

## INTRODUCTION

### I. Town Profile

Located in south-central Dane County, the Town of Oregon sits between the Villages of Oregon, Brooklyn and Belleville, immediately south of the City of Fitchburg, and north of the Town of Brooklyn in Green County. Its location atop the terminal moraine of the Wisconsin glaciation has left the town with a diverse natural landscape, including the westernmost reaches of the Southeast Glacial Plains ecological landscape.

### II. Planning History

The town adopted its first land use plan in 1994, and completed adoption of Dane County's exclusive agricultural zoning ordinance in 1995. On October 10th, 2005, the Town Planning Committee identified the following as guiding principles for their 2005 update of their 1994 land use plan to a full comprehensive plan in 2005-2006:

- Build upon the policies and principles in the 1994 Land Use Plan and the 2001 Visioning document.
- Clarify and maintain the Town's groundwater protection policy.
- Update and implement the Town conservation subdivision ordinance.
- Evaluate the potential for transfer or purchase of development rights.
- Limit new commercial development within the Town to designated areas.
- Plan for some mineral extraction uses within the Town.

### III. Plan Updates

As per Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation, the Town will review and update the *Comprehensive Plan* at least every ten years. Changing conditions and experiences in the Town will be noted and adjustments will be made to the *Plan* text and maps.

## Chapter 1 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### I. Background and Existing Conditions

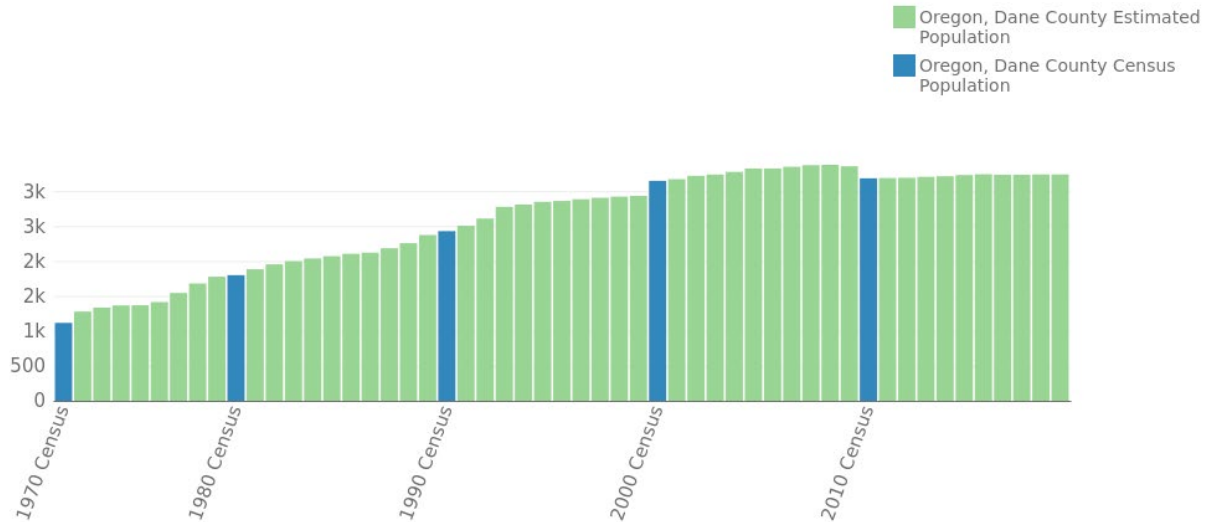
#### A. *Population Trends and Projections*

The Town of Oregon grew rapidly (5.2% average annual growth rate) from 1978-1998. However, over the next twenty years, from 1998-2018, the Town’s growth rate leveled off (0.6% average annual growth rate). As of the 2020 Decennial Census, the Town of Oregon had a population of 3,125 people, 59 people less than in 2010. The Wisconsin Department of Administration, projects the town to increase slowly (0.45% average annual growth) over the next twenty years. Applying these growth rates to the 2020 census population results in a projected 2040 population of 3,323 (Table B).

