

CHAPTER 1 Issues and Opportunities for Comprehensive Planning in the Town of Eau Pleine

Section 1.1 Description and Brief History of Planning Area

The Town of Eau Pleine is located in the northwest corner of Portage County, to the north of U.S. Highway 10. The Town (political unit) includes all of the Congressional Township T24N-R6E and the western portion of T25N-R7E. As a result, the Town of Eau Pleine ranks as the 5th largest in the County, encompassing a total area of approximately 36,875 acres. The Town is bordered on the north by Marathon County, on the south by the Town of Carson and the Village of Junction City, on the west by Wood County, and on the east by the Wisconsin River and Lake DuBay (Map 1.1)

The following excerpt is taken from the Online Archives of the Portage County Historical Society:

Just before the turn of the century, Eau Pleine was a gem of a town - or a mineral to be precise.

Legend has it that a Mrs. John Kniec, living on an Eau Pleine farm, had found a mineral in her cellar that she used to blacken or polish her stove, according to "Our County Our Story," by Malcolm Rosholt. When word got out, this mineral was found to be graphite.

Graphite was useful then for foundry facing, pipe joint paste and structural iron paints. Today it also is used for lead in pencils, crucibles, lubricants and electrodes.

In 1896, a man by the name of Frank E. Taggart took the bull by the horns and organized a company called Portage County Graphite and Mineral Paint Manufacturing Company. The company was reformed two years later as Wisconsin Graphite.

In less than two years, the company was turning out several tons of paint and paste a day, according to Rosholt. When a Pittsburgh company took over the stock, it installed a new plant on the site of the McDill mill dam, he wrote.

Taggart and two other partners formed Pioneer Graphite Company in 1902. Natural disasters eventually did the company in, though. The mill first was hit by a tornado, and later by fire, which proved too much for the owners. They discontinued operations in 1921, "Our County Our Story" states.

Eau Pleine wasn't known only for its graphite, though. In the early days, it wasn't a corner town as it is now, rather it spanned the Wisconsin River with 54 sections.

Eau Pleine, meaning "full water," was the perfect place to create a dam. Naturally, along with a dam were several early sawmills. Later, the dam area was made into a lake and power site named after John DuBay, who once operated a nearby trading post.

A substantial community started up after the arrival of the Wisconsin Valley Railroad north of one mill. The community contained a planing mill, two stores, a dance hail, boarding house, horse barns and more than 20 permanent residences.

One settler, Sylvester Crocker, was a blacksmith and miller by profession. He was a veterinarian in his spare time, according to "Our County Our Story." The area where he lived came to be called Crockers Landing. A sign welcoming travelers stated: "Crockers Landing - Make it Yours," Rosholt wrote in "Our County Our Story."

Another Eau Pleine resident, Don Carlos Hall, became a famous showman around the turn of the century. He traveled in a private railroad car with his company. Hall and his wife are buried in Union Cemetery. The headstone bears a cameo-sized photograph of the couple - the only one like it in the county, according to Rosholt.

Eau Pleine was formed in 1851, and finally attained its present size in 1899 (used by permission from the Portage County Historical Society).

A bridge that had stood on the Little Eau Pleine for 91 years was replaced in 1989 with Federal funds. The DuBay Dam was added in 1942 to stop the flooding that occurred in Eau Pleine each spring.

Up until 1970, the Town of Eau Pleine was a typical rural agriculture based community with a steadily declining population, due mostly to the changes in the agricultural economy. However, during the 1970's, the population of the Town experienced a 23% increase. Since 1980, the Town has again undergone a slow decline in the number of inhabitants.

To accommodate growth that may occur, tracts of land that are now void of development may see homes, farms and some businesses. If new development is not properly managed, the Town may find itself faced with unnecessarily inflated expenditure requirements for the provision of its limited services to the new areas. This Comprehensive Plan will analyze all of the lands within the Town of Eau Pleine corporate boundary, and include the short and long range recommendations for residential, commercial and industrial development, as well as the protection of important farmlands and other natural resources as determined by the residents of the Town of Eau Pleine.

Section 1.2 Past Planning In Eau Pleine

1986 Land Use Plan

At the request of the Eau Pleine Town Board, initial preparations for the development of a Town Land Use Plan were begun by the Portage County Planning Department in April of 1985. The Plan presents long-range recommendations for developing or protecting lands throughout the Town and is intended to serve as a basis for updating the Town's zoning map to reflect changing conditions and needs.

A citizen opinion survey was mailed to all landowners in the Town in May of 1985, to help identify local issues and concerns. The results of the survey were used in developing the Land Use Plan to assure that consideration was given to the needs of the Town as a whole.

