

Chapter 1 - Issues and Opportunities

The previous “Preface” Section of this Comprehensive Plan identified many of the drivers which facilitated the need to update the Comprehensive Plan. However, there are many external forces at play that will have an impact on future growth within the Town as well. The following forecasted trends may present issues and opportunities for the Town.

1.1 Forecasted Trends that may Impact Rural Development Patterns

The financial impacts of the recent recession have left scars on the investment community’s willingness to pursue larger development projects. Recent housing trend data from the American Planning Association suggest less demand for rural single family type housing in exchange for more concentrated, neighborhood type housing. As generations become less connected to the land, they will seek housing opportunities that will allow them to be in close proximity to services, social activities, schools, employment and other support functions. As the baby boomer generation ages, they will also desire to be closer to essential services and medical facilities. In addition, volatile and usually high gasoline prices appear to be a deterrent to living longer distances from employment. Also, as the duration of employment at one company continues to falls (averaging less than six years in tenure), the ability to move more easily from one housing location to another will become even more attractive, especially for single-family households.

Since early settlement, the economic base of the Town has been farming. Even though active farming operations continue to exist, towns experienced some urbanization due to the decline in family owned farms and increased interest in rural subdivisions. While that trend was expected to continue, the recession of 2008 changed that. In fact, recent research and trends seem to indicate less ambition for future home buyers to travel longer distances between home and work opportunities. National data obtained through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) indicates a growing number of youth are less interested in obtaining a driver’s license. In 2011, the percentage of 16-to-24 year olds with driver’s licenses dipped to another new low. Just over two-thirds of young Americans (67 percent) were licensed to drive in 2011, based on the latest data from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and population estimates from the Census Bureau, that’s the lowest percentage since 1963.

There has been lots of speculation about why fewer young people are getting driver’s licenses (and why even those who do have them seem to be driving less). Is it the economy which has been particularly brutal for young people lately? Is it the cost of gas and vehicle ownership? Is it because young people are too busy cuddling with their iPhones and iPads to get behind the wheel? The bottom line is the “Millennial” generations are not that into cars as past generations. The transportation behaviors of the Millennials are doubly important because there are so many of them. The youth driving decline now is remarkable since there are now more teenagers and young adults in America than there have been in years. Since 1992, America has gained more than 7.3 million 16-to-24 year olds — an increase of 22 percent — but has added only 1.2 million 16-to-24 year old *drivers*.

Another trend that may impact housing development within rural towns is the impact of the “Baby Boomer” generation (those people born between 1946 and 1964), on the future housing market. In the coming years, baby boomers will be moving on and will likely want to sell their homes to move closer to services and medical arrangements. Like any seller, they will be hoping there are people behind them to buy their homes. If there’s 1.5 to 2 million homes coming on the market every year at the end of this decade from senior households selling off, who will be behind them to buy? The answer is likely not enough buyers for the amount of homes on the market.

According to data from the American Housing Survey, from 1989 and 2009, 80 percent of new homes built in that era were detached single-family homes. A third of them were larger than 2,500 square feet. Forty (40) percent were built on lots of half an acre to 10 acres in size. This source predicts that 74 percent of new housing demand will come from the people who bought these traditional homes, now empty-nesters, wanting to downsize.

It is likely, a vast majority of today's households with children still want traditional sized houses. However, it is projected that about a quarter of the buyers will want something else, like condos, rental units and urban townhouses. Historically, that demand was very low, near zero percent in some regions. This is a small share but still a huge shift within the housing market. This trend may lead to why many baby boomers may not find buyers for their homes at the prices they wish to receive.

Both the youth travel and housing market trends cited above work together. To get to most of the homes that will hit the market, motorized travel will be required. Add to this the fact that a portion of the upcoming home buyers will still want to build new. However, this percentage will likely decrease as well. Why? The cost to build versus buying an existing house in an already flooded home market will likely make building a new home a lesser value. There are recent data to suggest this trend may be stabilizing as the amount of existing homes on the market have declined due to the fact that few new homes have been built since the recession. Also, agricultural land prices are still at an all-time high and few professionals project this trend to change as populations in developing countries grow increasing the demand for food. This means the cost to develop subdivisions within rural areas will be even more costly, especially in areas of active farming where the demand for farm land is high.

Although the above trends seem more national, than local, they will likely play a factor in the demand for new housing developments in rural towns such as Watertown, especially those not adjacent employment centers. All things considered, it is likely the most towns will not experience the same amount of new residential growth which occurred in the early to mid-2000's until these developing trends change.

1.2 Background Information

This plan element is also a compilation of current background information necessary to provide a description of the socioeconomic characteristics in the Town.

The following analysis is based on Tables 100 through 115, which can be found in the back of this Plan as an appendix. It must be further noted that the statistics upon which the analysis is based are from the 2010 United States Census, the latest available data.

The Town of Watertown is primarily an agricultural community. Residents enjoy a rural living environment in close proximity to urban services found in the City of Watertown and the Village of Johnson Creek. The town consists of approximately 24,000 acres and has a population of 1,975, according to the 2010 census.

