

# Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan

November 2024

Prepared by Dane County Planning and Development



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An aerial photograph of a rural landscape during autumn. The foreground shows a large field of harvested corn, a green grassy area, and a dirt road. In the middle ground, there is a farm with a white house and a blue-roofed structure, surrounded by trees with vibrant yellow and orange leaves. To the right, a winding path or road leads to a golf course. The background is a vast expanse of colorful trees under a clear sky.

ELEMENT 1:  
ISSUES &  
OPPORTUNITIES

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## I. Town Profile

The Town of Primrose is in southwestern Dane County, in Wisconsin’s Driftless Zone, a rolling landscape with steep river valleys that were not glaciated in the Ice Age 50,000 years ago. Primrose Brook, Deer Creek, and Mount Vernon Creek, all coldwater fisheries, flow west to east through the town, eventually joining the Sugar River West Branch in the neighboring Town of Montrose. At the [2020 census](#), 750 people lived in Primrose.

### Background Data Summary

20,000 acres	25 new people in 13 homes by 2040
750 people	50.5 average age
340 households	6.5% minority
\$93,958 median household annual income	> 12% worked in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, or mining

## II. Planning History

The Town adopted the first and existing *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* in 2009, in compliance with the state’s comprehensive planning law, found in Chapter 66.1001. The Dane County Board of Supervisors adopted the town plan as part of the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan*. With assistance from Dane County Planning and Development, the Town gathered public input and crafted the goals, objectives, and policies contained in this plan to guide growth and development over the next twenty years and reflect this in a Land Use Plan.

## III. Plan Updates

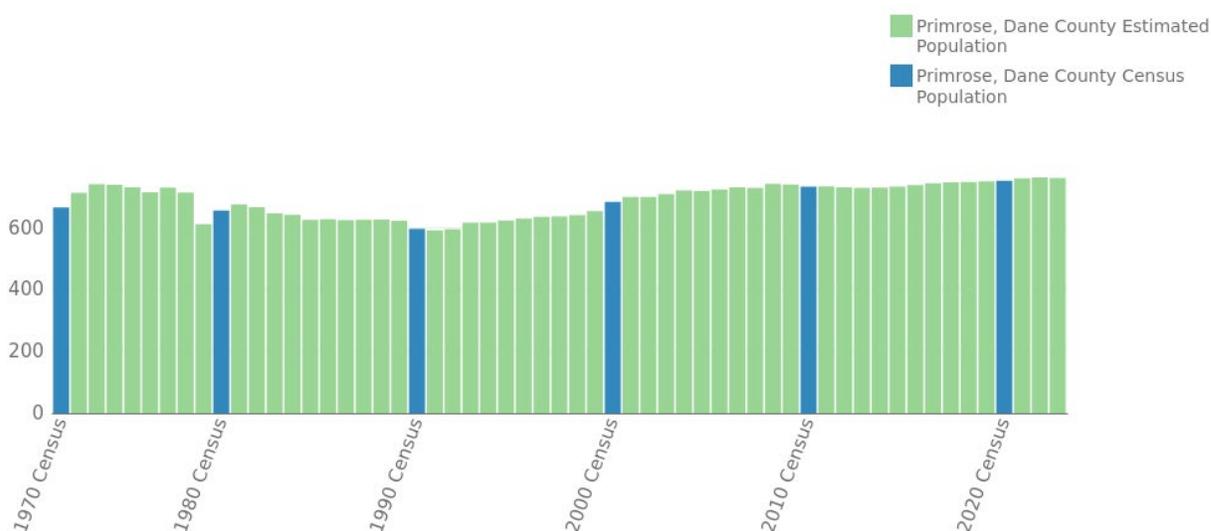
As per Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning legislation, the Town will review and update the *Comprehensive Plan* at least every ten years. Changing conditions and goals in the Town will be noted and adjustments will be made to the *Comprehensive Plan* text and maps accordingly. This plan update is intended to aid the Plan Commission and Board in meeting statutory timeline requirements and achieve the Town’s goals

## Chapter 2: Background & Existing Conditions

### I. Population Trends and Projections

The Town of Primrose experienced minor losses in population in the decade 1980 to 1990; however from 1990 to 2000 the population grew by 14%. Growth rates began leveling off to 7.2% from 2000 to 2010, and grew at a modest 2.6% between 2010 and 2020. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WIDOA) projects an average annual population growth rate of less than 1% over the next 20 years, adding 25 people by 2040.

Chart 1-1: Population over Time



Source: Applied Population Lab- Wisconsin Population and housing Estimates-

Table 1-1: Population Projections of Nearby Communities

Municipality	2020 Census	2025	2030	2035	2040
T. Primrose	750	765	775	780	780
T. Perry	737	761	780	790	799
T. Springdale	2,056	2,174	2,283	2,367	2,436
V. New Glarus	1,393	1,523	1,648	1,742	1,810
T. Montrose	1,064	1,064	1,059	1,049	1,030

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration

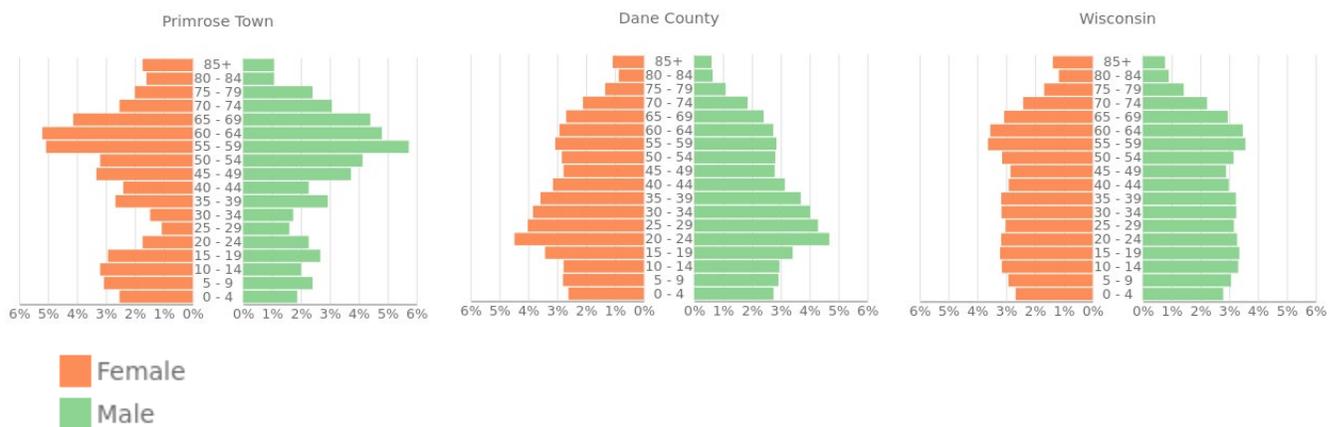
### A. Demographic Trends

#### 1. Age

The median age increased from about 46.2 years in 2010 to 50.5 years in 2020. In comparison, the median age in Dane County increased from 34.3 to 35.2 years of age. The

difference in age demography from 2010 to 2020 is primarily due to an increase in age groups 60 years old and older. In comparison with the County, the Town showed fewer people aged 20-45 years in the 1990 and 2020 censuses. The Town of Primrose is likely to have an increasing proportion of its population in the 65 and older year age bracket.

Chart 1-2: Age Pyramids by Percent of Population

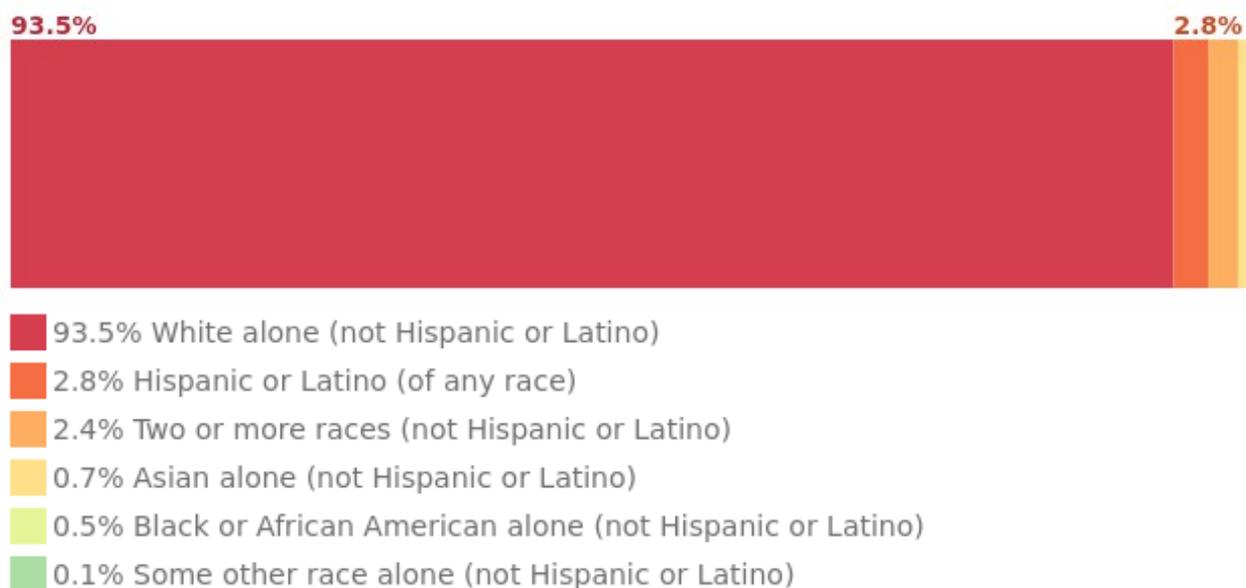


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2010, ACS 5-year estimates 2020

## 2. Ethnic Minorities

U.S. Census data show that the minority population of the Town of Primrose is 6.5% of the total population. Minority populations include Latinx (2.8%), and Asian, Black/African American and American Indian/Alaskan Native (each less than 1%).

Chart 1-3: Population by Race & Ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Demographic Profile 2020

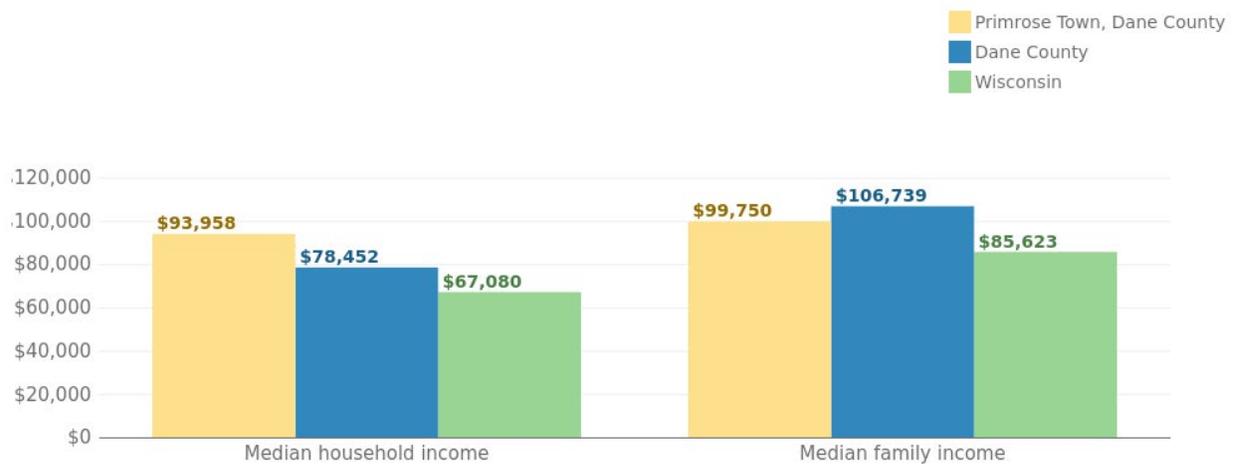
### 3. Education

According to the [American Community Survey](#), 25% to 35% of residents had a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2022, lower than the 55.7% of Dane County residents who had at least a 4-year degree.

### 4. Income

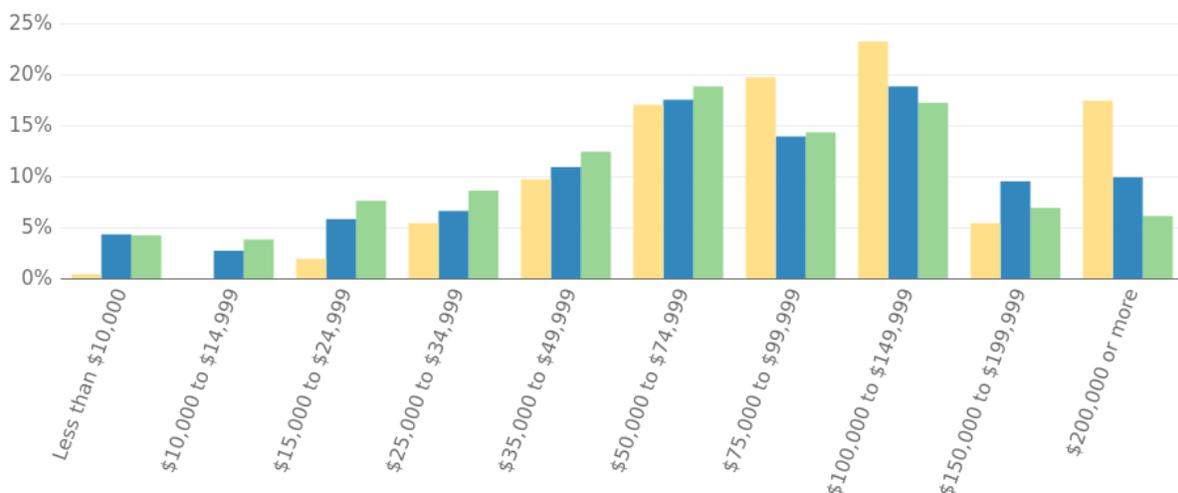
Based on 2017-2021 ACS 5-year estimates, the median household annual income was \$93,958, substantially higher than the Dane County median of \$78,452. More recent data suggest median income increased approximately 8% in 2022.

Chart 1-4: Household Median Income



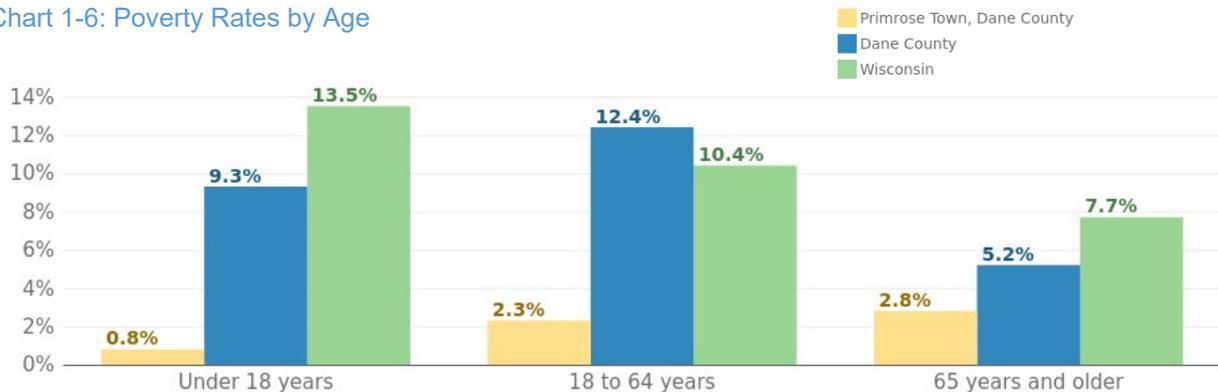
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Chart 1-5: Income Distribution



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Chart 1-6: Poverty Rates by Age



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2017-2021

## 5. Poverty

Primrose had lower poverty rates, less than 3%, than Dane County and Wisconsin across all age groups.

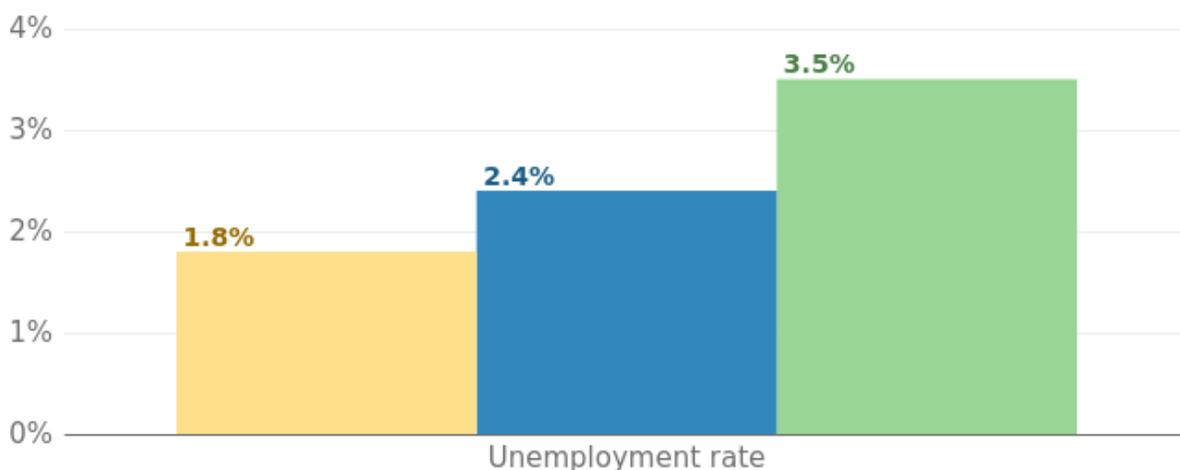
### B. Housing and Household Trends

Housing units in the Town increased from 282 in 2010 to 310 in 2020, an increase of 9.8%. However, mean household occupancy fell from 2.59 persons in 2010 to 2.40 persons in 2020. This change mirrors a national trend in decreasing household size. Assuming a constant numeric increase in houses, we can project 56 new households by 2040.