Chart 1-1

### Population Estimates over Time

1970-2020



Data source: Wisconsin Population and Housing Estimates  
Image produced by [GetFacts.wisc.edu](http://GetFacts.wisc.edu), a product of  the Applied Population Lab

Table 1-1: Population 1980-2020 (with surrounding communities)

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Town of Oregon	1,798	2,428	3,148	3,184	3,125
Village of Oregon	3,876	4,519	7,514	9,231	11,179
Village of Brooklyn (total Dane & Green Cos.)	643	789	1,340	1,401	1,524
City of Fitchburg	11,973	15,648	20,501	25,260	29,609
Town of Rutland	1,468	1,584	1,887	1,966	1,997
Town of Montrose	1,024	1,032	1,134	1,081	1,064
Town of Exeter	709	756	1,261	2,023	2,156

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Chart 1-2: People Added Per Decade

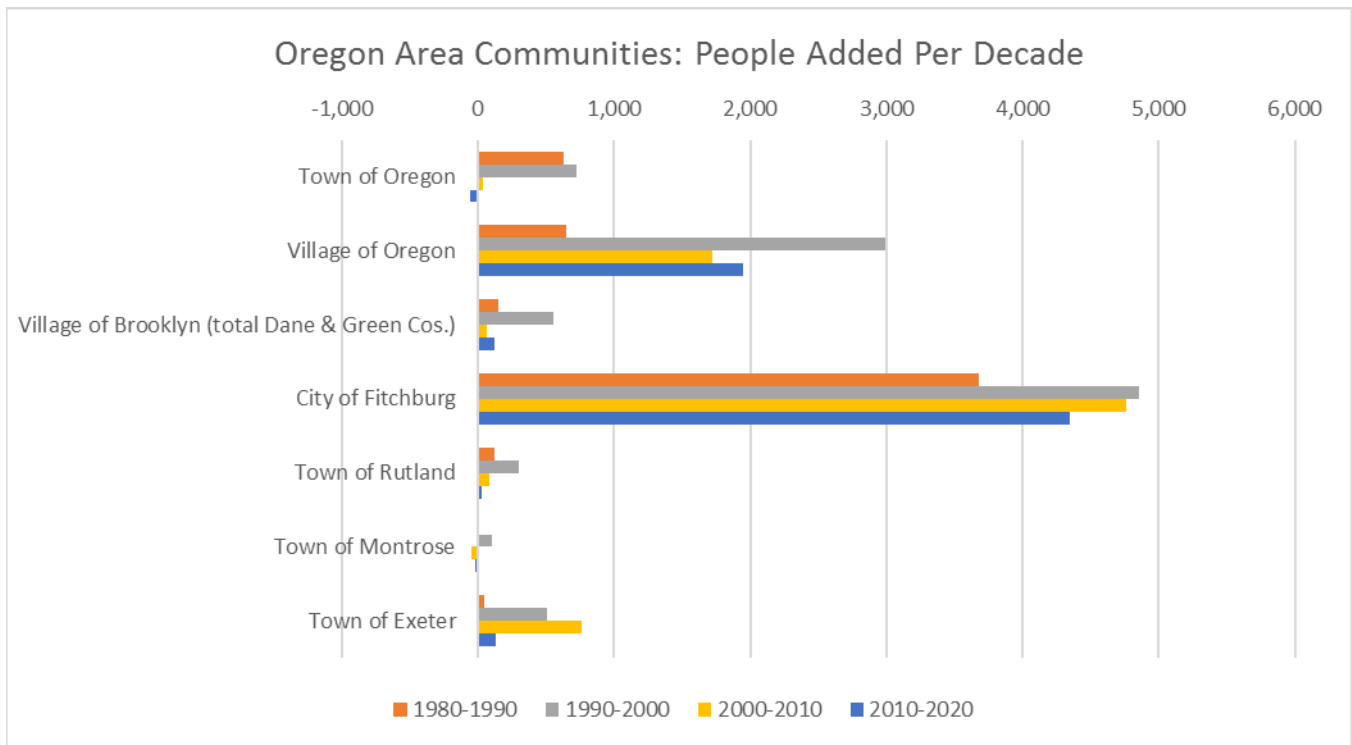


Table 1-2: Population Projections (with surrounding communities)

