

***Town of Stark***  
***Vernon County, Wisconsin***  
***Comprehensive Plan***

***Revised December 2020***



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# **I Issues and Opportunities**

## **1.1 Chapter Summary**

Comprehensive plans are prepared under Wisconsin State statute 66.1001. The plans should address nine elements. These plans evaluate these elements in light of what resources a community currently has available and whether available resources meet the community's needs. Plans then address what communities can do to address current and future needs as well as take advantage of current and future resources.

The nine elements that are reviewed are:

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

### **Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(a)**

#### **(a) Issues and Opportunities**

Background information on the local governmental unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals 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. Background information shall include population, household and employment forecasts that the local governmental unit uses in developing its comprehensive plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit

## **1.2 Planning Recommendations — Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs**

Comprehensive plans may also establish goals and objectives for communities. Communities are encouraged, through the comprehensive planning process, to determine what they would like

to "look like" in the future. The comprehensive planning process can assist communities in establishing realistic goals and deciding what can be done to reach those goals.

### 1.3 Vision Statement

A vision statement identifies where an organization (the Town of Stark) intends to be in the future and how to meet the future needs of its stakeholders: citizens. The vision statement incorporates a shared understanding of the nature and purpose of the organization and uses this understanding to move towards a greater purpose together. The vision statement for the Town of Stark is:

We are a community that values hard work, patriotism, family, family farming, small business, varied outdoor recreational opportunities and volunteer work that enhances the harmony between both local and visiting public. We envision the following for the Town of Stark:

- Maintaining our independent and self-reliant way of life.
- Protecting the rights of present and future landowners and town government.
- Addressing growth as a positive issue and allowing for reasonable residential development on appropriate sites.
- Preserving our scenic landscape, parks and wetlands to be used for many outdoor activities.
- Maintaining roads, cemeteries, recycling center, and town municipal buildings.
- Co-operating as a community for a clean and healthy environment.

Mitigation of the effects of runoff and flooding.

### 1.4 Goals

General planning goals are:

- Protect and improve the health, safety, and welfare of residents in the Town of Stark.
- Preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of the Town of Stark.
- Protect and preserve the community character of the Town of Stark.

Specific goals are discussed in each element and are:

1. To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
2. To balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
3. To plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique rural communities.
4. To preserve the cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
5. To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
6. To encourage the land use, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
7. To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.



8. To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, rivers and streams, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
9. To provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.
10. To provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, safety, and meets the needs of all citizens, including meeting the needs of a variety of citizens.
11. To encourage the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.
12. To maintain and revive existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
13. To facilitate 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.

### 1.5 Objectives

1. Work cooperatively with surrounding townships, the Village of La Farge, and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve in a neighborly way to resolve conflicts.
2. Use the Town of Stark Zoning Ordinance to fairly review proposed development and land use changes.
3. Create a framework of town processes and procedures that ensure fair dealing to all
4. Provide and support community facilities that promote community values, recreation and education.
5. Safeguard the affordability of housing in the township.
6. Cooperate with public service providers, including health and safety (fire department), education (Hillsboro, Kickapoo, La Farge, and Charter or Alternative Schools), and civil government (surrounding towns, Village of La Farge, Kickapoo Reserve, Vernon County).
7. Support town businesses, including farm operations, construction contractors, recreation and tourism service providers, and new entrepreneurs to maintain the role of the township in the Kickapoo Valley region.

### 1.6 Policies

1. To maintain an effective process for the Zoning Committee to use in guiding future development and deal with land use issues within the township.
2. To partner with the Village of La Farge, Kickapoo Valley Reserve, and neighboring townships to provide the support for public service providers in health, education and cultural opportunity to create a more vital community.
3. Maintain the Town of Stark website to provide information to the public.

### 1.7 Programs

The overall program elements of this section consist of the following:

- Working with the Town of Stark Zoning Committee to revise the Town of Stark Zoning Ordinance to be compatible with the town's comprehensive plan
- Developing and evaluating issues in future growth at a public meeting and using those issues and options in developing a comprehensive plan.
- + Identification by the Town of Stark general goals and alternatives for future growth and development in the town.

## 1.8 Background of initial Comprehensive Planning

**Grants/Jurisdiction** -- the Town of Stark received a Kickapoo Valley Reforestation grant

- (Nuzum Fund) from the UW Foundation in cooperation with the Towns of Forest and Union and the Village of La Farge (LUFS) in 2007. Much of the funds of the grant were used by the several municipalities involved to fund a mapping specialist at the county level. In addition, Stark worked with the aforementioned LUFS group and the Towns of Clinton, Whitestown, and Webster to develop a common land use classification system to be used in the plans.

**Public Participation Plan** - The PP plan was adopted by the Stark CP Advisory Committee on January 8, 2008 and by the town board on March 19, 2008. See Attachment A Section 10; Public Participation Plan, for the complete plan.

## 1.9 Stark Profile and Projections

As of the census of 2010 there were 363 people residing in the Town of Stark. The population density was 10 people per square mile. There were 220 housing units at an average density of 5.8 per square mile. 10% of Town of Stark residents are renters with the state average being 32%. The median rent charged in the town was \$363. The racial makeup of the town was 99% White. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1% of the population.

Of the population 51.8% were male and 48.2% were female. The median resident age for Town of Stark was 50.7 years while for the state is was 42.6 years. 82.3% of Town of Stark residents over 25 years of age had a high school or higher educational level. 17.2% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher with 9.8% having attained a graduate or professional degree. Unemployment was 1.2%.

74.8% were family households. The average family size was 2.4.

The median income in the town was \$ 69,541 while the state's median income level was \$59,305. Town of Stark residents with income below the poverty level in 2017 was 21.5% with the state average being 11.2%. Residents of the Town of Stark living below 50% of the poverty level was 6.6% while the state average was 5%.

Population in July 2017 363 Population change since 2000: +4%

Males: 51.8%

Females: 48.2%

Median resident age: 50.7 years

Wisconsin median age: 42.5 year

Estimated median household income in 2010: \$69,541 (was \$47,500 in 2000)

Wisconsin: \$59,578

Estimated median house/condo value in 2007: \$191,074 (it was \$94,400 in 2000)

Wisconsin: \$178,900

Average household size:

This town 2.4 people

Wisconsin: 2.4 people

Percentage of family households:

This town: 74.8%

Whole state: 64.4%

Residents with income below the poverty level in 2017:

This town: 20.1%

Whole state: 8.7%

Residents with income below 50% of the poverty level in 2017:

This town: 6.2%

Whole state: 3.7%

Ancestries: Norwegian (23.5%), German (21.2%), English (14.5%), Irish (8.2%), United States (5.4%), Czech (3.2%).

Land area: 34.4 square miles.

*Stark compared to Wisconsin state average:*

- Median house value **above** state average.
- Unemployed percentage **significantly below** state average.
- Black race population percentage **significantly below** state average.
- Hispanic race population percentage **significantly below** state average.
- Median age **significantly above** state average.
- Foreign-born population percentage **significantly below** state average.
- Renting percentage **significantly below** state average

### 1.10 Stark Zoning Ordinance History

The Town of Stark began their **Zoning Ordinance** in the mid-1970's. It was originally passed to deal with lakeshore zoning issues regarding the proposed lake that would have been part of the La Farge Reservoir Project. It was adopted under the authority granted by Section 60.61 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

After the La Farge Lake project was abandoned, the Town of Stark did a major revision of its **Zoning Ordinance** in 1998. That revision eliminated the language dealing with shoreline zoning and established a new zoning map for the town. In the period from 2003-2008, the town's **Zoning Ordinance** was revised in several ways including an addition of a system to issue driveway permits.

The purpose of the Town of Stark's **Zoning Ordinance** is to promote the health, safety, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the community.

The intent of the **Zoning Ordinance** is to regulate and restrict the use of all structures, lands, and waters; regulate and restrict lot coverage, population distribution and density, and the size and location of all

structures so as to: lesson congestion in and promote the safety and efficiency of the streets and highways; secure safety from fire, flooding panic, and other dangers; provide

adequate light, air sanitation and drainage; prevent overcrowding; avoid undue population concentration; facilitate the adequate provision of public facilities and utilities; stabilize and protect property values; further the appropriate use of land and conservation of natural resources; and preserve and promote the beauty of the community.

All land in the Town of Stark is classified in one of four zoning districts: residential, agricultural, business, or industrial. The zoning map shows the land that comprises each of these four districts. No person shall use land or a building or structure or erect; construct, reconstruct, move or structurally alter a building, structure, or part thereof, except in accordance with the regulations for the applicable zoning district.

A zoning administrator, appointed by the Town of Stark board, will issue permits, inspect property and structures, and make on-site inspections regarding zoning matters. A five member town zoning committee, appointed by the Town of Stark board, will make recommendations regarding conditional use permits, nonconforming uses and structures, substandard lots, and regulation variances. These recommendations will be passed onto the town board, which has the final decision making authority in all zoning matters.

The town zoning committee and zoning administrator had several joint meetings with the Town of Stark Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee during the process of preparing a comprehensive plan for the town. At these meetings, efforts were made to make the proposed comprehensive plan for the Town of Stark consistent with the town's Zoning Ordinance. Possible changes and amendments to the Town of Stark's Zoning Ordinance were discussed at these meetings.

## 2 Housing Element

### 2.1 Chapter Summary

Housing is a necessity of life and an important part of the comprehensive planning process. The purposes of this section are to assess the current housing stock in the Town of Stark and to identify policies and programs that will help meet existing and forecasted housing demand. The housing stock assessment includes the age, value, and type (e.g. single-family or multi-family) of existing housing units; as well as occupancy characteristics such as tenure (owner vs. renter occupied), and affordability (the percentage of monthly income residents spend on housing costs).

Housing data in this chapter come from the U.S. Census Bureau. Also included are housing-related results of a community survey distributed to Stark property owners in 2007. The survey was mailed to 297 property owners and returned by 203 (68%).

Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(b)

**(b) Housing element.**

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs of the local governmental unit to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing **demand in** the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental units housing stock. The element shall also identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing -choices that meet the needs- of persons of all -income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs, policies and programs that promote the availability of land for development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing, and policies and programs to maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.

**2.2 Goals**

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters: Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use and Implementation. One listed below has the particular objective of housing development.

- To provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of **all income** levels throughout the community.

**2.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations**

The following are the Housing objectives and policy recommendations that support the above goal and will guide housing decisions in the Town of Stark over the next 20 years.

*NOT IN ORDER OF PRIORITY*

1. Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of the existing housing in the community.
2. Support the enforcement of zoning ordinances to maintain the character of the existing and future residential neighborhoods.

The median income for a household in the Town of Stark was \$44,167 and at the time of the 2000 census, the per capita income in the Town of Stark was \$17,966, compared to \$21,587 nationally.

400

Graph #1

3. Review new housing proposals and support those proposals and programs that meet the

communities housing needs and are consistent with the policies outlined in the comprehensive plan.

4. Support the Town and County property maintenance standards to ensure a high quality

living environment within all residential areas.

5. Support the enforcement of local zoning Ordinances to maintain the character of the

existing and future residential neighborhoods.

6. When and where appropriate, utilize county, state and federal programs or grants to

maintain existing housing or to support the construction of future housing.

## **2.4 Housing Characteristics**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Town of Stark, as of the last census, has 191 houses and of these 125 are occupied. 12 of the occupied houses are rented and the remaining 113 are owner occupied. (See graph #2)

The housing density is 6 houses per square mile. The median gross rent in the Town of Stark is \$452.





## 2.5 Town of Stark Zoning

The Town of Stark has a "Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance" which covers all areas of authority: Residential, Agricultural, Business and Industrial.

With respect to dwellings in each area of authority the following zoning applies regarding dwelling size:

- a. Residential
  - 1. Minimum dwelling size: 700 sq. feet
  - 2. Minimum Lot Size: 2 acres
- b. Agricultural
  - 1. Minimum dwelling size: 700 sq. feet
  - 2. Minimum Lot Size: 20 acres
- c. Business
  - 1. Minimum dwelling size: 700 sq. feet
  - 2. Minimum Lot Size: 5 acres
- d. Industrial
  - 1. Dwelling/Lot Size not addressed

Further, the Stark Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance addresses Manufactured Homes and the Manufactured Home Stand As follows:

### " Manufactured Homes

- 1. *All manufactured homes shall be skirted from the home to the ground with the same type material (as) that from which the home is made.*
- 2. *The wheels must be removed.*
- 3. *All manufactured homes shall be placed on a manufactured home stand or structural components that serve the same purpose as a manufactured home stand.*

### Manufactured Home Stand

*For the purpose of this ordinance, a manufactured home stand shall be defined as an area intended for the actual placement of the manufactured home on the lot. The stand shall provide adequate support and tie-down securing the home against uplift sliding and overturning."*

The ordinance goes on to define what actions must be taken to avoid heaving, shifting, uplift and overturning.

## **2.6 Home Ownership and Assistance**

The governing board of the Town of Stark works closely with Vernon County in taking advantage of state and federal government programs which can help local home owners with attaining and maintaining their residences:

Community based residential facilities — REM Treatment Services owns at least one home in Stark Township where persons with varying degrees of mental/physical handicap(s) may reside.

Couleecap — a community action program offers several housing related programs such as home buyer's assistance, weatherization program, and other housing assistance programs.

Aging and Disability Resource Center of Western Wisconsin serves Vernon County, along with other local counties, and offers assistance to our elderly population.

Wisconsin Rural Development offers grants and loan assistance for financing and home improvement loans among other programs.

Habitat for Humanity, whose goal is to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness, has built homes in Vernon County.

In looking toward the future it must be noted that Vernon County, of which the Town of Stark is a part, consistently lags behind the State of Wisconsin and the Nation when it comes to increases in housing, according to data in the 2010 census and prior census data. Future should focus on the age of housing stock with regard to condition, redevelopment and rehabilitation.

There are facilities within Vernon County which will care for and provide assisted living arrangements for our aging citizenry. This will mean that, in the future, the number of aging Town of Stark residents will potentially decline.

The Town of Stark zoning ordinance is, among other things, intended to protect homeowners from groundwater contamination, dump sites and over development of agricultural lands.

(\*Source: [www.city-data.com/housing/houses-Stark-Wisconsin.html](http://www.city-data.com/housing/houses-Stark-Wisconsin.html))

Source: [www.cirv-data.com](http://www.cirv-data.com)

## 2.7 Housing Agents and Programs

**WHEDA (IVladison Office)**  
**201 W. Washington Ave.**  
**Suite 700**  
**P.O. Box 1728**  
**Madison, WI 53701-1728**  
**Phone: 1-800-362-2761**  
**<http://www.wheda.com>**

### 2.7.1 Other Housing Programs

Neighborhood Housing Services of Vernon County and the Vernon County Housing Authority work to connect there sources with eligible Vernon County residents, but interested local governments and non-profit organizations can apply for additional funding for their own programs, if desired. Below are brief descriptions of the agencies with funding available and the programs they offer. To find more specific information or to determine which program best fits your needs contact them directly.

#### **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS — BUREAU OF HOUSING (DHIR-BOH)**

More than \$40 million is distributed annually to improve the supply of affordable housing for Wisconsin residents. The Bureau of Housing is involved in the following programs:

- Administers federal housing funds such as Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Administers a variety of programs for persons with Special Needs, such as homeless
- Provides state housing funds through local housing organizations
- Coordinates housing assistance programs with those of other state and local housing agencies
- Develops state housing policy and provides housing information and technical assistance

#### **WISCONSIN HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (WHEDA)**

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by providing information and creative financing to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business, and agribusiness as a stimulus to the Wisconsin economy. WHEDA offers programs for both single and multi-family units. Projects that may qualify for WHEDA Multifamily Loans include:

- New construction
- Acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing properties
- Historic preservation
- Community-based residential facilities
- Assisted living facilities
- Section 8 properties

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — RURAL DEVELOPMENT **(USDA-RD)**

The Rural Housing Service (RHS) is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Located within the Department's Rural Development mission area, RHS operates a broad range of programs to provide:

- Homeownership options to individuals
- Housing rehabilitation and preservation funding
- Rental assistance to tenants of RHS-funded multifamily housing complexes
- Farm labor housing
- Help developers of multi-family housing projects, like assisted housing for the elderly, disabled, or apartment buildings
- Community facilities, such as libraries, childcare centers, schools, municipal buildings, and firefighting equipment in Indian groups, nonprofit organizations, communities, and local governments

#### UNITED STATES HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT **(HUD)**

The mission of HUD is to provide decent, safe, and sanitary home and suitable living environment for every American. More specifically the programs of HUD are aimed at the following:

- Creating opportunities for homeownership
- Providing housing assistance for low-income persons
- Working to create, rehabilitate and maintain the nation's affordable housing
- Enforcing the nation's fair housing laws
- Helping the homeless
- Spurring economic growth in distressed neighborhoods
- Helping local communities meet their development needs

### 3 Transportation

#### 3.1 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this section is to inventory, map and forecast transportation needs and the systems needed to meet those needs in the Town of Stark. Transportation would include all town, county and state highways, various types of recreation trails (walking, bicycle, skiing, snowmobiles, off-road vehicles, etc.), the Kickapoo River for canoeing and other water recreation, and systems of travel such as public transportation (buses, vans, cabs, etc.) for particular user groups. With the increased population forecast for the Town of Stark in the next twenty years (see Chapter 1, Issues & Opportunities), current highways and transportation systems may not be adequate in the future. Plotting that need for more and better roads and systems of transportation for the future is difficult to determine. It will be the effort of this chapter to attempt to forecast those transportation needs for the future for the Town of Stark. Economic development, such as the continuing expansion of organic markets for Organic Valley, tourism travel, which may be tied to increased visitation to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve and recreational use of the Kickapoo River, and residential settlement patterns in the town will all play in the future needs of transportation in the township. Regardless of the future dynamics on transportation needs mentioned above, regular maintenance on existing highway systems must continue.

## **Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(c)**

### **(c) Transportation Element**

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, electric personal assistive mobility devices, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking, and water transportation. The element shall compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals, and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element shall also identify highways within the local governmental unit by function and incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit. Beginning on January 1, 2010, any program or action of a local governmental unit that affects land use shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan, including (m) An improvement of a transportation facility that is undertaken under s. 84.185

## **3.2 Goals**

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters: Issues & Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities & Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. Fourteen Local Comprehensive Planning Goals were also established in addition to the basic nine elements. Four of these local planning goals address the transportation needs of the Town of Stark.

To balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.

- To encourage the land use, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- To provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, safety, and meets the needs of all citizens, including meeting the needs of a variety of citizens.
- To encourage the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.

## **3.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations**

Following is a list of objectives and policy recommendations to meet transportation needs for the Town of Stark for the next twenty years. They incorporate and support the above goals and may act as a guide on transportation decisions in the future.

1. Continue the Five-Year Plan approach currently in place by the Town of Stark board to provide adequate and continued maintenance on existing town roads.
2. Continue to work cooperatively with the townships of Union, Whitestown and Webster, the Village of La Farge, and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve to plow and grade snow and sand common roads during the winter season.
3. Continue to work cooperatively with the Vernon County Highway Department in procuring road salt, culverts, equipment, supplies and other needed material that can be purchased by county contract at a cheaper rate.



4. Continue to utilize federal, state, county, and tribal monies for road maintenance through grants (TRIP, etc.) and emergency (FEMA disaster assistance, BIA funds, etc.) programs.
5. Plan cooperatively with state, county and regional planning groups on the area's transportation needs for the future.
6. Continue to provide safe town roads that meet the needs of individuals, businesses, agriculture, and the schools.

### **3.4 Transportation Systems**

The main transportation system in the Town of Stark is an interconnected system of state, county and town roads.

