recording the physical condition of pavement. PASER rates paved roadways surfaces on a scale of 1 to 10, and gravel roads on a scale of 1 to 5. A rating of 10 for a paved roadway and a rating of 5 for unpaved roadway are considered new roadways, while a rating of 1 for both will require total reconstruction. Local communities are required to evaluate and report local road pavement conditions every two years to WisDOT using PASER.

- WISLR and PASER can be used together by local communities to develop and budget for planned maintenance and reconstruction schedules for local roads. Both programs are internet accessible and free to local communities.
- The Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) was established in 1991 by WisDOT to assist local units of governments in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads and municipal streets in cities and villages. LRIP is a reimbursement program, which pays up to 50% of total eligible costs with local governments providing the balance. Projects must be built to appropriate road standards and adhere to applicable program requirements. There are three subprograms within LRIP, the Town Road Improvement Program (TRIP) to assist towns, the Municipal Street Improvement Program (MSIP) to assist cities and villages, and the County Highway Improvement Program (CHIP).

AIR TRANSPORTATION

- St. Croix County has one publicly owned airport located in the City of New Richmond. The New Richmond Regional Airport (NRRRA) opened in 1964. It is the fifth largest in the State of Wisconsin by number of aircraft, with two runways, averaging 122 flights per day. Over 175 aircraft are based in privately-owned hangars. There is a seaplane access with 23 seaplanes in use. There is no scheduled passenger service at this facility; however, there is private charter service available.
- This airport is one of the fastest growing in the Midwest. In 2004 a corporate hangar area was added and in 2005 the hangar area was expanded. In 2007 the airport expanded the runway by 1,500 feet, for a new total of 5,507 feet. Also a lighted taxiway, parallel to the runway was constructed.
- NRRRA is home to 11 aviation-related businesses and several business aircraft. The airport contributes over nine million dollars per year to the New Richmond area economy.
- State statutes allow the City of New Richmond to utilize its zoning ordinance and building code authority to regulate land use, construction standards and structure height in areas within a three-nautical-mile radius from the NRRRA. The Town of Star Prairie is heavily impacted by the regulation of airspace surrounding the airport. See Transportation System map below.
- In April 2008 the City adopted a height limitation zoning ordinance and general building standards. The height limitations are elevations permissible above mean sea level in feet. Specific information on the height limitation in each zone and the building and construction standards can be found on the NRRRA's webpage, <http://www.nrairport.com/buildingcode.htm>.
- The New Richmond Regional Airport (NRRRA) governing board was expanded in 2007 to add a representative from the Town of Star Prairie. A town resident has been appointed by the Star Prairie Town Board to represent those people who live within the influence of the airport on the NRRRA board.
- A number of projects for the New Richmond Regional Airport are included in the WisDOT Airport Improvement Plan 2008-2012. See table below. The 2008 construction projects are completed. Land acquisitions have begun or are proposed for the near future.

- The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, which is approximately 25 miles from the west St. Croix County line and 39 miles from the Roberts exit to Interstate 94, provides scheduled commercial air service.
- The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport will continue to provide the primary scheduled passenger air service for St. Croix County and the Town of Star Prairie.
- There are no privately owned airstrips in the Town of Star Prairie.

**Major Airport Improvement Projects -- 2008
New Richmond Regional Airport**

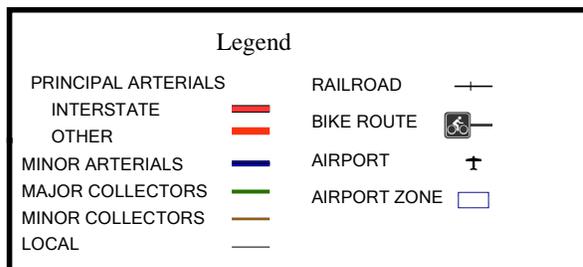
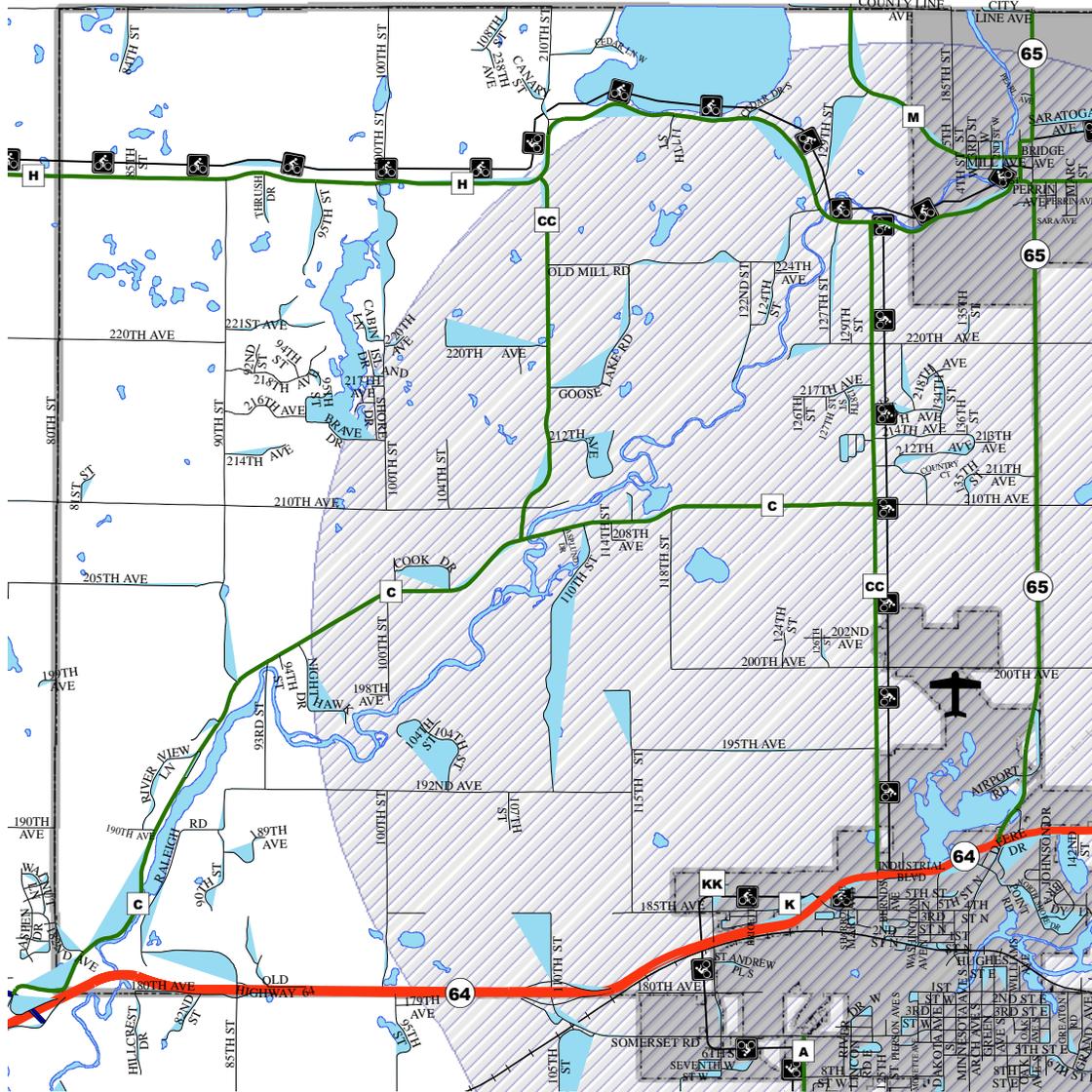
YEAR	SCHEDULED IMPROVEMENTS
2008	Design approach lighting system. Reconstruct runway 14/32; construct and pave blast pads; construct taxiway to NW corporate hangar area; pavement marking and airfield lighting; safety area grading.
2008	Develop land use zoning ordinance.
2009	Land acquisition for ALS and land reimbursement. Development NE hangar area. Approach lighting system (MALSF). Strengthen parallel taxiway and taxiways in S hangar area; expand S hangar area. Reconstruct S. GA apron.
2010	Purchase SRE and construct SRE building.
2011	Install water and sewer mains.
2012	Construct a helicopter landing and hangar area.

Source: 5-Year Airport Improvement Program, WisDOT Bureau of Aeronautics, (February, 2008).

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

- St. Croix County is served by two railroads with east-west routes, the Union Pacific (UP) and Canadian Pacific (CP).
- The UP Railroad operates the former Chicago-Northwestern (CNW) mainline between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago. This line travels through the towns of Baldwin and Hammond and serves the communities of Hudson, Roberts, Baldwin, Hammond, Woodville and Wilson.
- The CP Railroad operates the former Milwaukee Road/Soo Line, a branch line that provides shipper connections in Minnesota and to the east for the communities of Somerset and New Richmond.
- The Canadian Pacific line goes through the Town of Star Prairie in Section 34. There are no scheduled stops at this time.
- The mainline connections of the UP route between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago will continue to ensure rail service to communities along this route.
- The availability of service provided by the regional CP rail line is dependent upon the level of shipping generated by individual communities along this route and by access to larger rail systems to the west and east.

Transportation System: Star Prairie



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

TRUCKING & WATER TRANSPORTATION

Trucking transportation services were not dealt with separately in the Town of Star Prairie as they are covered by the town, county and state road systems.

There are no significant passenger or freight water transportation services in the Town of Star Prairie or in St. Croix County. The nearest is the barge traffic on the Mississippi river. Water transportation within the County is primarily recreational in nature (e.g., canoeing, fishing, water-skiing) occurring throughout the County on its many rivers and lakes, with some larger recreational boats and sailboats on Lake St. Croix. Paddlewheel and other riverboat excursions are also available along the St. Croix River for sight-seeing and dinner cruises.

PUBLIC TRANSIT & SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION

- Metro Commuter Services maintains a database of individuals who work in the region and who have expressed a desire to commute to work via carpool or vanpool. This commuter database uses a person’s home address, work address and work hours to find others who live and work near them and who have similar schedules. Their web site is: <http://mcs.metc.state.mn.us/>.
- Great Rivers Transit is a private subscription bus service that provides a daily bus commuter service to and from western Wisconsin to Minneapolis and St. Paul. Great Rivers is designed to be used via their website, <http://www.greatriverstransit.com/>. Subscribers choose the route they prefer, pay for service online and start riding either daily or occasionally.
- Existing park and ride lots for cars and van pools are located to provide connections for commuter transit to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area. The continued growth of the St. Croix County commuting work force warrants investigation of whether additional park and ride lots are needed and where they should be located.
- Park and ride lots serving the Town of Star Prairie are described in the following chart. All lots maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation have security lights and telephones. The City of New Richmond maintains a parking lot east of the airport entrance on STH 65, at the north end of the city. The lot has a security light.

Car and Van Pool Lots -- 2009
St. Croix County

LOT	# PAVED STALLS
STH 65/Airport (New Richmond)	30
I-94 - Carmichael Road Interchange (Hudson)	168
Hanley Road /Old Hwy. 35 (Hudson)	74
I-94/STH 65 Interchange (Roberts)	48
I-94/USH 63 Interchange (Baldwin)	36
USH 63/STH 64 East Intersection (4-Corners)	24
STH 35/65 (River Falls)	124
Total	504

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

- There are several specialized transportation services for the elderly and disabled available in St. Croix County that are supported by public funding.
- The St. Croix County Aging and Disability Resource Center coordinates specialized transportation services utilizing their site transportation vans and using volunteer transportation to medical appointments.
- The 2008 total number of one-way trips to nutrition sites/senior centers by the Van Transportation program was 16,908. This is down from 22,822 in 2005. The decrease is reflective of the changing demographics of seniors. More senior citizens are receiving home-delivered meals than are traveling to nutrition sites due to health concerns. This trend is occurring state-wide. The trips per community nutrition site, break down as follows:

**Van Transportation Services to Nutrition Sites -- 2005 & 2008
St. Croix County**

COMMUNITY	ONE-WAY TRIPS	
	2005	2008
Glenwood City	2134	2108
City of Hudson	3796	4300
City of New Richmond	9068	3668
Village of Baldwin	1774	1564
Village of Deer Park	14	283
Village of Hammond/Roberts	450	993
Village of Somerset	2260	1042
Village of Woodville	2784	2950
Total	22,280	16,908

Source: St. Croix County Aging and Disability Resource Center

- There are two programs in St. Croix County that provide subsidized transportation services to medical appointments. The Volunteer Medical Transportation program provides trips to medical appointments for people age 60 and over. In 2008 there were 520 one-way trips, in 2005 there were 542.
- The St. Croix County Disabled Transportation Program takes people with disabilities under the age of 60 to medical appointments. In 2008, 678 one-way trips were provided.
- St. Croix County contributes to the support of the River Falls Shared-Ride Taxi Service, which provides subsidized rides within the city limits. It is a combination of public and private pay and is available to elderly and disabled consumers. In 2008, 10,304 one-way trips were given to St. Croix County residents. In 2005 annual, one-way rides were approximately 7,869 in St. Croix County.
- The City of New Richmond sponsors a shared-ride taxi service that operates within and up to 1½ miles outside of the city limits, which includes portions of the towns of Richmond, Erin Prairie, Stanton and Star Prairie. It is available for elderly and disabled consumers through a combination of public and private pay. The service used to travel up to five miles outside the city, but the distance was reduced in 2006 to improve service and manage costs. The taxi service provided the following number of passenger trips: 9,747 in 2004,11,011 in 2005,11,327 in 2006,12,763 in 2007 and11,835 in 2008.
- Another service available in St. Croix County is the New Richmond Transport Service that provides non-emergency transport between local communities such as Baldwin, Hudson,

New Richmond, River Falls, Twin Cities and neighboring counties. The service is for both disabled and nondisabled people to medical and any other trip destinations on a scheduled basis only. This service is available to anyone for private pay and through other funding options, such as Medicaid. The number of trips is limited due to the number of vans and the number of calls in an area.

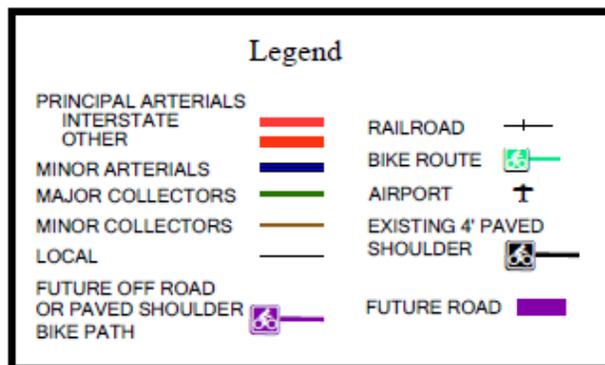
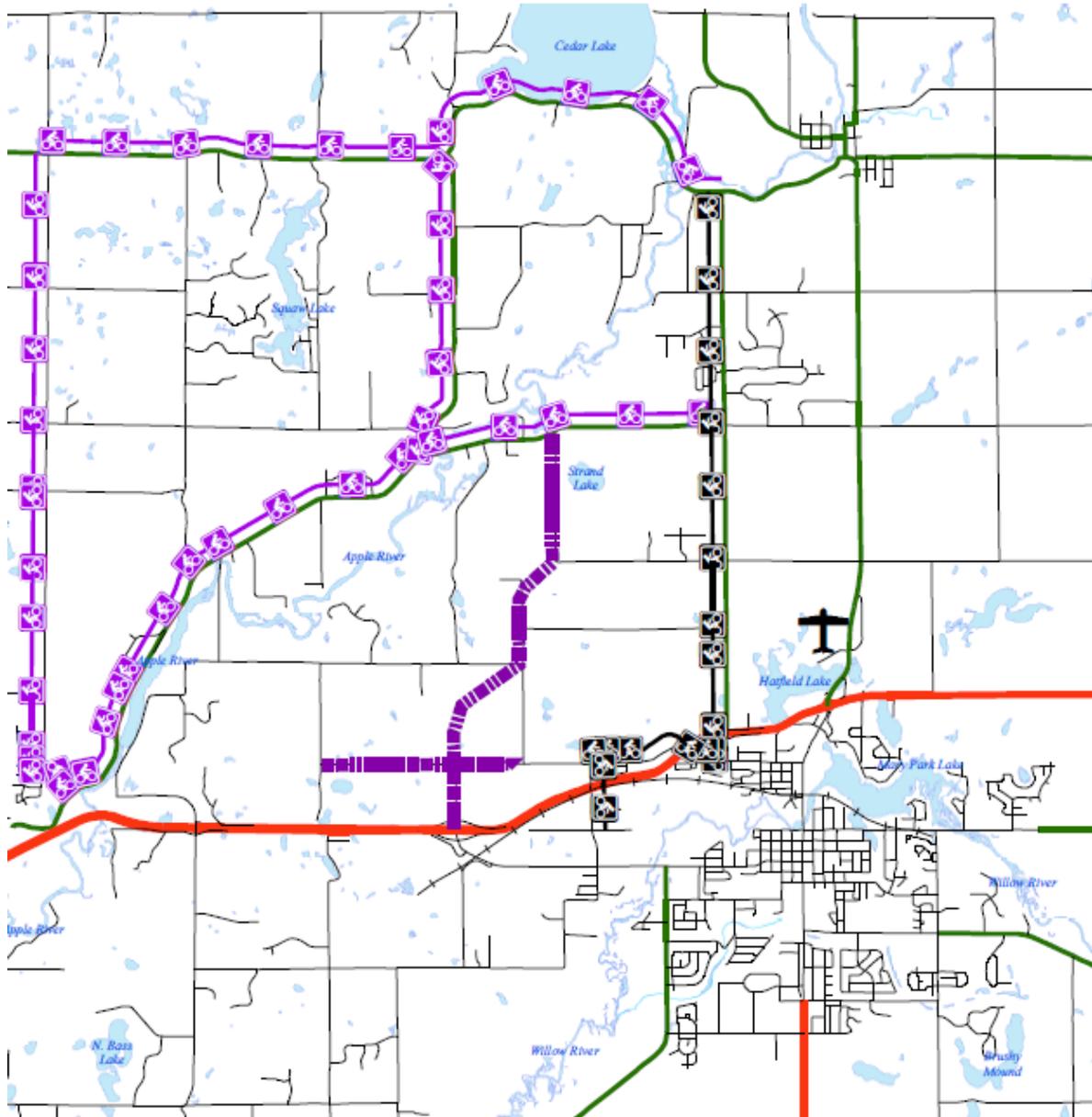
- The growing elderly population in St. Croix County will continue to place increasing demands on specialized transportation services.

BIKEWAY SYSTEM

- The 2006 St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies the existing bicycle route system in St. Croix County.
- In the Town of Star Prairie the route includes shared roadway along County Road H and paved shoulder along County Roads C, CC and K. They are designated and marked by the St. Croix County Highway Department in conjunction with the Town Board. Please see the Transportation System map.
- The Outdoor Recreation Plan also recommended that a county-wide trail plan for a multi-jurisdictional trail system be developed to link local, County, state and federal parks, facilities, trails and natural areas with municipalities, school, other trails and connection points and to meet the needs of commuters, recreation and tourism.
- In 1995, the St. Croix County Highway Department developed a bicycle transportation plan that addressed use of the bicycle as a transportation alternative. Bicycle traffic is allowed on most roads in St. Croix County, but some routes are recommended as the most direct routes between locations. These routes are either shared roadways or paved shoulders based on traffic levels, pavement condition and width and shoulder width.
- St. Croix County, working with cities, villages, towns, special interest groups, the County Highway Department and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission developed and adopted the St. Croix County Parks and Recreation Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in March, 2008 to implement the Outdoor Recreation Plan recommendation and update the bicycle transportation plan for the Highway Department.
- The 2008 plan recommended keeping the current shared-roadway system and improving 15 miles of gravel roads paved for shared roadway facilities, 50 miles of shoulder paving and approximately 65 miles of separate bicycle trail facilities.
- The Town of Star Prairie's residents indicated strong interest in additional bicycle routes or trails in the town survey and kickoff workshop. The Town of Star Prairie supported the County in developing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and recommended adding additional segments to the bike route system which were incorporated into the county-wide plan.
- The town may want to encourage the county to provide signed, paved shoulders when ever county roads are upgraded and where existing facilities can accommodate them to improve safety and functionality of routes.
- Recommended bicycle route upgrades are shown on the Future Bike Routes map below. Generally the recommended improvements are off-road bike paths or paved shoulder with bike route designation.

- County road improvements for bicycles include adding paved shoulder or off-road bike path to CTH H and CTH C/210th Ave. from the intersection with STH 64 east to the intersection with STH 65. A three foot paved shoulder will be added to CTH CC from CTH C to H during the summer of 2007, this will improve bicycling on this roadway.
- Town road improvements include adding paved shoulder or off-road bike path to 80th Street along the town's western border; and creating an east-west connection south of the Apple River along Raleigh Road and 192nd Ave. The town would also like to create a north-south connection in this area from 85th St. north along Raleigh Road and 93rd St. to CTH C. to connect town residents to Somerset and the Somerset school system and to New Richmond, New Richmond schools and the Hatfield Park complex.
- An off-road bike path should be incorporated into planning for a new road from the diamond interchange at STH 64 and 100th Street north to 115th Street and then to 114th or 118th streets to CTH C.
- A second off-road bike path may be possible along the utility corridor from the Xcel Energy Power Plant on the Apple River to 185th Ave. and CTH K. Please see Future Bike System map below.

Future Bike System: Star Prairie



SOURCE: 1999 Functional Road Classification System, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, St. Croix County Amended: 6/28/18

COMMUTING PATTERNS

**Commuting Patterns of St. Croix County Residents – 1990 to 2000
By Place of Work**

PLACE OF WORK	1990	% OF TOTAL	2000	% OF TOTAL	CHANGE 1990-2000
Minnesota Counties:					
Dakota	549	2.17%	1,025	2.98%	476
Hennepin	1,590	6.28%	2,869	8.33%	1,279
Ramsey	4,261	16.82%	5,173	15.03%	912
Washington	3,302	13.04%	5,245	15.24%	1,943
All Others	238	0.94%	649	1.89%	411
Wisconsin Counties					
Dunn	238	0.86%	306	0.89%	68
Pierce	857	3.38%	1,272	3.69%	415
Polk	359	1.42%	658	1.91%	299
All Others	244	0.96%	368	1.07%	124
Other States	103	0.41%	102	0.30%	-1
Subtotal Outgoing Commuters	11,720	46.28%	17,847	51.84%	5,926
St. Croix County	13,606	53.72%	16,579	48.68%	2,973
Total	25,326	100.00%	34,426	100.00%	8,899

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census.

**Commuters to St. Croix County – 1990 to 2000
By Place of Residence**

PLACE OF RESIDENCE	1990	% OF TOTAL	2000	% OF TOTAL	CHANGE 1990-2000
Minnesota Counties:					
Dakota	75	0.40%	244	0.93%	169
Hennepin	124	0.67%	424	1.62%	300
Ramsey	310	1.66%	524	2.00%	214
Washington	590	3.17%	958	3.66%	368
All Others	179	0.96%	581	2.22%	402
Wisconsin Counties					
Dunn	697	3.74%	1,347	5.15%	650
Pierce	1,836	9.86%	3,154	12.05%	1,318
Polk	842	4.52%	1,542	5.89%	700
All Others	300	1.61%	539	2.06%	239
Other States	68	0.37%	107	0.41%	39
Subtotal Incoming Commuters	5,021	26.96%	9,600	36.67%	4,399
St. Croix County	13,606	73.04%	16,579	64.02%	2,973
Total	18,627	100.0%	26,179	100.0%	7,372

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census

- St. Croix County residents are commuting to jobs outside the county in steadily increasing numbers.
- The number of residents commuting to the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area increased by slightly over 5,900 residents since 1990.
- In 2000, there were more residents working outside St. Croix County than inside.
- From 1990 to 2000, St. Croix County added over 7,000 new jobs within the county. However county residents fill less than half of those jobs. Workers from outside St. Croix County fill over 4,000 of those jobs.

**Commuting By Place of Work -- 1990 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

TOWN/COMMUNITY	YEAR	ST. CROIX COUNTY	% OF TOTAL	OTHER WISCONSIN COUNTIES	% OF TOTAL	WORKED OUTSIDE WISCONSIN	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL
Star Prairie	1990	517	54.9	51	5.4	373	39.6	941
Star Prairie	2000	752	47.7	102	6.5	721	45.8	1575
New Richmond	1990	1655	69.7	83	3.5	638	26.9	2376
New Richmond	2000	1779	56.2	234	7.4	1151	36.4	3164
Richmond	1990	525	68.0	23	3.0	224	29.0	772
Richmond	2000	474	53.7	82	9.3	326	37.0	882
Somerset	1990	330	33.1	47	4.7	621	62.2	998
Somerset	2000	545	36.3	77	5.1	878	58.5	1500
Stanton	1990	379	69.0	34	6.2	136	24.8	549
Stanton	2000	383	66.3	37	6.4	158	27.3	578
V. Somerset	1990	231	41.5	31	5.6	294	52.9	556
V. Somerset	2000	306	39.5	39	5.0	430	55.5	775
V. Star Prairie	1990	142	63.4	7	3.1	75	33.5	224
V. Star Prairie	2000	136	49.1	39	14.1	102	36.8	277
St. Croix County	1990	13,606	53.7	1677	6.6	10,043	39.7	25,326
St. Croix County	2000	16,759	48.7	2604	7.6	15,065	43.8	34,428

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census

- From 1990 to 2000, the number of Star Prairie residents commuting to jobs in St. Croix County increased by about 45% from 517 to 752.
- Also the percentage of residents commuting to jobs in St. Croix County is almost exactly the same for the Town of Star Prairie as it is for the County as a whole.
- From 1990 to 2000, the number of Star Prairie residents commuting to jobs in other Wisconsin Counties increased very slightly by about 1%, again a similar increase to the rate change for all of St. Croix County.
- From 1990 to 2000, the number of Star Prairie residents commuting to jobs outside Wisconsin increased by about 93%. This was a significant increase in the number of workers who had jobs in outside Wisconsin but chose to live in Wisconsin.
- It is interesting that regardless of the jump in numbers, a similar pattern is again apparent between the percentages for the town and County. The number of residents who worked outside Wisconsin and reside in the Town of Star Prairie mimics the county-wide rates very closely.

COUNTY, STATE & REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

FUNCTIONAL/JURISDICTIONAL STATUS

The functional and jurisdictional status of the roadways in the Town of Star Prairie are shown on the Transportation System map above. The WisDOT determines arterial and major and minor collector road status.

- Principal arterials include State Highway 64.
- Major collectors include State Highway 65 and County Highways C, CC, H, and M.
- All other county and town roads have local functional status regardless of which municipality has jurisdictional status.

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

Annual Average Daily Traffic counts, from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, for federal, state and county roadways within or next to the Town of Star Prairie are shown in the chart below.

**AADT By Roadway Segment -- 1994 to 2004
Town of Star Prairie**

ROADWAY	ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC			
	1994	1997	2000	2004
STH 64, Star Prairie	5700	6200	5900	6700
STH 64, Stanton	5000	4000	5400	4400
STH 65, Star Prairie	5100	4600	4200	4200*
CTH C, Huntingdon	2300	2200	3200	2700
CTH C/CC	2000	2100	2900	3000
CTH C, Johannesburg	2000	2000	3500	3200
CTH CC, New Richmond	3600	3200	3000	3400
CTH CC, Johannesburg	690	1100	820	1100
CTH H, Somerset	650	620	840	800
CTH H, Star Prairie	840	790	910	830
CTH H, Stanton	1200	1200	1600	1700
CTH M, Star Prairie	1700	1800	2200	1800
CTH K, New Richmond	N / A	2200	2600	3300

Source: 1994, 1997, 2000, 2004 Wisconsin Highway Traffic Volume Data, *2001 data.

- The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts for the Town of Star Prairie have generally remained consistent or increased from 1994 to 2004.
- The exception to this is the counts for year 2000. These counts are misleading because during 2000 State Trunk Highway 65 was being resurfaced which caused drivers to seek alternate routes to avoid the construction. In some instances driver choices resulted in higher traffic counts for county and state roads but in others it resulted in lower traffic counts.

- Inconsistent traffic counts will probably also show up in 2005 and 2006 due to construction on STH 64. STH 64. People may not have utilized the state highway as often and may have sought out alternative routes on County and Town roads to avoid road construction.
- The most heavily traveled route in the Town of Star Prairie is State Trunk Highway 64, with about 6,700 cars per day in 2004, an increase of about 13% over 2000.
- AADT on STH 64 drops about 2,300 vehicles after going through the City of New Richmond. Some of this drop may have been due to road construction in 2004.
- Traffic on STH 65 is also busy at around 4,200 AADT. That count has not been updated since 2001, probably due to the planned road construction.
- The most heavily traveled county roads are C, CC and C/CC combined north of New Richmond to Johannesburg. Equally heavily traveled is County Road K west of New Richmond.

HIGHWAY INVESTMENTS

Highway projects that are currently programmed by State and County Highway Departments to address highway improvement needs reflect a substantial investment in the highway infrastructure in St. Croix County and the Town of Star Prairie.

- WisDOT resurfaced and made short-term improvements to the STH 64 corridor from New Richmond to USH 63 in 2009. This project included improvements to the STH 64 and CTH T intersection.
- Conversion of STH 35/64 to a four-lane expressway was completed fall of 2006 including the Stillwater Bridge approach to Somerset and to New Richmond. WIS 64 is a major east-west travel corridor in St. Croix County. It joins WIS 35 near Somerset to serve interstate, interregional and local traffic between Houlton, Somerset and New Richmond.
- The WisDOT's long-term plan is to convert STH 64 to a four-lane freeway with very limited access. There will be three accesses, in Somerset, New Richmond and at 110th Street in Star Prairie and Richmond. Additional frontage roads will be needed to reroute local traffic that previously had direct access to STH 64.
- The St. Croix County Highway Department's six-year highway improvement program identified about \$9.5 million for countywide highway work to be performed between 2004 and 2010. These projects included widening, minor reconstruction, major reconstruction and simple base improvements. County trunk highway projects identified as needing improvements within the Town of Star Prairie included: CTH C repaving from CTH H to 200th Avenue in 2006, CTH CC construction from CTH H to CTH C in 2006-2007, and CTH C construction from CTH CC by Johannesburg south to STH 64 in 2012. An update to the six-year plan is underway.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

All state and regional transportation system plans have been taken into account and evaluated by the Town of Star Prairie. The town has also evaluated the impacts of the City of New Richmond's area transportation planning. The city has identified an urban growth boundary and a transportation system that could serve that area. The city has adopted an official map that includes the transportation system within the city limits and within the city's urban growth boundary. The Town of Star Prairie will continue to provide comments to the city regarding future transportation system planning and how that could coordinate with the City of New Richmond's planning and official map.

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The future Transportation System map below identifies future roads and the connections they will accomplish within the Town of Star Prairie. The town anticipates that the functional classification of some roads will change over time as the traffic levels increase and road improvements are made.

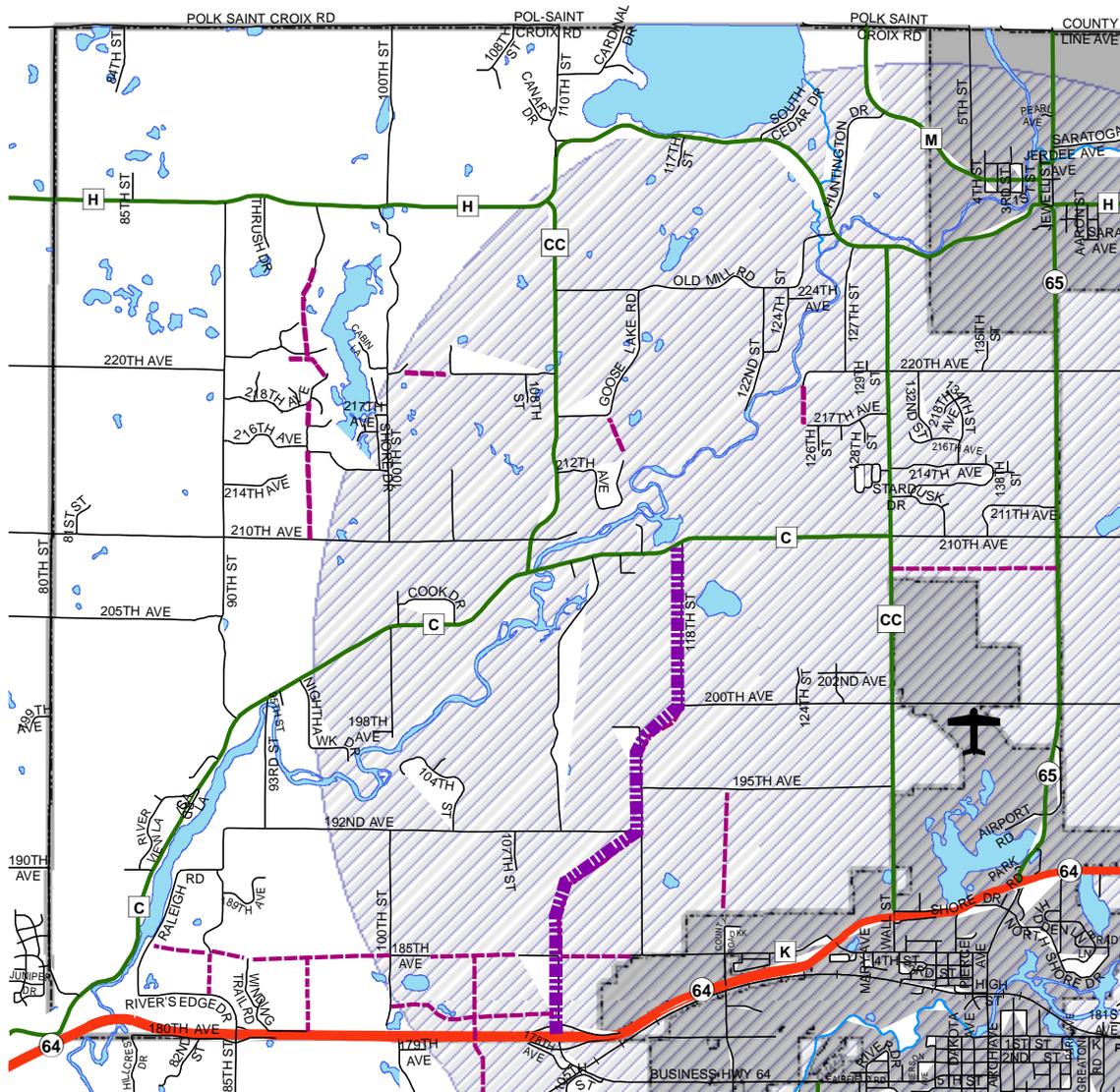
The town is planning for a future connection from the diamond interchange on STH 64 at 110th St., then connecting to 115th St. and finally connecting to CTH C somewhere between 114th and 118th streets. This will be an important component of the town's future road system. It is anticipated to be of collector or arterial status and would provide access for many of the town's residents to STH 64. The right-of-way along this corridor will need to be sufficient to allow for expansion as population growth in the town increases traffic levels. It should also be sufficient to accommodate an off-road bike path. Because the exact location of the future roadway will depend on many factors it is shown as a corridor and not as an actual road on the map below.

Future connections for local access are needed around Squaw Lake and on Goose Lake Road and 220th Ave. Future connections are also needed from CTH C to STH 65 and from CTH KK to 195th Ave.

The Plan Commission has worked with Wisconsin Department of Transportation and the towns of Richmond and Somerset to plan for future frontage roads that will be needed when WisDOT upgrades STH 64 from an expressway to a freeway. At that time all at-grade access to STH 64 will be removed and residents will need alternative access to the interchanges. This change is not anticipated for about 15 to 20 years; however WisDOT is planning for the future upgrade and as part of that planning process has worked with local communities to identify future connections and linkages for existing homes. The WisDOT also hopes that local communities will adopt official maps to prevent development in future local and state roadway corridors. A frontage road to provide access for local residents to the 110th Street/STH 64 diamond interchange expansion would be created by extension of 185th Avenue from 115th Street all the way to Raleigh Road. This corridor would have a circulation loop from the diamond interchange to 100th Street and two more loops from Winding Trail Road and River's Edge Drive to 185th Avenue extended. The new loop east of 110th Street would connect by overpass over STH 64 to 100th Street in the Town of Richmond.

Long-term discussion also identified the possibility of a bicycle/pedestrian crossing over the Apple River to CTH C at 185th Avenue extended and Raleigh Road. Future transportation planning will continue to pursue this opportunity.

Future Transportation System: Star Prairie



Legend

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



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

TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

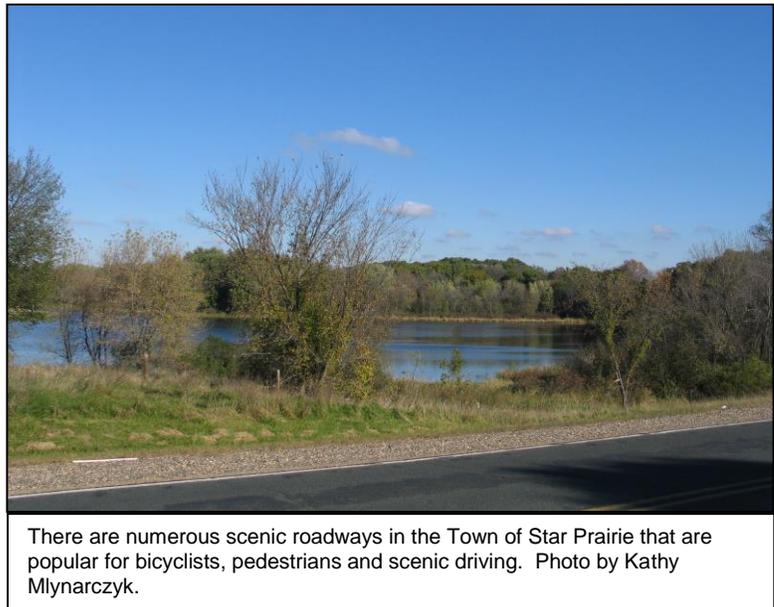
1. Ensure that transportation system improvements are coordinated with land development desires.
2. Coordinate multi-jurisdictional (town, village, city, county, state) transportation system improvements and maintenance in the Star Prairie area.
3. Provide for safe and adequate road capacities and road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

Policies:

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

7. Work with the county, state and private landowners in ensuring that road right-of-ways are clear of visual obstacles, particularly at road intersections. Road right-of-ways should be properly mowed and cleared.
8. Post weight restrictions on existing town roads as necessary and consider the weight limits on local roads when reviewing development proposals.
9. Discourage large amounts of “side of the road” residential and commercial development on State and County highways and arterial town roads to prevent congestion and preserve rural character and safety.
10. Encourage bicycle traffic to utilize less traveled town and county roadways.

11. Designate specific town and county roadways for bicycle traffic and improve designated bicycle routes with wide, signed shoulders or off-road bike paths, based on the Future Bike System map shown above. These changes would provide a coordinated system of bike routes to access the City of New Richmond, villages of Somerset and Star Prairie and park and school system serving



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

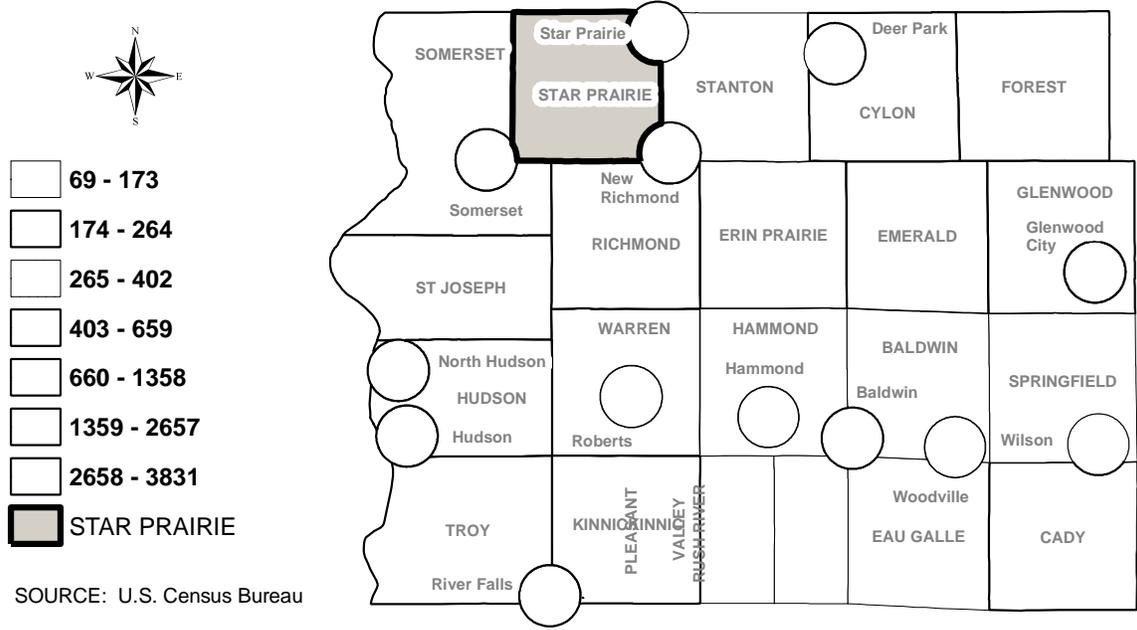
- town residents. It would provide better, safer connections for residents northwest and southeast of the Apple River.
12. Pursue a bicycle/pedestrian crossing over the Apple River at 185th Street extended and Raleigh Road and connecting to CTH C.
13. Work with the City of New Richmond and the Multi-Purpose Pathway Committee to coordinate and sign bicycle/pedestrian routes into and out of the City of New Richmond.
14. Notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet height limitations and building construction standards for insulation and sound reduction. These sites may be required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.
15. Require developers to enter into a developers’ agreement and provide a letter of credit to repair damage to town roads caused by construction traffic.
16. Evaluate and implement town impact fees on new development projects to offset additional expenses to the town for adding, upgrading or expanding town parks, roads, services and facilities.

17. As new development occurs, discourage new private roads and explore options to make existing private roads public to improve access for emergency services, improve maintenance and decrease conflicts.
18. Work with St. Croix County to update, as necessary, standards for development of local and county roads to safely serve multiple functions while retaining rural character.

HOUSING

HOUSING SUPPLY

**Total Housing Units - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



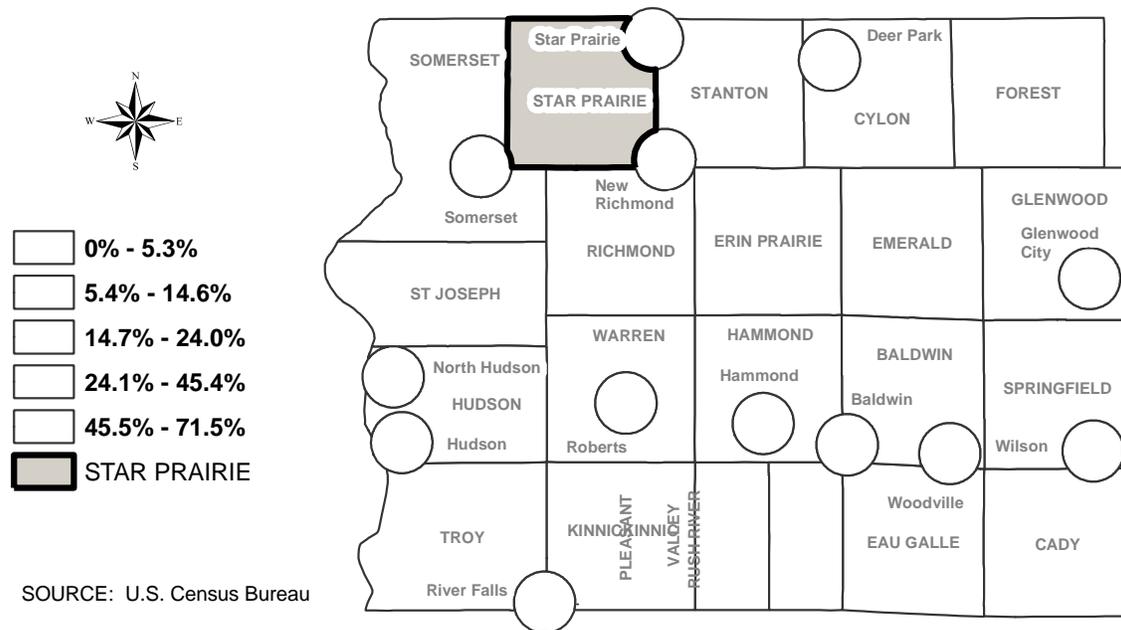
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

**Total Housing Units -- 1970 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	1970	1980	1990	2000	AVG PER YR 1970-2000	PERCENT CHANGE		
						70-80	80-90	90-00
Star Prairie	412	558	761	1079	22.2	35.4	36.4	41.8
Richmond	271	385	467	530	8.6	42.1	21.3	13.5
Somerset	297	559	722	963	22.2	88.2	29.2	33.4
Stanton	263	340	353	363	3.3	29.3	3.8	2.8
C. New Richmond	1223	1665	2025	2657	47.8	36.1	21.6	31.2
V. Somerset	232	318	417	659	14.2	37.1	31.1	58.0
V. Star Prairie	122	163	201	215	3.1	33.6	23.3	7.0
St. Croix County	10,376	14,710	18,519	24,265	463.0	41.8	25.9	31.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2000 Summary File 1

**Percent Change in Total Housing Units - 1990 to 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



- In St. Croix County the number of housing units increased by 5,746 units from 1990 to 2000, a 31 percent increase.
- From 1970 to 2000 an average of 463 units per year was constructed in St. Croix County.
- The Town of Star Prairie housing growth has averaged over 22 percent per year since the 1970's.
- Unlike some of its neighboring communities, the Town of Star Prairie has seen steady increases in the number of housing units and in the percentage increase in the number of housing units for the past 30 years. While some communities have seen higher growth rates or greater numbers, Star Prairie's growth has been very steadily increasing.
- During the 1970's, the housing unit growth rates in Star Prairie was below the County's but still strong.
- During the 1980's and 1990's the housing unit growth rates in Star Prairie were above the County's.
- Overall the housing unit growth rates in the Town of Star Prairie generally reflect the decline of agriculture and related farm families and the growth of suburbanites who are interested in locations with or near water resources and topographic features such as rolling hills that are abundant in this town.

**Housing Unit Types as a Percent of Total Units -- 1990 to 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	YEAR	TOTAL UNITS & PERCENT OF TOTAL UNITS					
		SINGLE FAMILY		MULTI-FAMILY		MOBILE HOME	
Star Prairie	1990	605	79.5%	15	2.0%	141	18.5%
Star Prairie	2000	899	83.7%	10	0.9%	165	15.4%
Richmond	1990	384	82.2%	45	9.6%	38	8.1%
Richmond	2000	468	89.8%	18	3.5%	35	6.7%
Somerset	1990	619	85.7%	44	6.1%	59	8.2%
Somerset	2000	899	90.0%	40	4.0%	60	6.0%
Stanton	1990	291	82.4%	9	2.5%	53	15.0%
Stanton	2000	354	88.9%	6	1.5%	38	9.5%
C. New Richmond	1990	1325	65.4%	649	32.0%	51	2.5%
C. New Richmond	2000	1674	63.3%	934	35.3%	35	1.3%
V. Star Prairie	1990	151	75.1%	45	22.4%	5	2.5%
V. Star Prairie	2000	159	81.5%	33	16.9%	3	1.5%
V. Somerset	1990	248	59.5%	166	39.8%	3	0.7%
V. Somerset	2000	350	54.9%	285	44.7%	2	0.3%
St. Croix County	1990	13,951	76.0%	3309	18.0%	1094	6.0%
St. Croix County	2000	18,610	76.7%	4519	18.6%	1131	4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Summary File 3.

