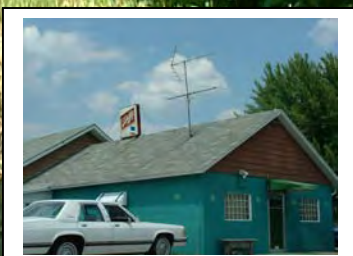


# Comprehensive Plan

## Town of Bear Creek

### Sauk County, Wisconsin



---

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	<b>Pages</b>
1.0 Purpose of This Plan	1
1.1 Statement of Vision, Goals, Objectives, Policies	3
1.2 Planning History	3
1.3 Regional Context	3
1.4 Jurisdictional Boundaries	3
1.5 Planning Area	4
 <i>Maps</i>	
1-1 Regional Context	
1-2 Jurisdictional Boundaries	
1-3 Aerial Photography/Parcel Boundaries	
 <b>Chapter Two: Issues and Opportunities</b>	
2.0 Purpose	5
2.1 Community Survey	5
2.2 Visioning Session	7
2.3 Open House	8
2.4 Formal Consensus Process to Establish Goals, Objectives and Policies	8
2.5 Town of Bear Creek Vision	9
 <b>Chapter Three: Population Inventory, Analysis and Projections</b>	
3.0 Purpose	11
3.1 Regional Population and Housing Trends	11
<i>Table P1 Regional Population Trends</i>	
<i>Table P2 Regional Housing Unit Comparison</i>	
<i>Table P3 Regional Average Household Size Comparison</i>	
3.2 Local Population and Housing Trends	12
<i>Charts P4 and P5 Occupancy Rate Bear Creek vs. Sauk County 1990</i>	
<i>Charts P6 and P7 Occupancy Rate Bear Creek vs. Sauk County 2000</i>	
<i>Table P8 Age and Gender, Bear Creek and Sauk County</i>	
<i>Table P9 Ethnic Composition, Bear Creek and Sauk County</i>	
<i>Chart P10 Change of Populations per Age Bracket, 1990 to 2000</i>	
<i>Table P11 Change of Populations per Age Bracket, 1990 to 2000</i>	
<i>Table P12 Length of Residency, Bear Creek vs. Sauk County</i>	
3.3 Interpretation of Demographic Data	15
3.4 Population Projections	15
<i>Table P13 Population Projections, Town of Bear Creek</i>	
<i>Charts P14 and P15 Population Projections based on Population and Housing</i>	

<b>Chapter Four: Housing</b>		<b>Pages</b>
4.0	Purpose	19
4.1	Housing Unit Trends	19
	<i>Chart H1 Regional Housing Unit Comparison</i>	
4.2	Household Characteristics	20
	<i>Table H2 Households by Type</i>	
	<i>Chart H3 Average Household Size Comparison</i>	
4.3	Housing Stock Characteristics	21
	<i>Table H4 Housing Units by Structural Type</i>	
	<i>Table H5 Age of Housing Units</i>	
	<i>Chart H6 Age of Existing Housing Structures</i>	
4.4	Housing Affordability	22
	<i>Chart H7 Household Income Levels, Bear Creek and Sauk County</i>	
	<i>Table H8 Affordable Housing Expenses per Income, Bear Creek 1990</i>	
	<i>Table H9 Affordable Housing Expenses per Income, Bear Creek 2000</i>	
	<i>Table H10 Distribution of Household Income, 1999</i>	
	<i>Chart H11 Monthly Owner Costs</i>	
	<i>Table H12 Monthly Owner Costs</i>	
	<i>Chart H13 Monthly Mortgage Costs, Bear Creek 1990</i>	
	<i>Chart H14 Monthly Mortgage Costs, Bear Creek 2000</i>	
	<i>Charts H15 and H16 Monthly Rental Costs, Bear Creek 1990 and 2000</i>	
	<i>Table H17 Housing Value, Bear Creek 2000</i>	
4.5	Housing Density	27
4.6	Local Population and Housing Trends	28
4.7	Projected Housing Needs Based on Population Projections	28
4.8	Housing Opportunities	29
4.9	Housing Programs and Resources	29
4.10	Housing Goal, Objectives and Policies	32
 <b>Chapter Five: Agricultural Resources</b>		
5.0	Purpose	34
5.1	Regional and Local Trends in Agriculture	34
	<i>Table A1 Trends in Average Size of Farms</i>	
	<i>Table A2 Trends in Farm Numbers</i>	
5.2	Land in Agriculture Use	35
	<i>Table A3 Agriculture Land Sales, Town of Bear Creek, Sauk County, and State of Wisconsin</i>	
5.3	Production Trends	36
	<i>Tables A4 &amp; A5 Production Trends: Sauk County &amp; State of Wisconsin</i>	
	<i>Table A6 Dairy Production Trends: Sauk County &amp; State of Wisconsin</i>	
5.4	Local Farm Numbers and Types	37
5.5	Farmland Preservation Program	37
5.6	Land Capability Classification	37
	<i>Table A7 Soil Class and Acreage in Bear Creek</i>	
5.7	Alternative Agriculture Opportunities	38
5.8	Federal, State and Local Programs and Resources	40
5.9	Agriculture Goal, Objectives and Policies	41

**Maps**

- 5-1 Land Capability Classification
- 5-2 Prime Farmland/Slope Delineation

**Chapter Six: Utilities and Community Resources**

6.0	Purpose	43
6.1	Water Supply and Private On-site Waste Disposal Systems	43
6.2	Solid Waste Disposal/Recycling	44
6.3	Septage Waste Disposal	44
6.4	Town Hall/Garage	45
6.5	Law Enforcement	45
6.6	Emergency Services	45
6.7	Library	45
6.8	Communication, Electric Utilities and Heating Fuel	45
6.9	Medical Facilities	45
6.10	Educational Facilities	45
6.11	Recreational Facilities	48
6.12	Cemeteries and Churches	48
6.13	Historical and Cultural Structures and Areas	48
6.14	Historical and Cultural Programs and Resources	49
6.15	Utilities and Community Resources Goal, Objectives and Policies	50

**Maps**

- 6-1 Septic Suitability
- 6-2 Alternative Septic Suitability
- 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources

**Chapter Seven: Transportation**

7.0	Purpose	52
7.1	Principle Arterial, Collector Roadways and Local Roads	52
	<i>Tables T1 and T2 Bear Creek Roadway Classification System Definitions</i>	
7.2	Airports	53
7.3	Elderly, Disabled and Veteran Transportation	54
7.4	Other Transportation Options	54
7.5	Review of State, Regional and Other Applicable Plans	54
7.6	Analysis of the Existing Transportation Systems and Plans	56
7.7	Transportation Goal, Objectives and Policies	56

**Maps**

- 7-1 Transportation

<b>Chapter Eight: Economic Development</b>		<b>Pages</b>
8.0	Purpose	58
8.1	Area Employment and Economic Activity	58
	<i>Table E1 Sauk County Top 10 Manufacturers/Distributors by Employment</i>	
	<i>Table E2 Top 10 Sauk County Non-Manufacturers by Employment</i>	
	<i>Table E3 Regional Income Comparisons</i>	
	<i>Table E4 Characteristics of Hired Farm Labor, Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin, 1997</i>	
	<i>Table E5 Farm Receipts, Capital, and Income, Sauk County vs. State of Wisconsin, 1997</i>	
	<i>Table E6 Travel Expenditures and Economic Impact</i>	
8.2	Local Employment and Economic Activity	62
	<i>Table E7 Education Attainment, Bear Creek and Sauk County</i>	
	<i>Table E8 Distribution of Household Income, 1999</i>	
	<i>Table E9 Labor Force and Employment</i>	
	<i>Table E10 Labor Force Change by Age Group, Sauk County, 2000-2020</i>	
	<i>Chart E11 Sauk County Labor Force Trend by Age, 2000-2020</i>	
	<i>Table E12 Forecasted Labor Force by Age group in Wisconsin, 2000-2020</i>	
	<i>Table E13 Employment by Occupation, Town of Bear Creek</i>	
	<i>Chart E14 Major Employment Sectors, Town of Bear Creek</i>	
	<i>Table E15 Employment by Occupation, Sauk County</i>	
	<i>Table E16 Commuting Patterns</i>	
8.3	Opportunities to Attract and Retain Business	67
8.4	Other Programs and Partnerships	67
8.5	Environmentally Contaminated Sites	68
8.6	Economic Development Goal, Objectives and Policies	69
<b>Chapter Nine: Natural Resources</b>		
9.0	Purpose	70
9.1	General Soils Information	70
9.2	Topography and Slope	71
9.3	Environmentally Sensitive and Significant Resources	71
	<i>Figure NR1 Nitrogen Cycle</i>	
	<i>Figure NR2 Phosphorus Cycle</i>	
	<i>Figure NR3 Lake Turnover</i>	
	<i>Figure NR4 Lake Vegetative Buffers</i>	
9.4	Mineral Resources	74
9.5	Programs, Partnerships and Resources	74
9.6	Natural Resource Goal, Objectives and Policies	76
<b>Maps</b>		
9-1	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	
9-2	General Soils Map	
9-3	General Floodplain Areas	
9-4	Potential Gravel Deposits	

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>Chapter Ten: Intergovernmental Cooperation</b>	
10.0 Purpose	79
10.1 Adjacent Town Plans and Planning Efforts	79
10.2 Current Intergovernmental Programs, Plans, Agreements and Opportunities	79
10.3 Current and Future Cooperative Planning Efforts	81
10.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal, Objectives and Policies	81
<b>Chapter Eleven: Land Use</b>	
11.0 Purpose	83
11.1 Future Land Use Districts	83
11.2 Recent Development Trends	83
<i>Table LU1 Number of Permits Issued (1990-2006)</i>	
11.3 Current Population and Housing Density	84
11.4 Existing Land Use	85
11.5 Higher Density Development	85
11.6 Smart Growth Areas	86
11.7 Future Land Area Needs	86
<i>Table LU2 Household Forecast: Household Size Trend and Lands Needed</i>	
11.8 Natural Limitations to Building and Site Development	88
11.9 Land Use Goal, Objectives and Policies	88
<b>Maps</b>	
11-1 Land Use and Land Cover	
11-2 Zoning Districts	
11-3 Land Use Districts	
<b>Chapter Twelve: Implementation</b>	
12.0 Purpose	96
12.1 Plan Adoption	96
12.2 Plan Monitoring, Amendments, and Update	96
12.3 Role of Implementation	97
12.4 Implementation Timeline and Recommended Courses of Action	98
12.5 Consistency Among Plan Elements	101
12.6 Annual Review of the Implementation Process	101
<b>Appendixes</b>	
Appx A Survey and Results	
Appx B Vision Session Handouts and Results	
Appx C Public Participation Plan/Scope of Services	
Appx D Adoption Resolutions/Ordinances	
Appx E Sources of Information	

## **Acknowledgments**

### **Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan Committee**

Ted Greenheck, Chair  
Bob Bremmel, Vice-Chair  
Sheley Scallon  
Jeff Scallon  
Eileen Eberle

Tim McCluskey  
Ken Blum  
Joe Bauer  
Tim Drea

### **Town Board**

Marty McCluskey, Chairperson  
Harold Emerson  
Dale Nachreiner

### **Town Plan Commission**

Ted Greenheck, Chairperson  
Joe Bauer  
Ken Blum  
Bob Bremel  
Jeff Scallon

### **Planning Consultant:**

#### **Sauk County Department of Planning and Zoning**

Brian Simmert, AICP, County Planner, *Project Manager and Author*  
Mark Steward, Planning & Zoning Director, *Planning Assistance*  
Dave Tremble, AICP, Land Preservation Specialist/Planner, *Planning Assistance*  
Aaron Hartman, GIS Technician/Planner, *Mapping*  
Gina Templin, Planning & Zoning Support Specialist  
Mary White, Administrative Support Specialist

**The Town of Bear Creek, located in the southwestern part of Sauk County, is a rural place characterized by its small town atmosphere and a strong sense of community pride. The Town has a diverse mix of natural resources including steep ridges and deep valleys, productive forestlands, multiple streams and wetland complexes and a portion of White Mound County Park as well as the Bear Creek fishery area. While Bear Creek has only recently experienced a population increase, this setting and its proximity to urbanizing areas will likely result in continued growth. Recognizing that this growth will occur makes planning for the Town's future important as a way to retain the characteristics valued by the community and to ensure a successful future for the Town of Bear Creek.**

### **1.0 Purpose Of This Plan**

The purpose of the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan is to help guide local decision-making by:

- Identifying areas appropriate for development and preservation;
- Establishing and assigning future land use districts based on desired land uses;
- Identifying needed transportation and utility provisions to serve existing and new development;
- Including provisions that emphasize economic development that is locally and recreationally based;
- Providing opportunities to preserve open space land for ecological, recreational, and aesthetic reasons.

The Comprehensive Plan has been prepared in accordance with Wis Stat § 66.1001 and is the culmination of 18 months of work on the part of a 9-member Comprehensive Planning Committee. Input from numerous other citizens of the Town and knowledgeable people from throughout Sauk County have been incorporated into the final Comprehensive Plan. The Plan itself is comprised of nine primary elements, as noted below, however this Plan has rearranged some elements or portions thereof to allow for a greater level of analysis based on some of the more important issues in the Town. For example, Natural Resources and Agriculture have been separated into two individual sections, while Cultural Resources has been included with Utilities and Community Facilities. Additionally, the 'Issues and Opportunities' element has been expanded to include an in-depth analysis of a Community Survey and Visions Session.

For each of these redefined elements, broken into chapters, minimum requirements of the comprehensive planning legislation are met and in many cases exceeded. In this Plan, a description of each element is provided under the purpose statement of each chapter, along with a primary goal, objectives and identified policies. Each chapter is accompanied by a series of charts, tables and maps to illustrate both background information and the intent of the identified goals, objectives and policies.

In addition to the nine required elements, the comprehensive planning legislation also set forth 14 goals for communities to reach both throughout and at the completion of their planning processes. Although these goals are not required, this Plan and planning process has accomplished them.



The nine elements and 14 goals of the comprehensive plan are noted below:

➤ **Nine Elements**

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities and Community Facilities
5. Agriculture, Natural and Cultural resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

➤ **Fourteen Goals**

1. Promoting redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures;
2. Encouraging neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices;
3. Protecting natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes and woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources;
4. Protecting economically productive areas, including farmland and forests;
5. Encouraging land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state government and utility costs;
6. Preserving cultural, historic and archeological sites;
7. Encouraging coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government;
8. Building 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, 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 unique urban and rural communities;
14. Providing an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

To guide the development of goals, objectives and policies, planning participants developed an overall Vision of how the Town should look and feel in the future. The input for the development of the Town's Vision was gathered through a 'Visioning Session', as well as through feedback from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. In addition to aiding with the development of the Plan's goals, objectives, and policies, the Vision is meant to assist the Town with the actual implementation of the Plan through the years. The Vision is primarily meant to serve as a grounding point for future decisions. It broadly and effectively addresses the needs, desires, and thoughts of residents and landowners in Bear Creek.

The highlight of the planning process was its reliance on extensive public participation and input, far exceeding the requirements of the comprehensive planning legislation. The legislation requires, at a

minimum, one town-sponsored public hearing when the draft plan is ready for adoption. In contrast, this planning process focused heavily on public input to formulate a plan that best represents all interests in the Town. The process began with the appointment of a representative Comprehensive Planning Committee and administration, a community-wide survey and vision session, an open house and numerous public meetings.

### **1.1 Statement of Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies**

Each Chapter in this Comprehensive Plan includes a primary goal followed by objectives and policies, which will provide future direction to the Town. Visions, goals, objectives and policies are defined as follows:

- A ***Vision*** is the expression of a community’s overall desired future direction. The vision statement serves as the foundation for setting goals, objectives and policies.
- ***Goals*** are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the Town should approach preservation and development issues. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the Town and are derived from the future Vision of a Town.
- ***Objectives*** suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of the goal. While achievement of an objective is not always easily measured, objectives are usually attainable through policies and specific implementation activities.
- ***Policies*** are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure Plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives of a Plan. Town decision-makers should use policies, including any housing density policy, on a regular basis. Success in achieving policies is usually measurable.

### **1.2 Planning History**

#### ➤ **Town of Bear Creek Planning History**

The Town of Bear Creek has no formal history of planning nor has the town adopted a Development Plan or Land Use Plan. Town decisions affecting land use have been decided, in part, based upon an evaluation of individual land use proposals as well as past actions by the Town Board.

### **1.3 Regional Context**

***Map 1-1 Regional Context*** shows the relationship of the Town of Bear Creek to neighboring communities. The Town is located in the southwest part of Sauk County and is about 6 miles northwest of the Village of Spring Green. The Town of Bear Creek also shares a border with Richland County to the west.

### **1.4 Jurisdictional Boundaries**

A result of the 2000 Federal Census population data required Sauk County to redistrict its county supervisory district boundaries to achieve new districts of equal population. As a result of this effort, the Town of Bear Creek was assigned one supervisory district. Supervisory District 22 also includes the western one-third of the Town of Westfield, the northwestern part of the Town of Spring Green

and the Town of Washington. *Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Map* depicts the exact boundaries of Supervisory District 22.

The Town of Bear Creek is split into the three school districts: River Valley, Weston and Ithaca. *Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Map* also depicts the locations of these boundaries.

In terms of land use-related issues, the following Chapters of the Sauk County Code of Ordinances govern the Town of Bear Creek:

**Administered by Sauk County Clerk**

- Chapter 1 Supervisory District Plan

**Administered by the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning**

- Chapter 7 Zoning Ordinance
- Chapter 8 Shoreland Protection Ordinance
- Chapter 10 Floodplain Zoning Ordinance
- Chapter 18 Rural Identification System
- Chapter 22 Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance
- Chapter 23 Tower Siting Ordinance
- Chapter 24 Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance
- Chapter 25 Private Sewage System Ordinance

**Administered by the Sauk County Department of Land Conservation**

- Chapter 26 Animal Waste Management Ordinance

**Administered by the Sauk County Sheriff**

- Chapter 27 Animal Control Ordinance

**1.5 Planning Area**

The Planning area covers all lands within the Town of Bear Creek. As a point of reference, *Map 1-3 Aerial Photography/Parcel Boundaries* shows an overlay of tax parcels on an air photo.

## **10.0 Purpose**

In order to achieve the overall vision in the Town of Bear Creek, including the protection of natural and cultural resources, agricultural operations, and the overall quality of life, the Town must interact with many agencies and governmental units. The Town of Bear Creek should evaluate how the plans of Sauk County and Juneau County as well as neighboring units of government will affect it.

## **10.1 Adjacent Town Plans and Planning Efforts**

The following planning efforts represent localized planning efforts that may affect the Town of Bear Creek.

### **10.1.1 Town of Spring Green (Sauk County)**

The Town of Spring Green's Comprehensive Plan calls for the continued use of the Resource Conservancy 35 zoning district to accomplish the goal of preserving productive agricultural lands and bluff vistas commonly found in the driftless area of Sauk County. Development in the Town is directed to the southwest near the area of Kennedy Road as well as directly north of the Village of Spring Green. Additionally, the Town's Plan is generally consistent with the Village of Spring Green Comprehensive Plan directing additional infill development along the US Highway corridor.

### **10.1.2 Town of Franklin (Sauk County)**

The Town of Franklin's Comprehensive Plan limits the amount of growth in an effort to preserve agricultural lands and farming operations. One important aspect of the plan includes the 'whole farm plan' concept, which is a guide to landowners that want to develop new lots for residential housing while preserving the majority of the land for agriculture and open space uses. This Plan also includes a strict residential density policy that progressively limits the number of houses that can be built in the town based upon total acreage owned.

### **10.1.3 Town of Washington (Sauk County)**

The Town of Washington does not have a plan and is not zoned.

### **10.1.4 Town of Buena Vista (Richland County)**

The Town of Buena Vista's Comprehensive Plan specifies a density of 1 house per 35 acres of ownership for the purpose of preserving agricultural lands. The Town has indicated that it wishes to pursue other residential land use options such as rural Planned Unit Developments and Conservation Subdivisions, but cannot move forward until Richland County initiates such a programs that can work in tandem with town objectives and policies.

## **10.2 Current Intergovernmental Programs, Plans, Agreements and Opportunities**

### **10.2.1 Sauk County 20/20 Development Plan (1998)**

In 1999, the Sauk County Board of Supervisors adopted the *Sauk County 20/20 Development Plan*. The Development Plan is a policy document that presents a vision statement, goals, and policies on six major planning issues: community change, economic development, farmland preservation, housing, natural resources and transportation. By design, this plan does not contain a county future land use plan map. Individual town plans and other land use plan maps will comprise the various

implementation chapters of the Development Plan. The 20/20 Plan also recommends that the County prepare comprehensive rewrites of its Zoning Ordinance and Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance to reflect the values of the Plan. It also recommends that the County study innovative land use approaches such as purchase of development rights (PDR), transfer of development rights (TDR), and conservation subdivision design as ways to preserve farmland and natural resource areas while respecting private property rights. Finally, the Plan recommends that the County adopt an erosion control/storm water management program, a groundwater protection program, and a highway access control ordinance.

### **10.2.2 Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan (October, 2003)**

As part of the USH12 MOA, funding was provided to address growth-related issues resulting from the expansion of US Hwy 12 from Middleton to Lake Delton. In Sauk County, the Highway 12 Local Planning Assistance Advisory Committee formed, consisting of members of Sauk County, the Ho-Chunk Nation, and local governments along the Hwy 12 corridor. In March of 2002, the Committee hired a consulting firm to assist with the preparation of *Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan*. The *Growth Management Plan* focuses on issues such as complementary land use, preservation, access, economic development, and community image issues that arise as a result of the future Highway expansion. The planning process developed an overall vision and detailed recommendations for the entire 24-mile Highway 12 corridor in Sauk County as well as a vision and recommendation for rural areas that may be affected by the corridor. Overall, the Vision for the rural areas seeks to limit large-scale development to protect the economic viability of farming, and the natural beauty and rural character of the area. The Plan also suggests tools and recommendations to achieve this vision. Although the Town of Bear Creek was not a part of the Highway 12 Local Planning Assistance Advisory Committee, it is included as part of the Plans General Planning Area. This area includes communities that are not directly located along Highway 12, but will probably experience some secondary or “spin-off” impacts from future Highway 12 expansions.

### **10.2.3 Sauk County Preservation Program**

Although not passed by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, the Sauk County Preservation Program is designed to protect important natural resources and agricultural land in Sauk County by the direct public acquisition of development rights from willing private landowners. The Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) is a concept employed in communities across the country in which a public agency (in this case, Sauk County) or a private nonprofit conservation organization compensates private landowners who voluntarily agree to permanently convey the right to develop their property for residential or commercial use. The rights are then “extinguished” by the acquiring agency, preventing any future development of the protected property. The purchase price for the development rights equals the “fair market value” (FMV) as determined by a professional appraisal that compares estimates of the unrestricted market value of the subject property against the restricted use value of similar, but otherwise undevelopable land (i.e., land which cannot be developed because of physical or legal constraints on its use). The difference between those two estimated values is the “fair market value” of the development rights, which Sauk County can legally offer to the landowner.

The purpose and terms of the agreement, including the respective rights of Sauk County to enforce the agreement and of the landowner to use the land, are detailed in a legal instrument called a Conservation Easement which is signed by the parties and recorded with the Register of Deeds as part of the permanent land record for that property. Agriculture, forestry, recreation and other traditional uses of the land are typically permitted, within the parameters of approved soil and water conservation plans and/or forestry stewardship plans.

### 10.3 Current and Future Cooperative Planning Efforts

Future planning efforts that the Town of Bear Creek should take part in include the development and update of plans from neighboring towns as well as plans developed by Sauk County.

#### ➤ Neighboring Town Planning

It is anticipated that the Town of Bear Creek will be represented in the planning processes of adjacent Towns that have elected to develop a land use/comprehensive plan or are updating comprehensive plans.

#### ➤ Sauk County

The Town of Bear Creek should continue to work with Sauk County, particularly with the development of options related to land use and land division, which can aid the Town with the implementation of their Comprehensive Plan policies. Furthermore, the Town should continue to work with Sauk County and adjacent communities to ensure that the integrity of Bear Creek's Comprehensive Plan is not compromised by neighboring community decisions and vice versa.

With regard to everyday land division, land use and agriculture-related questions, residents and Town officials are encouraged to work with various county departments. The Sauk County Departments of Planning & Zoning and Land Conservation administer the majority of county ordinances and programs that affect the Town.

### 10.4 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek seeks to improve communications with the local, state and federal governmental departments, fire districts, and school districts as well as continue to communicate and cooperate with adjoining townships.

#### **Intergovernmental Cooperation Objectives/Policies:**

ICO-1 Maintain a cooperative relationship with the Hillpoint, Lone Rock and Plain emergency response teams and the Ithaca, Weston and River Valley School Districts.

ICP-1A The Town Board will continually stay involved with fire and emergency needs and districts to assure consistent and effective coverage and to further plan for disaster response.

ICP-1B The Town shall communicate with school bus services to identify any problem areas on bus routes. Problem areas shall be corrected prior to the start of each school year.

ICO-2 Identify and utilize financial and in-kind services provided by local, state and federal governments relative to improving private/public facilities and environmental/recreational resources, as well as assistance provided by specialists.

ICP-2A The Town's Plan Commission may seek out grants and grant writing assistance that will benefit and offer opportunities to town residents and landowners. The town will also offer support to Sauk County with its efforts to secure grants that may be beneficial to the Town of Bear Creek.

ICO-3 Improve the efficiency of governmental services while assessing respective costs related to the level of services expected by town residents.

ICP-3A At each annual meeting, the Town Board will evaluate the cost of providing services relative to the expected level of said services by town residents. At this time, efficiency measure may be identified or a study initiated that will identify needed efficiencies to maintain or improve the level of services provided.

ICP-3B The Town shall work with adjoining townships regarding the coordination of plowing efforts at Town boundaries

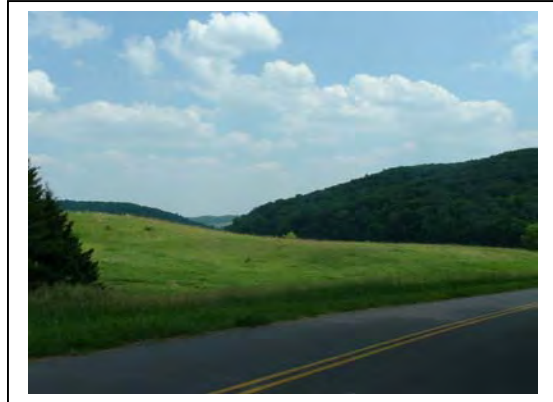
ICP-3C In an effort to be more cost effective, the Town of Bear Creek shall work with Sauk County and nearby towns to share equipment.

ICP-3D The Town of Bear Creek shall develop and maintain a town website.

ICP-3E The Town Board shall continue to be conscientious and conservative with all spending and purchases.

## 11.0 Purpose

The Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is one of the most important components of the plan, second only to the Implementation Chapter, which establishes an action plan for the local municipality. Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Planning Law (Smart Growth) in 1999, many communities adopted what were termed 'Land Use Plans' or 'Development Plans', which reflected the goals of the community through specific land use related policies by way of ordinances, zoning and subdivision regulations. The Town of Bear Creek has never had such a plan, therefore this comprehensive plan represents the town's first planning effort. The Land Use Chapter offers an opportunity to address issues that are specific to land use such as current land use, designated future land use, land divisions, building permits, density policies, home siting requirements, and development guidelines.



### 11.1 Future Land Use Districts (locations correspond with *Map 11-3 Land Use Districts*)

The Town of Bear Creek is unique in that the Town has designated only one land use district to be applied town-wide. This district, called the Rural Agricultural Conservation Area (RAC) is intended for sustained agricultural and forestry land uses and uses that are consistent with and compatible with agricultural and forestry operations. This district limits landowners to the creation of not more than 3 residential lots in each 10-year period.

The intent of the RAC is to maintain the area's rural appeal and food and fiber tradition. Farms and farming operations should continue to be a significant component of the RAC. New rural residential development should be sensitive to the visual landscape while minimizing conflict with farming and forestry operations. Hobby farming, lands set aside for preservation and recreation, and low density residential development are forms of land uses that are compatible with the RAC.

