

# Issues and Opportunities

## Major Findings

- ❑ Town of Friendship residents generally find the town to be a good place to live.
- ❑ Traffic delays and noise associated with trains are a major issue to residents
- ❑ Due to the relatively flat terrain, especially along the lake, stormwater ponding and poor stormwater drainage is a problem during certain times of the year.
- ❑ The Town's population is projected to keep growing, but the number of persons per household is projected to keep declining.

## Recommendations

- ❑ The Town should be persistent in communicating with Canadian National Railroad that long time delays at crossings, unacceptable levels of ditch maintenance, and excessive whistle noise need to be addressed.

## Goal and Objectives

### Goal

- ❑ Strive to raise the quality of life for town residents by addressing the weaknesses identified in the SWOT Workshop.

### Objectives

1. **Lot Split Restrictions** Add restrictions to Town ordinances that limit the number of lot splits in non-sewered areas.
2. **Railroad Issues** Communicate with Canadian National Railroad town concerns regarding long time delays at crossings, unacceptable levels of ditch maintenance, and excessive whistle noise (more on this objective in the Transportation Element).
3. **Industrial Park** Strive to develop more industrial parkland near USH 41 to generate more tax base and create jobs.
4. **Commercial Development** Show locations for future commercial development on the Land Use Plan and encourage businesses to locate in Friendship.
5. **Site Plan Ordinance** Write a Site Plan Ordinance that requires a petitioner of any new construction (except accessory or outbuildings and minor remodeling) to submit engineered plans of building elevations and stormwater management measures as part of a building permit application process

## Background Information

### SWOT Workshop

On March 24, 2008, the Town of Friendship Plan Commission held a public hearing to facilitate a “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats” (SWOT) workshop. The results of this workshop are summarized by each category:

#### Strengths

- A rural location, yet close to a metropolitan area having jobs, commercial and cultural amenities
- Lake Winnebago, which offers a variety of seasonal recreation activities
- Good road maintenance
- Comparatively lower taxes
- A good agricultural land base and citizens committed to farming
- Natural wooded and wetland areas that are publicly and privately preserved
- No concentration of urban development, but rather spread-out rural development
- Good fire, ambulance, and first responder service
- Quality groundwater

#### Weaknesses

- Need for expanded emergency siren warning system
- Major traffic interruptions caused by train stoppage
- Stormwater drainage issues, especially in areas where ditches are not properly maintained (especially Canadian National Railroad ditches)
- Nuisance issues, such as junked vehicles on private property
- Increasing taxes (other than town tax levy)
- Lack of good land use planning in some areas of the town
- Difficulty gaining utility extensions for the development of a Town Industrial Park
- Shortage of service businesses in the town

#### Opportunities

- Continue to work towards more industrial parkland
- A good sewer system to support growth in the Van Dyne area
- Encourage development to be “clustered” in a compact manner, offset by large areas of green space
- Pursue more recreational areas for public use
- Pursue construction of appropriate grade separated railroad crossings

#### Threats

- Groundwater protection
- Cost of filtering stormwater runoff before it reaches Lake Winnebago
- Impact of “mega-farms” on surrounding properties
- Impact associated with Village of North Fond du Lac annexation of town land
- Trend toward fewer “good paying” jobs
- Loss of industrial tax base
- Potential impact of NR 115 on waterfront properties, being initiated by the WDNR
- Declining state revenues and increasing public service costs

**NOTE - The following Findings and Recommendations are based on an analysis of the data contained in Tables 100 through 115. These tables can be found at the end of the plan.**

## Population Characteristics

### Population Change (Table 100)

- ❑ The Town of Friendship experienced little growth between 1970 and 2000, increasing in population by only 56 persons, to 2,406.
- ❑ Friendship's population actually declined by 6% from 1970 to 1990, before growing by 9% in the 1990s to produce an overall increase of 2% from 1970 to 2000.
- ❑ This 2% growth is the lowest among surrounding towns, which ranged from 10% to 19% growth in those thirty years. In this same time period, the population of Fond du Lac County increased nearly 15% and Wisconsin more than twenty percent.

