

## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Town of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan. This Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of the community planning process, stating our community's development goals and outlining public policies for guiding future growth. It establishes an identifiable destination that allows both the governing body and private interests to plan and budget with an idea as to the direction the Town may move in the future, and helps to ensure that future growth is not only anticipated, but planned for. The Plan functions as a practical guide to coordinate day-to-day decisions so they make sense in the future.

## **The Portage County Comprehensive Planning Process and Town of Buena Vista**

The Town of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan has been completed as a part of a larger, county-wide planning project. In November of 2000, the Portage County Planning and Zoning Department submitted an application for a State of Wisconsin planning grant to help fund the creation of County-wide Comprehensive Plans that would meet the newly enacted State Statute requirements for long range planning (see SS 66.1001). The Statute stipulates that by January 1, 2010, all Towns, Villages, Cities, and Counties that make decisions regulating land use will need to base those decisions on an adopted Comprehensive Plan. In January 2001 grant funds totaling \$504,000 were awarded to Portage County to assist with the project. Two separate "large area" plan documents are to be developed: an Urban Area plan which encompasses the City of Stevens Point, Villages of Park Ridge, Whiting and Plover, and a portion of the unincorporated Towns of Hull, Stockton, Plover, Linwood and Carson; and the Portage County Comprehensive Plan, which includes each of the seventeen unincorporated Towns (Alban, Amherst, Belmont, Buena Vista, Carson, Dewey, Eau Pleine, Grant, Hull, Lanark, Linwood, New Hope, Pine Grove, Plover, Sharon, Stockton) and six incorporated rural Villages (Almond, Amherst, Amherst Junction, Junction City, Nelsonville, Rosholt) that make up the rest of the County. In addition to the large area plans, the project includes the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan for each of the County's 27 individual units of government.

In June of 2001, a committee made up of representatives from each unit of government within Portage County was appointed to draft these large area plan documents. The ***Portage County Comprehensive Planning Joint Steering Committee*** adopted a "Public Participation Plan" on July 25, 2001. The Participation Plan detailed the different ways that residents of the County would be invited and encouraged to participate in the formulation of the Comprehensive Plans. The Town of Buena Vista also adopted the Public Participation Plan in April of 2003.

The first step in soliciting public involvement was a County-wide opinion survey, which was conducted in the second half of September 2001. Over 30,000 surveys were mailed, with an intended target of one for every household within the County. Over 6,600 of the households responded, a return rate of approximately 22%. The survey responses provided information on resident's feelings in the areas of: County trends and land use; housing; utilities and community facilities; ag, natural and cultural resources; commerce and employment; transportation; and quality of life within the County. The Town of Buena Vista was well represented in the survey results (see Appendix B). In order to follow up and build on the information gathered in the survey, a series of Hopes and Concerns Workshops were held in various locations around Portage County. A wide variety of County residents participated in the Workshops. To include as many groups as possible, workshops were scheduled in towns and villages across the County, as well as junior high and high schools, UW-Stevens Point (with both faculty and students), and the Lincoln Center.

After completion of the Hopes & Concerns workshops all of the response information was forwarded to the Portage County Comprehensive Planning Joint Steering Committee, who used a series of meetings to boil the information down to 44 summarizing “issue statements”. This list then became the basis for a series of six visioning sessions held across Portage County during the spring of 2002. Again, all of the public input was returned to the Joint Steering Committee for review and discussion. An Urban Area Vision Statement and a Rural Vision Statement were approved in the fall of 2002. These Vision Statements were used as a foundation for the Urban Area and Rural Area Comprehensive Plans, respectively, and their ideas resonate throughout the individual local unit plans.

State Statute 66.1001 defines minimum requirements for what content should be included within a comprehensive plan. These requirements include nine “elements” or chapters describing: *issues and opportunities; housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; agricultural, natural and cultural resources; economic development; intergovernmental cooperation, land use; and implementation.* The Town of Buena Vista has used the required elements as an outline for its plan document.

# **CHAPTER 1      Issues and Opportunities for Comprehensive Planning in the Town of Buena Vista**

## **Section 1.1      Brief History and Description of Planning Area**

Buena Vista is the 3rd largest of the 17 Portage County towns in terms of geographic size, encompassing an area of approximately 39,289 acres. The Town (political unit) includes all of congressional township T22N-R9E and part of R8E. The Town of Buena Vista is located in the south-central area of Portage County and is surrounded (clockwise from north to west) by the Towns of Plover, Stockton, Amherst, Lanark, Belmont, Almond, Pine Grove, and Grant (see Map 1.1 below).