#### **3.4.1 State Highways**

Two state highways run through the Town of Stark. State Highway 82 is an east-west road that enters the town from the east in section 24 from the Town of Union and proceeds west through sections 26, 27, and 28 to the Village of La Farge. It continues west beyond the village through sections 29, 30, and 19 before entering the Town of Webster. Approximately six miles of Highway 82 lie within the Town of Stark. State Highway 131 is a south-north road that enters the Town of Stark from Forest Township in Richland County in section 36 and continues north through sections 32 and 29 before entering the Village of La Farge. It continues north from the village through sections 20, 21, 16, 9, 10, and 3 before going into the Town of Whitestown just south of Rockton. Over six miles of Highway 131 lie within the Town of Stark. Both of these state highways are maintained for the state by the Vernon County Highway Department. (Refer to town roads Map 12-1 for more information on state highways.)

#### **3.4.2 County Highways**

Three Vernon County highways run through the Town of Stark for a total of 7.67 miles.

County Highway MM runs for .52 miles from the Richland County line and the Town of Forest in section 35. It intersects with County Highway D in that section and MM ends there.

County Highway D connects the West Lima area to State Highway 82 one mile east of La Farge.

County Highway D enters the Town of Stark from Union Township in section 36 and continues in a west and then northwest through sections 35, 34, and 27 for 3.45 miles before intersecting with Highway 82.

County Highway P connects the Dell-Weister Creek area with Highway 131 and enters the Town of Stark from Whitestown Township in section 6. It continues through sections 5, 4, 9 and 10 for 3.70 miles before intersecting with Highway 131 two miles south of Rockton.

All of these county highways are maintained by the Vernon County Highway Department. (Refer to town roads map for more information on county highways.)

#### **3.4.3 Town Roads**

There are 37.82 miles of roads in the Town of Stark designated as municipal or town roads by the state highway department. The roads vary in length, from 5.22 miles in length (Maple Ridge

Road) as the longest while Richard Road at 0.07 miles is the shortest. Widths of twenty feet with two-foot shoulders on each side are the norms for Town of Stark roads, but some roads are 16 or 18 feet wide with limited to no shoulders. Most roads in the town have a seal-coated surface, but a few remain with a gravel surface. (Refer to Map 12-1 for more information on road surfaces.) Turmelville Road, located in section 31, is designated by the state as a "Rustic Road". The Town of Stark board maintains a five-year road plan for the scheduled maintenance and repairs of all town roads.

#### 3.4.4 ATV/UTV Trails

All Town of Stark and Vernon Country Roads have been designated for ATV/UTV usage. 131 from the village of La Farge to Tunnelville Road, Highway 82 to Munson Road and Highway 131 to French Hill are connecting routes. ATVs and UTVs must follow all state road safety requirements.

### **3.5 Town of Stark Comprehensive Planning Survey & Public Meetings**

### **3.6 Potential Town Road Expansion**

In looking towards the future regarding town roads two areas are of concern.

Maple Ridge Road appears to have potential for increased housing, which may necessitate a future need for upgrading of that road. Rusch Lane has been approved for construction to ameliorate a land-locked property.

## 4 Utilities and Community Facilities

### 4.1 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this section is to inventory, map, and forecast utilities and community facilities in the Town of Stark. Utilities and community facilities, often referred to as public works, is the physical infrastructure that allows a community to function and grow. Community facilities may include libraries, municipal offices, schools, police stations, fire stations, parks, etc. Many of the community facilities are supported by utilities including water services, sewer system, stormwater drainage, electricity, etc. It is expected that the population in the Town of Stark may increase minimally as it has over the next 20 years

LI The exact needs to expand, rehab, or create new utilities and community facilities is difficult to determine. To the extent possible, this chapter tries to forecast the future utility and community facility needs of the Town of Stark; however, these needs will vary according to growth pressure and the level of service that is deemed publicly acceptable. In addition, when evaluating whether a utility or community facility will be able to meet future needs it is assumed that some routine maintenance will be needed.

## **Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(d)**

### **(d) Utilities and Community Facilities**

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit such as sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power-generating plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, childcare facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue facilities, libraries, schools and other governmental facilities. The element shall describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit, shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities and shall assess future needs for government services in the local governmental unit that are related to such utilities and facilities.

## **4.2 Goals**

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters:

Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. In addition to these basic nine elements, fourteen Local Comprehensive Planning Goals were established which are more general in nature. Of these thirteen goals, the three listed below have the particular objective of utility and community facility development.

- To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- To encourage the land use, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

## **4.3 Objectives and Recommendations**

The following are the Utilities and Community Facilities objectives and policy recommendations (not in order of priority) that support the above goals and will guide utility and community facility decisions in the jurisdiction over the next 20 years.

1. Maintain the existing park facilities so they can support existing recreational needs.
2. Consider implementing a capital improvements program and review it annually, making adjustments to meet the needs of the community.
3. Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal programs or grants to maintain, enhance, or pursue new utility and community facilities.

## **4.4 Public Utilities and Community Facilities**

### **4.4.1 Sanitary Sewer System**

All Town of Stark wastewater treatment is through private onsite wastewater treatment systems (POWTS). The Town of Stark has approximately 120 POWTS. POWTS, or septic systems, treat domestic wastewater, which would include domestic activities such as sanitary, bath, laundry,

dishwashing, garbage disposal, etc. These systems receive domestic wastewater and either retains it in a holding tank, or treats and discharges into the soil. Any system with a final discharge upon the ground surface, or discharging directly into surface waters of the state, is subject to DNR regulation. POWTS are most commonly used in rural or large lot areas where sanitary sewer is not available. These systems are regulated under WI COMM-83 and permits are issued by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce and the WI-DNR. Refer to the WI DOC, WI DNR, and the Vernon County Zoning and Sanitation Department for more information on sanitary sewer regulations.

#### **4.4.2 Stormwater Management**

There are no public stormwater management facilities in the Town of Stark except for ditching and culverts related to the rural road systems. However, many farm properties have private stormwater management practices which manage stormwaters. Such practices include ponds, terraces and grass waterways. These facilities retain and slow the run-off of stormwater. Benefits include the lessening of soil erosion and flash flooding, and the minimizing the contamination of surface waters. The effects of significant stormwater runoff on the road systems within the Town is of public concern because of the damage and public cost that uncontrolled water run-off can cause.

Stormwater management involves providing controlled release rates of runoff to receiving systems, typically through detention and/or retention facilities. A stormwater management system can be very simple — a series of natural drainage ways — or a complex system of culverts, pipes, and drains. Either way, the purpose of the system is to store and channel water to specific areas, diminishing the impact of non-point source pollution. The Town of Stark does not currently have any programs or policies addressing the management of stormwater runoff. Refer to the WI DNR, or the Vernon County Department of Zoning and Sanitation for more information on stormwater management.

Beginning in August 2004, any construction sites disturbing more than one acre of land must get state permits and keep soil on their land during and after construction (NR 151, 216). The threshold was lowered from five acres to one acre in order to comply with new U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Phase 2 Storm Water Regulations. The purpose of the regulation is to lower and control the amount of sedimentation that reaches Wisconsin rivers and lakes. Refer to the WI DNR for more information.

#### **4.4.3 Water Supply**

All drinking water for the residents of the Town of Stark comes from private wells. The Town of Stark has approximately 135 private wells constructed since 1980 (does not include replacement wells). Since all of the Town of Stark water comes from private wells, the future demand for water will depend on the number of new homes that are constructed (see Chapter 2, Housing).

Wells are safe, dependable sources of water if sited wisely and built correctly. Wisconsin has had well regulations since 1936, and today is recognized as a national leader in well protection. NR 812 (formerly NR 112), Wisconsin's Administrative Code for Well Construction and Pump Installation, is administered by the DNR. The Well Code is based on the premise that if a well

and water system is properly located, constructed, installed, and maintained, the well should provide safe water continuously without a need for treatment. Refer to the WI DNR, the Vernon County Department of Zoning and Sanitation and Chapter 5, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources for more information on water quality and well regulations.

#### **4.4.4 Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities**

The Town of Stark provides recycling services to town residents via a drop-off point at the Town Hall. Service is anticipated to be adequate for use in the future. Recycling services are not shared with any other jurisdictions. There are no landfills in the Town of Stark. Recycled waste is processed through the Vernon County Landfill.

#### **4.4.5 Parks and Recreational Facilities**

In the Town of Stark is located the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. The Kickapoo Valley Reserve is an 8,569 acre tract of land located north of the village of La Farge. Its history, resources, administration, and recreational diversity make it unique - a place like no other. The Reserve offers something for all outdoor enthusiasts, to include camping; hiking, canoeing, biking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and bird watching.

#### **4.4.6 Telecommunication Facilities**

The Town of Stark has two cellular towers located within its boundaries. The towers provides cellular phone coverage for most of the township. However, due to the many hills in the township not all areas may be covered.

#### **4.4.7 Power Plants and Transmission Lines**

Electric power to the Town of Stark is provided by Vernon Electric Cooperative, La Farge Municipal Utilities, and Rural Electric Association (REA). The capacity of power plants and transmission lines serving this area is adequate for present needs. The needs for expansion, rehabilitation or new facilities are not known at this time.

There is one transmission line running east and west through the town.

#### **4.4.8 Cemeteries**

The Town has four cemeteries: Jug Creek Cemetery, Bear Creek Cemetery, Star Valley Cemetery (located on the Kickapoo Reserve) and Star Cemetery(a portion is within the village of LaFarge.). Presently, these cemeteries are adequate.

#### **4.4.9 Postal Service**

Postal service for the town is provided by post offices in nearby villages to include La Farge. The postal service is adequate.

#### **4.4.10 Municipal Building**

The Town of Stark municipal building was recently built on Corps Road with a capacity of approximately fifty persons. It is used for meetings and voting as well as containing the recycling center.

Another building was constructed to hold sand and provide machinery storage.

#### 4.4.11 Police, Fire, and Rescue Services

Police service is provided by the Vernon County Sheriff's Department.

The fire station and rescue services are located in the Village of La Farge and are comprised of approximately 30 volunteers from the townships and villages surrounding the area. The fire department has 8 vehicles that are used in the Town. The use and capacity of these services are adequate for the size of the service area. The EMS and fire department have a newly constructed building in the village of La Farge. They have state licensed volunteers to staff two ambulances.

See Map 12-7 for emergency services.

#### 4.4.12 Library Facilities

The Town of Stark has no library. However, three libraries are located in the nearby villages of La Farge, Viola, and Ontario. The Lawton Memorial Library and the Ontario Public Library belong to the Winding Rivers Library System. The Viola Public Library belongs to the Southwest Wisconsin Library System. The Lawton Memorial Library underwent a recent renovation and expansion. The Winding Rivers Library System conducted a needs assessment and found adding 2000 square feet would allow the library to meet the minimal service requirements of the population. The library footprint is now 4100 square feet.

In 2019 the Friends of the Lawton Memorial Library spearheaded an effort to add solar plus battery storage to the library. In April 2018, an 11.2 kWh solar system was installed and in November 2018 a 27 kWh coupled battery storage system was added. The library would be able to support critical function in a power outage and be able to serve as a community resource center during such an emergency.

#### 4.4.13 Primary, Secondary, and Higher Education Facilities

The public K-12 school facilities of La Farge, Hillsboro and Kickapoo service the Town of Stark residents. Over 90% of the Town of Stark is in the La Farge School District. The La Farge School District enrollment has been increasing a small rate in the past few years. Ground

Colleges/universities with over 2000 students nearest to Stark:

- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE (about 41 miles; LA CROSSE, WI; Full-time enrollment: 8,669)
- WESTERN WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE (about 45 miles; LA CROSSE, WI; FT enrollment: 2,973)
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-PLATTEVILLE (about 60 miles; PLATTEVILLE, WI; FT enrollment: 5,045)
- WINONA STATE UNIVERSITY (about 82 miles; WINONA, MN; FT enrollment: 6,568)
- Viterbo University (about 45 miles; LA CROSSE, WI; FT enrollment 3,088)
- SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA (about 82 miles; WINONA, MN; FT enrollment: 2,969)
- LUTHER COLLEGE (about 85 miles; DECORAH, IA; FT enrollment: 2,566)
- UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON (about 90 miles; MADISON, WI; FT enrollment: 42,030)

#### **4.4.14 Health Care Facilities**

Health care facilities located nearest to Stark:

- ST JOSEPHS COMMUNITY HEALTH SERV INC (about 20 miles; HILLSBORO, WI)
- RICHLAND HOSPITAL INC (about 24 miles; RICHLAND CENTER, WI)
- VERNON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (about 20 miles; VIROQUA, WI)
- LA FARGE MEDICAL CLINIC (within Stark; LA FARGE, WI)

The health care facilities supporting the Town of Stark are excellent.

#### **4.4.15 Other Community Facilities**

Airports certified for carrier operations nearest to Stark:

- DANE COUNTY REGIONAL (about 90 miles; MADISON, WI; MSN)
- LA CROSSE MLTNI (about 49 miles; LA CROSSE, WI; ID: LSE)
- DUBUQUE REGIONAL (about 83 miles; DUBUQUE, IA; ID: DBQ)

Other public-use airports nearest to Stark:

- VIROQUA MUNI (about 20 miles; VIROQUA, WI; ID: Y51)
- JOSHUA SANFORD FIELD (about 21 miles; HILLSBORO, WI; ID: HBW)

The Town of Stark is supported with adequate airports.

### **4.5 Town of Stark Supported Utility Initiatives**

#### **4.5.1 Dark Sky Initiative**

The Town of Stark supports the Dark Sky Initiative.

The purpose of the initiative is to:

- Permit reasonable uses of outdoor lighting for nighttime safety, utility, security, and enjoyment while preserving the ambiance of the night
- Curtail and reverse any degradation of the nighttime visual environment and the night sky
- Minimize glare and obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary
- Conserve energy and resources to the greatest extent possible
- Help protect the natural environment from the damaging effects of night lighting

Practical Considerations:

1. The idea that more light always results in better safety and security is a myth. One needs only the right amount of light, in the right place, at the right time. More light often means wasted light and energy.
2. Use the lowest wattage of lamp that is feasible. The maximum wattage for most commercial applications should be 250 watts of high intensity discharge lighting should be considered the maximum, but less is usually sufficient.
3. Whenever possible, turn off the lights or use motion sensor controlled lighting.



4. Incorporate curfews (i.e. turn lights off automatically after a certain hour when businesses close or traffic is minimal). This is an easy and fast way to initiate dark sky practices.

#### **4.5.2 Alternative Energy Sources**

The town supports the reduction of the use of fossil fuels which is harmful to the environment and is a limited source of energy. The use of alternative energy sources, such as solar, wind, bio-mass and geothermal have grown in the Town of Stark over the past decade. Solar energy has been the primary source of alternative energy utilized among town residents. The Town of Stark installed a 5.6 kW ground mount solar system in 2018 which has effectively zeroed out the electric bill and is expected to save the town \$25,000 over the life of the system. Approximately half of the cost of the system was paid with donations from Town of Stark residents. In 2019 the Lawton Memorial Library installed a solar +storage system. Both systems are connected to the La Farge Municipal Utility and serve to reduce energy usage and peak demand during heat waves.

Town residents should be encouraged to make energy efficiency improvements to pertinent buildings. Focus on Energy offers many money saving suggestions and often has monetary assistance for energy saving projects. Energy efficiency measures often have the largest return on investment and are frequently paid for in just a few years. Energy efficient homes garner higher resale values and the lower utility bills are attractive to potential home buyers. Building energy consumption is responsible for nearly 40 percent of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States. Energy efficiency measures coupled with clean and renewable energy can drastically reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Alternative energy sources such as solar and wind can also be used to charge battery electric vehicles, thus reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

#### **4.6 Utilities and Community Facilities Agencies and Programs**

There are a number of available state and federal agencies and programs to assist communities with public works projects. Below are brief descriptions of various agencies and programs. Contact information has been provided for each agency. To find out more specific information or which program best fits your needs contact the agency directly.

##### **UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — RURAL DEVELOPMENT (USDA-RD) COMMUNITY FACILITIES DIRECT GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAM**

The community facilities grant program provides grants to assist the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 people. The objective of the agency is to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services to rural residents. This can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation. All projects that are funded by the RHS grant program must be for public use.

##### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM**

The community facilities loan program is similar to the grant program in that it provides funding for essential community facilities, such as schools, roads, fire halls, etc. Again local jurisdictions must have a population of less than 20,000 to be able to apply. Applications are funded based on a statewide priority point system. For more information on the loan program log on to the SDARD website or call the office.

USDA Rural Development of Wisconsin

4949 Kirschling Ct  
Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481  
Phone: 715-345-7615  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — RURAL UTILITIES

There are a number of available programs through USDA-RUS as part of the Water and Environmental Programs (WEP). WEP provides loans, grants, and loan guarantees for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, and storm drainage facilities in rural areas, cities, and towns of 10,000 or less. Public bodies, non-profit organizations and recognized Indian Tribes may qualify for assistance. WEP also makes grants to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and training to assist rural communities with their water, wastewater, and solid waste programs. Some of the available programs include:

- Water and Waste Disposal Direct and Guaranteed Loans
- Water and Waste Disposal Grants
- Technical Assistance and Training Grants
- Solid Waste Management Grants
- Rural Water Circuit Ride Technical Assistance

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (**USDA**) NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION (**NRCS**) UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (**US EPA**) COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH EDUCATION EXTENSION SERVICE (**CSREES**) FARM\*A\*SYST

Farm\*A\*Syst is a national program cooperatively supported by the above agencies. The program enables you to prevent pollution on farms, ranches, and in homes using confidential environmental assessments. This program can help you determine your risks. A system of fact sheets and worksheets helps you to identify the behaviors and practices that are creating risks. Some of the issues Farm\*A\*Syst can help you address includes:

- Quality of well water, new wells, and abandoned wells
- Livestock waste storage
- Storage and handling of petroleum products
- Managing hazardous wastes
- Nutrient management

Farm\*A\*Syst is a voluntary program, so you decide whether to assess your property. This program has been nationally and internationally recognized for its common-sense approach to managing environmental risks. Contact the Farm\*A\*Syst office for more information on available programs.

#### HOME\*A\*SYST

Also available through the cooperative efforts of USDA, NRCS, CSREES, and US EPA is the national Home\*A\*Syst program. This program is very similar to the Farm\*A\*Syst program explained above, but instead is specific to your home. The program begins with a checklist to identify risks including safety of drinking water, use and storage of hazardous chemicals, and lead based paint. The program can help you develop an action plan to reduce your risks. Contact

the Home\*A\*Syst program to find out more information and to obtain worksheets to begin your assessment today.

FARM\*A\* SYST

HOME\*A\*SYST

303 Hiram Smith Hall

1545 Observatory Dr.

Madison, WI 53706

Phone: 608-262-0024

<http://www.uwex.edudarnmsyst>

<http://www.uwex.edu/homeasyst>

## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

### **(WIDNR) BUREAU OF COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

#### **(DNR-CFA)**

The Bureau of Community Assistance administers a number of grant and loan programs.

The Bureau supports projects that protect the public health and the environment and provide recreational opportunities. The Bureau has three major areas of programs, which include the following:

- **Environmental Loans:** This is a loan program for drinking water, wastewater, and brownfield projects.
- **Environmental Financial Assistance Grants:** This is a grant program for non-point source runoff pollution, recycling, lakes, rivers, municipal flood control and well compensation.
- **Land and Recreation Financial Assistance Grants:** This is a grant program for conservation, restoration, parks, stewardship, acquisition of land and easements for conservation purposes, recreational facilities and trails, hunter education, forestry, forest fire protection, gypsy moth, household hazardous waste collection, dam rehabilitation and abandonment, dry cleaner remediation, and urban wildlife damage. These programs listed above are the major program headings. There are numerous programs available for specific projects underneath these umbrella programs. For example, under the Environmental Loans Program, there is the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program (SDWLP). The SDWLP provides loans to public water systems to build, upgrade, or replace water supply infrastructure to protect public health and address federal and state safe drinking water requirements. For more information on other available programs, contact the Wisconsin DNR or visit the website listed above.

