

A Survey of Elected Officials

In recent decades, rural Wisconsin has experienced development patterns resulting in the subdivision of larger land holdings into smaller ones, also known as *parcelization*. This trend increases pressure on Wisconsin's working landscapes and agricultural lands. A land use planning class of 23 students with the Center for Land Use Education (CLUE) at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is conducting a survey to identify trends in parcelization and the factors that stimulate it.

This survey is designed to help us better understand your attitudes on rural development and help us understand possible factors influencing parcelization.

This survey will be completed by elected County, Town, City, and Village officials. Please read questions carefully and make responses clear. Answers will remain confidential. This survey will take you approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

Check the appropriate circle to indicate your agreement with the following statements.

Please indicate the type of community you represent:

12.4 County

12.4 City

12.4 Village

62.9 Town

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General Impressions - Development/Economics/Social Impacts

The next few questions focus on your thoughts toward growth in your community. We would like to learn about your views of current growth patterns as well as what you feel would be the best pattern for future growth.

What is the biggest reason drawing people to move to this area?

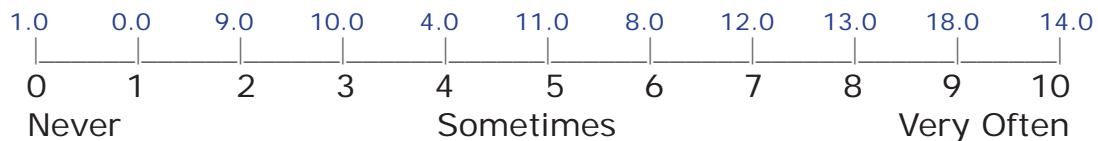
(check only the most important)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 9.0 Agriculture/forestry | 6.0 Business/jobs |
| 7.0 Low taxes | 10.0 Affordable housing/building units |
| 64.0 Enjoy area natural resources/
general lifestyle | 4.0 Other _____ |

Are you in favor of seasonal home development?

- | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------------|
| 33.7 Yes | 40.8 No | 29.5 No opinion |
|----------|---------|-----------------|

Since you have been living in your community, how often have you been witness to landowners selling small parcels of their land to different buyers? *(Please place a dot along the scale)*



People visit your county most for: *(check only one)*

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 33.3 Nature recreation | 5.4 Business |
| 49.5 Tourism | 0.0 Oddities (i.e., world's largest frying pan) |
| 7.5 Historic attractions | 4.3 Other _____ |

In your opinion what are the major drivers or factors contributing to land development within your county?

Views on development and planning issues in your community

Check the appropriate circle to indicate your agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Industrial development has benefited our economy	12.4	37.1	11.3	24.7	14.4
New commercial development has benefited our economy	11.3	43.3	12.4	22.7	10.3
Second homes are an important part of our community	15.5	30.9	11.3	34.0	8.2
Development pressures have increased greatly in the last 10 years	47.0	35.0	7.0	8.0	3.0
The changes I have seen in my community are, on balance, for the better	4.0	47.0	13.0	26.0	10.0
Residents in my community need more education concerning land use issues	31.0	46.0	7.0	12.0	4.0
New residential development is helping to lower taxes for existing residents	2.0	24.2	7.1	37.4	29.3
County zoning staff are doing a good job of enforcing current rules and regulations	6.1	35.4	15.2	52.3	11.1
Towns and the county usually see eye-to-eye on land use issues	2.0	4.0	17.0	36.0	5.0
Overall, the existing policies are doing a good job of protecting sensitive natural resources	10.0	43.0	15.0	24.0	8.0
Most development pressure in our community comes from outside the county	21.0	48.0	15.0	14.0	2.0
Our community would be involved in comprehensive planning even without any state requirements	8.1	48.5	9.1	30.3	4.0
Most community members are in favor of residential development within the county	4.0	37.0	15.0	39.0	5.0
I would like to learn more about the local zoning/planning issues and processes and their impacts	9.0	58.0	24.0	7.0	2.0
Planning committees are vital in determining the best interests for a community	19.4	61.2	6.1	11.2	2.0
Increasing development and parcelization (subdividing) leads to greater benefits than costs throughout the county regarding tax revenue issues	1.0	29.0	18.0	35.0	17.0
If the next 50 years are like the last 50 years, development will undermine the natural resource components of our local economy	30.0	38.0	8.0	19.0	5.0