- Approximately 84 percent or more of housing in the Town of Star Prairie is single family; this is seven percent higher than the county as a whole.
- From 1990 to 2000, the percentage of single family units increased by about four percent in the Town of Star Prairie. This is about six percent lower than all the neighboring towns around Star Prairie.
- From 1990 to 2000 the percentage of single-family housing has increased relative to multifamily and mobile homes in Star Prairie, while it has generally remained constant in the whole county.
- During this period the number and percent of multi-family structures decreased in Star Prairie while the number of mobile homes increased but as a percentage of total housing units it decreased in the Town.
- The surrounding towns of Richmond and Somerset have higher numbers of multi-family units than Star Prairie. Most rural towns saw a decrease in number and percentage of multi-family units from 1990 to 2000, this trend was repeated in Star Prairie.
- However, the Town of Star Prairie did not see a decrease in the number of mobile home units as was seen in all the surrounding municipalities. Star Prairie’s mobile home units increased in number but not as rapidly as single-family housing increased, resulting in a lower percentage of total from 1990 to 2000. The county as a whole also saw an increase in number but a decrease in percent of total.
- The Town of Star Prairie is the only community to see an increase in mobile home numbers. Generally mobile homes are being slowly replaced by permanent housing structures.

HOUSING OCCUPANCY

Occupied Housing Unit by Tenure – 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities

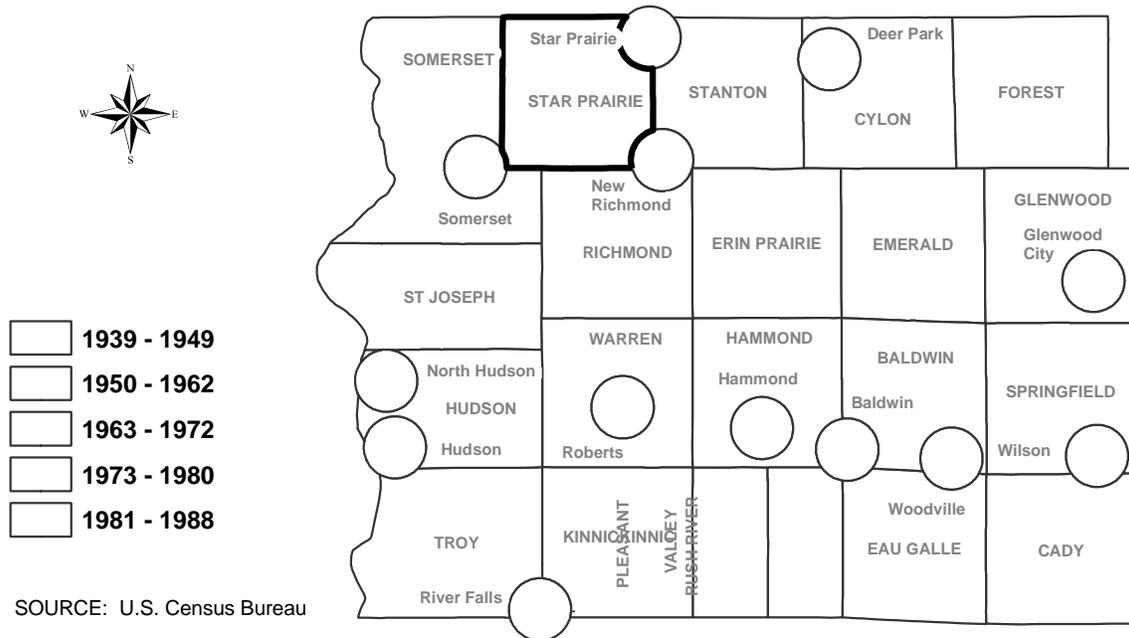
COMMUNITY	OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS			VACANT UNITS		PERCENT OF TOTAL UNITS		
	TOTAL	OWNER	RENTER	TOTAL	SEASONAL	OWNER OCCUPIED	RENTER OCCUPIED	SEASONAL OCCUPIED
Star Prairie	1006	908	98	73	58	90.3%	9.7%	5.4%
Richmond	524	464	60	6	0	88.5%	11.5%	0.0%
Somerset	927	848	79	44	15	91.5%	8.5%	1.6%
Stanton	352	303	49	11	0	86.1%	13.9%	0.0%
C. New Richmond	2561	1619	942	96	5	63.2%	36.8%	0.2%
V. Star Prairie	212	156	56	3	0	73.6%	26.4%	0.0%
V. Somerset	635	333	302	24	5	52.4%	47.6	0.8%
All County Towns	11,017	10,027	990	426	222	91.0%	9.0%	1.9%
St. Croix County	23,410	17,881	5,529	855	281	76.4%	23.6%	1.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Summary File 1

- In 2000, owner-occupied units accounted for 90 percent of all housing units in the Town of Star Prairie. This is very close to the rate for all towns in the County and neighboring towns.
- The Town has a higher percentage of owner-occupied housing than the county as a whole.
- In the Town of Star Prairie renter occupied units account for about 10 percent of the total housing stock.
- Star Prairie's percent-of-renter occupied housing units is similar to percent-of-renter occupied housing for all towns in the County. Generally, renter-occupied housing is located within cities and villages in the County.
- The Town has a much lower percentage of renter-occupied housing than the county as a whole.
- Star Prairie's 73 vacant units is very high for a town, it is higher than all the surrounding towns and is close to the City of New Richmond's number. It is about 7 percent of the Town's total housing supply.
- The high vacancy rate is accounted for by the seasonal housing units; 79 percent of the all the vacant units are seasonal housing. The town's high number of seasonal units is probably a result of the town's water resources such as Cedar Lake, Squaw Lake and the Apple River and its flowage.

HOUSING STOCK ASSESSMENT

**Median Year Housing Units Built - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



**Percent of Housing Units by Year of Construction – 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	MEDIAN	PERCENT OF TOTAL UNITS				
		PRE 1960	1960-1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999
Star Prairie	1982	18.0	8.2	20.8	15.0	38.1
Richmond	1977	20.0	11.1	28.6	18.0	22.3
Somerset	1980	20.4	5.4	25.1	18.6	30.4
Stanton	1967	37.4	17.3	29.4	3.0	12.8
C. New Richmond	1974	35.3	8.6	15.1	17.2	24.0
V. Somerset	1983	25.4	4.2	16.2	14.3	39.9
V. Star Prairie	1967	44.1	8.2	12.3	17.4	17.9
St. Croix	1977	28.5	8.0	19.8	16.6	27.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970-2000 Summary File 3

- In 2000, the median construction year for housing units throughout St. Croix County was 1977.
- The median construction year for housing in the Town of Star Prairie was 1982, only the Village of Somerset and Town of Hudson had more recent construction year housing than the town.
- Star Prairie’s median housing age is five years more recent than the County’s and is more recent than all the surrounding municipalities, except the Village of Somerset.

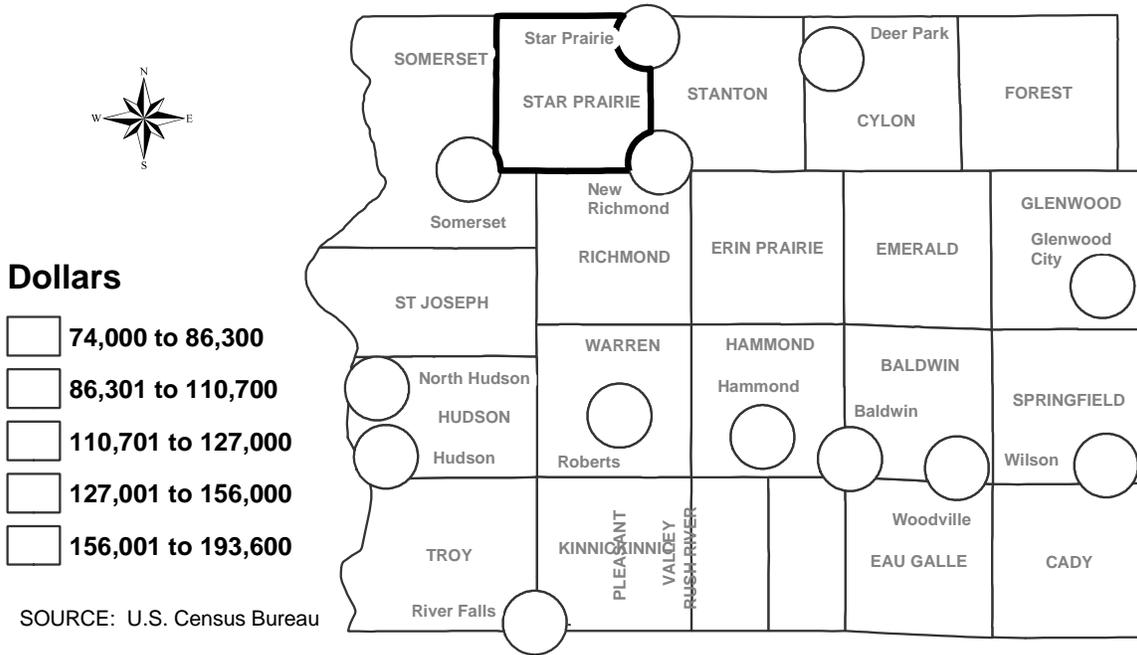
- This difference is due to the greater amount of new construction from 1990 to 1999 in Star Prairie; 38 percent of all housing was built during this timeframe.
- An additional 15 percent of all housing units was built from 1980 to 1989 in the Town.
- The Town of Star Prairie’s highest increase in housing units was in the 1990’s, its second highest was during the 1970’s with about 20 percent.
- The Town’s slowest decade was during the 1960’s, when about 8 percent were constructed.
- There has not been a consistent pattern in the surrounding municipalities. The median age and percentage shows that the majority of the housing in the Town of Somerset was constructed during the 1990’s, Richmond during the 1970’s and Stanton pre1960’s.
- The housing starts in Star Prairie and the surrounding municipalities generally dipped somewhat in the 1980’s. This was probably due to higher interest rates.

**Housing Value Owner-Occupied Units -- 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

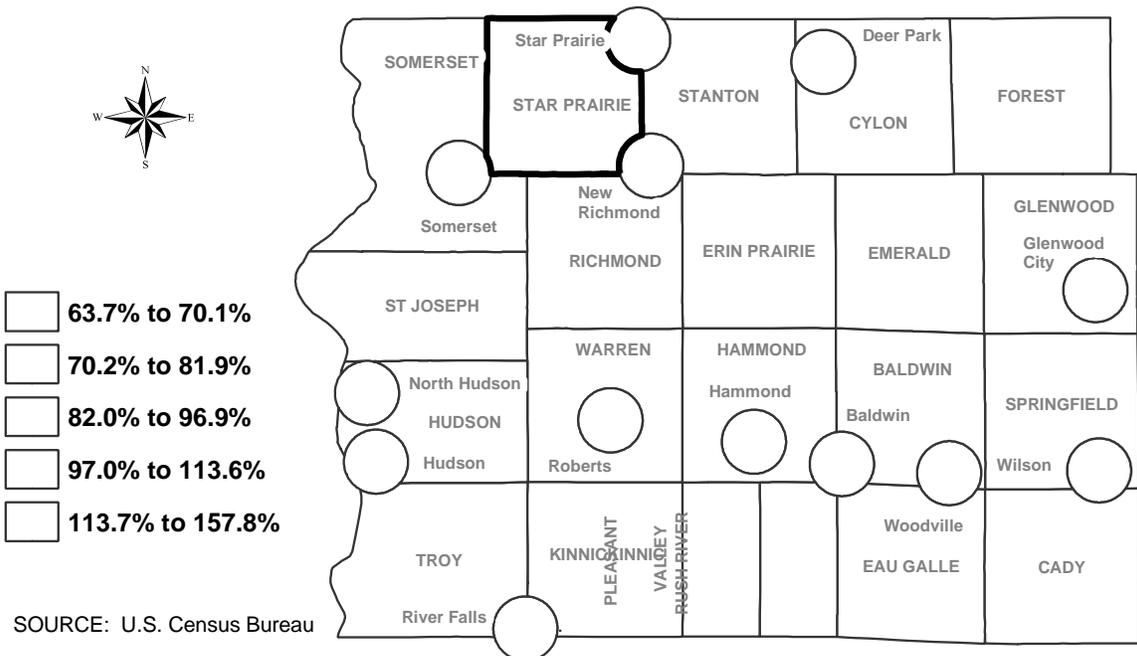
COMMUNITY	PERCENT OF TOTAL UNITS						
	LESS THAN \$50,000	\$50,000 TO \$99,999	\$100,000 TO \$149,999	\$150,000 TO \$199,999	\$200,000 TO \$299,999	\$300,000 TO \$499,999	\$500,000 OR MORE
Star Prairie	2.1%	14.0%	47.0%	20.9%	12.1%	3.9%	0.0%
Richmond	0.0%	19.7%	38.2%	24.5%	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Somerset	0.0%	9.3%	36.9%	30.4%	17.7%	5.4%	0.4%
Stanton	3.3%	23.9%	49.4%	15.6%	7.8%	0.0%	0.0%
C. New Richmond	1.9%	38.1%	43.0%	9.5%	5.2%	2.4%	0.0%
V. Somerset	0.7%	39.6%	51.6%	6.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%
V. Star Prairie	0.0%	40.3%	47.1%	12.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
St. Croix County	2.0%	19.7%	35.6%	23.8%	14.0%	4.1%	0.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Summary File 3 Specified

**Median Housing Unit Value - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



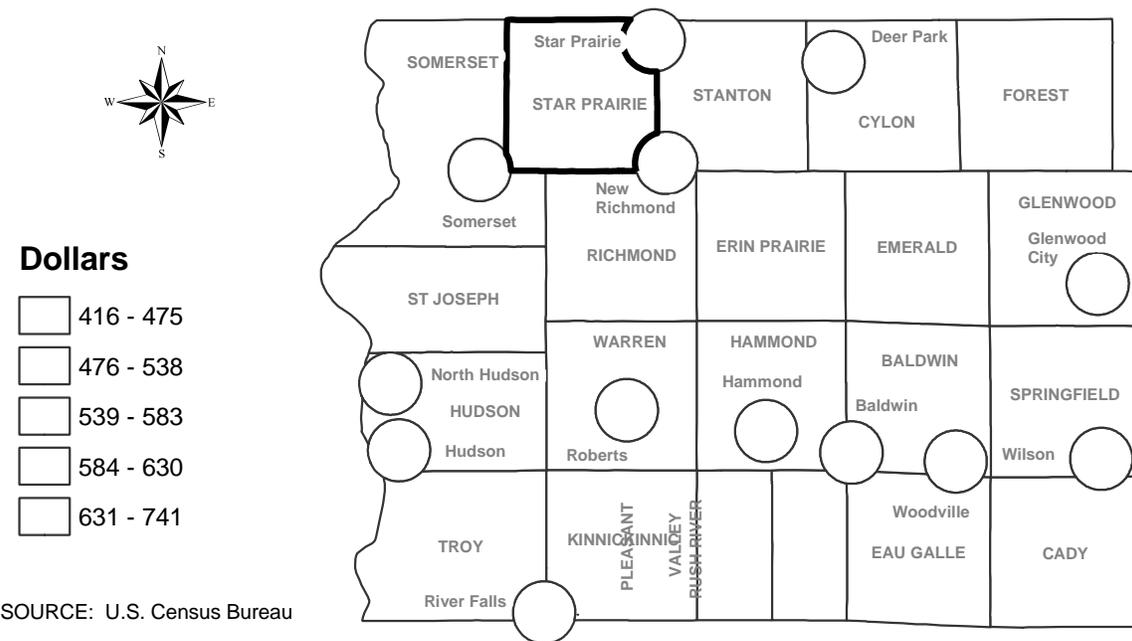
**Percent Change Median Housing Unit Value - 1990 to 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



- The median housing unit value in St. Croix County in 2000 was \$139,500.

- The Town of Star Prairie’s median value for 2000 was at \$135,700, very slightly below the County’s.
- The majority of the Town of Star Prairie’s housing units, 47 percent, ranged in value from \$100,000 to 149,999. An additional 20% of housing units ranged in value from \$150,000 to \$199,999. Together these two ranges accounted for about 2/3 of the housing in the town.
- Unlike most of the neighboring municipalities, Star Prairie had 3.9 percent of its housing value in the \$300,000 to \$499,999 range. Only the Town of Somerset had more and higher value housing.
- Generally, the Town of Star Prairie had more housing in the higher value ranges than the surrounding municipalities.
- From 1990 to 2000, housing unit values changed significantly in the Town of Star Prairie where the change was over 90 percent.
- Similar rates were seen in the neighboring towns, except Stanton, while the City of New Richmond and Villages of Somerset and Star Prairie saw somewhat lower percentage changes, while still increasing.

**Median Housing Unit Rent - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



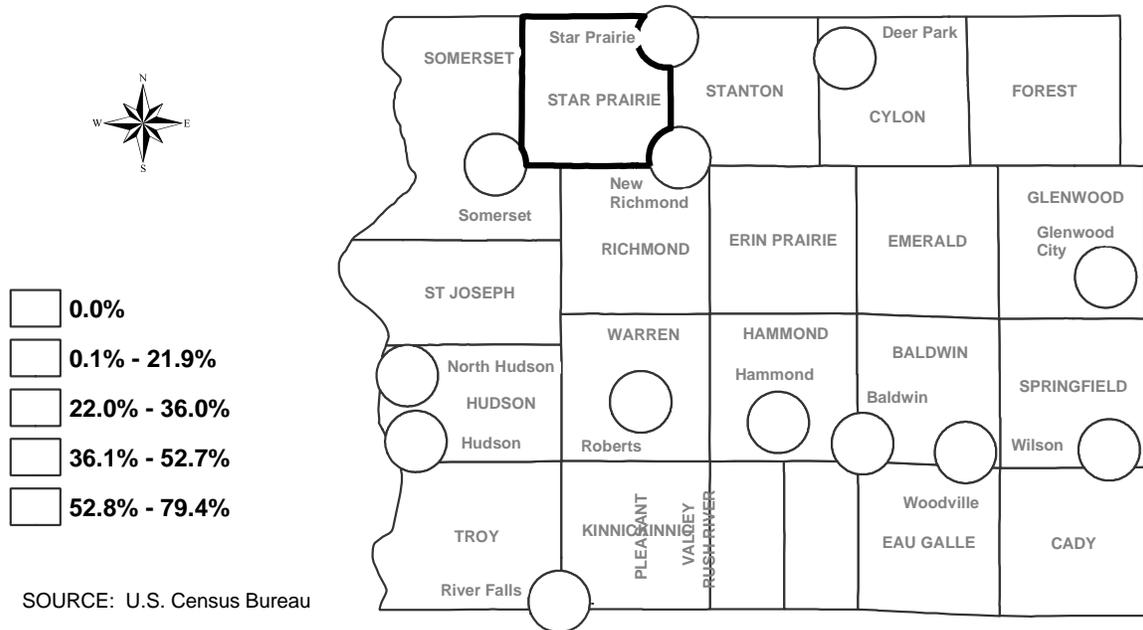
**Gross Rent Costs Per Housing Unit -- 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	MEDIAN	PERCENT OF TOTAL CASH UNITS					
		<\$200	\$200 TO \$299	\$300 TO \$499	\$500 TO \$749	\$750 TO \$999	\$1,000 OR MORE
Star Prairie	\$596	0.0%	3.7%	17.3%	46.9%	22.2%	9.9%
Richmond	\$546	10.3%	10.3%	15.4%	48.7%	15.4%	0.0%
Somerset	\$525	0.0%	0.0%	45.2%	31.5%	13.7%	9.6%
Stanton	\$528	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%	63.6%	0.0%	0.0%
C. New Richmond	\$538	7.0%	7.6%	27.0%	36.1%	17.6%	4.7%
V. Somerset	\$612	2.1%	3.8%	15.1%	62.5%	14.8%	1.7%
V. Star Prairie	\$528	7.8%	0.0%	33.3%	52.9%	5.9%	0.0%
St. Croix County	\$587	4.8%	7.4%	19.5%	46.2%	16.6%	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Summary File 3

- The County median housing unit gross rent is \$587, which is slightly lower than Star Prairie’s.
- Town of Star Prairie’s median housing unit rent was \$596, for 2000.
- Generally the rental costs in the municipalities surrounding the Town of Star Prairie are very close or lower, except for the Village of Somerset.
- This higher rental cost may reflect the fact that some of Star Prairie rental units are larger, older homes with acreage that may be more costly to rent, heat and maintain than a newer or smaller rental unit within a duplex or larger structure.
- The rent costs may also reflect the greater number of units in mobile home parks in Star Prairie than in surrounding municipalities.
- These rental costs generally reflect the proximity to the highway system and the job market.
- Rental costs increased substantially in St. Croix County and in the Town of Star Prairie between 1990 and 2000.

**Percent Change Median Housing Unit Rent - 1990 to 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



- Between 1990 and 2000, the Town of Star Prairie’s rental costs increased by well over 50 percent.
- The increasing costs of rentals have affected the affordability and availability of housing in all St. Croix County and in the Town of Star Prairie.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Monthly Ownership Costs as a Percent of Household Income -- 1999
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities

COMMUNITY	PERCENT OF TOTAL IN EACH PERCENTAGE CATEGORY							NOT COMPUTED
	<15%	15.0%- 19.9%	20.0%- 24.9%	25.0%- 29.9%	30.0%- 34.9%	35.0% OR >		
Star Prairie	27.2%	22.8%	18.1%	12.6%	6.0%	13.3%	-	
Richmond	35.2%	28.5%	19.1%	6.1%	3.9%	7.3%	-	
Somerset	29.9%	18.5%	23.9%	6.7%	7.8%	12.9%	0.9%	
Stanton	35.6%	26.7%	13.3%	11.1%	1.1%	11.1%	1.1%	
C. New Richmond	35.5%	18.1%	15.4%	13.0%	7.8%	10.2%	-	
V. Somerset	30.7%	22.3%	16.3%	13.1%	5.7%	12.0%	-	
V. Star Prairie	33.6%	21.0%	22.7%	9.2%	5.0%	8.4%	-	
All County Towns	32.4%	22.1%	18.3%	9.5%	5.3%	12.4%	0.0%	
St. Croix County	33.5%	21.2%	17.1%	10.5%	5.6%	11.9%	0.1%	
State of Wis.	36.8%	19.7%	15.5%	9.8%	5.8%	12.0%	0.0%	

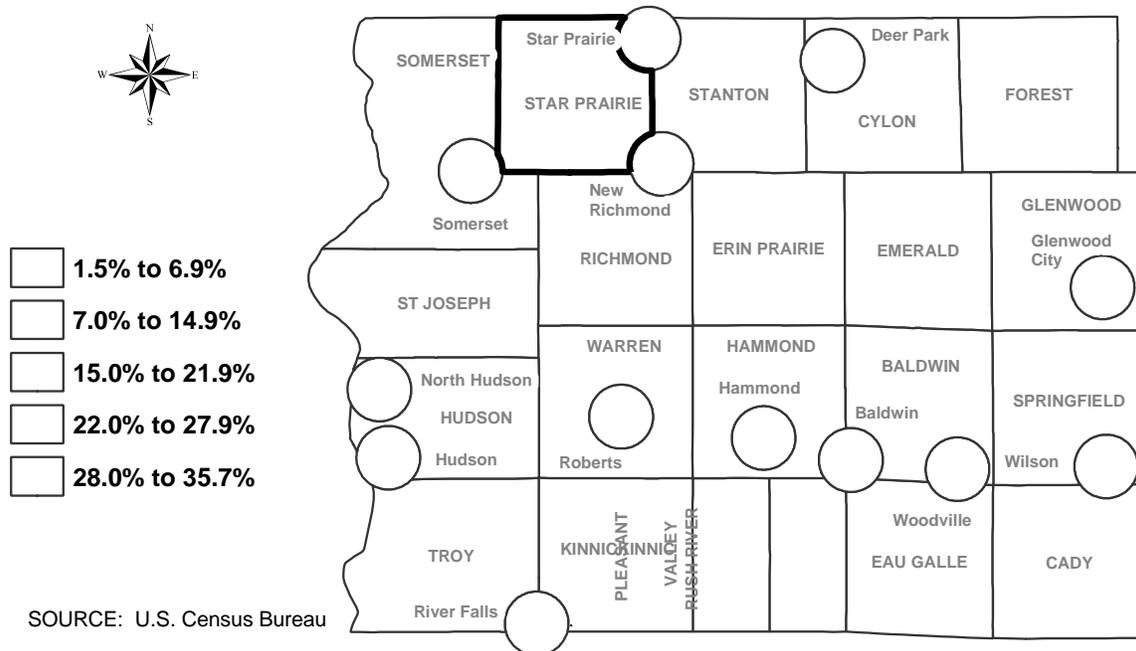
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Summary File 3 Specified

Gross Rent as a Percent of Household Income -- 1999
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities

COMMUNITY	PERCENT OF TOTAL IN EACH PERCENTAGE CATEGORY							NOT COMPUTED
	<10%	10.0%- 14.9%	15.0%- 19.9%	20.0%- 29.9%	30.0%- 39.9%	40.0%- 49.9%	50% OR >	
Star Prairie	9.5%	34.5%	14.3%	23.8%	3.6%	3.6%	16.7%	3.6%
Richmond	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	30.8%	35.9%	7.7%	15.4%	0.0%
Somerset	6.1%	23.2%	29.3%	2.4%	19.5%	0.0%	14.6%	10.9%
Stanton	0.0%	17.9%	30.8%	15.4%	5.1%	0.0%	10.3%	20.5%
C. New Richmond	3.5%	22.3%	13.0%	25.0%	12.5%	2.1%	19.4%	5.8%
V. Somerset	6.4%	19.9%	21.6%	26.7%	19.2%	2.4%	7.7%	2.4%
V. Star Prairie	5.6%	25.9%	16.7%	9.3%	20.4%	0.0%	16.7%	5.6%
All County Towns	9.5%	16.8%	15.7%	18.3%	10.0%	5.7%	11.3%	12.6%
St. Croix County	5.9%	15.8%	16.9%	26.6%	12.3%	4.4%	14.0%	4.2%
State of Wis.	6.7%	14.4%	16.7%	24.8%	11.7%	6.1%	14.5%	5.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Summary File 3 Specified

**Percent of Total Occupied Households Spending 30 Percent or More Income on Housing Costs - 1999
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



- Generally, housing costs in the Town of Star Prairie are affordable because only 15 to 22 percent of households spend 30 percent or more of their income on a mortgage or rent.
- This is the median rate in the County and indicates a mix of housing types and costs for Star Prairie residents to choose from.
- The Town of Star Prairie’s housing costs are more affordable than the City of New Richmond and village and town of Somerset. However they are the same as the Village of Star Prairie and Town of Richmond and higher than the Town of Stanton.

HOUSING PROGRAMS

Several regional, state and federal programs and funding sources are available to assist towns and residents in providing housing maintenance and rehabilitation.

The West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency, Inc., (West CAP) provides assistance with housing issues in Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk and St. Croix counties. The agency is located in Glenwood City. West CAP works through two main programs, Families In Transition (FIT) and HomeWorks Community Housing Development (CHD). FIT deals with the problems of families in housing crisis and seeks to stabilize housing situations. HomeWorks CHD deals with the development, construction and management of affordable rental housing.

The following list provides a brief description of the WESTCAP and state and federal programs and funding sources that are available:

- *Families In Transition (FIT):* The Families in Transition program carries out West CAP's strategies to help the persons-- individuals and families – who are struggling with the effects of the housing crisis. These are people who are at risk of eviction or foreclosure, families experiencing homelessness and families needing assistance to maintain permanent housing. West CAP's goal is housing stability through:
 - *Rent Assistance:* One-time partial payment of rent, mortgage or utilities of households at risk of eviction, foreclosure or shut-off.
 - *Short-term case management,* including budget counseling and housing stabilization plans: Case management assistance to families receiving rent assistance, focused on immediate financial remedies, referrals to supportive services and planning to achieve housing stability.
 - *Transitional Housing:* Through enrollment in the Supportive Housing Program and residency in either short-term transitional apartments maintained by West CAP or long-term housing leased by West CAP, up to 18 months.
 - *Supportive Services:* Help with issues of health, physical and mental, including AODA; transportation; childcare; and employment.
 - *Long-term Case Management:* Regular, consultative meetings with SHP clients supporting planning and actions to develop financial and housing stability.
 - *Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments:* Housing certificates to help clients pay Fair Market Rents for housing that meets HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS). The program conducts inspections to assure HQS. Certificates pay the difference between 30 percent of income and the Fair Market Rent.)
 - *Family Self-Sufficiency Certificates in the Section 8 Program:* For clients who voluntarily enroll in a program to freeze housing assistance and save increases in payment responsibility that would normally occur.
 - *First-time Homebuyer Assistance:* Grants or loans of \$3,000 for down-payment assistance and/or closing costs for first-time home purchases financed through cooperating financial institutions.
- *HomeWorks Housing Preservation Program:* The Housing Preservation Program originated as the Weatherization Program in 1974 and has evolved over 35 years to become the whole-house energy conservation, repair and lead hazard reduction program now known as Housing Preservation. It is West CAP's strategy to help families reduce housing costs, maintain their assets and for elderly homeowners to maintain residency in their homes. Housing Preservation performs all of the following services:

- Housing Audits, including depressurization testing, to determine baseline energy performance and identify specific needs;
 - Work orders, specifications and material lists;
 - Installation of energy conservation materials and equipment, including insulation, caulking, windows, furnaces, refrigerators and lighting;
 - Lead-hazard reduction in pre-1978 homes where children are present;
 - Housing rehabilitation for health and safety purposes, including accessibility for persons with disabilities; and
 - Homeowner education.
 - The Housing Preservation program maintains an inventory of frequently used materials. A fleet of trucks is used to transport technicians and materials to work sites.
- *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)*: The CDBG program provides grants to local governments for housing rehabilitation programs that primarily benefit low and moderate-income households. Using CDBG funds, communities may establish rehabilitation loans or grants to assist owner occupants with repairs. In Wisconsin the Department of Administration's Bureau of Housing administers the CDBG program. Any Wisconsin rural county, city, village or town with a population of less than 50,000 residents is eligible to apply for grant funding. In 2000, the estimated funding amount for the CDBG program was approximately \$7.5 million. The application deadline is typically in September.
 - *Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)*: The HOME program tries to expand the supply of affordable housing, especially rental housing, to very-low income and low-income families. In Wisconsin, the Department of Administration's Bureau of Housing administers the HOME program. Grant awards typically find down payment assistance for home buyers, weatherization related repairs, rental rehabilitation, accessibility improvements and rental housing development. In 2000, the estimated funding amount for the HOME program was approximately \$12.5 million. The application deadline is typically in May.
 - *Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)*: This state-administered program provides payments to utility companies or individuals upon billing to help pay for home heating costs in winter. This program is funded by both the state and federal governments, and is only available to individuals below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. Funds are administered through an application process.
 - *Property Tax Deferral Loan Program (PTDL)*: This State-administered program provides loans to low and moderate income elderly homeowners to help pay local property taxes, so that the elderly can afford to stay in their homes. To be eligible, individuals must be at least 65 years old with a spouse that is at least 60 years old, unless one is disabled.
 - *Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program*: This program is administered by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). The program encourages affordable housing development by providing private investors with income tax credits when they invest in low-income housing development. Tax credits are allocated to housing projects on a competitive basis. Local government support is an important factor in the award of tax credits.
 - *Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)*: This state-administered program provides funding to local public and non-profit agencies throughout Wisconsin to reduce housing costs for low- and moderate-income households. Funds are administered through an application process which is competitive. Eligible activities can include emergency rental aid, down payment

assistance, homeless prevention efforts and related housing initiatives. In 2000, the estimated funding amount was approximately \$2.8 million. Applications are typically due in February.

- *Local Housing Organization Grants (LoHOG):* This state-funded and administered program provides grants to local housing organizations to help support staff salaries, administrative costs and operating expenses associated with the provision of affordable housing and housing counseling for low-income households. Funds are administered through an application process. In 2000, the estimated funding amount was approximately \$500,000. Applications are typically due in November.
- *Easy-Close Option Loan Program:* This state-administered program assists low-income households in payment of closing costs to purchase a home. Qualifying households must have a total income of less than \$35,000. A non-competitive application is required for this program.
- *Lease-Purchase Assistance Program:* This state-administered program provides financial assistance to governmental or non-profit agencies to acquire, rehabilitate or construct affordable housing to be initially leased to a low-income family. The ultimate intent of the program is to sell the property to the family within three years. A non-competitive application process is required for this program.
- *Multi-family Mortgage Program:* This state-administered program provides construction and/or permanent financing in the form of below-market interest loans to private nonprofit groups and for-profit entities for the development of multi-family rental units.
- *Section 8 Program:* This federal program provides rent assistance to eligible low-income families based on family size, income and fair market rents. Typically, the tenants' share of the total rent payment does not exceed 30 percent of annual income under this program.
- *Rural Development Loan Programs:* This federal program, administered by the USDA, provides a variety of assistance to support the housing needs of rural people. Most involve direct assistance by the USDA, while others work through local partnerships. In order to be eligible for many of these loans, household income must meet certain guidelines and homes must be located in eligible rural areas. Programs include:
 - Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants
 - Housing Preservation Grants
 - Multi-family Housing Direct Loans
 - Multi-family Housing Guaranteed Loans
 - Repair Loans and Grants
 - Rural Housing Site Loans
 - Self-Help Technical Assistance Grants
 - Single Family Housing Direct Loans
 - Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loans
- *WDVA Home Loan Program.* Wisconsin offers veterans a Primary Mortgage Loan (PML) that is different from the USDVA Home Loan Guaranty Program. It may be used for:
 - Purchase or purchase and improvement of a single family home or condominium.
 - Construction of a new single family home.
 - Purchase of certain existing 2 to 4-unit owner occupied residence. (Must be occupied as borrower's principal residence.)
- *WDVA Home Improvement Loan.* Another state program allows veterans to borrow up to 90% of their home equity for home improvements. The \$25,000 cap has been removed from the program which may be used for additions, garage construction, repairs, and remodeling (i.e.,

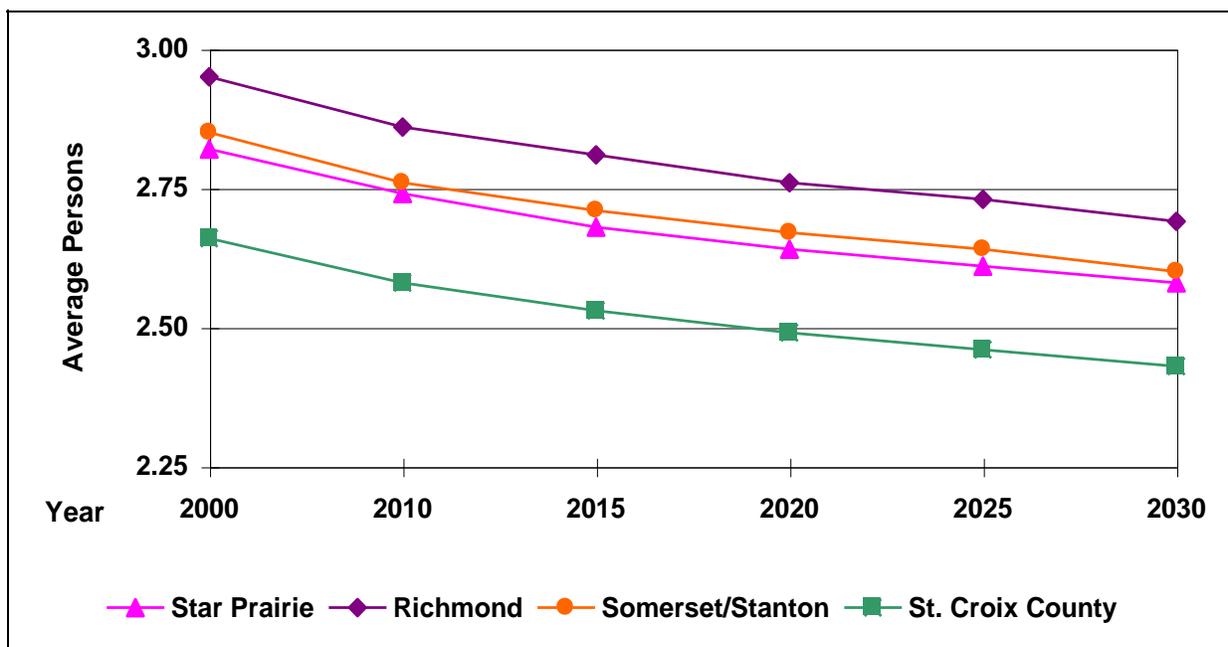
replace a roof, install new windows, a new furnace, or a central air conditioning system) of a veteran’s residence.

HOUSING GROWTH PROJECTIONS

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

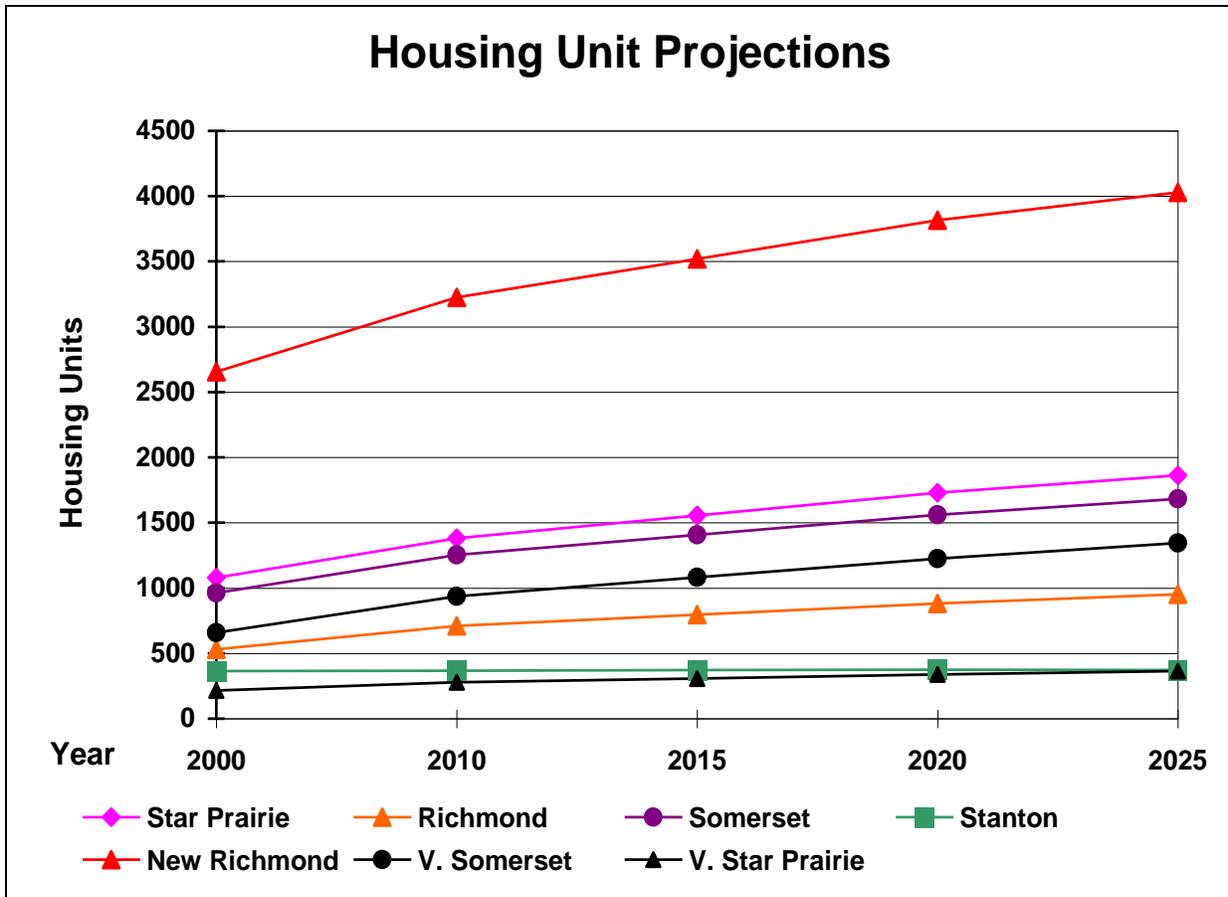
- Housing growth in Star Prairie remained fairly constant from 1998 through 2004, with about 50 new units each year. The highest number was around 65 units in 2003.
- However, housing growth in 2005 and 2006 dropped dramatically with about 40 new units in 2005 and about 20 in 2006. The recent downward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

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

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

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

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



HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

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

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

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



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

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



- 10. Additional mobile home parks or multi-family or multi-unit dwellings do not fit the rural character of the Town of Star Prairie and should not be developed, except in the Boundary Agreement Area as designated on the Future Land Use Map. See Future Land Use section, page 235.
- 11. Promote conservation design development to preserve the rural character of the community to enable rural residential development and provide services in a cost-effective manner.
- 12. Encourage home site design that achieves rural character and farmland preservation objectives and ensures that home sites are safe from seasonal flooding or ponding.
- 13. Guide development away from hydric and alluvial soils, which are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding.
- 14. The maximum gross density for development shall depend on the location of the development. The gross density may not be the minimum lot size in all cases. In conservation design development the minimum lot size shall be ½ acre per dwelling unit, with a two-acre gross density. Two-acre density for conventional development and one-acre density for development in the Boundary Agreement Area as designated on the Future Land Use Map. See Future Land Use section, page 235.

15. Explore options to provide senior housing opportunities in the Boundary Agreement Area, as designated on the Future Land Use Map, at densities greater than one single-family unit per acre and more than four attached, single-family units. See Future Land Use section, page 235.
16. Notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet height limitations and building construction standards for insulation and sound reduction. These sites may be required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.
17. Work with St. Croix County to improve or expand St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding property maintenance and nuisance issues such as junk vehicles and dilapidated buildings.
18. Work with St. Croix County to expand the St. Croix County Animal Waste and the Zoning ordinances to regulate large-scale farms near existing residences.



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



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

LABOR FORCE

Employment of Town of Star Prairie Residents -- 1980 to 2000

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES	YEAR			PERCENT OF TOTAL			PERCENT CHANGE	
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	80-90	90-00
Ag., Forestry & Mining	65	61	17	8.4%	6.4%	1.1%	-6.2%	-72.1%
Construction	50	60	164	6.5%	6.3%	10.3%	20.0%	173.3%
Manufacturing	313	339	492	40.4%	35.7%	30.9%	8.3%	45.1%
Trans., Utils. & Comm.	35	35	59	4.5%	3.7%	3.7%	0.0%	68.6%
Wholesale/Retail	153	175	229	19.8%	18.4%	14.4%	14.4%	30.9%
Finance, Ins. & Real E.	12	36	36	1.6%	3.8%	2.3%	200.0%	0.0%
Services	134	211	510	17.3%	22.2%	32.0%	57.5%	141.7%
Government	12	32	62	1.6%	3.4%	3.9%	166.7%	93.8%
Information	*	*	23	*	*	1.4%	*	*
Total	774	949	1592	100%	100%	100%	22.6%	67.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau *New Employment Category in 2000 Census

Employment of St. Croix County Residents -- 1980 to 2000

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES	YEAR			PERCENT OF TOTAL			PERCENT CHANGE	
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	80-90	90-00
Ag., Forestry & Mining	2077	1870	1093	10.6%	7.3%	3.1%	-10.0%	-41.6%
Construction	1029	1352	2581	5.3%	5.3%	7.4%	31.4%	90.9%
Manufacturing	5689	6812	8268	29.1%	26.5%	23.7%	19.7%	21.4%
Trans., Utils. & Comm.	1146	1647	2131	5.9%	6.4%	6.1%	43.7%	29.4%
Wholesale/Retail	3676	4703	4598	18.8%	18.3%	13.2%	27.9%	-2.2%
Finance, Ins. & Real E.	820	1667	2471	4.2%	6.5%	7.1%	103.3%	48.2%
Services	4589	6878	12036	23.5%	26.8%	34.5%	49.9%	75.0%
Government	529	776	1117	2.7%	3.0%	3.2%	46.7%	43.9%
Information	*	*	610	*	*	1.7%	*	*
Total	19,555	25,705	34,905	100%	100%	100%	31.4%	35.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau *New Employment Category in 2000 Census

- From 1990 to 2000, employment of St. Croix County residents increased in most categories.
- The greatest increases were in the construction and services industries.
- Decreases in employment were seen in the agriculture, forestry and mining industry and the wholesale/retail trade.
- The Town of Star Prairie saw similar trends with slight differences. From 1990 to 2000 there were increase in employment in all categories except agriculture, forestry and mining and finance, insurance and real estate.
- The Town saw the greatest increases in construction-173%; services-142% and government-94%.
- Two-thirds of town residents are employed in manufacturing and services, 31% and 30% respectively.
- Agricultural has declined significantly in the Town since 1990, dropping from 6% to 1% of all employment.
- The two largest employment areas, manufacturing and services, are generally not located within the town.

**Education Level by Minor Civil Division -- 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	NO DEGREE	HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE	SOME COLLEGE, NO DEGREE	ASSOCIATES OR BACHELOR'S DEGREE	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE
Star Prairie	12.2%	40.8%	23.0%	19.0%	5.0%
Richmond	9.9%	37.7%	25.4%	21.1%	5.9%
Somerset	8.0%	32.7%	25.2%	27.5%	6.7%
Stanton	7.7%	36.1%	29.3%	21.1%	5.8%
C. New Richmond	12.0%	39.4%	20.7%	23.2%	4.5%
V. Somerset	14.4%	44.2%	20.9%	18.9%	1.5%
V. Star Prairie	14.1%	32.1%	34.3%	14.5%	5.0%
St. Croix County	8.4%	33.3%	23.1%	28.2%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

- Education levels in the Town of Star Prairie are somewhat mixed.
- The town has a higher rate, 41%, for high school degrees than St. Croix County and all of the neighboring municipalities, except for the Village of Somerset.
- However, the number of post-secondary degrees 19% and 5%, is lower than St. Croix County as a whole and lower than all of the neighboring municipalities except for the villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.
- The town also has a higher rate of residents with no degree, 12%, than most of the neighboring municipalities except for the villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.

TYPES OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

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

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

Source: Star Prairie Plan Commission Members

**Commuters from Town of Star Prairie
By Place of Work -- 2000**

PLACE OF WORK	WORKERS, 16 AND OVER	% OF TOTAL
T. Star Prairie	63	4.0%
T. Richmond	26	1.7%
T. Somerset	17	1.1%
T. Stanton	4	0.3%
C. New Richmond	351	22.3%
V. Somerset	109	6.9%
V. Star Prairie	4	0.3%
Other County Towns	53	3.4%
Other County Cities	83	5.3%
Other County Villages	42	2.7%
Polk Co. WI	86	5.5%
Other County WI	16	1.0%
Hennepin Co MN	75	4.8%
Other County MN	50	3.2%
Ramsey Co. MN	231	14.7%
Washington Co. MN	359	22.8%
Out of State AL	2	0.1%
Out of State IA	4	0.3%
Total	1575	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

**Commuters to Town of Star Prairie
By Place of Residence -- 2000**

PLACE OF RESIDENCE	WORKERS, 16 AND OVER	% OF TOTAL
T. Star Prairie	63	32.5%
T. Emerald	2	1.0%
T. Erin Prairie	5	2.6%
T. Hammond	5	2.6%
T. Hudson	3	1.5%
T. Stanton	8	4.1%
T. Troy	12	6.2%
T. Warren	3	1.5%
C. New Richmond	45	23.2%
C. River Falls	4	2.1%
V. Somerset	5	2.6%
Other Co, WI	6	3.1%
Polk Co. WI	15	7.7%
Out of State MN	17	8.8%
Out of State ND	1	0.5%
Total	194	100.0%

Source: : U.S. Census Bureau 2000

- The majority of residents in the Town of Star Prairie, 48%, work in St. Croix County.
- Over 22% travel to the City of New Richmond for employment. The second largest employment location, within St. Croix County is the Village of Somerset. Approximately 7% of Town residents commute to the village.
- These numbers indicate a strong economic link between the Town, city and village.
- Almost 19% of Town residents work within St. Croix County in Star Prairie or other cities, villages or towns in the County.
- Commuting to the Twin Cities seems to be almost as attractive to residents as working in local communities.
- Over 45% of residents in Star Prairie commute to Minnesota to work. The largest number, 22.8%, commute to Washington County. Other Minnesota destinations include Ramsey and Hennepin counties.
- The Town of Star Prairie has a moderate level of employment within the town, approximately 200 employment opportunities are available.
- Most of the people employed within the Town of Star Prairie also live there, 32.5%. But an additional 23.2% live in the City of New Richmond.
- About 24% of the workers in the town arrive from towns, cities or villages from throughout St. Croix County, while a few arrive from Polk County or Minnesota.