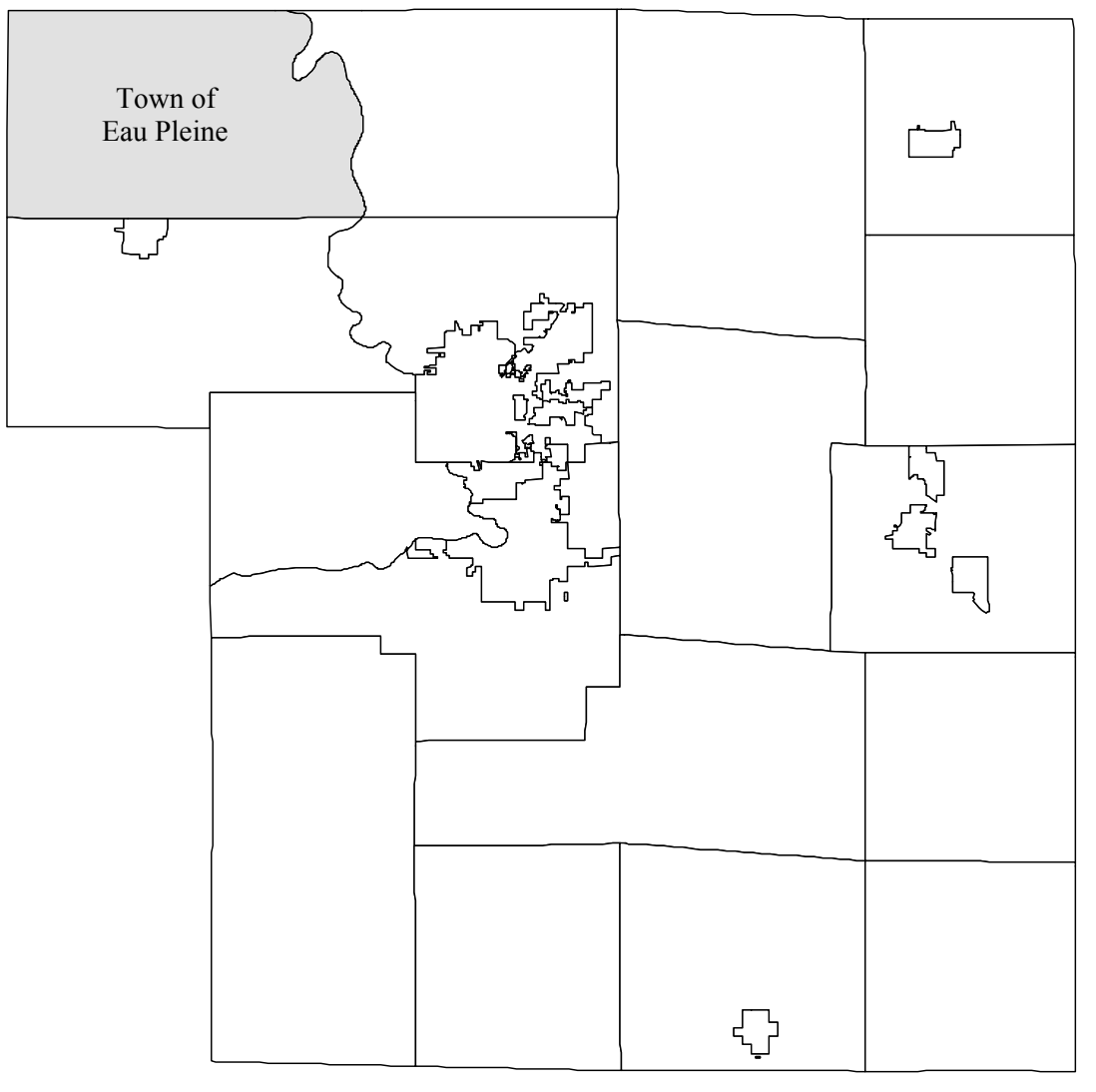
A five member citizen Planning Committee was appointed by the Town Board to assist the County Planning Department and Town Board in the development of the Land Use Plan and subsequently in updating the Town zoning map. The Town Planning Committee first met to begin work on this project on November 6, 1985. A total of nine public meetings were held at the Town Hall during the preparation of that document. The local planning process culminated with a joint meeting of the Planning Committee and Town Board on September 10, 1986, during which the recommendations and policies contained in the Plan were presented in a public forum. After consideration of all public input and the interests of the Town as a whole, the Town Planning Committee and Town Board officially adopted the Land Use Plan.

