

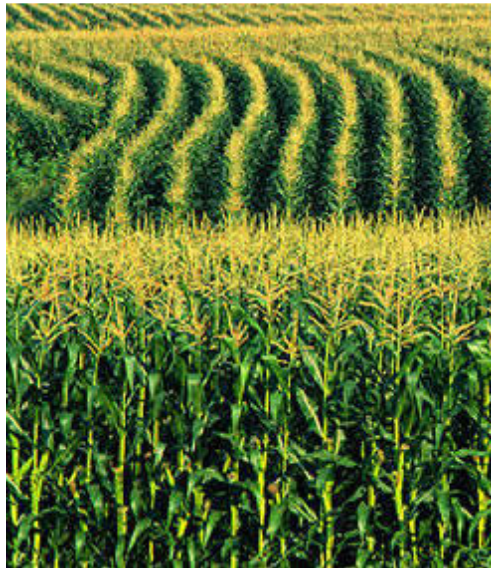
# 1. Agricultural and Natural Resources

## 1.0 Overview

Agricultural and natural resources have played an important role in the shaping of human settlement and activities in Sauk County. Today, agriculture represents the predominant land use, with 54% of the County's land under production. Additionally, forest lands represent about 21% of the County's land area, much of which falls within the Baraboo Range and represents the largest contiguous block of forest in the Midwest. Although not as easily measured, the impact of this landscape contributes a strong value and appreciation of rural character among County residents, along with millions of dollars in tourism revenue.

A significant recent trend has been the greater awareness of need to conserve our agricultural lands and natural resources for any number of reasons. Reflecting on a more holistic approach to agriculture and the importance of natural resources, the community is now more conscious to the unsustainable practices such as uncontrolled growth, poor returns for agricultural products and limits to creative approaches, be it political, regulatory or simple lack of understanding.

The objectives and ideas presented in this section attempt to address these constraints by providing forward thinking concepts to achieve sustainability in agricultural and natural resources. Additionally, they take into account and are consistent with Sauk County's Land and Water Resources Management Plan.



*Such scenes are common throughout Sauk County. The success of farms helps to decrease fragmentation.*



*Community gardens create green space in urban areas while producing nutritious food and fostering a sense of community.*



*Farmers markets allow buyers to buy locally produced food while meeting the growers.*



*Programs protecting natural resources ensure that future generations will enjoy the same beauty we do.*



*Dairy farms are important to Sauk County and help to maintain the rural characteristics of the area.*

## 1.1 Natural Resources

### **Natural Resources Defined**

Natural resources occur within the environment in a relatively undisturbed form by human settlement and in this natural form are often characterized by the level of biodiversity that exists in an ecosystem. Economically, natural resources typically refers to land resources or raw materials that are used in place, such as agricultural soils, or removed from one location to be used elsewhere as is the case with mineral extraction or removal of forest resources.

The human interrelationship with natural resources is one that desires to protect and enhance biodiversity and the health of the ecosystem while recognizing the need to utilize some of these resources to maintain a certain level of lifestyle.

### **Natural Resources Goal**

Open space and rural character are acknowledged and protected as important community resources.

### **Natural Resources Objectives**

#### **Objective 1**

Create regional green space programs that preserve permanent regional connections of open space, historic landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, waterways and low-impact recreational lands.

#### **Objective 2**

Expand the community's understanding of the economic, ecologic and social impacts of forests.

#### **Objective 3**

Develop and apply development standards that protect the environment and promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

#### **Objective 4**

Establish programs to minimize forest fragmentation, reestablish forested areas and explore techniques that would allow fragmented forests to retain a larger portion of their original ecological, economic, and social values.

#### **Objective 5**

Develop initiatives to maintain and protect threatened natural areas with cultural, ecological and economic significance.

#### **Additional Ideas**

- Designate a county-wide rural protection area that addresses rural character and environmentally sensitive areas. For any development proposed in the protection area, require that said development meet specified standards so as to ensure the integrity of the rural protection area.

### **Agricultural, Natural Resources and Civic Tourism**

Sauk County's expanding tourism industry was originally founded on its wealth of natural resources, and continues to rely on its natural beauty to attract visitors. Agricultural tourism is the natural extension of many tourist activities. Agricultural tourism is increasingly being viewed as a logical way for farmers to increase the profitability of their farms. Additionally, such tourism creates opportunities for non-farmers and non-rural people to learn about farms and rural life, nourishing a greater appreciation for agriculture.

Tourism enterprises based around agricultural and natural resources have a large variety of options, including:

- Farm tours and trail rides
- Farm stands and u-pick farms
- Sheep sheering
- Farm stays

Both agricultural and natural resources tourism are very place-based. They provide unique experiences specific to the area. Civic tourism looks at how tourism affects communities, viewing it as a tool to enable areas to develop healthy place-making. This perspective also argues that all forms of tourism benefit from the area's natural resources, as tourists are drawn to places with beautiful scenery. In Sauk County, many attractions take advantage of the area's natural resources. Civic tourism says that investing in natural resources directly benefits communities and tourism enterprises economically.

- Develop and apply principles to sustain a high-quality natural environment and protection of natural resources for any new development proposal. Require that certain criteria are met before new development proposals are approved. Development of these criteria and review of new development against the criteria will be a joint town-county partnership.
- Create a regional greenspace strategy that preserves permanent regional connections of open space, including historic landscapes, environmentally sensitive areas, waterways, and low-impact recreational lands.
- Encourage sustainable woodland and forest management.
- Maintain large blocks of contiguous forest habitat, and minimize breaks in forest canopy.
- Minimize/control permanent openings in identified areas of large forest blocks.
- Promote forest-based economy and forestry land uses compatible with this goal.
- Help landowners realize an economic return from their woodlands and forests.
- Promote the economic advantages provided by forest management and timber harvest plans to landowners.
- Encourage woodland and forest landowners to implement woodland and forest management plans that follow the DNR's Best Management Practices as outlined in

*Wisconsin's Forest Management Guidelines  
PUB-FR-226-2003.*

- Expand urban forestry programs.

### **Benefits of Green Spaces**

A number of studies have indicated a wide variety of benefits that access to green spaces have for people. Among them:

- More appealing communities. Not only are areas with green spaces esthetically appealing, they experience lower crime and property values increase.
- Health benefits. Residents experience higher self-esteem, less stress, and reduced fear and aggression.
- Outdoor recreational abilities. Important for child development and fostering relationships with nature, outdoor recreation also encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

There are many different ways green spaces can be incorporated into communities. Planned unit developments (PUDs), in which a development or subdivision is planned before construction takes place, often integrate shared open spaces in their designs. Development is multi-use and includes shops that fulfill basic neighborhood needs, such as grocery stores and gas stations. Additionally, rain gardens not only allows rainwater to seep into the ground, taking some strain off of storm water systems, but also integrates plants and flowers in places they may not otherwise be planted.

## 1.2 Agricultural Resources

### **Agricultural Resources Defined**

In its simplest form, agriculture refers to the production of food and fiber products and, more recently, fuel in the form of ethanol and biodiesel. Sustainable agriculture, on the other hand, integrates a triple bottom line concept that broadens the focus to include objective stewardship of natural resources and improve the quality of life in the farming community while maintaining farm profitability. The concept of sustainable agriculture can be fostered by ensuring fair markets for agricultural products, building a local understanding and respect for agriculture, and securing agricultural land for farming for the next generation of farmers.

The following goal and objectives draw from the Sauk County Farmland Preservation Plan for ideas and information and are consistent with that Plan.

### **Agricultural Resources Goal**

Maintain a diverse, economically viable, commercial agriculture base that enhances agriculture's economic contribution to Sauk County while also protecting open spaces, water quality, forests, and habitats.

### **Agricultural Resources Objectives**

#### **Objective 1**

Develop programs to maintain agriculture as a key component of the local economy.

#### **Objective 2**

Develop a multi-county communication strategy to raise the community's understanding of agriculture to individual counties and the larger region.

#### **Objective 3**

Protect the viability of farm operations by minimizing the fragmentation and parcelization of agricultural land to maintain the operational efficiency of the land.

#### **Objective 4**

Develop programs and policies within County departments that create proactive, supportive partnerships with agricultural producers as a means of protecting the natural environment while promoting economic viability.

#### **Objective 5**

Solicit and utilize the input of agricultural producers when considering changes to land use plans, zoning ordinances, taxing structure, fees, permits or other actions that have the potential to impact agricultural operations and agricultural infrastructure in the County. The potential impact should be documented in a manner similar to the agricultural impact statements required under Chapter 32.035 of Wisconsin Statutes.

### **Institutional Food Markets**

The Institutional Food Market model seeks to connect large volume institutional buyers in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors with local growers.

The Institutional Food Market Coalition (IFM) is a program of the Dane County Planning and Development Department. IFM's mission is to identify and help build new markets for Dane County and regional producers and increase sourcing of locally grown products.

