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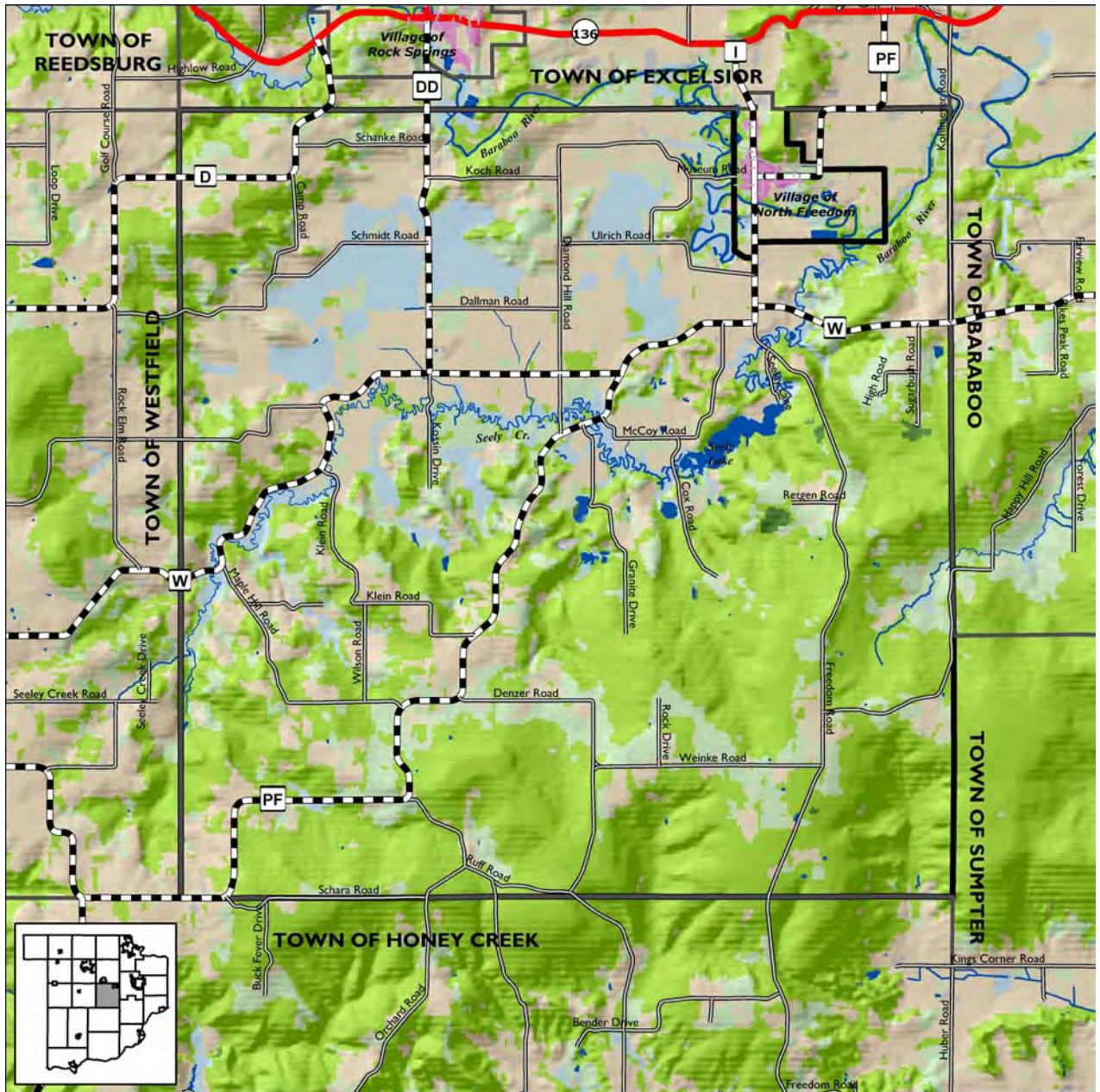
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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

TOWN OF FREEDOM, SAUK COUNTY



ADOPTIONS

Town of Freedom Plan Commission (November 1, 2005)

Town of Freedom Board (December 13, 2005)

1.0 Background

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Freedom is the culmination of fourteen months of work on the part of a 16 member Comprehensive Planning Committee. Input from numerous other citizens of the Town, and knowledgeable people from throughout Sauk County have also given forth their effort toward its completion. The Plan itself is composed of nine primary elements as defined under Wis. Stats. 66.1001 (comprehensive planning legislation) including those 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 their individual areas while Cultural Resources has been combined with 'Utilities and Community Facilities' and renamed, 'Utilities and Community Resources.' Additionally, the 'Issues and Opportunities' element has also been expanded to include an in-depth analysis and results of a Community Survey, Vision Session, and Focus Group make-up.

As part of each of these redefined elements or chapters as they can be referred to, minimum requirements of the comprehensive planning legislation are met and in many cases exceeded. For purposes of this Plan, a description is provided under the purpose statement of each chapter/element along with a primary goal, objectives and identified policies. Each chapter/element has been accompanied with a series of charts, tables and maps to fully 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 process. Although these goals are not required as are the nine elements, this Plan and planning process has achieved these goals. Like the elements, the fourteen goals are noted below.

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 and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied 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.

In conjunction with each identified goal, objectives and policies within the chapters, the planning process developed an overall Vision of how the Town should look and feel in the future. The input to the development of the Town's Vision was gathered through a 'Visioning Session' as well as through feedback from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Overall, the Vision aided planning participants with the development of the Plan's goals, objectives and policies and is meant to assist the Town with the actual implementation of the Plan through the years. Most importantly, however, is an understanding that the Vision has a primary purpose, which is to serve as a grounding point for future decisions. This grounding point effectively and broadly addresses the needs, desires, and thoughts of residents and landowners in Freedom.

Perhaps the highlight of this planning process included its reliance on extensive public participation and input far exceeding the requirements of the comprehensive planning legislation. At a minimum the legislation requires a town sponsored public hearing when the draft plan is ready for adoption. This planning process incorporated numerous and innovative means of public input to formulate a plan that best represents all interests in the Town beginning with the appointment of a representative Comprehensive Planning Committee, administration of focus groups, a community-wide survey and vision session, an open house and numerous public meetings.

1.1 Description of Goals, Objectives and Policies

As stated earlier, each element in the Comprehensive Plan incorporates stated goals, objectives and policies. A definition of each follows:

- **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 the 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 often not 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. Town decision-makers should use policies, including any

“housing density policy,” on a day to day basis. Success in achieving policies is usually measurable.

1.2 Planning History

➤ Town of Freedom Land Use Plan (1998)

The Town of Freedom has a recent history with regard to land use planning and related activities. With the recognition that the Town had been experiencing more residential growth, a land use committee was established to assess this impact and to develop strategies and detailed policies for the entire Town. This effort culminated in the development and adoption of the Town of Freedom’s first Land Use Plan which was intended to serve as a guide for planning and decision making regarding land use. To serve this purpose, the *Plan* included seven overlying goals including the following:

- Preserve the integrity of the rural community;
- Encourage cottage industries/appropriate small business;
- Encourage good stewardship of the land;
- Provide buffers, inasmuch as reasonable, between incompatible land uses;
- Encourage the maintenance and growth of the family farm;
- Encourage the management of woodlands and wildlife using generally accepted practices;
- Utilize an organized development pattern, which will minimize conflicting land uses and provide for a controlled rate of development.

The Plan also included specific policies which served to guide the Town, as part of their decision making process, to readily achieve the seven goals. These policies were essentially broken down into two primary categories: *Agriculture Policies* and *Development Policies*. From there, each of the policies addressed ways by which the Town could pursue a strong and sustained agricultural economy, reduced conflict between agriculture operations and other land uses all of which were coupled with the preservation of natural resources, character and feel of the Town.

Probably the most significant impact of the planning process to develop the Town’s first land use plan included the adoption of the county offered Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District. Prior to this planning process the Town was generally governed by the Agriculture Zoning District. This District, being first adopted by Sauk County in 1963, represented the first effort at county zoning and at that time this District was one of the only options available to rural Towns. Although the purpose of the Agriculture Zoning District included the identification and protection of agriculture areas and to provide for farm dwellings and agricultural activities, it did not necessarily ‘fit the bill’ for Towns that were primarily forested in nature.

During the mid-nineties, the Town’s of Spring Green and Greenfield in Sauk County identified a need for a zoning district that better represented Towns which were primarily forested and not traditionally agricultural in nature (traditionally referring to crop and animal production). This need led to an effort to develop the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District. The primary purpose of this new district is to protect, maintain, and enhance woodlands, bluffs, wildlife corridors, scenic areas, significant natural areas, and farmland within Sauk County. Much like the Exclusive Agriculture Zoning District, which was developed and adopted by Sauk County in 1979, the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District requires a minimum of 35 acres to build a new house. As a comparison the Agriculture District required approximately one-half acre to build a new house.

A significant component of the Town of Freedom Land Use Plan, included the adoption of the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District which was applied to the entire Town with the exception of

an existing quartzite quarry located in Section 22, and areas directly adjacent to the Village of North Freedom. These two areas remained under the Agriculture District to both facilitate the continued quarry operation and to allow for denser housing development adjacent to the village. The Town of Freedom Land Use Plan was endorsed and the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District, as it currently applies to Freedom, was officially adopted by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors on January 19, 1999.

1.3 Comprehensive Planning Process Sauk County

As part of the State of Wisconsin's 1999-2000 biennial budget, Governor Thompson signed into law one of the State's most comprehensive pieces of land-use legislation. This legislation is intended to provide local governmental units with the tools to create comprehensive plans, to promote more informed land-use decisions and to encourage state agencies to create more balanced land-use rules and policies. This legislation also includes a substantive definition of a comprehensive plan and provides an essential framework for local land-use decision making. It also helps local officials to determine the likely impacts of their decisions by ensuring that they consider all aspects of community life.

In the summer of 2002, the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning announced that it would apply for a 2003 Comprehensive Planning grant from the State of Wisconsin to facilitate planning processes for municipalities to enable them to develop and adopt local Comprehensive Plans. As a result of this effort, 21 Sauk County municipalities passed resolutions indicating their desire to be a co-applicant to the grant. Freedom was one of these municipalities.

In the spring of 2003, Sauk County announced that the 21 municipalities were awarded a 2003 Comprehensive Planning grant in the amount of \$288,000. Out of the total award, Freedom's share was \$10,000. The provisions of the grant required the Town, to match the grant award of \$10,000. In an effort to reduce this local match, Sauk County agreed to provide \$5,000 of in-kind mapping assistance bringing the total Town match to not more than \$5,000.

Once the overall grant was awarded, Towns in Sauk County could choose to contract with a private consultant or Sauk County as the consultant to aid them with the development of their Comprehensive Plans. Seven Towns chose to contract with Sauk County. Staff limitations prevented Sauk County from working with all seven towns at once. Sauk County held a drawing to fairly determine when each Town would begin their planning process (spring 2003, 2004, or 2005). Freedom, being one of the later draws, elected to begin their comprehensive planning process in the spring of 2004.

1.4 Regional Context

Map 1-1 Regional Context shows the relationship of the Town of Freedom to neighboring communities. The Town is located in the central part of Sauk County and is about 3 miles west of the City of Baraboo. The Town is also located about 4 miles south-east of the City of Reedsburg and directly south of the incorporated Village of Rock Springs with the Towns of Excelsior and Reedsburg to the north, Towns of Baraboo and Sumpter to the east, Town of Westfield to the west and the Town of Honey Creek to the south. The unincorporated Village of LaRue is centrally located in Section 15 and the incorporated Village of North Freedom is located in the northeasterly corner of the Town.

County Roads W & PF are the primary transportation routes in the Town which effectively connect the Town to the City of Baraboo and USH 12, providing as well the rural areas of Honey Creek and Westfield to the south and west.

1.5 Jurisdictional Boundaries

A result of the 2000 Federal Census population data required Sauk County to redistrict its supervisory district boundaries to achieve new districts of equal population. As a result of this effort, the Town of Freedom was assigned one supervisory district. Supervisory District 21, which includes parts of the Towns of Baraboo and Excelsior, and the Village of North Freedom, and also incorporates all of Freedom. **Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Map** depicts exact boundaries of Supervisory District 21.

The Town of Freedom is split into the School Districts of Reedsburg and Baraboo. **Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Map** also depicts the locations of these boundaries.

In terms of land use related issues, the entire Town of Freedom is governed by the following Chapters of the Sauk County Code or Ordinances:

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

1.6 Planning Area

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

1.7 Purpose of the Plan

The Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan is intended to update and replace the Town's Land Use Plan adopted in 1998. The updated plan will allow the Town to guide future growth, development, preservation, and includes precise guidelines for plan implementation, future review, amendments and direction relative to further policy development. The purposes of the Comprehensive Plan are many, however for the Town of Freedom, the highlighted purposes include the following:

- Identify those areas appropriate for development and preservation through established guidelines;
- Emphasize the preservation of critical habitat for threatened and endangered species through innovative land protection strategies;
- Preserve the overall view of the Town made up of wooded hillsides, farmsteads, fields and prairie through innovative guidelines;
- Ensure the continuance of Freedom's overall rural community atmosphere.
- Pursue innovative landowner options with the development and use of cluster development, density policy, Purchase of Development Rights, new lot and home siting standards, and achieving a balance between proposed development and the preservation of the make up and future of Freedom;
- Stress the importance of forest resources from a visual, economic and habitat perspective;
- Provide detailed strategies and a timeline for the implementation of the Plan and continue to work closely with Sauk County.

This Comprehensive Plan has been prepared under the State of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation, adopted in 1999 and contained in §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. This plan meets all of the statutory elements and requirements of this new law and further meets all 14 goals of the Comprehensive Planning Legislation.

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2.0 Purpose

The Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan Committee, comprised of one Town Board member and fifteen area residents, took part in several efforts aimed at identifying issues and opportunities facing the Town of Freedom. 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 media articles, focus group work, an intergovernmental forum, 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 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 views of residents and landowners regarding what they perceived as the issues and opportunities relative to each of the 9 elements of this Comprehensive Plan.

During September 2004, 325 surveys were mailed to every resident (household) and landowner in the Town of Freedom. Of the 325 surveys mailed 101, or 31%, were returned. This response rate is just above the average for a survey of this nature due to its length and 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 level quality of life in Freedom is perhaps the utmost important common denominator shared by all residents and visitors to Freedom. 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, survey participants were asked what their three most important reasons were for both themselves and their families to live in Freedom. Notably, 54 % of respondents chose natural beauty while 37% chose being near family and friends. The third top reason, Agriculture tied, at 29% with recreational opportunities. Either directly or indirectly, the response to this survey question reappears in the Town's Vision as well as other components of this plan through its goals, objectives and policies. Maintaining the quality of life also represents one of the primary responsibilities of the Town's Comprehensive Plan Committee.

➤ Housing

Housing is an important part of how a community grows. Where that 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 place a one (1) next to their first choice for locating new housing, a two (2) next to their second choice and so forth. Overall, 68 % of the total survey respondents indicated that their first choice would be to locate new housing development in and near the Village of North Freedom. The second and third choice for locating new housing development were near existing rural concentrations of housing (57%) and directed to newly developed rural subdivisions of 4 or more lots (33%). Respondents to the survey indicated that their fourth choice for new housing was on

small rural lots, (33% of the response). When asked if new housing development should be directed to new rural subdivisions (4 or more lots), 38% indicated that this type of residential development was least desirable. Note that the creation of rural subdivisions was nearly split between those who favored it as their third choice for development and those who ranked rural subdivisions as their least desirable form of development.

➤ **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, 93% indicated they would. Ninety-three percent of residents also indicates that they would support forms of agriculture tourism, workdays and educational opportunities and overnight lodging related to an agriculture theme/bed and breakfast. From a different perspective, 85% of respondents indicated that the preservation of farmland was either essential or very important, suggesting a strong commitment to sustaining agriculture operations in the Town.

➤ **Economic Development**

Agriculture and forestry 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 complimentary services such as cooperatives, agronomists, implement dealers, haulers etc. in southern Sauk County to keep agriculture viable in the Town. Of the total response from residents, many of who are presumably not farmers, 40% indicated that there were adequate support services while 42% were unsure.

In terms of other economic opportunities, respondents were asked if they would support business development in areas of existing development, namely the Village of North Freedom and vicinity. Overall, 38% of respondents indicated that they would support small businesses “Mom and Pop” while 51% of respondents indicated that they would support large business development. When asked if survey participants would support initiatives aimed at developing tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities in the Town, most were in support with the notable exceptions of ski hills, golf courses and snow mobile trails all with a no response of 30% or greater.

With respect to economic development and self-sustainability, the majority of residents supported the development of solar and wind energy with a response of strongly agree or agree at over 70%. The inception of ethanol plants and methane production were not strongly favored with roughly 30% of respondents indicating that they disagree or strongly disagree.

➤ **Utilities and Community Resources**

This category of the survey evaluated residents’ feelings on services such as fire, garbage collection and library opportunities as well as energy needs and energy alternatives. Overall, services primarily received an excellent to good rating with the exception of cell phone coverage which received an overall fair to poor rating. In terms of energy alternatives to purchasing power from a pre established grid, respondents primarily supported the establishment of solar and wind energy and offered no opinion or disagreed on the establishment of ethanol plants or power generation by the use of methane.

With regard to the preservation of cultural/historical and community resources, 75% of respondents indicated that it is essential, very important or important to protect historically significant features while 83% of respondents in those same three categories felt that the preservation of scenic views and undeveloped hills/bluff were important.

➤ **Natural Resources**

Survey participants were asked to rank the importance of protecting the following natural resources in their community ranging from general resources such as wetlands, woodlands, and forests to more specific resources such as scenic views and undeveloped hills, the Baraboo Bluffs and overall rural character. Respondents ranked the preservation of Freedom's natural resources as essential with rankings above 40% (with the exception of floodplain and shoreline preservation at roughly 30%). When survey participants were asked to rank the three most important reasons residents live in Freedom, 54% indicated natural beauty as most important. When asked if the Town should support programs that purchase open space lands for preservation and open space purposes, 47% agreed while 42% disagreed. When asked if the Town should support programs that help preserve agricultural lands for future farming opportunities, 78% agreed, yet 37% of respondents indicated that it is acceptable to build houses on tillable land.

➤ **Transportation**

Survey participants were asked to consider both the adequacy and condition of transportation systems (primarily roads) within the Town. Fifty-five percent of respondents indicated that the current road network and condition was good while 26% indicated fair. Snow removal received a high rating with 75% of respondents indicating snow removal was excellent to good.

➤ **Land Use**

Land Use is perhaps the one common element that both recognizes the interconnectedness of all the other elements of a comprehensive plan, and then ties them all together. Land Use also addresses some of the larger issues in a community and a study of land use concerns can further give specific direction to a community 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, survey participants were asked to rank their top three land use issues. Through this ranking 63% of respondents were concerned with the loss of farmland and the preservation of the Baraboo Range, upkeep of existing homes/structures ranked second at 59% and too much housing development ranked third at 48%.

With regard to new housing development, survey participants were asked questions related to Resource Conservancy 35 zoning and related minimum lot size as well as housing density rates. When participants were asked if they are in favor of the Town remaining zoned Resource Conservancy 35, 39% of respondents indicated they were in favor of keeping the current zoning while 36% were against the current zoning. Roughly 25% indicated they were unsure. Participants were asked if they favor keeping the minimum lot size of 35 acres to build a new house and if they were in favor of increasing or decreasing the minimum lot size. Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicated they were in favor of keeping the 35-acre requirement while 43 % were opposed. When asked if the 35-acre lot size should be increased or decreased, 20% said it should be increased while 42% indicated it should be decreased. 38% of respondents to this question were unsure.

When participants were asked if they are in favor of keeping the 35 acre density while having the ability to create lots of less than 35 acres in exchange for an agreement that a portion of the property

remain as currently used (i.e., not for residential purposes), forty-eight percent of respondents indicated that they would support such an option while 36% were in opposition. Sixteen percent of respondents to this question were unsure. When similarly asked if there was support for an increase in the minimum acreage required to create a small lot for a house, 22% of respondents supported such a program while 59% did not. Nineteen percent indicated that they were unsure.

➤ General Opinions

In addition to specific questions asked of the survey participants, more ‘open-ended’ questions were also asked. Among these, participants were asked what they want Freedom to look like in 20 years. Overall, a large majority of respondents indicated that they wanted Freedom to look the same as it does today as perhaps best summed up by this particular response, “It’s such a special place and we have a unique opportunity to keep it that way.”

2.2 Visioning Session

The Town held a Visioning Session Workshop on October 14, 2004. The purpose of the session was to involve residents and landowners in the Town of Freedom in defining what they believe Freedom should be in the future. In total, 26 residents took part in the session.

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 Freedom. 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:** Good road upkeep, good people/neighbors, natural beauty, scenic views/vistas, wide-open spaces, peaceful and quiet, good local government, clean air/water, recreational resources.
- **Weaknesses:** Lack of public participation/community involvement, poorly maintained town roads, controversy over the 35-acre requirement, new homes that don’t blend into the landscape, not much affordable housing, limited opportunities for alternative housing.
- **Opportunities:** More home business marketing, preserve and protect the diversity and beauty of the area, bring more families to the area, recreational opportunities, railroad museum promotion, Eco tourism, planning for acceptable growth, agriculture opportunities and farming, continue to preserve the ‘big woods’ in the Baraboo Hills.
- **Threats:** Uncontrolled development, difficulty in making a living farming, subdivisions, making building too restrictive, neighboring town plans conflicting with Freedom, unplanned economic development.

Equally important to identifying the Town's SWOT's, participants had the opportunity to develop key Vision Elements. To develop the key Vision Elements, participants were asked to consider the following questions:

- How should we build on our key strengths, or make sure they remain strengths?
- How can we minimize or overcome our key weaknesses?
- How can we take advantage of our key opportunities?
- How can we avoid or deal with our key threats?



Once the key Vision Elements were identified, participants were asked to rank their top 5 Vision Elements. Once identified, these top 5 Vision Elements were then incorporated into the Town's overall Vision with an expanded description under each key Vision Element. This expanded description, along with the top 5 key Vision Elements aimed to capture all of the key Vision Elements identified by participants.

The creation of the Vision Elements including the identification of the top 5 had a distinct impact on the development of the Town's Plan in that they were utilized for more than just the creation of a Vision, but were also utilized to create the Town's goals and objectives. From a different perspective, the following connections between the Town's Comprehensive Plan and the creation of Vision Elements have been identified:

- Vision Elements = Components to be incorporated into the Town of Freedom Vision (Vision Elements will become the Town's Vision).
- Vision Elements = The foundation for developing Goals.
- Vision Elements = The foundation for developing Objectives.

Once all of the Vision Elements were developed and the top 5 identified, the facilitators took participants through an exercise to begin creating strategies to achieve the top 5 Vision Elements. This exercise and creation of strategies represented the beginnings of policy development. The connection between strategies and policy development is as follows:



- Strategies = Plan Policies (strategies are to be developed into plan policies)

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 Press Releases/Media Coverage

The Town's planning process received a significant amount of media coverage beginning in October, 2004 when the **Baraboo News Republic (BNR)** and the **Reedsburg Independent** both published press releases promoting the Town's upcoming Vision Session. On March 9, 2005, the **BNR** published a front page article entitled, *'Residents gather to discuss plan'* highlighting a Town Board

meeting to discuss the comprehensive planning process. A subsequent headline article entitled, ***‘What will Freedom look like in the future?’*** was published in the March 11, 2005 **BNR** edition and highlighted the Freedom Town Board’s decision to continue with the comprehensive planning process. See Appendix C for reproductions of all media coverage.

2.4 Open House/Intergovernmental Forum

On October 6, 2005, the Comprehensive Plan Committee conducted an open house and intergovernmental forum to present the draft Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan. Through oral discussion and submitted written comments, participants were given an opportunity to comment on the Committee’s work and suggest changes. Attendance at the open houses included the 11 of the 16 Comprehensive Plan Committee members, two of the five Town Board members and approximately 30 residents.

2.5 Focus Groups

As part of this planning process, the Comprehensive Plan Committee developed focus groups to address seven of the nine elements of the comprehensive plan. The two elements not addressed under the focus groups included land use and implementation. Because of the importance and complexity of these two elements, it was decided that the full Committee should address them.

To develop the focus groups, each member of the Comprehensive Plan Committee was provided a brief description of each focus area. From that point, based on individual interest, each committee member was assigned to one or more focus groups. Added to these focus groups were residents of Freedom who were not part of the Committee but had indicated interest in contributing to the process. These additional focus group members were primarily identified through the survey interest page or other means of promotion of the planning process such as press releases and official Town postings of monthly Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings.

Once the focus groups were established, they met during the winter of 2004/2005 and were charged with utilizing background information inclusive of current conditions, statistics and projections, the Town’s Vision, survey responses, and vision session results to develop an overriding goal for each focus area. Once the goals were developed, the focus groups developed objectives and then policies to implement these objectives all of which aim to meet the focus groups’ goal as well as the Town’s vision.

The results of each focus group’s meetings, in terms of the development of goals, objectives and policies were continually brought to the Committee for review, comment and suggestions. This process both gave focus groups continued direction as well as assurance the focus group work recognized the needs and desires of all residents and landowners in Freedom.

The following includes the title of each focus group, members, and their focus group goal:

➤ Agriculture Resources Focus Group

Members: Craig Gaetzke, Arvin Faivre, Charles Geffert, Tom Schlieckau, Tom Stein, Michael Lascesski

↑ Agriculture Resources Goal: Maintain existing agriculture lands and encourage agriculture related economic opportunities.

➤ **Natural Resources Focus Group**

Members: Andrew Zimmer, Jim Lampman, Larry Phelps, Diane Lasclesski, Jane Hawley-Stevens

↑ **Natural Resources Goal:** Protect and enhance the Town's natural resources, including geology, soils, water, open space, forest, wetland and grassland, native plant-animal communities, wildlife, and endangered and threatened species, with special attention to the Baraboo Hills. To encourage wise and sustainable recreational, aesthetic, scientific and economic use of resources.

➤ **Housing Focus Group**

Members: Gary Holmes, Verla Klingenmeyer, Dean Steinhurst, Dale Klingenmeyer, Laurie Lindell

↑ **Housing Goal:** Manage new housing development in the Town to maintain the rural character, while preserving agricultural and natural areas as well as the natural beauty.

➤ **Economic Development Focus Group**

Members: Craig Gaetzke, Arvin Faivre, Charles Geffert, Tom Schlieckau, Tom Stein, Michael Lasclesski

↑ **Economic Development Goal:** Promote economic success of residents and businesses in the Town by encouraging the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services that reflect and are compatible with the rural character of the Town.

➤ **Transportation Focus Group**

Members: David Baumgarten, Steve Hartzell, Dennis Rehr

↑ **Transportation Goal:** Preserve and maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.

➤ **Intergovernmental Cooperation Focus Group**

Members: Gary Holmes, Verla Klingenmeyer, Dean Steinhurst, Dale Klingenmeyer, Laurie Lindell

↑ **Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal:** Establish mutually beneficial relationships with the Village of North Freedom relative to housing placement and service provisions and generally extend those relations to include all neighboring units of government including towns, Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin.

➤ **Utilities and Community Facilities Focus Group**

Members: David Baumgarten, Steve Hartzell, Dennis Rehr

↑ **Utilities & Community Resources Goal:** Maintain and enhance utilities, facilities, services, and cultural and historical resources.

➤ **Land Use Focus Group**

Members: Comprehensive Plan Committee

↑ **Land Use Goal:** See *Chapter 11 Land Use*

➤ **Implementation**

Members: Comprehensive Plan Committee

2.6 Formal Consensus Process to Establish Goals, Objectives and Policies

The planning committee utilized a **formal consensus** process to **discuss and agree upon all goals, objectives and policies** within in the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan, including the density policy relative to the number of homes that will be permitted in the Town's rural areas. The consensus process was used rather than a vote of a majority by the Committee 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.
- Secondly, 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. In that regard the plan will stand the test of time through its recognition of all interests.
- Lastly, 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 one another, generating new ideas until the best decision emerges.

As part of the formal consensus process, the Committee first defined consensus as it applied to the development of this Comprehensive Plan. The Committee's agreed upon definition is as follows (see also **Chapter 12 Implementation** for further discussion on the formal consensus process utilized to develop this plan):

Our definition of consensus aims for complete agreement and support among those present (or, where members absent have voiced their opinion). 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 four members combined declare themselves as, 'formal disagreement but will go with the majority', or 'block'. If there are four or more members in these categories, the item will be 'off the table' pending revision and reconsideration. A member absent from the meeting may express their opinion in writing and constitute part of one of the four opponents to voice formal disagreement or block a measure. However, their opinion would not be registered on any revision considered at the same meeting. The later part of this definition is 'sufficient consensus' or 'qualified consensus'.

2.7 Town of Freedom Vision

Please see pullout on next page.

TOWN OF FREEDOM VISION

Over the next 20 years, the predominant visual character of the Town of Freedom will be a scenic rural forested and agriculture landscape inclusive of well-maintained farms and rural residential properties. This rural landscape is enhanced by its unique geological and ecological systems including an ancient mountain range containing one of the largest upland forests in the region. This character and historical landscape will be maintained through the preservation and promotion of innovative agricultural practices, implementation of model forestry practices and enhancement of the local economy through non-traditional and value added income opportunities as they relate to the Town's rural character and history. Existing and future land uses will not only maintain but also aim to enhance the Town's rural character and ecological systems inclusive of its wetlands, streams, forests, and productive soils and wildlife habitat. As part of this charter, Freedom aims to continually recognize the needs of all its citizens and landowners by placing an emphasis on community decision making that respects the Town's proud heritage, natural environment, agricultural and local business base, and sense of community. This will lead to the realization of a high quality of community life and a legacy that will enrich the lives of current and future generations.



1. Continue to include residents, landowners and other stakeholders in Town decisions, particularly as they relate to land use.

In the spirit of continued cooperation, the Town of Freedom seeks to establish and maintain continued positive relations with residents and landowners and neighboring governments to promote cooperative planning as it relates to development, preservation, innovative opportunities relative to the enhancement of agriculture and natural resources, educational opportunities, economic development, shared facilities such as roads as well as maintenance and protection of shared resources such as water and air quality. Consideration will be given to providing flexibility with regard to private land use decisions provided that such decisions are consistent with the provisions of the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan and above all that such decisions are in harmony with the protection of significant natural resources, rural character, and the community atmosphere that the Town of Freedom seeks to maintain and enhance.



2. Preserve and enhance the rural character, natural beauty, natural resources, and overall community atmosphere.

Freedom's rural character and natural beauty is noted by its natural resources and significant scenic vistas and by its proximity with the Baraboo Range and rare ecological systems, historic natural features, mix of agrarian and rural residential lifestyles, and local and family businesses. Preservation and enhancement of these aspects of Freedom will result from the maintenance and development of partnerships that preserve and enhance the Town's natural resources, historically significant features, rural lifestyle and economic income opportunities for agriculture operations.



3. Capitalize and support non-traditional and value added economic opportunities for all of the Town's residents.

In order to provide lasting economic opportunities for the Town and its residents and preserve the Town's rural character, value added and non-traditional economic opportunities must be utilized with agriculture and home based types of businesses. Exploring the inception and expansion of organic production and specialty farming to provide 'agriculture' products to new markets will be paramount. The identification and inception of home based businesses that are compatible with the rural character will further provide for economic gain and may include tourism/Eco-tourism. The utilization of renewable energy such as wind power and biomass may emerge as a form of economic development and self-sufficiency.

4. Provide for continued and expanded services to the community and pursue efficiency and safety.

Positive relations and open communication will be expanded between the Town and neighboring governments including the Village of North Freedom, adjacent Towns and Sauk County as well as other public and private agencies to ensure consistency, efficiency and continued innovation relative to providing services and options to residents and landowners in Freedom. Consideration will be given to cost sharing and purchase/grant programs for natural, agricultural, housing, cultural and business resources. Providing options for preservation and development will also be explored. The Town will continually evaluate and maintain its level of existing services and where appropriate will upgrade facilities to promote efficiency and safety. The Town will explore and pursue opportunities to reduce costs related to providing services such as road upkeep and schooling as well as other services deemed important by the community.



5. Encourage new development that is appropriate in location and quantity and which is complimentary to the Town's character.

Through public and private partnerships, the Town will encourage the expansion and use of programs which offer flexibility to landowners to utilize their lands in harmony with the protection of agriculture, natural resources, and efficient provision of community services. New development will be complimentary to the overall character of the Town relative to its placement on the landscape and with regard to the numbers of new residences. This development will offer varied socioeconomic housing opportunities as well as complimentary business development for the Town.

3.0 Purpose

The Population Inventory and Analysis Chapter of the Plan gives an overview of the pertinent demographic trends and background information necessary to develop an understanding of the changes taking place over time in the Town of Freedom. As part of this overview, one of the patterns considered is the population profile. 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. Each of the elements contained within this plan inventories and analyzes related trends and resources, some of which relate back to the population inventory and analysis. This section primarily examines population changes and projections as well as housing occupancy rates.

3.1 Regional Population and Housing Trends

Looking at how the Town of Freedom is decreasing in population and increasing housing units, as compared to the neighboring Townships, the County and the State can provide insight into the current trends as well as potential future trends.

➤ Population

As **Table P1 Regional Population Trends** indicates, the population in the Town of Freedom increased between the years 1970 and 1990 from 371 to 422. From 1990 to 2000 the population experienced a decrease of -1.42% from 422 to 416 persons. Overall, between the years of 1970 and 2000, Freedom's population increased by 45 persons, or at an average of 4.04% per 10 years. Comparing this to the neighboring Townships, Excelsior experienced the greatest increase at an average change of 25.15% per 10 years, followed by Baraboo with a change of 18.68% per 10 years. The Town of Sumpter has an average increase of 2.72% per 10 years, while the Towns of Reedsburg, Westfield and Honey Creek all experienced a slight decrease in population averaged over the same time period. From 1970 to 2000, Sauk County experienced an average increase of 13.8% per 10 years, and the State of Wisconsin averaged an increase of 7.30% per 10 years.

Table P1: Regional Population Trends

Regional Population Comparison																		
Year	Town of Freedom		Baraboo		Excelsior		Reedsburg		Westfield		Honey Creek		Sumpter		Sauk County		State of Wisconsin	
	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change
1970	371		1,158		786		1,442		650		793		883		39,057		4,400,000	
1980	405	9.16%	1,545	33.42%	1,266	61.07%	1,468	1.80%	633	-2.62%	774	-2.40%	720	-18.46%	43,469	11.30%	4,700,000	6.82%
1990	422	4.20%	1,503	-2.72%	1,194	-5.69%	1,367	-6.88%	578	-8.69%	725	-6.33%	747	3.75%	46,975	8.07%	4,891,769	4.08%
2000	416	-1.42%	1,807	20.23%	1,379	15.49%	1,304	-4.61%	638	10.38%	736	1.52%	955	27.84%	55,225	17.56%	5,363,675	9.65%
Overall Change 1970 - 2000	45	12.13%	649	56.04%	593	75.45%	-138	-9.57%	-12	-1.85%	-57	-7.19%	72	8.15%	16,168	41.40%	963,675	21.90%
Average Change Per 10 Years	15	4.04%	216.33	18.68%	198	25.15%	-46	-3.19%	-4	-0.62%	-19	-2.40%	24	2.72%	5,389	13.80%	321,225	7.30%

Source: US Census 2000 (DP-1)

➤ Number of Housing Units

From 1990 to 2000, the populations in most Towns have increased slightly, and the number of housing units in each Town has as well. The Town of Freedom, however, has experienced fewer numbers of people with a 6-person decrease from 1990 to 2000, but a greater number of housing units with a 3-unit increase. This trend is indicative of a reduction in the number of persons per household and can be noted in **Table P2 Regional Housing Unit Comparison**.