- Economic opportunity in neighboring villages and cities is important to provide employment opportunities for Star Prairie's residents.

ECONOMIC BASE

Economics & Labor Impact of Agriculture – 1987 to 2002**St. Croix County**

ITEM	1987	1992	1997	2002
Total Sales	\$87,214,000	\$91,849,00	\$89,852,000	\$97,863,000
Total Sales Average per Farm	\$85,840	\$105,816	\$119,009	\$52,502
Total Farm Production Expenses	\$69,510,00	\$78,990,000	\$74,569,000	\$85,449,000
Total Farm Production Expenses Average per Farm	\$44,105	\$56,786	\$49,059	\$45,695
Hired Farm Labor (farms)	NA	607	468	297
Hired Farm Labor (workers)	NA	1,817	1,591	1,210
Hired Farm Labor (wages)	NA	\$6,164,000	\$6,122,000	\$9,805,000
Total Government Payments	\$6,678,000	\$4,457,000	\$5,240,556	\$5,677,000
Government Payments Average per Farm	\$8,305	\$6,794	\$3,146	\$5,632

Source: US Census of Agriculture, Farms with sales Greater than \$10,000

Top 100 Counties in Nation – 1992 to 2002**St. Croix County**

CATEGORY	1992		1997		2002	
	VALUE NUMBER	NATIONAL RANK	VALUE NUMBER	NATIONAL RANK	VALUE NUMBER	NATIONAL RANK
Value of Dairy Products Sold	\$55,507,000	60	\$49,650,000	80	\$51,181,000	73
Inventory of Dairy Cows	28,651	55	22,372	80	23,800	NA

Source: US Census of Agriculture

Economic Impacts of Farm Operations by Minor Civil Division -- 1997**Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Towns**

TOWN	1997 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FARMS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL		
		EMPLOYED ADULTS WORKING ON FARMS	HOUSEHOLDS W/ ANY FARM INCOME	INCOME IN TOWNS FROM FARMING
Star Prairie	67	5.1%	8.3%	2.1%
Richmond	73	10.4%	13.7%	4.1%
Somerset	52	2.6%	9.2%	0.9%
Stanton	60	19.7%	21.3%	9.6%
St. Croix County	1,630	18.2%	15.6% (All Towns)	4.0%

Source: Census of Agriculture 1997

- Agriculture is an important part of the economic base of St. Croix County.
- The dairy industry continues to be one of the main sources of farm income in the County.
- The Town of Star Prairie's agriculture has significantly decreased in both number of farms and income from agriculture-related activities.

Land and Improvement Equalized Valuations – 1994 to 2006
Town of Star Prairie

REAL ESTATE CLASS	EQUALIZED VALUATION				
	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006
Residential	\$57,523,300	\$84,842,600	\$126,214,600	\$207,994,600	\$295,160,800
Commercial	\$3,024,900	\$4,379,000	\$5,812,100	\$7,018,300	\$10,943,900
Manufacturing	\$218,100	\$218,100	\$229,800	\$301,300	\$305,300
Agricultural	\$12,189,800	\$7,620,900	\$2,818,300	\$953,000	\$964,600
Swamp/Waste or Undeveloped	\$33,500	\$82,900	\$5,389,300	\$9,653,800	\$8,643,500
Ag Forest	NA	NA	NA	NA	\$2,505,800
Forest	\$3,191,500	\$4,225,500	\$4,133,700	\$8,141,600	\$9,107,300
Ag Bldgs/Sites	NA	\$5,074,400	\$5,154,600	\$5,946,600	\$7,018,900
Total	\$76,181,100	\$106,443,400	\$149,752,400	\$240,009,200	\$334,650,100

Source: St. Croix County Statistical Report of Property Values 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003 & 2006 Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Land and Improvement Equalized Valuations – 1994 to 2006
Town of Star Prairie

REAL ESTATE CLASS	EQUALIZED VALUATION % CHANGE			
	1994-97	1997-00	2000-03	2003-06
Residential	47.5%	48.8%	64.8%	41.9%
Commercial	44.8%	32.7%	20.8%	55.9%
Manufacturing	0.0%	5.4%	31.1%	1.3%
Agricultural	-37.5%	-63.0%	-66.2%	1.2%
Swamp/Waste or Undeveloped	147.5%	6401.0%	79.1%	-10.5%
Ag Forest	NA	NA	NA	NA
Forest	32.4%	-2.2%	97.0%	11.9%
Ag Bldgs/Sites	NA	1.6%	15.4%	18.0%
Total	39.7%	40.7%	60.3%	39.4%

Source: St. Croix County Statistical Report of Property Values 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003 & 2006 Wisconsin Department of Revenue

- One way to evaluate the economic base in the Town of Star Prairie is to look at property taxation and the distribution of land and improvements in the economic categories of agriculture, commercial and manufacturing.
- The effect of use-value assessment can be seen beginning in 1998 when agricultural land value went down and the agricultural buildings and sites category was added.
- Use-value assessment separates the value of agricultural land from residential, commercial and manufacturing.
- Agricultural land values are based on a formula that includes the price of corn.
- Beginning in 2000, the swamp and waste category included road right-of-ways.
- Use-value was to be implemented at 10 percent per year for 10 years. However, in 2002 use-value was accelerated to full implementation.

- In 2003, the use-value formula, which is tied to the price of corn, accelerated a dramatic drop in agriculture land values due to decreased corn prices.
- The Swamp/Waste category was changed to Undeveloped in 2003.
- Agricultural forest was re-defined through a statutory change for 2005. This resulted in a significant increase in agricultural forest acres and consequently a large increase in equalized value for that class of property.
- Undeveloped and Agricultural Forest classes are valued at 50% of market value.
- Use-value has shifted the tax burden from agricultural land to the other assessment categories.

BROWNFIELDS IN THE TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Brownfields are abandoned, idle or underused commercial or industrial properties, where the expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination. Brownfields vary in size, location, age, and past use -- they can be anything from a five-hundred acre automobile assembly plant to a small, abandoned corner gas station.

At the national, state and local levels, the interest in cleaning up and returning brownfields to productive use has transformed this environmental issue into a major public policy initiative. In Wisconsin, there are an estimated 10,000 brownfields, of which 1,500 are believed to be tax delinquent.

These properties present public health, economic, environmental and social challenges to the rural and urban communities in which they are located. In the Town of Star Prairie brownfields generally include former town dumps, abandoned gas stations and abandoned service stations or similar type uses. The list below identifies the potential brownfields in Star Prairie.

- Former City of New Richmond landfills in section 27 & 34.
- Former Town of Star Prairie landfill in section 9.
- Underground storage tank in section 21, open.
- Underground storage tank in section 31, closed.
- Underground storage tank in section 35, closed.
- Underground storage tank in section 36, closed.
- Soil contamination in section 35, closed.

The Wisconsin Brownfields Redevelopment And Reuse Initiative

There have been two major legislative initiatives in Wisconsin to deal with brownfields properties. The first set of brownfields initiatives were contained in the 1994 Land Recycling Law. This law took the initial steps to clarify the liability of lenders, municipalities and purchasers of property, so long as they meet certain statutory requirements for investigation and cleanup of contaminated properties.

The next set of brownfields initiatives were passed as part of the state's 1997-99 biennial budget. These incentives greatly expanded the brownfields initiatives in the Land Recycling Law, including the creation of the Wisconsin Brownfields Grant Program that is administered by the Department of Commerce.

As part of the 1997-99 budget, the Legislature created the Brownfields Study Group to help provide direction for the future of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment in Wisconsin. The Study Group, which has been meeting since 1998, consists of state and local officials, private parties, consultants, environmental attorneys and academicians.

In the past five years, Study Group members have made more than 150 recommendations to the Legislature -- including the Brownfields Site Assessment Grant Program -- to enhance and expand the state's financial and liability initiatives for brownfields. Based on these recommendations, the Wisconsin Brownfields Initiative was expanded further in the 1999-2001 budget and the 2001-2003 budget.

- Wisconsin's Brownfields Initiative: 2006 Report to the Wisconsin State Legislature [PDF, 1,729KB] - A joint publication from the WDNR, Department of Commerce and Department of Administration (WDOA), the report provides a summary of the legislative, financial and policy initiatives created and implemented by the State of Wisconsin since the passage of the Land Recycling Act in 1994 (Wisconsin Act 453). These initiatives have aided communities all across the state in the investigation, cleanup and redevelopment of hundreds of brownfields -- abandoned, idle or underused properties where the reuse is hindered by real or perceived contamination.

The WDNR's Remediation and Redevelopment program has a wide range of financial and liability tools available to assist local governments, businesses, lenders, and others to clean up and redevelop brownfields in Wisconsin. Staff in the WDNR's Madison office and regional offices around the state are available to meet with community leaders, bankers, developers and private individuals to discuss their brownfield projects.

The links above provide information on each of these tools, in addition to links to other state agencies and federal brownfields funding and programs.

COUNTY, REGIONAL, STATE/FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Several county, regional and state/federal agencies and organizations provide assistance with development, training, funding and other elements of economic development to cities, villages, towns and residents. The following list provides a brief description of the resources that are available.

COUNTY RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

St. Croix Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC)

Website: <http://www.stcroixedc.com/index.htm>

SCEDC encourages and assists economic development and capital investment, to enhance tax base, to create jobs, and to assist businesses in expansion, retention and/or location within the economic development area. The SCEDC manages the following programs:

- **I-94 Corridor Technology Zone (SCEDC), St. Croix County**
High Technology Businesses in the I-94 Corridor Technology Zone (Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce, Polk and St. Croix Counties) may be eligible for state tax credits, through the Department of Commerce and the Department of Revenue, based on their ability to create jobs and investments that support the development of high-tech industries in the region.
- **St. Croix County Revolving Loan Fund (SCEDC), St. Croix County**
The St. Croix County Business Loan Fund is a flexible source of supplemental financing for businesses expanding or locating in St. Croix County. The purpose is to encourage the creation of quality jobs and to increase the tax base.

St. Croix County UW-Extension Office, Baldwin

website: www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/stcroix

County-based Extension educators are University of Wisconsin faculty and staff who are experts in agriculture and agribusiness, community and economic development, natural resources, family living and youth development. Extension specialists work on UW System campuses where they access current research and knowledge. Cooperative Extension partners with local, county, state and federal government to address public issues. Faculty and staff plan and carry out programs with a wide array of community partners -- volunteers, business and educational groups and advisors.

St Croix Valley Employers Association (SCVEA), New Richmond

website: www.scvea.com

SCVEA is a voluntary not-for-profit corporation providing services, salary survey data, information, and networking opportunities to its member employers. It is the vision of the St. Croix Valley Employers Association to be a progressive regional organization that assists its member employers in being successful with their individual missions. SCVEA does this by providing low cost - high quality training and services in practices and trends in technology, management and emerging workforce needs.

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College Employment Services (WITC), New Richmond

website: www.witc.edu/jobs/index.htm

Services offered: post job vacancies to entire WITC system; on-campus interviews, annual job fair; placement statistics; resume referral system; internships/co-op education; and customized or on site training.

REGIONAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Chippewa Valley Technical College Employment Services, River Falls

website: www.chippewa.tec.wi.us/business/employer/index.htm

Services offered: post job vacancies to entire CVTC system; on-campus interviews, annual job fair; placement statistics; resume referral system; internships/co-op education; and customized or on site training.

St. Croix Valley Angel Network, River Falls

The St. Croix Valley Angel Network, Inc. operates as an IRS not-for-profit organization with a volunteer board of directors. The network links early stage companies with high net worth individuals ("Accredited Investors") who secure equity positions in the companies. Many of these companies have exhausted their owner's personal resources and need additional funding to grow the business. Most companies have the potential for rapid growth and new job creation. Equity investments are done on a case-by-case basis. The investment information on candidate companies is only distributed to the network's sponsors - the angels and/or corporate supporters. The St. Croix Valley Angel Network provides a limited screening service so that prospective investors can avoid the need to preview a large number of requests. Strictest confidence is observed on all matters involving the network and its angels.

Contact: Steven DeWald email: steven.e.dewald@uwrf.edu.

St. Croix Valley Job Center, River Falls

website: www.wisconsinjobcenter.org

Wisconsin Job Centers provide a 'one-stop' service for employers to meet their workforce needs and job seekers to get the career planning, job placement and training services they need.

University of Wisconsin River Falls Career Services, River Falls

website: www.uwrf.edu/ccs

Career Services provides comprehensive planning and job search assistance to UWRF students at all levels of study. Employers who are seeking qualified candidates for permanent positions can:

- Arrange an on campus interview;
- Request an information table in the Student Center;
- Attend the annual Career Fair (held every October);
- Submit job openings to an on-line vacancy listing, updated weekly (www.uwrf.edu/ccs under "Employers");
- Request referrals from a database of student resumes; and/or
- View placement statistics for recent graduates.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC), River Falls

website: www.uwrf.edu/sbdc

The SBDC is a statewide network providing business education services throughout Wisconsin. SBDC professionals analyze the needs of each client and provide a link the knowledge, tools and resources essential for business success. The SBDC consists of the Lead Center or State Office, which is administered by the unit of Business and Manufacturing Extension at UW-Extension, and a network of service centers located at 12 of the four-year UW institutions.

University of Wisconsin-Extension, Eau Claire and River Falls

website: www.uwex.edu

UW-Extension is the "Wisconsin Idea" – the people's University connection. Through its programming divisions of Cooperative Extension, Broadcasting and Media Innovations, Continuing Education, and its collaborative relationships with the 26 UW universities and colleges, the 72 Wisconsin counties, and countless local, state and federal agencies and groups, Extension provides a spectrum of lifelong learning opportunities for Wisconsin citizens. Extension education extends the knowledge and resources of the University of Wisconsin to people by applying university research, knowledge and resources to the needs of Wisconsin people.

Forward Wisconsin, Eau Claire

website: www.forwardwi.com

Forward Wisconsin is a unique public-private state marketing and business recruitment organization. Its job is marketing outside Wisconsin to attract new businesses, jobs and increased economic activity to the state. Forward Wisconsin provides business cost comparisons, building and site locations, financial information and a variety of other business consulting services to prospective expanding businesses. Forward Wisconsin services are provided on a confidential, no-cost basis.

Northwest Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC), Eau Claire

website: <http://nwmoc.uwstout.edu>

NWMOC is a non-profit organization which is part of the national network of centers in the US Department of Commerce's Manufacturing Extension Partnership. It teams University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College System Institutions to assist small and medium size manufacturers to modernize and streamline their operations.

Science and Technology Accelerator Corporation (SciTAC)

SciTAC was formed in the spring of 2004 by a group of St. Croix Valley and River Falls business, government and higher education leaders. SciTAC was established for the purpose of attracting technology-based companies to the Corporation's accelerator facility in Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park in River Falls, Wisconsin.

SciTAC is a one-stop business resource that provides operating space, shared services, equipment, lab space and business assistance to technology companies that have advanced beyond the R&D and concept product stage. Development stage companies are invited to launch and introduce their

products/services to the market place and to grow their companies in SciTAC's accelerator facility. SciTAC is committed to assist in the acceleration of tenant company growth plans. Contact: Jim Letourneau, Board President, email: jimletourneau@foleyunited.com

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Eau Claire and St. Paul

website: www.score-eauclaire.org and www.score-stpaul.org

The SCORE Association (Service Corps of Retired Executives) is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. SCORE is a resource partner with the Small Business Administration (SBA). Working and retired executives and business owners donate their time and expertise as volunteer business counselors and provide confidential counseling and mentoring free of charge.

West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition (WCWRC)

The West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition provides leadership and coordination to develop passenger rail service through West Central Wisconsin as part of a regional strategy to ensure a balanced transportation system for long-term sustainable economic growth.

Contact: Ray Willoughby, Co-Chair, email: erwilloughby@msm.com

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC), Eau Claire

website: www.wcwrpc.gov

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is statutorily charged with the responsibility of planning for the physical, social and economic development of the region. To accomplish this mission, the Commission conducts area-wide planning and provides technical assistance to local governments.

West Central Wisconsin Workforce Resource (WCWWR), Menomonie

website: www.workforceresource.org

WCWWR provides resources for job seekers and employers and information on training and labor market statistics.

Wisconsin Business Development (WBD) Finance Corporation, Eau Claire

website: www.wbd.org

WBD is a business lender, and technical assistance firm specializing in economic development lending activities leading to the formation, retention and growth of successful businesses.

Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Eau Claire

website: www.commerce.state.wi.us

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce is the state's primary agency for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Commerce's purpose is to:

- Foster the retention and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin;
- Foster and promote economic business, export and community development; and
- Promote the public health, safety and welfare through effective and efficient regulations, education and enforcement.

Area Development Managers assist business expansions, promote business retention and help local development organizations. Using their knowledge of federal, state and regional resources to provide a variety of information to expanding or relocating firms. They also mobilize resources to help struggling businesses. Local economic development practitioners can turn to area development managers for assistance with long-term marketing and planning strategies.

Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network (WEN), Eau Claire

website: www.wenportal.org

Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Network (WEN) provides integrated statewide support to entrepreneurs in all industries and developmental stages. WEN assistance includes: starting a business; finance and

accounting; marketing product development; business plans; intellectual property; and competitive research.

STATE/FEDERAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Wisconsin Dept of Commerce Small Business Ombudsman

website: www.commerce.state.wi.us:80/BD/BD-SBO-index

Wisconsin Dept of Commerce Small Business Ombudsman assist small businesses with state regulations. Visit their website for more information on the monthly Wisconsin Regulatory Alert, the Small Business Regulatory Review Board and information on the type of assistance provided by the Small Business Ombudsman.

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Madison

website: www.dwd.state.wi.us

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is a state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce. The Department's primary responsibilities include providing job services, training and employment assistance to people looking for work, at the same time as it works with employers on finding the necessary workers to fill job openings.

WBA TEAM Network, Madison

website: <http://wisbank.supranet.net/products/tnbusinesses.php>

The WBA TEAM Network is a low cost program designed to assist commercial loan applicants. The TEAM staff works with you in the early stages of the creation or expansion of your business. The Wisconsin Bankers Association developed the WBA TEAM Network to help financial institutions across the state to respond effectively to business applicants.

Wisconsin Bankers Association (WBA), Madison

website: www.wisbank.com

The Wisconsin Bankers Association (WBA) represents 350 financial institutions of all sizes in Wisconsin. The WBA is the states largest financial institution trade association.

Wisconsin Housing Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), Madison

Website: www.wheda.com

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business and agribusiness.

Wisconsin SBA Office, Madison and Milwaukee

website: <http://www.sba.gov/wi/>

The Wisconsin SBA office is responsible for the delivery of SBA's many programs and services to the 72 counties of Wisconsin. SBA Wisconsin assists several hundred businesses each year by providing financial assistance through the 7(a) and 504 loan programs.

US Small Business Administration (SBA)

website: www.sba.gov

The SBA provides financial, technical and management assistance to help Americans start, run and grow their businesses. SBA is the nation's largest single financial backer of small businesses. The SBA also plays a major role in the government's disaster relief efforts by making low-interest recovery loans to both homeowners and businesses.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

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



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

a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities. Encourage business types which will benefit all the communities.

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



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

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

and setback buffers between residential and industrial or commercial land uses.

15. Work with businesses to maintain and protect the air quality, water quality and rural character of Star Prairie.
16. Require the disclosure of any soil or groundwater contamination on sites before approving development proposals.
17. Work together with private landowners and government agencies to clean up contaminated sites that threaten the public health, safety and welfare.

- 18. Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. When necessary, environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.
- 19. Commercial and industrial development should be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town’s primary drainage corridors, which include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. These parkways would allow the corridors to remain mostly undeveloped as wildlife corridors, contribute to preserving the Town’s rural atmosphere, provide stormwater management areas and provide potential trail linkages to the rest of the Town. Where appropriate, the Town should require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.
- 20. Work with St. Croix County to permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.



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

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

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

It must also be noted, that in an evaluation of the agricultural data available there is very little reported at the town level. However, specific areas of Star Prairie, such as the Star Prairie flats along the Polk County border, have very high quality agricultural lands and therefore it can be deduced that county-wide agricultural data is representative of the best agricultural lands in Star Prairie. In fact the data may slightly under represent the significance of agriculture rather than over represent it because of the productivity of the soils in those areas. Therefore county-wide data is used when town level data is not available.

RECENT TRENDS IN ST. CROIX COUNTY AGRICULTURE

Lee Milligan, former St. Croix County UW-Extension Agriculture Agent, analyzed recent trends in St. Croix County agriculture as of August 2007.

The agricultural sector is a vital contributor to the economy in St. Croix County. It accounts for \$524.4 million in economic activity. It provides jobs for 4,714 county citizens or about 13.6% of the workforce. It contributes about \$142.3 million to the county’s income or about 10% of St. Croix County’s total income.

The agricultural sector in St. Croix County is an industry that is undergoing continual change. The question one can pose is “How is production agriculture changing in St. Croix County?” The changes can be summarized in the following list:

Changes in St. Croix County Agriculture

Value of Agricultural Sales	Stable
Farm Numbers	Stable
Avg. Size of Farm	Decreasing
Livestock Numbers	Increasing
Cash Grain Acreage	Increasing
Dairy Cow Numbers	Decreasing
Avg. Milk Production/Cow	Increasing
Avg. Dairy Herd Size	Increasing

Annual agricultural sales in St. Croix County typically are about \$95 to \$100 million in gross receipts from the marketing of commodities such as meat, milk, crops, vegetables and timber. However in 2007 this value will increase due to significantly increased milk, livestock and crop prices. This value does not include the economic impact of the farm supply and agricultural product processing industries. St. Croix County’s marketing sales have been consistent in recent years as they have in Polk and Pierce counties. Barron and Dunn Counties have seen a decline in agricultural sales in recent

years. The chart below shows a comparison of agricultural sales in St. Croix County and surrounding counties based on the 2002 Census of Agriculture data.

**Value of Agricultural Sales – 1997 & 2002
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties**

YEAR	COUNTIES				
	BARRON	DUNN	PIERCE	POLK	ST. CROIX
1997	\$170,632,000	\$117,939,000	\$77,780,000	\$70,546,000	\$96,151,000
2002	\$149,918,000	\$103,519,000	\$72,329,000	\$72,492,000	\$97,863,000

Source: Census of Agriculture 2002

The chart below shows the total annual agricultural sales for St. Croix County and surrounding counties. Approximately 70% of the total sales in St. Croix County are from the dairy and livestock industry and 30% from crops and greenhouse/nursery industry. Dairy sales represent over 50% (\$50 million) of the total agricultural sales and about 73% of the total livestock sales. Grain sales represent about 20% of the total agricultural sales and 68% of the total crop/greenhouse/nursery sector.

**Annual Agricultural Sales – 2002
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties**

PRODUCT	COUNTIES				
	BARRON	DUNN	PIERCE	POLK	ST. CROIX
Total Value Crops, Greenhouse & Nursery	\$31,172,000	\$34,048,000	\$23,911,000	\$19,434,000	\$28,618,000
Total Value Livestock, Poultry & Their Products	\$118,746,000	\$69,532,000	\$48,418,000	\$53,058,000	\$69,245,000

Source: Census of Agriculture 2002

The chart below indicates that the declining trend in farm numbers in St. Croix County and many of the surrounding counties reversed in the 1990’s. In 1990 there were 1,690 farms and by 2002 1,864. Farm numbers had stabilized between 1997 and 2002.

**Farm Numbers – 1969 to 2002
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties**

YEAR	COUNTIES					WISCONSIN
	BARRON	DUNN	PIERCE	POLK	ST. CROIX	
1969	2,306	2,026	1,652	2,101	1,845	N/A
1978	1,876	1,759	1,498	1,823	1,734	N/A
1987	1,659	1,515	1,240	1,467	1,576	N/A
1997	1,681	1,701	1,523	1,642	1,895	79,541
2002	1,647	1,683	1,510	1,659	1,864	77,131

Source: Census of Agriculture 1969 - 2002

The reason for the significant increase in farm numbers in the 1990’s was the rapid increase in the number of small farms and an improvement in how the National Agricultural Statistics Service collects the data. A farm is defined by the National Agricultural Statistics Service as “any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year.” This includes livestock and livestock products, fruit, vegetables, crops, greenhouse and nursery products, Christmas trees, and government program payments. In St. Croix County there are a growing number of people purchasing smaller acreages that qualify as a farm. At the same time the number of large farms is growing and the number of midsize farms is declining.

**Size and Number of Farms – 1997 & 2002
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties**

ACRES	COUNTIES									
	BARRON		DUNN		PIERCE		POLK		ST. CROIX	
	1997	2002	1997	2002	1997	2002	1997	2002	1997	2002
1-99	603	697	611	712	673	830	695	863	922	1103
100-179	321	326	366	333	309	241	378	357	370	294
180-259	289	189	205	229	211	165	197	135	231	164
260-499	358	281	358	244	227	181	262	177	257	184
500-999	87	120	117	108	73	60	91	90	84	82
1000-1999	18	27	34	39	25	23	19	33	23	26
2000 +	5	7	10	18	5	10	0	4	8	11

Source: Census of Agriculture 2002.

The chart above illustrates the shift to smaller and larger farms between 1997 and 2002. The number of farms between the acreage of 1 to 99 acres increased by 181 and over 1,000 acres increased by 6 between 1997 and 2002. The number of farms between 100 to 999 acres declined by 218 during that time. Surrounding counties are also showing this general pattern.

The average size of a farm in St. Croix County is declining. In 1987 the average size reached a high of 212 acres and declined to 166 acres in 2002. This is a trend seen in the surrounding counties of Barron, Polk, Dunn and Pierce and across the state. See the chart below.

**Average Size of Farms (Acres) – 1969 to 2002
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties**

YEAR	COUNTIES					WISCONSIN
	BARRON	DUNN	PIERCE	POLK	ST. CROIX	
1969	178	207	187	180	192	183
1978	210	239	208	200	211	201
1987	226	264	217	215	212	221
1997	214	239	190	184	181	204
2002	214	237	177	177	166	204

Source: Census of Agriculture 1969 - 2002.

Crop acres in St. Croix County have declined approximately 14,000 acres since 1990. However, crop acres are 1,000 acres greater than 1970. The chart below illustrates the number of crop acres in St. Croix County and surrounding counties. Crop acres are defined as the sum of the acres of corn, soybeans, barley, oats and all hay. It excludes the 2007 Conservation Reserve Program enrollment of 30,485 acres, other small grains (1,600 acres), vegetable crops (4,300+ acres) and nursery crops grown in 2005.

**Harvested Crop Acres – 1971 to 2006
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties**

COUNTY	1971	2000	2002	2006
Barron	166,750	177,500	187,700	192,500
Dunn	163,800	193,500	196,900	210,500
Pierce	149,200	159,600	164,300	154,000
Polk	132,250	158,700	149,500	148,600
St. Croix	181,550	196,600	187,900	182,500

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service: Agricultural Statistics Data Base.

The number of acres of specific crops has changed dramatically over the years. The most dramatic change has been the huge reduction in the acres of oats grown and a corresponding increase in soybean acreage. In the early 1970's over 40,000 acres of oats were grown and only 3,000 acres of soybeans. In 2006, 41,300 acres of soybeans were grown and only 8,500 acres of oats. The amount

of hay grown has declined reflecting a decrease in livestock numbers and a shift to row crops. Please see the chart below.

Crop Acres – 1970 to 2002
St. Croix County

CROP	1970	1990	2002	2006
Corn	51,800	84,800	86,000	77,500
Oats	47,000	29,100	12,600	8,500
Barley	850	1,700	1,000	NA
Soybeans	2,600	16,300	31,000	41,300
All Hay	79,300	64,700	57,300	55,200

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service: Agricultural Statistics Data Base.

Yields of corn and soybeans have almost doubled since 1970. This is a dramatic change in 35 years. The chart below shows the changes in yields between 1970 and 2006. Yields declined significantly from the trend due to a drought in 2006. St. Croix County has large areas of very productive, well drained, silt loam soils. The yield increases are due to improvements in crop genetics and management practices. There has also been favorable weather in years prior to 2006 and 2007 that has been an important factor in the increased yields.

Average Yield (Bushels/Acre) – 1970, 1990 & 2002
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties

COUNTY	CORN					SOYBEANS				
	1970	1990	2002	2005	2006	1970	1990	2002	2005	2006
Barron	85	103	142	123	89	17	35	48	37	36
Dunn	85	120	141	143	100	20	37	46	35	35
Pierce	89	117	160	166	142	20	38	51	45	43
Polk	87	106	145	140	84	19	34	45	40	36
St. Croix	79	115	150	158	90	20	37	49	45	34

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service: Agricultural Statistics Data Base.

The dairy industry is the largest single enterprise in St. Croix County’s agricultural sector. It will typically account for 55 to 65 percent of the total cash farm receipts in the county. There are about 21,900 dairy cows on 198 dairy farms in St. Croix County as of 2006. Since the early 1990’s cow numbers have been slowly declining from 26,500 in 1995 to 21,900 cows in 2006. See the chart below.

Dairy Cow Numbers – 1975 to 2006
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties

YEAR	COUNTIES					WISCONSIN
	BARRON	DUNN	PIERCE	POLK	ST. CROIX	
1975	48,800	41,000	26,300	35,200	35,400	1.81 million
1985	49,700	43,800	28,500	34,700	36,900	1.88 million
1995	37,500	32,000	21,500	24,000	26,500	1.49 million
2000	29,000	21,500	18,400	18,100	24,200	1.29 million
2003	27,000	21,000	18,000	17,500	23,000	1.26 million
2006	25,000	22,400	17,200	16,000	21,900	1.24 million

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service: Agricultural Statistics Data Base.

The average milk production per cow in St. Croix County is frequently in the top ten counties in the state according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service. The average milk production is consistently above that of the neighboring counties and the state average. See the chart below. This is a reflection of the dairy producers management abilities with cows and producing, harvesting

and/or purchasing quality feeds. There is also a strong support of agricultural equipment and input suppliers, livestock health care, dairy nutrition and education professionals.

Average Production Per Cow (Lbs) – 1975 to 2006
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties

YEAR	COUNTIES					WISCONSIN
	BARRON	DUNN	PIERCE	POLK	ST. CROIX	
1975	10,200	10,200	10,600	10,300	10,600	10,430
1985	13,000	13,200	13,000	12,800	13,700	13,166
1995	14,900	15,800	15,300	15,300	16,200	15,397
2000	16,300	16,500	17,200	16,700	18,400	17,182
2003	16,300	16,900	17,300	17,400	18,500	17,728
2006	16,700	18,100	17,600	17,600	19,300	18,824

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service: Agricultural Statistics Data Base.

The number of cattle and calves in St. Croix County has declined from 92,000 in 1972 to 63,000 in 2007. This number includes beef and dairy cattle. Please see the chart below. This is a consistent trend reflected in surrounding counties and across the state.

Cattle & Calves – 1975 to 2007
St. Croix County & Surrounding Counties

COUNTY	1975	1985	1995	2003	2007
Barron	111,000	102,000	80,000	69,000	68,500
Dunn	105,400	105,000	77,000	62,000	64,500
Pierce	88,000	85,000	63,000	53,000	53,000
Polk	100,800	80,100	57,000	48,500	48,500
St. Croix	104,500	95,000	72,000	60,000	63,000

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service: Agricultural Statistics Data Base.

Swine numbers have also declined. There are about four major producers in the county and several farms with small numbers of swine.

Technology use in agriculture is also changing. It is becoming more diverse. For example, the production of milk may be done via grazing, confinement housing and stored feeds, or a combination of both methods. A producer may choose to be certified to produce the crops, milk or meat organically. Crop producers have the option of selecting genetically modified seed that has a level of resistance to specific herbicides or insects. Equipment is becoming more precise. Yields are being monitored as the combine crosses a field using yield monitors and global positioning equipment.

In summary, the St. Croix County agricultural sector provides over \$524 million of economic activity to the St. Croix County economy. There are large areas of very productive, well drained silt loam soils in St. Croix County that are the basis to the dairy and livestock and cash crop industries of St. Croix County. The changes occurring in the agricultural sector are similar to what is occurring in surrounding counties. These include slowly declining dairy and livestock numbers and crop acres. The number of farms under 100 acres and farms over 1,000 acres are increasing. These changes are similar to what is occurring across the state and nationally. Technology is becoming more diverse. Producers are using various forms of technology to meet their personal and business goals.

AGRICULTURAL INVENTORY

**Acres in Farmland –1978 to 2007
St. Croix County**

ACRES	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Total Farmland	365,832	352,472	334,028	308,460	312,076	310,178	308,275
% of County Land Area	78.4%	75.5%	73.7%	66.1%	66.8%	66.4%	66.0%
Total Cropland	281,165	267,724	262,347	244,807	237,069	232,792	222,427

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978-2007

- From 1978 to 2007 there has been a steady decline in total acres of farmland in St. Croix County. During that timeframe approximately 12 percent or 57,500 acres of land have been shifted to other uses. Farmland includes crops, pasture, woodland, land in the Conservation Reserve (CRP) and Wetland Reserve programs (WRP) and rented land.
- Cropland has seen a similar decrease. From 1978 to 2007, 13 percent or 58,700 acres of cropland have been shifted to other uses.

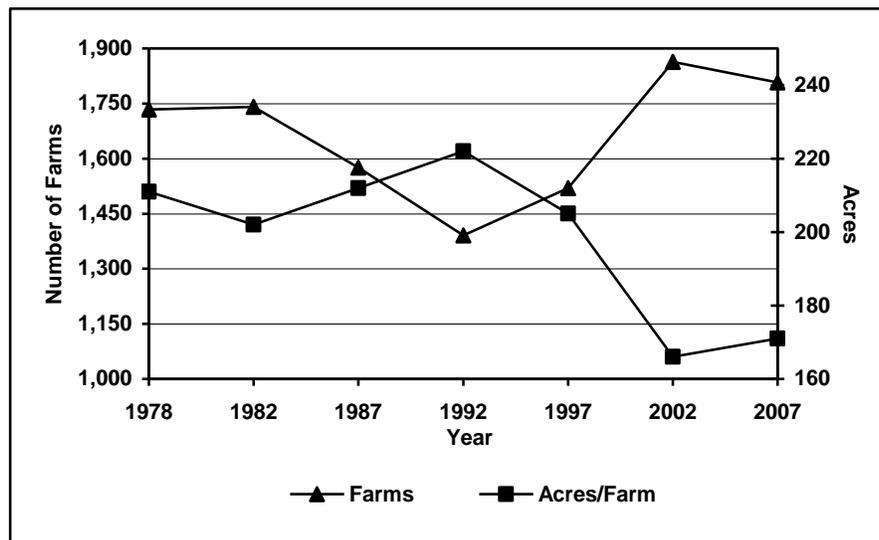
**Acres of Farmland on Tax Rolls Including Improvements – 1997 to 2009
Star Prairie & Neighboring Towns**

TOWN	TOTAL ACRES	FARMLAND ACRES ON TAX ROLLS		% CHANGE		% OF TOTAL ACRES TAXED AS FARMLAND		
	2009	1997	2002	2009	97-02	02-09	2002	2009
Star Prairie	19,315	12,129	7,519	6,909	-38.0%	-8.1%	38.9%	35.8%
Richmond	20,027	17,194	13,620	12,143	-20.8%	-10.8%	68.0%	60.6%
Stanton	21,243	16,682	15,126	14,320	-9.3%	-5.3%	71.2%	67.4%
St. Joseph	20,197	9,937	7,865	7,219	-20.9%	-8.2%	38.9%	35.7%
Somerset	29,942	16,241	10,782	10,620	-33.6%	-1.5%	36.0%	35.5%
Warren	21,143	16,681	14,247	13,280	-14.6%	-6.8%	67.4%	62.8%
St. Croix County	408,554	319,670	260,646	257,931	-18.5%	-1.0%	59.5%	63.1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue and St. Croix County Planning and Zoning.

- From 1997 to 2009 the acres of farmland on the tax rolls decreased by about 38 percent in the Town of Star Prairie.
- The acres of farmland on the tax rolls also decreased significantly in Richmond, St. Joseph and Somerset. They did not decrease by as much in Stanton and Warren.
- About half of this decrease has been due to the conversion of farmland to other uses; the other half has been caused by reclassification of land from farmland to swamp and waste and the increase in land classified as farmland because of the tax advantages of use-value assessment.
- Farmland is steadily being replaced by residential housing as the predominant land use in the western towns of St. Croix County, such as St. Joseph, Star Prairie and Somerset.
- In the towns of Richmond and Warren farmland is still the largest land use.
- Farmland is the predominant land use in the eastern towns of St. Croix County, including Stanton.

Number and Size of Farms -- 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978 – 2007

- The number of farms was steadily declining and the average size of farms was steadily increasing until the mid 1990’s.
- From 1992 to 1995 there was a slight reversal of these trends. Then from 1997 to 2002 there was a sharp shift to smaller acreages and more farms. From 2002 to 2007 the increase in smaller acreages has declined somewhat. Several things caused these trends reversals.
- A general increase in affluence in the metropolitan area caused an influx of people who purchased small acreage farmettes in St. Croix County.
- Wisconsin adopted use-value assessment; this greatly decreased the holding cost of land and encouraged people to purchase additional acres when they could be identified as a farm.
- There has also been an increase in the market for horticulture products, organic vegetables and other non-traditional livestock that are produced on smaller acreage farms.
- From 2002 to 2007 the number of smaller farms began to decrease reflecting more changes in use-value assessment, stronger agriculture economy due to the production of ethanol and reinvestment in agricultural land by farmers.

Farms by Type - 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

FARM TYPE	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Livestock	454	498	422	397	392	398	401
Dairy	734	762	630	511	338	228	192
Other Animal & Poultry	84	86	88	103	101	216	211
Cash Grains	264	231	226	182	489	280	232
Field Crops (other than cash grains)	96	83	125	115	147	664	689
Other Crop	102	81	85	83	53	78	83
TOTAL	1,734	1,741	1,576	1,391	1,520	1,864	1808

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978 - 2007

Farms by Size -- 1978 to 2007

St. Croix County

FARM SIZE	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
1-9 Acres	54	88	64	66	47	100	62
10-49 Acres	225	277	247	218	316	566	583
50 to 179 Acres	631	615	565	480	585	731	739
180 to 499 Acres	701	641	571	496	460	348	312
500 to 999 Acres	106	99	107	109	82	82	73
1000 or More Acres	17	21	22	22	30	37	39
TOTAL	1,734	1,741	1,576	1,391	1,520	1,864	1808

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978 - 2007

Farms by Value of Sales -- 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

SALES	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
\$0 to \$4,999	427	459	392	374	624	1,088	1041
\$5,000 to \$9,999	208	178	168	149	141	138	159
\$10,000 to \$24,999	228	172	220	192	199	200	169
\$25,000 to \$49,999	265	194	197	144	132	105	97
\$50,000 to \$99,999	468	472	299	221	164	116	99
\$100,000 to \$249,999	122	226	263	246	185	137	124
\$250,000 to \$499,999	13	39	29	51	55	53	71
\$500,000 or more	3	1	8	14	20	27	48
TOTAL	1,734	1,741	1,576	1,391	1,520	1,864	1808

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978 - 2007

- From 1978 to 1997, livestock, dairy and poultry farms were generally decreasing in farm numbers while crop farming was increasing in farm numbers.
- However, between 1997 and 2002 all types of farms have increased in number along with the general increase in farm numbers.
- From 2002 to 2007 dairy, poultry and cash grain farms have decreased while slight increases were experienced in livestock and crop farms.
- There has been a steady increase in the number of small farms, less than 50 acres, and large farms, over 1000 acres, while mid-size farms and the more traditional sizes, have been steadily declining over the past three decades.
- Farms less than 50 acres account for 36 percent of farm numbers.
- Also over the past two decades, there has been a steady increase in the number of farms in the lower sales brackets and in the upper sales brackets while there has been a steady decrease in the number of farms in the middle sales brackets.
- Farms with sales over \$500,000 nearly doubled from 2002 to 2007.
- These trends correspond to the increase in smaller acreage farms and possibly relate to the increase in farm operators who are not principal operators.

Farm Operator Characteristics -- 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Total Farms	1,734	1,741	1,576	1,391	1,520	1,864	1808
Ownership							
Individual/Family Farms	1,537	1,505	1,346	1,193	1,341	1,672	1580
Partnerships	167	178	175	127	99	109	121
Corporation-Family	23	50	51	59	54	64	75
Corporation-Other	1	1	2	5	7	3	11
Other (Coop, trust, etc.)	6	7	2	7	19	16	21
Principal Occupation Farming	1,107	1,076	974	819	733	941	747
Principal Occupation Other	627	665	602	572	787	923	1061
Average Years on Present Farm	16	16	19	21	22	21	21
Male Operators	1,689	1,682	1,528	1,317	1,386	1,643	1542
Female Operators	45	59	48	74	134	221	266
Average Age	48	47	49	50	51	53	56

Source: Census of Ag, 1978 - 2007

- Farm ownership has not varied much in St. Croix County over the past 20 years. Family farms continue to predominate.
- The number of farmers whose principal occupation is farming remained fairly constant from 1978 to 2002.
- However from 1997 to 2007 the number of farmers claiming a different principal occupation has increased steadily to nearly 60 percent of all farmers in 2007.
- This increase correlates to the increase in smaller acreage farms and the increase in the total number of farms in St. Croix County.
- The number of years on the present farm has been very consistent over the past 20 years, but the average age of the owner/operator has been steadily increasing.
- There has also been a significant increase in the number of female operators since 1992, a 260 percent increase since that time.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Farm Crop Production -- 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

HARVESTED CROPS	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Corn for Grain (bushels)	7,015,000	5,019,000	7,269,000	5,875,900	9,844,000	8,593,600	5,353,544
Corn for Silage (tons)	204,000	283,000	162,400	211,100	206,500	240,900	222,851
Wheat (bushels)	64,500	39,400	31,600	20,700	16,000	202,900	46,644
Barley (bushels)	47,600	48,100	95,900	87,900	131,400	25,700	30,689
Oats (bushels)	1,569,000	1,402,000	896,400	726,900	536,000	351,000	295,036
Soybeans (bushels)	127,000	221,000	370,300	360,600	709,100	1,451,100	949,282
Forage All - Hay, Haylage, Silage & Green Chop (tons)	NA	293,500	237,300	183,300	243,700	194,900	123,470

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service, 1978-1997, U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1987 -2007

- Crop production has shifted dramatically over the past 20 years.
- Corn grain and soybean production have increased while oats, barley and hay have all decreased. Corn silage has increased a little. The shift in crop types away from forage and feed to grain production is related to the decreasing number of farm animals.
- Wheat had a considerable increase from 1997 to 2002 but a return to previous numbers in 2007.
- From 2002 to 2007 crop production in St. Croix County experienced significant decreases in all areas except barley.

Farm Livestock Production -- 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

LIVESTOCK	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Milk Cows	35,500	36,800	35,500	29,600	24,000	21,800	21,600
Milk (1000 pounds)	415,350	474,720	521,860	461,760	415,200	428,400	419,040
Milk Per Cow	11,700	12,900	14,700	15,600	17,300	18,000	19,400
Cattle & Calves	91,000	94,900	92,000	79,000	62,800	59,800	59,400
Hogs and Pigs Sold	31,863	35,593	35,900	22,400	11,100	13,700	14,700

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service 1978 - 2007

- Despite a decreasing number of milk cows, production per cow has continued to climb so that in general milk production in St. Croix County has remained relatively constant over the past 30 years.
- Other livestock categories have decreased dramatically over the same timeframe.
- These changes reflect the changes in technology and farm labor costs and conflicts between residential property owners and livestock production.

State and National Ranking by County -- 2007
St. Croix County

CATEGORY	QUANTITY	STATE RANK	NATIONAL RANK
Oats (acres)	4,369	10 of 70	62 of 1,957
Grain, oilseeds, dry beans and drypeas	\$23,647,000	26 of 71	923 of 2,933
Soybeans (acres)	36,019	12 of 66	641 of 2,039
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture & sod	\$4,067,000	18 of 70	542 of 2,703
Corn for grain (acres)	66,522	17 of 68	475 of 2,634
Corn for silage (acres)	16,097	15 of 70	64 of 2,263
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, & sweet potatoes	\$2,115,000	33 of 71	564 of 2,796
Other crops & hay	\$2,153,000	21 of 72	811 of 3,054
Total Value Of Crops Incl. Nursery & Greenhouse	\$32,269,000	33 of 72	1,157 of 3,072
Turkeys Inventory	Not Available	6 of 70	Not Available
Aquaculture	\$457,000	9 of 58	351 of 1,498
Horses & Ponies Inventory	3,389	6 of 72	202 of 3,066
Horses, ponies, mules, burros & donkeys	\$353,000	9 of 70	687 3,024
Poultry & eggs	\$11,443,000	9 of 72	533 of 3020
Hogs & Pigs Inventory	8,053	14 of 71	746 of 2,958
Hogs & Pigs Sold	\$1,794,000	15 of 71	783 of 2,922
Milk & other dairy products	\$80,409,000	22 of 70	82 of 2,493
Total Value Of Livestock And Their Products	\$110,252,000	25 of 72	337 of 3,069
Total Value Of All Ag Products Sold	\$142,521,000	31 of 72	577 of 3,076

Source: US Census of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service.

- The chart above shows St. Croix County's rank for the top commodities. Rankings in the top 10 counties for the State of Wisconsin and top 100 counties for the nation are marked in bold.
- Turkey, aquaculture and poultry production are among the highest in the state. Horses and pony inventory and value are also among the top.
- Nationally, St. Croix County ranks highest in oats and corn for silage relative to crop production.
- Despite a decline in the number of dairy farms, St. Croix County ranks 82 of 2,493 counties nationwide in the value of milk and other dairy products sold.
- There are five dairy farms in St. Croix County with permits for over 1,000 animal units. The farms are located in the towns of Emerald, Hammond, Pleasant Valley, Rush River and St. Joseph. Emerald Dairy, in the Town of Emerald, at present has 1,600 animal units, although it is permitted for up to 3,400.
- There is also a large turkey operation in the Town of Richmond with over 1,000 animal units.

Commodity Values (in Millions) - 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

CATEGORY	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
All Livestock, Poultry & Products	\$55.6	\$82.8	\$75.2	\$79.1	\$65.8	\$69.2	\$110.3
Dairy Products	\$37.6	\$59.4	\$53.5	\$55.5	\$49.7	\$51.2	\$80.4
Cattle and Calves	\$10.4	\$13.9	\$14.0	\$17.8	\$11.4	\$12.1	\$15.4
Poultry & Eggs	\$4.3	\$5.4	\$3.9	\$3.1	\$2.2	\$3.9	\$11.4
Hogs & Pigs	\$2.8	\$3.8	\$3.4	\$2.2	\$1.3	\$1.0	\$1.8
All Crops	\$11.4	\$10.8	\$14.0	\$14.5	\$25.8	\$28.6	\$32.3
Corn for Grain	\$6.8	\$6.8	\$8.6	\$8.6	\$14.4		
Soybeans	NA	\$1.1	\$1.6	\$1.9	\$4.0	\$19.5*	\$23.6*
Oats	NA	\$0.5	0.4	\$0.3	\$0.3		
Hay, Silage	\$2.2	\$1.2	\$2.0	\$2.0	\$2.8	\$2.1	\$2.2
Nursery & Greenhouse	\$0.1	N/A	\$0.4	\$0.6	\$2.4	\$3.3	\$4.0
Vegetables, Melons	\$0.9	\$0.7	\$0.8	\$0.9	\$1.7	\$3.5	\$2.1
Total All Sales	\$67.0	\$93.7	\$89.2	\$93.6	\$91.6	\$97.9	\$142.5

*Categories combined for 2002 & 2007. Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978 - 2007

- Total commodity sales in St. Croix County has remained relatively constant for approximately 25 years, with a considerable increase in 2007 which can be attributed to an increase in milk and dairy prices.
- Commodity values reflect the decreasing importance of livestock farming in the County and the increasing importance of crop farming, especially corn and soybeans.
- Also gaining significant market share are nursery and greenhouse and vegetable and melon farming.
- Despite these shifts, dairy products have continued to account for over 50 percent of all commodity values for the past 20 years.

