



# Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Planning Public Opinion Survey Report, 2008

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**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary ..... - 2 -

Survey Purpose ..... - 4 -

Survey Methods ..... - 4 -

Profile of Respondents ..... - 5 -

Quality of Life ..... - 7 -

Programs and Services..... - 9 -

Housing ..... - 10 -

Natural and Cultural Resources ..... - 11 -

Agriculture and Land Use..... - 12 -

Transportation ..... - 15 -

Economic Development..... - 16 -

Key Functions of Town of Maple Grove Government ..... - 18 -

Additional Comments ..... - 19 -

Conclusions ..... - 20 -

Appendix A – Non-Response Bias Test ..... - 21 -

Appendix B – Written Comment..... - 22 -

Appendix C – Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question..... - 33 -

## Executive Summary

From mid-November to mid-December 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to 397 Town of Maple Grove residences. The SRC received 274 completed surveys, which is a very strong 69 percent response rate. With 274 responses, the estimates contained in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.3 percent. Statistical tests indicate that “non-response bias” is not a problem with this sample.

Nearly 90 percent of respondents rated the overall quality of life in the Town of Maple Grove as excellent or good. The top reason for choosing to live in the Town was being near family and friends followed by agriculture and the small town atmosphere.

Generally, respondents were satisfied with the Town services they receive (emergency services, street and road maintenance, and police protection) but there was a substantial minority who feel these same services warrant a fair or poor rating.

Respondents were asked to consider various proposals regarding Town services, realizing the potential costs or tax increases involved. Less than 10% of respondents support the construction of a community center and over three-fourths of respondents oppose the development of a community park. Six in ten respondents in Maple Grove were opposed to the Town contracting with a private hauler for garbage collection. Over three-fourths of respondents were opposed to higher taxes for improved services and roads.

Respondents indicate that they place a high level of importance on the protection of the Town’s natural resources. A majority of respondents said that it is essential or important to protect eight of the ten resources listed on the survey using regulations. Less than half of Maple Grove respondents said that regulation to protect open space or historic and cultural sites is essential or important.

When asked about housing in the Town, a substantial minority (40%) believes group homes or assisted living facilities are appropriate in the Town; over one-half do not. Less support was shown for mobile homes or manufactured housing parks with 71% opposed to this type of housing in the Town.

Nearly all respondents agree that productive farmland should continue being used in agriculture. A substantial minority (47%) is supportive of using productive farmland for residential purposes but only 28% are supportive of using productive agricultural land for commercial/industrial uses. Thirty-five percent of Town of Maple Grove respondents are willing to allow large-scale farm expansion anywhere in the Town. Approximately one-fourth are opposed to allowing the expansion of large farming operations anywhere in the Town. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents said their land is actively farmed and 57% report that their land will still be farmed over ten years from now.

A majority of residents do not believe landowners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want; 42% believe they should. Respondents want visual impacts to be considered when evaluating development proposals and a slight majority believes that new residential construction should be designed to preserve open space. A majority (53%) believe lots in rural residential developments should be 5 acres or less; 42% believe minimum lot sizes should be over 5 acres.

The overwhelming majority of Town of Maple Grove respondents believe the current road network meets the needs of its citizens. Nearly seven in ten believe alternative modes of transportation are important and over half (53%) do not see a need to pave all roads in the Town of Maple Grove.

The top two 'appropriate' types of economic/business development in the Town, according to respondents, are agricultural related businesses and home based businesses. Over three-fourths of respondents are not willing to use tax dollars to recruit business and industry to the Town.

There is generally strong support for encouraging energy alternatives as forms of economic development. Over three-fourths of respondents believe solar and wind power are worthy economic development options; 61% feel this way about biofuels.

Respondents identified the protection of agricultural resources, ensuring public safety, and providing efficient/effective government as the most important functions of Maple Grove Town government.

Information gathered from respondent comments indicates that citizens of Maple Grove value the rural, agricultural-based character of the Town. They would generally like to maintain the rural landscape and lifestyle into the future.

## Survey Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to understand public opinions about a range of important issues facing the Town of Maple Grove. Survey results will provide input into the comprehensive plan that the Town of Maple Grove is developing.

## Survey Methods

From mid-November to mid-December, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to 397 Town of Maple Grove residences. The SRC received 274 completed surveys, which is a 69 percent response rate. With 274 responses, the estimates contained in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.3 percent.

All surveys need to be concerned about “non-response bias.” Non-response bias exists if people who fail to complete and return a survey have opinions that are systematically different than those who returned a survey. For example, Question 3c of the survey asked respondents to rate street and road maintenance on a scale from “excellent” (= 1) to “poor” (=4). If only people who were very satisfied with street and road maintenance responded to the survey, the overall rating in the report would overstate the level of satisfaction of the overall population and the survey would have non-response bias.

A standard way to test for non-response bias is to compare the response patterns of those who completed a survey after the first mailing to those who completed the survey after the second mailing. The SRC tested 82 variables included in the questionnaire and found nine instances in which responses from the first mailing and those from the second were statistically different. In most instances, the differences do not change the interpretation of results. **Based upon a standard statistical analysis that is described in Appendix A, the Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that non-response bias is not a concern for the Town of Maple Grove survey.**

In addition to the numeric responses, Maple Grove property owners also provided additional written comments that were compiled by the SRC from the surveys. **Appendix B to this report contains the complete set of comments.**

**Appendix C contains the survey questionnaire with a quantitative summary of responses by question.**

## Profile of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of respondents to the Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Planning Public Opinion survey. Where comparable data were available from the 2000 Census, they were included to indicate the degree to which the sample represents the underlying adult population in the Town.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents								
Gender	Count	Male	Female					
Sample	230	66%	34%					
Census (18+)	661	52%	48%					
Age	Count	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
Sample	242	0%	5%	16%	29%	26%	24%	
Census (18+)	661	10%	13%	29%	20%	14%	14%	
Employment Status	Count	Full-Time	Part-Time	Self	Unemp	Retired	Other	
Sample	229	51%	3%	17%	1%	27%	2%	
Census (pop 16+)	722	64% <sup>1</sup>		15%	6%	11% <sup>2</sup>		
Home is located within ½ mile of the Town hall	Count	Yes	No	Not Applicable				
Sample	243	12%	79%	9%				
Number in Household	Count	0	1	2	3	4	5+	
Adults (sample)	235		15%	72%	7%	5%	1%	
Children (sample)	216	67%	13%	12%	5%	2%	1%	
Households with children <18 (Census)	323	57%	43%					
Length of Residency	Count	Less than 1 year	1 – 4 years	5 – 9 years	10 – 24 years	25+ years	Seasonal Only	
Sample	237	3%	11%	11%	32%	40%	2%	

Sample Bias Concerns. The sample has considerably lower proportions of females and younger people than 2000 Census figures. Statistical tests show that males and females have statistically significant differences of opinion in about 15 percent of the questions included in the survey. Many of the gender differences are associated with natural and cultural resource protection. Females were more likely to support regulations to protect the natural and cultural resources listed on the survey. Females were also more likely to have no opinion about the appropriate types of economic/business development in the Town.

<sup>1</sup> Census employment data does not differentiate between full-time and part-time workers.

<sup>2</sup> Households with retirement income.

Another difference from the expected demographic profile is with respect to age. There are substantially fewer young people in this sample than the Census likely due to the mail list used consisting of property owners which tend to be older. Approximately 7% of the variables tested showed a significant difference between the opinions of those younger than 45 and those older than that. Younger residents are more likely to say they live in the Town due to quality schools and are less likely to say agriculture is a top reason they live in the Town. Younger respondents believe it is more important to have alternative modes of transportation and that an important Town function is to support recreational opportunities.

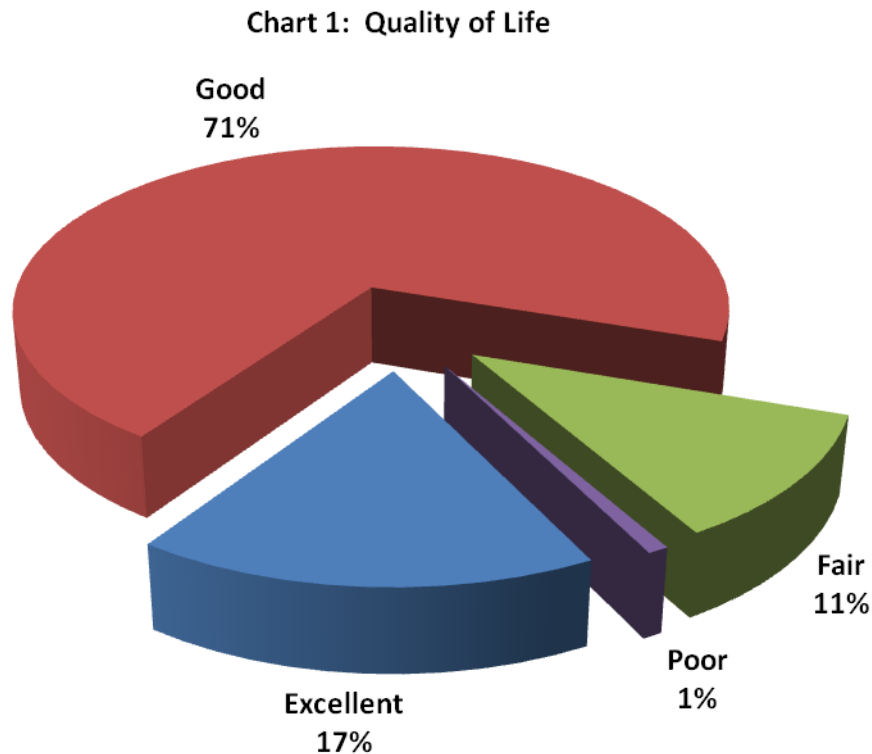
Differences of opinion based on demographics will be noted throughout the report.

In addition, in the fall of 2008, a survey was sent to Barron County residents asking similar questions regarding comprehensive planning. For comparison purposes, we will note applicable similarities and differences between the results of the two surveys (Town of Maple Grove and Barron County) throughout the report.



