

SUBCHAPTER 2: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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The purpose of this Subchapter is to comply with §66.1001(2)(a), which requires this Plan to contain background information on the local government unit and a statement of overall objectives, policies, goals and programs of the unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the Town over a 20-year planning period. Background information should include population, household and employment forecasts that the Town used in developing this Plan, and demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the Town.

21.201 GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

The Town of Lyndon is a body corporate and politic. It is organized and operated pursuant to Chapter 60 Wis. Stats., utilizing a Town Board form of government, with three (3) Board members, one of whom is elected Chairman. The Town has adopted "Village Powers" pursuant to §60.10(2)(c) and §60.22(3), and pursuant thereto, it has created a Plan Commission and adopted a Zoning Ordinance.

21.202 LOCATION

The Town is located in south-central Wisconsin, in Juneau County (pop. 24,316), between the Village of Lyndon Station (pop. 458) and the City of Wisconsin Dells (pop. 2,418) and its sister municipality, the Village of Lake Delton (pop. 344). The Town is located on the Wisconsin River, the State's largest internal waterway. The Town is dissected by Interstate Highways 90 & 94, as well as the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is situated approximately half way between Madison and LaCrosse, and half way between Minneapolis and Chicago.

21.203 HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- (1) **NATIVE AMERICANS:** The cultural history of the Dells area is thought to span several thousand years. Native Americans ranging from early Paleo-Indians to the more recent Ho-Chunk (formerly Winnebago), Sac (Sauk) and Menominee were attracted to the scenic Dells waterway, and left archeological evidence including effigy and burial mounds. In 1634, when the French explorer Jean Nicolet waded ashore at Red Banks, people of the Ho-Chunk Nation welcomed him. For some 360 years, the French labeled this nation as the Winnebago Tribe. In November 1994, the official results of the Ho-Chunk Nation secretarial Election was published, approving the revised Constitution and the proper name of the nation reverting to the Ho-Chunk Sovereign Nation (People of the Big Voice), which they have always called themselves. Hence today the Winnebago are the Ho-Chunk Nation and Red Banks is better known as Green Bay. The exact size of the total Ho-Chunk Nation was not known at that time. However, their territory extended from Green Bay beyond Lake Winnebago to the Wisconsin River and to the Rock River in Illinois.

While most people think of Native Americans as hunters or gatherers, the Ho-Chunk were also farmers. For example, their history tells of corn fields south of Wisconsin Dells that were as large as the distance covered when you shoot an arrow three times. They appreciated the bounty of the land we now call Wisconsin. Their story is the story of a people who loved the land of Wisconsin. In the last 170 years they faced tremendous hardship and overcame long odds to live here.

Their troubles began in the late 1820's when lead miners began to come into southwestern Wisconsin. At that time, the U.S. Government recognized the Ho-Chunk as a Sovereign Nation. The U.S. Government recognized the Ho-Chunk held title to more than seven million acres of some of the finest land in America. Treaty commissioners, speaking for the United States, promised they would punish any whites going on recognized Ho-Chunk lands. However, the lure of lead and good farmland proved too great. Within ten years, the U.S. government reversed its position. The Ho-Chunk were forced to sell their remaining lands at a fraction of their worth and were removed from

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Wisconsin.

First, the Ho-Chunk people were moved to Northeastern Iowa. Within ten years (1846), they were moved to a wooded region of Northern Minnesota. They were placed there as a barrier between warring Sioux and Chippewa. As a result, the Ho-Chunk were victims of raids by both. At their request, they were to be moved to better land near the Mississippi River. Whites objected and before they could move, the U.S. Senate moved them further West. Within four years of their arrival (1859), the Government reduced their reservation from 18 square miles to 9 square miles. Four years later (1863), they were moved to a desolate reservation in South Dakota surrounded by Sioux. The U.S. Government allowed the Ho-Chunk to exchange their South Dakota reservation for lands near the more friendly Omaha's of Nebraska, in 1865. Throughout this time many Ho-Chunk refused to live on the increasingly poor area away from their abundant homelands in Wisconsin. Many returned to Wisconsin.

Today, the Wisconsin Ho-Chunk do not have lands reserved (a reservation) in Wisconsin. Instead, all Wisconsin Ho-Chunk tribal lands are lands they once owned but they have had to repurchase. As of December 27, 2001, the 6,159 members of the Wisconsin Ho-Chunk Sovereign Nation hold title to 2,000 acres of land. The largest concentrations of Ho-Chunk tribal members are in Jackson, Monroe, Milwaukee, Sauk, Shawano, and Wood counties. The Ho-Chunk Nation owns approximately 77 acres in the Town.