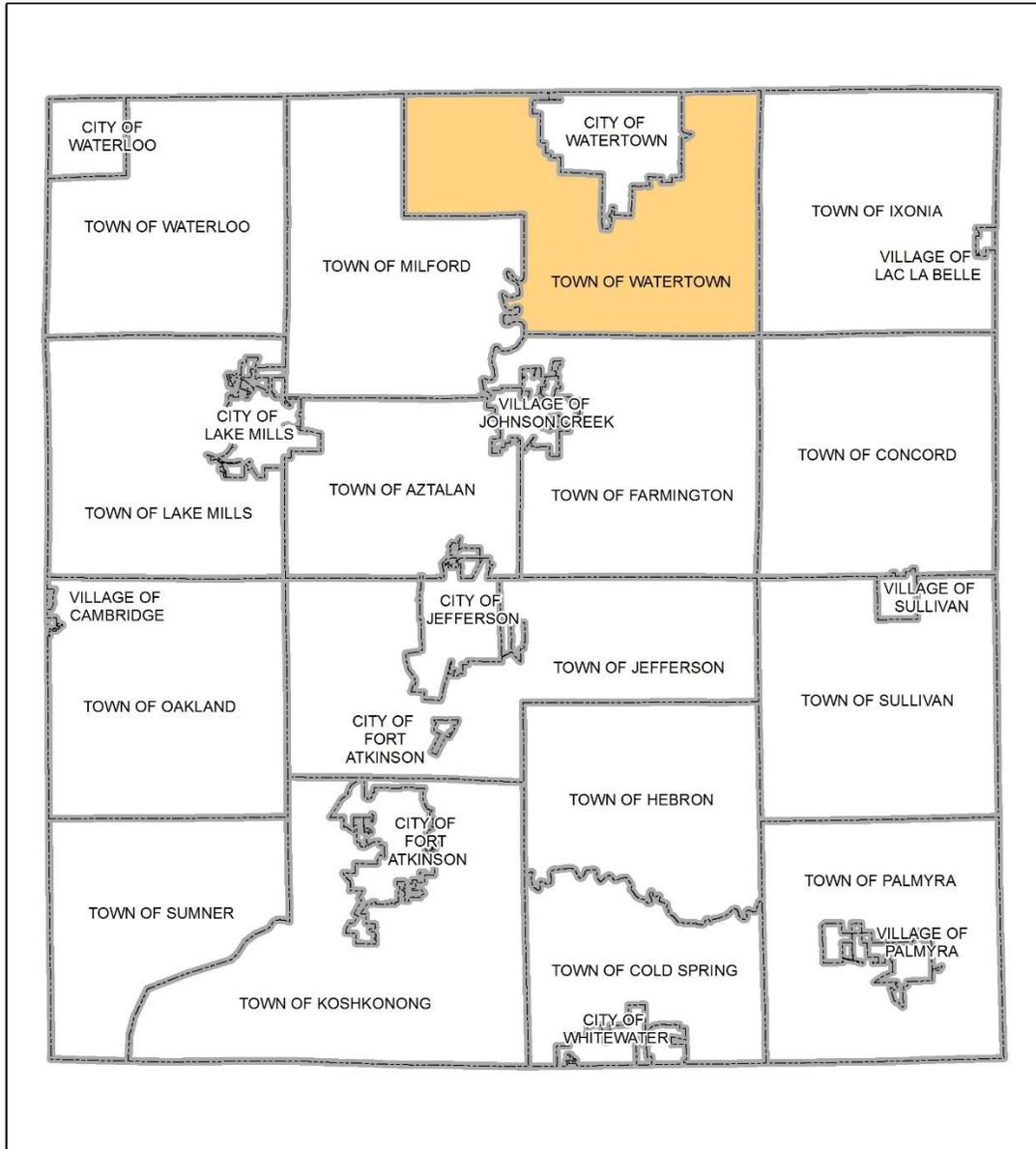
Nearly 65% (15,627 acres) of town land is being used for agricultural purposes. This is down over 5% since the last planning effort conducted in 2003. The primary reason was the amount of agricultural land consumed for the construction of the Hwy 26 By-Pass and interchange facilities. Approximately 23% (5,572 acres) of the town consists of woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, surface water and other open space areas. Intensive uses such as residential, commercial, industrial and transportation properties make up the remaining 12% (2,893 acres)

of land uses in the town. Major natural resource features include rolling hills and large blocks of environmental corridors, mostly associated with wetland areas, intermittent streams, and the Rock River corridor.

The town has had relatively slow to stable growth throughout its history. Given the development trends noted above in conjunction with the town's interest in preserving the agricultural base, the trend of stable to slow growth will continue.

Regional Setting

The Town of Watertown is located in the north-central portion of Jefferson County, Wisconsin and surrounds the southern half of the City of Watertown. The town is bounded by the Town of Emmet, which is in Dodge County to the north, the Town of Ixonia to the east, the Town of Farmington to the south, and the Town of Milford to the west (Map 1-1).



The base map was created with data from Jefferson County Land Information Office who in no event assumes any liability regarding fitness of use of the information and any application by others, is the responsibility of the user.

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Planning
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Town of Watertown

Jefferson County, Wisconsin

Location Map

Map 1-1

1.3 Land Use Trends and Predictions

The following land use trends and predictions are based on local, regional or statewide trend data. These trends or growth pressures identify the characteristics which are likely to be experienced within the town throughout the planning period. These trends should be viewed as the forces the town must be prepared to address over the next several years.

1. Persons per household ratios are expected to continue to decline.
2. The demand for commercial and industrial development is expected to remain low in the town. However, the demand for agricultural related business or general business that may need agricultural type buildings, may increase.
3. The town will likely experience an increase in the development of home occupational businesses.
4. The predominant land use throughout the town will continue to be cropped farmland.
5. Demand for commercial development will increase, especially at the interchanges associated with the STH 26 bypass.
6. The City of Watertown and Village of Johnson Creek will continue to grow and the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City and Village will overlap resulting in opportunities for joint planning and intergovernmental cooperation.
7. There is an increased likelihood that farm consolidation will be experienced in the town, resulting in fewer, but larger farms.
8. It is likely that the scale of animal feedlot operations will increase as farms expand to remain competitive.
9. The town will experience increased traffic use and weight loads on local roads resulting in additional road maintenance and construction costs.
10. The Rock River will continue to need protection from nonpoint and point sources of pollution.
11. Town residents will continue to demand local services such as fire and police protection, emergency rescue, garbage collection and recycling.
12. The town's primary housing stock will remain single-family residential.
13. The town's river front, woodland, and highland areas could be highly desired for residential development.
14. Desire to live in a rural setting and short commuting times to urban centers will continue to make the town an attractive place for residential development.
15. City of Watertown and Village of Johnson Creek will continue to review annexation petitions for expansion of their respective communities.

16. Potential growth in organic or "hobby" type farming and agricultural related uses.
17. There will be growth in the amount of land purchased for recreational purposes.

1.4 Public Participation Efforts

Public Participation Plan

The comprehensive plan update effort was led by the seven person Town Plan Commission. A total of 6 Plan Commission meetings were held to update the plan.

