

Introduction

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the Issues and Opportunities Chapter provide background information about the community and overall visions to guide future development and redevelopment over a 20-year planning period. This chapter presents the overall vision for Bradford, including an assessment of local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The community characteristics and general background information that form the basis for this chapter may also be found in *Chapter 3: Community Profile*.

Public Participation

On January 19, 2009, eighteen Town residents, landowners, and stakeholders attended the kick-off Meeting, participating in Values, SWOT, and Vision exercises, aimed at establishing a framework from which to make future land use decisions. The result of this process was the creation of a vision statement for each of the nine required plan elements. This process was critical in establishing a unifying vision for Bradford and providing a direction and focus for the planning effort.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

During the 2004 November election approximately 75% of eligible voters casted ballots. This consisted of 306 households, to which the Town mailed a land use survey. Bradford received 190 replies, approximately 62% of those mailed, representing the attitudes and desires of the Town.

*Town of Bradford Comprehensive
Plan
Public Participations*

Kick-off Meeting (January 19, 2009) – Included Values, SWOT, and Vision Exercises.

Planning and Zoning Committee – met monthly to review and discuss draft plan chapters and maps.

Public Hearing – Held on November 9, 2009, providing residents, landowners, and other stakeholders an opportunity to offer testimony on the Recommended Comprehensive Plan.

Tabulated Smart Growth Community Survey

Thinking about this area, overall how would you rate the quality of life here in Bradford?

- Excellent – 69 responses (41%)
- Good – 89 responses (53%)
- Fair – 7 responses (4%)
- Poor – 0 responses (0%)
- Not sure – 4 responses (2%)

Some people say that we must preserve the qualities that make our community special by severely limiting growth. Others say that growth is necessary for the economy, and our current regulations are satisfactory. Which of these statements best describes your point of view?

1. We must preserve the qualities that make our community special by severely limiting growth. 71 responses (43%)
2. Growth is necessary for the economy and current regulations are satisfactory. 75 responses (45%)

3. I have no opinion one way or another. 21 responses (12%)

Please place an X in the appropriate column following each service/facility to indicate your level of satisfaction with the following Town services or facilities.

Town Service Facility	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied
Ambulance	93 (51%)	31 (17%)	52 (29%)	4 (2%)	1 (1%)
Fire Protection	90 (51%)	34 (19%)	44 (25%)	6 (4%)	1 (1%)
Safety	84 (46%)	45 (25%)	42 (23%)	9 (5%)	1 (1%)
Snow Removal	60 (34%)	56 (32%)	12 (7%)	37 (21%)	10 (6%)
Road Maintenance	46 (25%)	56 (31%)	24 (13%)	38 (22%)	17 (9%)
Recycling Service	66 (37%)	32 (18%)	58 (32%)	16 (9%)	7 (4%)
Park & Rec. Facilities	65 (36%)	63 (34%)	47 (26%)	7 (3%)	1 (1%)
Town Board	64 (35%)	60 (33%)	45 (25%)	9 (5%)	5 (2%)
Road Resurfacing	41 (21%)	50 (26%)	40 (21%)	41 (21%)	20 (11%)
Communication	51 (27%)	49 (26%)	64 (34%)	20 (11%)	6 (2%)

Have you requested information or assistance from Town Officials in the past year?

Yes – 68 responses (38%)

No – 113 responses (62%)

If you answered “yes” would you say that the Town Official listened to and/or addressed your needs?

Yes – 62 responses (91%)

No – 6 responses (9%)

If you were going to rent or buy a home, which of the following factors would have the greatest effect on your decision?

Proximity of shopping – 26 responses (9%)

Proximity to work – 95 responses (32%)

Proximity to schools – 44 responses (15%)

Proximity to parks – 5 responses (2%)

Proximity to bike paths or nature walks – 12 responses (4%)

Having large yard – 75 responses (25%)

None of the above – 40 responses (13%)

Would you say that excessive speed on local roads is a serious problem, a moderate problem or no problem at all?

Serious Problem – 46 responses (25%)

Moderate problem – 80 responses (43%)

No problem at all – 59 responses (31%)

Not sure – 2 responses (1%)

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the environment in Bradford? That is the air quality and the quality of our streams?

Excellent – 60 responses (33%)

Good – 104 responses (57%)
Fair – 15 responses (8%)
Poor – 4 responses (2%)

Based on what you have heard and read, how would you describe the job opportunities we have here in Bradford?