Municipality	2020 (census)	2025 (projected)	2030 (projected)	2035 (projected)	2040 (projected)
Town of Oregon	3,125	3,205	3,271	3,309	3,323
Village of Oregon	11,179	11,917	12,612	13,165	13,654
Village of Brooklyn (total Dane & Green Cos.)	1,524	1,635	1,745	1,832	1,899
City of Fitchburg	29,609	31,281	32,814	34,004	35,023
Town of Rutland	1,997	2,055	2,103	2,128	2,147
Town of Montrose	1,064	1,064	1,059	1,049	1,030
Town of Exeter	2,156	2,379	2,589	2,759	2,884

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, WI Department of Administration (Vintage 2013 Projections, adjusted for 2020 census values)

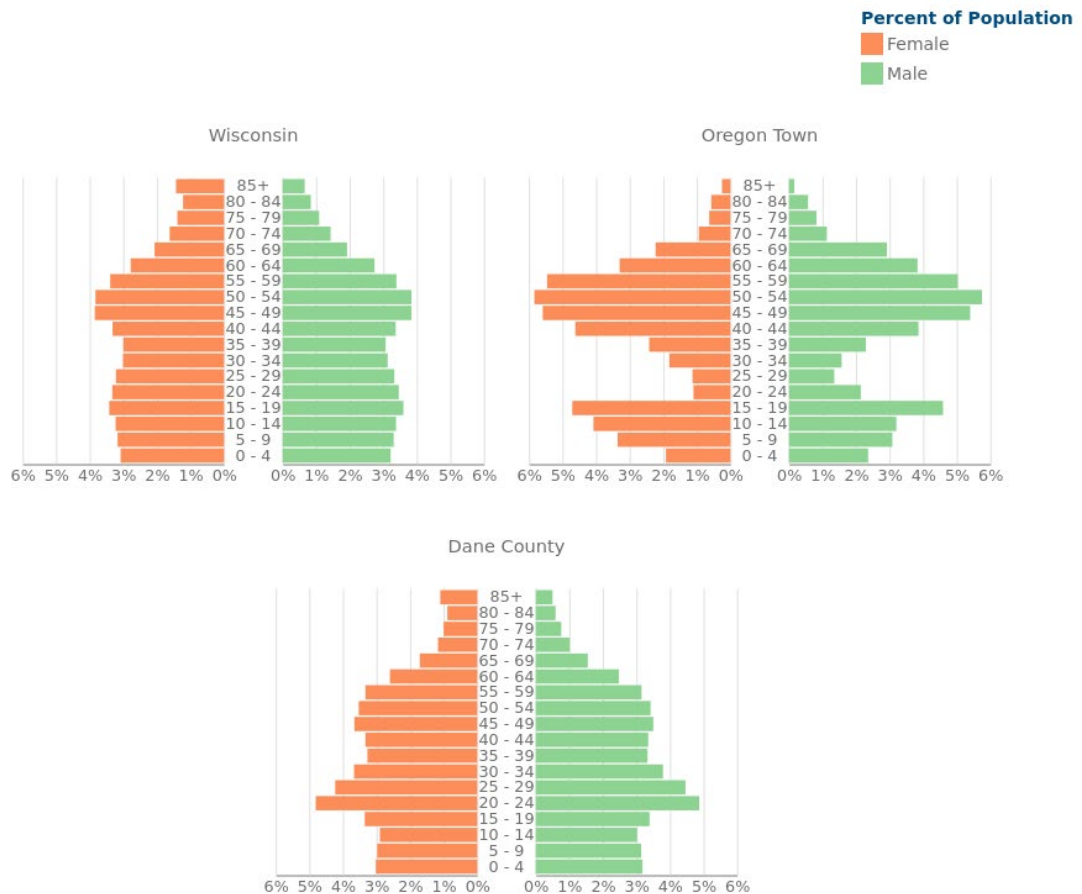
## II. Demographic Trends

### A. Age

According to the Census Bureau’s annual American Community Survey, the median age in the Town has increased by 12.1% over the last decade from 43 in 2010 to 48.2 in 2019. The median age of Dane County increased less dramatically during the same period from 34.3 to 35.5 years old. As the population of the Town ages, housing and services to meet older citizens’ needs will rise. Chart 1-2 shows the age composition of the town population as of 2019.

Chart 1-3

### Age Pyramid 2010



Data source: 2010 Census Summary File 1: QT-P1

Image produced by [GetFacts.wisc.edu](http://GetFacts.wisc.edu), a product of  the Applied Population Lab

### B. Racial, Ethnic and Language Minorities

According to the 2010 Census, the Town’s racial minority population comprised 2.2% of the total population. Chart 1-3 shows the 2010 racial and minority breakdown of the town population.