The Plan Commission followed the requirements of the adopted Public Participation Plan which is found in Appendix A. The comprehensive plan update process included two public informational meetings and a community survey administered through the outreach tool called "Survey Monkey". In addition, the Town of Watertown maintained a town web site that hosted plan updates and provided a comment box. The two meetings and survey are summarized as follows:

Public Informational Meeting #1. (August 22, 2016)

The first public informational meeting was held at the town hall and was designed to introduce the public to the planning process. The meeting included a presentation by the Town's planning consultant, Martenson & Eisele, Inc. The presentation included details on the planning process and also presented data on recent trends which occurred since the previous planning effort.

In addition, the audience of approximately 50 people, were introduced to the Survey Monkey tool and shown how to connect and fill out the on-line survey hosted on the town's web site. Finally, large scale wall sized maps were available for review by the public. The audience was asked to make any notations they felt necessary to the maps.

Community Survey Results (2016)

The on-line community survey was completed by 22 town residents. Although not an overwhelming response, the respondents provided good direction on a number of different topics and directives. The complete survey results can be found in Appendix B. In summary, it appears respondents were more supportive of agricultural related commercial activities over general commercial but still want some control of things like landscaping, lighting and exterior appearance. Commercial uses along the Hwy 16 & 26 corridors received support. Motorized vehicle trail use was not supported at the same level of non-motorized use. Nonetheless, the Planning Commission feels ATV use for farm purposes needs to be supported by the Town. Support for tiny homes was split and is likely due to the novelty of the use. The Planning Commission still feels tiny homes in certain situations may have a place in the Town. The Towns road maintenance program rated a bit lower than expected but how to improve is limited by funding. Also, some felt the responses could be impacted by where the respondent lived. From a regulation stand point, the respondents felt that County Zoning is going well and no change is needed. Executing an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Watertown was supported by respondents but the Planning Commission questioned why the City would have any motivation for an agreement.

Public Informational Meeting #2. March 28, 2017

The second public informational meeting was held at the town hall and included a presentation by the Town's planning consultant, Martenson & Eisele, Inc. The presentation included details on the planning process and also presented plan changes and recommendations.

Previous Public Outreach Efforts

It must be noted that the original comprehensive planning effort included a number of public outreach efforts as well. Although, the results are not recent, they still provide some insight on how residents viewed the state of the town. These results can be obtained by reviewing the original comprehensive plan document adopted in 2003.

SWOT Analysis

One input effort worth repeating within this plan update were the results of a SWOT analysis completed by a Public Advisory Committee on August 16, 2000. A SWOT Analysis is a brainstorming session that allows for quick identification of a community's basic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relative to future growth and development. Many of these statements are as applicable today as they were in the Year 2000. The SWOT statements are identified below:

Strengths

- Good location (proximity to: Madison/Milwaukee, Johnson Creek and Watertown services/shopping/events, Oconomowoc (lakes).
- Rural character.
- Moderately strict county land use plan.
- Nature-type environment: Rock River, wildlife, hunting, fishing.
- Financially sound.
- Good town government; progressive; listens to people.
- Jefferson County Zoning.
- Newsletter: has good impact on the town.
- Recreation opportunities: biking, hiking, "ride in the country".
- Home of farm economy.
- I94/Hwy 26/Hwy 16 access.
- Responsible.
- Topography (rolling hills, valleys, marsh).
- Wisconsin Electric Power Plant.
- Superb school system.
- Local land trust/started local PDR program.
- People of the township.
- Good roads.
- Oxygen-producing green space.
- Animal husbandry (dairy, sheep, horses, chickens, etc.).
- Diversified Christian base (Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, etc.).
- Great PAC that is informed on land use.
- Planner that is familiar with rural perspective in land use planning.
- Planning team with attitude towards success. A precedent set: Intergovernmental Land Use Agreement with neighboring municipalities.
- County-wide GIS mapping and other background inventory completed. Dane County's 10-year, \$4.3 million land protection program.

Weaknesses

- Inability to prevent annexation/relationship with city of Watertown/proximity to city of Watertown and village of Johnson Creek/A city (Watertown) that is working aggressively to better its position/weak role of town in working with incorporated municipalities.
- Apathy on part of residents/lack of participation.
- Location between Waukesha and Dane counties.
- Lack of citizen skill commitment (i.e., grant writing).
- Lack of understanding of agricultural elements on part of most residents new to the area. Generally uninformed, uneducated public.
- Lack of consensus on town goals.
- Rural property owners willing to sell for big \$\$/Lack of resident commitment to protect resources.
- Current lack of plan development.
- No senior citizen town meetings.
- No youth programs.
- Lack of control over zoning in town.
- Resentment of newcomers.
- Tax base erosion.
- Lack of income-generating vehicle (social) to reduce tax.
- Reliance on Ixonia and Watertown for services.

Opportunities

- Seek new agricultural endeavors (non-dairy, non-row crop) to backfill as dairy leaves in order to maintain strong agricultural base.
- Enact restrictions to maintain rural quality of life/pleasing landscape for residents. Create greenspace that will be much valued as Chicago/Milwaukee/Madison merge.
- Create/maintain balance of industry/development/agriculture.
- Control tax increase through grant application process.
- Opportunities to use conservation easements as a mechanism to halt city growth along a chosen urban boundary.
- Rock River Corridor.
- Do good planning/develop good town plan.
- Promote countryside as valuable to city residents (hiking, biking, food production). Town golf course.
- Create town event (i.e., Riverfest) to generate income.
- Create environment where encroaching cities will find it in their best interest to have our plan work.
- If USH 26 expansion is enumerated for a west (or east) bypass alternative, could use as a bartering chip for concessions from city for a growth boundary, PDR/TDR program.
- Environmental protection opportunities (wetlands, habitat, etc.) "create value".
- Restrict development (cost control on secondary cost burdens, i.e., schools, roads, sewer and water).
- Reach into cyberspace for assistance (problem is not unique).
- Insurance for landowners who (eventually) need to sell.
- Historical funding opportunities due to German/Irish history and buildings.
- PDR program to preserve farmland and ESA's.
- Intergovernmental Land Use Agreement (IGLUA) with city of Watertown and village of Johnson Creek.

Threats

- City of Watertown/Village of Johnson Creek annexation.

- Hwy 26 bypass/upgrade.
- Loss of open space, farmland, habitat, hunting opportunities, quality of life, farming abilities.
- Development threat to agriculture (residential and commercial)/poorly planned and restricted development.
- 3-mile extraterritorial zoning.
- Demands of newcomers.
- Well load consumption (better septic consumes marginal wetlands).
- Taxes: school, development (sewer, water, etc.)