## Quality of Life

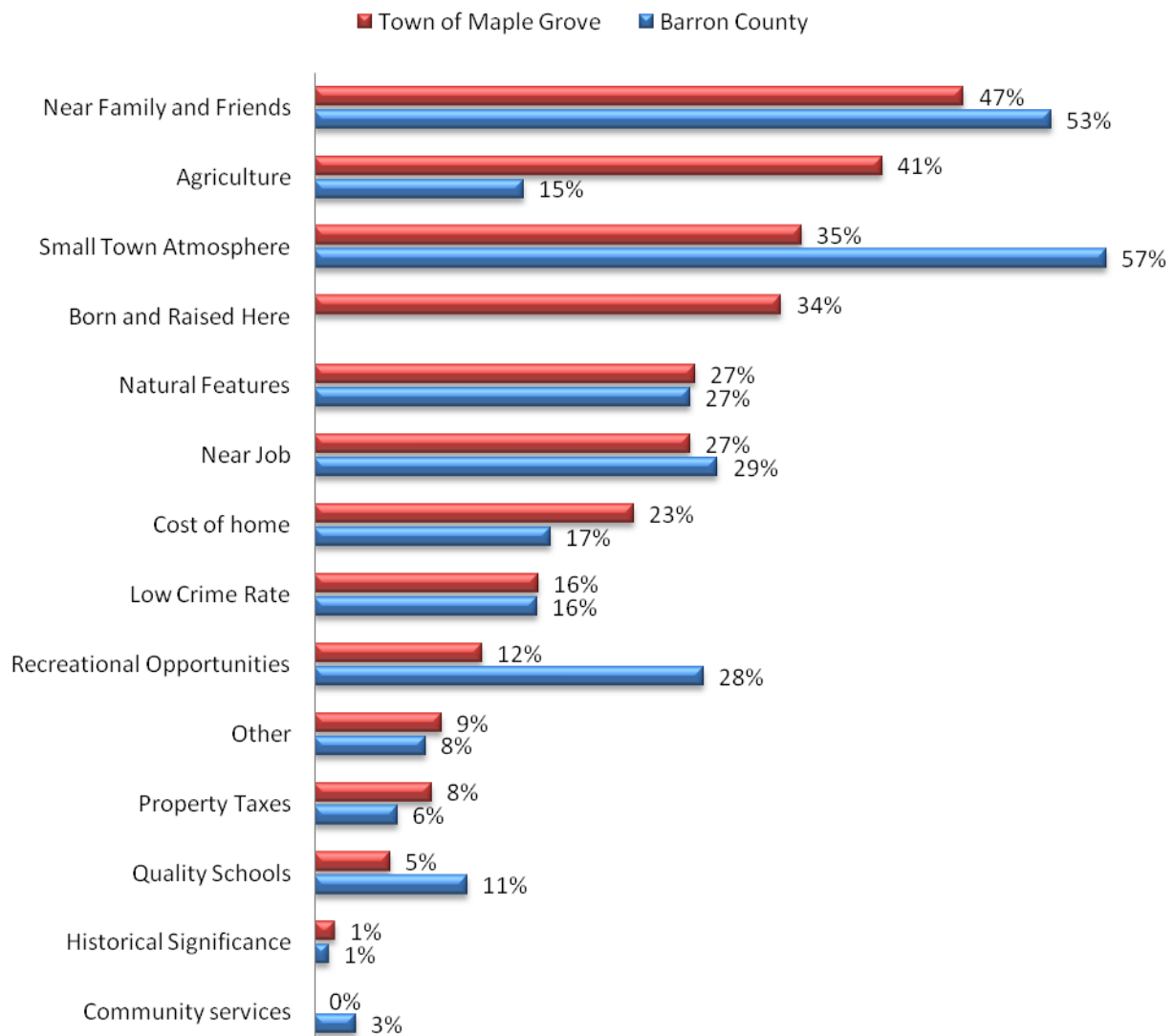
When respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of life in the Town, 88% rated it excellent or good (**Chart 1**). Quality of life results are similar to those shown in the fall 2008 Barron County survey with County residents rating the quality of life as “good” (70%) or “excellent” (11%).



Choosing Place of Residence. Respondents were asked to identify the three most important reasons they have chosen to live in Maple Grove. The results, including the comparable data for Barron County as a whole, are summarized in Chart 2 (Town = top bar and County = bottom bar). The top reason was being near family and friends. Agriculture and the small town atmosphere were the second and third reasons chosen. Relatively few respondents report that property taxes, quality schools, historical significance, or community services are reasons they live in the Town of Maple Grove. Twenty-five respondents wrote in “other” types of reasons they live in Maple Grove ranging from cheap farmland to church. Appendix B contains the complete compilation of “other” reasons mentioned.

Respondents to the countywide comprehensive planning survey were given a similar list of items to prioritize (the County survey did not have the “born and raised here” option). The top reasons for choosing to live in Barron County were the small town atmosphere, being near family and friends, and being near their job. Compared to Barron County, Maple Grove residents are much more likely to identify agricultural opportunities as a key reason for living in the Town and much less likely to identify the small town atmosphere and recreational opportunities.

**Chart 2: Top Reasons for Choosing Place of Residence**



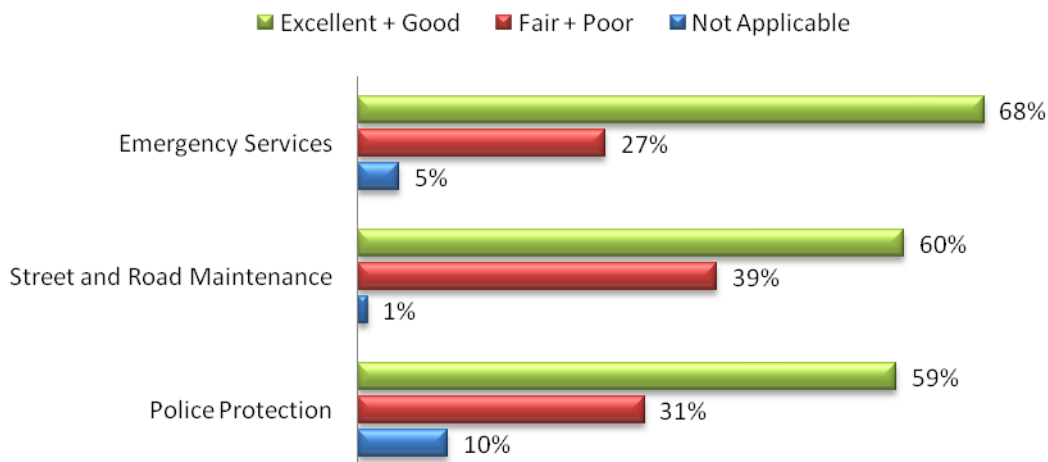
- Younger respondents and respondents with children in their home are more likely to say **quality schools** are a reason they live in the Town.
- Respondents who have lived in the Town for less than 10 years are more likely to say the **small town atmosphere** and **natural features** are top reasons for living in Maple Grove.
- Respondents with children in their household are more likely to say **being near family and friends** is a top reason they chose to live in the Town.
- Females are more likely to say that **property taxes** and the **cost of homes** are reasons they chose to live in the Town.
- **Agriculture** is more likely to be an important reason they live in the Town for respondents who are 45 or over.
- Respondents who have lived in the Town for 10 years or more are more likely to say **being born and raised in Maple Grove** is a top reason they live in the Town.

## Programs and Services

Quality of Town Services and Programs. In Chart 3 the ratings respondents give to Town services and programs are grouped into “excellent or good” (top bar), “fair or poor” (middle bar), and “not applicable” (bottom bar).

Chart 3 shows that a majority feel the following Town services are good or excellent: emergency services (68%), street and road maintenance (60%), and police protection (59%). A substantial minority, 27- 39 percent, feel these same services warrant a fair or poor rating. There are no statistically significant differences by demographic group.

**Chart 3: Quality of Town Services**



A more extensive list of programs and services were rated in the County Survey. For comparison purposes, the County’s emergency management services received 65% excellent/good ratings, the County Highway received 64% excellent/good ratings, and Sheriff, Patrol, Jail, and 911 services received 63% excellent/good ratings.

Residents were also asked to consider a series of statements about Town services in light of potential costs or tax increases involved (**Table 2**). The first statement asked if the Town should construct a community center. Less than 10% of respondents support this construction. A similar proposal was made about developing a community park and over three-fourths of respondents oppose this development as well.

Most Town of Maple Grove respondents opposed the construction of a community center or the development of a community park. However, support for the two developments are higher for those living within a ½ mile of the Town Hall than those that do not:

- Town should construct a community center: 28 percent of Town respondents that live within a ½ mile of the Town Hall agree/strongly agree vs. 7 percent of those that do not
- Town should develop a community park: 36 percent of Town respondents that live within a ½ mile of the Town Hall agree/strongly agree vs. 11 percent of those that do not

- Employed respondents are less likely to support the construction of a community center, the development of a community park, or contracting with a private waste hauler.
- Longer-term residents (10 years or more) are more likely to support the development of a community park.

Sixty-one percent of the respondents in Maple Grove were opposed to the Town contracting with a private hauler for garbage collection. Over three-fourths of respondents were opposed to higher taxes for improved services and roads. Additional discussions will likely be needed if the Town wishes to implement any of the measures mentioned in Table 2.