Table P2: Regional Housing Unit Comparison

Regional Housing Unit Comparison																		
Year	Town of Freedom		Town of Baraboo		Town of Excelsior		Town of Reedsburg		Town of Westfield		Town of Honey Creek		Town of Sumpter		Sauk County		State of Wisconsin	
	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change	#	% change
1990	179		614		439		383		211		274		400		20,439		2,055,774	
2000	182	1.68%	751	22.31%	558	27.11%	415	8.36%	216	2.37%	288	5.11%	458	14.5%	24,297	18.88%	2,321,144	12.91%

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

➤ Average Household Size

Comparing the number of persons per household during 1990 to 2000 shows that all Towns, as well as the County and the State of Wisconsin experienced a decline in the number of persons per occupied house. The Town of Sumpter, however, experienced an increase, reaching 2.51 persons per household in 2000. Both the State and the County averaged approximately 2.5 persons per household. While the number of persons per household declined for all of the towns adjacent to the Town of Freedom, the averages were still above the County and State average in 2000. Freedom was the exception dropping below the average to 2.28 persons per household during this time as noted in **Table P3 Regional Average Household Size Comparison**.

Table P3: Regional Average Household Size Comparison

Average Household Size Persons Per Household									
Year	Freedom	Baraboo	Excelsior	Reedsburg	Westfield	Sumpter	Honey Creek	Sauk County	Wisconsin
1990	2.81	3.11	3.28	3.18	3.11	2.42	2.96	2.61	2.61
2000	2.28	2.66	2.68	2.78	3.02	2.51	2.79	2.51	2.5

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

3.2 Local Population and Housing Trends

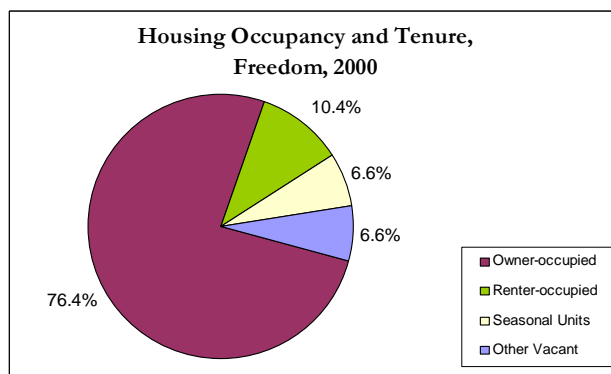
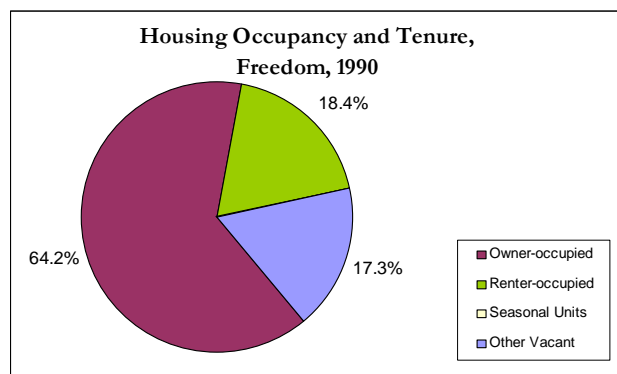
A look at local demographics profiles illustrates local trends and conditions, and provide insights as to the types of services required and commodities desired by the community. Local trends include an examination of occupied housing, population composition, population by age bracket, and length of residency.

➤ Occupied Housing

Through examination of the number of housing units, the number of these units occupied, and the number of persons per occupied household, insights into the population trends can be developed which in part utilize current and projected housing occupancy rates. In Freedom, the number of housing units increased from 179 in 1990 to 182 in 2000, with the number of housing units currently

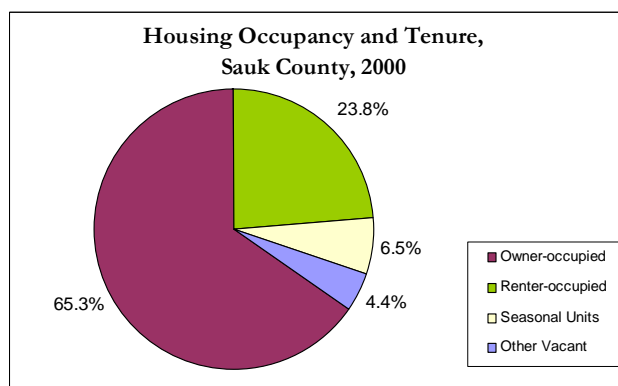
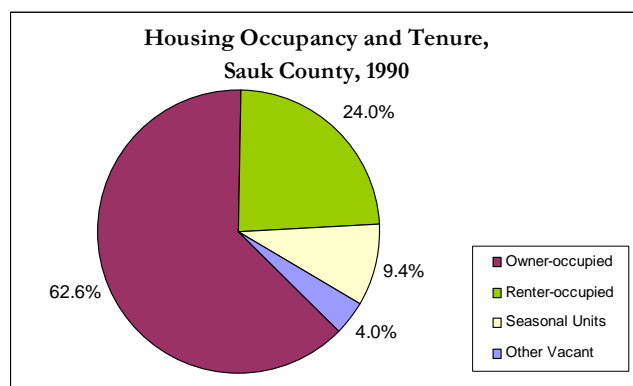
occupied also increasing from 82.68% in 1990 to 86.81% in 2000. Occupancy rate trends for both Freedom and Sauk County can be noted for the years 1990 and 2000 on charts P4 through P7 below.

Charts P4 and P5: Occupancy Rate and Tenure Freedom 1990 vs. 2000



Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA); US Census, 1990, 2000. Note: other vacant also includes seasonal for Freedom 1990 data (Chart P4)

Charts P6 and P7 : Occupancy Rate and Tenure Sauk County 1999 vs. 2000



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

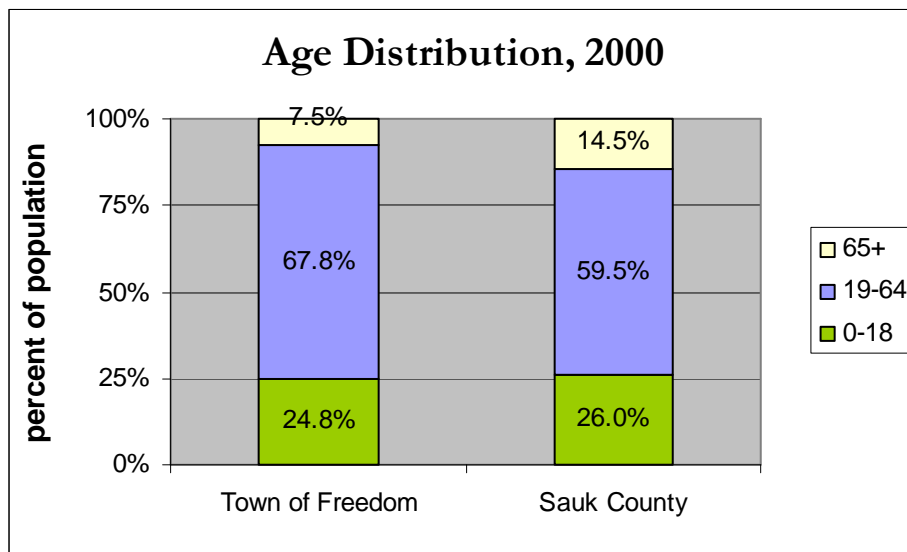
➤ Population Composition: Age, Gender and Race

Median age is defined as the age, which half of the population is above and the other half is below. **Table P8 Age and Gender, Freedom and Sauk County** shows the median age in Freedom at 40.4 during 2000. This is comparable to the median age of Sauk County at 37.3 for the same time period. In both Freedom and Sauk County, there is a slight decrease in the percent of population that is female. **Chart P9 Age Distribution, Freedom 2000** graphically shows the age distribution in Freedom compared to Sauk County. **Table P10 Ethnic Composition, Freedom and Sauk County** (see next page) shows that Caucasian population is consistent with that of Sauk County at 98%.

Table P8: Age and Gender, Freedom and Sauk County

Year	Median Age		Percent Under 18		Percent Over 65		Percent Female	
	Freedom	Sauk County	Freedom	Sauk County	Freedom	Sauk County	Freedom	Sauk County
1990, per census	Not Available	34.2	27.48%	27.19%	10.66%	15.77%	48.34%	50.79%
2000, per census	40.4	37.3	26.90%	26.00%	12.60%	14.50%	46.10%	50.60%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

Chart P9: Age Distribution, Freedom 2000

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table P10: Ethnic Composition, Freedom and Sauk County

Ethnic Composition, 2000							
	Percent White	Percent Black or African American	Percent American Indian and Alaska Native	Percent Asian	Percent Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Percent Some Other Race	Percent Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
Town of Freedom	98.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%
Sauk County	98.0%	0.4%	1.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.7%	1.17%

Source: US Census, 2000

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

➤ Comparison of State, Regional and Town Population Change

A comparison of population changes in Freedom to Sauk County and the State of Wisconsin indicates that Freedom's population loss does not reflect county and State population increases. The comparisons from 1970 to 2000 are noted in **Table P11 Comparison of State, Regional and Town Population Change**.

Table P11 Comparison of State, Regional and Town Population

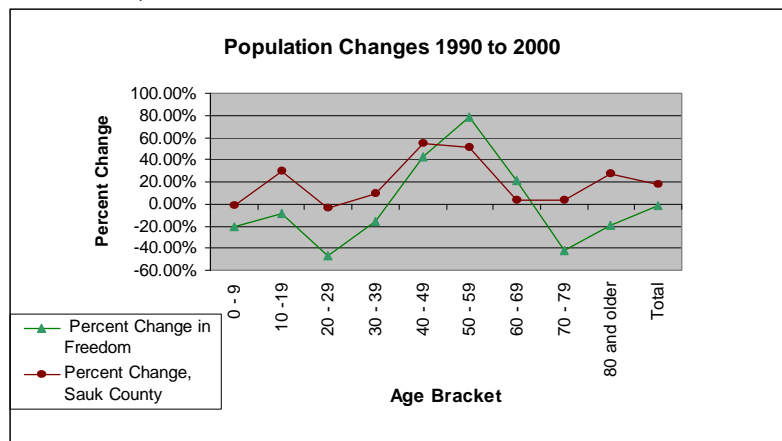
Comparison of State, Regional and Town Population Change						
Year	Freedom		Sauk County		State of Wisconsin	
	population	% change	population	% change	population	% change
1970	371		39,057		4,400,000	
1980	405	9.16%	43,469	11.30%	4,700,000	6.82%
1990	422	4.20%	46,975	8.07%	4,891,769	4.08%
2000	416	-1.42%	55,225	17.56%	5,363,675	9.65%
Overall Change 1970 - 2000	45	12.13%	16,168	41.40%	963,675	21.90%
Average Change Per 10 Years	15	3.98%	5,389	12.31%	321,225	6.85%

Source: US Census, 1970 to 2000

➤ Population per Age Bracket

Chart P12 Comparison Freedom Populations in Age Brackets, from 1990-2000 considers the numbers of persons in these ten-year age brackets and how they aged from 1990 to 2000. In a static community, as one age group in 1990 ages to the next age group in 2000, the population numbers should remain relatively constant. However, in Freedom, as the population in age bracket 10 to 19 during 1990, ages to the 20 to 29 age bracket in 2000, the population numbers decrease from 63 to 59. As those in the age bracket 20 to 29 during 1990 age to the 30 to 39 age bracket in 2000, the population increases from 53 to 67. There are 47 persons between the ages of 60 and 79 in 1990, yet only 8 people age 70 or older in 2000. Population in the newborn to age 9 bracket declined from 63 in 1990 to 50 in 2000. Generally the greatest increase in population beyond the 'aging' of age groups includes age brackets 30 through 59 which suggests a net migration of new families. **Table P13** offers an alternate way to view population changes in each age bracket,

Chart P12: Comparison of Freedom Populations in Age Brackets, from 1990 to 2000



Source: US Census, 1990 to 2000

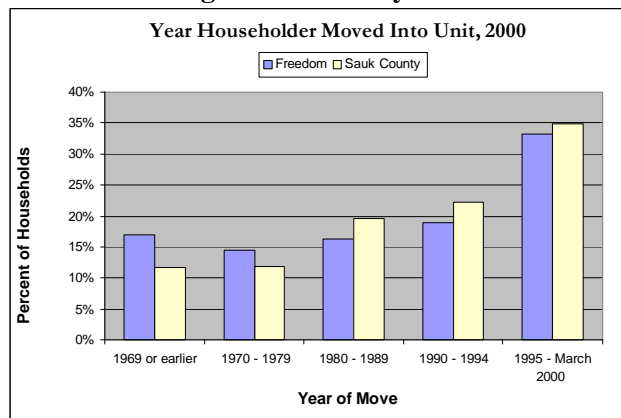
Table P13: Comparison of Freedom Populations in Age Brackets, from 1990 to 2000

Age Group	1990 Freedom	2000 Freedom	Percent Change in Freedom	1990 Sauk County	2000 Sauk County	Percent Change, Sauk County
0 - 9	63	50	-20.63%	7,264	7,170	-1.29%
10 -19	65	59	-9.23%	6,629	8,604	29.79%
20 - 29	53	28	-47.17%	6,294	6,049	-3.89%
30 - 39	80	67	-16.25%	7,612	8,310	9.17%
40 - 49	66	94	42.42%	5,609	8,663	54.45%
50 - 59	38	68	78.95%	4,111	6,198	50.77%
60 - 69	23	28	21.74%	4,162	4,315	3.68%
70 - 79	24	14	-41.67%	3,381	3,487	3.14%
80 and older	10	8	-20.00%	1,913	2,429	26.97%
Total	422	416	-1.42%	46,975	55,225	17.56%

Source: US Census, 1990 to 2000

➤ Length of Residency

According to the sampling data of the 2000 census, of the residents in Freedom, 17% moved into Freedom before 1969. **Chart P14 Length of Residency** shows that an additional 52.2% moved in since 1990, making long-term residents and recent move-ins comprising over 69% of the population of Freedom. A recent community Survey, showed almost 11% of those who responded moved into the Town of Freedom during 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 or the first half of 2004. As noted previously, there appears to be an immigration in the 30 – 59 age brackets between 1990 and 2000, which may also correlate to the numbers of new houses being built in the Town during the same time period. **Table P15** offers an alternative way to view length of residency data.

Chart P14: Length of Residency

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 QT-H7 data

Table P15 Length of Residency

Year Householder Moved Into Unit	(#) Freedom	(%) Freedom	(#) Sauk County	(%) Sauk County
1969 or earlier	27	17.0%	2,153	11.6%
1970 - 1979	23	14.5%	2,186	11.8%
1980 - 1989	26	16.4%	3,620	19.5%
1990 - 1994	30	18.9%	4,107	22.2%
1995 - March 2000	53	33.3%	6,474	34.9%
Total	159	100%	18,540	100%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 QT-H7 data

3.3 Interpretation of Population Data

After several years of positive growth, the Town of Freedom experienced a very slight decrease in population from 422 in 1990 to 416 in 2000. The increase in housing units, as well as the increase of the percentage of housing units occupied implies the population should be increasing by more than 6 persons. However, multiplying 150 (approximate occupied housing units during 1990) by 2.81 (persons per household during 1990) equals a population of 422, the number of persons in Freedom during 1990. Multiplying 158 (approximate occupied housing units during 2000) by 2.63 (persons per household during 2000) equals a population of 416, the number of persons in Freedom during 2000. The decrease in the number of persons per household accounts for the disparity between the relatively mild increase in population and the increase in occupied housing units during this time span. There are several possible explanations for the lower persons per household, including fewer extended families living together as well as fewer children per household. This is further supported in Sauk County in general, and specifically in the Town of Freedom, as there appears to be an emigration of youth (age bracket 10 to 19) as they reach college age and adulthood (age bracket 20 to 29) and immigration of those between the ages 30 to 59. In Freedom, the lower population numbers in the 0 to 9 age bracket also implies there are fewer children per household, or that families are waiting longer to start their families than during the previous census. These possibilities are reflected in the persons per household data.

3.4 Population Projections

The slight increase in housing units balanced with a slight decrease in persons per household implies that the population should remain relatively stable over time. Given the relatively flat change in population since 1970, it is difficult to identify a particular trend other than the continuance of a flat population rate. However, logically speaking it can be assumed that the population in the Town of Freedom will grow as is evidenced by significant increases in population of some neighboring towns. To project future populations, three methods were utilized. These methods include a linear projection, growth (or exponential) projection, and as a comparison the projection provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

➤ **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 for example. In some cases, this method can result in gross over or under estimations 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 with only 540 people. 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.
- **Housing Driven Population Projections.** The housing driven population projections calculate future population growth based on expected housing growth coupled with the current or expected persons per household. In some instances, this method can lend itself to be a fairly accurate tool, especially when coupled with one of the methods above to serve as a check and balance of sorts. The method is best summarized by the following equation:

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

Overall, there is a point of caution when considering the accuracy of housing driven projections. This method is based on the assumption that population grows based on the availability of the 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 or grow their family because of more readily available housing. Housing is created on demand, not the opposite.

Table P16 Population Projections: Town of Freedom highlights a number of possible projections, each utilizing different methods of projection. Descriptions of the Linear, growth and the DOA projection method are noted above. Housing driven projections were not utilized in the Town of Freedom due to the fact that an increase in the number of houses clearly has not correlated to an increase in population as the household size in Freedom is significantly lower than the average. In

addition to the three primary projection methods, additional methods of fast, moderate and slow were utilized the details of which are described below under Population Projection 2.

Table P16 Population Projections: Town of Freedom

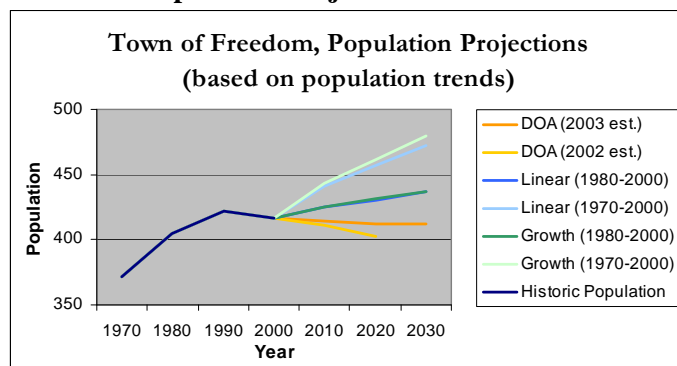
Town of Freedom Population Projections			Projections									
Year, source	Year	Historic Population	Percent Change	Linear (1970-2000)	Growth (1970-2000)	Linear (1980-2000)	Growth (1980-2000)	Static household size	Limited household size	Household size trend	DOA (2002 est.)	DOA (2003 est.)
1960, per census	1960	513		513	513	513	513	513	513	513	513	513
1970, per census	1970	371	-27.68%	371	371	371	371	371	371	371	371	371
1980, per census	1980	405	9.16%	405	405	405	405	405	405	405	405	405
1990, per census	1990	422	4.20%	422	422	422	422	422	422	422	422	422
2000, per census	2000	416	-1.42%	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	416
2010, projection	2010			441	444	425	426	440	402	426	411	414
2020, projection	2020			457	461	431	431	447	408	418	403	412
2025, projection	2025			464	470	434	434	451	411	414	400	414
2030, projection	2030			472	479	436	437	454	415	410	n/a	412

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

➤ **Population Projection 1 (3 methods: Linear, Growth, DOA)**

Chart P17 Population Projections shows the three projection methods that are based on population trends. Note that since the population remained relatively constant from 1970 to 1990, the projected populations remain relatively constant as well, with the exception of the growth projection showing a slight increase. The DOA method places emphasis on more recent population changes, this method projects a slight decrease in population from 416 persons in 2000 to 412 persons projected in 2020. The linear and growth models are nearly identical with a population projection of 457 (linear) and 461 (growth) by the year 2020. Note: The linear (blue) line cannot be seen as it is located underneath the growth (green) line.

Chart P17 Population Projections



Source: U.S. Census, Wisconsin DOA

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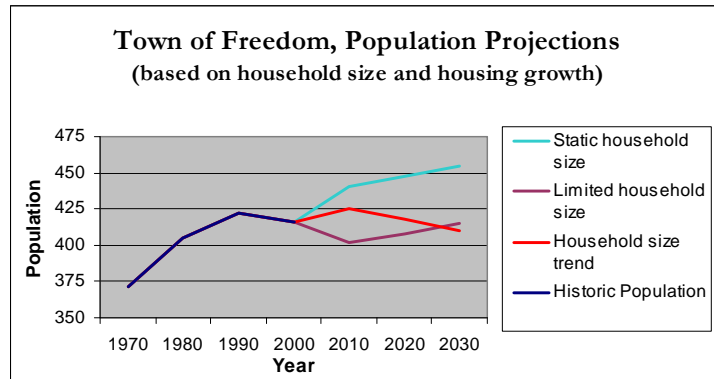
➤ Population Projection 2 (3 methods: Constant, Limited, Household Size Trend)

Chart P18 Population

Projections shows three possible population projections based on the historic and projected number of housing units coupled with a projected occupancy rate. The first projection found in this group, the constant household size projection, assumes the household size (or persons per household) remains constant at the value observed in 2000, in this case 2.28 persons per household. By holding this value constant, this

projection yields a population of 440 by 2010 and 454 by 2030. The next projection in this group, the limited household size projection, holds the county average of 2.5 persons per household constant producing no change of the population of 402 in 2010 and a like increase in population to 415 in 2020. The last projection in this trend, 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 2.28 persons per household to 2.21 persons per household. This produces a projection of 426 in 2010 and 410 in 2030.

Chart P18 Population Projections



Source: U.S. Census, Wisconsin DOA

➤ Population Projection Analysis

There are clear differences between Population Projection 1 and Population Projection 2. The projection types used under Projection 1 illustrate a relative constant population that hovers close to 416 persons. The DOA methods presents the most unreliable method out of all of the other methods under Projection 1, because it only takes into account the slight decrease in population from 1990-2000. The linear and growth methods appear to be the most reliable due to the fact that they utilize population changes since 1980.

The projection types used under Projection 2 utilize historic trends in housing units as well as household size. It appears as though the number of housing units from 1990-2000 have increased by 3, however the persons per household seem to be decreasing from 2.81 in 1990 to 2.28 in 2000. Overall, the limited household size trend projection seems to offer the most realistic model for the Town of Freedom. The limited household size trend projection takes into account the historic decrease in household size, as well as the increase in housing units from 1990-2000. The limited household size trend will most likely continue given that is the trend that best represents population change in the Town since 1980 thus showing a slight increase in population. Although it is difficult to ascertain when population growth trends will change, it is almost certain that from this point population in the Town of Freedom will continue to grow at an ever increasing rate which has already been expressed by neighboring towns since 1990 and as predicted after the completion of US Highway 12 connecting the Madison metro area to Sauk County communities.

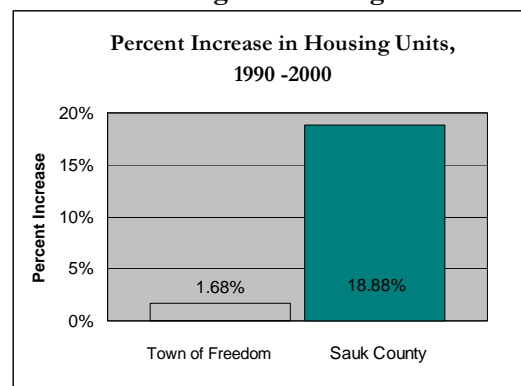
4.0 Purpose

Household and housing stock characteristics, both past and present, can be utilized to assess whether a community is providing an adequate housing supply as well as services to meet the needs of its housing units. This section of the Comprehensive Plan describes the Town of Freedom's predominate household and housing stock characteristics such as number of housing units, tenure, household type, age of housing stock, household income and expenses as well as value of housing and further provides an analysis of these housing trends. 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.

4.1 Housing Unit Trends

Locally, between 1980 and 1990, the number of total (occupied and vacant) housing units in Freedom increased from 147 to 179, or an increase of 21.77%. From 1990 to 2000, housing units increased from 179 to 182, or an increase of 1.68%. This is more than Sauk County's near steady increase from 1980 to 1990, at 17.10% but significantly less than Sauk County's 18.88% increase from 1990 to 2000. (Regional housing unit comparisons are available in **Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis Chapter**). This overall increase of 35 housing units in the Town of Freedom occurred despite the mild increase in population of 17 persons between 1980 and 1990, and only a 6 person decrease between 1990 and 2000 (See: **Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis**, for a full account). This is, in part, explained by the average decline in the persons per occupied household during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000.

Chart H1: Change in Housing Units



Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

Table H2: Number of Housing Units

Number of Housing Units				
Town of Freedom			Sauk County	
Year	Number of Units	Percent Change	Number of Units	Percent Change
1970	Not Available		13,654	
1980	147		17,454	27.83%
1990	179	21.77%	20,439	17.10%
2000	182	1.68%	24,297	18.88%

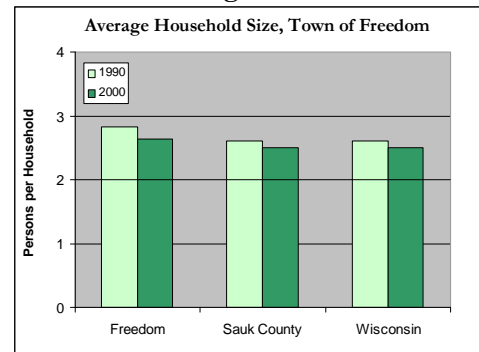
Source: U.S. Census, 1970-2000

4.2 Average Household Size and Tenure

➤ Average Household Size

The average household size or the persons per household in Freedom has dropped from 2.81 persons in 1990 to 2.28 in 2000. The Town of Freedom's average household size is lower than Sauk County's, which declined from 2.61 in 1990 to 2.51 persons per household in 2000. A comparison to regional average household size may be found in *Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis*.

Chart H3: Average Household Size



Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

➤ Tenure

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an overall vacancy rate of roughly 3% is ideal for providing consumers an adequate choice in housing. As cited in *Chapter 3: Population Inventory and Analysis*, during 1990, 82.68% or 150 of the 180 available housing units in the Town of Freedom were occupied compared to an 86.81%, occupancy rate in Sauk County. During 2000, occupancy in the Town of Freedom increased to 86.81%, or 159 of the 182 available housing units, while Sauk County increased to an 89.08% occupancy rate. In both decades, the vacancy rate was well above the ideal of 3% cited by HUD, implying that consumers had many choices of housing.

4.3 Household Characteristics

Household characteristics may influence not only the type of housing stock needed, but also the types of services and commodities utilized. In Freedom, of the occupied housing units, those comprised of families and married households increased in numbers from 1990 to 2000, and increased as a percentage of the population. Female householders decreased in both number and percentage of the population. Households with individuals over 65, and non-family households increased both in number, and in percentage of the population. There are no populations living in group quarters in the Town of Freedom. In comparison, from 1990 to 2000 Sauk County increased in raw numbers in all categories. However, as a percentage of the total population, families and married households declined. Female householders, households with individuals over 65, non-family households and those living in group quarters all increased in percentage of the total population.

Table H3: Households by Type

Households by Type								
	Town of Freedom				Sauk County			
	1990	% of Total Households, 1990	2000	% of Total Households, 2000	1990	% of Total Households, 1990	2000	% of Total Households, 2000
Family households	115	76.67%	123	77.36%	12,701	71.74%	14,863	68.67%
Married couple family	97	64.67%	113	71.07%	10,906	61.61%	12,284	56.75%
Female householder, no husband present	3	2.00%	3	1.89%	866	4.89%	1,745	8.06%
Non-family households	35	23.33%	36	22.64%	2,156	12.18%	6,781	31.33%
With Individuals 65 or older	0	0.00%	25	15.72%	2,157	12.18%	5,361	24.77%
Total Households	150	100.00%	159	100.00%	17,703	100.00%	21,644	100.00%

Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000.

4.4 Housing Stock Characteristics

During 2000, 157 of the 159 occupied housing units in the Town, or 98.7% of the homes were single family and 2, or 1.3% of the housing units were mobile homes. Sauk County was comprised of 17,642 or 72.61% single-family homes and 2,090, or 8.6% mobile homes. The remaining 4,565 or 18.79% Sauk County Homes comprised a variety of types of multifamily housing units.

Table H4: Housing Units, Structural Types, 2000 (occupied only)

	Total Housing Units	% Single Family Home	% Mobile Home	% two to four units	% with five to nine units per structure	% with ten or more units per structure
Freedom, 1990	150	91.82%	7.33%	1.33%	0.00%	0.00%
Freedom, 2000	159	98.70%	1.25%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Sauk County, 1990	17,703	83.10%	11.77%	12.40%	3.49%	1.63%
Sauk County, 2000	24,297	72.61%	8.60%	10.00%	4.10%	4.50%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

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. However, actual 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 qualities.

Table H5: Age of Housing Units

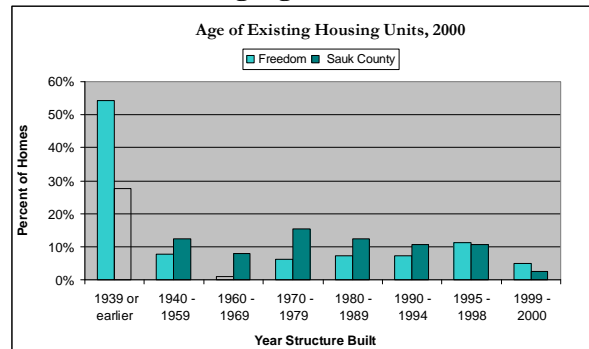
Age of Existing Housing Structures, 2000				
Year Unit Was Built	Number of Units in Freedom	Freedom	Number of Units in Sauk County	Sauk County
1939 or earlier	97	54.19%	6,737	27.73%
1940 - 1959	14	7.82%	3,000	12.35%
1960 - 1969	2	1.12%	1,931	7.95%
1970 - 1979	11	6.15%	3,764	15.49%
1980 - 1989	13	7.26%	3,021	12.43%
1990 - 1994	13	7.26%	2,621	10.79%
1995 - 1998	20	11.17%	2,628	10.82%
1999 - 2000	9	5.03%	595	2.45%
Total	179	100.00%	24,297	100.00%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Chart H6: Housing Age shows that approximately 54% of the existing owner occupied housing were built prior to 1939 while 30.72% of owner occupied homes units were built after 1980. The percentage of existing homes in the Town of Freedom built prior to 1939 is significantly greater than that of Sauk County. The number of homes built after 1939, in any bracket, are less than or equal to those of Sauk County.

4.5 Household Income, Housing Expenses and Housing Values.

Chart H6: Housing Age



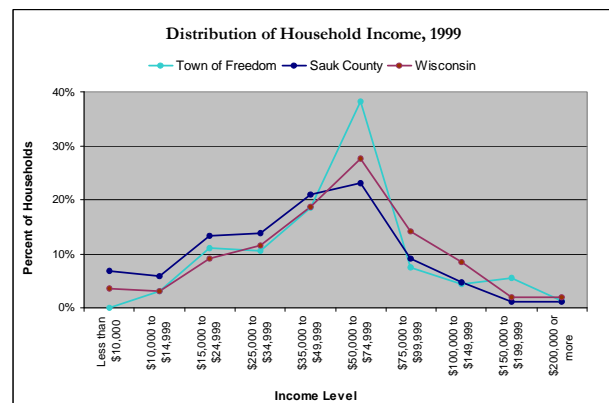
Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Looking at the household incomes, expenses and housing values provides insights into the types of housing structures that exist and thus, those that are needed in the community.

➤ Income Per Household

During 1999, the median household income for Freedom was \$55,000, which was well above the median income for Sauk County at \$41,941. Of the 159 households in Freedom, 30, (18.5%) were in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income bracket. Another 62 (38.3%) 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.

Chart H7: Household Income Levels



Source: U.S. Census 2000

Affordable monthly housing expenses are considered to be 30% of the monthly gross income, or affordable monthly mortgage expense = $.3 \times \text{monthly gross income}$ (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 HUD definitions may be used. As Table H8 on the following page illustrates, extremely low income (ELI) is defined as less than 30% of the household median gross income (HMI) or $\text{ELI} = .3 \times \text{HMI}$. Very low income (VLI) is 30% to 50% of the HMI, or $\text{VLI} = \text{ELI level up to } .5 \times \text{HMI}$. Low income (LI) is 50% to 80% of the HMI, $\text{LI} = \text{VLI level to } .8 \times \text{HMI}$, and moderate income (MI) is 80% to 100% of the HMI.

In order to determine if an income is considered to be in the low or moderate-income category, multiply the HMI by the standard percentage given with each category definition. Round these results to the nearest income brackets as listed in the US Census and this will give some idea of the percentage of households that fall in each range of income. Taking these income bracket limits and dividing by 12 will give an approximate income earned per month. Taking the monthly income and multiplying by 30% will give the approximate total housing costs affordable per month.

Given the HMI for Freedom is \$55,000, the extremely low-income range is anyone earning less than \$16,500 (rounded to \$15,000) per year. According to the 2000 census, 3.1% of the households in Freedom were in this range and could afford monthly housing expenses of \$375.00 or less. Eleven point one percent of the households in Freedom 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 comprised approximately 10.50% of the households in Freedom and could afford \$625.00 to \$875.00 in housing expenses each month. Households in the moderate-income range comprised 18.5% of the households in Freedom and could afford \$875.00 to \$1,175.00 in monthly housing expenses.

Table H8: Affordable Housing Expenses per Income, Freedom 1990

Freedom, 1990			
Household Median Income \$29,375			
Household Income Category	Rounded Description	Percent of Households	Affordable housing payment per month based on 30% of income standard
Extremely low income (below 30% of HMI)	< \$10,000	6.9%	\$250 or less
Very low income (30% to 50% of HMI)	\$10,000-\$15,000	11.0%	\$250 - \$375
Low income (50% to 80% of HMI)	\$15,000-\$25,000	17.2%	\$375 - \$625
Moderate income (80% to 100% of HMI)	\$25,000-\$35,000	27.6%	\$625 - \$875

Source: US Census 1990

Table H9: Affordable Housing Expenses per Income, Freedom 2000

Freedom, 2000			
Household Median Income \$55,000			
Household Income Category	Rounded Description	Percent of Households	Affordable housing payment per month based on 30% of income standard
Extremely low income (below 30% of HMI)	< \$15,000	3.1%	\$375 or less
Very low income (30% to 50% of HMI)	\$15,000-\$25,000	11.1%	\$375 - \$625
Low income (50% to 80% of HMI)	\$25,000-\$35,000	10.5%	\$625 - \$875
Moderate income (80% to 100% of HMI)	\$35,000-\$50,000	18.5%	\$875 - \$1,250

Source: US Census, 2000

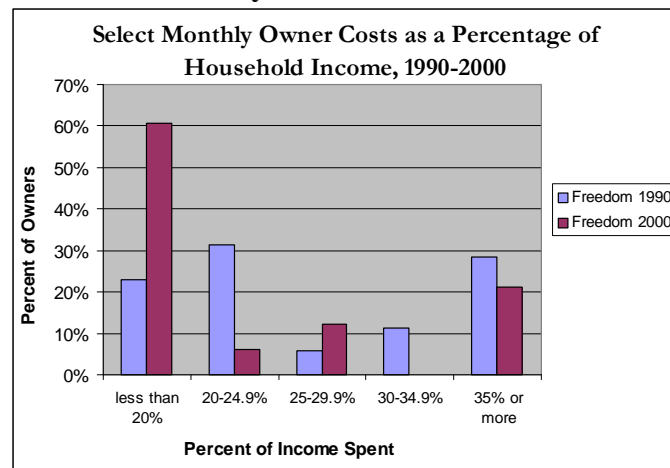
Table H10: Distribution of Household Income, 1999

Distribution of Household Income, 1999	% of Households	% of Households	% of Households
	Town of Freedom	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	0.0%	6.7%	3.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3.1%	5.8%	3.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.1%	13.4%	9.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.5%	13.8%	11.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.5%	21.0%	18.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	38.3%	23.2%	27.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7.4%	9.1%	14.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4.3%	4.7%	8.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5.6%	1.1%	1.9%
\$200,000 or more	1.2%	1.2%	2.0%
Median Household Income	\$55,000	\$41,941	\$52,911
No. of Households	162	21,647	2,086,304
Aggregate Household Income	\$10,295,900	\$1,076,409,500	\$112,374,261,000
Avg. Household Income	\$57,307	\$49,726	\$53,863
Ratio of mean to median HH Income	1.04	1.19	1.02

Source: US Census 2000, DP-3 Summary File 4.

