



# Town of Osceola Community Planning Survey Report

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**Survey Research Center Report 2008/10  
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## Executive Summary

In March, 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to all 1,309 Town of Osceola households and non-resident property owners for which mailing addresses were available. The surveys were followed up with reminder postcards. The overall response rate was 36 percent (476 completed questionnaires). The data provided in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.9 percent with 95 percent confidence. In general, the sample aligns with the demographic patterns in the 2000 Census data. In short, we expect the sample to accurately represent the opinions of the residents and non-resident land owners of the Town of Osceola.

The following are key observations from the survey results:

1. The top three reasons Town of Osceola respondents gave for choosing to live in the Town are to experience a lifestyle based on a small town/rural atmosphere, to live in surroundings characterized by natural beauty, and to be near their family and friends. Over three-fourths rated the quality of life in the Town as very good or good.
2. Most community services and facilities were rated highly by a majority of respondents.
3. A majority support using public tax dollars for a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.
4. Most Town of Osceola respondents placed a high level of importance on the protection of the natural resource base of the Town; a majority support using public funds and regulations to protect these resources.
5. Majorities said there is a need in the Town for more single family housing, affordable housing, and senior citizen housing. They support the use of cluster design for groups of houses. At the same time, written comments revealed a pattern of concern that the rural atmosphere of the Town will be lost due to residential development.
6. Town of Osceola residents and non-resident land owners are largely satisfied with the overall road network in the Town and the condition of its roads.
7. A majority of respondents do not believe that productive farmland should be used for residences, and do not believe that land owners should be able to develop their land any way they want. At the same time a majority does not believe in limiting the proportion of an individual's land holdings that could be developed into housing lots as long as the minimum lot size is met.
8. Production agriculture, agricultural service businesses, and direct farm marketing operations received the highest level of support as appropriate types of businesses in the Town, although smaller majorities find numerous other types of businesses to be appropriate as well. A majority does not believe that large scale agricultural operations are appropriate in the Town.
9. The response pattern among the demographic groups varied in several questions. Among the most notable were the responses from households with children and from retired respondents. Households with children gave higher ratings to the school system and were more likely to support various recreational programs. Specifically they see a need for more off-road trails for non-motorized uses and for more walking and hiking lanes along public roadways. Households with

children were also more likely to support the use of public funds for ballfields and other active recreation areas and for enhancements of boat launches and beaches.

Retirees were more likely to favor the status quo in their responses to several questions. They were more likely to disagree with reducing the minimum lot size adjacent to higher density areas and to disagree with increasing the minimum lot size to preserve wildlife corridors. Retirees were less likely to view large scale agricultural operations as appropriate in the Town but were more likely to believe that manufacturing or industrial businesses are appropriate. They were less likely to support programs for the purchase or the transfer of development rights. In addition, they were less likely to see a need for more biking and walking lanes along public roadways.

## **Survey Purpose**

The purpose for this study was to gather opinions of residents and non-resident property owners about land use and other planning issues regarding the future of the Town of Osceola. The survey serves as a key component of the public participation portion of the comprehensive plan for the Town. The Town chose to work with the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls to survey residents and non-resident property owners of the Town of Osceola about vital planning issues.

## **Survey Methods**

In March, 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to all 1,309 households (owner occupied and renter occupied) and non-resident property owners for which mailing addresses were available. After two weeks, the SRC mailed postcards to those from whom a completed questionnaire had not been received. The SRC received a total of 476 completed questionnaires from residents for a 36 percent response rate. Based on the most conservative measure of the population (1,953 adults) in the Town, the estimates provided in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.9 percent with 95 percent confidence.

In addition to the numeric responses, respondents provided additional written comments which were compiled by the SRC from the surveys. As appropriate, selected quotes will be used in some sections of this report to illustrate these comments. **Appendix A to this report contains the complete compilation of comments.**

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

**The Town of Osceola conducted a public opinion survey in 1997 in conjunction with the development of the Town's earlier comprehensive plan. Some of the questions in the 1997 survey contain data is comparable to this survey. As appropriate, comparisons to the 1997 data will be included in the text of this report.**

## Profile of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of respondents to the survey. Where comparable data was available from the 2000 Census, they were included to indicate the degree to which the sample represents the underlying adult population in the Town of Osceola. The data in Table 1 show that, in general, the patterns of the sample are very similar to the underlying population and that deviations from the Census data are relatively small. The proportion of males in the sample was slightly higher than the percentage of males in the total population, and the sample had a higher proportion of respondents over age 55. The sample had attained higher educational levels than the underlying population. The sample also had more households in the higher income brackets, although comparisons to the 2000 Census data are tenuous due to the age of the data and the growth of incomes since the 2000 Census. Non-resident property owners made up ten percent of the respondents but constituted 27 percent of the names on the mailing list. The data in Table 1 show that Osceola has a mixture of newer residents and long-time residents. Among the respondents who reported being residents of the Town, nearly one in four have lived in Osceola for five years or less, while more than one in five have been Town residents for over 30 years.

