



CHAPTER 2

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

CHAPTER 2: ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Issues and Opportunities Element is to define a desired vision for the Town of Algoma with respect to future land use. Section 66.1001 (2) (a) of the Wisconsin Statutes requires that the Issues and Opportunities Element include a “statement of the overall goals, objectives, policies, and programs of the governmental unit to guide the future development and redevelopment of the governmental unit over the planning period.” This chapter contains two major sections:

1. A summary of the public participation process and information on key points gathered during the plan update process, and;
2. A review of key demographic information and a narrative that was used to create the vision, goals, framing concepts, strategies and action steps.

GOAL

Accommodate the needs and service demands of a growing and changing population.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

Public input was sought early in the planning process per the adopted Citizen Participation Plan. Input was gathered through a number of methods in order to better identify issues and opportunities, as well as used to draft the vision, goals and action steps.

1. Public Meetings (entire process) – There was an opportunity for public comment during each of the Plan Committee meetings.
2. Plan Committee SWOT Analysis - A series of four questions were posed to the Town’s Plan Committee at one of the initial meetings to better gauge their impressions of the current comprehensive plan, along with identifying future issues and opportunities to be considered during the plan update process. A summary of comments submitted by the Plan Committee members are contained on the following pages.
3. Public Workshops (May, 2018) - A public open house workshop entitled “Westward Ho” was held on May 23rd, 2018 which focused on the Town’s previously identified West Side Growth Area. Over 70 people participated in the workshop. Some valuable information was collected during the workshop regarding topics associated with the



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future development of the Town. A summary of the workshop results can be found as a separate document (https://townofalgoma.org/comp_plan_update/). Some of these comments and ideas were integrated into the Town's final Year 2040 Land Use Plan and Map.

4. Public Comment Period- There was a public comment period for community members to submit input on the draft plan before the comprehensive plan is approved. The public comment period was October 9th through November 9th.

TOWN OF ALGOMA PLANNING COMMITTEE - SWOT ANALYSIS RESULTS

On May 17, 2018, the Planning Committee was asked a series of four questions. A total of 6 people provided input and 67 comments were received. Below is a summary of their responses.

- What are the “STRENGTHS” of the Town’s current comprehensive plan, land use regulations, land use decision making process, or other aspects of how the community’s future and ‘change management’ is addressed?
 - Current comprehensive plan: maps, projections, full spectrum of topics concerning the Town and its future, detailed goals and objectives, allows for future park expansion, well thought out, and easy to read and understand.
 - Land use decision making process: nimble, easy to use by Planning Commission.
 - Community: family focused, low tax base, prime for growth, business attraction to USH 21 area, good leadership, and change in leadership (forward thinking people) in the Town has been very good.
 - Regulations: protect neighborhoods.
- What are the “WEAKNESSES” of the Town’s current comprehensive plan, land use regulations, land use decision making process, or other aspects of how the community’s future and ‘change management’ is addressed?
 - Current comprehensive plan: boiler plate language; limited thought in some areas; plan is not always followed; the goals and objectives of the plan have not served as the basis for a specific annual plan from which progress can be evaluated and actions can be prioritized; the plan is heavy on the narrative and does not serve well as an operating strategic plan for the Town to manage; and changes in the comprehensive plan.
 - Community future and “change management”: transportation planning either inadequate or failed in execution; change in the rate of population growth has not been accounted for; forecast and allocate tax and annual revenues; new or different ideas for development that do not fit for the Town; and is there enough money in the budget, should we or must we borrow the money - let's not go overboard.

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- Community: old mindset by longtime residents; and mismatch between people wanting lower taxes and nicer amenities.
- Land use decision making process: Planning Commission should be part of the decision-making policy.
- What are the “OPPORTUNITIES” that the Town of Algoma has with respect to planning for its future? What trends can’t be ignored?
 - Planning: thoughtful information to aid decisions for the next decade; an easier process for the next comprehensive plan update; opportunities to examine what has been accomplished and what has not to determine if the outstanding items continue to be needed; opportunity to address housing for retiring/elderly people who wish to downsize and stay in the Town, need for alternative housing developments - i.e. condos, apartments; Parks - walking trails/biking trails - future use of quarry once it is no longer operational; local restaurants / coffee shop, while well written, the current comprehensive plan should be monitored, revised as necessary and reviewed every few years; maybe more commercial businesses should be brought in along the Hwy 21 corridor and the area between Hwy 21 and south to Witzel; and local and state organizations to help with ideas for the future.
 - Trends: a relatively decent amount of land exists for future home development; “prime” commercial land exists across from Aurora Hospital; community populations continue to grow with relatively stable families; young, family demographic; higher income earners with expendable income; green space, trees, location; growth of Oshkosh and what the western neighborhoods will need/want; desire for more walking, biking, hiking, options to errands/parks/etc.; infrastructure including chronic stormwater management issues; and address high end multi-unit planned community.
- What are the “THREATS” to the Town’s current quality of life? What may impact the Town in terms of developing or implementing a land use vision in the future?
 - Quality of life: reduction in taxes with loss of home/property through annexation, people wanting lower taxes may not be willing to kick in more money to make the Town better with amenities, roads, etc.
 - Impacts to future land use vision: failure to plan for the inevitable continued growth based on the proximity to Oshkosh and the attraction of the Town; unrealistic land use planning; significant new housing is being developed just outside and west of the Algoma border, where buyers are finding greater value from lots; greater financial benefits exist for school administrators to bring Omro students into Oakwood Elementary than to accept Oshkosh area students - as more Omro students are brought to the school, less opportunities exist for Oshkosh students and families to move to this community; old mindset of a quiet town and not wanting commercial around/behind their houses; consequences of inaction and letting the Town know; lack of citizen involvement and insufficient