Vision Statement

The following vision statement was prepared by the Town of Watertown Public Advisory Committee (PAC) to serve as a guide throughout the planning process when making decisions concerning land use. This vision statement continues to be supported as part of the plan update effort:

We want to maintain a pleasant rural atmosphere with forests and farms, marshes and hills; traditional and progressive farming activities; clean rivers, streams and wetlands; fresh air and quiet evenings; and familiar faces to work and play with. Expecting some residential growth and rural type business uses, it is our goal to maintain a place of natural beauty, and conserve and protect our natural resources and land values. Utilization of smart growth controls will help to protect the town's rural character, and diverse agriculture economy.

1.5 Demographics

Population change is the primary component in tracking a community's past growth as well as predicting future population trends. Population characteristics relate directly to the town's housing, educational, utility, community, and recreational facility needs, as well as its future economic development. In addition, a town's commitment to farmland preservation can impact the amount available for future development. Over time there may be fluctuations in the local and regional economy which can influence population change. In addition, events such as annexation can significantly impact a community's population base.

Population Change

**Table 1-1
Population Trends
Town of Watertown
1970-2010**

Census Count					# Change			
1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-10
1,671	1,921	1,840	1,876	1,975	250	(81)	36	99

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1970-2010.

Table 1-1 displays the population trends for the Town of Watertown from 1970 through 2010. The town has experienced fluctuating levels over the forty year period. The town reached a high in 1980 with 1,921 persons, but then declined by 81 persons by 1990. The town experienced a 36 person increase during the 1990s to reach the 2000 count of 1,876 persons. The town continued to grow from 2000 to 2010, and currently is documented as having the highest population for the town since 1970.

Comparative Population Counts

Table 1-2 presents a comparison of Watertown's population from 1970 to 2015 to the city of Watertown, Jefferson County, and the state of Wisconsin. Similarly, Figure 1-1 depicts the comparative percent population change during this period for the selected areas.

**Table 1-2
Comparative Population Change
Town of Watertown and Selected Areas**

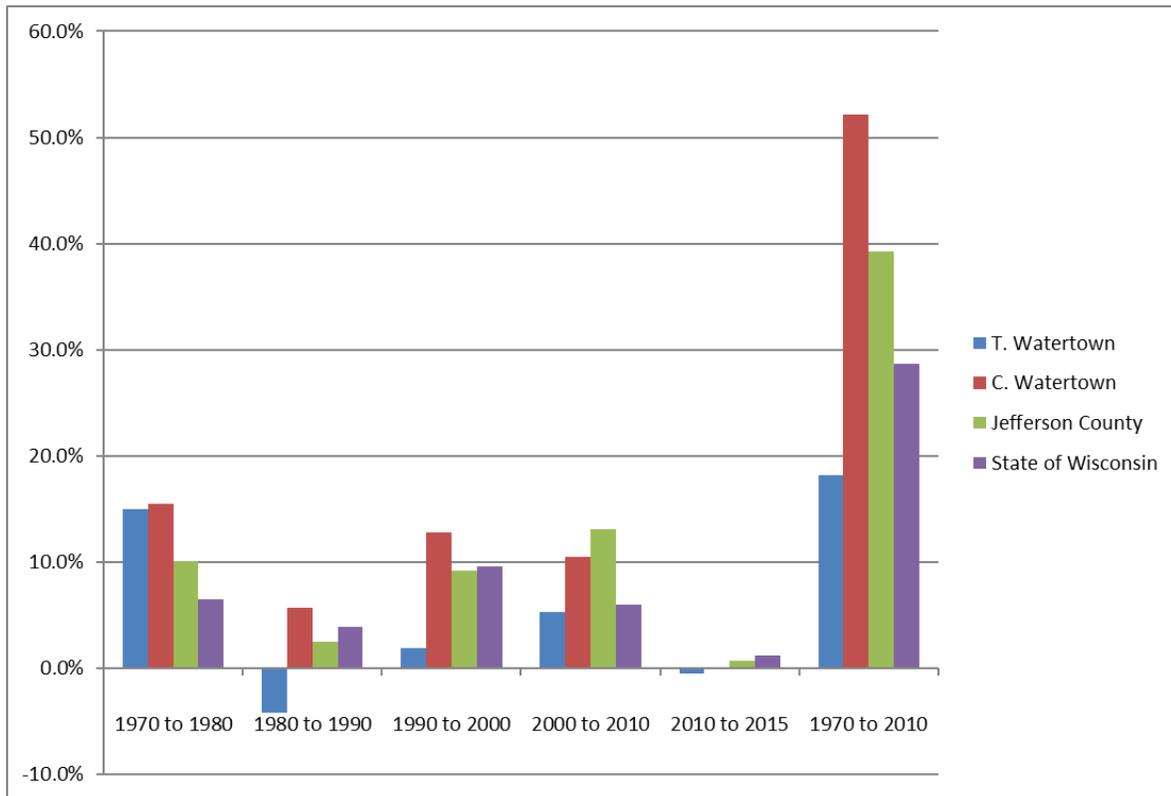
	T. Watertown	C. Watertown	Jefferson County	State of Wisconsin
1970	1,671	15,683	60,060	4,417,821
1980	1,921	18,113	66,152	4,705,642
1990	1,840	19,142	67,783	4,891,769
2000	1,876	21,598	74,021	5,363,675
2010	1,975	23,861	83,686	5,686,986
2015*	1,966	23,864	84,255	5,753,324
Percent Change				
1970 to 1980	15.0%	15.5%	10.1%	6.5%
1980 to 1990	-4.2%	5.7%	2.5%	4.0%
1990 to 2000	2.0%	12.8%	9.2%	9.6%
2000 to 2010	5.3%	10.5%	13.1%	6.0%
2010 to 2015	-0.5%	0.0%	0.7%	1.2%
1970 to 2010	18.2%	52.1%	39.3%	28.7%
1970 to 2015	17.7%	52.2%	40.3%	30.2%

* Estimate by Wisconsin Department of Administration

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970-2010. *Population estimate completed by Wisconsin Department of Administration.
Note: Population for the City of Watertown includes portions from both Jefferson County and Dodge County.