Chart 1-4

### Population by Race and Ethnicity


2015-2019 5-Year Estimate

#### Oregon town, Dane County Population

- 96.2% White alone (not Hispanic or Latino)
- 2.2% Two or more races (not Hispanic or Latino)
- 0.7% Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
- 0.5% Black or African American alone (not Hispanic or Latino)
- 0.2% American Indian and Alaska Native alone (not Hispanic or Latino)
- 0.2% Asian alone (not Hispanic or Latino)
- 0% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone (not Hispanic or Latino)
- 0% Some other race alone (not Hispanic or Latino)



Data source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates - DP05

Image produced by [GetFacts.wisc.edu](http://GetFacts.wisc.edu), a product of  the Applied Population Lab

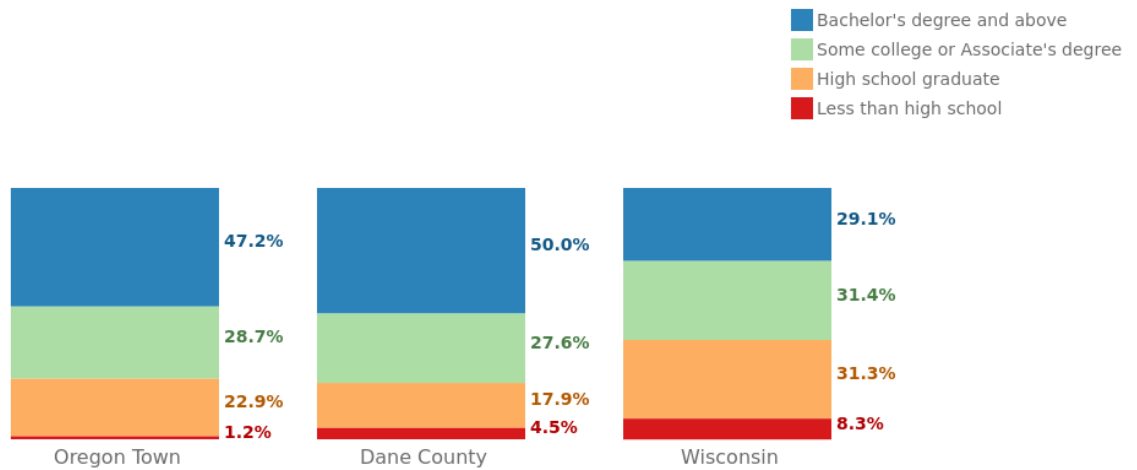
C. Education

Educational attainment figures for the Town are similar to Dane County as a whole. In 2017, 98.8% of Town residents, age 25 or older, held a high school diploma or higher (Chart 2). Dane County reports 95.5% of residents with at least a high school diploma.

Chart 1-5

Educational Attainment (for Population 25 Years and Over)

2013-2017 5-Year Estimate



Data source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates - S1501  
 Image produced by [GetFacts.wisc.edu](http://GetFacts.wisc.edu), a product of the Applied Population Lab

III. Income

With a median household income of \$108,125 in 2017, Town of Oregon residents were significantly more affluent than their counterparts in other towns, or in Dane County as a whole. Chart 1-5 further depicts the Town's household income dispersal.

Table 1-3: Median Household Income by Community

Municipality	Median Household Income
Town of Oregon	\$108,125
Village of Oregon	88,250
Village of Brooklyn	80,461
City of Fitchburg	66,110
Town of Rutland	91,830