### 11.2 Recent Development Trends

The issuance of new land use/building permits for single-family residential construction in the Town of Bear Creek has grown steadily during the last 15 years. From 1990 to 2007, an average of 10 permits per year were issued for new residential construction. Even though there has been a consistent, and by some standards, low rate of growth, future development pressures should not be overlooked. *Chart LU1 Number of Permits Issued (1990-2007)* depicts the rate in overall development in the Town of Bear Creek since 1990; however there appears to be an upward trend in residential housing construction in the most recent years since 2000. Assuming the Town will experience an increase in growth in the rural areas, it will become increasingly important for the Town of Bear Creek to guide rural residential growth in a way that preserves the rural character of the Town and that can be adequately served by existing public facilities. Where upgrades to public facilities are needed, service to the town should not be impacted. Reflecting upon equalized assessment values, the value of residential land, as reported by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue has nearly doubled from \$12,124,000 in 2000 to \$22,440,400 in 2005.



**Table LU1: Number of Permits Issued (1990-2007)**

Land Use Permits Issued for New Construction in the Town of Bear Creek							
Year	Resident					Commercial	Total Permits Issued for New Construction
	Single Family	Mobile Home	Total Permits Issued for Homesteads	Garage	other		
1990	2	1	3	0	0	0	3
1991	2	0	2	0	1	0	3
1992	4	0	4	0	1	0	5
1993	4	1	4	1	0	0	5
1994	4	0	4	1	1	0	6
1995	6	0	6	0	0	0	6
1996	6	0	6	0	1	0	7
1997	13	1	14	0	1	0	15
1998	5	0	5	4	5	0	14
1999	3	0	3	2	7	1	23
2000	6	0	6	0	3	0	9
2001	6	1	6	1	1	0	8
2002	7	0	7	2	1	0	10
2003	10	0	10	0	2	0	12
2004	9	0	9	0	1	0	10
2005	7	0	7	0	3	0	10
2006	7	1	8	0	1	0	9
2007	3	0	3	4	2	0	9
Total 1990 - 1999	65	2	66	17	17	1	101
Total, 2000 to 2007	112	1	113	21	33	0	171
Total, 1990 to 2007	177	3	179	38	48	1	271
Percent of Total Issued	66.41%	0.76%	67.17%	14.50%	18.32%	0.38%	100.00%
Average Issued Per Year	10.23	0.11	10.35	2.24	2.82	0.06	15.41

Source: Sauk County Planning &amp; Zoning

### 11.3 Current Population and Housing Density

A density calculation can be utilized during the comprehensive planning process to compare population and housing statistics for a community. This calculation will provide additional insight into development patterns and provide background information as the Town of Bear Creek determines its future development policies and practices. In 2000, with a population of 497 persons and a land area of approximately 50 square miles and 31,867 acres, the Town of Bear Creek's population density was roughly 10 persons per square mile or roughly 1 person per 64 acres.

The calculation for the housing density of the Town of Bear Creek in 2000 is the number of occupied housing units in 2000 (176 h.u.) divided by the total land area. This equates to about 5 houses per square mile or approximately one home per 181 acres. The further breakdown of these densities based on development patterns and location will be analyzed later in this section.

#### 11.4 Existing Land Use

*Map 11-1 Land Use and Land Cover*, along with the following descriptors, will aid in the understanding of existing land uses in the Town. The information provided in this section will serve as baseline data for future studies. Land can be classified by use districts or by cover; in the case of Bear Creek, land cover classifications are most relevant.

##### Land Cover Classifications

- **Coniferous Forest.** This area includes land that is primarily undeveloped, evergreen forestland. This area may also include rural residential development with low densities, but due to the small patchwork of acres with this designation, it is highly unlikely. This area represents less than 0.1% of the Town's total land area, or approximately 22 acres.
- **Deciduous Forest.** This area includes private and public lands that are primarily hardwood forestland that is undeveloped and un-platted. This area also includes areas of low-density residential development. This area includes 53% of the Town's total land area, or approximately 17,099 acres.
- **Grassland.** This area includes private and public lands that are undeveloped and are not in agricultural or woodland uses. These areas typically consist of prairie remnants or restored prairies representing grasslands first experienced by early settlers. These areas account for approximately 13% of the Town's land area, or 4,017 acres.
- **Open Water.** These areas are characterized as lakes, ponds and perennial streams and includes parts of Bear Creek and Little Bear Creek. It accounts for 0.01% of the total land area, or approximately 2 acres.
- **Wetland.** These areas consist of hydric soils that are not characterized by standing water. These areas are reflective of flood fringe areas like marshes and low lying stream bank areas. They account for approximately 2.5% of the Town's area, or approximately 784 acres.
- **Barren.** These areas have typically supported mining activities or other human activity, which has left the ground in an infertile state. The areas are characterized by soils incapable of supporting plant growth or by exposed rock formations. This area accounts for 0.3% of the total area, or approximately 91 acres.

#### 11.5 Smart Growth Areas

Smart Growth Areas are statutorily defined as areas that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and municipal, state and utility services, where practicable, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are both contiguous to existing development and at densities which have relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs. Based on this definition, and through an examination of the Town of Bear Creek as part of this planning process, the primary smart growth area within the Town includes and existing residential development located in the Section 7 and 8 respectively. Since this plan

does not permit the establishment of additional residential subdivisions and does not permit commercial types of development, smart growth areas are best defined as those that occur in a multi-town area. More specifically, higher density residential and commercial development will be directed to locate within or adjacent to the Villages of Plain or Spring Green. Existing platted residential subdivisions located in the southern part of the Town of Spring Green, typically referred to as the Pinelands, will also provide residential housing opportunities. Both Villages and the Pinelands meet the definition of a smart growth area as they are adequately served by existing road infrastructure and utilities.

### **11.5.1 Criteria for Evaluating New Residential Lot Placement**

In order to ensure efficient and cost effective development patterns relative to the placement of new residential established by a Certified Survey Map, a set of criteria is listed below. It is the intent of both the developer/landowner and Town to utilize these criteria when considering new rural residential lots. The criteria are not all-inclusive, but ask broad questions about development proposals to ensure that they are appropriate in location, size and scale and that utility and transportation provisions will be feasible, safe, and effective. These criteria will also help the Town evaluate development proposals to ensure that appropriate upgrades are made to affected utilities and local town transportation routes.

1. Adequate public facilities to accommodate development either exist or will be provided within a reasonable amount of time.
2. Public facilities and services needed to accommodate development will not place an unreasonable burden on the affected local units of government. Affected units of government may include the Fire, Ambulance and School Districts.
3. The proposed residential lot location will not have significant negative impacts on environmentally sensitive areas, including wetlands, streams, species-rich habitats, steep slopes, and large tracts of forest.
4. The proposed residential development will not significantly impair productive agricultural lands and will not interfere with neighboring farm operations.

### **11.6 Zoning Classifications**

The Town of Bear Creek adopted county zoning in August, 1969. At this time the entire Town was placed under the Agricultural Zoning District. Since that time there have been a number of rezones, the most prominent being an area in Section 18 off Strang Hollow Road to accommodate a residential subdivision development.

### **11.7 Future Land Area Needs**

Predicting future land area needs for residential, commercial (includes industrial), and agricultural uses involves a process of projecting trends into the future to determine the demand that will be placed on a community relative to maintaining land in its current land use or converting it to an alternative land use. Once these projections are made, quantities of land can then be accurately identified on a future land use map. In order to study the demand of future land uses in Bear Creek two factors will be considered. The first of these factors looks at population projections over time. And the second factor utilizes assumptions that population and development pressure will increase in the Town given the increased development of Sauk County. Future land Uses are broken down into residential, commercial and agricultural.

**11.7.1 Future Residential Land Area Needs**

According to the population projections under *Chapter 3 Population Inventory and Analysis* and *Chapter 4 Housing*, it is reasonable to assume that the population will continue to increase in the Town of Bear Creek. This increase will in turn cause an increased demand for housing in the Town. To realistically determine the number of new homes that will be needed through the year 2030, one must make a few assumptions. First, based on *Chart P10: Population Changes per Age Bracket*, it is apparent that population increases represent households with a limited household size and that the greatest population increase occurs within the 70-79 age bracket. Using this information, it is unlikely that household sizes will increase in the Town and will likely decrease. Using these two assumptions, the *Household Size Trend* population projection represents a 3% decrease in housing size every 10 years. **Table LU2 Household Forecast: Household Size Trend and Lands Needed** correlates population increases to average household size to determine a projected number of new households. Since the vacancy rate in the Town of Bear Creek is greater than 15%, only occupied households were considered for purposes of determining the amount of land needed in the future for additional occupied residential houses. Additional land needed represents an assumption of two acres needed for each new house: an average lot size of 1 ½ acres and an additional ½ acre required for each lot for road rights-of-way, new park dedication and utility rights-of-way.

**Table LU2: Household Forecast: Household Size Trend and Lands Needed**

Year	Population	Average Household Size	Number of Occupied Households	Additional Residential Land Needed
1990, per census	521	3.24	161	NA
2000, per census *	497	2.82	176	NA
2010, Projection	472	2.73	173	0
2015, Projection	--	2.69	--	0
2020, Projection	432	2.65	163	0
2025, Projection	357	2.61	136	0
2030, Projection	273	2.57	106	0

Source: US Census and Sauk County Planning & Zoning

\*There appears to be a slight margin of error in census data when dividing the total population by the average household size to determine the number of occupied households.

Based on this projection, the Town can anticipate not needing any new land for residential development. While this seems extreme, the most recent downward trend in new homes being built between 2006 and 2007 based on *Table LU-1 Land Use Permits Issues 1990-2007* coupled with policies in this Plan that do not permit any additional subdivisions or subdivision plats, it is conceivable that residential development will slow as a result.

**11.7.2 Future Commercial Land Area Needs**

Currently, the Town of Bear Creek has one commercial business, Drea’s Bar, which existed prior to the adoption of County Zoning in 1969. Since that time, there have been commercial businesses, however none of them operate today. The Town’s Plan is clear that the Town is interested in cottage industry types of commercial uses as well as value-added opportunities for farmers, however the Town’s Plan does not recognize commercial businesses proposals requiring commercial zoning as being an appropriate land use in the town. The only exception would be for an additional bar/rural grocery store. The town also recognizes that commercial developments

are most appropriately located in the Village of Plain or the Spring Green area where road access can adequately support such establishments.

### 11.7.3 Future Agricultural Land Area Needs

Based upon projected residential and commercial land needs, it can be assumed that the amount of agricultural land will remain the same in the Town. However, with limited rural residential development averaging roughly 6 new homes per year, the amount of agricultural (and wooded land) may decrease accordingly.

## 11.8 Natural Limitations to Building and Site Development

Natural limitations to development vary depending on where in the Town development is being proposed. Generally speaking, Bear and McCarville Creeks, which from the west extend into the central part of the Town, include a related floodplain area depicted on *Map 9-3 General Floodplain Areas* and wetlands noted on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. Likewise, there are other non-riparian wetlands scattered throughout the Town. Other natural limitations to development include soil limitations on the placement of foundations, roads and septic suitability. General soils information can be noted under *Chapter 9 Natural Resources* and on *Map 6-1 Septic Suitability*, and *Map 6-2 Alternative Septic Suitability*.

## 11.9 Land Use Goal, Objectives and Policies

**Land Use Goal:** Preserve and maintain existing land uses as well as to provide for future land use considerations that will promote the balance among quality of life, property values, environmental protection, and economic opportunities.

### Land Use Objectives/Policies:

LUO-1 Ensure adequate opportunities and land availability to meet all of the Town's objectives.

LUP-1A Recognize that all policies noted in this Plan are intricately related to land use and further recognize that the Town shall follow all policies when making decisions about the Town's future land use.

LUO-2 Maintain a density policy, by consensus, to determine the number of residential homes which can be built in the Town so as to preserve agricultural lands, farming operations, wetlands, and significant natural resources as well as the overall view of the Town.

LUP-2A The Town of Bear Creek Density Policy shall allow for the division of no more than three (3) lots in a ten (10) year period for each parcel. The division of more than three (3) lots in a ten (10) year period for each parcel is considered a subdivision and is not permitted. However, an amendment to this plan to consider a proposed subdivision may be prepared after the following findings are made relative to a specific subdivision proposal. Specifically, the proposed subdivision:

1. Will not result in undue water or air pollution. In making this determination, the Town shall at least consider: the elevation of land; and in relation to the flood plains, the nature of soils and subsoils and their ability to adequately support waste disposal; location of wetlands, the slope of the land and its effect on effluents; and applicable county and state regulations.

- 
2. Will not cause unreasonable soil erosion or reduction in the capacity of the land to hold water so that a dangerous or unhealthy condition may result.
  3. Will not cause unreasonable congestion or unsafe conditions with respect to use of roads, and other means of transportation existing or proposed.
  4. Will not cause an unreasonable burden on the ability of a the local school distirct to provide educational and transportation services.
  5. Will not place an unreasonable burden on the ability of the local governments to provide municipal or governmental services.
  6. Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas.
    - a. Necessary wildlife habitat and endangered species. The development or subdivision will not significantly imperil necessary wildlife habitat or any endangered species; and
      - 1.a the economic, social, cultural, recreational, or other benefit to the public from the development or subdivision will not outweigh the economic, environmental, or recreational loss to the public from the imperilment of the habitat or species; or
      - 2.a all feasible and reasonable means of preventing or lessening the destruction, diminution, or imperilment of the habitat or species have been considered; or
      - 3.a reasonably acceptable alternative site is owned or controlled by the applicant which would allow the development or subdivision to fulfill its intended purpose without undue adverse effects.
  7. Will conform to the Town comprehensive plan, including, for instance, limiting development on primary agricultural soils, using the best available technology for energy efficiency, and clusteriung development in rural growth areas.
  8. Will conform to county, state or regional plans.

LUP-2B The minimum lot size in the Town of Bear Creek is two (2) net acres.

**Definitions that apply to the Town of Bear Creek's Density Policy (LUP-2A):**

Land Division. Any division of a parcel of land where the act of division creates a new lot of less than 40 contiguous acres, excluding one quarter (1/4) of one quarter (1/4) section parcels as defined by the original Public Land Survey System.

Lot. A parcel of land occupied by or designed to provide space necessary from one main building and its accessory buildings or uses that abuts a publicly dedicated street. A lot shall be created by certified survey map and shall comply with the minimum size requirements pursuant to the *Sauk County Zoning Ordinance* or the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan, whichever is more restrictive. Net acreage (exclusive of road right-of-way) shall be utilized when calculation minimum lot size.

Parcel. A contiguous quantity of land in the possession of an owner, single or common interest. No Street, highway, easement, river, stream or water body shall constitute a break in contiguity.

Subdivision. The division of a lot, parcel, tract or one-quarter (1/4) of one-quarter (1/4) section by the owner thereof or their agent, for the purpose of transfer of ownership or building development, where the act of division create four (4) or more lots, or where the act of division creates four (4) or more lots by successive division within a ten (10) year period.

LUO-3 Preserve the rural character and integrity of land use for the Town of Bear Creek for present and future generations.

LUP-3A Utilize the development siting checklist and pictorial policies under LUP-9A when considering the location of any proposed land division/residential lot creation.

LUP-3B Develop a land division and building permit application that includes a check list of required information. This information will be utilized by the Plan Commission to evaluate and decide upon proposed land division and building projects.

LUO-4 Promote cooperation and open communication between agricultural and non-agricultural residents in order to foster working relationships and a positive community identity.

LUP-4A Upon the issuance of a building permit for new residential homes, include information that signifies that the Town of Bear Creek is a predominately agricultural community and that farming activities will be taking place.

LUP-4B The Plan Commission will write an annual newsletter to keep residents informed about current issues in the Town and to offer opportunities for public input, when needed. This newsletter may be included with the annual property tax bill.

LUO-5 Discourage unsightly land uses to preserve the Town's scenic rural landscape and overall quality of life.

LUP-5A Continue to work with Sauk County to discourage unkempt properties in terms of outside storage of materials and inoperable vehicles.

LUO-6 Encourage landowners in the Town to participate in programs that protect and restore stream banks and help maintain or enhance forested bluffs, wetlands, and other sensitive areas.

LUP-6A The Plan Commission will disseminate information and encourage landowners to utilize government programs/grants to maintain and improve the natural features of their properties. These may include stream bank restoration projects, forest management programs, wetland improvement and prairie restoration projects.

LUP-6B Review driveway permit applications, and where required by the State require an erosion control plan.

LOU-7 Maintain the rural and cultural character of the Town by implementing programs that maintain and preserve historical buildings and sites within the Town.

LUP-7A Develop and maintain signage in the town directing residents and visitors to the town's historic sites.

LUO-8 Implement controls to regulate animals density.

LUP-8A Ensure that landowners comply with State and DNR regulations concerning animal density. Encourage Sauk County to develop and implement animal density limits on rural residential lots.

LUO-9 Encourage the placement of new buildings which preserve productive agricultural lands, forested areas and the overall appearance of the town.

LUP-9A Utilize the following pictorial guide when siting new lots and homes, which represent the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies in the Plan. These pictorials represent the 'preferred' location and layout of new residential construction.

To coincide with the pictorial policies, utilize the following site-specific strategies, as a checklist, when considering the location of new homes or residential lots.

- Optimize the shape and configuration of farmable parcels;
- Minimize visual impact of development from roadsides and existing neighbors;
- Integrate development with existing landscape patterns (fields, fencerows, farmsteads, natural features);
- Use existing vegetation to screen new development;
- Use new landscaping to screen and enhance development;
- Minimize the visual impact of development through sensitive home siting on hillsides and limiting placement of development on hilltops;
- Retain wooded areas;
- Minimize number of driveways, and regulate placement and grade;
- Integrate development with existing topography and vegetation pattern.



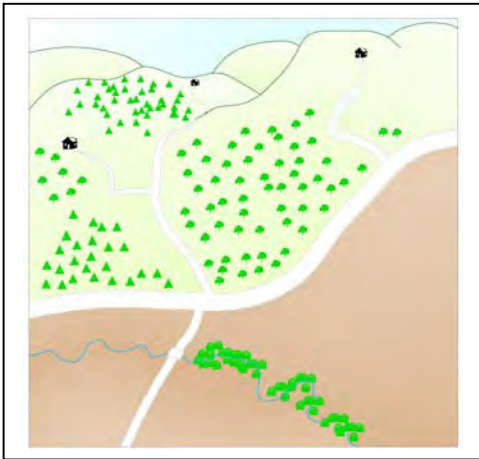
**Subset 1 LUP- 9A Development in Wooded Hillides**

**Preferred**



- Homes built in natural valley;
- Existing vegetation maintained or replaced;
- Driveways shared by residences;
- Reduction in Town road access points.

**Less Desired**



- Homes built on blufftops;
- Driveways placed on slopes greater than 12%;
- Multiple driveways serving homes;
- Homes visible from public right-of-way;
- Excessive clearing for driveways;
- Homes placed within the forest core.

**Subset 2 LUP- 9A Multiple Lot Residential (Agriculture Fields)**

**Preferred**



- Homes clustered along existing fence row;
- Minimal land taken out of agriculture production;
- Driveways shared by residences;
- Some screening provided;
- Homes placed away from farm lot/barnyard;
- Reduction in Town road access points;
- Cohesive agricultural fields.

**Less Desired**



- Homes placed in middle of agricultural fields;
- Multiple driveways serving homes;
- Homes visible from public right-of-way;
- No screening for new development.

**Subset 3 LUP- 9A Multiple Lot Residential (Agriculture Fields)****Preferred**

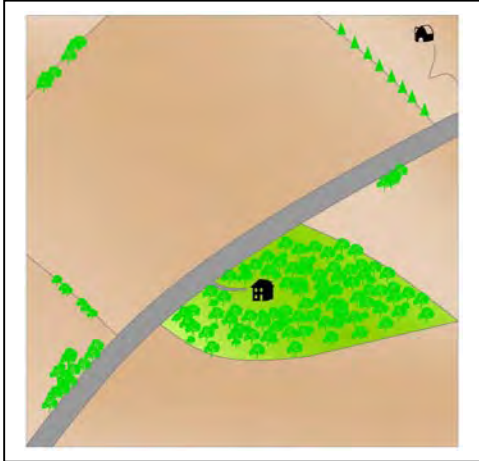
- Homes clustered in woodlot providing natural screening;
- Minimal land taken out of agriculture production;
- Driveways shared by residences;
- Existing vegetation maintained or replaced;
- Cohesive agricultural fields.

**Less Desired**

- Homes placed in middle of agricultural fields;
- Multiple driveways serving homes;
- Homes visible from public right-of-way;
- No screening for new development.

**Subset 4 LUP- 9A Single Lot Residential (Agriculture Fields)**

**Preferred**



- Home built on existing woodlot;
- Minimal land taken out of agriculture production;
- Existing vegetation maintained or replaced;
- Cohesive agricultural fields.

**Less Desired**



- Home built on agricultural field;
- No screening for new development;

## **12.0 Purpose**

A number of the policies in this Comprehensive Plan will not be implemented automatically, and follow-up actions will be required for the Plan to become a reality. However, by default, many of the plan policies have been developed in such a manner that, by themselves, they provide specific guidance to the Town with everyday decision-making. Therefore, the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan has two roles. One of these roles is to provide everyday guidance for decision making by the Town, and the other is to provide specific direction for carrying forth projects that will aid the Town with the full realization of its vision, goals and objectives.

This section is meant to provide guidance for the general process of adopting the Comprehensive Plan as well as more specific detail on how and when amendments will be made to the Plan. This section also provides a ‘timeline of implementation’ of all policies in the plan and recommendations, where needed, as to whom will be implementing these policies. This section defines the suggested implementation roles of the Plan Commission, Town Board, and the Economic Development Advisory Committee.

## **12.1 Plan Adoption**

The Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan must be adopted in a manner that recognizes a commitment to implement each policy within the Plan. The Plan itself will also be adopted as an ordinance, which will allow the Town to enforce its vision, goals, objectives, and policies. The Town has also included all of the basic elements of Comprehensive Planning and has achieved all 14 goals of the ‘Smart Growth’ legislation.

In addition to this achievement, the development of this plan included an extensive public participation component, which ensured numerous opportunities for residents, landowners, and neighboring governments to give input. Also, the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan Committee consisted of people from all interests and backgrounds, ensuring that the plan was developed by the people and for the overall good of the Town. The public participation plan and scope of services to the planning process are noted in Appendix C.

The final Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed by the Plan Commission, which will forward its recommendations to the Town Board for final Town approval. Upon Town approval, the Plan will be forwarded to the Planning, Zoning and Land Records Committee, which will recommend final approval by the Sauk County Board. Once approved by the county board, the Plan will finally be submitted to the State of Wisconsin, Department of Administration.

## **12.2 Plan Monitoring, Amendments, and Update**

The Town should regularly evaluate its progress towards achieving the policies in this Comprehensive Plan, and amend and update the Plan as appropriate. This section suggests recommended criteria and procedures for monitoring, amending, and updating the Plan.

### **12.2.1 Plan Monitoring**

The Town should continuously evaluate its decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions based on the recommendation/policies of the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan. More specifically, for each proposal that comes before the Town, any recommendation by the Town’s Plan Commission and final action by the Town Board

should reference any and all plan policies utilized as part of the review and decision-making process. This reference may come in the form of a resolution or minutes officially adopted by the Town.

### **12.2.2 Plan Amendments**

Amendments may be deemed appropriate or necessary in the years following the adoption and implementation of this Comprehensive Plan. Amendments are generally defined as either minor or major. Minor amendments generally include changes to maps or general text. Major amendments are defined as any change to plan policies. Therefore major amendments will require, at a minimum, a public hearing to garner input from the community regarding the amendment(s).

The State comprehensive planning law requires that the Comprehensive Plan be updated at least every ten years. As opposed to an amendment, an update is often a substantial re-write of the Plan document and maps. Further, on January 1, 2010, “any program or action that affects land use” will have to be consistent with locally adopted comprehensive plans- including zoning and subdivision ordinances, annexation, and transportation improvements. Based on these two deadlines, the Town should update its Comprehensive Plan before the year before 2017. The Town should also monitor any changes to language or interpretations of State law throughout the life of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **12.3 Role of Implementation**

### **12.3.1 Town Board**

The Town Board will provide for general oversight to the Plan Commission relative to selecting and guiding plan implementation activities. The Town Board will also consider any current proposals and ensure that they are consistent with this Plan as well as consider Plan Commission recommendations for such proposals. Town Board members are encouraged to take an active role in furthering plan implementation.

### **12.3.2 Plan Commission**

The primary body responsible for implementing the Comprehensive Plan is the Plan Commission. Implementation by the Plan Commission will take two forms. The first form comes with the utilization of the Comprehensive Plan for everyday decision making. The second form involves furthering policy directives such as developing and adopting a siting ordinance. With regard to furthering policy directives, it will be the responsibility of the Plan Commission to set a course of action and identify/include all possible partners.

### **12.3.3 Partners**

Partners can be defined as those groups that have an interest or expertise with the implementation of a particular policy. While the following table is not all-inclusive, it does list possible partners to the implementation of the Town’s policies.

Partner	Code
Bear Creek Town Board	TWB
Bear Creek Plan Commission	PC
Sauk County Planning & Zoning Department	P&Z
Sauk County Land Conservation Department	LCD
University of Wisconsin Extension	UWEX

#### 12.4 Implementation Timeline and Recommended Courses of Action

This section provides a summary of the actions that the Town should complete in order implement this Comprehensive Plan. This summary has been broken down by each element and elements' policies to include a minimum recommended course of action and timeframe for implementation. Each policy has also been assigned a representative body charged with the primary implementation of the policy.

#### HOUSING

Policy	Implementation Timeframe	Representative Body & Partners
HP-1A	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-1B	ongoing	PC
HP-3A	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-3B	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-3C	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-3D	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-4A	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-5A	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-5B	ongoing	PC
HP-5C	ongoing	PC
HP-5D	ongoing	PC/TWB
HP-5E	2010	PC/TWB
HP-5F	ongoing	PC/TWB

#### AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

Policy	Implementation Timeframe	Representative Body & Partners
ARP-1A	ongoing	PC/TWB
ARP-2A	2010	PC
ARP-2B	ongoing	PC
ARP-3A	ongoing	PC/TWB
ARP-3B	ongoing	PC/TWB

**UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Representative Body &amp; Partners</b>
UCRP-1A	ongoing	PC
UCRP-2A	ongoing	PC
UCRP-3A	2009	PC
UCRP-3B	ongoing	PC/TWB

**TRANSPORTATION**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Representative Body &amp; Partners</b>
TP-1A	2009	PC/TWB
TP-1B	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-2A	2009	PC
TP-3A	ongoing	TWB
TP-3B	2009	PC/TWB
TP-4A	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5A	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5B	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5C	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5D	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5E	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5F	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5G	ongoing	PC/TWB
TP-5H	ongoing	PC/TWB

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Representative Body &amp; Partners</b>
EDP-1A	2009-2010	PC/TWB/P&Z/UWEX
EDP-1B	2009	PC
EDP-2A	ongoing	PC
EDP-2B	2009	PC
EDP-3A	ongoing	PC/TWB



**NATURAL RESOURCES**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Representative Body &amp; Partners</b>
NRP-1A	2009	PC/TWB/LCD
NRP-2A	ongoing	PC/TWB
NRP-3A	ongoing	PC/TWB
NRP-3B	ongoing	PC/LCD
NRP-4A	ongoing	PC
NRP-4B	2009	PC
NRP-5A	ongoing	PC/TWB
NRP-6A	ongoing	PC/TWB
NRP-7A	ongoing	PC

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Representative Body</b>
ICP-1A	ongoing	TWB
ICP-1B	ongoing	TWB
ICP-2A	ongoing	PC/TWB
ICP-3A	ongoing	PC
ICP-3B	ongoing	PC
ICP-3C	ongoing	PC
ICP-3D	ongoing	PC
ICP-3E	ongoing	PC

**LAND USE**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Implementation Timeframe</b>	<b>Representative Body</b>
LUP-1A	ongoing	PC/TWB
LUP-2A	ongoing	PC/TWB
LUP-2B	ongoing	PC/TWB
LUP-3A	ongoing	PC/TWB
LUP-3B	ongoing	PC/TWB
LUP-4A	2009	PC/TWB/P&Z
LUP-4B	ongoing	PC
LUP-5A	ongoing	PC/TWB
LUP-6A	ongoing	PC
LUP-6B	ongoing	PC
LUP-7A	2010	PC
LUP-8A	ongoing	PC
LUP-9A	ongoing	PC

**12.5 Consistency Among Plan Elements**

The State Comprehensive Planning statute requires that the implementation element “describe how each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan shall be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.” Preparing the various elements of the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan simultaneously has ensured that there are no known internal inconsistencies between the different elements of this Plan.