Between the years of 1970 to 1980, the Town and City of Watertown and Jefferson County experienced similar increases in growth trends at a rate of 10% to 15%. All areas increased at a higher percentage than the state for the period. From 1980 to 1990, the Town of Watertown had a decrease in population while all other areas grew at a moderate rate. In the 1990s the town rebounded slightly from its decline in the 1980s, however other areas experienced growth at a rate much higher than the town. For the entire 45 year period shown, the city of Watertown increased in population at the greatest rate. The county and the state had very similar growth rates for the period, and the Town of Watertown increased the least.

**Figure 1-1
Comparative Population Change
Town of Watertown and Selected Areas
1970-2010**



Source: U.S. Census 1970-2010

Age Distribution

Table 1-3 displays the distribution of the population by age groups for 2000 and 2010 within Watertown. A shifting age structure affects a variety of services and needs within the community including housing, elderly care, and schools.

**Table 1-3
Population by Age Cohort
Town of Watertown**

	T. Watertown				Jefferson County				Wisconsin			
	2000 No.	%	2010 No.	%	2000 No.	%	2010 No.	%	2000 No.	%	2010 No.	%
< 10 years old	238	12.7%	192	9.7%	9,717	13.1%	10,825	12.9%	721,824	13.5%	727,060	12.8%
10 - 19	278	14.8%	309	15.6%	10,967	14.8%	12,185	14.6%	810,269	15.1%	775,136	13.6%
20 - 29	184	9.8%	154	7.8%	8,966	12.1%	10,380	12.4%	691,205	12.9%	758,899	13.3%
30 - 39	286	15.2%	199	10.1%	11,672	15.8%	10,504	12.6%	807,510	15.1%	694,675	12.2%
40 - 49	306	16.3%	339	17.2%	11,779	15.9%	12,183	14.6%	837,960	15.6%	817,965	14.4%
50 - 59	258	13.8%	326	16.5%	8,491	11.5%	11,896	14.2%	587,355	11.0%	822,112	14.5%
60 - 69	198	10.6%	264	13.4%	5,514	7.4%	8,106	9.7%	387,118	7.2%	540,854	9.5%
70 - 79	89	4.7%	147	7.4%	4,302	5.8%	4,594	5.5%	319,863	6.0%	314,719	5.5%
80 - 84	29	1.5%	23	1.2%	1,372	1.9%	1,515	1.8%	104,946	2.0%	117,061	2.1%
> 85 years old	10	0.5%	22	1.1%	1,241	1.7%	1,498	1.8%	95,625	1.8%	118,505	2.1%
Total Population	1,876		1,975		74,021		83,686		5,363,675		5,686,986	
Median Age	38.6		44.4		36.6		38.2		36.0		38.5	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000, 2010

The age structure appears to be relatively stable within the Town of Watertown. The under age 20 population decreased slightly from 2000 to 2010, as well as the 30 to 39 age group. However, the age groups between 40 and 79 all increased at a moderate rate. This moderate increase drove the overall median age for the town from 38.6 to 44.4, a 15 percent increase. Jefferson County and the State of Wisconsin experienced an aging population as well, but at a much slower rate than the Town of Watertown.

Education Levels

The educational attainment level of persons within a community is often an indicator of the overall income, job availability, and well-being of a community. Approximately 91% of persons age 25 and older in Watertown have attained a high school diploma or some post-secondary education. For further information on economic indicators and labor force characteristics refer to Chapter 6, Economic Development.

Income Levels

The median household income in the town was \$62,115 in 2010, this as an increase of nearly 18 percent from \$52,667 in 2000. The majority of households within the town have an income between \$50,000 and \$74,999. For further income and labor force characteristics refer to Chapter 6, Economic Development.

Employment Characteristics

Employment by industry within an area illustrates the structure of the economy. Historically, the state of Wisconsin has had a high concentration of employment in manufacturing and agricultural sectors of the economy. Recent state and national trends indicate a decreasing concentration of

employment in the manufacturing sector while employment within the services sector is increasing. This trend is partly attributed to a shift from an industrial-based to an information-based society and an aging population.

The greatest percentage of employment was found in the services segment of the economy for the Town of Watertown, Jefferson County and the State. The second greatest economic division for both communities and the county was in manufacturing. For further economic base characteristics refer to Section 6, Economic Development.

1.6 Trends and Forecasts

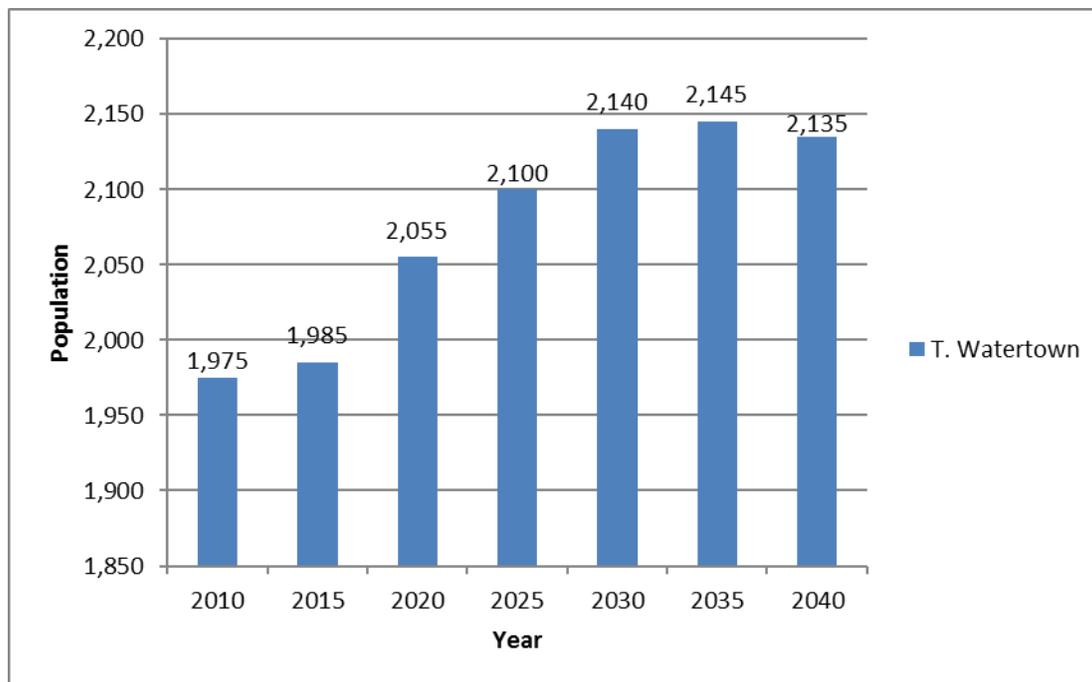
This section identifies forecasts for population, housing and the economy of Watertown for the planning period.