## WISCONSIN WELL COMPENSATION GRANT PROGRAM

Another program available through the Wisconsin DNR is the Well Compensation Grant Program. To be eligible for a grant, a person must own a contaminated private water supply serving a residence or used for watering livestock. Owners of wells serving commercial properties are not eligible, unless the commercial property also contains a residential unit or apartment. The well compensation grant program provides partial cost sharing for the following:

- Water testing if it shows the well is contaminated
- Reconstructing a contaminated well

- Constructing a new well
- Connecting to an existing private or public water supply
- Installing a new pump, including the associated piping
- Property abandoning the contaminated well
- Equipment for water treatment
- Providing a temporary bottled or trucked water supply

**WI DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT**

**PO Box 7970**

**Madison, WI 53707**

**Phone: 608-266-8934**

**Fax: 608-266-8969**

**<http://www.commerce.state.wi.us>**

**<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/>**

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**WISCONSIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

**PUBLIC FACILITIES (CDBG-PF)**

This program is designed to assist small communities with public facility improvements. Eligible activities would include publicly owned utility system improvements, streets, sidewalks, disability accessibility projects, and community centers. Local governments including towns, villages, cities, and counties are eligible. Entitlement cities, over 50,000 in population, are not eligible. Federal grant funds are made available on an annual basis. The maximum grant for any single applicant is \$750,000. Grants are only available up to the amount that is adequately justified and documented with engineering or vendor estimates.

**WISCONSIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

**PUBLIC FACILITIES (CDBG-PFED)**

This program helps underwrite the cost of municipal infrastructure necessary for business development. This program requires that the result of the project will ultimately induce businesses, create jobs, and invest in the community. More information is available from the Wisconsin Department of Commerce.

## **5 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources**

### **Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(e)**

#### **(e) Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources.**

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.

### **5.1 Agricultural Resources**

#### **5.1.1 Agricultural Resources Summary**

The purpose of the Agricultural element is to present agricultural data and provide direction for land use decisions impacting agriculture for the next 20 years.

#### **5.1.2 Goals**

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters: Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. In addition to these basic nine elements, fourteen Local Comprehensive Planning Goals were established which are more

general in nature. Of these fourteen goals, the one listed below has the particular objective of agricultural development.

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

### **5.1.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations**

The following agricultural resource objectives and policy recommendations will support the above goal and will guide agricultural resource decisions in the Town of Stark over the next 20 years.

#### *NOT IN ORDER OF PRIORITY*

1. Maintain the rural and agricultural character of the community.
2. Encourage the preservation of the family farm and farmland in the community.
3. Preserve agricultural land in the community from encroachment by incompatible development.
4. Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal programs or grants to conserve, maintain, and protect agricultural resources.

**Table 1. County Summary Highlights: 2007 - CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE - COUNTY DATA**[For meaning of abbreviations and symbols, see introductory text]

Item		Vernon
Farms	number	2,492
Land in farms	acres	357,090
Average size of farm	acres	143
Median size of farm	acres	80
Estimated market value of land and buildings:		
Average per farm	dollars	425,193
Average per acre	dollars	2967
Estimated market value of all machinery and equipment:		
Average per farm	dollars	59,854
Farms by size:		
Up to 9 acres		145
10 to 49 acres		668
50 to 179 acres		1,108
180 to 499 acres		484
500 to 999 acres		60
1,000 acres or more		29
Total cropland	farms	2134
acres		187,932
Harvested cropland	farms	1,815
acres		168,973
Irrigated land	farms	56
acres		156
Market value of agricultural products sold (see text)	\$1,000	167,490
Average per farm	dollars	67,211
Crops, including nursery and greenhouse crops	\$1,000	30,268
Livestock, poultry, and their products	\$1,000	137,222
Farms by value of sales:		
Less than \$2,500		972
\$2,500 to \$4,999		253
\$5,000 to \$9,999		247
\$10,000 to \$24,999		277
\$25,000 to \$49,999		226
\$50,000 to \$99,999		179
\$100,000 or more		338
Government payments	farms	1,176
\$1,000		3,162
Total income from farm-related sources, gross before taxes and expenses (see text)	farms	1,252
\$1,000		6,029
Total farm production expenses	\$1,000	126,147
Average per farm	dollars	50,621
Net cash farm income of operation (see text)	farms	2,492
\$1,000		50,534
Average per farm	dollars	20,279
Principal operator by primary occupation:		
Farming	number	1,163
Other	number	1,329
Principal operator by days worked off farm:		
Any	number	1,608
200 days or more	number	1,017
Livestock and poultry:		
Cattle and calves inventory	farms	1,375
number		74,550
Beef cows	farms	639
number		10,365
Milk cows	farms	524
number		25,085
Cattle and calves sold	farms	1,072
number		31,578
Hogs and pigs inventory	farms	104
number		4,688
Hogs and pigs sold	farms	121
number		8,976
Sheep and lambs inventory	farms	110
number		3,103
Layers inventory (see tend)	farms	314
number		154,454
Broilers and other meat-type chickens sold	farms	44
number		29,844
Selected crops harvested:		
Corn for grain	farms	897
acres		52,715
bushels		6,769,134
Corn for silage or greenchop	farms	561
acres		12,136
tons		193,727
Wheat for grain, all	farms	46
acres		957
bushels		52,343
Winter wheat for grain	farms	40
taCISS		884
bushels		50,327
Spring wheat for grain	farms	7
acres		73
bushels		2,016
Oats for grain	farms	319
acres		3,738
bushels		212,878



## 1992 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

HIGHLIGHTS OF AGRICULTURE:  
VERNON COUNTY,1992 AND 1987  
WISCONSIN

Item		ALL FARMS 1992	1987
Farms	number..	2 061	2 193
Land in farms	acres..	365 511	403 914
Average size of farm	acres..	177	184
Value of land and buildings@l:			
Average per farm	dollars..	137 242	139 741
Average per acre	dollars..	779	731
Estimated market value of all machinery and equipment@l			
Average per farm	dollars..	42 110	39 427
Farms by size:			
1 to 9 acres		185	154
10 to 49 acres		240	215
50 to 179 acres		863	972
180 to 499 acres		683	760
500 to 999 acres		80	82
1,000 acres or more		10	10
Total cropland	farms..	1 957	2 099
	- acres..	214 322	233 691
Harvested cropland -	-farms..	1883	2 039
	acres..	159 781	178 346
Irrigated land	farms..	11	7
	acres..	579	86
Market value of agricultural products sold	\$1,000..	96 785	93 368
Average per farm	dollars..	46 960	42 575
Crops, including nursery and greenhouse crops	\$1,000..	12 314	8 847
Livestock, poultry, and their products	\$1,000..	84 471	84 521
Farms by value of sales:			
Less than \$2,500		262	309
\$2,500 to \$4,999		186	189
\$5,000 to \$9,999		268	250
\$10,000 to \$24,999		362	352
\$25,000 to \$49,999		307	382
\$50,000 to \$99,999		384	499
\$100,000 or more		292	212
Total farm production expenses.\$1,000.		67 874	65 132
Average per farm	dollars.	32 933	29 714
Net cash return from agricultural sales for the farm unit	farms.	2 061	2 192
	\$1,000.	28 398	28 222
Average per farm	dollars.	13 779	12 875
Operators by principal occupation:			
Farming		1 363	1 638
Other		698	555
Operators by days worked off farm:			

\*ii:

Any		872	813
200 days or more		528	462
Livestock and poultry:			
Cattle and calves inventory...	farms	1 489	1 711
	number..	94 310	104 256
Beef cows	farms..	312	309
	number..	4 876	4 444
Milk cows	farms..	985	1 242
	number..	37 520	45 664
Cattle and calves sold	farms..	1 459	1 697
	number..	41 548	47 449
Hogs and pigs inventory	farms..	171	174
	number..	10 583	9 694
Hogs and pigs sold	farms..	176	168
	number..	20 970	18 976
Sheep and lambs inventory	farms..	48	51
	number..	1 307	1 638
Chickens 3 months old or older inventory	farms..	101	133
	number..	3 882	28 224
Broilers and other meat-type chickens sold	farms..	13	19
	number..	8 186	4 960
Selected crops harvested:			
Corn for grain or seed	farms..	1 148	1 597
	acres..	37 372	41 205
	bushels..	4 127 254	4 902 081
Corn for silo for green chop	farms..	878	826
	acres..	15 690	8 936
	tons, green..	217 557	124 406
Oats for grain	farms..	486	706
	acres..	6 691	8 893
	bushels..	373 308	507 358
Soybeans for beans	farms..	54	20
	acres..	1 945	289
	bushels..	65 618	10 920
Irish potatoes	farms..	12	13
	acres..	18	8
	cwt..	3 639	1 211
Hay-alfalfa, other, wild, silage	farms..	1 582	1 853
	acres..	108 638	131 339
	tons, dry..	263 579	349 048
Vegetables harvested	farms..	9	8
	acres..	42	24

@1Data are based on a sample of farms.

Legend: - Represents zero  
 (D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms  
 (X) Not applicable  
 (Z) Less than half the unit shown  
 (NA) Not available

#### **5.1.4 Farming System**

Using farm related data gathered at the County level from the Agricultural Census, it is possible to draw an inference about the state of agricultural health in the Town of Stark. (The Agricultural Census does not collect data at the town level and defines a farm as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year.)

The number of dairy farms in the Town of Stark has decreased to the point where presently there are no dairy farms.

#### **5.1.5 Land Sales Statistics and Graphs**

As required by the comprehensive planning process, statistics and graphs of land sales information are included below. Unfortunately, the data does not document land sales at the town level, nor is it as current as one would like. However, despite these limitations, it is clear that the value of land (both agricultural land and land sold for non-agricultural uses) has been continually rising. This trend of the last decade is no doubt continuing and therefore will continue to greatly affect future efforts by farmers to compete for the land base needed to remain in agriculture.

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture, USDA

Farms, Land in Farms, Value of Land and Buildings, and Land Use: 2007 and 2002

ITEM Vernon County

FARMS AND LAND IN FARMS		
Farms	number, 2007	2,492
	2002	2,230
Land in farms	acres, 2007	357,090
	2002	382,218
Average size of farm	acres, 2007	143
	2002	171
Estimated market value of land and buildings	farms, 2007	2,492
	2002	2,228
	\$1,000, 2007	1,059,561
	2002	713,561
Average per farm	dollars, 2007	425,193
	2002	320,270
Average per acre	dollars, 2007	2,967
	2002	1,768
2007 farms by value group:		
\$1 to \$49,999		185
\$50,000 to \$99,999		247
\$100,000 to \$199,999		574
\$200,000 to \$499,999		928
\$500,000 to \$999,999		381
\$1,000,000 to \$1,999,999		138
\$2,000,000 to \$4,999,999		48
\$5,000,000 to \$9,999,999		
\$10,000,000 or more		3
Approximate land area	acres, 2007	506,628
Proportion In farms	percent, 2007	70.5
2007 size of farm:		
1 to 9 acres	farms	145
	acres	776
10 to 49 acres	farms	668
	acres	18,522
50 to 69 acres	farms	227
	acres	13,289
70 to 99 acres	farms	354
	acres	28,927
100 to 139 acres	farms	308
	acres	36,113
140 to 179 acres	farms	217
	acres	33,626
180 to 219 acres	farms	148
	acres	29,091
220 to 259 acres	farms	94
	acres	22,423
260 to 499 acres	farms	242
	acres	83,343
500 to 999 acres	farms	60
	acres	40,256
1,000 to 1,999 acres	farms	20
	acres	26,813
2,000 acres or more	farms	9
	acres	23,911
2002 size of farm:		
1 to 9 acres	farms	82
	acres	343
10 to 49 acres	farms	428
	acres	12,528
50 to 69 acres	farms	181
	acres	10,778
70 to 99 acres	farms	321
	acres	26,811
100 to 139 acres	farms	328
	acres	38,509
140 to 179 acres	farms	217
	acres	33,916
180 to 219 acres	farms	162
	acres	31,944
220 to 259 acres	farms	124
	acres	29,514
260 to 499 acres	farms	265
	acres	92,175
500 to 999 acres	farms	98
	acres	62,221
1,000 to 1,999 acres	farms	21
	acres	28,729
2,000 acres or more	farms	
	acres	14,950



### **5.1.6 Agriculture Economy**

Agriculture is important to the township, as there are many families and individuals involved in it. Economically, agriculture is very important. Despite this, many of the farms in the town are being planted to trees or put into Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

### **5.1.7 Agricultural Infrastructure**

Farming infrastructure includes businesses and services such as feed mills, equipment vendors, or veterinarians might supply. Farm supply businesses and food processing facilities represent important resources to area farmers as well as the broader local economy. The Town of Stark area farm supply businesses and food processing facilities are Heartland Coop, LaFarge, Nelson Agri-Center, Viroqua, Tractor Supply Company, Viroqua, and numerous farm equipment businesses within 30 miles of the Town of Stark.

### **5.1.8 Physical Characteristics**

See Map 12-5 and 12-6 for the soil types and slope limitations for the Town of Stark.

### **5.1.9 Conflicts and Threats to Agriculture**

With the changes in development pressure and the transition out of farming by many, the nature of the industry is rapidly changing. Some of the conflicts and threats are within local control and some are tied to state, national and global decisions. This comprehensive plan cannot impact decisions such as commodity prices, which are set on the world market and the reduced marketing opportunities as a result of consolidation. What the plan can do, is respond to local conflicts and issues including

- Conflict with new residents with non-agriculture backgrounds. These include; smells and odors, traffic conflicts, animal waste disposal, trespassing, dust, manure and mud on the roads, chemical applications, equipment noise, lights, and fencing requirements.
- Fragmentation of the farm fields as new parcels are created.
- Agricultural land values exceeding possible agricultural income opportunities.
- The challenge of developing a new generation of farmers.

The Town of Stark should work with Vernon County to encourage appropriate agricultural activities.

### **5.1.10 Future of Agriculture**

Agriculture is changing rapidly and is likely to continue to do so. It appears that the future will include three types of operations: larger commodity producers, niche/specialty producers, and life-style farming operations. In the past, the commodity producers were dominant, but this is changing as traditional dairy producers and older farmers are leaving the business.

### **5.1.11 Agriculture Resources, Agencies and Programs**

There are a number of available county, state and federal programs to assist with agricultural planning and protection. Below are brief descriptions of the various agencies and programs.

1

**USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has a direct financial impact on rural Wisconsin families through the programs and services they offer. They are dedicated to stabilizing farm income, helping farmers conserve land and water resources, providing credit to new or disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and helping farm operations recover from the effects of disaster.

Programs and services offered by the FSA are

• **Farm Loan Program (FLP)**

The Farm Service Agency offers direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans to farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain private, commercial credit. Often, FLP borrowers are beginning farmers who cannot qualify for conventional loans because they have insufficient financial resources. The Agency also helps established farmers who have suffered financial setbacks from natural disasters, or whose resources are too limited to maintain profitable farming operations.

• **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

The CRP is a voluntary program that offers annual rental payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost-share assistance to establish approved cover on eligible cropland. The program encourages farmers to plant long-term resource-conserving covers to improve soil, water, and wildlife resources. The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) makes available assistance in an amount equal to not more than 50 percent of the participant's costs in establishing approved practices. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

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## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

WISCONSIN NATURAL  
RESOURCES CONSERVATION  
SERVICE (NRCS)  
6515 Watts Road  
Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53719  
Phone (608) 276-USDA  
<http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov>

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is the federal agency that works with landowners on private lands to conserve natural resources. NRCS is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, formerly the Soil Conservation Service. Nearly three-fourths of the technical assistance provided by the agency goes to helping farmers and ranchers develop conservation systems uniquely suited to their land and individual ways of doing business. The agency also assists other private landowners and rural and urban communities to reduce erosion, conserve and protect water, and solve other resource problems.

NRCS provides:

- **Technical Assistance for Conservation**

Conservation technical assistance is the basis of NRCS mission to conserve, sustain, and improve America's private lands. NRCS staff works one-on-one with private landowners to develop and implement conservation plans that protect the soil, water, air, plant and animal resources on the 1.5 billion acres of privately owned land in the United States.

- **Soil Survey**

NRCS is responsible for surveying the soils of the United States, publishing and interpreting soil information. Soil information is the basis for natural resource and land use planning, key to assessing site potential for specific uses and identifying soil characteristics and properties.

- **National Resources Inventory**

Every five years, NRCS conducts the National Resources Inventory (NRI) on nonfederal rural land in the United States. This inventory shows natural resource trends, such as land cover and use, soil erosion, prime farmland, and wetlands. The 1992 NRI, for example, shows that farmers are dramatically reducing soil erosion on cropland. From 1982 to 1992, erosion on all cropland declined by about one-third, going from 3.1 billion to 2.1 billion tons a year. —

- **Wetlands**

Wetland conservation is an important and sensitive issue. During 1982-1992, wetland losses due to agriculture slowed to about 31,000 acres a year, a more than 90 percent reduction compared to conversion rates between 1954 and 1974. NRCS is one of the four primary federal agencies involved with wetlands.



- **Wetlands Reserve Program**

In the Wetlands Reserve Program, conservation easements are purchased from landowners to restore or enhance wetland areas. Ownership, control of access, and some compatible uses remain with the landowner.

- **Wetland Identification**

NRCS has technical leadership for identification and delineation of wetlands on agricultural lands and on all USDA program participant's lands. NRCS maintains a list of hydric soils and a wetland inventory on agricultural land.

- **Soil Quality**

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Over the past decade, NRCS has been helping producers develop and implement 1.7 million conservation plans on 143 million acres of highly erodible cropland as part of the conservation compliance provision of the Food Security Act of 1985. As a result, erosion on the most highly erodible cropland has been cut by two-thirds.

- **Water Quality**

NRCS assists farmers to improve water quality. This includes improving nutrient and pesticide management and reducing soil erosion, thus decreasing sediment that would otherwise end up in lakes and streams. Technical assistance, including engineering, structure design and layout for manure management and water quality practices contributes significantly to state water quality efforts. Through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, NRCS provides technical and financial assistance for local resource priorities.

## **WISCONSIN FARM CENTER**

**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRADE  
AND CONSUMER PROTECTION  
(DATCP)**

**WISCONSIN FARM CENTER**

**2811 Agriculture Drive**

**PO Box 8911**

**Madison, WI 53708**

**Phone (608) 224-4960**

**<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us>**

The Wisconsin Farm Center provides services to Wisconsin farmers and agribusinesses to promote the vitality of the state's agricultural economy and rural communities.

Services include:

- **Financial Counseling and Advising**

The Farm Center's financial experts are trained in feasibility analysis, enterprise analysis, debt analysis along with restructuring and cash flow projection. They can personally assist producers and answer specific questions, providing useful resource materials.

- **Farm Mediation**

The Farm Center's farm mediation program provides dispute resolution services to farmers with problems involving creditor-debtor issues; U.S. Department of Agriculture program benefits; contracts with food processors, fertilizer, seed or feed dealers; conflicts within farm families; and landlord-tenant issues.

- **Stray Voltage**

Through Rural Electrical Power Services, the Farm Center provides information about stray voltage and power quality issues; answers to regulatory questions; on-farm and distribution system investigations by a technical team that can assist farmers in working with the utility or electrician to resolve a power quality conflict; a format for dispute resolution; and research on electrical issues.

- **Legal**

The Farm Center's agricultural attorney can answer general legal questions about farm business organization, landlord-tenant issues, debt restructuring, legal procedures, creditor-debtor law, and tax reorganization and estate planning.