<b>Table 2: Opinions about the Potential Costs or Tax Increases of Various Town Services</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
The Town of Maple Grove should construct a community center.	270	2%	7%	34%	50%	7%
The Town of Maple Grove should develop a community park.	268	0%	13%	31%	47%	9%
The Town of Maple Grove should contract with a private waste hauler for garbage collection for residents.	269	5%	17%	35%	26%	17%
I am in favor of higher taxes for improved services and roads.	263	1%	14%	38%	40%	7%

## Housing

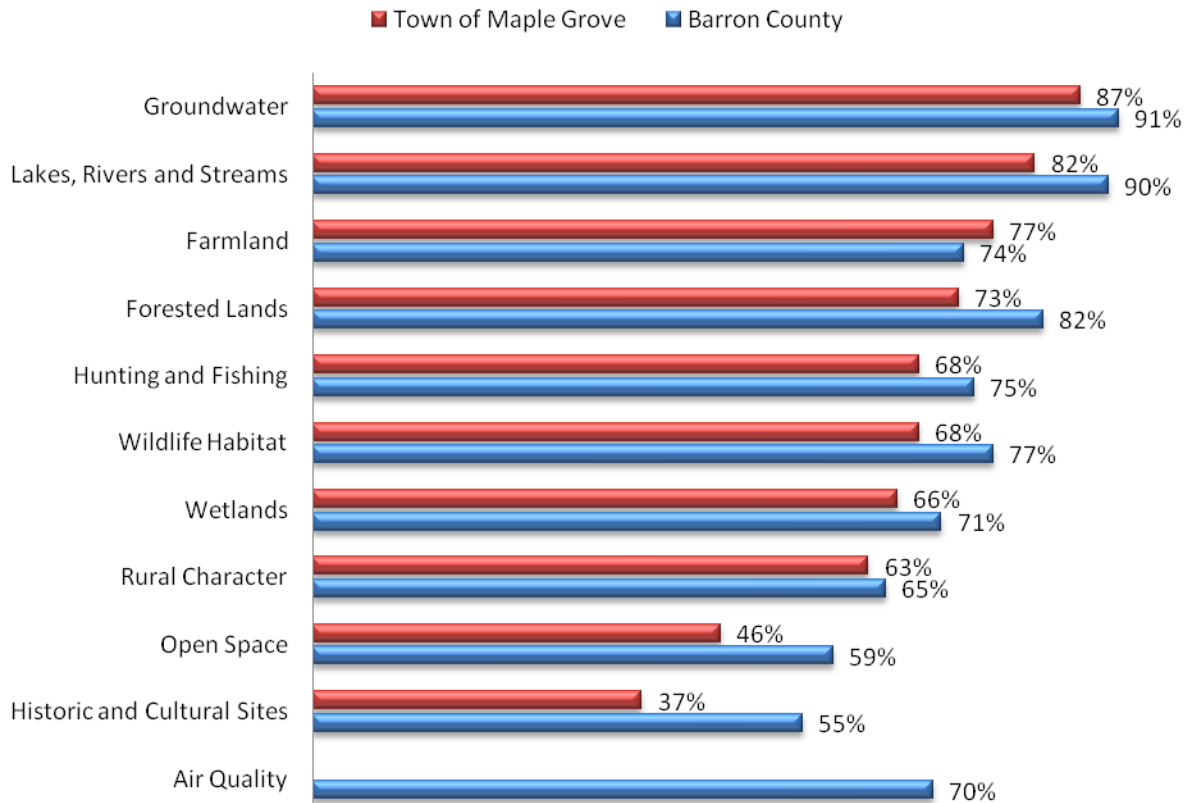
Town of Maple Grove respondents were asked if group homes or assisted living facilities are appropriate in the Town. As noted in Table 3, a substantial minority (40%) believe group homes or assisted living facilities are appropriate in the Town and over half (51%) do not. Less support is shown for mobile homes or manufactured housing parks with 71% not supportive of this type of housing in the Town. No statistically significant differences by demographic group were found for these questions.

<b>Table 3: Appropriate Types of Housing in the Town of Maple Grove</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Group homes or assisted living facilities are appropriate in the Town of Maple Grove.	265	6%	34%	27%	24%	9%
Mobile home or manufactured housing parks are appropriate in the Town of Maple Grove.	264	2%	19%	33%	38%	8%

## Natural and Cultural Resources

Natural Resource Protection. Chart 4 indicates that, when asked how important it is for the Town of Maple Grove to use regulations to protect various resources, a majority of respondents said it is essential or important to protect eight of the ten resources listed (top bar). Nearly one-half believe it is essential or important to protect open space and over one-third feel this way about historic and cultural sites.

**Chart 4: Importance of Protecting Natural Resources**  
**Percent (Essential + Important)**



- Females are more likely to say that it is essential for the Town of Maple Grove to use regulations to protect forested lands, historic and cultural sites, open space, rural character, and wetlands.
- Employed respondents and those with children in their home are more likely to support regulations to protect rural character.

When comparing the Town results with countywide results, the protection of groundwater and lakes, rivers and streams were also the top two resources listed on the countywide survey (bottom bar). The protection of forested lands rounded out the top three. Using regulations to protect farmland, (the Town of Maple Grove's number three choice) was number six on the countywide survey.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Air quality was listed on the County survey but not the Town's. It should also be noted that the County survey asked how important is it for the County to use tax dollars/regulations to protect the various resources listed; the Town survey did not mention using tax dollars for resource protection.

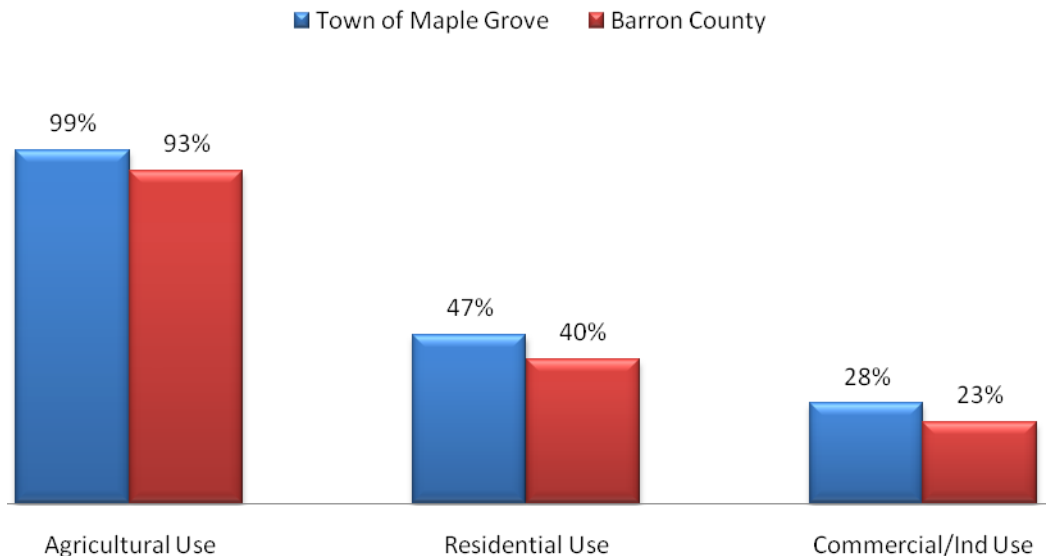
The pattern of responses in Chart 4 is also important. While majorities in both the Town and County tend to favor protecting resources via regulations, this sentiment is stronger in the County than in the Town for everything except farmland preservation.

**Agriculture and Land Use**

Use of Agricultural Land. Chart 5 shows that nearly all respondents agree that productive farmland should continue being used in agriculture (Town = left column and County = right column). Forty-seven percent are supportive of using productive farmland for residential purposes and only 28% support using productive agricultural land for commercial/industrial uses.

- Respondents who have lived in the Town for 10 years or more are more likely to oppose residential use of productive agricultural land.
- Employed respondents are more supportive of commercial/industrial use of agricultural land.

**Chart 5: Productive Agricultural Land Should be Used for:  
(Percent Strongly Agree + Agree)**



Very similar results occurred in the County survey. There was a near consensus on allowing productive farmland to continue being used in agriculture. A majority of Barron County landowners were opposed to using productive farmland for residential or commercial purposes.

Large Scale Farms. Town of Maple Grove respondents were asked to consider where large farming operations, those involving 500 or more animal units, should be allowed to expand. Survey responses (**Table 4**) indicate that 35% percent are willing to allow expansion anywhere in the Town. Approximately one-fourth (26%) are not willing to allow expansion anywhere in the Town. Allowing large-scale farm expansion adjacent only to State and County highways was opposed by approximately one-half of respondents. There were no demographic differences of note in terms of farmland owners/non-farmland owners views of large-scale farm expansion.

<b>Table 4: Large Scale Farms Involving 500+ Animal Units Should Be Allowed to Expand:</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Anywhere in the Town of Maple Grove	265	8%	27%	36%	22%	7%
Nowhere in the Town of Maple Grove	259	9%	17%	47%	15%	12%
Only adjacent to State and County Hwys.	252	8%	21%	35%	16%	20%

In comparison to Town results, fewer County respondents (one-fourth) are in favor of allowing expansions anywhere in Barron County, and slightly fewer (21%) would prohibit expansions anywhere the County.

Opinions about Development. A majority of Maple Grove respondents do not believe landowners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want; 42% believe they should (**Table 5**). Most respondents believe the visual impact of development is an important consideration when evaluating proposed development. Fifty-three percent of respondents believe new residential construction should be clustered or designed to preserve open space.

- Females are more likely to agree that the visual impact of development is an important consideration when evaluating proposed development.

<b>Table 5: Opinions about Land Use Decisions</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Landowners should be allowed to develop land any way they want.	264	14%	28%	35%	19%	4%
The visual impacts (view of the landscape) of development is an important consideration when evaluating proposed development.	265	24%	55%	11%	4%	7%
New residential construction should be clustered or designed in a manner which preserves open space.	265	9%	44%	29%	8%	10%

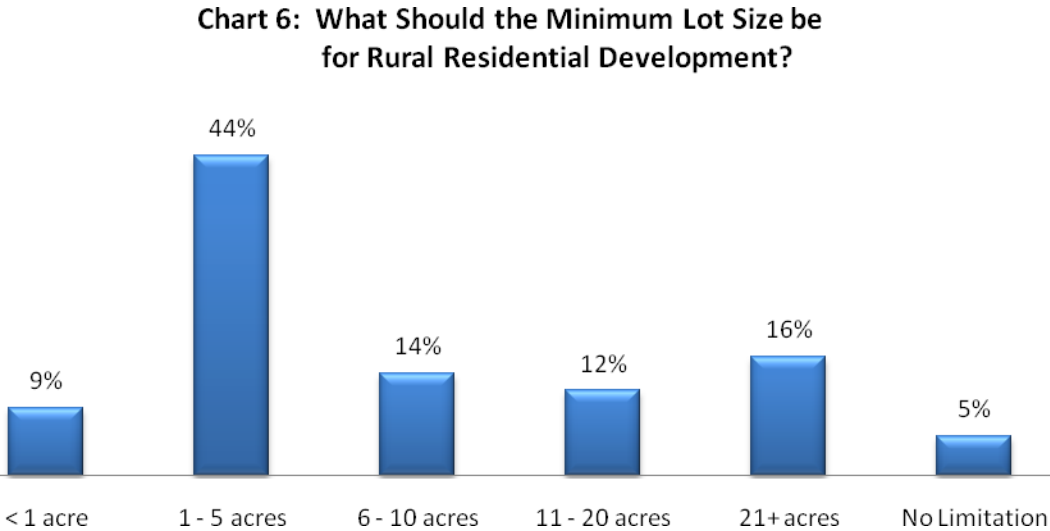
Town of Maple Grove and Barron County respondents generally had similar opinions regarding the first two land use decisions shown in Table 5.