### C. Labor Force and Employment Trends

The Town of Primrose’s labor force includes individuals 16 years old who are currently employed or who are available for work. Between 2017 and 2021, Primrose enjoyed a lower unemployment rate (1.8%) than both Dane County (2.4%) and Wisconsin (3.5%).

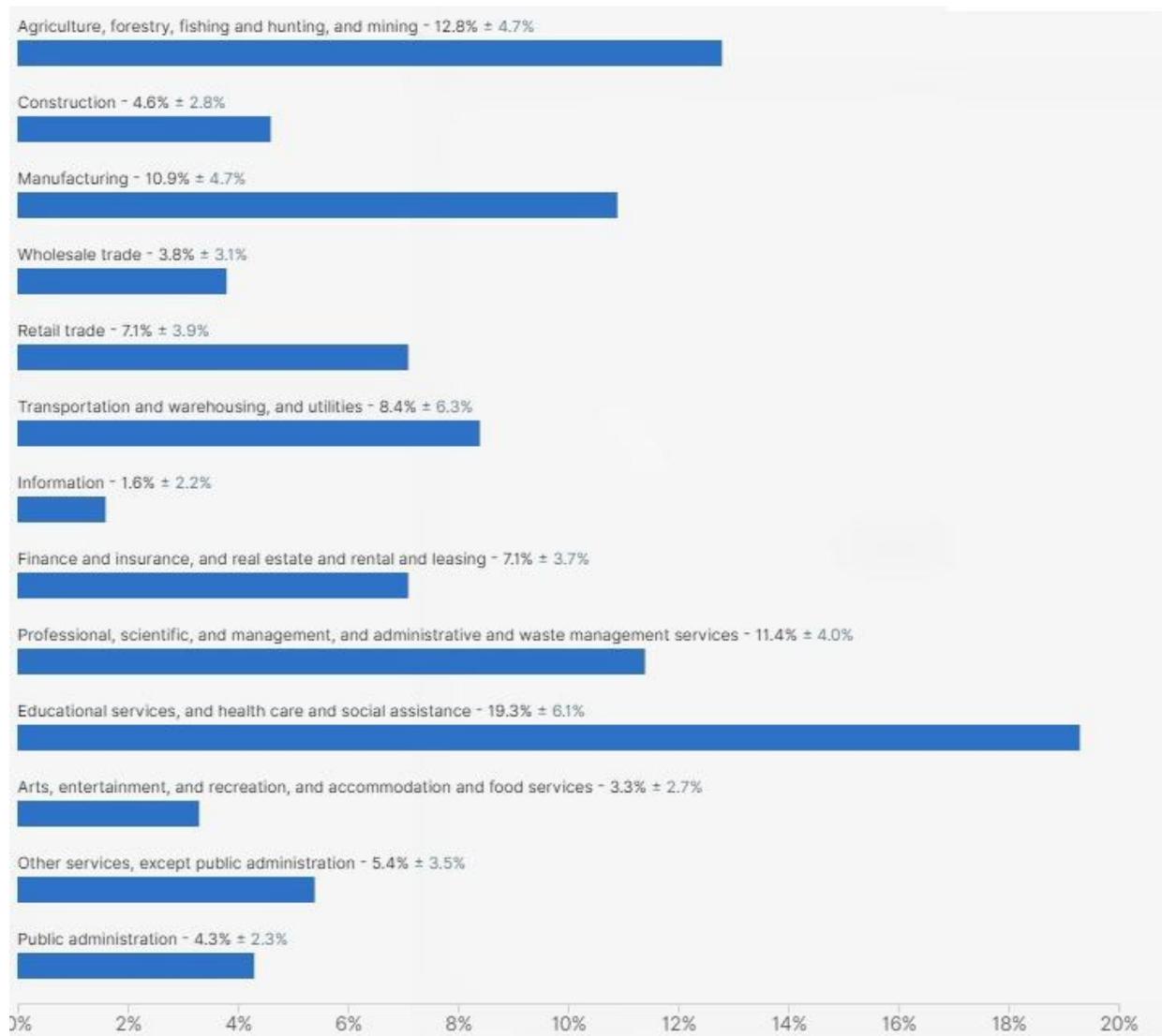
Chart 1-7: Unemployment Rate (16-year-olds and older)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Compared with the rest of Dane County, Primrose’s agriculture and forestry sectors are relatively important employment sectors. More than 12% of Primrose residents worked in the “agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, or mining” sectors in 2022, compared with 1% in Dane County ([American Community Survey, 2022](#)).

Chart 1-8: Employment by Industry (16+ years old)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2022 5-year estimates

## II. Key Planning Issues and Goals

### A. Public Participation Process

At the beginning of the planning process, the town adopted a public participation plan (see Appendix A). This plan included forming a plan steering committee, and various methods of ensuring input, including a community survey, and a public hearing. The survey generated useful input into the comprehensive planning effort. One hundred fifty

residents responded to the survey. Results indicated strong majorities support the 2009 goals as follows:

- 87% agreed or strongly agreed the town should seek to “Maintain traditional farms and current farming practices.”
- 90% agreed or strongly agreed the town should seek to “Encourage small sustainable agriculture.”
- 91% agreed or strongly agreed “Preserving woodlands and wetlands are as important as farmland preservation.”
- 91% agreed or strongly agreed the town should seek to “Maintain Primrose's current rural character (natural, undeveloped countryside, wildlife, and quiet environment).”
- 76% agreed or strongly agreed the town should seek to “Site houses in less conspicuous places.”
- 40% agreed or strongly agreed the town should seek to “Cluster new houses.”
- 82% agreed or strongly agreed the town should seek to “Consult neighbors about development on adjacent properties.”
- 82% agreed or strongly agreed “The dark night skies of the town are important.”

A detailed analysis of survey results is in Appendix 1.

## B. Overarching Goals

- Preserve the productive farmlands in the town for continued agricultural use.
- Prevent conflicts between incompatible uses.
- Protect the natural environment.
- Maintain the rural character of the town.

# ELEMENT 2: HOUSING



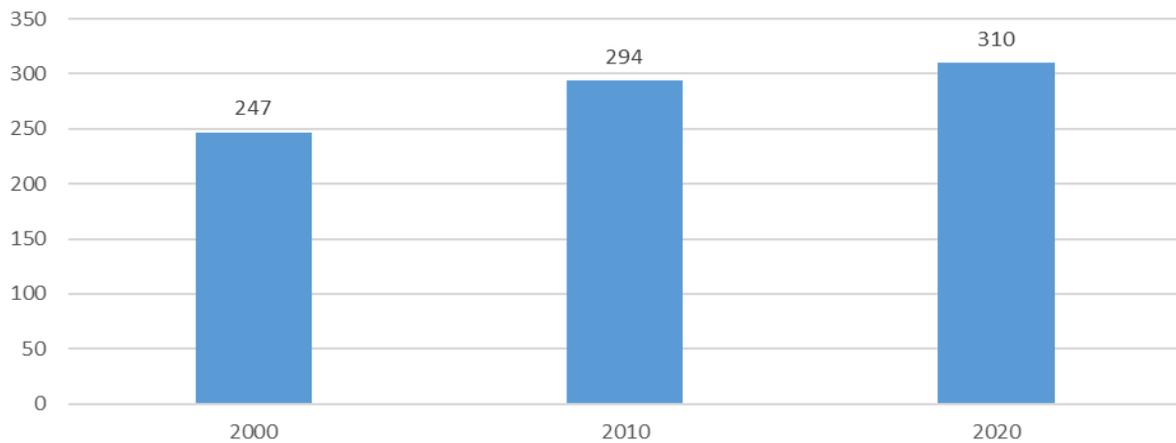
## Chapter 3: Existing Housing Conditions

### II. Housing Stock Characteristics

The number of housing units in the town has increased 25.5% between 2000 and 2020 (Chart 2-1). This is comparable to the 25% increase for Dane County as a whole, over the same period of time.

Detached, single-family residences make up 100% of the housing units in the Town of Primrose. As of the 2020 Dane County Land Use Inventory, there were 310 detached single-family residences, no duplexes and no multi-family homes in the town. According to the 2021 American Community Survey, 69.7% of the houses in the town were built before 1980.

Chart 2-1: Number of Housing Units 2000-2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census: 2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Census

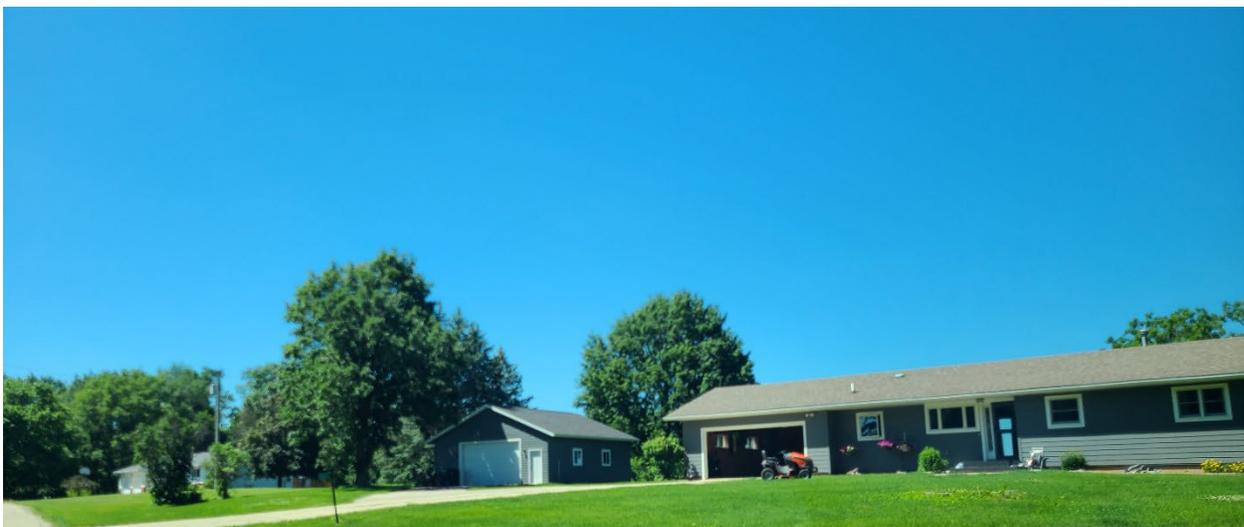
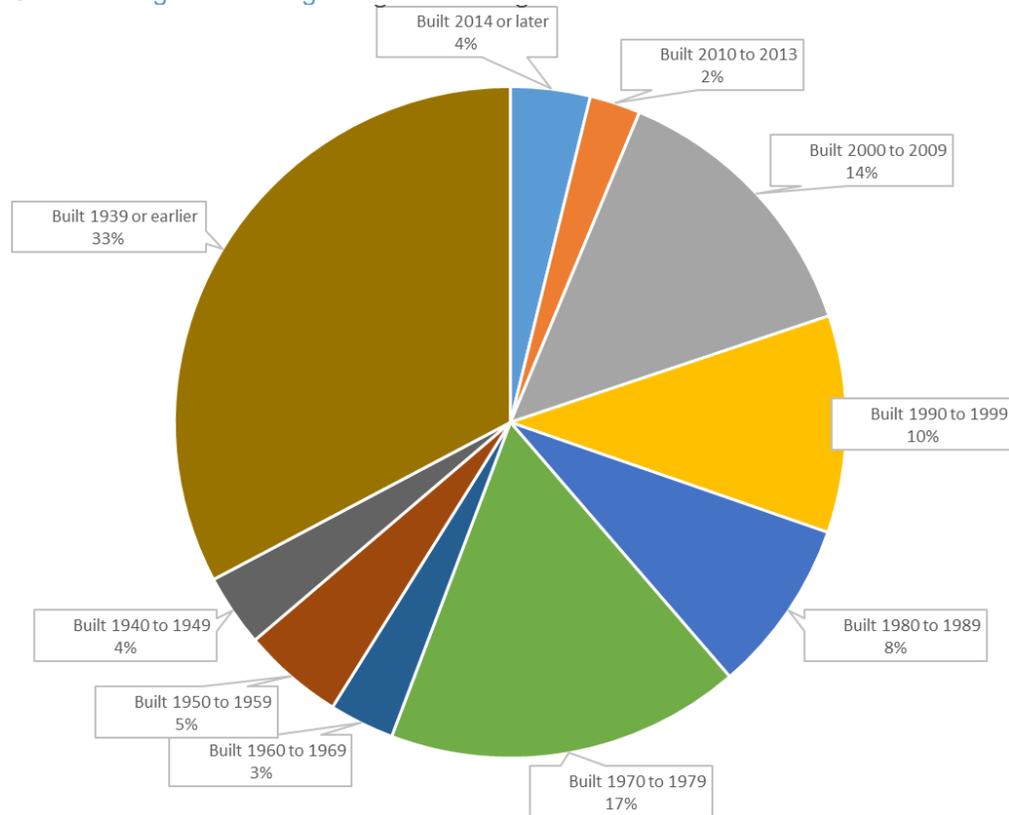


Chart 2-2: Age of Housing Stock

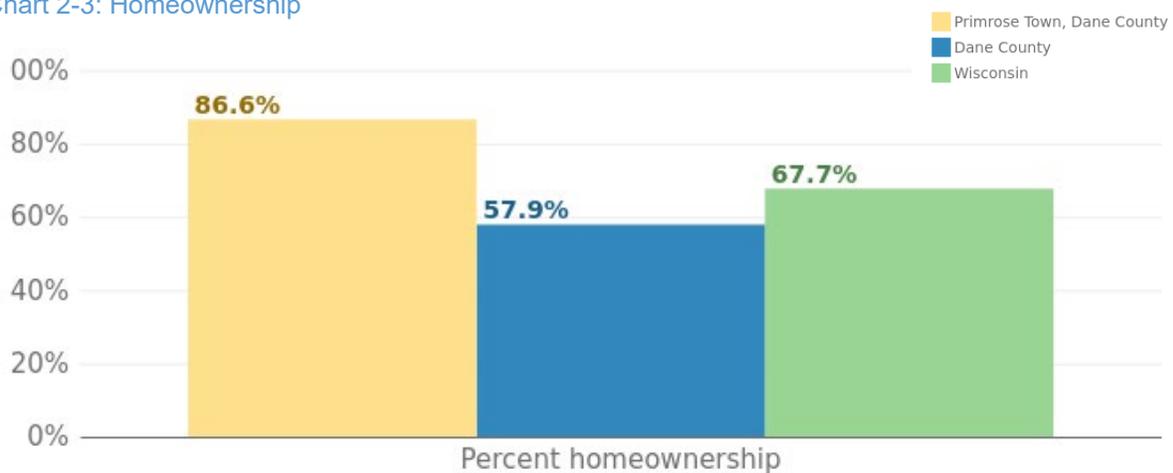


Source: American Community Survey, 2020

### III. Occupancy Characteristics

In 2022, in the Town of Primrose it was estimated that 86.6% of the homes were owner-occupied, showcasing a strong prevalence of property ownership.

Chart 2-3: Homeownership

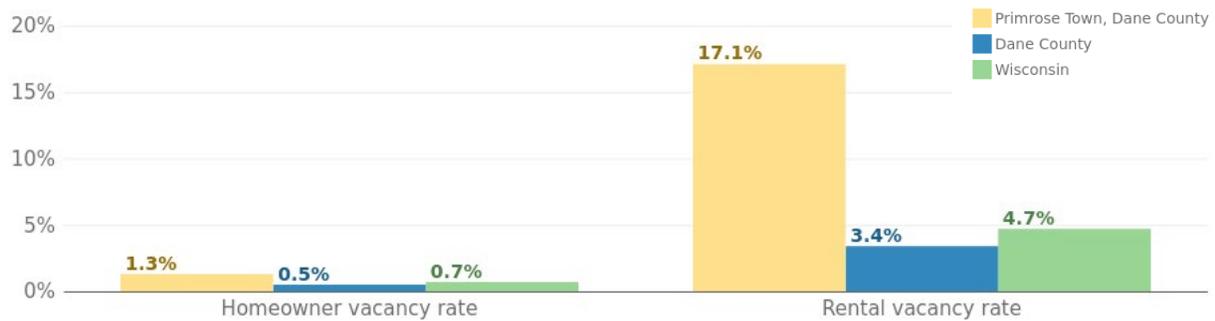


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2018-2022

The estimated vacancy rate in 2022 was 1.3% for homeowners and 17.1% for renters. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a healthy

owner-occupied vacancy rate is 2% because it allows residents adequate housing choice.