Farm Income - 1978 to 2007
St. Croix County

AVERAGES	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Average Sales/Farm	\$38,638	\$53,799	\$56,625	\$67,295	\$60,267	\$52,502	\$78,828
Average Expense/Farm	NA	NA	\$44,105	\$56,786	\$49,059	\$45,695	\$69,521
Average Net Cash Return on Ag Sales/Farm	NA	NA	\$12,230	\$12,877	\$10,455	\$10,795	\$17,298
Average Net Cash Return on Ag Sales/Farms > \$10,000 in Sales	NA	NA	\$27,976	\$39,386	\$40,772	NA*	NA

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 1978 - 2007 * The information is not available.

- Overall, farm income decreased for about 15 years from 1987 through 2002.
- Farm income for farms with ag sales greater than \$10,000 increased during that same 15-year timeframe, but was not available after 2002. This dichotomy may be due to the increase in farm numbers, many of which are probably emerging market or hobby farms.
- Net farm income saw an increase of about 60 percent from 2002 to 2007.

AGRIBUSINESS ACTIVITY

Types of Agribusinesses - 1978 to 2007**St. Croix County**

TYPE	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Agricultural Services	12	15	23	28	41	60	69
Animal Product Support	NA	NA	NA	NA	6	6	6
Veterinary	NA	NA	NA	NA	12	16	18
Landscape & Horticulture	NA	NA	NA	NA	23	38	45
Manufacturing	9	10	10	11	14	15	18
Food & Kindred	8	9	9	10	12	13	15
Farm/Garden Machinery	1	1	1	1	2	2	3
Wholesale Trade	22	26	17	19	21	18	12
Farm/Garden Machinery/Equipment	11	15	6	6	9	9	2
Farm Product Raw Material	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	4	3
Farm Supplies	11	11	11	13	9	5	7
Total Agribusinesses	43	51	50	58	76	93	99
Total Businesses	736	793	1,041	1,247	1,584	1,895	2,187

Source: U.S. Census, County Business Patterns, 1978 – 2007

- From 1978 to 2007 agribusiness services have continued to increase in number.
- There have been related increases in the manufacturing industry.
- However during this same timeframe the wholesale services related to the agricultural industry have decreased in number.

It is important to recognize the nontraditional farming activities that are developing in St. Croix County. As the above statistics illustrate, small farms are growing in number and acreage. Many are horticulture-related businesses, which is a strong emerging market. There is also a growing consumer interest in buying locally grown, low or pesticide-free fruits and vegetables, free-range chickens, organic and grass-fed beef and lamb and minimally processed foods.

The reuse, maintenance and redevelopment of existing farm structures is also growing as more and more traditional farms are consolidated into larger or smaller operations. The existing farm buildings are an important economic and cultural resource in the rural areas and should continue to be utilized. Many of these structures are used for covered storage of seasonal equipment such as boats, recreational vehicles, snowmobiles, etc. These structures have also been converted to other uses such as a meeting hall, recreation facility or clubhouse.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

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

SUITABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE

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

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

LAND EVALUATION AND SITE ASSESSMENT FOR AGRICULTURE

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

The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system is an analytical tool used to assist decision makers in comparing agricultural sites based on their agricultural value. The LESA system provides an objective and consistent tool to aid decision-makers in evaluating the relative importance of specific sites for continued agricultural use. In this sense, it is a tool for determining the best use of a site.

While in some cases the best use may be some type of development, there are many other situations where the best use is to remain in agriculture. Also, there may be instances where the land is not suitable for agriculture, but neither is it a suitable location for development. In such situations the LESA system is a valuable tool for determining the use with the least detrimental impact to the environment, economy and aesthetics.

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

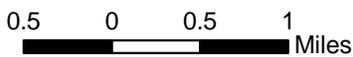
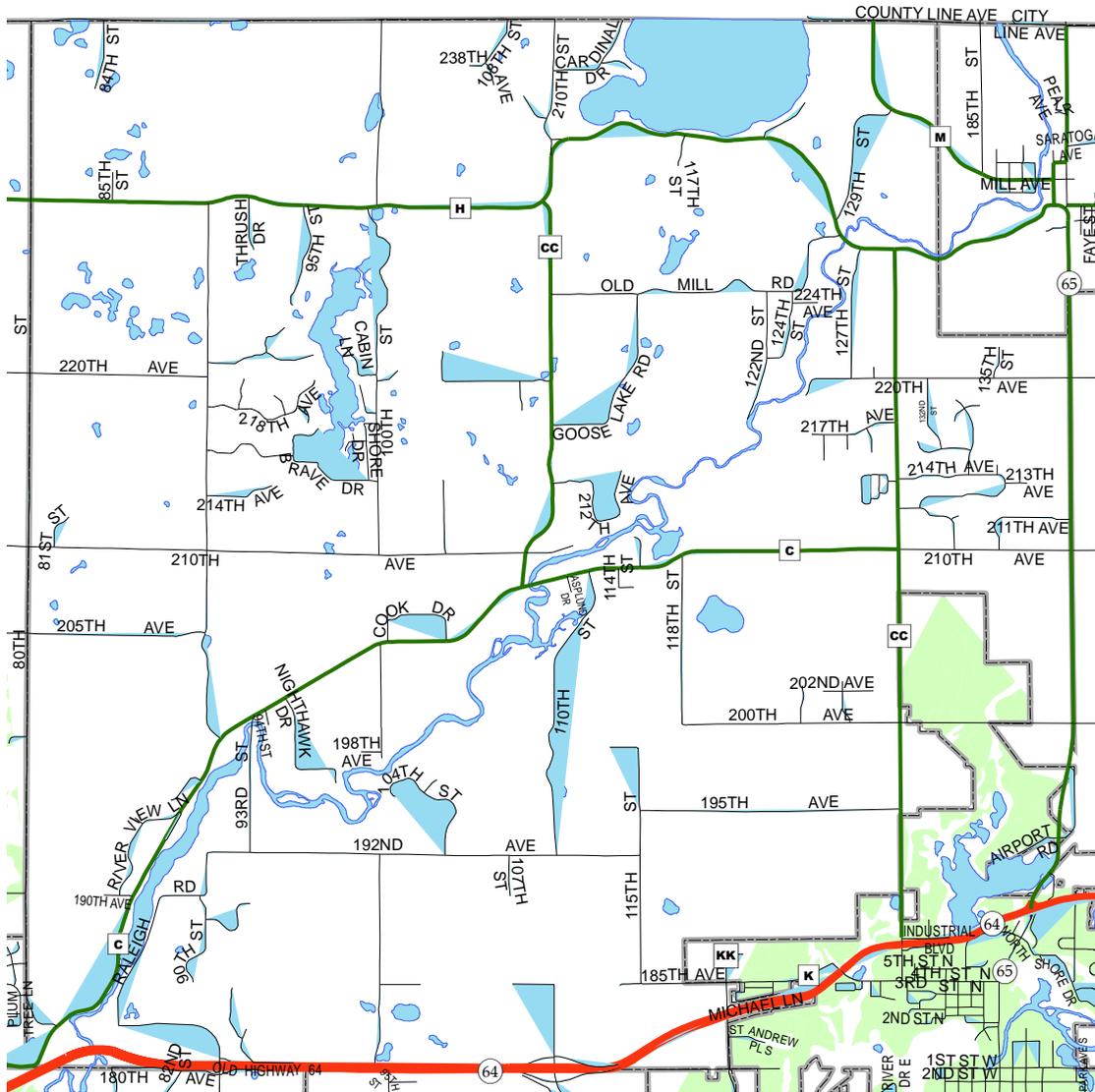
A LESA system was developed for St. Croix County by a committee consisting of members of the Land and Water Conservation and Planning and Zoning committees; citizens; town officials; county staff from the Land and Water Conservation, Zoning and Planning departments; and NRCS staff. A detailed manual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

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

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

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

Potentially Productive Agriculture Land TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE



SOURCE: NRCS AND ST. CROIX COUNTY LESA

WORKING LANDS INITIATIVE

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

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

Expand And Modernize The State's Existing Farmland Preservation Program

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

Establish Agricultural Enterprise Areas

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

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

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

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

FARMLAND PRESERVATION & EXCLUSIVE AG ZONING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Source: St. Croix County Planning & Zoning 2009

AGRICULTURE GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

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

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



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

3. Support buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas and between these areas and rural residential subdivisions consisting of gradually larger lot, lower density development. The variety in zones will increase compatibility with agricultural uses, provide a range of agriculture uses and greater choices in housing options in the town. Work with St. Croix County to implement these buffer zones through amendments to the zoning ordinance.

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



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

10. Notify all new building applicants about the Right to Farm Law and that this is a farming area with associated smell, noise and dust.
11. Require that new residents receive a copy of St. Croix County's Rural Living Guide that outlines the traditional community norms and expectations for rural residents.
12. Develop a Rural Living Guide insert and provide copies to all new residents as part of the building permit/inspection process.
13. Promote use of the forestry "best management practices" as minimum standards for logging and encourage forest landowners to enroll in the State's Managed Forest Land Program.
14. Restrict residential and commercial development to areas least suited for agricultural purposes because it is unproductive soils, there is no history of farming or it is inaccessible.
15. Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas and productive farm and forest lands.
16. Promote conservation design development/clustering as a method to preserve open agricultural ground.
17. Protect the visual quality of scenic roadways through site planning, driveway location, landscaping, signage, and other standards.

18. Prevent the layout of streets or driveways across and adjacent to agricultural land in order to reach non-farm development, unless no other alignment is possible. Place driveways along property lines, fencerows or existing vegetation wherever possible. Avoid stubbing roads for future development to agricultural land, especially agricultural preservation areas. Decrease conflicts between agricultural uses and non-farm uses by directing traffic to alternative routes.
19. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.
20. If authority is developed, establish a voluntary, market driven transfer of development rights program to discourage scattered development, promote rural residential development on the most suitable lands for development and encourage protection of prime agricultural lands. Generally sending areas would be those areas identified as remaining Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands or Open Space and the receiving areas would be the water service and Boundary Agreement areas.
21. Delineate, refine and protect “environmental corridors” as a composite of the Town’s most sensitive natural areas.
22. Identify environmentally sensitive areas most likely to be subject to rapid degradation and work to protect these areas first.
23. Prioritize the use of incentives and acquisition (land or easements) to protect environmentally sensitive areas, relying on regulations where necessary.
24. Before approving any changes in land use, consider the impact on wildlife habitat, rare plant and animal species, and archeological sites.
25. Undertake concerted efforts to improve water quality in the most impacted watersheds.
26. Protect and restore natural shoreline areas in the town.



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

NATURAL RESOURCES

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

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

GEOLOGY

SURFACE GEOLOGY AND PHYSIOGRAPHY

The surface geology of St. Croix County and particularly Star Prairie Township have been influenced by several periods of glaciation. Landforms produced by glacial deposition include end moraine, ground moraine and outwash plains. The first glacier covered the entire county, while the second, the Wisconsin Stage, covered only the land northwest of the Willow River, including the Town of Star Prairie.

End moraines are formed by deposition at the margin of a glacier during a standstill of the glacial front, when the rate of melting equals the rate of glacial advance. They form either at the point of maximum ice advance or during the recession of the glacier. Star Prairie, north of the Willow River, is covered by end moraine from the Superior lobe of the Wisconsin Age of glaciation. This end moraine consists of unsorted glacial material ranging in size from clay to boulders. Typically, the topography is rugged to rolling or hummocky with deep stream gorges and kettles (pits), which may contain lakes or marshes.

Originally all of St. Croix County was covered by ground moraine deposited previous to the Wisconsin stage of glaciation. The material deposited was unsorted and resulted in a gently rolling topography.

Ground moraine is deposited under glacial ice as a blanket of unsorted rock debris, which ranges widely in size. Early-Wisconsin or pre-Wisconsin Age glaciers deposited the ground moraine. A gently rolling topography, meandering streams and few lakes characterize this ground moraine. The topography here is a gently undulating plain with moderate relief and no definite alignment of undulation.

Immediately adjacent to the leading edges of the end moraine deposited by the Superior lobe is a pitted outwash plain of stratified layers of sand, gravel, silt, and clay. The outwash plain was deposited by running water from melting glaciers. Kettles developed in the plain from the melting of buried blocks of ice. The St. Croix River Valley, along the western extreme of the County, was a major glacial drainageway as the glaciers melted and receded.

BEDROCK GEOLOGY

Glacial drift overlies bedrock throughout almost the entire county. The bedrock, from oldest to youngest in age, includes Precambrian igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks, Cambrian sandstone, and Ordovician dolomite and sandstone.

Igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks of the Precambrian age underlie all of St. Croix County. Precambrian red shale and rhyolite have been identified in the Hudson area. Cambrian rocks overlie the Precambrian rocks and are present under the entire county. They are primarily sandstone but include subordinate shale, siltstone and dolomite. Predominant formations of the Cambrian include Mt. Simon, Eau Claire, Galesville, Franconia and Trempealeau.

Ordovician sedimentary rocks in St. Croix County are sandstones, shales and dolomites, and include the Prairie du Chien dolomite, St. Peter Sandstone, Galena-Platteville dolomite and Decorah Formation, undifferentiated, and Galena Dolomite.

The Bedrock Geology of Star Prairie Township includes the Prairie du Chien Group, the Tunnel City Group and the Trempealeau Group, Jordan and St. Lawrence Formations. The disposition of each is depicted in Map 1 Bedrock Geology.

TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

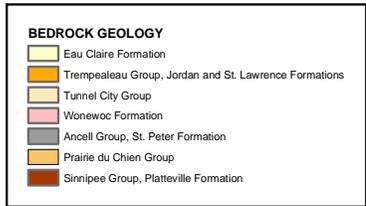
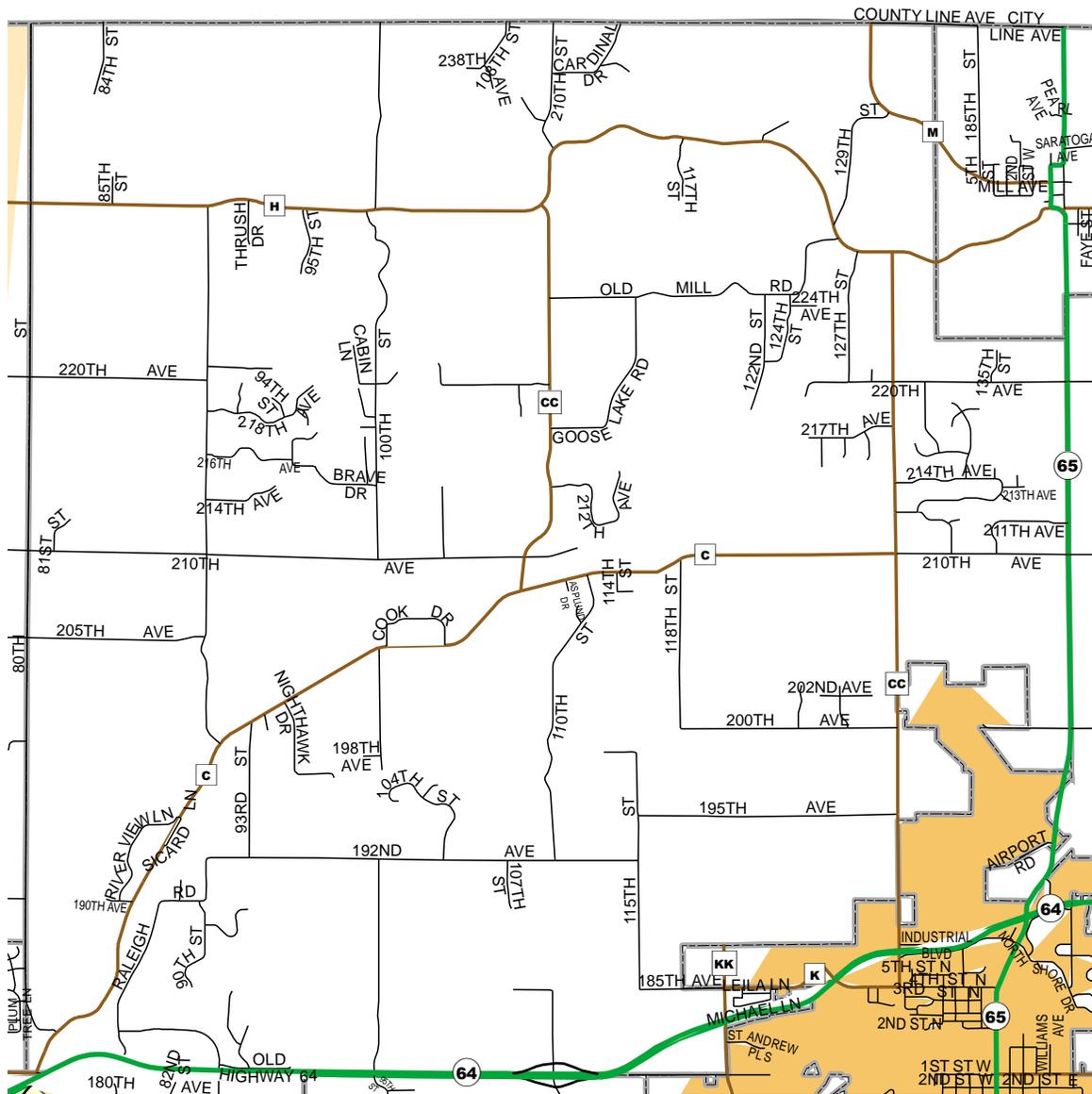
The Town of Star Prairie is part of larger geographic structures sharing some common characteristics or conditions. Physically, St. Croix County is part of the "western upland" region of Wisconsin. This region extends parallel to the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers from Polk County to the Illinois border and to the east from 30 to 75 miles. Surface topography in the western upland ranges from gently rolling to very steep with ridges separating deeply incised stream valleys. The southern two-thirds of the region is characterized by rugged topography, while the northern third tends to have a smoother surface in most areas. The western upland is higher in elevation than the central plain region to the east, but is lower in elevation than the northern highland region that extends northward from Polk County.

The topography ranges from gently rolling to hilly and rough. Part of the town is an undulating plain, often referred to as the Star Prairie flats. Areas of more rugged topography are found along the Apple River drainage system.

The Topographic Elevation of the Town is depicted in Map 9 Elevations.

Bedrock Geology TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

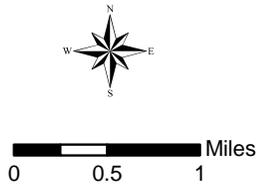
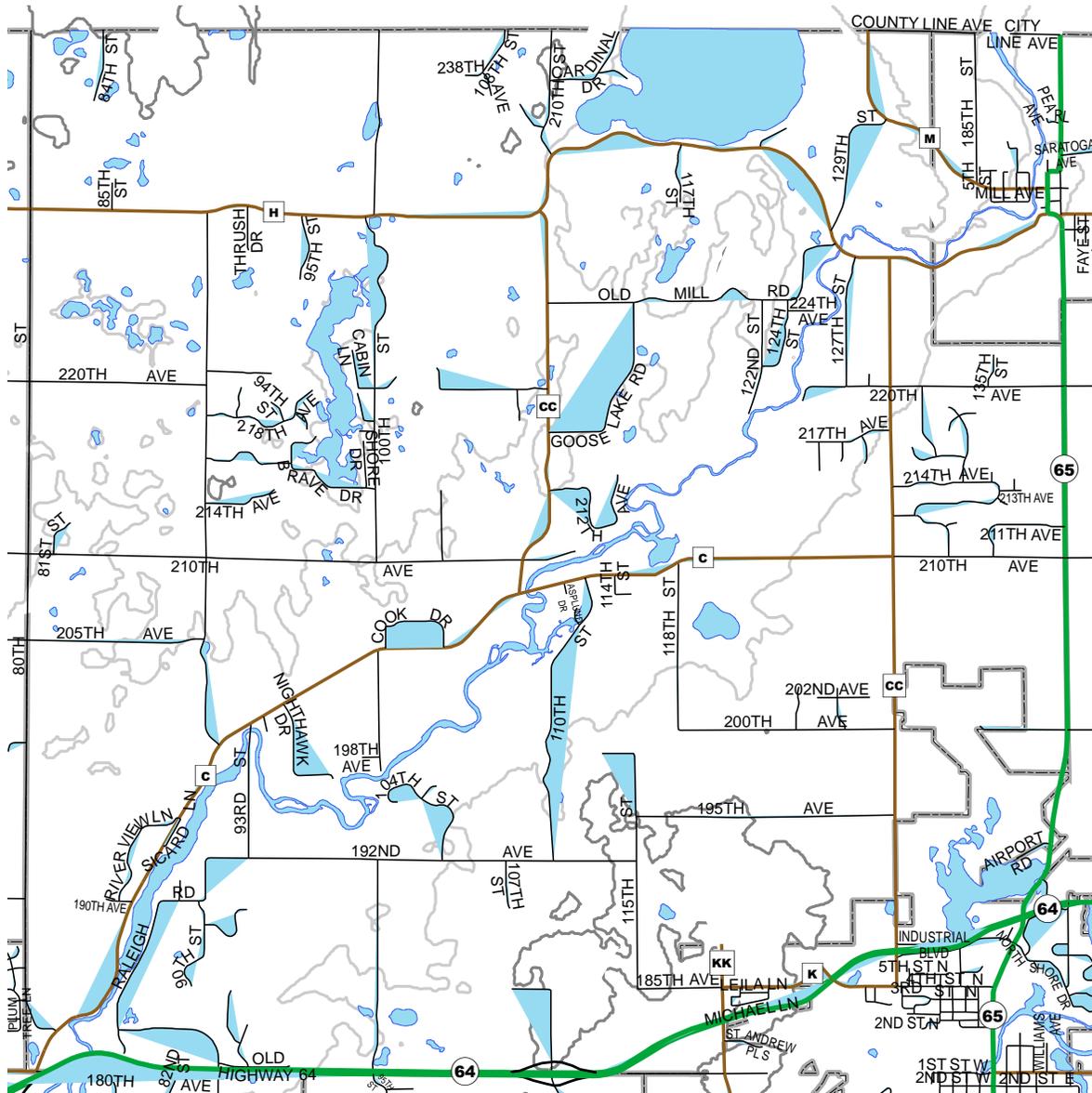
Map 1



SOURCE: Bedrock Geology of Wisconsin Map

ELEVATIONS: Contour Intervals of 75 Feet TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 9



CONTOUR INTERVALS	
—	950
—	1025
—	1100
—	1175

SOURCE: NRCS Soil Survey of St. Croix County.

SOILS

Soil properties are an important factor in how land is used. They indicate how productive farmland is, where sand and gravel is, and limitations for development. Indeed, the types of soils in an area often dictate the best use of the land. Hence, soil suitability interpretations for specific urban and rural land uses are essential for physical development planning and determining the best use of the soils on a site.

St. Croix County through the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) produced a digital soil survey that provides detailed soils mapping for the county at a scale of one-inch equals 1000 feet. In addition, the survey has produced information on the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soils, and provided soil property interpretations for agricultural, engineering, planning and resource conservation activities.

MAJOR SOIL ASSOCIATION GROUPS

St. Croix County has a wide variety of soils ranging from heavy, poorly drained to light and droughty. Soils that are generally excessively drained and well drained are found in the western half of the county. The moderately drained and somewhat poorly drained soils predominate in the county's eastern half. However, both extreme soil conditions are found throughout much of the county, making management difficult.

Widely varying soil types and complex slopes make the application of some best management practices troublesome. There are many areas with poorly drained soils on relatively steep slopes, which combine erosion with drainage problems.

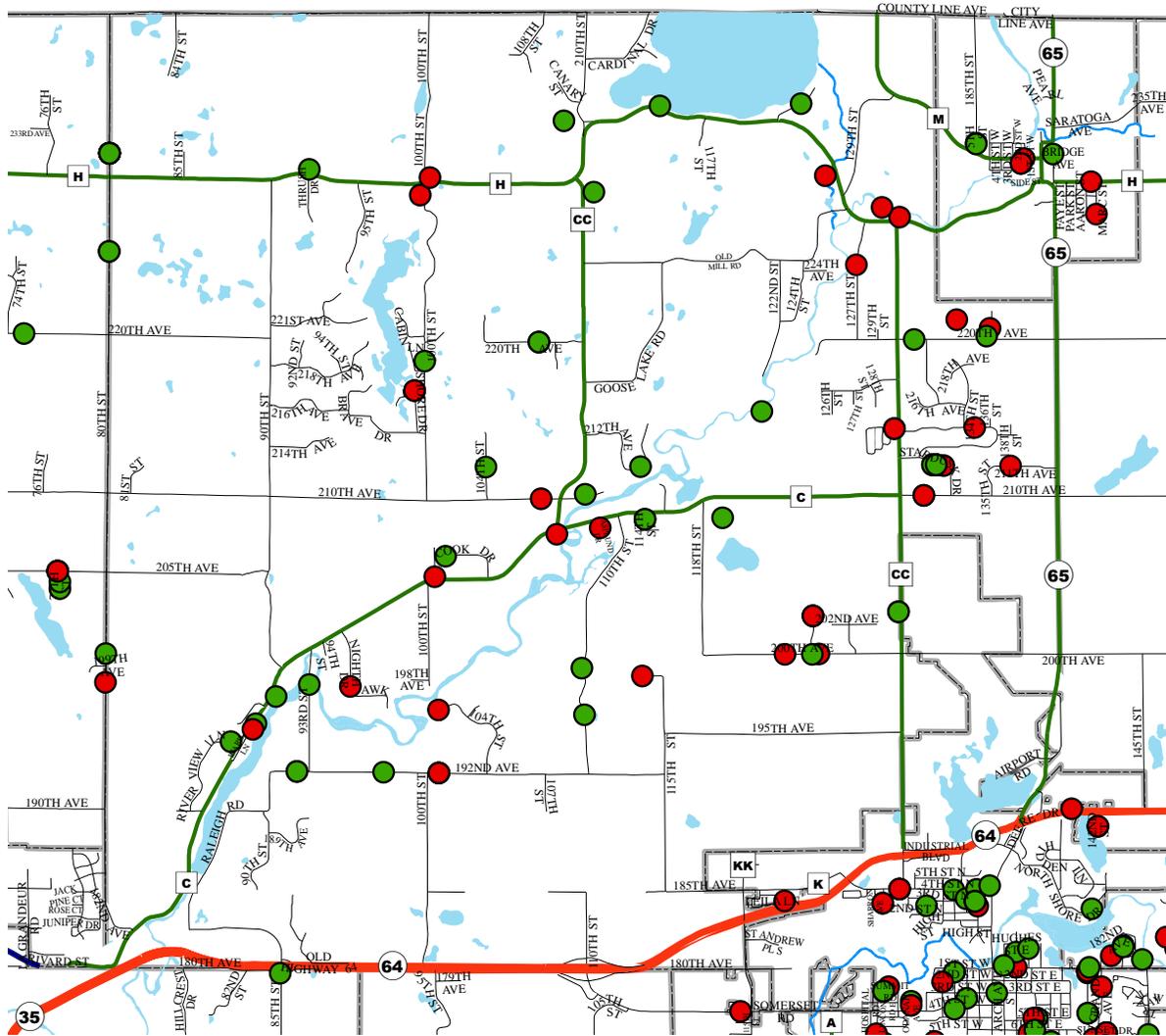
The General Soil Map shows the soil associations in the Town of Star Prairie. Soil associations are landscapes that have distinctive patterns of soils in defined proportions. They typically consist of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil, and are named for the major soils. The General Soils of Star Prairie are depicted in Map 2. It provides general soils information for the Town and is not intended to provide information for site-specific applications.

RADON TESTING

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas produced by the decay of radium (which is produced by the decay of uranium). Deposits of radium and uranium are common in rock and soil. Studies have shown that exposure to radon gas and its decay products can increase the risk of lung cancer. The risk of developing lung cancer is related to the concentration of radon in the air and the length of time an individual is exposed.

Radon has been identified in numerous homes throughout St. Croix County and in many homes in Star Prairie. Radon tests were taken by individual landowners using kits obtained through St. Croix County. Radon levels can vary greatly from home to home, the only way to identify elevated radon levels is to test your home. Radon test results do not predict the radon levels in neighboring homes. However, they do show that elevated radon levels can occur anywhere. Please see map below. Additional information on radon, testing and health impacts, is available at the following websites: www.dhfs.state.wi.us/dph_beh/RadonProt.

Radon Test Levels TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE



Radon Tests
Reading Level in PPM
● 0.0 - 3.9
● Greater Than 4

SOURCE: Home Owner Test Kits collected by St. Croix County Public Health.

SOIL SUITABILITY INTERPRETATIONS

The soil survey provides important information about the suitability of land for different rural and urban uses. The interpretation of soils involves assessing the characteristics of soils that affect a specific use and predicting the various limitations those soils place on a land use. In the Town of Star Prairie the available soil suitability interpretations of importance are those regarding septic tank absorption fields, agriculture, potential sand and gravel deposits, bedrock at or near the surface, and water table depth.

SUITABILITY FOR PRIVATE ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) are subsurface systems of perforated pipe, which distribute effluent from septic tanks to the soil. Soil between 18 inches and six feet is evaluated for properties that affect absorption of effluent and construction and operation of the system. Properties that affect absorption are permeability, depth to bedrock and water table, and susceptibility to flooding. The layout and construction of a system is affected by soil conditions related to slope, erosion potential, lateral seepage and downslope flow of effluent. Soils with characteristic large rocks and boulders present additional problems, and increase the costs of system construction.

The state requirements for septic system siting are specified in COMM 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. This code relies heavily on the ability of the soil to effectively treat the effluent discharged from the POWTS drainfield. The original soil survey suitability interpretations for St. Croix County were reviewed and updated by County staff to include information on suitability for POWTS based on COMM 83 soils criteria, public sanitary sewer or alternative treatment. The NRCS soil interpretations for septic tank absorption fields consider most excessively drained soils occurring over fractured bedrock or high water tables a severe limitation to septic system development because effluent in these situations can be readily transported to the groundwater and be detrimental to groundwater quality.

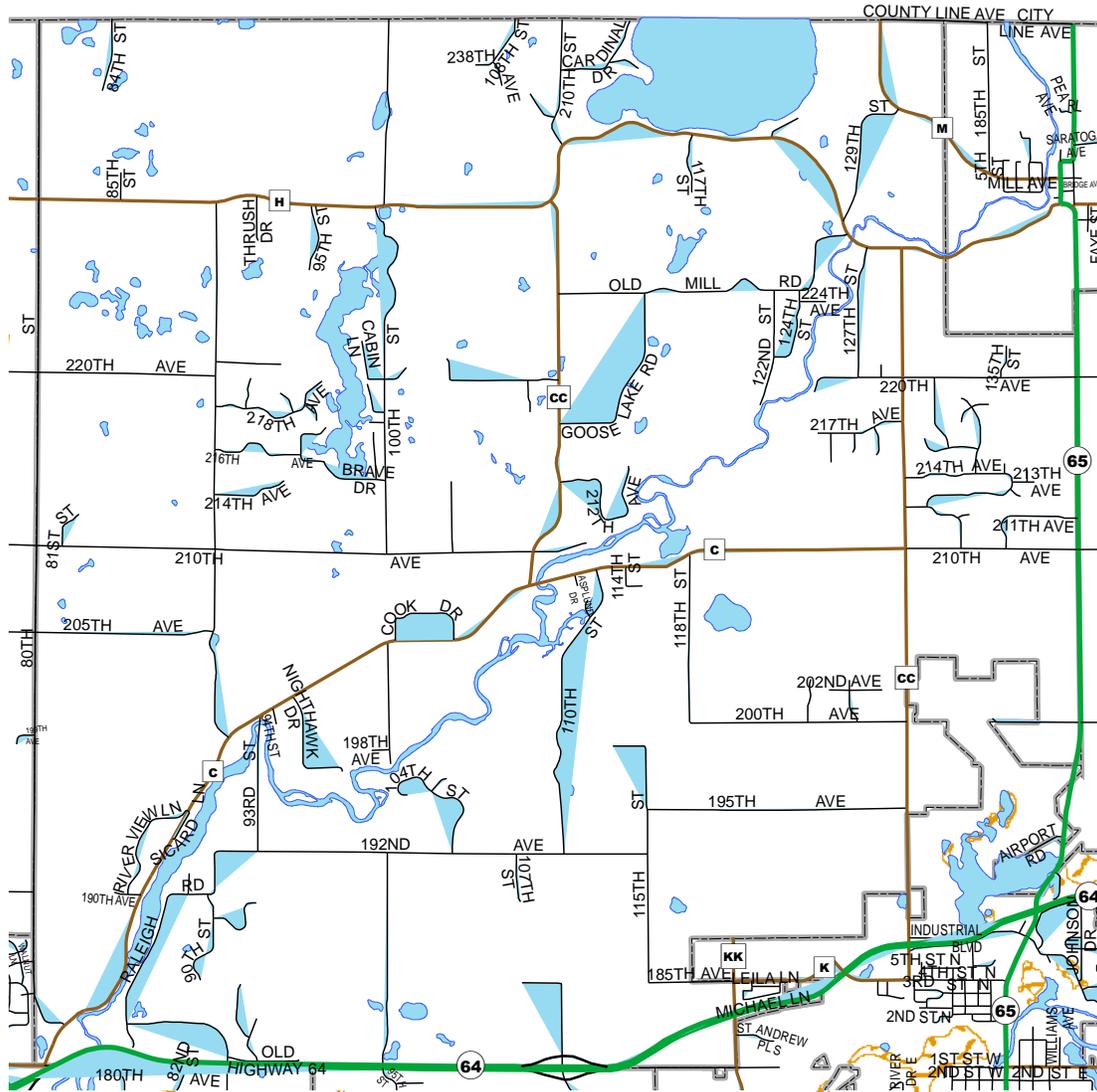
Map 3 Limitations for Septic Systems depicts those soils in the Town of Star Prairie with severe limitations based on the updated interpretation for POWTS.

SUITABILITY FOR EXTRACTION OF MINERALS (NON-METALLIC)

The Town of Star Prairie has significant supplies of sand and gravel. The soils amongst glacial outwash are the most likely source for sand and gravel as the melting waters of the glacier were most active in sorting and depositing high-quality sand and gravel in this area. Where the bedrock is at or near the surface of the ground are areas, which are probably most suited for quarrying stone.

Map 7 Potential Sand Deposits and Map 8 Potential Gravel Deposits show probable locations for sand and gravel deposits in the Town of Star Prairie.

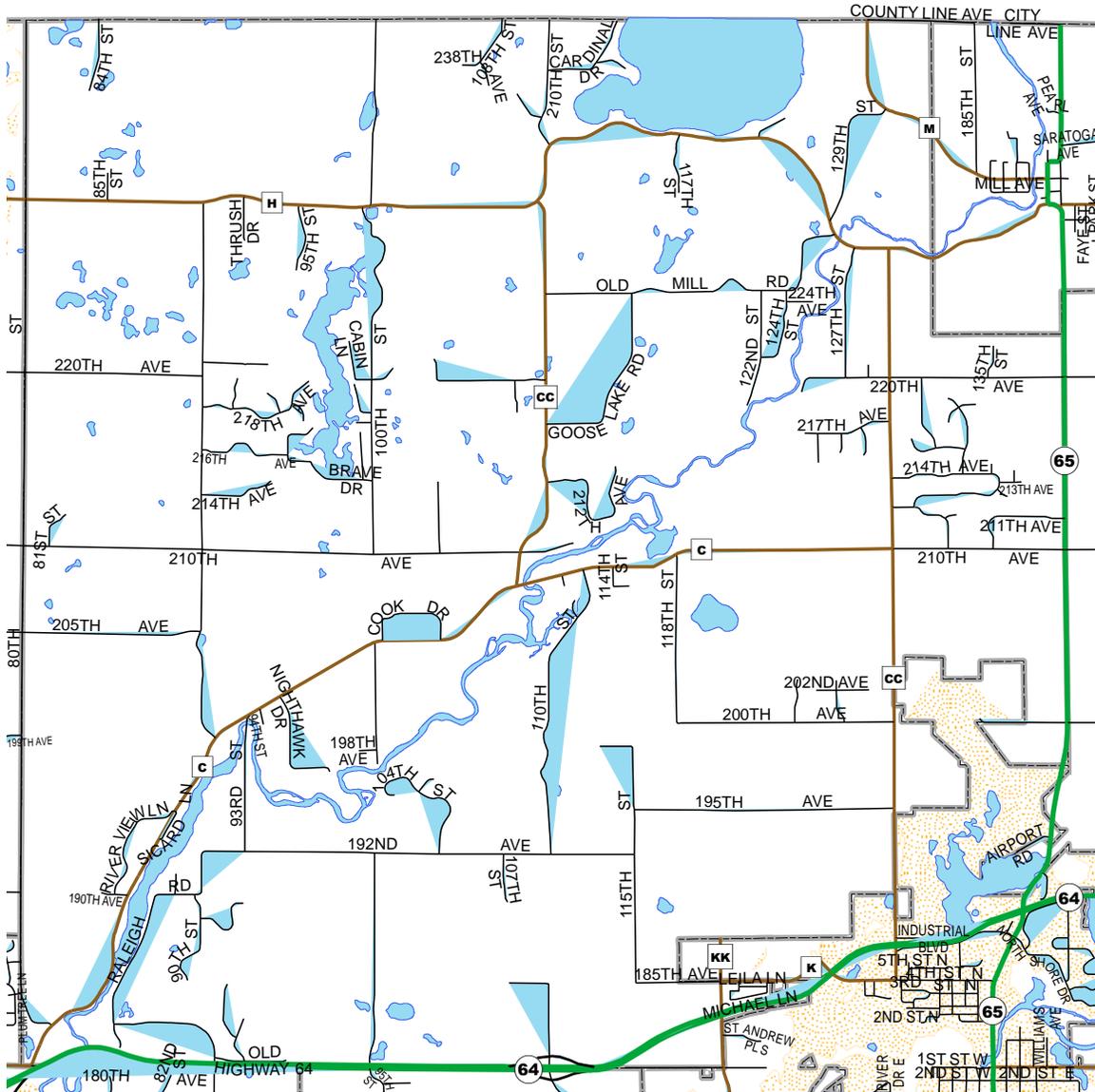
Limitations for Septic Systems TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE



SOURCE: Soil Survey of St. Croix County, 1978.

Potential Sand Deposits TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 7



SOURCE: NRCS Soil Survey of St. Croix County.

WATER RESOURCES

SURFACE WATER

Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and intermittent waterways and natural drainageways make up the surface waters of the Town of Star Prairie. These resources are all water bodies, standing still or flowing, navigable and intermittent, including natural drainageways that collect and channelize overland rainwater or snowmelt runoff. Natural drainageways are characterized by intermittent streams, threads, rills, gullies and dry washes that periodically contribute water to first-order streams. There are also many artificial drainageways where the natural drainageways have been altered by human activity. All of these features have the ability to transport sediment and pollutants, and are affected by their watersheds, the land that surrounds them.

The surface waters of Star Prairie occupy a major drainage system of northwestern Wisconsin. The St. Croix River basin which is part of the Mississippi River basin, covers the western two-thirds of the County and the Town of Star Prairie. The Apple River, which traverses the Town of Star Prairie; Trout Brook, Willow River and Kinnickinnic River are within the St. Croix River basin. There are also wetlands, intermittent streams or dry runs and other surface drainage features that carry water only during spring runoff or during extreme storm events.

Although the entire county was subjected to glacial action, the topography has since been eroded and worn so that it is now a well-drained area. The most recent glaciation (Wisconsin Stage) only covered the land northwest of the Willow River. Here, the end moraine left many kettle hole lakes, but these have all but disappeared and are now seen as wet depressions. Most of the remaining surface waters are some relatively larger lakes, streams and artificial impoundments.

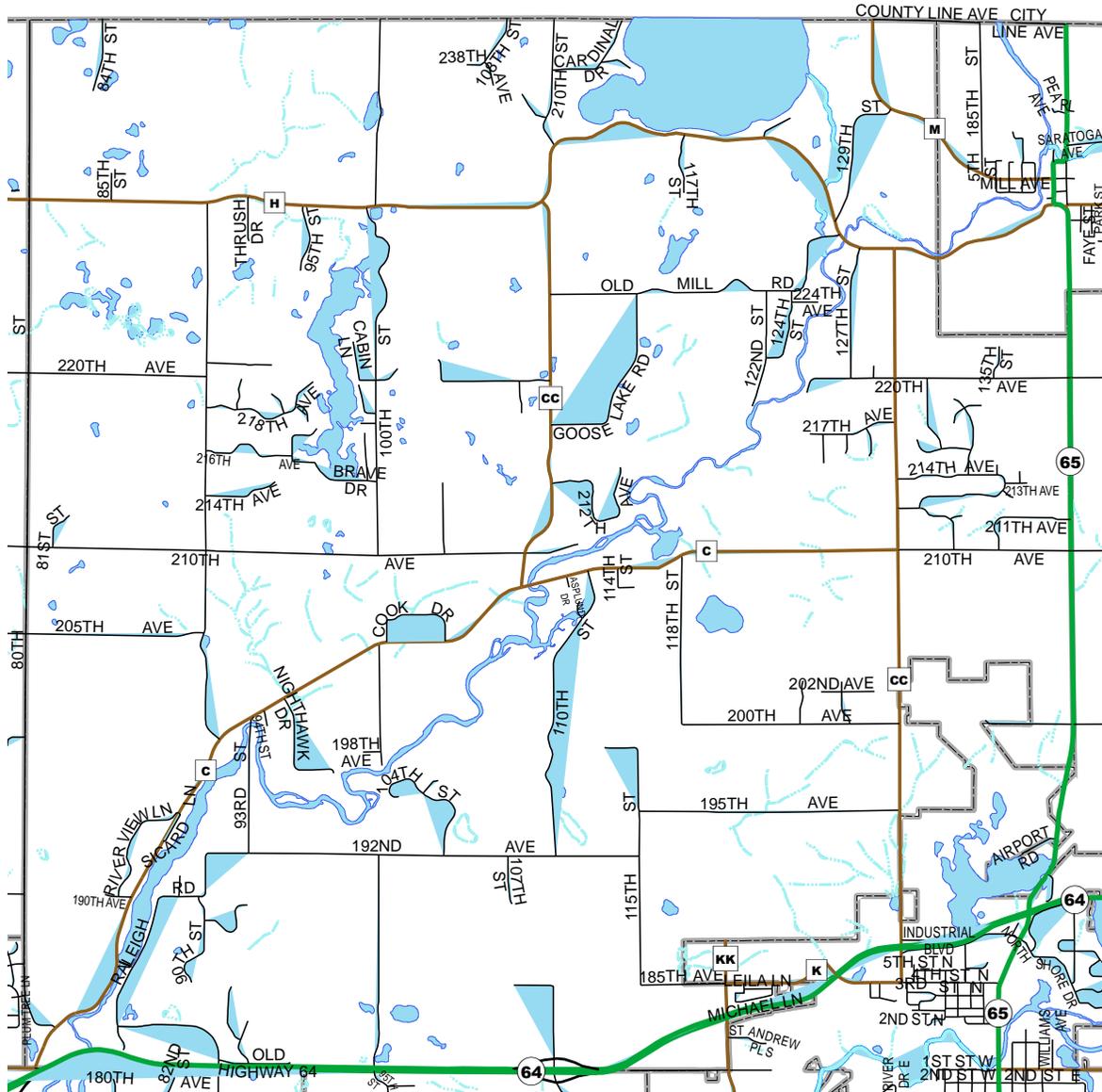
Star Prairie's water resources include: Cedar, Squaw and Strand lakes, Cedar Creek and the Apple River. Map 10 Water Bodies and Drainage depicts the water resources of the Town of Star Prairie.

WATERSHEDS

The lakes, rivers and wetlands of the towns are impacted by land use practices in the watersheds that drain to them. Most of the pollutants that enter surface water resources are carried in runoff from many diffuse or nonpoint sources. The major pollutants of concern are sediment carried from areas with bare soil such as crop fields and construction sites and phosphorus attached to soil particles or dissolved in water from fertilizers and livestock operations. There are three watersheds in Star Prairie: Trout Brook, the Lower Apple River and the Lower Willow River. Please see the Watershed Map below.

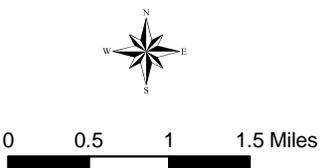
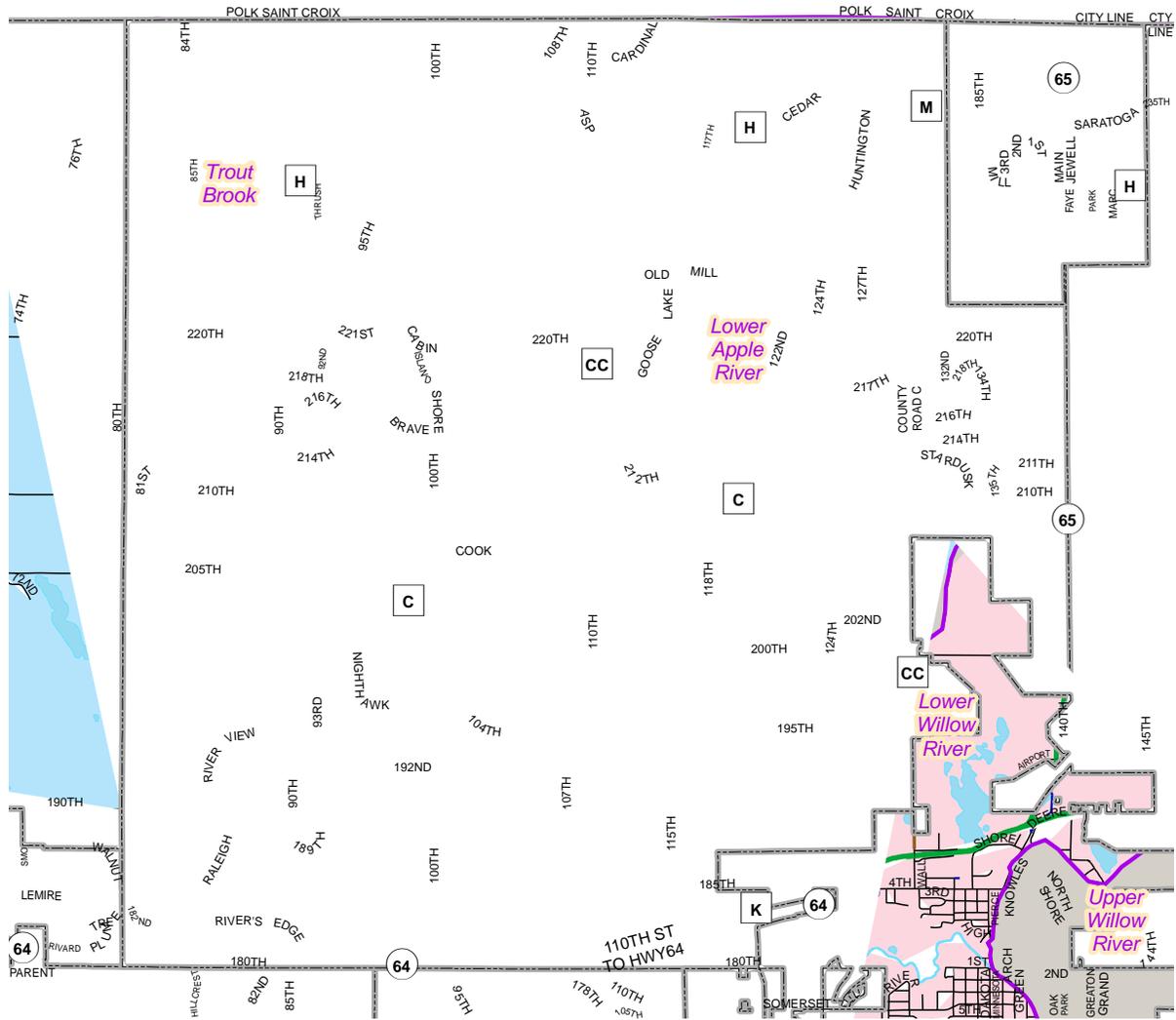
Water Bodies and Drainage TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 10



SOURCE: NRCS Soil Survey of St. Croix County.