Note: 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.

Another way to look at affordability is to look at the records from the 1990 to 2000 census with regard to percent of income spent towards mortgage or rent. The Census only considers these figures for a sampling of the population. When considering the household costs as a percent of income for homeowners, as per the 1990 census, 60% of the owner occupied households spent 30% or less of their household income on housing costs.

Chart H11: Monthly Owner Costs

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

Chart H12: Monthly Owner Costs shows that according to the sampling data in the 2000 census, 79% of the owner occupied households in Freedom spent 30% or less of their household income on housing costs.

Chart H12: Monthly Owner Costs

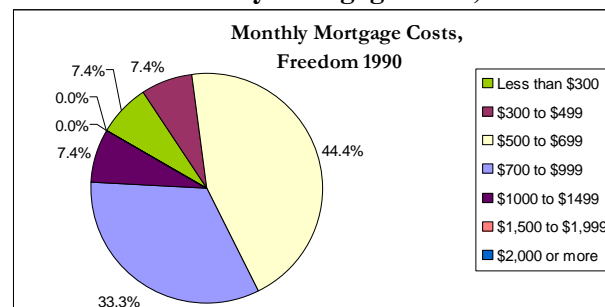
Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income				
Percentage of income	Freedom 1990		Freedom 2000	
	number of units	percent of units	number of units	percent of units
less than 20%	8	23%	20	61%
20-24.9%	11	31%	2	6%
25-29.9%	2	6%	4	12%
30-34.9%	4	11%	0	0%
35% or more	10	29%	7	21%
not computed	0	0%	0	0%
total units	35	100.00%	33	100.00%

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

The specific mortgage costs are but one of the monthly housing expenses. These are broken down for the Town of Freedom. Eight percent of the households spent \$300.00 to \$499 monthly mortgage costs. Zero percent of the households spent \$500.00 to \$699.00 on monthly mortgage costs and 40% of the households spent \$700.00 to \$999.00 on monthly mortgage costs. A full 32% of the households spent from \$1,000.00 to \$1,499.00 on monthly mortgage costs, eight percent spent

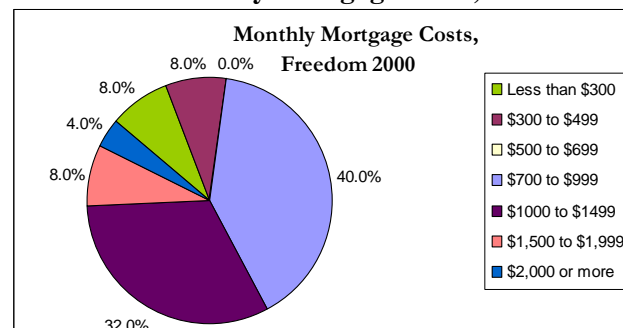
\$1,500.00 to \$1,999.00 and the remaining four percent of households spent \$2,000.00 or more. If compared to monthly mortgage costs for 1990, there was a significant shift from monthly costs of \$500 to \$699 to the next category of \$700 to \$999 and to \$1000 to \$1499. This significant increase is also reflected by the increase in Household Median Income during the same time period.

Chart H13: Monthly Mortgage Costs, Freedom 1990



Source: U.S. Census, 1990

Chart H14: Monthly Mortgage Costs, Freedom 2000

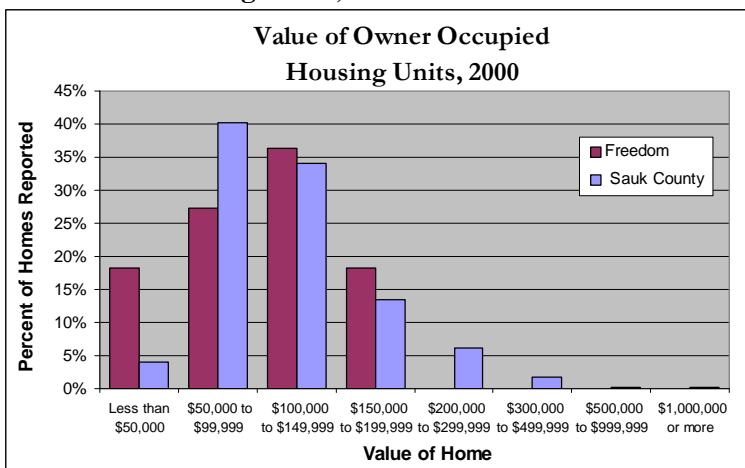


Source: U.S. Census, 2000

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A sample of housing values in Freedom during 2000 ranged from less than \$50,000.00 to \$299,999.00. The median home value in Freedom was \$106,300.00 and the median value in Sauk County was \$107,500.00. According to the 2000, U.S. Census **Chart H15 Housing Value, Freedom 2000** compares the housing values for the Town of Freedom with those of Sauk County. Approximately 44% of the homes in the Town of Freedom are \$100,000 or less whereas the percentage of homes valued between \$100,000 to 149,000 is 36.4% as compared to 34% respectively in Sauk County. There were approximately 18% of the homes valued between \$150,000 to \$199,999 in the Town as compared to Sauk County's almost 13.5%. Zero percent of the homes in Freedom were valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999, compared to 8.14% of the homes in Sauk County. However, since this represents a sample, there may be homes in this or a greater category in Freedom.

Chart H15: Housing Value, Freedom 2000



Source: U.S. Census, 2000

4.6 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, can be defined as the utilization of a credit system to determine both the total number of lots that can be created and the size of each lot. The density policy in effect can then yield a calculation of the total number of potential of future houses until an endpoint is reached.

The current gross housing density of the Town of Freedom stands at approximately 1 single family home per 118 acres. This level of housing density remains relatively unchanged from a historical perspective with the exception that more houses are appearing in the rural areas.

As part of this planning process, the Town may elected to implement a density policy as noted in **Chapter 11 Land Use** in conjunction with a cluster development option to create lots less than the current prescribed 35 acres under Resource Conservancy 35 zoning. It is surmised that the combination of these two options will significantly increase the number of new homes that can be built in the rural areas in the short term, however, determining the number of new houses that may be built on an annual or other identified timeline cannot be determined as there are no comparatives for this area under such a program.

4.7 Local Population and Housing Trends



To best describe the local population and housing trends, an examination of Population Projection 1 (linear or growth model) under the previous chapter can provide the best insight as to what the future population will be in Freedom. This projection can be somewhat correlated to the total number of new homes built between 1990 and 2000 at 3 new homes, but to a lesser extent, the total and average number of new homes between 2000 and 2004, with 13 total resulting in an average of 3.25 homes per year over that time period. With the application of an average of 3.25 houses being built per year the total number of additional houses needed by 2020 will be approximately 65. When estimating the number of new homes needed, one factor to also consider is the annual or average occupancy rate. If the occupancy rate in the community increases, it can be assumed that the number of new homes needed will decline. Considering that the occupancy rate in Freedom has been relatively constant at 83% in 1990 and 86% in 2000, this component was not factored in to the calculation of total new homes needed.

4.8 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 utilized a comparison between a linear and growth method with a method utilized by the Wisconsin Department of Administration. Population Projection 2 utilizes 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.

➤ Population Projection 1

- **DOA Projection (2003 est.)** projects a total population of 412 persons in the year 2020. At this rate of negative growth coupled with a constant of 2.5 persons per household (2.5 persons being the County average), the Town would lose 4 people or essentially 1.6 houses. If the current persons per household in the Town of Freedom is utilized, being 2.28 (derived from the 2000 census), total housing units needed would remain essentially the same at 1.7 housing units.
- **Linear Model (1980-2000) and Growth Model (1980-2000)** both show an increase in population from the current 416 persons to 431 persons resulting in a difference of 15 people. Applying 2.5 persons (2.5 persons being the County average) per household to 15 additional people will yield the need for 6 housing units by the year 2020. If the current persons per household in the Town of Freedom is utilized, being 2.28 (derived from the 2000 census), total housing units needed would increase slightly to 6.5 or would require 1 additional housing unit.

➤ Population Projection 2

- **Constant Household Size** utilizes the historic drop in persons per household from 2.81 in 1990 to 2.28 persons per household as identified by the 2000 census. This factor combined with the current number of occupied housing units in the Town in 2000 at 159

yields a population of 470 persons by 2020. This increase in population translates into an additional 24 houses by 2020.

- **Limited Household Size** holds the County average of 2.5 persons per household constant producing a minimal increase in population to 423 in 2020. This method yields the need for 3 additional houses by 2020.
- **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 2.28 persons per household to 2.21 persons per household. This produces a projection of 362 persons in 2020 and a net zero increase in the number of new houses needed.

➤ General Housing Needs Analysis

In reviewing the housing projection methods based on Populations Projection 1 and 2, it appears as though the most logical housing projections are those that produce a slight increase in population to the year 2020. Under Population Projection 1, the linear and growth models present a slight increase in population and corresponding increase of 6 housing units to the year 2020. Population Projection 2 recognizes the Limited Household Size analysis as closely representing the linear and growth models with a projected 3 houses added until the year 2020.

Realistically, the number of new housing units added to the Town through the year 2020 will be greater than the projected 6 houses under the Linear Model or 3 houses under the Limited Household Size Model and will likely be greater than the 24 houses identified by the Constant Household Size Model. This is already exemplified by the fact that 13 new homes have been built (or are under construction) in the Town since 2000. This number represents a significant increase from the 3 houses built over the previous 10 year period, 1990-2000. Thirteen new homes also translates into an average of 3.25 new homes per year. By using this average and projecting the number of new homes to the year 2020, the Town can most likely expect and additional 33 new homes by 2010 or 62 new homes by 2020.

4.9 Projected Growth and Housing Needs Analysis

Although projected population growth can be used to identify the need for additional future housing, it is not always the best method as is the case with Freedom. As noted in the previous section, the number of new homes calculated based on projected population growth from 2000 to 2020 has already been exceeded, and only one population/housing projection, the Constant Household Size Model thus far projects more houses than have been actually built, but not by much. Realistically, the Town of Freedom will likely experience an increase in population greater than those identified in the projections. This is due in part to the Town's proximity to rapidly urbanizing areas to the west (Reedsburg) and to the (east/south-east) Baraboo and Sauk Prairie. The most significant impact on the Town's increase in population and correspondent new housing rate will be the completion of the newly constructed U.S. Highway 12 offering a 30-minute or so commute to the Madison metro area.

4.10 Housing Programs and Choices

Through this process, the Town of Freedom has identified the need for housing choices to meet the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups, and special needs. This subsection explains the efforts made to accommodate such needs.

➤ **Density Policy**

To accommodate both the desire and need for affordable housing and vacant lots for building purposes, the Town of Freedom has elected to allow for the creation of ‘small’ lots within the rural areas of the Town (versus the 35-acre lot size minimum). The designation of these lots is to be based on a specified density policy noted under **Chapter 11 Land Use**. Essentially, a density policy coupled with small lot creation can have a twofold impact on the Town. First, the policy aims to protect farmland and open space through the option to sell smaller lots placed in appropriate locations. Secondly, the policy permits the designation of smaller lots which, depending on current market values of property are ‘more affordable.’

➤ **Subdivision Development and Appropriate Areas**

The Town, through this planning process, has recognized that areas within ¼ mile of the Village of North Freedom are appropriate for subdivision development. Recognizing that defining affordable housing is difficult and that market demand and corresponding values affect affordability, it is assumed that lots in these areas will serve the need for low to moderate income opportunities in housing options as by their very nature they will be less expensive than lots in rural areas.

➤ **Housing Programs**

Listed below are some examples of housing assistance programs available to Town of Freedom residents:

- **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.

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 with shared spaces for homeless individuals of very low income.

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.

- **State of Wisconsin – Department of Administration (Bureau of Housing)**

Home Single Family (HSF) – 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, provide accessibility modifications and provides down payment or closing cost assistance.

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 or 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.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) – There are two specific programs offered by WHEDA 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 where they live.

Wisconsin Fund – Provides partial reimbursement, based on household income, for the cost of replacing a failed septic system.

Focus on Energy – A public-private partnership offering energy information and services to residential, business, and industrial customers throughout Wisconsin. This program also includes cost sharing for the design and installation of alternative and renewable energy systems for residential and business use.

Other Programs – Other programs that may be considered for housing assistance are provided by various agencies throughout the State, including Rural Development components of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Sauk County.

4.11 Housing Goal, Objectives and Policies

Housing Goal: Manage new housing development in the Town to maintain the rural character, while preserving agricultural and natural areas as well as the natural beauty.

Housing Objectives/Policies:

HO-1 Encourage residential growth to be located next to developed areas that can be efficiently and adequately served by public infrastructure.

HP-1A Higher density residential subdivision development shall only be permitted within ¼ mile or directly adjacent to the Village of North Freedom and should be served by public sewer and water or shared septic and water. Subdivision is defined in the glossary of this Plan and the Sauk County Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance.

HP-1B Work with the Village of North Freedom to identify appropriate areas for subdivision development and develop cooperative agreements to utilize village services such as sewer and water, while retaining the development in the town. As part of these agreements develop a system of tax base sharing and provisions for future annexation.

HO-2 Develop housing location requirements that preserve agriculture, forested and natural areas.

HP-2A Direct any and all subdivision development as defined by this Plan and the Sauk County Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance to the Village of North Freedom or areas within ¼ mile.

HP-2B New residences, where appropriate, will share driveways with each other or with neighboring existing homes to preserve Town road edges and maintain rural character. For shared driveways, a driveway maintenance agreement must be recorded with the Sauk County Register of Deeds.

HP-2C Direct new rural housing development as defined by this Plan using the following criteria so as to preserve significant natural resources and agriculture operations:

Please see **Agriculture Resources Policy ARP-4B** for farmland preservation and **Natural Resources Policy NRP-1** for forest core and forested areas preservation.

HO-3 Allow for varied housing lot sizes.

HP-3A The following lot sizes are prescribed as follows:

- a. Subdivisions: All subdivisions within ¼ mile of the Village shall maintain a grid-like pattern and connectivity to the existing village street network with a lot size range from 6000 to 10,000 square feet. Coordination with existing Village street layout, utility provisions etc will be required as well as adherence to any adopted official map.
- b. Rural lots: One acre minimum through the application of the Town of Freedom Density Policy and Planned Unit Development Program. Please see **Land Use Policy LUP-2A** for rural lot size requirements.

HO-4 Encourage the use of quality construction materials consistent with the rural character.

HP4-A Continue to administer the Uniform Dwelling Code to ensure a high level of quality for all new construction.

HP4-B New construction in the Town is highly encouraged to utilize earth tone colors for any new construction. Agriculture areas may utilize the additional colors of red or white to mimic traditional farm related structures.

HO-5 Encourage the maintenance of existing housing.

HP-5A The Town will periodically include options and funding opportunities in a town newsletter to ensure residents are aware of available grants and other funding to maintain existing housing stock.

HP-5B Conversion of rural agricultural buildings to residential uses are encouraged to preserve the historic nature of these structures as much as possible. As such, the Town of Freedom will consider waiving respective density requirements in an effort to encourage their preservation. The allowance to convert rural agricultural buildings will be permitted if all the following criteria apply:

- a) The structure has historically been utilized as an agricultural building only and has not been previously utilized for any residential purpose.
- b) The structure was originally constructed prior to 1930.
- c) The structure currently maintains greater than 50% of original material utilized when first constructed or updated and which all occurred prior to 1930.

- d) That the proposed conversion includes no additions to the original structure (i.e., rooms, garages etc.), however cantilevered windows, porches, overhangs etc. are permitted provided that they do not include enclosed walls.
- e) That only two agricultural buildings will be permitted conversion per farm/parcel as the parcel existed on January 19, 1999 with a maximum of only three dwelling units permitted per farm/parcel under this option.

The process to convert an agricultural building is as follows:

- a) The Town of Freedom, after due consideration, may waive certain density requirements to allow the creation of a new 'residential lot' and thus encourage conversion and restoration.
- b) That the building to be converted be located on a maximum lot size as prescribed by the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan or be located on a newly established lot of not greater than 5 net acres.
- c) That the outside appearance of the building to be converted remains traditional to the original look of the building. To this end, any materials utilized to upgrade any exterior surface must be the same as what was originally utilized and will, to the greatest extent possible, mimic the original appearance of the building. (i.e., if a barn was vertically wood sided, any improvements to exterior walls must maintain vertical wood siding).
- d) That in order to accommodate the creation of the new lot, which may not be subject to the town's density policy, the Town will consider a rezone to the Agriculture District, the regulations of which are specified by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance.
- e) That in order to accommodate the conversion of an agriculture building into a two-family dwelling, the Town will consider a Special Exception under the Agriculture District as specified by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance.
- f) The Town will require the submittal of an Application for Determination which will include the following information:
 - Location.
 - Description of the proposal.
 - Applicant.
 - Building History (inclusive of any previous reconstruction and dates).
 - Elevation Survey of the entire building (before and after construction/restoration).
 - Complete set of floor plans.
 - Complete site plan showing the location of all existing buildings and proposed buildings (i.e., garage etc.).
 - Complete description and verification of structural stability and how compliance with the Uniform Dwelling Code will be achieved.
 - A list of materials to be utilized on the interior and exterior of the building.
 - Verification that the proposed residential use will not adversely affect neighboring agricultural operations.

HO-6 Support efforts which provide for affordable housing and which meet the requirements of people with special needs.

HP-6A Direct affordable housing opportunities for people with special needs to the Village of North Freedom or to those areas directly adjacent to the Village of North Freedom where services can be effectively provided.

HP-6B Develop options that will permit dependency living arrangements allowing for the physical arrangement of a dwelling unit in such a fashion that separate living spaces are created within a dwelling for the sole purpose of allowing a dependent person to live in the

secondary living area while the owner and his or her family reside in the principle living area. It is the intention of this policy to allow the secondary living area to contain separate bath and kitchen facilities, which permit a degree of independence. Prior to this policy taking effect, the Town will work with Sauk County to develop zoning options to permit such arrangement.

HO-7 Encourage residential housing designs that aim to balance the protection of natural resources with the opportunity to build new housing.

HP-7A The Town encourages innovation in housing designs and types that aims to reduce the impact on natural resources both with construction materials utilized as well as energy efficiency over the life of the structure. Examples include passive solar homes, earthen structures and certified green built homes. Retrofitting existing homes with energy saving technologies such as improved insulation, lighting and heating efficiency, and renewable sources of energy are encouraged. Periodically, the Towns newsletter may highlight these concepts.

HO-8 Develop minimum and maximum size limits for new residential homes to preserve significant environmental resources.

HP-8A Work with Sauk County to permit the construction of new residential structures (stick-built) that are less than 750 square feet of living space as currently prescribed by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance so as to allow the construction of seasonal/recreational cabins or full time residences to accommodate those who are interested in a smaller home and which are not less than 400 square feet of living space.

HP-8B Mobile homes shall only be permitted in mobile home parks, with the exception of mobile homes related to agriculture operations.

5.0 Purpose

While farming and agriculture activities are not as prominent in the Town of Freedom due to its topography and contiguous forested areas as compared to neighboring Towns, agrarian activities still represent a significant way of life for many Freedom residents and landowners. Throughout history, in the Town of Freedom and in Sauk County, 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 location, the Town of Freedom has begun to experience rural residential development pressures. Along with this, increases in property value assessments, increasing health care costs, and farm prices that have remained relatively stagnant have compounded the challenges recently. With consideration given to these issues, and although farming has remained a viable employment opportunity and lifestyle for many in Freedom, conversions of lands out of agriculture uses and reductions in the number of farms remains higher as compared to other Towns in Sauk County. The goal of this comprehensive plan is to address how to preserve remaining valuable agricultural lands and farms while still allowing for some growth within agricultural areas of the Town.

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, 246 acres in 1987 and 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 for 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 Freedom decreased from 72 to 40, while the number of dairy farms decreased from 16 to 11. In Sauk County, both the estimated numbers of farms and dairy farms have decreased. The estimated farms per square mile during 1997 are similar for the Town and the County, while dairy farms per square mile differ at .3 dairy farms per square mile in the Town and .6 dairy farms per square mile in the County.

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
Freedom	72	40	-44.4%	1.2	16	11	-31.30%	0.3
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 Tables *A1 Trends in Average Size of Farm* and *A2 Trends in Farm Numbers*, differs. This is due to different methodologies used to create the tables.

5.2 Land in Agriculture Use

Land sales in the Town of Freedom, Sauk County, and State of Wisconsin, indicate that 3,106 acres of farmland were sold in the Town of Freedom from 1990-1997. Of the acreage sold, 1,096 acres were diverted out of agricultural uses. The dollar per acre, at \$949.00, was an average value of land sold between 1990-1997. As a point of reference, the Town of Freedom was second only to the Town of Ironton's 1,520 acres of land converted out of agriculture use and slightly ahead of the Town of Reedsburg with 1,073 acres.

Table A3: Agriculture Land Sales, Town of Freedom, 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 Freedom 1990-1997	N/A	2,010	\$907	N/A	1,096	\$949	71	3,106	\$923
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

5.3 Production Trends

During 1999, the average yield for field corn for Sauk County differs 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 .3 tons per acre less than the State, .5 tons per acre more for forages harvested, and .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 did increase 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 agriculture 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 agriculture activities are declining, they still are the primary economic activity in the Town. Farmers in the Town of Freedom produce a variety of agriculture commodities including dairy, beef production, animal feed such as corn, alfalfa and soybeans as well as a number of cash crops. Freedom currently had approximately 4 Dairy Farms and 20 Beef operations in 2005. Historical data, however shows that the total number of dairy farms has declined significantly as in 1997 there were 11 dairy farms down from 16 dairy farms in 1989. In addition to 'traditional' agriculture products, residents produce apples, maple syrup and natural body care products.

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 into the program. Although the Town of Freedom did not adopt Exclusive Agriculture Zoning qualifying the Town's farmers to take part in this program, stand alone contracts were still permitted. These individual contract do not include much land however, with 269 acres having been removed from the program in the Spring of 2005 leaving only three participants/contracts and 538 acres under the program, each to expire in 2006, 2007 and 2027 respectively.

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 Freedom. The USDA-NRCS groups soils suitable for agriculture based on the most suitable land for producing food, feed, fiber, forage and oilseed crops. When classifying into groups, considerations are given to the limitations of the soil, their risk of damage, and response to treatment. In general, the fewer the limitations, the more suitable the soil is for agriculture use. **Map 5-1 Land Capability Classification** depicts the soils by classifications for the Town of Freedom.

Approximately 27.39% of the soils in the Town of Freedom 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.

Approximately 31.12% of the soils in the Town of Freedom 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

Table A8: Soil Class and Acreage of in the Town of Freedom

Town of Freedom Land Capability Classification		
Soil Class	Acres	Percent of Total Land Area
Class I	83.60	0.27%
Class II	4,843.98	15.77%
Class III	3,486.11	11.35%
Class IV	1,551.55	5.05%
Class V	0.00	0.00%
Class VI	8,009.09	26.07%
Class VII	2,924.37	9.52%
Class VIII	1,305.44	4.25%
Total	22,204.14	72.28%

Source: Sauk County Planning & Zoning

soils have limitations that make them generally unsuited for cultivation and limit use to pasture, woodland or wildlife.

Approximately 13.77% of the soils in the Town of Freedom are Class VII, VIII soils. Class VII soils have very severe limitations that restrict their use to pasture, woodland and wildlife. Class VIII soils (includes open water), with very severe limitations, have use restricted to recreation and wildlife.

As a general reference, *Map 5-2 Prime Farmland – Slope Delineation* defines prime farmland as being comprised of Class I and Class II soils. Approximately 25.46% 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 Agriculture Infrastructure



Photo courtesy Sauk County LCD

The agricultural industry in the Town of Freedom is supported by a diverse agricultural infrastructure within the area. Although most agricultural supporting enterprises are not located within the Town, they can be easily accessed in the nearby trade centers.

5.8 Alternative Agricultural Opportunities

Despite the changes 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.



Photo courtesy USDA-NRCS

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 or grass raised meats, and cheeses and varied forest products. These factors, coupled with the opportunity for direct marketing to the public as well as local restaurants, school districts, cooperatives and retail grocery cooperatives, promotion of the purchase of locally produced products and Community Supported Agriculture opportunities have and continue to produce positive results for the industry.

Agri-tourism/bed and breakfast establishments, recreational opportunities and agriculture related cottage industries are other examples of alternative agriculture opportunities. The Sauk County UW

Extension office recently published “Sauk County Farm Connect Guide, 2003”. This guide lists area farmers who directly market their products and/or provide consumers an opportunity to learn firsthand about agriculture today.

5.9 Federal, State and Local Programs and Resources

There are numerous programs and resources available through federal, state and local agencies that can 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.

➤ 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 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 other agency can legally offer to the landowner. For example, 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 BRPP is administered by 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.

➤ **Federal Programs and Resources**

Below are some examples of federal programs and resources, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that can provide assistance to farm operators in the Town of Freedom. 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.

- **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.
- **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 inclusive of a permanent easement, 30-Year Easement or a Restoration Cost Share Agreement.
- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes 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.

➤ **State and Local Programs and Resources**

In addition to the federal programs, several state and local programs and resources are available to aid in the sustainability of agricultural operations in the Town of Freedom. These programs are supported by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), University of Wisconsin Extension 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 on its 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 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 that have excessive levels of agriculture 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 web site highlights and promotes many of Wisconsin's smaller and independent agriculture producers as well as agriculture related events state-wide.

5.10 Agriculture Goal, Objectives and Policies

Agriculture Goal: Maintain existing agriculture lands and encourage agriculture related economic opportunities.

Agriculture Objectives/Policies:

ARO-1 Encourage timber harvesting according to sustainable forestry practices.

ARP-1A 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.

ARP- 1B To promote professionally managed timber harvests of 10 or more acres the Town, after having been provided proof of a certified forester prepared or approved harvest plan, will reimburse a landowner \$100.00 toward the cost of preparing such harvest plan, after completion of a timber harvest. This policy does not apply to lands enrolled under the Managed Forest Law.

ARP- 1C Consider a Town newsletter or website that will periodically highlight opportunities for residents and landowners relative to sustainable timber production and harvest methods.

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.

ARP-2A Actively work with Sauk County to develop new zoning districts and other options which will allow for innovative ‘value-added’ farming income opportunities that are consistent with the rural character.

ARP-2B Utilize expertise from agencies such as the USDA, Sauk County land Conservation Department, UWEX, representatives from various buying cooperatives and others to both explore the feasibility of and provide resources to farmers who may be considering the production of alternative agriculture products, markets and growing methods. Alternative crops and growing methods may include, but are not limited to, the production of hazelnuts, hops, fruits, unique cash crops, rotational grazed cattle, organic products and other methods which will produce a final product that will command a higher price.

ARP-2C Recognizing that the production of specialty crops is currently a major component of agriculture economics in the Town of Freedom, promote the inception of additional operations while maintaining current operations. The Plan Commission will foster the establishment of a town-landowner collaborative that will actively meet to develop ways to promote the Town as a destination for those seeking to purchase specialty crops/products on-sites as well as identify wholesale/retail outlets. The Collaborative will also identify and promote the Town as a favorable location for new start-up agriculturally related businesses that meet the definition of a family farm operation.

ARO-3 Educate new and existing residents on farm life, farm noises, odors, and operational requirements prior to granting permits for the construction of new rural residences.

ARP-3A Written information will be given to new residents of single family homes regarding the rights and responsibilities of living in an agricultural area. As part of the permitting process new residents will be required to sign a disclaimer indicating that they are aware that they may experience conflicts with living in an agricultural area. As part of the creation of any new lot, a statement will be recorded with the Sauk County Register of Deeds stating that this lot is within an agricultural area and that agriculture activities shall be paramount. It shall be the landowner/sellers responsibility to record such document.

ARP-3B Minimum setbacks between water wells and agriculture uses are as follows: 50 feet separation from a feedlot, 100 feet from a liquid manure storage facility and 250 feet from all other manure storage facilities.

ARO-4 Preserve productive farmlands and encourage the maintenance and growth of family farm operations for continued and future agriculture uses.

For the purposes of this plan, family farm operations are broadly defined as any activity that utilizes the land to produce a product or commodity for sale and which provides for family income. These operations may include maple syrup production, small-scale animal husbandry, organic production, fruit orchards, cash cropping, large-scale animal operations etc.

ARP-4A Support and encourage Sauk County to develop and adopt a Purchase of Development Rights Program which will offer farms an option to sell or donate development rights from agriculturally productive lands and adjacent lands to help maintain a viable farming economy.

ARP-4B Prime agriculture land as 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. Note that grazing (pasture) is a crop. These lands are identified as class I, II or III by the Sauk County Soil Survey. Property owners with lands identified as class I, II or III are encouraged not to use these lands for residential or commercial development if other land is available for such purposes. This policy will not prevent an individual from making agricultural use of land that is not otherwise mapped or identified as such.

ARO-5 Promote the conservation of soil and water resources for agriculture uses.

ARP-5A The Plan Commission will foster the establishment of a Town/Land Owner Collaborative made up of interested residents and public and private partners to promote and implement good agriculture land stewardship practices, and seek funding for private land stewardship projects. Periodically include opportunities and program descriptions in a Town newsletter or website.

6.0 Purpose

The Town of Freedom supports and utilizes an effective array of utilities (such as phone and Internet service) and public facilities (including parks, churches and an elementary school located in the Village of North Freedom). The Town also supports and utilizes services provided by both the County and School District. In addition to utilities and services, many historic attributes can be found in Freedom. These attributes, which provide insight into the Town's past, 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 Freedom are served by private wells (note: there are currently no service agreements with the Village of North Freedom). Sauk County is currently working with the Wisconsin Geological Survey office on a groundwater study. The study will include information pertaining to volumes and quality 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 coupled with the mix of agricultural fields with forested areas and a low density development pattern, it is assumed that groundwater contamination is at a minimum.

Overall, the disposal of domestic wastewater in the Town is handled through the use of individual Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (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 Freedom is not served by a sanitary sewer system, the only current means of service is via POWTS systems.

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 Freedom. 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, which 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 can be noted by comparing *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 Freedom. 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. Generally, however, Freedom does not exhibit a high occurrence of sandy soils.

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 versus inactive or abandoned landfill sites. According to that process, it was determined that Sauk County has 16 active landfill sites throughout the County, including sites for brush disposal to a fully operational solid waste disposal site. In addition, more than 40 sites were identified as abandoned sites. Of those 40 sites, there are none located in the Town of Freedom. However, it is important to bear in mind that these 40 sites constitute known sites and that undiscovered sites may be present, especially in those areas of the County that remain relatively undeveloped.

Although the Town of Freedom does not have any know landfill sites, it is important to at least reference that many of these abandoned sites are the result of the passage of more stringent federal regulations in the mid 1980's. Due to the fact that many of these landfills were located in abandoned sand and gravel pits, low lying areas, or hillsides, the potential for groundwater contamination is much greater due to poor location and the absence of liners and leachate collection systems.

Currently, there are no active landfill sites in the Town of Freedom and the Town provides solid waste and recycling services at a drop-off site in the unincorporated Village of La Rue.

6.3 Septage Waste Disposal

Sauk County requires that homeowners pump their septic tanks on a 3 year basis which can in effect prolong the life of a POWTS and ensure optimal efficiency and protection of groundwater. Disposal methods of septage vary from deposition into a licensed municipal sewage treatment plant to land spreading. Land spreading applications require special permits issued by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Part of this permitting process examines a land area and soil types as well as 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 septage.

6.4 Town Hall/Garage/Town Park



Although the Town of Freedom does not have a Town Hall, the Town utilizes the Village of North Freedom's Village Hall to conduct Town business. The Town owns two properties located outside of La Rue and at the intersection of La Rue Road and County Road PF. Located in this area is the Town Garage and Town recycling/trash collection site.

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.

6.6 Emergency Services

The entire Town is served by the Baraboo District Ambulance Service (BDAS) while first responder service is provided by the North Freedom Fire Department with 22 trained volunteers. The BDAS is a district owned by member municipalities. The BDAS is a Paramedic full time service licensed by the State of Wisconsin to provide 911 emergency response Paramedic care. The BDAS is also licensed by the State of Wisconsin to provide Advanced Care inter-facility transfer services to hospitals, clinics, nursing care facilities and to private residences. Paramedics offer the highest level of pre-hospital emergency care in the State. BDAS is the only Paramedic service within Sauk County. BDAS has 4 ambulances available 24/7 and two Quick Response Vehicles available to assure Paramedics can get to patients in a rapid and safe manner. BDAS will transport patients to the hospital of their choice unless medical need dictates transport to the nearest hospital. BDAS has 14 full time licensed EMT's including 10 Paramedics, three EMT-IV techs and one EMT- Basic plus 26 part time EMT's at all levels of licensure.

The Town is also served entirely by the North Freedom Fire Department, a volunteer service with 35 firefighters located in the Village of North Freedom Municipal Building. The Department has two engines, two tankers, one rescue van and brush truck. Jurisdictional boundaries of these respective services can be noted on *Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Boundaries*.

6.7 Library

The Town of Freedom and surrounding communities are served by the South Central Wisconsin Library System through Sauk County. There are two primary libraries utilized by Town residents which includes the North Freedom Library located in the back of the Village of North Freedom Municipal Building and Fire Department and the public library located in the City of Baraboo. Each library hosts a collection of general-purpose books, periodicals, historical memorabilia of the area, Internet access, periodic book discussion groups and children's activities. Rooms may be reserved for community meetings and events at the Baraboo Library only.

6.8 Communication, Electric Utilities and Heating Fuel

Telephone and e-mail service is provided by CenturyTel throughout the Town. The Town is also serviced entirely by Alliant for electrical service. Since there are no natural gas lines in the Town, heating fuel is primarily provided through contracts with independent fuel dealers with a large majority of residents, roughly 62%, utilizing LP/Propane. Heating fuel from wood and biomass sources ranks second and includes 39 households or 23% of the towns' residents. The remaining 15% utilize oil or electricity. Wireless communication facilities are becoming increasingly popular in the area, but service is difficult due to the diverse terrain of the driftless area coupled with the need for a large investment in a tower with little return (i.e., few customers). Currently there are no wireless communication towers for cell service in the Town.

6.9 Medical Facilities

The Town of Freedom is served by two primary care medical facilities, St. Clare Hospital in Baraboo and the Reedsburg Area Medical Center. St. Claire Health Services includes a 100-bed acute care hospital, a 100-bed long-term care facility with a 20-bed assisted living wing and health care foundation.

The Reedsburg Area Medical Center, which is located at 2000 North Dewey Avenue provides acute care, long term and day care surgery facilities as well a 24-hour emergency and urgent care facilities. The Center includes 53 acute care beds, 50 long term beds, and eight-day care surgery beds.

6.10 Educational Facilities

➤ Primary Educational Facilities

The Town of Freedom is divided into two public school districts. The Reedsburg School District incorporates the west half of the Town while the Baraboo School District includes the east half of the Town. *Map 1-2 Jurisdictional Boundaries* shows the exact location of these boundaries. While the majority of school aged children attend one of the two districts, parochial schools also offer a schooling option as well as increasing involvement in home schooling opportunities.

• Baraboo School District

The Baraboo School District provides educational opportunities for approximately 3000 students kindergarten through grade 12 at 6 elementary schools, a middle school and high school. The Baraboo School District offers a 12 to 1 student/teacher ratio and early childhood programs. Baraboo's Middle School's curriculum includes core classes and exploratory classes for grades 6 through 8. Baraboo High School provides a comprehensive core curriculum as well as a variety of advance placement courses and extra curricular clubs and activities.

The Baraboo School District is host to the North Freedom Elementary School, located in County Road I. The North Freedom School, opened in the Fall of 1991, has a capacity of 200 students and includes space for special education students, a media center (library), gymnasium, a computer lab and art center. While the North Freedom School was utilized for the immediate surrounding community, the new school increased its service area to include all students west of US Highway 12. Enrollment at the school is consistently near capacity.

• Reedsburg School District

The Reedsburg High School located at 1100 S. Albert Avenue, Webb Middle School located at 707 N. Webb Avenue; Pineview Elementary School located at 1121 8th Street; South Elementary School located at 420 Plum Avenue; and Westside Elementary School located at 401 Alexander Avenue. The public schools in this district serves approximately 2,486 students in grades K-12.

