

Introduction

The Issues and Opportunities Element provides the background information about the Town and the overall vision to guide future development and redevelopment through 2025. Specifically, the Issues and Opportunities Element includes population, household and employment forecasts, demographic trends, age distributions, education levels, income levels and employment characteristics. This chapter presents the overall vision for Buchanan, including an assessment of local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The community characteristics and general background information that form the basis for the Issues & Opportunities Element are provided in Chapter 3.

Community Survey

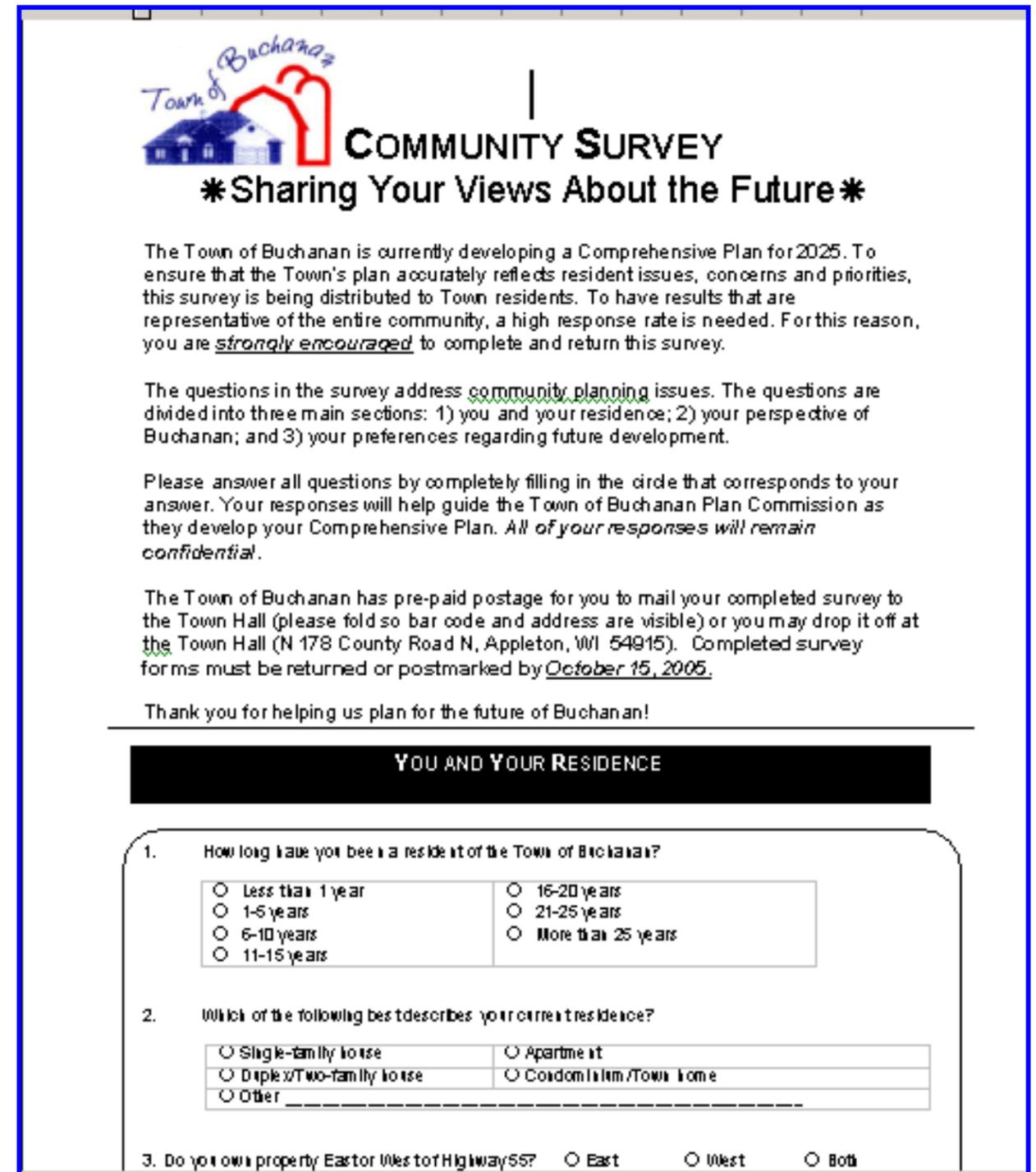
In October 2005, OMNNI Associates and the Buchanan Plan Commission developed and distributed a community survey to Town residents. More than 900 residents responded to the mailing. The purpose of the survey was to assess resident satisfaction with Buchanan and to understand resident desires and expectations for the future. A copy of the complete survey instrument and results are provided in the appendix. Additional results from specific questions are highlighted throughout the Plan to illustrate resident opinions related to topics discussed in the element chapters. Two survey questions aimed at gaining a general understanding of the community and its residents are included below. Questions aimed at issues related to specific elements in the Comprehensive Plan (Housing, Transportation, Natural Resources, etc.) will be in each of those chapters.