Watersheds TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE



Legend	
Watersheds	
■	Lower Apple River
■	Lower Willow River
■	Trout Brook
■	Upper Willow River

SOURCE: St. Croix County Planning / Land Information

SURFACE WATER QUALITY

- The streams and rivers in the town meet fish and aquatic life and recreational use standards.
- In general, water quality in the St. Croix River Basin, which includes all the water bodies in the Town of Star Prairie, is good.
- Water quality and aquatic habitat in the town's water bodies are threatened by non-point source pollution from agricultural land use, construction sites and rural residential development.
- The Apple River is threatened by turbidity, erosion, stream bank grazing and shoreland development. The river is both a cold and warm-water fishery.
- The whole Apple River is classified as Class B/Category 3 Muskie waters. Class B indicates the angler success and catch rates may be less than in prime waters, Category 3 means the population has no known natural reproduction of muskellunge. Stocking of muskellunge is required for maintenance of the population.
- The Apple River from the Village of Star Prairie to Johannesburg is classified as a Class II trout stream. Class II streams may have some natural reproduction, but not enough to utilize available food and space. Therefore, stocking is required to maintain a desirable sport fishery. These streams have good survival and carryover of adult trout, often producing some fish larger than average size. It is stocked annually with approximately 2300 brown trout.
- Below Johannesburg, the Apple River is a warm-water fishery and recreational river. Its banks are much more heavily developed, with residential or commercial recreational development. This portion of the Apple River fishery has small-mouth bass, walleye, northern pike and low-density Muskie. The Riverdale Dam, owned by Xcel Energy generates hydroelectric power and creates and regulates the Riverdale Flowage on the Apple River. The Riverdale Flowage portion of the Apple River has the same fish species as the rest of the Apple but also has large-mouth bass and panfish.
- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has an Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) list and an Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) list. Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters are protected through WDNR regulation. These waters may not be lowered in quality due to WDNR permitted activities such as wastewater treatment plants. There are no ORW or ERW designated waters in the Town of Star Prairie.
- The WDNR also has an impaired water list, known as the 303(d) list. This list identifies waters that do not meet water quality standards. The WDNR uses the list as the basis for establishing strategies to improve water bodies using total maximum daily loads. The priority watershed program uses conservation practices to improve the water body. There are two impaired waterbodies in the Town of Star Prairie.
- Since 1998 Squaw Lake has been listed on the 303(d) Impaired Waters List due to excessive nutrient loading from its watershed. Water quality is poor to very poor. It is in the Trout Brook watershed. Algae covers a large portion of the lake bottom and summer algal blooms can result in foul odors and an unsightly build-up of decaying algae on the shoreline. Also the nutrients in the lake limit rooting depth for vegetation needed by fish populations. The decreased aquatic habitat stresses fish populations.

- Squaw Lake has been part of the St. Croix Lakes Cluster Priority Watershed Project since 1997. The project is aimed at identifying and assessing nonpoint pollutants and guiding control measures and education efforts to improve water quality. Since 1997, education efforts have been completed, best management practices have been implemented, and farm runoff has decreased. Several farms in the upper watershed now have nutrient management plans, there is no winter spreading of manure in drainage channels and there is excellent communication with the local farm community. Several acres of farmland has been purchased by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as a Waterfowl Production Area. This property now contains restored wetlands and native prairie.
- Riparian and watershed property owners around Squaw Lake are members of the Squaw Lake Management District which was established in 1988. The district has taxing authority and holds an annual meeting where ongoing activities are determined and a mill rate set to fund those activities.
- Overall, nutrient loading to Squaw Lake has been decreased. Ongoing study is underway to determine options to remove or bind the existing nutrients in the lake. Squaw Lake is still threatened by nutrients, phosphorus and turbidity as a result of agriculture, internal loading and local land use. Squaw Lake is a warm-water fishery with northern pike, large-mouth bass, bluegill, pumpkinseed and crappie.
- Cedar Lake was added to the impaired waters list in 1998. Water quality is poor to very poor. It is nutrient impaired by phosphorus as a result of agriculture, internal loading and local land use. Summer algal blooms result in foul odors and unsightly built-up of algae biomass on the shoreline. The nutrients in the lake limit rooting depth for emergent vegetation used by the resident fish populations. As a result these impairments impact the recreational/aesthetic value of the lake and stress sport fish populations. Cedar Lake is located within both the Horse Creek and Lower Apple River watersheds.
- Cedar Lake is a warm-water fishery and is a Class B/Category 3 Muskie water, there are also northern pike, walleye, small-mouth bass, bluegill, crappie, perch and white bass.
- Riparian and watershed property owners around Cedar Lake are members of the Cedar Lake Rehabilitation & Lake Management District. The district has taxing authority and holds an annual meeting where ongoing activities are determined and a mill rate set to fund those activities.
- The Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District's ongoing water quality goals include reducing point sources and controlling nonpoint sources through native vegetation establishment, land acquisition, decreasing lake bed disturbances and implementing upland best management practices.
- The Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers has applied for a water quality grant to test, measure and model Cedar Lake's water. The results should provide information to develop strategies to improve the water quality of the lake.
- The Star Prairie Fish and Game Association has worked at improving the fish habitat of Cedar Lake by installing about 40 or 50 fish cribs annually, they hope to reach around 300 total. The fish cribs take the place of weed beds and create cover which allows sport fish populations to expand.
- Education is ongoing regarding phosphorus impacts within the Horse Creek watershed. Land use is converting from agriculture to residential and early signs indicate nutrient loading is

decreasing to Cedar Lake. Cedar Lake is a very deep lake but during extreme temperatures the phosphorus content causes algal blooms and decreased oxygen content to the fish population. In the 1990's an aeration system was added to the lake to improve the fishery and increase oxygen content. However, this process is creating increased phosphorus levels due to recycling of phosphorus internally.

GROUNDWATER

Major aquifers in St. Croix County include sand and gravel deposits and dolomite and sandstone bedrock. These aquifers are the source of all potable (drinkable) water in the Town of Star Prairie and St. Croix County. The sand and gravel aquifer consists of unconsolidated sand and gravel in glacial drift and alluvium. These deposits occur throughout about one-fourth of the county, either at the land surface or buried under less permeable drift. The sand and gravel aquifer can yield sufficient water yield for private residential water supplies. The sandstone aquifer includes all sedimentary bedrock younger than the Precambrian age. The sandstone aquifer is continuous over the county and includes, from youngest to oldest rock formations, the Galena-Platteville unit of the Ordovician age, St. Peter Sandstone, the Prairie du Chien Group, and sandstones of the Cambrian age.

The Prairie du Chien Group and the Cambrian sandstones are the major water-yielding rocks in the sandstone aquifer. The Prairie du Chien Group is the uppermost-saturated bedrock in much of the county and is used extensively for private residential water supplies. The ability of the Cambrian sandstone to store and yield water, and its generally great thickness makes it the principal source of municipal water supplies. The St. Peter Sandstone is found in a small area and is partly saturated and yields some water to wells.

The source of all groundwater recharge in St. Croix County including Star Prairie is precipitation. Between one and ten inches of precipitation per year infiltrates and recharges the groundwater aquifers. The amount infiltrated depends mainly on the type of rock material at the land surface. Most groundwater moves through the unconsolidated material and bedrock units and then discharges to surface waters, such as lakes, rivers and wetlands.

The groundwater elevation map, Map 11, shows the elevation of the top of the zone of saturation in the Town of Star Prairie. The elevation from sea level of the water table ranges from more than 960 feet along the eastern edge of the town to just under 840 feet in the southwestern corner of the town. The water table is under the glacial drift and within the bedrock in about half of St. Croix County.

AREAS WITH HIGH RELATIVE SUSCEPTIBILITY TO GROUNDWATER POLLUTION

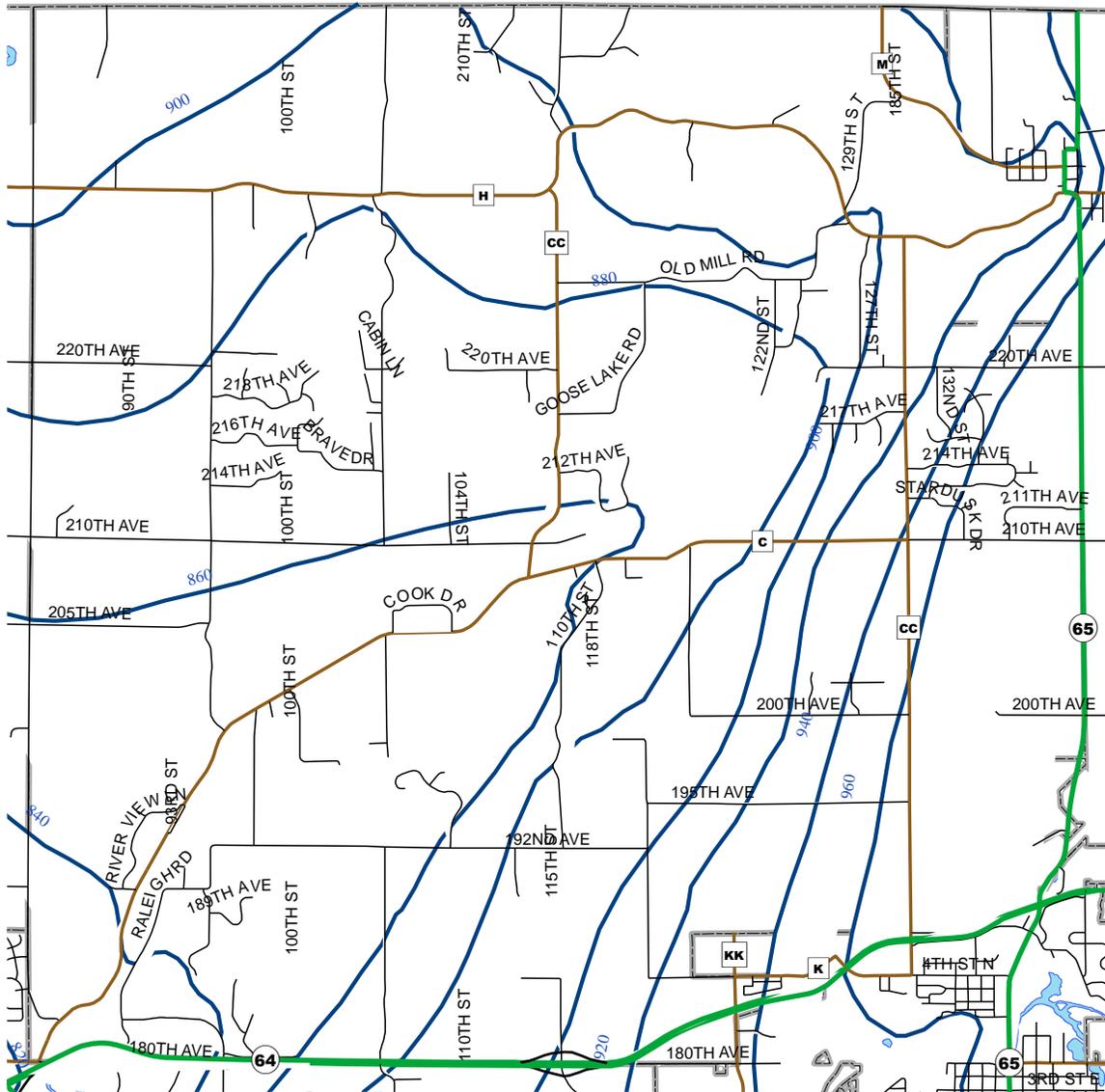
Groundwater supplies potable (drinkable) water to the residents of Star Prairie. Some land areas, because of inherent physical resource characteristics, do not attenuate (lessen the impact of) pollutants very well, which may be introduced into the environment. These areas should be protected from certain high-risk land uses and have best management practices and monitoring established, especially when in proximity to any wells that supply drinking water.

Groundwater can be adversely affected when contaminants are released into or spilled upon the ground. Some factors influencing an aquifer's susceptibility to pollution are depth to groundwater and bedrock, type of bedrock, sub-surface permeability and the soil's ability to lessen the impact of pollutants. The Depth to Groundwater of the Town of Star Prairie is depicted in Map 12 below.

High-risk activities-such as a business or industry using hazardous materials pose serious threats to groundwater and should be kept out of the immediate recharge areas of public and private wells. Point sources of groundwater contamination can include chemical spills, landfills, failing septic

Groundwater Elevation TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 11



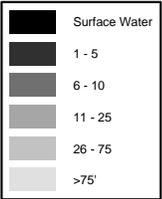
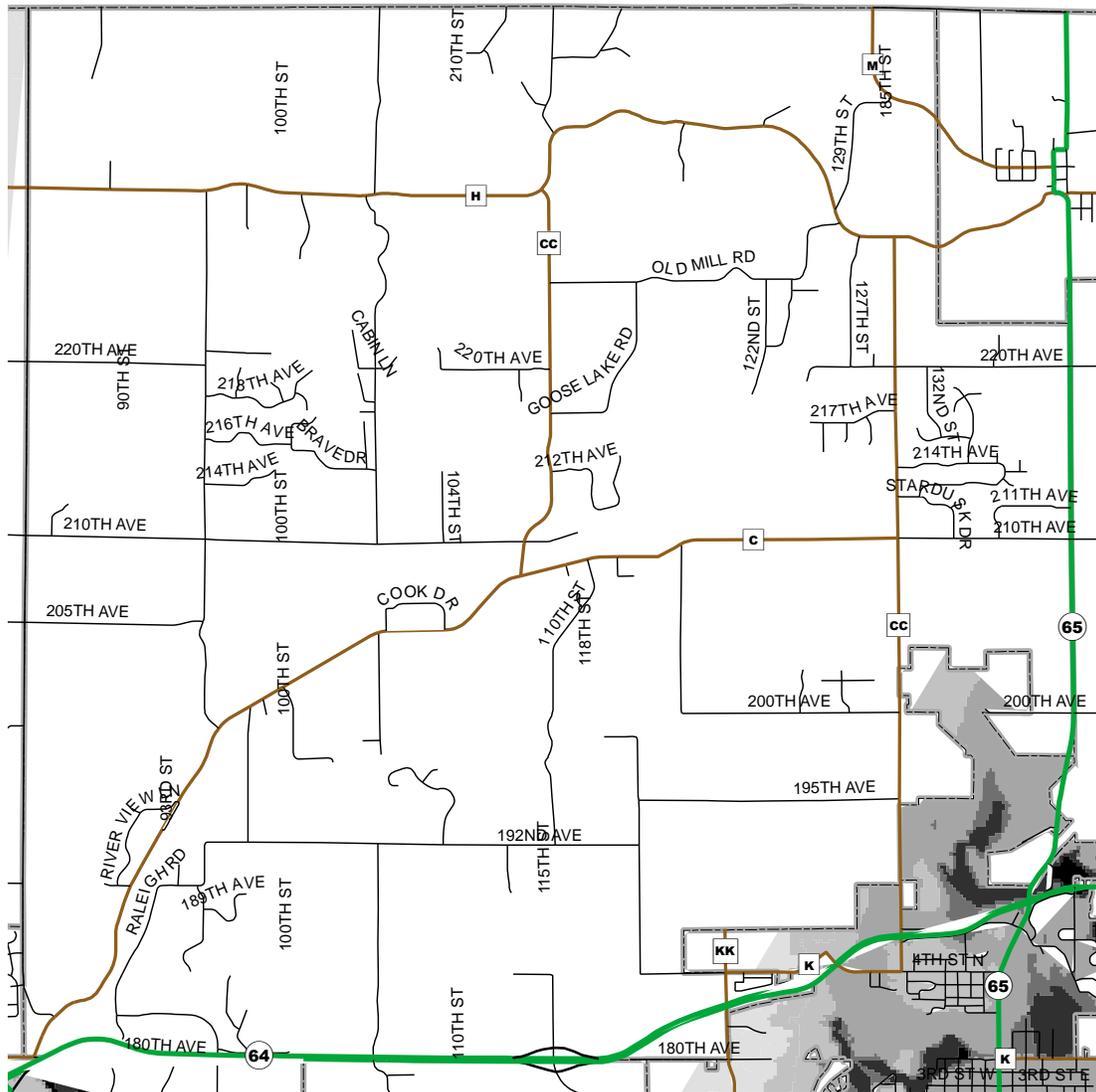
Water Elevation at 20' Intervals
 — Water Elevation

SOURCE: UW Extension 1985.

systems, abandoned wells, etc. However, non-point pollution of groundwater from agricultural runoff, lawn fertilizers, contaminants in stormwater and improper disposal of household chemicals (e.g. bleach, used motor oil, paints, etc.) can also cause groundwater pollution.

Depth to Groundwater TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 12



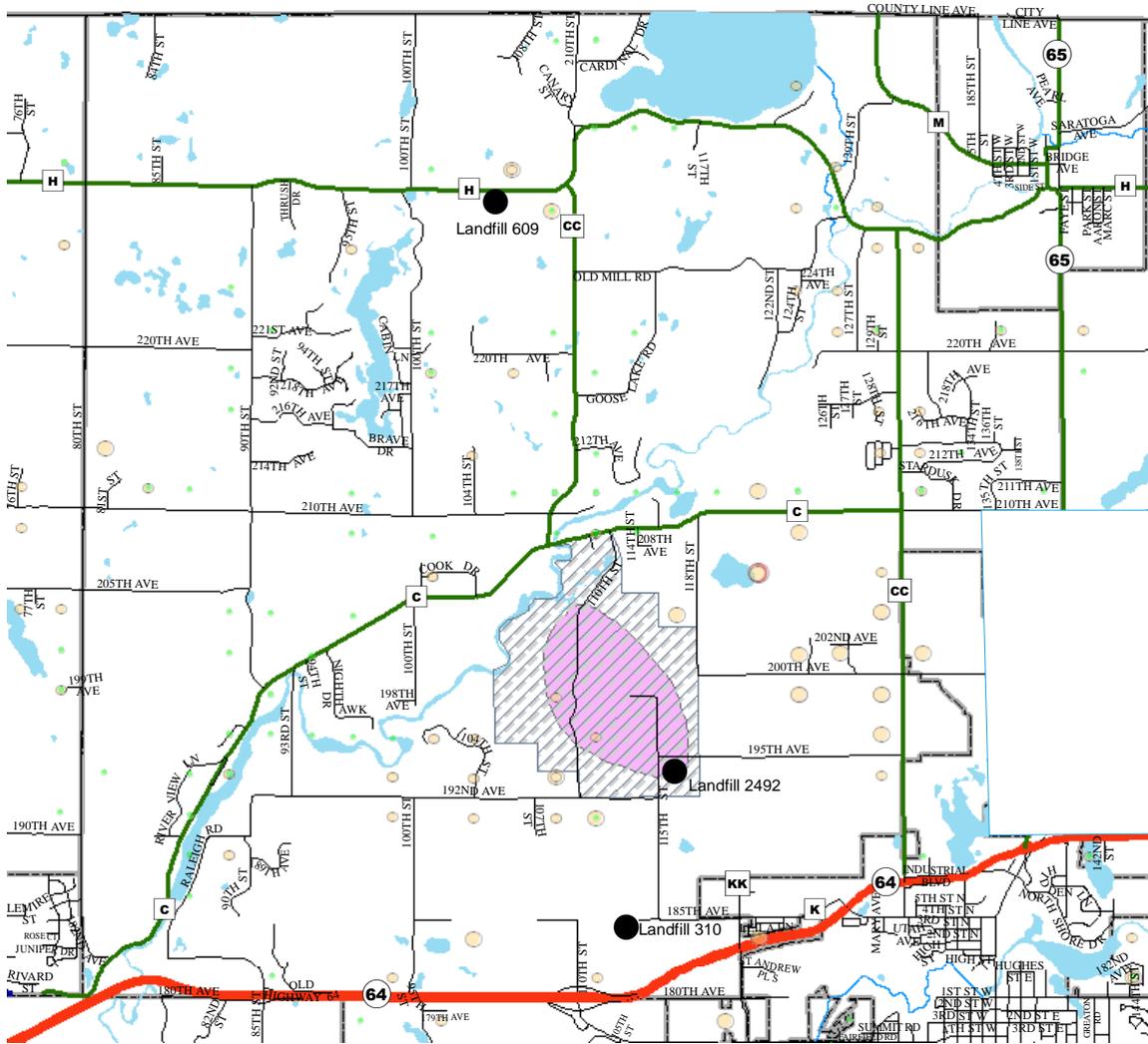
SOURCE: USGS

GROUNDWATER QUALITY

- The sandstone aquifer underlies all of St. Croix County and is the principal source of water for residential, municipal and industrial supplies.
- The quality of groundwater in the Town of Star Prairie is generally good. However, voluntary well tests have identified some existing and potential problems.
- Groundwater in Star Prairie, is classified as hard or very hard due to the presence of calcium and magnesium.
- Iron and manganese are found in water from all of St. Croix County's aquifers. Concentrations greater than the recommended limits are common.
- Nitrate concentrations in the water are localized but are becoming more of a problem throughout the county. There were elevated nitrate concentrations in a few private wells in the southeast portion of Star Prairie. Please see map below.
- There are now four Atrazine (a pesticide) prohibition areas within St. Croix County. One is located on the eastern edge of Star Prairie and the western edge of Stanton, just north of the City of New Richmond; one in Erin Prairie; one in Springfield; and one at the junction of the towns of Hammond, Warren, Pleasant Valley and Kinnickinnic. Please see map below.
- A report entitled "An Introduction to Groundwater in St. Croix County" completed in May 2006 by the UW-Extension and UW-Stevens Point provides a more complete analysis of St. Croix County's groundwater. The report looks into a broader range of water quality measurements such as coliform bacteria, arsenic, nitrates, triazine, arsenic, chloride, hardness and pH. The report may be access on St. Croix County's website, under the Land and Water Conservation Department's Drinking Water program, www.sccwi.us/lwcd choose Drinking Water Testing.
- The Town of Star Prairie has one of five properties listed in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) database for St. Croix County.
- The CERCLIS site is the New Richmond Landfill (License #2492). Please see map below. This landfill operated from approximately 1975 through early 1982, at which time it was capped with two feet of final cover material and six inches of top soil. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) first began investigating this site in 1999 and has taken the lead in its environmental clean up. It was first reported to the EPA in 2002. The preliminary assessment states that this former municipal landfill, northwest of the City of New Richmond, has impacted approximately 14 private wells in the Town of Star Prairie with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) at levels above state drinking water standards. Some trace amounts of VOCs below drinking water standards have been found in additional wells further north. The VOCs have caused significant groundwater contamination. Effects of short-term exposure to VOCs can include symptoms of intoxication (dizziness, headache, confusion, nausea), anemia and fatigue. Effects of long-term exposure to VOCs can include cancer, liver damage, spasms, and impaired speech, hearing and vision. For additional information please see the WDNR website: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/pubbro.htm>.
- Since 2002, the plume of groundwater contamination has been identified and a Special Deep Casing Requirement Area identified. Please see map below.

- All new wells in this area are required to drill a deep well and have additional testing done. As a temporary mitigation measure, approximately 15 existing private wells in this area installed whole-house, point-of-entry, activated carbon filter treatment systems. In some cases, existing landowners elected to use bottled water, while the extension of municipal water from the City of New Richmond was being planned for this area. The New Richmond Landfill Remediation Group has constructed water lines to provide municipal water to this area. Approximately 45 homes in the area were hooked up by early 2008.
- There is also a second potential impact area from a second plume of groundwater contamination in the Town of Star Prairie caused by an older landfill in section 34.
- Landfill license #310 is reported to have operated from approximately 1945 until it closed in 1975. Please see map below for the landfill location. In 1992, an Environmental Conditions Assessment was completed and based on the results of that assessment, one private well was replaced because of VOC contamination. The landfill was capped in 1994 with clay material. Since that time, Operation & Maintenance (O&M) continues at the site with scheduled water sampling from monitoring wells and private wells. A contamination plume from this second site has not been identified by WDNR and it has not been declared a special well casing requirement area. However, the WDNR is continuing its testing and investigation and may require additional actions at this site in the future.
- There is a third land fill in the Town of Star Prairie, it is a former town dump, landfill license #609. Please see map below. There is no groundwater contamination associated with this site.

Groundwater Quality TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE



■ ATRAZINE PROHIBITION AREA

NITROGEN LEVELS IN PPM

- 0.0 - 2.0
- 2.1 - 5.6
- 5.7 - 10.0
- 10.1 - 21.1
- 21.2 - 53.4

▨ DEEP CASING REQUIREMENT AREA

■ APPROX. CONTAMINATION PLUME

Note: Nitrate levels over 2 ppm indicate human impact on groundwater. Levels over 10 ppm exceed the DNR drinking water standard.

SOURCE: Drinking Water Program, UW Extension and LWCD, 1999-2001; DATCP, DNR



ISSUES AFFECTING SURFACE & GROUNDWATER QUALITY

- Agricultural runoff into the lakes and streams of the county has contributed to the degradation of water quality in some areas.
- The internally drained closed depressions and their corresponding high water tables are very sensitive to runoff and septic system effluent.
- The increased number and density of Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) can lead to nitrates in the groundwater if these systems are improperly installed or are not maintained. All POWTS are required to be inspected every three years, and most will need to be pumped at that time. Improper use of a system could lead to premature failure of the system, expensive repairs and water contamination. St. Croix County reminds residents of the septic system inspection requirement on a three-year rotational basis and requires proof that the system has been inspected.
- Along with rural residential development come problems such as storm water control and soil erosion.
- Increased lakeshore development has occurred in St. Croix County, causing increased runoff into the lakes, which can lead to water quality degradation.
- Landowners should test their drinking water annually or at least once every three years. Water testing kits are available at the County Planning and Zoning Department, Hudson; Land & Water Conservation Department, Baldwin; Public Health Department, New Richmond; or through private labs. A fee may apply.

WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

Municipal water suppliers are required by state administrative code to establish wellhead protection measures for new wells. It is also appropriate to establish protection measures for existing public water supply wells to protect the public health, safety and welfare, and to reduce public costs should a pollution event occur. Because it is difficult to adequately react to a pollution event that occurs in proximity to a well strict prohibitions of certain high-risk land uses should be established for that area (within the 30-day time of travel of contributing groundwater to a well). Certain high-risk land uses should be limited, and best management practices and monitoring established in the area between the 30-day and five-year time of travel of contributing groundwater to a public water supply well. The City of New Richmond has a well-head protection ordinance.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE RESOURCES**FLOODPLAINS**

Wisconsin Statute 87.30(1) (59.692) requires counties, cities and villages to implement floodplain zoning. The purpose of Wisconsin Administrative Code NR116, Floodplain Management Program, is the protection of property and public investments from the effects of flooding. Federal Emergency Management Agency 100-year floodplain maps are usually used to delineate flood hazard areas. Counties are required to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances within one year after hydraulic and engineering data adequate to formulate the ordinance becomes available. St. Croix County has adopted and implemented a floodplain ordinance into the county zoning ordinance. This ordinance was revised in 2009. This ordinance is effective in all towns. The floodplains of the Town of Star Prairie are depicted in May 13 below.

SHORELANDS

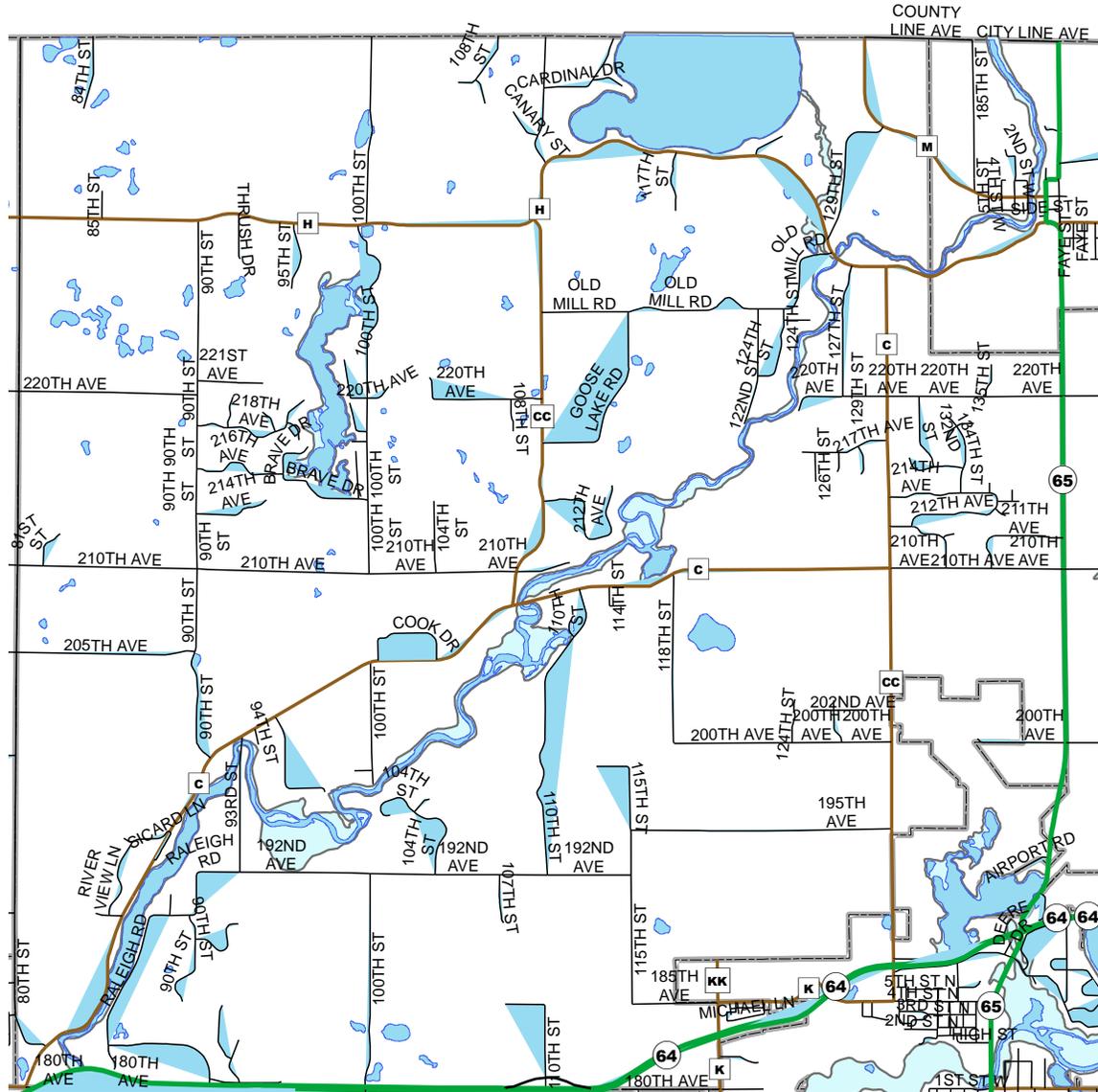
Lands within 1000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a lake or pond and 300 feet past the ordinary high water mark or landward edge of the floodplain, whichever is greater, of a river or stream are designated shorelands. Shorelands are usually considered prime residential building areas because of their scenic beauty. However, shorelands provide valuable habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals and vegetation. Shorelands also act as buffers and thus serve to protect water quality.

Wisconsin requires counties to protect and prevent the loss and erosion of these valuable resources by adopting and enforcing a shoreland ordinance. The authority to enact and enforce this provision comes from Wisconsin Statutes 59.971 and 144.26. Wisconsin Administrative Code NR115 dictates the shoreland management program. County ordinances can be more, but not less, stringent than NR115. Town approval is not required. Counties may permit only certain uses in wetlands of five acres or more within the shoreland zone.

The state requirement of shoreland zoning were adopted by St. Croix County and incorporated as part of the county's zoning ordinance. Shoreland zoning requirements in St. Croix County's ordinance permit only certain uses in wetlands of three acres or more within the shoreland zone. This ordinance is effective in all towns. The shorelands of Star Prairie are shown in Map 14 below. Site investigation of all floodplains and shorelands is required to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.

Floodplains TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 13



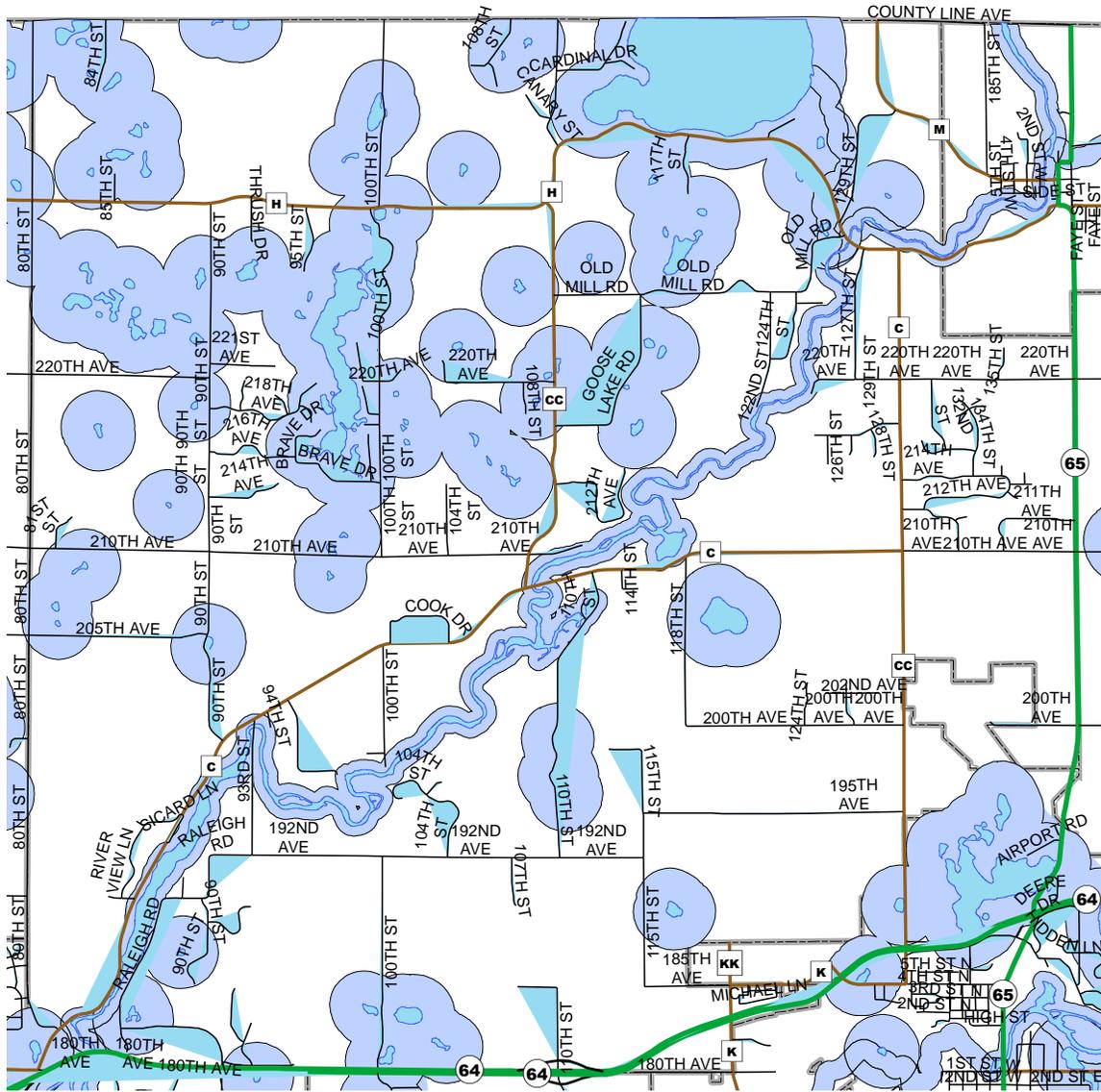
	Rivers & Lakes
	Floodplain



SOURCE: FIRM/FEMA, 1976

Shorelands TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 14



Lakes & Ponds Buffered 1000 Ft.	
Rivers and Streams Buffered 300 Ft.	
	Rivers and Lakes
	Shoreland

SOURCE: 1990 Tiger Files hydrology, NRCS streams and buffered by WCWRPC.

WETLANDS

Wetlands are defined by State Statute as "an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions." Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are commonly referred to as swamps, marshes or bogs. Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Wetlands can make lakes, rivers and streams cleaner, drinking water safer and also provide valuable habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals and vegetation. In addition, some wetlands can also provide the replenishment of groundwater supplies. Groundwater discharge is common from wetlands and can be important in maintaining stream flows, especially during dry months. Groundwater discharged through wetlands can contribute to high quality water in lakes and streams.

The federal government and the DNR restrict development in wetlands through Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and NR103, respectively. If landowners and developers are not notified of or do not follow these restrictions, wetlands can be damaged, resulting in costly fines and/or restoration.

Even though the DNR has an inventory of wetlands of two acres and larger, all wetlands, no matter how small, which meet the state definition, are subject to DNR regulations. Even if state regulations do not apply, federal regulations may, making it necessary to review all wetlands against these regulations before their disturbance. Particular attention must be given wetlands within shorelands to ensure protection from development.

Development in wetlands by either draining or filling removes their natural functions of storing and filtering pollutants, cleaning lakes, rivers and streams, making drinking water safer, providing valuable habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals and vegetation, replenishing groundwater supplies and the groundwater discharge from wetlands, which maintains stream flows, especially during dry months.

The Wetlands of the Town of Star Prairie are depicted in Map 15 below. Site investigation is required to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.

CLOSED DEPRESSIONS

Closed depressions are extremely sensitive land features because of their close association with the groundwater. The release of pollutants into or near closed depressions is almost certain to reach groundwater immediately. The Closed Depressions of the Town of Star Prairie are depicted in Map 16 below.

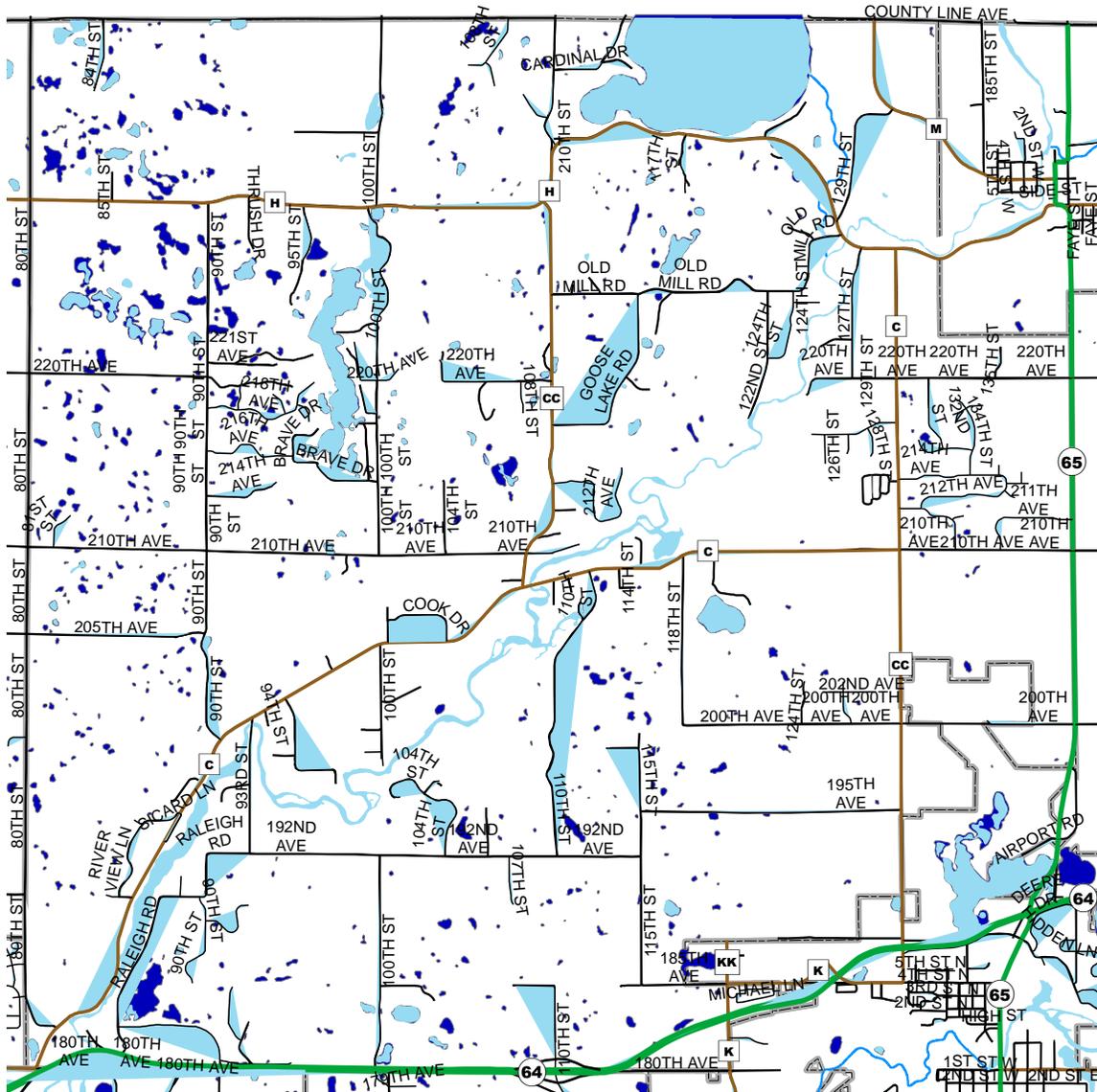
Closed Depressions

Closed depressions are common features in St. Croix County. They have formed through two quite different geological processes: karst development and glaciation. Karst development occurs in regions with highly soluble bedrock and results in distinctive landforms such as sinkholes. St. Croix County is covered by several rather thick, soluble carbonate units, and has particularly well developed karst, especially in the eastern half of the county. Glacial action can also result in topography marked by closed depressions known as kettles or kettleholes. Kettles develop when large blocks of glacier ice are buried within glacial deposits and subsequently melt. Many of the depressions in the western and northwestern portions of the county are kettles that developed in the St. Croix moraine after it was deposited during the Wisconsinan glaciation.

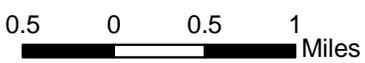
Baker, Hughes, Huffman and Nelson, Closed Depression Map of St. Croix County, Wisconsin, 1991

Closed Depressions TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 16



Rivers & Lakes
 Depressions



SOURCE: Department of Plant and Earth Science, UW-RF.

STEEP SLOPES

Steep slopes are any area where the gradient of the land is 12 percent or greater (each percent of slope is measured as one unit in elevation for every 100 horizontal units). One category of steep slope is 12% to less than 20% slope, of any soil type. It has been demonstrated that 12% slope is a threshold at which impacts from development become apparent. To allow development on these slopes one should avoid direct runoff into streams or rivers; follow state approved construction site erosion control standards; and institute best management practices, monitoring and maintenance to control on-site runoff and pollution. Steep slopes of 20% or greater are subject to erosion impacts even from slight land cover disturbances. Development on these slopes results in high construction costs and severe erosion with resultant negative impacts to surface waters. Therefore, development on slopes, 20% or greater, should be prohibited.

Steep Slopes of the Town of Star Prairie are depicted in Map 17 below.

WOODLANDS

Woodlands provide habitat for a variety of plants and animals, as well as adding scenic beauty to the landscape. The largest, continuous blocks of forested land are important habitat for a variety of plants and animals.

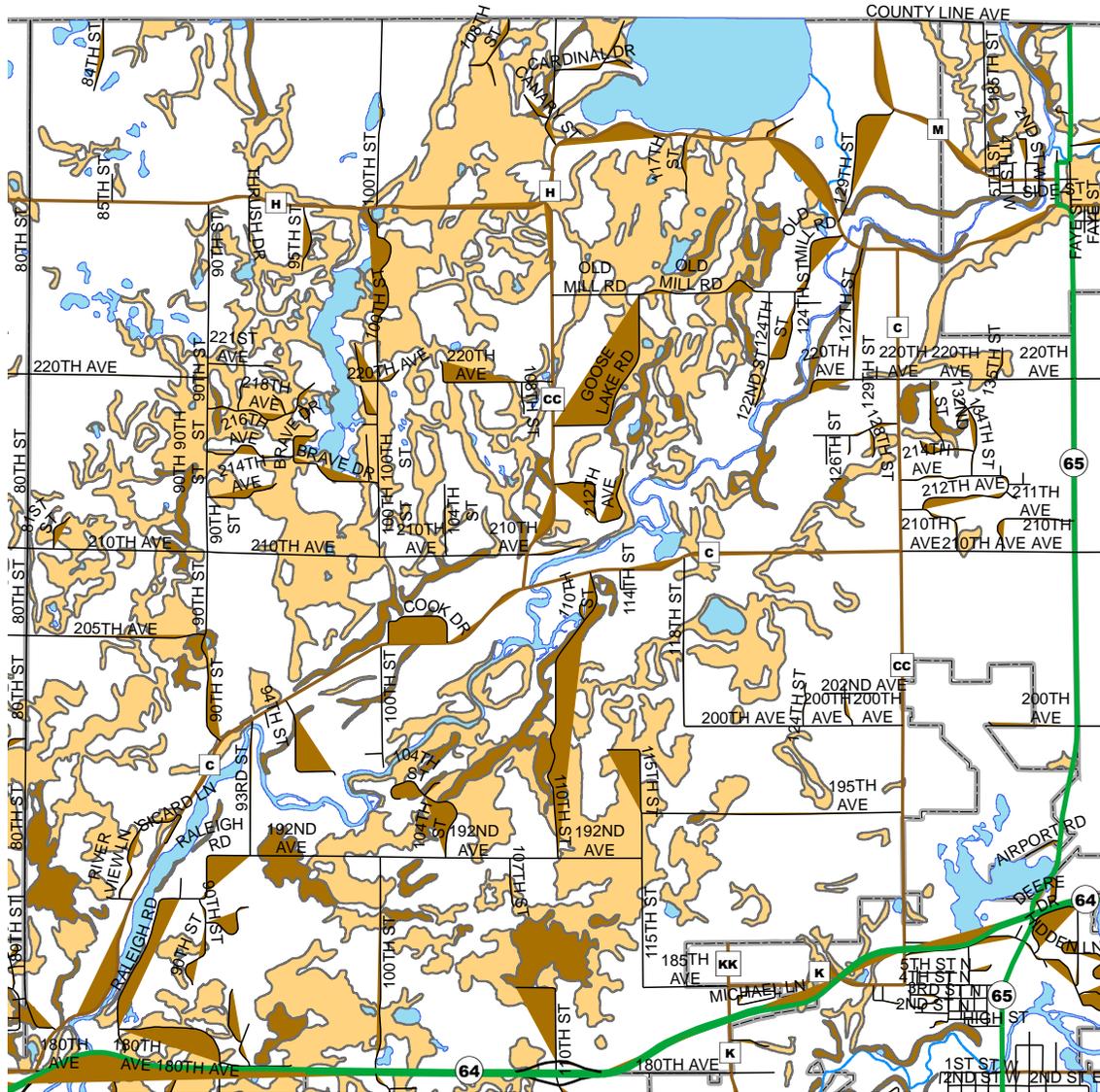
Woodlands should be protected from conversion to other uses. Woodlands managed according to approved forest management practices can support varying and sometimes complementary objectives, such as timber production or wildlife habitat. On the other hand, strict preservation of a woodland would be unusual and reserved for the most rare and unique stands in the county, if they even exist. Pine plantations, which are cultivated and managed, offer little in the way of natural habitat. However, they are important in providing wood products, windbreaks and erosion control.

