

CHAPTER 2: INVENTORY, TRENDS, AND FORECASTS

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the *Town of Townsend 20-Year Comprehensive Plan* provides a summary of the town's resource elements, which are also inventoried in *Volume II: County Resources*. The town's past trends and potential forecasts for population, housing, economic development, and land use are also illustrated in this chapter.

Ultimately, the information described in this portion of the town's comprehensive plan provides the foundation for the development of the Town of Townsend 20-Year General Plan Design (Chapter 3 of *Volume I: Town Plan*).

COMMUNITY INVENTORY

History and Description of Planning Area

History of the Town of Townsend

The Town of Townsend was built along Military Road in 1864. The town was originally named Johnson Siding and later, along with Lakewood, became known as the Town of Wheeler. In addition to Johnson Siding, there were two smaller communities in the Townsend area: Coleville and Unity Center. Coleville was located in the area of Surprise Lake. Unity Center was located along McCaslin Brook in the area of what are now Unity Drive, Cassler Drive and Sawyer Lake Road. Unity Drive was part of Old County T, later called McCaslin Drive and changed in 1998 to Unity Drive.

In 1916 the Town of Wheeler was split into what is now Lakewood and Townsend. The Town was named Townsend in honor of the man who drove the first spike in the railroad here.

Town of Townsend Planning Area

The Town of Townsend is located in the northern portion of Oconto County. The town encompasses an area of approximately 43 square miles or 27,051 acres. **Map 2.1** illustrates the general location of the Town of Townsend in Wisconsin, while **Map 2.2** shows the planning area.

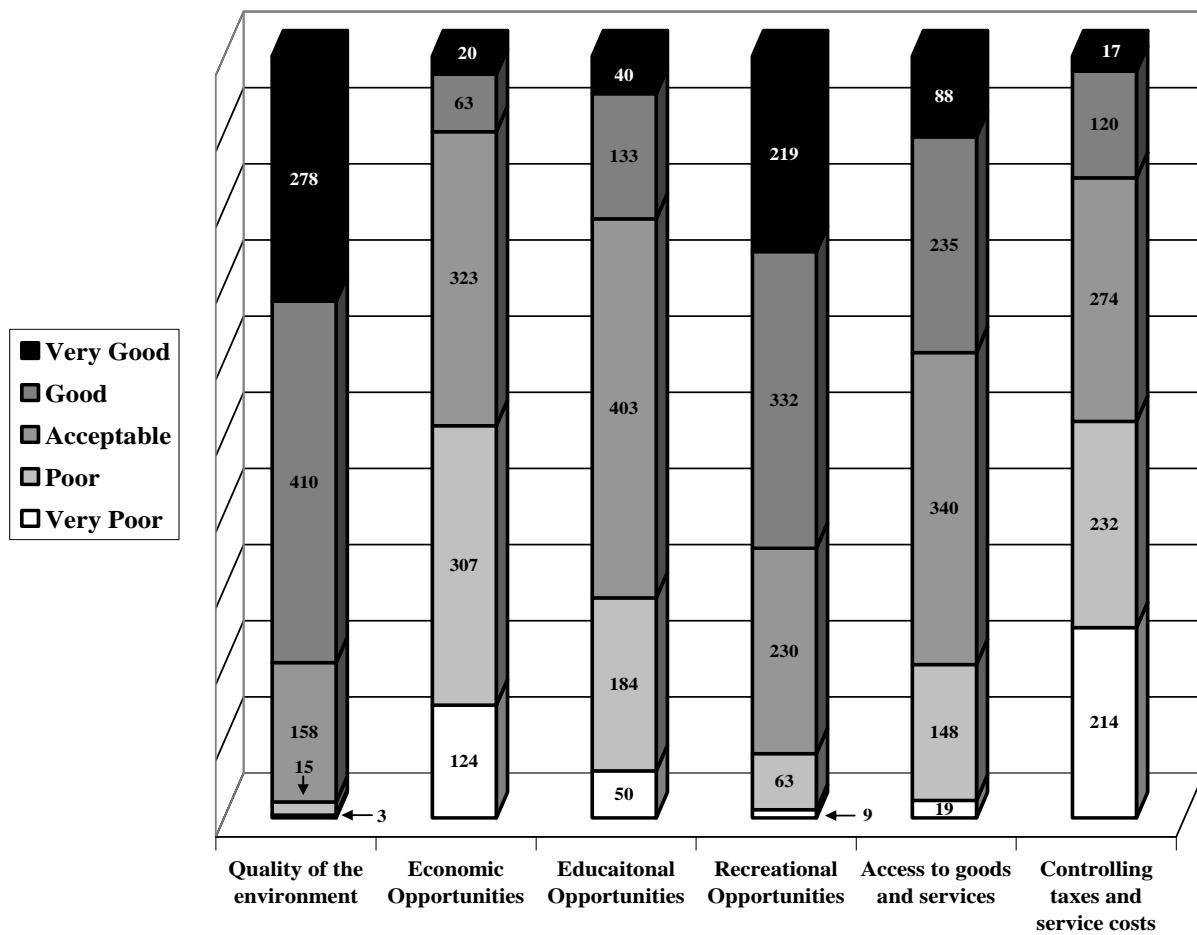
Past Planning Efforts

Town of Townsend Community Survey

In May 2004, the town completed a community survey with the assistance of Oconto County UW-Extension. The survey was mailed to all residents of the Town of Townsend, including those that are there on a part-time basis, totaling 1,802 surveys. Of these 903 were returned, which corresponds to a response rate of 50.1 percent. The survey is not a regulatory tool; however, it points to many issues that are considered important by the public that should be taken into consideration when making any future land use decision. The following information highlights the results of the survey.