Benefits of an IFM include:

- Competitive pricing;
- Tastier, more nutritious food;
- Sales support Wisconsin (Sauk County) family farms and rural communities;
- Local sourcing reduces air pollution by decreasing food miles from farm to table;
- Buying locally contributes to economic development. For every dollar spent on locally produced food, it is estimated that four dollars stay in the community, creating a significant multiplier effect. An increase in institutional demand equals an increase in demand for inputs such as seed, fertilizer, machinery, etc.

Sauk County producers and the overall county economy could benefit from the implementation of an IFM model. Furthermore, the work done by the Dane County IFM could serve as a resource or potential future partnership between the two counties.

*Source: Dane County Institutional Food Market Coalition, [www.ifmwi.org](http://www.ifmwi.org).*

**Objective 6**

Educate residents and visitors on the importance of agriculture in preserving the large tracts of open space and woodlots that are essential parts of the Sauk County experience.

**Objective 7**

Develop a multi-county agricultural tourism program that enhances direct farmer to consumer marketing.

**Objective 8**

Support programs for new farmers.

**Objective 9**

Establish a local food system that emphasizes the production of food that is sold within the southern Wisconsin region.

**Objective 10**

Enhance producer profitability by providing access to science-based information and programs that aid producers in improving efficiencies through improved methods, management, and technology.

**Objective 11**

Provide educational opportunities to non-farm rural homeowners to help them gain a better understanding of Wisconsin's right-to-farm law, fence law, and other regulations that are in place to assure that farmers are able to maintain their production systems.

**Additional Ideas**

- Develop an organic and local food development strategy. Also develop an Institutional Food Committee to explore opportunities to source Sauk County institutions with locally produced food.
- Establish a workgroup to develop and implement a strategic plan that will create a multi-county agricultural and natural resources tourism program that will enhance direct marketing options for participating landowners while building an appreciation for continued agriculture and preservation of natural resources.
- Update the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance to facilitate the inception of creative value-added agriculture opportunities through a Conditional Use Permitting process and be cognizant of potential agricultural tourism.
- Expand existing or develop new young and beginning farmer mentor networks to help new farmers with planning, land maintenance, insurance, grants, product diversity, marketing, etc. These mentors will include people already working in the field and have experience starting up a farm.
- Expand existing or develop new farmer-to-farmer networks that focus on agriculture land management, soil fertility, animal husbandry, the economics of farming, sustainable agriculture and opportunities for value added agricultural products. Utilize these networks to develop outreach programs to teach non-farmers about agriculture.
- Develop a communication and education strategy to raise the community's awareness of the importance of agriculture to the County's economy.
- Develop promotional materials and programs that emphasize sustainable agricultural as a competitive advantage/strength of Sauk County. Set up a website for sustainable agriculture in Sauk County and include relevant links.
- Establish links between local producers and local consumers and development promotional materials about the importance of buying locally produced agriculture products.
- Develop a communication and education program that emphasizes farm life and what to expect in a rural area. Work with landowners and others to develop a common understanding of what a landowner's duty of care is to their property. Include an economic comparison of well managed property versus poorly managed property.
- Update the Sauk County Agricultural Preservation Plan; update and emphasize programs that will ensure the viability of agriculture. Emphasize regional cooperation as part of the Plan update and consider developing regional partnerships with neighboring counties to develop a regionally based and implemented Agricultural Preservation Plan.

### **1.3 Managing Development**

#### **Managing Development Defined**

Well-managed development can best be defined by what it is not – sprawl. Sprawl can be described as the unplanned spread of cities or suburbs over rural lands, and with it, the loss of the distinctive elements of a community. Managing development focuses on efficient land use patterns that promote redevelopment of under-utilized lands. It sets limits on outward growth, incorporates permanent land preservation techniques, and achieves livable communities.

#### **Managing Development Goal**

Residential and commercial development is carefully managed; agriculture and natural resources are protected.

#### **Managing Development Objectives**

##### **Objective 1**

Develop agreements between cities/villages and surrounding towns that allow for orderly growth and development.

##### **Objective 2**

Develop agreements between cities/villages and surrounding towns that help maintain the rural character of the county.

##### **Objective 3**

Identify and protect rural and municipal water resources by regulating the types of land uses and management practices that can occur in well recharge areas.

##### **Objective 4**

Develop programs that permanently preserve open space and agricultural lands.

##### **Objective 5**

Expand Sauk County's capacity to provide growth management, design services, storm water and construction site management to local units of government.

##### **Objective 6**

Identify appropriate locations for mineral extraction sites (including quarries) based on inventory of recoverable resources, estimated future local need, and local policy directives.

#### **Additional Ideas**

- Develop cooperative boundary agreements between cities and villages with surrounding towns and include a physical plan as part of the agreement that evaluates consistency with adopted plans and include a social, economic and environmental impact of the anticipated type of development to occur within the boundary.

#### **The 1909 Plan of Chicago**

Nearly a century ago, planners Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett unveiled their 1909 Plan of Chicago, a framework for growth in the greater Chicago area. Often called the Burnham Plan, their vision included a network of forest preserve districts, open spaces and trails that have become a legacy unique to this region.

The Chicago Wilderness Alliance, a group that connects people and nature, is actively implementing this plan and has identified 1.8 million acres of prospective land preservation in the Chicago region, the goal of which protects corridors and open spaces that are critical to quality of life.

The group's vision is not merely a land acquisition strategy, but rather a call to carefully think about how we can live in and among natural areas in a sustainable way and to mutual benefit, by using tools such as conservation development, conservation easements, and thoughtful land use planning. It is a guide to creating a region where healthy ecosystems contribute to economic vitality and a high quality of life for all residents.

*Source: Chicago Wilderness,  
[www.chicagowilderness.com](http://www.chicagowilderness.com)*

- Continue the Baraboo Range Protection Program (even if there is no current funding) so that Sauk County is prepared to take advantage of future funding opportunities and add the North range of the Baraboo Range to the Baraboo Range Protection Program.
- Develop and adopt a county-wide Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program that will emphasize the protection of prime agricultural lands, agricultural lands under threat from development, lands with significant natural resources or lands that have other identified special significance within Sauk County. Officially adopt such a county-wide PDR program even if funding sources are not currently identified so as to position Sauk County to readily take advantage of potential funding sources utilizing an already adopted program.
- Partner with Dane County and the City of Madison to develop a regionally based Transfer of Development Rights Program.
- Work with the Towns of Delton and Baraboo, the Ho-Chunk Nation, Villages of West Baraboo and Lake Delton and City of Baraboo to develop an agreement that retains development east of the US Highway 12 bypass.
- Expand the Sauk County Planned Unit Development Program – cluster lot option to allow the transfer of development rights between landowners and which are consistent with the locally adopted town comprehensive plan which must first identify

respective sending and receiving areas for development rights.

- Utilizing data that identifies zones of contribution for municipal wellheads, work with respective municipalities to develop a wellhead protection ordinance to require land uses that are compatible with the protection and recharge of municipal potable water supplies. Demand for water usage is increasing continually. Groundwater requires protection to assure its availability for present and future generations.
- Identify places within Sauk County where quarries would and would not be acceptable by applying the following steps:
  - Inventory the location of recoverable and marketable non-metallic materials.
  - Complete an inventory of existing quarries in the area and include an estimate of materials remaining.
  - Complete an inventory of materials that could be recycled i.e., re-use of old buildings, etc.
  - Identify the uses for materials produced by quarries in the County.
  - Project future needs for quarried materials.
  - Coordinate this effort with local towns to determine appropriate locations for future quarries.

- Identify natural areas where quarries would be inappropriate because of the importance of the area to meet this objective and quality of life in the County.

### **Preserving Agriculture and Natural Resources**

Purchase of development rights programs (PDR) are a flexible tool that communities can use to preserve valuable agricultural and natural resources. Such programs are used to provide financial incentives to farmers and landowners to resist the pressure of development on their land. The public pays a landowner the amount of money associated with the value of the development rights of a parcel of land but the landowner still owns the parcel.

PDR arrangements are entirely voluntary for landowners, and PDR programs can be run by the government and non-profit organizations. If the land is sold, the conservation easement remains with the land. For this reason, easements are recorded in town or county records offices so that future buyers have access to that information.

*For more information, please see "Purchase of Development Rights: Conserving Lands, Preserving Western Livelihoods" by the Western Governors' Association, Trust for Public Land, and National Cattlemen's Beef Association or [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org).*

## 2. Education, Arts and Innovation

### 2.0 Overview

Innovation comes from creativity and communities without a high level of creative energy stagnate. A strong educational system that encourages problem-solving, finding unique solutions, and independent thinking fosters the innovation that strengthens communities and enriches life. The arts have the ability to spur discussion on various topics while exposing the audience to different perspectives. Both life-long learning and the arts are vital parts of a community, making areas more enjoyable to live and work by forming distinctive atmospheres and developing an individual sense of place.