**12.6 Annual Review of the Implementation Progress**

It is intended that the plan be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its continued implementation. At this time, it is anticipated that the Plan Commission will give an update to the Town Board regarding implementation activities for the upcoming year, identified partners and anticipated policy implementation.

## **2.0 Purpose**

The Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Planning Committee, comprised of nine area residents, took part in several efforts to identify issues and opportunities facing the Town of Bear Creek. These issues and opportunities culminated in the Town's Vision as well as its goals, objectives and policies. These efforts included a community-wide survey, community visioning session, numerous press releases and a formal consensus process to agree upon all goals, objectives and policies, including the Town's density policy, an open house to view the draft Comprehensive Plan and a public hearing on the final Comprehensive Plan. A more in depth description and summary of each activity with results are noted in this chapter. Specific background information regarding population, household and employment forecasts, demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, and income levels and employment characteristics of the Town can be found under the respective chapters that follow in this Plan.

## **2.1 Community Survey**

As part of the process, the Comprehensive Planning Committee developed and administered a community wide survey. The survey questions were developed to ascertain the opinions and perceptions of residents and landowners on the issues and opportunities in their Town.

During Summer of 2006, surveys were mailed to every household or landowners in the Town of Bear Creek. Of the 371 surveys mailed 175, or 47%, were returned. This response rate well above the average for a survey of this nature when considering its length and the types of questions asked. A copy of the cover letter to the survey as well as a tally of responses is located in Appendix A. A summary of the more significant results of the survey can be noted as follows:

### **➤ Quality of Life**

Defining and maintaining a high quality of life in Bear Creek is the most important common denominator among all residents and visitors to Bear Creek. A way to define quality of life is to find out why people choose to live where they do and, more importantly, why they choose to continue to live there. To better define quality of life, the survey asked participants to list their three most important reasons for living in Bear Creek. From all of the responses, most respondents indicated that they were near friends and family and many stated that they have lived in the Town all their life. Other responses that ranked high were open space and landscape inclusive of agriculture and rolling hills. Another top response was the geographic location of the town, the close proximity to metropolitan areas, i.e. Madison or being relatively far from it.

### **➤ Housing**

Housing is an important part of how a community grows. Where housing is located can have an impact on a community in terms of the need for services, aesthetics and overall community feel. Participants were asked to identify how new residential development should appear on the landscape in terms of placement and density. Overall 33% of respondents indicated that they did not want any new residential development to locate in the town. The second residential housing choice at 27% identified 'Conservation subdivision development designating areas for development and preservation.' The third choice at 21% identified 'One house per lot not to exceed 3 lots per landowner in a 5-year period, with an agreement that certain lands are preserved.' Respondents to the survey indicated that their fourth choice for new housing was 'Conventional subdivision development requiring large lots with no limitation on the number of lots.' The fifth choice identified a maximum

of three lots in a 5-year period per landowner. The least desirable type of residential development included conventional development with no limitation on the number and size of lots.

➤ **Agriculture Resources**

The majority of respondents to the survey indicated that they would support varied forms of community-supported agriculture and value-added agriculture operations. When asked if residents support the direct sale of farm products, 63% indicated they would. Forty-seven percent of residents also indicated that they would support forms of agriculture tourism, workdays and educational opportunities. From a different perspective, 85% of respondents indicated that the preservation of farmland was either essential or very important.

➤ **Economic Development**

Agriculture (including forestry) and recreation represent the two primary forms of local economic activity in the Town, however alternative forms of economic development were considered in the survey as well. In terms of sustaining agriculture, survey respondents were asked if they felt there were adequate agriculture support and complementary services such as cooperatives, agronomists, implement dealers, haulers, etc., in southern Sauk County and eastern Richland County to keep agriculture viable in the Town. Of the total response from residents, 36% indicated that there were adequate support services while 43% had no opinion.

In terms of other economic opportunities, respondents were asked if they would support business development in areas of existing development, namely the Villages of Plain or Spring Green and the surrounding vicinity. Overall, 27% of respondents indicated that they would support small businesses (10 or less full time employees) while 39% of respondents indicated that they would support both small and large types of businesses in the Villages. When asked about locating businesses in the rural areas of the Town, 41% indicated that they would support small businesses while 18% of respondents indicated that they would support both small and large businesses. When survey participants were asked what types of businesses are needed in the Town, Thirty-eight percent agreed that agriculture supply and services are needed while 35% indicate that tourism and hospitality should be added. Thirty-nine percent of respondents indicated that the Town needs a local market or grocery store.

➤ **Utilities and Community Resources**

This category of the survey evaluated residents' satisfaction with services such as fire, garbage collection and library opportunities as well as energy needs and energy alternatives. Overall, survey participants either strongly agreed or agreed that community facilities and services were adequate. When asked about what public facilities are needed in the Town, over 30% of the response either agreed or strongly agreed that public natural/recreational areas, walking/hiking/cross country ski trails and bike trails/routes are needed.

Eighty-two percent of respondents felt that wind energy should be developed in the Town while 88% percent felt that solar energy should be developed. Thirty-eight percent of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that methane production is appropriate while 46 strongly agreed or agreed to the development of ethanol plants.

➤ **Natural Resources**

Survey participants were asked to rank the importance of protecting various natural resources in their community, ranging from general resources such as wetlands, woodlands, and forests to more specific resources such as scenic views, undeveloped hills and overall rural character. Upwards of 90% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that protecting natural resources is important. Notably, the protection of farmland and surface water quality ranked the highest with 96% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing that this resource should be protected followed by the protection of woodlands at 95%. Protecting air quality ranked at 96 percent. The protection of shoreline ranked the lowest with 78% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing that shorelines should be protected.

➤ **Transportation**

Survey participants were asked to consider both the adequacy and condition of transportation systems (primarily roads) within the Town. Ninety-one percent of respondents indicated that they strongly agree or agree that the overall road network meets the needs of citizens while 85% felt that physical road conditions were adequate for intended uses. When asked if there are any transportation facility needs or problems that need to be addressed, 13% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed, 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed while 47% of respondents had no opinion.

➤ **Land Use**

Land Use is the one element that recognizes the interconnectedness of all of the other elements of a comprehensive plan and ties them all together. Land Use also addresses some of the larger issues in a community, and a study of land use concerns can give specific direction to mitigate land use conflicts by posing standards and procedures that apply to everyone equally. To gain a broader perspective of some of the top land use issues in the Town, the survey asked participants to list their top three land use issues. Through this listing, preserving agriculture was the top issue. General land use issues together with zoning were second and protecting the Towns' natural resources was the third most listed response. Other top issues included the preservation of rural character and water quality.

➤ **General Opinions**

In addition to specific questions asked of the survey participants, there were some more 'open-ended' questions. Among these, participants were asked what they want Bear Creek to look like in 20 years. Overall, a large majority of respondents indicated that they wanted Bear Creek to look the same as it does now with a mix of woodlands, farmlands and occasional residential properties. When participants were asked what they felt was the biggest issue facing the Town of Bear Creek in the next several years many responses were given, however a reoccurring theme centered on concerns splitting up lands and too much housing development.

## **2.2 Visioning Session**

The Town held a Visioning Session Workshop on March 12, 2007. The purpose of the session was to involve residents and landowners in the Town of Bear Creek to take part in defining what they believe Bear Creek should be in the future.

The Vision Session was structured in such a way that participants had an opportunity to express their thoughts on the evolution of a future vision for Bear Creek. Participants also had an opportunity to identify what they perceive to be the Town's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

(SWOT's) as related to the future vision as well as the nine elements defined in the comprehensive planning legislation.

Some of the more common responses included:

- **Strengths:** Rural setting, Good water, Whitemound park (lake/beach/trails), people and community, natural resources (deer), woods/scenic beauty/hills;
- **Weaknesses:** Property tax increases, communication infrastructure (phone, cell, dialup internet), affordability of land, current rule of ½ acre minimum lot size;
- **Opportunities:** Cottage industries, residential development in circumscribed areas, density limits on housing, more recreational development, ecotourism, improve cell phone and internet service;
- **Threats:** Loss of tax base (MFL lands), “Urban” expectations, invasive species, not having a plan, commercial farming- not enough land per amount of animals, environmental concerns such as water quality.

Equally important to identifying the Town's SWOT's, participants had the opportunity to begin developing a Town Vision Statement. To develop the Vision statement, key vision themes were identified in three separate working groups on large boards. The boards were then compared with the collective group to identify the common 5 themes that appeared on all three boards. These themes not only contributed to the town's overall vision statement, but also served as the 5 major points considered during the planning process. Generally, the 5 major points were as follows:

- Preservation of scenic beauty including farm and forest land and water quality;
- Economic development related to the natural landscape;
- Open and honest government;
- Community involvement;
- Strike a balance between farmland/housing/recreation

Overall, utilizing public input, the Vision Session aimed to create a Vision for the town as well as provide direction to the Comprehensive Plan Committee with the development of the plans goals, objectives and policies. The results and process utilized for the Vision Session can be noted in Appendix B.

### 2.3 Open House

On May 19, 2008, the Comprehensive Plan Committee conducted an open house to present the draft Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan. Through discussion and submittal of written comments, participants were given the opportunity to comment on the Committee's work and suggest changes. Approximately 22 town residents/landowners attended the open house.

### 2.4 Formal Consensus Process to Establish Goals, Objectives and Policies

The planning committee utilized a formal consensus process to discuss and agree on all goals, objectives and policies, including the Town's density policy. The Committee chose this process over a vote of a majority for the following reasons:

- First, it was the intent of the comprehensive planning process to incorporate the views of all the community’s citizens. These views have been expressed in three primary ways, including the community-wide survey, the vision session and the Comprehensive Plan Committee, which was charged with representing all views in the community.
- Second, the consensus process is based on the premise that it is better to involve every person who is affected by a decision in the decision-making process. This is true for several reasons. First, the decision would reflect the will of the entire group, not just the leadership or majority. Second, the people who carry out the plans will be more confident in their work. Through its recognition of all interests, the plan will stand the test of time.
- Third, the consensus process required active cooperation, disciplined speaking and listening, and respect for the contributions of every Committee member, all of which occurred under a defined structure. This structure aimed to ensure that everyone in the group had an opportunity to feel comfortable sharing their opinions and ideas and to explore resolutions with the hope that ideas build upon each other, generating new ideas until the best decision emerges.

The definition of consensus utilized by the Town during this planning is as follows:

*“Our definition of consensus aims for complete agreement and support among those present. This is complete consensus. However, we are willing to move ahead with a decision where there is clear support among the majority of members when not more than two members declare themselves as “block” or a combination of one “block” and two “formal disagreement but will go with the majority”. This is called “sufficient consensus” or “qualified consensus”. If the above qualifications exist, the item will be “off the table” pending revision and reconsideration.”*

**Table 2-1 Consensus Process Continuum** was utilized with the aforementioned definition when deciding upon plan goals, objectives and policies including the Town of Bear Creek Density Policy

**Table 2-1 Consensus Process Continuum**

Endorse	Endorse With a minor Point of contention	Agree with Reservation	Abstain	Stand Aside	Formal disagreement but will go with the majority	Block
“I like it”	“Basically I like it”	“I can live with it”	“I have no opinion”	I don’t like this but I don’t want to hold up the group”	“I want my disagreement to be noted in writing but I’ll support the decision”	“I veto this proposal”

## 2.5 Town of Bear Creek Vision

### Bear Creek Vision Statement

- The Town of Bear Creek boasts natural beauty in its agricultural, recreational and rural settings.
- We seek to preserve and protect the natural resources through good stewardship within the Township, while managing growth and encouraging diversity of land use.
- We envision maintaining our current rural quality of life, while improving our current technological services and maintaining our public services.

- The Town of Bear Creek strives to continue to be fiscally responsible, while planning future growth and development.
- The Town of Bear Creek welcomes total diversity of cultural and professional talents promoting business growth as well as opportunities in recreation, agriculture, cottage industries and tourism, while remaining within the long term goals of the community that compliment the Town's rural heritage.



### 3.0 Purpose

The Population Inventory and Analysis Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan gives an overview of the pertinent demographic trends and background information necessary to develop an understanding of the changes taking place in the Town of Bear Creek. In this chapter we will examine the population profile of Bear Creek. The population profile includes features that affect community dynamics and processes such as regional trends in population, housing units and persons per household, as well as local trends of housing occupancy, population composition, age distribution and length of residency. In analyzing these trends and projections, citizens of the Town of Bear Creek will gain a more complete understanding of future planning issues that should be addressed within this Comprehensive Plan.

### 3.1 Regional Population and Housing Trends

In evaluating changes in population and housing units in the Town of Bear Creek, it is important to consider how these changes compare to regional and local trends. Recognizing similarities and differences in potential future growth between Bear Creek and nearby towns will allow the Town of Bear Creek to create a Comprehensive Plan unique to its specific issues and goals.

#### 3.1.1 Population

As **Table P1 Regional Population Trends** indicates, the population in the Town of Bear Creek has both decreased and increased since 1970. Overall, between the years of 1980 and 2000, Bear Creek’s population decreased by 40 persons, or at an average loss of 20 persons per 10 years. In comparison to neighboring towns, Bear Creek has had a steady decrease in population growth from 1980 to 2000, however from 1990 to 2000 Bear Creek has experienced its greatest loss in population at 4.61%. On a larger scale, between 1970 and 2000, Sauk County experienced an average increase in population of 13.8% per 10 years. The Wisconsin DOA released population estimates for Sauk County in August 2007. From 2000 to 2007 the Town of Bear Creek gained 80 people. This number represents a 16.1% increase since 2000. Through the examination of these regional trends it is evident that strategies addressing appropriate growth management will need to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan for the Town.

**Table P1: Regional Population Trends**

Regional Population Trends																
Year	Town of Bear Creek		Town of Spring Green		Town of Washington		Town of Franklin		Town of Buena Vista		Town of Willow		Sauk County		Wisconsin	
	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change
1970	522		862		756		798		1,095		528		39,057		4,400,000	
1980	537	2.87%	1,139	32.13%	741	-1.98%	747	-6.39%	1,369	25.02%	527	-0.19%	43,469	11.30%	4,700,000	6.82%
1990	521	-2.98%	1,329	16.68%	798	7.69%	668	-10.58%	1,547	13.00%	572	8.54%	46,975	8.07%	4,891,769	4.08%
2000	497	-4.61%	1,585	19.26%	904	13.28%	696	4.19%	1,575	1.81%	493	-13.81%	55,225	17.56%	5,363,675	9.65%
Overall Change: 1970 - 2000	-25	-4.79%	723	83.87%	148	19.58%	-102	-12.78%	480	43.84%	-35	-6.63%	16,168	41.40%	-963,675	21.90%
Average change per 10 years	-8	-1.60%	-28	27.96%	49	6.53%	-34	-4.26%	160	14.61%	-12	-2.21%	5,389	13.80%	-321,225	7.30%

Source: US Census 2000

**3.1.2 Housing Units**

From 1990 to 2000, the numbers of housing units have increased slightly in Bear Creek and in many surrounding Towns. As seen in **Table P2 Regional Housing Unit Comparison**, the Town of Bear Creek’s increase in housing units (12.32%) is in between the increase experienced by Sauk County (15.88%) and the state of Wisconsin (11.43%) between the years 1990 and 2000.

**Table P2: Regional Housing Unit Comparison**

Regional Housing Unit Comparison																
Year	Town of Bear Creek		Town of Spring Green		Town of Washington		Town of Franklin		Town of Buena Vista		Town of Willow		Sauk County		Wisconsin	
	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change
1990	185		588		262		232		591		191		20,439		2,055,774	
2000	211	12.32%	661	11.04%	305	14.10%	267	13.11%	654	9.63%	182	-4.95%	24,297	15.88%	2,321,144	11.43%

Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000 (QT-H1)

**3.1.3 Average Household Size**

Comparing the number of persons per household during 1990 and 2000 shows that the Town of Bear Creek saw a decrease in numbers of persons per occupied house while one neighboring town saw an increase. Comparing Bear Creek, Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin, all three experienced a decline, as seen in **Table P3 Regional Average Household Size Comparison**. Both the State and the County averaged approximately 2.5 persons per household in 2000.

**Table P3: Average Household Size**

Average Household Size Persons Per Household																
Year	Town of Bear Creek		Town of Spring Green		Town of Washington		Town of Franklin		Town of Buena Vista		Town of Willow		Sauk County		Wisconsin	
	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change
1990	3.24		2.75		3.10		3.18		2.82		2.99		2.61		2.61	
2000	2.82	-14.89%	2.60	-5.77%	3.22	3.73%	2.78	-14.39%	2.63	-7.22%	2.69	-11.15%	2.51	-3.98%	2.50	-4.40%

Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000 (QT-P10)

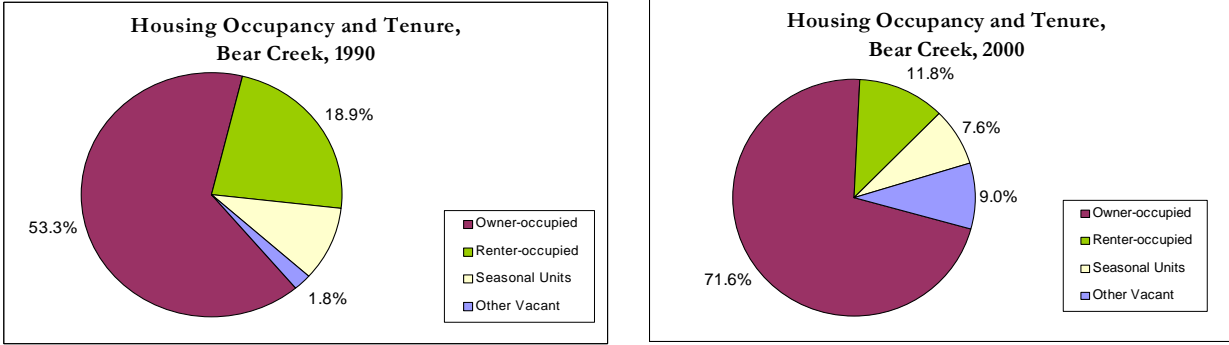
**3.2 Local Population and Housing Trends**

A look at local demographics profiles illustrates local trends and conditions, and provides insight as to the types of services both wanted and required by the community. The local trends section includes an examination of occupied housing, population composition, population by age bracket, and length of residency.

**3.2.1 Occupied Housing**

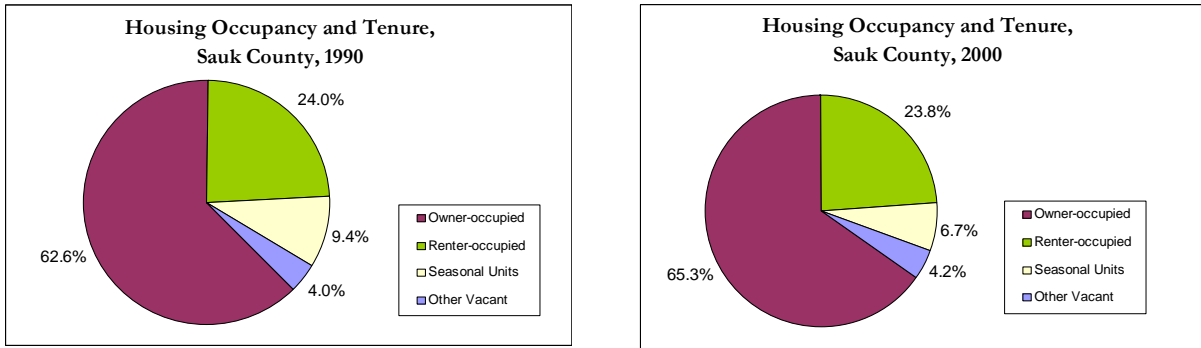
Determining the number of all housing units, the number of these units occupied, and the number of persons per occupied household will help to develop an understanding of population trends. In Bear Creek, the number of housing units increased from 185 in 1990 to 211 in 2000, the number of occupied housing units increased from 72% in 1990 to 83% in 2000. Occupancy rate trends for both Bear Creek and Sauk County are noted for the years 1990 and 2000 on **Charts P4 through P7**.

**Charts P4 and P5: Occupancy Rate and Tenure Bear Creek 1990 vs. 2000**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA); US Census, 1990, 2000

**Charts P6 and P7: Occupancy Rate and Tenure Sauk County 1990 vs. 2000**



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA); US Census, 1990, 2000

**3.2.2 Population Composition: Age, Gender and Race**

Median age is defined as the age at which half of the population is above and half is below. **Table P8 Age and Gender, Bear Creek and Sauk County** shows the median age in Bear Creek at 37.9 during 2000. This is comparable to the median age of Sauk County at 37.3 for the same time period. In both Bear Creek and Sauk County, there was a slight change in the female population percentage from 1990 to 2000. Also evident from this chart is that the percentage of the population over 65 years of age is slightly lower within the Town of Bear Creek in comparison to Sauk County.

**Table P8: Age and Gender, Bear Creek and Sauk County**

Year	Median Age		Percent Under 18		Percent Over 65		Percent Female	
	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County
1990, per census	Not available	34.2	30.90%	27.19%	10.50%	15.77%	47.00%	50.79%
2000, per census	37.9	37.3	27.40%	26.00%	12.80%	14.50%	46.60%	50.60%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

**Table P9 Ethnic Composition, Bear Creek and Sauk County** shows that from 1990 to 2000 there was a slight increase in the Caucasian population in the Town of Bear Creek and slight decrease in Sauk County. On the other hand, the Town of Bear Creek saw a decrease in the Native American and African American population while Sauk County experienced a slight increase within these two groups.

**Table P9: Ethnic Composition, Bear Creek and Sauk County**

Year	Percent White		Percent Native American and Alaska Native		Percent Hispanic (of any race)		Percent Asian		Percent African American		Percent Other	
	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County
1990, per census	99.4%	98.5%	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
2000, per census	99.6%	98.0%	0.0%	1.1%	1.6%	1.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.7%

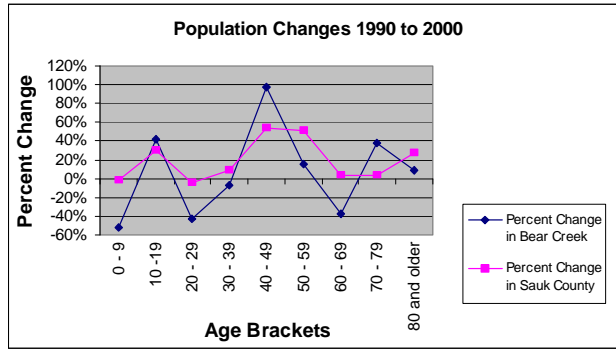
Source: US Census, 2000

\* Composition may equal more than 100% because some may report more than one ethnicity.

**3.2.3 Population per Age Bracket**

**Chart P10 and Table P11 Change of Populations per Age Bracket** breaks down the changes in population by age brackets for both the Town of Bear Creek and Sauk County from 1990 to 2000. Generally, this chart shows that the Town of Bear Creek is experiencing a greater percentage of growth in the young adult age and lower middle age brackets and less growth in the youngest and oldest adult age brackets. When compared to Sauk County population changes, definite growth trends in the lower middle age group age group can be seen, especially in the 40 - 49 age group. It is also apparent from this graph that increases and decreases in population age groups is fairly consistent with those changes in Sauk County.

**Chart P10: Change of Populations per Age Bracket**



Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000

**Table P11: Change of Populations per Age Bracket**

Town of Bear Creek	Age Group	0 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70 - 79	80 and older	Total
	1990, Bear Creek	104	69	72	96	45	46	57	21	11	521
	2000, Bear Creek	50	98	41	89	89	53	36	29	12	497
	Percent Change in Bear Creek	-51.92%	42.03%	-43.06%	-7.29%	97.78%	15.22%	-36.84%	38.10%	9.09%	-4.61%

Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000

### 3.2.4 Length of Residency

According to sample data included in the 2000 census, 18.10% of Town residents moved into Bear Creek on or before 1969. **Chart P12 Length of Residency** shows that 35.7% of those surveyed moved to the Town between the years 1970 and 1989. Since 1990, 46.10% of people surveyed moved to the Town. It is evident from this data that the Town of Bear Creek has been experiencing an influx of people into the Town since 1995.

**Table P12: Length of Residency**

Year	Length of Residency	
	Bear Creek, per 2000 census	Sauk County, per 2000 census
1969 or earlier	18.10%	9.90%
1970-1979	19.80%	10.10%
1980-1989	15.90%	16.70%
1990-1994	14.80%	19.00%
1995-1999	31.30%	44.30%

Source: US Census 2000

### 3.3 Interpretation of Demographic Data

The Town of Bear Creek has experienced periods of growth and loss in population since 1970, with an average loss in population of 1.60% per 10 years between 1970 and 2000. The number of housing units has increased slightly between the years of 1990 and 2000 and which does not correspond to the drop in population however it is reflective of the drop in the average number of people per household which decreased from 3.24 in 1990 to 2.82 in 2000. With an average population growth of negative 1.60% every 10 years, and a decreasing household size, the number of new homes built in the Town of Bear Creek will be affected. The following scenario exemplifies this issue: The population of the Town of Bear Creek in 2000 was 497 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. If we use the average rate of 1.60% loss in growth every 10 years over the last 30 years and a static household size of 2.82, we can estimate that the population in the year 2020 to be approximately 484 (note: this projection is based upon the increase in numbers of houses built). The average household size in 2000 was 2.82 as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, a decrease from 3.24 in 1990. If the average household size continues to decrease at this rate, by the year 2020 the average household size will be at approximately 2.40. Now, let us consider the number of housing units these statistics represent. In 2020, with a population of 484 and an average household size of 2.40, the number of housing units would be approximately 202. However, if the average household size remains constant at 2.82 with a population of 484, the number of housing units would be 172, a difference of 30 housing units. One can easily see from this example the importance that average household size plays in determining the amount of housing and new development needed to support a growing population.

### 3.4 Population Projections

Given the decrease of population over the last 10-year period in the Town of Bear Creek coupled with increases in population in neighboring towns, it is relatively safe to assume that populations will begin to increase in the future. However, the exact rate of increase is not known, nor can it be predicted with complete accuracy. Estimates of future growth for the Town of Bear Creek are necessary for effective planning. To estimate future population growth for the Town of Bear Creek, two population projection methods were utilized. The first is a standard approach, which considers a linear projection, growth (or exponential) projection, and the projection provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. The second method is a housing-driven population projection. Both methods are explained in more detail below.

### 3.4.1 Standard Population Projection Methods

- Linear Projection.** The linear growth model is the most basic of projection methods. The linear model works by drawing a straight, best-fit line through historic data points and extending that line out to future data points.
- Growth Projection.** The growth projection works in the same manner as the linear projection except that it applies an exponential growth curve to the data. Using the exponential growth method, the rate of population change in each subsequent year increases or decreases at a rate greater than the previous year. This method assumes the population will grow (or decline) without inhibition.
- Department of Administration Projection Method.** The DOA projection method works in the same manner as the linear projection model except that it gives more weight or influence to more recent years' data. This method calculates a projection (best-fit line) for three historic time periods: 1980-2003, 1990-2003 and 2000-2003. Each projection is then averaged together for a final projection. By averaging the three projections, population change that has occurred in the more recent time period is given more influence. This projection method is based on the premise that recent population trends, from the last 5 or 10 years for example, are more realistic for explaining future population growth than older trends, from 20 or 30 years ago. In some cases, this method can result in gross over- or underestimations of population growth. For example, consider a town of 500 where 5 new residents are added in one year. If this same rate of growth is applied over the next 20 years the town will swell to 600 people. What if, however, you lost 3 residents in the next year? If you apply this average rate of growth (2 people/year) you would have an increase of only 40 people in the next 20 years. The DOA method dampens the effect of very immediate population fluxes by including the three historic time periods. In addition, the DOA method adjusts for abnormal rates of change, such as annexations.