According to Reedsburg School Administration, due to the construction of the new high school and the addition to Westside Elementary School, the school system has no current overcrowding issues. South Elementary School remains the oldest structure in the district, but will remain in use for the foreseeable future.

- **Parochial Schools**

Sacred Heart Catholic School located at North Oak Street; and St Peter's Lutheran School at 346 N. Locust Street are three private schools located in the City of Reedsburg and together serve approximately 393 students in grades K-11.

In Baraboo, St. Joseph School, affiliated with the National Catholic Educational Association, provides pre K through 6 instruction with an average class size of 12. St John's Lutheran School, affiliated with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, provides pre K through 8 instruction with an average class size of 17.5

- **Secondary Educational Facilities**

The Town of Freedom is within commuting distance of a number of two and four year college campuses including:

UW-Baraboo/Sauk County offers freshman/sophomore-level university instruction leading to an Associate of Arts degree. After building an academic foundation at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, students can continue their work towards a bachelor's degree at a UW campus or other school of their choice. UW-Baraboo has a continuing education program that offers a variety of non-credit seminars, workshops and short courses. The programs range from computer applications and communication to theater and art field trips.

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.

Madison Area Technical College / Madison is a two year technical and community college serving the greater Madison area. MATC provides training for over 100 careers, offering associate degrees, diplomas and certificates. The comprehensive curriculum includes technical, liberal arts, sciences, college transfer courses, basic and continuing education adult classes, as well as customized training courses. Class sizes are small, with many courses available online and through distant learning programs.

University of Wisconsin / Madison is the flagship research campus of the University of Wisconsin system. The world-class university offers 137 undergraduate programs, 157 Masters degree programs and 133 Doctoral degree programs. UW-Madison also has professional degree programs in law, medicine, pharmacy and veterinary medicine.

Edgewood College in Madison is a private College, which currently enrolls approximately 15,000 undergraduate students and 500 graduate students. Edgewood offers more than 40 majors and 32 Minors, plus opportunity for individualized programs. 65% of all classes have less than 20 students. Programs for Master's degrees are offered in Business, Religious Studies, Education, Nursing, and Marriage and Family Therapy. The adult accelerated degree programs allow working adults to earn an undergraduate degree in 3 years, completing both their general education and major requirements. Edgewood College also offers a Doctoral of Education degree.

6.11 Recreational Facilities

The Village maintains two local parks, Village Park and Veteran's Memorial Park. Village Park includes a playground, picnic tables, restrooms and a baseball diamond.

The Town of Freedom does not currently own any parkland, however the Town will be discussing the acquisition of lands for either a town park or town forest/recreational area.

6.12 Cemetery's and Churches

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

- **Church of God Campground**, provides for Bible study, reflection and guided recreation through community retreat activities.
- **Maple Hill Cemetery**, originally located on the Peter Holzman farm served as one of the first cemeteries in the Freedom area. The cemetery came to be as a result of immigration of families often bringing with them older relatives who did not survive because of harsh conditions. There were also heavy tolls on children due to the many childhood illnesses at this time. The cemetery no longer exists as all that have been buried there have since been moved to the Oak Hill Cemetery or to areas in the eastern United States, the region these immigrants originally came from. The Maple Hill Cemetery was located in the Hill Settlement.
- **Oak Hill Cemetery**, is located in the Village of North Freedom. Samuel Northrop, a Republican on the Wisconsin State Assembly in 1858, was buried at this cemetery in May, 1860.
- **North Freedom United Methodist Church**, originally founded in 1873, is still utilized today. The church building is located at 301 E. Walnut Street in the Village of North Freedom.
- **North Freedom Baptist Church**, located on West Walnut Street originally utilized the Diamond Hill School for services until the first church was dedicated in November, 1875. In 1901 construction began on a new church and in October 1903, the new church was dedicated.
- **St Paul's Lutheran Church**, located on South Maple, was originally an old school house located just south of the Village, and was dedicated in 1897. The current church building was built in 1994-1995 with final dedication in July 1995.

6.13 Historical and Cultural Structures and Areas

(locations of each are identified on *Map 3-1 Community and Cultural Resources*)

- **McCoy School House**, located on what is now McCoy Road just east of La Rue. The District was organized in 1855 and the grounds for the school house donated by Carl Grosinske and Henry Erswell at one-half acre each. The school was also located in the Egerer Settlement District and was built in 1882 to accommodate students from rural areas. The school finally closed in 1962 and is now a private residence, but has been restored to look as it did as a school house.



- **Diamond Hill School**, On October 3, 1857 John Dickie Sr. leased to District #7, one half acre of land for an annual rental of 10 cents. The first school was built of logs and hewn logs served as benches. The first school term of the Dickie District, as it was first called, started June 1, 1858 with 29 pupils. The Dickie family was very influential in the early years of the District. The first teacher was Celia Wilton, for three months. The winter session was held from November through March with Maryanne Hill as teacher. In November 1858 the District was renumbered to District #3. Records show expenses for the first year were \$158. In 1868 a new frame school was built across the road from the present school at a cost of \$160. In 1891 20 desks were purchased for \$62 plus \$15 freight. In 1908 the district purchased an acre of land from the Eggerer Bros for \$250 on which a new school was built in 1909 for about \$1500. At a board meeting in 1915 it was decided to give an extra weeks vacation at potato harvest time. In an article from the "Sauk County Democrat", a weekly paper, this article appeared. "On February 18, 1917 a meeting was held in the school house in District #3 commonly known as the Dickie district. At this meeting the Diamond Hill Community Club was formed. From that time on the school became known as the Diamond Hill School." That same year a furnace was installed. A huge event took place in 1929 when a piece of playground equipment was purchased, called a "Joy Rider", more commonly called a merry-go-round. Free textbooks became a reality in 1939. Electricity arrived in 1941, and along with that the radio. On June 22, 1947, 5 elm trees were planted on the school grounds and dedicated in honor of 5 young men from the district who served during the war. New modern desks came in 1948 and the "milk program" began in 1956 and a refrigerator was purchased to keep the milk cold. The Diamond Hill School was consolidated into the Reedsburg School District on June 1, 1962. As was the case of most rural schools, it was a place for many community events. Singing schools, spelling bees, and declamatory contests and debates were held. Several local churches used the building for religious services. In later years 4-H Club meetings were also held at the school. The Diamond Hill School is located at the intersection of Diamond Hill Road and Ulrich Road.



- **Maple Hill School House (Hill Settlement)**, later called the Maple Hill Settlement, this school house is located near the intersection of County Road PF and Maple Hill Road. This school house, like many of its time, was built of logs with seats and desks made by a local cabinetmaker that lived in the community.



- **Happy Hill School House (Happy Hill Settlement)**, located on Happy Hill Road served as the first school house for those living in the southeast part of the Town. The School House, originally a log cabin type structure, still remains. In its time, the school house doubled as a community church where a Lutheran Pastor from Leland would hold services every few weeks on Sunday afternoons.
- **Maple Leaf School**, is located in Section 6 off Camp Road and operated from 1868-1944. The first meeting of school district No. 2 of the Town of Freedom was held on the 3rd day of March 1868 at the house of B.F. Palmer. School district No. 2 consisted of a whole of sections five, six, seven and eight.



Alfonzo Denslow served as Chairman for this meeting. Frank Fosdick served as Director, B.F. Palmer served as the clerk, and Philip Grub served as the treasurer. On October 5, 1868, the district voted to procure a site for the school from Jacob Paff. It was voted to have schooling for 3 months in the summer and three months in the winter. It was also voted to build the school house out of logs, to be 18 by 26 by 10 feet high, the job to be let by the lowest bidder. The job was let to B.F. Palmer for \$390.00 to be built by the 1st of December. The log school house lasted for 20 years. On July 5, 1887 it was decided that a new frame construction school house should be built and on September 26, 1887 it was noted that the new school should be 22 by 30 and 12 feet high. The new school house was built using material from the original log structure as well as materials delivered by people of the district. The new school house was finally built and finished by August Pyferreon for \$100.00 with occupancy in October, 1888.

Some of the first teachers were Margaret Hamill in 1868, Alice Nelson and Maria Witherby in 1869, P.E. Porter and Martha Fisk in 1870, and Clara Martin in 1871. A special meeting of the district was held April 24, 1944 and a vote was taken at that time to close the school. The votes registered as eight in favor of closing the school with five against. The school was to be closed in the coming year. In the late 1950's the school and its contents were auctioned off and the school was moved to the Prairie du Sac area to start life anew as someone's residential home.



- **Green Valley School**, located in Section 17 on County Road W was built in 1892. The schoolhouse was built to reduce the size of District 6 or the Maple Leaf School. The school house was later vacated in 1958 and consolidated into the Reedsburg School District.
- **Hartzell Century Farm**, is located on Camp Road.

The following includes a historical account of the Hartzell Family Farm (Meyer Family).

The Hartzell century farm began October 2nd, 1874 when August F. Meyer purchased 50 acres from Jacob Pfaff for the sum of \$1050.00. The farm is located at S5104 Camp Road within Section 5 and 6 of the Town of Freedom. The farm consisted of a hand hewn log house, a substantially built hop house, a three-story granary and a barn. In the 1870s hops were the main cash crop in Sauk County.

The original log farmhouse has been added on to accommodate an ever increasing family (sixteen children) and is still in use today. The life of a pioneer farmer was hard. The land had to be cleared of stumps and rocks. The Indians that lived near by would come and beg for food. On October 16th, 1886, 80 additional acres directly west of the original 50 acres were purchased from A. Walton.

On April 4th, 1912 a land contract transferred ownership from Wilhelmina Meyer (widow of August F. Meyer) to (son) Aurthur August Meyer. On November 9, 1943 the farm directly south of the original homestead was purchased from the estate of Thomas R. Morley to put the total acres close to 200.

Aurthur farmed for many years with the help of his wife Elsie, hired men and children Ada, Joyce and Glenn. Arthur was born in the farmhouse and lived on the farm until his death on March 3rd, 1963.

On December 31st 1963, a land contract transferred ownership to Donald L. Hartzell and Joyce I. (Meyer) Hartzell. Don and Joyce farmed for many years with the help of their sons Don Jr., Steve, Jeff and a nephew Gaylord "Biff" Grover.

The main crops in the early years were corn and alfalfa. Later years soybeans were added to the crop rotation. The farm was primarily a dairy operation from the early 1900s to 1957 when the focus was changed to beef. In the 1970s a hog operation was added to sell feeder pigs. Today (2005) most of the tillable land is rented out to Josh Gerike.

On January 1st, 2003 the farm was divided into four sections and ownership was transferred to Don Hartzell Jr., Steven Hartzell, Jeff Hartzell, and Biff Grover. Both Steve and Jeff have built new houses on parts of the farm. Don and Joyce still live in the original farmhouse. --provided by Steve Hartzell

- **Klein Century Farm**, is located on Klein Road.

The Klein farm began on March 7, 1882 when Charles Klein purchased 160 acres from Michael Hanley Sr. in the Town of Freedom, Section 20. The barn that is still in use today was built in 1889, and the house, built later, is still in use.

On January 24, 1910 Charles Klein and his wife transferred ownership to Louis Klein and wife (Anna) October 14, 1958 transferred ownership to Anna Klein. On October 8, 1962, the land was transferred to Walter Klein and wife (Esther). In February 1969 the land was transferred to Esther Klein followed by Clifford and Carl Klein in 2000. – provided by Carl Klein

- **Dickie Century Farm**, is located on County Road PF just east of the Village of North Freedom.
- **Meyer Century Farm**, is located on County Road PF in the southwest part of the Town.

- **Harold Kruse and Ken Lange Rock Shelters**, are located on Section 14. Prior to European settlement, the area and shelters were used by indigenous cultures. Several remains of this use have been discovered.
- **LaRue Tavern**, located in the unincorporated Village of LaRue got its inception in 1889 from two men, William G. La Rue and Robert B. Whiteside who began selling mining rights and leases. The townsite of LaRue was platted in 1903 and later included a hotel, general store, church and two taverns, one of which remains today—the LaRue Tavern.



- **Mid-Continent Railroad Museum**, officially came into existence on May 27, 1963 at its current site in the Town of Freedom. The museum began through an agreement signed in October, 1961 with the Hillsboro & Northeastern Railroad for use of their track, which ran between Hillsboro and Union Center in southwestern Wisconsin. In the spring of 1962, the interstate Commerce Commission rules became apparent which prohibited the operation of steam-powered locomotives on federally regulated lines. At this same time, the Chicago and Northwestern railroad was petitioning for the abandonment of a 4.2 mile stretch of track otherwise known as the Quartzite Spur. This spur was originally used to haul rock and iron ore from LaRue. Negotiations began and by the spring of 1963 the museum was able to operate the steam-powered locomotives on the abandoned spur and thus the museum was established along this spur.



Today the museum and train rides operate from May through September with numerous planned events throughout the year, including, but not limited to, dinner trains, snow trains, autumn festivals and the like.

According to the Mid-Continent Railway Museum, the following Mission is posted:

Mid Continent Railway Museum Mission Statement

The Mid-Continent Railway Museum is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the railroad legacy for the educational benefit of the general public. Its primary focus shall be on railroading of the Upper Midwest during the Golden Age of Railroading, 1880-1916.

The Museum adheres to the following principles:

- 1) to collect and preserve rolling stock, structures, and other artifacts that meet the Museum's focus;
- 2) to restore the equipment based upon sound scholarship;
- 3) to operate a demonstration steam passenger train in an historically accurate environment of a turn-of-the-century rural railroad;
- 4) to interpret, through Museum display and educational programs, the history, equipment, skills, and the human facets of the rail industry;
- 5) to maintain a library and archival collections in the interest of promoting historical studies of the industry;
- 6) to hold the Museum's collection in the public trust, ensuring long-term care of historic objects entrusted to its collections.

6.14 LaRue and Oliver



The Village of La Rue, named after William Gordon La Rue, was first platted in 1903 by his company. William LaRue came to Sauk County from Duluth, Minnesota in 1889 convinced that high quality iron ore could be found. In 1899, at the advent of a new drilling system utilizing diamond drills, LaRue's dream become a possible reality. Shortly after shafts were developed and mining began. To facilitate the movement of materials, the Chicago-Northwestern Railroad built a spur to North Freedom. In its time, LaRue

boasted a population of over 500 people. The mining activity did not last long, in part due to competition from mines producing better grades and quantities of ore and the fact that LaRue's mines constantly filled with water. The iron mines finally ceased operation around 1914 and the community of LaRue quickly returned to its pre-boom status. In 1917 mining of quartzite began in LaRue, but was also short lived due to the discovery of better rock in the Ohio Valley region. In 1957 the last load of quartzite was removed from LaRue.

In its time, LaRue consisted of a hotel, general store, elementary school, row houses and a church. The Village also boasted the LaRue Tavern and Dancehall, the only remaining remnant of the boom town days. The LaRue Tavern is located just south of the original Chicago-Northwestern railroad spur.

In addition to the Village of LaRue, a second community, Oliver was platted on August 29, 1911 with over 500 building lots in anticipation of a continued mining boom. Spurred on by the Oliver Mining Company, intent on extracting high-grade iron ore, 80 lots were sold after the plat recording. Plagued by the same water problem experience by LaRue, the Oliver Mining Company was unsuccessful and the future community of Oliver never came to be. The Town of Freedom officially vacated the Plat of Oliver in 1998 and the only remnant includes the original plat on paper, never conceived.

6.15 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 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. Check with contact agency for current status of programs and include:

Historic Preservation Subgrants are available to governments and non-profit organizations for surveys to identify and evaluate historical, architectural and archaeological resources for nominating properties and districts 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 projects that rehabilitate such buildings.

Historic Home Owner'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.

6.16 Utilities and Community Resources Goal, Objectives and Policies

Utilities and Community Facilities Goal: Maintain and enhance utilities, facilities, services, and cultural and historical resources.

Utilities and Community Facilities Objectives/Policies:

UCFO-1 Encourage the maintenance and improvement of utility infrastructure.

UCFP-1A Require power utility companies to use current high voltage transmission line corridors.

UCFP-1B Encourage the Town Board to develop a permitting process that will require utilities that are burying cable along Town Roads to present a plan to the Town Board for

approval. The utility Plan will note where utilities will be located so as to provide the Town with known locations. The Plan will also address restoration and cleanup of disturbed areas. The Plan must be submitted not less than 30 (thirty) days prior to commencement of work.

UCFO-2 The Town encourages the use of renewable energy such as solar, wind and biomass.

UCFP-2A The Town of Freedom encourages landowners to pursue renewable energy options as a form of economic development and self sustainability.

UCFO-3 Protect archeological and historic structures and the overall rural character of the Town.

UCFP-3A Identify and encourage the preservation of significant historical and archeological areas and work with specific landowners (both owners of the identified area and neighbors) with regard to preservation. When evaluating new development proposals and the creation of new lots, the Town will encourage that these historical and archeological areas be preserved. Preservation includes the resource itself and impacts from adjacent (proposed) land uses. Assistance with regard to preservation techniques may be provided by the Sauk County Historical Society. Refer to *Map 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources* to identify the Town's known historic and archeological resources.

UCFO-4 Continue to provide proper disposal and recycling of solid waste.

UCFP-4A Continue to provide at least the current level of solid waste and recycling services.

UCFO-5 Maintain services in a safe and efficient manner.

UCFP-5A Continue positive correspondence with the North Freedom Fire Department regarding safe and cost effective service provisions and the Village of North Freedom with regard to town use of the Village Hall.

UCFO-6 Encourage the Development of a Town Park/Forest/Recreation Area.

UCFP-6A The Plan Commission will explore the feasibility of establishing a Town Park/Forest/Recreation Area as well as identify possible locations.

UCFO-7 Encourage the Town to establish a 'Town Hall'

UCFP-7A The Plan Commission will explore the feasibility of establishing a Town Hall to be utilized for Town meetings and other community events as well as identify possible locations that are centrally located. This exploration may include a collaboration with the Village of North Freedom in constructing a joint village/town hall inclusive of a Town office and storage areas.

7.0 Purpose

Transportation networks are important components affecting development patterns in a community. Effective systems allow people and goods to flow productively for employment, market reasons, and provide a first opportunity for many 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 located within the Town.

7.1 Principal Arterial, Collector Roadways and Local Roads

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

Table T1: Freedom Roadway Classification System Definitions

Town of Freedom Roadway Classification System (Definition)		
Road	Classification	Definition
I-90/94, U.S. Hwy 12	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterials serve longer intra-urban trips and traffic travelling through urban areas. They carry high traffic volumes and provide links to major activity centers.
State Road 136 and 154	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.
County Roads PF, W, DD, D and Freedom Road	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, and in other areas of the 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 other systems. Local roads offer the lowest level of mobility and through traffic movements on this system is usually discouraged.

Source: Wisconsin DOT

Table T2: Freedom Roadway Classification System Descriptions

Town of Freedom Roadway Classification System (Description)		
Road	Classification	Description
I-90/94	Regional Interstate Roadway Principal Arterial	Located 20 miles north of the Town of Freedom, 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	Regional Interstate Roadway Principal Arterial	Located 4 miles east of Freedom, 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. In Sauk County in 2000, traffic volumes were generally between 15,000 to 18,000 vehicles per day north of Baraboo and 8,000 to 12,000 vehicles per day south of Baraboo.
State Road 136	Regional State Roadway Minor Arterial	State Road 136 is an east-west route coming from Baraboo via Rock Springs to the east side of Reedsburg. The Highway is located just north of the Freedom Town Line in the Town of Excelsior.
State Road 154	Regional State Roadway Minor Arterial	State Road 154, an east-west route beginning west of Rock Springs cuts across the southwest portion of the Town of Excelsior just north of the Town of Freedom.
County Roads PF, W and I	Regional Interstate Roads Major Collectors	County Road PF enters the southwestern most corner of the Town and travels diagonally through LaRue to the Village of North Freedom and finally connects to State Road 136. County Road W enters the east side of the Town from the Baraboo area and exits the west side of the Town north of Maple Hill Road. County Road I is located just north of the Village of North Freedom and connects to State Road 136.
County Road D and Freedom Road	Regional Interstate Roadways Minor Collectors	County Road D is located in the far northwest corner of the Town and connects State Road 154 to County Road PF in the Town of Honey Creek. Freedom Road is the most heavily used local road in the Town of Freedom. Freedom Road travels north-south and covers almost the entire length of the Town starting just south of the Village of North Freedom, through the Town of Honey Creek to finally connect to County Road C which connects to U.S. Highway 12.
County Road DD, Remaining Town Roads and Denzer Road	Local Roads	County Road DD connects State Road 154 to County Road W west of LaRue. Denzer Road travels east-west and north-south starting in the southwest part of the Town off of County Road PF to finally connect with County Road C in the Town of Honey Creek at Denzer. Denzer Road is mentioned as it is most likely the highest traveled local road, behind Freedom Road yet it does not carry the minor collector status. All other Town Roads not otherwise mentioned have the local road status.

Source: Wisconsin DOT

Table T3: Traffic Accidents

Traffic Accidents : 2001-2004					
County Road	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total per road 2001-2004
County Highway D	1		1		2
County Highway DD	4	1	1	3	9
County Highway PF	7	8	11	13	39
County Highway W	6	9	10	11	36
Town Road	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total per road 2001-2004
Denzer Road	1	1	1	1	4
Diamond Hill Road	1	2			3
Fairview Road		1			1
Freedom Road	2	2	5	4	13
Happy Hill Road	1	2			3
Klein Road		1			1
Kosin Road		1		1	2
Maple Hill Road			1		1
Schanke Road		1			1
Schara Road			1		1
Schmidt Road	1				1
Stone Church Road			2	1	3
Ulrich Road			2		2
Wilson Road		1			1

Source: Sauk County

7.2 Rustic Roads The Rustic Road System in Wisconsin was created by the 1973 State Legislature in an effort to help citizens and local units of government preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, outstanding natural features along rural roads such as rugged terrain, native vegetation, native wildlife, or open areas with agricultural vistas which singly or in combination uniquely set these roads apart from others.

These roads are preferably, a minimum length of 2 miles and, where feasible, should provide a completed closure or loop, or connect to major highways at both ends of the route. They are lightly traveled local access roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers and motorists as well as the adjacent property owners. A Rustic Road may be dirt, gravel or paved. It may be one-way or two-way. It may also have bicycle or hiking paths adjacent to or incorporated in the roadway area.



Unique brown and yellow signs mark the routes of all officially-designated Rustic Roads. A small placard beneath the Rustic Roads sign identifies each Rustic Road by its numerical designation within the total statewide system. To avoid confusion with the State Trunk Highway numbering, a letter "R" prefix is used such as R50 or R120. The Department of Transportation pays the cost of furnishing and installing Rustic Roads marking signs.

Any officially designated Rustic Road shall continue to be under local control. The maximum speed limit on a Rustic Road has been established by law at 45 mph. A speed limit as low as 25 mph may be established by the local governing authority. The county, city, village or town shall have the same

authority over the Rustic Road as it possesses over other highways under its jurisdiction. A Rustic Road is eligible for state aids just as any other public highway.

The Town of Freedom contains portions of Rustic Road 21, the remainder of which is shared with the Town of Honey Creek. Located just off County PF, the 8.6 mile road follows portions of Schara Road, Orchard Road, and Ruff Road and picks up a northern portion Slotty Road in the Town of Honey Creek.

7.3 Airports

Although there are no airports located in the Town of Freedom, 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 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 Freedom 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 with additional expansion 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 hour from the Town.

7.4 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 Freedom.

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.

7.5 Other Transportation Options

➤ **Trucking**

Trucking service is accommodated through the regions transportation network. There are several privately owned trucking operations within this area that meet the needs of the residents. These include Skinner Transfer out of Reedsburg and Fuchs trucking from the Town of Roxbury in Dane County. Cook's trucking also provides manure waste hauling services to many farmers in the area.

➤ **Rail**

The Wisconsin and Southern rail line begins in the City of Reedsburg and serves the Reedsburg Industrial Park and goes through Baraboo and finally through the Village of Merrimac. Commercial rail service is primarily limited to the removal of quartzite from the Martin Marietta Quarry north of the Village of Rock Springs. Rail services for tourism and entertainment purposes is provided by the Mid-Continent Railway Museum located northwest of the Village of North Freedom. Additional information about the Mid-Continent Railway Museum and related activities can be noted under *Chapter 6 Utilities and Community Resources*.

➤ **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 criteria is met, any individual may become part of the vanpool.

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

➤ **USH 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan (October, 2003)**

The *Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan* includes an overall vision and detailed recommendations for the entire 24-mile Highway 12 corridor in Sauk County. The Plan's recommendations are focused on identifying areas for development, preserving natural areas and farms, protecting community appearance and views, promoting appropriate economic development, and making the most of transportation improvements. The Highway 12 Plan also includes potential tools and techniques which may be adopted by local governments to implement the recommendations of the Highway 12 Plan.

Although the Highway 12 Plan primarily focuses on communities directly adjacent to the corridor, it also includes recommendations which can be utilized by secondary communities, which are those communities adjacent to the 'primary' communities. Freedom has been recognized as one of the secondary communities that will be affected by the overall upgrades to and expansion of the Highway 12 corridor.

➤ **Translinks 21: A Multimodal Transportation Plan for Wisconsin's 21st 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, provisions of 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 with local governments providing 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.

➤ **2002-2006 Sauk County Highway Improvement Plan**

The Highway Improvement Program for Sauk County identifies and prioritizes specific county road improvement projects for the next five years. Road improvement projects for Freedom are under Section 7.1.

➤ **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 Freedom.

➤ **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 practicable along and across State highways. There are no recommendations specific to Sauk County.

7.7 Analysis of the Existing Transportation Systems and Plans

As previously described, the Town of Freedom's transportation system consists of primarily local and county roads. The policies in this Plan provide for future directives relative to town road maintenance and improvements.



7.8 Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies

Transportation Goal: Preserve and maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.

Transportation Objectives/Policies:

TO-1 Continue to improve and maintain roads to meet the needs of current and future land uses.

TP-1A Continue to maintain road quality by utilizing State and County aids for road improvement.

TP-1B Carefully plan new developments to minimize extensive road construction and avoid burden to the Town for maintenance. As part of this policy, develop and implement Town road impact fees for new development projects or the expansion of existing land uses that place a burden on or require the upgrading of any Town roads.

TP-1C Maintain the current rustic road system in the Town as identified on *Map 7-1 Transportation*. For those rustic roads that are currently in a graveled state (graveled roads are identified on *Map 7-1 Transportation*), maintain this level of service and road condition.

TP-1D For all new and renewed mineral extraction operations, require the development of a legal agreement whereby the extraction firm/leaseholder will upgrade and maintain any Town road to meet the needs of additional traffic and weight requirements as defined by the Town Board or through an unbiased engineering study paid for by the mineral extraction firm/leaseholder. Additionally, as part of final reclamation/abandonment of any mineral extraction site, require that the Town road be returned to pre-extraction conditions or better and be paid for by the mineral extraction company or lease holder.

TO-2 Identify alternative transportation opportunities for persons who are elderly or have disabilities.

TP-2A Support additional transportation options for those without access to an automobile, including the elderly, disabled and children.

TO-3 Coordinate Town road standards with adjacent municipalities.

TP-3A Through intergovernmental coordination and the comprehensive planning process, work with neighboring Towns and the Village of North Freedom to establish uniform standards and connectivity for roads that connect at municipal borders relative to providing the same standards for weight limits, bike routes and related safety features, road width and road upgrades and other issues as identified.

TO-4 Address safety concerns with regard to multi-use of roads.

TP-4A When reconstructing roads the Town will consider multiple users and incorporate provisions to enhance the safety of these users. Multiple users may include bikers, farmers and snowmobiles. Such provision may include, but is not limited to adding bike lanes, signage or increasing road width to accommodate farming equipment.

8.0 Purpose

Unlike neighboring Towns, the Town of Freedom is not agriculture driven in the traditional sense. Rather, from a purely economic perspective, timber production and related timber sales quite possibly represent the largest economic potential in the Town. However, the forested landscape in Freedom also represents a non-market benefit consistent with the enjoyment of the landscape by residents and visitors, and the potential to capture visitor dollars by utilizing that natural draw of the Town's landscape. The large forested landscape in the Town is exemplified by the fact that at least the southern one third falls within the Baraboo Range, an area not conducive to farming. In addition there has been a historical drop in the number of farms in the town coupled with the loss of actual acreage under agriculture production. As a result, the previous farming landscapes have reverted back to wetlands and forests. In light of this observation, the planning process has identified that while traditional agriculture activities may not produce any significant economic gains in the Town, alternative types of agriculture may be a worthwhile endeavor. These types of agriculture may include the production of specialty crops and specialty services that aim more so for the tourism dollar rather than a straight commodity dollar. Related to the tourism dollar, economic development must also tie into economic activities in the Village of North Freedom as well as the Mid-Continent Railway Museum. Both will continue to draw tourists to the general area, which represents a ready consumer of products and services that can be provided by the Town of Freedom residents. This chapter will compare the economic status of its residents to neighboring communities and it will also examine the general health of agriculture economics in Sauk County. More importantly, this chapter will look at the feasibility of building upon the natural resource, cottage industry, and tourism economic opportunities for the Town

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.

➤ Commuting Patterns

In terms of commuting patterns, the 2000 Census indicates that 10.70% of Freedom residents work at home. It is assumed that the majority of these residents are involved in the farming occupation. For those who commute to their jobs, 80.10% drive alone while 5.5% carpool. The average commuting time to work is approximately 30 minutes.

➤ Employment Characteristics in Freedom and Sauk County

Sauk County provides many employment opportunities as is reflected in the 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 2003 was 4.3%. The DWD does not break out employment trends for individual Towns, however the 2000 census has identified that at the time 2.9% or 10 persons from the Town of Freedom were unemployed while 80.3% or 281 persons were employed. The remaining 19.7 percent or 69 either claim disability or are retired.

➤ **Area Economic Viability and Employment Opportunities**

The potential for economic opportunities within commuting distance of Freedom continues to improve. The Sauk Prairie Area has many service, retail and tourism industries as well as two Business/Industrial Parks, both with water, sewer electric and gas service in place. The Industrial Park in Prairie du Sac is fully developed, but existing building sites may be available. Sauk City's industrial park has been recently expanded and has room for additional growth. Prairie du Sac has recently completed downtown streetscape improvements. Sauk City is looking at ways to enhance the riverfront and continue to revitalize the downtown area. The Sauk Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce will be embarking on an Economic Development Study for the Sauk Prairie Area.

Baraboo and West Baraboo contain many service, retail and tourism industries and attractions as well as four industrial/business parks. All have water, sewer electric and gas service in place. The City of Reedsburg is host to a number of Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIF) to aid the facilitation of industrial tax base as well as high-end manufacturing jobs. The City has also established a Business Center Redevelopment District aimed at promoting industrial development to the City's business Center. The agricultural, retails sales and services sectors of the economy are strong. Tourism is playing an increasing role in this area with the 400 Trail, and historically maintained downtown area. Spring Green's Industrial Park contains many growing businesses. The park is currently full but may expand in the future. Artistic, historic and recreational activities make tourism a source of economic vitality for Spring Green.

The major county employers provide diverse employment opportunities that residents in the Town of Freedom may take advantage of. **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 Freedom, the major employment areas of Baraboo, Sauk Prairie, and Spring Green and Reedsburg are within the average commute time of 30 minutes from Freedom. In the top 20, the Baraboo area contains Baraboo Sysco Foods, Perry Judd's, Flambeau Plastic, Sauk County Government, Baraboo School System and St Clare Hospital together employing 3,587 persons. In the Sauk City, Prairie du Sac area, Milwaukee Valve, Sauk Prairie School District and Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital together employ 1,395 persons. In the Spring Green area, Cardinal IG and Cardinal CG employ 850 persons. Edward Kraemer and Sons Inc. in Plain, while not on the top-ten list, employs 110 persons at the headquarters in Plain, and 600 persons total. 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 3035 persons. The Town of Delton has Ho-Chunk Casino, Hotel and Convention Center with 1670 employees and the Village of Lake Delton has Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, Noah's Ark and Wilderness Lodge together with 1883 employees.

In addition to business opportunities outside of the Town, the Town does continue to provide a number of jobs in the agriculture industry as well as numerous local cottage industry types of businesses, which are noted later in this Chapter.

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	885	Reedsburg
Flambeau Plastic Co.	Plastics	700	Baraboo
Baraboo Sysco Foods	Wholesale Food Distribution	675	Baraboo
Perry Judd's, Inc.	Commercial Printing	550	Baraboo
Cardinal IG	Insulated Glass	500	Spring Green
Milwaukee Valve Co. – PDS Division	Brass Foundry	500	Prairie du Sac
Cardinal CG.	Coated Glass	350	Spring Green
Seat's Inc.	Seats	350	Reedsburg
Gerber Products Plastics	Baby Supplies	310	Reedsburg

Source: Sauk County Development Corporation, 2003

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

Employer	Product	Employees	Location
Ho-Chunk Casino, Hotel & Convention Center	Gaming, Hotel, Convention Center	1,670	Town of Delton
Wilderness Lodge	Hotel/Resort	820	Village of Lake Delton
Sauk County	Government	662	City of Baraboo
Kalahari Resort & Convention Center	Hotel/Resort/Convention Center	543	Village of Lake Delton
Baraboo School System	Education	530	City of Baraboo
Noah's Ark	Water Park	520	Village of Lake Delton
Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & Clinics	Health Care	470	Villages of Prairie du Sac/Sauk City
St. Clare Hospital	Health Care	470	City of Baraboo
Sauk Prairie School District	Education	425	Villages of Prairie du Sac/Sauk City
Reedsburg School System	Education	390	City of Reedsburg

Source: Sauk County Development Corporation, 2003

➤ Area Income Comparison

According to the Census, the median income for residents in Freedom was \$55,000.00. **Table E3 Regional Income Comparisons**, shows that compared to the neighboring Towns, the County and the State, the Town of Freedom exceeds in median household income.

Table E3: Regional Income Comparisons

Percent of Households in Income Bracket									
Household Income in 1999	Freedom	Honey Creek	Sumpter	Baraboo	Excelsior	Reedsburg	Westfield	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	0.00%	6.83%	6.47%	8.00%	6.30%	4.50%	5.10%	6.75%	3.54%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3.09%	3.60%	8.89%	3.60%	3.40%	6.30%	3.70%	5.80%	3.01%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.11%	8.63%	19.95%	11.80%	9.00%	7.60%	13.60%	13.35%	9.14%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.49%	7.91%	16.98%	9.50%	9.90%	9.10%	13.10%	13.80%	11.56%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.52%	28.75%	19.68%	20.30%	15.00%	23.90%	27.60%	21.03%	18.67%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	38.27%	23.74%	15.90%	25.80%	30.10%	24.40%	21.00%	23.16%	27.58%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7.41%	10.79%	8.09%	9.80%	14.10%	11.30%	8.40%	9.13%	14.09%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4.23%	7.19%	2.43%	7.60%	9.00%	8.30%	7.50%	4.71%	8.49%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5.56%	1.44%	0.81%	1.30%	80.00%	2.00%	0.00%	1.07%	1.94%
\$200,000 or more	1.23%	1.08%	0.81%	2.20%	2.50%	2.50%	0.00%	1.21%	1.98%
Median Household Income (dollars)	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 46,923.00	\$ 31,806.00	\$ 48,419.00	\$ 54,375.00	\$ 49,236.00	\$ 42,188.00	\$ 41,941.00	\$ 52,911.00

Source: US Census, 2000, DP-3 File 4

➤ Agriculture Economic Activity

The most recent compiled data for agriculture economic characteristics was in 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

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

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 having 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, and agri-tourism and participating in grower cooperatives.

➤ **Tourism Economic Impact and Opportunity**

According to the 2003 Wisconsin Department of Revenue report on tourism, Sauk County is the third most popular tourism destination in the State, behind Milwaukee and Dane Counties. 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, travelers spend more than half of their total expenditures on shopping and recreation (including event and entertainment fees, wagering, sightseeing and cultural events). Food expenditures represent 25% and lodging expenses represent 13% of the total estimated traveler expenditures. Six percent of Wisconsin traveler expenditures were spent 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.