Though both educational levels and support of the arts benefit communities in a variety of ways, particularly economically, the arts and art education are not often recognized or made priorities by communities. Sauk County is one of only a few counties in Wisconsin that provides funding for the arts. This appreciation of education and the arts helps to position Sauk County as a leader in supporting the arts. However, the County should recognize that improving encouragement of educational and arts programs is an on-going process that must continually be improved upon. The strategies in this section identify areas in which improvements can be made.



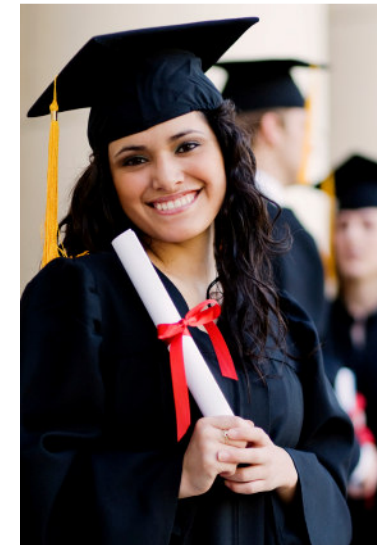
*“Art” includes many forms of expression, including, but not limited to, architecture...*



*...the spoken word...*



*...and paintings.*



*Promoting success in higher education benefits both the individual and the community as a whole.*



## Education Defined

Education prepares an individual to live a responsible, creative and productive life, empowering people to think analytically and individually. The availability of quality education directly affects a community's economy and attractiveness to businesses looking at relocating. On an individual level, formalized educational opportunities allow for career development and advancement possibilities. Conversely, the lack of quality, funded educational systems can derail a community's best plans and efforts for development and severely limit an individual's prospects of achieving life goals.

Going beyond K-12 and post-secondary programs, education includes life-long learning opportunities. It is important that communities have special courses and programs available for residents to learn new skills for personal enjoyment. These opportunities allow individuals to challenge themselves in addition to creating a sense of community.

## Education Goal

Sauk County communities are meeting the demand for educational, facility and programmatic funding for K-12 and higher education.

## Education Objectives

### Objective 1

Create an educational advisory committee to identify strategies for educational funding, programmatic needs and preparedness for new, unpredictable challenges.

### Objective 2

Identify community assets available to attract and retain top-level educators and administrators.

### Objective 3

Research and communicate the value of higher education (post high school) for community, economic, and social development.

### Objective 4

Develop an educational partnership with businesses and schools that maximizes resources.

### Objective 5

Make children a priority, recognizing that they are key to a viable community.

### Objective 6

Develop an education model that encourages critical thinking.

## School to Work Programs

In an increasingly global world, it is imperative that schools prepare students for life after graduation and provide them with the skills and tools they need to be successful in the workforce. To meet those needs, faculty and staff at Roy High School in Utah have identified basic standards, including:

- Communication
- Critical and creative thinking
- Social and personal development
- Self-motivation and adaptability
- Preparation for life after high school.

Using these standards, goals were created and a curriculum developed geared towards achieving these goals and meeting these standards. Additionally, graduation requirements have been adapted to reflect these standards.

An assessment system has been designed to measure achievement. Competency tests have been developed, including:

- Home economics
- Health occupations
- Medical English
- Welding
- Foreign language
- Mathematics
- Chemistry

The school has also partnered with area businesses to provide work-related training. Modules have been developed to emphasize certain work place skills, such as:

- Quality control
- Applied math
- Technologies at work
- Work successes
- Workplace economics
- Computer literacy
- Safety

### **Additional Ideas**

- Create an educational advisory committee of Sauk County that consists of school board superintendents, dean of University of Wisconsin -Baraboo/Sauk County, administrator of MATC, executive director of the Sauk County Development Corporation, the Sauk County Board supervisors and other key members of the County and business community. This committee would be brought together to share ideas, funding needs, educational programs, challenges, etc.
- Develop a communication plan that better informs our community, especially seniors and those without children as to the economic and social benefits of a strong educational system. Utilize local cable television to deliver the message and announce upcoming events and programs. Develop an understanding that K-12 is the cornerstone of our community.
- Use the Thrive model that was developed for the Madison Area to identify community assets to attract top level educators and administrators.
- Market “life-long learning” concepts to parents and community members as a model for K-12 and post-secondary education. Seek input from parents, students and employers to identify valuable components of education. Utilize town hall and web sites to get input. Utilize an educational advisory committee to respond and implement change.

- Encourage and support the development of additional degree opportunities for our citizens.

### **Charter Schools and Magnet Schools**

A charter school is a public school founded by a “charter” detailing various aspects of the school’s goals, methods, and function. Charter schools have a large degree of autonomy from the policies governing public school systems but are held accountable by the group or groups sponsoring the institution. Some benefits of charter schools include:

- Creating choices for students within the public school system
- Encouragement of innovative teaching/learning practices
- Encouragement of high community/parent involvement

Magnet schools have specialized curriculum such as bilingual courses and math/science based courses. Magnet schools are usually created outside of zoned school boundaries, although sometimes such “magnet” programs are developed within schools. According to Public School Review, characteristics of magnet schools include:

- Having a distinctive curriculum/instructional approach.
- Attracting students from outside an assigned neighborhood attendance zone.
- Having diversity as an explicit purpose.

*For more information, please see [www.uscharterschools.org](http://www.uscharterschools.org) and [www.publicschoolreview.com](http://www.publicschoolreview.com).*

## 2.2 Arts

### Arts Defined

Art emphasizes both the creative process and aesthetics of a product as it appeals to the senses, evokes emotions, or conveys a story. Modes of expression vary widely and can include fine art, music, ethnic and folk art, poetry, sculpture, culinary art, circus performance, dance, photography, live performance, and architecture, all of which come together to define a community's character. By bringing together and enhancing various aspects of society, art produces a unique atmosphere and a distinct community.

The arts act as a catalyst to bring people together, creating a sense of community. It encourages people to examine societal aspects in a non-threatening way, promotes analyzing subjects from multiple perspectives, and facilitates discussion.

Artistic energy and originality contribute to positive and long-lasting community and economic growth. From looking at the number of people attracted to various art establishments, courses, festivals and other events, it is clear that arts positively impact Sauk County's economy. Visitors are attracted by the art and unique entertainment opportunities and stay to eat, shop, and relax.

### Arts Goal

Sauk County supports and promotes the visual and performance arts, humanities, and historic preservation as an important part of community life.

### Arts Objectives

#### Objective 1

Maintain arts and culture funding and programming.

#### Objective 2

Develop scholarships and grants for projects that are unique and benefit the entire community.

#### Objective 3

Recognize and promote a diversity of artistic expression and the endeavors of artists.

#### Objective 4

Provide mentorship/encouragement to young and emerging artists/writers.

#### Objective 5

Promote economic development by encouraging the arts, humanities, and historic preservation.

#### Objective 6

Ensure a solid educational foundation for K-12 arts as fundamental to a complete education. Access research on creativity as a basis for innovation-based economy.

### Funding the Arts

Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission is a national model in funding for the arts. It is designed to increase public participation and access and connect the public and private sectors to support the arts and cultural resources. The Commission provides funding for artistic, cultural, and historical projects, produces publications about the arts, and provides information and technical assistance. With a single employee, funds are managed as efficiently and effectively as possible in collaboration with a board of citizens and several members of the county board.

Using a different approach, the Education Foundation of Sarasota County hosts an "Evening of Excellence" art competition and auction every year, recognizing student artists in the county and raising money for art programs and scholarships. High school art teachers from each public high school in the county submit students' best original artwork to be reviewed by a panel of community art professionals. The panel chooses a selected number of pieces as the "Best of the Best." A special reception is held, at which the selections are announced, after which the pieces are donated by the students to be sold at an auction benefiting the arts in the county. Each year the competition, reception, and auction have a different theme, and the events have become very popular in the community.

*For more information, please see the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission website at [www.culturalaffairscommission.com](http://www.culturalaffairscommission.com) and the Sarasota County Schools website at [www.sarasotacountyschools.net](http://www.sarasotacountyschools.net).*

### **Additional Ideas**

- Leverage and increase existing funds by seeking matching funds from outside organizations with similar interests, coalescing around a thriving community.
- Create a tracking mechanism for measuring the impact of arts in Sauk County.
- Coordinate and publish an artist directory and event calendar with an emphasis on a web-based platform, including a streaming video.
- Showcase gatherings and functions that feature artists. Encourage the inclusion of arts sector, programming and opportunities in County economic and community development efforts.