Chart 2-4: Vacancy Rates

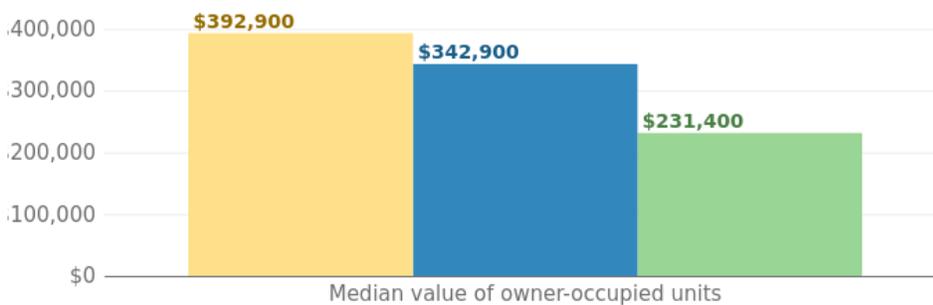


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2018-2022

### IV. Value Characteristics

In 2022, the median value of owner-occupied homes in the Town of Primrose was estimated at \$392,900, 14.8% higher than the median value for Dane County.

Chart 2-5: Housing Value

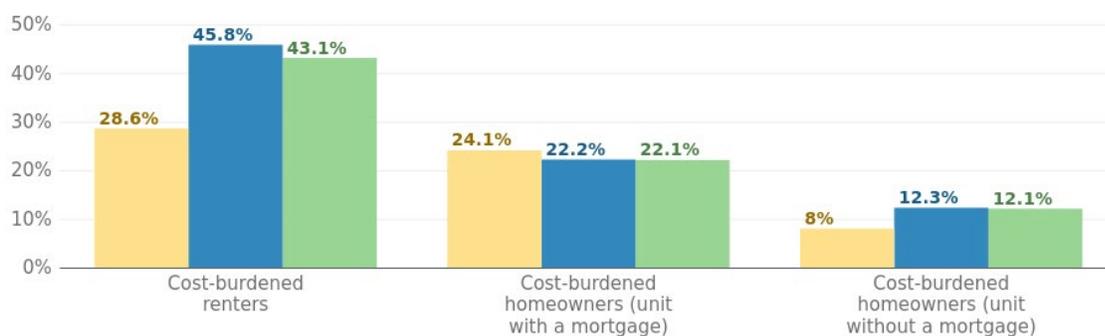


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2018-2022

### V. Housing Affordability

“Cost-burdened” is defined as spend more than 30% of one’s monthly income on housing costs. Compared with Dane County and the State of Wisconsin, the Town of Primrose has a smaller percentage of cost-burdened residents who own their own homes.

Chart 2-6: Cost Burdened Households Paying 30%+ of income for housing



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates 2018-2022

## VI. Projected Need for Housing

Based on Wisconsin Department of Administration projections there will be 780 people in the Town of Primrose by 2040. With the mean household size in 2020 at 2.40 persons, this suggests the town will need to accommodate 325 homes by 2040.

## VII. Housing Programs

[Rural Development- USDA](#): A federal program with state offices that provides a variety of housing and community development programs for rural areas. Some programs cover, support for rental housing development, direct and guaranteed mortgage loans for home buyers, and support for self-help and cooperative housing development.

[Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority \(WHEDA\)](#): Provides mortgage financing for first-time homebuyers, grants for home repair, and financing for multifamily housing. Specific programs change with the needs and demands of the housing market.

[Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\)](#): The CDBG Entitlement Program provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons. The funds that Dane County receives from HUD are distributed across the County (outside of Madison) and available to a variety of sub-recipients including municipalities, non-profit, and for-profit entities.

[Home Investment Partnerships \(HOME\) Programs](#): HOME provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use, often in partnership with local nonprofit groups, to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent homeownership or provide rental assistance to low-income people.

## Chapter 4: Housing Goals, Objectives, & Policies

### A. Goals

1. Provide a variety of quality housing opportunities for town residents.

### B. Objectives

1. Maintain current variety of housing types to suit projected demand.
2. Encourage upkeep of existing housing stock.
3. Avoid future land use conflicts by carefully siting new residential development.
4. Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for housing.

## C. Policies

1. Follow town density policy as outlined in the Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Policies (see Element 8: Land Use).
2. Educate town residents about housing rehabilitation and affordability programs available through the US Department of Agriculture Rural Housing Service and Dane County Department of Human Services.
3. Support conditional use permits for dependency living arrangements, when appropriate guidelines are developed, provided that they are not converted into permanent third-party apartments (See Element 6: Land Use).
4. Consider alternative options for maintenance of aging housing, to supplement or substitute for assistance and/or loan programs.
5. Work with Dane County to amend the county zoning ordinance to allow repair or reconstruction of existing farm residences without income determination.
6. Re-evaluate housing and land use policies on a regular basis to make sure policies allow for adequate housing to meet the needs of all residents of the town, including seniors, young families and migrant farm workers
7. Redirect high-density development requiring public transportation, public sewer or water to an appropriate Urban Service Area.





ELEMENT 3:  
TRANSPORTATION

## Chapter 5: Existing Transportation Network

### I. Roadways

#### 1. Arterials

State Trunk Highway 92 runs generally north and south through the eastern half of the town and moves traffic northward to U.S. Highway 18 and toward Mount Horeb and Verona, and southward to State Trunk Highway 69 and Green County.

#### 2. Collectors

County Trunk Highway A runs generally east to west through the center of the town, providing linkages to U.S. Highway 78 in the Town of Perry and to County Trunk Highway PB in the Town of Montrose. County Trunk Highways G, JG and U run north to south, providing connections to State Trunk Highway 92 and to Green County.

#### 3. Town Roads

The Town has 43 miles of dedicated roads. Maintenance, repair and snow removal is performed by the Town. This expense accounts for more than 80% of the annual budget.

### II. Transit

The closest fixed-route public transit service to the Town of Primrose is the Madison Metro Route 75 in the City of Verona approximately 4 miles northeast of the Town of Primrose line. There is a Park and Ride lot approximately 4 miles northwest in the Village of Mount Horeb, and a second Park and Ride lot approximately 5.5 miles northeast of the town line in the City of Verona.

### III. Taxis and Ride Hail Services

A number of commercial taxi and ride-hail services provide service to portions of the Town of Primrose and the Madison metropolitan area.

### IV. Carpool and Vanpool Services

The Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization operates [RIDESHARE, etc.](#), an online ride-matching service to connect commuters with carpooling and vanpool opportunities. The service area includes the Town of Primrose. The Wisconsin Department of Administration operates a [vanpool system](#) for commuters (including both state and non-state employees) traveling to and from the downtown Madison area.

### V. Specialized Transportation Services

Rides for seniors to doctor/dental appointments are available through [RSVP of Dane County Driver Services Program](#). The [Dane County Department of Human Services](#) provides individual and group transportation services which enable seniors and people with disabilities and to access their communities and needed services.

Transportation assistance may also be provided for low-income families or persons with unusual medical transportation expenses. The Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization operates a [number of commuter programs](#) that provide a ride home from work in an emergency to regular carpool, vanpool, mass transit, and bicycle commuters.

## **VI. Bicycles and Pedestrians**

There are no dedicated off-road bicycle facilities in the Town of Primrose. A planned trail would connect the northeastern portion of the town with Mount Vernon and the City of Verona. Shoulders along County and State Highways are rated as suitable for bicycle traffic on the Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization's [Dane County Bicycle Map](#).

## **VII. Rail**

None within the Town of Primrose.

## **VIII. Intercity Bus Service**

Several commercial bus lines provide regular service from the bus stop at 250 N. Lake Street, in the City of Madison (18 miles from the town center) to destinations, including Milwaukee, Janesville, Beloit, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Chicago, and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

## **IX. Trucking**

Truck traffic uses the many highways across the Town.

## **X. Water Transportation**

There is no significant water traffic in the town.

## **XI. Airports**

There are a couple private airstrips in the Town of Primrose, but there are no airfields within the town boundaries.

The [Dane County Regional Airport](#) (MSN) is located in the City of Madison, approximately 18 miles from the town center. Commercial airlines operate daily non-stop flights to 19 destinations in the continental United States.

## **XII. Snowmobile Trails**

The Mount Vernon Valley Riders maintain a number of club trails throughout the town.

## Chapter 6: Transportation Plans

### I. County and Regional Plans

[Regional Transportation Plan 2050 \(2017\)](#): Federal law requires Regional Transportation Plans for urban areas over 50,000 in population (such as the Dane County / Madison metropolitan area) as a condition for spending federal highway and transit funding. Adopted by the Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization, the *Regional Transportation Plan 2050* provides an overview of how the region intends to invest in the transportation system across all modes.

[Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\) \(updated annually\)](#): The *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, which the Madison Area TPB updates annually, is a coordinated listing of short-range transportation improvement projects anticipated to be undertaken in the next five-year period. Projects within the Madison Area TPB Planning Area must be included in the TIP in order to be eligible to receive federal funding assistance. Outer county area projects are listed for coordination purposes.

[Bicycle Transportation Plan \(2015\)](#): Adopted by the Madison Area Transportation Plan, the *Bicycle Transportation Plan* provides a framework for cooperation between state agencies, Dane County, and local governments in planning for and developing bicycle facilities and programs.

[Dane County Comprehensive Plan \(2012\)](#): Adopted by the Dane County Board of Supervisors, the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan* includes countywide goals, objectives, and policies for transportation.

### II. Applicable State Transportation Plans

[Connections 2030 \(2009\)](#): Connections 2030 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. This plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. WisDOT officially adopted Connections 2030 in October 2009. Planned transportation improvements affecting the Town of Primrose are included in the Madison Metropolitan Planning Area section.

[Six-Year Highway Improvement Program](#) (updated annually): The Wisconsin Department of Transportation adopts the Six-Year Highway Improvement Program to identify capital improvements to the portions of the 11,745-mile statewide highway system which is administered and maintained directly by WISDOT. Planned improvements affecting Dane County, including the Town of Primrose, are contained in the [Southwest Region](#) section.

[Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 \(2009\)](#): Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 identifies rail issues that reflect the views of Wisconsin citizens, businesses and government officials. The plan includes a number of key parts, including a statewide vision for freight, intercity passenger and commuter rail; and an inventory of Wisconsin's rail system, rail service and rail facilities.

State Freight Plan: The State Freight Plan (SFP) provides a vision for multimodal freight transportation and positions the state to remain competitive in the global marketplace. The SFP was approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation on March 19, 2018.

## **Chapter 7: Transportation Goals, Objectives, & Policies**

### **A. Goals**

1. Ensure safe and efficient transportation.
2. Continue to cost effectively maintain the Town's road infrastructure at a level of service desired by Town residents and businesses.
3. Accommodate multiple modes of transportation, as appropriate.
4. Plan for anticipated traffic demand.
5. Address other transportation related policies required by Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning law.

### **A. Objectives**

1. Provide reasonable access to an adequate and safe public transportation system for all residents, farmers, and businesses.
2. Ensure adequate town road capacities and conditions to safely and efficiently accommodate automotive, trucking, agricultural equipment, bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
3. Establish and sustain an ongoing road maintenance program with limited funding.
4. When reconstructing roads the Town will consider multiple users and incorporate provisions to enhance the safety of these users. Users include bikers, farmers, and snowmobiles. Provisions may include, but is not limited to, adding bike lanes, signage or increasing width to accommodate farming equipment.
5. Work with Dane County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to make sure improvements to County Trunk Highways and State Highways support the goals and objectives of this plan.
6. Evaluate traffic impacts on all development projects and require road improvements where appropriate.
7. Recognize all applicable state and regional transportation plans.
8. Recognize all transportation policies and programs defined in the Dane County Comprehensive Plan.

### **B. Policies**

1. The Town shall create an inventory of historical road maintenance and a ten year plan for road maintenance including as assessment of increased usage by farm

- related equipment.
2. Address vehicular safety concerns on town roads and county and state highways.
    - a. Encourage safety by installing signs to alert drivers to stops and slower speeds.
    - b. Work with WISDOT and County Highways to improve safety to accommodate wider farm equipment and heavy automobile traffic.
    - c. Work with the Dane County Sheriff and the State Patrol to enforce traffic regulations and reduce automobile/farm equipment safety problems, and ask the Sheriff for written reports of specific kinds of accidents in the Town.
  3. Improve bicycle, pedestrian and agricultural equipment safety on shoulders of town and county roads.
    - a. Work with the Dane County Public Works, Highways and Transportation Department to improve shoulders on State and County roads.
    - b. Work with biking organizations to identify biking routes and where possible to expand notification to Town residents.



# ELEMENT 4: UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES



## **Chapter 8: Existing Utilities & Community Facilities**

### **I. Town Hall**

The Town of Primrose's town hall is centrally located at 8468 County Highway A.

### **II. Water Supply**

Residents in the town get water from private wells. The town does not offer municipal water service, and does not anticipate offering water service in the next 20 years.

### **III. On-Site Wastewater Treatment**

Residential and commercial wastewater is handled through on-site disposal and treatment techniques, including: conventional, mound, pressure distribution, at-grade, holding tank, and sand filter systems. The town does not expect to need this service in the next twenty years.

### **IV. Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities**

The town offers trash and recycling curbside through a local contractor. The charges for this service are included in the municipal property taxes. The Town of Primrose is served by the [Dane County Sanitary Landfill](#), operated by Dane County Public Works, Highways and Transportation Department. The [Dane County Clean Sweep program](#), housed at the landfill, provides for disposal of hazardous wastes.

### **V. Stormwater Management**

The town follows Dane County's Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance (Chapter 14 Dane County Code of Ordinances). The Ordinance sets standards for the quality and quantity of runoff from areas where alterations in the landscape may result in changes in the amount and quality of water running off a site.

### **VI. Law Enforcement**

The town falls entirely within the West 4 Dane County Sheriff District.

### **VII. Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Service (EMS):**

New Glarus Fire and Mount Horeb Fire and EMS serve the Town of Primrose.

### **VIII. Cemeteries**

Three cemeteries operate in the Town of Primrose. The East and West Primrose Cemeteries are both located on Ridge Dr, and the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery is located on 722 Bowers Road.

## **IX. Libraries**

Town residents have access to three libraries within 15 minute drive: New Glarus Public Library, Belleville Public Library, and Mount Horeb Public Library. All three of these village libraries participate in the South Central Library Service shared collection access.

## **X. Schools**

The town is served by three school districts: New Glarus, Mount Horeb, and Belleville.

## **XI. Parks and Recreational Facilities**

Two park exists near the town, the Mount Vernon Forest of Fame Park, and Donald County Park that is located in less than 0.5 miles outside of town.

## **XII. Health Care Facilities**

The town does not contain health care facilities. The nearest hospital is located in the City of Madison. The closest nursing homes are located in the City of Verona, the Village of Belleville, and the Village of Mount Horeb.

## **XIII. Child Care Facilities**

At this time there are no childcare centers in the town. Small, in-home childcare services may exist from time to time.

## **XIV. Churches**

Primrose Lutheran Church, located on 8770 Ridge Dr., is the only church in the town

## **XV. Senior Services**

Senior centers near the Town of Primrose are located in the City of Verona, the Village of Belleville, and the Village of Mount Horeb.

- The [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#) (ADRC) of Dane County provides information about resources and support related to aging and/or living with a disability, long-term care options, and public benefits. ADRC services are free and available to all County residents.
- The [Area Agency on Aging of Dane County](#) provides individuals age 60 and over and/or their family members information and assistance in accessing services that help older adults stay in their homes and communities.

## **XVI. Other Community Services**

Town of Primrose residents can access three food pantries in the City of Verona, the Village of Belleville, and the Village of Mount Horeb. There are also two youth centers near the Town in the City of Verona and the Village of Mount Horeb.

## **XVII. Telecommunications Facilities**

Two telecommunication towers are located in the town, and another tower is located in the Town of Montrose just east of the Montrose/Primrose line.

## **XVIII. Broadband**

Most areas in the Town of Primrose lack sufficient broadband internet coverage.

## **XIX. Power Plants and Transmission**

The Town of Primrose is in the Wisconsin Power & Light Company service area.

# **Chapter 9: Service Demand Forecast**

Due to the low growth rate anticipated for the Town of Primrose, existing utilities and community facilities are expected to be sufficient for the next twenty years. One exception, broadband internet access, is already insufficient to meet current demand.

# **Chapter 10: Utilities & Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, & Policies**

## **A. Goals**

1. Cost effectively maintain the Town's infrastructure at a level of service desired by Town residents, farmers, and businesses.
2. Cost effectively maintain the Town's public services desired by Town residents and businesses.

## **B. Objectives**

1. Provide convenient solid waste and recycling services.
2. As feasible, accommodate recreational facilities of interest to residents.
3. Cooperate with other municipalities and governmental agencies to maximize cost-efficient delivery of services.
4. Meet the Dane County Comprehensive Plan objectives for utilities and community facilities, including sewer service, stormwater management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunication facilities, power plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, police, fire, rescue, libraries, schools, and other governmental facilities.