We face serious job shortage – 36 responses (19%)
We face a minor job shortage – 35 responses (18%)
We have a good supply of job opportunities – 23 responses (12%)
No opinion – 97 responses (51%)

How would you grade the quality of education our local public schools provide to children in our community?

Excellent – 48 responses (26%)
Good – 81 responses (45%)
Average – 23 responses (13%)
Below average – 3 responses (2%)
Poor - 2 responses (1%)
No opinion – 25 responses (13%)

In planning for the future, which of the following initiatives do you think would be the most important steps we should take in our area to protect or improve the quality of our natural environment here in Bradford?

Investing more in maintaining our existing parks and open spaces – 58 responses (9%)
Improving local services such as trash collection and snowplowing – 9 responses (9%)
Stricter water quality regulations – 27 responses (4%)
Investing more in creating new parks and open spaces – 15 responses (2%)
More regulations that protect agricultural land – 95 responses (14%)
More neighborhood beautification projects – 18 responses (3%)
Preserving existing woodlands – 111 responses (16%)
Preserving wetlands – 98 responses (15%)
Preserving creek corridors – 107 responses (16%)
Better enforcement of existing laws and regulations – 39 responses (6%)
Other – 21 responses (3%)
None, our environment is fine the way it is – 17 responses (2%)
Not sure – 10 responses (1%)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Town of Bradford landowners should generally be able to subdivide and sell their land for development.

Strongly agree – 12 responses (7%)
Somewhat agree – 38 responses (20%)
Neither agree or disagree – 17 responses (9%)
Somewhat disagree – 54 responses (30%)
Strongly disagree – 62 responses (34%)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Town of Bradford farmers should generally not be able to subdivide and sell their land for development unless their land is planned for the development on the official Town land use plan.

Strongly agree – 64 responses (35%)
Somewhat agree – 64 responses (35%)
Neither agree or disagree – 17 responses (9%)
Somewhat disagree – 25 responses (14%)
Strongly disagree – 13 responses (7%)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The Town should adopt land use regulations designed to protect non-farmed rural land from being subdivided for housing development.

Strongly agree – 73 responses (40%)
Somewhat agree – 50 responses (27%)
Neither agree or disagree – 17 responses (9%)
Somewhat disagree – 24 responses (14%)
Strongly disagree – 18 responses (10%)

Do you own or rent your place of residence?

Own – 170 (92%)
Rent – 15 (8%)

How long have you lived in the Town of Bradford?

Less than 1 year – 4 responses (2%)
1 to 5 years – 31 responses (17%)
6 to 10 years – 16 responses (9%)
11 to 25 years – 43 responses (24%)
26 to 40 years – 43 responses (24%)
41 or more years – 43 responses (24%)

What is your age?

18 to 29 – 8 responses (4%)
30 to 39 – 25 responses (13%)
40 to 49 – 44 responses (23%)
50 to 64 – 54 responses (29%)
65 or older – 58 responses (31%)

How many in your household are:

Birth to 5 years – 25 responses (6%)
6 to 12 years – 41 responses (9%)
13 to 18 years – 49 responses (10%)
19 to 29 years – 43 responses (9%)
30 to 39 years – 49 responses (10%)
40 to 49 years – 75 responses (16%)
50 to 64 years 104 responses (22%)
65 years or older – 85 responses (18%)

Do you derive most of your family income from farming?

Yes – 39 (22%)
No – 136 (78%)

VALUES EXERCISE

During the Kick-Off Meeting, participants were asked to identify the values that influence people to remain, take pride in, and become actively involved in the community. These value statements will help provide a direction for implementation of the *Town of Bradford Comprehensive Plan*. Furthermore, these values clearly indicate that residents share a strong sense of community identity and pride that is closely associated with the rural character and natural areas that make Bradford a desirable place to live. The numbers in parenthesis indicate the occurrence of the specific comments.

VALUES EXERCISE RESULTS

Why is Bradford special to you?