As shown by Figure 2.1, respondents felt that the town offered above average quality of environment and recreational opportunities and average to above average economic opportunities, educational opportunities, and access to goods and services. Responses indicate that residents do not believe the town is doing a very good job controlling taxes and service costs.

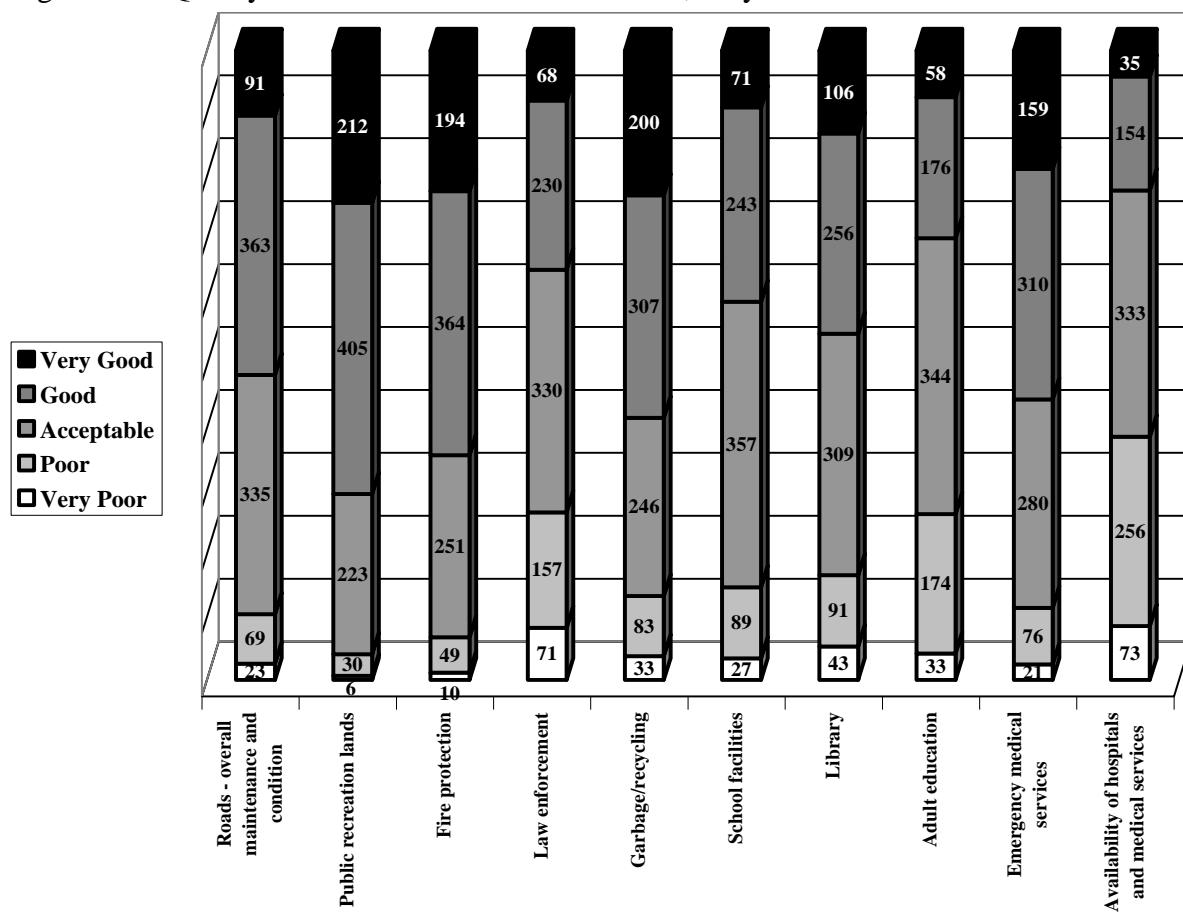
Figure 2.1: Community Rating, May 2004



Source: Town of Townsend Community Survey, May 2004; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

Overall, the town's residents feel that the quality of public facilities and services are average to above average, as illustrated by Figure 2.2. Some respondents did indicate displeasure with the availability of adult education opportunities in the town and their access to hospitals and medical services.

Figure 2.2: Quality of Public Facilities and Services, May 2004



Source: Town of Townsend Community Survey, May 2004; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

As illustrated by Table 2.1 and Figure 2.3 residents of the town value its quiet and peaceful nature as well as its natural features the most. Low crime rates and cleanliness were also noted as being important. By far, the top concern noted by respondents was increasing taxes. Over 21 percent of those that responded to the survey noted this as one of the top five concerns they had with respect to the town. Other top concerns that were noted include increasing land prices, lack of job opportunities, lack of new businesses, and increasing lake usage.