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communication by the Town resulting in lack of support for actions; encroachment of city and loss of developable land; zoning to allow for multi-use property as in apartment / condo use; financial implications of not enough taxes currently collected to fund parks, trails, and major road improvements.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS AND NARRATIVE

Changes in population and household characteristics, combined with existing and future development patterns and policy choices, will determine how well the Town will be able to meet the future needs of its residents.

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

THE FACTS:

- The Town experienced a significant gain in population between 1990 and 2010, growing by 95% or from 3,492 people in 1990 to 6,822 people in 2010.
- Growth in the Town slowed considerably between 2010 and 2017 with the addition of 137 persons.
- The WDOA's circa 2013 population projections forecast that the Town will continue to have steady growth through 2040, but at a slower rate.
- The population estimate for the year 2020 in the Town is 7,770, based on Census data.
- Rounds of property annexations occurred in 2013 and 2018, with a third round of annexations scheduled for 2023.
- Moving forward, the Town is projected to have an increase of 2,771 persons between the years 2017 and 2040.

WHAT IT MEANS:

Historically the Town has experienced a steady and rapid growth rate, especially compared to the county and the state. WDOA projections indicate that the Town will continue to see steady growth, though at a slightly slower pace during the planning period. The Town has expressed concern that perhaps the WDOA projections are high. New development such as Lake Vista and Remington and potentially the development of the Quarry will increase the Town's population. Based on this information and the amount of space available for residential development leads one to assume that the Town's projected 2040 population of 9,730 residents may occur.

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AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE

THE FACTS:

- Females comprised approximately 49.6% of the population between the 2014-2018 planning period.
- The Town's median age is 46 years old between 2014-2018, which was higher than Winnebago County at 38.2 years old.
- The largest segment of both the male and female populations is contained in the 44 to 54 year age cohort.
- Approximately 19% of the population is over 65 years old or older.
- Persons under the age of 18 years made up about 22.4% of the population.

WHAT IT MEANS:

With the Town's median age just under the age of 50, over the next 10 years, it is expected that the number of persons reaching retirement age will increase over the planning period. With a larger percentage of people under the age of 18, there will be a fair number of young adults entering the work force. The Town will continually see a change in demands for services and infrastructure. Impacts could be felt in many ways, including housing types that match the needs of this segment of the population, additional recreational or leisure amenities and access to public transportation for medical services, grocery shopping, etc.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

THE FACTS:

- Whites comprised approximately 94% of the population in the Town, compared to 92.1% in Winnebago County and 85.6% of the state's population.
- According to the American Community Survey 2014-2018 planning period, the Asian population made up a total of 5.1% of the Town's total population.
- The Black or African American population in the Town made up 0.4% of the total population.
- The Hispanic or Latino population made up around 0.4% of the population in the Town of Algoma during 2014-2018.

WHAT IT MEANS:

While whites still vastly outnumber other races, the Town's population is becoming more diverse from a racial and ethnic standpoint. In order to grow, the community may need to become more diverse. Racial diversity can lead to a number of changes in community dynamics. Understanding differences in culture, race and ethnic groups facilitates acceptance and creates a more welcoming community for all.

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HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE AND TRENDS

THE FACTS:

- Household size in the Town decreased slightly from 2.94 persons per household in 2000 to 2.78 persons per household in 2010.
- From the ACS 2014-2018 dataset, the average persons per household in the Town was 2.59.
- The Town's average household size has remained somewhat higher than the county and the State of Wisconsin in both time periods.
- Over 80% of the households in the Town were family households in both 2000 (86.2%) and 2010.
- Individuals living alone, age 65 years old and older, nearly doubled between 2000 and married couple families (husband and wife) made up 75.9% of all households in the Town in 2010 and 80.2% in 2000.
- ACS 2014-2018 data showed:
 - Owner occupied housing made up 93.5% of the total housing stock in the Town.
 - There were approximately 2,729 total households in the Town of Algoma.
 - Approximately 5.2% of households spoke a second language and had persons over the age of 5.