- (2) **WISCONSIN RIVER:** During the 17th century, European traders, trappers, and missionaries discovered the Wisconsin River as a primary transportation route. By the 1830's, timber resources in northern Wisconsin brought lumbermen who harvested old-growth forest and floated logs down the River. The Wisconsin River brought early opportunities for local economic growth. Damming of the River began in 1856 to generate waterpower for the new settlement. The present Kilbourn Dam (in Wisconsin Dells) was completed in 1909 and continues to serve the area with electric power today. However, the dam has reportedly raised the water level sixteen feet, submerging important geologic features and landmarks in the Upper Dells. According to the DNR, the difference in water levels between the Upper and Lower Dells is twenty-one feet. In a 1909 report, renowned landscape architect John Nolen recommended park status for the Dells. However, the State Park Board chose not to acquire the Dells of the Wisconsin River due to the extent of damage and development that had already occurred. About this time, tourism began to flourish in the Dells. Recognizing that tourism activity could endanger the scenic beauty of the Dells, H.H. Bennett's son-in-law, George Crandall, gradually acquired ownership of as much riverfront property as possible. He reforested many acres of cutover land adjacent to the River and created a plantation of 140,000 red pines that remain today. After Crandall's death, his daughters donated the property to the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF). Since that time, the Dells have been protected by Dells Boat Tours, LLC, a subsidiary of WARF.
- (3) **WISCONSIN DELLS:** The City of Wisconsin Dells has long been considered one of the premier family resort and recreation destinations in the State of Wisconsin and the Midwest. The beauty and splendor of the area began attracting tourists not long after the founding of Kilbourn – now Wisconsin Dells – in 1855. Early tours of the area were conducted by rowboat until the first steamboat began offering tours through the Dells in 1873. Intrigued by the images of landscape photographer H.H. Bennett, more and more visitors flocked to the area. By the 1890s, souvenir shops, more steamers, boat landings, and other tourist attractions were well established; foreshadowing the City's future as a mecca for family recreation and sightseeing. A century later, in 1999, it was estimated that the greater Wisconsin Dells community benefited from almost \$600 million in tourism-related expenditures by visitors to the area.

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- (4) **TOWN HISTORY:** The Town is named after the hometown of an early settler, James Cope, who came from Lindon, Vermont. With the creation of Juneau County, there was a battle between Mauston and New Lisbon regarding placement of the County Seat. Town of Waucedah County Supervisor, A.E. Avery, introduced a resolution to divide his own Town to maintain the balance of power on the County Board between these two factions. Hence, the Town of Waucedah was dissolved, the Town of Kildare was modified, and the Towns of Lyndon and Marion were created.

21.204 STATISTICAL INFORMATION

It is only through a clear understanding of the present community and the past events and trends that have helped shape the current community that we can effectively plan for the future. One way to help gain this understanding is through an analysis of demographic and development statistics over time. The following is an analysis of population, housing, employment, income, and economic trends experienced in the community over the last several decades, as well as projections for the future should these trends continue. A good understanding of these trends will help with the formulation of goals and objectives for the various Plan Elements aimed at continuing, altering, and/or accelerating these trends over the next several decades.

- (1) **POPULATION:** The Town's population has steadily increased over the last 40 years, according to the census information displayed in the table below. Due to Town and County ordinances which require minimum lot sizes for home building, the population is disbursed. There are several areas where the density of dwelling units is higher than normal. Most of these areas were established before land use regulations were imposed. The Town encompasses approximately 29.6 square miles, and so population density is low, with only 22-23 people per square mile.

	1970	1980	1990	2000	TOTALS
Town of Lyndon	405	701 73%	790 12.7%	1217 54%	+812 200%
Juneau County	18,445	21,037 +14%	21,650 +3%	24,316 +12%	+6,826 +39%
Village of Lake Delton	1,059	1,158 +9%	1,466 +26%	1,982 +35%	+923 87%
Seven Mile Creek Juneau County	376	362 -4%	383 +6%	369 -4%	-7 -2%
Village of Lyndon Station	533	375 -30%	474 +26%	458 -3%	-75 -14%
Town of Kildare Juneau County	335	465 39%	491 6%	557 13%	+222 +66%
Town of Newport Columbia County	562	657 +17%	535 -19%	681 +27%	+119 +21%
Town of Lewiston Columbia County	984	1,122 +14%	1,123 0%	1,187 +6%	+203 +21%
Town of Fairfield Sauk County	658	819 +24%	826 +1%	1,023 +24%	+365 +55%
Town of Delton Sauk County	846	1,426 +68%	1,599 +12%	2,024 +27%	+1,178 139%
Town of Dellona Sauk County	472	705 +49%	768 +9%	1,199 +56%	+727 +154%
Town of Dell Prairie Adams County	435	856 +97%	1,063 +24%	1,415 +33%	+980 +225%
Wis. Dells	2401	2521 +5%	2398 -4.9%	2418 +0.8%	17 +0.7%

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(2) **SEASONAL POPULATION:** Any analysis of population figures for the Town must recognize not only permanent Town residents as reflected in U.S. Census data, but also the presence of a seasonal population consisting of tourists and a temporary workforce that is not reflected in the census figures. At any point in time during the peak season, the number of people within the Wisconsin Dells/Lake Delton tourism area may be upwards of 20 times greater than the official population figures for the community. Even though this seasonal population does not call the Dells their home, their presence impacts surrounding communities, including the Town, and the facilities and services of the Town.