### **Public Art Programs**

Communities have used a variety of methods to increase the amount of art pieces in public places. Some areas create specific sites in government buildings to showcase local artists and some communities allocate spots in public places such as parks to exhibit art pieces. Phoenix, Arizona has installed several free-standing “streetscape panels” to display pieces specially designed by local artists. In other projects, artists have painted murals, communities have coordinated summer music concerts and theaters, and artists have designed public labyrinths using natural materials.

The Cow Parade movement places sculptures of cows around a community. The cows are painted by local artists to reflect aspects of the local community. After a certain amount of time, the cows are auctioned off. While the Madison area recently held a Cow Parade in 2006, this concept promotes place-making and an increase in showcasing the arts in public places.

Updated guides and maps are produced in many communities that have developed active public art projects and programs so that interested residents and visitors can easily find sculptures, murals, concerts, theaters, and other artistic pieces.

# 3. Quality of Life

## 3.0 Overview

People choose to live in places that offer high-quality services. As the Sauk County population becomes increasingly diverse, these services must be adaptable enough to provide for residents with a variety of needs. Additionally, problems will arise if a certain demographic group does not have access to services or if there is a disparity in quality between the services provided to different groups.

The affordability of health care and housing are major factors in determining where people choose to live and the quality of their lives. It is important that communities support and encourage their residents to achieve and maintain optimum health. It is also important that residents and potential residents have a variety of housing options available to them.

This section identifies three aspects of a community that directly affect the quality of resident life and provides ways the County can improve in these areas.



*Mobile dental clinics provide care to people without access to dental services.*



*Reusing materials lowers the environmental impact of housing. This house was made using parts of an interstate that was rebuilt.*



*Reusing existing structures, such as converting abandoned barns into houses, is an environmentally friendly way to accommodate a higher population.*



*Developing healthy lifestyle habits such as good nutrition and regular exercise help in maintaining a high quality of life.*

### 3.1 Health Care

#### Health Care Defined

Health care is the treatment, prevention and management of illness through services offered by medical and other health services. The increasing cost of health care is proving to be hard for small businesses and individuals, particularly those without adequate health insurance coverage. This lack of coverage forces residents into situations in which receiving treatment for medical conditions is not always possible.

In addition to challenges regarding health care coverage, certain lifestyle habits such as smoking and lack of proper nutrition or exercise inhibit an individual's ability to achieve maximum health, decreasing their quality of life. Certain medical issues, such as obesity, aggravate other conditions, such as diabetes. For this reason, awareness of healthy habits and preventative measures are essential in developing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

#### Health Care Goal

Make Sauk County a healthy place to live for its citizens.

#### Health Care Objectives

##### Objective 1

Identify, prioritize, and address health issues that affect the overall well-being of County residents.

##### Objective 2

Develop strategies to ensure an adequate supply of health care workers in Sauk County.

##### Objective 3

Promote healthier lifestyles.

#### Additional Ideas

- Sauk County Department of Health to lead the Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 plan initiatives which includes an assessment of health-related issues and problems.
- Orchestrate a collaborative approach among health care service providers to provide affordable and conveniently located (or transportation to) dental services, alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) services, mental health and primary medical care.
- Encourage each Sauk County hospital to have an electronic health record that promotes patient safety and quality.
- Support ongoing initiatives with healthcare providers, state-wide organizations, and educational institutions to stimulate local student interest in health care careers.
- Encourage personal responsibility and understanding in making appropriate healthcare decisions.

#### Mobile Dental Clinics

For many people, particularly those who are low-income and those who live in rural areas, receiving dental care can be difficult. Many times, even those who receive health insurance coverage through Medicaid have difficulties receiving dental care. Dental practices receive very low reimbursement for serving Medicaid patients and are therefore reluctant to do so. For this reason, patients are frequently left either without care or must travel long distances in order to find a dentist that will serve them.

A variety of communities and organizations have created a number of ways to connect dentists with those who need dental care. Some organizations and governmental units provide mobile dental clinics that travel throughout an area and reach out to those in need. Other groups work with public school districts to provide dental care to all under-insured or under-served student. Some technical colleges offer free or reduced-rate clinics staffed by faculty and dental students.

These efforts are funded a number of ways. In some places, a tax has been instituted against sodas or drinks with a certain percentage of sugar. In other situations, rates are based on the patient's income. Sometimes the clinics are staffed by volunteers, dentists who coordinate their schedules so the clinics are available as much as possible.

*For an example of a county health clinic, please see the Community Health Clinic of Butler County's website at [www.butlerhealthclinic.org](http://www.butlerhealthclinic.org).*

### 3.2 Housing

#### Housing Defined

Housing refers to structures that provide human habitation. Sauk County's population and its living habits are critical factors taken into account when ensuring adequate, safe, and ample housing choices. Housing choices and needs include those that provide for young families, retired citizens, the aging population, college students, and seasonal help. Factors to consider include a trend toward smaller households, problems with financing for mortgages, and the availability of housing for seasonal workers.

Additionally, housing structure style, building materials, and design have a large environmental impact. For example, structures can be built using highly effective insulation, energy-efficient windows and recycled or locally produced materials, all of which influence the environmental impact of the building.

#### Housing Goal

An adequate supply of affordable, well-planned, quality housing is available in Sauk County.

#### Housing Objectives

##### Objective 1

Encourage the development of affordable housing for mixed populations (i.e., age, economic status, marital status, owned and rental, single and multi-family units) that is sustainable and consistent with local comprehensive plans.

##### Objective 2

Encourage and promote locally produced building materials.

##### Objective 3

Encourage and promote energy efficient housing, alternative heating, and power generation.

##### Objective 4

Facilitate collaboration among municipalities to enhance support for housing and services provided to part-time and seasonal workers.

##### Objective 5

Encourage the development of mixed-use buildings that combines housing, retail, and professional space.

#### Additional Ideas

- Municipalities pass ordinances requiring developers to provide housing consistent with the policy criteria.
- County government concurs with policies, advocates compliance with Township, Village, Town, and City ordinances as consistent with Smart Growth Plans and sustainability. County Government showcases creative model ordinances and channels grants to creative development design implementations.

#### Reusing Construction Materials

Construction materials take up a large amount of space in local landfills, and demand for new materials strains natural resources. These problems can be solved through salvage and recycling programs.

The City of Houston has created a Building Materials Reuse Warehouse, which accepts building materials and makes them available to non-profit organizations at no cost. This benefits the City both by saving space in the landfill and encouraging non-profit organizations that serve the community.

By taking another approach, the Portland, Oregon region has attacked the problem from both ends of the issue. Metro, an elected regional government serving three counties in the region, has partnered with businesses in the construction and demolition industry to make recycling more efficient and effective. The governmental unit developed a toolkit geared towards encouraging recycling and salvage in the industry, creating a comprehensive directory of recycling and salvage facilities in the area and a planning guide to help architects and designers create projects that generate less waste. These tools have greatly improved recycling rates in the area.

*For more information about the City of Houston's Building Materials Reuse Warehouse, please see [www.greenhoustontx.gov/reuse.html](http://www.greenhoustontx.gov/reuse.html). To learn more about Metro, please visit their website at [www.metro-region.org](http://www.metro-region.org).*

- County government encourages growth and development of sustainable forestry – including logging, drying and processing of construction lumber for housing in Sauk County and beyond.
- County and municipalities require employers of part time and transient employees to provide adequate, safe, well-maintained housing for them. In return the County budget includes social service provisions for transients and part time seasonal workers.

### Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs or granny flats, garage apartments, or ancillary units) are secondary residences attached to a main residence. Different communities define such arrangements differently, but ADUs increase density while potentially providing homeowners some additional money. With careful regulation, communities are successfully incorporating ADUs into their housing stock, providing affordable housing for a variety of living situations.

ADUs are often used in a variety of ways. Elderly family members can maintain their independence while living close to family members, or the space can be rented out. Some homeowners use the extra space for work, while in some families teenage children have their own space.

Communities encourage the creation of ADUs in a variety of ways. Santa Cruz, California streamlined the permitting process for homeowners converting garages and basements into ADUs. They also offered low-interest loans for construction and conversion, as well as developing an informational guide about the process and the benefits of ADUs.

*For more information about ADUs, please see [www.newurbannews.com](http://www.newurbannews.com).*



### **3.3 Social Services**

#### **Social Services Defined**

Social services are the basic services provided by a local unit of government or private organization to residents. These services can include those that are not essential but which add to the overall quality of a community, such as wellness checks on elderly residents living independently.

The social services offered by Sauk County must change and adapt as the needs of the population change. There are increasing demands for quality child-care, elder care, and after school care, as well as services for special needs children and adults.

Additionally, many of Sauk County's citizens lack transportation to access services and jobs. This makes life more difficult, less productive, and less satisfying, damaging the County as a whole.

#### **Social Services Goal**

Make critical community services available for a diverse population.

#### **Social Services Objectives**

##### **Objective 1**

Collaborate with private, public, and charitable organizations to develop health care services to meet the needs of Sauk County's population.