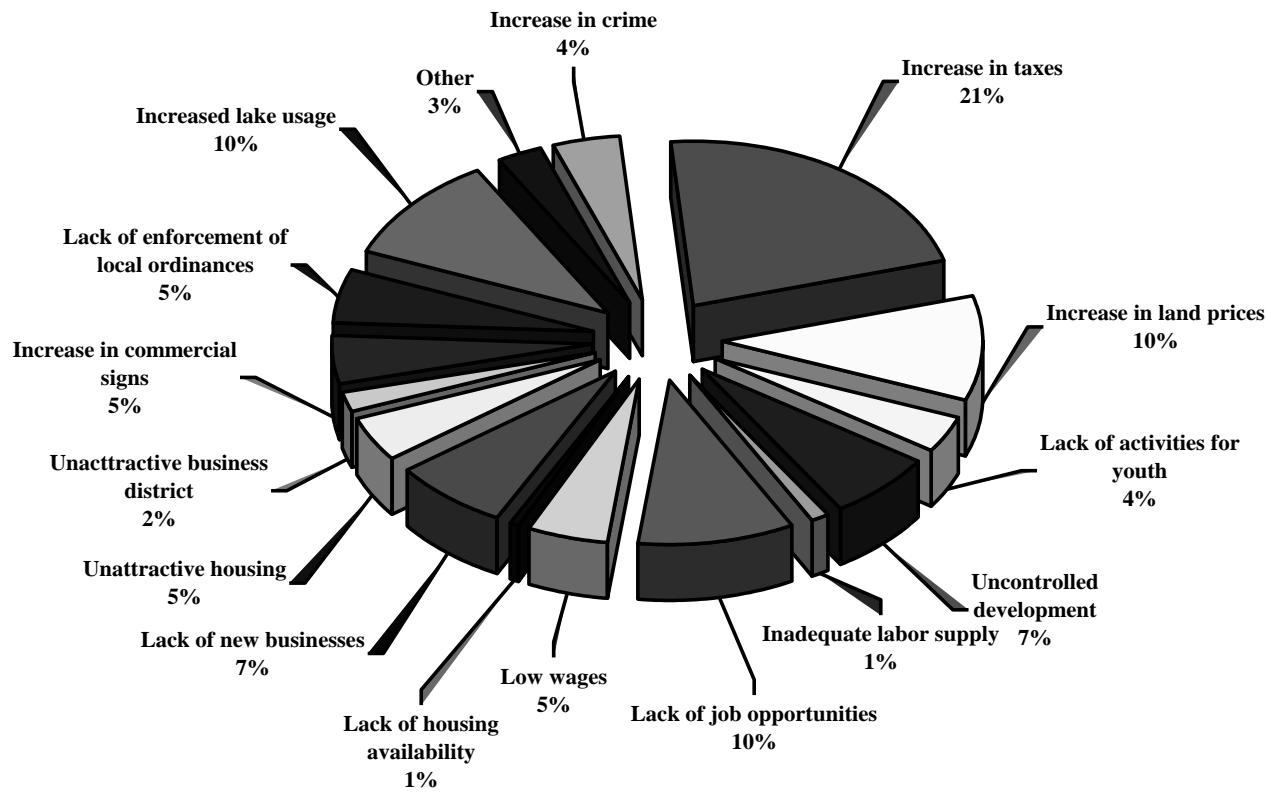
Table 2.1: Values of Town Residents, May 2004

	Value	Percent
Small town living		0
Friendliness		0
Quiet and peaceful		33.5
Low Crime		11.2
Clean and neat in appearance		7.9
Surface waters, wildlife, and beautiful scenery		46.2
Other		1.3

*Note: Respondents were asked to choose up to three options

Source: Town of Townsend Community Survey, May 2004; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

Figure 2.3: Problems or Concerns of Town Residents, May 2004



* Note: Respondents were asked to choose up to five options.

Source: Town of Townsend Community Survey, May 2004; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

In regards to new housing development, respondents showed that they were generally opposed to any new development of duplexes, multi-unit apartments, mobile homes, and high income housing. They were neutral regarding future development of single family housing, low to moderate income housing, and assisted living structures.