### 3.4.2 Housing-Driven Population Projections

The housing-driven population projections calculate future population growth based on expected housing growth and the current or expected persons per household. In some instances, this method is a fairly accurate tool, especially when coupled with one of the methods above to serve as a check and balance. The method is best summarized by the following equation:

$$[(\# \text{ housing units}) \times (\text{occupancy rate}) \times (\# \text{ people/housing unit})] \\ = \text{population projection}$$

However, the caveat to housing-driven projections is that calculations are based on the assumption that populations grow based on the availability of housing stock. A similar method is widely used to calculate population growth based on employment growth. People often move to an area for a new job, but are less likely to move their family because of more readily available housing. Housing is usually created due to demand, and not the other way around.

*Table P13 Population Projections, Town of Bear Creek* highlights a number of possible projections utilizing the different methods discussed above. Population projections for the year 2020 range from 432 to 616. Projections for the year 2030 range from 273 to 676. As can be noted, these projections have a range of over 200 and are, therefore, highly variable.

**Table P13: Population Projections, Town of Bear Creek**

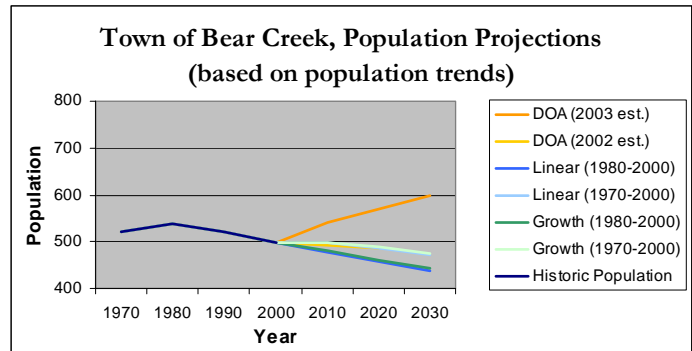
Town of Bear Creek Population Projections			Projections											
Year, source	Year	Historic Population	Percent Change	Linear	Growth	Linear	Growth	Static	Limited	Household	Household	Household	DOA	DOA
				(1970-2000)	(1970-2000)	(1980-2000)	(1980-2000)	household size	household size	size trend	(2002 est.)	(2003 est.)		
1960, per census	1960	663		663	663	663	663	663	663	663	663	663	663	663
1970, per census	1970	522	-21.27%	522	522	522	522	522	522	522	522	522	522	522
1980, per census	1980	537	2.87%	537	537	537	537	537	537	537	537	537	537	537
1990, per census	1990	521	-2.98%	521	521	521	521	521	521	521	521	521	521	521
2000, per census	2000	497	-4.61%	497	497	497	497	497	497	497	497	497	497	497
2010, projection	2010			497	497	478	479	555	492	472	493	542		
2020, projection	2020			487	488	458	461	616	546	432	486	570		
2025, projection	2025			477	478	447	451	646	573	357	483	584		
2030, projection	2030			473	474	438	444	676	600	273	n/a	599		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1960-2000, and Wisconsin Department of Administration - Demographic Services Center

### 3.4.3 Population Projections

*Chart P14 Population Projections* shows three projection methods that are based on population trends. The projections based on population growth include linear, growth, and DOA projection models. The linear and growth models (using data since 1980) result in population projections of 438 (linear) and 444 (growth) by the year 2030. The DOA method, which places emphasis on more recent population changes, appears to cause the population to increase as compared to the linear and growth models, predicting a population of 599 by 2030 for the Town of Bear Creek.

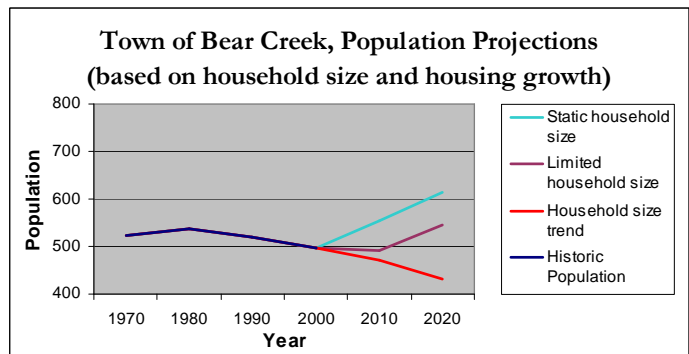
**Chart P14 Population Projections based on Population trends**



Source: U.S. Census, Wisconsin DOA

Population projections based on the historic and projected number of housing units coupled with a projected occupancy rate tell indicate an increase in population for the Town of Bear Creek. Housing unit projections assumed a growth rate equal to that occurring between 1990 and 2000 of 14.05% per 10 years. Using this rate of growth, total housing units in the Town of Bear Creek are estimated to grow to 275 in 2020 and 314 in 2030.

**Chart P15 Population Projections based on Housing Growth**



Source: U.S. Census

The static household size projection assumes the average household size (or persons per household) remains constant at the value observed in 2000 (2.82 persons per household). The projection yields a population of 616 by 2020 and 676 by 2030 using the 2000 occupancy rate of 83%. The limited household size projection holds the county average of 2.5 persons per household constant, producing a population projection of 546 by the year 2020 and 600 by the year 2030. The

household size trend projection adjusts household size based on a 3% decrease per 10 years. For example, this projection assumes that from the year 2000 to 2010, household size would decrease from 2.82 persons per household to 2.74 persons per household. This produces a projected population of 432 in 2020 and 273 in 2030. These results are depicted in *Chart P15 Population Projections based on Housing*.

#### **3.4.4 Population Projection Analysis**

Population projections based on historic population trends and those based on trends in household size produced similar projections as can be seen in *Charts P14* and *P15* above. Both projection methods illustrate different rates of population growth and loss. The DOA projection method, because it only takes into account population trends from 1990-2000 and more recently population changes from 2000-2003, may be an accurate assessment of future populations due to the more recent growth increase experienced by the Town. Conversely, the linear and growth methods may be least reliable due to the fact that they utilize population changes since 1980, which included an overall loss in population.

The projection types based on housing units and average household size take into consideration that housing units are increasing within the Town while average household size is decreasing. If housing units and occupancy rates continue to decrease, as they are currently, the population for the Town of Bear Creek will increase as shown in the *Chart P15*. Although it difficult to ascertain when population growth trends will change, it is almost certain that from this point on, the population in the Town of Bear Creek will continue to grow. The rate of growth experienced over the last 10 years will most likely continue and even increase over time, as more and more people are attracted to the community.



**4.0 Purpose**

Household and housing stock characteristics, both past and present, can be examined to assess whether a community is providing an adequate housing supply to meet the needs of its residents. This section of the Comprehensive Plan describes and analyzes the Town of Bear Creek’s primary housing characteristics such as the number of housing units, occupancy rate, structural type, age and value of existing housing structures, and household income and expenses. This section also describes what constitutes ‘affordable’ housing and further includes a compilation of objectives and policies that ensure a continued housing supply that provides a range of housing opportunities. Portions of this chapter refer to *Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis*.



**4.1 Housing Unit Trends**

Between 1990 and 2000, the Town of Bear Creek experienced an increase of approximately 2.6 housing units per year while the number of total (occupied and vacant) housing units in Bear Creek increased from 185 to 211, an increase of 14.05%. This rate of increase is just below Sauk County’s housing unit increase of 18.88% and is well above the negative population growth rate of -4.61% between the years 1990 and 2000 in the Town of Bear Creek (see *Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis*, for a full account). In comparison to nearby Towns, the Town of Bear Creek is experiencing a consistent increase in housing units; the Town of Washington to the north has experienced a 23% increase. Bear Creek’s housing unit percent increase between 1990 and 2000 was less than that experienced by the Sauk County.

**Chart H1: Regional Housing Unit Comparison**

Regional Housing Unit Comparison												
Year	Town of Bear Creek		Town of Spring Green		Town of Washington		Town of Franklin		Town of Buena Vista		Sauk County	
	Number of Units	Percent Change	Number of Units	Percent Change	Number of Units	Percent Change	Number of Units	Percent Change	Number of Units	Percent Change	Number of Units	Percent Change
1990	185		588		248		232		591		20,439	
2000	211	14.05%	661	12.41%	305	22.98%	267	15.09%	654	10.66%	24,297	18.88%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**4.1.1 Occupancy Rate**

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an overall vacancy rate of roughly 3% (or occupancy rate of 97%) is ideal for providing consumers an adequate choice in housing. As cited in *Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis*, during 1990, about 87% or 161 of the 185 available housing units in the Town of Bear Creek were occupied compared to an 86.7% occupancy rate in Sauk County. During 2000, occupancy in the Town of Bear Creek decreased to 83.4%, or 176 of the 211 available housing units, while Sauk County increased to an 89.1% occupancy rate. While occupancy rate did decrease from 1990 to 2000, it is predicted that the occupancy rate within the Town of Bear Creek will remain higher than the occupancy rate within Sauk County and surrounding Towns due to the lower concentration of seasonal homes.

## 4.2 Household Characteristics

Household characteristics may influence not only the type of housing stock needed, but also the types of services and commodities utilized. *Table H2 Households by Type* describes a variety of household characteristics. Occupied housing units in the Town of Bear Creek comprised of family households increased from 139 in 1990 (86.3%) to 141 in 2000 (80.1%). Female householders also increased slightly from 9 in 1990 (5.6%) to 10 in 2000 (6.8%). Non-family households also increased in number while increasing in percentage. In comparison, both the Town of Bear Creek and Sauk County saw increased numbers in every category from 1990 to 2000. The percentage of married households also slightly increased in the Town while it decreased in the County. Female householders increased by around one percent in both the Town and the County from 1990 to 2000. The percentage of non-family households and householders 65 and over both increased significantly in Sauk County while increasing slightly in the Town of Bear Creek.

**Table H2: Households by Type**

Households by Type								
	Town of Bear Creek				Sauk County			
	1990	% of Total Households, 1990	2000	% of Total Households, 2000	1990	% of Total Households, 1990	2000	% of Total Households, 2000
<b>Family households</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>86.3%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>80.1%</b>	<b>12,701</b>	<b>71.7%</b>	<b>14,863</b>	<b>68.7%</b>
Married	116	72.0%	119	67.6%	10,906	61.6%	12,284	56.8%
Female householder (single)	9	5.6%	10	6.8%	1,115	6.3%	1,745	8.1%
<b>Non-family households</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>2,156</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>6,781</b>	<b>31.3%</b>
With Individuals 65 or older	5	3.1%	8	4.5%	2,157	12.2%	5,361	24.8%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>17,703</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>21,644</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

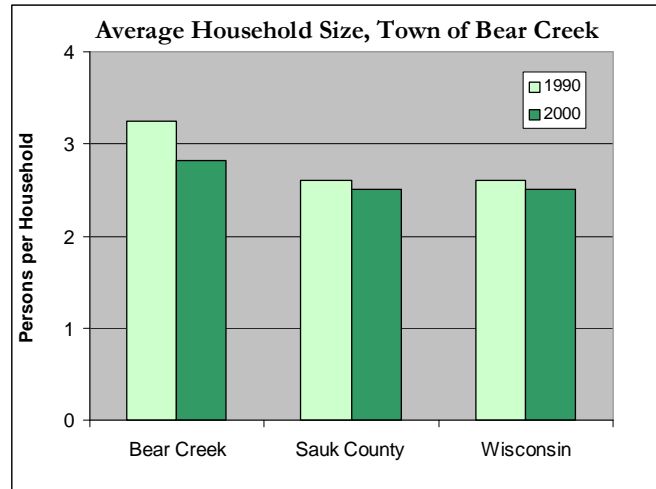
Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000.

please turn to next page

**4.2.1 Average Household Size**

The average household size or persons per households in Bear Creek has dropped from 3.24 persons in 1990 to 2.82 in 2000, a decrease of 13%. As displayed in *Chart H3 Average Household Size Comparison*, the Town of Bear Creek’s average household size is higher than that of both Sauk County and the state of Wisconsin. A comparison of average household size between the Town of Bear Creek and neighboring Towns may be found in *Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis*.

**Chart H3: Average Household Size Comparison**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**4.3 Housing Stock Characteristics**

During 2000, 93.6% of the homes in the Town of Bear Creek were single family, 3.7% of the housing units were mobile homes, 1.8% were 2- to 4- unit structures and 0.9% of housing units were RV’s or vans. In 2000, Sauk County was comprised of 72.61% single family homes, 8.6% mobile homes, and 18.79% multiple unit housing. When compared to 1990 statistics, the percentage of single-family homes has increased in the Town, while the percentage of multi-unit housing and mobile homes have decreased.

**Table H4: Housing Units by Structural Type**

Housing Units, Structural Type 2000						
	Total Housing Units	% Single Family Home	% Mobile Home	% with two to four units	% with five to nine units per structure	% with ten or more units per structure
Bear Creek, 1990	185	91.35%	6.49%	1.62%	0.00%	0.00%
Bear Creek, 2000	211	93.60%	3.70%	1.80%	0.00%	0.00%
Sauk County, 1990	20,439	71.98%	10.20%	10.74%	3.02%	4.06%
Sauk County, 2000	24,297	72.61%	8.60%	10.00%	4.10%	4.50%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

**4.3.1 Age of Housing Stock**

The age of the community's housing stock can be used as a measure of the general condition of the community's housing supply. This information can also provide insight into upkeep costs, the ease of remodeling, and housing resale value in a community. Building quality at the time of initial construction is also an important factor. Generally, housing constructed prior to 1939 has reached an age where continued maintenance and major repairs may be needed. In comparison, housing built in the 1980's may need upgrading as well due to a decrease in construction and material quality during that time.

**Table H5: Age of Housing Units**

Age of Existing Housing Structures, 2000				
Year Unit Was Built	Number of Units in Bear Creek	Bear Creek	Number of Units in Sauk County	Sauk County
1939 or earlier	105	47.9%	6,737	27.7%
1940 - 1959	12	5.5%	3,000	12.3%
1960 - 1969	9	4.1%	1,931	7.9%
1970 - 1979	22	10.0%	3,764	15.5%
1980 - 1989	29	13.2%	3,021	12.4%
1990 - 1994	15	6.8%	2,621	10.8%
1995 - 1998	17	7.8%	2,628	10.8%
1999 - 2000	10	4.6%	595	2.4%
Total	219	100.0%	24,297	100.0%

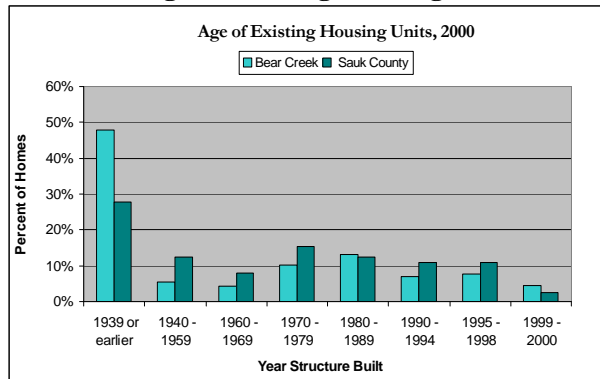
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

**Chart H6: Housing Age** shows that 47.9% of the existing owner occupied housing within the Town of Bear Creek was built prior to 1939 while 32.4% of owner occupied homes units were built after 1980. The percentage of existing homes in the Town of Bear Creek built prior to 1969 is below that of the percentage of Sauk County homes built in this time period. From 1980 to 1989 a greater percentage of homes were built in the Town of Bear Creek than Sauk County.

**4.4 Housing Affordability**

Examining household incomes, expenses and housing values provides insight into the types of housing structures that currently exist in the Town of Bear Creek and those that are needed in the community.

**Chart H6: Age of Existing Housing Structures**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000

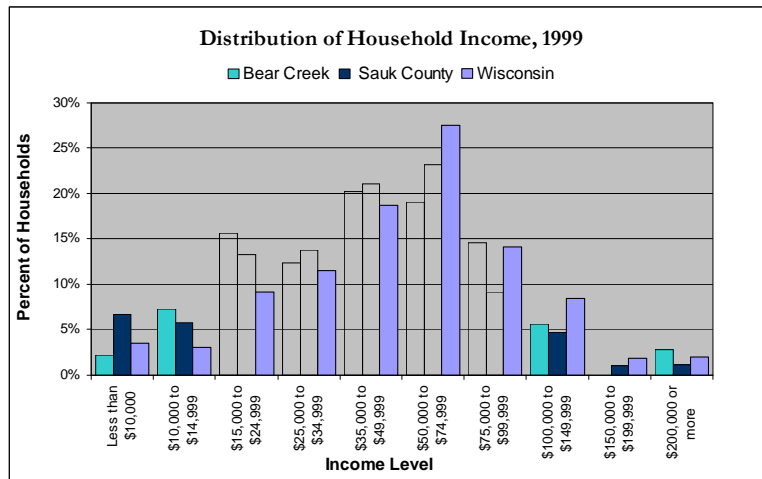
**4.4.1 Income Per Household**

During 1999, the median household income for Bear Creek was \$41,250, which was consistent with the median income for Sauk County at \$41,941. Of the 178 households surveyed in Bear Creek, 36 (20.22%) were in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income bracket. Another 34 (19.10%) of the households were in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income bracket. This is compared similarly to Sauk County with 21.03% of the households in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income bracket and 23.16% of the households in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income bracket.

Affordable monthly housing expenses (or mortgage payments) are considered to be 30% or less of the monthly gross income. This amount can be calculated using the following equation: affordable monthly mortgage expense = .3 \* monthly gross income (where the monthly gross income is the annual gross income divided by 12). In order to determine if the gross annual income is considered to be in the low or moderate-income brackets, the following Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definitions may be used. As **Table H8** on the following page illustrates, extremely low income (ELI) is defined as earning less than 30% of the household median gross income (HMI) or  $ELI = .3 * HMI$ . Very low income (VLI) is 30% to 50% of the HMI. Low income (LI) is defined as earning 50% to 80% of the HMI and moderate income (MI) is 80% to 100% of the HMI.

Given that the HMI for Bear Creek is \$41,250, the extremely low-income range is anyone earning less than \$12,375 (rounded to less than \$15,000) per year. According to the 2000 census, 9.5% of the households in Bear Creek were in this range and could afford monthly housing expenses of \$375.00 or less. 15.7% of the households in Bear Creek fell in the very low-income range and could afford monthly housing expenses of \$375.00 to \$625.00. Households in the low-income range made up approximately 12.4% of the households in Bear Creek, and these households are reportedly able to afford \$625.00 to \$875.00 in housing expenses each month. Households in the moderate-income range comprised 20.2% of the households in Bear Creek, and could afford monthly housing expenses from \$875.00 to \$1250.00.

**Chart H7: Household Income Levels**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Table H8: Affordable Housing Expenses per Income, Bear Creek, 1990**

Bear Creek, 1990			
Household Median Income \$31,518			
Household Income Category	Rounded Description	Percent of Households	Affordable housing payment per month based on 30% of income standard
<b>Extremely low income</b> (below 30% of HMI)	< \$10,000	6.3%	\$250 or less
<b>Very low income</b> (30% to 50% of HMI)	\$10,000-\$15,000	9.4%	\$250 - \$375
<b>Low income</b> (50% to 80% of HMI)	\$15,000-\$25,000	21.4%	\$375 - \$625
<b>Moderate income</b> (80% to 100% of HMI)	\$25,000-\$35,000	20.1%	\$625 - \$875

Source: U.S. Census 1990

**Table H9: Affordable Housing Expenses per Income, Bear Creek, 2000**

Bear Creek, 2000			
Household Median Income \$41,250			
Household Income Category	Rounded Description	Percent of Households	Affordable housing payment per month based on 30% of income standard
<b>Extremely low income</b> (below 30% of HMI)	< \$15,000	9.6%	\$375 or less
<b>Very low income</b> (30% to 50% of HMI)	\$15,000-\$25,000	15.7%	\$375 - \$625
<b>Low income</b> (50% to 80% of HMI)	\$25,000-\$35,000	12.4%	\$625 - \$875
<b>Moderate income</b> (80% to 100% of HMI)	\$35,000-\$50,000	20.2%	\$875 - \$1,250

Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Table H10: Distribution of Household Income, 1999**

Distribution of Household Income, 1999	% of Households	% of Households	% of Households
	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	2.2%	6.7%	3.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7.3%	5.8%	3.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	15.7%	13.4%	9.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.4%	13.8%	11.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	20.2%	21.0%	18.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.1%	23.2%	27.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.6%	9.1%	14.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5.6%	4.7%	8.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.0%	1.1%	1.9%
\$200,000 or more	2.8%	1.2%	2.0%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$41,250</b>	<b>\$41,941</b>	<b>\$43,791</b>
No. of Households	525	21,647	2,086,304
Aggregate Household Income	\$26,397,300	\$1,076,409,500	\$112,374,261,000
<b>Avg. Household Income</b>	<b>\$61,636</b>	<b>\$49,726</b>	<b>\$53,863</b>
<b>Ratio of mean to median HH Income</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>1.23</b>

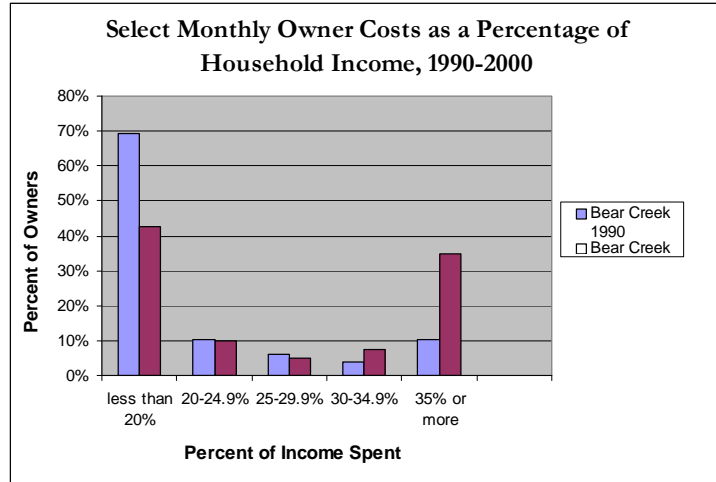
Source: US Census 2000, Housing Wisconsin.

\*The income range is the calculated household income range rounded to the nearest income bracket as provided in the 2000 Census. Therefore, the percent of households in this income range is also an approximate number.

**4.4.2 Owner Costs**

*Chart H11 and Table H12 Monthly Owner Cost* depict housing costs in relation to overall income using a sample population from the Town of Bear Creek to better understand housing affordability in the Town. Housing affordability has decreased slightly between 1990 and 2000. During this timeframe, the percentage of homeowners whose housing costs exceeded 30% of the household income increased by 3.3% (from 6.3% in 1990 to 9.6% in 2000). In 2000, approximately 56% of the owner-occupied houses in the Town of Bear Creek spent 30% or less of their household income on housing costs. This statistic is down significantly from 85% in 1990.

**Chart H11: Monthly Owner Costs**



Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

**Table H12: Monthly Owner Costs**

Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income				
Percentage of income	Bear Creek 1990		Bear Creek 2000	
	number of units	percent of units	number of units	percent of units
less than 20%	34	69.4%	17	42.5%
20-24.9%	5	10.2%	4	10.0%
25-29.9%	3	6.1%	2	5.0%
30-34.9%	2	4.1%	3	7.5%
35% or more	5	10.2%	14	35.0%
	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>total units</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

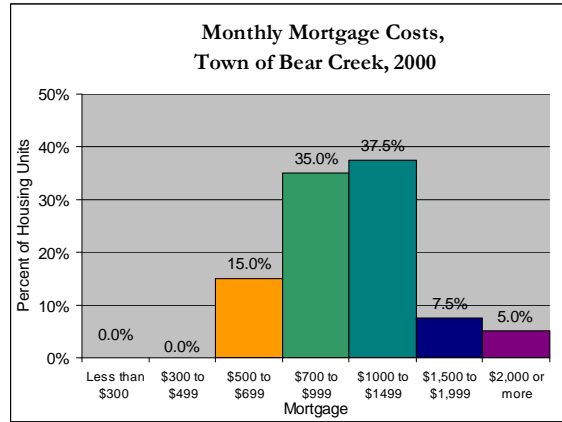
**4.4.3 Mortgage Costs**

Although mortgage costs are only one of many monthly housing expenses, this section narrows its focus by concentrating on them. Comparisons of monthly mortgage costs from 1990 to 2000 are broken down for the Town of Bear Creek in *Charts H13 and H14*. In 1990 and 2000, 0% of the households spent less than \$300 in monthly mortgage costs. However, in 1990, 37% of the households spent between \$300 and \$499 on monthly mortgage costs, while in 2000, 0% of mortgage payments were in this category.

The largest percentage (51.9%) of monthly mortgage costs in 1990 was between \$500-\$699. In 2000, the categories of \$700-\$999 and \$1,000-\$1,499 both made up about 72.5% of mortgage payments. As depicted in the chart, no households reported monthly mortgages of more than \$1,500 in 1990, while 7.5% of mortgage payments in 2000 were between \$1,500 and \$1,999. In comparing these two charts, it is easy to see that monthly mortgage costs are increasing significantly in the Town of Bear Creek. This may be due to an increasing market value of housing and land in the area. With increasing mortgage costs, it is expected that the amount of affordable housing in the Town will decrease if this trend continues.

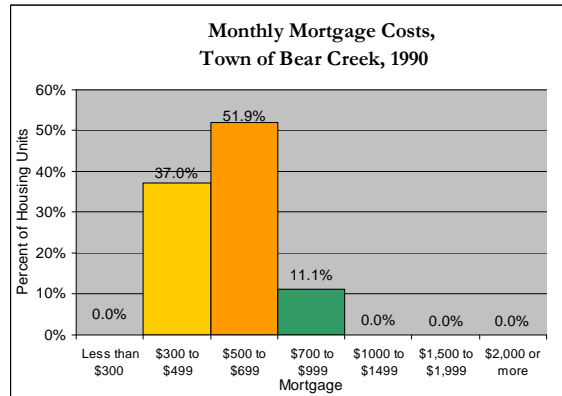
It is also important to consider monthly rental costs when analyzing the affordability of housing in a community. *Charts H15 and H16* compare monthly rental costs in the Town of Bear Creek between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, 21.4% of monthly rent payments were less than \$300, while in 2000, no rent payments were less than \$300. Rent payments in the \$300-\$499 category also decrease from 42.9% in 1990 to 22.2% in 2000. In 2000, rent payments in the \$750-\$999 category were recorded at 11.1%, which was up from 0% in 1990. No-cash rent payments, usually associated with farm help, increased by more than half from 36% in 1990 to 67% in 2000. It is evident from these statistics that the affordability of monthly rental payments is decreasing in the Town.

**Chart H13: Monthly Mortgage Costs, Bear Creek**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000

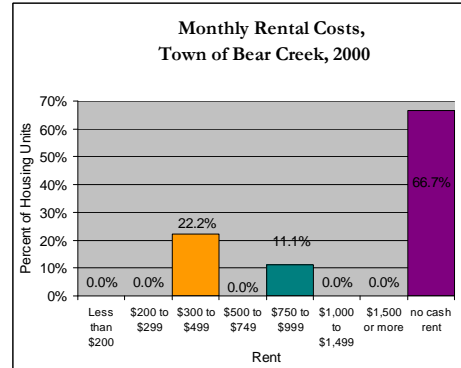
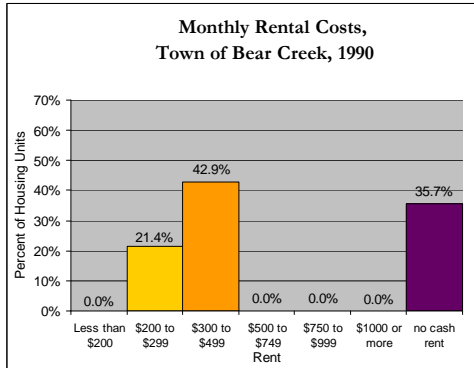
**Chart H14: Monthly Mortgage Costs, Bear Creek 1990**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000



**Charts H15 and H16: Monthly Rental Costs, Bear Creek 1990 and 2000**

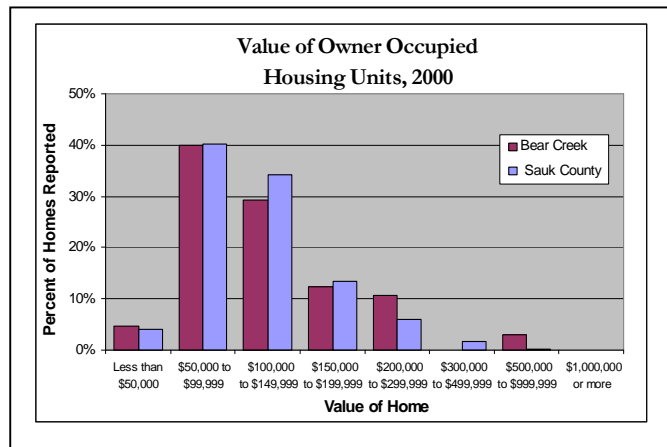


Source: U.S. Census 1990 and 2000

**4.4.4 House Values**

A sample of housing values in Bear Creek during 2000 ranged from less than \$50,000.00 to over \$500,000. The median home value in Bear Creek in 2000 was \$107,300, which was slightly lower than the median house value in Sauk County of \$107,500. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, *Chart H17 Housing Value, Bear Creek 2000* compares the housing values for the Town of Bear Creek with those of Sauk County. Approximately 44.6% of the homes in the Town of Bear Creek are less than \$100,000, whereas the percentage of homes valued between \$100,000 to 149,000 is 29.2% in Bear Creek compared to Sauk County’s 34% in this category. Approximately 12% of the homes were valued between \$150,000 and \$199,999 in the Town compared to Sauk County’s almost 13.5%. Ten point eight percent of the homes in Bear Creek were valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999, compared to 8.14% of the homes in Sauk County. As evident in the chart, 3% of owner-occupied housing was reported as having a value between \$500,000 and \$999,999. Statistics for housing value are based on a sample population and do not include all owner-occupied housing units.