##### **Objective 2**

Adapt current programs and processes to better serve non-English speaking populations.

##### **Additional Ideas**

- Collaboration is expected between private, public, and charitable organizations to plan for, develop and promote care for Sauk County's aging population.
- Collaboration is expected between private, public, and charitable organizations to plan, develop and promote community services to serve Sauk County's diverse community.
- Bring together private, public and charitable organizations as partners to address needs of the aging population for services such as home and community-based assistance, meal preparation, transportation, respite care, adult day care, etc, as a project of Sauk County Council on Collaborative Initiatives.
- Use the Diversity Taskforce to develop a plan to address areas of need; appeal to the community; recruit volunteers to assist with bilingual translation and interpretation.

#### **Diversity Taskforces**

The Sauk County population is becoming increasingly diverse, and in order to ensure that Sauk County residents have a high quality of life, it is necessary that the County address the dynamics of the ever-changing population. Diversity takes a range of characteristics into account, and, as complex as humans are, no one "category" will ever begin to describe a person. These characteristics include, but are not limited to:

- Gender
- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- Language
- Sexual orientation
- Parental status
- Disability
- Age
- Education level
- Economic status

Many organizations, businesses, universities, and governmental groups have created taskforces to examine diversity issues and develop initiatives to build bridges and foster better understanding between groups. Such taskforces identify potential problem areas and opportunities for improvement. They develop suggested actions for communities and organizations to take to increase equality and fairness.

## 4. Transportation

### 4.0 Overview

Transportation shapes Sauk County residents' daily decisions on the most basic level. Not only do transportation options determine the level of ease of completing simple tasks such as commuting to work or going grocery shopping, but they affect accessibility of emergency vehicles in urgent situations. Additionally, transportation options that allow people and goods to travel quickly from one place to another are essential in attracting and maintaining businesses.

The transportation infrastructure that serves Sauk County strongly impacts development patterns and energy usage, and despite the presence of various modes of transportation in the County, the vast majority of travel occurs via automobile on roads, highways, and Interstate 90/94.

The following goals and objectives seek to encourage an increase in multi-modal transportation options, maintain a quality infrastructure system, and plan for transportation-related development issues.



*Passenger rail systems have the potential to transform regional transportation.*



*Highways can be made more attractive by incorporating plants along medians. They can also support multi-modal transportation by adding bike lanes.*



*Wide sidewalks make communities more pedestrian-friendly and help to encourage walking instead of driving.*

#### **4.1 Efficient and Effective Transportation**

##### **Efficient and Effective Transportation Defined**

Sauk County benefits greatly from having an efficient and effective transportation system. Not only does that benefit businesses and industries the County depends on, but it makes day-to-day activities, such as travelling to work and doing errands, easier and less time-consuming for residents.

To be “effective” with regards to transportation means to expedite the travel of people and goods from one place to another, while to be “efficient” emphasizes the necessity of timely, cost-effective, and resource-responsible transportation. Both of these words hint at the fact that transportation decisions should not deplete resources that would hinder future transportation. Additionally, they both suggest that the effects of transportation, such as sending U.S. dollars overseas to unstable regions in order to purchase increasingly scarce fossil fuels, should not counteract efforts in other issue areas such as economic development, national security, or environmental preservation.

##### **Efficient and Effective Transportation Goal**

Make sure that people and goods are transported safely, efficiently and effectively.

##### **Efficient and Effective Transportation Objectives**

###### **Objective 1**

Develop and implement a cost-effective Sauk County transportation system that serves pedestrian, bicycle, auto/truck/bus, rail, and air traffic.

###### **Objective 2**

Develop policies to encourage increased passengers per vehicle in all modes of motorized transportation (e.g. currently at 1.1 people per car for Sauk County to Madison commuters).

###### **Objective 3**

Promote mix-mode transportation hubs (e.g. rail, roads, pedestrian) in existing cities/villages in Sauk County.

###### **Additional Ideas**

- Assess current vehicle occupancies and conduct an origin-destination study.
- Prepare feasibility study identifying opportunities, barriers to success, and partners.
- Implement a public awareness and promotion program.
- Coordinate the development of new transportation hubs with development and/or maintenance of existing transportation systems.

##### **Multi-Modal and Mass Transportation**

Sauk County’s unique transportation resources create a variety of travel options. Existing rail lines and Interstate 90/94 converge in the County’s northern section, and there are several local airports serving the area. Even so, there is a lack of mass transportation options available to and within Sauk County.

There are a number of potential solutions to this problem. For example, regional rail systems would have the potential to bring visitors into Sauk County from Minneapolis-St. Paul, Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago. Shuttle systems in the County would allow easy transportation between cities such as Wisconsin Dells, Lake Delton, and Baraboo. Bus rapid transit systems, using buses or other specialized vehicles, travel on fixed routes using lanes dedicated for their use to allow people to travel quickly from one place to another.

As transportation is so regional in character, it is essential that Sauk County coordinate efforts with neighboring counties. Communities will benefit economically by increasing mass transportation opportunities within the region.

*For more information about bus rapid transit systems, please see the National Bus Rapid Transit Institute’s website at [www.nbrti.org](http://www.nbrti.org) and the Bus Rapid Transit Policy Center’s website at [www.gobrt.org](http://www.gobrt.org).*

## 4.2 Infrastructure

### Infrastructure Defined

Infrastructure is every improvement or alteration to real property designed to facilitate transportation, including: roads, bridges, railroads, ferry/boat access, sidewalks, side paths, trails, airports, hangars, transit terminals, fixed bicycle racks and any landscaping designed to improve lines of sight and stimulate any mode of traffic flow.

If Sauk County fails to address the issue of aging transportation infrastructure, it will severely limit any potential future expansion of its tax base that depends on long-term system reliability and additional carrying capacity. The safety of roads, bridges, trails, rails, runways and other transportation infrastructure shapes the livability and economic performance and potential of the County. Deteriorating transportation infrastructure undermines virtually all community and economic development efforts, resulting in reduced incomes and declining fiscal revenues. Lost economic opportunities put greater financial pressure on local governments to raise taxes and limit their ability to generate and implement plans for orderly, attractive, and efficient residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial districts. Additionally, well-maintained infrastructure is essential in order to avoid potentially devastating infrastructure failure.

### Infrastructure Goal

Make sure that critical transportation infrastructure and systems are well-maintained.

### Infrastructure Objectives

#### Objective 1

Ensure that local supplies of construction aggregates (e.g. sand, gravel, and rock) are available for local projects.

#### Objective 2

Plan and construct infrastructure replacement and maintenance based upon total life cycle cost, including costs of extraction, processing, removal, recycling and ultimate disposal of materials and resources utilized.

#### Objective 3

Capture available state, federal, and private funding for transportation projects.

#### Additional Ideas

- Establish a county policy and consistent town policies on aggregate extraction/mining.
- Determine how locally available supply of materials can meet long-term demand.
- Identify sites for future aggregate supplies, assure a long-term material supply.
- Identify and quantify lifecycle cost, including long term maintenance.
- Construct only that which may be maintained affordably.

### Coal Ash in Highway Construction

Wisconsin is one of the nation's leaders in reusing coal combustion products such as coal ash, which is increasingly reused in beneficial ways. Such products can be used to make bricks, roofing tiles and shingles, bowling balls, and highways.

Coal ash can be added to portland cement, decreasing the amount of cement needed for a highway construction project. This lowers greenhouse emissions, as the production of portland cement creates a large amount of air pollutants. It also reduces the amount of virgin resources consumed, decreasing the pressure on natural resources. Additionally, instead of dumping coal ash or other coal combustion products into landfills, they are used to fortify construction projects.

While there are many environmental benefits to incorporating coal ash into highway projects, it is necessary to plan such projects carefully. Coal ash can leach toxic materials such as mercury and arsenic if it is not properly handled and contained in concrete. For this reason, projects must be carefully regulated. According to the U.S. government, the amount of substances leached is negligible, and, when dealt with properly, is not a health hazard.

*For more information, please see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's website at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).*

### 4.3 U.S. Highway 12 Corridor

#### **U.S. Highway 12 Corridor Defined**

The U.S. Highway 12 corridor in Sauk County is geographically defined as the 24-mile stretch of U.S. Highway between and including the Villages of Sauk City and Lake Delton. The Corridor traverses rural areas, the Baraboo Range, various villages, the City of Baraboo, and the Ho-Chunk Nation. The Corridor also includes a bypass covering an area just south of the City of Baraboo to Interstate 90/94 in Lake Delton. This stretch is a segment of the U.S. Highway 12 that connects Detroit, Michigan with the Pacific Coast. It is one of the first federal highways and in many places follows prehistoric Native American trade routes.