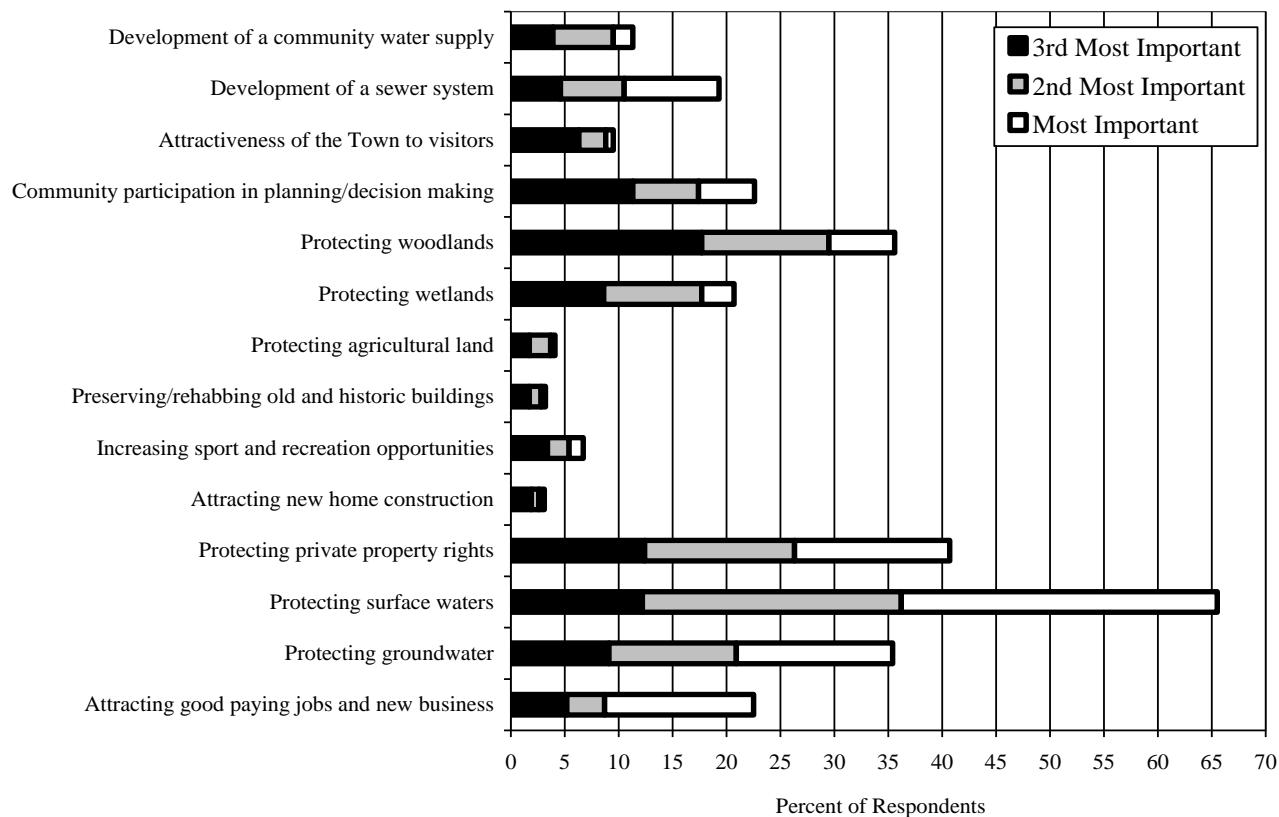
Regarding future commercial and industrial related development, respondents were opposed to large or moderate scale industrial and large scale retail related developments; neutral in terms of service and all scales of agricultural developments; and supportive of small scale industrial, tourism related, and small scale retail developments. Overall, the majority of respondents, over 82 percent, were neutral or opposed to no new development occurring in the future.

When asked about future zoning and planning activities, approximately 45 percent of respondents agreed that land use should be governed by town ordinances. Most respondents also felt that moderate to high levels of restriction should be placed on all types of development. In particular, almost 50 percent of respondents felt a high level of restriction should be placed on the location of manufacturing plants, large scale “commercial farms,” and mobile homes and lakeshore development. The majority of respondents also agreed that stricter protection of natural resources was needed and a farmer’s right to farm should be protected.

Respondents were also asked to identify the most important issues they believe should be addressed in future planning and zoning decisions. As illustrated by Figure 2.4, town residents

identified protecting surface waters, private property rights, and woodlands as the most important issues. On the other hand, preserving and/or rehabbing historic buildings and sites, attracting new home construction, and protecting agricultural land were identified as the least important issues.

Figure 2.4: Important Issues for Future Planning, May 2004



Source: Town of Townsend Community Survey, May 2004; and Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission, 2007.

Community Resources

Natural Resources

Natural resources are often a defining feature for local communities. People depend on natural resources to provide a clean and abundant supply of groundwater; assure good air quality; and provide natural landscapes that are fundamental to a healthy and diverse biological community.

The resources that lie beneath the ground are very important when considering future development. The area of the state in which Townsend is located, known as the Northern Highlands region, was once a mountainous area. Centuries of erosion eventually removed the mountains leaving behind bedrock comprised of granite and a mixture of igneous rocks and a topography that features some of the highest elevations in the state of Wisconsin. Nearby Thunder Mountain rises 1,375 feet above sea level and McCaslin Mountain has been measured at 1,625 feet above sea level.

Watersheds represent the total land area from which water drains into a particular body of water. There are two watersheds that provide drainage to the Town of Townsend: Lower North Branch Oconto River and South Branch Oconto River. Ultimately, these watersheds drain directly into Lake Michigan via Green Bay or a major river system. Each watershed contains a number of

drainage basins. These basins serve to transport water through the watershed and into a surface water. Deposition of sediment and runoff into these drainage basins can greatly impact an area's water resources. Therefore, it is imperative to protect these drainage basins from development in order to ensure maximum efficiency.

Protection of area watersheds leads to protection of the town's surface waters. Surface waters are abundant in the northern portion of Oconto County and play a significant role in the everyday life of the Town of Townsend's residents and visitors. The town contains 22 named lakes, 10 named streams, and a number of other unnamed surface waters. Major surface waters found in Townsend include Pickerel Lake, Upper Wheeler Pond, Townsend Flowage, Horn Lake, Explosion Lake, Reservoir Pond, Archibald Lake, the northern portion of Bass Lake (with the southern being in the Town of Doty), McCaslin Brook, McCaslin Creek, and a portion of the Oconto River. **Map 2.3** illustrates the location of surface waters in the Town of Townsend.



All of the water used by the Town of Townsend and its residents comes from groundwater. There is no municipal water supply in the town; therefore, all water is supplied via private wells. Fertilizers, manure, land application of sewage, pesticides, on-site sewage disposal systems, chemical spills, leaking underground storage tanks, landfills, existing land uses, and landowner practices are all potential pollutants for drinking water wells. The susceptibility of groundwater to contamination from these activities can be highly variable depending on location. Depth to bedrock, aquifer type, soil type, and depth to groundwater are all factors thought to influence susceptibility. Considering these factors, it can be concluded that groundwater is most susceptible to contamination in the northwest part of Oconto County, which includes the Town of Townsend, where the sand and gravel aquifer is present.