Population Forecasts

Population projections are based on past and current population trends and are not predictions, rather they extend past growth trends into the future, and their reliability depends on the continuation of these past growth trends. Projections should be considered as one of many tools used to help anticipate and predict future needs within the town. Population levels are subject to the town's physical conditions, environmental concerns, land use, zoning restrictions, taxation, annexation, and other political policies that influence business and personal location decisions.

The WDOA utilized a projection formula that calculates the annual population change over three varying time spans. From this formula, the average annual numerical population change is calculated, which is used to give communities preliminary population projections for a future date. As shown in Figure 1-2, the baseline projections prepared by WDOA predict a steady increase in the town's population. The 2040 projection, 2,135 persons, is an 8% increase from the 2010 population of 1,975 persons. The WDOA projections appear optimistic given recent trends that suggest the population within many rural towns is actually decreasing. Nonetheless, the WDOA projections are the most recognized source for population forecasts.

**Figure 1-2
Population Trends and WDOA Projections
Town of Watertown
2010-2040**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010; Wisconsin Department of Administration, Official Municipal Population Projections, 2015-2040.

Household Forecasts

Housing unit projections are an important element in preparing the land use plan. Specifically, they are used to allocate required acreage to accommodate future residential development, as well as prepare for the effect growth may have on the town's public facilities and services throughout the planning period. Similar to population projections, it is important to note that housing projections are based on past and current trends, and therefore should only be used as a guide for planning.

Household projections for Watertown for the planning period indicate an estimated number of households for 2040 of 880 units, a 16.7% increase from 2010. Again, the WDOA projections appear optimistic given recent trends that suggest the population within many rural towns is actually decreasing. For further housing characteristics and projection methodology refer to Chapter 2, Housing.

1.7 Goals and Objectives

This section contains the goals and objectives for each of the nine elements as described and required by Wisconsin's Smart Growth legislation and developed by the Town of Watertown Public Advisory Committee. For each element, a portion of the language from Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 has been included which describes the goals, objectives, policies and programs that need to be included as part of the development of a Smart Growth compliant Comprehensive Plan.

Smart Growth Local Comprehensive Planning Goals

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes and woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state government and utility costs.
6. Preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that provides mobility, convenience and safety which meets the needs of all citizens including transit-dependent and disabled.

Town of Watertown Comprehensive Planning Goals and Objectives

The following is a summary of the overall goals and objectives for the Town of Watertown. These goals and objectives are repeated within the context of each element and are further defined by corresponding policies and programs at the end of each section.

Goals

Community goals are broad statements expressing public preferences for the long term (20 years or more). They specifically address key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community. Goals are value-based statements that are not necessarily measurable.

Objectives

Objectives are narrower than goals and are measurable statements usually attainable through direct action and strategic planning. The accomplishment of objectives contributes to fulfillment of the goal.

Issues and Opportunities Element (IO)

"Background information on the local government unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the local government to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local government unit over a 20 year planning period."

Goal IO-1: *Strengthen local control of land use decisions through cooperation and communication with Jefferson County, the City of Watertown and Village of Johnson Creek.*

Supporting Objectives:

- IO-1.1 Utilize the town's comprehensive plan as a tool to guide and support town actions and decisions.
- IO-1.2 Work with the county to establish a mutually beneficial decision-making procedure that integrates and is consistent with the town's comprehensive plan.
- IO 1.3 Maintain consistency between the *Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan*, the *Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan* and the *Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance*.

Goal IO-2: *Balance appropriate land use regulation and individual property rights with community interests and goals.*

Supporting Objectives:

- IO-2.1 Create opportunities for citizen participation throughout all stages of plan and ordinance development and implementation.
- IO-2.2 Establish a development review process whereby all interested parties are afforded an opportunity to influence the outcome.

Issues and Opportunities Policies

1. The comprehensive plan shall maintain consistency with state comprehensive planning requirements.
2. Public participation shall be required prior to the development of and/or amendment to any town plans, ordinances, or programs.

Issues and Opportunities Programs

All programs required to implement the functions of the Town of Watertown Year 2025 Comprehensive Plan are listed under the remaining elements.

Housing Element (HE)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand in the local governmental unit."

Goal HE-1: *Provide a variety of housing and development opportunities that are consistent with the rural character and service capabilities of the town.*

Supporting Objectives:

- HE-1.1 Retain farm and single family residences as the preferred type of housing supply in the town.
- HE-1.2 Steer more intensive residential development such as two-family, multifamily and elderly housing to the City of Watertown and other urban service areas.
- HE- 1.3 Ensure that local land use controls and permitting procedures do not discourage or prevent the provision of affordable housing opportunities within the town.
- HE-1.4 Explore opportunities to provide incentives for developers and home builders to create quality housing that is affordable for low and moderate income households.
- HE-1.5 Support the location of manufactured homes within the town that feature designs similar to site-built homes and are built to state standards.

Goal HE-2: *Provide areas for residential development, while preserving open space, natural resources, farmland and the rural character of the town.*

Supporting Objectives:

- HE-2.1 Steer residential development to planned growth areas where adequate public services and facilities are available or planned.
- HE-2.2 Encourage well designed residential development to locate along existing public roads and near existing residential developments in order to promote orderly growth and expansion throughout the town.
- HE-2.3 Explore various programs and concepts that can encourage creative ways to preserve rural character and natural resources such as conservation subdivisions, agri-hoods, planned unit developments, PDR programs and conservation easements.

Transportation Element (TE)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation."