Participants in the March 30, 2009 Sauk County Visioning Session, "Facing Our Future," discussed the develop of the U.S Highway 12 corridor. They emphasized the regional character of U.S. Highway 12 and strongly suggested that Sauk County partner with other communities along U.S. Highway 12, both in and beyond the State of Wisconsin, to promote the historic and cultural importance of the U.S. Highway 12 route and generate interest in strengthening economic and cultural bonds among U.S. Highway 12 corridor cities, villages and rural communities.

Sauk County lacks current data on primary and secondary impacts of highway development on local communities, as well as on the real cost/benefits of secondary rural development. The short-term and long-term natural, cultural and social impacts of major highway

construction and related development are not currently known.

The new road is designed to improve the safety of drivers and passengers, bicyclists and pedestrians. Additional lanes on the existing alignment and on the new bypass routes promise to reduce current traffic congestion.

However, the expansion is likely to bring increased traffic and accompanying development, putting greater pressure on natural and cultural resources in the highway corridor and adjacent lands. If the future development of the U.S. Highway 12 corridor is not adequately addressed, Sauk County faces an undesirable future of unplanned and poorly managed development. Natural ecological systems and the native plant and animal communities in the corridor and adjacent lands will suffer from the loss and fragmentation of habitat. New development will bring more traffic, demands for additional highway access points, and additional traffic safety hazards. Finally, private rural landowners in the U.S. Highway 12 corridor will endure increasing pressure to convert remaining agricultural and forest land to more development-intensive purposes unless provided reasonable economic incentives to maintain traditional land uses.

#### **Successful Corridor Development: Octavia Boulevard, San Francisco**

A national model in successful corridor development, Octavia Boulevard was redesigned and rebuilt after earthquake-related safety concerns. The Boulevard allows traffic to move quickly and efficiently, while side lanes allow for neighborhood traffic. The lanes are bordered by trees and shrubs to increase the esthetic appeal of the area, and broad sidewalks and accommodation for bike lanes allow for easy, alternative modes of transportation.

In order to create a greater sense of community, each end of Octavia Boulevard has a sort of park, with lawns and playground. Special space has been set aside for rotating art installations.

Neighborhood development was taken into careful consideration as the Boulevard was redesigned. The business establishments have prospered as a result of the easy access the Boulevard provides, as well as the increased appeal of the area.

*For more information about the Octavia Boulevard project and others like it, please see the Congress for the New Urbanism's website at [www.cnu.org](http://www.cnu.org).*

## **U.S. Highway 12 Corridor Goal**

Fully realize the environmental, social, and economic benefits from the expansion of the U.S. Highway 12 corridor (Sauk City to Lake Delton).

## **U.S. Highway 12 Corridor Objectives**

### **Objective 1**

Promote U.S. Highway 12 as the “Gateway to Sauk County” (emphasizing the County’s natural beauty, agriculture, economy, communities, and outdoor recreation).

### **Objective 2**

Develop regulations and programs for the orderly development of the existing U.S. Highway 12 corridor.

### **Objective 3**

Develop regulations and programs for the orderly development of the new U.S. Highway 12 by-pass.

### **Additional Ideas**

- Form a regional group to carry on discussion and promote regional assets.
- Create an advisory board consisting of representatives from all units of government along the Highway 12 corridor using a third party facilitator with the objective of establishing mutually acceptable policies along the corridor.

## **The Mount Horeb Trollway: Business Highway ID**

The Mount Horeb “trollway” is an example of successful highway corridor development in a more rural setting. The area has incorporated roundabouts so traffic moves more smoothly. Additionally, Mount Horeb has ensured that it leaves a lasting impression on visitors and travelers by incorporating art in public places, most notably, the carved trolls that line the highway. This not only creates a unique sense of community, but is a distinct place-making tool.

Mount Horeb is also using the “trollway” as a launching point to support the 3/50 Project, encouraging local and independent businesses by advertising basic facts about the positive effects of buying goods and services from local businesses.

For more information, please see the Village of Mount Horeb website at [www.mounthorebwi.info](http://www.mounthorebwi.info) and the Mount Horeb Area Chamber of Commerce website at [www.trollway.com](http://www.trollway.com) To learn more about the 3/50 Project, please see [www.the230Project.net](http://www.the230Project.net)

# 5. Economy

## 5.0 Overview

The economy is one of the driving forces of a vibrant community, strongly affecting residents' lives and daily decisions. People live where they can find work and make enough money to support themselves and their families. Additionally, the quality of jobs is essential. Workers want jobs with benefits that meet their needs, particularly regarding issues such as health care insurance.

Recognizing the important role the economy plays in society, Sauk County consistently works to strengthen its economy. Not only does a thriving, vibrant economy make a community a more enjoyable place to live for residents, but it attracts new residents and businesses. Without a flourishing economy, local governments and organizations may struggle to provide necessary services to residents.

The following goals and objectives are designed to increase the strength of the Sauk County economy by empowering individuals while protecting the County from becoming dependent on any one industry for economic success.



*Apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training programs help to prepare students for the workforce.*



*Higher education increases qualifications of the workforce, attracting higher-paying jobs.*



*Financial seminars, workshops, and courses teach practical lessons regarding personal money matters.*

## **5.1 Financial Self-Sufficiency**

### **Financial Self-Sufficiency Defined**

Financial self-sufficiency is indicated by economic independence and financial stability for individuals and families. It includes the ability to not only be able to meet current expenses, but to save for future needs, such as retirement or education. It also means building equity to be able to leverage additional financial resources when needed.

Individuals and families who are financially self-sufficient contribute to a more resilient local economy and a community that is less dependent on government services or non-profit organizations to meet basic needs. It is necessary that residents have access to resources that enable them to seize economic opportunities and better plan for their financial future.

### **Financial Self-Sufficiency Goal**

Financially self-sufficient individuals and families.

### **Financial Self-Sufficiency Objectives**

#### **Objective 1**

Develop programs to help individuals more effectively manage their finances.

#### **Objective 2**

Expand job-training programs for current and dislocated workers that will enable them to compete in a globally competitive economy.

#### **Objective 3**

Develop programs to remove barriers to employment (i.e. transportation, day care, and educational issues).

#### **Objective 4**

Identify more affordable and accessible health care options.

#### **Objective 5**

Expand communications between local schools and the business community regarding skills graduates need.

### **Financial Self-Sufficiency Feature**

There are many different aspects of financial self-sufficiency, such as the availability of economic opportunities and an individual's knowledge about financial matters.

A variety of organizations around Sauk County work towards empowering individuals to become more financially literate and self-sufficient by providing educational materials and opportunities such as seminars and workshops. These programs are being expanded upon and further developed to assist a larger number of people in a greater variety of situations. Some materials are posted online to assist those who are not able to attend workshops or seminars due to transportation difficulties or busy schedules, and some materials are available in both English and Spanish.

To help increase financial literacy in young adults, some high school economics courses incorporate role-playing scenarios into their curriculums. Students are given a career and must budget based on their salary. Various scenarios are presented, such as buying a car, insurance, and handling a mortgage. Students gain practical knowledge about a variety of issues, such as interest rates, debt, and managing credit cards. These role-playing projects can be an effective tool in showing how financial concepts are applicable to everyday life.

For more information about the Sauk County Development Corporation, please see [www.scdc.org](http://www.scdc.org). To learn more about UW Extension, please see [www.udex.edu](http://www.udex.edu).



## 5.2 Economic Diversity

### **Economic Diversity Defined**

A diverse economy is one that relies on a wide range of industries, services, and agricultural activities that contribute to varied employment opportunities and total output of the local economy. This helps to ensure that any one economic sector does not account for the majority of employment opportunities or output, creating a more resilient community by reducing dependence on any one economic sector. Fostering a diversity of economic sectors serves to protect or cushion communities from economic downturns, stabilizing community employment and output during potentially difficult times. A diverse economy contributes to the overall stability of the community and the long term economic success of the County.

### **Economic Diversity Goal**

A diversified and non-depleting (sustainable) economy.

### **Economic Diversity Objectives**

#### **Objective 1**

Support local business start-ups.

#### **Objective 2**

Support the expansion of existing businesses into new markets.

#### **Objective 3**

Develop collaborations with local and regional organizations to promote the Sauk County region.

#### **Objective 4**

Promote and support the development of environmentally focused businesses/manufacturers.

#### **Objective 5**

Research and identify the mix of businesses where Sauk County has a competitive advantage.

#### **Objective 6**

Improve utility and transportation infrastructure (i.e. high-speed internet, freight rail, highway, and energy).

#### **Objective 7**

Attract/create employers that offer high wage jobs.

### **Strengthening and Encouraging New Businesses: Business Incubators**

In order to support the establishment of new companies and strengthen local economies, some communities have started to create “business incubators” – office space with low leases and equipment shared between a number of new establishments in order to cut initial costs. This also allows businesses to grow and become more stable in a less risky environment before eventually stepping out in the business world on their own.