**Table H17: Housing Value, Bear Creek 2000**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000

**4.5 Housing Density**

Housing density can be defined in a number of ways. Density in its simplest definition is the number of housing units per total area of land. This numerical value is commonly referred to as gross density. Density policy, on the other hand, involves the utilization of a credit system to determine both the total number of lots that can be created in an area and the size of each lot. The density policy yields a calculation of the total number of potential future houses until an endpoint is reached.

The current housing density of the Town of Bear Creek stands at approximately 1 household per 151 acres. This level of housing density has remained relatively unchanged from a historical perspective, however as more housing units are being built, the overall housing density will increase.

#### 4.6 Local Population and Housing Trends

To understand population and housing trends in the Town of Bear Creek and the impacts these trends will have on the future of the community, it is necessary to examine the population projections discussed in the previous chapter. The growth of the population will drive housing development in the Town. If the average household size continues to decrease in the Town the number of housing units needed to accommodate the population may increase further. From 1990 to 2000, the Town experienced a 14.05% increase in housing units. If this trend continues, an additional 29 housing units will be built by the year 2010. From 2010 to 2020, an additional 33 housing units will be built if the 14.05% increase rate remains constant. Finally, from 2020 to 2030 an additional 38 housing units would be built during this time period.

#### 4.7 Projected Housing Needs Based on Population Projections

As noted in *Chapter 3 Population Inventory and Analysis* two methods of population projections are utilized. Population Projection 1 involved a comparison between a linear and growth method, along with a method used by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. Population Projection 2 uses a method that combines the historic projected number of new housing units coupled with a projected occupancy rate. The following includes the projected number of housing units needed based on Population Projection 1 as well as a reiteration of housing units needed, identified under Population Projection 2 and based on the historic number of housing units actually built.

##### 4.7.1 Population Projection 1 and Housing Needs

- **DOA Projection (2003 est.)** projects a total population of 570 persons in the year 2020. At this rate of growth and a constant of 2.5 persons per household (the County average), the Town would add 73 people or essentially 52 new occupied houses assuming the occupancy rate remains the same. Alternatively, at this rate of growth and a constant of 2.82 persons per household (the Town of Bear Creek's average from the 2000 census), total new housing units needed by 2020 would be 26. By 2030, based on 2.5 persons per household, the Town will need 64 new occupied housing units to accommodate 102 new persons.
- **Linear Model (1980-2000) and Growth Model (1980-2000)** both show an average decrease in population to 460 persons to the year 2020, or 37 less people. Assuming a constant of 2.5 persons per household (the County average), there will not be a need for housing units by the year 2020. Alternatively, assuming a constant of 2.82 persons per household (the Town of Bear Creek average from the 2000 census), there will be approximately 13 housing units going unused by 2020. By 2030, based on 2.5 persons per household and an average loss of 53 persons, the Town will have a total net need for two additional housing units.

##### 4.7.2 Population Projection 2 and Housing Needs

- **Static Household Size** accounts for the historic drop in persons per household from 3.24 in 1990 to 2.82 persons per household as identified by the 2000 census. Combining this factor with the 176 occupied housing units in the Town in 2000 yields a population

projection of 616 persons by 2020 and 676 persons by 2030. This increase in population translates into an additional 42 occupied housing units by 2020 and another 22 new housing units by 2030.

- **Limited Household Size** holds the County average of 2.5 persons per household constant, producing an increase in population size to 546 by 2020 and 600 persons by 2030. This method yields the need for 42 additional occupied homes by 2020 and 64 total new housing units by 2030.
- **Household Size Trend** adjusts the average household size based on a 3% decrease every 10 years. For example, this projection assumes that from the year 2000 to 2010, average household size would decrease from 2.82 persons per household to 2.74 persons per household. This produces a projection of 432 persons in 2020 and 273 persons by 2030. This method yields a need no additional housing in the town.

### 4.7.3 General Housing Needs Analysis

In reviewing the housing projection methods based on Population Projections 1 and 2, it appears as though the most logical housing projections are those that produce a slight increase in population through the years 2020 and 2030 respectively. However with an average drop of 20 persons per 10-year period between 1980-1990 and 1990-2000 suggests that there will be a continued drop in population through 2030. Under Population Projection 1, the linear and growth models present a continued drop in population and conversely less need for housing while the DOA method appears to over project population growth translating into an over projection of housing needs. Population Projection 2 recognizes a Static Household Size which mimics the DOA projection while the Household Size Trend recognizes a continued drop in population, both of which maybe unrealistic. The Limited Household Size projection appears to be the most logical given the historical decline in population in the last 20 years as it allows for minimal population gains which translates into a need for 21 additional houses per 10-year period or 2 additional houses per year through the year 2030.

Realistically, housing units will be added to the Town of Bear Creek through the year 2020 and beyond. It is difficult to predict exact population and housing need increases, so it may be appropriate to set ranges for predicted growth. Planners to identify lands needed to accommodate this growth can then utilize the ranges. (See *Chapter 11 Land Use* for more information on planning for development.)

### 4.8 Housing Opportunities

The Town of Bear Creek has always provided options for varying housing choices and locations. Although there are limitations on the numbers of vacant lots, there are opportunities to create new lots located in either platted subdivisions or identified by Certified Survey mapped lots.

### 4.9 Housing Programs and Resources

Listed under this section are some examples of housing assistance programs available at the time of plan adoption and administrative agencies for such programs. Based on eligibility criteria, some Town of Bear Creek residents may qualify.

#### 4.9.1 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

**Section 811** – provides funding to nonprofit organizations for supportive housing for very low-income persons with disabilities who are at least 18 years of age

**Section 202** – provides funding to private nonprofit organizations and consumer cooperatives for supportive housing for very low-income persons age 62 and older

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

**451 7<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.  
Washington, DC 20410**

**Phone: 202-708-1112  
www.hud.gov**

**Section 8** – major program for assisting very low-income families, elderly and disabled individuals to afford housing on the private market. Participants are responsible for finding their own housing. Funding vouchers are distributed through Public Housing Authorities that deliver the vouchers to eligible applicants.

**Section 8/SRO** – provides funding to rehabilitate existing structures to create single room occupancy (SRO) housing for homeless individuals of very low income, with shared spaces.

**Hope VI** – provides grants to Public Housing Authorities to destroy severely distressed public housing units and replace them with new units or dramatically rehabilitate existing units. It hopes to relocate residents in order to integrate low and middle-income communities. It also provides community and supportive services.

**Public Housing** – the goal is to provide rental housing for low-income families, elderly and disabled individuals. Rents are based on resident's anticipated gross annual income less any deductions.

**HOME** – provides formula grants to states and localities that communities use to fund a range of activities that build, buy, or rehabilitate affordable housing units for rent or ownership.

**Section 502** – makes loans to low- and very low-income households in rural areas to build, repair, renovate, or relocate houses, including mobile/manufactured homes. Funds can be used to purchase and prepare sites and to pay for necessities such as water supply and sewage disposal.

**Section 515** – provides direct, competitive mortgage loans to provide affordable multifamily rental housing for very low-, low- and moderate-income families, and elderly and disabled individuals. It is primarily a direct mortgage program but funds can also be used to improve land and water and waste disposal systems.

**Section 514/516** – loans and grants used to buy, build, improve, or repair housing for farm laborers, including persons whose income is earned in aquaculture and those involved in on-farm processing. Funds can be used to purchase a site or leasehold interest in a site, to construct or repair housing, day care facilities, or community rooms, to pay fees to purchase durable household furnishings and pay construction loan interest.

#### 4.9.2 State of Wisconsin – Department of Administration (Bureau of Housing)

**Home Rehabilitation and Accessibility (HRA)** – provides Federal HOME funds to participating agencies to make repairs and improvements needed to bring dwellings, owned and occupied by low-income households, up to appropriate housing quality standards and provide accessibility modifications.

**Home Buyer Rehabilitation (HBR)** – funds provided through local agencies for the lowest income households either in grant or loan formats for a wide variety of local affordable housing activities.

**Rental Housing Development (RHD)** – Provides additional information to HUD’s HOME program for requirements on funding. These funds are used to provide direct competitive mortgages in order to establish affordable multi-family housing for very low-, low- and moderate-income families, and elderly and disabled individuals.

**Rental Housing Development (RHD)** – funds provided through HUD’s HOME program to make repairs or improvements to rental units leased to persons who have low or very low incomes.

**Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)** – funds set aside to assist low or moderate income persons of families to secure affordable, decent, safe and sanitary housing by defraying some of the housing costs.

**Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** – funds made available to local units of government that are deemed most in need of assistance for housing rehabilitation and/or limited other housing activities. The funds are awarded to a local governmental unit, which in turn, provides zero interest, deferred payment loans for housing assistance to low- to moderate-income homeowners.

**Community Development Block Grant - Emergency Assistance Program (CDBG-EAP)** - Funds are to be directed to eligible units of government throughout the State that are in need of assistance due to a natural or manmade disaster. Funds are to be used to provide housing assistance to low- to moderate-income homeowners to address the damage caused by the disaster.

#### 4.9.3 Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

WHEDA offers two specific programs to assist individuals with their homeownership needs: HOME and Home Improvement Loans. The HOME program provides competitive mortgages to potential homeowners with fixed below-market interest rates to qualified candidates. The Home Improvement Loan program provides funding up to \$17,500 to qualified candidates for rehabilitation and other various housing activities. These funds are provided at below-market fixed interest rates for up to 15 years with no prepayment penalties. The properties must be at least 10 years old and the applicants must meet the income limits established by WHEDA for the county they reside within.

**WHEDA (Madison office)**

**201 W. Washington Ave.  
Suite 700  
P.O. Box 1728  
Madison, WI 53701**

**Phone: 1-800-363-2761  
www.wheda.com**

#### 4.9.4 United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD)

The Rural Housing Service (RHS) is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The RHS provides assistance to rural home owners under rehabilitation and preservation funding initiatives, rental assistance to tenants of RHS-funded multifamily housing complexes, farm labor housing, assisted living housing and development of community facilities such as libraries, childcare centers, schools, municipal buildings and nonprofit organizations.

**USDA Rural Development of Wisconsin**

**4949 Kirschiling Court  
Stevens Point, WI 54481**

**Phone: 715-345-7615  
[www.rurdev.usda.gov/wi/](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wi/)**

#### 4.10 Housing Goal, Objectives and Policies

**Housing Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek supports opportunities for housing needs of all income levels, age groups, and persons with special needs while minimizing the loss of farmland.

##### **Housing Objectives/Policies:**

HO-1 Encourage siting of homes in areas that will not result in property or environmental damage or impair rural character or agricultural operations

HP-1A Policies set forth under the Land Use Chapter will provide general siting guidance for new housing and includes a general check-list of siting provisions.

HP-1B All residents adjacent to a proposed housing lot or new housing proposal shall be notified by the appropriate town authority of the pending proposal and the time and location of the Plan Commission review of said proposal.

HO-2 Minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural development.

See ARP-3A and ARP-3B for housing location provisions relative to agricultural land uses.

HO-3 Provide varied opportunities for single-family home development to meet varied housing needs while discouraging subdivisions.

HP-3A Allow only single-family residential development in the Town of Bear Creek. Multi-Family dwellings shall be directed to nearby incorporated areas.

HP-3B Future housing subdivisions shall not be permitted in the Town. Subdivisions shall be directed to nearby incorporated areas or to towns that have elected to permit subdivision development and which is based upon the locally adopted comprehensive plan.

HP-3C Direct affordable housing opportunities for people with special needs to nearby incorporated areas where services can be effectively provided.

HP-3D Mobile homes will not be permitted, with the exception of mobile homes related to an agricultural operation or when used as temporary shelter during the construction of a single-family residence.

HO-4 Provide varied housing lot size options while minimizing the loss of farmland.

HP-4A New residential lot sizes will not be limited in Bear Creek with the exception that any new lot created for the purpose of constructing a single-family residence shall not be less than two (2) net acres. The net acre calculation excludes the road right-of-way.

HO-5 Encourage residential housing designs and locations that aim to balance the protection of natural resources and rural character and which utilizes existing transportation routes.

HP-5A When determining the location of new residential lots, this policy will require that landowners abide by the siting criteria provided for under LUP-9A.

HP-5B Support Sauk County with the establishment of sustainable development guidelines and ordinances to preserve natural resources, protect the environment and achieve energy efficiency and independence.

HP-5C All new housing proposals should have access to existing utility and transportation infrastructure.

HP-5D The Town will not accept dedications or driveway extensions or any new town roads unless such road is improved to town specification.

HP-5E Work with Sauk County to permit the construction of new residential structures (stick built) that are less than 750 square feet of living space currently prescribed by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance so as to allow the construction of seasonal/recreational cabins containing not less than 400 square feet of living space.

HP-5F Mobile homes shall only be permitted in mobile home parks, with the exception of mobile homes related to agricultural operations.

**5.0 Purpose**

Farming and agricultural activities represent the primary form of economic activity in the Town, and for many Bear Creek residents, a primary way of life. Throughout the Town of Bear Creek’s history, farmland and farming operations have been passed down to succeeding generations, a tradition that continues today. However, in the last 10 to 15 years, the agricultural community has faced many challenges. Because of its proximity to the Madison metropolitan area, the Town of Bear Creek has begun to experience an increased rate of rural residential development. Along with this residential development rate, increases in property value assessments, increasing health care costs, and stagnant farm prices have compounded the challenges to the agriculture industry recently. For years, farming has remained a viable employment opportunity and lifestyle for many in Bear Creek, but the future of a viable agricultural economy is in question. Development of rural residential lands is not inherently negative as it provides an opportunity for landowners to divide land as they see fit. However, done improperly, such land divisions may conflict with adjacent agricultural land uses and may contribute to the loss of prime farmland in the Town of Bear Creek.



This section highlights some of the trends in agriculture from a local, county and state perspective. More importantly, it provides guidance to the Town to allow for a specified amount of rural residential development that is compatible with continued agriculture land uses.

**5.1 Regional and Local Trends in Agriculture**

From 1987 to 1997, the estimated number of farms in Sauk County decreased from 1,502 to 1,452 (by 3.33%). The average size for farms in Sauk County also decreased from 246 acres in 1987 to 229 acres in 1997. During the same time period, the estimated number of farms in the State of Wisconsin decreased from 75,131 to 65,602, (by 12.68%), while the average size of farms increased from 221 acres to 227 acres.

**Table A1: Trends in Average Size of Farms**

Sauk County Farms				Wisconsin Farms			
Year	Approximate Number of Farms	Average Size of Farm in Acres	Percent Change in Average Size	Year	Approximate Number of Farms	Average Size of Farm in Acres	Percent Change in Average Size
1987	1,502	246		1987	75,131	221	
1992	1,383	243	-1.22%	1992	67,959	228	3.17%
1997	1,452	229	-5.76%	1997	65,602	227	-0.44%

Source: Wisconsin County Agricultural trends in the 1990's, Prepared by PATS, UW Madison, August 2001

From 1990 to 1997, the estimated number of farms in Bear Creek increased from 84 to 90, while the number of dairy farms decreased from 39 to 25. In Sauk County, both farms and dairy farms have



decreased. The estimated farms per square mile in 1997 are similar for the Town and the County. For dairy farm density, the Town had 0.5 dairy farms per square mile and the County had 0.6 dairy farms per square mile.

**Table A2: Trends in Farm Numbers**

	Estimated Farm Numbers				Dairy Farm Numbers			
	1990	1997	% Change	Estimated Farms per square mile	1989	1997	% Change	Dairy Farms per Square Mile, 1997
Bear Creek	84	90	7.1%	1.8	39	25	-35.90%	0.5
Sauk County	1597	1507	-5.60%	1.9	687	475	-30.90%	0.6

Source: Wisconsin Town Land Use Databook, Prepared by the Program on Agriculture Technology Studies (PATS), UW Madison, September 1999 – Wisconsin Agriculture Statistics Service in cooperation with the WI Department of Agriculture

The estimated number of farms for Sauk County illustrated in the *Charts A1 Trends in Average Size of Farm and A2 Trends in Farm Numbers* differs. This is due to different methodologies used for estimating the number of farms in Sauk County by the Program on Agricultural Technology Studies (PATS), UW Madison, and Census of Agriculture.

## 5.2 Land in Agriculture Use

Land sales in the Town of Bear Creek, Sauk County, and State of Wisconsin, indicate that 3,668 acres of farmland were sold in the Town of Bear Creek from 1990-1997. Of the acreage sold, 808 acres were diverted out of agricultural uses. The average price per acre of converted agricultural land was \$1,048 between 1990 and 1997. As a point of reference, the Town of Ironton had the highest amount of land converted out of agriculture at 1,520 acres, while the Town of Sumpter had the lowest amount at only 88 acres.

**Table A3: Agriculture Land Sales, Town of Bear Creek, Sauk County, and State of Wisconsin**

	Agriculture Land Continuing in Agriculture Use			Agricultural Land Being Diverted to Other Uses			Total of all Agriculture Land		
	Number of Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars Per Acre	Number of Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars per Acre	Number of Transactions	Acres Sold	Dollars Per Acre
Town of Bear Creek 1990-1997	N/A	2,860	\$852	N/A	808	\$1,048	70	3,668	\$911
Sauk County 1990-1997	N/A	50,947	\$914	N/A	16,130	\$1,124	1,103	67,077	\$979
Sauk County 2001	33	2,017	\$2,511	19	642	\$2,712	52	2,670	\$2,560
State of Wisconsin 2001	1,974	126,404	\$2,060	993	49,337	\$3,448	2,967	175,741	\$2,450

Source: Wisconsin Town Land Use Databook, Prepared by the Program on Agriculture Technology Studies (PATS), UW Madison, September 1999 – Wisconsin Agriculture Statistics Service in cooperation with the WI Department of Agriculture

**5.2 Production Trends**

During 1999, the average yield for field corn for Sauk County differed by only 1 bushel per acre from that of the State. The average difference for corn silage is 1 ton per acre. Alfalfa yield in Sauk County was 0.3 tons per acre less than the State, 0.5 tons per acre forages harvested, and 0.2 tons per acre more for soybean yields.

**Tables A4 & A5: Production trends: Sauk County & State of Wisconsin**

Farm Production Trends, 1999	Forage/Feed							
	Alfalfa		Other Forages	All Forage Harvested		Soybeans		Small Grains (Oats, barley, wheat)
	Acres	Yield	Acres	Acres	Yield	Acres	Yield	Acres
Sauk County	715	4.1	8,100	79,600	4.6	24,500	48	7,300
State of Wisconsin	3,000,000	4.4	600,000	3,600,000	4.1	1,300,000	46	485,000

Farm Production Trends, 1999	Corn				
	Field Corn		Corn Silage		Total Corn
	Acres	Yield	Acres	Yield	acres
Sauk County	66,000	144	15,100	16	81,100
State of Wisconsin	2,850,000	143	730,000	17	3,580,000

Source: Wisconsin County Agricultural trends in the 1990's, Prepared by PATS, UW Madison, August 2001

The number of dairy cows, the total milk produced by them, and the number of dairy herds decreased for both the County and the State from 1991-1999, while the productivity of the herds increased from 1991 to 1999 for both the County and the State.

**Table A6: Dairy Production Trends: Sauk County & State of Wisconsin**

	Dairy Trends, Sauk County and Wisconsin							
	Net Change, 1991 - 1999				Percent Change, 1991 - 1999			
	Number of Cows	Total Milk Produced	Herd Productivity	Number of Dairy Herds	Number of Cows	Total Milk Produced	Herd Productivity	Number of Dairy Herds
Sauk County 1991 - 1997	-6,300	-4,060	2,800	-233	-17.10%	-0.80%	19.70%	-35.00%
State of Wisconsin 1991 - 1997	-388,000	-1,329,000	2,983	-12,103	-22.10%	-5.40%	21.40%	-37.20%

Source: Wisconsin County Agricultural trends in the 1990's, Prepared by PATS, UW Madison, August 2001

These statistics are reflective of the agricultural industry throughout the State of Wisconsin. Despite these changes, agricultural productivity has increased. Sauk County remains one of the State's leaders in terms of production and revenue generated, according to a recent study completed in August, 2001, by the University of Wisconsin- Madison, entitled, "*Wisconsin County Agricultural Trends in the 1990s*".

#### 5.4 Local Farm Numbers and Types

Even though farming and related agricultural activities are declining, they still are the primary economic activity in the Town. Farmers in the Town of Bear Creek produce a variety of agricultural commodities including dairy, beef production, animal feed such as corn, alfalfa and soybeans as well as a number of cash crops. Bear Creek currently has approximately 16 Dairy Farms in 2008, 32 Beef, 2 Hog Farms, 6 goat, sheep and other farms. Historical data shows that the total number of dairy farms has declined significantly. In 1997 there were 25 dairy farms, down from 39 dairy farms in 1989.

#### 5.5 Farmland Preservation Program

The Farmland Preservation Program was established by the State of Wisconsin and was designed to help local governments that wish to preserve farmland through local planning and zoning by providing tax relief to farmers who participate. In the late 1970's, Sauk County produced a Farmland Preservation Plan as a requirement to enter the program. Although the Town of Bear Creek did not adopt Exclusive Agriculture Zoning to qualify the Town's farmers to take part in this program, stand-alone contracts are still permitted. These individual contracts include approximately 2,362 acres, with most contracts extending beyond 2010 through 2020.

#### 5.6 Land Capability Classification

Soil suitability is a key factor in determining the best and most cost-effective locations and means for agricultural practices in the Town of Bear Creek. The USDA-NRCS ranks soils suitable for agriculture based on the most suitable land for producing food, feed, fiber, forage and oilseed crops. When classifying soils, consideration is given to the limitations of the soil, its risk of damage, and its response to treatment. In general, the fewer the limitations, the more suitable the soil is for agricultural use. **Map5-1 Land Capability Classification** depicts the soils by classifications for the Town of Bear Creek.

**Table A7: Soil Class and Acreage of in the Town of Bear Creek**

Approximately 19.02% of the soils in the Town of Bear Creek are Class I, II, or III soils. Class one soils have few limitations that restrict their use. Class II soils have some limitations such as wetness, erosion, or droughtiness that require conservation practices. They are cultivated with a few simple precautions. Class III soils have many limitations with special management practices required.

Town of Bear Creek Land Capability Classification		
Soil Class	Acres	Percent of Total Land Area
Class I	28	0.09%
Class II	1,319	4.14%
Class III	4,713	14.79%
Class IV	8,989	28.21%
Class V	0	0.00%
Class VI	7,579	23.78%
Class VII	3	0.01%
Class VIII	9,235	28.98%
Total Acreage in Bear Creek	31,867	100.00%

Source: Sauk County Planning & Zoning

Approximately 51.99% of the soils in the Town of Bear Creek are Class IV, V, and VI soils. Class IV soils have severe limitations that require careful management. Class V soils are suited mainly to pasture

due to permanent limitations such as wetness or stoniness. Class VI soils have limitations that make them generally unsuited for cultivation and limit use to pasture, woodland or wildlife.

Approximately 28.99% of the soils in the Town of Bear Creek are Class VII and VIII soils. Class VII soils have very severe limitations that restrict their use to pasture, woodland and wildlife habitat. Class VIII soils (includes open water), with very severe limitations, have use restricted to recreation and wildlife habitat.

As a general reference, *Map 5-2 Prime Farmland/Slope Delineation* defines prime farmland as having Class I and Class II soils. Approximately 4.23% of the soils on this map are indicated as prime farmland. Soils that require other management practices to be considered prime farmland are also indicated as such on the map.

### 5.7 Alternative Agricultural Opportunities

Despite the change in the number of farmers, farm size and the price of farmland, agricultural productivity has increased. According to a recent study completed in August 2001, by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, entitled, “Wisconsin County Agricultural Trends in the 1990’s”, Sauk County remains one of the State’s leaders in terms of agricultural production and revenue generated.

Overall, changes to technology, machinery and agricultural practices have resulted in the industry becoming more efficient. In addition, it is more common for farms to concentrate their efforts on certain niche markets such as the production of organic, and non-traditional products such as unique meats and cheeses and varied forest products. The promotion of locally produced products; Community Supported Agriculture; and direct marketing to the public, local restaurants, school districts, cooperatives and retail grocery cooperatives continues to produce positive results for the industry. Other examples of opportunities in the agricultural industry include agri-tourism/bed and breakfast establishments, recreational opportunities and agriculture-related cottage industries. The Town of Bear Creek has adopted policies that support alternative agriculture and related opportunities.

### 5.8 Federal, State and Local Programs and Resources

There are numerous programs and resources available through federal, state and local agencies that provide assistance to farmers to help ensure agricultural sustainability. These programs should not be looked at individually, as a possible solution to ensure the viability of agriculture, but rather as small components of the collective system aimed at preserving all scales of farming operations.

#### 5.8.1 Purchase of Development Rights Program

The Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) is a concept employed in communities across the country in which a public agency (such as the local or county government) or a private non-profit conservation organization compensates private landowners who voluntarily agree to permanently convey the right to develop their property for residential or commercial use. The rights are then “extinguished” by the acquiring agency, preventing any future development of the protected property. The purchase price for the development rights equals the “fair market value” (FMV) as determined by a professional appraisal that compares estimates of the unrestricted market value of the subject property against the restricted use value of similar, but otherwise undevelopable land (i.e., land which cannot be developed because of physical or

**Sauk County Planning & Zoning  
Department (P&Z)**

**505 Broadway  
Baraboo, WI 53913**

**Phone: 608-355-3285  
www.co.sauk.wi.us**

legal constraints on its use). The difference between those two estimated values is the "fair market value" of the development rights, which Sauk County or another agency can legally offer to the landowner. The following is an actual example of a development rights acquisition:

The estimated unrestricted ("before") value of a 78-acre wooded property is appraised at \$213,000. The estimated restricted use value of the property is \$135,000. The difference between the unrestricted value and the restricted use value is \$78,000 (\$1,000/acre), which is the "fair market value". This is the value of the development rights that Sauk County is able to offer the landowner.

The purpose and terms of the agreement, including the respective rights of the agency to enforce the agreement and of the landowner to use the land, are detailed in a legal instrument called a Conservation Easement which is signed by the parties and recorded with the Register of Deeds as part of the permanent land record for that property. Agriculture, forestry, recreation and other traditional uses of the land are typically permitted, within the parameters of approved soil and water conservation plans and/or forestry stewardship plans.

Sauk County has already implemented the Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP) to purchase development rights from willing sellers whose land lies within the boundaries of the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark (BRNNL), as it existed in March of 1999. The BRPP is funded by a \$5M grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. The Sauk County Department of Planning and Zoning, with oversight by the Baraboo Range Commission, a nine-member commission of the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, administers the BRPP.

### 5.8.2 Federal Programs and Resources

Below are some examples of federal programs and resources available at the time of plan adoption, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that can provide assistance to farm operators in the Town of Bear Creek. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) are agencies within the USDA that provide consultation and local administration of these programs and resources within Sauk County. In addition, these agencies also provide technical assistance and staffing to develop farm conservation plans and other management tools.