<b>Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents</b>							
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
Sample	429	59%	41%				
Census (18+)	1,453	51%	49%				
<b>Age 18+</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>18-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65+</b>
Sample	433	0%	15%	22%	23%	21%	19%
Census	1,453	8%	19%	29%	22%	10%	12%
<b>Household Size</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5+</b>
Number Adults	443		17%	72%	7%	3%	0%
Number Children (<18)	438	59%	13%	19%	6%	1%	1%
<b>Residential Status</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Farmland Owner</b>	<b>Rural Non-Farm Resid.</b>	<b>Non-Resid. Land Owner</b>	<b>Renter</b>	<b>Other</b>	
Sample	445	7%	79%	10%	1%	3%	
<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>	<b>Self</b>	<b>Unemp</b>	<b>Retired</b>	<b>Other</b>
Sample	453	55%	13%	6%	1%	24%	1%
Census (Age 16+)	1,563	66% <sup>1</sup>		8%	2%	24% <sup>2</sup>	

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

<sup>2</sup> Census data includes retired workers and individuals not in the workforce.

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Less than High School</b>	<b>High School Dipl.</b>	<b>Some Tech or College</b>	<b>Tech College Grad</b>	<b>Bach. Degree</b>	<b>Graduate or Prof. Degree</b>	
Sample	452	1%	19%	26%	16%	20%	17%	
Census (Age 25+)	1,374	9%	34%	24%	9%	15%	8%	
<b>Annual Household Income Range</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>&lt;\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15-\$24,999</b>	<b>\$25-\$49,999</b>	<b>\$50-\$74,999</b>	<b>\$75-\$99,999</b>	<b>\$100,000+</b>	
Sample	431	2%	5%	22%	29%	19%	23%	
Census	755	5%	7%	28%	35%	14%	10%	
<b>Length Residency</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>&lt;1 yr.</b>	<b>1 - 5 yrs.</b>	<b>5.1 - 10 yrs.</b>	<b>10.1 – 15 yrs.</b>	<b>15.1 – 20 yrs.</b>	<b>20.1 - 30 yrs.</b>	<b>30+ yrs.</b>
Sample	383	4%	19%	22%	15%	7%	12%	21%

## Quality of Life

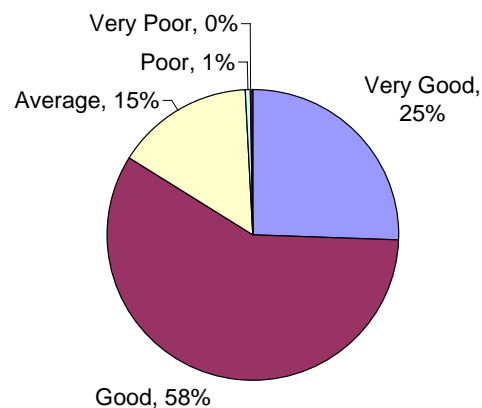
Respondents were asked to identify the three most important reasons they chose to live in the Town of Osceola. As shown in Table 2 respondents have clear preferences for choosing to live in the Town of Osceola. Over half of the respondents included the small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle in their top three reasons, while the natural beauty/surroundings of the Town was in the top three for nearly half of the respondents. About a third of respondents said that being near to family and friends was among their top reasons to live in the Town. In the middle of the pack were the quality of the schools, nearness to their jobs and proximity to the amenities offered by the Twin Cities. At the other end of the spectrum, fewer than five percent indicated that the appearance of homes and cultural/community events were among the most important reasons to live in the Town.

<b>Table 2: Reasons for Choosing to Live in the Town of Osceola</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Small town atmosphere/Rural Lifestyle	55%
Natural beauty/Surroundings	46%
Near family and friends	34%
Quality of schools	29%
Near job (employment opportunity)	28%
Proximity to Twin Cites (amenities, etc.)	27%
Cost of home	22%
Low crime rate	18%
Recreational opportunities	16%
Property taxes	15%
Appearance of homes	4%
Cultural/Community events	3%

There were few significant differences of opinion among the demographic groups with respect to the reasons for choosing to live in the Town. Respondents from households with less than \$50,000 annual income were more likely to include the natural beauty and surroundings as their third choice, while those from households with incomes above \$50,000 more frequently chose proximity to the Twin Cities as their third choice.