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

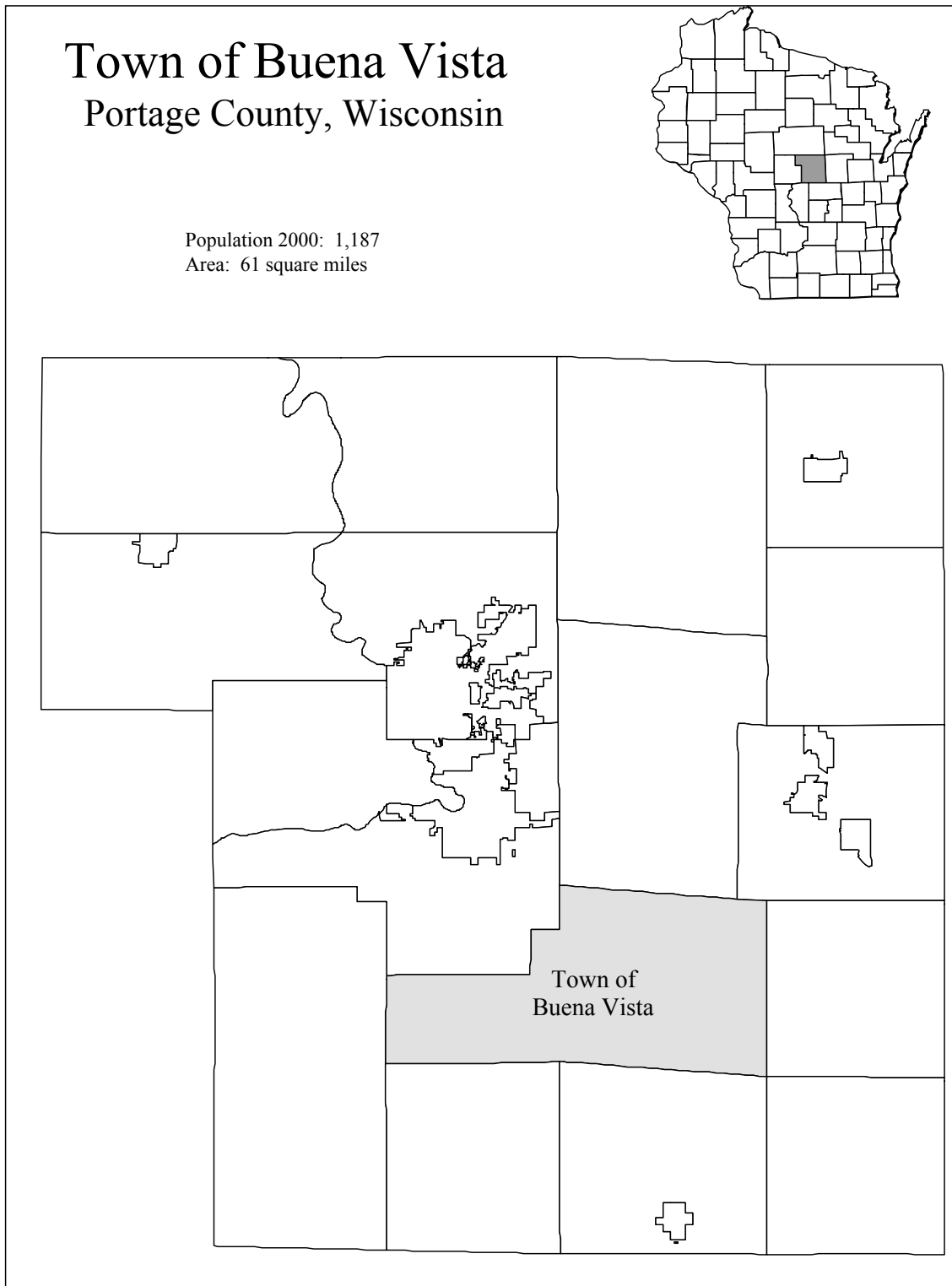
*It seems strange to find a Spanish name meaning “Good View” given in 1854 to a town in Portage County located in the plain with a few hills but no panoramic view at a time when there is no mention of a Spaniard or a Mexican living in or even passing through the county. This name was also given to a village, a post office, a creek and the marsh into which it flows. It indirectly refers to the battle of Buena Vista which was fought in 1846 during the Mexican War and at the time was considered as famous a victory by the Americans as Waterloo by the British. The name was given to several places and establishments in the Midwest but at the time there were few settlers in this region and they did not care about giving a name to any place. In the early 1850’s two men coming here stopped on their way in a tavern in East Troy in southern Wisconsin that had that name. They came to Portage County, put a claim on a piece of land located on the road coming from the south, erected a shanty where they opened a tavern, a hotel for those days, and named it Buena Vista. A small village developed near it and when the town was established it was named after it.*