Development can destroy a woodland's capacity to provide wood products, habitat for a variety of plants and animals, and scenic beauty. Because of their value for habitat, production and scenery, woodlands should be protected from conversion to other uses. Considerations for open space when development occurs can accomplish the preservation of woodland values while managing how that development occurs.

The Woodlands of the Town of Star Prairie are depicted in Map 18 below.

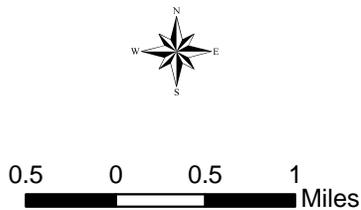
Steep Slopes TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE

Map 17



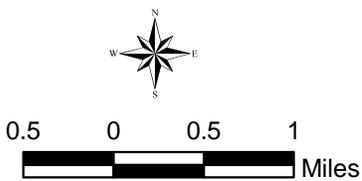
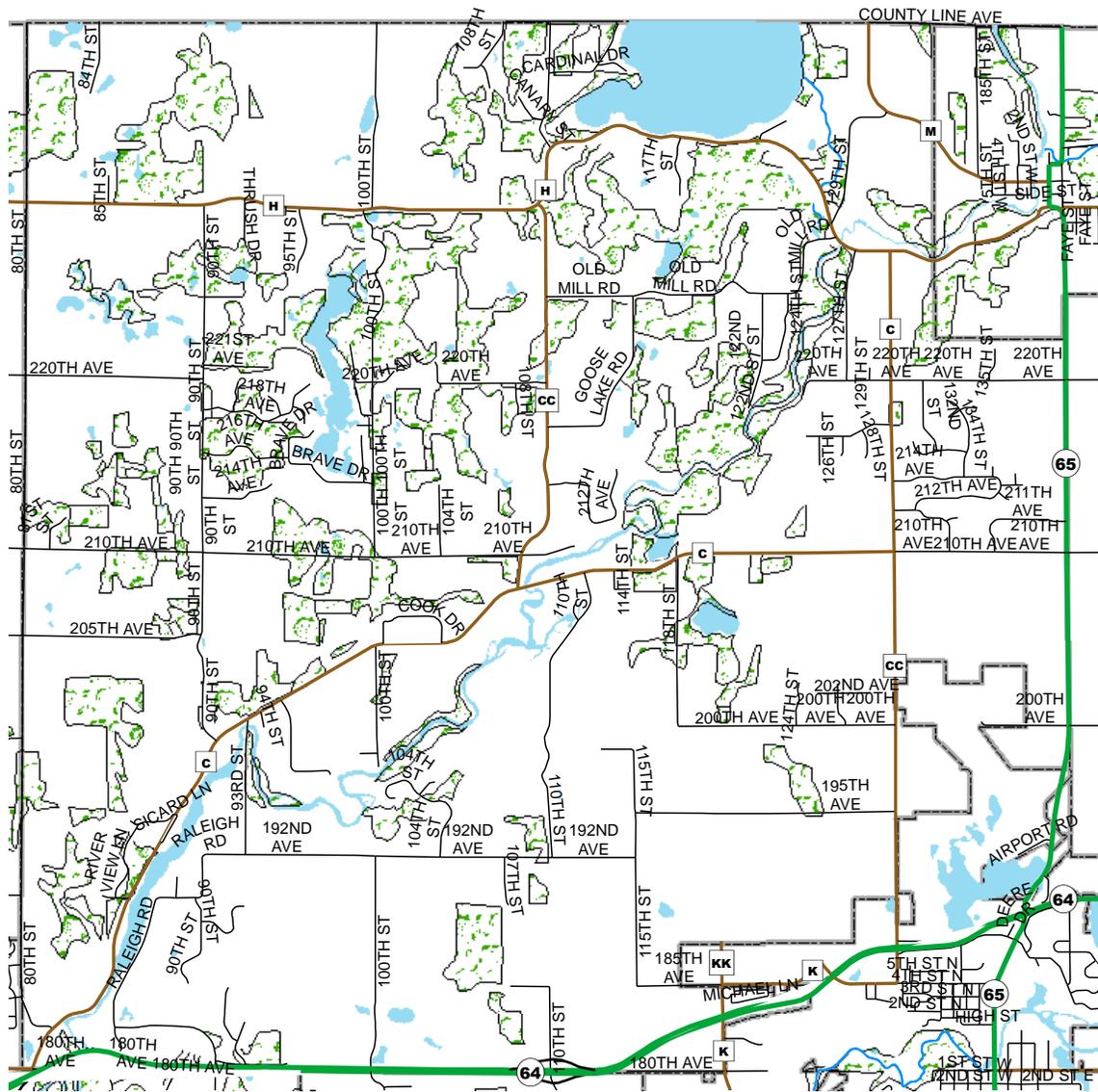
Legend

- 12% to 20% Slope
- > 20% Slope
- Rivers & Lakes



SOURCE: NRCS, 1995 St. Croix County Soil Survey.

Woodlands TOWN OF STAR PRAIRIE



Legend

- Woodlands
- Rivers & Lakes

SOURCE: Minnesota/Wisconsin Area Boundary Commission. (1973 SCS & 1991 Aerial Photography)

PRAIRIE AND OTHER GRASSLANDS

The majority of the Town of Star Prairie was originally covered by prairie, most of which does not remain today. Prairie is the term used to describe the grassland type that predominated in Wisconsin prior to Euro-American settlement. Prairies, which are dominated by grasses and forbs (flowers), lack trees and tall shrubs, and are home to a rich variety of plants and animals. The grasses and forbs create a very diverse environment that not only supports the many birds etc. that we can see in prairies but also a tremendous diversity of insects/invertebrates that contribute to the diversity higher up the food chain. Within the prairie designation there are variations due to soils and climate.

The drastic changes in prairie habitat over the past 150 years have had negative impacts on many plants and animals because of direct loss of the ecosystem and indirect impacts due to fragmentation of remaining parcels from development and related disturbances. Prairies continue to be a threatened plant community in Wisconsin, as only about 13,000 acres (0.5 percent) of the original 3.1 million acres remain. The decimation of prairie in Wisconsin means that an estimated 20 percent of the original grassland plants are considered rare in the state. Many other species of Wisconsin's prairie plants are endangered, threatened or of special concern, and two are known to no longer exist in the state. Many grassland birds face similar circumstances as indicated by a growing list of special concern species and the declining numbers of birds once considered common in the state, such as several species of sparrows and the meadowlark.

Although the majority of prairie mammals have been able to adapt to the loss of prairie habitat, some are no longer present in the state, some are of special concern and there are others that will most likely not adapt to continuing changes in agricultural practices and land use. Prairie-associated reptiles and amphibians have been affected as well. About half have apparently adapted to the loss of prairie, while three reptiles are on the state's endangered species list. One is listed as threatened, and two are of special concern. Little is known about the invertebrates of Wisconsin's native prairies. Indeed, there are probably many grassland insects that are extinct, no longer found in the state, or have not yet been discovered.

Degraded areas that were once prairie can often be restored with moderate effort to yield a habitat suitable for most of the associated plant and animal species. Even certain managed agricultural and livestock practices can accommodate the maintenance of the open habitats needed by many grassland species. Historically, prairies were naturally maintained by frequent fires that swept across the landscape. Today, human development and suppression of fire has created a need for prescribed burns to maintain these habitats for wildlife.

Grasslands can be restored and maintained through preserving a certain amount of open space for this type of cover as development occurs. It is estimated that restoration of a minimum of three percent to four percent of the original prairie acreage may be required to maintain the biodiversity of grassland ecosystems. Hence, development can occur in such a way that it can maintain sufficient grasslands for its habitat value while preserving the rural character of the landscape.

The scarcity of native prairie makes any further loss to development, critical. [The Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area \(WPHRA\) was established by local citizens and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources \(WDNR\) to protect and restore 20,000 acres of grassland, prairie and wetlands in western St. Croix and SW Polk counties. The WDNR will buy land or easements from willing sellers, as well as accept donated lands, to fulfill the habitat needs of grassland wildlife. Lands acquired under this program will remain on the tax roles to provide state revenues to local towns and counties.](#)

OAK SAVANNA

Portions of the Town of Star Prairie were originally covered by oak savanna. Only scant remnants of the complete ecosystem exist today. Oak savanna is the ecosystem that historically was a part of a larger complex bordered by the prairies of the west and the forests of the east. Savannas, considered to be the middle of the continuum between prairie and forest, were a mosaic of plant types maintained by wildfire and possibly large ungulates such as bison and elk.

Oak savanna was home to an abundant variety of plants and animals, and was probably optimum habitat for many game species, as well as songbirds. However, presently oak savanna is one of the most threatened plant communities in the world. In Wisconsin, less than 500 acres is listed in Wisconsin's Natural Heritage Inventory as having a mix of plants similar to an original oak savanna.

Any identified oak savanna remnants should be protected. There has been no inventory of oak savanna remnants in St. Croix County. However, some of the identified grasslands have the potential for savanna restoration by the Department of Natural Resources and conservation groups. Certain marginal agricultural lands which were once oak savanna can be restored economically and often still accommodate light to moderate cattle grazing.

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES HABITAT OR AREAS

All existing federal, state and local wildlife and fisheries areas, including private conservancy areas are mapped. These areas are managed to provide important feeding, breeding, nesting, cover and other habitat values to a wide variety of plant and animal species. They also provide a recreational and open space function to local communities.

There are two large U.S. Fish and Wildlife Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA) located in the Town of Star Prairie. Prairie Flats North WPA is 220 acres in sections 5, 6 and 8. Prairie Flats South WPA is 320 acres in section 7. Both are a complex of wetlands and restored native prairie that provides habitat for many species of wildlife including mallards, blue-winged teal, wood ducks, hooded mergansers, trumpeter swans, Henslow's sparrows, bobolinks, meadowlarks, sandhill cranes, deer and wild turkey. Many other species of wildlife also benefit from these WPAs. WPA lands are purchased with duck stamp dollars and therefore the primary purpose is to provide waterfowl production habitat which consists of large tracks of grassland interspersed with numerous wetlands. Management on WPAs includes ongoing wetland and prairie restoration, water level manipulation, prescribed fire, tree removal, mowing and sometimes grazing. They are open to the public for hunting, fishing, environmental education and interpretation, and wildlife observation and photography. Motorized vehicles, mountain bikes and horses are not allowed in WPAs.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has identified additional sites that may be considered for protection based on the presence of native prairie, the distribution of wetlands and grasslands and the need for additional habitat. In the Town of Star Prairie those additional sites could be in sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 18. Additional sites identified were along the Apple River corridor such as Louie Lake and the Apple River wetlands in sections 15, 21 and 22.

The WDNR also identified additional sites that should be considered for protection based on the presence of native prairie, the distribution of wetlands and areas important to fish habitat and water quality. Those additional sites included: Louie Lake and the Apple River wetlands in sections 15, 21 and 22, Strand Lake in sections 22 and 23, Apple River tributary in section 14, and wetlands along 110th Street in section 27.

NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC AREAS

All existing federal, state and local natural and scientific areas are mapped. The WDNR, Bureau of Endangered Resources conducts data searches for natural and scientific areas of national, state or local significance. The Bureau urges special notice be taken to protect any and all natural or scientific areas from development.

RARE OR ENDANGERED SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES

Rare or endangered species and communities are very sensitive to certain kinds of encroachment in their surroundings. Development on or near the locations of rare or endangered species can further threaten their status and survival.

The WDNR, Bureau of Endangered Resources conducts data searches for endangered plants and animals. The Bureau urges special notice be taken to protect any and all endangered resources from development. To protect them from disturbance, the exact locations of the endangered resources can only be used for analysis and review purposes. Therefore, these locations will be incorporated as environmental resources, but will not be specifically revealed.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

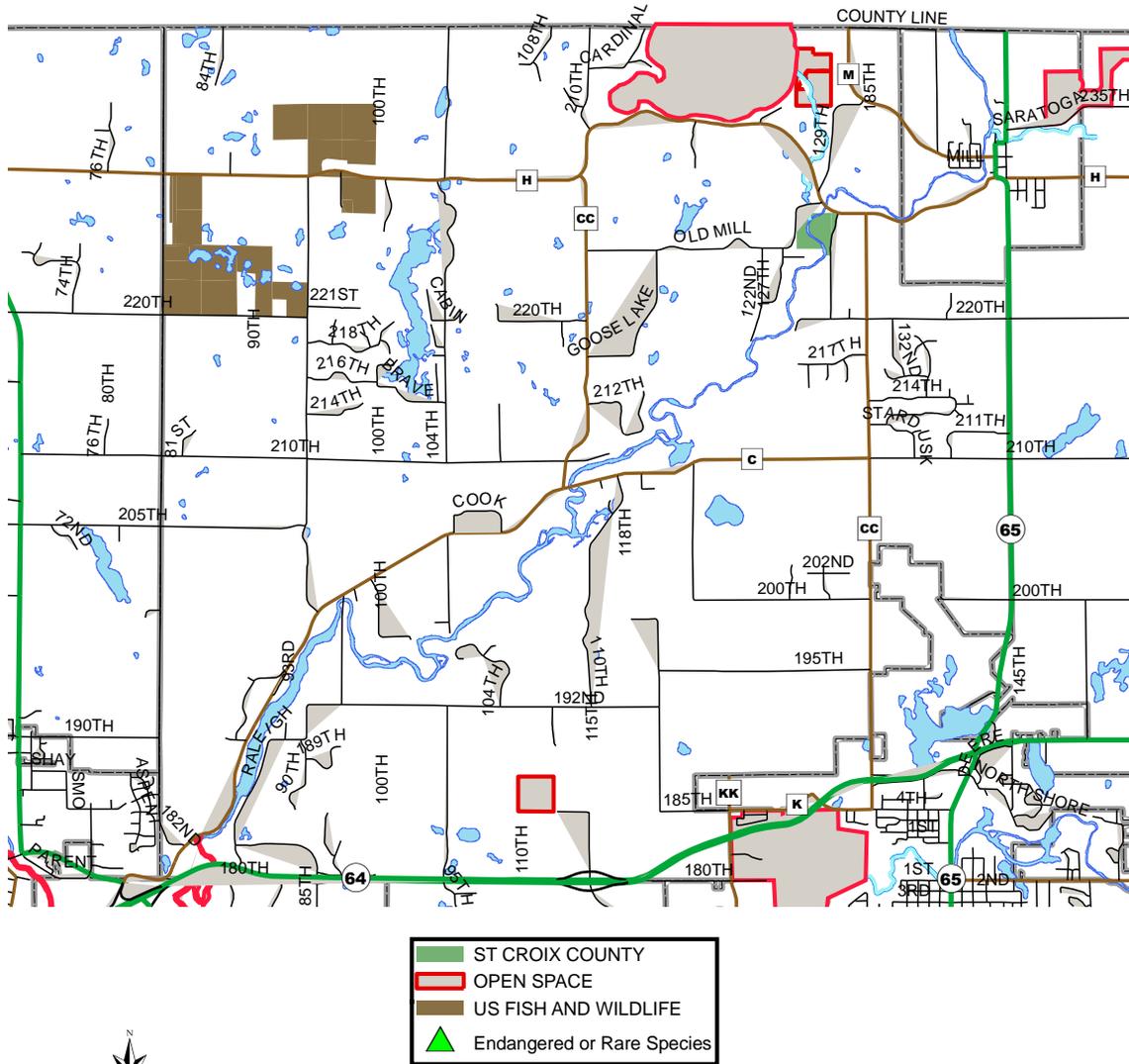
Recreation and open space areas provide natural resource based recreation, open space and scenic amenities. They also are valuable to preserve unique physical features, certain plant communities and quality wildlife habitat for natural interpretation. Natural resource based outdoor recreation, park, open space and scenic areas are designated for low intensity uses. The uses do not include golf courses, ball diamonds, soccer fields, high intensity or service campgrounds, etc., as these uses are better suited to previously disturbed uplands which can be converted.

There are several recreation and open space sites in the Town of Star Prairie. St. Croix County owns and maintains the Apple River Property in section 11 for passive recreation. The site includes shoreline fishing, trails, canoe access and parking. There is an easement for a 15-foot wide walking trail from the Apple River Property north along Cedar Creek through Vern Nelson's former property. The County Parks Department hopes to work with the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to expand the easement along Cedar Creek and someday connect the County's Apple River Property to the McMurtrie Preserve.

The Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust owns and maintains the South Cedar Bay Landing on Cedar Lake in section 3 and the McMurtrie Preserve in section 2. The landing provides canoe access to Cedar Lake, benches, picnic tables and limited parking. The Land Trust is in the process of improving the access to the McMurtrie Preserve and will provide trails, a pavilion, toilet facilities and parking lot. The site will be open to the public for educational purposes. The Land Trust is in the process of acquiring approximately 40 acres from the New Richmond Archery Club in section 33.

The Fisheries; Wildlife Areas; Rare and Endangered Resources; and Recreation, Scenic and Open Space Areas of the Town of Star Prairie are shown on the map below.

Star Prairie Fisheries, Wildlife Areas, Rare and Endangered Resources Recreation, Scenic and Open Space Areas



SOURCE: DNR \ US Fish and Wildlife Service \ St. Croix County

THE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Several of the previously described resources are involved in the impacts of development on surface water quality and quantity. Lakes, Ponds, Rivers, Streams, and Intermittent Waterways and Natural Drainageways; Wetlands; Shorelands; Floodplains; Steep Slopes; and, Wildlife and Fisheries Areas are directly affected by surface water impacts.

Urbanization, development and other human activities disrupt the natural course of water as it moves across a watershed. Removing vegetation and constructing impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, driveways, sidewalks, rooftops and to some extent lawns greatly increases the amount and rate of stormwater runoff. As this increased stormwater runoff crosses the urbanized or developed landscape it also picks up contaminants and sediments which affect water quality.

In rivers and streams the changes brought by development are: increased water level fluctuations manifested by lower base flow and increased stormwater flow which can lead to flooding; decreased oxygen levels; increased water temperatures; greater channel erosion; muddying of waters from increased sediment; and, pollution from fertilizers, pesticides, debris, salt, oil, grease and toxic substances. In effect, urbanization and development can turn a clear, cool, brisk-running trout stream, which does not breach its banks every spring into a muddy, warm, slow-moving stream which swells over its embankment with every heavy rain.

Lakes, ponds and reservoirs can also be impacted by development. All lakes decline in water quality over time if left in their natural state. However, development can accelerate the decline in lake water quality, so what once took thousands of years can occur in decades. As with rivers and streams, the detrimental impacts from development to lakes are caused by stormwater runoff, erosion and pollution.

Shorelands and the vegetation they contain are the natural buffer which helps protect surface waters from overland runoff and contaminants. If they are disturbed their ability to slow runoff and filter contaminants is reduced. Shoreland is also critical habitat for a variety of plants and animals and preserves the aesthetic quality of water bodies if left undisturbed.

Development within areas that are prone to flooding can cause adverse impacts on not only the waterway but also on the development itself. Altering the floodplain landscape by filling or building levees or structures can exacerbate flooding conditions. The filling of wetlands in floodprone areas has been proven to increase the likelihood of flooding. These alterations divert water from where it once flowed or was stored in during spring runoff or storm events, which usually increases the area of the floodplain. The accumulation of development in floodplains can cause more severe flooding in other areas within the floodplain or newly created floodplain. In addition, development within floodplains is always subject to damage from flooding.

Development on steep slopes causes erosion by introducing impervious surfaces to areas where water does not infiltrate readily. Increased erosion impacts surface waters by increasing runoff quantity and the sediment it carries. Development on these slopes results in high construction costs as special construction techniques must be employed for structures, hillsides are cut and filled and attempts are made to stabilize hillsides through building terracing. Terraces may appear to stabilize these slopes, but if they are not rigorously maintained the forces of gravity and water eventually deteriorate them.

ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS

Environmental corridors are significant areas of environmental resources characterized by continuous systems of open space, physical features, environmentally sensitive lands and natural or cultural resources which can be adversely impacted by development. These areas are often evident to people in the area and they identify with them as significant natural areas in their surroundings. Independent resources are non-continuous open space, physical features, environmentally sensitive lands and natural or cultural resources that also can be adversely impacted by development.

The adverse impacts caused by development in these areas can create undue costs on society in the attempt to alleviate those problems. Managing development in these areas either eliminates or reduces the adverse impacts from development. Management cannot overcome the impacts of developing in some of these areas, and in those areas it is prudent to prohibit development. In managing the development in those areas that can accommodate it, the costs associated with the adverse impacts of development can be shifted from society as a whole to those who choose to develop in them. This is accomplished by ensuring development occurs using engineering, site design, construction and management practices that address potential adverse impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR CRITERIA

This system of identifying environmental corridors was developed as part of the St. Croix County Development Management Plan. The system was created with a great deal of input and consideration from similar systems in the state. It is a way to inventory and organize environmental features. The environmental corridors incorporate the following environmental and historical resources: Lakes, Ponds, Rivers, Streams, and Intermittent Waterways and Natural Drainageways; Wetlands; Shorelands; Floodplains; Steep Slopes; Geologic Formations and Physiographic Features; Highly Erodible Soils; Wet, Poorly Drained Organic Soils; Closed Depressions; Wellhead Protection Areas; Woodlands; Prairie; Rare or Endangered Species and Communities; Historical and Archeological Sites; and, Scenic Areas.

The following are the criteria used to designate environmental corridors and resources:

PRIMARY ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR

- Linear in nature, often arising from a dominant feature or focal point, such as a waterbody or geologic feature
- At least three environmental resources present
- At least 400 acres in size
- At least two miles long
- At least 200 feet wide

SECONDARY ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR

- At least two environmental resources present
- At least 100 acres in size
- Approximately one mile long or longer
- No minimum width

INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

- At least one valued resource present
- No minimum size

- Separated from environmental corridors by intervening land or small, narrow features abutting environmental corridors

The Primary Environmental Corridors of the Town of Star Prairie are depicted in Map 22 below. The Primary Environmental Corridors map identifies the areas in the towns with the most significant environmental features. Town residents are most likely to identify these areas as significant environmental areas.

There are environmental resources throughout the town, not just in primary environmental corridors, which should be considered when determining the impacts of development.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Non-native species from other regions and continents displace native species, disrupt ecosystems, hamper boating and harm recreational activities such as fishing and hiking. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has identified invasive species and documented the harm they cause to commercial, agricultural, and aquaculture resources on their web pages: <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/>.

Because they lack the predators and competitors they faced in their homelands, invasive species can spread rapidly and aggressively. Controlling invasive species is difficult and getting rid of them is often impossible. Human prevention of the spread of invasive species is critical, since humans often unwittingly introduce them to their favorite waters and lands.

Invasives like knapweed, leafy spurge and buckthorn are not good for wildlife and they also have negative impacts on agriculture - for example spotted knapweed (the pretty purple flower found along roadways) and leafy spurge can have a very detrimental effect on the quality of grazing land.

Some industries negatively affected by invasive species include sport and commercial fishing, forestry, and raw water users (power companies and utilities). These expenses are passed on to consumers (for example, in the form of higher water and electric bills). Invasive shrubs such as buckthorn and honeysuckle prevent the regeneration of young trees, causing a long term but very serious impact on forestry. Control of buckthorn alone has been estimated at \$500-\$2,000 per acre over multiple years.

Zebra mussels and Eurasian water milfoil have altered the environment of many waterways. Tiny zebra mussels - with huge appetites for microscopic plants and animals - rapidly reproduce and through their large numbers are capable of severely altering their environment by reducing the food supply for native organisms and by enhancing conditions for the rapid growth of blue-green algae and aquatic vegetation. Eurasian water milfoil chokes out plants needed by native fish and can clog boat motors.

In woodlands, garlic mustard can completely cover the ground with first- and second-year plants in a matter of years. This European garden herb not only steals most light and nutrient resources from native wildflowers, it is also thought to secrete a chemical into the soil that inhibits growth of other plants.

There are also health risks associated with invasive species. The sharp zebra mussel shells can cut the feet of unsuspecting swimmers and waders. Simply rubbing against wild parsnip with bare skin can cause burned and blistering arms and legs. This roadside and grassland invasive is spreading rapidly in Wisconsin, but few people know of its dangerous impacts.

PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

While some invasives are here to stay and the only solutions are manual or biological control, others can be prevented. Here are things you can do:

Boaters, Sailors, Anglers & Paddlers

- Inspect your boat, trailer and equipment and remove visible aquatic plants, animals and mud.
- Drain water from your boat, motor, bilge, live wells and bait containers.
- Dispose of leftover bait in the trash, not in the water or on land. Never move live fish, including minnows, from one water to another.
- Buy your minnows from licensed Wisconsin bait dealers or catch your own and use it to fish the water you caught it from.
- Wash your boat and equipment with high pressure or hot water, OR let it dry for 5 days

Campers

- Leave firewood at home. Buy it within a 50-mile radius of your campsite.
- Burn all wood during your trip.
- Inspect clothing and equipment for seeds, insects, etc. before leaving your camping area.

Landowners & Gardeners

- Use native plant species whenever possible.
- Dispose of seeds in the trash.
- Be on the lookout for invasive species. Identify and report populations of target weed species identified by WDNR.
- Respond aggressively to rid your land of new invasive species.
- Leave native trees and plants alone; natural landscapes offer the best defense.
- Eliminate or contain populations before they spread.
- Coordinate long-term monitoring of occurrence sites.
- Become a Wisconsin Weed Watcher and join Wisconsin landowners, sport & recreation enthusiasts, naturalists, park employees, educators, gardeners, resource professionals and other citizens as they help nip new plant invasions in the bud.

Hikers, Bikers, ATV Riders & Other Recreational Users

- Clean your clothes, bicycles, ATV's, etc before leaving a site that is infested with invasive plants.

COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

1. Guide the location and design of development to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands, prairie and agriculture.
2. Preserve and protect natural landscape features such as wetlands, floodplains, streams, lakes, steep slopes, woodlands, prairies and oak savannas as essential components of the hydrologic system, valuable wildlife habitat, to restore degraded resources where possible and to emphasize their value to the community as potential focal points of natural beauty and recreation.
3. Discourage and where possible, prevent the altering of wetlands and floodplains by filling or developing.



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

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



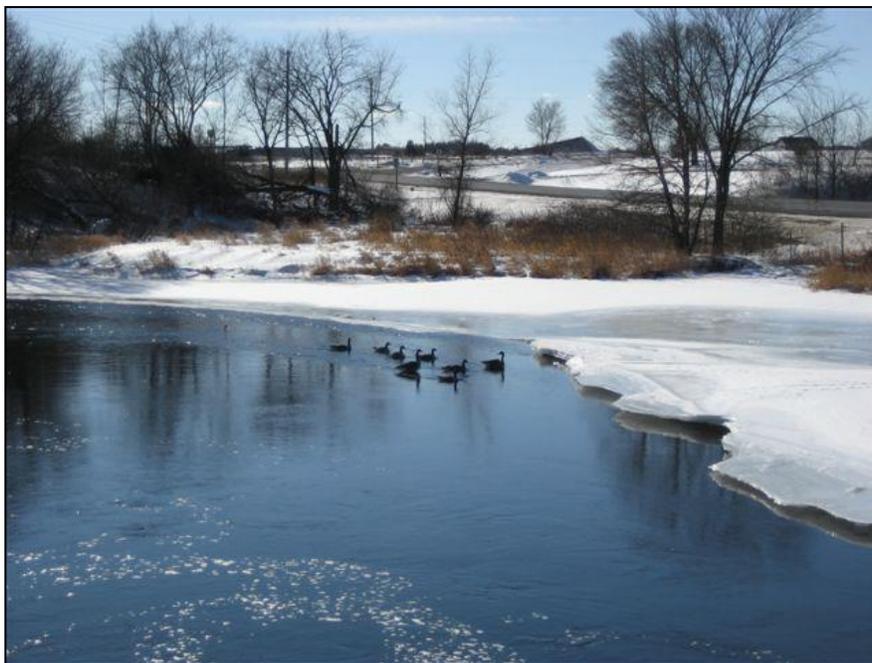
Cedar Lake is also an important natural resource the Town plans to preserve and restore. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

10. Protect and restore natural shoreline areas in the town.
11. Encourage natural landscaping, especially along shorelines, utilizing native plant species and minimizing turf to protect and enhance surface and groundwater quality.
12. Promote the proper placement of new on-site wastewater systems and appropriate maintenance and replacement of older systems as a means to

protect ground-water quality.

13. Consider protection and enhancement of sensitive natural resources, open and recreational space, large blocks of forestland and scenic vistas when reviewing development proposals and making public expenditures.
14. Support the continued identification and protection of key natural resources in Star Prairie.
15. Encourage the County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.
16. Encourage and support a buffer zone around public lands to mitigate conflicts between property owners and citizens utilizing public lands for recreation. Such a zone could be created with a principal structure setback of 150 feet from the lot line on properties adjacent to publicly-owned lands.
17. Coordinate and work with other governmental and private agencies such as the Squaw Lake Management District, Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, WDNR, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and U.S.

- Fish & Wildlife Service to protect natural resources, especially those that cross political boundaries such as rivers.
18. Support and work with the county on slope disturbance standards. Development should only be allowed on steep slopes with a grade from 12 to 20 percent where best management practices for erosion and sediment control and storm water management can be implemented successfully.
 19. Direct proposed development in areas where soil characteristics are compatible with the proposed development.
 20. Promote development and agricultural practices, which protect surface and ground water quality, including proper erosion control, manure management and storm water management strategies.
 21. Encourage conservation design development for sites with unique or exceptional natural resources such as surface water, wetlands, steep slopes or highly productive agricultural soils.
 22. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.
 23. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.



Scenic countryside in Star Prairie. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

HISTORIC RESOURCES

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

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

- The old Town Hall, also known as the Riverview School, Johannesburg, built in 1923, CTHs C and CC, Section 21.
- Oakland Cemetery, platted in 1893, CTH CC, Section 13.
- Cemetery at the St. Croix County Health Center, CTH K, Section 35.
- Unnamed Gravesite, Section 25.
- Phillips' Graves, Section 36.
- Rivard Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 31.
- Maitrejean Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 30.
- SCA and other Unnamed Historic and Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 25.
- Orville Mosher Collection Prehistoric Campsite/village, Sections 8, 9 & 36
- Riverdale Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 30.
- Unnamed Site Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 11.
- Unnamed Site Prehistoric and Woodland Campsite/village, Sections 2 & 3.
- Airport Fill, Prehistoric Campsite/village, Section 25.
- Hatfield Park, Prehistoric and historic Campsite/village, Section 36.
- Possible Indian Mound and Prehistoric Campsite/village around Strand Lake, Section 23.
- Riverdale Dam Powerhouse on Riverdale Flowage, CTH C, Section 31.
- Huntingdon dam structure footings & remnants located on the Apple River, St. Croix County's Apple River County Park Property, Section 11.
- McClure dam structure footings & remnants located on the Apple River, Harlan Vehrs & Leon Orr properties, Section 14.

- Campbell's Mill structure footings & remnants located near the flume and behind the Cedar Creek Inn on Cedar Creek, Section 11.
- Pamela & Bruce Emerson Century Farm, 2087 CTH CC, established 1889, 118 years, Section 24.
- Lyle and Ruth Halvorson Century Farm, 1987 93rd Street, established 1881, 126 years, Section 29.
- Ron Engh Barn, site of first Barn Art Fair.
- Squaw Lake School, now a single-family home, Section 9.
- First School in Star Prairie, now the Genevieve Francois Farm Granary, Section 23.
- Wall Street School, now a single-family home known as the Berget House, Section 23.
- Riverdale School, now a single-family home, Section 29.
- Gerald Backes Windmill & Farmstead, 110th St., Section 28.
- Doug Rivard Farmstead, Polk/St. Croix Road, Section 4.
- Jeff Levy & MaryEllen Stewart House & Farmstead, 110th St., Section 21.
- Genevieve Francois House & Farmstead, CTH CC, Section 23.
- Bob & Alice Talmage Windmill, 118th St., Section 18.
- Harlan Vehrs Windmill, CTH C, Section 14.

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

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

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

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

HISTORIC RESOURCE PROGRAMS

Once resources are identified, they can be protected through a variety of techniques. One option is listing in the National Register of Historic Places and/or the State Register of Historic Places programs. There are several benefits that come with being listed, such as eligibility for state and federal income tax credits for rehabilitation, use of a special historic building code and protective negotiations when government-funded or assisted projects (i.e. roads) threaten the resources. They can also be valued elements in tourism.

The "Barn Again!" program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Successful Farming magazine has been a successful and visible program for recognizing, rewarding and encouraging the preservation of historic farm buildings.

Another popular program, the Barns Preservation Initiative, to help owners rehabilitate and preserve Wisconsin's barns was begun in 1994 by the Wisconsin Historical Society, the University of Wisconsin

Extension and the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation. This program recognizes the importance of the state's agricultural heritage as embodied in barns, farmhouses, outbuildings and landscapes and has initiated steps to help owners and organizations to preserve and reuse those cultural resources. Workshops that address the preservation of barns have been conducted, informational and technical materials have been prepared, and plans to make additional resources available and to address other rural preservation topics are underway.

Star Prairie can continue to promote the community's farming heritage by supporting local festivals, fairs, markets, farm tours or farm breakfasts.

SCENIC RESOURCES

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

**Scenic Resources
Town of Star Prairie**

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

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

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

SCENIC RESOURCE PROGRAMS

One technique for preservation of scenic views is to require a viewshed analysis at the time of development. Amendments to the community's subdivision ordinance would be necessary. A viewshed analysis would identify the places from where the new development could be seen from other locations and the impact of the view that would result if development occurred in the manner proposed. New development should be designed, located and landscaped in a manner that does not detract from these scenic views.

A second technique for preservation of scenic views is the state and federal "rustic road" and "scenic byway" programs to preserve and celebrate particularly scenic road corridors. State "rustic roads" designations would be best suited for scenic town roads. To qualify, a roadway must be substantially undeveloped and have outstanding natural features, including native vegetation, abundant wildlife, open areas or agricultural vistas that make the area unique. The federal "scenic byway" program may be best suited for state or county highways. The town should work with the county to explore possibilities, advantages and disadvantages of these programs.

CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

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

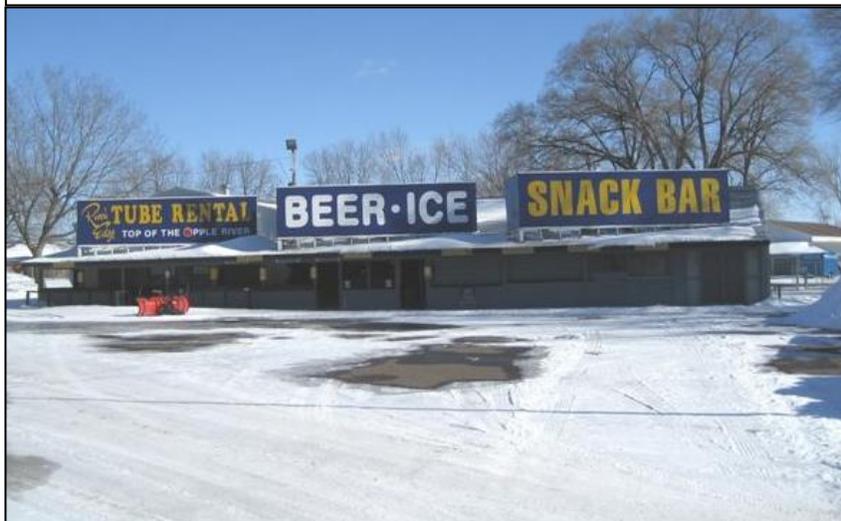


Star Prairie's Old Town Hall on the Apple River near Johannesburg is an important cultural resource for the town. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

8. Support local festivals, fairs, farm tours, farm breakfasts and markets that celebrate the town's farming heritage and rural way of life.
9. Encourage events that promote the town's historical past and rural heritage.
10. Support the New Richmond Preservation Society as a local repository for historical materials; also encourage residents to donate items to the historic materials repository that the society maintains.
11. Support the designation of 110th Street and Old Mill Road as rustic roads to be added to the state's rustic road system.



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



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Intergovernmental communication, coordination and cooperation can make a significant difference in the implementation and administration of a comprehensive plan. Intergovernmental cooperation can be developed over time. This section explores the relationships between the Town of Star Prairie and other municipalities, agencies and others; identifies existing and potential conflicts and offers processes to resolve conflicts and build cooperative relationships.

EXISTING INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

ST. CROIX COUNTY

The relationship with St. Croix County is one of the most important intergovernmental relationships the Town of Star Prairie has at this time.

- The Town of Star Prairie adopted County Zoning on October 7, 1975 and shares that responsibility with the County. The Town relies on county staff reports to provide information about zoning change requests, ordinance interpretations, special exceptions, variances and ongoing enforcement.
- Star Prairie relies on the County Land Division ordinance for regulation of new development.
- County ordinances regulate shoreland, floodplain, sanitary, non-metallic mining and animal waste in the Town of Star Prairie.
- In 2000, St. Croix County adopted a county-wide Development Management Plan. The county plan is a broad-based planning framework which addresses county-wide issues but also recommends, as part of its implementation program, that each town develop a local plan. The County Plan commits the county to work with the towns to coordinate and develop consistent goals and policies for comprehensive planning. The County Plan provides basic guidance on land uses and encourages the towns to further refine and expand upon that guidance. Throughout the goals, objectives, policies and implementation program of the County Plan, there are strong incentives that encourage towns to develop local plans. Once those local plans are developed it is the county's intent to adopt those plans and work with the towns to implement them through the county's zoning and land division ordinances. The county is in the process of updating its plan.
- The town works with the Planning and Zoning and Land and Water Conservation departments in the review and approval of proposed subdivisions and in water quality education, monitoring and testing.
- St. Croix County is the Responsible Unit for recycling. The town works with the County Recycling Specialist in the provision of special collection events for town residents.
- The St. Croix County sheriff provides law enforcement service to the Town. The town contracts with the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department for a satellite law enforcement office to encourage better service and response times for town residents.
- Public health care services are provided by the St. Croix County Health and Human Service Department.
- The St. Croix County Highway Department provides assistance with street and road maintenance.

- The town of Star Prairie's and City of New Richmond's bike/trail plans have been incorporated into the county's bike and trail plans. Also, the town works with the St. Croix County Parks Department in the management of recreation facilities such as the Squaw Lake boat landing.

Existing Conflicts

Existing conflicts between the town and county are primarily over the enforcement of County zoning, zoning changes and how zoning is administered. The intent of the Land Use Element of this plan is to make clear the town's policies regarding zoning changes.

Potential Conflicts

One potential conflict is the interpretation of the Town's policies regarding rezoning. Another potential conflict is any difference in Town and County subdivision ordinances. The town's subdivision ordinance may have a different minimum lot size while the county has two-acre average and one and a half acre minimum lot size. Generally, a town's ordinance is the applicable standard because it is more restrictive. As a result of this plan, the town will likely be implementing a new subdivision ordinance, which should remove many of the potential conflicts. The County has adopted conservation design development as part of its subdivision and zoning ordinances allowing smaller lot sizes and clustering to preserve open space. The town may consider allowing conservation design as part of its subdivision ordinance also.

Conflict Resolution

The town and county would hold joint meetings and negotiations to resolve conflicts. The Town of Star Prairie can continue to rely on county zoning staff reports for information about zoning change requests.

CITY OF NEW RICHMOND

The relationship with the City of New Richmond is the also one of the most important intergovernmental relationships the Town of Star Prairie has at this time. The City of New Richmond adopted a new Comprehensive Plan in 2005. The City has experienced several boundary expansions in recent years. Annexation, plat review and zoning can all be contentious at municipal boundaries.

The Town of Star Prairie and City of New Richmond work together on several shared services.

- The Town of Star Prairie is part-owner of the New Richmond Ambulance and Fire Service.
- The town contracts with the City of New Richmond to use its recycling drop-off center.
- The town has contributed funds to park development in New Richmond and several youth recreation programs.
- The city worked with the town to develop an official map for road expansions and improvements and for a future trail system that will serve city and town residents.
- The city and town have entered into an agreement to provide city water service to town residents with contaminated water and within an identified jurisdictional boundary area, Town of Star Prairie Water District #1, please see the Future Land Use section page 235.
- The town and city have negotiated a boundary annexation agreement known as City of New Richmond/Town of Star Prairie Cooperative Plan, dated August 2012 to establish a 40-year growth boundary between the City of New Richmond and the Town of Star Prairie.
- A town resident, recommended by the Town Board, serves on the New Richmond Airport Commission.

The town, along with the City of New Richmond, the New Richmond School District and the other three towns around the City, participate in Frontporch, a local project sponsored by the New Richmond Foundation to improve intergovernmental relations between government jurisdictions. This group is talking about a multi-jurisdictional park system and an area library system.

Existing Conflicts

In 2005, New Richmond adopted changes to its subdivision ordinances which regulate the density of plats in the extraterritorial plat review jurisdiction of the city. These regulations have caused conflicts with property owners who wish to develop at higher densities than allowed by the city ordinance. The town board is concerned about the extent of these regulations and their affect on local property owners and hopes the boundary and annexation agreement will resolve some of these concerns. A 2010 amendment to Wisconsin Statute Chapter 236, the state platting law, changes city and village authority to deny plats based on the proposed use of the land. This amendment's impact on New Richmond's subdivision ordinance and the regulation of extraterritorial plats will also help resolve the conflict.

Potential Conflicts

The City of New Richmond has developed an airport land use ordinance that could affect a significant amount of land and residents in Star Prairie. The town board is hopeful that having a town resident on the Airport Commission will improve communication and provide opportunity for town input.

Conflict Resolution

The town and city have found intergovernmental cooperation to be beneficial and fiscally responsible to all their residents. This aspect of their relationship has been positive and is not anticipated to change during the timeframe of this plan. As conflicts occur between the Town and City they will continue with meetings, such as those sponsored by Frontporch, to discuss and negotiate solutions.

VILLAGE OF SOMERSET

The Town of Star Prairie and Village of Somerset have historically worked well together to manage common road jurisdiction and maintenance concerns. Recently the village hired a facilitator to work with representatives from the village and surrounding towns, including Star Prairie, to plan for road expansion and other future growth and discuss growth and annexation issues. Also the town and village have entered into a mutual aid agreement for fire protection to provide faster fire response to a portion of the town.

There are no existing conflicts between these two communities. Potential conflicts may include extraterritorial zoning and annexation issues along the village and town's common border and road maintenance as a result of village's commercial and industrial traffic circulation. The town and village would hold joint meetings to discuss and negotiate resolutions to any conflicts.

VILLAGE OF STAR PRAIRIE

The Village of Star Prairie has adopted a comprehensive plan. The Town of Star Prairie will share their town plan with the village. No conflicts between the municipalities have been identified at this time. The Town of Star Prairie and the Village of Star Prairie have a good relationship and anticipate that relationship improving during the timeframe of this plan. If there were any conflicts the Town and Village would meet to discuss and negotiate solutions to problems.

SURROUNDING TOWNS

The towns surrounding Star Prairie are in various stages of considering, developing, adopting or implementing comprehensive plans and subdivision ordinances. The towns of Somerset and Stanton

have adopted comprehensive plans. The Town of Richmond is developing a Comprehensive Plan. The towns of Alden and Farmington in Polk County have adopted comprehensive plans.

Conflicting land use policies between adjacent towns can effect land use patterns and have desirable or undesirable effects. The Town of Star Prairie will review neighboring town plans as and will share their town plan with neighboring towns. They will notify neighboring towns when major policy changes occur, and encourage neighboring towns to consider comprehensive planning and develop joint solutions to issues of mutual concern. Star Prairie and the neighboring towns have historically had good cooperation on road construction and maintenance costs and have a good relationship where concerns are discussed and resolved. The town expects this good relationship to continue.

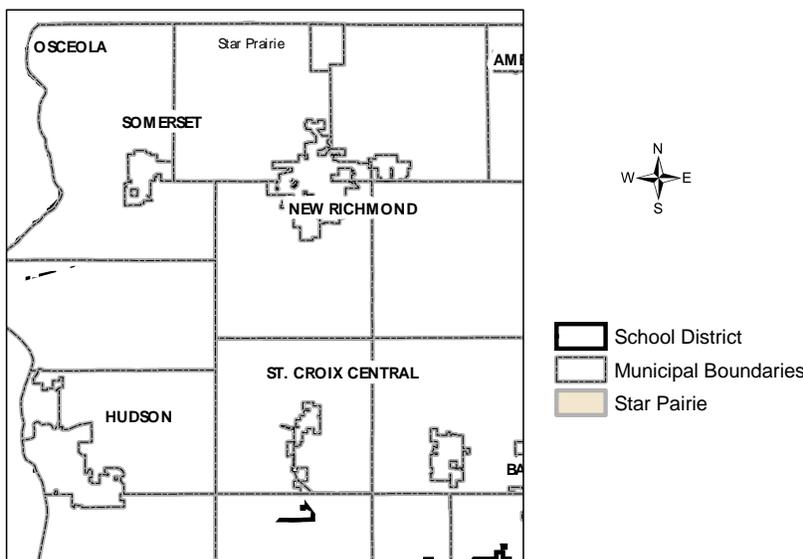
SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Town of Star Prairie is served by three different school districts, New Richmond, Osceola and Somerset, as shown in the map below.

In 2010 and 2011 New Richmond will complete expansion projects for new school facilities to meet growing enrollment. Construction of the new high school will be completed for the 2010-2011 school year and remodeling of the old high school into a middle school will be completed by 2011.

Somerset will need additional capacity in the next five years but expansion plans are on hold due funding costs and concerns. Osceola anticipates it will not need additional facilities in the near future. The school districts and town officials need to stay in contact regarding land use decisions and their impacts on school growth. The Town needs to initiate this communication and make this comprehensive plan available to the school districts. The town should also work with the schools to encourage multiple uses of school facilities for town residents.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS



SOURCE: ST. Croix County Planning and Zoning / Land Information

The town also needs to discuss the impacts of the proposed boundary and annexation agreement on the New Richmond and Somerset school districts. School district boundaries cannot be changed without approval from both school districts and school boards and approval by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The town and city should initiate these discussions when the draft agreement is available for the school district to review.

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) located in Eau Claire serves all of St. Croix County. The WCWRPC provides a variety of services to local governments including preparation of town plans, plan and ordinance amendments and special studies. The Town would continue to work with and support the regional planning commission when applicable.

STATE OF WISCONSIN AGENCIES

Various Wisconsin agencies including UW-Extension, Department Of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Industry Labor Human Relations, Department of Ag Trade & Consumer Protection, Department of Administration, Department of Commerce and others provide services or have land or highways in the Town of Star Prairie. The Town will continue to work with and support these agencies when applicable.

ANNEXATION

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

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

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

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

COOPERATIVE BOUNDARY PLANS & ANNEXATION AGREEMENT

Wisconsin Statute §66.0307 authorizes local municipalities to enter into an agreement that sets a mutual boundary line between the two municipalities upon approval of a cooperative boundary plan by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. Cooperative boundary plans are the most thorough and complete method for developing boundary plans in Wisconsin. They are a valuable tool for local communities and a welcome alternative to lengthy conflicts and litigation over municipal boundary and land use issues.

