

# Issues and Opportunities

## Findings and Recommendations

- ❑ The Town of Oakfield experienced virtually no growth between 1970 and 2000, increasing in population by only two persons, to 767.
- ❑ The percentage of residents employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining declined by half, from about one-fifth to one-tenth of all employees.
- ❑ The data shows that employed town residents are driving comparatively long distances to get to work, a reflection of the employment possibilities in the town.
- ❑ It is projected that the population of the Town of Oakfield will decrease steadily by between 1.5% and 2% every five years between 2000 and 2025, or a total of about eight percent.

## SWOT Workshop

On November 5, 2007, the Town 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

- ❑ Strong recreational land base
- ❑ Geographic aesthetics
- ❑ Agricultural base
- ❑ Rural character
- ❑ Good school systems
- ❑ Non-metallic mining that provides stone and gravel
- ❑ Good roads
- ❑ Good public infrastructure (town hall and equipment)
- ❑ Strong Town and Village (of Oakfield) ties
- ❑ Close proximity to major metropolitan areas for jobs and shopping
- ❑ Proximity to public facilities in the Village of Oakfield, such as the library, community center, and post office
- ❑ Positive aspects of Wind Generation as a clean source of electrical power and tax base

### Weaknesses

- ❑ Lack of commercial or industrial tax base
- ❑ Limited police protection
- ❑ Relatively high taxes
- ❑ No rail-road service
- ❑ No public transit system
- ❑ No affordable housing
- ❑ Negative aspects of Wind Generation

### Opportunities

- ❑ Diversified Farming methods
- ❑ Ledge (escarpment) protection
- ❑ Protect prime farmland through conservation subdivision ordinance
- ❑ Preserve environmentally sensitive lands

- ❑ Protect wildlife recreation habitat
- ❑ Institute Aquifer protection measures
- ❑ Develop more trails through public lands, especially if they can be connected to the Wild Goose trail
- ❑ Positive aspects of Wind Generation as a clean source of electrical power and tax base

### Threats

- ❑ Declining state revenues and increasing public service costs
- ❑ Rising energy costs
- ❑ Environmental pollution
- ❑ Groundwater contamination caused by improperly abandon wells
- ❑ Loss of agricultural land
- ❑ Negative aspects of Wind Energy Systems
- ❑ Lack of lay people to fill town government positions
- ❑ Declining social relationship building
- ❑ Danger of fire when located near State or Federal Lands

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

## Population Characteristics

### Population Change (Table 100)

- ❑ The Town of Oakfield experienced virtually no growth between 1970 and 2000, increasing in population by only two persons, to 767.
- ❑ In comparison, several surrounding communities had no population growth or actually declined (Towns of Eden and Waupun). Several communities had modest growth (Village of Oakfield and the Towns of Byron and Lamartine), while the Village of Eden nearly doubled. In this same time period, the population of Fond du Lac County increased nearly 15% and Wisconsin more than 20%.
- ❑ The Villages of Oakfield and Eden (and the county and state), were the only communities to increase their population in each of the three decades from 1970 to 2000. The other surrounding communities lost population in the 1980s, and some did in the 1990s, too.
- ❑ All have begun growing again in varying degrees since 2000, based on population estimates.

### Population Race (Table 101)

- ❑ The Town of Oakfield was over 99 percent white in 2000,
- ❑ This compares to Fond du Lac County being at about 96% white and Wisconsin at 89% respectively, in the same timeframe.

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

- ❑ The residents of the Town of Oakfield in 2000 were distributed throughout age categories in a way very similar to Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin.
- ❑ Approximately 34% were youth and teenagers, compared to 28% in the county and state. About 75% were below the age of fifty.
- ❑ 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 the Town of Oakfield (households include unrelated persons) was almost \$52,000 in 1999. The median income for families was slightly higher. Household income is \$7,000 to \$9,000 lower in the county and state. Family income is only slightly lower.
- ❑ The median income for both households and families increased by about 65% between 1990 and 2000. This is faster growth than in the county (about 55%) and the state (50%).

### Household Income (Table 104)

- ❑ The Town of Oakfield had a similar distribution of wealth as Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin between 1989 and 1999. The household income category with the highest percentage in all three cases in 1999 was \$50,000 to \$75,000.
- ❑ Overall, incomes in the Town of Oakfield are comfortably higher than in the county and state, with 78% earning more than \$35,000 in 1999, compared to 64% in the county and 61% in Wisconsin.

### Per Capita Income (Table 105)

- ❑ Per capita income of approximately \$18,600 for Town of Oakfield residents in 1999 was \$1,500 to \$2,000 lower than those in the county and state.
- ❑ The percentage change in per capita income of residents in the Town of Oakfield from 1989 to 1999 was significantly higher than in the county or state. Per capita income in the Town increased by more than 75%, while it only increased 60% in the county and state.

