

# 1. Issues and Opportunities

The *Town of Beaver Township Plan* will guide the future of the Town of Beaver for the next twenty years.

Development of the *Town of Beaver Township Plan* was in response to the passage of Wisconsin's planning legislation (Statute 66.1001). This law requires all municipalities (counties, cities, towns, and villages) to adopt a plan by the year 2010 if they wish to make any local land use decisions. After the year 2010, any municipality that regulates land use must make their decisions in accordance with that community's township plan.

## 1.1 Introduction

A community is often motivated to plan by the issues it must address and the opportunities it wishes to pursue. In addition, a community must react to local, regional, state, and national trends that influence development patterns and service levels.

However, a community is more than the borders which encompass it as a part of the region, state, and nation. A community is defined by the people who live and work there, the houses and businesses, the parks and natural features, its past, its present, and its future. No matter the location, change is the one certainty that visits all places, and no community is immune to its affects. How a community changes, how that change is perceived, and how change is managed all have a direct impact on the community. An understanding of the history, combined with a vision of the community's future is fundamental to make decisions. Hence, the foundation of township planning follows the premise of balance among the past (how we got here), the present (what we have here), and the future (what do we want here).

The issues and opportunities element of the township plan provides perspective on the planning process, public participation, demographic information, trends and forecasts, and the overall goals of the town's plan.

A more detailed assessment of specific issues and opportunities relative to each plan element for the Town of Beaver is discussed within the respective plan element.

## 1.2 Regional Perspective

The Town of Beaver is located in the center of Clark County . The town is bordered by the Town of Unity to the east and the Town of Loyal to the south, the Town of Warner to the west and the Town of Green Grove to the north .

The town is primarily an agricultural based community. County Highway's K and P run through the center of the town. Canadian National Railway and Enbridge pipeline are other major transportation features in the Northeast corner of the township. The town has experienced moderate growth in the past ten years. Residential development is primarily characterized by single-family housing units and farmsteads.

Clark County, Wisconsin is located in West Central Wisconsin. Geographically, Clark County is very large (1,215 square miles) and is host to 46 local units of government that include eight cities, five villages and 33 towns. With a 2010 census population of 34,690 and a total land area of 1,215.6 square miles, population density in Clark County is low with an average density of 28.5 persons per square mile. Clark County is predominantly a rural county which revolves around the agriculture, manufacturing and recreation industries.

The foundation of Clark County and the Town of Beaver is based in agriculture, particularly the dairy industry. Dairy processing and agri-business is very important to county residents as an employment opportunity and as a way of life. Clark County maintains a strong manufacturing base as well.

The cornerstone to Clark County's recreation industry is the 133,000-acre Clark County Forest. The county-owned forest provides residents and visitors a variety of recreational opportunities including hunting, camping, ATV riding, snowmobiling, hiking, skiing and horseback riding. The Clark County Forest is managed as a sustainable resource and generates opportunities for the forest products industry as well. In addition, considerable private holdings of forestland exist throughout the county. Private forestland generates additional recreational and economic opportunities for landowners as well as providing valuable wildlife habitat. The county's major water feature is the scenic Black River, which flows north to south through the entire length of the county before it empties into Lake Arbutus.

### **1.3 Public Participation**

The Wisconsin planning legislation specifies that the governing body for a unit of government must prepare and adopt written procedures to foster public participation in a planning process. The procedures must include open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, in every stage of the preparation of the plan. In addition, the participation procedures must provide for wide distribution of proposed drafts, alternatives, and amendments of the township plan. The public participation procedures should address how members of the public can send written comments on the plan to the governing body, and how the governing body will respond.

In coordination with Clark County public participation procedures, the Town of Beaver has complied with all public participation requirements as detailed in Wisconsin Statutes (s66.1001) by adopting and initiating a public participation plan. The Town of Beaver public participation plan was adopted on June 9, 2009.

## **1.4 Issues and Opportunities**

The Town of Beaver has identified some specific issues and opportunities, which are as follows:

1. Balance between the sale of farmland for development versus the need to protect farmland from development.
2. Protect the “right to farm.”
3. Continue to improve local town road systems.
4. Maintain local control of land use decisions.
- 5.—Maintain public input on large scale livestock operations.-

## **1.5 Issues and Opportunities - Goals and Objectives**

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires a statement of overall goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the local governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local governmental unit over a 20-year planning period.

*Goal 1: Improve involvement of local government (towns) in the land use decision making process through cooperation and communication with Clark County and neighboring communities.*

Objectives

1. Improve cooperation efforts with the county to establish a mutually beneficial decision-making procedure that integrates and is consistent with the town’s plan.
2. Improve cooperation efforts with neighboring communities to ensure coordinated decision-making and the reduction of incompatible land uses.

*Goal 2: Balance individual property rights with town interests and goals.*

Objectives

1. Create opportunities for citizen participation throughout all stages of planning and policy implementation.
2. Establish a development review process whereby all interested parties are afforded an opportunity to influence the outcome.

*Goal 3: Continually recognize the importance and value of the agricultural industry in all future land use decisions and promote their preservation and prosperity for future generations.*

#### Objectives

1. Increase awareness of oppressed state of farming and causes and make requests to political and industry leaders to answer and provide solutions.

### **1.6 Issues and Opportunities - Policies**

#### Policies

1. Public participation shall be required prior to the development and/or amendment to any plans, ordinances or programs.
2. Policies, ordinances, and decisions shall be made in conformance with the town's plan.
3. The town's plan shall be referred to and utilized for all future development, planning or implementation decisions within the town.
4. Adequate town funding and staffing shall be maintained to properly administer town programs(i.e., permits, land use controls, etc.).
5. Future town issues, trends, opportunities and conflicts that were not included within the township's plan shall be assessed and amended to the plan as necessary.