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Plan Implementation and Policy Enforcement

Constituent support for specific policies

In your opinion, how strongly would your constituents support or oppose the following:

	Strongly Support	Support	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Permitting the same rate of development experienced in the past 10 years?	8.1	50.5	6.1	34.3	1.0
Raising local taxes to purchase development rights from willing sellers?	2.0	9.0	13.0	61.0	15.0
Using state and federal grants to purchase development rights from willing sellers?	9.0	52.0	13.0	19.0	7.0
Establishing a cap on the number of new residential lots permitted annually?	6.0	41.0	9.0	36.0	8.0
Requiring conservation subdivisions that provide one acre of open space for every new acre of development?	7.0	38.0	25.0	22.0	8.0
Reducing local land use regulations to the minimum required by state law?	3.1	25.5	19.4	38.8	13.3
Promoting and facilitating an increase in residential development and construction?	3.0	30.0	15.0	37.0	15.0
Requiring all land divisions to be reviewed by a local plan commission?	23.5	59.2	6.1	8.2	3.1

Level of government responsible for subdivision enforcement

Which of the following units of government should have review and approval authority of new residential parcels?

(check all that apply)

	Federal	State	County	Towns	Cities/ Villages	No Regulation
Land in floodplains	19.4	48.0	66.3	52.0	26.5	4.1
Land 1000 feet from lakes and 300 feet from rivers	6.1	46.5	67.7	57.6	29.3	6.1
Private land within national forest boundaries	51.0	38.4	40.4	41.4	11.1	4.0
Land in prime agricultural soils	10.1	34.3	53.5	74.7	22.2	3.0
Land adjacent to city limits	4.0	10.1	48.5	65.7	52.5	8.2
Land adjacent to a freeway or US highway	31.0	51.0	48.0	40.0	24.0	9.1
Land adjacent to a county highway	2.0	12.0	77.0	55.0	29.0	7.1
Land adjacent to a county park	2.0	13.0	76.0	53.0	28.0	4.0

Do you feel that the local economy is most dependent on: (*check only one*)

- | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|------|-------------------|
| 65.1 | Year round citizens | 18.6 | Seasonal citizens |
| 10.5 | Recreational visitors | 3.5 | None of the above |
| 2.3 | Other _____ | | |

What actions has your community taken to control residential development on the outside of urban areas in the past? (*check all that apply*)

- | | |
|------|------------------------|
| 37.8 | None |
| 47.5 | Zoning regulations |
| 9.1 | Tax Incentives |
| 11.1 | Conservation Easements |
| 14.1 | Other _____ |

Are you familiar with current development laws?

- | | | | |
|------|-----|------|----|
| 73.1 | Yes | 26.9 | No |
|------|-----|------|----|

Would you like to see further legislative efforts to regulate development?

- | | | | | | |
|------|-----|------|----|------|--------|
| 33.3 | Yes | 38.7 | No | 28.0 | Unsure |
|------|-----|------|----|------|--------|

What do you, as an official, base your decisions on when faced with a challenging planning issue? (*check only one*)

- | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 39.4 | Personal opinions/values |
| 35.1 | County citizens' majority opinion |
| 1.1 | Political opinions |
| 24.5 | Other _____ |

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Minimum Lot Sizes

Indicate the minimum size you think should be required of new residential lots in the following locations:

(check the one that applies)