## **C. Policies**

1. Limit residential, commercial, and industrial development to densities that are cost-effective to serve.

2. Apply the policies and programs of the Dane County Comprehensive Plan for utilities and community facilities, including those for sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunication facilities, power plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, police, fire, rescue, libraries, schools, and other governmental facilities.
3. Work to improve the availability, affordability, and adoption of telecommunication and high-speed broadband internet services.
4. Encourage pre-planning of utility corridors by towns and the counties.
5. Work with the state legislature to require utility companies to use pre-planned corridors in the County Comprehensive Plan, or existing transportation corridors.
6. Ensure new renewable energy facilities comply with town siting, design, and decommission standards described in Element 8 of this plan.
7. Explore and plan for future options to manage solid and liquid waste (manure) within the township.
8. Develop policies to manage placement of cell towers that minimize impacts to the Town's rural character and the environment.
9. Work with the County of Dane's Broadband Coordinator to:
  - a. Pursuing available broadband expansion funding opportunities,
  - b. Partnering with internet service providers that serve or could serve the Town of Primrose.
  - c. Use available maps and data to identify areas of the Town that are underserved and unserved.
  - d. Consider building conduit access whenever road reconstruction are ongoing in the Right of Way to allow for broadband infrastructure.
  - e. Consider adopting the Broadband Forward! model ordinance to streamline administrative procedures and reduce obstacles to broadband infrastructure investment in the Town.





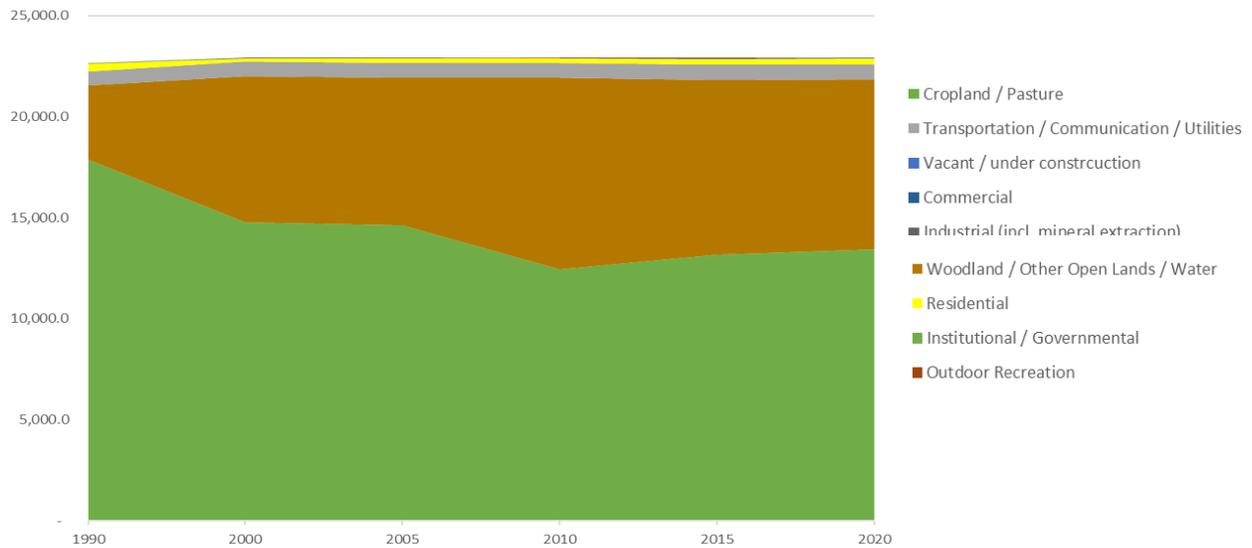
**ELEMENT 5:  
AGRICULTURAL,  
NATURAL, & CULTURAL  
RESOURCES**

# Chapter 11: Agricultural Resource

## I. Historic Trends

In the Town of Primrose, land in crop and pasture declined by 4,446 acres between 1990 and 2020 (*Dane County Land Use Inventory*). Woodland/other open land and water increased by 4,736 acres, and outdoor recreation increased by 1.37 acres over the same time period. Land devoted to residential use decreased 95.33 acres from 1990 to 2020.

Chart 5-1 Land Use 1990-2020



## II. Existing Farming

Ninety four percent of the Town’s land was in agricultural use in 2020. Forty percent of was dedicated to corn/soybean rotational crops, with another 19% in woodland, 15% on hay/alfalfa, and 3% is pasture. Small, but growing, acreages of wheat farming, dairy cattle and milk production, beef cattle, apiculture, grain farming, and nursery tree production also occur throughout the town.

Chart 5-2 Crops by Acreage (2020)

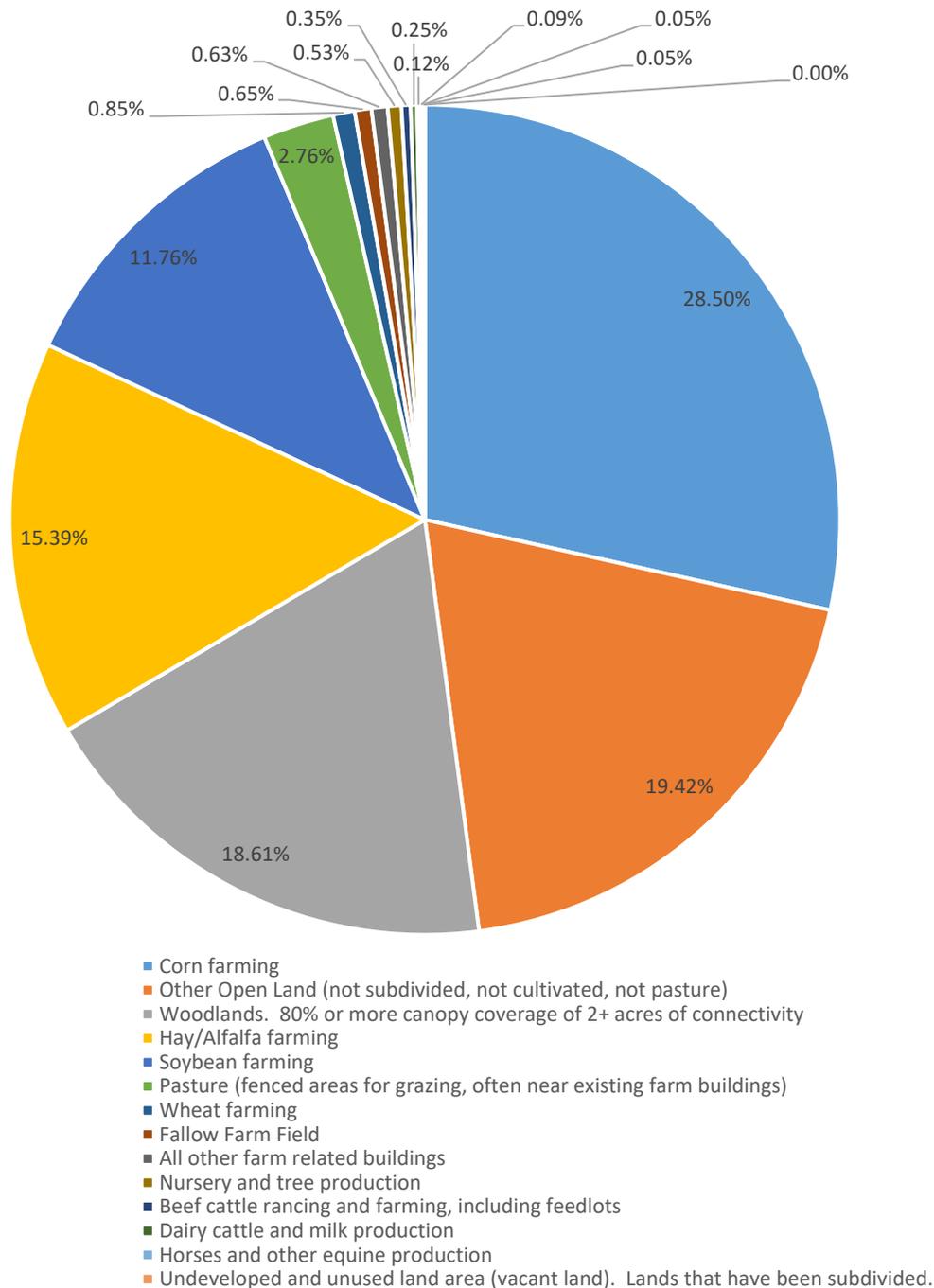


Table 5-1 Land in Agricultural Use 2010-2020

Description	2010	2020	Change 2010-2020
Other open land (not subdivided, farming)	5,105.7	4,211.2	-894.5
Corn farming	5,104.4	6,179.7	1075.3
Woodlands (80%+ canopy with 2+ acres of connectivity)	4,185.2	4,036.0	-149.2
Hay/alfalfa farming	3,537.8	3,337.9	-199.9
Soybean farming	2,157.7	2,551.1	393.4
Pasture (fenced areas often near farm buildings)	836.3	599.4	-236.9
Wheat farming	189.1	183.3	-5.8
Farm residence, access road	156.6	50.0	-106.6
Other grain farming (barley, rye, milo, oat, wild rice etc.)	144.0	10.8	-133.2
Nursery and tree production	110.8	115.2	4.3
Dairy cattle and milk production	68.2	53.754	-14.5
Beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots	34.6	76.693	42.1
Fallow Farm Field	33.7	141.055	107.4
All other farm related buildings	20.3	135.751	115.5
Farm related outbuildings detached from primary farm	17.9	10.077	-7.9
Abandoned/Unused farming structures	7.9		-7.9
Vegetable garden (plots less than one / one-half acre)	7.8		-7.8
Polyculture/CSA (community supported agriculture)	7.8		-7.8
Chicken egg production	6.6		-6.6
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production (non-food uses)	6.3		-6.3
Large scale grain elevators, Cooperative	5.0		-5.0
Sheep farming	3.4		-3.4
Sand and gravel quarry	1.6		-1.6
Noncitrus fruit and tree nut farming	1.1		-1.1
Other poultry production	0.5		-0.5
Apiculture (raising bees)	0.1	0.1	0.0
Horses and other equine production		25.0	25.0
Undeveloped/unused land.		19.4	19.4
<b>Total land in agricultural use</b>	<b>21,750.703</b>	<b>21,736.42</b>	<b>-14.284</b>

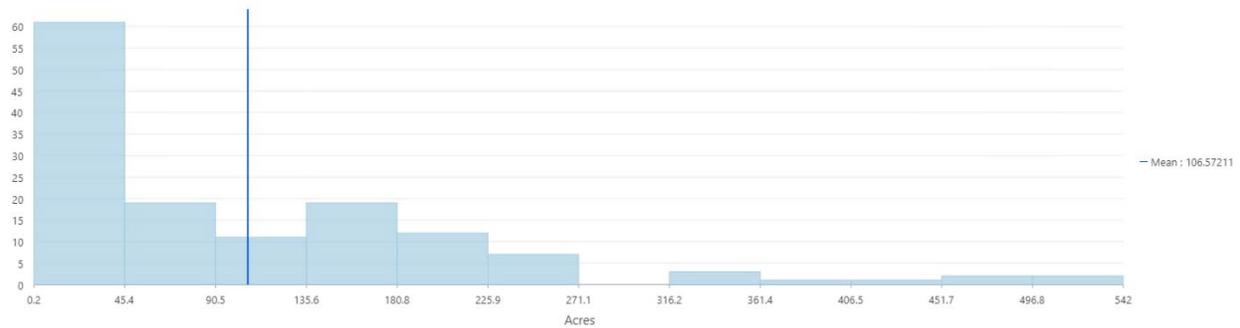
Source: Land Use Inventory

### III. Farm Size, Scale, and Type

The Dane County Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 10, Dane County Code) defines a “farm” as “All land under common ownership that is primarily devoted to agricultural use.” In 2020, 138 landowners had a majority of their property in agricultural use and could be

considered a “farm.” Farms ranged from less than one acre to 542 acres in size, with an average area of 106.6 acres.

Chart 5-3 Distribution of Acres



Source: Land Use Inventory

## IV. Future Prospects

Because of the Town’s strong density policy, agricultural practices will likely continue over the next twenty years. Global, national, and regional market factors may affect the type of farming in the Town.



## Chapter 12: Natural Resources

### I. Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Town of Primrose primarily lies in the unglaciated Driftless Zone, with a small lobe of glaciated area near the West Branch of the Sugar River Valley. The town sits at the intersection of two ecological landscapes, as recognized by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the [Southwest Savanna](#) and [Southeast Glacial Plains](#). The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' [Southwest Wisconsin Grasslands and Streams Conservation Area](#) encompasses the entire Town of Primrose, and provides funding and technical support to promote restoring and preserving the remaining native grasslands, prairies, and savanna remnants.

The northern portion of the town falls within the West Branch of the Sugar River watershed. The watershed has undergone extensive fisheries and landscape restoration efforts. The southern portion of the town is in the Little Sugar River watershed, and a small area of the westernmost portion of the town is in the Blue Mounds Branch watershed. Designated Resource Protection Corridors (see Element 8, Land Use) provide protection for critical resources associated with shorelands, wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes.

### II. Soils

Primrose lies in the unglaciated Driftless Zone, characterized by steep slopes and thin soils. Under the Soil and Water Conservation Society's Land Evaluation and Site Assessment classification, the most agriculturally productive soils (Class V and VI) lie primarily in the valley floors of the town's two major river systems. Poorer soils are located on slopes and peaks along the slopes.

Hydric soils and soils with hydric inclusions also follow the streams and rivers, especially in the West Branch of the Sugar River Valley. Hydric soils may, in time, revert to wetland conditions if no longer drained or cropped. Hydric soils present a variety of practical difficulties for construction and development should be avoided. The Dane County Zoning Division typically requires wetland delineations for proposed fill or construction near hydric soils.

### III. Wetlands

Small wetlands are found in the valleys of the West Branch of the Sugar River and the Little Sugar River. Dane County's Shoreland and Wetland Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 11, Dane County Code) regulates development in and near wetlands.

### IV. Groundwater

Hilltops and slopes in Primrose provide very high levels of groundwater recharge, up to 14 inches/year. In Primrose, groundwater supplies nearly all the water for domestic,

commercial and industrial uses. Therefore it is extremely important to protect the quality of our groundwater. Excessive road salt, fertilizer, and pesticide use, and poor maintenance of animal waste and septic systems can decrease groundwater quality.

## V. Wildlife and Endangered Species:

The Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory identifies the following endangered or threatened species or species of special concern as potentially present in the Town.

Table 5-2: Wisconsin DNR Natural Heritage Inventory

Common name	Scientific name	WI Status	Federal Status	Group
Loggerhead Shrike	<a href="#">Lanius ludovicianus</a>	END	SOC	Bird
Wilcox's Panic Grass	<a href="#">Dichanthelium wilcoxianum</a>	SC	-	Plant
Bell's Vireo	<a href="#">Vireo bellii</a>	THR	-	Bird
Prairie Fame-flower	<a href="#">Phemeranthus rugospermus</a>	SC	-	Plant
Azure Bluets	<a href="#">Houstonia caerulea</a>	SC	-	Plant
Purple-stem Cliff-brake	<a href="#">Pellaea atropurpurea</a>	SC	-	Plant
Yellow Wild-indigo	<a href="#">Baptisia tinctoria</a>	SC	-	Plant
Oak Woodland	<a href="#">Oak woodland</a>	NA	-	Community
Prairie Turnip	<a href="#">Pediomelum esculentum</a>	SC	-	Plant
Henslow's Sparrow	<a href="#">Centronyx henslowii</a>	THR	SOC	Bird
Upland Sandpiper	<a href="#">Bartramia longicauda</a>	THR	-	Bird
Northern Bobwhite	<a href="#">Colinus virginianus</a>	SC/M	-	Bird
Pickerel Frog	<a href="#">Lithobates palustris</a>	SC/H	-	Frog
Hairy Wild Petunia	<a href="#">Ruellia humilis</a>	END	-	Plant
Prairie Deer Mouse	<a href="#">Peromyscus maniculatus bairdii</a>	SC/N	-	Mammal
Rusty Patched Bumble Bee	<a href="#">Bombus affinis</a>	SC/FL	LE/HPZ	Bee
Yellow Bumble Bee	<a href="#">Bombus fervidus</a>	SC/N	-	Bee
Plains Gartersnake	<a href="#">Thamnophis radix</a>	SC/H	-	Snake
White Blue-eyed-grass	<a href="#">Sisyrinchium albidum</a>	SC	-	Plant

Source: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/NHI/calypso/EORreport.html#CName>

## VI. Woodlands

In 2020, the Town of Primrose had approximately 4,000 acres of woodland, about 3% less than in 2010. Forested land comprises 17% of the land area in the Town. Blocks of woodlands, including areas forested since the 1930s, are scattered throughout the town.

## VII. Metallic / Non-Metallic Mineral Resources:

No active or inactive mineral extraction sites exist in the town.