- **Vocational**

The Farm Center can help farmers or their family members make a successful transition to off-farm employment. It can help them examine their skills and explore their career options, regardless of whether they are looking to add off-farm income to the farm operation, starting a new small business, or seeking off-farm employment.

- **Farm Transfers**

Through its Farm Link program, the Farm Center can help farmers who want to start their own operation, retiring farmers who want someone to take over their operation, or farmers who want to relocate due to urban or environmental pressures.

- **Animal Agriculture**

Animals are a vital part of agriculture in Wisconsin. Whether you are a farmer, a veterinarian, a livestock dealer or trucker, or a consumer, DATCP provides information and regulates many aspects of animal agriculture.

- **Crops**

Statistics show Wisconsin ranks first in production of a number of agriculture crops. Farmers in the State continue to adopt traditional and specialty crops. Cultivating and protecting them is key to our mission.

- **Land and Water**

The State works with county land conservation departments to protect the environment through conservation practices, incentive programs and regulation.

## **5.2 Natural Resources**

### **5.2.1 Natural Resources Summary**

As the Town of Stark continues to grow and change, it is vital that it consider its future in conjunction with its natural resources. It can be very challenging for rural communities to allow new development, while at the same time protecting the natural environment, preserving the character of an area. At first, development may have only a limited impact on the natural landscape, but as it continues, visual and environmental impacts become increasingly apparent. In order to protect natural resources for the future, it is crucial to be aware of existing natural resources, such as water resources, geologic resources, forests and woodlands, wildlife habitat, parks and open space, air and light, and wetlands.

### **5.2.2 Goals**

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters: Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. In addition to these basic nine elements, fourteen Local Comprehensive Planning Goals were established which are more general in nature. Of these fourteen goals, the two listed below have the particular objective of natural resource protection.

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, rivers and streams, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.

### **5.2.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations**

The following natural resource objectives and policy recommendations will support the above goals and objectives, and will guide natural resource decisions in the Town of Stark over the next 20 years.

*NOT IN ORDER OF PRIORITY*

1. Avoid disturbance to wetlands, shorelands, and floodplains and discourage disturbance to other environmentally sensitive areas and natural corridors.
2. Encourage residents to implement sustainable forestry practices.
3. Encourage the suppression and limitation of noxious weeds.
4. Explore opportunities to capitalize on local natural resources in conjunction with tourism.
5. Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal programs or grants to conserve, maintain, and protect natural resources.

### **5.2.4 Common Natural Resources**

Natural resources are materials occurring in nature and are essential or useful to humans, such as water, air, land, forests, fish and wildlife, topsoil, and minerals. They are combined into the recognized systems in which we exist. These systems, or combinations of natural materials, can be referred to as "natural environments", "ecosystems", "biomes", or "natural habitats", among others. Humans and their activities impact all natural resources. Conversely, whether obvious or not, human impacts to the natural environment often have significant adverse impacts on the human community.

Natural resources are equally important to the town economically, recreationally, culturally, and aesthetically.

### **5.2.5 Natural Areas**

Significant tracts of natural areas exist within the Kickapoo Valley Reserve located in the town of Stark. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has identified the areas meeting the legislatively defined criteria as Natural Areas in s. 23.27 Wisconsin statutes within the Reserve. In addition, the Reserve is listed federally as a National Natural Landmark through the U.S. National Park Service. Within the Master Plan of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, a Land Management Plan provides for the protection and management of these designated Natural Areas.

### **5.2.6 Communication and Cooperation**

Keeping residents informed of their jurisdiction's natural resources is a proactive first step in supporting the natural resources and natural resource protection efforts important to the Town of Stark. Flyers included with a tax mailing, articles in the local newspaper, workshops, or other similar education efforts can all help to educate residents on natural resource issues.

Fostering working relationships with the Towns of Webster, Whitestown, Clinton, Union, Village of La Farge, and Richland and Vernon counties can help the Town of Stark protect shared, contiguous natural areas that give local residents space to pursue recreational opportunities. Tapping into state and federal programs which aim specifically at protecting

farmland, wetlands, forests, historic buildings, etc., can add to the Town of Stark's support efforts to protect community natural resources. State and federal agencies and contact information are listed at the end of this Section. The Town of Stark can find new ways of working with its jurisdictional neighbors by meeting with them and discussing issues of mutual concern.

### **5.2.7 Water Resources**

Water resources, (both surface and groundwater) are one of the most commonly used natural resources, serving intrinsic and essential functions in the community. Plants, animals, and people all consume water on a daily basis. Over 70% of all Wisconsin communities (that is, every two out of three State citizens) rely on groundwater not only for domestic use, but also for agriculture, industrial uses, recreational purposes, etc. All Town of Stark residents use groundwater for domestic water consumption.

Water is one of the most easily contaminated resources. Because of its mobile nature, contaminants can travel far from their source through the water cycle. Contaminants in the water cycle coming from a variety of sources are identified as non-point source pollution (NPSP). Nonpoint source pollution comes from diffuse sources such as agriculture runoff, leaking septic systems, road salt and road building, parking lots, lawn, and golf course runoff, all of which directly impact water resources. Point source pollution comes from identifiable sources such as a single factory or overflow from a sewage treatment facility.

The Town of Stark does keep road salt in a shed or covered so it does not mix into runoff . Overall, the town protects water resources by minimizing salt on roads during the winter.

### **5.2.8 Groundwater Contamination**

It is important to keep the groundwater resource in mind for many areas of comprehensive planning. Ultimately, what takes place above ground directly affects groundwater below. There are a variety of activities that impact water resource quality. Potential pollution sources that can affect groundwater include but are not limited to

- On-site septic systems
- Sewage Treatment Plants
- Road Salt
- Sanitary Landfills
- Underground Storage Tanks
- Feedlots
- Junkyard
- Leaking Sewer Lines
- Pesticide and Fertilizer Applications
- Surface Waste Water Discharge
- Household Cleaners & Detergents
- Non-sewered Subdivisions
- Gas Stations
- Chemical Spills
- Abandoned Quarries/Wells
- Old Mine Openings or Shafts

Potential contaminants to groundwater in the Town of Stark include abandoned vehicles and barnyard runoff. Pinpointing pollution sources can be made easier by identifying the location and extent of groundwater recharge areas, as well as the extent of the local watershed, so communities can plan where and how much development can be built, with the least amount of impact to water resources. Contamination of local drinking water resources can be devastating,

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very costly to reverse, and affects all area residents. The Town of Stark protects drinking water resources against possible contamination by minimizing the amount of road salt used.

Private well owners should be encouraged to have their wells tested periodically. Private laboratories do tests for chemical contaminants, such as volatile organic compounds or pesticides as well as bacteria, nitrate, and fluoride. Check the Yellow Pages under "laboratories" or "water analysis". Costs can range from \$30 to \$1,000, depending on the number and type of chemicals analyzed and the test methods. The State Laboratory of Hygiene can also test your drinking water for several pollutants including bacteria, nitrate or fluoride. The bacteria, nitrate and fluoride tests can be made from the same sample bottle of water for an additional fee. For a test kit, call the lab at (800) 442-4618 or write the State Laboratory of Hygiene, Environmental Health Division, 2601 Agriculture Dr., P.O. Box 7996, Madison, WI 53707-7996.

If bacterial contamination has occurred, the homeowner should check for flooded well pits, broken seals, improperly abandoned wells in the area, especially old dug wells, quarries, any physical changes to the surrounding area, such as housing developments or landfills, spills or waste dumping.

If a lab test alerts the homeowner to the presence of high levels of chemicals in the drinking water, they may be advised to drink bottled water or drill a new well. But what about low levels of contaminants? Will small quantities of benzene a major component of gasoline, or - perchloroethylene (PCE), a chemical used in dry-cleaning solvents, make the water undrinkable? The answer is no. That is not to say that the water is totally safe to drink, though. Contamination of drinking water, even at very low levels, should not be taken lightly, nor should the risks be exaggerated. To keep the risk of contamination as low as possible, public agencies and private citizens must continue to make tough decisions on what is worth the risk and what is not.

A way to protect drinking water at the jurisdictional level could be to encourage individual wellhead protection plans or when building "from the ground up", showing that the layout of house, well, and septic field have enough space to prevent cross contamination. A wellhead protection plan lists potential contaminants within a well "cone of depression" (a cone-shaped lowering of the water table around a pumped well) and aims at preventing contaminants from entering the area of land around the water supply well(s). This area includes, "the surface or subsurface area surrounding a water well or wellfield supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such well or wellfield" (US EPA. 1987). Wellhead protection plans for individual, private wells are not required by the State but they would be instrumental in greatly contributing to groundwater protection. The Town of Stark does not wish to create a wellhead protection plan at this time.

For homes already built, it is possible for the homeowner to do an individual wellhead protection plan, merely by ensuring that there are no contaminants in the general vicinity of the household well and that any future enhancements or changes around the home do not negatively impact the well's cone of depression. This means the well should not be subject to contaminants such as gasoline and oil (from a driveway), fertilizers (from a lawn), or bacteria (from an improperly placed or broken drain field).

### 5.2.9 Groundwater Supply

Water supply is impacted as communities grow, bringing increased demand to supply water to new homes, businesses, and industries. High capacity wells and an increasing number of wells, both private and public, can reduce the amount of recharge to surface waters, causing streamflow reduction, loss of springs, and changes in wetland vegetative communities. The strains of meeting growing water demand from a sprawling population are starting to show. Statewide water use has increased 33% in the last 15 years and water tables are plummeting in many urban areas as the thirst for more water outstrips the land's ability to provide it. (Lisa Gaumnitz, Tim Asplund, and Megan R. Matthews, "A Growing Thirst for Groundwater", August 2004.)

The Groundwater Bill (2003 Act 310) addresses groundwater quantity issues, requiring approval for siting, fees, and an environmental review. While this legislation is currently more relevant in areas of the state experiencing severe water quantity issues (such as Southeast Wisconsin), the principle of controlling groundwater withdrawal in all parts of the state is quite important and is a growing concern for the future. By 2006, a State level groundwater advisory committee will be organized to address groundwater management that will be hopefully be of help to communities, although groundwater supply is not an issue in the Town of Stark at this time.

### 5.2.10 Surface Water

Surface water, which is all water naturally open to the atmosphere such as rivers, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, streams, impoundments, seas, and estuaries, in the Town of Stark includes the Kickapoo River. These watercourses provide recreational opportunities, such as fishing, boating, swimming, and passive recreational opportunities like bird watching and sun bathing. The rivers and their feeder streams provide habitat for fish, mussels, insects, and other wildlife. The Town of Stark ownership currently does not have a town policy aimed at protecting surface waters or protecting shorelands. See Map 12-3 for streams and major watersheds.

### 5.2.11 Wetlands

Wetlands serve a variety of functions, including playing an important role in stormwater management and flood control, filtering pollutants, recharging groundwater, providing a habitat for many wildlife species and plants, and offering open space and passive recreational opportunities. Wetlands include all marshes, swamps, fens, bogs, and those areas excluded from cultivation or other uses because they are intermittently wet.

The Town of Stark is in the Western Coulee and Ridge ecological landscape, as defined by the 2002 Land Legacy Report put out by the WI DNR. This landscape is characterized by highly eroded and unglaciated topography. Because of the hilly terrain, wetlands in the area are primarily associated with the rivers and streams of the area, and not in more generally level or upland areas. Protection of wetlands in the Town of Stark is controlled by the WI-DNR.

The Wisconsin Wetland Inventory (WWI) was completed in 1985. Pre-European settlement wetland figures estimate the state had about 10 million acres of wetlands. Based on aerial photography from 1978-79, the WWI shows approximately 5.3 million acres of wetlands remaining in the state representing a loss of about 47% of original wetland acreage. This figure does not include wetlands less than 2 or 5 acres in size (minimum mapping unit varies by county). Because the original WWI utilized aerial photographs taken in the summer, some

wetlands were missed. In addition, wetlands that were farmed as of the date of photography used and then later abandoned due to wet conditions were not captured as part of the WWI. (Wetland data in this inventory is to the county level only.) Go to <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/wetlands/facts.shtml> for more information.

#### **5.2.12 Floodplains**

A floodplain is a low area of land adjacent to a stream or other watercourse that is subject to flooding and holds the overflow of water during a flood. They are delineated based on the 100-year storm event - the area that would be covered by water during a flood so big it only happens (theoretically) every 100 years. However, flooding can occur in any year.

For that reason, development should not occur in drainage ways and floodplains since they serve as stormwater runoff systems and flood mitigation landscape features. Counties, cities, and villages are required to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances in order to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA has designated flood hazard areas along many surface water resources. The importance of respecting floodways and floodplains is critical in terms of planning and development. Ignoring these constraints can cause serious problems relating to property damage and the overall safety of residents. Some town landowners may install private dams to mitigate and/or prevent flooding.

#### **5.2.13 Wildlife**

Habitat is the combination of food, water, shelter, and space necessary to meet the needs of wildlife.

#### **5.2.14 Importance of Biodiversity**

Biodiversity is the full spectrum of life forms and the many ecological processes that support them. Protecting the biodiversity is essential to core values such as maintaining clean air and water, providing adequate habitat for the state's flora and fauna, maintaining a vibrant economy and providing recreational opportunities. Biodiversity protection depends on the sustainability of diverse ecosystems, such as the mosaic of forests, agricultural lands, grasslands, bluffs, coastal zones and aquatic communities present in Wisconsin. It also depends upon the conservation of each ecosystem's basic components — the natural communities, plants and animals within them. Ecosystems contain a variety of species that are unique in some way and provide value to the diversity of the individual ecosystem and the state overall. It is important to view biodiversity at all levels to ensure the adequate conservation of Wisconsin's environment.

#### **5.2.15 Natural Communities**

At the broadest scale, the State of Wisconsin is divided into distinct "ecological landscapes" based on unique combinations of physical and biological characteristics that make up the ecosystems, such as climate, geology, soils, water, or vegetation. They differ in levels of biological productivity, habitat suitability for wildlife, presence of rare species and natural communities, and in many other ways that affect land use and management. Because of the biotic and abiotic differences between ecological landscapes, the natural communities within each are typically different as well.



### 5.2.16 State Natural Areas

Wisconsin harbors a diverse mix of natural biotic communities and native species. Some species and natural communities have very limited distribution or only occur at small locations around the state. In 1951, Wisconsin initiated the country's first statewide program to identify and protect areas of outstanding and unique ecological, geological, and archeological value. These natural areas provide the best examples of natural processes acting over time with limited impact of human activity. The State Natural Areas program has grown to become the largest and most successful program of its kind in the nation; there are over 335 sites are designated in Wisconsin.

State Natural Areas are important not only because they showcase the best and most pristine parts of Wisconsin, but also because they provide excellent wildlife habitat and undisturbed natural communities. Many threatened, endangered, and state special concern species can be found in these areas.

### 5.2.17 Natural and Cultural History

The Kickapoo Valley is indeed a treasure within the Western Upland Physiographic region, otherwise known as the Driftless Area Ecoregion. The geologic term "drift less" refers to the lack of drift, or accumulated rock and soil, left by the receding glaciers. This unique area encompasses approximately 15,000 square miles, primarily in southwestern Wisconsin. Because these hills and valleys escaped glaciation during the Pleistocene Epoch (about one million years ago), panoramic scenery abounds. In fact, the Brooks Report to the National Park Service cited the area to be the "best and most representative example of the Driftless Area that exists."

More than 50 exposed bluff cliffs, the largest concentration of seeping sandstone walls in the state, 300 million years of bedrock erosion, and the largest remnants of southern mesic oak forest remaining in the state can be found in the Driftless Area.

## 5.3 Cultural Resources

### 5.3.1 Cultural Resources Summary

The purpose of this section is to inventory and support the management of cultural resources in the Town of Stark. Many communities often ignore cultural and historic resources in order to deal with "real" issues facing their community. However, the proper appreciation of these assets is vital to the long-term success of a community. Respecting and utilizing these available resources increases the overall quality of life and provides opportunities for tourism.

Determining what cultural and historic resources are has been left open to some interpretation. For the purpose of this report, historic resources include historic buildings and sites (as identified by the national register of historic places), museums, churches, cemeteries, old country schools, and other buildings deemed appropriate by the community. The information presented here is to serve as a guide to cultural and historic resources and is not inclusive.

Cultural resources is a broad term that encompasses prehistoric, history, architectural, and traditional cultural sites, artifacts, and relics. Culturally significant places provide a tangible link to our history, contribute to our heritage, and shape our cultural identity. The management of cultural resources began with the passage of laws like the Archaeological Resource Protection Act and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Federal and state properties are now

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required to consider cultural resources and prepare environmental impact studies, including an inventory of archaeological sites.

The diversity of the culture has played an important part in the heritage of the Kickapoo Valley and the state. Indigenous peoples and pioneer settlement, a former African-American community, historic bridges, and a growing Amish community are all distinctive to the area of southwestern Wisconsin.

In 1978, the Wisconsin State Historical Society Board approved the nomination of the Kickapoo River Archeological District. The nomination states that the area includes "265 open sites, 15 rock shelters, 4 burial mound groups, 454 prehistoric archeological sites, and one petroglyph site." Designation of an archeological district carries certain protections for the sites in both federal and state law. Archeological resources include any site, petroglyph, pictograph structure, object, data, or other material relating to the archeology and history of the areas.

### 5.3.2 Goals

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters: Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. In addition to these basic nine elements, fourteen Local Comprehensive Planning Goals were established which are more general in nature. Of these fourteen goals, the one listed below has the particular objective of cultural resource protection.

- **To preserve the cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.**

### 5.3.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations

The following cultural resources objectives and policy recommendations will support the above goal and will guide cultural resource decisions in the Town of Stark over the next 20 years.

*NOT IN ORDER OF PRIORITY*

1. Encourage the protection of important cultural resources in the community.
2. Continue to support important community festivals and cultural events.
3. Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal program or grants to conserve, maintain, and protect cultural resources.

### 5.3.4 Historic and Cultural Resources

Preserving important aspects of our past gives us a sense of continuity and meaning and historic preservation efforts foster community pride. Because cultural resources provide an important window to the past, residents of the Town of Stark need to retain those resources that make their individual communities distinctive. The presence of these resources creates a level of respect for our earlier pioneers who formed the character of our community that new residents now enjoy.

In addition to maintaining a community's distinctive character, cultural resource preservation can lead to tangible economic benefits. By retaining and emphasizing historic heritage, tourism can

increase. Preservation offers a positive alternative to continued decay and rehabilitation can lead to increases in real estate values and town tax revenues.

### **5.3.5 Historical Preservation Organizations**

#### **Vernon County Historical Society**

The Vernon County Historical Society is the officially recognized county organization for the preservation of Vernon County's historical heritage.

#### **Friends of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve**

This group supports the mission of the Reserve and serves as a strong advocate for the preservation of local history, one of the facets of that mission.

#### **Driftless Area Heritage Group**

A group comprised of the Friends of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve and other historical groups in the county that meet twice yearly to share information and ideas.

#### **Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center**

The Visitor Center of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, S3661 State Hwy 131, La Farge: located north of La Farge, the center includes an exhibit gallery featuring area history, nature, geology and the history of the La Farge Dam Project.

### **5.3.6 Town of Stark History**

The Town of Stark has had continual human occupation for about 12,000 years, or since the retreat of the last glaciers. There are many sites in the Town of Stark with evidence of these long ago people. Archeological finds range from petroglyphs and rock art found in rock shelters, burial and effigy mounds, and spear and arrow points and pottery shards found in former camps and villages.

Most of these archeological sites are located in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, which protects them. Due to the fragility of the archeological evidence, most sites are not available to public viewing.

The Winnebago, now Ho-Chunk, were the last native people in the area before white settlement began around 1850. The Ho-Chunk Nation now co-manages land held in trust by the Bureau of Indian Affairs within the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, including 377 acres in the Town of Stark.