How Satisfied are You with the Town of Buchanan as a Place to Live?

Very Dissatisfied – 2.7% Dissatisfied – 1.7% Neutral/No Opinion – 2.4% Satisfied – 47.0% Very Satisfied – 46.3%

What Level of Personal Importance do you Place on Each of the Following Characteristics of the Town?

TABLE 1.0 COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTION #9 RESULTS					
	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Important	Very Important	No Opinion
Local Retail Shopping	3.3%	17.9%	53.6%	22.4%	2.8%
Local Personal/Professional Services	2.5%	23.0%	53.1%	16.0%	5.5%
Local Health Care	3.1%	19.2%	47.8%	25.8%	4.1%
Housing Opportunities/Choices	4.8%	23.4%	44.7%	16.7%	10.4%
New Economic/Business Development	6.0%	22.7%	43.5%	21.4%	6.4%
Sense of Safety and Security	3.2%	0.8%	15.0%	79.1%	1.9%
Parks and Recreation	3.1%	11.1%	44.3%	36.4%	5.1%
Small-Town Atmosphere	2.3%	6.9%	35.4%	51.1%	4.3%



Town of Buchanan
COMMUNITY SURVEY
Sharing Your Views About the Future

The Town of Buchanan is currently developing a Comprehensive Plan for 2025. To ensure that the Town's plan accurately reflects resident issues, concerns and priorities, this survey is being distributed to Town residents. To have results that are representative of the entire community, a high response rate is needed. For this reason, you are *strongly encouraged* to complete and return this survey.

The questions in the survey address community planning issues. The questions are divided into three main sections: 1) you and your residence; 2) your perspective of Buchanan; and 3) your preferences regarding future development.

Please answer all questions by completely filling in the circle that corresponds to your answer. Your responses will help guide the Town of Buchanan Plan Commission as they develop your Comprehensive Plan. *All of your responses will remain confidential.*

The Town of Buchanan has pre-paid postage for you to mail your completed survey to the Town Hall (please fold so bar code and address are visible) or you may drop it off at the Town Hall (N 178 County Road N, Appleton, WI 54915). Completed survey forms must be returned or postmarked by October 15, 2005.

Thank you for helping us plan for the future of Buchanan!

YOU AND YOUR RESIDENCE

1. How long have you been a resident of the Town of Buchanan?

Less than 1 year 16-20 years
 1-5 years 21-25 years
 6-10 years More than 25 years
 11-15 years

2. Which of the following best describes your current residence?

Single-family house Apartment
 Duplex/Two-family house Condominium/Town home
 Other _____

3. Do you own property East/West of Highway 55? East West Both

Cover Page from the Town of Buchanan Survey Instrument Distributed in October 2005

Visioning Process

Rather than solely develop a series of policy statements to guide future growth and development, the Town participated in a visioning process to establish a framework from which to make future land use decisions. The result of this process was a vision statement for each of the nine required plan elements. This process was critical to establish a unified vision for Buchanan and provide a direction and focus for the planning effort.

A three-step process was used to create visions. This process included a community SWOT meeting, cognitive mapping, and element vision development. What follows is a description of the activities and the major issues and opportunities identified through planning process.

What Does SWOT Stand For?

Strength: Something that makes a community stand out when compared to other communities. Something that makes one proud to call the community home. A strength can be a physical asset, a program, or an environmental condition (i.e. friendly community atmosphere).

Weakness: Opposite of strength. Problem that needs to be addressed.

Opportunity: Something that could be done to improve the community. A potential.