## Chapter 13: Cultural Resources

### I. Historic Sites

The Wisconsin Historical Society’s Architectural Heritage Inventory (AHI) identifies 17 structures of historic interest in the Town of Primrose (Table 5-3). No sites are listed on the National and State Register of Historical Places. Some may be of regional or local significance.

Table 5-3: Historic Architectural Resources

Historic Use	Historic Name/ Other Name	Style	Year Built	AHI #	Year Surveyed
House	Sugar River Valley Farmette	Italianate	Unknown	4405	2006
Barn		Astylistic Utilitarian	Unknown	4406	2006
Silo		Astylistic Utilitarian	Unknown	4407	
House	Eichelkraut House	Queen Anne	Unknown	4408	2006
Centric Barn		Octagon	Unknown	4409	2006
Town Hall	Primrose Town Hall	Front Gabled	Unknown	4410	2006
House		Italianate	Unknown	4411	2006
Barn		Astylistic Utilitarian	Unknown	4413	2006
School	School	Craftsman	Unknown	4414	2007
House		Other Vernacular	Unknown	4415	2007
House		Gabled Ell	Unknown	4416	2007
Church	Primrose Lutheran Church	Early Gothic Revival	Unknown	4417	2006
House		Astylistic Utilitarian	Unknown	4418	2006
House		Gabled Ell	Unknown	4419	
House		Other Vernacular	Unknown	4420	
Barn		Astylistic Utilitarian	Unknown	4421	
House	Ingebrit Peterson House	Side Gabled	1857	87162	2006

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society

### II. Archaeological and Burial Sites

Under Wisconsin law, Native American burial mounds, unmarked burials, and all marked and unmarked cemeteries are protected from intentional disturbance. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of archaeological sites and cemeteries referred to as the Archaeological Site Inventory (ASI). The Archaeological Site Inventory (ASI) is the most comprehensive list of archaeological sites, mounds, unmarked cemeteries, marked cemeteries, and cultural sites available. The ASI does not include all of the sites and cemeteries present in the state, however. It includes ONLY those sites that have been reported to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Detailed ASI information is confidential and is not subject to Wisconsin’s open records law (Wis. Stats. §§ 44.48 and 157.70). This information is also protected by Federal law

(Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 9(a) of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979). This caution not only helps protect archaeological sites but also protects landowners since private landowners own the majority of archaeological sites in the Town.

Since only a small portion of the Town has been surveyed for the presence of archaeological sites and cemeteries, the sites listed in the inventory represent only a fraction of the sites that are actually present. Local residents and American Indian communities who have and do live and work in the area possess much additional information on other archaeological sites and cemeteries. Steps should be taken to have this information incorporated into updates of the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*.

At this time, 21 archaeological sites and cemeteries are recorded in Primrose (Table 5-4).

Table 5-4 Archaeological and Burial Sites

ASI_ID	Name	Site Type	Culture Name	Section
12154	Mueller	Campsite/Village	Prehistoric;Woodland	8
59604	Haag Site	Lithic Scatter	Unknown	8
25327	Esser Rockshelter	Cave/Rock shelter	Unknown Prehistoric	11
29006	Lucille O'Connor	Campsite/Village	Unknown Prehistoric	13
67124	Devils Chimney	Cultural Site;Quarry	Historic Indian	11
12362	Amundsen	Campsite/Village	Unknown Prehistoric	10
12674	Emma Pierce Mound Group	Conical; Mound(S) - Linear	Woodland; Late Woodland	4
22974	Kahl Farm	Conical(S), Linear, Other, Mound(S)	Woodland	14
12032	Little Sugar Site	Campsite/Village	Unknown Prehistoric	32
12155		Campsite/Village	Unknown Prehistoric	18
12361	Argue Mammoth	Campsite/Village;Paleontological	Unknown Prehistoric	4
29007	Francis O'connor	Campsite/Village	Archaic;Woodland	12
9501	Mt. Julia Site	Campsite/Village	Unknown Prehistoric	13
29008	F & L O'connor	Campsite/Village	Archaic;Woodland	12
100627	Rindy Site	Campsite/Village	Late Woodland	25
12363	Hobbs	Campsite/Village	Unknown Prehistoric	9
9502	Devils Chimney Camp	Campsite/Village	Archaic	10
59603	Meadow Creek Site	Lithic Scatter	Unknown Prehistoric	5
13677	Mt. Pleasant Cemetery (Old Baptist)	Cemetery/Burial	Historic American Euro-	22
13678	West Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery	Cemetery/Burial		28
13679	East Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery	Cemetery/Burial		28

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society



### III. Community Design

The town incorporates community design guidelines. When reviewing development proposals, the Town and property owners will consider these Town objectives:

- Avoid disturbance of land with a history of agriculture;
- Avoid disturbance of floodplains, wetlands and steep slopes;
- Minimize number and length of driveways, and;
- Avoid fragmentation of existing contiguous wood lots of 20 acres or more.

See *Element 8: Land Use* for detailed design and siting criteria.

## Chapter 14: Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources Goals, Objectives, & Policies

### I. Agricultural Resources

#### A. Goals

1. Preserve productive farmlands in the town for continued agricultural use.
2. Keep farming economically viable in the Town of Primrose through the 21st century.
3. Maintain the rural character of the town.

### C. Objectives

1. Discourage land uses which conflict with agriculture.
2. Support efforts to expand economic opportunities for farmers.
3. Limit nonfarm development consistent with town density policies.
4. Direct nonfarm development away from productive agricultural lands.
5. Protect farm operations from incompatible land uses and activities that may adversely affect capital investment in agricultural land, improvements, and equipment.

### C. Policies

1. Limit nonfarm uses in agricultural preservation districts to one unit per 35 acres owned as of April 28, 1981 (see Chapter 8: Land Use).
2. Allow rezones for nonfarm development only on lands that meet town siting, lot design and driveway criteria (see Chapter 8: Land Use).
3. Direct development incompatible with agricultural use away from farming areas and toward areas with appropriate public services.
4. Cooperate with other government units to make local farmers eligible for farmland preservation tax credits and other programs that encourage continued farming.
5. Town ordinances that restrict noise, odors, keeping of animals, etc. shall not apply to farming activities in agricultural preservation districts.
6. Encourage farmer participation in cost-share and other programs as described in the Dane County Land & Water Resources Plan.
7. Encourage and participate in farmer education programs through UW Extension.
8. Consider new tools, such as TDR and PDR, to help protect agricultural lands and provide financial alternatives to developing farmland (See Chapter 8: Land Use).
9. Work with Dane County to revise county zoning and land division ordinances to support farm operations and agriculture-related businesses.

## II. Mineral Resources

### A. Goals

1. Make sure mineral extraction operations protect public health, safety and the environment and are consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.
2. Limit conflicts between mineral extraction and incompatible uses.

### B. Objectives

1. Establish clear, consistent policies for conditional use permits for mineral extraction operations. See Element 8, Land Use.
2. Work closely with Dane County to review and provide appropriate conditions for proposed mineral extraction operations. See Element 8, Land Use.
3. Discourage development that would conflict with existing mineral extraction operations.

## C. Policies

1. Help identify significant mineral deposits within the town and inventory inactive unreclaimed mineral extraction sites.
2. Review conditional use permits for new or expanded mineral extraction sites and develop recommended conditions based on the nature of the proposed operation, the location, topography, environmental features of the site, and public comment received. Work with Dane County as necessary to develop specific conditions related to, at a minimum:
  - Hours of operation;
  - Conditions on schedule, notification to neighbors and nature of blasting (if any),
  - Truck traffic and safe routes for material hauling,
  - Other uses on the site, such as crushing or asphalt production,
  - Fencing, screening and warning signs on the site, and
  - Final use of any reclaimed sites, consistent with other goals, objectives and policies of this plan.

## III. Natural Resources

### A. Goals

1. Protect important natural features such as significant woodland and grassland areas, floodplains, wetlands, endangered species habitat and steep slopes.
2. Provide sufficient parks and outdoor recreation areas to meet the needs of town residents.
3. Preserve the rural and scenic character of the town.
4. Protect and where possible, improve surface and groundwater quality.
5. Provide for sustainable, diverse hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and other outdoor activities within the town.
6. Support and encourage voluntary stewardship of private and public lands and respect private property rights.

### B. Objectives

1. Establish a resource protection district, with policies to help protect sensitive environmental areas, including floodplains, wetlands and steep slopes.
2. Establish a public lands district with policies to help foster cooperation with public agencies owning land in the town and promote consistency with this plan.
3. Make sure development uses best practices to minimize impacts to natural land and water resources.
4. Direct development requiring public sewer and water to designated Urban Service Areas.
5. Where possible, limit fragmentation of valuable natural resources and try to connect separated wildlife habitats to maintain robust viable populations.

## C. Policies

1. Guide the location and design of development in a manner that will minimize any adverse impact on the quality of surface waters, aquifers, wetlands, woodlands, and agriculture.
2. Support and coordinate with Dane County on erosion control, stormwater, floodplain, wetland and shoreland regulation.
3. Support cost-share, farm conservation plans and other efforts described in the Dane County Land & Water Resources Plan.
4. Work cooperatively with municipal, county, state and federal public agencies and nonprofits owning land in the Town to:
  - participate in public acquisition planning processes,
  - develop agreements on future use of existing public lands,
  - assure input from Town officials and citizens, and
  - provide a better understanding of financial resources and funding mechanisms available for land acquisition and management.
5. Consider Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and other programs to protect natural resources and give landowners alternatives to development. Give priority to tools and incentives that complement and support other voluntary conservation efforts in the town, such as the DNR's Southwest Grassland and Stream Conservation Area.
6. Review town siting criteria, design and development guidelines to make sure they adequately protect the rural character of the town, and avoid environmental impacts. The town should consider whether future amendments to the Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan should address issues such as:
  - Development, landscaping or design guidelines for ridgetops to reduce impacts to scenic vistas and prevent erosion.
  - Establishing limits on tree removal to protect woodlands and avoid fragmentation of habitat.
  - Using downward-directed lighting to protect dark skies and avoid unnecessary light pollution.

## IV. Cultural Resources

### A. Goals and Objectives

1. Encourage identification, protection, interpretation and maintenance for all significant archaeological sites in the town.
2. Encourage identification, protection, preservation and restoration of buildings, structures and sites which represent or reflect elements of the town's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history.
3. Help increase public awareness and appreciation of the town's historic and archaeological resources.

4. Preserve and protect the physical spaces which support and house cultural resources and practices of interest to residents of the Town of Primrose.

## B. Policies and Programs

1. Support local, county, state and federal historic preservation efforts.
2. Support efforts to help provide restoration grants to willing owners of historic properties. Provide information about grants, technical assistance and recognition programs to town residents.
3. Consider potential for providing modest incentives for landowners to maintain or restore historic properties.
4. Support efforts to document and research historic and archaeological sites in the town. Work with the Wisconsin Historical Society to provide interpretative materials, plaques, or markers for Town of Primrose sites of statewide or regional interest.
5. Work with the Village of Mount Horeb Historical Society, other historical societies, the Primrose Lutheran Church, Native American tribes and residents to educate and provide interpretation of town historic sites, rural schools, and document the written and oral history of the town.
6. Consider if the Town should appoint a historian and/or help establish a Town of Primrose Historical Society. Make meeting space available in the Town Hall.
7. Support local festivals, ethnic celebrations, farm tours, farm breakfasts, and markets that celebrate the town's history, heritage and rural way of life.
8. Conduct regular surveys of town residents about types of activities, pastimes, hobbies, sports, performances, handiwork, music, art, dance, theater, religion or other cultural practices, including information about the physical locations where such activities take place.



# ELEMENT 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



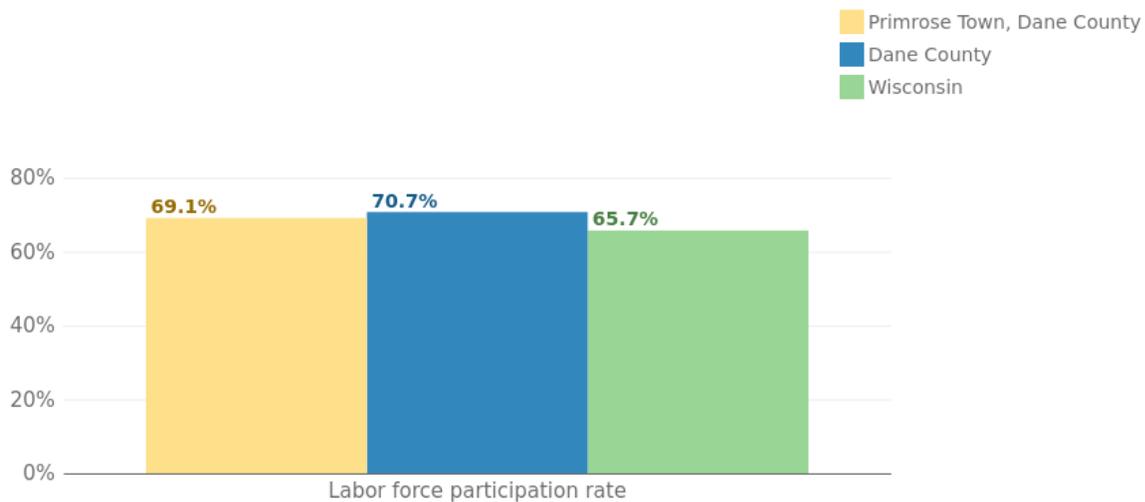
## Chapter 15: Economic Base

### I. Labor and Income

#### A. Labor Force

Approximately 69% of the town’s population aged 16 and older over participated in the labor force, slightly less than participation rate for Dane County as a whole, and slightly more than Wisconsin.

Chart 6-1 Labor Force Participation Rate (Population 16+ Years Old)



Source: [American Community Survey five-year averages 2018-2022](#)

#### B. Median Income

In 2022, Town of Primrose households had a median income of \$100,000, 18.6% higher than the \$84,297 median for Dane County as a whole.

Chart 6-2 Median Income for Households and Families

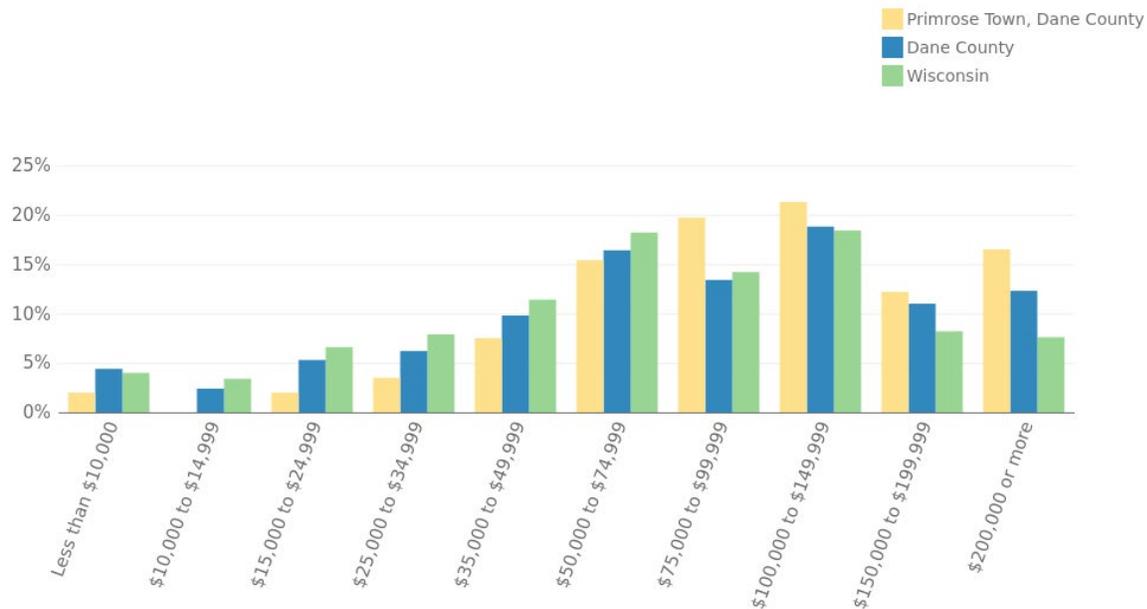


Source: [American Community Survey five-year averages 2018-2022](#)

### C. Income Distribution

Fifty percent of Town of Primrose households reported incomes of \$100,000 or more in the 2022 American Community Survey. Compared with Dane County as a whole, the Town of Primrose has a greater proportion of households earning \$100,000 or more, and a considerably smaller proportion of households earning less than \$50,000.