### **5.3.7 Town Organization**

The Bad Ax County Board of Supervisors created the Town of Stark in November of 1858. The land for the new town was previously contained within the Town of Union. In the spring of 1859, elections were held and the town government was organized in the new town. The first town meeting took place at the Orrison Wilson house. Over the years, several other sites served to host town government functions. A new building was constructed to hold the town hall, maintenance garage

and

recycling center was constructed along with a sand/salt and equipment storage building. These buildings are located atop Corps Road well out of the floodplain.

### 5.3.8 Historic Places

#### State and National Register

The National Register of Historic Places recognizes properties of local, state, and national significance. Properties are listed in the National Register because of their association with significant person or events, because they contain important information about -our history or prehistory, or because of their architectural or engineering significance. The National Register also lists important grouping of properties as historic districts. In addition the National Park Service highlights properties that have significance to the nation as a whole by conferring them the status of National Historic Landmark.

The Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places parallels the National Register. Most of the properties in Wisconsin listed on the National Register are also listed on the State Register.

According to the Wisconsin Historical Society there are four sites located in the Town of Stark, which are detailed below. The period of significance indicates the length of time when a property was associated with important events, activities or persons, or attained the characteristics that qualify it for register listing.

- B. Lawrence Site I a/k/a Boy Scout Rockshelter; VE-154. Added in 1975. Prehistoric early, middle, and late Archaic, early, middle and late Woodland. Period of significance is 5000-6999 BC, 3000-4999 BC, 1000-2999 BC, 1000 AD-999 BC, 1499-1000 AD. Conservation area and village site within the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.
- Hanson Petroglyph a/k/a VE-48 Added in 1974. Religious, prehistoric, Native American, art significance. Period of significance 1499-1000 AD. Conservation area, within the Kickapoo Valley Reserve
- Markee Site a/k/a VE-195. Added in 1975. Prehistoric late Archaic, Woodland, significance. Period of 6000-6499 BC, 5500-5999 BC, 5000-5499 BC. Historic function: Animal facility, camp, agriculture/subsistence, domestic. Current function conservation area and vacant within the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.
- Upper Kickapoo Valley Prehistoric Archeological District a/k/a La Farge Lake Project. Added 1999. Prehistoric significance with Woodland, Paleo-Indian, Archaic cultural affiliation. Period of significance: 499-0BC, 499-0 AD, 1000-500 AD, 1499-1000 AD, 1749-1500 AD. Historic function: Domestic, funerary, industry/processing/extraction. Recreation and culture, religion, camp ceremonial site, graves/burials, manufacturing facility, village site, work of art (sculpture, carving, rock art). Current function: landscape, recreation and culture, forest, outdoor recreation. Entire district is located in Kickapoo Valley Reserve lands in Town of Stark and Whitestown.

#### Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory

The Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory (AHI), provided by the Wisconsin historical society, lists historical and architectural information on properties in Wisconsin. The majority of properties listed are privately owned. Listed properties convey no special status, rights, or benefits. In the Town of Stark, there are 13 structures listed on the AHI list.

#### Museums, Monuments and Other Attractions

- Kickapoo Valley Reserve and Visitor Center, S3661 State Hwy 131, La Farge. Located north of La Farge, the Reserve comprises the land from the former La Farge Dam Project,

now set aside for educational and recreational purposes. There are trails for hiking, mountain bikes and horseback riding. A variety of primitive campsites are offered with some having access for canoeists on the Kickapoo River. The Visitor Center offers educational programs for all ages and features an exhibit hall with exhibits on geology, nature, natural history and the dam project. The Center is open seven days a week, Memorial Day through the end of October, and open six days a week, Monday through Saturday the rest of the year.

- Star Valley Memorial — Located along the Old Hwy 131 Trail in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, the memorial honors the early pioneer settlers of the area, the site of the old Star Valley School and the remembrance of those buried at the Star Valley Cemetery.
- Fort Wales Rock, Northeast corner of Section 31: This is a large flat rock outcropping located on private property that was a favorite picnic site with a fantastic view of the village of La Farge. The site is located on maps from 1896 to the present.
- Potts Corners, former rural community on Weister Creek at the junction of Weister Road and County Hwy P in Section 5. Now part of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, the site is marked by a lone pine tree that once stood by the community church.
- Ma & Pa's Park, County Highway P in Section 5, developed by the Dorschied family on their old home place on Weister Creek. Picnic area features a flowing well and campsites and is located within the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.

#### **Town of Stark Cemeteries**

- Jug Creek Cemetery: located on hill on north side of Jug Creek road in Section 2.
- Star Valley Cemetery: Located in Section 17, abandoned in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, now remembered by the Star Valley Memorial in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.
- Star Cemetery/Advent Church Cemetery, located on a hill overlooking the Kickapoo River just north of La Farge on Plum Run Road in Section 20. This is one of the original cemeteries for the former village of Seelyburg.
- Bear Creek Cemetery: Along State Hwy 82, one mile east of La Farge in Sections 27 & 28.

### **5.3.9 Community Design**

Community design as a cultural resource helps explain the origins and history of how a given community looks, feels, and functions in the present day. Components of the origin of community design include historic settlement patterns, resource use (like mining, farming, and forestry) in rural areas, transportation features and traffic patterns, natural features like rivers and wetlands, and the heritage and values of the people that lived in the community in the past and that live there today.

The design of a community as seen today might also be influenced by community decisions including the use of zoning, the establishment of parks and other current facilities, the use of historic preservation, and in some cases, the use of land use planning. Many residents expressed support for maintaining the rural character of the Town of Stark through the survey and at public meetings.

### **5.3.10 Cultural Resource Trends**

- The recognized value of historic and cultural resources will grow, demanding more attention to their preservation.
- The community design features that express rural character and small town atmosphere will be challenged in some areas that experience development and growth.
- Funding for the preservation of historic sites will be a challenge.

### **5.3.11 Museum or Cultural Resource Center**

Another way of preserving the past is through a local museum or cultural resource center. The Town does not have a local museum. However, the Kickapoo Reserve Center has many area historical and cultural resources on display.

### **5.3.12 Historical Markers**

Wisconsin Historical Markers identify, commemorate and honor the important people, places, and events that have contributed to the state's rich heritage. The Wisconsin Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation administers the Historical Markers program. Contact them for more information. There are none in the Town of Stark. See Map 12-1.

## **6 Economic Development**

### **6.1 Chapter Summary**

Economic development is about working together to retain and create jobs that provide a good standard of living for individuals. Increased personal income and wealth increases the tax base and allows the community to provide desired services. A balanced, healthy economy is essential to a community.

As the economy becomes more technologically demanding, the local workforce must advance their skills to keep up with industry and information technology advancements.

#### **Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001 (2) (f)**

##### **(f) Economic Development**

Compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit. The element shall assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired by the local governmental unit. The element shall assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries. The element shall also evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses. The element shall also identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.

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## 6.2 Goals

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. The plans include nine basic chapters: Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. The planning goals in relation to the nine elements are:

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests
- To facilitate 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

The points listed below are incorporated into the objective of economic development:

- Promote 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
- Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government
- Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial structures
- Protect economically productive areas, including farmland and forests

## 6.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendation

The following Economic Development objectives and policy recommendations support the above goals to help guide local economic development decisions for the next 20 years.

1. Encourage home-based entrepreneurial activity that has no or minimal impacts on adjacent properties.
2. Encourage crop and livestock production farming as a local economic development strategy.
3. Encourage businesses that add value to agricultural products through processing, packaging, and marketing as a local economic development strategy.
4. Encourage entrepreneurial activity such as the sale of locally grown and created products and services from roadside markets and home-based sales.
5. Support one or more annual local events intended to attract visitors and support local civic groups and entrepreneurs, such as a community festival.
6. Help attract tourists to the community and to local businesses, such as through local or joint effort marketing, a web site, advertising, and other methods.
7. Encourage programs that build local capacity for community and economic development (e.g. teaching local volunteers and entrepreneurs how to organize a community event or start a business).  
Encourage programs and groups that work to preserve historic buildings and cultural resources as a way to develop tourism and enable community to better attract new residents.



## 6.4 Analysis of the Economic Base and Labor Force

The Town of Stark's economic base is diverse. The diverse economic base includes jobs in agriculture. Other drivers of the local economy are the service sector in commercial and retail trade, education, the health care industry and government.

Tourism contributes to the local economic base. Visitors enjoy the natural beauty and partake in four season recreational opportunities. Opportunities are available for local job creation in tourist services and attraction businesses.

### 6.4.1 Economic Base

The Town of Stark's economic base is diverse. This base includes jobs in agriculture as well as other drivers of the local economy in the service sector of commercial and retail trade, education, the health care industry and government.

#### Town of Stark

Economic Characteristics	Number	Percent	U.S.
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	168	64.1	63.9%
Commuting to Work			
Workers 16 years and over	159	100.0	
Car, truck or van - drove alone	106	66.7	
Car, truck or van — carpooled	19	11.9	
Public transportation (including taxi cab)	6	3.8	
Walked	6	3.8	
Other means	4	2.5	
Worked at home	18	11.3	
Mean travel time to work in minutes (workers 16 years and over)	27	(X)	25.5
Work locations of residents commuting out			
Cashton village Monroe Co. WI	2		
Glendale town Monroe Co. WI	3		
Sparta city Monroe Co. WI	2		
Tomah city Monroe Co. WI	2		
Warrens village Monroe Co. WI	4		
Forest town Richland Co. WI	2		
Richland Center city Richland Co. WI	4		
Christiana town Vernon Co. WI	3		
Clinton town Vernon Co. WI	3		
Hillsboro city Vernon Co. WI	6		
La Farge village Vernon Co. WI	42		
Readstown village Vernon Co. WI	6		
Stark town Vernon Co. WI	25		
Viroqua city Vernon Co. WI	21		
Viroqua town Vernon Co. WI	5		
Westby city Vernon Co. WI	6		
Marshfield city Wood Co. WI	2		
Home locations of workers commuting in			
Buena Vista town Richland Co. WI	2		

Stark town Vernon Co. WI	25		
Union town Vernon Co. WI	2		
Viroqua town Vernon Co. WI	2		
Occupation			
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	166	100.0	
Management, professional and related occupations	64	38.6	
Service occupations	11	6.6	
Sales and office occupations	25	15.1	
Fanning, fishing and forestry occupations	9	5.4	
Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations	30	18.1	
Production, transportation and material moving occupations	27	16.3	
Industry			
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	16	9.6	
Construction	21	12.7	
Manufacturing	31	18.7	
Wholesale and trade	6	3.6	
Retail and trade	15	9.0	
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	11	6.6	
Information		0.0	
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	4	2.4	
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	8	4.8	
Educational, health and social. services	33	19.9	
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	9	5.4	
Other services (except public administration)	8	4.8	
Public administration	4	2.4	
Median household income in 1999 (dollars)	44,167	(X)	41,994
Median family income in 1999 (dollars)	48,393	(X)	50,046
Per capita income in 1999 (dollars)	17,966	(X)	21,587
Families below poverty level	17	18.7	9.2%
Individuals below poverty level	65	20.1	12.4%
Income in 1999			
Households	120	100	
Less than \$10,000	12	10	
	6	5	
\$15,000 to \$24,999	20	16.7	
\$25,000 to \$34,999	14	11.7	
	23	19.2	
	28	23.3	
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11	9.2	
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6	5	
\$150,000 to \$199,999			
\$200,000 or more			
Median household income (dollars)	44,167	(X)	
With earnings	105	87.5	
Mean earnings (dollars)	41,755	(X)	
With Social Security income	33	27.5	
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	9,748	(X)	
With Supplemental Security Income	7	5.8	

<u>Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)</u>	<u>5,957</u>	<u>(X)</u>
With public assistance income	<u>12</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Mean public assistance income (dollars)</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>(X)</u>
With retirement income	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Mean retirement income (dollars)</u>	<u>8,539</u>	<u>(X)</u>

(X) Not applicable

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## 6.4.2 Analysis of the Labor Force

### Town of Stark Profile

POPULATION				
	1970	1980	1990	2000
Stark	356	322	259	349
Vernon	24,557	25,642	25,617	28,056
Wisconsin	4,417,821	4,705,642	4,891,599	5,363,675

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; WI dept of Admin

### HOUSING UNITS

	1970	1980	1990	2000
Stark	111	135	144	198
Vernon	8,448	10,141	10,830	12,416
Wisconsin	1,472,332	1,863,897	2,055,676	2,321,144

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### REAL ESTATE EQUALIZED VALUES

Millions of Dollars				
	2003	2004	2005	2006
Stark	20	20	23	25
Vernon	1,125	1,195	1,334	1,480
Wisconsin	351,117	381,508	417,999	458,541

Source: WI Dept of Revenue

### PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Stark \$	19,987	20,547	21,045	22,479
Wisconsin \$	29,400	30,025	30,664	32,166
United States \$	30,574	30,810	31,484	33,050

Source: U.S. Dept of Commerce

### UNEMPLOYMENT TRENDS

	2003	2004	2005
Vernon County Labor Force	15,397	15,136	14,406
Number Employed	14,600	14,443	13,762
Number Unemployed	797	693	644
Vernon County unemployment %	5.2	4.6	4.5
WI unemployment %	5.6	4.9	4.7
U.S. unemployment %	6.0	5.5	5.1

Source: WI Dept of Workforce Development

### Vernon County

#### EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY 2000

Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, mining	16
Construction	21
Manufacturing	31
Wholesale trade	6
Retail trade	15
Transportation and warehousing utilities	11
Information	0
Finance, Ins, real estate, rental/leasing	4
Prot scientific, mgt, admin and mgt service	8
Education, health, social service	33
Arts, entertain, rec, accom and food service	9
Other services (except public admin)	8
Total employment by industry	166

Source: U.S. Census bureau

#### 2005 WAGE ESTIMATES

	Avg	Meidian
Office clerks, general	10.84	10.55
Welders, cutter, solderers, brazers	14.27	14.42
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor trailer	16.21	15.55
Computer support specialist	15.62	15.49
Construction laborers	15.66	14.68
Managers, all other	31.66	31.28
Maintenance workers, machineery	14.45	14.31
Janitors and cleaners, except maids	10.18	9.87
Licensed practical and vocational nurses	16.39	16.25
Retail salespersons	10.51	8.83

Source: WI Dept of Workforce Development

#### EDUCATION

2004-2005	County	State
High School Drop Out Rate %	.33	1.73

#### 2005 TAXES

Local Property Taxes	
2005 effective full value rate/\$1000	22.46
2005 real pers property full value	22,883,2000

Local Contact: Stark Township Clerk

Regional Contact: Mississippi River Planning Commission

Commuting plays a significant role in the make-up of the workforce. The 2000 Census indicates several residents drive to nearby towns for employment.

This out-commute is typical for rural municipalities. With CROPP Cooperative's location in the annexed land in the Town of Stark, workers from other areas are attracted to the employment opportunities at CROPP.

### **6.5 Analysis of New Business and Industry Desired**

Recognition of the need and support to retain existing jobs and attract new business is strong in the Town of Stark. The creation of additional businesses and jobs would enhance growth and economic support.

#### **Vernon County - A Rural Community**

It is most useful to look at Vernon County as a whole in assessing the prospects for economic development in the Town of Stark. Most recent has been the decline of manufacturing that has occurred throughout the nation as well as in the county with the closing of NCR in Viroqua. An organic food producer, CROPP Cooperative, has experienced exceptional growth and has become nationally known for its products. Growth in the agricultural industry is the exception today. Additional economic development initiatives should be targeted to this unique industry.

#### **Major Employers**

Organic Valley - Land from Town of Stark was annexed into the village of La Farge in 2004 to provide a building site for Organic Valley (CROPP Cooperative), one of the major sources of employment in the area. A look at the largest employers in Vernon County reveals a changing profile of employment. Involvement in healthcare, technology and agriculture provides employment opportunities. Private employment benefits tourism with the provision of bed and breakfasts as a cottage industry on the fringes of the Kickapoo Reserve in the Town of Stark.

Kickapoo Valley Reserve — Consists of 8,569 acres of public land located between the villages of La Farge and Ontario. 4645 acres lie in the Town of Stark. 364 of the 1200 acres held in trust by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and managed by the Ho-Chunk Nation are in Town of Stark and 3560 acres of the Reserve are in the Town of Whitestown. The Reserve land is owned by the State of Wisconsin Department of Tourism and the Ho-Chunk Nation and managed locally by the Kickapoo Reserve Management Board.

S & S Cycle located in nearby Viola, Wisconsin (Richland County) is a significant employer in the area, also. Since 1969, up to 130 people have been employed to design and manufacture performance parts for motorcycles.

GoMacro located in Viola, Wisconsin has expanded its labor force to over ninety people. It is a major producer of organic food bars.

La Farge Medical Clinic (VMH) recently moved to a new facility and has undergone an increase in its labor force.

The La Farge Public Schools continues to be a major employer in the area; serving students from 4 years old to seniors in high school.

#### **Future Employment Occupation Areas:**

Management/professional Service  
Sales/office

Farming/forestry  
Construction

Production/transportation  
Cabin Rentals  
Day Spa

Bed and Breakfasts  
Family Treatment Services  
Massage Therapy

## **6.6 Future Economic Planning Factors and Desires**

### **Planning Factors**

1. The Town of Stark should encourage the development of a diversified economic base in a manner that will maintain a quality living environment.
2. One goal of the Kickapoo Valley is to develop a multi-use recreational trail in the Valley along the old railroad bed from Wauzeka to La Farge. The proposed trail located on the old railroad bed would then connect to the Old Highway 131 Trail, a multiuse trail currently in use in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. The new proposed trail would impact land in the Town of Stark from the Richland County line north to the Village of La Farge.
3. Several regional tourist organizations have started to propose that Wisconsin State Highway 131 be designated as a "Scenic Byway". This nationally recognized designation could mean greatly increased tourist traffic on this highway, which bisects the Town of Stark from north to south. If the designation were to occur, then many more tourists would be visiting the township on a yearly basis.
4. Support Vernon County Mobility's fixed route bus system which runs between Viroqua and La Crosse. If the bus route is successful and sustainable, feeder routes from other sites in the county (La Farge) may be initiated to transport others to the Viroqua connection. If the feeder routes are realized, then people in Stark will be able to access the bus system and benefit from its use.
5. The Town of Stark will continue to strive for economic development both presently and in the future.
6. The Town of Stark should maintain awareness of developing economic factors and the affecting changes: carbon trading in relation to forestry, purchase of development rights (PDR) and the transfer of development rights (TDR).

### **Economic Desires**

1. Encourage businesses that are compatible in a rural setting.
2. Maintain and improve the appearance and quality of existing businesses in the community.
3. Encourage new housing in residentially zoned areas.
4. Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
5. Create an environment that will encourage cooperation and a positive attitude between businesses and residents that will be of mutual benefit.

## **6.7 Economic Development Programs**

### **Regional:**

Vernon County Economic Development

Vernon County Revolving Loan Fund

Vernon Telephone is a regional utility company that provides technical and consultative services.

## State

### *Rural Economic Development Program*

This program administered by Wisconsin Department of Commerce provides grants and low interest loans for small business (less than 25 employees) start-ups or expansions in rural areas. Funds may be used for "soft costs" only, such as planning, engineering and marketing assistance.

### University of Wisconsin Extension Office

The Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin Extension, creates, applies and transfers multidisciplinary knowledge to help people understand community change and identify opportunities.

### The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)

This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.

### Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The UW SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small business in Wisconsin.

### Other State Programs

Technology Development grants and loans; Customized Labor Training grants and loans; and Major Economic Development Project grants and loans.

### Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)

This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvements necessary for major economic development projects.

## Federal

### *Economic Development Administration (EDA)*

EDA offers a guaranteed loan program as well as public works grant program. These are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.