*The Town of Buena Vista is in the outwash plain of the last Wisconsin glaciation and the western part was at the northern end of the glacial lake. It is crossed by a low hill range which is the terminal moraine of a glaciation older than the last Wisconsin and is named the Arnott moraine after the village in the plain between it and the outer terminal moraine. The road from the south first followed the eastern edge of the Arnott moraine and it is there that the village of Buena Vista was located. The road then went through a gap across the range created by the creek and then followed the western side of the moraine. In 1863 the village of Buena Vista was completely destroyed by a tornado and was not rebuilt. In its place, at the gap in the range, a new center developed under the name of Keen or Keene (probably after the name of a pioneer). It had a post office, a school, a church, a general store, a hotel, a blacksmith shop and even a jewelry and photograph gallery, but when the main road from the South was relocated (the present Highway 51) and automobiles replaced horses, Keene declined and at present consists of only a tavern. A sign reading “Keene, population 4” was put up but it was not an official road sign and was taken off. Two other community centers started in Buena Vista, Liberty Corners at a crossroad with present Highway 54 and Coddington in the west, but now both are just names.*

The Town of Buena Vista was an agricultural-based, rural community that experienced a population peak around 1920, declining through the 1960’s, then rising to the present (see Figure 1.2). Population projections for 2025 indicate a continued growth trend. To accommodate this growth, tracts of land that are now void of development will 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 Buena Vista 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 Buena Vista.

**Map 1.1 Location of Buena Vista**



## **Section 1.2 Past Planning In Buena Vista**

### **1982 Land Use Plan**

In 1981, the Town of Buena Vista Planning Committee began working with the Portage County Planning Department to draft the first land use plan for the Town of Buena Vista. This planning effort was requested by the Town to help preserve good agricultural lands in Buena Vista and help mitigate conflicts between farm and non-farm uses. The intent of the plan was to serve as a formal statement of Town/County policies regarding land use. In addition, the Plan was intended to serve as a guide in updating the Town's 1969 zoning map, to reflect changing conditions and needs. The plan was adopted by the Town Board in May of 1982.

## **Section 1.3 Current Comprehensive Planning Process**

As mentioned in the introduction to this document, this Town of Buena Vista 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 Buena Vista Plan Commission began the Town Comprehensive Planning process in earnest in January 2003. The Plan Commission met through June 2005 to put together the first complete draft of the plan. The Comprehensive Planning process involved several basic phases:

The first phase involved research. Activities included acquiring a thorough knowledge of the existing community setting, identifying problems that require solutions, and 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 phase 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 phase involved the creation of a plan map 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 phase will involve 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 programming.

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 Buena Vista.