Comparisons of Town and County survey results regarding land use decisions:

- landowners should be allowed to develop land any way they want: 42 percent of Town respondents agree/strongly agree vs. 35 percent of County respondents
- visual impact is an important consideration when evaluating proposed development: 79 percent of Town respondents agree/strongly agree vs. 85 percent of County respondents

The question regarding the preference of new residential construction being clustered or preserving open space was not in the County survey. However, the SRC has asked this question using a visual element in a large number of land use surveys throughout Wisconsin. In almost every instance, a cluster design of residential housing development has been favored. A majority (53%) of Maple Grove property owners also preferred the cluster design option but by a narrower margin than we typically see.

Minimum Lot Size. Chart 6 indicates that about two-thirds of the respondents believe lots in rural residential developments should be 10 acres or less, and of those, a large percentage (44%) prefer lots of 1 to 5 acres. Forty-two percent think the minimum lot size for new residential construction should be over 5 acres. Only 5% believe there should be no limitation regarding rural residential lot sizes.



The choices for minimum lot sizes used in the County survey were different from the Town’s in two cases: options of *11 to 40 acres* and *41 or more acres* were used instead of *11 – 20 acres* and *21 or more acres*. County residents were more supportive of minimum lot sizes of 10 acres or less (76% vs. 67% of Town respondents) and slightly less supportive of minimum lot sizes of more than 10 acres (15% vs. 28% of Town respondents).

Acreage. Respondents were asked how many acres they own in the Town of Maple Grove. Table 6 shows that over 60% of respondents own more than 20 acres in the Town of Maple Grove and more than one-fourth own less than 10 acres.

The Town of Maple Grove has a substantial percentage (38%) of landowners who own more than 40 acres (vs. 22% from County sample) and a comparatively low percentage (29%) of landowners who own less than 10 acres (vs. 67% from County sample).

Table 6: Acres of Land Owned					
	Count	< 10	10 – 20	21 – 40	40+
Town of Maple Grove	266	29%	11%	23%	38%
Barron County	388	67%	5%	6%	22%

- Longer-term residents (10 or more years) are more likely to own more than 40 acres of land.



Respondents were asked if their land is currently farmed and to speculate whether or not it would be farmed in the future. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents said that their land is actively farmed (25% said they farm their own land and 33% said their land was farmed under contract or other arrangement).

Fifty-seven percent report that their land will still be farmed over ten years from now; 41% believe their land will be farmed 10 years or less.

Less than one-fourth of Barron County respondents report that their land is currently farmed. Slightly more than half of County respondents who reported that their land was currently being farmed said that they believe it will still be farmed over 15 years from now.

## Transportation

The overwhelming majority of Town of Maple Grove respondents believe the current road network meets the needs of its citizens (**Table 7**). Nearly seven in ten believe alternative modes of transportation are important and over half (53%) do not feel all roads in the Town of Maple Grove should be paved.

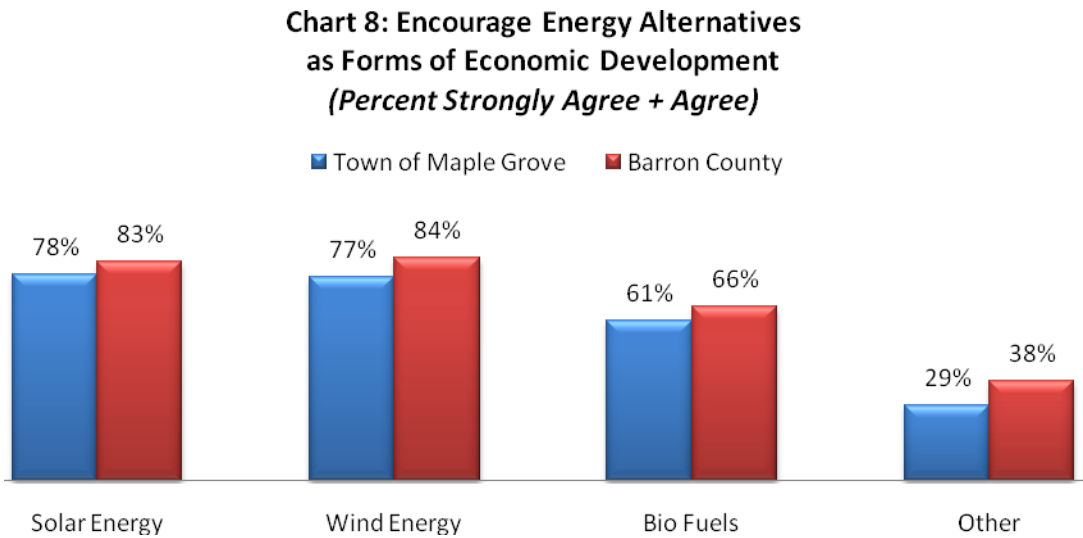
- Those without children in their home are more likely to agree that the overall road network meets the needs of its citizens.
- Younger respondents and those with children in their home are more likely to agree that alternative modes of transportation are important.

<b>Table 7: Transportation Issues in the Town of Maple Grove</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
The overall road network (roads, streets, and highways) in the Town of Maple Grove meets the needs of its citizens.	265	12%	73%	10%	3%	2%
Alternative modes of transportation, such as ATV, snowmobile, bicycle, and walking are important.	263	17%	52%	16%	9%	6%
All roads in the Town of Maple Grove should be paved.	266	14%	25%	42%	11%	8%

Comparison to the County results indicate that, as is the case with the Town, the overwhelming majority of Barron County respondents (88%) feel the current road network meets the needs of its citizens and that alternative modes of transportation (ATVs, snowmobiles, bicycles, and walking) are important (89%).

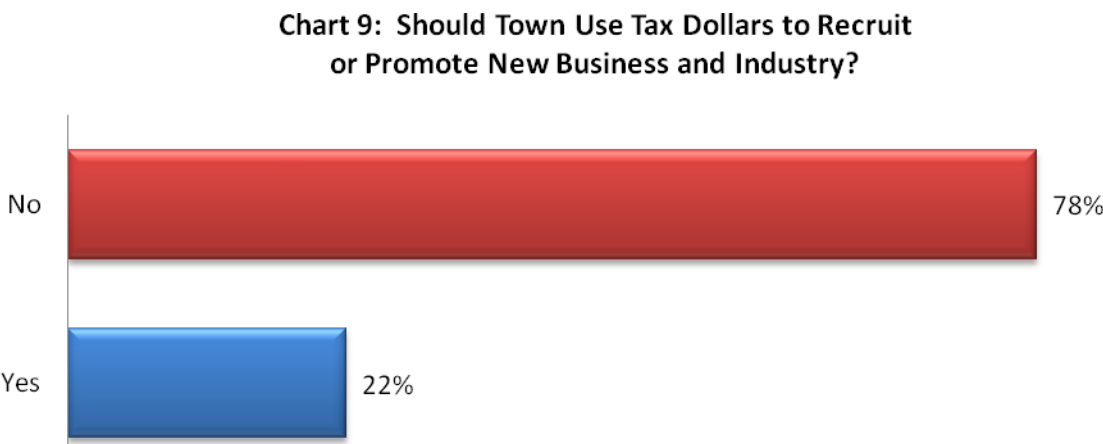
Economic Development

Energy Alternatives. Chart 8 summarizes the opinions of Town of Maple Grove respondents with respect to pursuing alternative energy forms as an economic development strategy. (Town = left column and County = right column). Over three-fourths of respondents believe solar and wind power are worthy economic development options; 61% feel this way about biofuels. Respondents provided “other” alternative energy options, such as geothermal, which can be found in Appendix B, Question 20.



The countywide survey showed slightly higher enthusiasm for each of the three energy forms mentioned.

Recruiting new business and industry. Chart 9 indicates that most respondents are unwilling to use tax dollars to recruit business and industry to the Town; 22% agree with using tax revenues in this fashion.

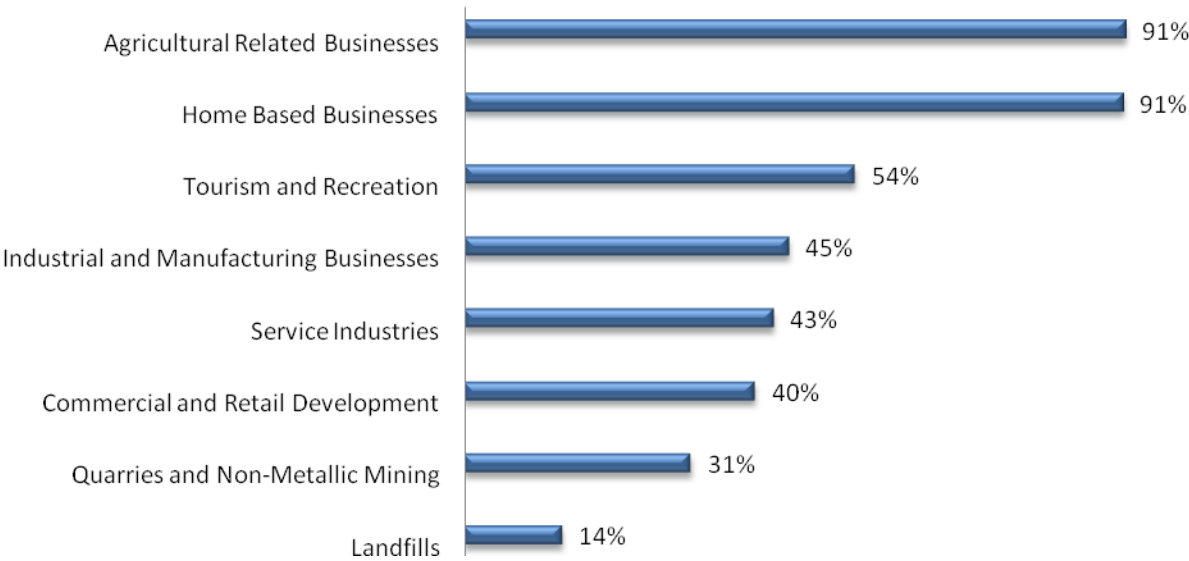


County results show nearly opposite results. Using a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree, nearly 70% of County residents agree (49%) or strongly agree (20%) that tax dollars should be used to recruit new businesses and industries to the County; only 22% disagree.