### *US Department of Agriculture — Rural Development (USDA-RD)*

The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

### Small Business Administration

SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.



## 7 Intergovernmental Cooperation

### 7.1 Chapter Summary

In general terms, intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as trading maintenance responsibilities on town roads, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements. It can even involve consolidating services, jurisdictions, or transferring territory.

Many issues do and will cross jurisdictional boundaries, affecting more than one community. Today, increased communication technologies and personal mobility mean that people, money, and resources also move across jurisdictions, as quickly and freely as air and water. Frequently, the action of one government unit impacts others. Increasingly, we have come to the realization that many vital issues are regional in nature. Watersheds, economic conditions, commuter patterns, housing, media markets, and effects from growth and change are all issues that spill over local boundaries and impact the region as a whole. The Town of Stark is not an island.

The Town of Stark currently cooperates with surrounding townships, the Village of La Farge, the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, various Vernon County departments, the Ho-Chunk Nation, agencies of the State of Wisconsin, and regional organizations such as the Mississippi Regional Plan Commission. Other intergovernmental agreements are being formulated presently on a variety of issues and topics that will stretch into the future for the township.

#### **Wisconsin State Statute 66.301 — Intergovernmental Cooperation**

**Wisconsin Statute, 66 301 permits local agreements between the state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, and certain special districts, including school districts, public library systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, and others.**

## 7.2 Goals

The State of Wisconsin passed a comprehensive planning law in 2000 to compel municipalities to create comprehensive plans. These plans include nine basic element chapters: Issues & Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities & Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Land Use, and Implementation. Fourteen local Comprehensive Planning Goals for the Town of Stark were also established in addition to the basic nine elements. Five of these local planning goals address the needs for intergovernmental cooperation in the Town of Stark.

- To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- To provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, safety, and meets the needs of all citizens, including meeting the needs of a variety of citizens.

## 7.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations

Following is a list of objectives and policy recommendations to facilitate effective intergovernmental cooperation for the Town of Stark for the next twenty years. They incorporate and support the above local planning goals and may serve as a guide for decisions on intergovernmental cooperation in the future.

1. Continue the current agreements of cooperation with other local units of government that provide efficient and cost effective services for the Town of Stark.
2. Continue to work cooperatively with Vernon County departments, agencies of the State of Wisconsin, and regional organizations to effectively meet town needs.
3. Continue to work cooperatively with the Kickapoo Valley Reserve and Ho-Chunk Nation regarding Reserve and BIA Trust lands in the Town of Stark.
4. Continue to work cooperatively with neighboring units of government for providing fire protection and ambulance service to the town.
5. Continue to negotiate cooperatively with the Town of Whitestown to reach an agreement with the Ho-Chunk Nation for payment in lieu of taxes on BIA Trust lands in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.
6. Continue to plan with the Kickapoo Valley Regional Economic Development Initiative to develop a regional economic development approach for the future of the Kickapoo Valley.

## 7.4 Existing Intergovernmental Cooperation Relationships and Agreements

- The Town of Stark currently has road maintenance agreements (non-written, arrived at cooperatively by patrolmen) on certain town roads located at the township lines with the Towns of Union, Whitestown, and Webster.

- The Town of Stark, the KVR and Village of La Farge currently trade labor and machinery when needed on various road and construction projects.
- The Town of Stark provides fire protection for its citizens by being a member of the La Farge Area Fire Association, which includes the Village of La Farge, and the Towns of Stark, Webster, Clinton, Whitestown, and Union in Vernon County and towns of Forest and Bloom in Richland County.
- The Town of Stark is a member of the La Farge Area Ambulance Association, which provides service to the Village of La Farge and surrounding townships.
- The Town of Stark is a member of the Vernon Economic Development Association (VEDA).

#### **7.6 Plans and Programs Currently In Use**

- **KICKAPLAN** — The Town of Stark has worked cooperatively with the Townships of Union, Forest, Whitestown, Clinton, and Webster and the Vernon County Land & Water Resources office in developing a comprehensive plan. Using grants from the Kickapoo Valley Forestation Fund (Ralph Nuzum Fund) at the UW-Foundation and administered by the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, this consortium has hired a mapmaking specialist and conducted a variety of workshops to aid in the process of developing township comprehensive plans: A continued collaborative effort will be assumed on the editing and printing of the final plans.
- **WISCONSIN TOWNS ASSOCIATION (WTA)** — The Wisconsin Towns Association is a non-profit, statewide organization created under s.60.23 (14) of the Wisconsin Statutes to protect the interests of towns and to improve town government. Elected officials of the Town of Stark regularly attend regional and county WTA meetings and workshops.
- **MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION** — The Commission is the official comprehensive planning agency for the counties of Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, LaCrosse, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau, and Vernon. Services provided by the Commission include comprehensive and land use planning, transportation improvement and corridor planning, open space, recreational and environmental planning, economic development, demographic information and projections, technical assistance to local governments, geographic information services and aerial photography distribution.
- **WISCONSIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM PUBLIC FACILITIES (CDBG-PF)** — This program is designed to assist small communities with public facility improvements. The Town of Stark and the Village of La Farge have jointly applied for a CDBG Public Facilities grant to be used towards the construction of a community services building.

#### **7.6 Developing Intergovernmental Programs**

- STARK/WHITESTOWN/HO-CHUNK AGREEMENT — The Towns of Stark and Whitestown have established with the Ho-Chunk Nation a plan regarding payments in lieu of taxes by the Nation to the two townships for land held in trust for the Nation on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Presently the monies are funneled through Vernon County. The townships would continue to share in the Nation's commitment to preserve and protect the natural resources and cultural sites on trust land on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.

## **8 Land Use**

### **8.1 Chapter Summary**

Land use is often one of the more controversial issues confronting communities. In many instances, communities were originally platted and land use decisions were made with little regard to natural limitations on development or the interests of the community as a whole. Today, with better knowledge of these limitations, communities are faced with making more intelligent choices as to where future development should occur. Instead of working with a clean slate, however, communities must contend with existing uses and how new development might affect or be affected by them. The land use decisions in this plan are meant to take into account the knowledge and policies of the other elements of this plan.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze how the land in the Town of Stark is currently being used, and what constraints to development exist in these areas. This chapter will also discuss the future land use needs in the Town. Based on the information in this chapter, and preceding chapters, a set of goals and policies was developed to help guide the land use decisions in Stark over the next 20 years.

## **Wisconsin Statute 66.1001(2)(h)**

### **(h) Land Use**

A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element shall contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity and net density of existing uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial and other public and private uses. The element shall analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts. The element shall contain projections, based on the background information specified in par. (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based. The element shall also include a series of maps that shows current land uses and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in par. (d), and the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.

## **8.2 Goals**

The following are Land Use Goals.

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- To balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- To plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique rural communities.
- To preserve the cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
- To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- To encourage the land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- To provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.
- To encourage the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.
- To facilitate 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.

## **8.3 Objectives and Policy Recommendations**

The following are the Land Use objectives and policy recommendations (not in order of priority) that support the above goals and will guide land use decisions in the Town of Stark over the next 20 years.

1. Maintain the small-town character of the jurisdiction by avoiding developments that would alter its character.
2. Encourage new development to be harmonious with the surrounding natural landscape.
3. Recognize the critical role that farmland, open space, historical architecture, scenic vistas, land-and riverscapes, natural resources and designated features,

scenic roads, archeological, and cultural features play in defining and enhancing and enhancing the community's distinctive rural character.

4. Discourage the placement of new development in the middle of parcels of agricultural cropland (discourage fragmentation of cropland).
5. Development including roadways, driveways, and buildings on steep slopes should be avoided to minimize soil erosion, disruption of important wildlife habitat, and to keep maintenance costs for foundations, roads, utilities, and waste disposal systems to a minimum.
6. Recognize that ridge tops are important groundwater recharge areas. Concentrated sources of pollution such as landfills and junk yards will not be allowed in these areas.
7. Recognize that while flat valley bottoms are often the most desirable areas for new development, these areas frequently contain highly productive and irreplaceable agricultural soils. Therefore, care must be taken to ensure that development occurs on the least productive valley soils.

## **8.4 Land Use Principles**

### **8.4.1 General Land Use**

Zoning is the regulation of the use of land and buildings, which permits a community to control the development of its own jurisdiction. For all intensive purposes, zoning is a locally enacted law that regulates and controls the use of private property. Zoning involves dividing the countryside into districts or zones for agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and public purposes. The zoning law or resolution then states which specific uses are permitted in each district and under what circumstances. It provides for orderly growth by protecting homes and property from harmful uses on neighboring properties.

The Town of Stark is zoned. It is the general intent of the Zoning Ordinance to regulate and restrict the use of all structures, lands, and waters; regulate and restrict lot coverage, population distribution and density, and the size and location of all structures so as to: lessen congestion in and promote the safety and efficiency of the streets and highways; secure safety from fire, flooding panic, and other dangers; provide adequate light, air sanitation and drainage; prevent overcrowding; avoid undue population concentration; facilitate the adequate provision of public facilities and utilities; stabilize and protect property values; further the appropriate use of land and conservation of natural resources; and preserve and promote the beauty of the community.

General land use follow these principles:

- Separate incompatible uses, such as industrial from residential, by locating them in different parts of the community or buffering them from each other.
- Consider potential "nuisances," such as noises, light, smell, high volume roadways and industrial uses.
- Accommodate daily services in a central location or business district.
- Locate institutional uses in areas to serve as focal points for the community and, where appropriate, support downtown or special district activities.
- Continue developing in areas where existing development is already located or where public services already exist rather than developing new areas.

## 8.4.2 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Principles

- Minimize development of the best agricultural lands.
- Discourage growth in natural areas like wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, and stream corridors.
- Consider historic resources and archeological sites.
- Configure development relative to topographical constraints (e.g. relatively flat areas are more suitable for commercial/industrial type uses whereas rolling topography may be appropriate for some housing)
- Capitalize on, but do not harm natural amenities (like rivers, forested or wooded areas, wetlands, etc).
- Consider sustainability of future water supply and impacts of solid and liquid waste treatment and disposal.
- Provide for existing water supply to be protected (wellhead protection). • Consider natural hazards such as bluff stability.

## 8.4.3 Housing and Neighborhood Development Principles

- Provide enough areas for housing to meet future growth expectations.
- Allow affordable housing throughout the community.
- Plan for multi-family developments in parts of a city or village where streets and sidewalks can handle the increased amount of traffic generated by the project, where there are adequate parks, and where the utility system and schools have sufficient capacity.
- Encourage small-scale retail and services to locate close to residential neighborhoods.
  - Separate and buffer mainly residential neighborhoods and schools from large scale commercial and industrial areas.
- Preserve distinctive and attractive entryways into the community.

## 8.5 Existing Land Uses

The following table approximates the amount of land in each of the major classifications for the Town of Stark. Refer to Map 12-4 in the Land Use Chapter Attachments for a map of land uses in the town. Currently the dominant land use in the Town of Stark is agriculture.

**Town of Stark Existing Land Uses**

Use	Acres	Per cent
Forest	15,380	
Agriculture	3,810	17%
Grassland	1,747	8%
Developed	829	4%
Wetland	179	1%
Barren	30	0%
Open water	10	0%
Total	21,985	100%

## 8.6 Existing Zoning Districts



Four zoning districts are provided in the Town Zoning Ordinance and referred to in Map 12-9:

1. Residential
2. Agricultural
3. Business
4. Industrial

## 8.7 Existing Parcel Analysis

The Town of Stark is characterized by rugged topography. The only relatively large, flat areas consist of the valley plain of the Kickapoo River. Narrow bands of flatter topography are found along Bear, Otter, Wiester and Jug Creeks and along the top of major ridgelines such as the Buckeye and Maple Ridges. The numerous drainage systems feeding the Kickapoo River consist of narrow-fingered valleys flanked by steep slopes and long, narrow ridges. These narrow, winding systems of valleys-and ridges-have elevation variations-by as much as-400 feet. The steep slopes and rough terrain limits the areas suitability for intensive agriculture and future development. The areas of steeper slopes coincide closely with those areas having forest cover (70% of the land use in the Town of Stark) due to the unsuitability of agriculture. Since these forest areas have slopes greater than 12 per cent, much of the areas are unsuitable for development. Areas with slopes of less than 12 per cent that is suitable for development consist of narrow strips along the tops of ridgelines and the valley areas of the various drainage systems.

## 8.8 Land Use Trends

### 8.801 Land Supply

There is an ample supply of land for agricultural and small business development. Almost all of this area is relatively rural in nature, with much of it being woodland and farmland. There are no dominant land supply problems in relationship to land needs; there are no urban development pressures in this area.

### 8-8.2 Land Demand

Historically the demand for land throughout Vernon County has occurred around the cities and villages. The present demand for land throughout this area is largely for rural uses. There has been an increasing demand for scenic rural lands for home building and for recreational/hunting uses. Private wells and on-site wastewater treatment systems are used to facilitate development. Since a large part of La Farge has flooded the last couple of years, there are few suitable development sites, thus there is pressure to expand La Farge housing development into Stark.

### 8.8-3 Land Use Prices

Land prices in this area are steadily increasing. Land prices can experience spikes in values for some individual parcels with prime attributes for housing development. Land prices can be expected to increase as more rural lands are purchased for housing and recreational uses. Land prices can be influenced to some degree by land use plans, zoning and availability of services. In the Town of Stark, land pricing is determined primarily by demand and the current economy.

The tables below display the recent developments in land use classification and value for the Town of Stark . The information is from

the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. Caution should be given as the WIDOR has periodically switched the way that they have reported certain land classifications over the years. In addition, technological advances have allowed the WIDOR to better identify land. These changes can account for some land classifications not having a value in one year but having one in another year. In addition, local assessors have changed over time, which can also account for some difference in the methods by which data was reported.

**Equalized Value Assessment** — This is the estimated value of all taxable real and personal property in each taxation district. The value represents market value (most probable selling price), except for agricultural property, which is based on its use (ability to generate agricultural income) and agricultural forest and undeveloped lands, which are based on 50% of their full, fair market value. Since assessors in different taxing districts value property at different percentages of market value, equalized values ensure fairness between municipalities. The equalized values are used for apportioning county property taxes, public school taxes, vocational school taxes, and for distributing property tax relief. In summary, equalized values are not only used to distribute the state levy among the counties, but also the equalized values distribute each county's levy among the municipalities in that county. The WIDOR determines the equalized value. (Source: 2005 Guide for Property Owners, WI-DOR)

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57 / 132 68.6%

Page 1

62 CO 030 MUN 1695 ACCT NO

FOR TOWN OF STARK VERNON COUNTY

Town - Village - City Municipality Name County Name

Line No.	REAL ESTATE (See Lines 18 - 22 for other Real Estate)	PARCEL COUNT		NO. OF ACRES WHOLE NUMBERS ONLY	VALUE OF LAND	VALUE OF IMPROVEMENTS	TOTAL VALUE OF LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS
		TOTAL LAND (Col. A)	IMPROVEMENTS (Col. B)	(Col. C)	(Col. D)	(Col. E)	(Col. F)
1	RESIDENTIAL - Class 1	161	152	223	1,498,000	11,146,300	12,634,300
2	COMMERCIAL - Class 2	5	4	7	38,400	186,100	224,500
3	MANUFACTURING - Class 3	1	0	27	80,800	0	80,800
4	AGRICULTURAL - Class 4	444		7,542	992,300		992,300
5	UNDEVELOPED - Class 5	328		1,470	1,656,000		1,656,000
6	AGRICULTURAL FOREST - Class 5m	135		1,797	2,249,500		2,249,500
7	FOREST LANDS - Class 6	124		1,243	3,108,400		3,108,400
8	OTHER - Class 7	115	115	98	650,500	7,843,400	8,493,900
9	TOTAL - ALL COLUMNS	1,313	271	12,407	10,263,900	19,175,800	29,439,700
10	NUMBER OF PERSONAL PROPERTY ACCOUNTS IN ROLL			7	LOCALLY ASSESSED	MANUFACTURING	MERGED
11	BOATS AND OTHER WATERCRAFT NOT EXEMPT - Code 1				0	0	0
12	MACHINERY, TOOLS AND PATTERNS - Code 2					0	0
13	FURNITURE, FIXTURES AND EQUIPMENT - Code 3				1,700	0	1,700
14	ALL OTHER PERSONAL PROPERTY NOT EXEMPT - Codes 4A, 4B, 4C				18,800	0	18,800
15	TOTAL OF PERSONAL PROPERTY NOT EXEMPT (Total of Lines 11-14)				20,500	0	20,500
16	AGGREGATE ASSESSED VALUE OF ALL PROPERTY SUBJECT TO THE GENERAL PROPERTY TAX (Total of Lines 9F and 15F) MUST EQUAL TOTAL VALUE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS (K-12 PLUS K-8) - Line 50, Col. F						29,460,200
17	BOARD OF REVIEW DATE OF FINAL ADJOURNMENT	08/08/2018	Name of Assessor	WORTH SERVICES	Telephone #	(808) 476-2262	

REMARKS

The Assessment Ratio to be used in calculating the estimated Fair Market Value on tax bills for this tax district is .944647904. This ratio should be used to convert assessed values to "Calculate Equalized Values" in Step 1 of the Lottery and Gaming Credit Calculations. This ratio should be used in the "Computation of Tax Equivalent" schedule of the Annual Reports filed by the municipal electric, gas and water utilities with the Public Service Commission.

L0000A101W1 - PA-421C (R-9-18) (Sec. 70.83)

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## Town of Stark Land Use Values

Source: WI Dept of Revenue, Statement of Changes of Equalized Values

## 828.4 Town of Stark Land Use Value Changes

Real Estate	2019	2020	Increase
-------------	------	------	----------

Residential	100,959,300	109,909,900	9%
Commercial	2,101,600	2,101,600	0%
Manufacturing	128,400	128,400	0%
Agriculture	1,259,700	1,302,810	3%
Undeveloped	1,465,400	1,745,910	19%
Ag Forest	4,665,500	4,953,300	5%
Forest	4,178,800	4,392,300	5%

The average value of all farmland sold between 2018 and 2020 was \$1 ,890 per acre. That value was up 57% from the average farmland value of \$1,206 per acre between 1995 and 1999.

## 8.9 Future Land Use

To adequately plan for the future growth, a community must be aware of what its future needs will be in terms of additional land. The projection of land use needed is based upon several factors, including: historical community growth trends, population forecasts, anticipated economic and land use trends, and several assumptions.

### Assumptions

- Land values will continue to increase at historical values.
  - Residential: 2.6 new houses per year with 2.2 acres per house
  - Commercial: slowly increase
  - Manufacturing: slowly increase
  - Agricultural: remain about the same
  - Undeveloped: decreases converting to residential, forest, agricultural
  - Productive Forest: decreases converting to managed forest
  - Other: remain the same
  - Managed Forest: increases
  - Exempt: Federal exempt lands remain the same
  - Total: remain the same
- Land will increase in hunting use.
- Forest land will be used for carbon trading.
- There will be an increase of land use for retirement, recreational, and organic farming uses.
- More renewable energy will be used.
- CRP acres will revert to agricultural acres.
- Population will continue to grow at a historical rate
- Area economic changes will be minimal.
- Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Tax credits will increase agricultural land use. Agricultural Enterprise Areas and Agricultural Conservation Easements will be established.
- Development Rights will preserve agricultural and forest land use.

Total Real Estate	2019	2020	Change
Land	26,893,200	28,868,800	+7%
Improvements	96,991,800	98,107,800	+8%
Total	123,885,000	126,976,600	+8%
Total Equalized Eval	125,384,400	135,231,700	+8%

### 8.9.1 Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Tax Credits

The goal of the farmland preservation program is to:

- save critical farmland resources
- promote sound land use planning and development
- encourage agricultural investment
- promote soil and water conservation
- minimize land use conflicts
- help farms stay economically viable.