Map 1.1: Town of Eau Pleine Area

Town of Eau Pleine

Portage County, Wisconsin

Population 2000: 931
Area: 58 square miles



Section 1.3 Current Comprehensive Planning Process

As mentioned in the introduction to this document, this Town of Eau Pleine Comprehensive Plan update had its beginning as a part of the County-wide planning project started in June 2001. The work during the first 18 months of the County-wide project, performed primarily by the Portage County Comprehensive Planning Joint Steering Committee, centered on public participation, visioning, and the generation of preliminary goal suggestions for the nine required Plan elements. This information was then forwarded to all local units of government in the fall of 2002. Utilizing the information provided by the Joint Steering Committee, the Town of Eau Pleine Plan Commission began the Town Comprehensive Planning process in earnest in January 2003. The Plan Commission met monthly through (January 2005) to put together the first complete preliminary draft of the plan. The Comprehensive Planning process involved several basic steps:

The first step involved research. Activities included acquiring a thorough knowledge of the existing community setting, identifying problems that require solutions, analyzing critical factors that need to be changed before progress can be made toward community goals, and establishing goals and objectives for growth and development. The second step involved the formation of planning policy. Planning policies recommend a course of action that will accommodate expected change, produce desired change, and prevent undesirable change.

The next steps involved the development of different plan alternatives for guiding future growth. The Land Use Element relates how the Town is expected to grow, and generally identifies how development should proceed in the future to achieve community goals. It proposes the most efficient use of land within the financial capabilities of the community by identifying where residential, and other anticipated land uses should occur.

The final step involves implementation of the plan and programs that will influence the day-to-day decisions made by government officials, private enterprise, and individuals. Plan implementation provides the means by which community goals can be achieved. Three major tools of implementation are the Zoning Ordinance, subdivision regulations, and capital improvements program.

The Comprehensive Plan is the primary link between the past, the present, and the future, making it perhaps the best resource for achieving continuity over a period of time. It is to be used as a guide by those making decisions with regard to the development of the community. The Comprehensive Plan must also remain flexible so that it can be modified to reflect the processes of actual development and the changing attitudes and priorities of the community. To maintain an updated Comprehensive Plan, new information must be continually gathered and studied to determine trends and reevaluate projections, forecasts, and plans. Even policy recommendations, which are relatively permanent statements, may require periodic review to determine their appropriateness and suitability in relation to the direction and character of community development at that time. A well thought-out and updated Comprehensive Plan, with a solid base of public involvement, is one of the most fruitful investments a local government can make. As a collection of policies and plans designed to guide future growth and development, it will help ensure continuity over time as changes occur within the Town of Eau Pleine.

Section 1.4 Demographic Trends

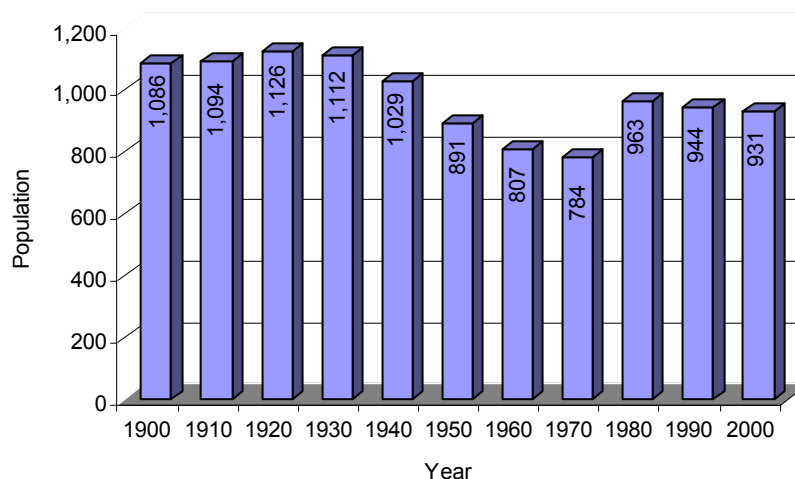
A. Population Growth

Every 10 years the Federal government performs the National Census, and these Census results are the main source of the information we use to understand how communities change over time. The Town of Eau Pleine has seen a considerable variation in its growth rate over the last 100 years.

Census data reveal two major, historical population trends for the Town of Eau Pleine (Figure 1.2). The first major trend was a steady decline in the Town's population over a forty-year period from 1930 to 1970. This was characteristic of a rural-to-urban population movement that occurred during that period on a County, State and nation wide basis. This declining population trend was reversed in the 1970's, with the Town experiencing an upturn in population as urban residents began moving back to rural or semi-rural areas. This growth was highlighted by a 23% increase during the 1970's. Once again, this change was characteristic of a broader urban-to-rural movement at the County, State and national levels. In Portage County, the impact of this migration back to the rural areas occurred earlier and was greater in those towns located adjacent to the larger population centers.

From 1970 to 2000 overall population had grown 19% for the Town (Table 1.1). However, from 1980 to 2000, growth decreased by 3% for the period. The loss experienced by the Town of Eau Pleine over the past twenty years is another trend of rural-to-urban movement to Stevens Point, Plover, or other urban areas. Wausau and Marshfield may continue to be an influence in population loss/growth for Eau Pleine in the future.