### Population Race (Table 101)

- ❑ The Town of Friendship was over 98% white in 2000. This compares to 96% in Fond du Lac County and 89% in throughout Wisconsin.
- ❑ It can at least be said that all three jurisdictions became slightly more diverse since 1990.

### Population Age and Median Age (Table 102)

- ❑ Overall, the residents of the Town of Friendship in 2000 were slightly older than average when compared to Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin. The median age in Friendship was 38; it was 37 in the county and 36 in the state.
- ❑ Approximately 29% of Friendship residents were between 50 and 80, compared to 25% in the county and 24% in the state.
- ❑ The percentage of young adults was lower in Friendship than in the county or state.
- ❑ As is the case throughout America, as the Baby Boom generation ages, the number of elderly will increase. This may alter the number and types of services the Town needs to provide to meet the needs of its aging residents.

## Income Characteristics

### Median Income (Table 103)

- ❑ The median income for households in Friendship (households include unrelated persons) was approximately \$47,000 in 1999. The median income for families was slightly higher. *Household* income is lower in the county and state. *Family* income is lower in the town.
- ❑ The increase in median income between 1989 and 1999 was generally lower in the town than in the county and state.

### Household Income (Table 104)

- ❑ The Town of Friendship is a strongly middle-income community. Fifty-six percent of households in Friendship have incomes between \$35,000 and \$75,000. This compares to 46% in Fond du Lac County and only 41% in Wisconsin.
- ❑ Conversely, only 17% of Friendship households earn less than \$25,000, compared to 24% in the county and 26% in the state.
- ❑ At the other end of the scale, only 15% of Friendship households earn more than \$75,000, compared to 17% in the county and 20% in the state.

**Per Capita Income (Table 105)**

- ❑ Per capita income of approximately \$22,750 for Town of Friendship residents in 1999 was \$2,700 more than in Fond du Lac County and \$1,500 higher than throughout Wisconsin.
- ❑ The percentage change in per capita income of residents in the Town of Friendship from 1989 to 1999 was also significantly higher than in the county or state. Per capita income in the town increased by 78%, while it only increased 60% in the county and state.

**Poverty Status (Table 106)**

- ❑ There is relatively little poverty in Friendship. Only 2.7% of persons and 1.4% of families in Friendship were below the poverty level in 1999. Both figures declined since 1989.
- ❑ Poverty status is more than two times higher for both individuals and families in Fond du Lac County, and three times higher across Wisconsin.

**Employment Characteristics****Labor Force (Table 107)**

- ❑ The unemployment rates in Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin have a similar history from 1990 to 2006. Both dipped 25 to 40 percent from 1990 to 2000, then returned to near their 1990 level by 2006.
- ❑ The unemployment rate in both the county and state was at 4.7% in 2006.

**Employment of Residents by Type of Industry (Table 108)**

- ❑ About one-third of employed Friendship residents in 2000 held positions in the service industry. Another quarter were in manufacturing. This is a reverse of employment in 1990.
- ❑ Employment in retail trade industry accounts for the third-highest percentage of employment in both 1990 and 2000, but compared to all jobs in those years, retail trade's percentage of 10% in 2000 was half what it was in 1990.
- ❑ Employment in government, while only 7% of jobs in 2000, increased by 160% from 1990 to 2000. Construction also increased, by over 67%, but it only accounts for 6% of employment.
- ❑ Surprisingly, the percentage of residents employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining actually increased by 7%, though the total number of Friendship residents engaged in these jobs was only 45 in 2000. Nonetheless, an increase in the number of persons in a town working in this category is very rare. The percentage of Fond du Lac County residents employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining declined by 20% from 1990 to 2000. The decline was almost 33% in the state.
- ❑ The manufacturing and service industries employed the highest percentages of residents in the county and state, too. Service-related employment is particularly common in the state, where nearly 40% of employed persons are in service positions.
- ❑ About 100 more town residents were employed in 2000 than in 1990, an 8% increase. The county and state both had percentage increases of employed persons of almost twice that.