Under the farmland preservation (FP) law, farmers may claiming income tax credits if their land is all of the following:

- targeted for preservation in a certified FP plan
- covered by a certified FP zoning ordinance or by an individual FP agreement if in

A designated agricultural enterprise area

- complies with state soil and water conservation standards
  - have a nutrient management plan in place
- The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative provides landowners with an opportunity to claim farmland preservation tax credits through participation in the program starting in 2010. Acres claimed must be located in a farmland preservation area identified in a certified county farmland preservation plan. Eligible land includes agricultural land or permanent undeveloped natural resource areas or open space land that is:

- in an area certified for farmland preservation zoning, and/or

II

- located in a designated agricultural enterprise area and under a farmland preservation agreement.

Since the Town of Stark is zoned, no additional zoning is required. However, the Town Zoning Committee in the future may wish to establish an Agricultural enterprise Area (AEA)

within the agriculture zones so that landowners can reap the financial benefits of the new program.

Percent of state agriculture sales

### **Total and Per Farm Overview, 2017 and change since 2012**

**2017**

**% change**

**since 2012**

Number of farms 1,961 -12

Land in farms (acres) 337,086 -3

Average size of farm (acres) 172 +11

**Total (\$)**

Market value of products sold 181,543,000 -18

Government payments 1,575,000 -57

Farm-related income 7,300,000 (Z)

Total farm production expenses 147,769,000 -12

Net cash farm income 42,649,000 -33

**Per farm average (\$)**

Market value of products sold 92,577 -7

Government payments

(average per farm receiving) 2,461 -32

Farm-related income 5,998 +4

Total farm production expenses 75,354 (Z)

Net cash farm income 21,749 -24

## **2**

### **Share of Sales by Type (%)**

Crops 34

Livestock, poultry, and products 66

### **Land in Farms by Use (%) a**

Cropland 58

Pastureland 12

Woodland 25

Other 5

### **Acres irrigated: 1,476**

(Z)% of land in farms

### **Land Use Practices (%) of farms)**

No till 28

Reduced till 19

Intensive till 24

Cover crop 17

### **Farms by Value of Sales Farms by Size**

#### **Number Percent of Total a Number Percent of Total a**

Less than \$2,500 548 28 1 to 9 acres 152 8

\$2,500 to \$4,999 133 7 10 to 49 acres 458 23

\$5,000 to \$9,999 209 11 50 to 179 acres 804 41

\$10,000 to \$24,999 224 11 180 to 499 acres 438 22

\$25,000 to \$49,999 212 11 500 to 999 acres 73 4

\$50,000 to \$99,999 253 13 1,000 + acres 36 2

\$100,000 or more 382 19

## **Vernon County**

## **Wisconsin**

### **8.92 Development Rights**

Development Rights provide an economic incentive for preserving undeveloped land. Transfer of Development Rights create a market by which farmers, for example, can sell their development rights to someone wishing to develop in a receiving area.

### 819.3 Carbon Trading

Emissions trading (or carbon trading) is an administrative approach used to control pollution by providing economic incentives for achieving reductions in the emissions of pollutants. It is sometimes called cap and trade. A coal power plant in Michigan may be used as an example of how cap and trade might work. Due to emissions trading, coal may become less competitive as a fuel. A central authority (usually a government or international body) sets a limit or cap on the amount of a pollutant that can be emitted. Companies or other groups are issued emission permits and are required to hold an equivalent number of allowances (or credits) which represent the right to emit a specific amount. The total amount of allowances and credits cannot exceed the cap, limiting total emissions to that level. Companies that need to increase their emission allowance must buy credits from those who pollute less. The transfer of allowances is referred to as a trade. In effect, the buyer is paying a charge for polluting, while the seller is being rewarded for having reduced emissions by more than was needed. Thus, in theory, those who can easily reduce emissions most cheaply will do so, achieving the pollution reduction at the lowest possible cost to society.

### 8.94 Proposed Development

There are no proposed developments in the Town of Stark. The Zoning Ordinance has no provisions for developments so this may need to be addressed in the Ordinance in the future,

### 8n9a5 Development Limitations

Development should only take place in suitable areas, which is determined by a number of criteria, including:

- A community's vision statement
- ' Land use goals and policies
- ° Surrounding uses
- ° Special requirements of the proposed development
- The ability to provide utility and community services to the area
- Transportation and economic development factors
- Cultural resource constraints
- ' Various physical constraints

The development of some land uses can be constrained by the physical characteristics of a given location generally related to characteristics of soil, water and geology. The Town of Stark has physical limitations to land development within its boundaries. The primary physical limitations include flood plain lands, wetlands, steep slopes, and bedrock close to the surface. Other limitations may include proximity to uses such as feed lots, quarries and historical sites. Some of these limitations may include state or federal regulations regarding development. Map 12-8 illustrates some of these land use limitations. Specific development proposals should be

evaluated for their relationship to these limitations and the various regulations that may be associated with them.

Map 12-8, Future Land Use, display the recommended development areas in the Town of Stark. Recommended development is where the slope is less than 20 per cent and not in the flood plain.

#### 8.9.5.1 Development Limitations: Lot Size

The four zoning district's lot Size are:

- |                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| Residential     | 2 acres  |
| 2, Agricultural | 20 acres |
| 3. Business     | 5 acres  |
| 4. Industrial   | 5 acres  |

#### 8.9.5.2 Development Limitations: Subdivisions

At this time, the Town of Stark's Zoning Ordinance regulations do not address cluster housing/subdivisions, conservation subdivisions, or planned unit developments. The Zoning Ordinance may need to address these issues.

#### 8.9.5.3 Density Standards/Land Division

Density or a density standard is a measure of how many lots there are for a set number of acres. A community can use a density standard in conjunction with a minimum lot size requirement, a maximum lot size requirement, or both. For example, a community may have a density standard of one home per 20 acres. Say a landowner owns 60 acres: there are therefore only three opportunities to build on those 60 acres. This landowner may decide to sell some of this property. If there is no minimum lot size associated with the density standard, in order to build a home, a full 20 acres would be needed by the buyer. If the density standard has a minimum lot size requirement of 5 acres (for example), the landowner would only need to sell 5 acres, not the entire 20. The density standard would be met. Some communities have a minimum and a maximum lot size associated with their density standard. In this case, if the minimum lot size is 5 acres, the maximum 10 acres, with a one per 20 density, the landowner could sell anywhere between 5 and 10 acres to someone to build a home. The density standard of one per 20 acres and the lot size requirement(s) are met. The Town of Stark has a minimum lot size, see para.

8.9.2.1, but there is no density standard established. No maximum lot size was identified.

#### 8.9.5.4 Development Limitations: Transportation

Transportation requirements exert an enormous influence on land use. As the need for larger and more roads (in addition to other forms of transportation), safety becomes ever more important. To create safe and workable roads, jurisdictions can develop or improve standards for their driveways and general road access. Stark has both driveway and access standards.

#### 8.9.5.5 Development Limitations: Agriculture

Agriculture continues to be a major part of life in the Town of Stark, although the face of it is changing. Nevertheless, the need for open and unbroken land for agricultural pursuits remains the same and development needs to be sensitive to its requirements. Part of the Stark Vision Statement says that it is a community which values family farming and protecting the rights of present and future landowners. The Town of Stark's Zoning Ordinance states that no agricultural operation shall have over 500 animal units of livestock or fowl.

# 1

## 8.10 Farmland Potential

The following is a review of the physical development limitations discussed and presented in Chapter 5, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources. A review of Map 12-5, Soil Classifications shows the location of Prime Soils (Class 1 & 2) and State Soils (Class 3) in the Town of Stark. Prime Soils is land best suited for producing feed, food, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. State Soils is land of statewide importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage and oilseed crops.

### 8.10.1 Depth to Water Table/Flood Hazards

A review of Map 12-3, Water Resources and FEMA Floodplain reveal development limitations associated with water resources. Because of the potential for flooding, and the problems

associated with wet soils, these areas should be precluded from development.

### 8.10.2 Slope Limitations

A review of Map 12-6, Slopes, reveals areas in the Town of Stark where development limitations occur due to steep slopes. Slope is an important limitation to consider since problems for development are usually associated with areas with extreme slope (because of erosion and other factors). In general, areas with slopes under 12 percent are best suited for development.

### 8.10.3 Septic Limitations

The lot area for uses requiring a private sewer system shall be determined in accordance with Section H65 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code unless the zoning district establishes a larger minimum lot size.

The engineering interpretations in the soil survey indicate the degree to which sub-grade materials are influenced by surface drainage, depth of frost penetrations, and other factors. Limitations apply to domestic sewage disposal systems; primarily filter fields and seepage beds. How well a sewage disposal system functions depends largely on the rate at which

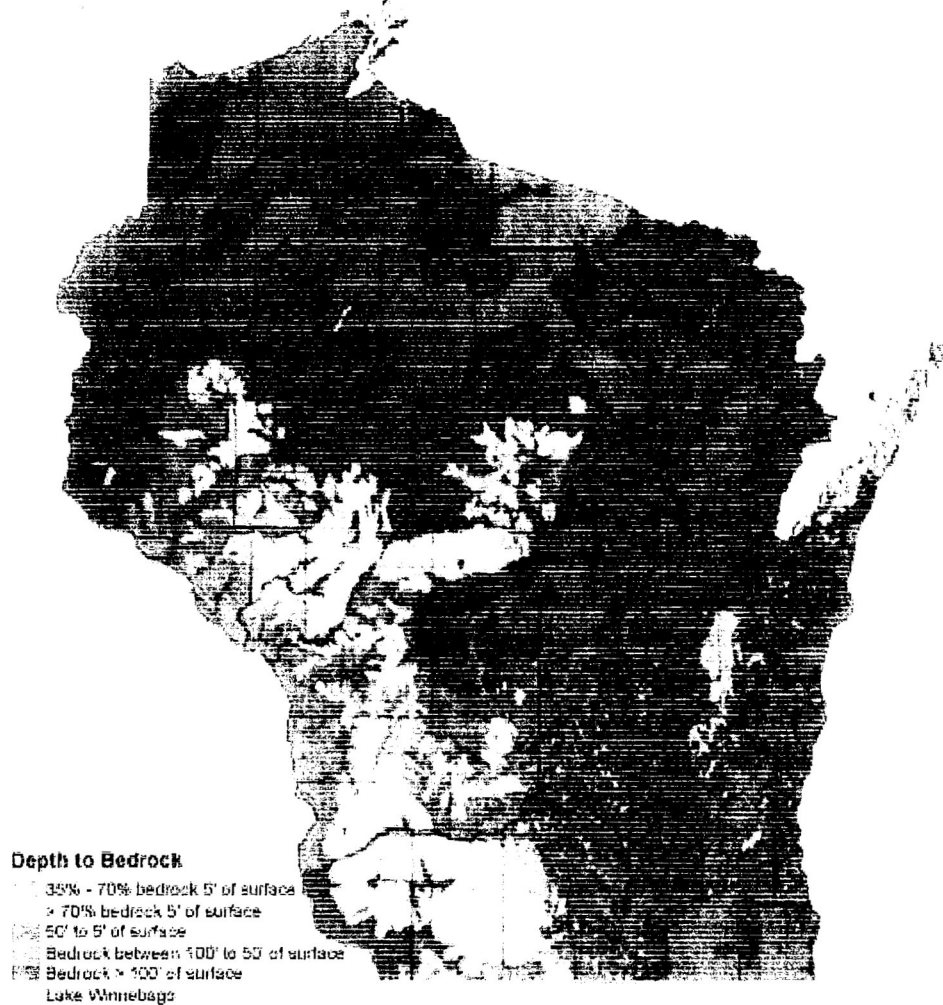


effluent from the tank moves into and through the soil. If permeability is moderately slow, sewage effluent is likely to flow along the surface of the soil. If permeability is moderately rapid or rapid, effluent is likely to flow into the aquifer. Detailed testing at specific site locations may reveal pockets with fewer restrictions than indicated. See Map 12-5, Soil Limitations.

#### 8.10.4 Depth to Bedrock

A review of the map below, Depth to Bedrock, reveals areas in the Town of Stark where development limitations occur due to the depth to the bedrock. The depth to bedrock is an important factor that influences other limitations such as septic tanks and building foundations. Bedrock that is too close to the surface not only hampers surface water absorption by the soil, but also poses an obstacle to construction.

#### Depth of Bedrock in Wisconsin



#### 8.10.5 Potential Land Use Conflicts

- Landfills or Waste Facilities
- Jails or Prisons
- Halfway Houses or Group Homes
- Airports, Highways, Rail Lines
- Low Income Housing
- Strip Malls and Shopping Centers °"Cell" Towers, Electrical Transmission Lines  
, Wind Farms
- Large Livestock Operations
- Industrial or Manufacturing Operations

#### 8.10.6 Threatened and Endangered Species, Recreation Resources

A review of Map 12-2, Natural & Recreational Resources, reveals areas in the Town of Stark where other development limitations may occur.

#### 8.11 Opportunities for Redevelopment

Due to the small amount of prime agricultural land in the Town of Stark, the Town recommends that any future housing development be on non-prime agricultural land.

#### 8.12 Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

There is no pattern of land use conflicts in the Town of Stark. However, land use must comply with the four zoning districts in the Zoning Ordinance. The greatest potential for land use conflicts in the town would be in the rural areas at the interface of non-farm-homes and agricultural activities. The presence of non-farm homes is still dispersed; however, a wider distribution of such homes could be expected to create increased land use conflicts with farming activities. There is an increasing potential for land use conflicts throughout rural areas, in general, such as confined animal feeding operations (CAFO) and waste storage facilities. Through zoning the Town of Stark limits large livestock facilities.

The development of some land uses can be constrained by the physical characteristics of a given location generally related to characteristics of soil water and geology. The Town of Stark has physical limitations to land development within its boundaries. The primary physical limitations include flood plain lands, wetlands, steep slopes, and high bed rock. Other limitations may include proximity to uses such as feed lots, quarries and historical sites. Some of these limitations may include state or federal regulations regarding development. Map 12-4 illustrates some of these land use limitations. Specific development proposals should be evaluated for their relationship to these limitations and the various regulations that may be associated with them.

#### 8.13 Land Use Agencies and Programs

There are a number of available state agencies and programs to assist communities with land use projects. Below are brief descriptions of various agencies and programs. Contact information has been provided for each agency. To find out more specific information or which program best fits your needs contact the agency directly.

## CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program provides assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with Federal, State, and tribal environmental laws, and encourages environmental enhancement. The program is funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). CRP is administered by the Farm Service Agency, with NRCS providing technical land eligibility determinations, conservation planning and practice implementation.

## CENTER FOR LAND USE EDUCATION (CLUE)

The Center for Land Use Education is a joint venture of Cooperative Extension and the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. CLUE uses a team-based

I approach to accomplish its dual missions of campus based undergraduate and graduate education and

Extension outreach teaching related to

- Land use planning,
- Plan and ordinance administration,
- ' Project impact and regional trends analysis and
- ' Public involvement in local land use policy development.

## CENTER FOR LAND USE EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin — Stevens Point —

CNR

800 Reserve St.

Stevens Point, WI 54481 Phone: 715-

346-2386

<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter>

## WISCONSIN LAND COUNCIL — WI DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

The Wisconsin Land Council was created to gather and analyze land use and planning related information, coordinate high priority state initiatives including the development of a Wisconsin land information system, and provide recommendations to the Governor for improvements to the existing statewide planning framework. The Council is dedicated to identifying ways to enhance and facilitate planning efforts of Wisconsin's local governments and to improve the coordination and cooperation of state agencies in their land use activities.

## WISCONSIN LAND COUNCIL

WIDOA

17 South Fairchild

7th Floor

Madison, WI 53703

<http://www.wisconsinplanners.org>

## UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

The UW-Madison's department of Urban Planning can provide research and outreach services to area communities. The University also has the Land Information & Computer Graphics Facility (LICGF). The overall mission of the LICGF is to provide research, training, and outreach in the use of land and geographic information systems (LIS/GIS). Their mission focuses on land record modernization, land and natural resource management applications, and the use of information for land-use decision-making.

**UW-MADISON DEPARTMENT OF URBAN PLANNING**

925 Bascom Mall Room 110

Music Hall

Madison, WI 53706 Phone: 608-262-1004

<http://www.wisc.edu/1004>

**UW LAND INFORMATION & COMPUTER GRAPHICS FACILITY**

500 Babcock Drive

Room B102

Madison, WI 53706

Phone: 608-263-5534

<http://www.lic.wisc.edu>

## 9 Implementation

### 9.1 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the comprehensive plan will be utilized to guide future growth and development in the Town of Stark and may be used to serve as the blueprint for the future. As change is inevitable, the plan will need to be amended to reflect major changes. Section 9.5 will review how each chapter of the comprehensive plan elements interrelate and how the plan will be monitored and evaluated. Section 9.9 discusses how the plan must be updated at a minimum of once every ten years.

### 9.2 Vision Statement

The following is a review of the vision statement found in Chapter 1, Issues and Opportunities, section 1.8. The vision statement serves as the overall guide for land use decision making in the Town of Stark. We are a community that values hard work, patriotism, family, family farming, small business, varied outdoor recreational opportunities and volunteer work that enhances the harmony between both local and visiting public.

We envision the following for the Town of Stark in 2024:

- Our independent and self-reliant way of life.
- Protecting the rights of present and future landowners.
- Addressing growth as a positive issue and allow for reasonable residential development on appropriate sites.
- The preservation of our scenic landscape and many outdoor activities.
- Town maintenance of roads, cemeteries, recycling center, and parks.
- Community co-operation for a clean community.

#### Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001(2)(i)

Implementation.

A compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in a stated sequence, including proposed

changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, sign regulations, erosion and storm water control ordinances, historic preservation ordinances, site plan regulations, design review ordinances, building codes, mechanical codes, housing codes sanitary codes or subdivision ordinances, to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in pars. (a) to (h). The element shall describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan, and shall include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan. The element shall

include a process for updating the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan under this subsection shall be updated no less than once every 10 years.

### 9.3 Goals, Objectives and Policy Recommendations

The following are Implementation goals, objectives and policy recommendations. They support the goals, objectives, policies and programs specified in the previous eight chapters and will guide the implementation of this comprehensive plan in the Town of Stark over the next 20 years.

1. Comply with and enforce the Planning Goals and the Policies and Programs-outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.
2. Enforce local ordinances to support the vision noted in Section 9.2.
3. Comply with applicable County, State, and Federal regulations.
4. Amend the local comprehensive plan and local ordinances only after careful evaluation of existing conditions and potential impacts.
5. Update the Town of Stark Comprehensive Plan at a minimum of every ten years as required by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001.

## 94 Local Ordinance and Regulations

The intent of local ordinances and regulations is to control land development within the Town. By carefully applying these local ordinances and regulations, the Town of Stark will be accomplishing the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan. Enforcement of such ordinances and regulations serve an important function by ensuring orderly growth and

development. The Town of Stark will use their plan, local ordinances, and the Township Zoning ordinance as their enforcement tools.

## 9.5 Consistency Among Plan Elements

As required by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001, all elements included in this plan are consistent with one another and no known conflicts exist. If there is a question regarding a decision that is not clearly conveyed in the details of this plan, than the decision should

be based on the intent of the vision statement. All nine elements included in this plan work to achieve the desired future for the Town of Stark.

## 9.6 Severability

If any provision of this Plan shall be found to be invalid or unconstitutional, or if the application of this Plan to any person or circumstances is found to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions or applications of this Plan, which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application.