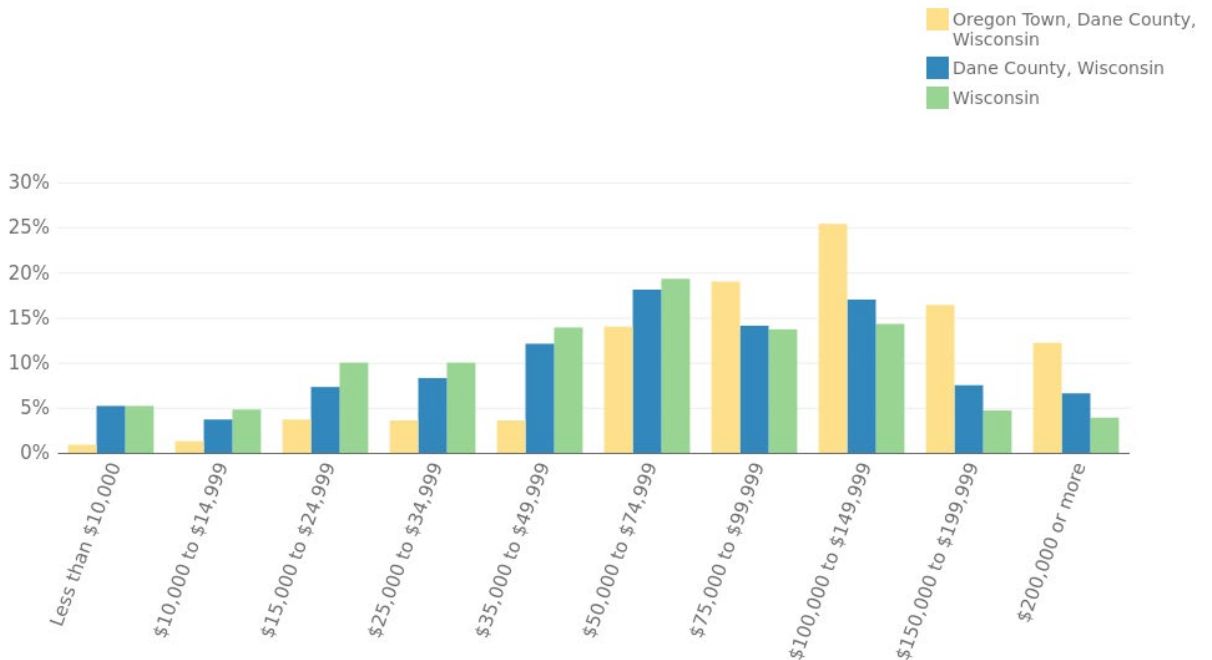
Town of Montrose	79,583
Town of Exeter	102,961

2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Chart 1-6

## Household Income Distribution

2013-2017 5-Year Estimate



Data source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates - DP03  
 Image produced by [GetFacts.wisc.edu](http://GetFacts.wisc.edu), a product of  the Applied Population Lab

### IV. Housing and Household Trends

The number of households in the Town increased from 1,144 in 2010 to 1,180 in 2020, a 3% increase over the decade. Conversely, the average household size in the Town decreased from 2.77 persons per household in 2010 to 2.64 in 2020. The trend toward smaller household sizes is mirrored nationwide and is due in part to increases in divorce, decreases in the birth rate, and a larger proportion of the population age 65 and older.

The projected number of households in the Town is expected to increase by 70 to 1,250 total households by 2040, according to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (Table 1-4). Household projections are useful in planning for future housing development.



Table 1-4

Projected population and household growth 2020-2040								
	2010 Census	2020 Census	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	2035 Projection	2040 Projection	2020- 2040 Proj. Change	New Households @ 2020 Avg. Household Size
T Oregon	3,184	3,125	3,205	3,271	3,309	3,323	198	70

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration 2019.