Figure 1.2: Town of Eau Pleine Population Change, 1900 to 2000



Source: US Bureau of Census

Population projections developed by the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department suggest that the Town will experience a small amount of growth, with a projected increase of 38 residents from the year 2000 through 2020, or a 20-year growth rate of 4%. It should be noted that population projections are “best guesses” and should be used with caution.

Table 1.1: Eau Pleine Comparison Population Change, 1970 to 2003

	U.S. Census				State of Wisconsin Estimate	1970 to 2000 Change	2000 to 2003 Change
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2003		
Town of Eau Pleine	784	963	944	931	946	18.8%	1.6%
Town of Carson	1,295	1,441	1,327	1,299	1,337	0.3%	2.9%
Town of Dewey	575	803	849	975	1,011	69.6%	3.7%
Portage County	47,541	57,420	61,405	67,182	68,664	41.3%	2.2%

Source: US Census Bureau; State of Wisconsin Dept. of Administration; Portage County Planning and Zoning Dept

Population growth is a combination of many factors including birth, death, in and out migration. By examining migration patterns for the residents of the Town of Eau Pleine, we can better understand the cause for growth in the community (Table 1.2). The U.S. Census provides data on where residents were living five years prior to the Census. The “Same House” column identifies the Eau Pleine residents that lived in the same dwelling in both 1995 and 2000 (or 1985 and 1990); this can be an indicator of long-term residency. The “Different House, Portage County” column identifies the Eau Pleine residents that lived in a home outside the Town, but within Portage County, in 1995. The “Different House, Different County” column identifies the Eau Pleine residents that lived in a home outside of the Town and Portage County, but within the State of Wisconsin, in 1995. The “Different State” column identifies the Eau Pleine residents that lived in a home outside the State of Wisconsin in 1995. Altogether, this information provides insight into the nature and pace of new residents moving into the Town.

Based on 2000 Census information, seventy-three percent (73%) of the Town's residents lived in the same house as they did in 1995, down two percent (2%) from the 1990 Census. This would show that long-term residents are slowly declining yet they still comprise the majority of the total population. Migration patterns for the Town, with respect to percentage change, are similar to surrounding communities.

Table 1.2: Place of Residence for Town Residents, Five Years Prior to 1990 & 2000 Census

	Same House				Different House, Portage County				Different House Different County				Different State			
	1985		1995		1985		1995		1985		1995		1985		1995	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Town of Eau Pleine	669	75%	659	73%	118	13%	156	17%	76	8%	82	9%	32	4%	25	3%
Town of Carson	1,005	79%	940	75%	135	11%	231	18%	87	7%	89	7%	47	4%	25	2%
Town of Dewey	585	76%	662	68%	123	16%	194	20%	37	5%	51	5%	22	3%	18	2%
Portage County		51%		56%		21%		22%		21%		16%		7%		5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census

B. Age Distribution

Table 1.3 below details the number of Town residents that occupied specific age groups in each of the last three Census years, along with similar information for an average of all Portage County Towns and the County as a whole.

Further insight into the nature of the Town’s population change over time can be gained through examining how the different age groups change as they move through their life cycles. Age

groups for the Towns and County (or “cohorts” as they are called when tracking a group of same-aged people) have been displayed in the table in ten-year increments to more easily see how their numbers increase or decline over different census years. The diagonal series of gray and white boxes within Table 1.3 indicate the path of each age cohort through the three Census periods.

The 5-to-14 year old cohort for the Town of Eau Pleine numbered 156 in 1990. Their number declined by 51 persons (-48.6%) by the year 2000 (as the 5-to-14 year olds became 15-to-24 year olds). Children leaving home for college or jobs may explain some of this decline. There was a substantial jump in 2000 for the population of persons that were under 5 years in 1990 (as those under 5 became 5-to-14 year olds). This cohort increased by 81 persons, or 108%.

The “median age” is the point where ½ of the population lies above and ½ lies below; the older this age is, the older the overall population for a place is becoming. The median age for the Town of Eau Pleine is 39.3 years. This rate has increased by over eleven years since 1980, with the rate of increase holding steady over the two decades. The other Towns across Portage County have seen their median age increase at a slightly slower pace (10.5 years). The County as a whole has seen its median age increase at an even slower rate, just under eight years over the twenty-year period. This is an indication that the Towns overall are aging more rapidly than the County’s Villages or City of Stevens Point.