Types of Businesses in Town. Residents were asked to indicate the types of economic/business development they view appropriate for Maple Grove. Chart 10 shows that agricultural related businesses and home based businesses are the top choices, by considerable margins. Tourism and recreation had majority support. After the top three, more than one third of Town residents agreed that industrial/manufacturing (45%), service industries (43%), and commercial/retail development (40%) are appropriate in the Town. Quarries and non-metallic mining had substantial minority support while landfills were generally not deemed appropriate.

- Females and non-employed respondents are more likely to have ‘no opinion’ about the appropriateness of the types of economic/business development in the Town.
- Males are more likely to agree that industrial and manufacturing businesses are appropriate in Maple Grove.

**Chart 10: Appropriate Types of Economic/Business Development in the Town of Maple Grove**  
*(Percent Strongly Agree + Agree)*



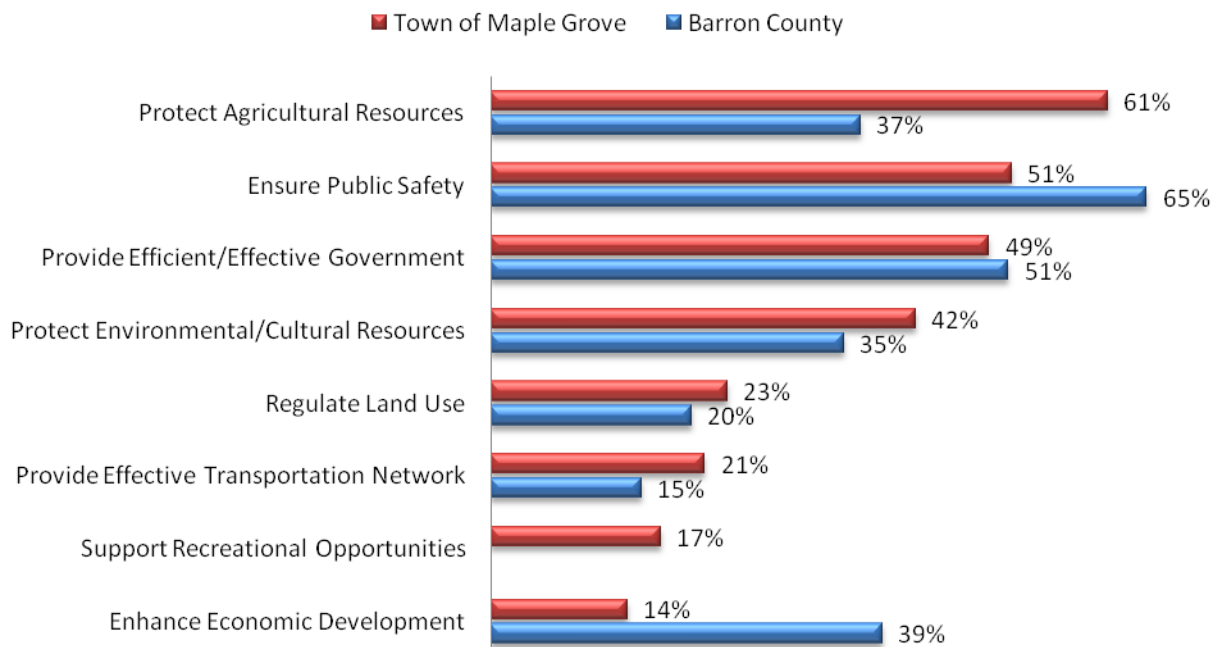
A similar list with a slightly different scale of ‘essential’ to ‘not important’ was given to County respondents, and between 60% and 70% County respondents felt that agricultural related businesses, tourism and recreation, industry/manufacturing, and service industries are essential or very important to Barron County. Town residents were much more enthusiastic about home based businesses than County respondents. Twenty-nine percent of County respondents felt that home based businesses were essential or very important in the County (vs. 91% in Maple Grove).

## Key Functions of Town of Maple Grove Government

Chart 11 summarizes the results of a question that asked respondents to identify the three most important functions for the Town of Maple Grove. It indicates that the top functions of the Town are to protect agricultural resources, ensure public safety, and provide efficient/effective government. (The top bar = Maple Grove responses and the bottom bar shows the comparable Barron County responses). Since 58% of survey respondents report that they own actively farmed land, the most important Town function (protecting agricultural resources) is not surprising. Perhaps, also not surprising, is the last choice, enhancing economic development. As discussed earlier in the report, 78% of respondents are not supportive of using tax dollars to recruit business and industry to the Town.

Barron County residents have substantially higher expectations with respect to enhancing economic development and ensuring public safety and lower expectations for the County to protect agricultural resources.<sup>4</sup>

**Chart 11: Most Important Government Functions**



- Respondents 45 and over are more likely to say that providing efficient and effective government is one of the most important Town of Maple Grove functions.
- Protecting environmental/cultural resources is a top Town function according to females.
- Younger respondents are more likely to say that supporting recreational opportunities is one of the top functions of the Town.

<sup>4</sup> *Providing social services* was a government function listed on the County survey but not the Town's, likewise, the Town survey listed the government function of *supporting recreational opportunities* which was not on the County survey.

## Additional Comments

Twenty-five years from now. Near the end of the survey, respondents were asked the following open-ended question, “What would you like the Town of Maple Grove to look like 25 years from now?” A total of 164 responses were received. The answers were grouped into specific topics and are summarized in Table 8. The complete list of responses is included in Appendix B, Question 23.

One topic, maintaining the status quo, accounted for one-third of all comments. Preserving a small town, rural, agriculture-based community, which might be viewed as a subset of maintaining the status quo, garnered the second highest number of comments. Improving the appearance of the Town, and road improvements rounded out the top 4 choices.

Comments include:

*“I would like to see it much as it is now, sparsely populated and in ag use.”*

*“Full of agriculture farmland and healthy recreational land full of wildlife.”*

*“Houses and the surrounding cleaned up neatly.”*

Concerns, ideas, or additional comments. A second open-ended question asked, “Do you have any other concerns, ideas, or additional comments?” A total of 81 responses were received. Both roads and Town services/facilities garnered 17% of the comments. The complete list of responses is included in Appendix B, Question 25.

*“Fix the roads! We are tired of driving over potholes, loose tar and patch jobs.”*

*“I do like the way the roads have been kept up the last 2 years.”*

*“It is my opinion the services the town provides has greatly declined in the last year and is not keeping pace with my taxes.”*

Comments regarding land use (14% of those received) highlighted differing opinions about this topic:

*“The town of Maple Grove is mostly Ag related land. I don't like to see the fields and woods turned into developments.”*

*“We shouldn't over regulate, let the landowner or homeowner, or business be free enough that they want to stay and or expand.”*

Table 8: What would you like the Town of Maple Grove to look like 25 years from now?		
Topic	Count	%
No Change/Little Change	54	33%
Small Town/Rural/Ag Community	35	21%
Appearance/Clean Up	18	11%
Roads	16	10%
Residential Development	11	7%
Economic Development	10	6%
Taxes	3	2%
Town Facilities/Services	3	2%
Like the Past	2	1%
Variety/Mixture of Change	2	1%
Miscellaneous	10	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Conclusions

An emphasis on agriculture and the rural lifestyle is evident throughout the results from the survey. Agriculture was one of the top three reasons respondents choose to live in the Town and 58% said that the land they own is actively farmed.

Protecting farmland by regulations is considered essential/important to 77% of respondents; 63% feel this way about the Town's rural character. Nearly all respondents support allowing productive farmland to continue being used in agriculture. When asked to determine the 'appropriateness' of types of businesses in the Town of Maple Grove, 91% of respondents strongly agree/agree that agricultural related businesses are appropriate in Maple Grove. Sixty-one percent of respondents identify the protection of agricultural resources as a top function of the Town.

When respondents were asked what they would like the Town of Maple Grove to look like 25 years from now, preserving a small town, rural, agriculture based community garnered the second highest number of comments.

With respect to land use issues, Maple Grove residents strongly agree that productive agricultural land should be allowed to continue to be used in agriculture but a substantial minority believes such land should be allowed to be converted to residential uses. Residents do not support the proposition that landowners should be able to develop their land in anyway they see fit and they want visual impacts to be considered when evaluating development proposals. However, just over half of respondents said they favor cluster residential development designs that would preserve more open space and 42% think the minimum lot size for new residential construction should be over 5 acres.

Less than half of Maple Grove respondents said that regulation to protect open space is essential or important and less than one-fourth of respondents believe a top function of Town government is to regulate land use. In addition to the somewhat contradictory results mentioned above in the numeric data, comments received from two open-ended questions in the survey highlight the differences between residents that do not want additional residential development, or at least would like to see regulations regarding such development, and those that do not think restrictions and regulations should be placed on landowners regarding the use of their property.

## Appendix A – Non-Response Bias Test

Surveys have to be concerned with “non-response bias”. Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who do not return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. For example, Question 3c of the survey asked respondents to rate street and road maintenance on a scale from “excellent” (= 1) to “poor” (=4). If only people who were very satisfied with street and road maintenance responded to the survey, the overall rating in the report would overstate the level of satisfaction of the overall population and the survey would have non-response bias.

The standard way to test for non-response bias is to compare the responses of those who return the first mailing of a questionnaire to those who return the second mailing. Those who return the second questionnaire are, in effect, a sample of non-respondents (to the first mailing), and we assume that they are representative of that group. In this survey, 225 people responded to the first mailing and 49 responded to the second mailing.