	1/4 acre	1/2 acre	1 acre	2 acres	5 acres	10 acres	20 acres	40 acres	Should not be permitted
Prime agricultural soils	3.1	3.1	13.3	3.1	12.5	9.4	4.2	13.5	37.5
Open space/non-prime soils	4.2	7.4	12.6	6.3	27.4	14.7	6.3	13.7	7.4
Forested areas	4.2	2.1	14.7	7.4	25.3	11.6	8.4	16.8	9.5
Areas adjacent to cities and villages	21.1	15.8	24.2	11.6	21.1	3.2	2.1	1.1	0.0
Areas adjacent to public lands	4.3	11.7	17.0	6.4	26.6	17.0	5.3	10.6	1.1
On the shore of lakes	12.6	16.8	25.3	13.7	20.0	2.1	1.1	1.1	7.4
On the shore of rivers	12.5	20.8	20.8	15.6	16.7	3.1	2.1	1.0	7.3
Second and third tier areas near lakes	13.5	11.5	25.0	15.6	21.9	4.2	3.1	1.0	4.2
Second and third tier areas near rivers	12.6	11.6	23.2	20.0	20.0	4.2	3.2	1.1	4.2

Comments:

Education/Information

We would like to assess your educational experience concerning land use practices and development issues. We are also interested in the public's access to information and education concerning land use planning and development.

Where do you receive the information you know on development issues?
Check all that apply.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 91.1 Meetings | 21.8 Books |
| 20.8 Internet | 53.5 Pamphlets/Brochures |
| 31.7 Magazine | 17.8 Academic Institution |
| 53.5 Newspaper | 44.6 A land use planner |
| Other _____ | |

What types of programs are currently offered in your area about land use planning and development? *(check all that apply)*

- 2.0 None
- 61.0 UW-Extension programs
- 41.0 State/Federal programs
- 19.0 Online courses
- 68.0 Town/County programs
- 15.8 Other _____

How would you prefer to learn more about formal land use planning? *Please rank your preferences with (1) being most preferred and (7) being least preferred.*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
_____ Information booklet	28.0	24.4	15.9	15.9	9.8	3.7	2.4
_____ State/Federal Agencies	9.6	8.4	18.1	13.3	18.1	15.7	16.9
_____ Public speaker	26.8	18.3	23.2	7.3	9.8	11.0	3.7
_____ Newspaper	2.4	6.0	13.1	20.2	20.2	15.5	22.6
_____ Internet site	8.2	7.1	11.8	20.0	16.5	17.6	18.8
_____ Course offered at local University	6.1	14.6	8.5	11.0	9.8	24.4	25.6
_____ Other planning officials	30.1	20.5	8.4	10.8	13.3	8.4	8.4

Which of the following land use concepts and ideas are you familiar with?

am familiar <i>(check all that apply)</i>	<i>(mark both columns)</i>	would like to know more <i>(check all that apply)</i>
50.0	GIS (Geographical Information Systems)	43.3
75.0	Smart Growth	30.3
49.0	EIS (Environmental Impact Statements)	46.0
35.0	Conservation Subdivisions	50.0
58.6	Farm Conservation Programs	46.5
42.4	Maximum Lot Size	40.4
39.4	Density-based Zoning	51.5
68.0	Comprehensive Planning	40.0
37.8	Transfer of Development Rights	48.0
42.9	Purchase of Development Rights	48.0
40.4	Subdivision Regulations	54.5

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Plan goals

From the following list, indicate (1) how important each goal is for you as an elected representative and (2) the success of your town/county in reaching that goal.

Importance					<i>(mark both columns)</i>	Success					
Highly important						Complete success					Complete failure
←—————→						←—————→					
36.2	27.7	23.9	4.3	8.5	Attracting quality jobs to the area	11.8	8.6	37.6	30.1	11.8	
26.6	19.1	28.7	12.8	12.8	Promoting farming on productive lands	15.2	19.6	41.3	13.0	10.9	
29.7	40.7	25.3	3.3	1.1	Protecting sensitive resources from harmful land uses	9.9	40.7	37.4	9.9	2.2	
12.0	22.8	47.8	10.9	6.5	Ensuring the supply of affordable housing	4.4	17.8	41.1	27.8	8.9	
17.4	30.4	29.3	15.3	7.6	Directing new development to areas with existing infrastructure	4.4	26.7	36.7	24.4	7.8	
27.7	22.3	34.0	13.8	2.1	Preserving open space from development	15.2	26.1	37.0	17.4	4.3	
34.0	30.9	20.2	11.7	3.2	Reducing local spending to lower taxes	14.3	36.3	29.7	12.1	7.7	
8.7	28.3	42.4	13.0	7.6	Increasing the amount of recreation resources in the community	5.6	24.4	41.1	27.8	1.1	
23.2	40.0	33.7	3.2	0.0	Increasing cooperation between municipal and county government	8.6	34.4	37.6	18.3	1.1	
12.0	21.7	38.0	19.6	8.7	Promoting forest management on private lands	3.4	20.2	52.8	19.1	4.5	
28.6	25.3	31.9	9.9	4.4	Updating land use regulations to ensure they are consistent with comprehensive plan	11.1	30.0	35.6	17.8	5.6	