Overall, respondents gave a positive rating to the quality of life in the Town (Figure 1). The highest proportion rated the Town's quality of life as good (58%), and another 25 percent said it was very good. Fewer than one in six said it was average. Only one percent rated the Town's quality of life as poor, and none said it was very poor. This generally positive assessment of the Town's overall quality of life was similar across all demographic groups.

**Figure 1. Quality of Life Rating**





A similar question was asked in the 1997 survey. While comparisons between the 1997 and 2008 data are difficult because the rating categories were not identical, there appears to have been little change in the quality of life rating. In the two categories that have the same descriptor in both surveys, the responses were nearly identical. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents in the 1997 survey gave rating of good; a nearly identical proportion (58 percent) gave a rating of good in this survey. One percent of respondents in both surveys gave a poor rating to the quality of life in the Town.

The SRC examined the factors that are associated with the rating that each respondent gave to the quality of life in the Town of Osceola. Factors that have statistically significant relationship with residents' opinions about the Town's quality of life include: their rating of parks and recreation opportunities, their rating of the public safety services, their rating the library, the level of importance they place on protection of the natural resources, the their satisfaction with the Town's roads, and the length of their commute time to their places of work. All of these statistical relationships are positive, which means that higher ratings for parks/recreation opportunities, public safety, natural resource protection, and the condition and network of local roads are associated with a higher rating for the Town's overall quality of life. Fewer minutes of commuting time is also associated with a higher quality of life rating. These findings suggest that if residents feel that the Town is doing a good job with respect to their key functions (good roads, public safety), if local parks and recreational opportunities are sufficient, if the local library is good, if the natural environment is protected, and if they can spend more time in the Town (and less in their commute), that they rate the quality of life higher.

## **Community Facilities and Services**

Town of Osceola respondents indicated a relatively high level of satisfaction with most local facilities and services. As shown in Table 3, the school system received the highest rating and was rated very good or good by nearly three-fourths of respondents. A majority gave very good or good ratings to fire protection, ambulance service, park/recreation facilities, and the library. A plurality gave very good or good ratings to public facilities (49%) and recycling programs (48%).

Ratings for street and road maintenance were lukewarm. Forty-four percent rated this item as very good (10%) or good (34%); nearly four in ten said maintenance was average. The proportion of responses in the top two rating categories was somewhat lower than those seen by the SRC in similar survey projects.

The two technology items on the list received the highest proportion of low ratings. While a third gave very good or good ratings to their high speed Internet service, one in five said it was poor or very poor. Wireless (cell) telephone coverage received the lowest marks, with 38 percent rating their coverage as poor or very poor.

Substantial numbers of respondents said they had no opinion about several of the items on the list, particularly ambulance service (28%), fire protection (25%), high speed Internet (19%), library (17%) and public facilities (16%). This is not surprising since many respondents are not likely to have had occasion to use ambulance or fire protection services and may not have access to high speed Internet service.

<b>Table 3: Opinions About the Quality of Local Facilities and Services</b>							
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Public school system	469	34%	39%	13%	1%	1%	12%
Fire protection	471	24%	35%	14%	1%	0%	25%
Ambulance service	468	23%	34%	15%	1%	0%	28%
Park & recreation facilities	470	17%	37%	32%	7%	2%	4%
Police protection	468	16%	38%	29%	7%	1%	9%
Public facilities (e.g. Town Hall)	465	15%	34%	29%	5%	1%	16%
Library	463	14%	37%	25%	6%	1%	17%
Recycling programs	471	12%	36%	32%	7%	3%	9%
High speed Internet	466	11%	22%	28%	15%	5%	19%
Street/road maintenance	472	10%	34%	39%	12%	3%	1%
Mobile (cell) phone coverage	469	6%	20%	31%	26%	12%	6%

There was one noteworthy difference among the ratings by the demographic groups. Respondents from households with children gave a higher rating to the school system than those from households without children. Given that they likely have more direct contact with the schools, this is a quite positive outcome.

Although there were several other statistically significant differences among the ratings from the various demographic groups, the most frequent difference was in the percentage who said they had no opinion about a particular item on the list. For example, those under age 45 and those who have lived in the Town 15 years or less were more likely to have no opinion about the ambulance service and fire protection. Farmland owners, single adult households, households without children, and those who are retired were more likely to have no opinion about the quality of high speed internet access.