## **Section 1.4 Demographic Trends**

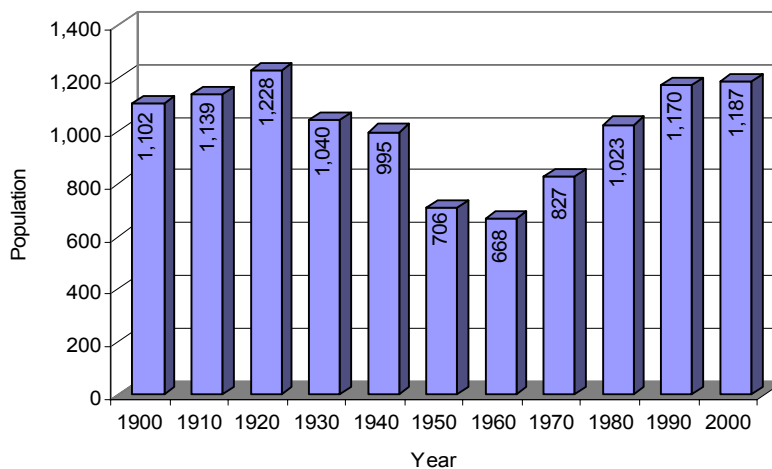
### **A. Population Growth**

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

Census data reveal a major cycle of population loss and gain throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Through 1920, Buena Vista saw its population rise to a peak of 1,228. Over the next 40 years, the Town’s population was reduced by almost half (Figure 1.2). In the 40 years since 1960, the population has risen to a level just shy of the 1920 peak. According to the latest Census information, the population increased by 164 people between 1980 and 2000.

The Town experienced this upturn in population as urban residents began moving back to rural or semi-rural areas. 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.

**Figure 1.2: Town of Buena Vista Population Change, 1900 to 2000**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

The Town of Buena Vista’s population growth of 43.5% from 1970 to 2000 was slightly greater than that of Portage County (+41%) and well above the State (+21%) during the same period. The 2004 State of Wisconsin Department of Administration population estimate for the Town of Buena Vista was 1,235, an increase of 4.0% since the 2000 Census. This rate of change over the last four years was higher than Portage County as a whole (2.6%), and all surrounding Towns except Lanark (5.4%).

**Table 1.1: Buena Vista Comparison Population Change, 1970 to 2004**

	U.S. Census				State of Wisconsin Estimate	1970 to 2000 Change	2000 to 2004 Change
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2004		
Town of Buena Vista	827	1,023	1,170	1,187	1,235	43.5%	4.0%
Town of Almond	529	624	590	679	699	28.4%	2.9%
Town of Amherst	936	1,215	1,335	1,435	1,464	53.3%	2.0%
Town of Grant	1,195	1,593	1,673	2,020	2,078	69.0%	2.9%
Town of Lanark	578	1,043	1,554	1,449	1,527	150.7%	5.4%
Town of Pine Grove	649	762	949	904	926	39.3%	2.4%
Town of Plover	3,692	2,330	2,223	2,415	2,447	-34.6%	1.3%
Town of Stockton	1,537	2,208	2,494	2,896	2,974	88.4%	2.7%
Portage County	47,541	57,420	61,405	67,182	68,935	41.3%	2.6%

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

Table 1.2 below helps to illustrate the migration patterns of Town residents by examining where residents were living five years prior to the census. The “Same House” column identifies the Buena Vista residents that lived in the same dwelling in both 1999 and 2000 (or 1985 and 1990); this can be an indicator of long-term residency. The “Different House, Portage County” column identifies the Buena Vista residents that lived in a home outside the Town, but within Portage County, in 1995. The “Different House, Different County” column identifies the Buena Vista 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 Buena Vista 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.

**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 Buena Vista	730	69%	820	72%	228	21%	205	18%	82	8%	113	10%	23	2%	9	1%
Town of Almond	487	88%	550	77%	52	9%	98	14%	17	3%	57	8%	7	1%	31	4%
Town of Amherst	823	68%	1,014	77%	235	19%	189	14%	77	6%	110	8%	79	7%	83	6%
Town of Grant	1,054	68%	1,450	75%	144	9%	68	3%	320	21%	425	22%	23	1%	39	2%
Town of Lanark	687	66%	756	56%	184	18%	251	19%	132	13%	332	25%	44	4%	80	6%
Town of Pine Grove	587	67%	571	72%	205	23%	84	11%	54	6%	127	16%	28	3%	43	5%
Town of Plover	1,386	67%	1,517	71%	391	19%	316	15%	221	11%	309	14%	62	3%	53	2%
Town of Stockton	1,589	71%	1,996	73%	466	21%	500	18%	158	7%	239	9%	37	2%	66	2%
Portage County	51%		56%		21%		22%		21%		16%		7%		5%	

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

Based on 2000 census information, seventy-two (72%) percent of Buena Vista’s residents lived in the same house as they did in 1995, up two (2%) percent from 1990. Eighteen (18%) percent of Town residents in the year 2000 had moved into the Town after living in other parts of Portage County in 1995 (down 4% from 1990); nine (9%) percent lived in a different part of Wisconsin in 1995 before moving to the Buena Vista area (up by 1%), and one (1%) percent moved to the Town from another state (down by 1%). These numbers provide further examples of the strength of residential expansion within the Town of Buena Vista: increased percentage of residents living long term in the same dwelling; more people relocating into the Town from other counties and beyond.