**Industry of Employed Persons (Table 109)**

- ❑ In 2000, 30% of persons employed in Fond du Lac County (regardless of where they lived) worked in the *manufacturing* industry. Another 20% were in *trade, transportation and utilities*; and 18% in *education*.
- ❑ These same three categories held the greatest percentages of employees in Wisconsin in 2000, but only 22% were in manufacturing. Not surprisingly, there is a more even distribution of employees throughout the employment categories in the state than in Fond du Lac County.

### **Employment of Residents by Type of Occupation (Table 110)**

When analyzing Table 110, it is important to note that the number and variety of categories for the types of occupations in the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses changed significantly. It is, therefore, virtually impossible to make comparisons between the two years.

- ❑ In 2000, almost 29% of the 1,322 employed residents of the Town of Friendship were in the *production, transportation, and material moving* occupation. Another 23% were in *management, professional and related occupations*, and 19% were in *sales and office* positions.
- ❑ These same three occupations were highest in the Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin in 2000, but *management, professional and related occupations* was the category with the highest percentage.
- ❑ The percentage of employed residents of the town in *construction, extraction, and maintenance* occupations was 35% higher than in the county, and 45% higher than in the state.

### **Travel Time to Work (Table 111)**

- ❑ In 2000, more than half of employed Town of Friendship residents traveled between fifteen and thirty minutes to get to work. This compares to only about a third of county and state residents.
- ❑ Only 14% of employed Town of Friendship residents drove less than ten minutes to work, compared to more than 22% of workers in the county, and 21% across the state.
- ❑ The percentage of town residents who drive more than thirty minutes to work is comparable to that in the county and state.
- ❑ The data showing that employed town residents are driving moderately long distances to get to work is likely a reflection of the town's value as a preferred residential location for people who work in Fond du Lac and Oshkosh.

### **Average Weekly Wages (Table 112)**

- ❑ The highest-paying jobs in Fond du Lac County in 2000 were in the *manufacturing and construction* industries, followed by those in *financial activities, education and health, and public administration*.
- ❑ This order is not significantly different than for all of Wisconsin, but wages in most industries average much higher throughout the state than they do in Fond du Lac County.

## **Education Characteristics**

### **Educational Attainment (Table 113)**

- ❑ The general level of education of Town of Friendship residents is generally lower than in Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin. While 12.5% of Friendship residents in 2000 had not finished high school, compared to 16% in the county and 15% in the state, 44.5% had only a high school diploma, compared to 40% in the county and 35% in the state.
- ❑ Forty-three percent of Friendship residents in 2000 had attended college for a period of time. This is similar to throughout Fond du Lac County, but much lower than the more than 50% in Wisconsin.

## Population Projections

### Population Projections (Table 114)

- ❑ It is projected that the population of the Town of Friendship will increase steadily by about 2.9% every five years between 2000 and 2020, then slow a bit to 2.3% from 2020 to 2025. The result will be an overall increase of about 350 persons, or fifteen percent.
- ❑ The 15% projected growth in Friendship is comparable to the rate in most of the surrounding towns, Winnebago and Fond du Lac Counties, and Wisconsin.

## Household Projections

### Household Projections (Table 115)

- ❑ The number of households in the Town of Friendship is projected by the State to increase by approximately 225 between 2000 and 2025. This is a 23% increase. Similar percentage increases are expected in the counties, state, Town of Utica, and the Town of Black Wolf in Winnebago County.
- ❑ The average number of persons per household in the town was 2.48 in 2000. Fond du Lac County averaged 2.63 persons per household, and the state 2.57.
- ❑ It is projected that the average number of persons per household in the town will decline to 2.30 by 2025. The average number of persons per household is expected to also decline throughout the state and nation as the divorce rate remains high and couples are waiting longer to have children.