Chart 6-3 Household Income Distribution

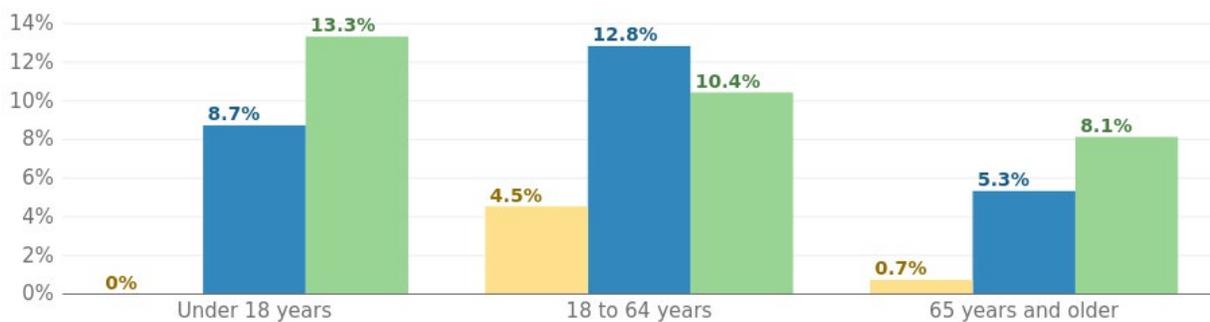


Source: [American Community Survey five-year averages 2018-2022](#)

### D. Poverty

According to the [American Community Survey five-year averages](#), approximately 4.3% (age 18 to 64 years) and 0.7% (age 65 years and older) of the residents of the Town of Primrose, had incomes below the federal poverty standard between 2018 and 2022.

Chart 6-4 Poverty Rates by Age



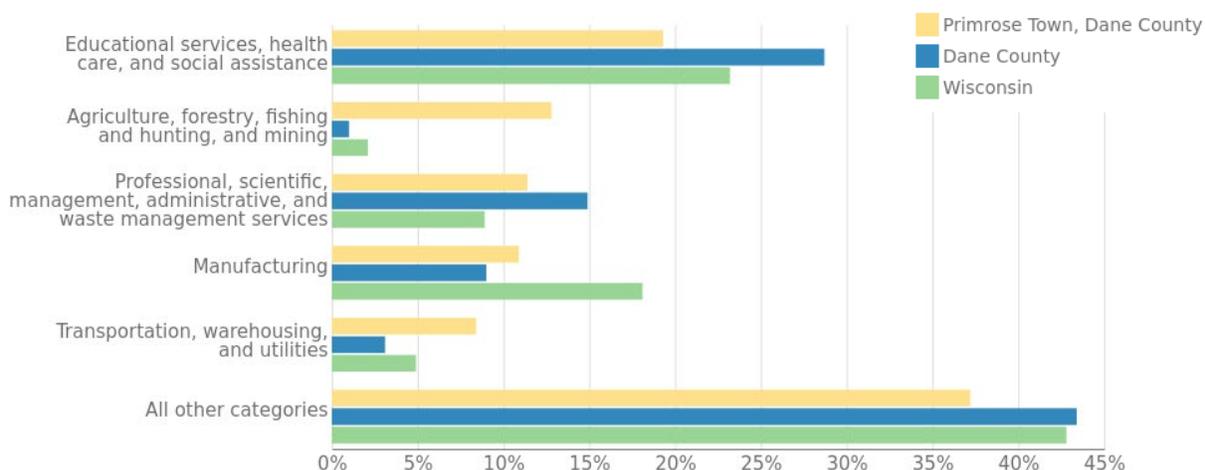
Source: [American Community Survey five-year averages 2018-2022](#)

## II. Major Industries and Employment

### A. Major Industries

The 2020 Land Use Inventory identified 1 commercial operation, a farm and garden supply retail operation, located in the Town of Primrose. In 2022, 19.3% of the town’s labor force worked in education, healthcare, and social assistance, 12.8% of the town’s labor worked in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining, 11.4% of the town’s labor worked in professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services, 10.9% of the town’s labor worked in manufacturing, and 8.4% of the town’s labor worked in transportation, warehousing, and utilities.

Chart 6-5 Employment by Industry

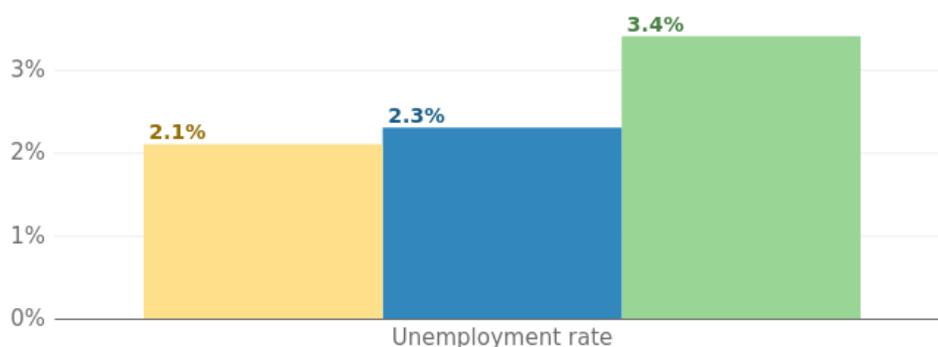


Source: [American Community Survey five-year averages 2018-2022](#)

### B. Unemployment

Between 2018 and 2022, the town’s unemployment rate averaged 2.1%, considerably lower than Dane County’s 2.3% rate and Wisconsin’s 3.4% rate.

Chart 6-6 Unemployment Rate (for Population 16+ Years Old )



Source: [American Community Survey five-year averages 2018-2022](#)

### III. Environmentally Contaminated Sites

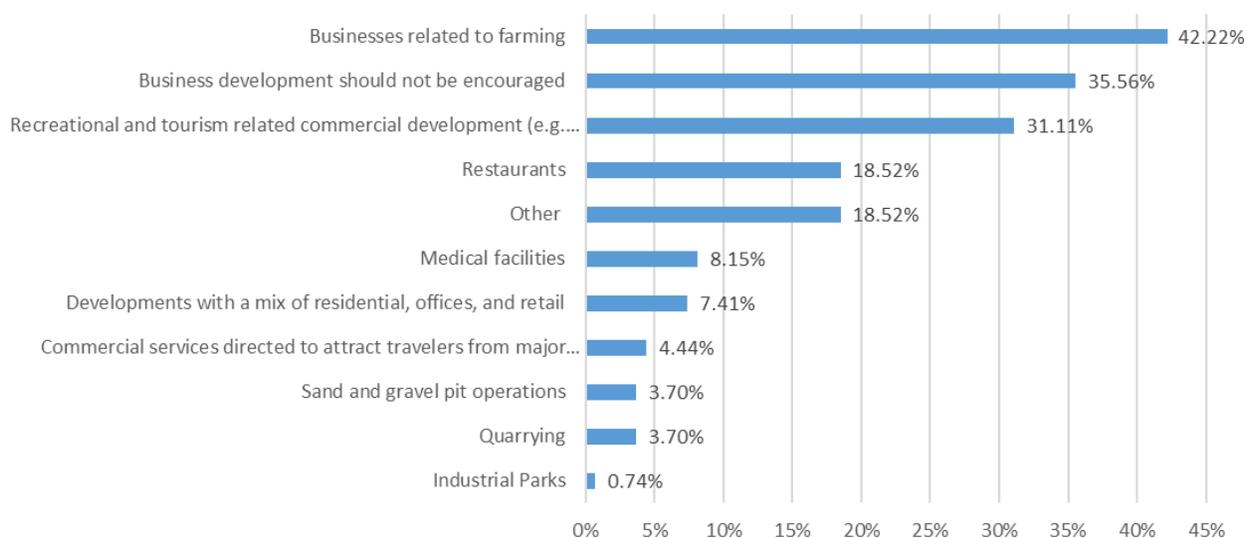
According to the WI DNR Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment, there is one active contaminated site in Section 15 (Hanna Brothers Soil Service 02-12-547230) in the Town of Primrose. The site was last monitored by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection in 1995 for possible fertilizer discharge.

## Chapter 16: Desired Economic Development

### I. Resident Survey Results

Based on the comprehensive plan survey, a majority of town residents wanted to see new “Businesses related to farming,” “Recreational and tourism related commercial development,” and “Restaurants” in the future. A majority of residents also thought that business development should not be encouraged in the Town of Primrose.

Chart 6-1 Residents’ Preferences for Future New Types of Businesses in the Town of Primrose



### II. Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Town of Primrose residents enjoy easy access to the Madison metropolitan area. Transportation networks provide for relatively short commute times. Because of the rural character of much of the town and the lack of historic town commercial centers, careful planning of new commercial development will be necessary to minimize impacts to surrounding properties.

### III. Economic Development Programs

#### A. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

TIF is a tool for financing local economic development projects. As outlined in Wis. Act 231, town governments may use TIF to encourage agricultural, forestry, manufacturing, or tourism projects within their jurisdictions. Details of the law can be found at <http://www.dor.state.wi.us/slf/tif.html>.

#### B. Dane County Community Development Block Grant Program

This program provides funds for eligible economic development projects such as business counseling, education for small business owners, and loans.

<http://www.co.dane.wi.us/plandev/cdbg/index.htm>

#### C. Community-Based Economic Development Program (CBED)

CBED provides grants for incubator projects, economic development plans, and revolving loan programs to local governments. Funds are available annually through a competitive application process.

<http://commerce.wi.gov/CD/CD-bcf-cbed.html>

## Chapter 17: Economic Development Goals, Objectives, & Policies

#### A. Goals

1. Consider a variety of home-based, independent contractor and limited family businesses in farming areas where there will be at most a minimal impact on agricultural activities and enterprises within the Town of Primrose.

#### B. Objectives

1. Allow only those commercial uses that will not cause environmental degradation or conflict with farming operations or the rural character of the town.
2. To allow such business development as is needed to support existing or new agricultural, forestry or passive recreational activities.
3. Support a wide variety of home-based, independent contractor and limited family businesses in farming areas where there will be no impact on surrounding properties to expand options for town residents to earn income.
4. Allow for flexibility and creativity for farmers and agriculture-related businesses to expand, diversify, and/or add value to their products to meet changing market.

#### C. Policies

1. Any commercial development must comply with the siting, lot size, scale, density and operational requirements described in Element 8: Land Use.

2. Support limited small, home- or farm-based businesses that provide a service to town residents and can supplement town residents' income.
3. Develop policies to support sustainable "green-energy," biotechnology and organic farming projects, while protecting the environment, natural resources and rural character of the town.
4. Support local, county, state and federal programs to reinvest in agriculture, promote new agricultural products and create added value for farm, forestry and related operations in the town.
5. Support and increase public awareness of alternative agriculture enterprises, such as organic farming, community supported agriculture, and farmer's markets.
6. Survey and inventory road conditions and work out conditions with new commercial uses to make sure they pay their fair share of maintenance and repair to town roads caused by heavy vehicle traffic. If necessary, consider seasonal road postings to limit vehicle weights, particularly in spring.
7. Require regular review of commercial or business operations permitted under conditional use permits, and consider expiration date on conditional use permits and require operators to reapply after a certain length of time.
8. Work with University of Wisconsin Extension, local schools, 4-H and other groups to help interested town residents learn new skills.
9. Continue to work with Dane County, the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission, the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, and the University of Wisconsin to monitor the status and economic health of agricultural and other businesses in the town.



VERMONT

CROSS PLAINS

MIDDLETON

*Village of  
Mount Hope*

SPRINGDALE

*City of  
Verona*

MOUNDS

VERONA

PERRY

PRIMROSE

MONTROSE

# ELEMENT 7: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

*Village of  
Bellville*

## Chapter 18: Intergovernmental Cooperation

### I. Regional Context

#### A. Adjacent Towns

The Town of Primrose shares borders with the Dane County Towns of Perry, Springdale and Montrose, and with the Green County Town of New Glarus.

#### B. Adjacent Cities and Villages

The Town of Primrose shares no borders with any incorporated city or village. The Town is approximately three and a half miles from the City of Verona to the northeast, three miles from the Village of Mount Horeb to the northwest, and two miles from the Village of Belleville to the east. Town residents often commute to the City of Verona, the Villages of Mount Horeb, Belleville or New Glarus or the Madison Metropolitan Area for shopping, jobs, and entertainment.

#### C. Dane County

The Town of Primrose is within County Supervisory District 30. The town relies on a number of Dane County ordinances to regulate land use in the Town. Currently, the Town uses Dane County's zoning ordinance, floodplain zoning ordinance, land division ordinance, subdivision ordinance, erosion control and stormwater management ordinance, and shoreland/wetland zoning ordinance. The Town continues to maintain a good relationship with Dane County departments.

#### D. School Districts

The Town is served by the Mount Horeb Area School District in the north, the New Glarus School District in the south, and the Belleville School District in the east-central portion of the town.

#### E. Capital Area Regional Planning Commission

The Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC) was created on May 2, 2007 to serve as the regional planning and area wide water quality management planning entity for the Dane County region. Its responsibilities include approval of urban service areas and delineation of environmental and open space corridors. The Commission is composed of thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Mayor of the City of Madison (4), the Dane County Executive (3), the Dane County Cities and Villages Association (3), and the Dane County Towns Association (3).

## F. Relevant State Agencies

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owns a substantial amount of land in the town (see Public Lands District in Chapter 8: Land Use), and has regulatory authority over stream crossings and other work in navigable streams. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WISDOT) manages State Highway 92, which runs through the eastern portion of the town, and State Highway 69, which crosses the southeastern corner of the town. The town also participates in the Department of Agriculture Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP)'s Farmland Preservation Program.

## G. Relevant Federal Agencies

The National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service own lands in the eastern portion of the town. Many farmers and other landowners in the town participate in conservation programs funded and operated by the Natural Resource Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## II. Existing or Potential Conflicts

### A. Other Cities and Villages

Adopted comprehensive plans for the Town of New Glarus, in Green County, and the Town of Springdale, in Dane County, would both allow for higher densities of nonfarm development than does the Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Primrose Board and Planning Commission should cooperate with their counterparts in neighboring towns to make sure proposed residential developments across town lines do not negatively impact ongoing farm or conservation activities in Primrose.

The adopted comprehensive plans for the City of Verona and the Villages of Mount Horeb, Belleville and New Glarus do not show any projected expansion into the Town of Primrose within the next 20 years (Map 7-1). Consequently, no potential conflicts are anticipated with these municipalities.

## **Chapter 19: Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, & Policies**

### A. Goals

1. Facilitate and encourage cooperation and communication between all levels of government.
2. Establish a process for mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with other governmental jurisdictions to promote cooperation and communication.

## B. Objectives

1. Maintain good working relationships with adjoining municipalities and other governmental jurisdictions.
2. Explore cooperation with municipalities, Dane County, and state and federal agencies, including land use planning, service, and boundary agreements.
3. Explore shared public service agreements that improve services and lower costs.

## C. Policies and Programs

1. Continue to actively participate in intergovernmental organizations such as the Dane County Towns Association and events sponsored by the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission, and explore other opportunities to meet with representative from other governments.
2. Continue to actively participate in formal public hearings, workshops, committees and other outreach opportunities sponsored by other governmental units, including Dane County, the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission, nearby cities and villages, surrounding towns and state and federal agencies.
3. Provide formal comments and recommendations on proposed municipal, county or state plans, regulations or infrastructure improvements that have the potential to affect the Town of Primrose.
4. Work with the Board of Supervisors to have the Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan adopted into the Dane County Comprehensive Plan.





ELEMENT 8:  
LAND USE

## Chapter 20: Existing Land Use

Existing land uses and historic trends are described below and listed in Table 8-A. Over the past 20 years, cropland and pasture acreage in the town has decreased, while woodlands and single family residential uses have increased in acreage.

### I. Agriculture

In 2020, cropland and pasture accounted for 58.6% of the land area of the town. This is a decrease of 1,358 acres since 2000. Conventional farm practices are employed to raise corn, soybeans, and dairy as well as other livestock and crops. Since 1990, cropland and pasture has declined by 4,446 acres.

### II. Woodlands

Woodlands account for 17.6% of the land area of the town. Woodland acreage decreased in Primrose by 23 acres (0.6%) between 2000 and 2020.

### III. Residential

The Town maintains a relatively low-density population, with 1.3% of the Town's land occupied by residential use. Single-family residential is the prevalent housing type. Land devoted to residential use has grown by 153 acres, which is more than double the amount in 2000.

### IV. Commercial

Commercial retail, services and industrial uses play a very small part of the Town's total land use, totaling only 4 acres (less than 1% of the town's land area). At this time the Town contains only one commercial operation which is a farm supply retail store.

### V. Other Public Uses

The predominant public use is transportation infrastructure, which consumes 723.3 acres in the Town. Roadways account for the bulk of this land use.