WHAT IT MEANS:

Even though the Town's household size is decreasing yet remains higher than the county and the state, indicating the strong presence of family households. As the household size continues to decrease over the planning period, the presence of married couples and families should remain strong, when compared to the county and the state. Married couples may be better off than single parent households; this is especially true of single mother households. Household that are better off financially have more disposable income that can be spent on maintaining properties and donating money for civic needs. Decreases in household size and an aging population, may create an additional need for diverse housing units and accommodating infrastructure to fit individual needs. This could include larger homes for married couple and family households, and different housing for single individuals and an elderly population.

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EDUCATION

THE FACTS:

- The Town had a slightly higher percentage of residents age 25 or older who graduated from high school or higher in 2014-2018 than the county and the state at 95.8%.
- The Town had a significantly higher percentage of residents age 25 or older who received a bachelor's degree (32.0%) in 2014-2018.
- Residents who have received their graduate degree or higher comprised 13.9% of the total Town population.

WHAT IT MEANS:

The Town is generally better educated than the county and state as a whole. Since those with a bachelor's degree can expect to earn about twice as much as a high school graduate, this would indicate that Town residents should have more buying potential and disposable income. Algoma could capitalize on this in many ways moving forward by recruiting employers to the Town that rely on this disposable income.

INCOME

THE FACTS:

- Of the 5,791 population in the Town, 3,851 people are over the age of 16 and in the labor force.
- The ACS 2014-2018 Estimates show that the median household income in 2018 dollars was \$85,216, which is significantly higher than both Winnebago County (\$56,589) and the State of Wisconsin (\$60,773).
- The mean household income for the State of Wisconsin is \$77,687 while Winnebago County's mean household income is \$79,230. The Town of Algoma's mean household income is \$105,171.
- Those with annual household incomes of \$100,000 or more made up about 43% of the Town's total households.

WHAT IT MEANS:

Since a somewhat large percentage of Algoma's household income is from earnings, access to employment opportunities is a strong determinant in meeting the income needs of residents. The Town's population is fairly well off financially when compared to the county and the state.

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POVERTY STATUS

THE FACTS:

- Approximately 3.3% of persons lived below the poverty level in the Town, according to the American Community Survey 2014-2018 estimates.
- Between 2005-2009 and 2014-2018, the percentage of people living below the poverty line more than doubled in the Town from 1.4% to 3.3%.
- Approximately 1.5% of families lived below the poverty level in the Town, according to 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

WHAT IT MEANS:

While not a large share of the population, some people within Algoma are struggling financially. Those struggling financially may not have access to a vehicle and may therefore have difficulty accessing employment, groceries, services and health care. They may also have difficulty finding affordable housing. It will be important for the Town to provide amenities for struggling community members, households and families.

FRAMING CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES

2a: AGING IN PLACE

Aging in place is a concept that can be thought of in two ways. First, is when an individual makes a conscious decision to stay in their home of choice for as long as they can. As they grow older, supplementary services may be needed to facilitate their living conditions and maintain comfort and quality of life. The second is from a community perspective which broadens the concept to include opportunities being made for any resident to live their full life within the same community. Therefore, aging in place is more a function of the community's overall "livability".

The Town of Algoma must continually evaluate the "livability" of the community and its ability to enable residents to "age in place." Changes in housing types, access to services, and transportation choices will occur as an individual's life changes over time - i.e. single, married, children, empty-nest, retirement, and end of life care. Town development initiatives will be key factors to enable residents to access the necessary amenities and services they require locally as they age.

Strategy 2a-1: Make the Town of Algoma a more "livable" community over the next twenty years in order to increase opportunities to age in place. Resources for review and consideration include:

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- AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities. A resource for neighborhoods, cities, and towns across the country, the network reiterates AARP's vision: healthy, sustainable communities will benefit residents of all ages.
- AARP Livability Index: The Livability Index scores neighborhoods and communities across the U.S. for the services and amenities that impact your life the most.
- APA's Policy Guide for Aging in Community: APA recognizes that the aging of the population creates a unique opportunity and responsibility to apply sound planning approaches and policy to improve communities to serve the spectrum of needs and abilities of older adults.

Strategy 2a-2: Integrate sound-decision making into land use policies using a framework that examines variables affecting livability and aging in place, such as:

- Mobility/Transportation
- Access to food
- Programs and services
- Built environment
- Access to health services
- Social interaction/engagement
- Housing/Affordability
- Access to information
- Public security/safety
- Civic participation
- Volunteerism
- Leadership Succession

2b: DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

The national and state population trends are changing rapidly in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and income disparity. Issues and opportunities associated with this changing population should be addressed proactively at a community level. Diversity and inclusivity is becoming increasingly important as younger generations have become accustomed to it, if not demand it, in the places that they live. The Town of Algoma is not immune to these changes and demographic data has shown that the population is changing in terms of race, ethnicity and those with lower incomes. Algoma should strive to ensure inclusivity, diversity and equity is part of its land use plan and the land use decision-making process.

Strategy 2b-1: Expand diversity in planning and civic leadership by implementing strategies for reducing barriers to participation and cultivating diverse leaders.

Strategy 2b-2: Implement strategies for reducing barriers to participation in government committees and organizations to increase diversity through planning and civic leadership.

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