

# INTRODUCTION

## LOCATION AND HISTORY

The Town of Frog Creek is located in the northeast corner of Washburn County, bordering Sawyer County (Town of Lenroot) to the east and Douglas County (Town of Wascott) to the north. Located at latitude 460732N & longitude 0914113W, the Town of Frog Creek is formed by two civil townships. Frog Creek was part of Veazie from 1883 through 1889, Spooner from 1889 through 1893, Minong from 1893 through 1903 and Wolfe from 1904 through 1908 when it became organized and named Frog Creek for the many frogs in the area.

Ample natural resources and reliable transportation to move products and people was key to communities in Washburn County. Some settlements failed to grow or faltered if either of these two components were missing. Chittamo and Harmon are two communities that have been lost in the Town of Frog Creek over the years. Chittamo did not die from lack of natural provisions. At one time, it served the needs of about 120 people, but began to fall into ruin during and after World War II when its young people were siphoned into the armed forces or the city where industries provided better lifestyles. At its peak, Chittamo boasted the only store in the township. The locality also had a school constructed for a maximum of 60 pupils (the largest number of students to attend the school was 45), a town hall where dances were held every Saturday night, a church with a community cemetery, and a railroad landing where lumberjacks loaded logs and where passengers disembarked or boarded the train. Chittamo was the Chippewa Indian word for squirrel. It was also the name of an Indian sub-chief who lived there for many years.

Frog Creek is a rural community that has experienced little population growth over the past two decades (18 persons). The Washburn County Forestry Department owns 35,100.25 acres of forestland in the town, amounting to 76.6% of the entire town. Most private woodlands in the town are used as recreational parcels.

Development of the comprehensive plan is intended to guide future land use decisions made by the Town of Frog Creek and Washburn County. It is important to point out this plan is representative of both year-round and seasonal residents. Participation by these residents has contributed to a broad-based plan where all persons had an opportunity to provide direct input. Nowhere during the process were seasonal residents ignored as being “non-voting” landowners or non-residents of the community. Throughout the process, the planning committee/commission encouraged and utilized comments from the public. As a result of this integrated planning process, the comprehensive plan examines the entire community, pertaining to both year-round and seasonal residents.

## PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The *Town of Frog Creek Comprehensive Plan* is intended to assist local officials make future land use decisions. The plan will also assist in development and management issues by addressing short-range and long-range concerns regarding growth, development, and

preservation of the community. There are numerous reasons for developing a comprehensive plan, including:

- Identifying areas appropriate for development and preservation over the next 20 years;
- Recommending types of land use for specific areas of the town;
- Preserving forestry practices and retain forestry as a viable industry;
- Protecting surface water resources and their surrounding environments;
- Identifying needed transportation and community facilities to serve future residents;
- Directing housing and other investments in the town; and
- Providing detailed objectives and actions to implement the plan goals.

This *comprehensive plan* has been prepared under the Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning legislation contained in Wisconsin Statute 66.1001. The plan is organized into nine chapters or elements, (issues and opportunities; housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; natural, agricultural, and cultural resources; economic development; intergovernmental cooperation; land use, and implementation) each addressing one element specified under the law.

## **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Efforts by the Town of Frog Creek to begin reviewing and discussing land use changes began in 2002 when a five-member community planning committee representing town residents was appointed by the town board. This broad-based committee prepared goals, objectives, and action statements to aid the Town of Frog Creek in planning for its future. The Town Board, following review and recommendations by the plan commission, adopted the goals, objectives, and actions. These broad goals and objectives are intended to provide guidelines for future decisions about land use and are intended to provide an orderly basis for immediate and long-range planning. These guidelines will be used by the plan commission in its recommendations to the town board on future land use changes. The goals and objectives recommended in this comprehensive plan are the framework for the various specific action-plans and programs taken on by both the public and private sectors. These implementation statements will provide the foundation for town and county future ordinances, especially those relating to zoning, land division, erosion control, parks, and town and county services.

To guide the planning process, the Town of Frog Creek Comprehensive Planning Committee/Commission directed a number of efforts to ensure that this comprehensive plan is based on a vision shared by Frog Creek residents. The results are summarized below.

## **TOWN OF FROG CREEK “PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN”**

Wisconsin's new “Smart Growth” law requires municipalities to adopt written procedures that are designed to foster a wide range of public participation throughout the planning process. The main goal of this plan is to make all citizens of Frog Creek aware of the progress of the comprehensive planning process occurring in the town and to offer the public opportunities to make suggestions or comments during the process.

In adhering to the requirement of developing and adopting a Public Participation Plan, the Town of Frog Creek adopted their plan for use in the overall development of the Frog Creek Comprehensive Plan. **See Appendix A for Public Participation Plan.**

## **COMMUNITY SURVEY**

The county mailed a survey to all landowners in January 2002. Out of 119 surveys that were sent, 35 completed surveys were returned to Northwest Regional Planning Commission. This results in a response rate of 29.3 percent, which is excellent for a written survey six pages in length. The survey included questions to gather basic demographic data, ascertain resident assessments of current situations, and to obtain opinions regarding the town's future. **See Appendix B for Town of Frog Creek survey results.**

## **ISSUES IDENTIFICATION AND S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS WORKSHOPS**

The town held its Issues Identification meeting in November 2002 and a S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) meeting in December 2002. The purpose of the Issues meeting was to identify issues the town faces specific to seven of the nine 'Smart Growth' elements. In the December 2002 meeting, the town went through a S.W.O.T. analysis where participants were asked to express their opinions about town strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Results of both the issues and S.W.O.T. meeting are available in the Issues and Opportunities element of this document.

## **TOWN OF FROG CREEK OPEN HOUSE**

On January 24, 2004, the Town of Frog Creek held an open house/public input session at the town hall. The purpose of the open house was to discuss the results of the survey and to gather comments from the public on the planning process. Eight people attended this meeting.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

A formal public hearing on the comprehensive plan and adopting ordinance was held on October 3, 2005, at 6:30 PM. In advance of that hearing, the town provided copies of the plan to surrounding governments and other parties under the requirements of the 'Smart Growth' legislation.

## **ADOPTION ORDINANCE**

The comprehensive plan adopting ordinance was approved by the Frog Creek Town Board on October 3, 2005.