Many times when start-ups take advantage of the resources available at an incubator, they also receive advice, as well as formal learning opportunities, more easily as they are in close contact with a community of small-business entrepreneurs. Some incubators, such as the student business incubator at UW Madison, also provide consulting services and assistance with preparing business plans, marketing, etc.

Additionally, leases increase slightly as businesses become more successful, preparing the business for the transition out of the incubator.

*For more information, please see the National Business Incubation Association at [www.nbia.org](http://www.nbia.org).*

# 6. Government

## 6.0 Overview

Government plays a special role in society by providing services that may not be managed as successfully by other sectors in a community, making decisions based on what is best for the community as a whole and taking a leadership position in times of emergency. Local governmental units in Wisconsin are charged with providing many services and performing a large variety of duties.

It is necessary for government to be just and treat residents equitably. Additionally, it is essential that government processes are transparent and that community members have ways to express their opinions and share their perspectives, allowing community input. Governmental officials and representatives must be accessible to residents in order to answer questions and listen to opinions, and there must be mechanisms for accountability.

The goals and objectives in this section are geared towards increasing government transparency and efficiency while strengthening the government's ability to provide necessary services to the community.



*Citizen interactions with government are integral in shaping a strong, vibrant community.*



*Many of the decisions that directly affect day-to-day life in Sauk County are undertaken at the local level.*



*Town hall meetings, public hearings, and committee meetings allow community members to stay informed, express opinions, and hold government officials accountable.*

## 6.1 Consistency and Coordination

### Consistency and Coordination Defined

Consistency and coordination are the balanced and interactive results of internal and external efficiencies that produce programs free from irregularity, variation or contradiction and which have a high degree of standardization in order to ensure residents are treated fairly and equally.

Various levels of government often have conflicting values, priorities, and regulations. Concerns about a lack of a clear and transparent public process fuel a lack of faith and trust in government. Without consistent methods and procedures between levels of government and different jurisdictions there is conflict, confusion, redundancy, and uncertainty. This greatly inhibits the effectiveness of government operations and constrains the County's ability to provide basic services needed by residents.

### Consistency and Coordination Goal

Coordinated and consistent intergovernmental policies and practices.

### Consistency and Coordination Objectives

#### Objective 1

Better inform the public about local government processes and activities.

#### Objective 2

Create opportunities for additional interaction (i.e. feedback) between the public and government.

#### Objective 3

Identify where jurisdictions overlap and interact, and establish a process to address inconsistencies and conflicts.

#### Objective 4

Maintain transparency while improving efficiency and public awareness of government processes.

#### Additional Ideas

- Identify process jurisdictional interactions and address inconsistencies and conflicts while promoting intergovernmental sharing of technologies, etc.
- Develop outreach opportunities and resources with area organizations, schools and other units of government to provide information about local government processes.
- Provide ongoing training to elected officials regarding processes and agency activities they are responsible for.
- Increase the scope/coverage of property-owner/resident notifications of land use changes, rezoning petitions and development applications. Also, utilize local government units to post multiple notices.

### Increasing Dialogue, Transparency, and Accountability: Askbristol.com

In an effort to increase transparency and accountability in local government, the Bristol City Council created an interactive website that allows community residents to learn about a variety of issues and provide feedback.

The website includes a discussion section that describes different issues and allows people to comment and share opinions with one another. Another section allows residents to post petitions, including information about the subject, so that fellow residents can sign the petition online. Website visitors can also see an archive of previous petitions. Residents can learn about proposals and development plans and add their perspectives, as well as watch webcasts of government meetings.

This highly innovative website has allowed a higher level of transparency and much more input from citizens by making it easier and more convenient for community members to stay informed and involved. All of these features allow government officials to more easily take resident opinions into account when making decisions.

*For more information, please see [www.askbristol.com/askbristol.php](http://www.askbristol.com/askbristol.php)*

## 6.2 Disaster Preparedness

### **Disaster Preparedness Defined**

Disaster preparedness is the process of ensuring that an organization or government unit has implemented preventative measures and is in a state of readiness to minimize the loss of life, injury or damage during disastrous or potentially disastrous situations while ensuring the capacity to sustain basic functions to a satisfactory level.

Long-range plans to address potential disasters, such as floods, or other predictable but infrequent events, such as critical fuel shortages, may already exist but are not yet effectively implemented. The County is the appropriate level of government to coordinate local and regional disaster planning and management. The flood of 2008 caused extensive physical damage and raised awareness of the consequences of ineffective disaster planning and implementation. The County and local units of government should be prepared to implement disaster management plans by identifying actions necessary to initiate under particular threat conditions and assigning individual responsibilities, making every effort to prevent loss of life, injury, and property damage.

Technological advances provide the ability to predict some, but not all, events. Even so, there are many variables, and there is no comprehensive understanding of how various disaster events, such as floods, will ultimately impact a community.

### **Disaster Preparedness Goal**

Information is exchanged and communicated to the public and between governments during natural disasters and rare occurrences.

### **Disaster Preparedness Objectives**

#### **Objective 1**

Lead, oversee and provide training to local units of government for all emergency management planning and operations.

#### **Objective 2**

Develop information and mapping resources to restrict developments in areas prone to disasters (e.g. flooding, fire, waste disposal sites).

#### **Objective 3**

Review and improve the County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan

#### **Objective 4**

Identify potential threats to public health and develop and implement effective response measures to possible scenarios.

### **Additional Ideas**

- Identify and map high/intermittent/low hazard mitigation areas. Require higher-level development review in high hazard areas.
- Provide additional County assistance to local units in providing emergency management training.

### **Clarifying Jurisdictional Authority and Governmental Processes**

Often times governmental processes can be confusing and sometimes redundant. Community members can be frustrated by lack of clear guidelines regarding management of programs and application, permit, and complaint processes. Additionally, sometimes efforts can be made more efficient by coordinating departmental efforts to eliminate redundancies.

One way organizations and governmental units have solved these problems has been to clearly establish flow charts to diagram each step of a particular process and the department or official in charge of that step. This allows government processes to be more transparent to community members, as well as allowing the public to better understand what is required to apply for a program or permit or file a complaint. Additionally, departments benefit because potential redundancies are identified and addressed.

Another area in which such flow charts can be useful is during theoretical emergency situations. The interjurisdictional network of responsibilities regarding the transition between emergency management authority and recovery management authority can be explained clearly and effectively, improving communication and coordination between departments and organizations during urgent situations.

### 6.3 Anticipating and Adapting to Change

#### **Anticipating and Adapting to Change Defined**

One aspect of successful government is its ability to look at the world with open eyes, identify existing, developing, and potential challenges and adapt its programs and policies to successfully meet those situations. By looking at problems other communities face and the various methods used to combat those issues, governmental units can serve constituents in the most advantageous way possible.

Developing this habit of consciously making the effort to continually search for best practices not only fights the natural institutional tendency towards inertia, but also supports the mentality that communities can always do better. By looking outside itself, governments can fight the status quo and more effectively serve the community by assisting the area in achieving the public's goals.

#### **Anticipating and Adapting to Change Goal**

Anticipate and adapt to change.

#### **Anticipating and Adapting to Change Objectives**

##### **Objective 1**

Actively seek ideas from within and outside of Sauk County.

### 6.4 Additional Ideas

- Identify potential improvements to services by learning from other communities.
- Monitor government processes and performance in other communities to identify potential improvements in process management.
- Invest in new technology.
- Identify all costs and benefits to public investments based on an objective analysis.

### Life Cycle Cost Analysis

Traditionally, project costs such as the construction of a building were reviewed based solely on the initial expenses associated with the construction of the structure. However, decision makers are increasingly broadening their scope when analyzing the cost of projects, a process called "life cycle cost analysis." The federal government has defined life cycle costs as "...the sum or present values of investment costs, capital costs, installation costs, energy costs, operating costs, maintenance costs, and disposal costs over the life-time of the project, product, or measure."

By doing this sort of analysis, the government is consciously choosing to make decisions that are beneficial for communities for the long term. When basing decisions on the anticipated cost of the project for its entire expected life span, decision makers are able to make more informed choices. They are able to budget more accurately and use resources more effectively.

One result of taking life cycle costs into consideration is that the lowest bid on a project may not necessarily be the winning bid, as the most affordable construction of a building may not be the most economical choice in the long run.