Table 8-1 Land Use by Acreage 2000-2020<sup>1</sup>

Acres of Land Use	2000	2010	2020
<b>Residential</b>	<b>144.4</b>	<b>211.4</b>	<b>297.7</b>
Single Family	140.8	211.4	247.7
Two Family	1.3		0.0
Multi Family	0.0		0.0
Farm Dwelling	50.0	50.0	50.0
Group Quarters	0.0		0.0
Mobile Home	2.3		0.0
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Manufacturing	0.0		0.0
Wholesale	4.3		0.0
Extractive	17.9	1.6	0.0
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>737.1</b>	<b>726.7</b>	<b>732.3</b>
Road and Right of Way	736.4	726.7	731.3
Railroad	0.0		0.0
Other	0.7		1.1
<b>Communication/utilities</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>0.2</b>
Generating Processing	0.0	1.3	0.0
Transmission	0.0	0.2	0.2
Waste Processing	0.0		0.0
Other	0.0		0.0
<b>Commercial retail</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>
General Repair & Maintenance	0.0		0.0
Transportation Related	0.0		0.0
Other	0.0		4.1
<b>Commercial services</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Lodging	0.0		0.0
Other	0.4		0.0
<b>Institutional/governmental</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>5.2</b>
Education	4.2		0.0
Administrative	0.6	1.4	0.0
Cemetery	2.9	3.8	3.8
Other	1.6	1.0	1.4
<b>Outdoor recreation</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Woodlands</b>	<b>4,058.9</b>	<b>4,185.3</b>	<b>4,036.0</b>
<b>Other Open Lands</b>	<b>3,157.0</b>	<b>5,139.4</b>	<b>4,211.2</b>
<b>Vacant Unused Lands</b>	<b>0.0</b>		<b>19.4</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>192.0</b>	<b>184.0</b>
<b>Cropland Pasture</b>	<b>14,727.8</b>	<b>12,476.5</b>	<b>13,419.7</b>
<b>Total undeveloped area</b>	<b>21,996.5</b>	<b>21,941.2</b>	<b>21,870.3</b>
<b>Total developed area</b>	<b>913.4 (4%)</b>	<b>970.2 (4%)</b>	<b>1,040.9 (4.5%)</b>
<b>Total area</b>	<b>22,909.9</b>	<b>22,911.4</b>	<b>22,911.2</b>

Source: Dane County Planning & Development and CARPC (Land Use Inventory), 2022.

<sup>1</sup> In 2010 CARPC changed the way agricultural, farm residential and other rural land use were reported. For a more detailed description, see the Farmland Loss Mitigation Report, CARPC, 2010.

# Chapter 21: Future Land Use

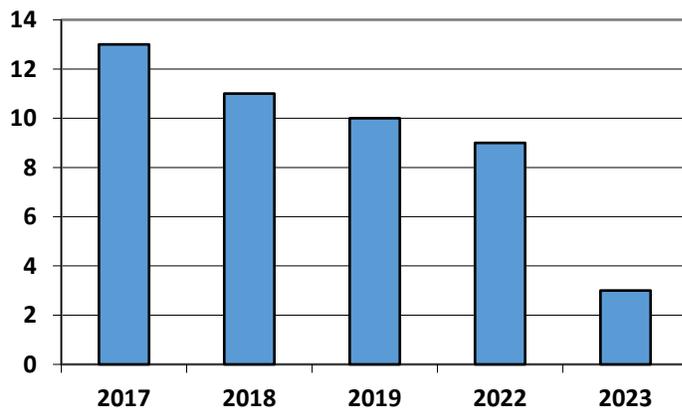
## I. Supply and Demand

The number of parcels created each year determines the rate of development in the Town. The Town has a density policy that allows 1 split per 35 acres of contiguous land owned as of April 28, 1981.

Four zoning permits were issued in 2023; single family residence, replacement residence, agricultural building and house remodel). Eleven zoning permits were issued in 2022, eleven in 2021, and nine in 2020.

Two of the rezones, totaling 4.4 acres, in 2023 were out changed out of farmland. Four rezones, totaling 12.7 acres, in 2022 were changed out of farmland.

Chart 8-1 Rezones out of Farmland Preservation



The statistics indicate that demand for non-agriculture related residential development will continue to be satisfied by rural densities permitted under the town’s one unit per 35-acre density policy. Therefore, it is unnecessary for the Town to provide a full range of municipal services now or in the foreseeable future.



## II. Land Use Acreage Projections

Table 8-2 shows land use projections for the Town of Primrose from 2020 through 2040. Residential land use projections are based on Wisconsin Department of Administration household projections and single family residential acreage per housing unit as reported in the 2020 Dane County Land Use Inventory. Agricultural, commercial and other non-residential land uses are based on historic trends between 2000 and 2020.

Table 8-1: Land Use Acreage Projections in 5-year Increments

Land Use	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Cropland/Pasture	13,419.7	13,400.7	13,396.6	13,394.5	13,394.5
Woodland/Open Lands/Water	8,431.2	8,431.2	8,431.2	8,431.2	8,431.2
Transportation/Communication / Utilities	732.5	732.5	732.5	732.5	732.5
Residential	297.7	316.7	320.8	322.9	322.9
Vacant / under construction	19.4	19.8	20.1	20.5	20.9
Institutional / Governmental	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6
Commercial	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.4
Outdoor Recreation	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5

Source: WI DOA Household Projections, Dane County Land Use Inventory 2020.

## III. Land Use Conflicts

Land use conflicts in the town can arise from:

- poorly planned residential development that is incompatible with nearby agricultural and open space uses,
- commercial development that generates excessive traffic, or is generally incompatible with the rural character of the town, and/or
- incompatibilities between town, county and city or village plans.

The Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan seeks to minimize such conflicts by:

- limiting the overall density of residential development in agricultural areas,
- establishing siting and design guidelines,
- limiting the nature and scope of commercial activities to those compatible with existing uses,
- redirecting more intensive uses to areas with appropriate municipal services, and
- supporting intergovernmental cooperation and planning.

## IV. Redevelopment Opportunities

Approximately 4.6% of the town is developed, so there are limited redevelopment opportunities.

## Chapter 22: Land Use Goals, Objectives, & Policies

The Town of Primrose features a diverse rural landscape that includes farms, woodlands, river valleys, and hillsides. Residents value the rural lifestyle and environmental resources, such as Mount Vernon and Door Creeks and Primrose Brook. Over 70% of respondents to the town comprehensive plan survey felt that it was “essential” or “very important” to protect streams, air quality, wildlife habitat, farmland, wetlands, and woodlands.

### I. Overarching Land Use Guidance

The following general land use goals, objectives, and policies reflect town desires and are designed to ensure the long term quality of life respecting the property rights and responsibilities of landowners.

#### A. Goals

1. Preserve the productive cropland/agricultural lands in the town for continued agricultural use.
2. Prevent conflicts between incompatible uses.
3. Protect the natural environment.
4. Maintain the rural character of the town.

#### B. Objectives

1. Discourage land uses that conflict with agriculture and the town’s rural character.
2. Limit nonfarm development according to density and siting criteria described in this plan.
3. Protect, maintain and restore unique natural resources such as wetlands, floodplains, hydric soils, steep slopes, woodlands and productive farm soils.
4. Recognize the environment as an integrated system of land, water and air resources, the destruction or disturbance of which can adversely affect the community by creating hazards, destroying important public resources, or wasting productive lands and renewable resources.
5. Control public costs for roads and services associated with development.

#### C. Policies

1. Provide a sufficient supply and mix of land uses to meet town land use objectives.
2. Follow the recommendations and requirements of this Plan when making land use decisions.
3. Redirect high-density residential land uses, or other commercial or industrial development usually associated with an urban land use pattern to a designated Urban Service Area.

4. Minimize development impacts on productive agricultural lands, or those lands with a history of productive farming activity.
5. Limit residential development to locations that are not classified as productive farmland.
6. Require agencies and bodies responsible for the location of public improvements such as roadway corridors, pipelines, power lines or broadband and renewable energy to recognize and comply with the agricultural land preservation objectives of the Town.
7. Promote state and local programs that encourage farming, or investment in farming, within the Town.
8. Implement land use regulation using three areas: Agricultural Preservation, Environmental & Resource Protection, and Public Lands (see Planned Land Use Maps 8-3, 8-4).

## II. Planning Areas

The above policies are implemented through the three areas named in Land Use Policy 8. Each area has unique development standards as detailed in the following sections.

### A. Agricultural Preservation Areas

The Town established the Agricultural Preservation Area to preserve agricultural lands and rural character while providing opportunities for limited development. This designation aims to promote investment in agricultural operations by ensuring that incompatible land uses are directed to areas that minimize interference with farming activities. This area encompasses the most land in the town and includes productive soils, other agricultural land uses, pastureland, woodlots, and residences and out-buildings.

#### 1. Development Density Policy

Non-farm development includes all residential development (farm and non-farm), non-farm commercial and development in sales of land or easements to public entities. The density policy limits the amount of development and is used to guide Town decision-making when considering rezones out of the FP-35 area. The town's Density policy limits development to one dwelling unit per 35 acres in this area. Density limitations apply to:

- All residential development,
- Commercial development initiated after the date of adoption of this comprehensive plan, and
- Sales of land or easements to public entities unless otherwise indicated in sales contracts, deeds, or recorded agreements.

Under the adoption of the Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan the number of densities for development (referred to herein as, "split" or "density unit") on a parcel of land are based on the number of contiguous acres held in single ownership as of April 28, 1981. Acreages are not rounded up for this calculation.

Density units are not equivalent to or guarantees of future building sites. Building site criteria for a proposed nonfarm development must be met before a density unit may be used.

Landowners may choose from one, but not both, of two density siting options. Option A, allows for a higher density and stricter siting and design standards. Option B, allows for a lower density and less restrict siting and design standards. Once Option A or B is used, that option must be applied for the remaining density units on the property.

- a. *Siting Option A: All new or expanded building sites, driveways and public or private roads developed under Density Option A must comply with all of the following:*
  - i. Be entirely on pasture or woodlands as determined as of 1981, and not cropped since 1981.
  - ii. Minimize conflicts with surrounding agricultural uses.
  - iii. Avoid disturbing lands appropriate for long term agricultural use based on:
    - a) Dane County LESA Group I, II, or III soils,
    - b) Historical cropping activity,
    - c) Commitment of owner to continued agricultural use,
    - d) Degree of investment in agricultural operations,
    - e) Natural features, e.g. significant native woodlands or grasslands, and,
    - f) Adjacent land uses.
  - iv. All general siting criteria described below under 'Development siting standards & criteria.'
- b. *Siting Option B: Density units for option B are determined based on the contiguous acres held in single ownership as of April 28, 1981 that have not been already been used as of the adoption of the May 18, 2010 revision of the Comprehensive Plan. Option B requires using two density units/splits (35x2=70 acres) for all remaining builds as of 2010.*

Example: If a property had 6 density units as of April 28, 1981 and used 2 of those before May 18, 2010, it would have 4 remaining density units. If Option B were used, the property would have 2 remaining builds at 1 per 70 acres.

This policy is not meant to require or encourage 70-acre dwelling unit lots; rather landowners are encouraged to create smaller clustered dwelling unit lots that meet the siting criteria of this plan.

- i. Siting Criteria: Landowners may cross no more than 300 linear feet of historically cropped lands to reach pasture or woodlands with a residential driveway, if all of the following criteria are met:
  - a) Avoid any disturbance of lands determined appropriate for long term agricultural preservation based on:
    - 1) Dane County LESA Group I, II, or III soils,

- 2) Driveways that cross no more than 300 feet of historically cropped land,
  - 3) Commitment of owner to continued agricultural use,
  - 4) Degree of investment in agricultural operations,
  - 5) Natural features, e.g. significant native woodlands or grasslands, and
  - 6) Adjacent land uses.
- b) The landowner records with the Dane County Register of Deeds either a deed restriction document or a conservation easement that prohibits nonfarm development on 70 acres of agricultural land for each nonfarm lot created. The town will also record deed notice documents on the entire 1981 farm indicating that further nonfarm development on the original farm is limited to no more than one unit per 70 acres.
  - c) Deed restrictions or conservation easements must run in favor of, at a minimum, both the Town of Primrose and Dane County Board of Supervisors.
  - d) Additional, restricted, density units not used for proposed nonfarm development may be transferred to other properties if the town develops a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, or may be sold as part of a future town Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, but may not be used for additional development on the original farm.
  - e) Driveways shall not cross more than 300 linear feet of historically cropped lands to access an appropriate building site.
  - f) All new or expanded building sites, driveways, and public or private roads shall comply with all criteria described below under 'Development siting standards & criteria'.
- c. *Subdivision plats:*
- Subdivision plats (defined in Chapter 75, Dane County Code as 5 or more lots less than 35 acres in size created within 5 years) are not permitted in Agricultural Preservation Areas.
- d. *Rounding:*
- The town's density limitation is meant literally, with no rounding up of fractional density units permitted. For example, a 4/28/1981 farm unit totaling 56 acres would be eligible for no more than one nonfarm development site ( $56 / 35 = 1.6$ , truncated to 1).
- e. *Determining original farm units:*
- The Town will use the 1981 Land Atlas and Plat Book for Dane County by Rockford Map Publishers, Inc., as a guide to determining original farm ownership and acreage as of April 28, 1981. Parcel size will be based on gross

acreage, which includes road and other public rights of way, as calculated by the Dane County GIS system. Landowners or applicants for rezoning proposals may submit more detailed information for consideration, such as recorded deeds or surveys.

An original farm unit, or base farm tract, is defined as contiguous lands in single ownership as of April 28, 1981. For the purposes of this policy, single ownership is defined as parcels owned by one individual or by a married couple, partnership, or corporation including that individual. Parcels interrupted by roads, other public rights-of-way, or by navigable waterways shall be considered contiguous for the purposes of calculating allowable density. Parcels meeting at a single point shall be considered contiguous.

*f. Eligible lands:*

When calculating original farm acreage and eligible density units, all property under single ownership within the Agricultural Preservation Area shall be included. This includes land under water, within mapped wetlands, floodplains, or environmental corridors.

*g. Land transfers after April 28, 1981 and allocation of density units:*

Land sales of over 35 acres occurring after April 28, 1981, do not result in new allotments of density units. When land sales of more than 35 acres occur after April 28, 1981 without clear documentation or recorded agreement between buyer and seller, or subsequent/current owners, regarding any transfer of splits or density units, the Town shall utilize the following guidelines when considering allocation of any remaining density unit(s):

- i. Landowners are encouraged to make clear in recorded documentation, such as a sales contract or warranty deed, that a density unit is being transferred or retained when selling tracts of land over 35 acres, and whether land follows Option A, one build per 35 acres, or B, one per 70 acres. The Town may request that any supporting documentation be included with development or rezone proposals. Supporting documents may include, but are not limited to, sales contracts, warranty deeds, affidavits, and written agreements.
- ii. Landowners who combine portions of different April 28, 1981 farm parcels in order to obtain over 35 acres are not entitled to a nonfarm density unit.
- iii. Proportional allocation: In the absence of clearly understood supporting documentation, any remaining splits will be allocated on a proportional basis among current owners of the April 28, 1981 farm unit in keeping with the Town's density policies. Under no circumstances shall the density standard be exceeded on the April 28, 1981 farm unit.
- iv. Vacant, legal, substandard (sometimes referred to as "non-conforming") FP-1 zoned parcels under 35 acres in size in existence since April 28, 1981 may be permitted to rezone to an appropriate area to allow for one

single-family home, providing siting criteria are met. Such parcels may not be divided.

- v. Substandard, legally created FP-1 zoned parcels under 35-acre parcels, with an existing residence, may not be divided.
- vi. Illegally created substandard parcels are not permitted to divide.
- vii. Illegally created substandard parcels with an existing residence may be permitted to rezone to an appropriate area to bring the parcel into compliance, provided the parcel complies with all density and siting criteria of this plan.

*h. Farm residences:*

- i. Existing primary farm residences built before April 28, 1981 and on A-1 (exclusive)-zoned parcels 35 acres or larger shall not count against this density policy. A primary farm residence is the main farm house on an original farm unit, or base farm tract, usually with the buildings, that was occupied by someone who was farming the land that he or she owned as of April 28, 1981. There will be no more than one primary farm residence per original farm unit, or base farm tract.
- ii. All existing residences, other than primary farm residences, shall count against this density policy.
- iii. Separation, by certified survey map and rezone, of residences, including separated primary farm residences, built prior to April 28, 1981 shall count against this density policy.
- iv. All residences built after April 28, 1981, including residences for farm owners or operators under sections 10.222(3)(a)5, Dane County Code, shall count against the density policy.

*i. Duplexes:*

Zoning for the construction of new duplex or two-family homes or for the conversion of existing large houses to duplex use will be considered, if the following criteria are met:

- i. Any existing house must have a total floor area of at least 1,800 square feet.
- ii. The Public Health agency of Madison and Dane County confirms that the private onsite wastewater treatment system is adequately sized, installed and maintained to accommodate duplex use.
- iii. The duplex structure will count as two density units under the density limitation. "Attached accessory dwelling units," as defined in s. 10.004(3), Dane County Code, and allowed under a conditional use permit, are not considered a duplex under this policy and do not count as an additional density unit.

*j. When density units are exhausted:*

When eligible density units for an original April 28, 1981 farm have been exhausted, the town shall request the County to record a deed restriction that prohibits further residential development on the balance of the property prior to the issuance of the rezone of said property. Portions of the property intended to remain in agricultural use shall be zoned FP-1 or FP-35.

2. Development siting standards and criteria:

The Town shall use the following siting standards and criteria when reviewing proposed rezones or development, land divisions under county and town land division ordinances, and building siting under the town building permit ordinance.