Goal TE-1: *Provide and maintain a safe and reliable town transportation network.*

Supporting Objectives:

- TE-1.1 Adopt town road standards for the construction of public and private roads.
- TE-1.2 Implement and preserve access controls along all town roadways (i.e. driveway permits).
- TE-1.3 Develop and maintain a transportation plan to address long-term needs for road upgrades and new roads.
- TE-1.4 Ensure that new roads can connect to existing and planned roads on abutting properties whenever possible.
- TE-1.5 Consider the development of an official map to reserve adequate right-of-way for future road linkages.
- TE-1.6 Continually advocate to the WDOT for increased funding for local road aids to fund future town road projects.
- TE-1.7 Should a local road aid shortfall continue to exist, consider increasing town tax levies for the purposes of improving local roads.
- TE-1.8 Recognize the need to provide routes for ATV (All Terrain Vehicles) and UTV (Utility Terrain Vehicles) to use as a function of agricultural activities.
- TE-1.9 Continue to permit and monitor the Town's IOH (Implements of Husbandry) program.

Goal TE-2: *Increase the safety and use of non-motorized transportation modes.***Supporting Objectives:**

- TE-2.1 Consider bicycle and pedestrian safety needs when new roads are proposed or when major roadway improvements are made.
- TE-2.2 Consider/promote the development of multi-use trails and linkages as part of new development proposals.
- TE-2.3 Work with Jefferson County and adjacent municipalities in the development of bicycle and multi-use trails.

Utilities and Community Facilities Element (UCF)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on- site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunication facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities and other public facilities such as police, fire, and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities."

Wastewater Treatment

Goal UCF-1: Ensure proper disposal of wastewater to protect ground and surface water.

Supporting Objectives:

UCF-1.1 Coordinate wastewater facility planning and the location of future private onsite septic systems with the town's preferred land use plan, environmental considerations, economic development and growth management objectives.

Water Supply

Goal UCF-2: Protect and improve the quality and quantity of the town's ground and surface water features.

Supporting Objectives:

UCF-2.1 Facilitate the reduction of point and non-point pollution sources through both regulatory and non-regulatory approaches.

UCF-2.2 Evaluate the potential impacts of development proposals on groundwater quality and quantity.

UCF-2.3 Pursue partnerships for technical assistance and funding among town, state, county and individual landowners to address known water quality problems.

UCF-2.4 Support data collection and monitoring efforts that further the understanding of factors influencing the quality, quantity and movement of ground and surface water features.

UCF-2.5 Promote clean-up and beautification of the Rock River.

Stormwater Management

Goal UCF-3: Ensure that all areas are reasonably protected from flooding.

Supporting Objectives:

UCF-3.1 Encourage and support the preservation of natural open spaces that minimize flooding such as wetlands and floodplains.

UCF-3.2 Work with the county to develop a stormwater management ordinance to ensure proper drainage and retention of stormwater.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

Goal UCF-4: Promote effective solid waste disposal and recycling services that protect the public health, the natural environment, and land use quality.

Supporting Objectives:

- UCF-4.1 Increase town involvement and promote education in decisions involving the type, location and extent of land disposal of solid waste produced by local residents.

Schools

Goal UCF-5: Promote quality schools and access to educational opportunities for everyone.

Supporting Objectives:

- UCF-5.1 Coordinate local planning efforts with the School District in order to allow them to anticipate future growth and to provide appropriate facilities.

Parks and Recreation

Goal UCF-6: Promote a variety of recreational opportunities within the Town of Watertown.

Supporting Objectives:

- UCF-6.1 Identify areas and provide for increased recreational and public access to the river within the town.
- UCF-6.2 Enhance recreational facilities that provide multi-use recreational opportunities.
- UCF-6.3 Recognize the need to accommodate all age groups and abilities in recreational pursuits.
- UCF-6.4 Maintain existing and improve public access to waterways.
- UCF-6.5 Explore parkland options.

Utilities

Goal UCF-7: Ensure the provision of reliable, efficient, and well-planned utilities to adequately serve existing and future development.

Supporting Objectives:

- UCF-7.1 Cooperate in the planning and coordination of utilities with other agencies and jurisdictions in order to efficiently serve local and regional growth.
- UCF-7.2 Determine the use, location, and capacity of existing and future public utilities in order to efficiently serve existing and planned service areas.
- UCF-7.3 Actively pursue the highest levels of service from natural gas, electrical, telephone, cable, telecommunications and other technology providers offering services to the town.

- UCF-7.4 Promote "green energy" and other alternative technologies.
- UCF-7.5 Look for opportunities to expand broadband service within the Town.
- UCF-7.6 Work with Jefferson County to be creative with zoning to accommodate on-site energy generation and use.

Other Governmental Services

Goal UCF-8: Maintain high quality town services and facilities.

Supporting Objectives:

- UCF-8.1 Continually monitor the demographics of the town's population to determine the need for new or expanded services.

Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Element (ANC)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources."

Goal ANC-1: Provide incentives and options to farmers and rural landowners to retain the town's contiguous areas of agricultural lands, natural areas and open spaces.

Supporting Objectives:

- ANC-1.1 Continue to utilize the farmland preservation program and other incentives which would provide farmers the ability to realize some of the value of their property while continuing to farm.
- ANC-1.2 Develop conservation design guidelines (clustering of home sites) and identify appropriate areas within the town.
- ANC-1.3 Support programs which lower the tax burden for lands under agricultural production or conserved as natural areas.

Goal ANC-2: Maintain the operational efficiency and productivity of Watertown's agricultural areas for current and future generations.

Supporting Objectives:

- ANC-2.1 Identify town lands where the primary intent is to preserve productive farmland, to allow for farming expansion, to maintain the efficiency and productivity of town farm operations, and to protect agricultural investment in land and improvements.
- ANC-2.2 Protect the continuity of farmland areas.

- ANC-2.3 Appropriately site whatever development occurs in agricultural areas in order to ensure that growth in rural areas is compatible with the continued use of the adjacent land for agricultural production.
- ANC-2.4 Inform current and prospective landowners about the types and timing of agricultural activities; importance of agriculture to the town economy; potential nuisances of living within an agricultural area; and actions that can be taken to minimize conflicts.

Goal ANC-3: Maintain, preserve and enhance the town's natural resources.