- Rural community (9)
- Open space and quiet (5)
- Proximity to Metro Areas (2)
- Good Agricultural land (2)
- Good quality soil (2)
- Low crime rate (2)
- Born and raised here (3)
- Good road system (2)
- Schools (7)
- Police
- Fire protection (2)
- Job opportunities
- Shopping centers close by (2)
- Good markets for farm products
- Good friends and neighbors/community (10)
- Parks (3)
- Creek
- Agricultural support Madison, Platteville schools
- Competitive
- Supply of experienced Agricultural workers
- Organizations
- Recreational areas
- Family (7)
- Natural beauty and resources (4)
- Protection of rural community (4)
- Church (2)
- Golf course
- Local government
- Homes
- Housing and development plan
- Opportunity of business and development

SWOT EXERCISE (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS)

A SWOT is a planning exercise that encourages participants to think about and evaluate their community in its current state by identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The objective of the exercise was to determine how residents, business owners, landowners, and officials viewed various aspects of the Town. Each person was asked to identify the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the community from their own perspective. The list appearing below and on the following pages summarizes the individual responses gathered during the SWOT Exercise. The numbers appearing in parentheses following the response indicate the number of individuals who identified that particular issue as a SWOT. The information gathered during the exercise will be used in the development of the Comprehensive Plan and in the creation of the Future Land Use maps.

SWOT RESULTS

Strengths

- Local government (7)
- Rural Community (7)
- Fire Dept and EMS (6)
- People (6)
- Schools (5)
- Farmland (4)
- Parks (3)
- Rural area not far from Metro areas (3)
- Agricultural preservation, agriculture-based (3)
- Scenic, natural beauty (3)
- Railroad (2)
- Roads
- Strong agricultural economy
- Close to farm equipment dealers, suppliers
- Close market for grain
- Close to goods and services
- Prime Agricultural soil
- Competitive Agricultural market
- Ample supply of Ag support business, suppliers and experienced workers
- Marketing options for Agricultural product
- Railroad & Trucking businesses for moving Agricultural Products
- Ag research readily available for innovative farming techniques
- Supply of experienced Agricultural workers
- 54 miles of roads
- Town involvement
- Friendly
- Wildlife
- Turtle Creek
- Honest and hardworking people
- Nice housing for people outside the township
- Safe for kids
- Highway system
- Antique store
- Golf course
- Grain elevator
- Post office
- Snowmobile trails
- Agricultural families
- Preservation of wildlife, woodlands, and waterways

Weaknesses

- Roads and bridges (13)
- Lack of funds (7)
- Planning (4)
- No grocery store (2)
- Limited public transportation (2)
- Government rid itself of small town, behind closed doors decision making (2)
- Accountability to tax payers
- Lack of industry
- Good 'ol boy favor system
- No close airport for larger planes
- Growth without proper zoning or services
- Lack of employment opportunity
- 54 miles of roads to maintain
- Pathway location for metro areas
- Less new resident involvement
- Lack of gas station
- Not having influence with DOT decisions
- Subdivisions
- Water management and conservation needs to be stricter for everyone and enforced
- Current rules should apply to everyone
- Residents not showing interest until problem arise

- Lack of shopping facilities for Hwy 14
- Loss of small businesses

- Runoff control
- Pressure on EMT services

Opportunities

- Expansion of Agricultural businesses (5)
- Good place to raise a family (4)
- Existing land for farming (4)
- Nice place for commuters to live (2)
- Maintaining grain mill/elevators
- Renewable energy sources
- Hwy 14
- Better planning on how money in Bradford is spent
- Maintaining roads a priority
- Freedom
- Endless opportunities for small business
- Safe
- Agricultural network to accommodate the future needs of society
- Some Commercial development
- Scattered housing

- Open spaces
- Utilize volunteers to maintain roadsides and parks to ensure a safe place to live and raise a family
- Increase tax base by planning and development, management of land that is being farmed by environmental correct standards and conservation procedures that will enable the township to remain a productive farming community.
- Offer permanent farmers market
- In-home businesses
- Expansion of ethanol and alternative energy sources
- Variety of taxpayers and businesses
- Direct marketing and more specialty marketing
- Smart growth

Threats

- Losing good land to a new highway (13)
- Loss of housing (2)
- Subdivisions (2)
- Uncontrolled and unplanned housing development (3)
- Encroachment of boundaries by expanding nearby communities
- Funding for Roads
- Possible sewer problems
- Creek corridor
- Trailer park
- Lack of people for Fire Dept and EMS
- High density

- Government without economic or social values
- Lack of communication and understanding of town residents, a need to give back to the community
- Urban sprawl
- Development of good agricultural land
- Becoming a “bedroom” community
- Bad economy
- Non-agricultural, uninformed taxpayers not understanding agricultural needs
- Poor roads

VISION EXERCISE

During the second half of the Kick-off Meeting, attendees participated in a visioning exercise aimed at generating ideas regarding the ideal future for the Town. Participants were asked to complete a series of sentences related to various land uses in the community as if it were the year 2030. These responses, like those compiled during the SWOT exercise, will be used to guide the development of the draft Comprehensive Plan. Below and on the following pages you will find a complete inventory of Vision Exercise responses. The number to the right indicates the number multiple responses.