Table E6: Travel Expenditures and Economic Impact, shows that the Wisconsin Department of Tourism estimated traveling expenditures at approximately \$947 million dollars during 2003, up \$883 million from 2002 for Sauk County. This expenditure supported 25,302 jobs.

Table E6: Travel Expenditures and Economic Impact

Travel Expenditures and Economic Impact							
	2002 Expenditures	2001 Expenditures	Percent Change	Full-Time Job Equivalents	Resident Income	State Revenues	Local Revenues
Sauk County	\$856,181,017	\$828,423,253	3.35%	24,532	\$530,631,384	\$66,666,331	\$65,527,817
State of WI	11,676,615,166	11,446,492,521	2.01%	323,759	\$6,602,720,000	\$1,077,135,000	\$777,910,000

Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism, 2001 Note: This is the most current data provided by the Department of Tourism.

The southwestern portion of Sauk County has many opportunities for recreational, cultural, historical and nature based tourism. Some of the sites visited in or near the Town of Freedom include: Hemlock Draw, Wisconsin Society of Ornithology, Natural Bridge State Park, Tuck-a-way Campground, Honey Creek Historic District, Lady Loretto Church, Maple Hill Apple Orchard, Mid Continent Railroad Museum, the Wisconsin River, Devil's Lake State Park, Ski Hi Apple Orchard, Baxter's Hollow, and a variety of other campgrounds and horseback riding stables, as well as nearby hunting grounds, snowmobile, hiking and biking trails.

With the Town of Freedom's proximity to so many tourism locations, the potential for the Town to add to its economic base in this category presents an opportunity. What's more, the Town of Freedom is host to the Mid Continent Railway Museum. By cooperating with the Museum, there is an opportunity to promote Town cottage industry types of businesses and low-impact tourism opportunities. It will be important, however, to ensure that cottage industries and low-impact tourism opportunities both reflect and protect the Town's history, natural resources and current residents while still providing for an important economic niche for the Town.

8.2 Local Employment and Economic Activity

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

➤ Education, Income Levels and Employment Activity

Table E7: Educational Attainment, Freedom shows that the percentage of Freedom residents with a high school diploma increased by 18.4% from 1990 to 2000, roughly double the rate of Sauk County at 8.8%. The percentages of those with a Bachelors Degree increased for both Freedom and Sauk County from 1990 to 2000 at roughly 5.0%.

Table E7 Educational Attainment, Freedom

Educational Attainment, 1990-2000				
	High School Diploma, Freedom	Bachelors Degree or Higher, Freedom	High School Diploma, Sauk County	Bachelors Degree or Higher, Sauk County
1990	73.10%	12.20%	74.70%	12.90%
2000	91.50%	17.70%	83.50%	17.60%

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2000

➤ Income Levels

As detailed in the Housing Chapter, of the 159 households in Freedom, 30, (18.5%) were in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income bracket. Another 62 (38.3%) of the households were in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income bracket. This is compared to Sauk County, at 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. Therefore, the median household income is the income value at which half of the other income values are above and one half are below. An average value is found by dividing a sum of values by its total number of values. Average household 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 E8 Distribution of Household Income, 1999 shows that in 1990, the median household income for the Town of Freedom was \$55,000, while the average household income was \$57,307. The ratio of the average to the median income is 1.04. As a comparison, the Town of Honey Creek's median household income is \$46,923, the Town of Excelsior is \$54,375, the Town of Westfield is \$42,188, the Town of Baraboo is \$48,419 and the Town of Reedsburg is at \$49,236.

Table E8: Distribution of Household Income, 1999

Distribution of Household Income, 1999	% of Households	% of Households	% of Households
	Town of Freedom	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Less than \$10,000	0.0%	6.7%	3.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3.1%	5.8%	3.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.1%	13.4%	9.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.5%	13.8%	11.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.5%	21.0%	18.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	38.3%	23.2%	27.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7.4%	9.1%	14.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	4.3%	4.7%	8.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5.6%	1.1%	1.9%
\$200,000 or more	1.2%	1.2%	2.0%
Median Household Income	\$55,000	\$41,941	\$52,911
No. of Households	162	21,647	2,086,304
Aggregate Household Income	\$10,295,900	\$1,076,409,500	\$112,374,261,000
Avg. Household Income	\$57,307	\$49,726	\$53,863
Ratio of mean to median HH Income	1.04	1.19	1.23

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.

➤ Employment

Table E9: Labor Force and Employment

shows that of the 416 persons in Freedom during 2000, 350 persons, age 16 or older, are in the labor force, and an additional 69 persons, age 16 or older that are not in the labor force. Of those in the labor force, 10 or 2.9% are unemployed. This is equivalent to the unemployment rate for Sauk County of 3.0% according to the 2000 Census.

Table E9: Labor Force and Employment

Category	Employment, 2000	
	Town of Freedom, 2000	Sauk County, 2000
Population 16 years and over	350	42,480
Civilian Labor Force	281	30,374
Employed	271	29,108
Unemployed	10	1,266
Not in Labor Force	69	12,085
Unemployment Rate	3.6%	4.2%

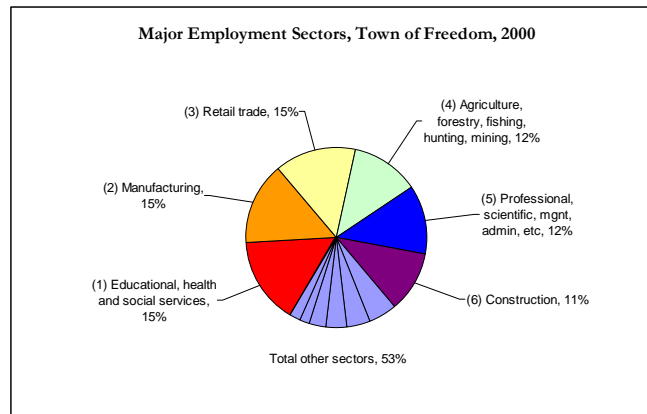
Source: U.S. Census, 2000, P-3

Table E10: Employment by Occupation, Town of Freedom shows that manufacturing, once a major occupation has now been surpassed by the education industry as the major employer. Other occupations remained relatively constant with the exception of the arts, entertainment, recreation and food industry segment, which jumped from zero employed to fourteen. **Chart E11 Major Employment Sectors, Town of Freedom** 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 Freedom

Industry	Town of Freedom, Employment by Industry, 1990-2000					
	Town of Freedom, 1990	Town of Freedom 1990, Percent of Employed Population	Town of Freedom, 2000	Town of Freedom 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	46	19.91%	33	12.18%	-13	-7.74%
Construction	14	6.06%	29	10.70%	15	4.64%
Manufacturing	50	21.65%	41	15.13%	-9	-6.52%
Wholesale trade	3	1.30%	10	3.69%	7	2.39%
Retail trade	38	16.45%	40	14.76%	2	-1.69%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	13	5.63%	11	4.06%	-2	-1.57%
Information	0	0.00%	5	1.85%	5	1.85%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	5	2.16%	8	2.95%	3	0.79%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	10	4.33%	33	12.18%	23	7.85%
Educational, health and social services	39	16.88%	42	15.50%	3	-1.38%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	0	0.00%	14	5.17%	14	5.17%
Other services (except public Administration)	2	0.87%	0	0.00%	-2	-0.87%
Public Administration	11	4.76%	5	1.85%	-6	-2.92%
Industry Total	231	100.00%	271	100.00%	40	8.63%

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 Freedom

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	10.69%	1,557	5.35%	-901	-5.34%
Construction	1,751	7.62%	2,282	7.84%	531	0.22%
Manufacturing	5,528	24.05%	5,554	19.08%	26	-4.97%
Wholesale trade	888	3.86%	935	3.21%	47	-0.65%
Retail trade	3,757	16.34%	3,843	13.20%	86	-3.14%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	865	3.76%	1,150	3.95%	285	0.19%
Information	268	1.17%	425	1.46%	157	0.29%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	945	4.11%	1,255	4.31%	310	0.20%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1,381	6.01%	1,521	5.23%	140	-0.78%
Educational, health and social services	3,105	13.51%	5,130	17.62%	2025	4.12%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	242	1.05%	3,525	12.11%	3283	11.06%
other services (except public Administration)	1,144	4.98%	915	3.14%	-229	-1.83%
Public Administration	655	2.85%	1,016	3.49%	361	0.64%
Industry Total	22,987		29,108		6121	0.00%

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.

➤ **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 Freedom has not added many homes in the last 20 years, the number of farms have substantially declined. This decline could account for the increase in commuter driving alone coupled with the decrease in those working at home (i.e., on-site agriculture operations). The number of residents who commute alone increased from 72.2% in 1990 to 80.1% in 2000 and in comparison the number of residents who work at home or who no longer car pool decreased proportionally by 10.2%. The number of residents using public transportation includes 3 persons or 1.1%.

Table E13: Commuting Patterns

Commuting Patterns	Freedom 1990	Percent Freedom, 1990	Sauk County 1990	Percent Sauk County, 1990	Freedom 2000	Percent Freedom, 2000	Sauk County 2000	Percent Sauk County, 2000
Drove Alone	168	72.7%	16,004	70.4%	217	80.1%	22,213	77.4%
Carpooled	27	11.7%	2,952	13.0%	15	5.5%	3,196	11.1%
Public Transportation	0	0.0%	87	0.4%	3	1.1%	139	0.5%
Walked	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A	5	1.8%	1,116	3.9%
Other Means	2	0.9%	185	0.8%	2	0.7%	230	0.8%
Work At home	34	14.7%	3,498	15.4%	29	10.7%	1,800	6.3%
Total	231	100.0%	22,726	100.0%	271	100.0%	28,694	100.0%
Average Travel Time (minutes)	N/A		N/A		22.8		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

➤ **Local Employment Opportunities**

Within the Town of Freedom several small businesses exist. The two largest are Four Elements, a family owned body care products business specializing in products made from organically produced herbs, and the Maple Hill Apple Orchard, also a family run business specializing in apples and apple products, fall family activities and the sale of related merchandise. Mid-Continent Railroad Museum also provides for tourism opportunities in the Town. Additional businesses in the Town include Geffert's Sugar Bush Syrup, a family run maple syrup operation, Freedom Boat Works, and The Little French Bakery which produces French pastries, artisan breads, chocolates and cakes by special order, and also offers cooking classes taught by the owner or by invited guest chefs. The Town also hosts the La Rue Tavern and Schliekau Auto Body, which provides for auto collision and restoration services. Lastly, the Town is host to the Kraemer/Klingenmeyer quarry.

8.3 Other Programs and Partnerships

➤ **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.

➤ **Wisconsin Department of Commerce**

Provides a broad range of financial resources to help businesses and communities undertake economic development. These programs include:

- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Economic Development Program**
Provides grants to communities to promote local job creation and retention.

- **CDBG – Public Facilities** helps eligible local governments upgrade community facilities, infrastructure, and utilities to benefit low to moderate income residents
- **Rural Economic Development Program** offers low-interest loans for businesses with fewer than 25 employees.
- **US Small Business Administration (SBA)** provides 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 IRBs.
- **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. Facilitation is provided to help match company needs with possible locations throughout the State. 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.

8.4 Economic Development Goal, Objectives and Policies

Economic Development Goal: Promote economic success of residents and businesses in the Town by encouraging the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services that reflect and are compatible with the rural character of the Town.

Economic Development Objectives/Policies:

EDO-1 Encourage the maintenance and development of cottage industries, farming and farm related businesses, which complement the agrarian and rural character.

EDP-1A The Plan Commission will foster the establishment of a Town/Land Owner Collaborative made up of interested residents and public and private partners to promote and recruit tourism, the maintenance and development of cottage industries, farming and farm related businesses and compatible commercial businesses in the Town. Periodically include opportunities and program descriptions in a Town newsletter or website.

EDP-1B The Town will work with Sauk County to develop new zoning options which will allow for innovative opportunities for economic development related to agriculture and recreation so as to negate the need to rezone, but rather incorporate a system of special exception or conditional uses under the predominate zoning district.

EDO-2 Promote alternative and renewable forms of energy as a form of economic development and self sustainability.

EDP-2A The Town encourages the use of renewable energy such as solar, wind and biomass provided that they are utilized for single residential or business uses only. This does not preclude residents/businesses from selling excess energy produced back to the grid. Through a Town newsletter or website the Town intends to periodically highlight these forms of energy, financial incentives/programs for new installations, and residents/landowners who currently utilize these energy systems.

EDO-3 Encourage restoration and maintenance of all structures including the preservation of historic sites.

EDP-3A Encourage the sharing of resources and information which will assist interested landowners in the areas of cultural preservation and/or economic development related to the Town that reflects the Town's needs and character.

EDO-4 Promote outdoor recreation opportunities.

EDP-4A Plan collaboratively with the Village of North Freedom and other interest groups to protect and promote the Baraboo River as a recreational resource and in particular support the Village with its efforts to develop a multi-use trail and/or canoe launch provided no land is seized through eminent domain.

EDP-4B Outdoor recreational opportunities shall be consistent with permitted uses defined by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance and specifically the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District.

EDO-5 Consider the location of and prevent potential future conflicts of new residential development that occurs near areas that have value for future mineral extraction operations.

EDP-5A Prior to the issuance of any town building permit or creation of any new lot, utilize *Map 9-4 Potential Mineral Deposits* which shows potential mineral deposits that can be economically removed. Notify applicants of this potential resource.

EDP-5B Property owners with mineral deposits will be permitted to extract the mineral resource provided that they meet all State and County requirements relative to the protection of surrounding natural resources, residences, and final reclamation of the mineral extraction site. All mineral extraction plans must also be approved by the Town's Plan Commission and Town Board.

EDO-6 Encourage the use of quality construction materials consistent with the rural character.

EDP-6A Continue to administer the Uniform Dwelling Code to ensure a high level of quality for all new construction.

EDP-6B New construction in the Town is highly encouraged to utilize earth tone colors for any new construction. Agriculture areas may utilize the additional colors of red or white to mimic traditional farm related structures.

EDO-7 Encourage and help promote the Mid-Continent Railroad Museum as a tourist attraction showing the beautiful natural scenery and for providing economic help to the area.

EDP-7A Work with the Mid-Continent Railway Museum to help acquire grants for equipment repair.

9.0 Purpose

The Town of Freedom is home to one of the most outstanding landscapes and most significant habitat and environmentally sensitive areas in the upper Midwest. This significance is exemplified by the large complex of wetlands located primarily in the north-central and north-western part of the Town and the Baraboo Range lands in the southern two-thirds of the Town, which incorporates large tracts of contiguous forested lands. Both areas serve as important habitat types for many rare and endangered species, both resident and migratory. This section highlights these and other important natural and historical resources in the Town and provides a platform for the establishment and implementation of preservation programs and guidelines, growth management practices, siting guidelines for proposed development and other means.

9.1 General Soils Information

Soil suitability is a key factor in determining the best and most cost efficient 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 agriculture productivity and suitability. Freedom is dominated by two major soil groups: Baraboo Silt Loam (also Baraboo Stony Silt Loam), Ettrick Silt Loam, with some Curran Silt Loam soils present. General soils information can also be noted on *Map 9-2 General Soils Map*.

- **Baraboo Silt Loam (also Baraboo Stony Silt Loam)** soils are moderately slopes located on well drained convex ridgetops and foot slopes on loess-covered quartzite uplands. Most areas are oblong and range from 3 to 90 acres. This soil has a depth of roughly 34 to more than 40 inches before underlying quartzite bedrock is reached. Included in this mapping area are small areas where cobbles, stones and boulders are on the surface of and throughout the soil. Permeability and water holding capacity is moderate in this soil. This soil has a seasonal perched water table just above the quartzite layer. Some areas of these soils are farmed or are used for crops, however past areas that have been cultivated are no longer farmed. This soil is best suited to hay, pasture or trees. Erosion is generally not a problem in areas where soils are used for pasture or hay, however overgrazing destroys plant cover and results in erosion. This soil is only moderately suitable for buildings with basements because and septic tank absorption fields due of the perched water table and minimal depth to bedrock. Suitability can be improved through the use of a filtering mound system and the addition of fill for building construction. Another limitation to be considered for building sites is that the underlying bedrock is very hard and is a poor aquifer. Wells are difficult and expensive to drill and are generally low capacity.
- **Ettrick Silt Loam** soils are nearly level, poorly drained and are often associated with floodplain, in drainageways and low stream terraces. In most areas it is 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 inundated with reed canary grass. This soil is also poorly suited to trees. This soil is poorly suited to building and septic tank absorbtion fields because of the high water table and frequent flooding.
- **Curran Silt Loam** soils are nearly level to gently sloping and are somewhat poorly drained, located in drainage ways and outwash plains and stream terraces. Permeability is moderately slow in the subsoil and rapid in the substratum. The available water capacity is high and surface

runoff is slow. A water table is at a depth of 1 to 3 feet during wet periods. Most drained areas of this soil are used for cultivated crops, hay and pasture. The potential is good for cultivated crops and pasture and is fair for trees. The soil is poorly suited to dwellings with or without basements because of the occasional flooding and seasonal high water table. The soil is also poorly suited to septic tank absorption fields due to the same and moderately slow permeability.

- **LaFarge Silt Loam** are gently sloping to steep well-drained on convex ridge tops, foot slopes and valley floors on unglaciated sandstone uplands. Permeability is typically moderate, as is the permeability. Surface runoff is medium. Most areas of this soil are used for cultivated crops, hay and pasture. Erosion is generally not a problem in areas where this soil is used for pasture of hay. Overgrazing, however, destroys the plant cover and results in erosion. This soil is moderately suited to dwellings without basements because it lacks sufficient strength and stability to support building foundations. This soil is poorly suited to septic tank absorption fields because of the depth to rock. The suitability can be improved by building a filtering mound or adding suitable material.

9.2 Topography and Slope

The examination of topography is necessary to help determine areas where development should be avoided, or where potential constraints may exist. Freedom lies in the unglaciated or driftless area of southern Sauk County. Its topography is diverse and dramatic, dominated on the north by the south face of the Baraboo Range and interspersed throughout with sheer Cambrian limestone, sandstone and quartzite bluffs. Elevations range from 754 feet above sea level in the southeastern marshlands to a height of 1,436 feet above sea level in the northern bluffs. The upland topography is characterized by heavily dissected bedrock ridges and steep valleys, with slopes often in excess of 20%.

- **The Baraboo Bluffs**, also known as **The Baraboo Hills** and **The Baraboo Range**

The steep slopes of the western, unglaciated end of the Baraboo Bluffs provide a diverse range of climatic conditions and “micro-habitats” that support a variety of species co-existing within a relatively confined area. The Baraboo Bluffs are a regionally and nationally significant ancient mountain range containing one of the largest upland hardwood forests in the upper Midwest. More than 8,000 acres of dense forest and steep slopes characterize the Bluffs portion of Freedom, with its unique contingent of rare species of flora and fauna. Twenty-eight different types of forests, wetlands and prairies have been identified in the Bluffs, providing habitat for 23 federal or state listed threatened or endangered species. The harsh soil conditions atop the quartzite bedrock have prevented a viable agriculture and until recently discouraged widespread residential development.

In recognition of its outstanding geological and ecological significance, 50,700 acres of the “South Range” were designated as the **Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark (BRNNL)** by the Secretary of the Interior in 1980, and one of the Earth’s “Last Great Places” by The Nature Conservancy in 1995.

In 1999, Sauk County adopted The Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP) Plan. Under the Protection Plan, the county purchases conservation easements from willing sellers to protect the forest from development. Funding to purchase the easements comes from the settlement regarding the expansion of US Hwy 12 from Middleton to Lake Delton. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Nature Conservancy, and the Baraboo Preservation Association also work with willing sellers to protect forestland within the Bluffs through land and conservation easement acquisitions.

9.3 Environmentally Sensitive and Significant Resources

The Town of Freedom has identified environmentally sensitive areas as areas of land having slopes greater than 12%, lands within the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark, surface waters, floodplains, wetlands, hydric soils, groundwater recharge areas, areas of contiguous forest cover, and areas that harbor endangered species. 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 9-3 General Floodplain Areas**.

➤ Woodlands

Forty-eight percent of the land in Freedom is covered by forest. Much of this forest is located in the Baraboo Bluffs, with additional forested areas located northwest of County Road PF. Once dominated by great stands of white oak and sugar maple, logging, land clearing and livestock grazing have altered these forests. Red oak is now the predominant species, along with black cherry and hickory. Fragmentation of forests into smaller units by clear-cutting, development and grazing threatens wildlife species that rely on unbroken expanses of forest cover. This plan incorporates specific policies that aim to protect these significant woodlands through private stewardship and the promotion of forest management plans. In particular, this plan recognizes the importance of healthy forests as a primary form of economic opportunities for current and future generations, as well as finding a balance with habitat protection and creation.

➤ Threatened and Endangered Species



As previously noted, the Baraboo Range provides habitat for 23 federal or state listed threatened or endangered species. The DNR's Natural Heritage Inventory program maintains data on the general location and status of rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species. This data is obtained through field inventories. **Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas** shows general areas in Freedom that were identified as containing rare plant or animal species. The extensive and contiguous forest cover in the Baraboo Range provides a home and breeding ground for many endangered, threatened and rare birds including neotropical migrants and local year-round populations. Fragmentation of these contiguous blocks of forest by creating opening and adding buildings will most likely cause these bird populations to decline, as documented through numerous studies. Such forest disturbances can potentially provide a vehicle for exotic invasive plant introductions such as garlic mustard, bush honey suckle and buckthorn, all of which damage biodiversity and forest tree reproduction to maintain a canopy into the future as well of for economic factors in wood fiber production. The creation of additional forest edges and breaks in the canopy also increases the potential of aggressive 'edge' species such blue jays, house wrens, starlings, house sparrows and cowbirds that compete with threatened and rare birds, both in competition for space and nest paraticism.

➤ **Significant Natural Areas and Resources**



There are many significant natural areas and resources in the Town of Freedom, some of which are well known and some that are yet to be discovered. The plan calls attention to these already identified natural areas, which, by their nature, connect the present day Town to the landscape that once dominated the area. The material, in part, is from the Natural Area Inventory of Sauk County Wisconsin, 1976, by William E. Tans, Botanist and Kenneth I. Lange, Naturalist. Location of each are noted on **Map 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources**.

- Seeley Creek Maple Forest, located in the SE ¼, NW ¼ of Section 19 (east of road) includes approximately 20 acres of an extremely rich remnant mesic southern hardwood tract on a north-facing slope.
- Wintergreen Hill and Gravel Pit, located in the NW ¼, NW ¼ of Section 23 includes 30 acres of oak-pine woods on a quartzite hill with a variety of ground cover plants.
- LaRue Quarry, located in the NW 1/3 of Section 22 includes a classic example of the unconformity between Cambrian sandstone and pre-Cambrian quartzite.
- Illinois Iron Mine, located in the SE ¼, NE ¼ of Section 16 is one of the two Sauk County mines that shipped iron ore.
- A scenic wooded area is located in the SE ½, NW ¼ of Section 23 and includes 40 acres.
- Lange Rockshelter and Kruse Rockshelter's are located in the NE ¼ of Section 14.

➤ **Large Tracts of Mature Forest**

The Town of Freedom, along with the Towns of Sumpter, Baraboo, Merrimac, Greenfield and Honey Creek is host to one of the largest unbroken tracts of mature upland forestlands in the Midwest. This resource has been identified as critical habitat to support viable breeding bird populations and includes numerous rare and endangered bird species that rely on this mature unbroken habitat for survival and reproduction. The majority of the forestlands in the Town are privately owned, thus continued education and cooperation among



landowners to properly manage this resource is critical. Management may include, but is not limited to, cooperation among neighboring landowners to enhance the forest resource and contiguous blocks of forest through such activities as the control of invasive plants and animals, preservation of the forest canopy and in some cases the expansion of forested areas, sustainable timber harvest methods, deer population management and ensuring compatible land uses with forested areas.

➤ **Drainage Basins**

The Town of Freedom is located in the Lower Wisconsin River Basin, which drains approximately 4,940 square miles of south central and southwestern Wisconsin. The Town encompasses a majority of Seeley Creek and a portion of the Baraboo River in the northeast part of the Town and a portion of Pine Creek, which flows north of Happy Hill Road.

➤ **Floodplains**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates floodplain areas. These general floodplain delineations represent the areas adjacent to navigable waters potentially subject to the 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 Freedom are located along the Baraboo River and Seeley Creek. 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*.

➤ **Wetlands**

Wetland areas are important for aquifer recharge, flood control, groundwater and surface water quality improvement, and wildlife habitat. The Town of Freedom has large complexes of wetlands in the northwest part of the Town, as well as along Seeley Creek

➤ **Groundwater Resources**

As elsewhere in Sauk County, groundwater remains the major source of fresh water supply. In Freedom groundwater is supplied by the sandstone and dolomite aquifer prevalent in western Sauk County, which yields a reliable average of 400-500 gallons per minute. In the Baraboo Bluffs, groundwater flows are limited by the non-porous quartzite to only 20 gallons per minute. Well-drilling in the Baraboo Quartzite is expensive, although recently developed “hydro-cracking” technology could improve water yields enough to make well-drilling worthwhile. Springs are not common in the Baraboo Bluffs, but are found in the limestone and sandstone regions of the township.

The Town of Freedom is the host watershed for all of the Village of North Freedom’s municipal water supply as identified by the zones of contribution on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. 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 Village of North Freedom. Identifying zones of contribution is the precursor to the establishment of a wellhead protection program. Well head 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.

The 5-year zone of contribution is on the immediate Village boundary at the intersection of County Roads I and PF. The 50-year zone of contribution extends three miles west/south-west and includes lands that are primarily wetlands. The 100-year zone of contribution extends south and west of the 50-year and also includes the majority of the town’s wetland areas. Protection and enhancement of these wetland areas will be critical to a sustained and safe water supply for the Village.

➤ **Surface Waters of Freedom**

• **Seeley Creek**

Seeley Creek lies almost entirely within the Town of Freedom with its headwaters being in the southwestern part of the Town of Westfield. Seeley Creek then travels northeast to finally meet the Baraboo River just south of the Village of North Freedom. Although Seeley Creek is not classified as a trout stream, it has historically supported a trout population. According to the USGS quadrangle map, Seeley Creek is fed by numerous intermittent streams that typically flow during times of spring thaw and heavy rains as well as four streams with year-round flows. None of the branches have been named, however two are noted on the north side of Seeley Creek in Sections 8,9 and 16 respectively and represent drainage ditches for agricultural purposes. The other two feeders include one that begins in the Herritz Hollow area in the southwestern portion of the Town and a second short feeder in Section 18 that flows south.



East of La Rue, Seeley Creek has been dammed to form Seeley Lake. At 49 square acres with a maximum depth of 10 feet, Seeley Lake supports a viable bluegill, bass and northern pike population. The lake also has a boat ramp access.

It is not known for sure how the name, ‘Seeley’ was selected, but according to some there was a man by the name of Seeley who was a logger who logged all of the best white pine along Seeley Creek.

• **Baraboo River**

The Baraboo River enters the Town of Freedom in Section 4, just south of Rock Springs, then flows north into the Town of Excelsior and then back into the Town of Freedom just north of the Village of North Freedom. Finally the Baraboo River exits the Town at its northeastern most point into the Town of Baraboo. The Baraboo River supports a warm water fishery and is a major tributary to the Wisconsin River.

➤ **Hilltops and Ridges**

The planning process has identified the preservation of hilltops and ridgetops as an important natural feature that defines the horizon of the Town. Large structures constructed on top of them 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 Freedom has one active mineral extraction site, the Klingenmeyer quarry located east of LaRue off of Granite Drive. This site is leased by The Kramer Company, LLC and includes the Klingenmeyer property (233 acres) and Weitzel property (10 acres). The actual area under a current mining operation and includes both properties for a total of approximately 22 acres. Additional areas for possible mining have been identified, however this is dependent on future lease agreements as well as market demand. Quartzite encompasses the primary mineral extracted, while overburden sandstone ranges from zero to 18 feet before quartzite is exposed. According to the reclamation plan prepared by The Kraemer Company, the resultant rock faces will resemble those found at Devil's Lake State Park and will include stable highwall faces. As a general reference, potential gravel deposits, or areas that may support future mineral extraction operation are noted under *Map 9-4 Potential Mineral Deposits*.

9.5 Programs, Partnerships and Resources

Below are some examples of programs, partnership and resources that can provide assistance to landowners in the Town of Freedom relative to land preservation and stewardship options.

- **The Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP)** is a voluntary program administered by the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning which aims to preserve the Baraboo Range forested or forest buffer lands, through a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) (conservation easement) program. The Baraboo Range conservation easements allow willing landowners to retain title and continued use of land while preserving the forest resource.
- **Baraboo Range Preservation Association (BRPA)** is a land trust that works to preserve and protect the qualities and culture of the Baraboo Range through promotion of ecologically responsible land use. The Association is a non profit tax exempt organization formed in 1994 by property owners in the area and other concerned individuals who were interested in maintaining traditional rural land uses and private property rights while seeking to preserving the unique natural characteristics of the Baraboo Hills.
- **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.

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- **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 programs such as 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 protect the environment of 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 and 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 also 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 which 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 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.
- **Managed Forest Law Property Tax Program** a DNR program which 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 owning 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 which provides education activities and opportunities to aid land owners in the identification and management practices of prairie remnants. Work parties assist with brush clearing and removal of invasive species.
- **Aldo Leopold Foundation** strives to promote the care of natural resources and foster an ethical relationship between people and land. Programs include the restoration and protection through partnerships with more than 30 organizations and education programs for private landowners and public land managers.

9.6 Natural Resources Goal, Objectives and Policies:

Natural Resources Goal: Protect and enhance the Town's natural resources, including geology, soils, water, open space, forest, wetland and grassland, native plant-animal communities, wildlife, and endangered and threatened species, with special attention to the Baraboo Hills. To encourage wise and sustainable recreational, aesthetic, scientific and economic use of these resources.

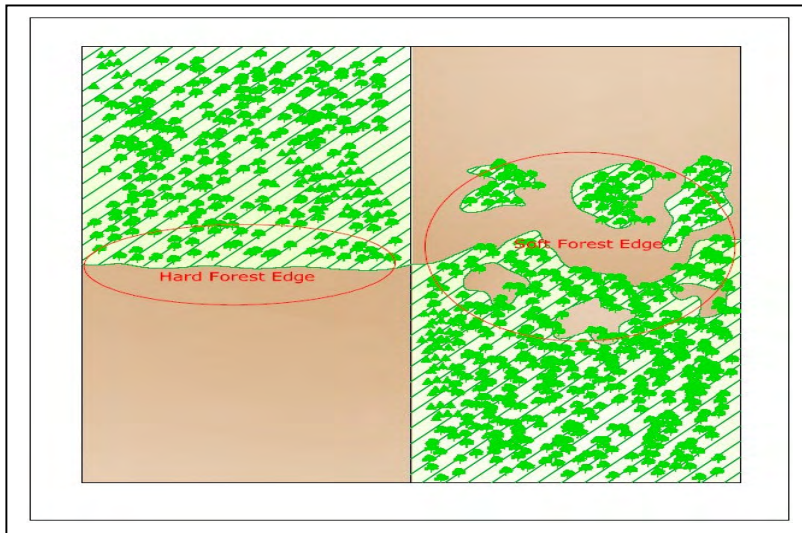
Natural Resources Objectives/Policies:

Definitions that apply to the following Natural Resource Objectives and Policies:

1. **Forest Edge.** The transition area between two different forest types or successional stages. (See also figure below)
 - a. **Hard Forest Edge.** Occurs between forested habitat and field. Hard edges tend to be permanent and may have more impact on wildlife interior species than soft edges. They are typically represented as an edge between an agricultural field, open prairie or other like open space devoid of any trees (i.e., the edge of a cornfield and forested area).

- b. **Soft Forest Edge.** Occurs between two age classes of forested habitat. Soft edges differ from the regeneration found in canopy gaps by virtue of the amount and distribution of the regenerating age class. Soft edges can also form as the forest expands into open habitats such as abandoned agricultural fields or CRP lands.

Forest Edge Figure:



2. **Forest Core.** Any part of the existing forest lying at least 200 feet in any direction from an existing forest edge. Forest core habitat is qualitatively different from edge habitat, and supports viable populations of wildlife and natural communities that require relative isolation from the influences of surrounding environmental conditions and land uses.
3. **Forest Core Buffer Zone.** The area of forest, at least 200 feet in width, which separates the forest edge from the interior forest core. The environment near forest edges differs significantly from the forest interior in terms of its structure, species composition and abundance.
4. **Forest Canopy.** A layer of foliage in a forest stand. This most often refers to the uppermost layer of foliage, but also includes lower layers in a multi-storied stand.

NRO-1 Preserve the forest canopy of the Baraboo Range (BRNNL).

NRP-1A Prevent new construction or the creation of new building lots in forested areas that infringe on the forest core **whenever a reasonable alternative site is available for development.** (Note: Forest Core is defined below and depicted on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas* relative to the BRNNL line) In any case, development will be directed to areas which will cause the least severe ecological impact to forest core habitat insofar that development should first locate in areas on the open land-ward side of a hard forest edge, and if this option is not available the development should locate on the open land-ward side of a soft forest edge. A site visit by the Town Board and Plan Commission is required to assess the conditions present on a particular site. Where there is a concern specific to a development proposal, the town will work with public and/or private resource agencies to accommodate the development while protecting forest core habitat and the forest core buffer zone.

For purposes of this policy, reasonable alternative shall be understood to mean that a property owner is entitled to utilize their lands for any purpose expressly permitted under any adopted Town of Freedom Ordinance and applicable Sauk County Ordinances and further that the siting of new dwellings must comply with the provisions of this policy and Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan insofar that these provisions do not cause an undue burden to a landowner. Although 'reasonable' and 'burden' are difficult to define, it is the intent of this Policy to require the Town's Plan Commission to ask the following questions when evaluating new home and lot siting proposals:

- a. What are the risks to habitat and the forest core habitat of a proposed new lot/house location (versus other available locations)?
- b. How can these risks be minimized if the new lot/house is placed in an environmentally sensitive area or forest core?
- c. What are the financial costs of locating a new lot/house in one particular location over another? (i.e., costs associated with excessive site preparation, driveway location, type of septic system required such as a conventional system versus a new technology system, etc).
- d. To what extent does financial cost outweigh the benefit to the public to preserve environmentally sensitive areas?
- e. Are there alternatives to the creation of new lots or building of a new house that can be explored?

In all cases, the Town's Plan Commission shall work with the affected property owner to accommodate the siting of a new lot/house and that such evaluation be completed in the form of a recommendation to the Town Board within three months of the initial proposal being first made to the Plan Commission at a legally posted meeting. It is not the intention of this policy to restrict or eliminate the potential of creating a new lot or building a new house on lands in the BRNNL beyond the number of lots/houses otherwise afforded to the landowner according to the Density Policy of the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan or other applicable Sauk County Ordinances.

NRP-1B Develop and adopt a Town Driveway Ordinance to address new driveways through forested areas. These specifications will be based on sound ecological research so as to preserve the natural resources. Whenever possible prevent the creation of new forest edges from new driveways by retaining existing forest canopies.

NRO-2 Manage the location and cutting area requirements for new residential development in the forested areas of the Baraboo Range (BRNNL).

NRP-2A Limit new openings in the forest canopy to the minimum possible square footage area reasonable for siting new construction. That total cutting area shall not exceed 200% of

the footprint area required for driveways, the primary residence and outbuildings. A cutting plan shall be required as part of the issuance of a Town building permit.

NRP-2B Landowners are encouraged to preserve the existing forest canopy when planning construction siting and cutting plan preparation. Trees outside the cutting plan area destroyed during construction shall be replaced by a new tree of a similar species.

NRO-3 Manage the location and design of new roads in the Baraboo Range (BRNNL) while limiting the expansion of existing roads and adjacent rights-of-way in Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

NRP-3A No new town roads will be built in the forested portion of the BRNNL as defined on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. Ruff Road, Granite Drive, Cox Road and Schara Road will not be upgraded, improved, widened or modified within the BRNNL boundary.