How would you describe the impact of a comprehensive land use plan or a county master plan on the community in which you are a part of?

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If you could improve the planning process in your county, how would you do so?

Agriculture, Natural Resources, Wildlife, Recreation

We would like to get an impression on how local government officials feel about land use practices regarding agriculture, natural resources, wildlife and recreation.

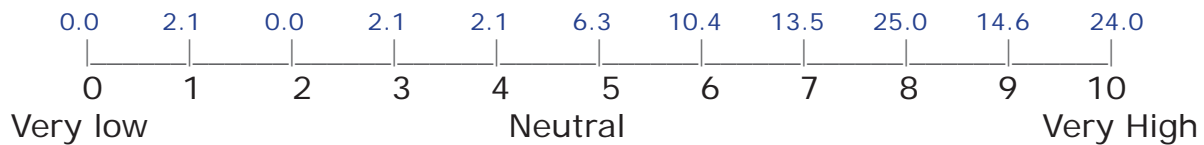
In your opinion, what are the three most important activities relating to natural resources in your area? *Check three (3).*

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 58.3 Agriculture | 6.3 Cross Country/Downhill Skiing |
| 13.5 Camping | 50.0 Fishing |
| 67.7 Hunting | 0.0 Hiking/backpacking |
| 28.1 Forestry | 5.2 Wildlife viewing/bird watching |
| 32.3 Snowmobiling | 35.4 Boating (motor or paddle) |
| 3.1 Other _____ | |

Are these natural resources taken into consideration when land use decisions are made?

	Always	Sometimes	Unsure	Rarely	Never
Preserving agricultural land	38.3	35.1	11.7	8.5	6.4
Preserving timber resources	17.9	48.4	23.2	8.4	2.1
Creating/maintaining recreation	21.3	58.5	8.5	10.6	1.1
Water quality/wetland preservation	58.5	30.9	7.4	2.1	1.1
Maintaining wildlife corridors	14.7	44.2	23.2	14.7	3.2
Protecting undeveloped land	24.5	38.3	21.3	11.7	4.3

In general, how much does your community value its agricultural, forested land, and other natural resources in your area? *Please place a dot on the scale.*



What do you wish will happen to area natural resources over the course of the next ten years?

- 1.1 Preserved with no access or use
- 62.8 Preserved with limited access and use
- 25.5 Full access and use
- 3.2 Open to development
- 2.1 Increased development
- 5.3 No change

What natural area do you think has taken the biggest loss due to development?
(Check one)

- 46.7 Agricultural lands
- 8.7 Forested Areas
- 6.5 Land near recreational areas
- 6.5 Wildlife habitats
- 28.3 Wetlands/Shorelines
- 3.3 Other: _____

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Personal Data

What is your age?

1.0	18-30 years	8.2	31-40 years
16.5	41-50 years	29.9	51-60 years
28.9	61-70 years	15.5	71+ years

Gender:

87.4	Male	12.6	Female
------	------	------	--------

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

44.7	High School	14.9	Associate's	27.7	Bachelor's
9.6	Masters	1.1	Doctorate	2.1	Other _____

While growing up, did you visit wilderness areas?

47.9	Often	40.6	Sometimes
5.2	Seldom	6.3	Never

How long have you been a member of the community where you currently reside?

1.0	0-5 years	9.3	5-10 years
20.6	10-20 years	69.1	20+ years

How long have you been a town, village, city, or county elected official?

____ years

Thank you for your participation!

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