Cathedral Pines State Natural Area

Source: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/sna/sna496.htm>

A large portion of the Town of Townsend is made up of public forest lands. Over 13,800 acres of land in the town are part of the Nicolet National Forest. This means that over 50 percent of the town is owned and managed by the US Forest Service. The national forest is managed for a number of different uses including timber harvesting, forest preservation, and recreation. The town also contains an additional 6,600 acres of woodlands that lie outside of the National Forest. In total, the town contains over 20,000 acres of woodlands.

A number of places in the Town of Townsend have been identified for their environmental significance and named as State Scientific and Natural Areas, State Wildlife and Fishery Areas, Significant Coastal Wetlands, Land Legacy Places, or a natural area. For more information regarding these sites and their designations see Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County*

Resources.

Environmental Corridors

Other areas of environmental significance have been identified as falling within an environmental corridor. An environmental corridor is a portion of the landscape that contains and connects natural areas, green space, and scenic, historic, scientific, recreational, and cultural resources. In developing this comprehensive plan, the following criteria were utilized in delineating the environmental corridors in the Town of Townsend:

- WDNR inventoried wetlands (> 2 acres);
- 100-year floodplains;
- Steep slope ($\geq 12\%$); and
- Surface waters with a 75-foot buffer.

Each individual feature within the environmental corridors is referred to in this plan as a “plan determinant.” **Map 2.4** illustrates the plan determinants of the Town of Townsend. For more information regarding environmental corridors, wetlands, floodplains, soils, and surface waters please see Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

These environmental corridors, along with other identified areas of environmental significance, should be considered when making decisions regarding future development in Townsend. These spaces serve a vital role in protecting local water quality; serving as buffers between different land uses; controlling, moderating, and storing floodwaters; providing nutrient and sediment filtration; and providing fish and wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

Agricultural Resources

There are a number of areas in Townsend that can be designated as having prime agricultural soils. The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service defines prime agricultural soils as lands that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, and other agricultural crops, with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion. Approximately 6,671 acres of land in the town is comprised of these soils. **Map 2.5** illustrates the location of the classified prime farmland soils in the Town of Townsend. For definitions of agricultural soil types and more information on the soils found throughout the Town of Townsend and Oconto County see Chapter 5 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Despite the occurrence of these soils, the farming presence in the town has been declining over time. Ultimately, Townsend’s agricultural character is deeply rooted in the timber industry. Portions of the Nicolet National Forest are harvested every year for timber to be utilized in a number of different ways.

Economic Resources

The Town of Townsend’s economy is heavily influenced by its forest and water resources. The Nicolet National Forest and other woodlands in the town provide a number of jobs and opportunities for local businesses. The forests and lakes promote tourism and attract a number of seasonal residents which further enhances opportunities for local retailers and service providers. For more information on the county’s economy, please see Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Transportation

State Highway 32 is a minor arterial route that services the Town of Townsend and is one of the most heavily used roads in the area. The function of an arterial highway is to move traffic over medium to long distances, often between regions as well as between major economic centers, quickly, safely, and efficiently. State Highway 32 is classified as a minor arterial highway because it has an annual daily traffic (ADT) count of 2,000, as opposed to a major arterial which has an ADT of 6,000. The town is also serviced by a major collector road, County Highway T, and a minor collector road, Archibald Lake Road. Collector roads take traffic from the local road system (and the land based activities supported by the local roads) and provide relatively fast and efficient routes to arterial highways, farm markets, agricultural service centers, and larger urban areas.

The transportation facility inventory conducted for Oconto County has established that the county currently has jurisdiction over, and responsibility for, approximately 313 miles of highway. The county's jurisdictional responsibility relative to its highway system includes maintenance, repair and reconstruction of the highways as required. The primary funding source for maintaining, rehabilitating and reconstructing the county highway system is the state's disbursement of general transportation aids.

According to the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads, in 2006 the Town of Townsend contained 100.83 miles of roads. Of these, 4.84 miles are under the jurisdiction of Oconto County while 95.99 are under jurisdiction of the town. Table 8.2 found in Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources* lists the mileage of roads under the jurisdiction of the Town of Townsend by function. **Map 8.1** found in Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources* provides the location of the roads by function within the town.

For further transportation information as it pertains to Oconto County and its municipalities, including an inventory of facilities, applicable transportation plans, funding opportunities, and recommendations, please refer to Chapter 8 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Facilities, Utilities, and Services

An assessment of existing community and public facilities needs to be made to determine any current or future issues that may cause potential problems in meeting future development needs. Information regarding county-wide community and public facilities, including location and serviceability, can be found in Chapter 9 of *Volume II: County Resources*. The majority of the information on county and local community and public facilities was solicited from a survey that was sent to the Town of Townsend Clerk and from comprehensive plans that have been completed in the past. The survey asked for information regarding existing community and public facilities as well as any existing needs the town has that are associated with those facilities. **Map 2.6** shows the location of public and community facilities located in the Town of Townsend.

The Townsend Town Hall is located 16564 Elm St. The Town Hall serves as the Town Business Office and is used as a place to hold Town Board meetings, county zoning hearings, elections, and other meetings related to town and county business.

The town does not supply its own police protection. Instead, the Oconto County Sheriff's Department provides police services to the town's residents. There is an Oconto County Sheriff's Deputy dedicated to the northern third of the county. In addition to this individual, there is a

Recreational Officer committed to patrolling the trails and waterways of the county. The town also relies on the Oconto County Jail for any incarceration needs and a Municipal Court has been placed in Gillett, servicing the northern portion of the county.