NRP-3B New roads in the Town may be built only after a public hearing and approval by the Town Board.

NRO-4 Manage roadside vegetation throughout the Town to protect wildlife during nesting seasons.

NRP-4A Limit roadside mowing by the Town to one pass prior to August 1st

NRP-4B Noxious weeds and invasive plants will be controlled and mowing restrictions do not apply where these populations exist.

NRP-4C Brush removal will only be done after August 1st and prior to April 15th.

NRO-5 Manage forests using sustainable harvesting and stewardship practices in the Town.

See policies ARP-1A, APR-2A, ARP-3A to achieve objective NRO-5.

NRO-6 Cooperate with the The Nature Conservancy, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Sauk County and others to encourage participation in land preservation efforts and use of conservation easements.

NRP-6A The Town Plan Commission shall designate one of its members as the Town liaison to work with landowners, government agencies, conservation groups and land trusts such as The Nature Conservancy, North Freedom Rod, Gun and Archery Club, Sauk County, State of Wisconsin, USDA, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, etc. to cooperatively preserve open space for future opportunities. These preservation practices may include, but are not limited to, conservation easements, purchase of open space lands, Planned Unit Developments, purchase/transfer of development rights, voluntary donations of conservation easements and through private land owner stewardship options.

NRO-7 Preserve clean water resources and employ policies and practices that will eliminate/minimize water contamination.

NRP-7A No commercial landfills will be permitted in the Town of Freedom. Chemical storage facilities, refineries etc. must adhere to applicable County and State laws.

NRP-7B Encourage agriculture practices that optimize the use of chemical applications.

NRP-7C Encourage lawn care procedures the minimize the release of polluting chemicals beyond property boundaries.

NRO-8 Maintain and enhance biodiversity in the Town of Freedom’s natural communities.

NRO-9 Protect endangered and threatened species of indigenous plants and animals.

NRO-10 Encourage use of landscaping with native plants.

NRO-11 Discourage the introduction of invasive exotic plants and encourage their eradication.

NRO-12 Encourage enhancement of both game and non-game wildlife habitat on agricultural lands.

The following policies address NRO-8 through NRO-12:

NRP-8 to 12A Provide information and photographs in a Town newsletter or website to all landowners describing exotic invasive plants, including garlic mustard and common buckthorn, to assist in individual identification and eradication efforts. Encourage landowner cooperation with The Nature Conservancy and other conservation organizations to help eradicate invasive exotic plant species.

NRP-8 to 12B Develop a collection of materials given to applicants for permits for new construction that will:

- Suggest landscaping procedures to minimize the introduction of exotic species;
- Suggest procedures that would minimize the effects on indigenous plants and animals;
- Suggest procedures that would maximize biodiversity.

NRO-13 Protect/maintain the scenic heritage landscape vistas and views.

NRP-13A Encourage limiting the visibility of new construction through the use of careful home/structure siting, landscaping/use of existing vegetation and encouraging the selection of natural colors and materials.

NRO-14 Include lighting standards to minimize light glare from trespassing onto neighboring properties and into the night sky.

NRP-14A Require ‘down-lighting’ fixtures for new construction and encourage retrofits on existing light fixtures intended for all-night use. Include options periodically in a Town newsletter or website.

NRO-15 Maintain/enhance opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, photography, bird watching, swimming, bicycling and other recreational use of the outdoors.

NRP-15A Encourage the Town to purchase of lands for the development of parks and public use access, and encourage land owner cooperation for the development of multi-use trails through private lands.

9.0 Purpose

The Town of Freedom is home to one of the most outstanding landscapes and most significant habitat and environmentally sensitive areas in the upper Midwest. This significance is exemplified by the large complex of wetlands located primarily in the north-central and north-western part of the Town and the Baraboo Range lands in the southern two-thirds of the Town, which incorporates large tracts of contiguous forested lands. Both areas serve as important habitat types for many rare and endangered species, both resident and migratory. This section highlights these and other important natural and historical resources in the Town and provides a platform for the establishment and implementation of preservation programs and guidelines, growth management practices, and siting guidelines for proposed development.

9.1 General Soils Information

Soil suitability is a key factor in determining the best and most cost efficient 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 agriculture productivity and suitability. Freedom is dominated by two major soil groups: Baraboo Silt Loam (also Baraboo Stony Silt Loam), Ettrick Silt Loam, with some Curran Silt Loam soils present. General soils information can also be noted on *Map 9-2 General Soils Map*.

- **Baraboo Silt Loam (also Baraboo Stony Silt Loam)** soils are moderately sloped on well drained convex ridgetops and foot slopes on loess-covered quartzite uplands. Most areas are oblong and range from 3 to 90 acres. This soil has a depth of roughly 34 to more than 40 inches before underlying quartzite bedrock is reached. Included in this mapping area are small areas where cobbles, stones and boulders are on the surface of and throughout the soil. Permeability and water holding capacity is moderate in this soil. This soil has a seasonal perched water table just above the quartzite layer. Some areas of these soils are farmed or are used for crops, however past areas that have been cultivated are no longer farmed. This soil is best suited to hay, pasture or trees. Erosion is generally not a problem in areas where soils are used for pasture or hay, however overgrazing destroys plant cover and results in erosion. This soil is only moderately suitable for buildings with basements and septic tank absorption fields due of the perched water table and minimal depth to bedrock. Suitability can be improved through the use of a filtering mound system and the addition of fill for building construction. Another limitation to be considered for building sites is that the underlying bedrock is very hard and is a poor aquifer. Wells are difficult and expensive to drill and are generally low capacity.
- **Ettrick Silt Loam** soils are nearly level, poorly drained and are often associated with floodplain, in drainageways and low stream terraces. In most areas it is 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 inundated with reed canary grass. This soil is also poorly suited to trees. This soil is poorly suited to building and septic tank absorption fields because of the high water table and frequent flooding.
- **Curran Silt Loam** soils are nearly level to gently sloping and are somewhat poorly drained, located in drainage ways and outwash plains and stream terraces. Permeability is moderately slow in the subsoil and rapid in the substratum. The available water capacity is high and surface

runoff is slow. The water table is at a depth of 1 to 3 feet during wet periods. Most drained areas of this soil are used for cultivated crops, hay and pasture. The potential is good for cultivated crops and pasture and is fair for trees. The soil is poorly suited to dwellings with or without basements because of the occasional flooding and seasonal high water table. The soil is also poorly suited to septic tank absorption fields due to the same and moderately slow permeability.

- **LaFarge Silt Loam** soils are gently sloping to steep well-drained on convex ridge tops, foot slopes and valley floors on unglaciated sandstone uplands. Permeability is typically moderate. Surface runoff is medium. Most areas of this soil are used for cultivated crops, hay and pasture. Erosion is generally not a problem in areas where this soil is used for pasture or hay. Overgrazing, however, destroys the plant cover and results in erosion. This soil is moderately suited to dwellings without basements because it lacks sufficient strength and stability to support building foundations. This soil is poorly suited to septic tank absorption fields because of the depth to rock. The suitability can be improved by building a filtering mound or adding suitable material.

9.2 Topography and Slope

The examination of topography is necessary to help determine areas where development should be avoided, or where potential constraints may exist. Freedom lies in the unglaciated or driftless area of southern Sauk County. Its topography is diverse and dramatic, dominated on the south by the north face of the Baraboo Range and interspersed throughout with sheer Cambrian limestone, sandstone and quartzite bluffs. Elevations range from 754 feet above sea level in the central forested areas to a height of 1,436 feet above sea level in the southern bluffs. The upland topography is characterized by heavily dissected bedrock ridges and steep valleys, with slopes often in excess of 20%.

- **The Baraboo Bluffs**, also known as **The Baraboo Hills** and **The Baraboo Range**

The steep slopes of the western, unglaciated end of the Baraboo Bluffs provide a diverse range of climactic conditions and “micro-habitats” that support a variety of species co-existing within a relatively confined area. The Baraboo Bluffs are a regionally and nationally significant ancient mountain range containing one of the largest upland hardwood forests in the upper Midwest. More than 8,000 acres of dense forest and steep slopes characterize the Bluffs portion of Freedom, with its unique contingent of rare species of flora and fauna. Twenty-eight different types of forests, wetlands and prairies have been identified in the Bluffs, providing habitat for 23 federal or state listed threatened or endangered species. The harsh soil conditions atop the quartzite bedrock have prevented viable agriculture and until recently discouraged widespread residential development.

In recognition of its outstanding geological and ecological significance, 50,700 acres of the “South Range” were designated as the **Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark (BRNNL)** by the Secretary of the Interior in 1980, and one of the Earth’s “Last Great Places” by The Nature Conservancy in 1995.

In 1999, Sauk County adopted The Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP) Plan. Under the Protection Plan, the county purchases conservation easements from willing sellers to protect the forest from development. Funding to purchase the easements comes from the settlement regarding the expansion of US Hwy 12 from Middleton to Lake Delton. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Nature Conservancy, and the Baraboo Preservation Association also work with willing sellers to protect forestland within the Bluffs through land and conservation easement acquisitions.

9.3 Environmentally Sensitive and Significant Resources

The Town of Freedom has identified environmentally sensitive areas as areas of land having slopes greater than 12%, lands within the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark, surface waters, floodplains, wetlands, hydric soils, groundwater recharge areas, areas of contiguous forest cover, and areas that harbor endangered species. 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 9-3 General Floodplain Areas**.

➤ Woodlands

Forty-eight percent of the land in Freedom is covered by forest. Much of this forest is located in the Baraboo Bluffs, with additional forested areas located northwest of County Road PF. Once dominated by great stands of white oak and sugar maple, logging, land clearing and livestock grazing have altered these forests. Red oak is now the predominant species, along with black cherry and hickory. Fragmentation of forests into smaller units by clear-cutting, development and grazing threatens wildlife species that rely on unbroken expanses of forest cover. This plan incorporates specific policies that aim to protect these significant woodlands through private stewardship and the promotion of forest management plans. In particular, this plan recognizes the importance of healthy forests as a primary form of economic opportunities for current and future generations, as well as finding a balance with habitat protection and creation.

➤ Threatened and Endangered Species



As previously noted, the Baraboo Range provides habitat for 23 federal or state listed threatened or endangered species. The DNR's Natural Heritage Inventory program maintains data on the general location and status of rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species. This data is obtained through field inventories. **Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas** shows general areas in Freedom that were identified as containing rare plant or animal species. The extensive and contiguous forest cover in the Baraboo Range provides a home and breeding ground for many endangered, threatened and rare birds including neotropical migrants and local year-round populations. Fragmentation of these contiguous blocks of forest by creating openings and adding buildings will most likely cause these bird populations to decline, as documented through numerous studies. Such forest disturbances can potentially provide a vehicle for exotic invasive plant introductions such as garlic mustard, bush honey suckle and buckthorn, all of which damage biodiversity and forest tree reproduction to maintain a canopy into the future as well as for economic factors in wood fiber production. The creation of additional forest edges and breaks in the canopy also increases the potential of aggressive 'edge' species such as blue jays, house wrens, starlings, house sparrows and cowbirds that compete with threatened and rare birds, both in competition for space and nest parasitism.

➤ Significant Natural Areas and Resources



There are many significant natural areas and resources in the Town of Freedom, some of which are well known and some that are yet to be discovered. The plan calls attention to these already identified natural areas, which, by their nature, connect the present day Town to the landscape that once dominated the area. The 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**.

- Seeley Creek Maple Forest, located in the SE ¼, NW ¼ of Section 19 (east of road) includes approximately 20 acres of an extremely rich remnant mesic southern hardwood tract on a north-facing slope.
- Wintergreen Hill and Gravel Pit, located in the NW ¼, NW ¼ of Section 23 includes 30 acres of oak-pine woods on a quartzite hill with a variety of ground cover plants.
- LaRue Quarry, located in the NW 1/3 of Section 22 includes a classic example of the unconformity between Cambrian sandstone and pre-Cambrian quartzite.
- Illinois Iron Mine, located in the SE ¼, NE ¼ of Section 16 is one of the two Sauk County mines that shipped iron ore.
- A scenic wooded area is located in the SE ½, NW ¼ of Section 23 and includes 40 acres.
- Lange Rockshelter and Kruse Rockshelter's are located in the NE ¼ of Section 14.

➤ Large Tracts of Mature Forest

The Town of Freedom, along with the Towns of Sumpter, Baraboo, Merrimac, Greenfield and Honey Creek is host to one of the largest unbroken tracts of mature upland forestlands in the Midwest. This resource has been identified as critical habitat to support viable breeding bird populations and includes numerous rare and endangered bird species that rely on this mature unbroken habitat for survival and reproduction. The majority of the forestlands in the Town are privately owned, thus continued education and cooperation among



landowners to properly manage this resource is critical. Management may include, but is not limited to, cooperation among neighboring landowners to enhance the forest resource and contiguous blocks of forest through such activities as the control of invasive plants and animals, preservation of the forest canopy and in some cases the expansion of forested areas, sustainable timber harvest methods, deer population management and ensuring compatible land uses with forested areas.

➤ **Drainage Basins**

The Town of Freedom is located in the Lower Wisconsin River Basin, which drains approximately 4,940 square miles of south central and southwestern Wisconsin. The Town encompasses a majority of Seeley Creek and a portion of the Baraboo River in the northeast part of the Town and a portion of Pine Creek, which flows north of Happy Hill Road.

➤ **Floodplains**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates floodplain areas. These general floodplain delineations represent the areas adjacent to navigable waters potentially subject to the 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 Freedom are located along the Baraboo River and Seeley Creek. 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*.

➤ **Wetlands**

Wetland areas are important for aquifer recharge, flood control, groundwater and surface water quality improvement, and wildlife habitat. The Town of Freedom has large complexes of wetlands in the northwest part of the Town, as well as along Seeley Creek

➤ **Groundwater Resources**

As elsewhere in Sauk County, groundwater remains the major source of fresh water supply. In Freedom groundwater is supplied by the sandstone and dolomite aquifer prevalent in western Sauk County, which yields a reliable average of 400-500 gallons per minute. In the Baraboo Bluffs, groundwater flows are limited by the non-porous quartzite to only 20 gallons per minute. Well-drilling in the Baraboo Quartzite is expensive, although recently developed “hydro-cracking” technology could improve water yields enough to make well-drilling worthwhile. Springs are not common in the Baraboo Bluffs, but are found in the limestone and sandstone regions of the township.

The Town of Freedom is the host watershed for all of the Village of North Freedom’s municipal water supply as identified by the zones of contribution on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. 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 utilized by the Village of North Freedom. Identifying zones of contribution is the precursor to the establishment of a wellhead protection program. Well head 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.

The 5-year zone of contribution is on the immediate Village boundary at the intersection of County Roads I and PF. The 50-year zone of contribution extends three miles west/south-west and includes lands that are primarily wetlands. The 100-year zone of contribution extends south and west of the 50-year and also includes the majority of the town’s wetland areas. Protection and enhancement of these wetland areas will be critical to a sustained and safe water supply for the Village.

➤ **Surface Waters of Freedom**

• **Seeley Creek**

Seeley Creek lies almost entirely within the Town of Freedom with its headwaters being in the southwestern part of the Town of Westfield. Seeley Creek then travels northeast to finally meet the Baraboo River just south of the Village of North Freedom. Although Seeley Creek is not classified as a trout stream, it has historically supported a trout population. According to the USGS quadrangle map, Seeley Creek is fed by numerous intermittent streams that typically flow during times of spring thaw and heavy rains as well as four streams with year-round flows. None of the branches have been named, however two are noted on the north side of Seeley Creek in Sections 8,9 and 16 respectively and represent drainage ditches for agricultural purposes. The other two feeders include one that begins in the Herritz Hollow area in the southwestern portion of the Town and a second short feeder in Section 18 that flows south.



East of La Rue, Seeley Creek has been dammed to form Seeley Lake. At 49 square acres with a maximum depth of 10 feet, Seeley Lake supports a viable bluegill, bass and northern pike population. The lake also has a boat ramp access.

It is not known for sure how the name, 'Seeley' was selected, but according to some there was a logger by the name of Seeley who logged all of the best white pine along Seeley Creek.

• **Baraboo River**

The Baraboo River enters the Town of Freedom in Section 4, just south of Rock Springs, then flows north into the Town of Excelsior and then back into the Town of Freedom just north of the Village of North Freedom. Finally the Baraboo River exits the Town at its northeastern most point into the Town of Baraboo. The Baraboo River supports a warm water fishery and is a major tributary to the Wisconsin River.

➤ **Hilltops and Ridges**

The planning process has identified the preservation of hilltops and ridgetops as an important natural feature that defines the horizon of the Town. Large structures constructed on top of them 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 Freedom has one active mineral extraction site, the Klingenmeyer quarry located east of LaRue off of Granite Drive. This site is leased by The Kramer Company, LLC and includes the Klingenmeyer property (233 acres) and Weitzel property (10 acres). The actual area under a current mining operation includes both properties for a total of approximately 22 acres. Additional areas for possible mining have been identified, however this is dependent on future lease agreements as well as market demand. Quartzite encompasses the primary mineral extracted, while overburden sandstone ranges from zero to 18 feet before quartzite is exposed. According to the reclamation plan prepared by The Kraemer Company, the resultant rock faces will resemble those found at Devil's Lake State Park and will include stable highwall faces. As a general reference, potential gravel deposits, or areas that may support future mineral extraction operation are noted under *Map 9-4 Potential Mineral Deposits*.

9.5 Programs, Partnerships and Resources

Below are some examples of programs, partnership and resources that can provide assistance to landowners in the Town of Freedom relative to land preservation and stewardship options.

- **The Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP)** is a voluntary program administered by the Sauk County Department of Planning & Zoning which aims to preserve the Baraboo Range forested or forest buffer lands, through a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) (conservation easement) program. The Baraboo Range conservation easements allow willing landowners to retain title and continued use of land while preserving the forest resource.
- **Baraboo Range Preservation Association (BRPA)** is a land trust that works to preserve and protect the qualities and culture of the Baraboo Range through promotion of ecologically responsible land use. The Association is a non profit tax exempt organization formed in 1994 by property owners in the area and other concerned individuals who were interested in maintaining traditional rural land uses and private property rights while seeking to preserving the unique natural characteristics of the Baraboo Hills.
- **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 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.
- **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 protect the environment of 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 and 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 also 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 be 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 which 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 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.

- **Managed Forest Law Property Tax Program** a DNR program which 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 owning 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 which provides education activities and opportunities to aid land owners in the identification and management practices of prairie remnants. Work parties assist with brush clearing and removal of invasive species.
- **Aldo Leopold Foundation** strives to promote the care of natural resources and foster an ethical relationship between people and land. Programs include restoration and protection through partnerships with more than 30 organizations and education programs for private landowners and public land managers.

9.6 Natural Resources Goal, Objectives and Policies:

Natural Resources Goal: Protect and enhance the Town's natural resources, including geology, soils, water, open space, forest, wetland and grassland, native plant-animal communities, wildlife, and endangered and threatened species, with special attention to the Baraboo Hills. To encourage wise and sustainable recreational, aesthetic, scientific and economic use of these resources.

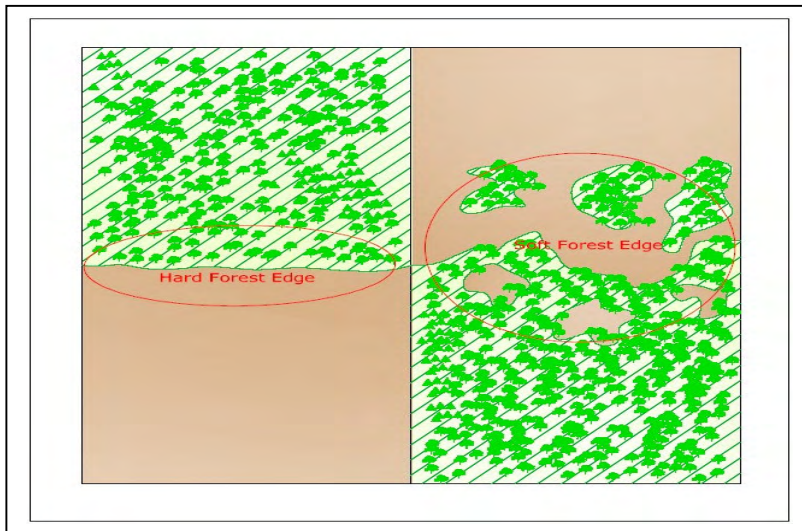
Natural Resources Objectives/Policies:

Definitions that apply to the following Natural Resource Objectives and Policies:

1. **Forest Edge.** The transition area between two different forest types or successional stages. (See also figure below)
 - a. **Hard Forest Edge.** Occurs between forested habitat and field. Hard edges tend to be permanent and may have more impact on wildlife interior species than soft edges. They are typically represented as an edge between an agricultural field, open prairie or other like open space devoid of any trees (i.e., the edge of a cornfield and forested area).

- b. **Soft Forest Edge.** Occurs between two age classes of forested habitat. Soft edges differ from the regeneration found in canopy gaps by virtue of the amount and distribution of the regenerating age class. Soft edges can also form as the forest expands into open habitats such as abandoned agricultural fields or CRP lands.

Forest Edge Figure:



2. **Forest Core.** Any part of the existing forest lying at least 200 feet in any direction from an existing forest edge. Forest core habitat is qualitatively different from edge habitat, and supports viable populations of wildlife and natural communities that require relative isolation from the influences of surrounding environmental conditions and land uses.
3. **Forest Core Buffer Zone.** The area of forest, at least 200 feet in width, which separates the forest edge from the interior forest core. The environment near forest edges differs significantly from the forest interior in terms of its structure, species composition and abundance.
4. **Forest Canopy.** A layer of foliage in a forest stand. This most often refers to the uppermost layer of foliage, but also includes lower layers in a multi-storied stand.

NRO-1 Preserve the forest canopy of the Baraboo Range (BRNNL).

NRP-1A Prevent new construction or the creation of new building lots in forested areas that infringe on the forest core **whenever a reasonable alternative site is available for development**. (Note: Forest Core is defined above and depicted on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas* and *Map 11-1 Land use and Landcover* relative to the BRNNL line) In any case, development will be directed to areas which will cause the least severe ecological impact to forest core habitat insofar that development should first locate in areas on the open land-ward side of a hard forest edge, and if this option is not available the development should locate on the open land-ward side of a soft forest edge. A site visit by the Town Board and Plan Commission is required to assess the conditions present on a particular site. Where there is a concern specific to a development proposal, the town will work with public and/or private resource agencies to accommodate the development while protecting forest core habitat and the forest core buffer zone.

For purposes of this policy, reasonable alternative shall be understood to mean that a property owner is entitled to utilize their lands for any purpose expressly permitted under any adopted Town of Freedom Ordinance and applicable Sauk County Ordinances and further that the siting of new dwellings must comply with the provisions of this policy and Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan insofar that these provisions do not cause an undue burden to a landowner. Although 'reasonable' and 'burden' are difficult to define, it is the intent of this Policy to require the Town's Plan Commission to ask the following questions when evaluating new home and lot siting proposals:

- a. What are the risks to habitat and the forest core habitat of a proposed new lot/house location (versus other available locations)?
- b. How can these risks be minimized if the new lot/house is placed in an environmentally sensitive area or forest core?
- c. What are the financial costs of locating a new lot/house in one particular location over another? (i.e., costs associated with excessive site preparation, driveway location, type of septic system required such as a conventional system versus a new technology system, etc).
- d. To what extent does financial cost outweigh the benefit to the public to preserve environmentally sensitive areas?
- e. Are there alternatives to the creation of new lots or building of a new house that can be explored?

In all cases, the Town's Plan Commission shall work with the affected property owner to accommodate the siting of a new lot/house and that such evaluation be completed in the form of a recommendation to the Town Board within three months of the initial proposal being first made to the Plan Commission at a legally posted meeting. It is not the intention of this policy to restrict or eliminate the potential of creating a new lot or building a new house on lands in the BRNNL beyond the number of lots/houses otherwise afforded to the landowner according to the Density Policy of the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan or other applicable Sauk County Ordinances.

NRP-1B Develop and adopt a Town Driveway Ordinance to address new driveways through forested areas. These specifications will be based on sound ecological research so as to preserve the natural resources. Whenever possible prevent the creation of new forest edges from new driveways by retaining existing forest canopies.

NRO-2 Manage the location and cutting area requirements for new residential development in the forested areas of the Baraboo Range (BRNNL).

NRP-2A Limit new openings in the forest canopy to the minimum possible square footage area reasonable for siting new construction. That total cutting area shall not exceed 200% of

the footprint area required for driveways, the primary residence and outbuildings. A cutting plan shall be required as part of the issuance of a Town building permit.

NRP-2B Landowners are encouraged to preserve the existing forest canopy when planning construction siting and cutting plan preparation. Trees outside the cutting plan area destroyed during construction shall be replaced by a new tree of a similar species.

NRO-3 Manage the location and design of new roads in the Baraboo Range (BRNNL) while limiting the expansion of existing roads and adjacent rights-of-way in Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

NRP-3A No new town roads will be built in the forested portion of the BRNNL as defined on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas* and *Map 11-1 Land Use and Landcover*. Ruff Road, Granite Drive, Cox Road and Schara Road will not be upgraded, improved, widened or modified within the BRNNL boundary.

NRP-3B New roads in the Town may be built only after a public hearing and approval by the Town Board.

NRO-4 Manage roadside vegetation throughout the Town to protect wildlife during nesting seasons.

NRP-4A Maintain limits on second pass mowing to after August 1st to preserve native plants. Single pass mowing (road shoulders only) is approved anytime as needed.

NRP-4B Noxious weeds and invasive plants will be controlled and mowing restrictions do not apply where these populations exist.

NRP-4C Brush removal will only be done after August 1st and prior to April 15th.

NRO-5 Manage forests using sustainable harvesting and stewardship practices in the Town.

See policies ARP-1A, APR-2A, ARP-3A to achieve objective NRO-5.

NRO-6 Cooperate with the The Nature Conservancy, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Sauk County and others to encourage participation in land preservation efforts and use of conservation easements.

NRP-6A The Town Plan Commission shall designate one of its members as the Town liaison to work with landowners, government agencies, conservation groups and land trusts such as The Nature Conservancy, North Freedom Rod, Gun and Archery Club, Sauk County, State of Wisconsin, USDA, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, etc. to cooperatively preserve open space for future opportunities. These preservation practices may include, but are not limited to, conservation easements, purchase of open space lands, Planned Unit Developments, purchase/transfer of development rights, voluntary donations of conservation easements and through private land owner stewardship options.

NRO-7 Preserve clean water resources and employ policies and practices that will eliminate/minimize water contamination.

NRP-7A No commercial landfills will be permitted in the Town of Freedom. Chemical storage facilities, refineries etc. must adhere to applicable County and State laws.

NRP-7B Encourage agriculture practices that minimize/optimize the use of chemical applications.

NRP-7C Encourage lawn care procedures that minimize the release of polluting chemicals beyond property boundaries.

NRO-8 Maintain and enhance biodiversity in the Town of Freedom's natural communities.

NRO-9 Protect endangered and threatened species of indigenous plants and animals.

NRO-10 Encourage the use of landscaping with native plants.

NRO-11 Discourage the introduction of invasive exotic plants and encourage their eradication.

NRO-12 Encourage the enhancement of both game and non-game wildlife habitat on agricultural lands.

The following policies address NRO-8 through NRO-12:

NRP-8 to 12A Provide information and photographs in a Town newsletter or website to all landowners describing exotic invasive plants, including garlic mustard and common buckthorn, to assist in individual identification and eradication efforts. Encourage landowner cooperation with The Nature Conservancy and other conservation organizations to help eradicate invasive exotic plant species.

NRP-8 to 12B Develop a collection of materials given to applicants for permits for new construction that will:

- Suggest landscaping procedures to minimize the introduction of exotic species;
- Suggest procedures that would minimize the effects on indigenous plants and animals;
- Suggest procedures that would maximize biodiversity.

NRO-13 Protect/maintain the scenic heritage landscape vistas and views.

NRP-13A Encourage limiting the visibility of new construction through the use of careful home/structure siting, landscaping/use of existing vegetation and encouraging the selection of natural colors and materials.

NRO-14 Include lighting standards to minimize light glare from trespassing onto neighboring properties and into the night sky.

NRP-14A Require 'down-lighting' fixtures for new construction and encourage retrofits on existing light fixtures intended for all-night use. Include options periodically in a Town newsletter or website.

NRO-15 Maintain/enhance opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, photography, bird watching, swimming, bicycling and other recreational use of the outdoors.

NRP-15A Encourage the Town to purchase lands for the development of parks and public use access, and encourage land owner cooperation for the development of multi-use trails through private lands.

10.0 Purpose

In order to achieve the overall vision in the Town of Freedom, 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. This interaction in part calls for an evaluation of the plans of Sauk County as well as neighboring units of government as to how they will affect the Town of Freedom. From an opposite perspective, this evaluation looks at how the Town of Freedom's decisions affect neighboring units of government.

10.1 Adjacent Town Plans and Planning Efforts

➤ Town of Honey Creek Comprehensive Plan (October, 2004)

The Town of Honey Creek adopted a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Wis. Stats. 66.1001 in October, 2004. Prior to the development of this Comprehensive Plan, the Town was under the guidance of its 1999 Land Use Plan. Honey Creek's Comprehensive Plan stresses the importance of preserving both the rural character as exemplified by rural sighting standards for new residential development and the protection significant natural resources typically noted as forested lands in the Baraboo Bluffs and agricultural lands. Honey Creek has also developed a density based cluster development program which allows for the creation of small building lots at a 'forty' acre density in exchange for an 30 year easement on remaining lands with the goals of preserving larger tracts of land for open space uses. According to Honey Creek's Plan, this 30-year easement renews for blocks of 10 years thereafter provided that the Town's density policy either stays the same or becomes more restrictive. Amendments to the Town's density policy can only be made after the appointment of an ad-hoc committee that must reach consensus on the amendment. The amendment process is the same as the process originally utilized to develop the Town's density policy.

➤ Town of Sumpter Comprehensive Plan (February, 2003)

The Town of Sumpter developed and adopted a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Wis. Stats. 66.1001 in February, 2003. Prior to the development of its the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Sumpter was under the guidance of it's 1987 Development Plan. Sumpter's overall plan purpose is to preserve the rural and agrarian character as well as the cultural and natural features that make the area unique. Sumpter's Plan includes options to create lots of less than 35 acres at a specified density in exchange for the placement of an easement on a remaining portion of the landowner's property. The Plan also has provisions for cluster development and new development siting guidelines, which are aimed at preserving agriculture and natural resources.

➤ Town of Baraboo Comprehensive Plan (July, 2005)

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Baraboo provides for a land use management strategy for the Town that will ensure growth and development decisions made over the next 20 years are consistent with the community's desired character and vision for the future. The Plan is meant to act as a guide for the Town Board and Plan Commission as well as residents and landowners as decision are made that will affect the Town. Like many comprehensive plans, the Town has adopted cluster development provisions allowing for the creation of small lots at a 1 lot per 35 specified density. This decision by the Town of Baraboo is consistent with the Town of Freedom's cluster development option and density.

➤ **Town of Excelsior Development Plan (April, 1999)**

The Town of Excelsior developed adopted a Development Plan in 1999 in response to increased development pressure. According to the Town's Plan, the primary objectives are to, 'establish criteria for future development in an orderly manner that will provide services in an economical and efficient fashion.' To accomplish this objective, the Plan encourages development to locate near existing subdivision development and incorporated areas. The Plan aims to give the town board a guide in making individual land use decisions while being consistent with the long range goals of the citizens.

In addition to identifying areas appropriate for development, the Development Plan also places a high priority on the preservation of productive farmland for continued agricultural use and preservation of the Town's rural character. In order to obtain these desired results, the Town adopted the County's Resource Conservancy 5 zoning district for the town, excepting those areas of high-density residential development. The Town of Excelsior has informally indicated that they may be interested in developing a comprehensive plan.

➤ **Town of Reedsburg Comprehensive Plan (September, 2004)**

The Town of Reedsburg adopted a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with Wis. Stats. 66.1001 in September, 2004. The Town of Reedsburg Comprehensive Plan has identified areas within the City of Reedsburg's extraterritorial jurisdiction as a development area for residential and commercial. The Town has also identified a commitment to preserving agriculture operations and thus all areas outside of the City's ET have been identified as agriculture preservation/rural residential. The Town of Reedsburg adopted a density based cluster development program that applies to areas outside of the City's ET and which sets a density of 1 house per 35 acres of ownership with a maximum lot creation per parcel of not more than three in any 10 year period.

➤ **Town of Westfield Comprehensive Plan (Spring, 2005)**

The Town of Westfield adopted an updated Land Use Plan in May of 1998. Currently, the Town is undergoing the Comprehensive Planning process with an expected adoption date in the Spring of 2006. It is anticipated that the Town of Westfield Plan will continue its current Exclusive Agriculture zoning while providing for varied land development and preservation options

➤ **Village of North Freedom Comprehensive Plan (Spring, 2004)**

The Village of North Freedom Comprehensive Plan was adopted in the Spring of 2004 in accordance with Wis. Stats. 66.1001. The Plan provides direction to the Village on future growth and downtown redevelopment.

10.2 Current Intergovernmental Programs, Plans, Agreements and Opportunities

➤ **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. It is envisioned that 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.

➤ **Memorandum of Agreement concerning US Highway 12 between Middleton and Lake Delton, Wisconsin (March, 1999)**

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is an agreement between Sauk County, Dane County, the State of Wisconsin, WisDOT, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency USEPA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service (NPS), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The agreement includes commitments and timeframes for Highway 12 improvements in Dane and Sauk Counties, protection of the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark, farmland preservation and other natural resource protection. Specifically, the parties agreed to the following transportation system improvements:

1. "WisDOT and FHWA may proceed with a phased construction of a modified four-lane USH 12 in Dane County (between Middleton and Sauk City]..."
2. "WisDOT will exercise its authority to control and reduce access points along USH 12..."

The parties also agreed to the following:

1. The creation of two funds "to provide long-term protection of the nationally significant natural resources in the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark (BRNNL) which may be impacted from the USH 12 project." The BRNNL Protection Fund "will contain \$5 million paid by WisDOT from state/federal transportation monies. " The Special BRNNL Stewardship Fund " will contain up to \$5 million of additional Stewardship Capital Fund dollars but will require a dollar-for-dollar federal/local/private non-transportation fund match...". Funding of \$250,000 each for Dane County and Sauk County for local planning assistance for "the towns, cities, and villages along the USH 12 corridor to use as they see appropriate to address growth-related issues." This is the funding source for this Highway 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan and future implementation projects to be determined.
2. The creation of the Sauk County Fund in which "WisDOT agrees to provide up to \$250,000 over a five year period in state/federal transportation monies to be used to establish and fund a program to purchase lands, scenic/conservation/agricultural easements and/or development rights from willing sellers in Sauk County outside of the BRNNL"

➤ **Baraboo Range Protection Program**

The County created the Baraboo Range Protection Program (BRPP), a component of the Sauk County Protection Program (SCPP), to use state and federal monies and local matches provided by the MOA, described above to purchase development rights. The BRPP reimburses eligible participants for costs associated with the purchase of land or development rights of properties with substantially undisturbed forested land. Eligible land or development right purchasers include Sauk County government, any Sauk County Town government, any nonprofit conservation organization, and State

and Federal agencies. The Sauk County Baraboo Range Commission, a special committee of the Sauk County Board of Supervisors, administers the program. The southern part of Freedom falls within the program boundaries of the BRPP as noted on **Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas**.

➤ **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 was formed. The committee consisted 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 complimentary 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 Freedom 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. Additional discussion can be found under **Chapter 7 Transportation**.

➤ **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 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 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.

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 BRPP is administered by 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.

The countywide Sauk County Preservation Program is primarily geared to the protection of important agricultural and other natural resource areas throughout Sauk County outside the boundaries of the BRNNL. Sauk County's Land Preservation Program is intended to support the County's Comprehensive Plan and local Comprehensive Plans by providing local towns with the means for permanently preventing the development of landscapes designated in these plans for agricultural, open space, wildlife conservation or recreational use.