#### USDA Farm Service Agency

**Wisconsin State Office  
8030 Excelsior Drive  
Madison, WI 53717**

**Phone: 608-662-4422  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi)**

- **Farmland and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP)** provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with State, tribal or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value.

#### Wisconsin Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

**6615 Watts Road  
Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53719**

**Phone: 608-276-USDA (8732)  
[www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov)**

- **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help them safeguard environmentally sensitive land. Producers in CRP plant long-term, resource conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)** is a voluntary land retirement program that helps agricultural producers protect environmentally sensitive land, decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat, and safeguard ground and surface water. Like CRP, CREP is administered by the USDA's FSA.
- **Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)** is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost effective manner. The program provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture. The program offers three options, including a permanent easement, a 30-Year Easement or a Restoration Cost Share Agreement.
- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promote both agriculture productions and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of 10 years.
- **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)** is a voluntary program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations of National, State, Tribal, and local significance. Through WHIP, the NRCS provides technical assistance to landowners and others to develop upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat in areas on their property.

### 5.8.3 State and Local Programs and Resources

In addition to the federal programs, several state and local programs and resources are available, at the time of plan adoption, to aid in the sustainability of agricultural operations in the Town of Bear Creek. These programs are supported by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the University of Wisconsin Extension (UWEX), and local organizations such as the Sauk County Development Corporation and the Sauk County Land Conservation Department. A few examples of these programs and resources include:

- **Farmland Preservation Program** which provides tax credits to farms of 35 acres or more under Exclusive Agriculture Zoning, having a farm income of not less than \$6000 for each of the last three years, and which operations are in compliance with county soil and water conservation programs.
- **Wisconsin's Use Value Tax System** provides tax relief to agricultural landowners by assessing property value in terms of crop production and agricultural market prices, not current real estate market trends or non-farm development potential.
- **Agriculture Development Zone (South-Central)** is a new agricultural economic development program in the State of Wisconsin that provides tax credits to farm operators and business owners

**Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,  
Trade and Consumer Protection  
(DATCP)**

**2811 Agriculture Drive  
P.O. Box 8911  
Madison, WI 53708**

**Phone: 608-224-4960  
www.datcp.state.wi.us**

**Sauk County Land Conservation  
Department (LCD)**

**505 Broadway  
Baraboo, WI 53913**

**Phone: 608-355-3245  
www.co.sauk.wi.us**

who make new investments in agricultural operations. These tax incentives are offered for three basic categories of investment including job creation, environmental remediation, or capital investments in technology/new equipment. The Wisconsin Department of Commerce administers this program.

- **Wildlife Abatement and Claim Program** is a county-administered program to assist landowners with excessive levels of agricultural crop damage from deer, bear, geese, or turkey.
- **SavorWisconsin.com** is a program offshoot of Governor Doyle’s “Grow Wisconsin” initiative, designed to enhance the state’s economy. To help accomplish this, several steps have been taken to emphasize the purchase of locally grown, produced, and manufactured products to support Wisconsin’s local producers and businesses. With this, SavorWisconsin.com started in late 2002 and is guided by DATCP, UWEX and the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association. The website highlights and promotes many of Wisconsin’s smaller and independent agricultural producers as well as agriculture-related events Statewide.

### 5.9 Agriculture Goal, Objectives and Policies

**Agriculture Resources Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek strives to preserve our farmland and supports agricultural opportunities to ensure small agri-business remains a viable career choice.

#### Agriculture Resources Objectives/Policies:

ARO-1 Discourage large livestock operations (> 1,000 animal units).

ARP-1A Recognizing that the Town of Bear Creek consists of smaller scale agricultural operations, the town discourages the inception of large scale animal operations.

ARO-2 Identify and pursue opportunities for farmers to obtain additional income from activities and the sale of items related to agriculture and farming as an occupation and utilize State and County farm programs to maintain and upgrade farming operations including grants, tax incentives, land use valuation and rural development programs.

ARP-2A Actively work with Sauk County to develop new zoning options that will allow for innovative value-added farming income opportunities that are consistent with the Town’s rural character, while precluding the requirement that landowners rezone out of the Agricultural Zoning District.

ARP-2B Utilize expertise from agencies such as the USDA, Sauk County Land Conservation Department, UW-Extension, representatives from farm cooperatives and others to both explore the feasibility of and provide resources to farmers who may be considering the production of alternative agricultural products, markets and growing methods.

ARO-3 Preserve existing agricultural lands and protect agricultural operations from incompatible development.

ARP-3A Prime agricultural land as broadly defined on *Map 5-1 Land Capability Classification* is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing crops. It has the soil quality, growing season and naturally occurring moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high yield crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. These lands are typically identified as class I, II and III soils. When

considering the location of new lots for residential development, these lots shall not include class I soils and shall substantially avoid class II and III soils.

ARP-3B Limit the encroachment of non-farm growth on agricultural resources as defined below:

- a. Restrict new residential development or non-agricultural structures from being erected within 300 feet of any agriculture supporting structure (barns, feedlots, manure storage facilities etc.) unless the structure is owned by the owner of said agriculture supporting structures and is utilized by a family member or someone involved in agriculture. The construction of non-agricultural structures on lots of record is exempt from this policy.
- b. No new residences or wells shall be constructed within 100 feet of any farm field, including permanent pasture, unless the structures are owned by the owner of said agriculture supporting structures and is utilized by a family member or someone involved in agriculture. The construction of residential structures on lots of record are exempt from this policy.
- c. No agriculture supporting structure (barns, feedlots, manure storage facilities etc.), shall be built or moved to within 300 feet of any existing or proposed residence as expressed on a town or county building permit application or certified survey mapped lot.



## 6.0 Purpose

The Town of Bear Creek supports and utilizes a number of utilities including as phone and Internet service and public facilities such as recreational land. The Town also supports and utilizes services provided by both the County and School District. In addition to utilities and services, Bear Creek has many historic attributes. These attributes provide insight into the Town's past and serve to ground the community as it builds upon its future. This section of the Plan summarizes the Town's utilities, public facilities and significant community resources and history.



## 6.1 Water Supply and Private On-site Waste Disposal Systems

All residents in the Town of Bear Creek are served by private wells. Sauk County recently worked with the Wisconsin Geological Survey office on a groundwater study. The study includes information pertaining to volumes and quality of groundwater as well as typical movement patterns, wellhead protection areas, and contamination issues. According to information obtained from Wisconsin and neighboring states, a low probability of significant groundwater pollution from private on-site sewage treatment systems occurs in housing developments with a density less than one house per two acres. There is a high probability of groundwater pollution where homes are located at a density greater than one house per acre. Given the soil types in the region and the mix of agricultural fields with forested areas and a low-density development pattern, groundwater contamination is assumed to be at a minimum.

Overall, the disposal of domestic wastewater in the Town is handled through the use of individual Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS), or septic systems, which generally collect solids in a septic tank and discharge gray water to a drain field. Based on the requirements set forth by the State of Wisconsin COMM 83 and in Sauk County, all residential units with running water and plumbing fixtures must have an approved means of wastewater disposal. Because the Town of Bear Creek is not served by a sanitary sewer system, the only current means of service is via POWTSs.

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce, in conjunction with the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning, regulates the siting, design, installation, and inspection of all POWTS systems in the Town of Bear Creek. In 2000, the State adopted a revised private sewage system Code commonly referred to as Comm. 83. This new requirement permits the continued use of conventional systems as well as alternative systems, such as those that employ the use of biological or aerate treatment. It also stipulates system inspections every three years to ensure compliance with installation and operation requirements.

Typically, these alternative systems permit development of land areas that previously would not support a conventional system. A comparison of lands that previously could not support a POWTS under conventional technologies to those that can support alternative systems is illustrated in *Map 6-1 Septic Suitability* and *Map 6-2 Alternative Septic Suitability*. In early 2003, Sauk County revised its Private Sewage System Ordinance to allow the use of alternative systems.

As a general explanation, *Map 6-1 Septic Suitability* shows soil suitability for conventional POWTS in the Town of Bear Creek. The suitability classifications, ranging from very low to high suitability, are determined based on information obtained from the Sauk County Land Conservation Department's Land Evaluation System, as monitored by the NRCS office. These classifications are based on average slope, depth to soil saturation, average depth to bedrock, and flooding potential. As a general observation, soils that fall within or near the category of most suitable are best suited for conventional POWTS. Soils that fall within or near the category of least suitable may be candidates for alternative POWTS, or may not be structured to support any POWTS.

Caution should be advised that while areas of sandy soils most commonly appear to be most suitable for POWTS, there is a danger of groundwater contamination with nitrates and bacteria, particularly when a cluster of homes are proposed and wells are placed down groundwater flow from POWTS. Additionally, POWTS are not well suited in areas of shallow soils with bedrock that is close to the surface. Although new septic technologies can now facilitate the installation of septic systems in these shallow soils areas, these septic systems also pose a greater potential threat of groundwater contamination, especially in highly developed areas.

Although Bear Creek does not generally exhibit areas of sandy soils, it does have areas of shallow soils and bedrock. Furthermore, private septic systems in areas of shallow soils may also threaten surface water quality. In terms of residential development in areas of shallow soils, leachate from septic drainfields may not percolate through the soil as is intended, instead encountering an impermeable layer (i.e., bedrock) and traveling laterally to enter a creek. Whether this is an actual threat to the surface waters in Bear Creek is unknown at this time, however preventative measures can be taken with the installation of new systems and replacement of failed systems. Systems should be sited as far from the water resource as possible. Shared septic systems must be sited in an area having suitable soils, and require verification that a new technology septic system will in fact adequately treat wastewater. These types of evaluations and any regulations guiding the placement of septic systems are best handled by the Sauk County Planning and Zoning Department, a certified master plumber or septic designer.

## **6.2 Solid Waste Disposal/Recycling**

Solid waste disposal sites, or landfills, are potential sources of groundwater pollution in Sauk County. In 2000, the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning conducted an inventory to verify the number of active and inactive or abandoned landfill sites. According to that process, it was determined that Sauk County has 15 active landfill sites throughout the County, including sites for brush disposal. In addition, more than 40 sites were identified as abandoned sites. Of those 40 sites, one is located in the Town of Bear Creek in Section 26. Currently, the Town of Bear Creek contracts with Town & Country Sanitation, which provides solid waste and recycling services for Town residents.

## **6.3 Septage Waste Disposal**

The State of Wisconsin requires that homeowners pump their septic tanks on a 3-year basis to prolong the life of a POWTS and ensure optimal efficiency and protection of groundwater. Holding tanks are pumped on a regular basis, typically bi-monthly. Disposal methods of septic system waste vary from deposition into a licensed municipal sewage treatment plant to land spreading. Land spreading requires special permits issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Part of this permitting process examines land area, soil types, and crops grown to ensure that natural resources in the area will be protected from such activity. Additionally, the permitting process ensures the protection of human health from viruses and pathogens contained in the waste.

#### **6.4 Town Hall and Garage**

The Bear Creek Town Hall and garage is located on County Road G. Currently the town a 2008 International Dump Truck and plow, an end loader and grader.

#### **6.5 Law Enforcement**

The Sauk County Sheriff's Department serves as the primary law enforcement agency to Town residents. Patrol officers are assigned general service areas within the county. These law enforcement services are considered adequate. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources also patrols the Bear Creek State Natural/Fishery Areas.

#### **6.6 Emergency Services**

Two emergency service districts including 152 and 188 serve the Town of Bear Creek. District 152 includes the far northern most mile and a half of the Town and is covered by the Hillpoint First Responders and the Plain Ambulance Department. District 188, covering the remainder of the Town, is covered by the Plain Fire Department and Plain Ambulance. Jurisdictional boundaries of these respective services can be noted on *Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Boundaries*.

#### **6.7 Library**

The Town of Bear Creek and surrounding communities are served by the South Central Wisconsin Library System through Sauk County. Two libraries serve the Town; the Spring Green Library located in the Village of Spring Green, and the Kraemer Library and Community Center located in the Village of Plain. Both libraries library hosts a collection of general-purpose books, periodicals, historical memorabilia of the area and Internet access as well as programming.

#### **6.8 Communication, Electric Utilities and Heating Fuel**

Telephone, Internet and e-mail service is provided by Verizon. The Town is also serviced by Alliant Energy. Since there are no natural gas lines in the Town, heating fuel is primarily provided through contracts with independent fuel dealers with roughly 51% of residents utilizing LP/Propane. Heating fuel from wood and biomass sources ranks second and includes 53 households or 29% of the town's residents. The remaining 20% utilize either oil (17%) or electricity (1.6%) or other (1.1%). Wireless communication facilities are becoming increasingly popular in the area, but service is difficult due to a lack of infrastructure investment by private wireless communication companies.

#### **6.9 Medical Facilities (Richland Center)**

The Town of Bear Creek is primarily served by the Spring Green Medical Center which is affiliated with Richland Hospital. Other services are provided by a medical clinic in Plain. Major medical facilities are located in Sauk Prairie, Dodgeville and Madison.

#### **6.10 Educational Facilities**

There are a number of education facilities available in the Town of Bear Creek residents including public primary education facilities, secondary higher education schools as well as childcare facilities.

### 6.10.1 Primary Educational Facilities

The Town of Bear Creek is divided into three public school districts. The River Valley School District incorporates the greatest area in the Town, the southern two-thirds of the Town and the eastern one-third. The Ithaca School District includes fragmented areas in the northwestern part of the Town. The Weston School District lies in the northern most mile of the Town boundary. *Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Boundaries* shows the exact location of these boundaries. While the majority of school aged children attend one of the three districts, parochial schools also offer a schooling option as well as increasing involvement in home schooling opportunities.

- **River Valley School District**

The River Valley School District is located 660 W. Daley St, in Spring Green. The district has six schools, four elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Two schools are outside of the county, one in Lone Rock in Richland County and one in Iowa County, in Arena. In Sauk County, the elementary schools are located in the Village of Plain and the Village of Spring Green. The elementary schools teach pre-kindergarten to fifth grade, and have a combined enrollment of approximately 539 students. The River Valley Middle School is located at the same address as the district headquarters in Spring Green. There are approximately 314 students in grades 6 to 8 enrolled here. The River Valley High School is located at 660 W. Varsity Boulevard in Spring Green. There are approximately 555 students enrolled in grades 9 to 12 at this school. In total, there are about 1,408 students enrolled in classes in this district.

- **Ithaca School District**

The Ithaca School District is located at 24615 State Highway 58 in Richland Center, in Richland County. There is one school building, same address as district headquarters, for all grades in the district. The elementary school has grades kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup>. There are currently about 150 elementary students. The Ithaca Middle School serves grades 6 to 8 and has a current enrollment of 84 students. The Ithaca High School serves grades 9 through 12, and has a current enrollment of 118 students. There are about 352 students enrolled in class in this district.

- **Weston School District**

The Weston School District is located at E2511 County Road S, in the Township of Ironton. The Elementary, Middle and High Schools are located at the same address. The elementary school, which serves grades pre-kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade, has an enrollment of about 155 students. The middle school accommodates 81 children in grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>. The high school has about 129 students enrolled in grades 9 to 12. The district serves approximately 365 students in grades K-12.

- **Parochial Schools**

St. Luke's, which is located in the Village of Plain, provided education opportunities for ages K-8 and has an enrollment of approximately 124 students.

St John's, which is located in the Village of Spring Green, serves grades K-5 and has an approximate enrollment of 76 students.

### 6.10.2 Secondary Educational Facilities

The Town of Bear Creek is within commuting distance of two-year year college campuses including:

***UW-Baraboo/Sauk County and UW-Richland Center/Richland County.*** The University of Wisconsin-Baraboo/Sauk County (UW-B/SC) is one of thirteen University of Wisconsin Colleges (UWC) two-year campuses. The UW Colleges (UWC) serves over thirteen thousand students across the State of Wisconsin. UW-B/SC provides student-centered, freshman-sophomore liberal arts programming, which can serve as the foundation for virtually any University of Wisconsin major. UW-B/SC offers the Associate of Arts and Science degree which satisfies the general education requirements at any UW campus. Classes are taught by outstanding faculty who are dedicated to teaching and committed to their fields of study. Over 80% of the UW Colleges faculty hold the highest degrees possible in their fields of study. With the lowest tuition in the UW System and an average class size of 21, UW-B/SC offers the kind of access to instructors that is typically reserved for upper-level students at larger university campuses. The UW-B/SC campus community includes approximately 700 students and 90 faculty and staff. UW-B/SC also offers a number of baccalaureate degree completion programs in collaboration with four-year UW institutions. Additionally, the UW-B/SC Office of Continuing Education provides non-credit and credit life-long learning and outreach opportunities in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Extension. The University of Wisconsin-Richland is also a UWC campus.

***Madison Area Technical College / Reedsburg*** has over 4,000 students served annually. MATC Reedsburg provides technical and workplace skills training. The college awards associate degrees, technical diplomas, certificates and apprenticeships, and offers classes that transfer to four-year degree programs. Programs are offered in accounting, administrative assistance, business mid-management, business software application, childcare education, farm and production management, nursing and supervisory management. The college offers apprenticeships in electrical and machine maintenance, and tool and die. MATC also offers customized labor training for local businesses.

***Southwest Wisconsin Technical College*** located in Fennimore, provides comprehensive and higher learning education opportunities including courses in Agriculture, Business, Information technology, Health, Industrial Occupations, Public Safety and the Service Industry.

### 6.10.3 Childcare Facilities

There are two kinds of childcare facilities that are recognized and permitted by the State of Wisconsin. The first type, referred to as a home daycare facility, allows the operator to provide care for up to eight children within a primary home. The second type of facility is referred to as a group daycare facility. This type of facility allows the operator to have more than eight children and is based on the number of certified staff employed to work or volunteer on the premises. Currently there are no group daycare facilities in the Town of Bear Creek, however there maybe a number of home daycare facilities. According to ***Chart P10: Change of Populations per Age Bracket*** there has been an increase decline in the population of ages 0-9, which is typically the age bracket requiring daycare. This decline suggests that the need for group childcare facilities is declining and that home childcare facilities as well as group facilities located in the Spring Green area will likely provide adequate childcare needs for families in the Town of Bear Creek. There is ample opportunity to start home daycare facilities, should the need arise, with the existing zoning in the Town which permits these types of daycares as home occupations.

### 6.11 Recreational Facilities

There is one county park and one state fishery/natural area within the Town of Bear Creek: White Mound County Park and Bear Creek State Fishery and Natural Areas. White Mound County Park is located off Highway 23 and on White Mound Dr., northeast of Loreto. The park contains 70 campground sites, a boat landing, playground and picnic area. It has handicapped-accessible restrooms. Bear Creek State Fishery area is located in Sauk and Richland counties along Highway 130. Bear Creek State Natural area is located north of the fishery area, creating a contiguous area of state owned land.

### 6.12 Cemeteries and Churches

(Locations of each are identified on *Map 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources*)

**St. Patrick's Cemetery**, located off of Chapel Road and adjacent to Our Lady of the Fields, is a small cemetery with historic and current burials. Many names from the original Irish immigrant families can be found here.

**St. Patrick's Cemetery Loreto**, located on County Road G, is adjacent to St. Patrick's Church. Members of the St Patrick's Parish currently utilize this cemetery.

**St Patrick's Church**, located on County Road G, is a modern brick building built in 1966. The name of the church comes from Apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick.

### 6.13 Historical and Cultural Structures and Areas (locations of each are identified on *Map 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources*)

#### 6.13.1 Historic Schools

- **Little Bear School**, originally located in Section 18 on County Highway B, was the longest used school in the town. Built in 1857, the school remained open until 1960 and the district joined the River Valley School System in neighboring Richland County. The school was later remodeled into a private residential home.
- **Grove School**, in Section 34 on an 1859 plat map, was rebuilt in 1867. During prohibition the woods behind the school and the school itself was a site used, at least on one occasion, to illegally produce alcohol. Beginning in the 1960-1961 school year, the River Valley School District began operating the school district. One year later, in 1962 the school closed. The schoolhouse was then converted into a private residence.
- **Hilldrop School**, in Section 20, on highway N, was first recorded in land records in 1859. The school remained nameless until the name Hilldrop was selected around 1920. The children who attended the school during World War Two collected milkweed pods to the aid war effort. The school children were presented with an award as they collected the most milkweed pods in the county. The school remained open until 1956, when it closed for one academic year. The school reopened for two years but closed for good in 1960.
- **Pleasant View School**, at County Highways B & G in Section 14, was first built in 1868. When nearby schools, Stone and Roosevelt, closed in the early 1940's those students came to Pleasant View. Shortly thereafter, the school was renamed West Spring Green School. The school finally

closed in 1949, but the district continued running until 1954. The district was consolidated into the neighboring River Valley School District. In 1964, the old building was sold at an auction and remodeled into a private family home.

- **Bear Valley School** was located in Section 31, on what is now Marble Quarry Rd. Originally built in 1863, a new red brick schoolhouse built in 1903 replaced the wooden structure. The school closed in 1946, while the district continued operating until 1954. Today, most students from this area of the township attend River Valley District Schools or Ithaca Schools in Richland County.
- **Hickory Grove School**, in the Section 3, was once named Farrell school. The original structure dates back to pre 1859. The school was later renamed Hickory Grove due to the many Hickory trees nearby. In 1961, Hickory Grove along with six other rural schools were consolidated into Pine Crest School. The schoolhouse was sold and remodeled into a vacation home.
- **Twin Creek School**, in Section 7, was erected in 1876. The school was commonly referred to as the Fargen School because of a large number of students with that last name. Closed in 1941, the schoolhouse was moved to a farm and used as storage.
- **Loreto School**, in Section 14, was built on donated parcel of land in 1857. Classes were initially conducted out of a private home before construction. The school was rebuilt three times. The school closed in 1962, the building has remained in its' condition at the time it was closed.
- **Ghost School**, located in Section 26, such named for the short life of the school. The schoolhouse was built in 1851; it was in use for only 30 years. When the teacher, Anton Wesley, died in 1881, the school ceased to be used.
- **Bear Valley Consolidated**, located at N2772 County Road N, was a satellite school built in 1960 as a two-room school house. The school operated 20 years at which time students were sent to either the Ithaca or River Valley School District. Past uses of the school house building included a silo sales business and the Bear Valley Vittles and Fixin's Restaurant, which retained the atmosphere and interior appearance of the building when it was used as a school.

### 6.13.2 Historic Structures or Areas

- **Our Lady of the Fields Shrine** is located off of Chapel Road, one-half mile west of County Road G. The Chapel Shrine was built in 1903 and incorporates a form of Gothic Revival architecture. The Chapel serves as a reminder of the small and struggling Irish parish which has evolved into the present-day St. Partrick's.

### 6.14 Historical and Cultural Programs and Resources

- **Sauk County Historical Society** protects and maintains the history of the county by collecting and preserving historic artifacts, photographs and documents. The Historical Society has many community outreach programs, acts as a resource and research facility for local history and assists other Sauk County historical societies in pursuing their goals.

#### Sauk County Historical Society

P.O. Box 651  
Baraboo, WI 53913

608-355-1001  
<http://www.saukcounty.com/schs>

- **Sauk County Arts, Humanities and Historic Preservation Committee** provides funding through grant programs to community organizations and local governments seeking supplementary funds for local arts and history projects.
- **State of Wisconsin Historic Preservation Programs** provide several opportunities for cost sharing through grant and subgrant programs, through the Wisconsin Historical Society. These programs are dependent on variable annual funding sources.
- **Historic Preservation Subgrants** are available to governments and non-profit organizations for surveys to identify and evaluate historical, architectural and archaeological resources. These properties and districts can then be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.
- **Historic Preservation Tax Credit for Income-Producing Historic Buildings** is available to those who apply for and receive project approval before beginning physical work on the rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- **Historic Homeowner's Tax Credits** are available to those who apply for and receive project approval before beginning work on rehabilitating non-income personal residences.
- **Archaeological Sites Property Tax Exemption Program** provides tax exemption for owners of archaeological sites listed in the National or State Register of Historic places.
- **Jeffris Family Foundation** provides funding for bricks and mortar rehabilitation projects in Wisconsin's smaller communities.
- **Save America's Treasures** is a federal grant program for governments and non-profit organizations.

### **6.15 Utilities and Community Resources Goal, Objectives and Policies**

**Utilities and Community Resources Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek seeks to improve our current technological services and encourages the use of our community facilities.

#### **Utilities and Community Resources Objectives/Policies:**

UCRO-1 Improve telecommunication infrastructure.

UCRP-1A The Town will cooperate work with private communication companies to provide adequate cell phone coverage, installation of fiber optic cable, satellite options, and delivery of high-speed Internet services to town residents.

UCRO-2 Encourage town residents to utilize alternative energy resources.

UCRP-2A The Town of Bear Creek encourages individual landowners to install renewable energy infrastructure such as wind, solar and biomass. The Town's website will provide links to programs and organizations that foster energy independence and efficiency.

UCRO-3 Preserve local public facilities and encourage use by local organizations and residents.



UCRP-3A The Town of Bear Creek website will indicate that the Town hall may be used for public events.

UCRP-3B The Town of Bear Creek designates St. Patrick's Church as the local disaster shelter and meeting place.

**7.0 Purpose**

Transportation networks affect development patterns in a community. Effective systems allow people and goods to move efficiently for employment and marketing, and provide a first opportunity for tourists to view the scenic landscapes and history of an area both locally and regionally. Transportation options within the Town are primarily limited to Town and County roads, which are utilized by the automobile, farm machinery and occasional bike traffic. As rural non-agriculture homes are built, the use of transportation routes for residential purposes has increased. Other



transportation options both within and outside of the Town are varied and include airports, special service transportation, recreational transportation, and trucking. This section summarizes existing transportation options available to Town residents as well as conditions of Town and County roads. **Map 7-1 Transportation** shows the location of all transportation options in the Town.

**7.1 Principal Arterial, Collector Roadways and Local Roads**

Transportation routes can be classified by both form and function. **Table T1 Bear Creek Roadway Classification System Definitions** identifies each road in the town by its classification and purpose. **Table T2 Bear Creek Roadway Classification System Descriptions** describes the location of each of these roads including its potential users.

**Table T1: Bear Creek Roadway Classification System Definitions**

Town of Bear Creek Roadway Classification System (Definition)		
Road	Classification	Definition
I-90/94, U.S. Hwy 12, 14	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterials serve longer intra-urban trips and traffic traveling through urban areas. They carry high traffic volumes and provide links to major activity centers.
None in Bear Creek	Minor Arterial	Provide intra-community continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials. The minor arterial system interconnects with the urban arterial system and provides system connections to rural collectors.
State Road 130, County Roads N, G, GG, and B	Major Collectors (and) Minor Collectors	Provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. These facilities collect traffic from the local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it onto the arterial system in the central business district. In some areas of development and traffic density, the collector may include the street grid, which forms the basic unit for traffic circulation.
Remaining Town Roads	Local Roads	Comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They primarily provide direct access to land and access to order systems. Local roads offer the lowest level of mobility, and through traffic movements are discouraged.

Source: Wisconsin DOT

**Table T2: Bear Creek Roadway Classification System Descriptions**

<b>Town of Bear Creek Roadway Classification System (Description)</b>		
Road	Classification	Description
I-90/94	Regional Interstate Roadway Principal Arterial	Located 45 miles east of the Town of Bear Creek, Interstate 90/94 serves as a regional controlled-access facility within Wisconsin. It is considered a backbone route, according to the Corridors 20/20 Plan, connecting major population and economic centers
U.S. Hwy 12,14	Regional Interstate Roadway Principal Arterial	Located 25 miles east of Bear Creek, Highway 12 serves as a principal north-south arterial, connecting Wisconsin Dells with Dane County and carrying a large volume of both local and through traffic. Located 5 miles south of Bear Creek, Highway 14 serves as an east-west arterial between the cities of Madison to Richland Center to Rochester, Minnesota.
None in Bear Creek	Regional State Roadway Minor Arterial	The closest Minor Arterial to Bear Creek is State Road 154 to the north the State Road 23 to the east.
State Road 130, County Roads G (part), B, N and GG	Local Roads Major Collectors	State Road 130 begins at its intersection with State Road 154 in Washington County and flanks the northern and western edge of Bear Creek going toward Richland Center. County Road B and N serve as the primary east west corridor while County Road GG connects State Road 23 with County G. That part of County Road G south of County B to the intersection with County JJ in the Town of Spring Green is also classified as a major collector.
County Road G (part)	Local Roads Minor Collectors	That part of County Road G north of County B is classified as a minor collector. County G. In Sauk County, County G travels north and south through the towns of Washington, Ironton and Woodland.
Remaining Town Roads	Local Roads	Many of the remaining local roads include those less traveled rural stretches and which connect roads under a higher classification.