## 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 the average of all County towns and Portage County as a whole. 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 Buena Vista numbered 241 in 1990. Their number declined by 77 persons (-46.9%) by the year 2000 (as the 5-to-14 year olds became 15-to-24 year olds). Some of this decline may be explained by children leaving home for college or jobs. For the most part, the age cohort 35 to 44 experienced an increase in numbers between 1990 and 2000. In comparing this growth trend to other Portage County Towns and the County overall, you will find about the same growth within the cohorts over the ten-year period.

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

Age	Town of Buena Vista			Town Average			Portage County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Under 5 years	104 10.2%	107 9.1%	74 6.2%	133 9.2%	118 7.7%	96 6.0%	4,343 7.6%	4,266 6.9%	3,964 5.9%
5 to 14 years	195 19.1%	241 20.6%	193 16.3%	276 19.0%	272 17.9%	256 15.5%	8,671 15.1%	9,080 14.8%	9,118 13.6%
15 to 24 years	190 18.6%	147 12.6%	164 13.8%	260 17.7%	202 12.9%	201 12.5%	15,270 26.6%	13,081 21.3%	13,983 20.8%
25 to 34 years	193 18.9%	179 15.3%	132 11.1%	253 17.2%	243 15.7%	185 11.4%	9,180 16.0%	9,897 16.1%	8,322 12.4%
35 to 44 years	101 9.9%	206 17.6%	229 19.3%	168 11.1%	250 16.2%	293 17.9%	5,593 9.7%	8,690 14.2%	10,261 15.3%
45 to 54 years	82 8.0%	102 8.7%	203 17.1%	116 8.4%	158 10.3%	259 16.2%	4,447 7.7%	5,489 8.9%	8,945 13.3%
55 to 59 years	68 6.6%	92 7.9%	86 7.2%	104 8.1%	150 8.7%	153 9.4%	4,185 7.3%	4,299 7.0%	5,235 7.8%
65 to 74 years	58 5.7%	60 5.1%	64 5.4%	75 6.2%	87 6.7%	97 6.5%	3,391 5.9%	3,610 5.9%	3,791 5.6%
75 to 84 years	23 2.2%	28 2.4%	32 2.7%	30 2.5%	40 3.2%	53 3.7%	1,806 3.1%	2,273 3.7%	2,565 3.8%
85 years and over	9 0.9%	8 0.7%	10 0.8%	8 0.6%	9 0.8%	15 1.0%	534 0.9%	720 1.2%	998 1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>1,187</b>	<b>1,423</b>	<b>1,532</b>	<b>1,612</b>	<b>57,420</b>	<b>61,405</b>	<b>67,182</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	26.1	30.0	36.0	27	32	38	25.4	29.3	33.0

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

The median age for the Town of Buena Vista was 36 years (Table 1.3) as of the year 2000. Median age has increased by almost ten years since 1980, with the rate of increase accelerating between 1990 and 2000. 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

other Towns across Portage County have seen their median age increase at a slightly quicker pace (10.5 years). The County as a whole has seen its median age increase at a slower rate, 7.6 years over the twenty-year period. This is an indication that the Towns are aging more rapidly than the County as a whole.

As expected with the rise in median age, the percentage of the 65+ population for Portage County towns has been trending upward since 1980 as well. The Town of Buena Vista's population segment aged 65+ increased slightly from 8.8% of total population in 1980 to 8.9% in 2000. The average Portage County Town saw this segment increase from 7.9% to 8.6%, and the County as a whole increased from 9.9% to 10.8% (Table 1.3). When examining all of the age groups, those 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. The number of seniors aged 75 and over has slightly increased since 1990. In Buena Vista, the age cohorts under 35 are also slowly losing population.