Threat: A threat may be internal or external. A threat can be anything that could jeopardize the future success of a community.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT meeting is a planning exercise used to encourage communities to contemplate:

- Where they have been
- Where they are
- Where they want to be in the future
- How they want to get there

On May 16, 2005, the Buchanan Plan Commission hosted a SWOT exercise as part of the Kick-off Meeting. The objective of the exercise was to understand how residents, business owners, appointed and elected officials, and other local stakeholders viewed various aspects of the Town. This included their thoughts on the natural environment, built environment (roads, utilities, etc.), and “quality of life” issues, among others.

What is a Vision?

Webster’s Dictionary defines vision as: (1) sense of sight; (2) something supposedly seen by other than normal sight; something perceived in a dream; (3) mental image; (4) The ability to perceive something not actually visible, as through mental acuteness or keen foresight [a project made possible by one man’s vision].

In planning, the term “vision” is an expression or idea of the desired future.

At the meeting, each participant was asked to write down what he or she thought were the Town’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Each person could list as many items as desired under each category. Next, participants worked in small groups to discuss their answers and collectively decide upon the three the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A list of the ideas expressed (including all of the group ideas and some additional individual ideas) is provided in the table. This information served as an action agenda for plan development.

The responses provided by the SWOT participants during the exercise are included in this document as written.

STRENGTHS

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and responsible government delivering measurable results with low property taxes and the ability to offer quality services • A diverse population that all work to support the community • Working with OMNNI; Town recognizes the need and is working on a plan for its future • Good location with low crime rate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community values – church, government, schools • Family oriented community (Darboy area) • Open space • Safe area to live • Current developed area – closeness to access of Hwys/communities • Close to retail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Water and sewer • Natural resources • Community sticks together and works with other communities well • Supportive businesses • Lot sizes • Schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still a lot of undeveloped land that could be planned for properly • Frugal government • Employment opportunities |
|---|---|---|---|

WEAKNESSES

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads and transportation (i.e. aging roads, insufficient biking and hiking trails, lack of conventional public transportation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic control, routing and enforcement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough safe ways for children to get around to different areas in the community (Darboy area) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough fresh and new ideas from the newer people of the community (involvement) |
|--|--|---|---|

- People do not realize growth is inevitable and must work with it (not against it)
- Rural area response time for emergencies and other issues
- Water drainage
- Land use
- Congestion at SW corner of township – lop sided development and lack of future planning/development opportunities mixed with lack of planning for annexation

- Government limited by state statutes, and unable to get TIF districts
- Lacks identity. Area more associated with Darboy. People think Buchanan is Darboy.
- Missing mass transit on regular basis
- Industrial base
- Hard to fight of annexation
- Need more traffic lights; Lack of street lights
- Taste of water
- Gardener’s Creek flooding problem

- Intergovernmental co-op
- Inconsistent zoning policies not applied fairly
- All the homes are about the same age causing concern in the future.
- No local police force
- Retention ponds need to be studied more before any more building.
- Need to work with Town of Harrison to manage our identity and future needs
- Litter

- A location to bring yard waste too (leaves, clippings, branches).
- Mega farms
- Pay non-member fees for sporting activities if you live in the Town of Buchanan
Need developed routes to schools and parks

OPPORTUNITIES

- Township either needs recreation programs (all sports and activities for children) of its own or to subsidize surrounding programs for equality – needs to be part of school system boundaries
- Controlled growth of residential, commercial and multi family development (intelligent way)

- Potential for land development
- Have great potential to be a very desirable area for transients. We could be known as THE PLACE TO LIVE
- Working in collaboration with surrounding communities and contracting with the county
- Multi-use transportation (e.g. – bike lanes, highway crossing)

- Commercial growth
- Keeping housing available for elderly, disabled persons, etc.
- Keeping safety of residents a priority (e.g. bike trails, police, fire, etc.)
- Keeping efficient transportation from rural to business communities, as well as maintaining community transportation, (e.g. bus.)

- Keep land for future cemetery.

THREATS

- Continued annexation attempts from surrounding municipalities
- Not enough knowledge in the Town for discussion on making the growth plan
- Smart & controlled growth - unplanned land use results in inconsistent/incompatible land uses
- Pressure on township to increase services as township grows; Costs of providing police, fire, etc.