Supporting Objectives

- ANC – 3.1 Manage growth to protect town open spaces, which, through their preservation, would: conserve and enhance natural or scenic resources; protect streams, water supply/quality, fish and wildlife habitat; promote conservation of soils, wetlands, beaches, and woodlands; enhance the value of adjoining public lands; maintain and improve public and private recreation opportunities; and/or preserve historic and cultural resources.
- ANC – 3.2 Direct growth away from environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes in order to protect the benefits and functions they provide and to save future public and private dollars spent on flood control, stormwater management, habitat restoration, erosion control, water
- ANC-3.3 Maintain a network of natural area and open space corridors and connections.
- ANC-3.4 Maintain and enhance plant and habitat diversity in Watertown.

Goal ANC-4: Preserve the significant historical and cultural lands, sites and structures that contribute to community identity and character.

Supporting Objectives:

- ANC-4.1 Work cooperatively with Jefferson County, local historical societies and other appropriate organizations to identify, record, and protect lands, sites, rustic roads and structures that have historical or archaeological significance within the Town of Watertown.
- ANC-4.2 Promote the history of Watertown and the aspects that have helped to define its culture and heritage.

Economic Development Element (ED)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit."

Goal ED-I: Maintain, enhance and diversify the local economy consistent with other goals and objectives.

Supporting Objectives:

- ED-1.1 Retain and provide new opportunities for local employment of town citizens.
- ED-1.2 Support agriculture as a strong component of the local economy which provides the town and county with revenue at a minimal cost of service and supports related agricultural processing and service industries.
- ED-1.3 Explore possibilities to increase and support business development adjacent to the City of Watertown and existing commercial sites.
- ED-1.4 Accommodate and regulate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding area. Recognize them as “incubators” for developing small business. Work with Jefferson County to establish clear criteria for their function.
- ED-1.5 Implement architectural and site design guidelines.
- ED-1.6 Work with Jefferson County to be creative with zoning to help accommodate the conversion of unique structures within the Town to be renovated into community assets, business and services. Examples include barn reuse, bed & breakfast establishments, wineries, art galleries, etc.
- ED-1.7 Recognize the need for the development of agriculturally related businesses within farmland preservation areas. Ensure zoning regulations can accommodate through appropriate reviews.
- ED-1.8 Allow for home base business and recognizing them as “incubators” for developing small business. Work with Jefferson County to establish clear criteria for their function.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Element (IC)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities, and sharing services."

Goal IC-1: Establish mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with other units of government.

Supporting Objectives:

- IC-1.1 Pursue cooperative agreements regarding annexation, expansion of services, and growth management with the city of Watertown and village of Johnson Creek.
- IC-1.2 Identify alternative solutions to existing or potential land use, administration or policy conflicts that may hinder intergovernmental cooperation.

Land Use Element (LU)

"A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property."

Goal LU-1: Provide for a well-balanced mix of land uses within the Town of Watertown.

Supporting Objectives:

- LU-1.1 Identify preferred land use areas which contain areas of similar feature and function and can coexist with one another (i.e. agricultural, residential, commercial etc.).
- LU-1.2 Identify the Town of Watertown's natural resources, environmentally sensitive features, open spaces, cultural and historic resources so that these areas can be preserved and in some cases integrated as a valuable feature of new development.
- LU-1.3 Conserve the majority of the town's rural lands by focusing new areas of growth within or near existing areas of development where adequate public facilities and services exist or are planned.
- LU-1.4 Identify preferred areas for rural residential growth outside of existing developed areas such that impacts on productive farmland, natural areas and open space are minimized.
- LU-1.5 Realize the cost effectiveness of utilizing the existing road network to accommodate most future development.

Goal LU-2: Avoid incompatible land uses within the Town of Watertown.

Supporting Objectives:

- LU-2.1 Utilize a mapping inventory of land use, zoning, resource protection (ownership), and water features to evaluate the conditions, features, density, location and uses that occupy the land.
- LU-2.2 Analyze land use trends and potential land use conflicts that may impact development or redevelopment.
- LU-2.3 Develop a preferred land use map for the preferred use, location, and density of land uses for the next 20 years and beyond.
- LU-2.4 Utilize recognized design standards to protect and promote the character of the town, while also buffering incompatible land uses.
- LU-2.5 Maintain the importance of the Town's Comprehensive Plan in guiding land use decisions for rezoning and land divisions. (Due to a recent law change, conditional uses no longer need to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.)

Implementation Element (IE)

"A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, sign regulations, erosion and storm water control ordinances, historic preservation ordinances, site plan regulations, design review ordinances, building codes, mechanical codes, housing codes, sanitary codes, or subdivision ordinances, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in all other elements."

Goal IE-1: Promote consistency between and integration of the plan recommendations and local ordinances.

Supporting Objectives

- IE-1.1 Implement an "Action Plan" as part of the Implementation Element to assist the Plan Commission, Town Board and other with the administration of the Comprehensive Plan
- IE-1.2 Work with Jefferson County to ensure that administration and enforcement of land use regulations are consistent with the *Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation & Land Use Plan* and the *Town of Watertown Comprehensive Plan*.
- IE-1.3 Work with Jefferson County to determine the most effective approach to review and permit items such as wind & solar power, mobile and radio broadband services and non-metallic mining operations.
- IE-1.4 Continually assess the Town's need to research and pass more restrictive ordinances than Jefferson County when deemed necessary.
- IE-1.5 Amend Town of Watertown ordinances to address changing service, transportation and development trends. Examples include recycling, camping, special events ATV/UTV use etc.

Goal 1E-2: Update the Comprehensive Plan on a regular schedule to ensure that the plan remains a useful tool for growth and development decisions.

Supporting Objectives:

- IE-2.1 Conduct a periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan for consistency with the goals, objectives, maps, policies and programs contained within.
- IE-2.2 Update the Comprehensive Plan every 10 years to coincide with the release of census data.
- IE-2.3 Maintain the importance of the Town's Comprehensive Plan in guiding land use decisions for rezoning and land divisions. (Due to recent State law change, conditional uses no longer need to be consistent with the comprehensive plan).

Goal 1E-3: Improve the efficiency of government administration whenever possible by utilizing improved technology. (Examples include on-line reservations, payments, applications, programs, meeting schedules, information exchange, etc.)

Supporting Objectives:

- IE-3.1 Utilize social and digital media to improve communication with town residents, visitors, and prospectors.