### C. Education Levels

The different municipal divisions within Portage County have followed similar trends of improvement across levels of educational attainment over the past decade (Table 1.4). This was a result of the combination of in-migration and continued pursuit of educational excellence by the existing residents of the municipalities. The number and percentage of Town of Buena Vista residents aged 25 and over that had less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education decreased between 1990 and 2000 by almost 15%. The percentage of 25+ year-olds who completed some college, or completed a college degree program rose from 28% to 36% over the same period. This 10-year increase in attainment for Buena Vista was lower of the gain for the Town average (15% to 44%) and slightly lower compared for County as a whole (40% to 49%). The Town of Buena Vista was about the same as the Town averages, but higher than County averages for the number and percentage of residents who completed 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade but did not receive a diploma. The Buena Vista numbers for this category increased by 0.5%, as well as the Town average, and Portage County experienced a slight decline of just over 1% in this category.

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

Ed. Attainment (Persons 25 yrs+)	Town of Buena Vista		Town Average		Portage County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Less Than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	148 21.9%	59 7.7%	116 10.0%	66 6.2%	4,065 11.6%	2,420 6.0%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade (No Diploma)	51 7.6%	62 8.1%	84 7.2%	86 8.1%	3,029 8.7%	3,019 7.5%
High School Graduate	284 42.1%	372 48.4%	393 33.9%	445 41.9%	14,082 40.2%	14,952 37.2%
Some College (No Degree)	91 13.5%	127 16.5%	115 9.9%	187 17.6%	5,205 14.9%	7,572 18.9%
Associate Degree	32 4.7%	45 5.9%	43 3.7%	74 7.0%	1,922 5.5%	2,802 7.0%
Bachelor's Degree	48 7.1%	78 10.2%	92 7.9%	144 13.6%	4,594 13.1%	6,468 16.1%
Graduate / Professional Degree	21 3.1%	25 3.3%	37 3.2%	59 5.6%	2,107 6.0%	2,910 7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>1160</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>35,004</b>	<b>40,143</b>

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census

#### D. Households and Income

The Town of Buena Vista 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 Buena Vista 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 Buena Vista, have seen their percentage of total households decrease at a slightly higher rate over the last 20 years than the decrease in the Town average or County as a whole, even though their numbers have continued to increase. Single-parent headed households within Buena Vista have increased over the 20 year period from 24 to over 38 households, an increase of nearly 3%. By comparison the Town Average and County as a whole have seen single-head households increase between 1 and 3%. Buena Vista’s non-family households have increased from 10% of total households in 1980 to over 24% in 2000. The non-family percentage for Portage County has historically been higher than Buena Vista or the Town average.

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

**Table 1.5: Household Type Comparison, Buena Vista, Town Average, and Portage County**

Households By Type	Town of Buena Vista			Town Average			Portage County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
<b>Family Households</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>13,257</b>	<b>14,883</b>	<b>16,496</b>
<i>Percent of Total Households</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>86%</i>	<i>76%</i>	<i>84%</i>	<i>82%</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>82%</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>66%</i>
Married-couple families	241	273	276	329	362	408	11,592	12,645	13,808
<i>Percent of Family Households</i>	<i>91%</i>	<i>88%</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>90%</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>89%</i>	<i>87%</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>84%</i>
Other family, male householder	10	15	20	13	18	22	437	602	861
<i>Percent of Family Households</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>5%</i>
Other family, female householder	14	23	23	22	29	29	1,228	1,636	1,827
<i>Percent of Family Households</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>11%</i>
<b>Non-Family Households</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>5,056</b>	<b>6,423</b>	<b>8,544</b>
<i>Percent of Total Households</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>28%</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>34%</i>
Householder living alone	26	35	71	57	72	96	3,730	4,679	6,130
<i>Percent of Non-Fam Households</i>	<i>90%</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>72%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>81%</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>74%</i>	<i>73%</i>	<i>72%</i>
Householder 65 years and over	~	16	19		29	35	~	1,933	2,196
<i>Percent of Non-Fam Households</i>		<i>32%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>29%</i>		<i>30%</i>	<i>26%</i>
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>18,313</b>	<b>21,306</b>	<b>25,040</b>
<b>Persons Per House Hold</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>2.54</b>

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 Buena Vista. 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 Buena Vista that the percentages of households making greater than \$50,000 per year has increased from 1.7% in 1979 to 43.5% in 1999. This percentage increase was greater than Portage County as a whole (3% to 42%) and the Town average (3.3% to 34.3%). Median household income level for Buena Vista residents has increased from \$16,719 to \$46,920 (+181%) over the same period, an income level that is slightly lower than that of surrounding towns (\$48,037) but higher than Portage County (\$43,487).