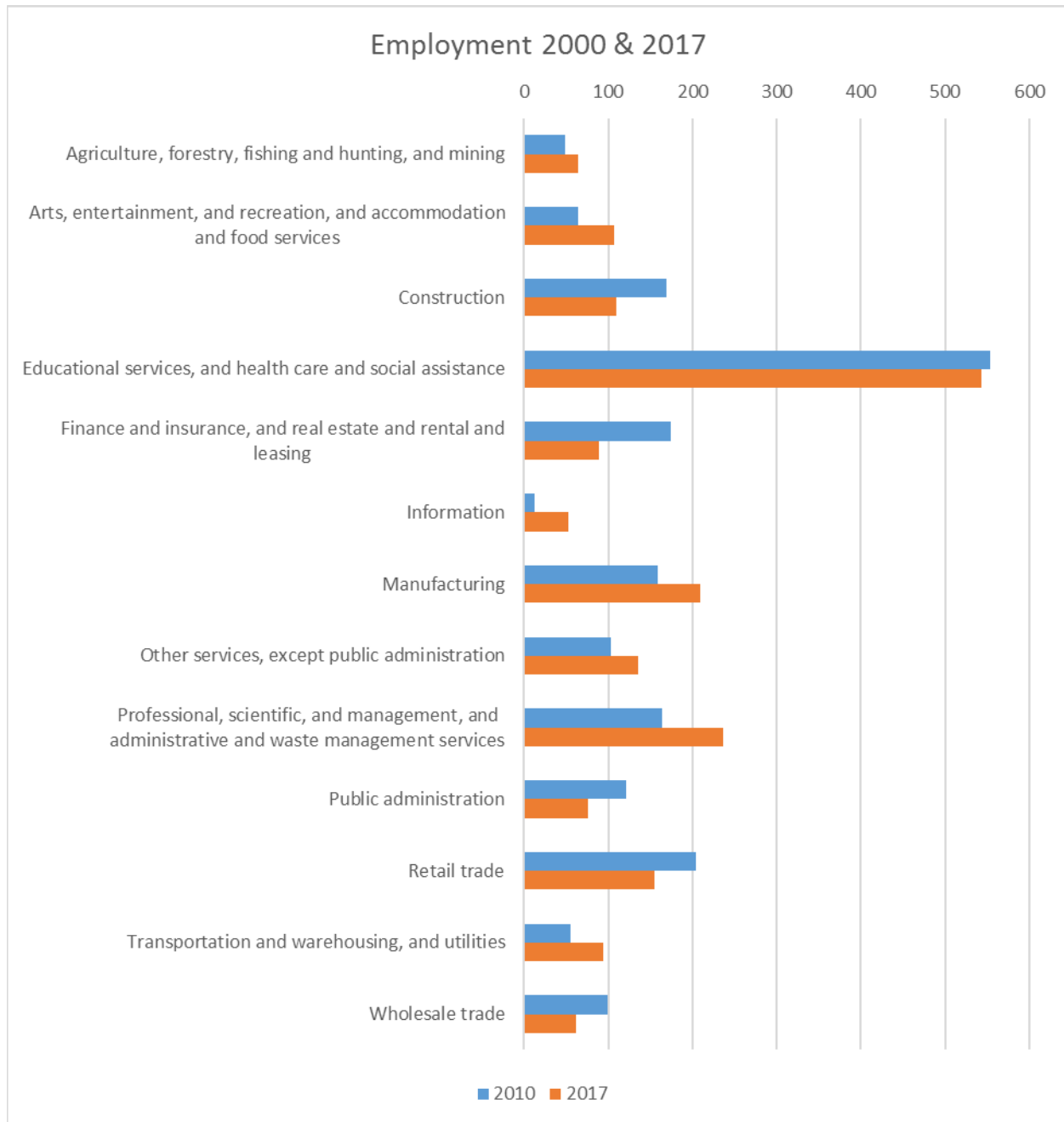
## V. Labor Force and Employment Trends

According to the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey estimates, the Town of Oregon had a 2020 labor force of 1,861 people. Over the span of 2016-2020, the unemployment rate for the population 16 years and over averaged under 2%, which compares favorably with Dane County’s unemployment rate of 2.5% and Wisconsin’s rate of 3.5%.

Between 2010 and 2017, the town saw moderate employment growth in the “professional, management and administrative,” “information,” “service,” “manufacturing” and “arts, recreation, accommodation and food service” sectors. Meanwhile, “retail trade,” “public administration,” and “wholesale trade” sectors saw employment declines.

With planned limited non-agricultural development, the employment forecast for the town is expected to remain similar to what is shown in Chart 1-6. Those occupying the new housing are expected to fall into the management, professional and service fields, as they commute into nearby employment centers in the Madison metropolitan area.

Chart 1-7



## VI. Key Planning Issues and Overall Goals

### A. *Public Participation Process*

At the very beginning of the planning process, the town adopted a public participation plan (see Appendix 3). This plan included development of a plan steering committee, and various methods of ensuring participation, including a newsletter, website, community survey, an open house and a public hearing.

Over 50% of survey respondents felt that the town population 20 years from now should be approximately “the same as today.” Strong majorities felt that protection of natural and agricultural resources were either “essential” or “very important,” with “farmland,” “woodlands,” “wildlife habitat,” “streams,” “air quality,” and “groundwater resources” ranking particularly highly. .