10.3 Current and Future Cooperative Planning Efforts

➤ Neighboring Town Comprehensive Plans

It is anticipated that the Town of Freedom will be represented in the planning processes for those Towns who have elected to develop a Comprehensive Plan or are updating comprehensive plans, which share common borders.

➤ Sauk County

The Town of Freedom 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 Freedom's Comprehensive Plan is not compromised by neighboring community choices and decisions and vice versa.

At such time that Sauk County develops the countywide Comprehensive Plan, it is intended that the Town of Freedom be part of that process to ensure that the integrity of their plan is not only upheld, but also embraced as a unique plan developed by and for the community.

With regard to everyday land division, land use and agriculture related questions, residents and Town officials are encouraged to build upon the working relationship with various County Departments particularly with the Sauk County Planning & Zoning and Land Conservation Departments as these departments administer the majority of county ordinances and programs that affect the Town.

➤ School Districts

Approximately one-half of the territory of the Town of Freedom lies within the Baraboo School District while the other one-half is in the Reedsburg School District. Parochial schools in the area include St. Peter's Lutheran and Sacred Heart Catholic School in the City of Reedsburg and St. Joseph Catholic School and St. John's Lutheran School in Baraboo. Programs and activities offered by each of the school districts for the community can be noted under **Chapter 6**

Utilities and Community Resources. It is the intent of this Comprehensive Plan to continue dialog with each school district relative to community decisions and the ability of the school districts to provide cost effective services.



10.4 Fire and Ambulance Protection Agreements

The Town of Freedom is part of the North Freedom Fire Protection District and Baraboo District Ambulance Service. See *Chapter 6 Utilities and Community Resources* for additional information.

10.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal, Objectives, and Policies

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal: Establish mutually beneficial relationships with the Village of North Freedom relative to housing placement and service provisions and generally extend those relations to include all neighboring units of government including towns, Sauk County the State of Wisconsin.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Objectives/Policies:

ICO-1 Identify existing or potential conflicts between the Town of Freedom and other units of government.

ICP-1A With regard to annexation of lands from the Town into the Village of North Freedom, encourage the Village to continue providing notice to the Town prior to taking any action. The Town will in-turn have an opportunity to comment and further ensure that such action is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and any amendment thereafter.

ICP-1B Encourage the Village of North Freedom to work cooperatively with the Town of Freedom regarding future land use proposals. In recognition of the historical and projected growth for the Village, the Town does not, at this time support Village adoption of Extra Territorial (ET) plat review or zoning authority, but rather supports continued positive relations and discussions between the Village and Town officials.

ICO-2 Maintain the relationship of the Town of Freedom to the school districts and other units of government.

ICP-2A Work with the Reedsburg and Baraboo School Districts to ensure that they have an opportunity to give input to any issue related to providing bussing and educational services.

ICP-2B Continue the positive relations with the North Freedom Fire Department.

ICO-3 Work with government and private non-profit agencies to identify and pursue grant opportunities beneficial to the Town and its residents/landowners.

ICP-3A Consider a Town newsletter or website that will periodically highlight opportunities for residents and landowners.

ICO-4 The Town Board and Plan Commission should stay informed and involved in issues that may affect the town and advocate for the benefit of the Town and its residents.

ICP-4A The Plan Commission and Town Board are encouraged to attend information/educational programs at the State and local level.

ICO-5 Coordinate development options with neighboring towns and the Villages of North Freedom and Rock Springs. relative to providing appropriate locations for future development.

ICP-5A The Town shall investigate developing an in-town or between town and village/city Transfer of Development Rights program and identify lands suited/appropriate as sending areas and land as receiving areas, and work together with neighboring towns and villages and Sauk County to develop and implement such program.

11.0 Purpose

The Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is one of the most important components, perhaps only second to the Implementation Component. Prior to the ‘comprehensive plan’ many communities adopted what were termed, ‘land use plans’ which focussed on addressing specific land use related policies by which the community intended to implement its previously stated goals through land use ordinances, zoning and subdivision regulations. The Town’s original Development Plan (or Land Use Plan) of 1998 provides a good example of this kind of ‘policy driven’ plan. The net result of this plan being the adoption of the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District.

The Town of Freedom’s 1998 Development Plan represents the first community-wide planning document that addressed some of the broader range of issues that affect land use including the Town’s agriculture, economic, residential and natural resources components. The 1998 Plan then rolled these primary areas into the land use category through the recognition that each individual component both directly or indirectly relates to and impacts the future land uses in the Town as well as the overall well being of the community.

The 2005 Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan takes the same approach as the 1998 Development Plan by recognizing the individuality of each of the plan’s elements including, Issues and Opportunities, Agricultural Resources, Housing, Utilities and Community Resources, Economic Development, Natural Resources, Intergovernmental Cooperation and finally Implementation. This Plan also recognizes that the goals, objectives and policies under each of the components noted above directly or indirectly impact and are ultimately related to land use.

The overall purpose of the Land Use Element in this Comprehensive Plan is therefore two-fold. First, just like the 1998 Development Plan, this Element serves as a fixed point where all other policies are recognized both for their specific relation to their own element area but also to their relation and impact on the Land Use Element. Thus, the first policy takes action to officially recognize that each policy under all other elements is also a component of the Land Use Element. Second, the Land Use Element offers an opportunity to address issues that are specific to land use such as the actual current use of the land, land divisions, building permits, density policies and home siting requirements to name a few.

11.1 Recent Development Trends

The issuance of new land use/building permits for single family residential construction in the Town of Freedom has remained relatively constant during the last 14 years. From 1990 to 2000, an average of four permits per year were issued for 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 LUI Number of Permits Issued (1990-2004)* depicts the relatively constant rate in overall development in the Town of Freedom since 1990.

Of these new permits for the construction of single-family residences, none were for new farmsteads. Assuming the Town will experience an increase in growth, it will become increasingly important for Town Officials to direct growth to ensure the protection of family farms and significant natural resources.

Table LU1 Number of Permits Issues (1990-2004)

Land Use Permits Issued for New Construction in the Town of Freedom								
Year	Resident					Commercial	Total Permits Issued for New Construction	Percent of Total Issued
	Single Family	Mobile Home	Total Permits Issued for Homesteads	Garage	other			
1990	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	1.53%
1991	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.76%
1992	2	0	2	1	2	0	5	3.82%
1993	5	0	5	0	1	1	7	5.34%
1994	4	0	4	1	0	0	5	3.82%
1995	3	0	3	0	2	0	5	3.82%
1996	4	0	4	0	1	0	5	3.82%
1997	8	0	8	1	6	0	15	11.45%
1998	6	0	6	1	3	0	10	7.63%
1999	6	0	6	2	7	0	15	11.45%
2000	4	0	4	1	10	0	15	11.45%
2001	2	0	2	1	6	0	9	6.87%
2002	6	0	6	2	5	0	13	9.92%
2003	6	0	6	2	10	0	18	13.74%
2004	2	0	2	2	2	0	6	4.58%
Total 1990 - 1999	41	0	41	6	22	1	70	53.44%
Total, 2000, 01, 02, 03, 2004	20	0	20	8	33	0	61	28.24%
Total, 1990 to 2005	61	0	61	14	55	1	131	total
Percent of Total Issued	46.56%	0.00%	46.56%	10.69%	41.98%	0.76%	100.00%	Percent of Total Issued
Average Issued Per Year	4.69	0.00	4.69	1.08	4.23	0.08	10.08	Average Issued Per Year

Source: Sauk County Planning & Zoning

11.2 Current Population and Housing Density

Another comparative tool that can be utilized during a comprehensive planning process is to compare population and housing statistics for a community through a density calculation. This calculation will provide additional insight into development patterns and provide background information as the Town of Freedom determines its future development policies and practices. In 2000, with a population of 416 persons and a land area of approximately 36 square miles and 22,204 acres, the Town of Freedom's population density is roughly 11.5 persons per square mile or roughly 1 person per 53 acres.

A calculation can also be made to determine the housing density of the Town of Freedom in 2000 by dividing the number of housing units (182) by the total land area. This equates to 5 houses per square mile or approximately one home on each 122 acres. The further breakdown of these densities based on development patterns and location will be analyzed later in this section.

11.3 Existing Land Use

Comparing existing land uses to future land uses and areas can serve as a point of comparison to show how overall land uses are changing over time. The information provided in this section will serve as a point of beginning to compare land uses in the future (i.e. 2010, 2020). **Map 11-1 Landuse and Landcover** along with the following descriptors will aid in the understanding of the existing land uses in the Town.

- **Mixed Higher Density Developed.** For towns, this area typically includes unincorporated villages. Although the Town of Freedom has one unincorporated Village, the Village of LaRue, it is not developed. Thus, this calculation equates to zero for Freedom.
- **Agriculture.** This area includes land used primarily for farming, farmsteads, and supporting activities. This also includes rural single family residential development with low densities. This area includes approximately 28% of the total land area or approximately 6,291 acres.
- **Grassland.** This area includes private and public lands that are undeveloped and are not in agricultural or woodland uses. It should be noted that these areas typically consist of prairie remnants or the reestablishment of prairie areas representing the grasslands first experienced by early settlers. These areas account for approximately 15% of the Town's land area, or roughly 3,329 acres of land.
- **Coniferous Forest.** This area includes land that is primarily evergreen forestland, which are undeveloped. 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 1% of the Town's total land area, or approximately 58 acres.
- **Deciduous Forest.** This area includes private and public lands that are primarily hardwood forestland that is undeveloped. This area also includes areas of low density residential development. This is the largest land use category in the Town accounting for approximately 47% of all land areas, or roughly 10,615 acres.
- **Open Water.** These areas are characterized as being lakes, ponds, perennial streams etc. It accounts for less than 1% of the total land area, or approximately 75 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 8% of the Town's area, or approximately 1,792 acres.
- **Barren.** These areas have typically supported mining activities or other human activity, which has left the ground in an infertile state. It is also reflective of different types of soil classifications, which are incapable of supporting plant growth, or that may be characterized by exposed rock formations. This area also accounts for less than 1% of the total area, or approximately 42 acres.

11.4 Higher Density Development

Currently, higher density developments (defined as lot sizes of 2 acres or less) are concentrated to the Village of North Freedom only. The policies in this plan call for subdivision types of development to occur in the Village or within ¼ mile of the existing Village boundary. Subdivision development is not permitted elsewhere in the Town.

11.5 Lots of Record

For purposes in Freedom, a lot of record is defined as a land area designated on a plat of survey, certified survey map, or described in a conveyance recorded in the Sauk County Register of Deeds office which complied with the zoning laws in existence when the property was originally divided and/or recorded but which may no longer comply with the current minimum land area within the applicable zoning district. Such land area may be utilized to provide space necessary for one main building and its accessory buildings or uses. Said in simpler terms, it is a land area under single ownership that is less than 35 acres and which existed prior to the adoption of Resource Conservancy 35 zoning by the Town of Freedom on January 19, 1999 (note: this date reflects approval of the zoning change by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors). *Map 11-2 Lot of Record* shows the location of existing lots of record in the Town, however no claims are made to the accuracy of this map. Therefore, prior to issuing building permits for these lots, it is recommended that the Town contact the Sauk County Planning & Zoning Department for an official verification.

11.6 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 as part of this planning process, the primary smart growth area identified includes lands within or adjacent (within ¼ mile) to the Village of North Freedom.

➤ Village of North Freedom- Adjacent Lands

The policies in this plan specifically recognizes the Village of North Freedom and lands within ¼ mile of the Village as the primary growth area both from a redevelopment and new development standpoint. This Plan recognizes that any development should correspond with the traditional Village layout relative to street and pedestrian patterns to ensure that when and if this development is annexed, connectivity can be made with Village infrastructure. As well, this Plan emphasizes the possibility of establishing a sanitary district with the Village, which will allow the

Town to develop at traditional Village densities while utilizing public services. This type of agreement will likely include a system of tax base sharing which will generate capital for the maintenance and expansion of village services, and at the same time allow the Town to benefit from the increased tax base.

Short of such intergovernmental agreements, the Town of Freedom Plan requires that all subdivision development in the Town occur within ¼ mile of the Village utilizing the traditional layout and lot size, but will also require the use of community septic systems. This method of waste disposal not only promotes up-to-date technologies to ensure that wastewater is being treated, but also provides a convenient and cost effective end-of-pipe connection should the Village annex the subdivision and at that time require the use of a public sanitary sewer system.

To carry forth the process identifying these areas as future residential development, it is envisioned that the Town's Plan Commission and Village Council discuss options and work toward setting up respective intergovernmental agreements. At a minimum, the following concepts will need to be addressed and agreements established:

1. Development guidelines relative to requiring connected streets via the adoption of an official map by both the Village and Town. The official map will provide for the location of new streets, utilities and park space that must be included in subdivision proposals. The official map will ensure connectivity as well as adequate and cost effective placement of public utilities (i.e., sewer lines, lift stations, electrical, stormwater facilities etc.)
2. Pictorial representations of architecture and placement of new housing and businesses that depict the future look of the North Freedom area as envisioned by the Village and Town. This may include concepts such as front porches facing the road vs. garages, encouragement of a particular architectural style and material use, greenspace placement etc.
3. Designation of lands for redevelopment or new lands for development via a future land use map to be located in both the Village's and Town's Comprehensive Plan. This map will serve to better define each municipality's smart growth areas and should be the same based on agreement for future growth areas.

It is envisioned the Town and Village carry out activities related to future development and agreements through the cooperative efforts of elected and appointed officials. Assistance can be obtained from a private consultant or the use of Sauk County staff may be obtained for a minimal or no-charge basis (depending on the complexity of the project). Appropriate County staff includes County Planners from the Planning & Zoning Department and/or the Community Resource Development Agent from UW-Extension. It may also be possible to retain the services of university students working toward a degree in land use or planning. Additionally, agreements such as those discussed under this section can be utilized and adapted from other communities to fit the North Freedom area.

➤ **Rural Areas**

Since 1999, along with the adoption of the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District by the Town, came a requirement that in order to build a new house on a new lot a minimum of 35 acres was required. Today, this same standard applies. The 35-acre standard was originally adopted by the Town as a means to reduce the potential number of new houses that could be built in the Town. At roughly 1 house per ½ acre under the Agriculture Zoning District (zoning of the Town prior to Resource Conservancy 35) the Town could have potentially had a full build-out of

roughly 44,000 new homes. Although this build-out is unrealistic, it represents the notion that development could potentially occur on a large scale. At the adoption of the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District by both the Town Board and Sauk County Board of Supervisors, the Town Board went on record that they do not support the minimum 35-acre lot size requirement that ‘went along’ with Resource Conservancy 35 zoning but rather supported a ‘lot credit system’ where small lots of 1 to 5 acres could be created at a density of 1 lot per 35 acres. This Plan, along with a program called the Planned Unit Development- Cluster Development provides for the lot credit option. This Plan sets a clear standard and process for the use of lot credits and small lot creation as a joint program with Sauk County. The net result includes a more rational housing density, reduced threat of excessive development not compatible with the Town and ultimately an option for landowners to create small lots once again.

11.7 Alternative Build-out Scenarios and Density Policies (Rural Areas)

As part of the planning process, lengthy discussions took place to both identify the strengths and weaknesses of the 35 acre zoning and to propose workable alternatives that serve as a win (or compromise) situation for all. This process took place under a formal consensus process discussed under *Chapter 2 Issues and Opportunities* and *Chapter 12 Implementation* as well as general discussion by the Comprehensive Plan Committee throughout the planning process.

To aid the Committee with the discussion, members first created three build-out scenarios for the Town. A description and summary of the discussion regarding each of these scenarios is as follows:

- **Scenario One:** One house per 35 acres (see also *Map 11-3 One House per 35 Acres*). Scenario one references the current approach of 1 house per 35 acres. This scenario was utilized to illustrate the potential full build-out of the Town of Freedom if the Town were divided into 35-acre lots respectively. This build-out effectively represents a density of one house per 35 acres owned. Concerns to consider in this scenario include the fact that not every landowner will be willing to parcel their land into 35-acre lots, which is in part one reason why the 35-acre rule has been somewhat successful in preserving lands. A second concern includes the fact that not all lands are readily accessible to 35-acre lot creation and subsequent development.
- **Scenario Two:** One house per 35 acres clustered (see also *Map 11-4 One House per 35 Acres Clustered*). Scenario two references scenario one only each new home is clustered on a 5-acre lot respectively. Although this scenario may still have inherent errors, it reduces the concerns noted in the first scenario in that development lots may now be created next to the road for ‘development’ of lands otherwise not accessible. Also, there is an increased potential for landowners to be willing to sell lots of less than 35 acres.
- **Scenario Three:** One house per parcel/farm (see also *Map 11-5 One House per Parcel/Farm*). Scenario three was provided to show a density policy that is opposite of the density expressed in the first two scenarios with a rate of 1 house per 35 acres.

Through the Committee’s examination of the scenarios coupled with the consensus process and general discussion it became evident that the 1 house per 35 acre lots (Scenario One) was not the preferred option. Alternatively, scenario three was not preferred either. Through discussion and consensus, the Comprehensive Planning Committee agreed that a density of one house/lot per 35 acres owned is appropriate for the Town.

11.8 Town of Freedom Density Policy

As noted in the previous section, it must be emphasized that the density policy developed by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, utilizing input from Town residents and landowners, aims to represent the opinions and needs of all residents and landowners. It is true that there are residents who believe that land should not be developed or divided at any cost, and those who believe they should have the opportunity to divide or develop unencumbered by policy or regulation. The election and implementation of either ‘extreme’ serves to unfairly recognize the desires of one group over the other. Thus, to ensure that all groups are fairly recognized, the decision to develop and select this density policy was not by means of simple vote of the majority of Committee members. Rather, the development and selection of the density policy resulted from a formal consensus process that led to an agreement by all of the Committee members to select a ‘middle ground’ that best represents the needs of all residents and landowners. The consensus process and definition of consensus utilized by the Committee is defined under **Chapter 12 Implementation**. For the record, the Committee agreed by complete consensus that the Town should pursue the allowance to create small lots utilizing Sauk County’s Planned Unit Development program. The agreed upon density of one small lot/house per 35 acres owned was agreed upon by qualified consensus with one Committee member opposed. The application of the same density policy of one lot/house per 35 acres town-wide with the exception of areas within ¼ mile of the Village of North Freedom was agreed upon by complete consensus.

➤ Amendment to the Town of Freedom Density Policy

Amendments to the Town’s Density policy may be deemed appropriate from time to time. To ensure that any future density policy amendment best recognizes the needs of all residents, this plan considers such an action a major comprehensive plan amendment. What this means, relative to the density policy, is that in order to amend the policy a steering committee representative of all views in the town must be created. At that time the steering committee will be responsible for acquiring feedback from Town residents and landowners to utilize in the decision making process. The final decision to amend the density policy will be by consensus. The amendment process is more precisely defined under **Chapter 12 Implementation**.

➤ The Town of Freedom Density Policy

The Town of Freedom’s Density Policy is based, in part, on the County’s minimum density of 1 house per 35 acres of ownership under the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District. Freedom’s Density Policy further utilizes a credit system to determine both the number of lots which can be created and the size of each lot for residential purposes. In return for the creation of lots of any size, an easement will be placed on a remaining portion of the original farm/parcel based on the Town’s Density Policy and will be held in joint by the Town of Freedom and Sauk County for a minimum of 20 years.

The following Table represents the Town’s Density Policy which should be utilized to calculate the total number of credits afforded to each landowner. The Table should also be utilized to determine credits needed for the creation of both numbers of lots and lot sizes.

The basic premise behind the Town’s Density Policy includes a calculation of how many credits a land owner has. To do this, the land owner must take the total net acres owned and divide this value by 35. For example a 155 acre farm would have 4.42 credits rounded down to the nearest whole number equals 4 credits ($155/35=4.42$ or 4 credits).

Utilizing **Table LU2**, the landowner would then be able to determine what combination of lot sizes and number of lots can be created utilizing a total of 4 credits. **Appendix G** includes **worksheets A-F**, which give examples of how to calculate the number of credits used with the creation of lots and numbers of lots of a certain size. Note that these worksheets do not represent the total number of lots and related lot size combinations available to a landowner. The primary intent of the worksheets is to help landowners apply Freedom's Density Policy to their property.

Table LU 2 Town of Freedom Density Policy Calculation Table

Town of Freedom Density Policy (net acres)	Acres Owned (net acres)	Credits Available
35	35 or <70	1
35	70 or <105	2
35	105 or <140	3
35	140 or <175	4
35	175 or <210	5
35	210 or <245	6
35	245 or <280	7

Reduced Lot Size (net acres)	Credits Needed for <u>Each</u> Reduced Lot Created
1 to 5	1
>5 up to 10	2
>10 up to 15	3
>15 up to 20	4
>20 up to 25	5
>25 up to 30	6
>30 and < 35	7

11.9 Zoning Classifications

The Town of Freedom adopted county zoning in July 1964. From that year to 1998, the Town of Freedom has primarily been zoned Agriculture (general) until the Town adopted Resource Conservancy 35 zoning in January, 1999 along with the development of their first Development Plan. With the exception of one rezone to agriculture for a quarry expansion and commercial apple orchard business, the Town has not experienced significant pressures for rezoning since the adoption of the Development Plan. As a result, the Town's current zoning map clearly mimics the Town's Zoning and land Use Map adopted in the fall of 1998 as a component of the Development Plan. **Map 11-6 Zoning Districts** and **Map 11-7 Future Land Uses** depicts the current zoning and proposed land uses in the Town of Freedom.

11.10 Future Land Uses

Determining future land uses and amounts of land needed for development and preservation results from a process of projecting growth trends into the future to determine both the demand for changes in land use that will be placed on a community relative to development and the desire of a community to maintain land in its current use. In order to study the demand of future land uses in Freedom 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 and the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 12 from the Sauk City to Middleton. Future land Uses are broken down into residential, commercial, agricultural, and natural resources.

➤ Future Residential Land Uses

In brief review, the population in Freedom has declined by 4 persons in the last 10 years (1990-2000), however logically speaking it seems realistic that the population will actually increase as exemplified by population increases in neighboring Towns. The second factor to consider will be a completed 4-lane U.S. Highway 12 corridor that will provide for a 30-minute commute to the City of Madison's west side coupled with the possibility of cluster developments and additional development in the North Freedom area. Although it is not known how this corridor will impact the population in the Town, or what impact the general growth trend of Sauk County will have, it is surmised that the population will most likely resemble a combination under Population Projection 2 (see *Chapter 3 Population Inventory & Analysis*) where the limited household size proposes an additional seven people by 2020 while the constant household size projection includes 54 additional persons. It is unclear as to how many people will be added to the town and what average household sizes will be in the future, however the Town can be certain that growth will occur and that the town is unlikely to see a drop in population in the next 20-year timeframe.

For the next 20 years, the Town will likely experience scattered rural residential development and growth similar to the previous 20 years. The primary diversion from this trend may include development within ¼ mile of the Village of North Freedom. Recognizing the need to plan for future growth areas in 5-year increments, this Plan envisions the majority of the growth to occur in this area, but also recognizes the historical drop in population and uncertainty of population growth in the future. Thus, it is not appropriate to designate all lands within ¼ mile of the Village for residential uses as this practice may lead to land speculation and artificial jumps in population not appropriate for a community of this size. Thus, according to *Map 11-7 Future Land Uses* these areas are identified as future growth areas with the understanding that changes of land use, most typically for residential uses, are only made when a clear need for housing is demonstrated. In other words, a proposal for a 100-lot subdivision which could effectively increase the population of the Town by over 50% may not be appropriate or in the best interest of the Town or Village. However, smaller development proposals, with a demonstrated need for housing, may be considered.

➤ Future Commercial Land Uses

Future commercial development in the Town of Freedom is primarily directed to areas adjacent to or within the Village of North Freedom. This designation is complimentary to the Village of North Freedom with their designation of commercial adjacent to the Mid-Continent Railway museum.

➤ Future Agriculture Areas

Defining future agriculture areas is more difficult than defining future land uses adjacent to the Village of North Freedom as agriculture areas (and lands) are influenced largely by local policy (i.e., 1 per 35) as well as market forces relative to rural residential development. The establishment of a density policy coupled with cluster

development options offers a viable alternative to the conversion of agricultural lands into



Photo courtesy USDA NRCS

35-acre residential lots. In addition to lot sizes and as expressed in this planning process and by the community survey, agriculture and farming in the northern part of the town is vital to maintaining any farming as an occupation in the Town. Without options, such as cluster development, the Town is at risk of losing its few farms to large lot residential development. Thus there is merit in looking at options, which better define both the protection of agriculture lands while still allowing for residential development. There is also merit in defining ways that Freedom farmers can continue to be economically viable. Protection of farmland includes many facets and ideas, however the primary factor to farmland protection includes that of soil types. Therefore, agriculture areas are best defined by **Map 5-1 Land Capability Classification** and **Map 5-2 Prime Farmland Slope Delineation**.

➤ Future Natural Resource Areas



Photo courtesy USDA NRCS

Like agriculture, defining future natural resource areas is also more difficult than defining future residential or commercial development. And like agriculture, the development of significant natural resources such as contiguous forested blocks, prairie remnants, stream corridors, microhabitats and the like are once again largely influenced by local policy as well as market forces. Like agriculture, the establishment of a density policy coupled with cluster development options offer a viable option to the conversion of natural resource areas into 35-acre residential lots. As expressed in the planing process, preserving significant natural resources is a high priority. Also, as expressed in the Community Survey, the preservation of natural resources was among the highest priorities. Protecting the Town's Natural Resource Areas will take a slightly different approach than the preservation of agriculture resources, which primarily relies on ensuring the economic viability and success of the Town's farmers. Natural resources will more likely rely on programs that aim to assure continued protection such as purchase of development rights, voluntary easements and regulation. However, like agriculture, the protection of natural resources will also heavily rely on the application of a local density policy and future build-out scenario that aims to protect identified natural resource areas. For the proposes of this plan, future natural resources areas are best defined by **Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas**. In general, areas defined as being within the Baraboo Range National Natural Landmark have been identified as requiring the highest level of natural resource protection and any future local policies will need to reflect this designation. However, all areas of the Town should be considered from the perspective of protecting natural resources.

11.11 Natural Limitations to Building and Site Development

➤ Areas adjacent to the Village of North Freedom (1/4 mile)

Future development adjacent to the Village of North Freedom does not come without its limitations. The Baraboo River, located directly west of the Village and related floodplain areas pose a severe limitation to growth to the west and east (see also *Map 9-3 General Floodplain Areas*). Seeley Creek, located to the south of the Village, also includes designated floodplain areas. Both areas also include a complex of wetland systems noted on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*. Given these limitations, it appears as though development is practically located to the northeast of the Village in the Town of Freedom and the north in the Town of Excelsior. A certain amount of development could be accommodated to the south of the village along County Road I. Thus, the designation of future lands for development as expressed on *Map 11-7 Future Land Use* does not attempt to define a specific growth area, but rather recognizes areas adjacent to and within ¼ mile of the Village as general growth areas. An additional tool to site development includes *Map 9-2 General Soils* which shows limitations by high water tables or wet soils. This map works in conjunction with the *1977 Sauk County Soil Survey*, which describes each soil type and their limitations to dwelling and road building.

➤ Rural Areas

Development in the rural areas is limited primarily by the ability to place a Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (septic system) in addition to areas of hydric soils, wetlands and open water. Large areas of the Town east and west of County Road DD and north and south of Ulrich Road include lands with the greatest limitation by the large and expansive wetland complex present. Other areas of the Town, namely those in the Baraboo Range, also pose limitations relative to exposed or near surface quartzite limiting basements, septic system development and well drilling. Rural limitations are best noted on *Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas*, *Map 6-1 Septic Suitability*, and *Map 6-2 Alternative Septic Suitability*.

11.12 Land Use Goal, Objectives and Policies

Land Use Goal(s): (the following goals are the same goals from the Town's 1998 Land Use Plan)

- Preserve the integrity of the rural community.
- Encourage cottage industry/appropriate small business.
- Encourage good land stewardship.
- Provide buffers, inasmuch as is reasonable, between incompatible land uses.
- Encourage the maintenance and growth of the family farm.
- Encourage the management of woodlands and wildlife using generally accepted practices.
- Utilize an organized development pattern, which will minimize conflicting land uses and provide for a controlled rate of development.

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, contiguous blocks of forest, and significant natural resources as well as the overall view of the Town.

LUP-2A The Town of Freedom Density Policy:

Town of Freedom Density Policy (net acres)	Acres Owned (net acres)	Credits Available
35	35 or <70	1
35	70 or <105	2
35	105 or <140	3
35	140 or <175	4
35	175 or <210	5
35	210 or <245	6
35	245 or <280	7

Reduced Lot Size (net acres)	Credits Needed for <u>Each</u> Reduced Lot Created
1 to 5	1
>5 up to 10	2
>10 up to 15	3
>15 up to 20	4
>20 up to 25	5
>25 up to 30	6
>30 and < 35	7

Note: Appendix G contains worksheet examples of differing ways the Town's density policy may be applied. The worksheets are meant to provide a examples and are not meant to convey every possible way of land division under the Planned Unit Development Program/Town of Freedom Density Policy.

LUP-2B No part of the Town's Density Policy (LUP-2A through LUP-2J) shall become effective until such time as Sauk County officially adopts respective Ordinances, called a Planned Unit Development Overlay Zone, to permit the creation of small lots. Until this time the minimum requirement of 35-acre lots will be enforced under the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District.

Density credits afforded to a parcel shall be calculated on the date of adoption of respective County Ordinances to permit the creation of small lots. This date is:

_____.

LUP-2C The Density Policy shall apply to all landowners and in all circumstances except that farm consolidations shall not be required to utilize a density credit provided that the residential structure/farm buildings being divided from the original parcel were built prior to January 19, 1999, the date the Town of Freedom adopted Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning, and that the newly created lot be not less than 1 acre and not more than 5 acres. Farm consolidated lots may be larger than 5 acres provided the respective number of credits are utilized per the Town of Freedom's Density Policy (i.e., a ten acre farm consolidated lot will use 1 credit versus two credits for the creation of a vacant lot).

LUP-2D The Density Policy also recognizes that the division of a parcel into lots of less than 35 acres for the purpose of transfer of ownership, shall be limited to not more than 3 lots in a 5-year period. The creation of more than 3 lots in a 5-year period shall be considered a subdivision under this Plan. Subdivisions shall only be permitted within ¼ mile of the Village of North Freedom.

LUP-2E The Town shall recognize the Plan Commission as the body charged with the implementation of the Town of Freedom's Density Policy and Planned Unit Development cluster development options and as further defined under the Implementation Chapter. Prior to initial implementation and/or amendments thereafter to the Density Policy and Planned Unit Development cluster development options or Transfer of Development Rights Program, the Town shall seek legal counsel/review of the policy and all related documents. Upon completion of this review, changes may be incorporated, and the policy and all supporting documents will be adopted as an Ordinance Amendment to the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan.

LUP-2F Any proposed amendment to an already adopted Town of Freedom Density Policy shall be considered a major amendment and shall require the reconvening of a Committee representative of all people and interests in the Town of Freedom who will review the amendment and determine if the proposed change is consistent with the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Plan. This Committee, upon agreeing to make an amendment, will make a recommendation to the Plan Commission who will make a recommendation to the Town Board for final approval. See LUP-2E with regard to legal requirements prior to approval of any amendment to the Town's Density Policy. See also *Chapter 12 Implementation, Section 12.3* for detailed procedures relative to amending the Town's Density Policy.

LUP-2G Lands remaining after the application of the Town's Density Policy as part of a Planned Unit Development cluster development expressed under respective Sauk County codes, will be identified as a Planned Unit Development Preservation Area at which time an open space easement will be placed. Said easement may be held by the county, town or outside land trust for a specified period of time. This easement will continue for 20 years and may automatically be extended provided that the Town's Density Policy remains the same or has become more restrictive. Should the Town's Density Policy become less restrictive, the original 20 year easement may be removed to permit additional lot creation. Under this scenario, removal of the easement will only be permitted on or anytime after the sunset date of the easement (sunset date being defined as 20 years after the recording date of the original easement or at the sunset of each 10-year renewal period thereafter). All easements will be legally recorded as an official document with the Sauk County Register of Deeds.

LUP-2H Lots created as the result of the application of a Density Policy will not be permitted further divisions unless the additional required credits are obtained.

LUP-2I Any large land transfers in the Town of Freedom will automatically carry with the transfer the number of afforded credits. For example, a 70-acre parcel currently has two credits. Upon transfer to a successive land owner, the two credits under the density policy will also automatically transfer with the 70 acres. If the 70 acres is divided and sold to two different landowners, each gaining 35 acres, 1 credit will automatically transfer with each 35-acre parcel.

LUP-2J It is the intent of this policy to consider the development of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program that will occur between landowners within the Town and between the Town and existing incorporated areas. As part of this program, the Town will need to identify appropriate sending and receiving areas for development rights/credits as well as appropriate development densities. The evolution and subsequent acceptance of a TDR program shall cause the Town to amend the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan.

The development of a TDR program shall be considered a major comprehensive plan amendment and shall require the reconvening of a Committee representative of all people and interests in the Town of Freedom who will develop a TDR program that is consistent with the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Plan. This Committee, upon agreeing on a TDR program, will make a recommendation to the Plan Commission who will make a recommendation to the Town Board for final approval. See LUP-2E with regard to legal requirements prior to the approval of any TDR program. See also *Chapter 12 Implementation, Section 12.3* for detailed procedures relative to amending the Town's Density Policy and developing a TDR program.

This policy also intends to encourage Sauk County to develop and implement Transfer of Development Right options. At such time as Sauk County adopts TDR regulations, the Town of Freedom shall have one (1) year from said adoption date by the Sauk County Board of Supervisors to establish a Committee. Once the Town officially establishes a Committee, said Committee will have one (1) year to present an agreed upon TDR program to the Town of Freedom Plan Commission for consideration. Like any amendment to the Town's Density Policy, it must be emphasized that the development of a Town of Freedom Transfer of Development Rights program must be agreed upon by consensus of the Committee.

LUO-3 Assure that the provisions of this plan are considered when making land use decisions in the Town and further support external programs to realize the Vision, Goals and Objectives of this Plan.

LUP-3A As the Town reviews land division proposals and changes in land use, it is the intent of this policy to ensure that both the Town's Plan Commission and Town Board review and incorporate this Plan's Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies into their final decision.

LUP-3B Support Sauk County with the development, adoption and implementation of a Planned Unit Development Ordinance so as allow the Town to utilize their density policy and related programs.

LUP-3C Support and encourage Sauk County with the development and adoption of the county-wide Purchase of Development Rights Program for prime agricultural lands.

LUO-4 Encourage the placement of new buildings which preserve productive agricultural lands, forested areas and the overall appearance of the town.

LUP-4A 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.

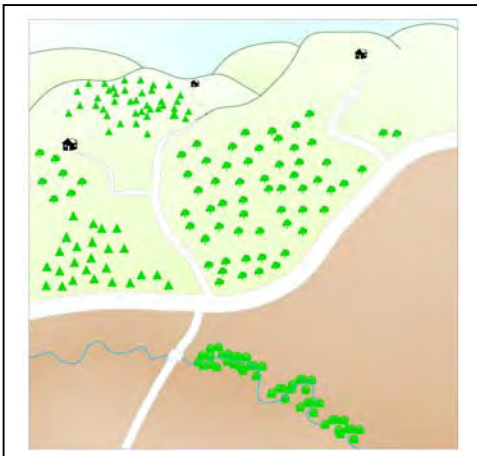
Subset 1 LUP- 4A Development in the Baraboo Range

Preferred



- Homes built in natural valley;
- Existing vegetation maintained or replaced;
- Driveways shared by residences;
- Homes placed within 200 ft forest core buffer;
- Reduction in Town road access points.