<b>Table A1 – Statistically Significant Differences Between Responses of First and Second Mailings</b>			
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean First Mailing</b>	<b>Mean Second Mailing</b>	<b>Statistical Significance</b>
Importance of Regulation to Protect: groundwater	1.62	1.91	.024
<b>Importance of Regulation to Protect: rural character</b>	<b>2.20</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>.029</b>
Mobile Homes/Manuf. Housing Parks are Appropriate	3.37	3.04	.030
Large Scale Farms Allowed: nowhere in the Town	2.98	3.33	.048
<b>Allow landowners to develop land any way they want</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>.001</b>
Land will be actively farmed: 16 – 20 Years	.41	.20	.007
<b>Town of Maple Grove functions: ensure public safety</b>	<b>.48</b>	<b>.65</b>	<b>.032</b>
Town of Maple Grove functions: regulate land use	.26	.12	.043
Town of Maple Grove functions: enhance econ. devel.	.12	.22	.043

Nine variables were found with statistically significant differences between the mean responses of these two groups of respondents (**Table A1**) out of 82 tested. While these items are statistically different, the differences are quite small and generally would not affect the overall interpretation of the results. Instances in which the difference would modify the interpretation of results are highlighted in bold text in the Table. We noted that the respondents to the first mailing were more likely to say that the protection of rural character by regulations is “important” with a mean of 2.20 than Mail 2 respondents (mean = 2.52) on a scale of “1 = Essential” to “4 = Not Important”. Mail 2 respondents were more likely to agree that landowners should be allowed to develop land any way they want with a mean of 2.27 than Mail 1 respondent (mean = 2.81) on a scale of “1 = Strongly Agree” to “4 = Strongly Disagree”. Mail 2 respondents were also more likely to believe that one of the top three functions of the Town is to ensure public safety. **The Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that non-response bias is not a concern for this sample.**

## **Appendix B – Town of Maple Grove Comprehensive Planning Public Opinion Survey Written Comments**

### **Q1 What are the 3 most important reasons you & your family choose to live in the Town of Maple Grove? 'Other' responses (26 Comments)**

- Don't live there/Do not live in Maple Grove/I do not live on my WI property (5x)
- Dairy opportunity family farm/Where we bought our farm (2x)
- Ad in the paper
- Business in Barron
- Cheap farmland
- Church
- Close to church
- Close to town
- Country like setting
- Family lives here
- I live in TN.
- In the country
- Near primary residence
- Out of town.
- Peace and quiet
- Property owner
- Quiet, unpopulated
- Raised in MG
- Rural living
- South 40 family farm
- Wanted to live in country. Not in town.
- Where we bought our farm

### **Q20 The Town of Maple Grove should encourage the following alternatives as a form of economic development.**

#### **'Other' responses (18 Comments)**

- Geothermal (7x)
- Not the townships purpose or business.
- Homeowner choice
- Water turbines
- Wood would not be enough to promote expensive alternatives.
- Nuclear
- Water
- Hot air from Politicians
- "Drill here, drill now, pay less" - national plan
- Gases from large dairy's (manner)
- Waste to energy
- Oil exploration



**Q23 What would you like the Town of Maple Grove to look like 25 years from now? (164 comments)**

**No Change/Little Change (54 responses)**

- The same/same/same as is (14x)
- Like it as is now. (4x)
- Same as it does now. (4x)
- A lot like now with farming and recreational as number one also more solar and wind power.
- About the same
- As it is with less houses and development
- Close to or the same as it appears now.
- Essentially the same as today.
- Essentially, unchanged
- Hope to stay the same
- I want it to have as much natural and open space as it does now.
- I would like it to stay the same as it is today. The small community atmosphere.
- I would like Maple Grove to remain much the same but with more community involvement
- I would like to see it much as it is now, sparsely populated and in ag use.
- Just like today
- Just the way it is.
- Leave it like it is. A nice little town
- Like it does maybe give us more money so all houses can be up to date
- Mostly the same with a few more houses.
- Much as it does now.
- Nice roads, Bike trails. Much the same - want this to remain untouched, unchanged.
- No change
- Progress will occur, but change should come with planning, with good planning looks. Should not be a whole lot different.
- Same as it is. It's not a town, it's a township.
- Same, but with black top roads.
- Similar to what it looks like now.
- Somewhat unchanged
- Still a farming community with maybe a park and a gas station, improved roads.
- The same with a few small farms and only one large farm (4 mile)
- The Town of Maple Grove is primarily a rural area. We do not see much change needed in this agricultural community. We definitely don't want to see any housing areas going up in this rural area.
- The way it looks at present time, with the exception with a few new homes.
- To look like it is now
- To not change
- Very close to what it looks like now with cleaner properties on the west side of Highway 25 in Hillsdale.
- We would like to stay similar to what is it now

### **Small Town/Rural/Ag Community (35 responses)**

- A clean family friendly area with job opportunities.
- A farm community
- A farming community. Recreational areas. Clean community without household. Garbage in ditches and swamps.
- A healthy friendly rural community. We are close enough to needed businesses. Let's keep our area a rural community with "natural" outdoor recreations
- A nice clean rural America.
- A quiet, little residential town
- A safe, peaceful refuge for families to enjoy and visit. Walking, riding trails in natural settings for all ages to use.
- A thriving ag Township with farms of 100 cows or less. Most roads blacktop.
- Agricultural, recreational "small town" emphasis with special consideration for the environment and human needs. The residents should be safe, well-educated and healthy. It will have many farms & open spaces plus well-kept residential areas. The wetlands & forested areas will be used to keep the air clean & wildlife in abundance.
- Agricultural/limited residential
- As a Rural Entity
- Beautiful countryside, not plastered with ATV and snowmobile trails, no slum housing.
- Clean and orderly with farm and residences mixed with good roads, clean water and air.
- Clean, rural, safe
- Definitely not a trailer park place...farms-no fewer than now--that's probably a dream, but that's my answer and homes to go with them.
- Farming community
- Full of agriculture farmland and healthy recreational land full of wildlife.
- Keep it rural and agriculture lifestyle.
- Like a place that is not controlled entirely by the government.
- Neat, attractive, home sites and farmsteads. Roadside right of ways trimmed-and all roads paved.
- Nice park.
- Quiet, agriculture township
- Remain agriculture township.
- Room for small farmers and small town atmosphere
- Rural
- Rural and community living
- Rural character, same as it is now, retain peace, quiet, clean air. Restrict development. No trailer courts, no more party barns. Enforced dog ordinances. No more feed lots.
- Rural community with a ""small town"" atmosphere.
- Rural small town America
- Rural with a mix of farms and residence similar to the present"
- Stay a farming community.
- Still be an agricultural community. Curb the small lot size residential construction.
- Still the small town atmosphere with well-kept homes. No more junk yard lawns. Lots of trees, maybe even a park.

- To have residential homes, farms, and businesses (home and commercial)
- Trees, farm (crop) land, minimal large animal barns "warehouses" for animals. Buildings and properties well kept (clean, well-maintained).

#### **Appearance/Clean Up (18 responses)**

- A clean, well kept community
- A great place to live with the junky looking houses/yards cleaned up, especially in town.
- Brush cut. No sofas, refrigerators, etc. in ditches.
- Clean and livable
- Clean ditch lines, uncluttered home sites - no garbage, junk and old cars.
- Clean up and fix that old run down factory
- Clean up Hillsdale
- Clean up home areas--no junk
- Garbage left in ditches cleaned up.
- Get rid of junk and unsightly clutter in country and small towns.
- Green!
- Homes better maintained in residential areas.
- Hopefully certain homes are cleaned up and improved. Junk removed from homeowners yards.
- Houses and the surrounding cleaned up neatly.
- More trees being planted-preferably maples!
- Present homes updated and remodeled to conserve energy and improved appearance.
- The town of Hillsdale needs to have ordinances put in place and adhered to regarding the clean up of the homes, yards etc. It does not take money to clean up junk. I would like to have a feeling of pride living near Hillsdale instead of embarrassment!
- The town should be cleaned and not trashy.

#### **Roads (16 responses)**

- A little modernized paved roads better town hall
- All paved roads!
- All right of ways maintained according to Wis.DOT and Wis. State Statutes.
- All roads black topped.
- Basically, the same as it does now--preserve it with all roads black topped.
- Better road maintenance, less rural development
- Don't have highway "8" go through the northern end of Maple Grove Township.
- Good roads
- Green trees along roads.
- I would like to see our roads improved where necessary. Services (road maintenance) provided by township equal to that City provides to township people who live on city highways. There are roads in our township that were sand lifted over 10 years ago. That have not been blacktopped. Treat everyone fairly.
- Maintained roads whether gravel or blacktop, new town hall

- Not much different than what it looks like now. The biggest current issue is getting the roads repaved. These are back roads like 12th Ave that people drive 55mph on and due to horrible road conditions make it hazardous.
- Pave roads
- Properly developed on Hwy 25. Need to black top empty lots for parking.
- Road ditches clean
- Shouldering of roads done on blacktop roads. Employ Maple Grove residents and our own equipment not pay out to other towns

#### **Residential Development (11 responses)**

- Affordable housing for new residents
- Houses on no less than 20 acres, ag and woodland are maintained, continuous improvement of current roads as according to five-year road plans, no power plants.
- I would like to see a designated area for new home construction with lots ranging in size of 1-5 acres per lot. Hopefully this would decrease the breaking up of productive farmland into 40's with one house per 40. The advantage of this designated area would be the installation of infra structure (streets, water, sewer)
- I would like to see the township with no more development than what we see today. We must maintain the rural lifestyle. Once development comes, it is too late.
- More growth to promote new homes and business to help support M/G and property taxes. Allow land parcels to be divided to allow families to move in and expand. Allow alcohol and gasoline sales on HWY 25 and HWY D. Promote farmers market and craft sales.
- More new homes
- More residential single-family homes. Biking & walking areas. Recreational areas.
- No large-scale development, to retain a rural atmosphere.
- Populated with new growth
- Some rural, good farmland protected. Able to develop woodland and productive farmland. Home based businesses allowed.
- Well-planned residential living.

#### **Economic Development (10 responses)**

- A lot like it is now with a few more Industrial and Manufacturing businesses spread around.
- At least as good as now or better, create industry and jobs, promote agriculture and ag. Related jobs and biofuel.
- Encouraging small businesses yet not impacting the natural resources. Clean water, woodlands, & streams, wetlands protected to encourage the diversity of wildlife that so many area sportsmen have worked to protect: QDM, DU, Pheasants, etc. Neighboring landowners considerate of next door neighbors. Farmers able to farm, recreational interests encouraged, hunting protected, small home businesses sustaining the tax base, agriculture encourages: area community center & sports facilities help out so that Maple Grove does not have to build them.
- Gas station. A park for picnics and for kids to play art.
- Have a gas station
- More jobs.

