

**City of Dodgeville
Village of Ridgeway
Town of Dodgeville
Town of Ridgeway**

Community Vision Plan

Iowa County

**A Summary of Public Input
December 2002**

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On Wednesday December 11 the City of Dodgeville, Village of Ridgeway and the Towns of Dodgeville and Ridgeway participated in a community-visioning program called: ***“Community Vision: Looking to the Future.”*** This visioning exercise took place at the Stonefield Apartment meeting room in Dodgeville, Wisconsin. Paul Ohlrogge of the UW-Extension Office, Amy Knox of Regional Planning and Mary Jenkins of Regional Planning facilitated this program.

Communities today face any number of pressing concerns, including requests for rezoning, demands for affordable housing or the loss of a major employer. Unfortunately, decisions about these issues are frequently made in the absence of a real vision of how the residents want their communities to look in the future.

Planning for a community’s future can be a difficult, time consuming and costly job. Residents are often more concerned about daily tasks rather than think about a vision. Residents want good schools, decent jobs, safe and clean environments and safe neighborhoods in which to live. Without a vision, however, communities limit their ability to make decisions about these issues – somewhat like driving across the country without a roadmap.

Who should determine a community’s future, other than its residents? Should it be a consultant hired to develop a plan, a state or federal agency making decisions on highways or wetlands preservation, or a private developer constructing a shopping mall or a residential subdivision? All these could have a large impact on a community without input from a broad range of residents. Residents need to participate in and actively envision the future of their communities – or other groups and individuals will determine it for them.

The community-visioning program lasted approximately three hours with good healthy discussions on what folks of these four municipalities envisioned their future to be. The program was broken down into three sections. The first section concentrated on: “Our Current Condition”. The second portion focused on: “Challenges and Opportunities.” The third portion focused on: “The Future.”

What follows is a summary of information gathered during the visioning session on a series of questions posed to the group of citizens in attendance. This information, along with other information gathered from a recent written countywide survey, will be used to assist the Regional Planning Commission in drafting a comprehensive plan for the participating jurisdictions. This visioning session will help guide the future of the participating town and village Plan Commissions in their efforts to work toward comprehensive planning.

Section 1: Our Current Condition

The following three questions were asked to the group regarding our current condition:

1. What do you like about living in this area of Iowa County?
2. What are some of the community values?
3. What is unique about your community that is not found anywhere else?

<i><u>What do you like about living in this area of Iowa County?</u></i>	
• The rural character	• Limited traffic
• Privacy	• Variable scenery
• Caring elected officials	• People are caring
• Life supporting services	• Opportunity to be involved
• American Players Theatre is close by	• Good schools
• Active Chamber of Commerce	• Lands' End
• Churches	• Community is receptive to new ideas
• Folklore Village	• Cheese and wine makers
• Clean air	• Agriculture
• Reasonable taxes	• Diversity
• Good health care	• Employment opportunities
• Lesser degree of noise as compared to other places	• Your voice counts
• Reasonable distance to major cities	• Natural resources and wildlife
• Safe communities	• Down-to-earth
• Opportunity for growth	• Viable downtown
• Strong community of artists	• Good snowplow services
• History	• Governor Dodge State park
• Library	• Community Service Organizations
• Local media (Television, Paper and Radio)	• Local Parks
• Bike Trail	• Golf Courses
• Micro Brew Pub	• Quality of roads and highways
• Low Crime rate	• Major tourism area near by
• Festival and parades	• Blues Festival
• Sunsets	• Global Views store

What are some of the community values?

- ◆ Good work ethic
- ◆ History and preservation
- ◆ Natural resources
- ◆ Helping those in need
- ◆ Work, family and community – a balance
- ◆ Heritage
- ◆ Progressive education
- ◆ Honest people
- ◆ Agriculture and land stewardship
- ◆ Respectful people
- ◆ Pride in the community
- ◆ Involvement in the community
- ◆ Willingness to contribute to charity
- ◆ Good neighbors
- ◆ Appreciation for wild spaces/wildlife
- ◆ Opportunities for our children
- ◆ Care for the elderly
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Families
- ◆ Open and responsive government

What is unique about your community that is not found anywhere else?

- Lands' End
- Historic Courthouse in Dodgeville
- Well marked rural roads
- Unglaciaded topography
- Pleasant Ridge Store and Restaurant
- Military Ridge
- Non-polluting businesses
- Folklore Village
- Governor Dodge History is here
- American Players Theater in the area
- House on the Rock
- Taliesen and Frank Lloyd Wright History
- The Ridgeway Ghost
- Good water
- Trees and prairies
- Windmills and the Montfort wind-farm
- Slag furnace in city of Dodgeville
- Natural springs
- Amazing vistas
- Abundant wildlife
- Limited traffic
- Blue Mounds State park
- 1964 State Champion Basket-Ball Team
- Good hunting and Fishing areas
- Governor Dodge State Park
- Family Farms
- Trout streams
- Oak savannas
- CWD
- Mine shafts under the city
- New four lane highway
- A lot of smoke free restaurants

Section 2. Challenges and Opportunities:

The second portion of the Visioning Program focused on the Challenges and Opportunities facing the City of Dodgeville, Village of Ridgeway and the Towns of Dodgeville and Ridgeway. The following questions were used to facilitate discussion on the upcoming challenges:

1. What are some of the challenges and concerns facing your community?
2. What some opportunities for your communities in the future?
3. What type of development or redevelopment should occur in this area?
4. What type of development should not occur?