Source: Wisconsin DOT

**7.2 Airports**

Although there are no airports located in the Town of Bear Creek, three area airports are available for small passenger and freight service: The Tri-County Airport, the Reedsburg Municipal Airport and Baraboo-Dells Municipal Airport.

The Tri-County Airport, located off County Road JJ, is jointly owned and operated by the Counties of Richland, Iowa and Sauk and provides passenger and cargo service.

The Richland Municipal Airport, located in the Village of Sextonville, provides private plane hangers and related facilities. The airport is located five miles east of Richland Center.

The Reedsburg Municipal Airport is paved with lighted runways of 4,900 and 2,650 feet in length. It is designated as a “Transport/Corporate” airport facility intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service and small airplanes used in commuter air service.

The Baraboo Dells Municipal Airport is located about 13 miles away from the Town of Reedsburg near the intersection of Highway 33 and US Highway 12. It offers small passenger and freight service. It is jointly owned and managed by the Cities of Baraboo and Wisconsin Dells, the Village of Lake Delton, and the Town of Delton. Improvements to the terminal building and hangars were recently completed, and additional expansion is planned for the future.

The airport is equipped with paved and lighted runways suitable for recreational and small business aircraft. It also offers privately owned hangars on site, hangar lots for lease, outdoor airplane parking and airplane maintenance facilities.

The Dane County Regional Airport, located on the east side of the City of Madison, provides larger air carrier and passenger service and is approximately 1.5 hours from the Town.

### **7.3 Elderly, Disabled and Veteran Transportation**

Sauk County offers several specialized transportation assistance programs for persons who are elderly, disabled or veterans within the Town of Bear Creek.

Persons who are elderly and disabled that are unable to transport themselves and who do not have family members or friends to drive them can take advantage of the Volunteer Driver Program by contacting the Sauk County Commission on Aging. This service is provided for medical, nutritional and personal business reasons. Individuals available for driving are encouraged to call.

Veterans in need of transportation assistance to a Veteran's Hospital or Clinic should contact the Veterans Service Office.

### **7.4 Other Transportation Options**

#### **7.4.1 Trucking**

Trucking options are accommodated through the regions transportation network. There are several privately owned trucking operations in the area that meet the needs of residents.

#### **7.4.2 Rail**

The Town is indirectly served by the Wisconsin and Southern rail line that connects Madison to the east and to Prairie du Chien and the Wisconsin River on the west., a contractor of the Union Pacific Railway, serves the Town of Bear Creek via a connection in the City of Reedsburg. The rail line travels through the Cities of Baraboo and Madison and crosses the Wisconsin River in the Village of Merrimac. This is a Class 2 line rated for 25 mph service. Amtrak in Wisconsin Dells on the Canadian Pacific Railway provides passenger rail service to the area.

#### **7.4.3 State of Wisconsin**

The State of Wisconsin provides for vanpooling opportunities with the requirement that at least two State employees are part of the pool. Once this criterion is met, any individual may become part of the vanpool.

### **7.5 Review of State, Regional and Other Applicable Plans**

The following is a review of local, state and regional plans and studies relevant to the Town that may affect the overall transportation system. The Town of Bear Creek's transportation element

incorporates these plans into the comprehensive plan in varying degrees to ensure an accurate reflection of the overall transportation system.

- **Translinks 21: A Multimodel Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21<sup>st</sup> Century (November, 1995)**

This plan provides a broad planning 'umbrella', including an overall vision and goals for transportation systems in Wisconsin for the next 25 years. The Plan recognizes U.S. Highway 12 as a 'Corridors 2020 Connector' route that is vital to the economic prosperity of the State. It also provides grant funding for local governments to develop transportation corridor management plans to deal with growth issues, State funding to assist small communities with transportation services for the elderly and disabled, and provides for a statewide assessment program for local road improvements.

- **LRIP: Local Roads Improvement Program (1991)**

One component of the LRIP is the Town Road Improvement Program (TRIP), which aids local town governmental units with improving seriously deteriorating town roads. A reimbursement program, TRIP pays up to 50% of total eligible costs and local governments provide the balance.

- **Wisconsin State Highway Plan (February, 2000)**

This plan focuses on the State Trunk Highway routes in Wisconsin (State Roads). Although the plan does not identify specific projects, it does set forth broad strategies and policies to improve the State's highway system. The plan also includes three main categories of emphasis: pavement and bridge preservation, traffic movement, and safety.

- **2006-2012 Sauk County Highway Improvement Plan**

The Highway Improvement Program for Sauk County identifies and prioritizes specific county road improvement projects for the next six years. There are no scheduled County or State Highway improvements scheduled in Bear Creek during this time frame.

- **Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 (1998)**

The Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 sets forth three initiatives for bicycle transportation in Wisconsin: 1) a plan for improving conditions of bicycling, 2) clarification of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's role in bicycle transportation, and 3) establishes policies for further integrating bicycling into the current transportation system. The Department of Transportation State Bicycle Plan does not currently identify any Priority Routes in the Town of Bear Creek.

- **Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 (March, 2002)**

This is a policy document created by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation that presents statewide and local measures to increase walking and promote pedestrian safety. The goals of the Plan are to increase the number and improve the quality of walking trips, reduce the number of pedestrian crashes and fatalities, and increase the availability of pedestrian planning and design guidance for state and local officials and citizens. The key State objective identified in the plan is to work with local governments and other interested stakeholders to increase accommodations for pedestrian travel to the extent possible along and across State highways. There are no recommendations specific to Sauk County.

## 7.6 Analysis of the Existing Transportation Systems and Plans

As previously described, the Town of Bear Creek's transportation system consists of primarily local and county roads. Responses from the Town survey indicated that Bear Creek's local and county roads are in good condition, and it appears that there were no major transportation-related issues in the Town at the time of the survey completion.

## 7.7 Transportation Goal, Objectives and Policies

**Transportation Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek strives to maintain and improve its current infrastructure of 43 miles of safe roads and encourages alternative transportation.

### Transportation Objectives/Policies:

TO-1 Control the spread of invasive plants.

TP-1A The Town Board shall appoint a Weed Commissioner. The Weed Commissioner shall notify the Town Board of areas along the road side the show evidence of invasive plants. The Weed Commissioner shall also inform land owners of the types of invasive plants and suggested strategies for eradication.

TP-1B Once invasive plants are identified along road edges, the Town board shall identify the best method to eliminate these plants. The Town Board shall contend with problem areas on an as-needed basis.

TO-2 Identify and utilize State cost sharing funds to maintain and improve town road conditions including bridge improvements.

TP-2A The Town Board shall formalize a policy for improving roads and bridges that are deemed inefficient. The Town shall make improvements on an annual basis and apply for grants for such improvements.

TO-3 Identify roads that are highly traveled and in poor condition and improve their composition to provide durable roads for current and projected traffic loads.

TP-3A The Town Board shall provide written recommendations for road improvements after their annual road review.

TP-3B The Town Board shall draft an ordinance that addresses town road standards.

TO-4 Promote ride sharing inside and outside of the Town to encourage fuel conservation and minimize pollution.

TP-4A The Town of Bear Creek recommends to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation that a Park & Ride/Pool facility be located in the Spring Green area to facilitate ride sharing opportunities for those town residents who work in the Madison/Dane County or Dodgeville areas.

TO-5 In order to improve safety concerns, the Town seeks to maintain adequate signage, increase awareness of bicyclists, replace single lane bridges with culverts, maintain road sides slopes that have been cleared and maintain road visibility at corners and intersections

TP-5A The Town of Bear Creek shall mow road sides three times per year to improve sight distances.

TP-5B The Town Board should amend their driveway ordinance to protect town roads. The written standards shall include erosion control criteria, maximum slope and minimum visibility distances.

TP-5C The Town Board shall check the adequacy of signage during the annual road review.

TP-5D The Town shall provide adequate signage, when, and if, bike trails are established.

TP-5E The Town shall eliminate and prohibit single lane bridges.

TP-5F The Town shall prohibit crops taller than 36 inches within the road right-of-way.

TP-5G The Town supports county requirements that prohibit obstructions (i.e., fences or trees) within the road right-of-way.

TP-5H The Town Board shall identify areas that have insufficient clear zones and formalize a policy to correct, if possible. If it is not possible to correct such areas, the Town shall provide signage to inform motorists.

## 8.0 Purpose

As part of this planning process, the Town of Bear Creek has identified a desire maintain its current economy while offering options to establishing limited business ventures to town residents. This Chapter provides an overview of economic activity both in the Town and for Sauk County overall. It also provides a listing of local and state programs focused on economic development.



## 8.1 Area Employment and Economic Activity

An overall look at commuting patterns, regional employment and income characteristics, tourism economic impacts and agriculture economic impacts provides insight to the county's economic vitality.

### 8.1.1 Commuting Patterns

In terms of commuting patterns, the 2000 Census sample data indicates that 15.5% of Bear Creek residents work at home. It is assumed that the majority of these residents are involved in farming. For those who commute to their jobs, 68.7% drive alone while 13.4% carpool. The average commuting time to work is approximately 31 minutes.

### 8.1.2 Employment Characteristics in Bear Creek and Sauk County

Sauk County provides many employment opportunities, as is reflected in the low unemployment rates, occupation type and major employers in the area.

According to the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Sauk County Annual Average Unemployment Rate for 2004 was 4.2%. Unemployment for Sauk County in 2003 was 4.3%. The DWD does not break down employment trends for individual Towns, however the 2000 census identified that 9 persons (or 2.3% of the population) from the Town of Bear Creek were unemployed while 288 persons (or 74.4% of the population) were employed. The remaining 90 people (or 23.3%) either claim disability or are retired.

### 8.1.3 Area Economic Viability and Employment Opportunities

The potential for economic opportunities within commuting distance of Bear Creek continues to improve. The Village of Spring Green continues to add to its industrial and retail base. The Town is also within commuting distance to the Cities of Middleton and Madison.

The major county employers provide diverse employment opportunities for residents of the Town of Bear Creek. *Tables E1 and E2* show the top 20 employers during 2002, divided into Manufacturers/Distributors and Non-Manufacturers. While most of the county is within commuting distance of Bear Creek, the major employment areas of Baraboo, Sauk Prairie, and Reedsburg are within the average commute time of 50 minutes from Bear Creek. Of the top 20 employers, the Baraboo area contains Baraboo Sysco Foods, Perry Judd's, Flambeau Plastic, Sauk County Government, Baraboo School System and St. Clare Hospital, together employing 3,627 persons. In the Sauk City-Prairie du Sac area, Milwaukee Valve, Sauk Prairie School District and Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital together employ 1,250 persons. In the Spring Green area,



Cardinal IG and Cardinal CG employ 1,061 persons. Of the top 20 in the Reedsburg area are Land’s End, Grede Foundries, Seats Inc., Gerber Products Plastics, and Reedsburg School Systems, together employing 3,061 persons. The Town of Delton has the Ho-Chunk Casino, Hotel and Convention Center with 1,375 employees and the Village of Lake Delton has the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, Noah’s Ark and Wilderness Lodge together with 2,420 employees.

In addition to business opportunities outside of the Town, the Town does continue to provide a number of jobs in the agriculture industry.

**Table E1: Sauk County Top 10 Manufacturers/Distributors by Employment**

Employer	Product	Employees	Location
Lands' End	Clothing/Distribution & Telemarketing	1,100	Reedsburg
Grede Foundries, Inc.	Ductile Iron Castings	840	Reedsburg
Flambeau Plastic Co.	Plastics	650	Baraboo
Baraboo Sysco Foods	Wholesale Food Distribution	650	Baraboo
Perry Judd's, Inc.	Commercial Printing	675	Baraboo
Cardinal IG	Insulated Glass	630	Spring Green
Milwaukee Valve Co. – PDS Division	Brass Foundry	360	Prairie du Sac
Cardinal CG.	Coated Glass	431	Spring Green
Seat's Inc.	Seats	430	Reedsburg
Gerber Products Plastics	Baby Supplies	305	Reedsburg

Source: Sauk County Development Corporation, 2005

**Table E2: Top 10 Sauk County Non-Manufacturers by Employment**

Employer	Product	Employees	Location
Ho-Chunk Casino, Hotel & Convention Center	Gaming, Hotel, Convention Center	1,375	Town of Delton
Wilderness Lodge	Hotel/Resort	1200	Village of Lake Delton
Sauk County	Government	675	City of Baraboo
Kalahari Resort & Convention Center	Hotel/Resort/Convention Center	700	Village of Lake Delton
Baraboo School System	Education	504	City of Baraboo
Noah's Ark	Water Park	520	Village of Lake Delton
Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & Clinics	Health Care	465	Villages of Prairie du Sac/Sauk City
St. Clare Hospital	Health Care	473	City of Baraboo
Sauk Prairie School District	Education	425	Villages of Prairie du Sac/Sauk City
Reedsburg School System	Education	386	City of Reedsburg

Source: Sauk County Development Corporation, 2005

**8.1.4 Area Income Comparison**

According to the Census, in 1999, the median income for households in Bear Creek was \$41,250.00. *Table E3 Regional Income Comparisons* shows that compared to the neighboring Towns, the County and the State, the Town of Bear Creek has roughly the same median income as all of Sauk County.

**Table E3: Regional Income Comparisons**

Household Income in 1999	Income Distribution, Regional Comparison, 1999							
	Percent of Households							
	Bear Creek	Spring Green	Franklin	Washington	Ithaca	Buena Vista	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	2.20%	2.90%	3.50%	9.50%	2.80%	4.70%	6.75%	3.54%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7.30%	2.30%	5.40%	8.80%	5.90%	5.40%	5.80%	3.01%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	15.70%	13.70%	10.40%	9.90%	13.80%	14.00%	13.35%	9.14%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.40%	10.30%	14.70%	13.90%	15.70%	20.60%	13.80%	11.56%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	20.20%	27.00%	23.20%	19.00%	19.70%	17.40%	21.03%	18.67%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.10%	30.90%	23.20%	24.50%	32.70%	27.10%	23.16%	27.58%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.60%	9.80%	14.70%	12.10%	7.10%	6.90%	9.13%	14.09%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5.60%	5.40%	4.20%	2.20%	1.20%	3.50%	4.71%	8.49%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.00%	2.10%	0.00%	0.00%	0.40%	0.30%	1.07%	1.94%
\$200,000 or more	2.80%	0.70%	0.80%	0.00%	0.80%	0.20%	1.21%	1.98%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$41,250.00</b>	<b>\$49,028.00</b>	<b>\$45,982.00</b>	<b>\$41,563.00</b>	<b>\$47,222.00</b>	<b>\$40,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 41,941.00</b>	<b>\$ 52,911.00</b>

Source: US Census, 2000, DP-3

### 8.1.5 Agriculture Economic Activity

The most recently compiled data for state agriculture economic characteristics is from 1997, and is broken down by county. This information is provided in Tables E4 and E5 as indicators of the important economic impact agriculture has on communities. Table E4 indicates that from 1992 to 1997, Sauk County farms increased the number of hired workers by 22.30%. The annual payment indicates that most are seasonal employees.

**Table E4: Characteristics of Hired Farm Labor, Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin 1997**

Characteristics of Hired Farm Labor by Wisconsin Counties, 1992 - 1997						
	Percent of farms with any hired labor	Number of hired farm workers	Change in hired farm workers net change 1992 - 1997	Change in hired farm workers, percent change 1992 - 1997	Hired farm worker payroll (dollars)	Average annual payment per worker (dollars)
Sauk County	35.40%	1,764	322	22.30%	\$9,195,000.00	\$5,213.00
State of Wisconsin	38.40%	96,482	-12,962	-11.80%	\$409,009,000.00	\$4,239.00

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, Wisconsin County Agriculture Trends in the 1990's, Program on Agriculture Technology Studies, UW Madison, August 2001

**Table E5: Farm Receipts, Capital, and Income, Sauk County vs. State of Wisconsin, 1997**

Average Value of all Farmland and Buildings 1997						
	Value of all farm receipts	Percent of receipts from Dairy sales	Per Farm	Per Acre	Average value of machinery and equipment per farm	Average net farm income per farm
Sauk County, 1997	\$121,224,000.00	50.00%	\$285,633.00	\$1,212.00	\$46,411.00	\$17,953.00
State of Wisconsin, 1997	\$5,579,861,000.00	49.20%	\$282,135.00	\$1,244.00	\$66,731.00	\$20,110.00

Percent of Farms by Value of Sales 1997							
	Percent of farms with positive net income	Value of total government payments	Percent of farms receiving government payments	under \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 Plus
Sauk County, 1997	48.10%	\$3,235,000.00	62.90%	39.10%	24.00%	12.30%	24.60%
State of Wisconsin, 1997	54.20%	\$137,274,000.00	56.30%	38.60%	23.90%	13.40%	22.70%

Source: Wisconsin County Agriculture Trend in the 1990's, UW Program on Agriculture Technology Studies, 2001

**Table E5 Farm Receipts, Capital, and Income Sauk County vs. State of Wisconsin, 1997** shows that in Sauk County, half of all farm receipts (the gross market value of all agriculture products sold) came from dairy sales (sale of milk and milk products) during 1997. The average value of farmland buildings and the value of machinery and equipment is based on market value. The fact that 63.10% of the farms have a sales value of less than \$50,000 per year indicates that many of the farms in Sauk County are relatively small, family-farm operations. Many of these farms depend on off-farm work

or investments for their main source of income. Overall, economic development strategies for agriculture include looking at opportunities for diversification in products produced, producing for niche markets, direct marketing, agri-tourism and participating in grower cooperatives.

**8.1.6 Tourism Economic Impact and Opportunity**

According to the 2006 Wisconsin Department of Revenue report on tourism, Sauk County is the second most popular tourism destination in the State, behind only Milwaukee County. The overall statewide economic impact of travelers is broken down in several ways. Direct impacts, the employee wages and taxes paid from establishments where travelers purchase goods or services, and indirect impacts, the money spent by these employees on goods and services in the area, add up to the total economic impact.

Looking at the traveler expenditures by category, more than half of the total expenditures are on shopping and recreation (including event and entertainment fees, wagering, sightseeing and cultural events) expenditures. Food expenditures represent 25% and lodging expenses represent 13% of the total estimated traveler expenditures. Six percent of Wisconsin traveler expenditures were on transportation within the State (Wisconsin Department of Tourism, 2002). Forty-six percent of traveler expenditures occurred in summer, 29% percent of expenditures were in the winter/spring season and 24% of expenditures were during the fall season.

**8.2 Local Employment and Economic Activity**

The Town of Bear Creek and Sauk County provide many local employment opportunities as is reflected in the education levels, labor force and occupation characteristics of Bear Creek.

**8.2.1 Education, Income Levels and Employment Activity**

*Table E6 Educational Attainment* shows that the percentage of Bear Creek residents with a high school diploma increased by 10.7% during 1990 and 2000, less than the rate of Sauk County at 8.8%. The percentages of those with a Bachelor’s Degree also increased for Bear Creek by 4.9% from 1990 to 2000 while Sauk County’s percentage increased by roughly 5.0%.

**Table E6 Educational Attainment**

Educational Attainment, 1990-2000				
	High School Diploma, Bear Creek	Bachelors Degree or Higher, Bear Creek	High School Diploma, Sauk County	Bachelors Degree or Higher, Sauk County
1990	73.7%	11.9%	74.7%	12.9%
2000	84.4%	16.8%	83.5%	17.6%

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

**8.2.2 Income Levels**

As detailed in the Housing Chapter, of the 525 households in Bear Creek, 105, (20.20%) were in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income bracket. Another 100 (19.1%) of the households were in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income bracket. This is compared to Sauk County, with 21.03% of the households in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income bracket and 23.16% of the households in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income bracket.

Another tool in the assessment of income distribution is the comparison of the median household income with the average household income for a particular year. A median value represents the middle value in an ordered list of data values. It divides the values into two equal parts with one half of the values falling below the median and one half falling above the median. An average value is found by dividing a sum of values by its total number of values. Average household income is calculated by dividing aggregate household income by the number of households in a given

geographic area for a given year. Aggregate household income is the sum of the incomes of a sample of households in a given geographic area.

**Table E7 Distribution of Household Income, 1999** shows that in 1999, the median household income for the Town of Bear Creek was \$41,250 while the average household income was \$54,050. The ratio of the average to the median income is 1.31.

**Table E7: Distribution of Household Income, 1999**

Distribution of Household Income, 1999	% of Households	% of Households	% of Households
	Town of Bear Creek	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	2.2%	6.7%	3.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7.3%	5.8%	3.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	15.7%	13.4%	9.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.4%	13.8%	11.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	20.2%	21.0%	18.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.1%	23.2%	27.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.6%	9.1%	14.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5.6%	4.7%	8.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.0%	1.1%	1.9%
\$200,000 or more	2.8%	1.2%	2.0%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$41,250</b>	<b>\$41,941</b>	<b>\$43,791</b>
No. of Households	219	21,647	2,086,304
Aggregate Household Income	\$26,397,300	\$1,076,409,500	\$112,374,261,000
<b>Avg. Household Income</b>	<b>\$54,050</b>	<b>\$49,726</b>	<b>\$53,863</b>
<b>Ratio of mean to median HH Income</b>	<b>1.31</b>	<b>1.19</b>	<b>1.23</b>

Source: US Census 2000

From 1990 to 2000, both Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin saw the ratio of average income to median income increase slightly, the County from 1.17 to 1.19, the State from 1.19 to 1.23. This implies that the number of values on the upper end of the spectrum has increased slightly during the past decade.

### 8.2.3 Employment

**Table E8 Labor Force and Employment** shows that, of the 387 persons in Bear Creek during 2000, 297 persons age 16 or older are in the labor force, and an additional 90 persons age 16 or older are not in the labor force. Of those in the labor force, 9, or 3%, are unemployed. This is less than the unemployment rate for Sauk County of 4.2%, according to the 2000 Census.

**Table E8: Labor Force and Employment**

Labor Force Status, 1990 2000		
Category	Town of Bear Creek, 2000	Sauk County, 2000
<b>Population 16 years and over</b>	387	42,480
Not in Labor Force	90	12,085
In labor force	297	30,395
Armed Forces	0	21
Civilian labor force	297	30,374
Employed	288	29,108
Unemployed	9	1,266
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 2000, DP-3

Forecasting future employment and available labor helps a community understand the age and gender make-up of their future workforce (people between the ages of 15 and 64), the size of the future work force and how it will affect the overall population and the demand on certain future jobs in the community. A future workforce profile also assists a Town in planning for desired future levels and types of employment within the economy on an area. Typically, a workforce projection is based upon an analysis of the age group distribution and the change in population over time. However, it is difficult to complete these projections for the Town of Bear Creek due to insufficient Census data on future age distribution at the town level. One way to assess the future labor force is to consider possible future age group distribution in the Town of Bear Creek based on data for age group trends in Sauk County from 2000 to 2020. This assumes that the Town of Bear Creek will experience changes in age group categories parallel to those occurring in Sauk County. **Table E9 Labor Force Change by Age Group in Sauk County, 2000-2020** shows the age group data forecast for the Sauk County labor force. In looking at **Table E9**, notable trends include the older age groups (55-61, 62-69 and 70+) showing the greatest amount of increase and the 35-54 age group, the age group in their prime earning years, showing the least change (1%). According to **Table E9**, the age group 62-69 grows the most, exhibiting a 106% increase (or 1,482 people). From 2000 to 2020, the age group 55-61 increases by 86% (or 2,481 people) and the age group 70+ increases by 29% (or 1,644 people).

**Table E9: Labor Force Change by Age Group in Sauk County, 2000-2020**

Forecasted Labor Force by Age Group in Sauk County, 2000-2020									
Age Groups	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Forecasted Labor Force Change from 2000-2020 (number of persons)	Forecasted Labor Force Change from 2000-2020 (percent)	Projected Population Change from 2000-2020 (number of persons)	Projected Population Change from 2000-2020 (percent)
16-19	2,122	2,314	2,112	2,015	2,025	-97	-5%	-140	-4%
20-24	2,346	2,922	3,167	2,863	2,719	373	16%	434	16%
25-34	6,261	6,134	6,803	7,758	7,671	1,410	23%	1,599	23%
35-54	14,746	15,545	15,552	14,942	14,940	194	1%	216	1%
55-61	2,870	3,677	4,527	5,179	5,351	2,481	86%	3,124	86%
62-69	1,398	1,570	1,970	2,469	2,880	1,482	106%	3,526	106%
70+	748	751	763	824	965	217	29%	1,644	27%
Total 18 and Over	30,491	32,913	34,894	36,050	36,551	6,060	20%	10,403	24%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

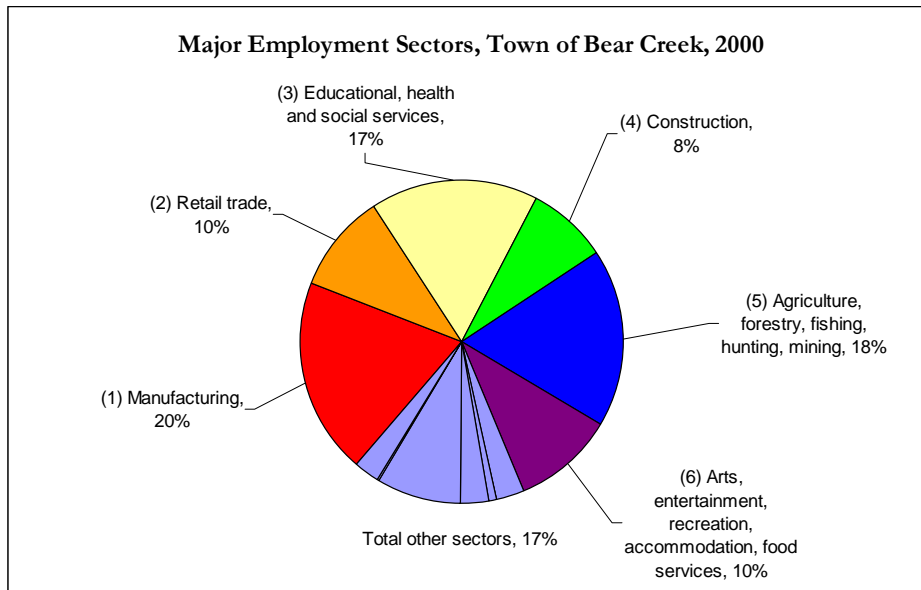
While assessing the types of employment opportunities in the Town of Bear Creek **Table E10 Employment by Occupation, Town of Bear Creek** shows that agriculture, once the major occupation, has now been surpassed by the manufacturing industry as the major employer. Other occupations remained relatively constant, with the exception that education, health and arts type occupations have increased. **Chart E11 Major Employment Sectors, Town of Bear Creek** graphically shows the major employment arenas in the Town while **Table E12 Employment by Occupation, Sauk County** provides a comparison to the region.

**Table E10: Employment by Occupation, Town of Bear Creek**

Town of Bear Creek, Employment by Industry, 1990-2000							
Industry	Town of Bear Creek, 1990	Town of Bear Creek 1990, Percent of Employed Population	Town of Bear Creek, 2000	Town of Bear Creek 2000, Percent of Employed Population	Change in number of employees per industry, 1990-2000	Change in percent employment per industry, 1990-2000	Rate of growth of industry, 1990-2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	94	32.2%	51	17.7%	-43	-14.5%	-45.7%
Construction	40	13.7%	23	8.0%	-17	-5.7%	-42.5%
Manufacturing	64	21.9%	57	19.8%	-7	-2.1%	-10.9%
Wholesale trade	2	0.7%	1	0.3%	-1	-0.3%	-50.0%
Retail trade	32	11.0%	30	10.4%	-2	-0.5%	-6.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3	1.0%	8	2.8%	5	1.8%	166.7%
Information	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	new industry
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	3	1.0%	8	2.8%	5	1.8%	166.7%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	10	3.4%	24	8.3%	14	4.9%	140.0%
Educational, health and social services	23	7.9%	49	17.0%	26	9.1%	113.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	5	1.7%	30	10.4%	25	8.7%	500.0%
other services (except public Administration)	16	5.5%	7	2.4%	-9	-3.0%	-56.3%
Public Administration	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Industry Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>

Source: US Census 1990, 2000. Note: U.S. Census 1990 Occupation classes are grouped differently. The 1990 data are grouped together as best as able for comparison to the U.S. Census 2000.