Less Desired -



- Homes built on bluffs;
- 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- 4A 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- 4A Multiple Lot Residential (Agriculture Fields)**Preferred**

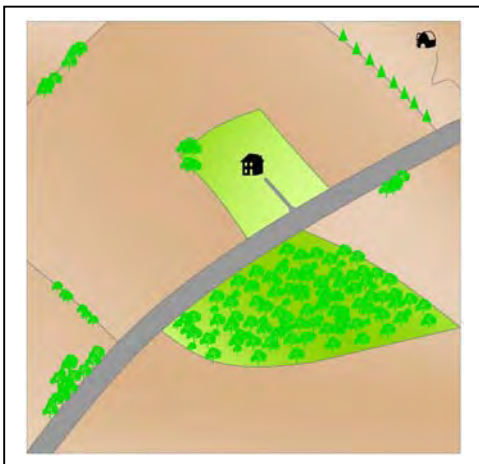
- Homes clustered in woodlot providing natural screening;
- Minimal land taken out of agriculture production;
- Driveways shared by residences;
- Existing vegetation maintained or replaced;
- Cohesive agricultural fields.

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- 4A Single Lot Residential (Agriculture Fields)**Preferred**

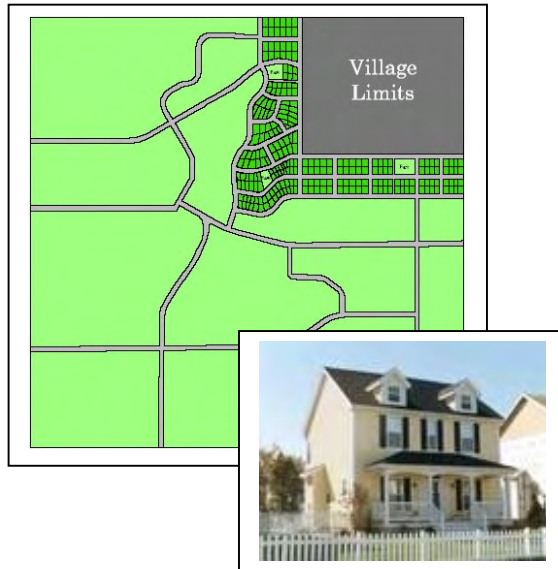
- Home built on existing woodlot;
- Minimal land taken out of agriculture production;
- Existing vegetation maintained or replaced;
- Cohesive agricultural fields.

Less Desired

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

Subset 5 LUP- 4A Development within $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Village of North Freedom

Preferred -



- Interconnected road enhancing mobility;
- Inclusion of sidewalks connected to the Village;
- Secondary road connections to the Village;
- Dedicated park space for the residents of the neighborhood;
- Development directly adjacent to the Village thereby avoiding the 'leap frog' effect;
- Village sanitary sewer service provided or a community septic system that can be 'hooked' into the Village at a later date;
- Smaller lots typical of the average lot size in the Village;
- Housing architecture and layout typical of current Village development including front porches and rear facing garages.

Less Desired -



- Lack of interconnected roads, limiting mobility;
- No sidewalks;
- Road separation from the Village road system;
- Use of County roads to gain access to the Village and downtown;
- Little or no recreational space/parks;
- Development not contiguous to the Village;
- Septic systems on each individual lot;
- Excessively large lots not typical of urban development;
- Housing architecture and layout not conducive to a sense of community (i.e. no front porches, garages facing road etc.)

12.0 Purpose

A number of the policies in this Comprehensive Plan will not be automatically implemented and follow-up actions will be required for the Plan to become a reality. An example includes the development of periodic newsletters and website to address and promote certain policies. 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. Thus, the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan takes on two roles. One of these roles provides for everyday guidance for decision making by the Town whereas the second role provides specific guidance or direction to carry forth projects which when completed will serve to aid the Town with the full realization of its vision, goals and objectives.

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

12.1 Plan Adoption

The Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan must be adopted in a manner which 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, during the development of this plan, an extensive public participation component was included which ensured numerous opportunities for residents and landowners, as well as neighboring governments to give input. This opportunity, along with the recognition that the Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan Committee consisted of people from all interests and backgrounds, ensured that a 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 can be noted in Appendix D.

To coincide with the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town will appoint a 5-member Plan Commission. It is intended that this Plan will be reviewed by the Plan Commission with a recommendation forwarded onto the Town Board for final Town approval.

Upon Town approval, the Plan will be forwarded onto the Planning, Zoning and Land Records Committee for recommendation to the Sauk County Board for final approval and 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.

➤ Plan Monitoring

The Town should constantly evaluate its decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions against the recommendation/policies of the Town of Freedom 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.

➤ **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 minor or major. Minor amendments generally include changes to maps, general text or policies. Any minor amendment to a Plan policy will at a minimum require a public hearing. Major amendments are defined as any change the Town's Density Policy or Transfer of Development Rights Program, thus major amendments will require, at a minimum, a public hearing to garner input from the community regarding the amendment(s). Prior to the public hearing however, any amendment to the Town's Density Policy or Transfer of Development Rights Program must also follow the guidelines noted under **12.3 Density Policy Amendment and Transfer of Development Rights Procedure**. Any amendment to Plan policies whether minor or major must be adopted by Ordinance according to the procedures outlined in Wis. Stat. §66.0295(4).

➤ **Plan Update**

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 2015 (i.e., ten years after 2005). The Town should also monitor any changes to language or interpretations of State law throughout the life of the Comprehensive Plan.

12.3 Density Policy Amendment and Transfer of Development Rights Procedure



Any amendment to the Town's Density Policy or development of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program will require the convening of a steering committee (much like the Comprehensive Plan Committee) to develop and evaluate any proposed amendment to the Density Policy or TDR program. This steering committee should have at least 10 members and may include all members of the Town's Plan Commission plus other residents of the Town who represent all interests including, but not limited to, agriculture, development, environmental protection and other interests as identified. Prior to any recommendation of an amendment to the Town's Density Policy or TDR program, the steering committee must first reach consensus on the proposed amendment or TDR program. To reach consensus a continuum needs to be considered where not everyone may agree with the proposed amendment, however, every member of the steering committee must at least agree to endorse the amendment with their stated (and recorded) concerns. It is suggested that **Table 12-1 Consensus Process Continuum** along with an example step by step process noted below be utilized to facilitate discussion and consensus. Note that consensus cannot be reached if any member

of the steering committee chooses to block a proposed amendment noted by the shaded column on Table 12-1, however any position taken to the left of the shaded box is considered ‘agreement by consensus.’

Table 12-1 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”

Prior to any consensus process, it is important to first define ‘agreement by consensus.’ An example of a definition of consensus can be noted under Level One below. The remaining following levels and steps are only a suggested process that may be followed to reach consensus, however these levels and steps should not be construed to be the only way to reach consensus.

➤ **Level One: Develop a Definition**

• **Step 1: Developing a Definition of Consensus**

The steering committee must first define their idea of consensus and may consider using Table 12-1 to do so. An example of a definition that could be used or amended to fit the needs of the steering committee is as follows:

Our definition of consensus aims for complete agreement and support among those present (or, where members absent have voiced their opinion). 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 four members combined declare themselves as, ‘formal disagreement but will go with the majority’, or ‘block’. If there are four or more members in these categories, the item will be ‘off the table’ pending revision and reconsideration. A member absent from the meeting may express their opinion in writing and constitute part of one of the four opponents to voice formal disagreement or block a measure. However, their opinion would not be registered on any revision considered at the same meeting. The later part of this definition is ‘sufficient consensus’ or ‘qualified consensus’.

Note: The above definition of consensus was utilized to reach agreement on all plan goals, objectives and policies including the density policy so noted in this Plan.

• **Step 2: General Discussion/First Call for Consensus**

Discussion at this level ought to be the broadest in scope. Comments should be encouraged which take the whole proposal into account; i.e., why it is a good idea, or general problems which need to be addressed. Discussion at this level often has a philosophical or principled tone, purposely addressing how a proposal might affect Freedom in the long run or what kind of precedent it might create, etc. Specific concerns should not be raised, but relevant factual information should be presented. For those who might at first feel opposed to a proposal, this discussion is consideration of why it might be good for the steering committee or residents of Freedom in the broadest sense. If, through discussion,

there is general approval of one remaining identified policy, the facilitator can request a call for consensus.

- **Step 3: First Call for Consensus**

The facilitator will ask if there are any unresolved concerns. After a period of silence, if there are no additional concerns raised, the facilitator declares that consensus is reached and the proposal is read for the record. At no time will the facilitator ask, “Is there consensus?” or “Does everyone agree?”. These questions do not encourage an environment in which all concerns can be expressed. If some people have a concern, but are shy or intimidated by a strong showing of support for a proposal, the question “Are there any unresolved concerns?” speaks directly to them and provides an opportunity for them to speak. Any concerns for which someone stands aside (see description of stand aside below) are listed with the proposal and become part of it. As an alternative, the facilitator may choose to use a ‘round robin’ method whereby consensus is determined based on everyone stating where they fall on the consensus process continuum and then comparing the results to the group’s definition of consensus. The round robin method was utilized to reach consensus in this Plan.

- **Level Two: Identify Concerns / Group Related Concerns**

- **Step 1: List All Concerns**

At the beginning of the next level, brainstorming is used so that concerns can be identified and written publicly and for the record by a notetaker. This is not a time to attempt to resolve concerns or their validity. That would stifle free expression of concerns. At this point, only concerns are to be expressed, reasonable or unreasonable, well thought out or vague.

- **Step 2: Group Related Concerns**

At this point, the focus is on identifying patterns and relationships between concerns and to group like concerns.

- **Level Three: Resolve Concerns / Second Call for Consensus**

- **Step 1: Resolve Groups of Related Concerns**

Often, related concerns can be resolved as a group.

- **Step 2: Second Call for Consensus**

If most concerns seem to have been resolved, then call for consensus in the manner described above. If some concerns have not been resolved, then a more focussed discussion is needed.

- **Step 3: Restate Remaining Concerns (One at a Time)**

Return to the list. The facilitator checks each one with the group and removes ones which have been resolved or are, for any reason, no longer a concern. Each remaining concern is restated clearly and concisely and addressed one at a time. Sometimes new concerns are raised which need to be added to the list. It is not appropriate to hold back a concern and spring it upon the group late in the process. This undermines trust and limits the group’s ability to adequately discuss the concern in its relation to other concerns.

- **Step 4: Questions to Clarify the Concern**

The facilitator asks for questions or comments which further clarify the concern so everyone clearly understands it before discussion starts.

- **Step 5: Discussion Limited to Resolving One Concern at a Time**

Use group discussion to facilitate a resolution for each concern. The discussion is kept focussed upon the particular concern until every suggestion has been offered. If no new ideas are coming forward and the concern cannot be resolved, or if the time allotted for the discussion has been used, move to one of the closing options described below.

- **Step 6: Call for Consensus**

- **Step 7: Repeat this process until all concerns have been resolved.**

12.4 Role of Implementation

➤ Town Board

The Town Board will provide for general oversight of the Plan Commissions activities relative to selecting and guiding Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee participants. 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. Like Plan Commission members, Town Board members are encouraged to take an active role as members of the Implementation Committee.

➤ Plan Commission

It is intended that the primary body responsible for the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan be 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. It is also recommended that the Plan Commission take the role of identifying policies within the Plan to support their decision/recommendation to the Town Board. The second form of implementation recognizes the role of the Plan Commission to identify participants for the working groups or collaborative.

➤ Working Groups and Collaborative Committee

From time to time Working Groups and/or a Collaborative Committee may be established to address the implementation of short term and long term policies. These Groups can be made up of any landowners in the Town of Freedom and will include members of the Town's Plan Commission, and may include members of the Town Board. The role of the working group will be to implement certain policies in the Comprehensive Plan as directed by the Plan Commission, but to also serve as an ad-hoc Committee, where appropriate, to work through any identified issue. As part of this implementation, it is assumed that appropriate outside technical assistance will be requested. This assistance will most likely be provided by community 'experts' on a particular topic such as those who represent organizations referenced in the Chapters of this Plan (i.e. Prairie Enthusiasts, Sauk County Historical Society) or this assistance may come from a governmental entity such as Sauk

County or UW-Extension. Assistance may also be provided by inviting community representatives from Towns both within and outside Sauk County

12.5 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. Implementation is divided into three timeframes: Immediate, Short-Term, and Long-Term.

➤ Immediate Implementation

Immediate implementation recognizes those policies that become **effective immediately** upon Plan adoption by the Town of Freedom Board and requires no further course of action other than continued administration of the policy by the Town.

➤ Short-Term Implementation

Short-Term implementation recognizes those policies that require further work to reach a point where they can be effectively administered by the Town. By Short-Term, it is intended that the Town finally implement these policies within **five (5) years** of Plan adoption.

➤ Long-Term Implementation

Long-Term implementation recognizes those policies that require further work to reach a point where they can be effectively administered by the Town. By Long-Term, it is intended that the Town finally implement these policies within **ten (10) years** of Plan adoption.

Please turn to next page for implementation charts

Housing	Implementation
HO-1 Encourage residential growth to be located next to developed areas that can be efficiently and adequately served by public infrastructure.	
HP-1A Higher density residential subdivision development shall only be permitted within ¼ mile or directly adjacent to the Village of North Freedom and should be served by public sewer and water or shared septic and water. Subdivision is defined in the glossary of this Plan and the Sauk County Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance.	Immediate
HP-1B Work with the Village of North Freedom to identify appropriate areas for subdivision development and develop cooperative agreements to utilize village services such as sewer and water, while retaining the development in the town. As part of these agreements develop a system of tax base sharing and provisions for future annexation.	Long Term
HO-2 Develop housing location requirements that preserve agriculture, forested and natural areas.	
HP-2A Direct any and all subdivision development as defined by this Plan and the Sauk County Land Division and Subdivision Regulations Ordinance to the Village of North Freedom or areas within ¼ mile.	Immediate
HP-2B New residences, where appropriate, will share driveways with each other or with neighboring existing homes to preserve Town road edges and maintain rural character. For shared driveways, a driveway maintenance agreement must be recorded with the Sauk County Register of Deeds.	Immediate
HP-2C Direct new rural housing development as defined by this Plan using the following criteria so as to preserve significant natural resources and agriculture operations: See ARP-4B and NRP-1A.	Immediate
HO-3 Allow for varied housing lot sizes.	
HP-3A The following lot sizes are prescribed as follows: a. Subdivisions: All subdivisions within ¼ mile of the Village shall maintain a grid-like pattern and connectivity to the existing village street network with a lot size range from 6000 to 10,000 square feet. Coordination with existing Village street layout, utility provisions etc will be required as well as adherence to any adopted official map. b. Rural lots: One acre minimum. See LUP-2A.	Immediate
HO-4 Encourage the use of quality construction materials consistent with the rural character.	
HP4-A Continue to administer the Uniform Dwelling Code to ensure a high level of quality for all new construction.	Immediate
HP4-B New construction in the Town is highly encouraged to utilize earth tone colors for any new construction. Agriculture areas may utilize the additional colors of red or white to mimic traditional farm related structures.	Immediate
HO-5 Encourage the maintenance of existing housing.	
HP-5A The Town will periodically include options and funding opportunities in a town newsletter to ensure residents are aware of available grants and other funding to maintain existing housing stock.	Short Term
HP-5B See Chapter 4: Housing	Immediate
HO-6 Support efforts which provide for affordable housing and which meets the requirements of people with special needs.	
HP-6A Direct affordable housing opportunities for people with special needs to the Village of North Freedom or to those areas directly adjacent to the Village of North Freedom where services can be effectively provided.	Immediate
HP-6B Develop options that will permit dependency living arrangements allowing for the physical arrangement of a dwelling unit in such a fashion that separate living spaces are created within a dwelling for the sole purpose of allowing a dependent person to live in the secondary living area while the owner and his or her family reside in the principle living area. It is the intention of this policy to allow the secondary living area to contain separate bath and kitchen facilities, which permit a degree of independence. Prior to this policy taking effect, the Town will work with Sauk County to develop zoning options to permit such arrangement.	Short Term
HO-7 Encourage residential housing designs that aim to balance the protection of natural resources with the opportunity to build new housing.	
HP-7A The Town encourages innovation in housing designs and types that aims to reduce the impact on natural resources both with construction materials utilized as well as energy efficiency over the life of the structure. Examples include passive solar homes, earthen structures and certified green built homes. Retrofitting existing homes with energy saving technologies such as improved insulation, lighting and heating efficiency, and renewable sources of energy are encouraged. Periodically, the Towns newsletter may highlight these concepts.	Immediate
HO-8 Develop minimum and maximum size limits for new residential homes to preserve significant environmental resources.	
HP-8A Work with Sauk County to permit the construction of new residential structures (stick-built) that are less than 750 square feet of living space as currently prescribed by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance so as to allow the construction of seasonal/recreational cabins or full time residences to accommodate those who are interested in a smaller home and which are not less than 400 square feet of living space.	Long Term
HP-8B Mobile homes shall only be permitted in mobile home parks, with the exception of mobile homes related to agriculture operations.	Immediate

Agriculture Resources	Implementation
ARO-1 Encourage timber harvesting according to sustainable forestry practices.	
ARP-1A Encourage woodland and forest landowners with more than 10 acres of woods/forest to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	Immediate
ARP- 1B To promote professionally managed timber harvests of 10 or more acres the Town, after having been provided proof of a certified forester prepared or approved harvest plan, will reimburse a landowner \$100.00 toward the cost of preparing such harvest plan, after completion of a timber harvest. This policy does not apply to lands enrolled under the Managed Forest Law.	Short Term
ARP- 1C Consider a Town newsletter or website that will periodically highlight opportunities for residents and landowners relative to sustainable timber production and harvest methods.	Short Term
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.	
ARP-2A Actively work with Sauk County to develop new zoning districts and other options which will allow for innovative 'value-added' farming income opportunities that are consistent with the rural character.	Short Term
ARP-2B Utilize expertise from agencies such as the USDA, Sauk County Land Conservation Department, UWEX, representatives from various buying cooperatives and others to both explore the feasibility of and provide resources to farmers who may be considering the production of alternative agriculture products, markets and growing methods. Alternative crops and growing methods may include, but are not limited to, the production of hazelnuts, hops, fruits, unique cash crops, rotational grazed cattle, organic products and other methods which will produce a final product that will command a higher price.	Short Term
ARP-2C Recognizing that the production of specialty crops is currently a major component of agriculture economics in the Town of Freedom, promote the inception of additional operations while maintaining current operations. The Plan Commission will foster the establishment of a town-landowner collaborative that will actively meet to develop ways to promote the Town as a destination for those seeking to purchase specialty crops/products on-sites as well as identify wholesale/retail outlets. The Collaborative will also identify and promote the Town as a favorable location for new start-up agriculturally related businesses that meet the definition of a family farm operation.	Long Term
ARO-3 Educate new and existing residents on farm life, farm noises, odors, and operational requirements prior to granting permits for the construction of new rural residences.	
ARP-3A Written information will be given to new residents of single family homes regarding their rights and responsibilities of living in an agricultural area. As part of the permitting process the new residents will be required to sign a disclaimer indicating that they are aware that they may experience conflicts with living in an agricultural area. As part of the creation of any new lot, a statement will be recorded with the Sauk County Register of Deeds stating that this lot is within an agricultural area and that agriculture activities shall be paramount. It shall be the landowner/sellers responsibility to record such document.	Short Term
ARP-3b Minimum setbacks between water wells and agriculture uses are as follows: 50 feet separation from a feedlot, 100 feet from a liquid manure storage facility and 250 feet from all other manure storage facilities.	Immediate
ARO-4 Preserve productive farmlands and encourage the maintenance and growth of family farm operations for continued and future agriculture uses.	
ARP-4A Support and encourage Sauk County to develop and adopt a Purchase of Development Rights Program which will offer farms an option to sell or donate development rights from agriculturally productive lands and adjacent lands to help maintain a viable farming economy.	Short Term
ARP-4B Prime agriculture land as defined on <i>Map 5-1 Land Capability Classification</i> 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. Note that grazing (pasture) is a crop. These lands are identified as class I, II or III by the Sauk County Soil Survey. Property owners with lands identified as class I, II or III are encouraged not to use these lands for residential or commercial development if other land is available for such purposes. This policy will not prevent an individual from making agricultural use of land that is not otherwise mapped or identified as such.	Immediate
ARO-5 Promote the conservation of soil and water resources for agriculture uses.	
ARP-5A The Plan Commission will foster the establishment of a Town/Land Owner Collaborative made up of interested residents and public and private partners to promote and implement good agriculture land stewardship practices, and seek funding for private land stewardship projects. Periodically include opportunities and program descriptions in a Town newsletter or website.	Short term

Utilities and Community Resources	Implementation
UCFO-1 Encourage the maintenance and improvement of utility infrastructure.	
UCFP-1A Require power utility companies to use current high voltage transmission line corridors.	Immediate
UCFP-1B Encourage the Town Board to develop a permitting process that will require utilities that are burying cable along Town Roads to present a plan to the Town Board for approval. The utility Plan will note where utilities will be located so as to provide the Town with known locations. The Plan will also address restoration and cleanup of disturbed areas. The Plan must be submitted not less than 30 (thirty) days prior to commencement of work.	Short Term
UCFO-2 The Town encourages the use of renewable energy such as solar, wind and biomass.	
UCFP-2A The Town of Freedom encourages landowners to pursue renewable energy options as a form of economic development and self sustainability.	Short Term
UCFO-3 Protect archeological and historic structures and the overall rural character of the Town.	
UCFP-3A Identify and encourage the preservation of significant historical and archeological areas and work with specific landowners (both owners of the identified area and neighbors) with regard to preservation. When evaluating new development proposals and the creation of new lots, the Town will encourage that these historical and archeological areas be preserved. Preservation includes the resource itself and impacts from adjacent (proposed) land uses. Assistance with regard to preservation techniques may be provided by the Sauk County Historical Society. Refer to <i>Map 6-3 Community and Cultural Resources</i> to identify the Town's known historic and archeological resources.	Immediate
UCFO-4 Continue to provide proper disposal and recycling of solid waste.	
UCFP-4A Continue to provide at least the current level of solid waste and recycling services.	Immediate
UCFO-5 Maintain services in a safe and efficient manner.	
UCFP-5A Continue positive correspondence with the North Freedom Fire Department regarding safe and cost effective service provisions and the Village of North Freedom with regard to town use of the Village Hall.	Immediate
UCFO-6 Encourage the Development of a Town Park/Forest/Recreation Area.	
UCFP-6A The Plan Commission will explore the feasibility of establishing a Town Park/Forest/Recreation Area as well as identify possible locations.	Short Term
UCFO-7 Encourage the Town to establish a 'Town Hall'	
UCFP-7A The Plan Commission will explore the feasibility of establishing a Town Hall to be utilized for Town meetings and other community events as well as identify possible locations that are centrally located. This exploration may include a collaboration with the Village of North Freedom in constructing a joint village/town hall inclusive of a Town office and storage areas.	Short Term

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Transportation	Implementation
TO-1 Continue to improve and maintain roads to meet the needs of current and future land uses.	
TP-1A Continue to maintain road quality by utilizing State and County aids for road improvement.	Immediate
TP-1B Carefully plan new developments to minimize extensive road construction and avoid burden to the Town for maintenance. As part of this policy, develop and implement Town road impact fees for new development projects or the expansion of existing land uses that place a burden on or require the upgrading of any Town roads.	Long Term
TP-1C Maintain the current rustic road system in the Town as identified on <i>Map 7-1 Transportation</i> . For those rustic roads that are currently in a graveled state (graveled roads are identified on <i>Map 7-1 Transportation</i>), maintain this level of service and road condition.	Immediate
TP-1D For all new and renewed mineral extraction operations, require the development of a legal agreement whereby the extraction firm/leaseholder will upgrade and maintain any Town road to meet the needs of additional traffic and weight requirements as defined by the town board or through an unbiased engineering study paid for by the mineral extraction company. Additionally, as part of final reclamation/abandonment of any mineral extraction site, require that the Town road be returned to pre-extraction conditions or better and be paid for by the mineral extraction company or lease holder.	Immediate
TO-2 Identify alternative transportation opportunities for persons who are elderly or have disabilities.	
TP-2A Support additional transportation options for those without access to an automobile, including the elderly, disabled and children.	Immediate
TO-3 Coordinate Town road standards with adjacent municipalities.	
TP-3A Through intergovernmental coordination and the comprehensive planning process, work with neighboring Towns and the Village of North Freedom to establish uniform standards and connectivity for roads that connect at municipal borders relative to providing the same standards for weight limits, bike routes and related safety features, road width and road upgrades and other issues as identified.	Short Term
TO-4 Address safety concerns with regard to multi-use of roads.	
TP-4A When reconstructing roads the Town will consider multiple users and incorporate provisions to enhance the safety of these users. Multiple users may include bikers, farmers and snowmobiles. Such provision may include, but is not limited to adding bike lanes, signage or increasing road width to accommodate farming equipment.	Immediate

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Economic Development	Implementation
EDO-1 Encourage the maintenance and development of cottage industries, farming and farm related businesses, which complement the agrarian and rural character.	
EDP-1A The Plan Commission will foster the establishment of a Town/Land Owner Collaborative made up of interested residents and public and private partners to promote and recruit tourism, the maintenance and development of cottage industries, farming and farm related businesses and compatible commercial businesses in the Town. Periodically include opportunities and program descriptions in a Town newsletter or website.	Long Term
EDP-1B The Town will work with Sauk County to develop new zoning options which will allow for innovative opportunities for economic development related to agriculture and recreation so as to negate the need to rezone, but rather incorporate a system of special exception or conditional uses under the predominate zoning district.	Long Term
EDO-2 Promote alternative and renewable forms of energy as a form of economic development and self sustainability.	
EDP-2A The Town encourages the use of renewable energy such as solar, wind and biomass provided that they are utilized for single residential or business uses only. This does not preclude residents/businesses from selling excess energy produced back to the grid. Through a Town newsletter or website the Town intends to periodically highlight these forms of energy, financial incentives/programs for new installations, and residents/landowners who currently utilize these energy systems.	Long Term
EDO-3 Encourage restoration and maintenance of all structures including the preservation of historic sites.	
EDP-3A Encourage the sharing of resources and information which will assist interested landowners in the areas of cultural preservation and/or economic development related to the Town that reflects the Town's needs and character.	Long Term
EDO-4 Promote outdoor recreation opportunities.	
EDP-4A Plan collaboratively with the Village of North Freedom and other interest groups to protect and promote the Baraboo River as a recreational resource and in particular support the Village with its efforts to develop a multi-use trail and/or canoe launch provided no land is seized through eminent domain.	Long Term
EDP-4B Outdoor recreational opportunities shall be consistent with permitted uses defined by the Sauk County Zoning Ordinance and specifically the Resource Conservancy 35 Zoning District.	Immediate
EDO-5 Consider the location of and prevent potential future conflicts of new residential development that occurs near areas that have value for future mineral extraction operations.	
EDP-5A Prior to the issuance of any town building permit or creation of any new lot, utilize <i>Map 9-4 Potential Mineral Deposits</i> which shows potential mineral deposits that can be economically removed. Notify applicants of this potential resource.	Immediate
EDP-5B Property owners with mineral deposits will be permitted to extract the mineral resource provided that they meet all State and County requirements relative to the protection of surrounding natural resources, residences, and final reclamation of the mineral extraction site. All mineral extraction plans must also be approved by the Town's Plan Commission and Town Board.	Immediate
EDO-6 Encourage the use of quality construction materials consistent with the rural character.	
EDP-6A Continue to administer the Uniform Dwelling Code to ensure a high level of quality for all new construction.	Immediate
EDP-6B New construction in the Town is highly encouraged to utilize earth tone colors for any new construction. Agriculture areas may utilize the additional colors of red or white to mimic traditional farm related structures.	Immediate
EDO-7 Encourage and help promote the Mid-Continent Railroad Museum as a tourist attraction showing the beautiful natural scenery and for providing economic help to the area.	
EDP-7A Work with the Railway Museum to help acquire grants for equipment repair.	Short/Long Term

Natural Resources	Implementation
NRO-1 Preserve the forest canopy of the Baraboo Range (BRNNL).	
NRP-1A See Chapter 9: Natural Resources.	Immediate
NRP-1B Develop and adopt a Town Driveway Ordinance to address new driveways through forested areas. These specifications will be based on sound ecological research so as to preserve the natural resources. Whenever possible prevent the creation of new forest edges from new driveways by retaining existing forest canopies.	Immediate/Short Term
NRO-2 Manage the location and cutting area requirements for new residential development in the forested areas of the Baraboo Range (BRNNL).	
NRP-2A Limit new openings in the forest canopy to the minimum possible square footage area reasonable for siting new construction. That total cutting area shall not exceed 200% of the footprint area required for driveways, the primary residence and outbuildings. A cutting plan shall be required as part of the issuance of a Town building permit.	Immediate
NRP-2B Landowners are encouraged to preserve the existing forest canopy when planning construction siting and cutting plan preparation. Trees outside the cutting plan area destroyed during construction shall be replaced by a new tree of a similar species.	Immediate
NRO-3 Manage the location and design of new roads in the Baraboo Range (BRNNL) while limiting the expansion of existing roads and adjacent rights-of-way in Environmentally Sensitive Areas.	
NRP-3A No new town roads will be built in the forested portion of the BRNNL as defined on <i>Map 9-1 Environmentally Sensitive Areas</i> . Ruff Road, Granite Drive, Cox Road and Schara Road will not be upgraded, improved, widened or modified within the BRNNL boundary.	Immediate
NRP-3B New roads in the Town may be built only after a public hearing and approval by the Town Board.	Immediate
NRO-4 Manage roadside vegetation throughout the Town to protect wildlife during nesting seasons.	
NRP-4A Maintain limits on second pass mowing to after August 1st to preserve native plants. Single pass mowing (road shoulders only) is approved anytime as needed.	Immediate
NRP-4B Noxious weeds and invasive plants will be controlled and mowing restrictions do not apply where these populations exist.	Immediate
NRP-4C Brush removal will only be done after August 1st and prior to April 15th.	Immediate
NRO-5 Manage forests using sustainable harvesting and stewardship practices in the Town.	
See policies ARP-1A, APR-2A, ARP-3A to achieve objective NRO-5.	
NRO-6 Cooperate with the The Nature Conservancy, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Sauk County and others to encourage participation in land preservation efforts and use of conservation easements.	
NRP-6A The Town Plan Commission shall designate one of its members as the Town liaison to work with landowners, government agencies, conservation groups and land trusts such as The Nature Conservancy, North Freedom Rod, Gun and Archery Club, Sauk County, State of Wisconsin, USDA, Baraboo Range Preservation Association, etc. to cooperatively preserve open space for future opportunities. These preservation practices may include, but are not limited to, conservation easements, purchase of open space lands, Planned Unit Developments, purchase/transfer of development rights, voluntary donations of conservation easements and through private land owner stewardship options.	Short Term
NRO-7 Preserve clean water resources and employ policies and practices that will eliminate/minimize water contamination.	
NRP-7A No commercial landfills will be permitted in the Town of Freedom. Chemical storage facilities, refineries etc. must adhere to applicable County and State laws.	Immediate
NRP-7B Encourage agriculture practices that minimize/optimize the use of chemical applications.	Immediate
NRP-7C Encourage lawn care procedures the minimize the release of polluting chemicals beyond property boundaries.	Immediate
NRO-8 Maintain and enhance biodiversity in the Town of Freedom's natural communities.	
NRO-9 Protect endangered and threatened species of indigenous plants and animals.	
NRO-10 Encourage use of landscaping with native plants.	
NRO-11 Discourage the introduction of invasive exotic plants and encourage their eradication.	
NRO-12 Encourage enhancement of both game and non-game wildlife habitat on agricultural lands.	
NRP-8 to 12A Provide information and photographs in a Town newsletter or website to all landowners describing exotic invasive plants, including garlic mustard and common buckthorn, to assist in individual identification and eradication efforts. Encourage landowner cooperation with The Nature Conservancy and other conservation organizations to help eradicate invasive exotic plant species.	Short/Long Term
NRP-8 to 12B Develop a collection of materials given to applicants for permits for new construction that will: - Suggest landscaping procedures to minimize the introduction of exotic species; - Suggest procedures that would minimize the effects on indigenous plants and animals; - Suggest procedures that would maximize biodiversity.	Short/Long Term

NRO-13 Protect/maintain the scenic heritage landscape vistas and views.	
NRP-13A Encourage limiting the visibility of new construction through the use of careful home/structure siting, landscaping/use of existing vegetation and encouraging the selection of natural colors and materials.	Immediate
NRO-14 Include lighting standards to minimize light glare from trespassing onto neighboring properties and into the night sky.	
NRP-14A Require 'down-lighting' fixtures for new construction and encourage retrofits on existing light fixtures intended for all-night use. Include options periodically in a Town newsletter or website.	Short/Long Term
NRO-15 Maintain/enhance opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, photography, bird watching, swimming, bicycling and other recreational use of the outdoors.	
NRP-15A Encourage the Town to purchase lands for the development of parks and public use access, and encourage land owner cooperation for the development of multi-use trails through private lands.	Short/Long Term

Intergovernmental Cooperation	Implementation
ICO-1 Identify existing or potential conflicts between the Town of Freedom and other units of government.	
ICP-1A With regard to annexation of lands from the Town into the Village of North Freedom, encourage the Village to continue providing notice to the Town prior to taking any action. The Town will in-turn have an opportunity to comment and further ensure that such action is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and any amendment thereafter.	Immediate
ICP-1B Encourage the Village of North Freedom to work cooperatively with the Town of Freedom regarding future land use proposals. In recognition of the historical and projected growth for the Village, the Town does not, at this time support Village adoption of Extra Territorial (ET) plat review or zoning authority, but rather supports continued positive relations and discussions between the Village and Town officials.	Immediate
ICO-2 Maintain the relationship of the Town of Freedom to the school districts and other units of government.	
ICP-2A Work with the Reedsburg and Baraboo School Districts to ensure that they have an opportunity to give input to any issue related to providing bussing and educational services.	Immediate
ICP-2B Continue the positive relations with the North Freedom Fire Department.	Immediate
ICO-3 Work with government and private non-profit agencies to identify and pursue grant opportunities beneficial to the Town and its residents/landowners.	
ICP-3A Consider a Town newsletter or website that will periodically highlight opportunities for residents and landowners.	Short/Long Term
ICO-4 The Town Board and Plan Commission should stay informed and involved in issues that may affect the town and advocate for the benefit of the Town and its residents.	
ICP-4A The Plan Commission and Town Board are encouraged to attend information/educational programs at the State and local level.	Short/Long Term
ICO-5 Coordinate development options with neighboring towns and the Villages of North Freedom and Rock Springs. relative to providing appropriate locations for future development.	
ICP-5A The Town shall investigate developing an in-town or between town and village/city Transfer of Development Rights program and identify lands suited/appropriate as sending areas and land as receiving areas, and work together with neighboring towns and villages and Sauk County to develop and implement such program.	Long Term

Land Use	Implementation
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.	Immediate
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, contiguous blocks of forest, and significant natural resources as well as the overall view of the Town.	
LUP-2A The Town of Freedom Density Policy and policies LUP-2B thru LUP-2J (Implementation of LUP-J noted in the policy itself.)	Immediate
LUO-3 Assume that the provisions of this plan are considered when making land use decisions in the Town and further support external programs to realize the Vision, Goals and Objectives of this Plan.	
LUP-3A As the Town reviews land division proposals and changes in land use, it is the intent of this policy to ensure that both the Town's Plan Commission and Town Board review and incorporate this Plan's Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies into their final decision.	Immediate
LUP-3B Support Sauk County with the development, adoption and implementation of a Planned Unit Development Ordinance so as allow the Town to utilize their density policy and related programs.	Immediate
LUP-3C Support and encourage Sauk County with the development and adoption of the county-wide Purchase of Development Rights Program for prime agricultural lands.	Short/Long Term
LUO-4 Encourage the placement of new buildings which preserve productive agricultural lands, forested areas and the overall viewshed of the town.	
LUP-4A Utilize the following pictorial policies 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. (See Land Use Chapter for subsets).	Immediate

12.6 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 Freedom Comprehensive Plan simultaneously has ensured that there are no known internal inconsistencies between the different elements of this Plan.

12.7 Review of the Implementation Progress

It is intended that prior to each annual meeting, the Plan Commission and Town Board jointly review the Vision, Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the Plan has been followed and to also ensure its continued implementation. This process of review and summary will also offer the Plan Commission and Town Board a check-in as to how the plan is being implemented, if it is effective in its current form and to identify any needed amendments.