Chart 1-8

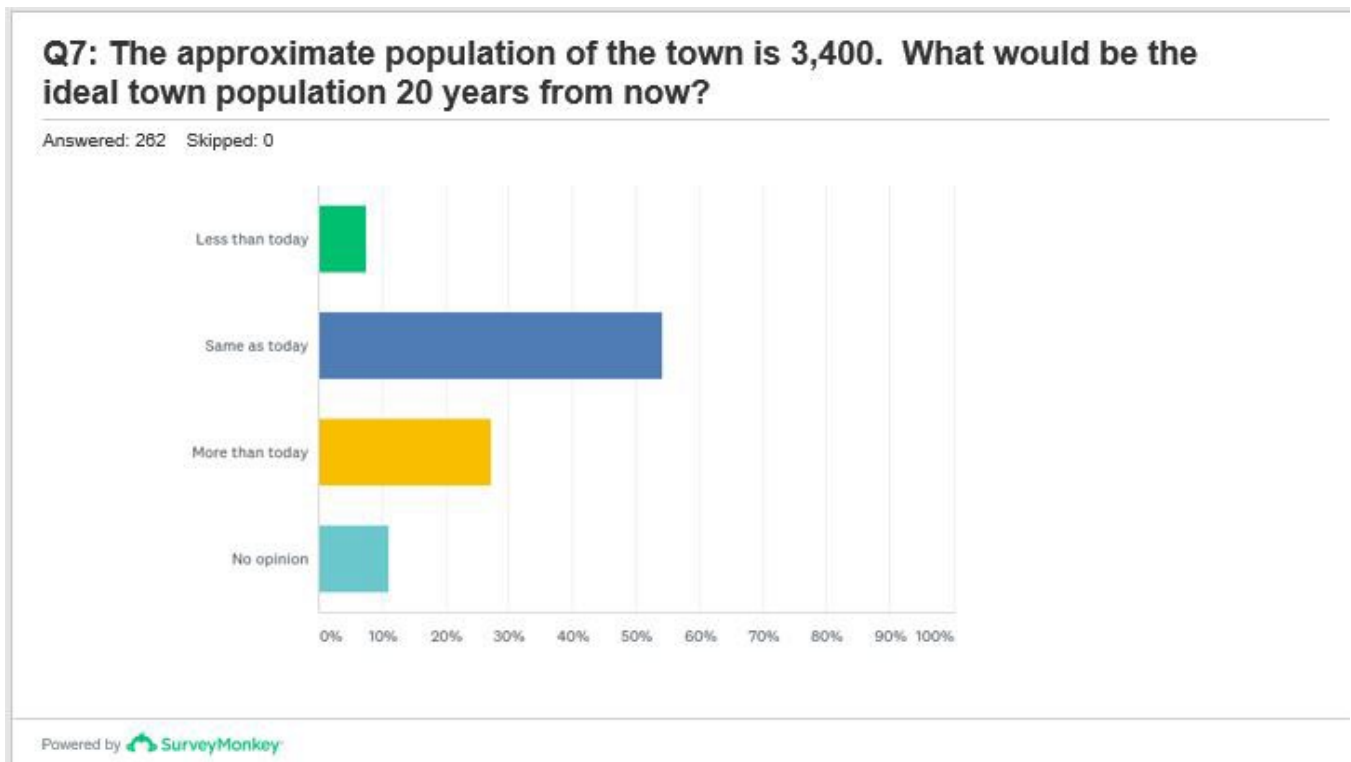
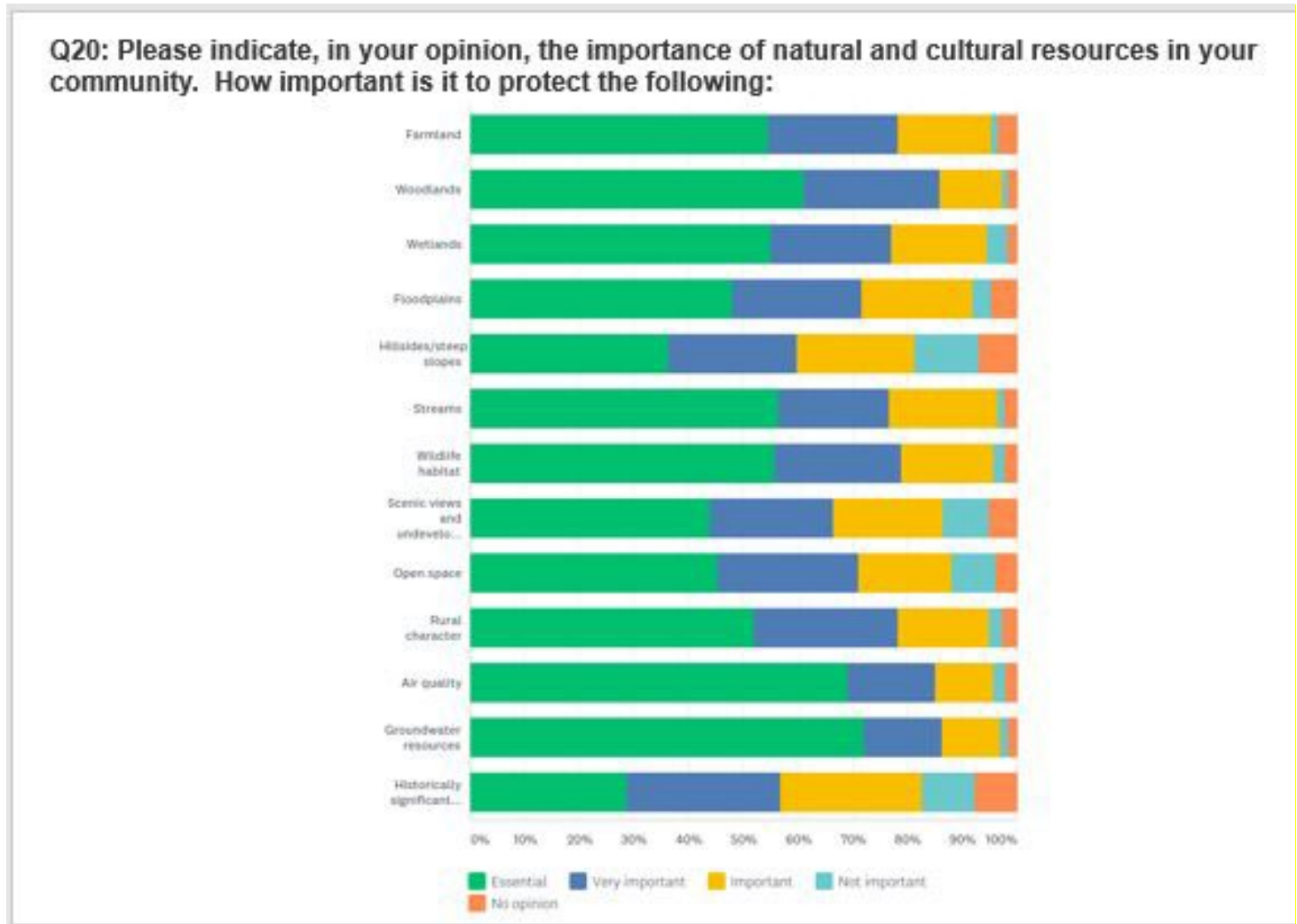


Chart 1-9



**B. Vision Statement & Overall Goals**

As Town of Oregon residents, whether our roots here are deep in the past or more recent, we now set forth this vision for our future.

1. To preserve the rural character of our town: We like living in the country. Our town is a desirable place to live and to raise children because the community is safe, the people are friendly, and the schools are good. We want to keep our farms because they provide much of the rural character that we cherish.
2. To plan development wisely and control growth: We would like our population to stay small. We want to protect property rights and values. We want to plan development carefully so that we can preserve our productive farmland, precious wetlands, sheltering woodlands, wildlife habitats, open spaces and scenic views.
3. To cooperate with the Village of Oregon and the Village of Brooklyn: We want a partnership with the Village of Oregon and the Village of Brooklyn so that it continues to serve as centers for commercial business and public services. We want to stabilize the boundaries between the Town and these Villages so that we can preserve our town's integrity.
4. To provide an outdoor resource for our community: We would like our Town to be a place for quiet and reflective outdoor recreation, whether we are biking with friends down a country road or walking alone. We want to preserve the Town of Oregon as a sanctuary for the greater good.

We dedicate this vision to our children as the wings for their future