Table 1.3: Distribution of Population, by Ten-Year Age Groups

Age	Town of Eau Pleine			Town Average			Portage County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Under 5 years	77 8.0%	75 7.9%	45 4.8%	139 9.4%	120 7.8%	98 6.1%	4,343 7.6%	4,266 6.9%	3,964 5.9%
5 to 14 years	186 19.3%	156 16.5%	156 16.8%	276 19.0%	277 18.1%	259 15.4%	8,671 15.1%	9,080 14.8%	9,118 13.6%
15 to 24 years	165 17.1%	128 13.6%	105 11.3%	262 17.7%	204 12.9%	204 12.6%	15,270 26.6%	13,081 21.3%	13,983 20.8%
25 to 34 years	157 16.3%	140 14.8%	101 10.8%	255 17.4%	245 15.7%	187 11.4%	9,180 16.0%	9,897 16.1%	8,322 12.4%
35 to 44 years	83 8.6%	148 15.7%	164 17.6%	169 11.2%	253 16.3%	297 18.0%	5,593 9.7%	8,690 14.2%	10,261 15.3%
45 to 54 years	103 10.7%	90 9.5%	148 15.9%	117 8.2%	163 10.2%	266 16.2%	4,447 7.7%	5,489 8.9%	8,945 13.3%
55 to 64 years	88 9.1%	95 10.1%	79 8.5%	103 7.9%	149 8.6%	154 9.3%	4,185 7.3%	4,299 7.0%	5,235 7.8%
65 to 74 years	70 7.3%	68 7.2%	82 8.8%	75 6.1%	87 6.5%	96 6.3%	3,391 5.9%	3,610 5.9%	3,791 5.6%
75 to 84 years	25 2.6%	35 3.7%	40 4.3%	30 2.5%	39 3.1%	52 3.6%	1,806 3.1%	2,273 3.7%	2,565 3.8%
85 years and over	9 0.9%	9 1.0%	11 1.2%	7 0.6%	9 0.8%	15 1.0%	534 0.9%	720 1.2%	998 1.5%
Total	963	944	931	1,427	1,546	1,628	57,420	61,405	67,182
Median Age	28.0	33.2	39.3	27	32	38	25.4	29.3	33.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000 Census

As one would expect with the rise in median age, the percentage of the population for the Towns within Portage County over the age of 65 has been trending upward since 1980 as well. The

Town of Eau Pleine 65+ population segment increased from 10.8% of total population in 1980 to 14.3% in 2000. The average Portage County Town saw this segment increase from 9.2% to 10.9%, and the County as a whole increased from 9.9% to 10.9%. When examining all of the age groups for the Town, we find that all groups below the age of 35 are declining in both raw numbers and percent for Town and County population averages, while the reverse is true for age groups above the age of 35

C. Education Levels

Levels of educational attainment follow a similar trend of improvement across the different municipal divisions within Portage County (Table 1.4). The Town of Eau Pleine’s overall educational attainment increased during the 1990’s. This was a result of the combination of immigration, continued educational involvement by the existing residents of the Town and the passing of older residents who did not have the educational opportunities enjoyed today. The number and percentage of Town of Eau Pleine residents age 25 and over who had less than a 9th grade education decreased significantly between 1990 and 2000. The percentage of 25+ year old residents who completed some college, or completed a college degree program rose from twenty-seven percent (27%) to thirty-nine percent (39%) over the same period. This 10-year increase in attainment for Eau Pleine was slightly behind of the gain for the Town average (25% to 44%) and for County as a whole (40% to 49%). The Town of Eau Pleine also outperformed the Town and County averages for the number and percentage of residents who completed 9th to 12th grade but did not receive a diploma. The Eau Pleine numbers for this category decreased by 8.5%, while the Town Average had a 1% incline and Portage County experienced a 1% decrease in this category.

Table 1.4: Comparison of Educational Attainment for Residents 25 Years and Older

Ed. Attainment (Persons 25 yrs+)	Town of Eau Pleine		Town Average		Portage County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Less Than 9th Grade	100 16.6%	59 9.4%	119 10.2%	66 6.1%	4,065 11.6%	2,420 6.0%
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	100 16.6%	51 8.1%	81 6.9%	87 8.1%	3,029 8.7%	3,019 7.5%
High School Graduate	237 39.4%	273 43.5%	396 34.0%	451 42.1%	14,082 40.2%	14,952 37.2%
Some College (No Degree)	70 11.6%	101 16.1%	116 9.9%	189 17.7%	5,205 14.9%	7,572 18.9%
Associate Degree	22 3.7%	36 5.7%	44 3.8%	75 7.0%	1,922 5.5%	2,802 7.0%
Bachelor's Degree	58 9.6%	83 13.2%	91 7.8%	144 13.5%	4,594 13.1%	6,468 16.1%
Graduate / Professional Degree	15 2.5%	24 3.8%	38 3.2%	59 5.5%	2,107 6.0%	2,910 7.2%
Total	602	627	1165	1070	35,004	40,143

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, 2000 Census

D. Households and Income

The Town of Eau Pleine residential community is made up of different types of households. The U.S. Census defines a household simply as “including all of the people who occupy a housing unit.” People not living in households are classified as living in group quarters. Table 1.5 below details the changes in the make-up of Town of Eau Pleine households over the last 20 years, and

compares them to the Portage County data and the average of the County Towns. Married-couple households, traditionally the largest group within Eau Pleine, have seen their percentage of total households slightly decrease at the same rate as the Town average, and at a slower rate than the County over the last 20 years, even though their numbers have continued to increase. Single-parent headed households within Eau Pleine have increased over the 20 year period from 22 to 28 households, which represents a 1% increase. By comparison, the Town average and County as a whole have seen single-head households increase between 1% and 3%. Eau Pleine's Non-Family households have increased from approximately 19% of total households in 1980 to 22.4% in 2000. The non-family percentage for Portage County has historically been higher than Eau Pleine or the Town average.