VISION EXERCISE RESULTS

Residents of the Town of Bradford take great pride in ...

- Rural Culture/Community (8)
- Farmland (4)
- School (4)
- Protecting the farm land (4)
- Parks (3)
- Single family (2)
- Open farm land with Clustered development
- Helpful friendly Neighbors
- Turtle Creek
- Self-sufficient life style of residents
- Roadsides
- Safe well kept Roads
- Safe living
- Quality of life
- Local government
- Family oriented
- Protecting each other
- Controlled residential growth
- Homes
- Local people working together

Attractive and desirable housing in Bradford can be described as...

- Controlled Growth (6)
- Present housing maintained (5)
- Single family (2)
- Something for everybody
- Low income
- Multi units
- Highland
- No trailer homes
- No cheap pre-fab homes
- Pride, Cleanliness and Care for Nature
- Well kept farmsteads
- It is now
- Location of existing farm sites
- Rural housing
- Present without overwhelming the rural experience

The transportation network in Bradford includes...

- Well kept roads (9)
- Good Rail system (5)
- Hwys 14 & 140 (4)
- 54 miles of Town Road (2)
- Bike trails
- Hiking trails
- Boats on the creek
- Continued support of roads and bridges more State and Federal aid
- Many adequate roads keep other traffic on the interstate
- No new roads
- Hwy 11
- Well maintained bridges
- State Highways

- Rail road
- Peaceful roads

- Always needing tending

Farming in Bradford...

- Excellent farmland (5)
- Family farms (4)
- Excellent growth potential (2)
- Continuing and prospering (2)
- Continuing to be significant to our society (2)
- Close to markets and supplies
- Good competition
- Include food and produce grown on farms for local markets along with commercial production

- Farming will be energy self-sufficient via wind, water or other bio-fuel production
- Farming coexists with rural community life
- Great Soil
- Employs most people
- Here to stay
- Offers diversity of products and services to accommodate this future including livestock
- Good production
- Continue to be number one priority

The natural environment of Bradford...

- Turtle Creek (6)
- Good air quality (4)
- Should be preserved (4)
- Carvers Rock Park (4)
- Farmland (3)
- Water Quality (3)
- Clean and clear wooded area for wildlife (2)
- Hiking trails
- Farming done in such a manner that limits erosion and runoff of nutrients and chemicals
- Has improved every year
- Cleaning up streams, woodlands and roadways

- Excellent
- Good neighbors and friends
- As it is now
- No pollution
- Has been maintained by minimizing growth along our waterways
- More diversified farm products besides corn and beans
- Provides residents with a positive experience that brings daily enjoyment
- Allows residents to appreciate the natural world from a close up perspective

Bradford has successfully preserved...

- Farmland (11)
- Rural community (5)
- Older farm buildings (2)
- Air and water both ground and surface

- Residential areas
- Family oriented community
- Park

Commercial and industrial development in the Town includes...and is located...

- Grain elevator maintained (5)

- Commercial near existing Avalon and Emerald Grove (2)

- A permanent farmers market located in Avalon or Emerald Grove (2)
- Convenience store with gas line
- Industrial in larger nearby Cities
- Permanent Garden center located in Rural Bradford
- Apple orchard
- Trucking
- Wind generation / methane digesters / biodiesel production
- Repair shops on Carvers Rock Road
- Small family farms
- Small stores in Avalon and Emerald Grove
- Growth of grain elevator in Avalon
- None
- Hwys 140 & 14
- Expanding services in our villages, local stores
- In Avalon and scattered sites throughout the town

In 2030, looking down at the Town from an airplane one would see...

- Controlled Housing (7)
- Excellent Farmland (4)
- Mix of Agricultural and residential housing (3)
- As it is today (3)
- Greener fields and woods along the Turtle Creek (2)
- Well maintained properties (2)
- Some Commercial/industrial sites
- Family farms
- No Strip mall development along roads but near commercial Avalon or Emerald Grove
- Open spaces
- More houses
- Fields of corn, wheat and beans
- School
- Buses
- Wind mill
- No busy roads
- Parks
- Green Agriculture
- Development

SUMMARY

The results of these exercises will be used to create Vision Statements for each Comprehensive Plan element and will guide the development of each plan chapter.