The 1997 survey also contained a question asking respondents about community services and facilities. The list of services and facilities was somewhat smaller in the 1997 survey. Respondents were asked whether the listed items were “adequate” and to choose yes, no, or no opinion. As described above, the 2008 survey asked respondents to indicate their opinion on a scale from very good to very poor (or no opinion). Thus, direct comparisons are difficult. If we consider the ratings of very good, good, and average to be the equivalent of adequate in the 1997 survey, the ratings for police protection, recycling services, road maintenance, and parks and recreation facilities were higher in this survey, and the rating for fire protection was nearly the same. The proportion of no opinion responses regarding parks and recreation facilities dropped from an average of 44 percent in 1997 to four percent in 2008. The percentage of no opinion responses regarding road maintenance dropped from 13 percent in 1997 to one percent in 2008. Thus more of the public has shifted from no opinion to a more positive opinion regarding parks and recreation and road maintenance.

The aesthetic impact of cell phone towers and windmills used for generating electricity does not seem to be a concern for residents of the Town of Osceola. Residents also do not seem to be opposed to windmills because of their potential noise. More than seven in ten said that they do not oppose cell phone towers because of their aesthetic impact on the landscape. Similar majorities said that they are not opposed to

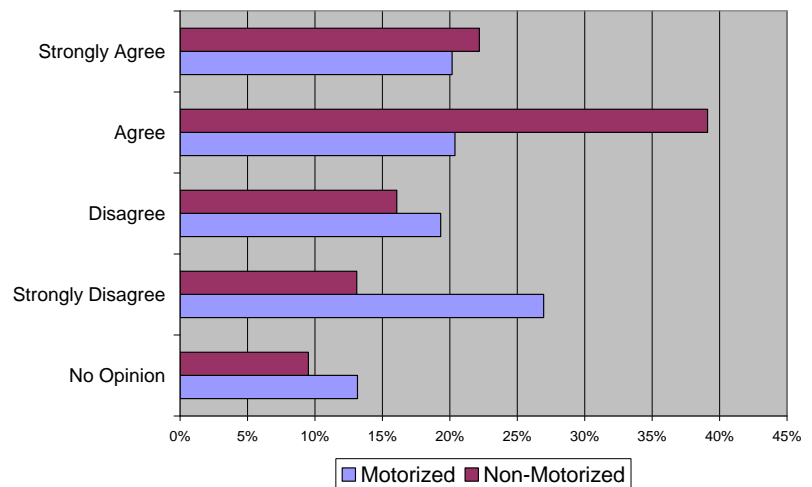
electricity-generating windmills because of their visual impact (71%) or the noise they generate (75%). (See Table 4.)

<b>Table 4: Opinions About Mobile Telephone Towers and Electricity-Generating Windmills</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Oppose to mobile phone towers – visual impact	469	5%	16%	38%	33%	4%
Not concerned about visual impact of windmills for electrical generation	471	30%	41%	16%	8%	5%
Opposed to electricity generating windmills - noise	471	2%	8%	41%	34%	15%

Responses to these questions did not vary by demographic group (men versus women, young versus old, etc.).

When asked about the need for additional off-road trails, a majority (61%) favored more trails for non-motorized vehicles. (See Figure 2.) However, their opinions about additional trails for motorized vehicles were mixed. The percentage that agreed or strongly agreed equaled the percentage that disagreed or strongly disagreed (40%). The strength of feeling is somewhat stronger among those who disagree with the suggestion that more motorized trails are needed (more than 1 in 4 strongly disagrees).

**Figure 2. Need Additional Off-Road Trails**



Respondents under age 45 and those from households with annual incomes over \$50,000 were more likely to agree or strongly agree that more trails for motorized vehicles are needed.

With regard to the need for more trails for non-motorized uses, women and those from households with children were in stronger agreement that these types of trails are needed.

Respondents were then presented with a list of nine items related to recreation and asked whether the Town should use public funds to support each item. The results are presented in Table 5. Of the nine items, a majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that six of them should be supported with public funds: parks, boat landing/beach enhancements, bicycle routes, hunting/fishing access, ballfields, and trails for hiking and skiing. Support for parks (80 percent agree or strongly agree) was substantially higher than the next highest rated item (enhanced boat landings/beaches – 66%). Opinions were about evenly split regarding snowmobile/ATV trails, and a plurality disagreed or strongly disagreed with the use of funds for public campgrounds. A majority disagreed or strongly disagreed that public funds should be used for horse trails.