(3) **POPULATION PROJECTIONS:** According to the DOA, population projections are as follows:

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	CHANGE
Town	1,217	1,385	1,492	1,606	1,718	1,817	1,900	683 56.1%
County	24,316	26,719	27,513	28,449	29,348	30,066	30,551	6,235 25.6%

(4) **MARITAL STATUS:** Marital status for residents age 15 and over is as follows:

Never married:	24.7%
Married, living together:	57.5%
Married, separated:	1.4%
Widowed:	5.7%
Divorced:	10.7%
	100%

(5) **HOUSEHOLDS:** According to the 2000 census, there were 440 households in the Town, of which 108 (24.5%) were non-family households, and 332 (75.5%) were family households (e.g. with children under 18 years). The average household size was 2.77 persons, and the average family size was 3.11 persons.

(6) **SEX AND AGE:** According to the 2000 census, the makeup of the population is 51.4% male, and 48.6% female. The median age is 35.4 years, distributed as follows:

Under 18 years:	29.3%
18 years and over:	70.7%
21 years and over:	67.3%
62 years and over:	11.1%
65 years and over:	8.7%

(7) **EDUCATION:** The following table is a summary of the educational level of Town residents:

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL	TOWN	COUNTY	STATE
Less than 9 th Grade	4%	7.20%	5.40%
9 th to 12 th Grade (no diploma)	15.6%	14.30%	9.60%
High School Graduate (or equivalency)	44%	43.00%	34.60%
Some college, no degree	22.5%	19.70%	20.60%
Associate Degree	4.9%	5.80%	7.30%
Bachelor's Degree	7.1%	7.00%	15.30%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1.8%	3.00%	7.20%

(8) **EMPLOYMENT:** According to the 2000 census, 70.6% of the population was in the labor force, and 68.8% were employed. The majority (81.3%) of the Town's workers were private wage/salary workers, 10.7% were self-employed, 7.6% were government employed, and 0.3% were unpaid family workers. The workforce was spread across the industries shown in the following table:

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INDUSTRY	PERCENT
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	3.4%
Construction	9.3%
Manufacturing	14.8%
Wholesale trade	2.9%
Retail trade	13.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	6.2%
Information	1.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	3.6%
Prof., scientific, management, admin., & waste management services	3.6%
Educational, health and social services	8.9%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	27.2%
Other services (except public administration)	2.9%
Public administration	2.6%

The Town has been an agriculturally-based community for generations. Agriculture remains the dominant industry located in the Town. In 2009, there were thirteen (13) active farms, four (4) of which were dairy farms. Most of the Town's residents commute to employment areas outside of the Town in Wisconsin Dells, Mauston, and Reedsburg. The largest businesses in the Town focus on tourism, and are campgrounds and taverns.

- (9) **INCOME:** Full-time, year-round workers earned \$31,250.00 (male) and \$20,446.00 (female). The median household income was \$42,639.00, spread across the following categories:

Median Household Income	Percent
Less than \$10,000.00:	04.3%
\$ 10,000.00 to \$ 14,999.00:	04.3%
\$ 15,000.00 to \$ 24,999.00:	14.3%
\$ 25,000.00 to \$ 34,999.00:	17.5%
\$ 35,000.00 to \$ 49,999.00:	14.7%
\$ 50,000.00 to \$ 74,999.00:	31.1%
\$ 75,000.00 to \$ 99,999.00:	09.8%
\$100,000.00 to \$149,999.00:	02.5%
\$150,000.00 to \$199,999.00:	01.1%
\$200,000.00 or more:	00.5%

21.205 PUBLIC INPUT

According to the participation survey, 45% of Town residents favor growth in the Town at the present rate of growth, with 13% favoring more accelerated growth and 32% favoring decreased growth. Hence, it appears that residents favor growth at a slightly decreased rate than what has been experienced. But whatever the growth, residents overwhelmingly favor (76%) having input into the Town's growth. Hence, it would appear that residents generally favor planning and zoning to monitor and control the Town's growth.

21.206 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- (1) **PLANNED GROWTH:** Due to the Town's geographic location on the Interstate, near the Wisconsin Dells/Lake Delton tourism area, and adjacent to the Wisconsin River and other scenic natural resources, the Town has experienced development pressure, which the Town wishes to control. The Town is not resistant to growth. Instead, the Town wants to ensure that growth is well planned, so that it improves the tax base, preserves natural resources, and enhances the rural quality of life in the Town.
- (2) **ORDINANCES:** The Town needs to update its ordinances to establish standards and procedures to handle future development. The Town will adopt a new Code of Ordinances, including a new zoning ordinance.

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