### Poverty Status (Table 106)

- ❑ The poverty status of persons and families in the Town of Oakfield is virtually a non-issue, ranging from only one to two percent in 1999. It's dramatically lower than in 1989.
- ❑ Poverty status is about three times higher for both individuals and families in Fond du Lac County, and even 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 Town of Oakfield residents in 2000 held positions in the manufacturing industry. Another quarter was in service type jobs.
- ❑ The percentage in manufacturing is about the same as in 1990, but service is about 60% higher. Construction also increased by about 60%, to almost 11% of employees.
- ❑ The percentage of residents employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining declined by half, from about one-fifth to one-tenth of all employees. Those in wholesale and retail trade also decreased by about half.
- ❑ The manufacturing and service industries employed the highest percentages of residents in the county and state, too, but they were not equal. In both instances, a higher percentage of

people were employed in the service industry, particularly in the state, where nearly 40% of employed persons are in service positions.

- ❑ The percentage of county residents employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining declined a comparatively smaller 20% from 1990 to 2000. In the state, the decline was almost thirty-three percent.
- ❑ About thirty more town residents were employed in 2000 than in 1990, a 7% increase. The county and state both had increases in employed persons of twice that.

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

When analyzing Table 110, it is important to note that between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses the categories for the types of occupations held by the residents of the town, county and state changed significantly. It is, therefore, virtually impossible to make comparisons between the two years. There are also fewer categories in 2000, which makes detailed analysis difficult.

- ❑ In 2000, almost 27% of the 443 employed residents of the Town of Oakfield were in the production, transportation, and material moving occupation. Another 40% were evenly split between sales and office and management, professional and related occupations.
- ❑ These same three occupations were highest in the Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin in 2000, but in the county and state, 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 75% to 100% higher than in the county and state.

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

- ❑ Thirty percent of employees in Fond du Lac County in 2000 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 more even distribution of employees throughout the employment categories in the state than in Fond du Lac County.

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

- ❑ In 2000, a third of employed Town of Oakfield residents traveled between ten and twenty minutes to get to work; another third traveled twenty minutes to a half-hour.
- ❑ In Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin, also, a third of workers traveled ten to twenty minutes, but only seventeen to twenty percent traveled twenty to thirty minutes.
- ❑ Only nine percent of employed Town of Oakfield residents drove less than ten minutes to work, compared to more than 26% of workers in the county, and 20% across the state.
- ❑ More than ten percent of employed town residents worked at home, about three times the rates in Fond du Lac County and Wisconsin. Nonetheless, the percentage of Town residents who worked at home declined by more than half from 1990 to 2000.
- ❑ The data shows that employed town residents are driving comparatively long distances to get to work, a reflection of the employment possibilities in the town.

#### **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)

- ❑ Significantly more than half of Town of Oakfield residents older than 25 in 2000 had a high school education. Another 37% had some college experience or had earned a college degree. Only seven percent had not graduated from high school.
- ❑ A smaller percentage of town residents had attended college than in the county and state populations, but a significantly higher percentage of county and state residents had not earned a high school diploma.

## Population Projections

### Population Projections (Table 114)

- ❑ It is projected that the population of the Town of Oakfield will decrease steadily by between 1.5% and 2% every five years between 2000 and 2025, or a total of about eight percent. The result will be a projected decline of about eighty residents by 2025.
- ❑ In comparison, the Village of Oakfield is expected to increase by about six percent over the same period, while Fond du Lac County's population is projected to increase fourteen percent, and the state's by seventeen percent. Surrounding towns are projected to experience minor increases or decreases between now and 2025.

## Household Projections

### Household Projections (Table 115)

- ❑ The number of households in the Town of Oakfield is projected by the State to remain essentially unchanged, at around 250, between 2000 and 2025. However, with an average of two single-family building permits per year projected forward, the Town may see about 40 homes built in the town in the next 20 years.
- ❑ The number of households in both the county and state are projected to increase twenty-four percent.
- ❑ The average number of persons per household in the town was a comparatively very high 3.04 in 2000. The county averaged 2.63 persons per household, and the state 2.57.
- ❑ As is the case virtually everywhere in America, household size will decline in the Town of Oakfield for at least the next twenty years. It is projected that there will be 2.82 persons per household in the Town of Oakfield in 2025.

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

### Goal

1. Preserve the farming, natural areas, and unique geographic features for existing and future generations that live in the Town of Oakfield

Please note that the following objectives and policies are not the only ones that relate to land use in the Town of Oakfield. There are objectives and policies in the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan that also relate to land use.

### Objectives

1. Maintain and build upon the strong recreational land base in the town
2. Continue to support the Niagara Escarpment buffer that limits the kind of land uses that can occur below and above this geological feature
3. Maintain the strong cooperative relationship with the Village of Oakfield
4. Discourage land development that may impact environmentally sensitive areas of the town