- Small farms, gardens/greenhouses, and businesses, economic sustainability little corn and beans, especially monoculture, and the deadly poisons that go with them. Promote organic sustainable grass based farms FREEDOM! No permits, licenses, big brother, etc. Imagine that! Maple Grove will be self-sufficient and produce its own food, services, and most goods in house instead of sending our money to corporations.
- Some kind of factories for people to have a job.
- Still ag based, but with more businesses, and names for a broader tax base.
- Vibrant agricultural industry, clean water, lots of well-maintained residence, other businesses.

#### **Taxes (3 responses)**

- An area where you would be proud to live in and you're not taxed to death
- I would like to see lower taxes--not Maple Grove--wider spending I would like to see pothole fixed--by school district and county government.
- Known for low property taxes. Smaller government.

#### **Town Facilities/Services (3 responses)**

- A new Town Hall. They have the land and did have part of the money. Hire local people to do the roadwork.
- Sewer and water in Hillsdale.
- The old railroad in to Barron turned into a bike path.

#### **Like the Past (2 responses)**

- Back to the 50's with a slower path of life (this, of course, will not happen, but wouldn't it be nice?)
- Like it did 25 years ago. 25 years ago there wasn't a home built in every woods. 25 years ago, everyone within a 2-mile radius was a neighbor. Now most don't know or care who lives across the road.

#### **Variety/Mixture of Changes (2 responses)**

- A live, yet retain its small town atmosphere so that crime does not become a problem. It does seem that some business and industry needs to be encouraged in order to keep down our property taxes by bringing in consumers to spend money.
- A well balanced agra/economic developing community, better understanding of between residence and leadership in governing local issues-such as roads- stewardship of the agra/business properties-budget expenditures.

#### **Miscellaneous (10 responses)**

- No opinion (4x)
- I won't be around in 25 years.
- No comment
- That's beyond our lifespan
- That's not up to me to decide.
- Three hundred less residents.
- Wind and solar power in use by homeowners.

**Q25 Do you have any other concerns, ideas, or additional comments? (81 comments)**

**Roads (14 responses)**

- As for the roads, the dirt roads in the township are not paved because nobody or not many people travel or live on them. Leave them dirt and not pay for paving, fix the roads that are paved now.
- Blacktop the remaining gravel roads. 16th street (poor farm road) needs major work. Widen, add shoulders and stripe. Safety issue. I do not live in this road.
- Displeased with the contracting out of Road maintenance, and services. I feel that the roads were better taken care of with our own township employees and equipment.
- Fix and repave 16th street (poor farm road)
- Fix the roads! We are tired of driving over potholes, loose tar and patch jobs.
- Fix the roads. Put up speed zonings and children signs on roads with none currently.
- I do like the way the roads have been kept up the last 2 years.
- I would like my road paved we pay to high of taxes to live on a dirt road or they should lower my taxes.
- Need road improvement in Hillsdale. Road improvements in Hillsdale in 2008 where very poor.
- Pave the 1/2 mile on 15th street--that is gravel
- Road maintenance and snow removal is awesome! Find a way to enforce cleanup of unsightly properties. Blacktop or hard coat remaining roads.
- This summer the intersections I travel were not mowed back enough or often enough to provide good views from autos at stop signs.
- Township open up Senior Citizen driveways after snow or bad weather.
- Would like to see 16th street from County Hwy D to Barron/Maple Grove township line dug up and completely rebuilt. It is probably the highest travelled township road and is badly in need of being completely rebuilt.

**Town Services/Facilities (14 responses)**

- I would like to see garbage pickup that is paid for in property tax.
- Improve emergency response time throughout the township.
- It is my opinion the services the town provides has greatly declined in the last year and is not keeping pace with my taxes. Last year days would go by after a snowfall before our road would be plowed out. In fact I actually got stuck in the snow on the road on 8th Ave one week after a snow fall because I needed to drive in my lane while meeting a vehicle and the only plowing that was done to the road was one path down the center rather than cleaning the whole road off. We need to get a town board that will run the town as a business and possibly generate revenue rather than change the town's standard operating procedure to match their personal agendas.
- Keep the lawn mowed around town shop.
- Leave community sanitation to pick up garbage (no contracting out) and no burning garbage band
- Need major dog control. People need to understand the law and responsibility of being a dog owner.
- Need new town hall. Taxpayers need a neutral place where they can conduct town business and express their concerns without feeling threatened.
- Road construction to pave all roads, repair bridges, improve water run-off. Promote property clean up; enforce a ""junk"" ordinance, non-operating vehicles. Township clean up days, with free disposal,

twice a year. Encourage and support community growth. Encourage involvement from MGT residents, property owners. Remove abandon, run down-non livable buildings.

- Service should be provided uniformly to town residents.
- The responsibility of the Township government is the maintenance of Township roads and bridges
- The township functions very well with contracted services.
- We need a new town hall. Would like to see our own employees and equipment for most of the roadwork.
- Would like to see a solid waste collection site, supported by taxes paid by individual or multiple home sites. Collection site should be centrally located. If it is run by property taxes hopefully residents would use that collection site instead of the road sides, swamps and pot holes to get rid of the white goods, appliances, TVs, furniture and household garbage.
- Would like to see a solid waste recovery system open to all Maple Grove Township residents. Paid for by all landowners that is supported by taxes. Some place residents could use to get rid of appliances, tires furniture, even garbage. So it would not end up in the ditches on sparsely residential roads.

#### **Land Use (12 responses)**

- Do not want to see housing areas going up in the rural areas of Town of Maple Grove
- Don't want the township to allow developments on anything less than 20 acres parcels-that is bad enough. I did not move to a rural area just to have the area being developed with houses popping up next door. Additionally we must maintain the land for agricultural use-not development. I so enjoy the serenity of this township & hope I can say that in the years to come.
- I believe a person who owns, rents, or occupies land or residence should be able to use his or her own property as they see fit. If a large farmer wants to expand and can do so without consuming his neighbors property, or change rules and regs so his neighbor can't use or enjoy his property then I'm not in favor of that farm expansion. Some rules, easements, laws need to be changed! Where a dump was once ok may not be ok today. Some hunting laws also need to be changed especially around resident's homes and buildings.
- I like having the 40-acre rule, because you can still have your own recreational things going on, and still have respect for your neighbors! Keep 4-wheelers off dirt roads, because we have enough dust and problems keeping the road in good shape! Thank you.
- I worry about eminent domain, it isn't right to take owner's homes or land away from just because "they" can.
- I would prefer that 40 acre be mine for housing. 80 would be better.
- If you allow 1 party to take down line fence on town property-allow anyone who borders and wants to take their down. Equality goes a long way & better relationships.
- In order to get a building permit, new homes should have \$125,000 worth of value when complete.
- Mobile homes would be all right if put on the right number of acres with a permanent foundation, basement. The same with a prefab home.
- The town of Maple Grove is mostly Ag related land. I don't like to see the fields and woods turned into developments.
- To allow homes in smaller acreage and home based business
- We shouldn't over regulate, let the landowner or homeowner, or business be free enough that they want to stay and or expand.

### **Taxes (12 responses)**

- Higher taxes depend on the services rendered. Strive to make Maple Grove a place residents want to live.
- Homeowner's taxes are rising at a rate that home owners are having a hard time keeping up. Some may be forced to sell or move. Maple Grove one of the highest townships in Barron county.
- I am very concerned about the recent increase in property taxes and believe that steps must be taken to freeze, limit, or reduce them. People are on fixed incomes and being forced out of their homes due to tax increases, on and above cost of living increases.
- I'm concerned our taxes are getting to high. My land has been in our family for over 100 years--our taxes keep increasing so we are unable to do any improvements to our home or property. I think property owners who keep the land, yards, and buildings up should pay lower taxes and those who have junk all over should pay more as it is an eye sore.
- Reduce property taxes
- Someone much smarter than I am needs to figure a way for people who have farmed all their lives, can stay in their homes for their final years, and not be forced to move to town because they can't earn enough to cover expenses. (including taxes) Progress is important but please don't forget the old folks. Thanks.
- The Maple Grove land taxes have increased considerably. Causing financial hardship for many landowners. This also deters many landowners from making property improvements. The elderly are struggling to keep their homes.
- The more we let government do for us the less choices we will have and the more taxes we will have to pay.
- The town of Maple Grove should not cause taxes. All the middle class who can only do so much we are in a recession and things could only get worse. We are all in this together. (unreadable)
- This township is one of the most highly taxed. If business will decrease this and make the tax burden less, then I encourage it, but we don't want another "Barron" sometimes these small towns die out and then you are worse off than you were before. So I feel that some discretion be maintained. It does seem that change is a good thing, but growth should be done slowly to insure the safety of all in the community and discourage land gouging and undesirable elements into the area. Keeping in mind that many who live here have a low income and higher taxes will hurt many households, do what it takes to keep the residents in the area we like so much.
- We already pay high taxes, compared to other communities and it's supposed to include roads.
- We would like to see the real estate taxes lowered in the town of Maple Grove.

### **Economic Development (4 responses)**

- I am not advocating using tax dollars to recruit or promote new businesses, but the board should encourage privately owned businesses and industry to come in order to create new jobs.
- I would like to see a gas/convenience store in Hillsdale. I am happy to see the progress of a parking lot by the town hall. The town hall needs to be taken care of to keep the building usable. It is a historic building for this little town should remain a priority to the township.
- Keeping big business to city limits. Protect agriculture, hunting lands.
- Limiting new cemeteries, housing developments, regulating public service towers. Development of plan for replacing town hall



#### **Town Government (4 responses)**

- Need a town board that's not self serving. One that can be trusted.
- The township does not need to be messing with private property rights and our individual freedoms. Our country is leaning socialistic to worse. I am proud of our heritage and the fewer regulations the better. Do the job local government was originally designed to do and leave the rest alone. Thank you.
- We need to prevent people from dumping garbage on roadsides and prosecute those who do.
- Would need a new town hall. Would like to see our own employees and equipment for most of the road work.