The town does, however, provide its own fire protection and emergency medical services. The fire department is located at 17937 Front Street and is staffed by approximately 40 volunteers. The town is responsible to provide fire protection services to its own residents and also maintains mutual aids agreements with the Brazeau, Crooked Lake, Doty, Lakewood, Mountain, Riverview, Silver Cliff, Wabeno, and Wolf River fire departments. The town's emergency medical services are provided by the Lakewood/Townsend Ambulance Service located at 16003 Village View Road in Townsend.

Residents and visitors of the Town of Townsend can seek non-emergency medical attention from the NorthLakes Community Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center, which provides primary and preventative care services to Medicare, Medicaid, commercially insured, uninsured, and low income patients under the general or direct supervision of a physician. The clinic is located at 15397 State Highway 32. Bellin Health located in Lakewood is also available to provide non-emergency medical attention. This clinic is located at 15481 Commercial Rd. Suite E. In emergency situations, local emergency medical services generally bring patients to either HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital in the City of Oconto Falls or Aspirus Langlade Hospital in the City of Antigo in Langlade County. There are no adult care facilities located in the town. Survey response indicated this is an issue as there is a significant elderly population in the town as well as surrounding areas.

The Town of Townsend Waste Disposal facility, located on Village View Road, provides residents of the town with a place to dispose of refuse. This facility also serves as the recycling facility. The town does not offer curbside pickup of trash or recyclables. Some town residents choose to contract with a private hauler for waste pick-up services. There is one federally owned and four locally owned park and recreation areas located in the town. These facilities are illustrated on **Map 2.6**.

For more information on the community and public facilities offered throughout Oconto County please refer to Chapter 9 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Land Use Inventory

A detailed field inventory of land uses in the Town of Townsend was completed by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission in 2007. In 2017, as part of the plan update a detailed existing land use inventory was completed by Oconto County Planning. A consistent standard land use classification methodology and process was used to determine existing land uses. Please see Chapter 11 of *Volume II: County Resources* for a description of these categories.

A breakdown of the town's land uses and acreages is shown in Table 2.2, while **Map 2.7** illustrates the current land use.

Table 2.2: Existing Land Use Inventory

Land Use Type	Total Acres	Percentage Total Land	Percentage Developed Land
DEVELOPED			
<i>Single Family</i>	1,835.3	6.8	71.2
<i>Mobile Homes</i>	161.7	0.6	6.3
<i>Multi-Family</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Vacant Residential</i>	2.4	0.0	0.1
Total Residential	1,999.4	7.4	77.5
Commercial	69.0	0.3	2.7
Industrial	50.0	0.2	1.9
Transportation	298.3	1.1	11.6
Communications/Utilities	2.7	0.0	0.1
Institutional/Governmental	8.6	0.0	0.3
Recreational	132.3	0.5	5.1
Agricultural Structures	18.7	0.1	0.7
Total Developed Acres	2,579.0	9.6	100.0

UNDEVELOPED		Percentage Undeveloped Land
Croplands/Pasture	650.5	2.4
Woodlands	20,124.3	74.5
Other Natural Areas	1,263.7	4.7
Water Features	2,377.8	8.8
Total Undeveloped Acres	24,416.2	90.4
Total Land Area	26,995.2	100.0

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Population

Historic Population Trends

Analyzing changes in the trends and characteristics of a community's population and housing is important in understanding the needs of its current and future populations.

The Town of Townsend has experienced almost a 200 percent increase in population since 1920. The town's population increased in almost every decade between 1920 and 2010, with the exception of the periods between 1940 and 1950 and 1980 and 1990 when minor decreases were observed. The largest increase in population was recorded between 1970 and 1980. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the town had a population of 979 in that year.

Of the 979 people inhabiting the Town of Townsend in 2010, 308, or 31.5 percent, were at or above retirement age (65 and older). Additionally, the median age of the town's residents rose from 46.0 in 1990 to 52.6 in 2000 to 58.3 in 2010. This is a reflection of a trend in aging

population that has been observed throughout Oconto County and the State of Wisconsin. From this data it would also be reasonable to assume that the majority of new residents arriving in the Town of Townsend are at or around retirement age. This could be a result of seasonal residents moving to their seasonal homes permanently as they retire.

As previously noted, the Town of Townsend has a significant seasonal population. The seasonal residents of Townsend come primarily in the summer months; however, a significant number also visit in the winter to take advantage of the numerous winter-related outdoor recreation activities that are available in the town. The Town of Townsend's seasonal population can be estimated by multiplying the number of seasonal housing units present in the town in 2010 by the town's 2010 average number of persons per household.

By doing this calculation it can be estimated that the 2010 seasonal population of Townsend was 2,652 resulting in a year 2040 total population of 3,631 people.

For more information on population trends in Oconto County and the Town of Townsend refer to Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*. For town specific population data refer to Tables 6.14 – 6.18 found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Population Projections

By inventorying past population trends it is possible to project future trends. These projections will allow the Town of Townsend to determine how much land will be necessary to meet future development needs as well as what type of development will be prudent in order to meet the needs of their population. Population projections allow the Town of Townsend to realize the area's future needs for housing, utilities, transportation, recreation, and a number of other population influenced services. For this plan, the town has utilized Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) population projections. Based on these WDOA projections, the Town of Townsend can anticipate continued population growth.