The Town of Star Prairie and the City of New Richmond adopted by Resolution Nos. 2012-3 and #081202 respectively their cooperative plan, dated August 2012. This Cooperative Plan designates growth areas for the City and protected areas for revenue sharing, and includes detailed arrangements for service provisions.

The Cooperative Plan establishes the timeframe, activities and terms under which land would be attached to the City. It also recognizes a separate Water Service Agreement between the City of New Richmond and the Town of Star Prairie which identifies the terms and conditions under which the City of New Richmond will provide water service to certain residential properties within the Town of Star Prairie, whose water has been contaminated from a closed New Richmond land fill. The Cooperative Plan addresses land use control and zoning, extension of water and/or sanitary sewer service, assessments, fees, highway construction, revenue sharing, police and fire protection, a joint commission to oversee, and other administrative provisions. The area subject to the Cooperative Plan can be identified as the “Boundary Agreement Area” as shown on the Future Land Use Map, page 239.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Objectives:

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

Policies:

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

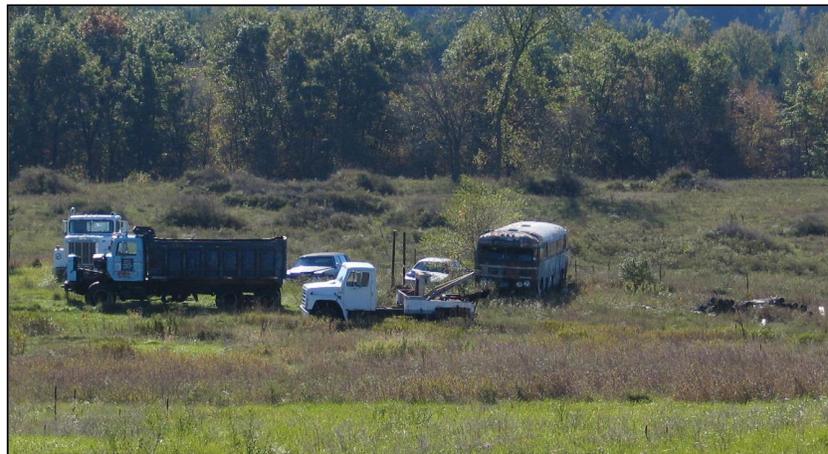
9. Coordinate and work with other governmental and private agencies such as the Squaw Lake Management District, Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, WDNR, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to protect natural resources, especially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



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

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

19. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset, City of New Richmond, St. Croix County, state agencies and local organizations to develop, provide and support recreational facilities and opportunities within the town.
20. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.
21. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.
22. Work with and through St. Croix County, (which serves as the town's Responsible Unit to implement the state recycling laws), to expand education, information, special collections and related services for recycling.
23. Contract with the City of New Richmond to provide a recycling drop-off center for town residents
24. Contract with the New Richmond Ambulance and Fire Service for ambulance and fire service for town residents.
25. Continue the mutual aid agreement with the Village of Somerset for fire protection service to town residents.
26. Work with the Village of Somerset and City of New Richmond in the provision of joint services when it will result in better services and/or cost savings.
27. Utilize St. Croix County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement.
28. Contract with the Sheriff's Department for a satellite office for law enforcement to encourage better service and response times for town residents.
29. Work with St. Croix County and state agencies to assure public health and groundwater quality when permitting and monitoring new and replacement private on-site wastewater systems and water wells.
30. Work with St. Croix County to maintain property to ensure a high-quality living environment within all residential areas and to address violations of applicable land use ordinances on residential, commercial or industrial properties.
31. Work with St. Croix County to update the County's and the town's land use regulations to require that relocated houses and new manufactured houses are sited



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

- on freestanding, separate parcels; are placed on permanent foundations; and are brought into compliance with the Uniform Dwelling Code to provide safe, quality housing.
32. Work with St. Croix County to improve or expand St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding property maintenance and nuisance issues such as junk vehicles and dilapidated buildings.
 33. Work with St. Croix County to expand the St. Croix County Animal Waste and the Zoning ordinances to regulate large-scale farms near existing residences.
 34. Support buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas and between these areas and rural residential subdivisions consisting of gradually larger lot, lower density development. The variety in zones will increase compatibility with agricultural uses, provide a range of agriculture uses and greater choices in housing options in the town. Work with St. Croix County to implement these buffer zones through amendments to the zoning ordinance.
 35. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.
 36. Cooperate with the State Historical Society, St. Croix County, surrounding communities and local agencies on a comprehensive survey of historic and archeological resources in the town.
 37. Support the New Richmond Preservation Society as a local repository for historical materials; also encourage residents to donate items to the historic materials repository that the society maintains.
 38. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities. Encourage business types which will benefit all the communities.
 39. Work with St. Croix Economic Development Corporation to assist in locating potential new businesses.
 40. Work with St. Croix County to update land use regulations to improve site planning for commercial and industrial development.
 41. Work with St. Croix County to permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.

LAND USE

EXISTING LAND USE REGULATIONS

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

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

REGULATION	STAR PRAIRIE	RICHMOND	SOMERSET	STANTON	ST. CROIX COUNTY
Village Powers Adopted	Yes '72	Yes '08	Yes '98	Yes '77	N/A
Official Map Ordinance	No	No	No	No	N/A
County Zoning	Yes '75	Yes '76	Yes '68	Yes '75	Yes '74
Exclusive Ag Zoning	Yes '86	No	Yes '	Yes '82	Yes
Standards to zone out of Exclusive Ag	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shoreland/Wetland Zoning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '74
Floodplain Zoning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '05
Land Division/Subdivision Ordinance	In Progress	No	Yes '09	Yes '96	Yes '06
Minimum Lot Size	N/A	N/A	Yes, 3 acre	Yes, 2 acre	Yes 1.5 acre min., 2 acre avg.
Allow Majors w/ POWTS*	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	Yes
Allow Minors w/ POWTS*	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes, 2 lots in 5 years	Yes
Monies in Lieu of Dedication	N/A	N/A	No	No	No
Erosion Control/Stormwater Mngt.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '06
Sanitary Ordinance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '05
Animal Waste Ordinance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '85
Nonmetallic Mining Ordinance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes '04
Tire Management Ordinance	No	No	No	No	Yes '85
Agricultural Shoreland Mngt. Ordinance	No	No	No	No	No
Historic Preservation Ordinance	No	No	No	No	No
Town Mobile Home Park Ordinance	Yes '70	Yes '70	No	Yes '84	N/A
Development Impact Fees	Yes '06	Yes	No	No	N/A
Cooperative Boundary Agreement	Yes, '12	No	No	No	N/A
Water Utility District	Yes, '12	No	No	No	N/A
Reinvestment Neighborhoods	No	No	No	No	N/A
Business Improvement District	No	No	No	No	N/A
Architectural Conservancy Dist.	No	No	No	No	N/A
Sanitary District	No	Yes	No	No	N/A

*POWTS-- Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems

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

The Town of Star Prairie adopted exclusive agriculture zoning as one of the tools used to regulate land use. The decision to adopt exclusive agriculture zoning generally came from information

provided in the St. Croix County Farmland Preservation Plan which was adopted in 1980 by the St. Croix County Board of Supervisors.

What is not well known is that the 1980 Farmland Preservation Plan was a very thorough and well thought out document. It covered farmland preservation, but it also looked at other land uses and the need for growth in St. Croix County. The following quotes from the Farmland Preservation Plan provide insight into the thinking behind the plan, the justification for creating the plan, the concepts behind the land use designations in the plan and the comprehensive approach to land use that was part of the plan:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

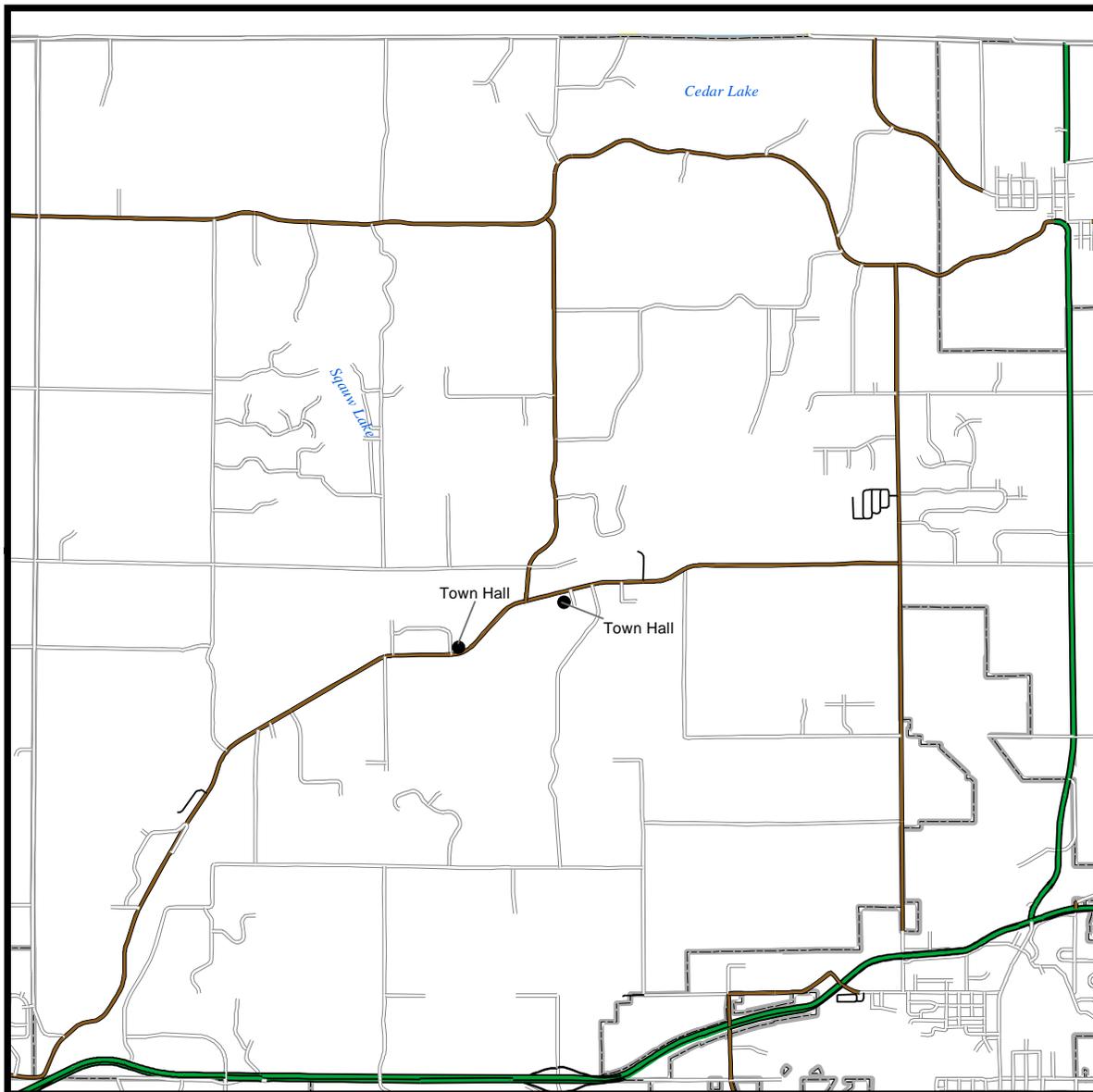
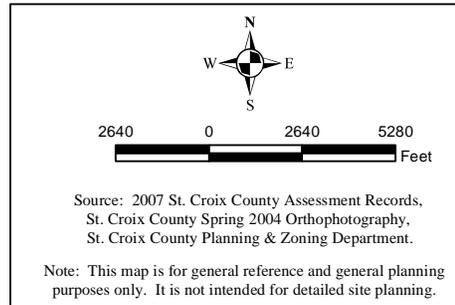
In addition to the regulations identified in the table above, the following County regulations are or can be in effect in the Town of Star Prairie. These regulations are adopted by the County and are in effect in all unincorporated areas of St. Croix County; no town adoption or action is required.

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

EXISTING LAND USES

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

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



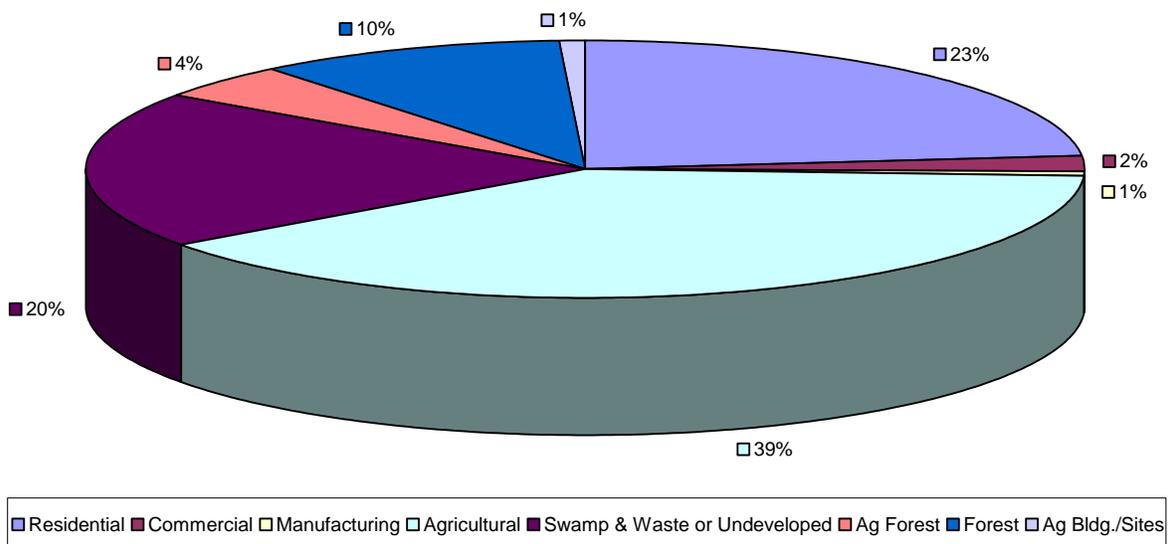
LAND USE TRENDS

**Property Tax Classifications – 1994 to 2006
Town of Star Prairie**

REAL ESTATE CLASS	1994		1997		2000		2003		2006	
	ACRES	% OF TOTAL								
Residential	2486	13%	3,164	17%	3,388	19%	3,835	22%	4,190	23%
Commercial	333	2%	329	2%	290	2%	287	2%	332	2%
Manufacturing	49	0%	51	0%	51	0%	152	1%	148	1%
Agricultural	13,067	70%	11,941	65%	8,708	48%	7,519	43%	7,016	39%
Swamp & Waste or Undeveloped	740	4%	705	4%	3,632	20%	3,661	21%	3,562	20%
Ag Forest	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0%	781	4%
Forest	1,892	10%	1,938	11%	2,018	11%	1,855	11%	1,820	10%
Ag Bldg. Sites	N/A	N/A	188	1%	159	1%	140	1%	138	1%
Totals	18,567	100%	18,316	100%	18,246	100%	17,449	100%	17,422	100%

Source: St. Croix County Statistical Report of Property Values 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003 & 2006 Wisconsin Department of Revenue

**Town of Star Prairie
Property Tax Classifications 2006**



- Exempt acres are exempt from assessment but not necessarily from property taxes. This category generally includes all publicly-owned local, county, state and federal land and institutionally-owned land. In 2006, the Town of Star Prairie had 1,640 exempt acres.
- Woodland Tax is another land classification not included in the general assessment categories because it is taxed at a special reduced rate. In 2006 the Town of Star Prairie had 287 acres in woodland tax.
- Undeveloped land includes areas commonly called marshes, swamps, thickets, bogs or wet meadows. This class also includes fallow tillable land (assuming agricultural use is the land's highest and best use), road right-of-way, ponds, depleted gravel pits, and land that, because

of soil or site conditions, is not producing or capable of producing commercial forest products.

- Although there seems to be a significant decrease in the amount of land in the agricultural real estate classification from 1994 to 2003, there actually was only about a 1,500 acre decrease in this category. Use value assessment, which was implemented between 1996 and 2000, shifted land uses from the agricultural real estate classification to the undeveloped (which was formerly swamp and waste), ag forest and ag buildings and sites classifications.

DENSITIES

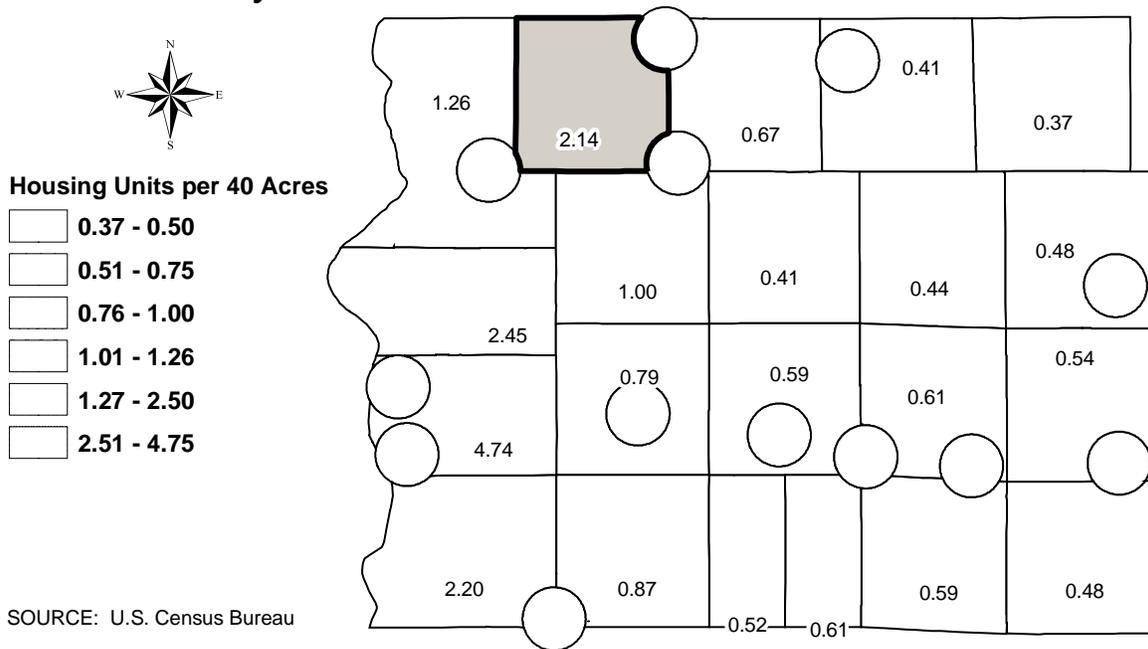
**Housing Unit Density - 2000
Town of Star Prairie & Neighboring Communities**

COMMUNITY	HOUSING UNITS PER SQ. MILE	HOUSING UNITS PER 40 ACRES
Star Prairie	34.3	2.14
Richmond	16.0	1.00
Somerset	20.1	1.26
Stanton	10.7	0.67
C. New Richmond	521.0	N/A
V. Star Prairie	102.4	N/A
V. Somerset	357.5	N/A
St. Croix County	33.6	2.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

- The Town of Star Prairie’s housing unit density is fairly low and it closely mirrors St. Croix County’s overall density. This indicates that Star Prairie is still very rural in nature and the majority of housing in the town is very spread out.
- In comparison, the densities per square mile indicate the much higher density of the incorporated villages and city.
- As the graphic below shows, density throughout St. Croix County is higher in the west than in the east and higher along the I-94 corridor. The Twin Cities’ job market has heavily influenced housing preferences in the western half of the county.

**Housing Units Per 40 Acres - 2000
St. Croix County - Star Prairie**



SUPPLY & DEMAND

The supply, demand and price of land affect the location, type and intensity of land use. The tables above show that the existing land uses in Star Prairie are primarily residential, agricultural and open land. One method of analyzing supply, demand and price for open land is to review data compiled by the Department of Revenue Fielded Sales System. The Fielded Sales System tracks parcels sold and what their identified use is, including whether the sale is converted out of agriculture or remains in agriculture. The system tracks only “arms length transactions” or those transactions to non-family members.

**Fielded Sales Data - 1997 to 2005
Town of Star Prairie**

YEAR	ACRES OUT	VALUE OUT PER ACRE	ACRES IN	VALUE IN PER ACRE
1997	0		247	\$915
1998	116	\$1,791	37	\$1,400
1999	128	\$3,283	111	\$1,811
2000	35	\$3,569	20	\$2,233
2001	78	\$4,596	105	\$1,995
2002	22	\$5,705	50	\$5,030
2003	55	\$11,377	190	\$6,090
2004	75	\$10,945	79	\$6,000
2005	3	\$12,000	50	\$7,836
Total	512	\$53,266	889	\$33,310

Source: WI Department of Revenue 2006

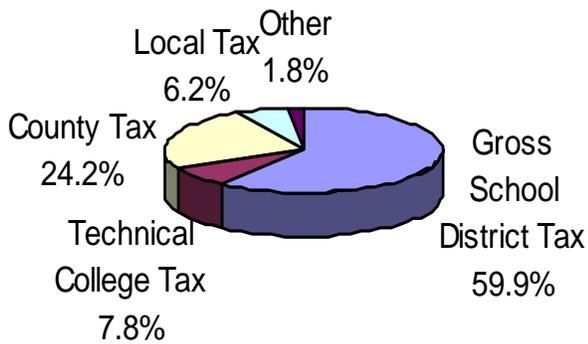
- Agricultural land sale prices for land both going out of agriculture and staying in agriculture have risen significantly over the past 10 years.
- The gap between the price of ag land and development land has also increased significantly in that timeframe, from a few hundred dollars to around \$4,000.
- The Department of Revenue has indicated that in recent years the reported use for agricultural land may be misleading. There is a significant tax advantage from use-value assessment so sales may be reporting future land use as agriculture when the development is intended in a short timeframe of one to two years.

PROPERTY TAXES

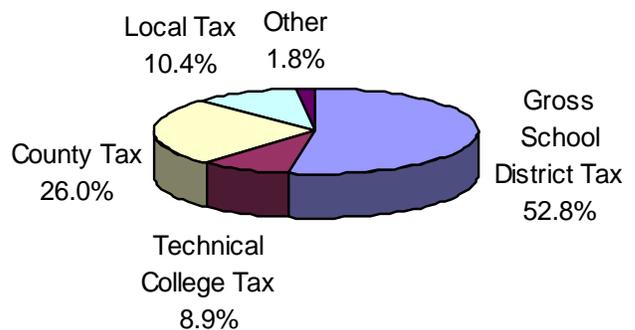
Property taxes can have a significant impact on land use and land use decisions. The state’s use value assessment of agricultural land is a good example of how taxation can impact decisions. Because the holding cost of agricultural land has been decreased by use value assessment, there are more opportunities for investors in the agricultural land market.

Taxation is analyzed for each town based on the 2005 taxes using Department of Revenue data and tax analysis software. The first set of graphs looks at the breakdown of each municipality’s tax bill.

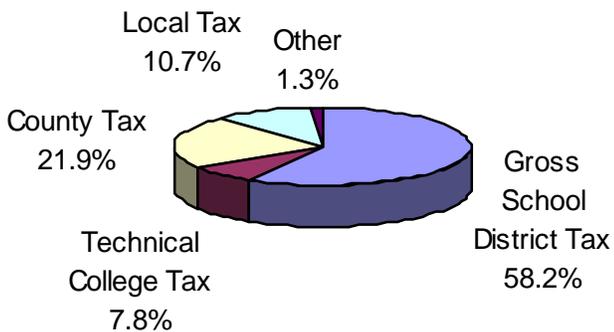
**Property Taxes by Source – 2005
Town of Star Prairie**



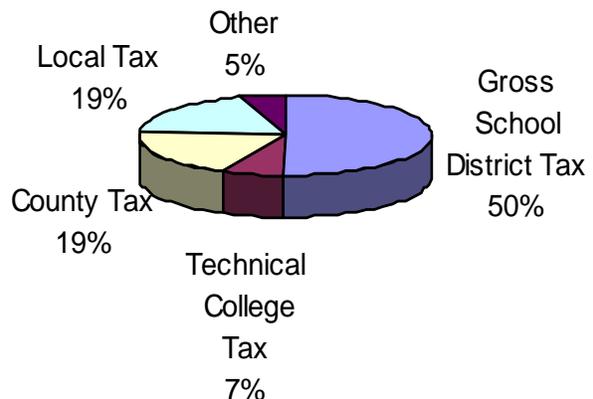
**Property Taxes by Source – 2005
All County Towns Over 2501 People**



**Property Taxes by Source – 2005
All St. Croix County Towns**



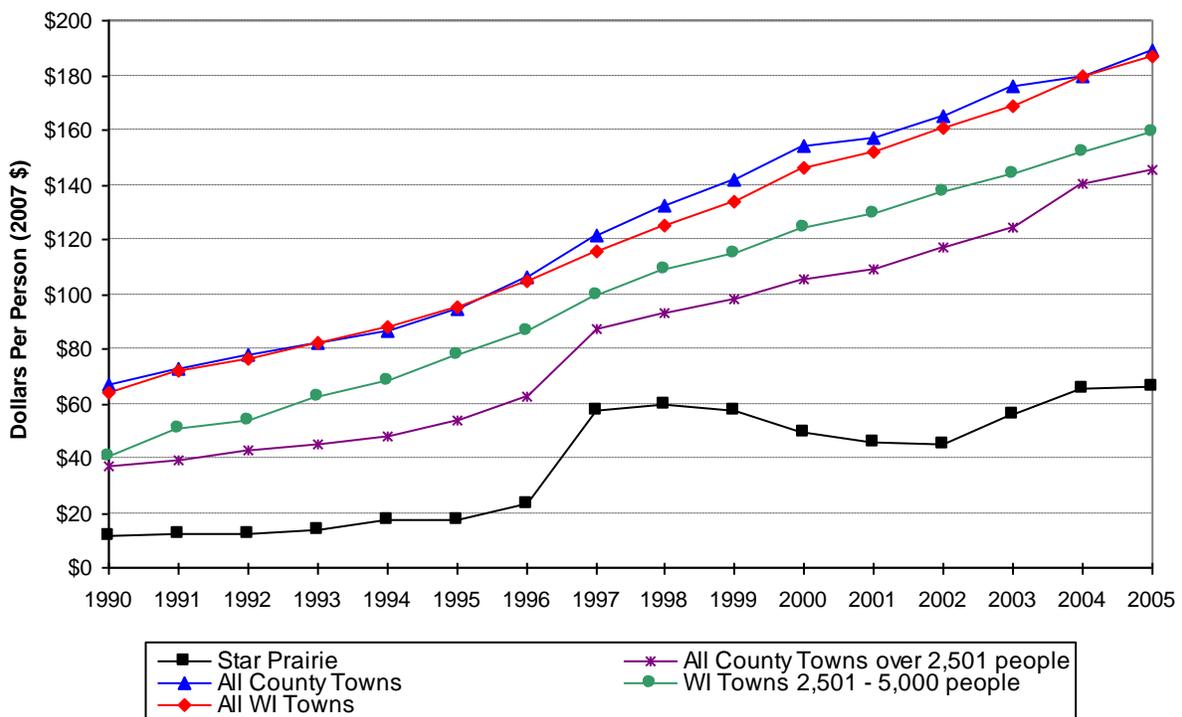
**Property Taxes by Source - 2005
St. Croix County**



- Generally, the local schools account for approximately 50-60 percent of all property taxes, with the higher percentage in smaller communities like Star Prairie.
- The property tax breakdown between schools, county, and local taxes remains consistent regardless of a town’s population.
- In 2005, Star Prairie’s local tax rate was low relative to similar-sized towns, all towns and all local government in St. Croix County.

The next two graphs show how taxes per citizen have changed over a 15-year timeframe and the break down of local taxes per capita by budget categories in 2005.

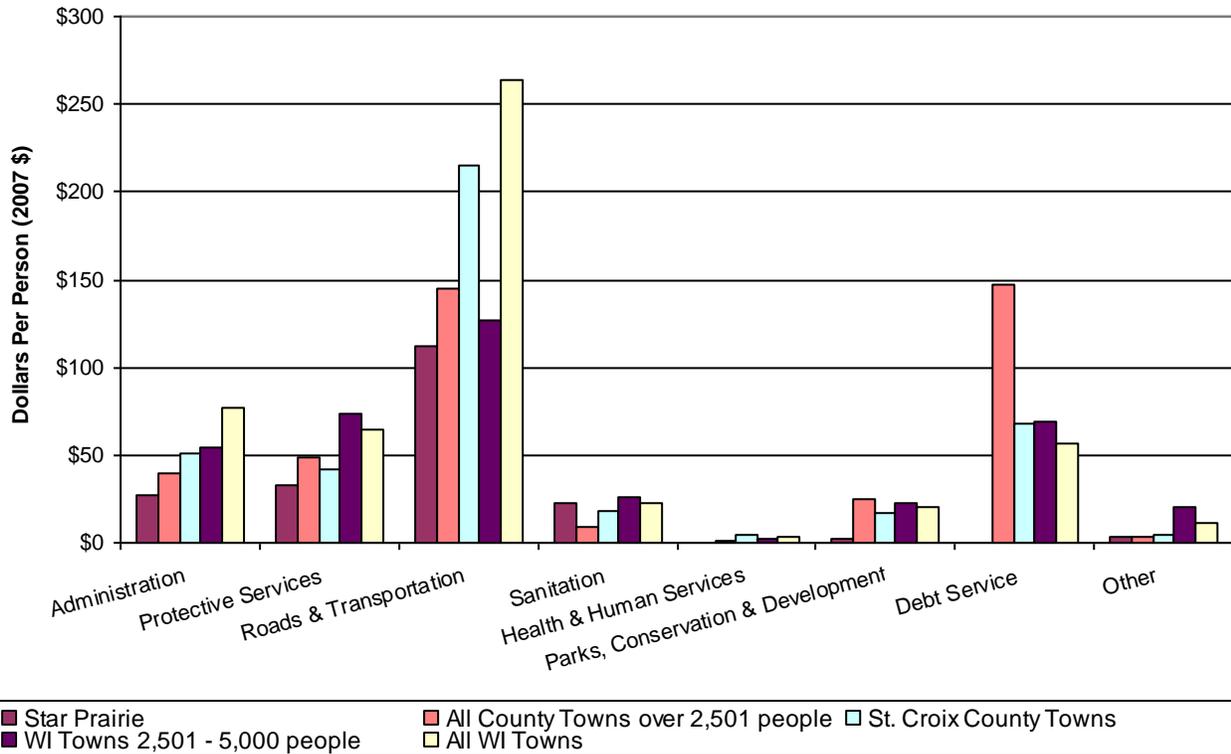
**Per Capita Local Tax -1990 to 2005
Town of Star Prairie**



- Between 1990 and 2005, the Town of Star Prairie has generally had a very low tax rate per capita. The tax rate has consistently been well below the rates for all St. Croix County and Wisconsin towns and those County and Wisconsin towns in a similar population category.
- The Town’s per capita tax rate is two and a half times lower than the average rate for all towns in St. Croix County and is a third of that for similar-sized towns in the County.
- The rate has increased steadily while still remaining well below the per capita rate for similar sized towns and all towns in St. Croix County and Wisconsin.
- While the Town’s tax rate is low in comparison to other towns, it has seen tremendous increases.
- Taxes per capita have increased steadily in the Town of Star Prairie, over 600 percent from 1990 to 2005.
- The largest single increase occurred in 1997 when the tax rate per capita jumped from \$20 to almost \$60.

- Since that time per capita taxes have seen normal dips and increases.

**Per Capita Expenditures of Town Revenues - 2005
Town of Star Prairie**



- In 2005, the Town of Star Prairie’s largest local expenses were town roads, protective services, administration and sanitation.
- At \$112 per person, road cost are approximately three and a half times the cost of the next largest budget item.
- Protective services costs about \$33 per person, administration \$27 per person and sanitation \$22 per person.
- Generally Star Prairie’s expenses are less than similar-sized communities and all towns in the County and State, except for sanitation.
- Star Prairie’s sanitation expenses are relatively high because they include the landfill remediation fees which are being paid from operating capital. The town has chosen not to use debt service for this expense.
- As of 2005 the town had no debt service; however the new town hall was financed with long-term debt.

CONFLICTING LAND USES

Conflicting land uses in the Town of Star Prairie are related to the rural and generally agricultural nature of the town. Conflicts may be seen between residential uses and agricultural or recreational or tourism uses. There are also conflicts from non-metallic mining operations and residential uses whether in conjunction with agricultural operations or rural residential housing. Other possible conflicts stem from the diverse expectations of those people moving to the country and long-time residents. Another conflict occurs between the residents and the New Richmond Airport. A final conflict is seen in the limited commercial, industrial and home occupation activities which occur in rural areas. The lack of convenient access to commercial facilities can be viewed very differently by rural residents.

Generally the Town of Star Prairie finds that information is one of the best ways to decrease or control conflicts. A rural living guide to help educate new rural residential residents about what to expect when choosing to live in a rural agricultural community has been developed by St. Croix County and should improve understanding about conflicting uses. The guide can be customized with local information regarding issues of concern, rules and regulations and where to find assistance specific to the Town of Star Prairie.

Also the town has developed a website where information on living in the community, upcoming meetings, minutes, plans and regulations are or will be posted for convenient public access. The link is: <http://www.townofstarprairie.com/>.

FUTURE LAND USE PROJECTIONS

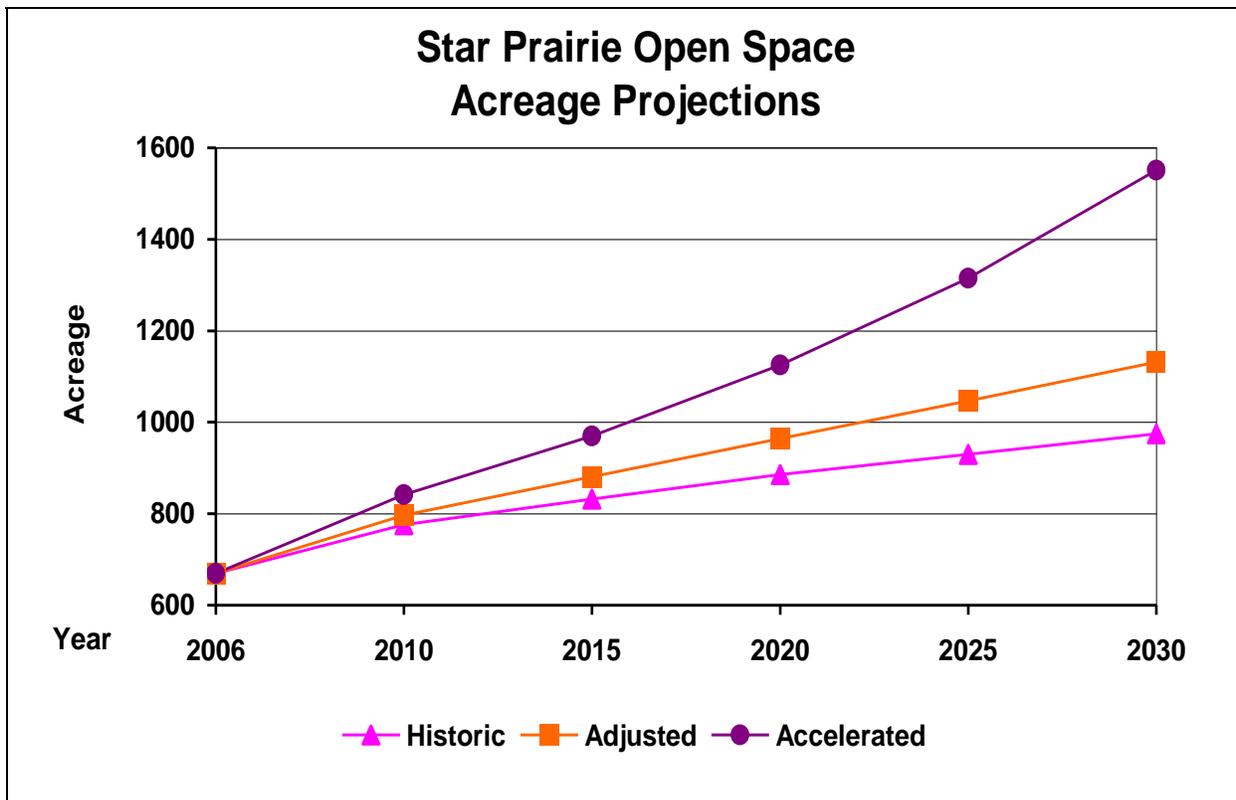
OPEN SPACE PROJECTIONS

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

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

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

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



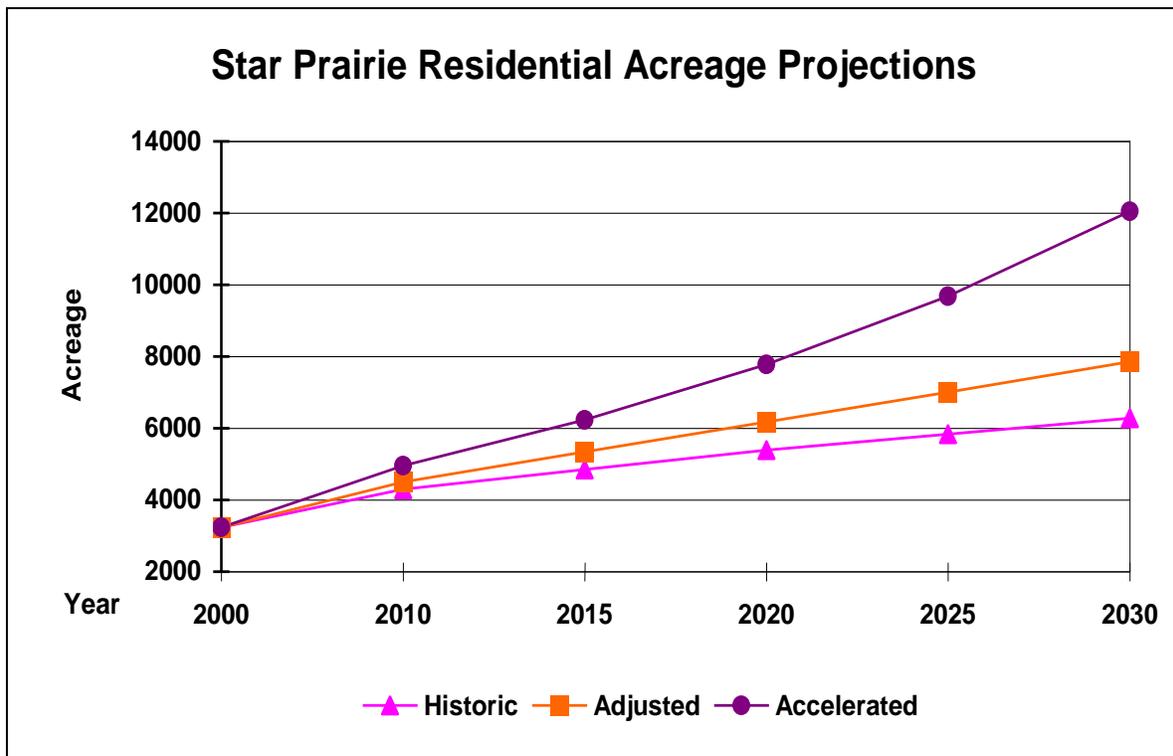
RESIDENTIAL PROJECTIONS

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

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

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

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



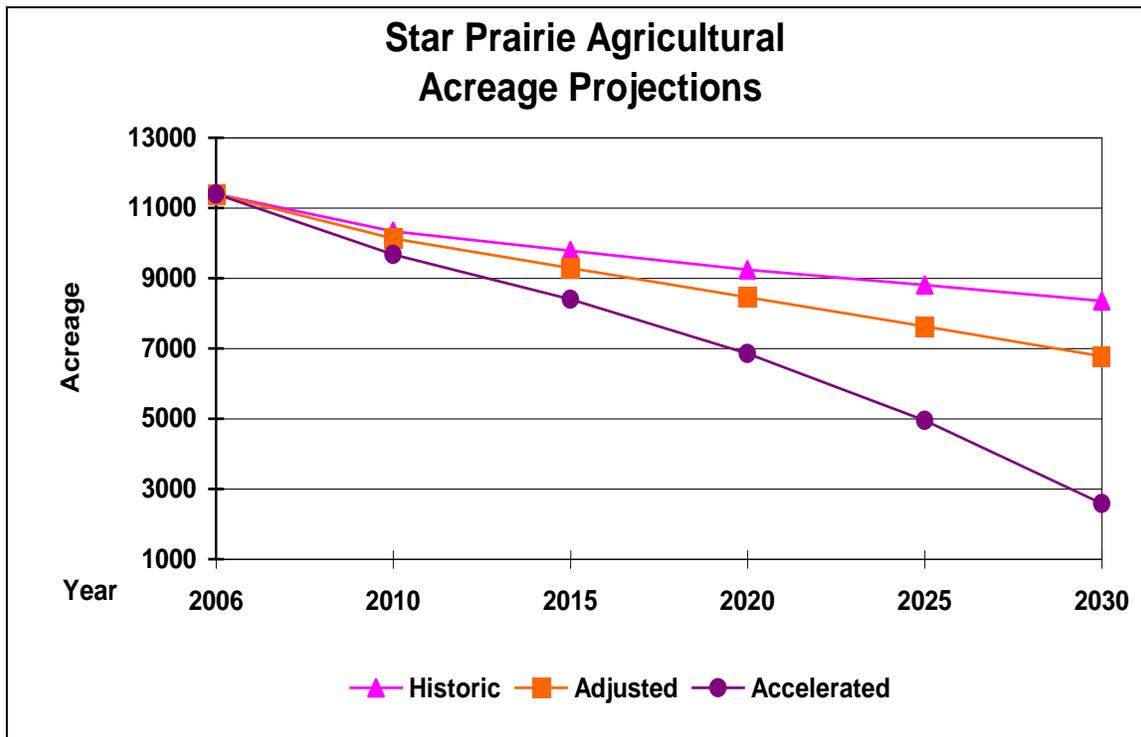
AGRICULTURAL PROJECTIONS

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

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

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

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



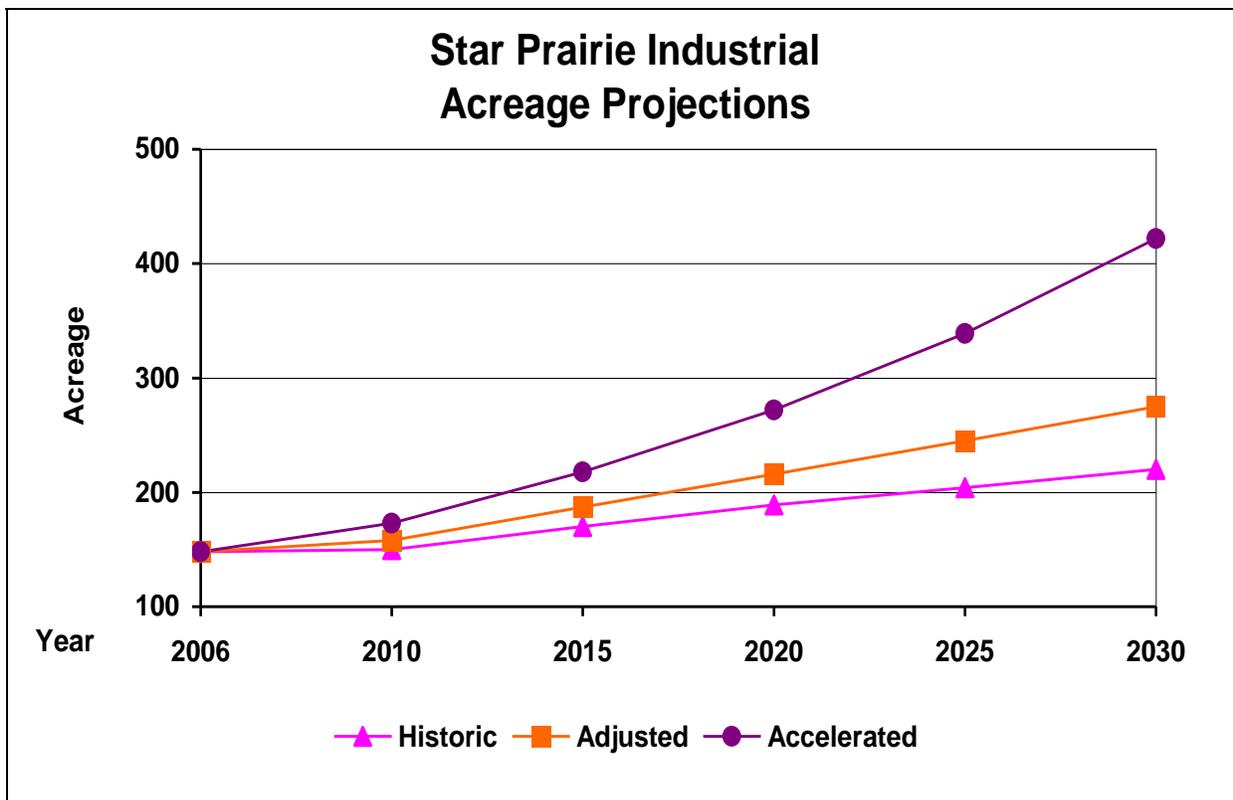
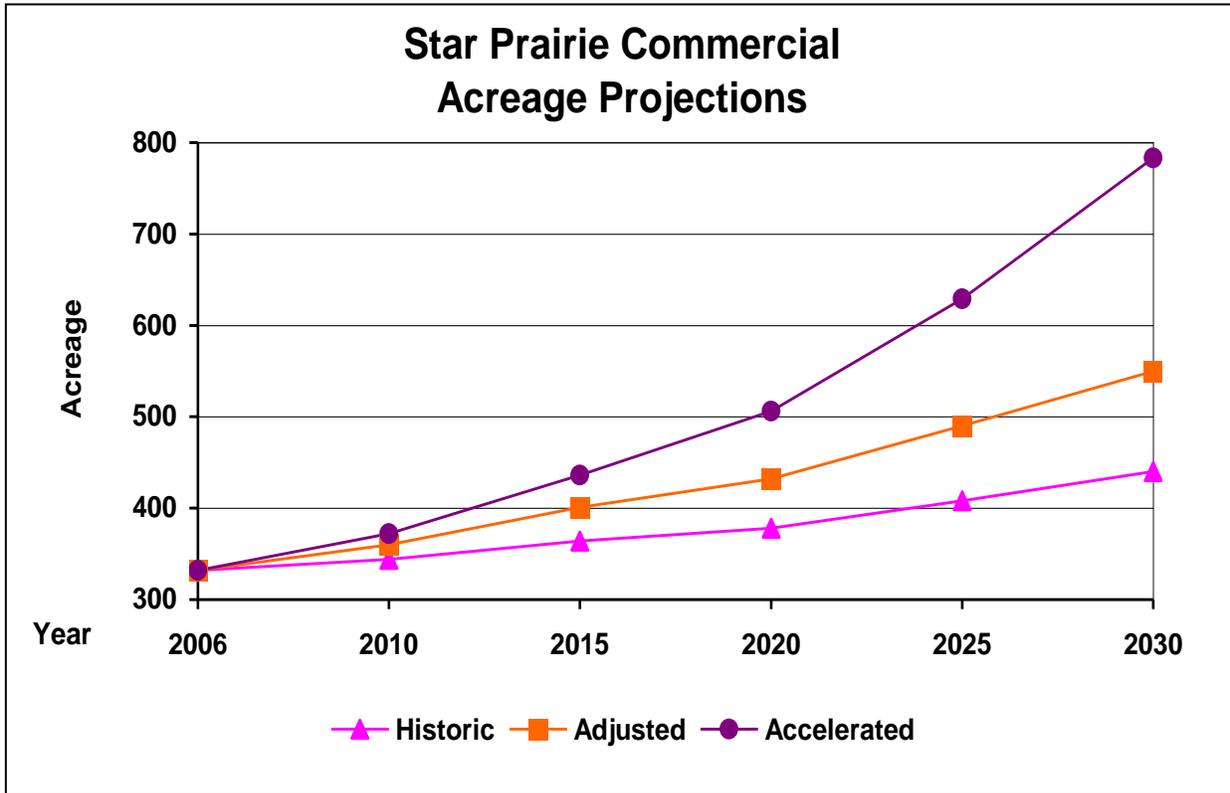
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL PROJECTIONS

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

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

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

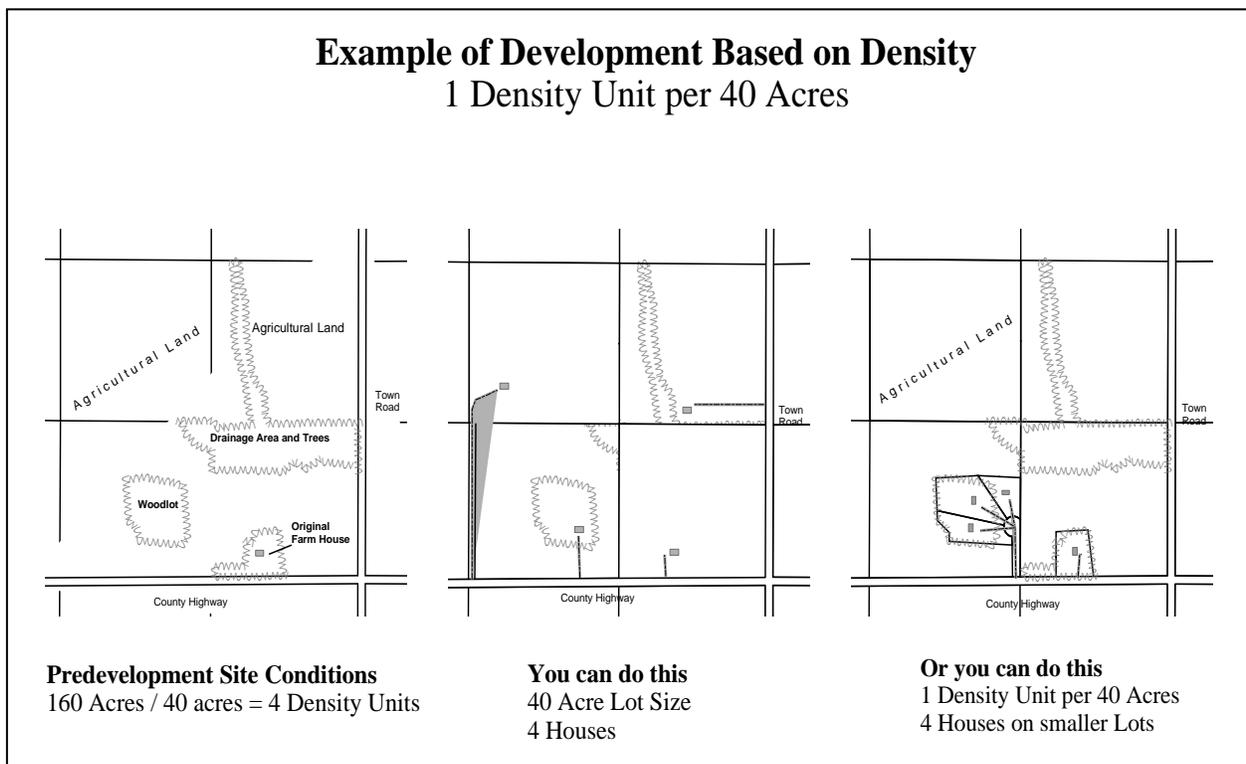
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue & St. Croix County Planning & Zoning Department Projections 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.