The Persons Per Household (PPH) calculation for the Town of Eau Pleine, the Town average, and the County have continued a declining trend over the last 20 years. Eau Pleine closely matches the size and rate of decline of the Towns, while the overall County PPH rate of decline has been a bit smaller. This translates into Eau Pleine and other Town households being a bit larger than the County average.

Table 1.5: Household Type Comparison, Eau Pleine, Town Average, and Portage County

Households By Type	Town of Eau Pleine			Town Average			Portage County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Family Households	240	256	267	365	413	462	13,257	14,883	16,496
<i>(% of Total households)</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>82%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>83%</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>72%</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>34%</i>
Married-couple families	218	229	239	330	365	411	11,592	12,645	13,808
<i>(% of Family households)</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>90%</i>	<i>90%</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>84%</i>
Other family, male householder	11	14	15	13	18	21	437	602	861
<i>(% of Family households)</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>5%</i>
Other family, female householder	11	13	13	22	30	30	1,228	1,636	1,827
<i>(% of Family households)</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>11%</i>
Non-Family Households	55	56	77	68	88	124	5,056	6,423	8,544
<i>(% of Total households)</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>34%</i>
Householder living alone	49	49	62	55	71	96	3,730	4,679	6,130
<i>(% of Non-family households)</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>88%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>74%</i>	<i>73%</i>	<i>72%</i>
Householder 65 years and over	~	32	33	~	28	34	~	1,933	2,196
<i>(% of Non-family households)</i>		<i>57%</i>	<i>43%</i>		<i>32%</i>	<i>28%</i>		<i>30%</i>	<i>26%</i>
Total Households	295	312	344	433	500	586	18,313	21,306	25,040
Persons Per Household	3.26	3.03	2.71	3.28	3.01	2.72	2.93	2.71	2.54

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000 Census

Another instructive piece of information on the state of households within the Town is the level of income that each household achieves. Again the Census provides insight into the range of incomes present within Eau Pleine. Table 1.6 below describes how household incomes have changed in the last 20 years. It is a testimony to both the inflation of wages and the increased earning power of the residents of Eau Pleine that the percentage of households making greater than \$50,000 per year has increased from 0.0% in 1979 to 49.1% 1999. Median household income has increased from \$16,098 to \$49,167 over the same period. The percentage increase in households earning greater than \$50,000 for Portage County as a whole over the 20-year period (3% to 43%) is lower than the Town.

Table 1.6: Household Income Comparison, Eau Pleine, Town Average, and Portage County

Household Income Per Year	Town of Eau Pleine			Town Average			Portage County		
	1979	1989	1999	1979	1989	1999	1979	1989	1999
Less Than \$10,000	84 28.8%	16 5.1%	20 5.9%	105 24.0%	51 10.0%	26 3.0%	5,300 28.9%	3,210 15.0%	1,767 7.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	44 15.1%	33 10.6%	25 7.4%	68 15.5%	37 7.3%	24 2.7%	2,919 15.9%	1,978 9.3%	1,608 6.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	101 34.6%	21 6.7%	27 8.0%	142 32.6%	89 17.6%	57 6.5%	5,423 29.6%	4,072 19.1%	3,174 12.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	52 17.8%	53 17.0%	41 12.1%	77 17.8%	86 17.1%	77 8.8%	2,907 15.8%	3,654 17.1%	3,425 13.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11 0.1%	72 0.2%	59 0.1%	30 0.2%	126 0.4%	114 0.2%	1,223 6.7%	4,370 20.5%	4,484 17.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	0 0.0%	52 16.7%	99 29.3%	10 2.2%	84 16.7%	157 18.0%	380 2.1%	2,983 14.0%	5,771 23.0%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0 0.0%	49 15.7%	36 10.7%	5 1.1%	19 3.8%	83 9.5%	193 1.1%	661 3.1%	2,820 11.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0 0.0%	12 3.8%	16 4.7%	0 0.0%	8 1.5%	37 4.2%	0 0.0%	274 1.3%	1,346 5.4%
\$150,000 or more	0 0.0%	4 1.3%	15 4.4%	0 0.0%	5 0.9%	18 2.1%	0 0.0%	134 0.6%	717 2.9%
Total Households	292	312	338	435	503	874	18,345	21,336	25,112
Median H-Hold Income	\$16,098	\$29,583	\$49,167	\$16,776	\$31,632	\$47,966	\$16,659	\$28,686	\$43,487