**Chart E11 Major Employment Sectors, Town of Bear Creek**



Source: U.S. Census 2000

**Table E12: Employment by Occupation, Sauk County**

Sauk County, Employment by Industry, 1990 2000						
Industry	Sauk County 1990	Sauk County 1990 Percent of Employed Population	Sauk County, 2000	Sauk County 2000, Percent of Employed Population	Change in number of employees per industry, 1990 2000	Change in percent employment per industry, 1990 2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	2,458	10.7%	1,557	5.3%	-901	-5.3%
Construction	1,751	7.6%	2,282	7.8%	531	0.2%
Manufacturing	5,528	24.0%	5,554	19.1%	26	-5.0%
Wholesale trade	888	3.9%	935	3.2%	47	-0.7%
Retail trade	3,757	16.3%	3,843	13.2%	86	-3.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	865	3.8%	1,150	4.0%	285	0.2%
Information	268	1.2%	425	1.5%	157	0.3%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	945	4.1%	1,255	4.3%	310	0.2%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1,381	6.0%	1,521	5.2%	140	-0.8%
Educational, health and social services	3,105	13.5%	5,130	17.6%	2,025	4.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	242	1.1%	3,525	12.1%	3,283	11.1%
other services (except public Administration)	1,144	5.0%	915	3.1%	-229	-1.8%
Public Administration	655	2.8%	1,016	3.5%	361	0.6%
<b>Industry Total</b>	<b>22,987</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>29,108</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6,121</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

Source: US Census 1990, 2000 Note: U.S. Census 1990 Occupation classes are grouped differently. The 1990 data are grouped together as best as able for comparison to the U.S. Census 2000.

**8.2.4 Commuting Patterns**

Commuting patterns in rural areas are typically reflective of both the number of on-site agriculture operations as well as numbers of rural residential homes not related to agriculture activities. Although the Town of Bear Creek has not added many homes in the last 20 years, the number of farms has declined. This decline could account for the increase in commuters driving alone and the decrease in those working at home (i.e., on-site agriculture operations). The number of residents who commute alone increased from 50.7% in 1990 to 68.7% in 2000, and the number of residents who work at home decreased from 30.8% in 1990 to 13.4% in 2000.

**Table E13: Commuting Patterns**

Commuting Patterns	Bear Creek 1990	Percent Bear Creek, 1990	Sauk County 1990	Percent Sauk County, 1990	Bear Creek 2000	Percent Bear Creek, 2000	Sauk County 2000	Percent Sauk County, 2000
Drove Alone	148	50.7%	16,004	70.4%	195	68.7%	22,213	77.4%
Carpooled	49	16.8%	2,952	13.0%	38	13.4%	3,196	11.1%
Public Transportation	5	1.7%	87	0.4%	0	0.0%	139	0.5%
Walked or Worked at Home	90	0.0%	3,498	15.4%	44	15.5%	2,916	10.2%
Other Means	0	0.0%	185	0.8%	7	2.5%	230	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>22,726</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>28,694</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Average Travel Time (minutes)	N/A		N/A		31.3		20.3	

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

Note: The category "walked" and "work at home" are combined in the U.S. Census 1990 data.



**8.3 Opportunities to Attract and Retain Business**

It will be important for Bear Creek to foster cottage industries and low-impact value-added economic opportunities that both reflect and protect the Town’s history, natural resources and current residents.

**8.4 Other Programs and Partnerships**

**8.4.1 Sauk County Development Corporation**

Sauk County Development Corporation’s mission is to promote and retain the diverse economic vitality of Sauk County and its individual communities.

**Sauk County Development Corporation (SCDC)**

**P.O. Box 33  
522 South Boulevard  
Baraboo, WI 53913**

**Phone: 608-355-2084  
www.scdc.com**

**8.4.2 Wisconsin Department of Commerce**

Provides a broad range of financial resources to help businesses and communities undertake economic development. Programs noted were available at the time of Plan adoption. These programs include:

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Economic Development Program**

Provides grants to communities to promote local job creation and retention.

**Wisconsin Department of Commerce  
Division of Community Development**

**P.O. Box 7970  
Madison, WI 53707**

**Phone: 608-266-8934  
www.commerce.state.wi.us**

- **CDBG – Public Facilities** helps eligible local governments upgrade community facilities, infrastructure, and utilities to benefit lot to moderate income residents

- **Rural Economic Development Program** offers low-interest loans for businesses with fewer than 25 employees.

- **US Small Business Administration (SBA)** provided loan guarantees that are used in conjunction with bank financing to improve loan terms.

- **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)** a program that buys down commercial interest rates, enabling Wisconsin lenders to offer short-term, below-market rate loans to small, minority- or women-owned businesses.

- **Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRBs)** are municipal bonds whose proceeds are loaned to private persons or to businesses to finance capital investment projects. All Wisconsin municipalities – cities, villages, and towns are authorized to issue IRDs.

- **Major Economic Development Program (MED)** is designed to provide financial assistance for Wisconsin business startup or expansions.

- **Customized Labor Training Program (CLT)** encourages businesses to invest in the retooling and upgrading of equipment in order to increase the productivity of its labor force by providing a grant of up to 50% of the cost of a workforce training program.

- **Technology Development Fund Program (TDF)** is designed to provide assistance to businesses embarking on technical research projects aimed at developing new products or processes, or improving existing products or processes.
- **Forward Wisconsin** is a non-profit economic development-marketing corporation for the State of Wisconsin. This organization creates marketing strategies aimed at luring businesses and industry from other states within the United States and other countries throughout the world to improve the corporate climate in Wisconsin. The organization assists in locating companies throughout the State, based on those companies' needs. Assistance is available to aid with community development projects and marketing.
- **Agriculture Development Zone (South-Central)** is a new agricultural economic development program in the State of Wisconsin, which provides tax credits to farm operators and business owners who make new investments in agricultural operations. These tax incentives are offered for three basic categories of investment including job creation, environmental remediation, or capital investments in technology/new equipment. This program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

### 8.5 Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Comprehensive Planning Legislation requires communities to evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program maintains a list of contaminated sites.

The Town of Bear Creek does not have any open sites. Site 04-57-525411, a fertilizer spill has since been cleaned up with no additional action required. The use at this location is agricultural and future use is planned as agricultural.

#### DNR Definitions:

- **Brownfields**, The DNR identifies brownfields as abandoned or underutilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination
- **Open**: Spills, LUST, ERP, VPLE and abandoned container activities in need of clean up or where cleanup is still underway. Not applicable to activity types of "General Property" and "No Action Required by RR Program.
- **Closed**: Activities where investigation and cleanup of the contamination has been completed and the state has approved all cleanup actions. Not applicable to activity types of "General Property" and "No Action Required by RR Program.
- **Historic**: Spills where cleanups may have been completed prior to 1996 and no end date is shown. Spill activities in this category show Historic status. Please contact regional spills coordinator (WDNR) if you need more information.
- **NAR**: No action required by RR Program, There was or may have been a discharge to the environment and based on known information, DNR has determined that the responsible

party does not need to undertake an investigation or cleanup in response to that discharge. NAR activities in BRRTS have an activity number prefix of 09.

- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) A LUST site has contaminated soil and/or groundwater with petroleum, which includes toxic and cancer causing substances. However, given time, petroleum contamination naturally breaks down in the environment (biodegradation) Some LUST sites may emit potentially explosive vapors. LUST activities in BRRTS have an activity number prefix of '03'

## 8.6 Economic Development Goal, Objectives and Policies

**Economic Development Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek welcomes total diversity of cultural and professional talents promoting business growth as well as opportunities in recreation, agriculture, cottage industries and tourism, while remaining within the long term goals of the community that complement the Town's rural heritage.

### Economic Development Objectives/Policies:

EDO-1 Encourage the inception and maintenance of cottage industries.

EDP-1A The Town's Plan Commission will work with Sauk County Planning & Zoning and UW-Extension on developing flexible guidelines and ordinances that will allow for the development of commercially related agricultural businesses and other cottage industries without the need to rezone. It is intended that this policy be implemented as part of a comprehensive revision to Sauk County's zoning ordinance. Options to consider may include the development of an overlay zoning district or a system of conditional or special exception uses.

EDP-1B Promote established cottage industries on the Town of Bear Creek web site. The website will also show Sauk County's definition of cottage industry.

EDO-2 Promote new businesses that are sensitive to the goal of preserving the Town's natural resources, cultural heritage and rural character and which utilizes the towns natural resources assets through recreational and tourism opportunities.

EDP-2A The Town's Plan Commission will work with Sauk County and the Spring Green Area to strategize ways to attract business interests that both utilize and rely on the area's history and character with the goal of building a local economy that is sustainable and consistent with the area. This economy will likely emphasize the arts and use of the land for alternative and localized forms of agriculture.

EDP-2B The Town of Bear Creek's website shall define current land uses in the Town.

EDO-3 Promote retention of traditional farming and agriculturally related businesses.

EDP-3A The Town will work with appropriate government agencies and traditional farmers to identify changes in agricultural markets and to take advantage of new markets that demand larger/or different quantities of agriculture commodities. By fostering this effort, this will ensure that agriculture related businesses such a cooperatives, fertilizer dealers etc. will remain in the area to serve this need.

## 9.0 Purpose

The Town of Bear Creek's landscape features a blend of wetlands, woodlands, agricultural fields, bluffs and streams. The predominately wooded and hilly landscape provides numerous recreational opportunities including a biking, hiking and hunting. Public participation efforts reveal that preserving these natural features and in particular the wooded landscape and low impact residential recreational land uses is critical to maintaining the desired lifestyle of current residents. This section of Bear Creek's plan highlights these and other important natural resource issues in the Town and provides a platform for the establishment and implementation of programs that ensure the protection of this landscape and natural resources within.



## 9.1 General Soils Information

Soil suitability is a key factor in determining the best and most cost-effective locations for new development. Problems that limit development and the placement of Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (septic systems) on certain soils may include poor drainage, erosion, steep slopes or high water tables. Soil suitability is also a key factor in determining agricultural productivity and suitability. Three major soil types dominate Bear Creek township: Norden/Eleva/Rock Outcrop series, Norden-La Farge-Valton series and the Ettrick-Fluvaquent series. General soils information can also be noted on *Map 9-2 General Soils Map*.

- **Norden and Eleva and Rock outcrop series** soil are distributed evenly throughout the town's uplands. This soil series is typically well-drained and moderately permeable on unglaciated sandstone uplands. This soil series is steep or moderately steep with slopes ranging from 12 to 60 percent. This soil is primarily in native woodland vegetation and some moderately steep areas are used for pasture, hay or corn fields. This soil is poorly suited for septic tank absorption fields and building sites due to a shallow bedrock layer and slope. These limitations may be overcome by reshaping the landscape.
- **Norden-La Farge-Valton series** soils are evenly distributed in the Bear Creek Township. These soils consist of well-drained, moderately permeable, high available water capacity soils, in moderately steep to very steep slopes. These soils are best suited for hay, pasture or woodland production. Cultivated crops, such as corn, are moderately productive. Septic system suitability is poor due to slope, depth to bedrock and moderately slow permeability. These soils are primarily under agricultural production.
- **Ettrick-Fluvaquents series** soils are located primarily along Bear Creek, Little Bear Creek and Marble Creek. These soils are nearly level, poorly drained and are often associated with floodplains, drainageways and low stream terraces. In most areas the soils are subject to ponding during wet periods and after heavy rains. Permeability is low in this soil while the available water capacity is high. Unless drained, this soil has a water table within one foot of the surface during much of the year. If drained, this soil is suited to crop production, however excess surface water must be drained rapidly. Because of the high water table, undrained areas of this soil are not suitable for most forage species and are typically overtaken by reed canary grass. This soil is

---

poorly suited to trees, and is also poorly suited to building and septic tank absorption fields because of the high water table and frequent flooding.

## **9.2 Topography and Slope**

The examination of topography is necessary to help determine where development should be avoided or where certain constraints may exist. Bear Creek lies within the unglaciated or driftless area of southern Sauk County. The Town's topography flattens out on its east end and becomes more dramatic with steeper slopes and deep valleys along its western border.

## **9.3 Environmentally Sensitive and Significant Resources**

The Town of Bear Creek has identified environmentally sensitive areas of land having slopes greater than 12%, lands along Bear Creek and tributaries, surface waters, floodplains, wetlands, hydric soils, and groundwater recharge areas. The Town has further recognized that any land use proposed will have an impact on these areas and should be minimized as much as possible utilizing a combination of site evaluations by the Town's Plan Commission as well as the objectives and policies in this Plan. *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas* shows the location of the aforementioned components of this subsection with the exception of floodplain, which is shown on *Map 9-2 General Floodplain Areas*.

### **9.3.1 Woodlands**

Just over half of Bear Creek is covered by forest. Much of this forest is located along the creek waterways, state land and on slopes that are generally greater than 10%. This woodland pattern results from historical agricultural land uses that avoided land types that are difficult to place under cultivation. Riparian woodland areas are primarily composed of silver maple, aspen and box elder, while upland forests are primarily composed of red, white and black oak, hickory and a mixture of upland hardwood forests. These woodlands have been identified as important features that add to the Town's rural character.

### **9.3.2 Rare Species Occurrences**

The Wisconsin DNR's Natural Heritage Inventory program maintains information on the general location and status of rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species. As of April 2006, there were some documented occurrences of rare or threatened species in the Town of Bear Creek. *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas* shows the areas in Bear Creek that were identified as containing rare plant or animal species.

### **9.3.3 Significant Natural Areas and Resources**

There are a number of significant natural areas and resources in the Town of Bear Creek. The plan calls attention to these natural areas, which, by their nature, connect the present day Town to the landscape that once dominated the area. This material, in part, is from the Natural Area Inventory of Sauk County Wisconsin, 1976, by William E. Tans, Botanist and Kenneth I. Lange, Naturalist. Locations of each are noted on *Map 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources*.

---

**T.10N. - R.3E.**

- The Bear Creek Cattail Marsh is located in the lowlands of the NE ¼ of Section 19, the W ½ of Section 20 and Section 30 along Bear Creek and includes an extensive driftless area cattail marsh. Parts of Bear Creek in this area are considered a class II trout stream.
- A mesic wood is located in the NE ¼ of Section 16 and includes roughly 40 acres. Here a ravine of sugar maple of small to medium size exists mixed with basswood and black ash.
- Bear Creek Cave is located in the SW ¼, SE ¼ of Section 3 and is classified as the most extensive cave in Sauk County.

**T.9N - R.3E.**

- A cattail-sedge marsh is located in the S ¼ of Section 18 and the N ½ of Section 19 along Little Bear Creek and is 1 mile long.
- A Lime Prairie is located in part of the NW ½ of Section 20 and encompasses 8-10 acres.
- A second Lime Prairie is located in the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 18 and includes 10 acres. This site is characterized by steep hillsides of ancient open wooded growth with white and burr oaks that is now converting to hickory and black oak. The south facing hilltop has a small prairie.

**9.3.4 Drainage Basins**

The Town of Bear Creek is located entirely in the Lower Wisconsin River Basin, which drains approximately 4,940 square miles of south central and southwestern Wisconsin and is located within the Bear Creek and Honey Creek watersheds. There are two distinct watersheds that drain into the Wisconsin River, which can be located on *Map 9-5 Watershed Boundaries*. These boundaries can serve as a starting point for identifying non-point sources of pollution in each of the stream systems.

**9.3.5 Floodplains**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates floodplain areas. These general floodplain delineations represent the areas adjacent to navigable waters potentially subject to a 100-year flood event (1% chance of occurring in any year). All areas subject to flooding are not necessarily reflected in mapped floodplains. The State requires County regulation of development in floodplains. Development is strongly discouraged in floodplains, to avoid both upstream and downstream property damage as well as reduced governmental costs in relation to disaster relief. Floodplain areas in the Bear Creek are primarily located along Bear Creek and extending north along Highway 130, County Road N and McCarville Road. The FEMA maps should be referenced for official delineation and elevations of floodplain boundaries. General Floodplain boundaries can be noted on *Map 9-3 General Floodplain Areas*.

**9.3.6 Wetlands**

Wetland areas are important for aquifer recharge, flood control, groundwater and surface water quality improvement, and wildlife habitat. The majority of the Town's wetlands are associated with Bear Creek. Historically, the greatest threat to these wetlands has been drainage for agricultural purposes.

---

All known wetland areas over 2 acres in size have been mapped and can be referenced on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*.

### **9.3.7 Groundwater Resources**

As in most of Sauk County, groundwater remains the major source of fresh water. In Bear Creek, groundwater is supplied by the sandstone and dolomite aquifer prevalent in western Sauk County. This yields a reliable average of 400-500 gallons per minute.

The Bear Creek watershed is the host for a majority of the residents in the Town of Bear Creek. The zones of contribution are identified areas where rainwater that falls to the surface will become groundwater and part of a community's potable water supply. The zones of contribution have been broken down into 5, 50 and 100-year time frames. This timeframe indicates that when rainwater falls to the surface and becomes groundwater, it will be subsequently be utilized by the Town of Bear Creeks' residents. Identifying zones of contribution is the precursor to the establishment of a wellhead protection program. Wellhead protection aims to encourage or require compatible land uses in the zones of contribution areas to protect contaminates from entering the public water supply and to also ensure continued quantities of water.

Considering that there are no municipal wells within Bear Creek, zones of contribution are scattered and small, relative to housing placement and density.

### **9.3.8 Surface Waters of Bear Creek**

The Town of Bear Creek's surface water resources, including Bear Creek, Little Bear Creek, Mccarville and Marble Creeks and all tributaries, are valued resources that Town residents have identified for priority protection. Farm fields and construction sites in the watershed have been identified as problem areas that contribute to non-point source pollution. While the Town of Bear Creek Comprehensive Plan does not seek to research and offer specific solutions to stream management issues and water quality, it does highlight primary threats to water quality and provides general guidelines to protect the quality of the Town's surface water resources.

### **9.3.9 Storm Water Management**

Managing storm water has a significant impact on the surface water resources in the Town of Bear Creek. Currently, construction site erosion control is regulated by the State of Wisconsin Uniform Dwelling Code and is enforced by the Town's building inspector. *Chapter 22 Sauk County Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance* requires a storm water management plan for new subdivision and commercial development that is reviewed by the Sauk County Planning and Zoning Department.

### **9.3.10 Vegetative Buffers**

Lakes and streams are receiving more and more runoff and non-point source pollution every year from development and human activity in their watersheds. Human development often involves replacing permeable surfaces with impervious materials such as asphalt and cement. Roofs, roads, driveways, parking areas and lawns prevent rain from soaking in and instead allow it to run off into the nearest body of water. As rain passes over impervious areas, it picks up pollutants such as grease, oil, fertilizers, pesticides, detergents, soil, nutrients and organic debris. One of the best ways to prevent this runoff from reaching a lake or other body of water is with a vegetative buffer strip or zone.

Vegetative buffers are one of the most effective and inexpensive tools to improve lake water quality. Buffers may consist of native forbs and grasses, shrubs, or trees. In addition to providing increased wildlife habitat, a vegetative buffer can play a key role in the removal of both nitrogen and phosphorus before storm water reaches a creek and, in some cases, has the ability to cleanse storm water runoff to achieve near pre-development water quality. Buffer strips not only prevent excess nutrients from entering a lake, but also provide a barrier against sediment runoff and various other types of pollution.

Grasses used in lawn mixes are usually shallow-rooted and do not absorb storm water runoff well. Lawns also require maintenance that vegetative buffers do not. Buffers do not need to be mowed, fertilized, or sprayed with pesticides. Additionally, vegetative buffers provide privacy around a cabin or house if they extend beyond the shoreline.

The following points explain how vegetative buffers work:

- The leaf canopy reduces the impact of raindrops on the soil, preventing excessive erosion.
- Leaf surfaces collect rain and allow for evaporation.
- Low herbaceous plants and the duff layer filter sediment and pollutants from runoff.
- Root systems hold soil in place and absorb water and nutrients.
- An uneven soil surface allows rain and snowmelt to puddle and infiltrate, recharging groundwater instead of running into surface waters.

### **9.3.11 Hilltops and Ridges**

Hilltops and ridges are important natural features that define the horizon of the Town. Large structures at the top of these features tend to be visually prominent—especially when these structures do not blend into the overall landscape in terms of color, material or style.

## **9.4 Mineral Resources**

Currently, the Town of Bear Creek has two active mineral extraction sites: the Lins Pit quarry located in Section 22 off County Highway B and the Dickerson quarry located in the northeast quarter of Section 28 and parts of the SW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 27 off of Marble Quarry Road. The Lins Pit quarry produces limestone and will have a final reclamation for wildlife habitat, the Dickerson quarry produces limestone and is planned to be reclaimed to natural grassland for passive recreation.

Preserving mineral deposits for future generations is important, as more development demands these raw materials. As a general reference, potential gravel deposits or areas that may support future mineral extraction operations are noted under *Map9-4 Potential Gravel Deposits*.

## **9.5 Programs, Partnerships and Resources**

Below are some examples of programs, partnerships and resources that provide assistance to landowners in the Town of Bear Creek relative to land preservation and stewardship options. These programs were available at the time of Plan adoption.



- 
- **The Nature Conservancy (TNC)** first came to the Baraboo Bluffs in the early 1960s at the request of local residents and university professors who knew how ecologically unique the area was and who wanted the Conservancy's help in protecting the area. Today the Conservancy has 900 members in the Baraboo Hills area and is staffed out of a Baraboo Office. The Conservancy protects lands through education programs and work activities, Land/Forest Management Programs, voluntary agreements, acquisition of lands and through purchase of development rights.
  - **Sauk County Natural Beauty Council**, which is administered by the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning, involves itself in projects such as environmental displays at local fairs and Earth Day events, the promotion and protection of significant environmental resources through resolutions and letters, sponsoring clean ups at the local landfills, and administering prairie burns and plantings.
  - **Sauk County Department of Land Conservation** coordinates natural resource management and environmental enhancement activities within county boundaries and administers a variety of county, state, and federal initiatives. The Department places particular emphasis on soil conservation, water quality improvement, groundwater protection, flood control, nonpoint water pollution abatement, erosion control, wildlife habitat improvement, farmland preservation and animal waste management, and further strives to promote the awareness of natural resources and their value to the citizens of Sauk County. The Department is involved in the administration of Earth Day activities, and coordinates with school districts to teach children about natural resources and conservation.
  - **Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning** strives to protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of all citizens and visitors of Sauk County and to protect Sauk County's physical and natural resources through the professional administration and equitable enforcement of numerous Sauk County Codes and Ordinances. The Department places an emphasis on preparing communities, particularly Towns, for the future by protecting and enhancing the quality of life through education, state-of-the-art planning practices and code enforcement techniques. The Department also aids Towns in the development of Comprehensive Plans, plan updates, plan interpretation and plan implementation.
  - **County Land & Water Resource Management (LWRM) Plan Implementation** is a cost share and technical assistance program to landowners installing best management practices. These programs help to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality and conserve county-identified natural resources. Landowners can contact Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for more information.
  - **Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program** is a State program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry, which provides assistance to private landowners to protect and enhance their forested lands, prairies and waters. Landowners must receive written approval from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and be identified as the landowner in a Forest Stewardship Plan or in the process of applying for plan development. Qualified landowners may be reimbursed up to 65% of cost of eligible practices.
  - **Community Financial Assistance (CFA)** is a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources program that administers grants and loans to local governments and interested groups to develop and support projects that protect health and the environment, and provide recreational opportunities.

- 
- **Partnership for Fish and Wildlife Management**, a US Fish and Wildlife Services program, assists with the restoration of wetlands, grasslands, and threatened and endangered species habitat through a cost share program. Any privately owned land is potentially eligible for restoration under this program.
  - **Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)** is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture. The program offers three options inclusive of a permanent easement, 30-Year Easement or a Restoration Cost share Agreement.
  - **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)** is a voluntary program that encourages the creation of high quality wildlife habitat to support wildlife populations of national, state, tribal, and local significance. Through WHIP, the NRCS provides technical assistance to landowners and others to restore and maintain upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitats on their property.
  - **Managed Forest Law Property Tax Program** is a DNR program that provides tax incentives for approved forest management plans. The MFL can ease the burden of property taxes for forest landowners with at least 10 acres of woods that meet specific requirements. The program is intended to foster timber production on private forests while recognizing other values of forests.
  - **Forestry Incentive Program** provides cost sharing for landowners with no more than 1000 acres for tree planting, site preparation, timber stand improvements, and related practices on non-industrial private forest lands. This is a federal NRCS program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
  - **National Wildlife Turkey Federation** has a variety of programs to benefit wild turkey habitat, management, conservation and education.
  - **Pheasants Forever** provides assistance with habitat restoration through five major programs: food plots, nesting cover, woody cover, land purchase and wetland restoration projects.
  - **Prairie Enthusiasts** is a private nonprofit organization committed to the protection and management of native prairie and savanna in the Upper Midwest, providing educational activities and opportunities to aid landowners in the identification and management of prairie remnants. Work parties assist with brush clearing and removal of invasive species.
  - **Aldo Leopold Foundation** strives to promote the protection of natural resources and to foster an ethical relationship between people and land. Programs involve restoration and land protection through partnerships with more than 30 organizations and educational programs for private landowners and public land managers.

#### 9.6 Natural Resources Goal, Objectives and Policies:

**Natural Resources Goal:** The Town of Bear Creek strives to preserve and protect its natural and cultural resources through good stewardship within the township for enjoyment and use by future generations.

---

**Natural Resources Objectives/Policies:**

NRO-1 Restrict animal density for single-family homes to protect our natural resources, for the welfare of the animals and for public health.

NRP-1 Encourage Sauk County to develop and adopt animal unit limits on rural residential lots as part of the County's Zoning Ordinance.

NRO-2 Maintain water quality and protect Bear Creek and all other natural water streams.

NRP-2A Encourage agriculture practices that minimize/optimize the use of chemical applications.

NRO-3 Install signage at natural and historic sites and provide access to State owned land in the Town.

NRP-3A The Town will work with the Sauk County Historical Society and Wisconsin Department of Natural resources to erect way finding and information signage at natural areas and historic sites.

NRO-3B Work with the DNR to provide public access on State owned land within the town.

NRO-4 Promote forest management to assure renewable resources and wildlife habitat.

NRP-4A Encourage woodland and forest landowners with more than 10 acres of woods/forest to:

- a. Use Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines (Department of Natural Resources, PUB-FR-226-2003) when developing forest management and harvest plans;
- b. Implement forest management plans that result in timber stand and wildlife habitat improvement;
- c. Employ the services of a certified forester to develop timber harvest plans;
- d. Avoid unsustainable cutting methods: Diameter Limit Cutting, Economic Clearcutting, and High Grading (also known as "Selective Logging"), and;
- e. Avoid cutting oaks between April 15 and July 1, in order to minimize the spread of oak wilt disease.

NRP- 4B Consider a Town newsletter or website that will periodically highlight opportunities for residents and landowners relative to sustainable timber production and harvest methods.

NRO-5 Encourage agricultural practices that improve and protect surface and groundwater quality and quantity.

NRP-5A Encourage landowners to develop a conservation plan utilizing assistance provided by the Sauk County Land Conservation Department.

NRO-6 Consider additional quarry activities in the Town based on regulations of the County and State with consideration given to the Town's scenic natural beauty.

---

NRP-6A The Town will require that any newly established mineral extraction operation not be visible from any public right-of-way during leaf-on conditions.

NRO-7 Cooperate with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Sauk County and others to encourage participation in land preservation efforts and use of conservation easements. Work with other respective groups in an effort to maintain existing historical sites including cemeteries in the Town.

NRP-7A The Town Plan Commission may designate one of its members as the Town liaison to work with landowners, government agencies, conservation groups and others to cooperatively preserve open space for future opportunities, including wetlands, forests and agricultural lands and to preserve identified historical sites. These preservation practices may include, but are not limited to, conservation easements, purchase of open space lands, purchase/transfer of development rights, voluntary donations of conservation easements and through private land owner stewardship options and preservation grants.