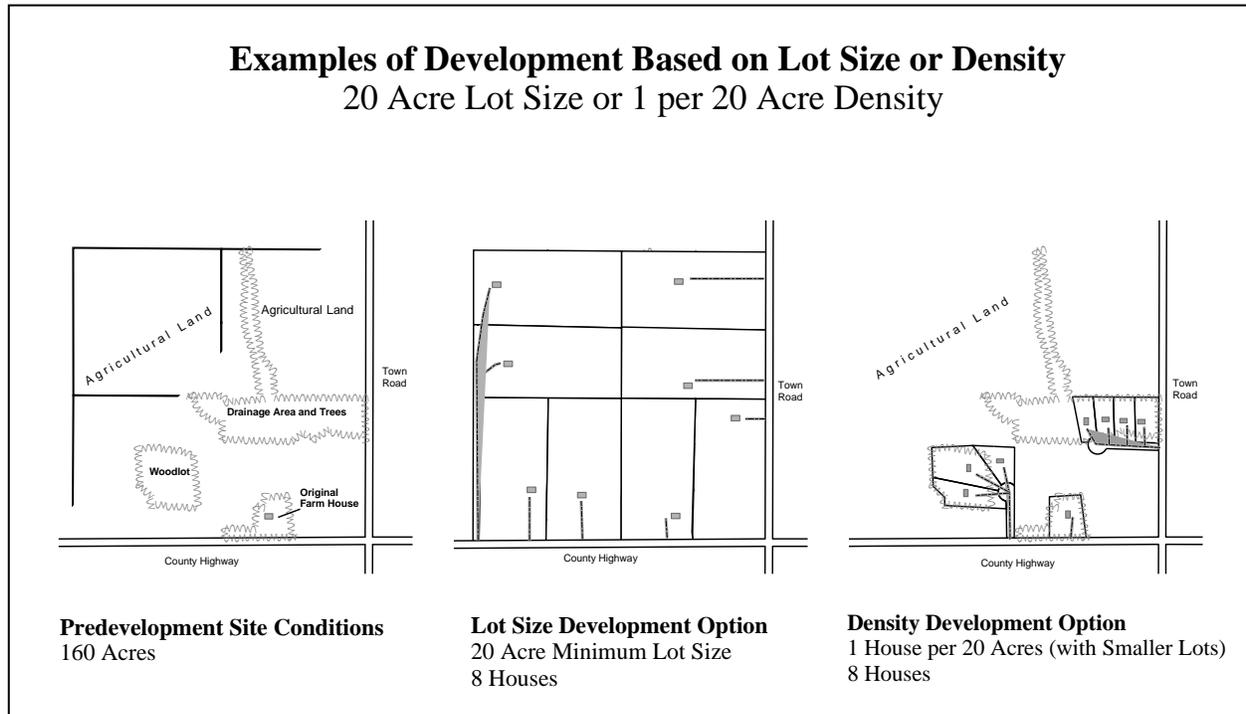


LAND USE ALTERNATIVES

DENSITY BASED DEVELOPMENT REGULATION

Density based development regulation is a tool to allow communities to regulate the amount of development and the size of lots separately from each other. Historically, communities have set the amount of development (maximum density) and the minimum lot size at the same number, i.e. 35 acre minimum lot size = 1 house every 35 acres, 5 acre minimum lot size = 1 house every 5 acres. With a density-based approach these two standards are separated. Minimum lot size regulations set how big individual homesites or lots must be. Maximum density regulations set how many homesites or lots can be divided from a larger parcel regardless of how big individual homesites or lot size must be. Establishing maximum density standards in addition to minimum lot sizes is density based development regulation. The figures below illustrate this concept.



**Advantages:**

- Often provides low to medium income housing.
- Enables the developer to earn a greater return on their investment.
- Focus increased development density within selected portions of the community.
- Can achieve environmental, agricultural and social benefits of greater variety of housing types, required open space, agricultural preservation and protection of environmentally sensitive areas.

Disadvantages:

- Limits flexibility on what can be constructed and where.
- Focuses more development in rural areas where land is readily available and relatively inexpensive.
- Consumers may not want development.
- Occasionally promotes monotonous development patterns.

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is an incentive-based tool used by some communities to help achieve land use goals – generally at little or no public expense. TDR is usually used in concert with other land use tools such as zoning and subdivision regulations. Although it is used to achieve community objectives, the concept of TDR is fundamentally linked to private property rights. All owners of private property in the United States hold with it an interest in a “bundle of rights.” Sticks in the bundle may include the right to maintain the present land use, the right to mine or excavate and the right to build or subdivide. These rights may be limited through laws like zoning enacted by government. TDR suggests that the right to develop property can be transferred from one property owner’s bundle to another owner’s bundle.

TDR programs can be modest or broad in scope they can include a few or nearly all property owners. However there are some essential features shared by nearly all TDR programs.

A TDR program allow the transfer of one or more rights to develop from properties that a community desires to preserve or prefers not to see developed to properties where a community is willing to accept development. A community can identify and designate areas to preserve or limit development for a variety of reasons including protecting productive farmland, environmentally sensitive areas, open spaces, scenic areas, historic buildings, etc. Landowners in these areas are restricted from developing their land to its maximum economic use through zoning and other regulation. However these landowners can move, send or sell their development rights to areas where the community encourages development.

- The sale (“transfer”) of one parcel’s development rights (the “sending” parcel) to the owner of another parcel (the “receiving” parcel) allows more development on the receiving parcel while reducing or preventing development on the sending parcel. A conservation easement or deed restriction is placed on the sending parcel to prevent further development in either the short term or long term depending on the adopted regulations.

When a land owner sells development rights, development of that property is prevented through a deed restriction or conservation easement. All other rights remain with the property. For example, a farmer who transfers a development right retains title to the land and may continue farming. Through the sale of development rights, TDR allows property owners to achieve some to all of the economic gain that could otherwise be realized through actual development of their property.

Landowners may purchase development rights from other landowners. Communities usually

A conservation easement is:

A less-than-fee, non-possessory interest in a parcel of land, recorded by a real estate deed. Acquired by public agencies or private conservation organizations through purchase or donation.

The holder of the underlying possessory interest retains certain rights to the land (e.g., the right to sell, the right to farm, the right to hunt).

The holder of the easement has the right to prevent certain activities on the land consistent with the terms of the easement.

May prohibit all ground-disturbing activity on a parcel. May last for a specified term or be a perpetual restriction on the use of land.

A deed restriction is:

A limitation recorded against a deed and filed in the Register of Deeds Office.

designate on a land use map where new or additional development is appropriate. Criteria for determining areas where development should be located could include: good access to transportation networks, poorer farm lands, access to public sewer and water systems.

Typically the use of transferred development rights allows the areas where development is acceptable to develop at higher densities than would otherwise be allowed. For example, a land owner may be permitted to building only 1 house under her property’s base zoning but with the use of transferred development rights, the property owner may be able to develop 4, 6, etc. houses. The system must be constructed so that landowners that purchase development rights can enjoy a

greater economic return on their properties by purchasing and using development rights than by developing under the standard rules.

Development rights or TDRs are bought and sold in a private market much like real estate. Their price, therefore, is dictated by the laws of supply and demand. Public involvement and expense is generally limited once a program is established.

Advantages:

- Provides landowners with options.
- Can protect large tracts of sensitive areas, such as endangered resources, viable agricultural soils and drinking water supplies.
- Provides financial incentives for landowners in both sending and receiving areas.
- Can allow developers in receiving areas to build increased density developments above and beyond normal zoning regulations.
- Provides certainty about where development will happen.
- Creates incentive for developers to buy development rights.
- Creates a competitive market between buyers and sellers.

Disadvantages:

- Complex and difficult to administer.
- For this program to work there must be development pressures in both sending and receiving areas.

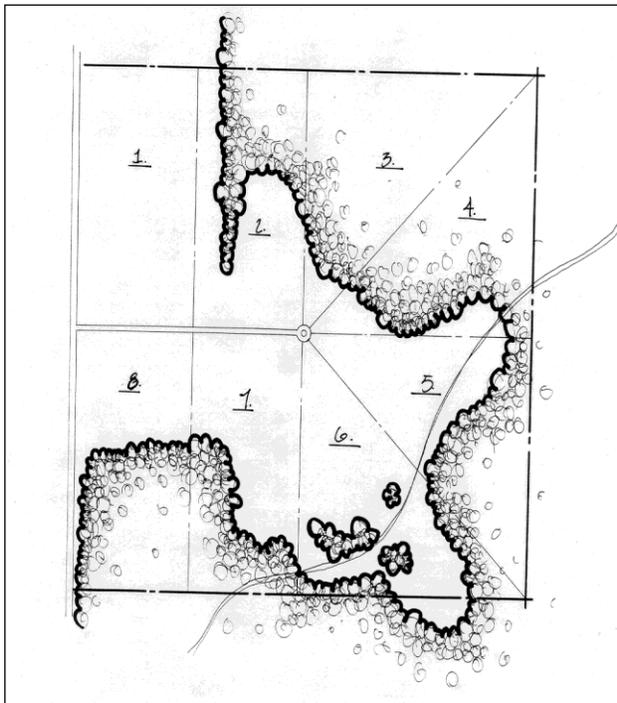
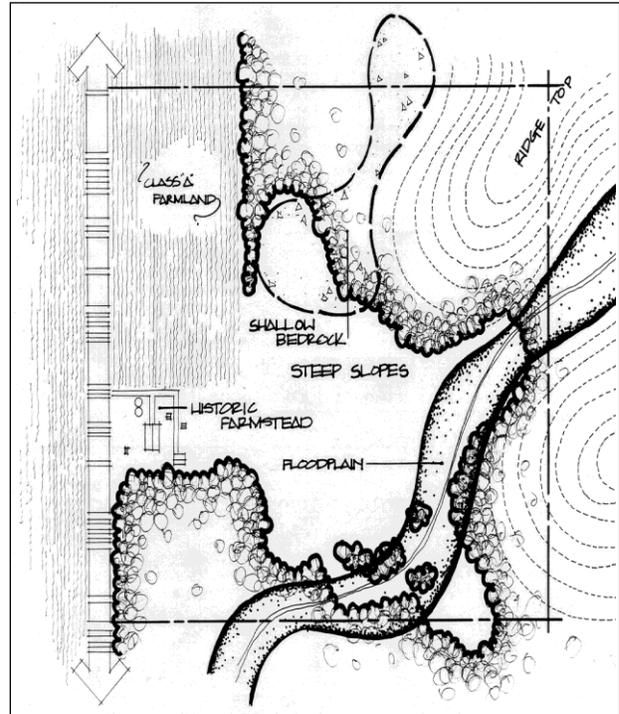
CONSERVATION DESIGN SUBDIVISIONS

Conservation design development, or conservation design, is a subdividing method that focuses on maintaining open space and conserving significant natural and cultural features. This is accomplished by preserving a significant portion of a development site as undivided open space with the remaining land used for the house lots and necessary roads. The open space is permanently preserved through conservation easements. It is important to note **that a conservation design subdivision provides the developer with the same number, or possibly more, lots than could be accomplished through a conventional subdivision.**

As a method for maintaining desired rural character in towns that allow major subdivisions, the conservation design development concept can be a key tenet of the comprehensive plan. This technique can help Towns preserve many of the natural and agricultural features that first attracted new residents by improving the design of future residential developments.

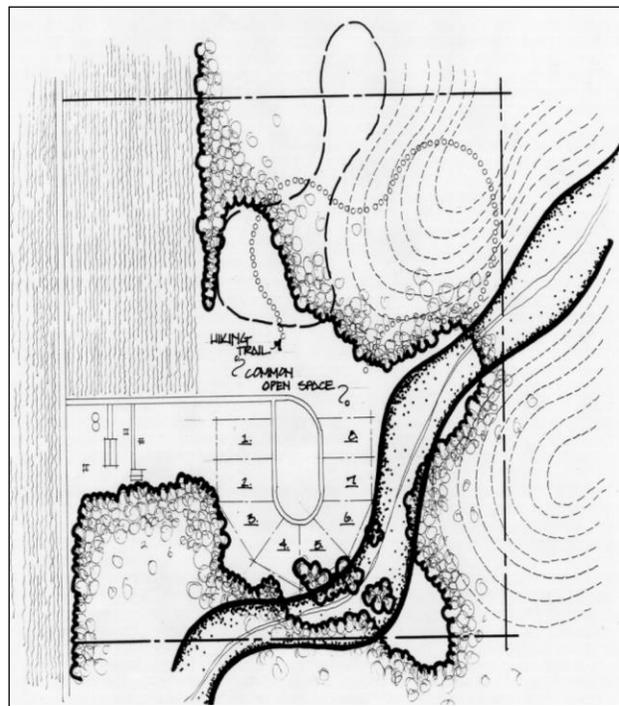
The conservation design example below uses the same number of house lots from the conventional layout but completely alters the design by simply reducing the lot size and being sensitive to the environmental features in order to preserve farmland. The following sketches are from “A Model Ordinance for a Conservation Subdivision” prepared by the University of Wisconsin Extension.

Step 1: Inventory and mapping of existing resources for a hypothetical 40-acre site.



Step 2: Development yield as permitted under existing ordinances (zoning, etc.) for the 40-acre site and assuming a 5-acre minimum lot size zoning standard. Eight lots would be permitted under this scenario.

Step 3: Concept map of the conservation subdivision showing the eight lots that would be permitted, plus the historic farmhouse, which would be preserved, for a total of nine dwelling units.



The following are some observations from comparing the conventional subdivision to the conservation design subdivision:

- Conventional layout – all parts of the tract are either house lots or roads.
- Conservation layout – close to half of the site is undivided open space or agricultural land that can be permanently preserved.
- Conventional layout – view from across the road to the trees and creek is disrupted, and houses can be seen in all parts of the development.
- Conservation layout – view from across the road to trees and creek is almost entirely preserved.
- Conventional layout – only four property owners have access to parts of the creek.
- Conservation layout – all property owners have access to the length of the creek.
- Conventional layout – no common space; each lot owner only has use of his own five-acre parcel.
- Conservation layout – creates a number of common open space areas with a large area remaining for active agricultural use.
- Conventional layout – no pedestrian-ways unless sidewalks are included in the construction of the roads.
- Conservation layout – trail network can be completed and can link with neighboring subdivisions.
- Conventional layout – no area for neighborhood facilities.
- Conservation layout – central green area can include children’s play area, shelter, or other amenities.

Given the strong desire of residents to retain rural character and preserve natural features and farmland, conservation design subdivisions offer a preferable alternative to typical subdivisions with large house lots blanketing entire tracts of land.

There are several recommendations relating to conservation design developments.

They include:

- Conservation design should be the preferred method for future major residential subdivisions.
- Require a minimum of 50 percent or more of the acreage of the conservation design subdivision to be dedicated to open space, natural areas or agricultural uses. The 50 percent or more requirement can include undevelopable land, such as wetlands, creeks, and other water features, in the calculation.
- Prime agricultural land, in addition to natural resource features, such as wetlands, steep slopes, and floodplains, should be included within the preserved open space to the greatest extent possible. Additional features that the Town feels adds to its rural character, such as blocks of upland woods, should be identified as secondary conservation areas and are preferred for the balance of the open space areas, if needed.
- The open space within the conservation design subdivisions should be owned by any of the following four entities: land trust, homeowners association, individual landowner, or Town and should be spelled out and agreed upon in writing before the subdivision is approved.

NATURAL LIMITATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT

Decisions on land use are based on a variety of factors both internal and external to a particular site. Some factors are beyond a property owner's control, i.e. government regulation, the economy, interest rates and market demand. Other factors such as management are completely controlled by the property owner. However, these factors can and will change over time, whereas the natural physical features of the site are usually unchangeable or change is severely limited. Physical features, such as soil type, soil productivity, slope, wastewater treatment capacity, depth to groundwater, depth to bedrock, environmental sensitivity, etc., can direct or limit land use alternatives for a property owner. For specific details on the natural physical features that can impact land use alternatives and decisions please see the Natural Resources Section, on page 178.

INTERACTIVE LAND USE WORKSHOP RESULTS

The development projections for residential, agriculture, commercial, industrial and open space land uses were utilized as the basis for the second night of the interactive land use workshop. The first part consisted of an interactive slide show of land uses where participants individually and then as a group worked to determine an appropriate list of land uses for the town. The second part was a land use mapping exercise where the different projections were mapped to allow participants to determine the scope of future development and identify potential locations for the identified land uses.

Three of the four groups reached consensus that the historic growth levels were appropriate for the Town of Star Prairie and that higher growth levels should be actively discouraged through policies and regulations. The groups also showed strong support for conservation design development, especially south of the Apple River and CTH C; protection of high quality agricultural resources especially in the Star Prairie flats area; protection of natural resources especially along the Apple River, Strand Lake, Cedar Lake and Squaw Lake; and for appropriate commercial and industrial development in limited locations in the Town, around the airport and along STH 65 to the north, around the new diamond interchange at 110th Street, and along the rail line.

All four groups discussed annexation and generally recognized that much of the potential commercial and industrial development could and should be annexed by the City of New Richmond and Village of Somerset. There were also good discussions of the area around the water line and consensus was this area should be developed first with residential housing and use of conservation design to decrease lot size for cost-effective service. These results are incorporated into the land use goals, objectives and policies and the future land use map and narrative.

LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

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

Goals:

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

Objectives:

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

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



Rural residential development. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

23. Use density and minimum lot size regulations to allow growth and development while protecting productive farmlands on prime agricultural soils.
24. Discourage nonagricultural development on prime agricultural soils.
25. Preserve Star Prairie's most important and sensitive natural resources and areas.
26. Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas, natural resources and productive forest lands.
27. Preserve the Town's scenic beauty, historical heritage and archeological resources.
28. Work with surrounding communities to encourage an orderly, efficient land use pattern that preserves farming and natural resources and minimizes conflicts between urban and rural uses.
29. Work with neighboring municipalities to resolve boundary issues and other conflicts that exist or may develop.
30. Work with other local governments, state agencies, school districts, etc. on land use and community development issues of mutual concern.
31. Work with other units of government to develop and enforce appropriate land use regulations to maintain rural residential quality.

Policies:

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

11. Require the disclosure of any soil or groundwater contamination on sites before approving development proposals.
12. Residences should be located adjacent to tree lines and wooded field edges, if available. If not, homes should be clustered on the edges of farm fields. Tree lines should be preserved.
13. Encourage tree preservation and tree planting to screen new structures from neighboring properties and the public road in residential areas and require it in commercial and industrial areas.
14. Consider protection and enhancement of sensitive natural resources, open and recreational space, large blocks of forestland and scenic vistas when reviewing development proposals and making public expenditures.
15. Protect the visual quality of scenic roadways through site planning, driveway location, landscaping, signage, and other standards.
16. Permit home-based businesses where there will be little impact on surrounding properties.
17. To reduce the conversion of prime agricultural land to other uses, request that St. Croix County amend the County zoning ordinance so that the exclusive agriculture-zoning district would regulate based on both density and lot size rather than just lot size.
18. Set the Town of Star Prairie’s development density to one lot per quarter –quarter section or “platted 40 acres” on land zoned exclusive agriculture.
19. Review St. Croix County’s Land Division Ordinance for conservation design development to determine if the regulations meet the Town’s needs. If St. Croix County’s ordinance does not meet the Town’s needs work with the St. Croix County Planning and Zoning Department in the development of the town subdivision ordinance.
20. The maximum gross density for development shall depend on the location of the development. The gross density may not be the minimum lot size in all cases. In conservation design development the minimum lot size shall be ½ acre per dwelling unit, with a two-acre gross density. Two-acre density for conventional development and one-acre density for development in the Boundary Agreement Area.



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

- 21. Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. Environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.
- 22. Commercial and industrial development shall be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town’s primary drainage corridors, which include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. These parkways would allow the corridors to remain mostly undeveloped as wildlife corridors, contribute to preserving the Town’s rural



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

- atmosphere, provide stormwater management areas and provide potential trail linkages to the rest of the Town. Where appropriate, the Town shall require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.
- 23. Continue to allow small-lot residential development of two to five acres to promote rural character and protection of natural resources on infill sites between existing development.

- 24. Update land use regulations to guide the location of future residential development and protect important features of the natural environment without making existing houses nonconforming whenever possible.
- 25. Explore options to provide senior housing opportunities in the Boundary Agreement Area at densities greater than one single-family unit per acre and more than four attached, single-family units.
- 26. Notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet insulation or sound reduction requirements and are required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.
- 27. Additional mobile home parks or multi-family or multi-unit dwellings do not fit the rural character of the Town of Star Prairie and should not be developed, except in the Boundary Agreement Area as designated on the Future Land Use Map. See Future Land Use section, page 235. Multi-family housing, multi-unit dwelling or a mobile home park is defined as five or more units in a structure or on a lot.

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

29. Discourage large amounts of “side of the road” residential and commercial development on State and County highways and arterial town roads to prevent congestion and preserve rural character and safety.



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

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

37. Support buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas and between these areas and rural residential subdivisions consisting of gradually larger lot, lower density development zones.
38. Require new non-farm residential lots to be located adjacent to existing development or grouped to preserve larger tracts of agricultural land, protect natural resources and improve the design, layout and functionality of development.



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

39. When possible, new homes should not be placed in the middle of open farm fields.
40. Continue to use Agriculture zoning to promote and protect agriculture for its economic contribution to the economy and as one of the primary land uses in the Town of Star Prairie.
41. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program. If authority is developed, establish a voluntary, market driven transfer of development rights program to discourage scattered development, promote rural residential development on the most suitable lands for development and encourage protection of prime agricultural lands. Generally sending areas would be those areas identified as remaining Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands or Open Space and the receiving areas would be the water service and Boundary Agreement areas.
42. Guide the location and design of development to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands, prairie and agriculture.
43. Preserve and protect natural landscape features such as wetlands, floodplains, streams, lakes, steep slopes, woodlands, prairies and oak savannas as essential components of the hydrologic system, valuable wildlife habitat, to restore degraded resources where possible and to emphasize their value to the community as potential focal points of natural beauty and recreation.
44. Discourage and where possible, prevent the altering of wetlands and floodplains by filling or developing.
45. Before approving any changes in land use, consider the impacts on wildlife habitat, potential locations of rare plant and animal species and archeological sites.
46. Identify environmentally sensitive areas most likely to be subject to rapid degradation and work to protect these areas first.

47. Prioritize the use of incentives and acquisition (land or easements) to protect environmentally sensitive areas, relying on regulations where necessary.
48. Encourage and support a buffer zone around public lands to mitigate conflicts between property owners and citizens utilizing public lands for recreation. Such a zone could be created with a principal structure setback of 150 feet from the lot line on properties adjacent to publicly-owned lands.
49. Encourage private landowners to protect and, if necessary, rehabilitate identified cultural, historic, archeological and scenic resources when specific sites are proposed for development.
50. Develop and implement a boundary and annexation agreement with the City of New Richmond and the villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.



A Star Prairie sunset. Photo by Kathy Mlynarczyk.

FUTURE LAND USE

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

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

Open Space (709 existing acres, 1847 future acres): These are lands which may be used for passive or active recreation, but are more likely to be protected open space. The Apple River corridor is easily the most clearly identified resource in the town and it is representative of the community. Residents identify strongly with the Apple River as a resource enjoyed and utilized by most residents. It's still considered "their" river. The majority of the land along the river is undeveloped, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the shoreline. The Apple River corridor encompasses a very large area, those targeted as the most valuable to town residents and the most sensitive and in need of resource protection included the wetlands downstream from the St. Croix County Apple River Property; the wetlands upstream and downstream from the old town hall, especially the backwater known as Louie Lake; and the wetlands downstream from the old town hall to 93rd Street. In addition to resource protection there are also historic Indian sites along the Apple River and probably around Strand Lake too. Strand Lake, Cedar Lake, and Squaw Lake were also identified as very special water and land



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



resources that local residents want protected. Many of the areas identified are unsuitable for construction, others are important for water quality protection. Hopefully all of these areas would be protected as open space for passive recreation such as hiking, nature study, bird watching, etc. There are some existing residential uses in these areas and there would probably be some limited new residential uses but residential density would be very low to protect the resources.

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

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

Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands (2229 remaining future acres): The existing primary land use in the Town of Star Prairie that will continue to occupy a significant part of the landscape. These areas include existing agricultural lands with soils classified by the Natural Resources Soil Conservation Service capability classifications as I, II or III, existing farms, and the majority of the land zoned Exclusive Ag. It also includes publicly-owned waterfowl production areas and areas adjacent to these areas to allow for expansion. It is characterized by large scale agriculture operations, hobby/small-scale farms and very low-density, small-lot rural residential development that is compatible with the agricultural activity and that does not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. It will generally include the Star Prairie flats area, in the northwest portion of the town, the area north of the Squaw Lake and near the Prairie Flats wildlife areas. Most of this land should be zoned Exclusive Ag, with a limited amount infilled with Ag Residential or Ag II.



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

Hobby/Small-Scale Agriculture (2500 remaining future acres): Very low-density, large-lot, farm-related development. These areas are compatible with existing agriculture and provide a buffer to existing residential subdivisions. They generally have excellent soils, are very good existing farms lands and are in locations that provide a good buffer to residential and/or commercial areas. These are usually 10 to 20-acre small-scale farms but may be as low as five acres. They will buffer various agricultural and open space uses from the **Mixed**

Rural and **Rural Residential** areas and transition to the **Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands** areas. The **Hobby/Small-Scale Agriculture** areas are generally in the eastern side of the town along STH 65 and south of CTH C between the residential areas and the industrial land around the airport. It will also be used to buffer the **Agricultural/Forest/Grasslands** of the Star Prairie flats from residential development and to buffer the **Commercial** area including the speedway on CTH CC. New residential subdivisions would not be appropriate in this area unless they were small groups of three to five lots. Most of this land should be zoned Ag II, with some remaining Exclusive Ag or Ag Residential depending on lot size. Tools such as a specific new zoning district, deed restrictions or conservation easements should be developed or utilized to limit further division of these sites.

Mixed Rural (3132 future acres): Medium-density, small-lot conservation design residential development that is compatible with agricultural activities and with sensitive environmental resources found throughout much of the town. This residential development does not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. For the amount of planned development in the Town, these are the locations where the development may occur but also where some type of agriculture or open space is continuing. There is some existing traditional residential development in these areas also. All new residential subdivisions in this area should be conservation design to preserve open space and rural character. Higher density development will be possible with the use of transfer of development rights from land zoned Exclusive Ag to the property in the Town



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

Water Service Area. Based on the population projections and planned development in the Town, not all these areas will be needed for rural residential development over the timeframe of this plan. These areas are generally lands presently zoned Ag Residential.

Rural Residential (2,940 existing acres, 3,859 future acres): Medium to high density, small-lot rural residential development that is

generally comprised of existing traditional residential subdivisions and new major subdivisions. Conservation design may be used in these areas to preserve environmentally sensitive resources. These areas are presently adjacent to existing residential subdivisions with existing infrastructure such as road connections and in locations where development concepts have been suggested. This development will occur through major subdivision creation. The area of the town south of CTH C and 210th Avenue should be the first area developed and it is where the town should encourage development to locate.

Government – Institutional (29 existing acres, no change): This land use area includes the new and old Town Halls, town boat landings, state, county and local parks and the federal lands that make up the Prairie Flats North and South Waterfowl Production Areas. Expansion of those existing uses has been identified as the future land use.

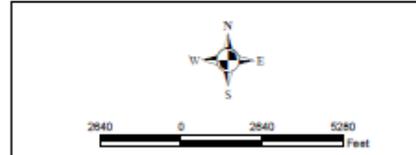
Commercial (166 existing acres, 58 future acres): Infill commercial development that is compatible with and supports the agricultural economy or rural character of the Town of Star Prairie and that does not negatively impact prime farmland, environmental areas, drainage areas or waterways. Additional commercial development should generally be located at the new diamond interchange of STH 35/64 and 110th Street and along STH 65 north of New Richmond to 210th Street. Existing commercial sites may show some expansion but only if it is not in conflict with other surrounding land uses. No other new areas of commercial development are encouraged or planned. Generally large-scale or high-density commercial development should be located within or adjacent to the City of New Richmond or Villages of Somerset or Star Prairie where urban sewer and water services are present.

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

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

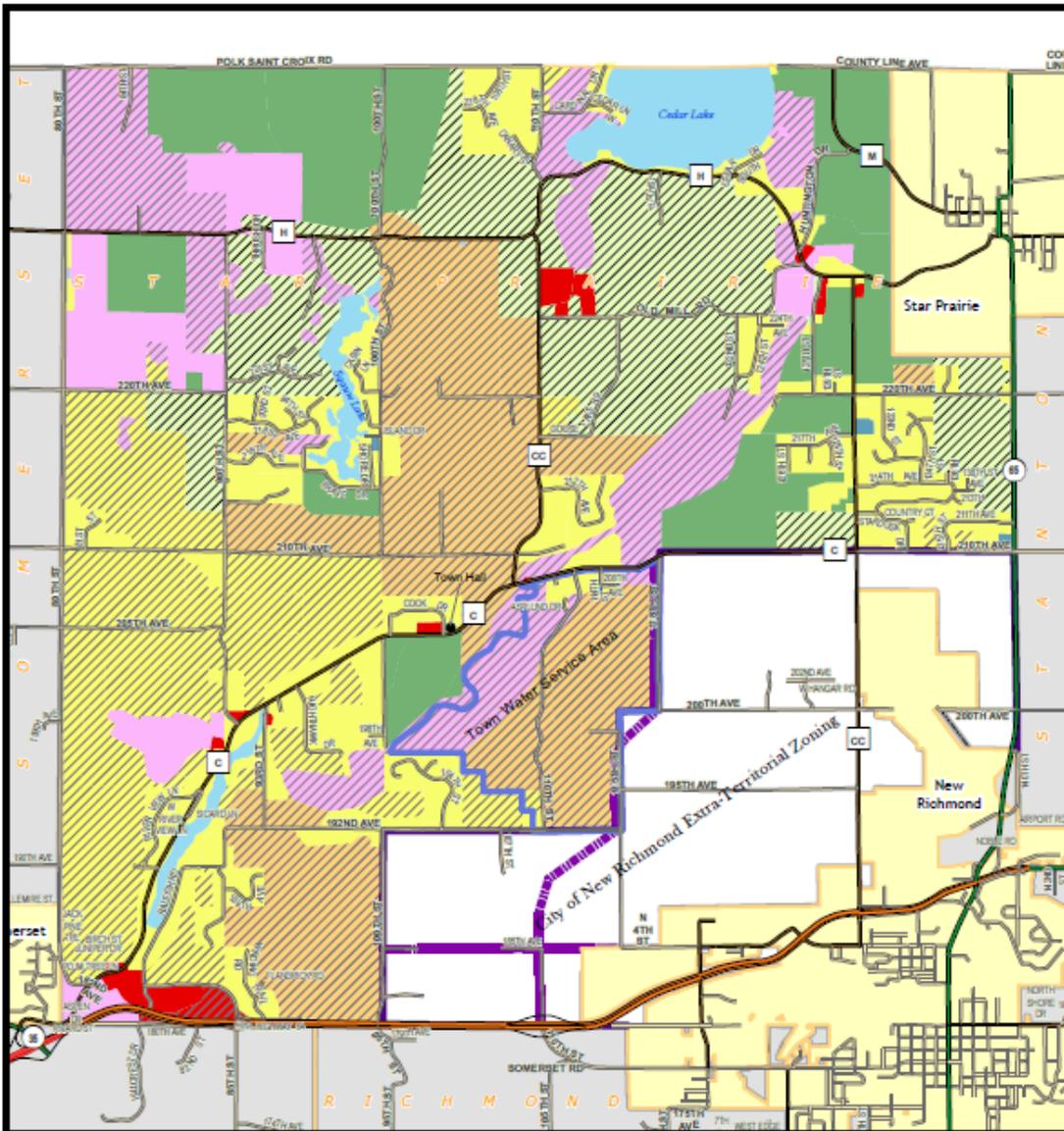
Future Land Use Town of Star Prairie, St. Croix County, WI

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  Mixed Rural / Conservation Design Residential |
|  Hobby / Small Scale Ag |  Rural Residential |
|  Open Space |  Commercial |
|  Surface Water |  Institutional |
|  FUTURE |  Industrial |
|  Water Service Area |  Utilities |
|  Watermain | |
|  Boundary Agreement Area | |
|  Proposed Road | |



Amended: 6/28/2016
St. Croix County Community Development

Note: This map is for general reference and general planning purposes only. It is not intended for detailed site planning.



IMPLEMENTATION

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

PLAN ADOPTION

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

CONSISTENCY OF PLAN ELEMENTS

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

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Implementation Schedules – 2010 to 2025 Town of Star Prairie

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Complete planned recreational facilities at the new town hall.	2010-2011
2. Adopt an ordinance to create a Town Park Committee to recommend park acquisitions, development activities and recreational facilities.	2012
3. Work with St. Croix County Emergency Management to identify emergency siren coverage areas. As needed, provide an additional emergency warning siren to serve the western portion of the Town of Star Prairie.	2010-2012
4. Explore various uses at the old town hall and develop an operational plan for it.	2010-2012
5. Identify storm shelters for residents, mobile home parks or campgrounds, execute formal agreements for shelter use and use local media and park or campground owners to help educate residents on availability.	2012
6. Provide appropriate services for town residents, including public road maintenance and snow plowing on town roads, emergency services (fire, police, ambulance), recycling, spring clean up and satellite law enforcement.	Ongoing
7. Consider the goals, objectives and policies of this plan, as well as the general welfare of all residents, to determine whether new town services or expansions may be appropriate in the future.	Ongoing

UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
8. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset, City of New Richmond, St. Croix County, state agencies and local organizations to develop, provide and support recreational facilities and opportunities within the town.	Ongoing
9. Support St. Croix County's efforts to create an assessor's plat of the Huntingdon area to clarify legal descriptions of parcels. This will facilitate improvements for recreational use of the County's Apple River property.	Ongoing
10. Established a 200-foot no construction buffer around any landfills in the town to allow for the expansion of methane gas underground and prevent contact with that gas.	Ongoing
11. Support efforts by St. Croix County and the Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust to connect the Apple River Property and McMurtrie Preserve through a walking easement along Cedar Creek.	Ongoing
12. Encourage property owners to test their drinking water annually or at least once every three years. Water testing kits are available at the County Planning and Zoning Department, Hudson; Land & Water Conservation Department, Baldwin; Public Health Department, New Richmond; or through private labs. A fee may apply.	Ongoing
TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Adopt an official map for the Town of Star Prairie to assist in planning for, designating and protecting roadway corridors for planned road extensions and to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	2010-2011
2. Regularly review, expand and revise the future road plan map for the town to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	2010-2020
3. Designate specific town and county roadways for bicycle traffic and improve designated bicycle routes with wide, signed shoulders or off-road bike paths, based on the Future Bike System map in this plan.	2010-2020
4. Work with St. Croix County, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, landowners and private developers to limit development and access along State Trunk Highways 64 and 65 to help preserve them as throughways and scenic image corridors. Do not limit access over or under those highways.	Ongoing
5. Pursue a bicycle/pedestrian crossing over the Apple River at 185 th Street extended and Raleigh Road and connecting to CTH C.	Ongoing
6. Work with the City of New Richmond and the Multi-Purpose Pathway Committee to coordinate and sign bicycle/pedestrian routes into and out of the City of New Richmond.	Ongoing
7. Work with St. Croix County to update, as necessary, standards for development of local and county roads to safely serve multiple functions while retaining rural character.	Ongoing
8. Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards.	Ongoing
HOUSING ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Develop information to notify property owners and developers that development located within three nautical miles of the airport will need to meet height limitations and building construction standards for insulation and sound reduction. These sites may be required to have deed restrictions acknowledging the airport and its related noise impacts.	2010-2012
2. Develop a town land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Guide the location of future residential development and protect important features of the natural environment without making existing houses nonconforming whenever possible.	2010-2012

HOUSING ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
Promote conservation design development to preserve the rural character of the community while continuing to enable rural residential development and provide services in a cost-effective manner.	2010-2012
Set standards for conservation design development, conventional development and development in the Boundary Agreement Area.	2010-2012
3. Develop town land use regulations regarding manufactured or mobile home development to bring it into compliance with the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	2010-2012
4. Explore options to provide senior housing opportunities in the Boundary Agreement Area at densities greater than one single-family unit per acre and more than four attached, single-family units.	2010-2012
5. To ensure high quality construction, require all housing construction to comply with the State of Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code.	Ongoing
6. Work with St. Croix County to update the County's land use regulations regarding manufactured or mobile home standards to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	Ongoing
7. Coordinate with St. Croix County to pursue grant funding for anchoring older mobile or manufactured homes.	Ongoing
8. Work with St. Croix County to maintain property to ensure a high-quality living environment within all residential areas and to address violations of applicable land use ordinances on residential, commercial or industrial properties.	Ongoing
9. Review county land use regulations regarding lot size and density standards for multi-family housing, suggest changes if needed to meet the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	Ongoing
10. Work with St. Croix County to improve or expand St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding property maintenance and nuisance issues such as junk vehicles and dilapidated buildings.	Ongoing
11. Work with St. Croix County to expand the St. Croix County Animal Waste and the Zoning ordinances to regulate large-scale farms near existing residences.	Ongoing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Research and develop a site plan review process to identify minimum standards for commercial and industrial sites. These could include all commercial and industrial development in the Town but flexibility should be allowed to address the concerns of existing businesses. Encourage St. Croix County to adopt the same requirements/regulations in the zoning ordinance.	2011-2012
Commercial and industrial site plans should include sidewalks, parking preferably behind buildings and parking lot landscaping standards, including landscaped islands or rain gardens within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt.	2011-2012
Business signage, landscaping and lighting that is compatible with Star Prairie's rural character. Lighting should be shielded and downward directed with no spillover onto neighboring properties and should have specific illumination timeframes to maintain dark skies. Landscaping and screening should include visual screening standards and setback buffers between residential and industrial or commercial land uses.	2010-2012
2. Work with the villages of Star Prairie and Somerset and the City of New Richmond to encourage high density residential, commercial and industrial development requiring a higher level of services to locate in these municipalities.	Ongoing
3. Work with St. Croix Economic Development Corporation to assist in locating potential new businesses.	Ongoing
4. Promote higher quality development and minimize the negative impacts of commercial and industrial development in the Town through the use of restrictive covenants, zoning restrictions and design standards.	Ongoing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
5. Ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within Environmentally Sensitive Areas by placing environmentally sensitive areas in conservancy zoning. Environmentally sensitive features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership.	Ongoing
6. Commercial and industrial development should be designed with consideration of the parkways that this plan identifies along the Town's primary drainage corridors, which include the Apple River, Willow River, Cedar Creek, Squaw Lake, Cedar Lake, Strand Lake and Hatfield Lake. Where appropriate, the Town should require the dedication of land for trails or parks before approving development proposals.	Ongoing
AGRICULTURAL ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Require that new residents receive a copy of the 'Rural Living Guide' that outlines the traditional community norms and expectations for rural residents. Develop a Rural Living Guide insert and provide copies to all new residents as part of the building permit / inspection process.	2010-Ongoing
2. Work with St. Croix County to implement buffer zones around agriculture preservation areas through amendments to the county zoning ordinance.	2010-2012
3. Develop and support policies that strengthen and maintain a farm operator's right to farm with farm practices that do not threaten public health or safety.	2010-2012
4. Develop a land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Restrict residential and commercial development to areas least suited for agricultural purposes because it is unproductive soils, there is no history of farming or it is inaccessible.	2010-2012
Direct development away from environmentally sensitive areas and productive farm and forest lands.	2010-2012
Promote conservation design development as a method to preserve open agricultural ground.	2010-2012
5. Implement and enforce the road and driveway ordinance to regulate any change to an existing driveway or creation of a new driveway and implement town road construction standards.	Ongoing
6. Support exclusive agriculture zoning, agricultural enterprise area designation and other land use measures, which discourage non-farm development in identified Agricultural Preservation Areas, specifically the Star Prairie Flats in sections 4, 5, 6, & 7, the west half of section 14 and the east half of section 15 up to the Apple River, and the west half of section 1 and east half of section 2.	Ongoing
7. Notify all new building applicants about the Right to Farm Law and that this is a farming area with associated smell, noise, and dust.	Ongoing
8. Encourage St. Croix County to study a voluntary purchase of development rights program.	Ongoing
NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	TIMEFRAME
1. Develop a land division ordinance to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan: Guide the location and design of development to minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, woodlands, prairie and agriculture.	2010-2012
Discourage and where possible, prevent the altering of wetlands and floodplains by filling or developing.	2010-2012
Delineate, refine and protect "environmental corridors" as a composite of Star Prairie's most sensitive natural areas.	2010-2012
Protect and restore natural shoreline areas in the town.	2010-2012

NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
	Encourage conservation design development for sites with unique or exceptional natural resources such as surface water, wetlands, steep slopes, or highly productive agricultural soils.	2010-2012
2.	Research and review options to develop incentives and/or acquire land or easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas.	2010-2012
3.	Research and review options for implementing a buffer zone around public lands to mitigate conflicts between property owners and citizens utilizing public lands for recreation. Such a zone could be created with a principal structure setback of 150 feet from the lot line on properties adjacent to publicly-owned lands.	2010-2012
4.	Work with other local, state, county and federal agencies to improve water quality in the most impacted watersheds, especially Squaw Lake and the Apple River.	Ongoing
5.	Coordinate and work with other governmental and private agencies such as the Squaw Lake Management District, Cedar Lake Rehabilitation District, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust, WDNR, Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to protect natural resources, especially those that cross political boundaries such as rivers.	Ongoing
6.	Support and work with the county on slope disturbance standards. Development should only be allowed on steep slopes with a grade from 12 to 20 percent where best management practices for erosion and sediment control and storm water management can be implemented successfully.	Ongoing
CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Support the designation of 110 th Street and Old Mill Road as rustic roads to be added to the state's rustic road system.	2010-2012
2.	Maintain an inventory of historic, archaeological and scenic resources.	Ongoing
3.	Provide the inventory for reference and discussion before and during consideration of land development proposals.	Ongoing
4.	Encourage private landowners to protect and, if necessary, rehabilitate identified cultural, historic, archeological and scenic resources when specific sites are proposed for development.	Ongoing
5.	Support the New Richmond Preservation Society as a local repository for historical materials; also encourage residents to donate items to the historic materials repository that the society maintains.	Ongoing
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS		TIMEFRAME
1.	Provide a copy of this comprehensive plan to all surrounding local governments.	2010
2.	Develop and implement boundary and annexation agreements with the City of New Richmond and villages of Somerset and Star Prairie.	2010-2012
3.	Work with St. Croix County, adjacent towns and the regional planning commission to identify and resolve actual and potential conflicts between the Town Plan and other plans through open dialog, cooperative initiatives, and amendments to the Town of Star Prairie Plan where appropriate.	Ongoing
4.	Coordinate, cooperate and communicate with surrounding municipalities, state and federal agencies and St. Croix County to implement the goals, objectives and policies of this plan.	Ongoing
5.	Monitor changes to state and county regulations to ensure compliance with the goals, objectives and policies of this plan	Ongoing

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

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

PLAN MONITORING, AMENDMENTS AND UPDATE

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

PROCEDURES

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

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

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

APPENDIX

Town of Star Prairie Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Plan

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adapted from the *International Association for Public Participation*

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

Stage 1: Start-up

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

Stage 2: Issues and Opportunities

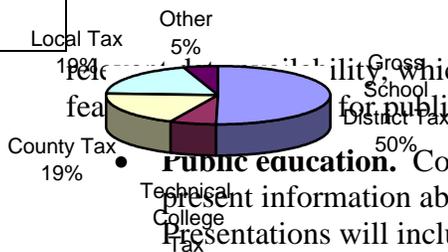
The Town will organize an **Issues and Opportunities Workshop** to which the public will be invited through a direct mailing to all town residents. This activity is an example of public interaction. Participants will identify and prioritize those issues and opportunities that they believe ought be addressed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

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

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

Stage 3: Plan Elements

As the various elements of the comprehensive plan are drafted, three open houses will be scheduled for public participation. The topics of each open house will depend on the actual sequence of completion of the draft elements. That sequence will be dependent on the timing of



ity, which is not yet known. The open house format will be designed to provide for public education, public input, and public interaction.

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

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

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

Stage 4: Plan Review and Adoption

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

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

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