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000 Census

With the examination of income information, the Town of Eau Pleine should also assess the poverty status of its residents. “Poverty” is generally defined as a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is poor. If a family’s total income is less than that family’s threshold, then that family, and every individual in it, is considered poor. The poverty thresholds do not vary geographically. That is, they are the same throughout the United States. However, the poverty thresholds are updated annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U). The official poverty definition counts money income before taxes and does not include capital gains and non-cash benefits (such as public housing, food stamps, and Medicaid). Poverty is not defined for people in military barracks, institutional group quarters, or for unrelated children under age 15 (such as foster children). Table 1.7 below outlines poverty thresholds for 1980, 1990, and 2000. Table 1.8 lists the Census information on poverty for the total number of residents, persons age 65 and above, and families within the Town of Eau Pleine, the Town average, and Portage County as a whole.

Table 1.7: Poverty Thresholds - 1980, 1990, and 2000

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Threshold		
	1980	1990	2000
One Person	\$4,190	\$6,652	\$8,794
Two Persons	\$5,363	\$8,509	\$11,239
Three Persons	\$6,565	\$10,419	\$13,738
Four Persons	\$8,414	\$13,481	\$17,603
Five Persons	\$9,966	\$15,792	\$20,819
Six Persons	\$11,269	\$17,839	\$23,528
Seven Persons	\$12,761	\$20,241	\$26,754
Eight Persons	\$14,199	\$22,582	\$29,701
Nine Persons or More	\$16,896	\$26,848	\$35,060

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

According to Census figures, the Town of Eau Pleine has experienced a decrease in the number of residents earning below the poverty level. With regard to the other Towns in Portage County, Eau Pleine has slightly lower percentages of persons living in poverty.

Table 1.8: Percent in Poverty, Eau Pleine, Town Average, and Portage County

	Town of Eau Pleine		Town Average		Portage County	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
Persons	972	931	1,354	1,447	57,805	67,182
Below Poverty Level	123 12.7%	45 4.8%	114 8.4%	80 5.5%	7,454 12.9%	6,074 9.0%
Persons 65 Years and Over	123	133	115	149	5,327	7,354
Below Poverty Level	21 17.1%	10 7.5%	13 10.9%	14 9.4%	740 13.9%	561 7.6%
Families	56	267	377	413	14,927	16,643
Below Poverty Level	21 37.5%	10 3.7%	23 6.0%	14 3.5%	1,051 7.0%	725 4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, 2000 Census

E. Employment Characteristics

Table 1.9 below summarizes employment by industry data provided for the last three Census years. This information represents what type of industry that the working residents of Eau Pleine were employed by, and is not a listing of the employment currently located within the Town. The discussion of the Eau Pleine economy will take place within the Economic Development Element of this Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that the method used for classifying industries was changed between the 1990 and 2000 Census, and therefore the information included in the industry categories of Table 1.9 is not entirely consistent for comparison between those years. The table attempts to place the three Census years in a useable context.

Table 1.9: Summary of Employment by Industry

Industry	Town of Eau Pleine			Town Average			Portage County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Mining	126 35.6%	94 20.2%	45 9.7%	91 15.6%	81 10.8%	59 6.8%	1,816 7.3%	1,755 5.8%	1,241 3.5%
Construction	6 1.7%	28 6.0%	17 3.7%	33 5.7%	44 5.8%	54 6.2%	1,004 4.0%	1,297 4.3%	1,707 4.8%
Manufacturing	70 19.8%	108 23.2%	105 22.6%	125 21.3%	156 20.7%	187 21.5%	4,637 18.6%	5,373 17.8%	6,314 17.7%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	25 7.1%	23 4.9%	24 5.2%	31 5.2%	49 6.5%	56 6.4%	1,214 4.9%	1,511 5.0%	1,948 5.5%
Information	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	11 1.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	835 2.3%
Communications/ Other Public Facilities	2 0.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	6 1.0%	7 0.9%	0 0.0%	325 1.3%	367 1.2%	0 0.0%
Wholesale Trade	2 0.6%	4 0.9%	11 2.4%	24 4.1%	25 3.3%	31 3.6%	885 3.5%	1,026 3.4%	1,235 3.5%
Retail Trade	29 8.2%	57 12.2%	51 11.0%	81 13.8%	121 16.1%	105 12.1%	4,317 17.3%	5,667 18.8%	4,813 13.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	21 5.9%	32 6.9%	64 13.8%	65 11.0%	84 11.1%	89 10.3%	2,971 11.9%	3,359 11.1%	3,682 10.3%
Professional, Management, Administrative	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	23 4.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	30 3.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1,627 4.6%
Business and Repair Services	4 1.1%	7 1.5%	0 0.0%	11 1.9%	19 2.5%	0 0.0%	518 2.1%	941 3.1%	0 0.0%
Personal Services	0 0.0%	21 4.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	15 2.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	777 2.6%	0 0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation Services	11 3.1%	5 1.1%	21 4.5%	17 3.0%	6 0.7%	49 5.7%	734 2.9%	388 1.3%	3,005 8.4%
Educational, Health, Social Services	52 14.7%	69 14.8%	57 12.3%	80 13.6%	103 13.7%	146 16.8%	5,331 21.4%	5,617 18.6%	7,192 20.2%
Other	4 1.1%	8 1.7%	36 7.7%	14 2.3%	23 3.1%	33 3.8%	624 2.5%	1,362 4.5%	1,236 3.5%
Public Administration	2 0.6%	10 2.1%	8 1.7%	9 1.6%	19 2.5%	20 2.3%	571 2.3%	710 2.4%	842 2.4%
Total Employed Persons	354	466	465	586	751	870	24,947	30,150	35,677
Unemployed Persons	32	12	29	58	39	38	2,013	1,590	2,255
Total Labor Force	386	478	494	644	818	656	26,960	31,740	37,944
Percent Unemployed	9.0%	2.6%	6.2%	10%	5%	4%	8.1%	5.3%	6.3%
Persons 16 Years +	0	725	711	0	1079	671	0	47,202	53,135