**Table 1.6: Household Income Comparison, Buena Vista, Town Average, and Portage County**

Household Income Per Year	Town of Buena Vista			Town Average			Portage County		
	1979	1989	1999	1979	1989	1999	1979	1989	1999
Less Than \$10,000	78 26.2%	41 11.1%	18 4.1%	105 24.2%	49 9.8%	26 3.0%	5,300 28.9%	3,210 15.0%	1,767 7.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	49 16.4%	27 7.3%	22 5.0%	63 14.4%	34 6.9%	23 2.6%	2,919 15.9%	1,978 9.3%	1,608 6.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	104 34.9%	63 17.1%	34 7.7%	141 32.6%	86 17.2%	56 6.5%	5,423 29.6%	4,072 19.1%	3,174 12.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	36 12.1%	70 19.0%	62 14.1%	78 18.1%	85 17.0%	75 8.7%	2,907 15.8%	3,654 17.1%	3,425 13.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	26 0.2%	78 0.2%	112 0.2%	29 0.2%	126 0.4%	111 0.2%	1,223 6.7%	4,370 20.5%	4,484 17.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	5 1.7%	66 17.9%	120 27.3%	10 2.2%	87 17.4%	163 18.8%	380 2.1%	2,983 14.0%	5,771 23.0%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0 0.0%	14 3.8%	40 9.1%	5 1.1%	21 4.3%	83 9.6%	193 1.1%	661 3.1%	2,820 11.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0 0.0%	7 1.9%	21 4.8%	0 0.0%	8 1.6%	37 4.2%	0 0.0%	274 1.3%	1,346 5.4%
\$150,000 or more	0 0.0%	2 0.5%	10 2.3%	0 0.0%	5 1.0%	19 2.1%	0 0.0%	134 0.6%	717 2.9%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>18,345</b>	<b>21,336</b>	<b>25,112</b>
<b>Median H-Hold Income</b>	\$16,719	\$32,174	\$46,920	\$16,737	\$31,470	\$48,106	\$16,659	\$28,686	\$43,487

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

With the examination of income information, the Town of Buena Vista 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, that family and every individual in it, is considered poor. The poverty thresholds do not vary geographically; they are the same throughout the United States. These 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 Buena Vista, the Town average, and Portage County as a whole.

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

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Thresholds		
	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

**Table 1.8: Percent in Poverty Comparison, Buena Vista, Town Average, and Portage County**

	Town of Buena Vista		Town Average		Portage County	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
<b>Persons</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>1,187</b>	<b>1,342</b>	<b>1,431</b>	<b>57,805</b>	<b>67,182</b>
Below Poverty Level	147 <i>12.6%</i>	71 <i>6.0%</i>	<b>113</b> <i>8.4%</i>	<b>78</b> <i>5.4%</i>	7,454 <i>12.9%</i>	6,074 <i>9.0%</i>
<b>Persons 65 Years and Over</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>5,327</b>	<b>7,354</b>
Below Poverty Level	24 <i>25.0%</i>	19 <i>17.9%</i>	<b>12</b> <i>10.6%</i>	<b>14</b> <i>9.0%</i>	740 <i>13.9%</i>	561 <i>7.6%</i>
<b>Families</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>14,927</b>	<b>16,643</b>
Below Poverty Level	27 <i>8.5%</i>	16 <i>4.7%</i>	<b>22</b> <i>6.2%</i>	<b>14</b> <i>3.4%</i>	1,051 <i>7.0%</i>	725 <i>4.4%</i>

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

According to census figures, the Town of Buena Vista has experienced a substantial decrease in the number of residents earning below the poverty level as compared to the County as a whole. Buena Vista, however, has slightly higher percentages of persons living in poverty than the town average, and has a higher percentage of its seniors living in poverty than the town average and County as a whole. While Buena Vista has reduced the number of families that are considered to be in poverty, the Town average and County have slightly lower percentages.