*a. Site plan review:*

The Planning Commission and Town Board must approve a site plan for all proposed nonfarm development within the Agricultural Preservation Area. Site plans should show the layout of the proposed lot(s), the location and use of proposed buildings, parking area(s), significant natural features, existing and proposed vegetation and driveway access. Site plan should meet all standards of section 10.101(6), Dane County Code. Site plans must, in the opinion of the Planning Commission and Town Board, meet all of the following objectives:

- i. Agricultural lands, woodlands and other natural resources are to be protected. Site plans should minimize the break-up of contiguous tracts of agricultural land, woodlands or environmentally sensitive land.
  - a) Unless exempted by the Farmers Retirement house provision buildings shall not be located on historically cropped lands.
  - b) Residential buildings, driveways, public or private roads and out buildings shall be located in pastures or woodlots in places with the least impact on the surrounding resources.
  - c) Driveways and building in woodlots should minimize the destruction of hardwood trees and environmentally sensitive/important areas. Short driveways and building near the edge of woods may be required. No more than 30% or 2 acres (whichever is less) of existing woods on a lot may be cut for the building site and driveway.
- ii. New buildings, driveways and public or private roads must comply with Resource Protection Corridor policies.
- iii. Siting should protect the rural character of the township.
  - a) Proposed buildings and uses create minimal conflict with neighbors.
  - b) New driveways, houses or outbuildings will be located a minimum of 500 feet away from adjacent out-buildings and

residences, unless the adjacent residence is also the property of the person proposing the new building and is part of a planned “cluster development.” Whenever possible, buildings and driveways must be 100’ from existing property lines. At the discretion of the Town Board and Planning Commission, balancing various competing goals and objectives of the town plan, exceptions to this rule may sometimes be allowed. Such exceptions might include situations such as the following: Where the enforcement of the rule is impossible because the parcel is too small, or where the placement of the new driveway in accordance with the rule would disturb important natural resources such as agricultural land.

- c) Buildings are to be sited and designed to minimize visual impact when viewed from existing houses and public roads. Buildings are to be hidden from Town roads whenever possible.
- d) On properties with exposed hilltops or ridges, roof lines cannot extend above the hilltop or ridge line, if possible.
- e) Natural vegetation should be left in place to screen new buildings. Where natural vegetation is not present, screening by plantings of a minimum height of 6’, berms, or other features may be required to mitigate the impact of residential development.

*b. Lot sizes for development shall be:*

- i. A minimum parcel of 2 acres. Nonfarm zoning parcels shall be the minimum size necessary to accommodate the proposed use, while meeting town driveway standards, minimum road frontage and other criteria of the town comprehensive plan.
- ii. Nonfarm development in woodlands of greater than 20 contiguous acres, existing as of 1981, requires a minimum of 10 acres of woodland and is restricted to 1 residential build per 10 acres.

*c. Driveways and roads shall be:*

- i. The minimum length necessary to access the site,
- ii. Designed and located to be suitable for emergency vehicle access and safe access onto existing roadways,
- iii. In compliance with the Town Driveway Ordinance, County, and/or State Highway access requirements,
- iv. Constructed using erosion control measures and return lands to a near normal setting after completion. The Town may require an erosion control, and/or stormwater management plan, or a preliminary review letter meeting county ordinance standards as a condition of approval. Driveways longer than 125 feet in length, require proof of compliance

with county erosion control and stormwater regulations as a condition of approval.

*d. Farmer Retirement Homes:*

A farmer may be granted an exception for a retirement home if all of the following criteria are met:

- i. The resident farmer has owned or operated an agricultural operation headquartered in the Town of Primrose for at least 20 years and is 55 years old or older.
- ii. During all of those 20 years, the resident farmer must have earned the majority of their livelihood from an active operation. Passive income such as land rent, MFL, CRP or CREP do not qualify. The Town reserves the right to ask for verification of income. (The years do not have to be consecutive years.)
- iii. The property must have a density unit per the township density policy. This lot will only take one density unit from the calculation.
- iv. The lot granted under this exception may only be used for said farmer's retirement home. The lot may not be used for any other building purpose or sold as a buildable lot.)
- v. The approval of the retirement house lot is only valid for two years from the time of Town Board approval. If not constructed within that time frame, the applicant must reapply. Rezoning to take place at the time of construction.
- vi. If a farmer has building sites that meet the Town siting criteria (e.g., not in or crossing agricultural land etc.), one of those sites must be used. The farmer cannot have sold off sites since 2010 that meet the siting criteria (e.g., in woods or pasture), and then apply for a retirement site in or crossing agricultural land.
- vii. The only time a retirement site will be allowed in or crossing agricultural land, is if the farmer had no buildable sites as of 2010 by the Town's siting criteria. The site must minimize disturbance to agricultural land.
- viii. The driveway cannot exceed 300 feet in length, and buildings cannot be more than 300' from the entry point of the field. All other siting criteria, ordinances, policies, etc., must be met.

*e. Additional criteria:*

Additional criteria may include:

- i. Manure storage plans and/or farm conservation plans approved by the Dane County Land Conservation Division.
- ii. Existing or proposed sanitary systems must be adequately sized to meet the proposed use and meet all current requirements of COMM 83, Wisconsin Administrative Code and Chapter 46, Dane County Code.
- iii. Erosion control and stormwater permits under Chapter 14, Dane County Code.

## B. Resource Protection Corridors

The Town established Resource Protection Corridors, as shown on the Planned Land Use Map 8-3, to preserve and enhance natural resources within the Town by limiting development and promoting best practices in management and restoration. This area applies to:



- 100- year floodplains,
- wetlands,
- hydric soils,
- Groups I & II Farm Soils under the Dane County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) classification, and;
- Steep slopes exceeding 25% grade.

Development within the Resource Protection Corridor is generally prohibited, except as provided below. Appropriate Zoning Areas:

- NR-C Natural Resource Conservancy
- FP-35 Exclusive Agriculture
- FP-1 Farmland Preservation
- RE Recreational

### 1. Policies & Programs

- a. Maintain in agricultural, conservation, or open space use.
- b. Require erosion control and soil and water conservation practices for all land-disturbing activities.
- c. Prohibit new structures, buildings, or development, and limit impervious surfaces. Provided all applicable county and state erosion control, stormwater, shoreland, wetland, floodplain, and stream crossing regulations are met, the following may be permitted in the Environmental & Resources Protection Area:
  - i. Expansion or improvement of existing accesses or driveways to meet current town driveway standards.
  - ii. Agricultural structure replacement if no other site outside the Environmental Resources Protection Area is practical and construction is limited to the footprint of the original structure.
- d. Support programs to restore natural vegetation, remove invasive species, and improve habitat.

- e. Where there are disputes over mapped wetlands, floodplains or onsite soil conditions, the town plan commission and board may refer to detailed studies derived from onsite field conditions to determine actual Resource Protection Corridor boundaries. Any such study must be reviewed and approved by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Dane County Zoning Administrator, or the Dane County Land Conservation Division, as appropriate as a condition of approval. Developers bear the burden of proof that mapped Resource Protection Corridors are in error.

### C. Public Lands Area

The Town established the Public Lands Area to coordinate with the public and nonprofit entities that own land in the town. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Dane County own land in the Town. Appropriate Zoning Areas:

- NR-C Conservancy
- FP-35 Farmland Preservation
- FP-1 Farmland Preservation
- RE-1 Recreational

#### 1. Policies

- a. Work with the public agencies the own land in the Town and develop agreements on future use of existing public lands.
- b. Actively participate in future updates to the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan, and state and federal public lands programs.
- c. Develop procedures for adequate citizen input and analysis against the goals, objectives, and policies of this Plan related to land use decisions, acquisitions, or dispensations of public lands.
- d. Encourage land uses that are compatible with natural resource preservation and protection.
- e. Encourage public recreational opportunities for Town residents on publicly owned lands.



### III. Policies for Particular Land Uses

#### A. Commercial Development

##### 1. Policies

The Town shall follow the following policies regarding proposed new, or expansion of existing, commercial development within an Agricultural Preservation Area:

- a. Allow limited commercial development, as needed, to support existing agricultural activities, provide supplemental income for farm families, or provide agricultural-related services.
- b. Development must not result in environmental degradation, inappropriate traffic volumes, or conflict with farming activities.
- c. Commercial uses will be limited to those allowable under the Limited Commercial zoning criteria or as conditional uses in the Zoning Areas.
- d. Limit rezoning to the portion of land necessary for the proposed commercial use.
- e. The applicant must request a specific use when requesting a rezone.
- f. The Town may require a condition on the rezoning to allow only the specific use as delineated on an approved site plan.
- g. All commercial, but not all limited commercial use shall count against the town density policy.
- h. Avoid substantial public expenditure and/or incurring municipal debt for provision of municipal improvements and services associated with commercial development.

#### B. Mineral Extraction

##### 1. Policies

- a. Within the Agricultural Preservation Area, the town will consider Conditional Use Permits for new or expanded mineral extraction operations that:
  - i are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan;
  - ii. are consistent with agricultural use and farmland preservation, and;
  - iii adequately protect public safety, rural character, and the environment.
- b. Applicants must contact the town Plan Commission secretary to have the proposal placed on the agenda of the next available Plan Commission meeting and meet with the town Plan Commission prior to filing a Dane County Zoning conditional use permit (CUP) application.
- c. At least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting with the Town Plan Commission, applicants are advised to complete and provide to the town

Plan Commission secretary and the Town Clerk the following documents (see Appendix 2 for application materials):

- i. Completed application materials, including site plans and reclamation plans, required by the Dane County Department of Planning and Development for a mineral extraction CUP, and
  - ii. Town of Primrose Mineral Extraction Questionnaire.
- d. Prior to the scheduled Plan Commission meeting, applicants should review and understand the list of standard conditions for mineral extraction CUPs provided by the Dane County Department of Planning and Development, as well as the reclamation standards required under Chapter 74, Dane County Code. Proposed land uses after reclamation must be consistent with the Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan, including density policies.
  - e. After the applicant files a conditional use permit with Dane County, the Plan Commission may recommend conditions to the town board based on the Mineral Extraction Questionnaire, county standard conditions and public input received. At its discretion, the Plan Commission may choose to delay making a recommendation to the town board until after the county public hearing.
  - f. The town will work with owners of former extraction sites, neighbors, and the Dane County Zoning Division to encourage clean-up and reclamation.

## C. Renewable Energy Facilities

The Dane County Zoning Ordinance describes three renewable energy facility categories:

- Small-scale facilities, such as rooftop solar panels or wind turbines intended primarily for onsite use. Such services are a permitted use in every zoning area.
- Mid-size facilities intended primarily for offsite use, but not under the direct approval authority of the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. Such uses are a conditional use in several county zoning areas.
- Large-scale facilities intended primarily for offsite use, and under Wisconsin PSC authority. Such facilities are exempt from county zoning.

The town will apply the following policies to Conditional Use Permits for renewable energy facilities, and will encourage the Public Service Commission to follow these policies when issuing orders within the Town of Primrose:

### 1. Policies

- a. Minimize need for new electrical transmission lines; locate new renewable energy installations as close as possible to existing transmission facilities.
- b. Manage utility-scale installations density and size to minimize impacts to adjoining agricultural and rural character.
- c. Except where required for aviation or other safety concerns, encourage setbacks, vegetative screening, berms, or other practices to minimize visual impact.

- d. Encourage multiple- or dual-use facilities that allow agriculture, natural resources, habitat and/or soil and water conservation uses to coexist with energy generation.
- e. Arrange energy infrastructure, fencing, and berms to allow for equipment movement, habitat and wildlife corridors, and pervious cover to minimize runoff.
- f. Ensure installations comply with county erosion and stormwater standards during construction, operation, maintenance, and decommission.
- g. Encourage adaptive use of operating or closed mineral extraction or other rural industrial sites for renewable energy use.
- h. To the extent possible, avoid productive farm soils.
- i. Make sure landscaping and other vegetation is maintained to continue to serve its intended purpose and does not create sources for invasive species.
- j. Require decommissioning plans with financial instruments sufficient to cover equipment removal and reclamation. Lands should be returned to a use described in this plan.





PRIMROSE TOWN HALL

# ELEMENT 9: IMPLEMENTATION

## Chapter 23: Implementation Tools

### I. Land Use Regulations

The Town of Primrose regulates land use through the following mechanisms:

#### A. Town of Primrose Driveway Ordinance

This ordinance regulates the creation, reworking or expansion of roads that ultimately connect to a public right-of-way. Applications for any driveway permit must comply with all of the provisions of this ordinance and must be consistent with the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*.

#### B. Town of Primrose Building Permit Ordinance

This ordinance regulates the placement of residential and residential accessory buildings on land in the Town of Primrose. Building sites must comply with the requirements of the ordinance and with the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*.

#### C. Zoning Ordinance- Chapter 10, Dane County Code

Through zoning maps and text, the ordinance governs the use of publicly and privately owned land in the town. The town will not recommend approval of rezone petitions under s.59.69(5)(e), Wis. Stats., or on Conditional Use Permits under s.10101(7), Dane County Code, unless they are consistent with the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*.

#### D. Land Division Ordinance- Chapter 75, Dane County Code

The town falls under the Dane County subdivision ordinance (Chapter 75 of the Dane County Code of Ordinances) which outlines provisions for subdividing parcels of land into smaller parcels. This ordinance applies to any division of land that creates a parcel of 35 acres or less in size. Approval of any plat or certified survey maps will require full compliance with the Ordinance and with the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*.

#### E. Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance- Chapter 14, Dane County Code

To ensure environmental protection of natural resources and features, the town has adopted the Dane County ordinance.

#### F. Shoreland Zoning Ordinance- Chapter 11, Dane County Code

Dane County administers this ordinance to regulate development within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a stream to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and natural scenic beauty.

## G. Floodplain Zoning Ordinance- Chapter 17, Dane County Code

Dane County administers this ordinance to control development within floodplains to reduce flood hazards and protect the environment.

## H. Sign Regulations- Chapter 10, Dane County Code

Sign regulations are within the Dane County Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 10.

## I. Building and Mechanical Codes

The town falls under the state Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC).

## J. Rural Density Policy

The town's rural density policy limits the number of lots that may be created by certified survey to one parcel for each 35 acres, or portion thereof, owned as of December 15, 1994. To prevent the occurrence of multiple divisions by successive landowners, this limitation runs with the land; is cumulative; and applies to those persons owning land within the town on April 28, 1981, and to their grantees, heirs, successors and assigns. For further details, please refer to the Land Use policies found in Chapter 8.

## K. Sanitary Codes- Chapter 46, Dane County Code

The town is covered by the Dane County Private Sewage System and Health Ordinances.

## L. Plan Adoption, Evaluation, Amendments and Updates

Following the requirements of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation, the town board adopted the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* by ordinance after receiving recommendation from the town's plan commission and holding a formal public hearing. In addition, the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* was approved by the Dane County Board of Supervisors for inclusion in the *Dane County Comprehensive Plan*.

Ongoing evaluation of the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* will occur while being utilized by the town. Progress toward goals will be reported, and changes in conditions that affect elements of the plan will be noted. When changing conditions in the town warrant minor modification of the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* text or maps, an amendment shall be made. Reasons for an amendment may include:

- Changes in state or federal law(s) affecting comprehensive planning,
- Changes to goals, objectives, policies, or recommendations in the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*,
- Changes in community demographics,
- Instances where the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* becomes inconsistent with other policy goals.

The town board and town plan commission will review the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* every year to determine if amendments or updates are necessary.

Every five years, the plan commission will recommend, if needed, minor updates or amendments of the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* for the town board to consider. At least every ten years, the town will perform a major update of the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*, in accordance with the State law. Unlike an amendment, an update may accommodate significant changes and modifications to the plan text and maps.

## II. Integration of Plan Elements

In accordance with State law, the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan* elements are integrated and consistent with the other elements. Elements were carefully prepared to achieve the Town of Primrose’s vision and goals.

## III. Implementation Timeline

A timetable for action was created (Table 9-1) to carry out the objectives of the *Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan*. Each year progress toward achieving the recommendations listed below will be monitored and evaluated by the town plan commission. As is evident from the table, most of the activities are ongoing.

Table 9-1: Action Plan and Timeframe

ELEMENT	RECOMMENDATION	TIMEFRAME
Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources	Follow the plan’s residential density policy in the Agricultural Preservation District.	Ongoing
	Continue to implement the town driveway ordinance.	Ongoing
	Work with the county in exploring programs to preserve farmland, such as purchase of development rights and transfer of development rights programs.	Ongoing
Housing & Economic Development	Allow for limited commercial uses appropriate to a rural town, consistent with land use policies in Chapter 8.	Ongoing
	Follow the residential density policy contained in the Comprehensive Plan.	Ongoing
	Promote the careful placement of homesites in an effort to preserve farmland and protect natural features.	Ongoing
	Identify local need and interest in the Dane County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.	Ongoing
Transportation	Continue to maintain town local roads.	Ongoing
Utilities & Community Facilities	Work with Dane County to develop policies and guidelines for wind turbines, communication towers, and management of solid and liquid manure.	Ongoing
Land Use	Follow the Town of Primrose Comprehensive Plan recommendations for all zoning petitions and land divisions.	Ongoing
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Share information with neighboring towns and villages as comprehensive plans are developed and/or amended.	Ongoing