What are some of the challenges or concerns facing your community?

• Smart growth and the work to go into it	• Housing for all income levels
• Siting of houses in rural areas	• CWD
• Lack of high paying jobs	• State and local budget deficits
• Maintaining quality of schools	• Maintaining quality of our drinking water
• Recreation opportunities for all ages	• Terrorism
• Keeping drugs out	• Use of alcohol is high
• Keeping talented people here in our communities (Brain Drain)	• Maintaining family farms
• Balancing private property rights with public views	• Urban development – sprawl like Mt. Horeb and Verona is scary
• Unplanned growth	• Youth activities or the lack of them
• Maintaining high quality health care	• Planning for an aging population
• Keeping local services in supply for the demand	• A challenge to find a way to be more welcoming to minorities
• Cost of government services	• New grocery store
• Attracting retail businesses	• Positive youth development opportunities
• Tax base to support services	• Getting communities to work together
• Financial institutions lose local decision making ability	• Balancing living in the country with urban sprawl
• Agriculture economy	• Pedestrian safety
• Too much reliance on one major employer	• Economic development for the area
• Polarization with folks who have moved here versus those who were raised here	• Service group membership
• Providing water at a low cost	• Education and acceptance of smart growth
• Current financial state of the school district	• High number of senior citizens living in poverty
• Police and Fire protection as community grows	• Hard to get younger and talented people involved in local decision making and broader community involvement
• Understanding the difficulty of maintaining a good healthy forest land	• Zoning and Planning complimentary towns and county
• Providing for the performing arts	• An auditorium
• Maintaining strong E.M.T. services and membership in them	• Annexation to certain towns

What are some opportunities for your communities in the future?

Inter-Community collaboration	Develop more of Eco-Tourism
Sell and promote the many wonders of this area to those who are not from here	Control urban development and sprawl
Provide means of affordable housing to keep people here	Increase public participation
Opportunity to learn from other groups, municipalities that have done comprehensive planning already	One time opportunity to preserve rural character
Opportunity to learn that growth can be positive when done “smart”	Capitalize on geographic location in a managed way
Opportunity to minimize land use conflicts in the future	Get young people involved in the planning process
Preserve the Unglaciaded area	Opportunity to be easier to understand zoning, etc.

<i>What type of development or redevelopment should occur in this area?</i>	<i>What type of development should not occur?</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development that takes conservation and agriculture in mind 2. Design review criteria to keep community character 3. More restaurants 4. Transition (a new way) from agriculture conservation to rural residential 5. Look at 15 acre minimum rural lot size 6. Look at clustering for rural housing explore the idea 7. Siting of rural housing to preserve the landscape 8. Development should be close to the city for businesses and housing 9. Industrial, commercial, and retail development 10. Low impact industry (type we have now) 11. Infrastructure in place for the development close to town 12. Some size limitations on mega-farms (needs to be thought about) 13. Consideration for larger farms and their impact on the local area 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate farms – mega farms 2. Casinos 3. Prisons 4. Heavy industry or smokestacks 5. Strip- malls 6. Big electrical transmission lines 7. No mega slaughter houses

Section 3. The Future

The final segment of the visioning process was to look ahead at a preferred vision of the future. Visioning is *a process* by which a community envisions the future it wants, and plans how to achieve it. Through public involvement, communities identify their purpose, core values and vision of the future. The following questions were asked to encourage discussion on the community's vision for the future.

1. What words do you want your grandchildren to use to describe your community?
2. What do you want to preserve?
3. What do you want your community to look like in 2022?

What words do you want your grandchildren to use to describe your community?

• Cool	• Neat	• Progressive
• Safe	• Tolerant	• Fun
• Comfortable	• Retreat like	• Beautiful
• Clean	• Quiet	• Home
• Open-minded	• Friendly	• Healthy
• Smoke free	• Prosperous	• Environmentally conscious
• Interesting	• Well thought out	• Good planning
• Opportunistic	• Collaboration	• Resourceful
• Opportunity for them to make decisions here	• Quaint	• Scenic
• Close knit	• Smoke free indoor air	• A place I want to live in

What do you want to preserve?

- Historic courthouse
- Darkness
- Quietness
- Vibrant schools
- Parks
- Hospitals
- Safe communities
- Downtown
- Agriculture land
- Natural resources
- Talking about conservation

What do you want your community to look like in 2022?

Clean	Diversified human resources
Downtown vibrant	No need for a humane society
Have an auditorium in Dodgeville	Wide open spaces
Well kept farms	Mass transit system
Indoor pool and ice arena	Smoke free work place ordinance
Appreciation for the site scapes	Unpolluted environment
Ice cream dipper gone	Have community get together to share ideas
Park district	Leashless Dog Park
Communication system in step with the times and technology available	No CWD
Inter-fill development – use what is available first	Regional sewer system
More bike lanes	Affordable access to health care
Farms with traditional barns preserved	Regional higher educational facility in the area
Controlled traffic	Theatre Arts Center
Growth of housing, business, commercial so our children have a place to come back to after college	Future opportunities for our children are here
Would like retail development, a strip mall or a Wal-Mart	Preserve the Downtown
Book Store	Ethnic restaurants
No super Wal-Marts	Technology for the internet - broadband
Technology so we do not use as much salt on the roads	Mexican restaurant