More information on population projections for Oconto County and the Town of Townsend can be found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources* with town specific projections shown in Table 6.18.

Seasonal Population Projections

Given the Town of Townsend's estimated year 2010 seasonal population, it is important for the town to review the seasonal population projections to be aware of the number of seasonal residents that will be living in Townsend. Assuming the 2010 ratio of seasonal housing units to occupied housing units stays constant, projections for future seasonal housing units can be used to project future seasonal populations by multiplying the projected persons per household by the projected seasonal housing units (see the "Seasonal Housing Projections" portion of this chapter for more information on seasonal housing units in the Town of Townsend).



By doing this calculation, it can be estimated that the seasonal population in Townsend will rise from approximately 2,652 in 2010 to 3,264 in 2040. Based on these projections the town could expect to increase its total population, which includes year-round and seasonal residents, to approximately 4,469 people by the year 2040.

More information on seasonal population projections for Oconto County and the Town of Townsend can be found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources* with town specific projections shown in Table 6.18.

Housing

Housing Trends and Characteristics

As reported by the U.S. Census, the number of housing units in the Town of Townsend have increased from 886 in 1970 to 1,769 in 2010. The town experienced its largest increase in housing units, almost 50 percent, between 1970 and 1980. This reflects similar trends observed throughout Oconto County, particularly in the northern section, in which fewer housing units have been constructed each decade since 1970.

Housing Projections

Utilizing the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) occupied housing unit projections, the town can expect to see a continued, but limited increase in occupied housing units. As reported by the U.S. Census, in 2010 the town had 464 occupied housing units. WDOA housing projections show occupied housing units in the town increasing to 526 in 2020, 603 in 2030 and 628 in 2040.

More information on these methods, as well as projections for Oconto County and all of its municipalities, can be found in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Seasonal Housing Projections

Due to the number of seasonal housing units currently located in the Town of Townsend, it is important to consider the number of additional housing units that may potentially be built for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use in the future. By utilizing WDOA's final household projections for Wisconsin municipalities, the number of future seasonal housing units can be estimated. Assuming the 2010 ratio of seasonal housing units to occupied housing units stays constant, the number of future seasonal housing units can be projected by multiplying the projected occupied housing units by the ratio of seasonal housing units to occupied housing units.

By doing this calculation, it can be anticipated that the number of seasonal housing units will rise from approximately 1,257 in 2010 to 1,701 in 2040. Based on these projections the town could expect approximately 2,329 total housing units, which includes year-round and seasonal residences, by the year 2040.

For five-year incremental projections see Table 6.21 in Chapter 6 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Economic Development

The Town of Townsend's economy is heavily influenced by its forest and water resources. The Nicolet National Forest and other woodlands in the town provide a number of jobs and opportunities for local businesses. The forests and lakes promote tourism and attract a number of seasonal residents which further enhances opportunities for local retailers and service providers.

Labor Force Characteristics

Approximately half of the residents of Townsend are part of the civilian labor force, which includes persons sixteen years of age or older who are employed or seeking employment. Of

those that are employed, the majority, 29.4 percent, are employed in sales and office related occupations. A large percent, 25.6, are employed in management, professional, and related occupations.

More information on employed persons by occupation for Oconto County and the Town of Townsend can be found in Table 7.11 found in Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*. For more information regarding economic characteristics of Oconto County and the Town of Lakewood refer to Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

Sites for Redevelopment

By utilizing the WDNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) it is possible to inventory all of the environmentally contaminated sites that may be used for commercial or industrial uses. According to this tracking system, there have been eight environmental incidences that have occurred in the Town of Townsend. Of these, six are closed and two required no action, meaning all eight are eligible for redevelopment.

For more information regarding economic characteristics of Oconto County and its municipalities see Chapter 7 of *Volume II: County Resources*.

LAND USE TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Existing Land Use Issues and Conflicts

- Over 50 percent of land within town is under public ownership, leaving only 13,200 acres in which to plan.
- Development pressures on natural features, primarily surface waters and forest. Very few areas available for development around lakes without impeding on environmental corridors and existing water quality.
- No sanitary and water services available to promote commercial development or provide protection to the town's surface waters. Increased development could lead to negative impacts on groundwater supply if all new residential development has to rely on individual wells and private onsite treatment systems.
- Lack of defined areas for future recreational use. Continued loss of public access to surface waters. Need for more recreational trails for all modes of transportation.
- Difficult to anticipate trends in future seasonal populations. Housing market and increasing fuel costs could have major impacts on future development of seasonal units. It is also unknown how many seasonal units will be converted to year-round residences.

Anticipated Land Use Trends

- Push for more lake development causing pressure to begin secondary and tertiary development. May be additional pressure to develop other natural areas such as woodlands as lakeshore property becomes scarce.
- Need for more commercial and light industrial development to promote economic development in the town and provide more job opportunities to residents of the town and surrounding communities. Business development to be focused primarily along STH 32 and County T.

- Further development of “town center.” Enhance current recreation and government areas and new commercial development that will compliment this type of multi-purpose land use.
- Increasing number of residential sub-divisions.
- Need for additional municipal services including water, sanitary, emergency services, storm-water management, etc.
- Fragmentation of woodlands and other large areas of contiguous open space.
- Development pressure adjacent to public lands.
- Need for additional recreational opportunities, such as trails and parks.