#### **Miscellaneous (21 responses)**

- No/None (6x)
- N/A (2x)
- Big waste of money and time.
- I feel everyone has different needs and interest with homes and property and should be respected as individuals as long as they are no harming anyone around them.
- I prefer that Maple Grove remain a rural agricultural community, primarily.
- Is this survey necessary
- It was difficult to select only three options above. There are more than 3 that are important to us. I would also select government and transportation, and ag resources
- I've lived here for 51 plus years.
- New builders and residents don't seem to have the same consideration and "helping out" that used to make MG a great township to live in, losing our own source of community. We are personally being impacted by noisy neighbors during certain times that make our enjoyment of our land seriously affected, multiple dogs, loud machinery day/night, corn dryers, etc. that have completely ruined our outdoor experience during evenings, deer season, etc. For 20 years, the entire neighborhood had enjoyed quality, country experiences of quiet evenings enjoying campfires, picnics, duck-deer hunting, managing our lands for QDM, keeping a large tract of wooded wetland to be mutually enjoyed. One new inconsiderate landowner has undone 20 years of management. Every neighbor is unhappy how things have turned out.
- Question #5 (*importance of regulations to protect natural resources*) Do we need to waste time and money changing regulations that are already in place unless they are not sufficient for our needs. What type of grants are available and can we qualify development to improve our town, such as a taxi service for a 50-mile radius to make it possible for the elderly to remain in our community.
- This is a beautiful area of Northern WI - we believe more pride and upkeep could come from residence in keeping roadways/ fence lines/ clean - old buildings and junk accumulations cleaned up - maybe some local community drives - would help if equipment could stimulate such activities
- We are very happy for the opportunity to respond to this questionnaire. We look forward to the report and working on the programs/projects in the future that come out of this plan. It is wonderful to be able to live in such a good place as northern Wisconsin. We strongly hope the Town will enforce codes to keep landowners and residents up to a high standard as far as "eye appeal" is concerned. There should not be too many junker vehicles or unsightly trash or collapsing buildings tolerated on properties.

- We grow berries and vegetables and sell at the Farmers Market. We tap our trees and make maple syrup.
- We must maintain some freedom to use our land but large CAFO's are too hard on roads, soil, and especially water so shouldn't be allowed. I'd like to get away from the monoculture of corn and beans, or at least the deadly chemicals that are killing us and ruining our environment. We should be able to build what we want, how we want. If I want to live in a cardboard box, that's my choice-I feel no obligation to be forced to use builders, plumbers, elec, etc. or ask ""mother maple"" Tell the stores and county to go blow-we don't need their BS. No more public school STEALING our money. Too many radio towers/zapping us w/ frequencies.
- Yes, less out of county employment--hurts Americans.

**Q28 Employment Status:**

**'Other' responses (4 responses)**

- Disabled (3x)
- Student

**Q33 In what zip code do you live? (237 responses)**

- 54812 (101x)
- 54733 (99x)
- 54728 (14x)
- 54744 (4x)
- 54762 (3x)
- 54005 (2x)
- 54822 (2x)
- 54868 (2x)
- 10025
- 37918
- 53149
- 53948
- 54017
- 54723
- 54725
- 54763
- 54823
- 54875

## Appendix C – Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

### TOWN OF MAPLE GROVE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

PLEASE RETURN BY xxxxxxxxxxxx, 2008

Fill the circle that most closely describes your perspective toward the following statements:

Like this: ☒ Not like this: ☐ ☐ ☐

#### QUALITY OF LIFE

1. What are the **three** most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Maple Grove?  
(Percent answered yes)

41%	Agriculture	16%	Low Crime Rate	5%	Quality Schools
0%	Community Services	27%	Natural Features	12%	Recreational Opportunities
23%	Cost of Home	47%	Near Family and Friends	35%	Small Town Atmosphere
1%	Historical Significance	27%	Near Job (Employment Opportunity)	9%	Other: (Please Identify)
8%	Property Taxes	34%	Born and Raised Here		<u>See Appendix B</u>

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
2. Rate the overall quality of life in the Town of Maple Grove.	17%	71%	12%	1%

#### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

3. Rate the following <u>Programs and Services</u>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
a. Police protection	5%	54%	25%	7%	10%
b. Emergency Services (e.g., ambulance, fire)	11%	57%	21%	6%	5%
c. Street and Road Maintenance	9%	51%	25%	14%	1%

4. What is your opinion on the following, realizing the potential costs or tax increases involved.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. The Town of Maple Grove should construct a community center.	2%	7%	34%	50%	7%
b. The Town of Maple Grove should develop a community park.	0%	13%	31%	47%	9%
c. The Town of Maple Grove should contract with a private waste hauler for garbage collection for residents.	5%	17%	35%	26%	17%
d. I am in favor of higher taxes for improved services and roads.	1%	14%	38%	40%	7%

## **NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

5. How important is it for the Town of Maple Grove to use regulations to protect the following:	Essential	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
a. Farmland	35%	42%	17%	6%
b. Forested Lands	25%	48%	20%	7%
c. Groundwater	51%	36%	9%	4%
d. Historic and Cultural Sites	11%	26%	43%	20%
e. Open Space	15%	31%	36%	18%
f. Lakes, Rivers and Streams	37%	45%	12%	6%
g. Rural Character	21%	42%	27%	10%
h. Hunting and Fishing	27%	42%	21%	10%
i. Wetlands	25%	41%	24%	10%
j. Wildlife Habitat	26%	42%	21%	10%

## **HOUSING**

The following questions ask your opinion about the development of housing in the Town of Maple Grove.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
6. Group homes or assisted living facilities are appropriate in the Town of Maple Grove.	6%	34%	27%	24%	9%
7. Mobile home or manufactured housing parks are appropriate in the Town of Maple Grove	2%	19%	33%	38%	8%

## **AGRICULTURE AND LAND USE**

8. Productive agricultural land should be allowed to be used for:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Agricultural Use	69%	30%	0%	0%	1%
b. Residential Use	8%	39%	32%	16%	5%
c. Commercial/Industrial Use	5%	23%	36%	31%	5%
9. Large scale farms (500 or more animal units) should be allowed to expand:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Anywhere in the Town of Maple Grove	8%	27%	36%	22%	7%
b. Nowhere in the Town of Maple Grove	9%	17%	47%	15%	12%
c. Only adjacent to State and County highways	8%	21%	35%	16%	20%
10. Landowners should be allowed to develop land any way they want.	14%	28%	35%	19%	4%
11. The visual impacts (view of the landscape) of development is an important consideration when evaluating proposed development.	24%	55%	11%	4%	7%
12. New residential construction should be clustered or designed in a manner which preserves open space.	9%	44%	29%	8%	10%

13. In your opinion, what should the minimum lot size be for new residential construction, assuming applicable sanitary regulations are met? **Fill one circle only.**

Less than 1 acre	1 to 5 acres	6 to 10 acres	11 to 20 acres	21 or more acres	No Limitation
9%	44%	14%	12%	16%	5%

14. How many acres of land do you own in the Town of Maple Grove?	Less than 10	10 - 20	21 -40	40 plus
	29%	11%	23%	38%

15. Is the land you own actively farmed?	Yes, by myself	Yes, by contract or other	No	Not Applicable
	25%	33%	36%	5%

16. Do you think your land will be actively farmed (by you or someone else) in the next: (Percent answered yes)

0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	Not Applicable
20%	21%	20%	37%	37%

## **TRANSPORTATION**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
17. The overall road network (roads, streets, and highways) in the Town of Maple Grove meets the needs of its citizens.	12%	73%	10%	3%	2%
18. Alternative modes of transportation, such as ATV, snowmobile, bicycle, and walking are important.	17%	52%	16%	9%	6%
19. All roads in the Town of Maple Grove should be paved.	14%	25%	42%	11%	8%

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

20. The Town of Maple Grove should encourage the following energy alternatives as a form of economic development:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Bio Fuels (e.g. ethanol, biodiesel)	16%	45%	18%	9%	13%
b. Solar Energy	27%	51%	10%	3%	9%
c. Wind Energy	28%	49%	10%	5%	8%
d. Other <b><u>See Appendix B</u></b>	9%	20%	11%	0%	61%

	Yes	No
21. Should the Town of Maple Grove use tax dollars to recruit or promote new business and industry?	22%	78%

22. The following types of economic/business development are appropriate in the Town of Maple Grove.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Agricultural Related Businesses	34%	57%	5%	2%	3%
b. Commercial and Retail Development	7%	33%	36%	14%	10%
c. Home Based Businesses	19%	72%	2%	1%	6%
d. Industrial and Manufacturing Businesses	10%	35%	32%	16%	8%
e. Tourism and Recreation	11%	43%	23%	12%	11%
f. Service industries (e.g. financial services, health services, etc.)	9%	34%	32%	15%	11%
g. Landfills	3%	10%	32%	47%	8%
h. Quarries and Non-Metallic Mining	6%	25%	27%	29%	13%

23. What would you like the Town of Maple Grove to look like 25 years from now? **See Appendix B**

24. Which **THREE** of the following Town of Maple Grove functions do you think are **most important** (Only select top 3)?  
(Percent answered yes)

a. Ensure public safety	51%	b. Provide efficient/effective government	49%
c. Protect environmental/cultural resources	42%	d. Protect agricultural resources	61%
e. Support recreational opportunities	17%	f. Regulate land use	23%
g. Enhance economic development	14%	h. Provide effective transportation network	21%

25. Do you have any other concerns, ideas, or additional comments? **See Appendix B**

**DEMOGRAPHICS:** Please tell us some things about you:

26. Gender:	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
	66%	34%				
27. Age:	<b>18-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65 and older</b>
	0%	5%	16%	29%	26%	24%
28. Employment Status:	<b>Employed Full Time</b>	<b>Employed Part Time</b>	<b>Self Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Retired</b>	<b>Other: <u>See Appendix B</u></b>
	51%	3%	17%	1%	27%	2%
29. My Town of Maple Grove home is located within ½ mile of the Town Hall.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>			
	12%	79%	9%			
30. Number of Adults (18 or older) in Household:	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5+</b>
		15%	72%	7%	5%	1%
31. Number of Children (under 18) in Household:						
	67%	13%	12%	5%	2%	1%
32. How many years have you lived in Town of Maple Grove?	<b>Less than 1</b>	<b>1 – 4</b>	<b>5 - 9</b>	<b>10 - 24</b>	<b>25+</b>	<b>Seasonal Only</b>
	3%	11%	11%	32%	40%	2%
33. In what zip code do you live?	<b><u>See Appendix B</u></b>					

**Thank You for Completing the Survey!****Your survey responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.**Please return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by **xxxxxxxxxxxxxx, 2008** to:

***Survey Research Center***  
University of Wisconsin - River Falls  
410 S. Third St.  
River Falls, WI 54022-5001