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980, 1990, 2000 Census

Section 1.5 Forecasts

A. Population Projections

Portage County Planning and Zoning Department prepares population projections for each of the municipalities within the County. The methodology for this projection is included in Appendix D of this Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Eau Pleine Plan Commission has adopted the following projected population totals for the planning period:

Yr 2010: **957** Yr 2015: **954** Yr 2020: **958** Yr 2025: **993**

The Town of Eau Pleine Plan Commission believes that the above population projections are low. The Commission thinks that these numbers will be higher due to the future USH 10 facility that will be built along the Town's southern boundary and the lower cost of property in Eau Pleine.

B. Household Projections

Household projections for Eau Pleine will be based on the above stated population projections divided by the anticipated number of persons per household in both 2010 and 2020.

The number of persons per household (PPH) in Eau Pleine has declined from 3.26 persons in 1980 to 2.71 persons in 2000. Using a method of linear regression from data beginning in 1980, the forecasted number of persons per household in 2010 will be 2.45. Forecasting numbers far into the future using linear regression produces increased uncertainty, therefore, the persons per household will be held at 2.45 through 2025. Keep in mind that these numbers represent projections and should not be used as absolute.

Using a PPH of 2.45 for this plan horizon (2025), the household projections for Eau Pleine are:

2010: **391** households 2015: **389** households 2020: **391** households 2025: **405** households

C. Employment Projections

The Town has experienced a sharp decline in agriculture related employment since 1980. Town officials think the downward trend in this sector will continue over the next twenty years. Future job opportunities outside of the agriculture sector are projected to be created in the Stevens Point urban area, Marshfield and Wausau. Jobs will most likely be found in the service, health care, government, manufacturing, and finance sectors.

Section 1.6 Community Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The Town of Eau Pleine recognizes the decreasing role that agricultural operations play in the economy, and toward the preservation of a rural lifestyle and community character. However, Town residents wish to limit development densities in areas due to environmental concerns such as groundwater protection. Town residents also recognize the importance that natural resources, such as the Mead Wildlife Area, contribute toward the Town's character. Recognition of these assets should be taken into consideration as growth and development occurs over time.

Goals, objectives and policies provide the framework for guiding future community development activities in the Town of Eau Pleine. A means of deriving goals and policies is through issue identification. Many of the issue statements in the various plan elements are framed as questions. This was purposefully done so that answering the questions would help plan commissioners form goal or policy statements. Goals are stated as desirable conditions to strive toward in the future. They are common ideals of the community that can be achieved through the actions of government leaders, private enterprise and individuals. Objectives are general targets to be achieved along the path of satisfying community goals. Policies are more specific recommendations or methods of action to accomplish these stated objectives. Together these three pieces express the uniqueness of the community while providing guidance for desirable patterns of growth and development. The following statements are reflective of the overall desires of the community:

A. Goal

Maintain or improve the current quality of life and rural character in the Town by properly guiding development patterns.

B. Objectives

1. Recognize the importance of individual property rights.
2. Direct non-farm housing away from productive agricultural areas.
3. Protect important natural areas throughout the Town.
4. Ensure that newly developed or redeveloped areas are compatible with existing uses of land.

C. Policies

1. Effective implementation tools, such as the Portage County Zoning Ordinance, official maps, and Town ordinances should be used and enforced.
2. Limit development densities throughout the Town to preserve productive farmland, protect natural resources and open spaces, as a means of preserving rural character.