Development Considerations

- There is approximately 8,500 acres of undeveloped land available for future planning discussions (includes all undeveloped categories minus water features).
- Ability to provide services to new residents (seasonal and full-time).
- Supply of lakeshore properties is decreasing. This may impact the number of seasonal residents coming to Townsend.
- Ample land and area for commercial/light industrial development. Increased development of these uses may be another way to attract potential residents with the decrease in lakeshore properties. However, potential for this type of development may be limited by lack of municipal water and sanitary sewer services.
- Land prices will likely continue to increase, particularly around lakes and in wooded areas.
- Address the amount of impervious surfaces constructed in the town in order to maintain/improve water quality.
- Ability to alert residents of emergencies and the limit options for appropriate shelters.
- As population increases continue to monitor possibility of adding a school to better serve town residents.
- Acknowledge local fire risk by controlling the wildland urban interface, maintaining appropriate vegetation, and promoting use of fire resistant building and landscape materials.
- Consider which roads are currently capable of handling increased traffic flows and those that may need to be upgraded to accommodate future growth.
- Bringing high speed internet and cable television to Townsend. The town should also consider future development of cell towers and other utilities including those associated with renewable energies (wind turbines, geothermal plants, etc.).

DESIGN YEAR LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Five Year Incremental Land Use Projections

Wisconsin State Statutes require Comprehensive Plans to include projections in five-year increments for future residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses in the community over the 20-year planning period. The Wisconsin Department of Administration

(WDOA) projections were used to determine anticipated future growth within the town. The Town of Townsend future land use projections can be viewed in Table 2.3.

It is not the intent of this comprehensive plan to see an entire area within a land use classification noted on the General Plan Design to be developed. The specified uses should be allowed if consistent with the type, location, and density of existing development. Some of the land within the land use classification is not developable due to natural features, easements, setbacks, existing preferred land uses, or availability of supporting infrastructure. Within developing areas, these additional considerations and land uses generally account for approximately 25 percent of the gross land area. Given these considerations, the gross land use needs for residential, commercial, and industrial development for the Town of Townsend by 2040 is 715.52. The net acreage total for each of the illustrated land uses is 536.64 acres.

Table 2.3: Five-Year Incremental Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	Residential		Commercial		Industrial	
	Acres	Total	Acres	Total	Acres	Total
2020	155.0		5.3		3.9	
2025	126.0	281.0	4.3	9.7	3.2	7.0
2030	122.5	403.5	4.2	13.9	3.1	10.1
2035	76.0	479.5	2.6	16.5	1.9	12.0
2040	27.0	506.5	0.9	17.5	0.7	12.7

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020

Residential Projections

The town's future residential land use acreage was projected utilizing the following methodology:

- the town's projected housing needs were based on the WDOA projections,
- the assumption that each new residential development will be, on average, two acres in size;
- a multiplication factor ranging from 1.25 to 2.25 to allow for market flexibility.

Table 2.4: Five-Year Incremental Housing Land Use Projections, 2020-204

Year	New Housing Units	Acres/DU	Market Value	Acres Needed
2020	62	2	1.25	155.0
2025	42	2	1.5	126.0
2030	35	2	1.75	122.5
2035	19	2	2	76.0
2040	6	2	2.25	27.0
Total	164			506.50

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020

Note: The new housing units shown for 2020 would be the increase from the number of housing units determined in the 2010 census and the projected number of housing units in 2020. From 2010 thru 2020 it is projected the town will see 62 new housing units. From 2020 thru 2025 it is projected the town will see 42 new housing units.

Commercial Projections

To calculate commercial land use projections, the current ratio of residential acreage to commercial can be calculated based on the 2017 land use inventory. According to the inventory, the Town of Townsend contains approximately 69 acres of commercial land. This represents a ratio of approximately twenty nine acres of residential development for every one acre of commercial development. Assuming this ratio was to stay the same, the town should anticipate allocating an additional 17.5 acres for commercial development over the next 20 years. This projection is illustrated in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Five-Year Incremental Commercial Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	Res. Acreage	Ratio	Acres Needed
2020	155.0	29.0	5.3
2025	126.0	29.0	4.3
2030	122.5	29.0	4.2
2035	76.0	29.0	2.6
2040	27.0	29.0	0.9
Total			17.5

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020

Industrial Projections

Industrial lands are projected in the same manner as the commercial lands. According to the 2017 Town of Townsend land use inventory, as of that year the town contained 50 acres of industrial land. This represents a ratio of approximately 40 acres of residential development for every one acre of industrial development. Assuming the ratio was to stay the same, the town should anticipate allocating an additional 12.7 acres for industrial development over the next 20 years. This projection is illustrated in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Five-Year Incremental Industrial Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

Year	Res. Acreage	Ratio	Acres Needed
2020	155.0	40	3.9
2025	126.0	40	3.2
2030	122.5	40	3.1
2035	76.0	40	1.9
2040	27.0	40	0.7
Total			12.7

Source: Oconto County Planning, 2020

Agricultural Projections

Several agricultural lands exist within the town. It is the intent of this comprehensive plan to preserve as much of these remaining farmlands as possible over the next 20 years. As development pressures continue to grow, proposed developments should be directed to areas not considered productive agricultural land or to areas where services are more readily available. The consumption of agricultural lands may be influenced by the strategies of local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances.

Map 2.1: Location Map

Map 2.2: Planning Area

Map 2.3: Surface Waters

Map 2.4: Plan Determinants

Map 2.5: Prime Agricultural Soils

Map 2.6: Public and Community Facilities

Map 2.7: Existing Land Use