## 9.7 Plan Adoption

The first official action required to implement the Town of Stark Comprehensive Plan is official adoption of the plan by the Comprehensive Plan Committee. Once the Comprehensive Plan Committee recommends the plan by resolution, the Town Board then needs to adopt the comprehensive plan by ordinance as required by State Statute 66.1001. The Stark Comprehensive Plan will take effect when the Town Board passes it. After the plan is adopted

by ordinance, it then becomes the official tool for future development in the next 20 years. The plan is designed to guide development in a consistent manner.

## 9.8 Plan Amendments

Amendments may be necessary due to changes in town policies, programs, or services, as well as

changes in state or federal laws. An amendment may also be needed due to proposals presented to the town. Amendments are any changes to plan text or maps. The town board can amend the Stark Comprehensive Plan at any time. Proposed amendments should be channeled through the Zoning Committee, with final action occurring at the town board, including proper public notices and hearings. Amendments should be done with extreme caution: they should not be made simply to avoid local planning pressure.

## 9.9 Plan Updates

As required by Wisconsin State Statute, this comprehensive plan needs to be updated at least once every ten years. An update is different from an amendment, as an update is a major revision of multiple plan sections including maps. The plan was originally written based on variables that are ever changing and future direction might be inaccurately predicted. A plan update should include public involvement, as well as an official public hearing.

## 9.10 Measuring Progress

The success of this comprehensive plan will be measured by the extent to which the Town of Stark achieves its vision of the future for their community by following the goals, objectives, policies, and programs outlined in the plan. In order to do so, the Zoning Committee will review this Comprehensive Plan every two (2) years.

## 9.11 Rezoning Application Procedure for Zoned Towns

1. The landowner/developer/builder makes an appointment with the Zoning Administrator. 2. The applicant gets information, forms, regulations, applications, and pay fees to the Stark Zoning Administrator.

3. The zoning committee reviews the application for completeness and compliance with the town zoning ordinance, places the application on the planning and zoning agenda, and, if applicable, prepares for a hearing.

4. The applicant prepares their packet of information for town review.

5. The town zoning committee reviews application and makes a recommendation to the town board. The town board then approves or denies the application.

6. After the applicant applies for and receives all required state and local permits (Land Use, Sanitary, Building Permit, County Address), the applicant may begin construction.

## 9.12 Goal and Policy Summary

Comprehensive Plans are comprised of nine elements (Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Intergovernmental Cooperation, Land Use, and complementation). Each element has policy statements, which contribute to the overall plan, supporting a jurisdiction's vision and goals. Policy statements give the jurisdiction general

guidelines to help in making land use decisions. Chapter goals are summarized in Table 9.1. Plan policies are summarized in Tables 9.2 through 9.10, with policies listed by element and showing implementation actions and the party responsible for such actions in three separate columns. The key below describes Table notation.

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTION

- Does not require specific action — This policy is a general statement of direction that does not need a specific ordinance or program to be enforced. It is enforced through conscious decision making and by following the local comprehensive plan, which is passed by ordinance.
- Ordinance - The policy is enforced by an existing ordinance or an ordinance currently in development.
- Specific Action responsibility inherent in Planning Commission duties.

#### RESPONSIBILITY

##### Town of Stark

- Town Zoning Committee — The Town of Stark Zoning Committee receives proposals/applications, reviews the proposal against the plan and any local ordinances, then makes a recommendation to the town board.
- Town Board — As the elected body of the community, the Stark town board acts as the decision making authority and has the responsibility to make sure that the specific policy is enforced. The Board reviews the zoning committee's recommendation and makes a final decision.

Table 9.1 Goals

Chapter 1, Issues and Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.</li> <li>• To balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.</li> <li>• To plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique rural communities.</li> <li>• To preserve the cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.</li> <li>• To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.</li> <li>• To encourage the land use, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.</li> <li>• To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.</li> <li>• To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.</li> <li>• To provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.</li> <li>• To provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, safety, and</li> </ul>



meets the needs of all citizens, including meeting the needs of a variety of citizens.

- To encourage the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.
- To maintain and revive existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- To facilitate 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.

#### **Chapter 2, Housing**

- To provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.

#### **Chapter 3, Transportation**

- To balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- To encourage the land use, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- To provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, safety, and meets the needs of all citizens, including meeting the needs of a variety of citizens.
- To encourage the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.

#### **Chapter 4, Utilities and Community Facilities**

- To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- To encourage the land use, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

#### **Chapter 5, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources**

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- To preserve the cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

#### **Chapter 6, Economic Development**

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- To facilitate 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.

#### **Chapter 7, Intergovernmental Cooperation**

- To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- To provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- To provide an integrated, efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, safety, and meets the needs of all citizens, including meeting the needs of a variety of citizens.

#### **Chapter 8, Land Use**

- To protect and preserve economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
- To balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
- To plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique rural communities.
- To preserve the cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
- To encourage the coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
- To encourage the land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.
- To protect the natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
- To provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout the community.
- To encourage the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure and public services.
- To facilitate 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.

#### **Chapter 9, Implementation**

- Comply with and enforce the 14 Planning Goals and the Policies and Programs outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.
- Enforce local ordinances to support the vision noted in Section 9.2.
- Comply with applicable County, State, and Federal regulations.
- Amend the local comprehensive plan and local ordinances only after careful evaluation of existing conditions and potential impacts.
- Update the Town of Stark Comprehensive Plan at a minimum of every ten years as required by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001.

**Table 9.2 Issues and Opportunities**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
To maintain an effective process for the Zoning Committee to use in guiding future development and deal with land use issues within the township	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
To partner with the Village of La Farge, Kickapoo Valley Reserve, and neighboring townships to provide the support for public service providers in health, education and cultural opportunity to create a more vital community	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Maintain the Town of Stark website to provide information to the public	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

**Table 9.3 Utilities and Community Facilities**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Maintain the existing park facilities so they can support existing recreational needs.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Consider implementing a capital improvements program and review it annually, making adjustments to meet the needs of the community.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal programs or grants to maintain, enhance, or pursue new utility and community facilities.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

**Table 9.4 Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Maintain the rural and agricultural character of the community.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage the preservation of the family farm and farmland in the community.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Preserve agricultural land in the community from encroachment by incompatible development.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal programs or grants to conserve, maintain, and protect agricultural resources.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Avoid disturbance to wetlands, shorelands, and floodplains and discourage disturbance to other environmentally sensitive areas and natural corridors.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage residents to implement sustainable forestry practices.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage the suppression and limitation of noxious weeds.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Explore opportunities to capitalize on local natural resources in conjunction with tourism.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal programs or grants to conserve, maintain, and protect natural resources.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage the protection of important cultural resources in the community.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to support important community festivals and cultural events.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state, and federal program or grants to conserve, maintain, and protect	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

cultural resources.

**Table 9.5 Housing**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of the existing housing in the community.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Support the enforcement of zoning ordinances to maintain the character of the existing and future residential neighborhoods	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Review new housing proposals and support those proposals and programs that meet the communities housing needs and are consistent with the policies outlined in the comprehensive plan.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Support the Town and County property maintenance standards to ensure a high quality living environment within all residential areas.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Support the enforcement of local zoning Ordinances to maintain the character of the existing and future residential neighborhoods.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Where and when appropriate, utilize county, state and federal programs or grants to maintain existing housing or to support the construction of future housing.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

**Table 9.6 Transportation**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Continue the Five-Year Plan approach currently in place by the Town of Stark board to provide adequate and continued maintenance on existing town roads.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to work cooperatively with the townships of Union, Whitestown and Webster, the Village of La Farge, and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve to plow and grade snow and sand common roads during the winter season.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to work cooperatively with the Vernon County Highway Department in procuring road salt, culverts, equipment, supplies and other needed material that can be purchased by county contract at a cheaper rate.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to utilize federal, state, county, and tribal monies for road maintenance through grants (TRIP, etc.) and emergency (FEMA disaster assistance, BIA funds, etc.) programs.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Plan cooperatively with state, county and regional planning groups on the area's transportation needs for the future.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to provide safe town roads that meet the needs of individuals, businesses, agriculture, and the schools.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

**Table 9.7 Economic Development**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Encourage home-based entrepreneurial activity that has no or minimal impact on adjacent properties.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage crop and livestock production	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

farming as a local economic development strategy.

Encourage businesses that add value to agricultural products through processing, packaging, and marketing as a local economic development strategy.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage entrepreneurial activity such as the sale of locally grown and created products and services from roadside markets and home-based sales.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Support one or more annual local events intended to attract visitors and support local civic groups and entrepreneurs, such as a community festival or sidewalk sales.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Help attract tourists to the community and to local businesses, such as through local or joint effort marketing, a web site, advertising, and other methods.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage programs that build local capacity for community and economic development (e.g. teaching local volunteers and entrepreneurs how to organize a community event or start a business).	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage programs and groups that work to preserve historic buildings and cultural resources as a way to develop tourism and enable a community to better attract new residents.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

**Table 9.8 Inter overnmental Coo eration**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Continue the current agreements of cooperation with other local units of government that provide efficient and cost effective services for the Town of Stark.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to work cooperatively with Vernon County departments, agencies of the State of Wisconsin, and regional organizations to effectively meet town needs.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to work cooperatively with the Kickapoo Valley Reserve and Ho-Chunk Nation regarding Reserve and BIA Trust lands in the Town of Stark.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to work cooperatively with neighboring units of government for providing fire protection and ambulance service to the town.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to negotiate cooperatively with the Town of Whitestown to reach an agreement with the Ho-Chunk Nation for payment in lieu of taxes on BIA Trust lands in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Continue to plan with the Kickapoo Valley Regional Economic Development Initiative to develop a regional economic development approach for the future of the Kickapoo Valley.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

**Table 9.9 Land Use**

POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Maintain the small-town character of the jurisdiction by avoiding developments that would alter its character.	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board
Encourage new development to be	Does not require specific action	Zoning Committee, Town Board

harmonious with the surrounding natural landscape.

Recognize the critical role that farmland, open space, historical architecture, scenic vistas, land and riverscapes, natural resources and designated features, scenic roads, archeological, and cultural features play in defining and enhancing the community's distinctive rural character.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Discourage the placement of new development in the middle of parcels of agricultural cropland (discourage fragmentation of cropland).

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Development including roadways, driveways, and buildings on steep slopes should be avoided to minimize soil erosion, disruption of important wildlife habitat, and to keep maintenance costs for foundations, roads, utilities, and waste disposal systems to a minimum.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Recognize that ridge tops are important groundwater recharge areas.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Concentrated sources of pollution such as landfills and truck yards will not be allowed in these areas.

Recognize that while flat valley bottoms are often the most desirable areas for new development, these areas frequently contain highly productive and irreplaceable agricultural soils. Therefore, care must be taken to ensure that development occurs on the least productive valley soils.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

#### Table 9.10 Implementation

##### POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION

##### ACTION

##### RESPONSIBILITY

Comply with and enforce the Planning Goals and the Policies and Programs outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Enforce local ordinances to support the vision noted in Section 9.2.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Comply with applicable County, State, and Federal regulations.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Amend the local comprehensive plan and local ordinances only after careful evaluation of existing conditions and potential impacts.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

Update the Town of Stark Comprehensive Plan at a minimum of every ten years as required by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001.

Does not require specific action

Zoning Committee, Town Board

## 10 Attachment A Public Participation Plan

Participation Plan for Town of Stark's  
Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee

### Introduction:

- The comprehensive planning process that the Town of Stark Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee is engaged in requires that the public be an active participant. This participation plan outlines the various goals and structure to foster that participation in this process by the public.

### Goals:

- To facilitate the acceptance and implementation of the comprehensive plan by Town of Stark residents and landowners.
- To foster local leadership in the planning process.
- To obtain detailed information and recommendations on specific planning issues by extending participation opportunities to the public.

### Participation Structure:

- The Town of Stark Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee has been formed to provide input to the plan and provide a resource to encourage the public to participate in the public meetings. The members of the committee represent a variety of interests in the town, including farming, business, environmental and land use issues, and the service sector.
  - Citizen participation sessions will be held, often in conjunction with neighboring municipalities. (The Town of Stark has entered into grant-seeking agreements with the Village of La Farge and Towns of Forest and Union; the consortium is called LUFS) Discussion at these sessions will be organized around the nine required elements of comprehensive planning.
  - A survey sent to all town residents and landowners will be used to generate and compile interests and preferences of the public.
  - The town web site, articles in local newspapers, direct mailings, and public notices will be used to keep the public informed about the comprehensive planning progress.
  - For each of the nine elements of planning, a working group will be formed with public participation to focus on town's needs in each area.
- At the conclusion of the planning process, a public hearing will be held on the preliminary plan. Copies of this preliminary plan will be made available at the local library, county and municipal offices, and on the town web site.

This Participation Plan was approved at the  
Stark Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee

meeting of the Town of

## 11 Attachment B Survey Tally

*TOWN OF STARK*

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING SURVEY

JANUARY 8, 2008

Enclosed in this mailing you will find a survey that seeks your ideas and opinions as a property owner and/or resident of the Town of Stark. This survey is an initial effort seeking public participation in the Town of Stark's efforts to write a Comprehensive Plan. An Advisory Comprehensive Planning Committee, consisting of members Brian Jacobs, Jack Letzring, Lois Milonczyk, Chuck Pasker, Rebecca Zahm, and Town Chairman Brad Steinmetz, has prepared this survey. It is the goal of this committee to have a comprehensive plan in place to be passed by the town board by January 1, 2010, which is the state-mandated deadline.

Public participation is a critical aspect of creating a comprehensive plan for the Town of Stark. There are nine state-mandated elements to consider when creating a plan. They are: Issues & Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities & Community Facilities, Land Use, Agriculture, Natural, & Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Intergovernmental Cooperation, and Implementation. Many of the questions on the survey pertain to one or more of these elements. There will be a range of opinions among Town of Stark

respondents regarding the questions on the survey. It is important that everyone's opinions are heard as we begin this process. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, so please complete and return the survey in the enclosed envelope by February 4, 2008.

The Advisory Committee will tabulate the responses to the survey and publish the results. Public meetings will be held in the future to discuss the elements to a plan and seek more public input on the process. We hope that this will be a good learning experience for us all and lead to a productive process to create a good workable plan for the Town of Stark.

This survey is designed to be answered by the head of a household living at each address where the survey is mailed. However, if two adults wish to submit responses, simply indicate "TWO RESPONDENTS" at the top of the first page and mark your survey accordingly with your answers. If you would like another survey form to use, contact Clerk Lonnie Muller at 625-2771 or stop in at the Episcope office at 202 E. Main Street in La Farge to pick one up.

Thank you for participating in this survey process,

# Comprehensive Planning Survey 2007

Demographic Information	YES	NO	Unsur. more i
1. Do you reside in the Town of Stark? Y or N	62	49	
Own a home? Y or N	74	22	
Rent? Y or N	3	60	
2. If not, where do you reside?			
Do you plan to reside here in the future? Y or N	23	20	3
3. How long have you lived in or owned property in Stark?			
Less than 5 years	16		
5-10 years	27		
10-25 years	40		
Over 25 years	20		
All my life	13		
4. How many acres do you own in Stark?			
None	2		
Less than 5	7		
5-10	15		
10-25	30		
50-100	38		
Over 100	23		
6. Are you planning to build a new home in Stark in the future? Y or N	15	90	
Vacation	3		1
Residence	15		2
7. Are you planning to start a business in Stark? Y or N	7	104	
If yes, do you plan to build? Y or N	5	7	
8. If you live in Stark, why? (check all that apply):			
I (or my spouse) grew up in the area.	32		
I have family nearby.	27		
My job is here.	17		
I commute to a job nearby.	13		
It's a safe place for my family.	29		
I enjoy the rural lifestyle and/or the natural beauty.	61		
Other	6		
9. What would affect your decision to live here? (check all that apply)			



### Utilities, Community Facilities and Services

11. Are you satisfied with the current waste and recycling facilities? Y or N	91	6	
Are you satisfied with the hours the facility is open? Y or N	74	22	
12. Is the township staffed adequately to meet the current needs of the community? Y or N or Unsure	67	4	35
13. Are you properly informed of township meetings, resolutions and policies? Y or N	67	36	
14. What is the best way to notify people?			
Newspaper	51		
Post at town hall and area businesses	24		
US mail	63		
Email	35		
Town website @: tn.stark.wi.gov	32		

### Transportation

15. Do township roads meet the needs of our town residents? Y or N	107	5	
16. Are the roads adequate to safely transport agricultural and commercial products to and from our community? (1E: Milk trucks, logging trucks, stock trucks) Y or N	101	8	
17. Are roads in the township maintained to provide safe transportation? Y or N	109	2	
18. Will existing roads meet our needs for the next 20 years if they are maintained as they are now? Y or N	78	17	
19. The seasonal maintenance of our roads is adequate. Y or N	106	3	
20. We need to emphasize the paving of our town's gravel roads. Y or N	59	50	

### Personal Preferences

### **Housing and Land Use**

23. Should only single family homes should be allowed in Stark? Y or N	50	52
24. Are there enough residences available for rent in Stark? Y or N	38	27
25. The cost of housing (building or buying) in Stark is prohibitive to home ownership. Y or N	30	66
26. The cost of land in Stark is prohibitive to ownership. Y or N	37	58
27. Farming and agriculture should be viable forms of employment in Stark. Y or N	106	5
28. The outside appearance and general upkeep of homes (grounds and buildings) in	77	33
29. Littering and debris are problems in Stark that need to be addressed. Y or N	57	45
30. Stark has an ample supply of affordable homes. Y or N	40	42
31. Visual impacts of development are an important consideration when evaluating proposed building projects. Y or N	94	16
32. Land owners should be allowed to develop land in any way they see fit. Y or N	31	77
33. Preservation of existing farms and farm lands should be a major consideration in evaluating new development. Y or N	86	24

34. Residential housing utilizing alternative energy systems should be encouraged. Y or N	100	9	
35. Wind turbines and solar panels are eyesores and should be avoided if possible. Y or N	15	93	
36. Currently productive farmland should be encouraged to be maintained as agricultural. Y or N	97	12	
37. Currently productive farmland should be allowed to be used for residential development. Y or N	43	61	
38. Currently productive farmland should be allowed to be used for commercial and industrial development. Y or N	33	74	
39. Should the minimum lot size on residential land (25 acres) be changed? Y or N	18	86	
40. The public participation process is essential for determining the most valuable form of land use and regulations for Stark. Y or N	101	7	
41. Agriculture is crucial to the future of Stark's economy. Y or N	71	31	
42. Noxious and/or invasive weeds are a threat and should be controlled. Y or N	92	13	
43. Rural land and open spaces are a natural resource and should be preserved. Y or N	94	12	
44. Looking to the future, Stark residents should be aware of the purchase of landowners development rights. Y or N or need more information	42	2	65
45. Building restrictions on floodplain construction should be strictly enforced. Y or N	87	17	
46. Alternative residential development plans such as clustered development of housing should be explored in order to preserve farmland or open spaces. Y or N	79	21	
47. Outdoor advertising (billboards, electronic signs, etc.) should be restricted.	91	16	
48. Junkyards and salvage operations should be regulated and shielded from public view. Y or N	97	12	
49. Low impact forestry practices should be encouraged. Y or N	96	7	
50. Do you feel zoning protects your interests as a landowner and increases the value of land in Stark? Y or N	78	21	
51. Do you feel zoning threatens your rights as a landowner and suppresses the value of land in Stark? Y or N	28	72	

## **12 Attachment C Maps**

12.1 General Base Map

12.2 Recreation Base Map

12.3 Aggregated Land Use

12.4 Detailed Land Use

12.5 Productive Ag Soils

12.6 Natural Soil Limitations

12.7 Emergency Services

12.8 Future Land Use

12.9 Zoning Ordinance Map

12.10 County Base Map

12.11 County **Emergency Services**

12.12 County Snowmobile Trails and Bike Routes