*For more information about life cycle cost analysis, please see the National Institute of Building Sciences' Whole Building Design Guide website at [www.wbdg.org](http://www.wbdg.org) and the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy website at [www.eere.energy.gov](http://www.eere.energy.gov).*

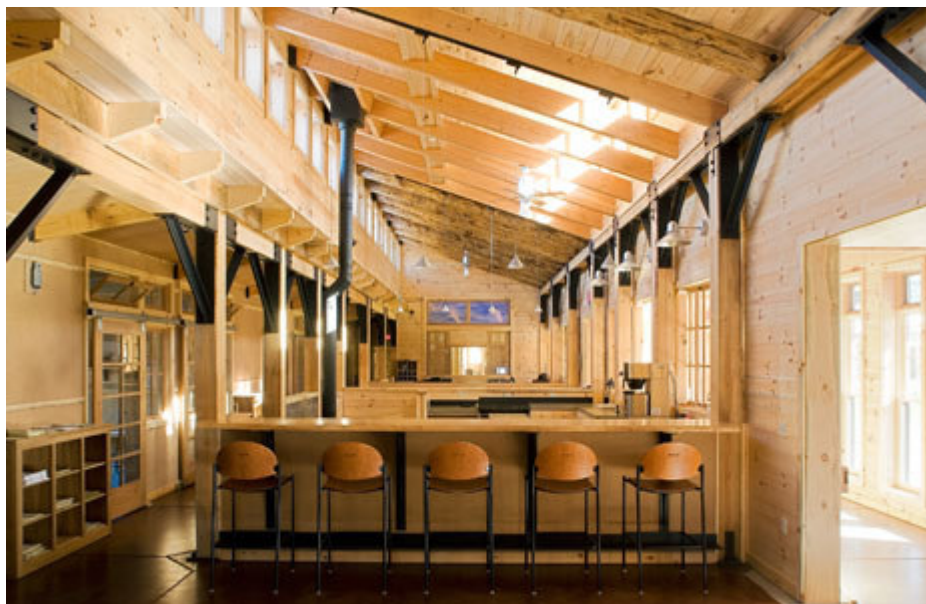
# 7. Energy

## 7.0 Overview

Energy issues directly affects many aspects of communities and several of the themes discussed in this Plan, such as transportation, housing, economy, and agricultural and natural resources. The amount of energy consumed, along with the energy sources used, affects the economy, environment, and budgets. On a larger scale, by producing energy at home, the U.S. can remove dependence on foreign energy sources.

Sauk County has historically been a leader, and energy issues present tremendous potential for the County to implement inventive solutions to modern problems. The old Sauk County landfill was one of the first sites to use methane burners to produce energy from a landfill. With new technology and a willingness to develop and implement innovative programs and policies, the County has a window of opportunity to be a model for communities across the country.

The goals and objectives pertaining to this theme focus on sustainable energy sources and energy efficiency and education. They concentrate on increasing the amount of energy produced locally and by alternative/renewable energy sources while reducing the amount of energy used.



*The Aldo Leopold Legacy Center, located outside of Baraboo, is energy efficient, carbon neutral, and one of the most environmentally friendly buildings in the U.S.*



*Sustainable alternative energy options allow Sauk County to meet current needs while planning for the future.*



*Manure digesters allow farmers to turn manure into profit by creating renewable energy.*

## 7.1 Sustainable Energy Sources

### Sustainable Energy Sources Defined

Sustainable energy often refers to renewable sources such as biofuel, solar power, geothermal and wind. However, it also includes ways to promote energy efficiency through means such as mass transportation, insulated windows and doors, and energy-efficient appliances. As sustainable energy includes renewable sources, it avoids depletion of natural resources for future generations.

While Sauk County may not entirely transition to sustainable energy, there are definite benefits to increasing its presence in the County's energy profile. These benefits include support for new businesses that promote alternative energy and efficiency, decreased independence on outside energy sources, and the cultivation of a 'green' image for Sauk County that can spur a new, sustainably-based economic profile.

### Sustainable Energy Sources Goal

Widely available, affordable, locally produced and environmentally sensitive energy source(s).

### Sustainable Energy Sources Objective

#### Objective 1

Establish partnerships among units of government, non-profit organizations, businesses and community residents to identify and implement energy conservation strategies.

#### Objective 2

Develop local, clean, renewable, affordable energy production sources.

#### Objective 3

Access and promote financial incentives for energy conservation and developing renewable energy sources.

#### Objective 4

Meet or exceed the State of Wisconsin goal of "25 by 25" by becoming a leader in renewable energy consumption while increasing local (renewable) energy production.

#### Objective 5

Assess and develop specific feasible projects to produce renewable energy locally.

#### Objective 6

Promote and integrate the use of renewable energy technologies in creating sustainable communities, renewable energy districts, and green buildings.

#### Objective 7

Explore the potential to increase the use of renewable energy sources within the community and to develop local renewable energy sources, promoting energy self-sufficiency.

### Wisconsin's '25 by 25' Goal

In 2007 Governor Doyle signed Executive Order #192 and created the Wisconsin Office of Energy Independence and formalized the goal of energy independence in Wisconsin. Executive Order #192 set the goal of generating 25% of Wisconsin's power and 25% of the transportation fuels used in Wisconsin from renewable resources by 2025. In early 2009, the Town of Fairfield passed a resolution formally adopting the "25 by '25" goal.

The national 25 by'25 "Action Plan" sets out several issues to focus on in order to accomplish this goal:

- Increasing production of renewable energy.
- Delivering renewable energy to markets.
- Expanding renewable energy markets.
- Improving energy efficiency and productivity.
- Strengthening conservation of natural resources and the environment.

*For more information please see the Governor's website at [www.wisgov.state.wi.us](http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us). For a suggested "Action Plan" regarding ways to reach this goal, please see the 25 x '25 website at [www.25x25.org](http://www.25x25.org).*

### **Objective 8**

Evaluate the opportunity to incorporate alternative energy and sustainable development strategies in all of its development or redevelopment activities and encourage citizens to incorporate alternative energy and sustainability into residential projects.

### **Objective 9**

Assess and develop a list of energy use/carbon emission reduction options, possible alternative/renewable energy sources for residences, public buildings and transportation with anticipated energy and emissions savings, net cost savings (life cycle cost estimates) and other potential incentives, using available information and programs at State and Federal levels.

### **Encouraging Energy Efficiency and Alternative Energy**

With an increase in concern about energy efficiency and growing knowledge about alternative forms of energy, a number of governmental units have established programs designed to encourage individuals, households, and businesses to make changes regarding energy usage. One approach involves a governmental unit financing programs using bonds to improve energy efficiency of buildings or install alternative energy systems. Beneficiaries use the financial savings from the new system to pay back the bond.

Boulder County, Colorado, has designed a program, ClimateSmart, to connect residents and businesses to cost-effective programs to save money and reduce energy usage. The program educates community members about reducing energy usage. Its website includes a forum to allow people to discuss changes they have made in their household or at work. Additionally, program leaders have facilitated the creation of community "climate action groups" that focus on putting on events and educational opportunities in their communities. All of these efforts have been put in place to help Boulder achieve its greenhouse gas reduction goals and realize Boulder's 2012 Kyoto Protocol goal, which was mandated by voters in 2006.

*For more information about bonding programs and alternative energy incentive programs, please see North Carolina Solar Center's Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency website at [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org). The ClimateSmart program can be found at [www.beclimatesmart.com](http://www.beclimatesmart.com). For a more local approach for individuals, please see Enact's website at [www.enactwi.org](http://www.enactwi.org).*



## 7.2 Energy Efficiency

### Energy Efficiency Defined

Energy efficiency involves the concept of utilizing less energy to perform the same function.

### Energy Efficiency Goal

Develop a collaborative effort to encourage and assist organizations, businesses, and residents in energy conservation efforts, renewable energy usage, and green building. Promote higher energy and power efficiencies.

### Energy Efficiency Objectives

#### Objective 1

Assess and develop specific projects to reduce energy use and carbon emissions.

#### Objective 2

Develop a baseline measurement of current energy use and carbon emissions by the County and its residents and processes to update these measurements as reductions occur.

#### Objective 3

Undertake a thorough review of all County ordinances to make energy conservation a conscious part of the ordinance implementation process.

#### Objective 4

Provide a mechanism to track the accomplishments of the County and its residents in reducing energy use and conversion to renewable energy.

#### Objective 5

Establish a physical location(s) where residents can get current information on energy conservation, renewable energy, and green building. A user-friendly electronic website should also be developed to assist in this effort.

#### Objective 6

Educate and inform the public, including stakeholders that include residential, commercial, industrial and governmental organizations who are consumers of power and energy, the many benefits and uses of renewable energy and green building/retrofitting.

### Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy works to increase energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy by providing residents and businesses with technical and financial assistance. The program utilizes a number of innovative methods to support energy efficiency and increased dialogue of energy issues, such as a Tool Lending Library that allows business owners to use a variety of specialized tools that monitor energy usage and leaks.

For residents, businesses, organizations, and governments that want to work on energy issues, Focus on Energy provides useful support in completing projects. The primary organizations that make up Focus on Energy are:

- Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
- Statewide Energy Efficiency and Renewable Administration (SEERA)
- Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation
- Energy Center of Wisconsin
- PA Consulting Group
- Wipfli LLP
- Baker Tilly Virchow Krause

*For more information, please see Focus on Energy's website at [www.focusonenergy.com](http://www.focusonenergy.com).*