- Too much growth to fast and lack of infrastructure to support that growth
- Being over run by commercial. Possibility for devaluing private property
- Lack of business base (tax base)
- Rapid growth planning
- City of Kaukauna
- New rules concerning casing and grouting of wells may inhibit new housing
- Sanitation facility

- Loss of community; Should Darboy incorporate?
- Unfunded mandates
- Traffic congestion on main roads
- Lack of cultural centers, churches, libraries, etc.
- Looked down upon by surrounding municipalities
- Hard for schools to keep up with growth
- Potential loss of jobs if paper industry leaves

- Erosion
- Empty strip mall storefronts
- Division of the area known as “Darboy” could lead to a polarized vision of the community

VISION DEVELOPMENT

To begin to develop vision statements for each of the nine required plan elements, a Vision exercise was conducted on Monday, July 11, 2005. The exercise involved completing a series of statements related to what the Town of Buchanan would look like in 20 years. The statements related to the nine (9) required plan elements. For example, participants were asked to complete the following statement, “In 20 years, looking down from an airplane at the Town of Buchanan, one would see...” Ideas were captured on a wall graphic in the room during the meeting. At the conclusion of the exercise, participants had the opportunity to indicate which items they felt were the most important to be addressed in the plan. OMNNI used the wall graphic to develop draft vision statements, which the Planning Commission reviewed in the spring of 2005. The final vision statements are provided throughout this plan to introduce the remaining elements. The overall vision is provided at the end of this chapter. Below are the list of partial statements residents used to “brainstorm” their ideas for the wall graphic. Each of the vision statements above are related to an element of this Comprehensive Plan.

- In 2025, protected natural and cultural resources...
- In 2025, recreational opportunities include...

- In 2025, attractive and desirable housing in the Town of Buchanan can be described as...
- In 2025, farming in the Town of Buchanan...

- In 2025, commercial and industrial development in Buchanan includes.... and is located....
- In 2025, rural character in the Town of Buchanan means ...

Participants ranked two ideas as especially important on the wall graphic: incorporating open space in new subdivisions and developing a housing strategy to protect the Town’s boundaries in 2025 and beyond. To address these two topics information is provided in this plan about conservation subdivision designs, alternative wastewater treatment systems (as compared to municipal/sanitary district systems), boundary agreements, the role of public education with respect to annexation, conservation easements and land purchase strategies.



Residents examine the wall graphic to individually identify ideas of most importance.

COGNITIVE MAPPING

A cognitive map, or mental map, is a map drawn by a person that geographically locates his or her memories, ideas and thoughts of a particular place. Since cognitive maps are based on individual's preferences and opinions there are no "right" or "wrong" maps. Cognitive maps are used to delineate geographic areas of a community people like, dislike, frequently visit, feel are important, travel through regularly, feel safe, etc.

At the Land Use Mapping Forum held on March 13, 2006 participants were provided two maps of the Town of Buchanan. On the first map, participants outlined portions of the Town based on their opinion of aesthetic appeal. The most attractive places were colored in one shade and least attractive in another. Participants also identified important local travel routes and their residence on this map.

On the second map, participants outlined those areas where they would like to see new commercial/industrial development, new residential subdivision development, new recreation areas, farmland and open space in Buchanan in the year 2025.

These maps were used in the development of the *Future Land Use Map* presented later in this plan. This approach was helpful in understanding community concerns and priorities for the future. More information about this activity, including composite and majority opinion maps, is provided in the Future Land Use Chapter.

Issues & Opportunities Element Vision

Below is the overall vision statement, which represents the broad interests of Town residents, elected/appointed officials, business leaders and property owners. Supporting visions for each of the required plan elements are provided at the beginning of subsequent chapters. Supporting goals, objectives and program initiatives are described in Chapter 12 of this plan.

Overall Vision

Buchanan is a unique, thriving, and prosperous community that invites opportunity for involvement from all in creating and implementing its vision for 2025 and beyond.

Buchanan is "the place" for living in the Fox Cities. It offers a great location, excellent schools, attractive parks, a network of trails, and quality housing choices for its many residents. Town planning has successfully blended development with natural areas and agricultural uses.

We envision Buchanan as a community that values cooperation and harmony among government, the business sector, citizens, civic organizations and surrounding communities

The community is known for its spirit of neighborliness, compassion, cooperation and mutual respect for all.