#### 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 Buena Vista were employed by, and is not a listing of the employment currently located within the Town. The discussion of the Buena Vista 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 Buena Vista			Town Average			Portage County		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Mining	112 29.8%	76 14.8%	97 14.5%	92 15.8%	82 11.1%	56 6.6%	1,816 7.3%	1,755 5.8%	1,241 3.5%
Construction	25 6.6%	35 6.8%	36 5.4%	32 5.5%	43 5.8%	53 6.2%	1,004 4.0%	1,297 4.3%	1,707 4.8%
Manufacturing	71 18.9%	132 25.7%	130 19.4%	125 21.4%	154 20.7%	185 21.7%	4,637 18.6%	5,373 17.8%	6,314 17.7%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	23 6.1%	24 4.7%	35 5.2%	31 5.3%	49 6.6%	55 6.5%	1,214 4.9%	1,511 5.0%	1,948 5.5%
Information	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	21 3.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	10 1.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	835 2.3%
Communications/ Other Public Facilities	4 1.1%	2 0.4%	0 0.0%	6 1.0%	7 0.9%	0 0.0%	325 1.3%	367 1.2%	0 0.0%
Wholesale Trade	12 3.2%	8 1.6%	37 5.5%	23 4.0%	25 3.3%	29 3.4%	885 3.5%	1,026 3.4%	1,235 3.5%
Retail Trade	36 9.6%	82 16.0%	57 8.5%	80 13.8%	119 16.0%	105 12.3%	4,317 17.3%	5,667 18.8%	4,813 13.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	33 8.8%	42 8.2%	47 7.0%	61 10.5%	80 10.7%	86 10.0%	2,971 11.9%	3,359 11.1%	3,682 10.3%
Professional, Management, Administrative	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	26 3.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	30 3.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1,627 4.6%
Business and Repair Services	2 3.1%	15 2.9%	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%	14 2.7%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	16 2.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	777 2.6%	0 0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation Services	11 2.9%	2 0.4%	36 5.4%	17 3.0%	6 0.8%	48 5.7%	734 2.9%	388 1.3%	3,005 8.4%
Educational, Health, Social Services	37 9.8%	59 11.5%	98 14.6%	81 13.9%	103 13.8%	143 16.8%	5,331 21.4%	5,617 18.6%	7,192 20.2%
Other	4 1.1%	16 3.1%	35 5.2%	14 2.4%	23 3.0%	33 3.8%	624 2.5%	1,362 4.5%	1,236 3.5%
Public Administration	6 1.6%	6 1.2%	15 2.2%	9 1.5%	19 2.6%	20 2.3%	571 2.3%	710 2.4%	842 2.4%
<b>Total Employed Persons</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>24,947</b>	<b>30,150</b>	<b>35,677</b>
<b>Unemployed Persons</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2,013</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>2,255</b>
<b>Total Labor Force</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>26,960</b>	<b>31,740</b>	<b>37,944</b>
<b>Percent Unemployed</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>Persons 16 Years +</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>47,202</b>	<b>53,135</b>

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 F of this Comprehensive Plan.

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

Yr 2010: **1,252**      Yr 2015: **1,268**      Yr 2020: **1,293**      Yr 2025: **1,341**

They think, however, that population might grow higher than projected due to accessibility and proximity to I-39, STH 54, and new USH 10 improvements.

### **B. Household Projections**

Household projections for Buena Vista will be based on the above stated population projection divided by the anticipated number of persons per household in through 2025.

The number of persons per household for Buena Vista has declined from 3.48 persons in 1980 to 2.84 persons in 2000. Using a method of linear regression from data being from 1980, the forecasted PPH in 2010 will be 2.55. Forecasting numbers far into the future using linear regression produces increased uncertainty, therefore, the persons per household will be held at 2.55 through 2025. Keep in mind that these numbers represent projections and should not be used as absolute.

Using a PPH of 2.55 for this plan horizon (2025), the household projections for Buena Vista are:

2010: **491** households    2015: **498** households    2020: **508** households    2025: **526** households

### **C. Employment Projections**

Although employment in the agricultural sector has declined over the last twenty years (Table 1.9), the Town projects that agriculture related employment, including farm operations, will continue to provide limited job opportunities for its residents. Future job opportunities outside of the agriculture sector are projected to be created throughout the County, including the Stevens Point urban area, in the service, government, manufacturing, and finance and insurance sectors.

## **Section 1.6 Goals, Objectives and Policies**

The Town of Buena Vista recognizes the important role that agricultural operations play in the economy and toward the preservation of a rural lifestyle and community character. In addition to promoting the agricultural economy, Town residents also wish to preserve local character by limiting residential densities to an amount befitting a rural landscape.

Goals, objectives and policies provide the framework for guiding future community development activities in the Town of Buena Vista. 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.