In most respects, these numbers are consistent with the results of the previous questions that asked about the need for more trails. As noted above, 40 percent of respondents said there is a need for more trails for

motorized uses, and a similar percentage (44%) said that public funds should be used for snowmobile/ATV trails. Sixty-one percent agreed that additional trails for non-motorized uses are needed and similar percentages agreed that public funds should be used for bicycle routes (60%) and hiking/skiing trails (56%). Horse trails was the exception to this pattern; only 27 percent were in agreement with using public funds for this particular type of trail. Interestingly, in another SRC project looking at the Wisconsin equine industry, increased access to trails was identified as the biggest challenge facing the state’s horse owners.

<b>Table 5: Opinions About Use of Public Funds to Support Recreational Opportunities</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Parks	464	16%	64%	9%	6%	4%
Enhance boat landings/beaches	459	12%	55%	19%	7%	8%
Bicycle routes	461	14%	46%	20%	14%	6%
Hunting/fishing access	460	13%	45%	23%	10%	9%
Ballfields, active recreation areas	452	9%	49%	21%	12%	8%
Hiking and skiing trails	466	9%	47%	24%	12%	8%
Snowmobile/ATV trails	459	15%	29%	28%	19%	10%
Publicly owned-campgrounds	462	6%	34%	32%	14%	13%
Horse trails	458	5%	22%	38%	20%	16%

Respondents from households with children, respondents who have lived in the Town 15 years or less, and those from households with over \$50,000 annual income were more likely to agree or strongly agree that public funds should be used for ball fields and active recreation areas. Those over age 45 were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree to use public funds for ballfields and active recreation areas.

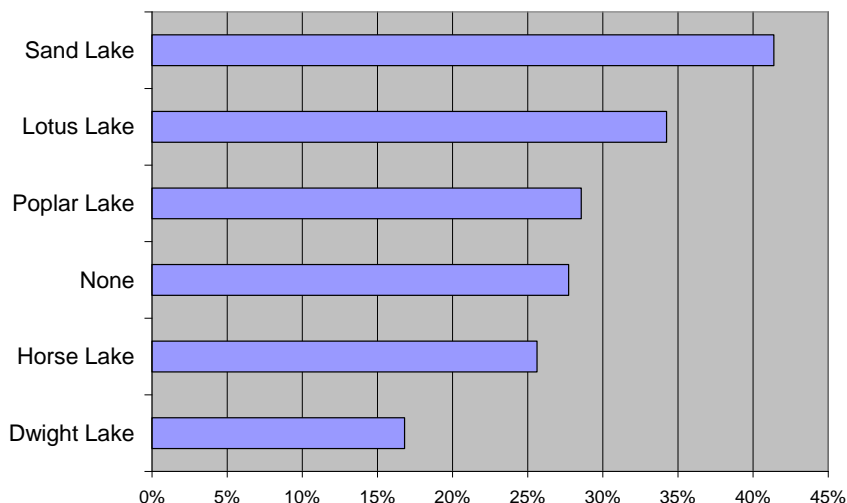
Not surprisingly, there was greater support for public funds for bike routes among households with children, but those who are age 45 and over were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree. Similarly, households with children were more likely to support public funds for boat launch and beach enhancements, while respondents who are age 45 and over had a higher percentage of those who disagree.

The 1997 survey asked respondents whether the Town “should further develop its park or beach system.” The SRC compared the percentage those who responded “yes” to this question (53%) to the combined responses in the strongly agree and agree categories for parks and boat landings/beaches in the data for Table 5. The combined average of the strongly agree and agree responses is 73 percent. The percentage of respondents without an opinion dropped significantly, from 23% in 1997 to 5% in 2008. It appears that Osceola respondents are more likely to support expansion of the Town’s parks in 2008 than they were in 1997 and that the increased support came from among those who had no opinion in 1997.

When asked which lakes/beaches they have visited during the past year, Sand Lake was the most frequently mentioned among the five choices, with over 40 percent of respondents indicating at least one visit. Lotus Lake was visited by a third of respondents, while Poplar Lake and Horse Lake were mentioned by 29 percent and 26 percent respectively. Dwight Lake was visited by about one in six. Over a quarter of respondents said they did not visit any of the lakes in the past year. (Figure 3)

Respondents to the 1997 survey were also asked to indicate the lakes they had visited during preceding year. Three lakes (Sand, Poplar, and Lotus) were choices on both surveys. Sand Lake appears to have gained popularity. In 1997, 28 percent of respondents said they had visited Sand Lake, while 41 percent of respondents to this survey said they had visited within the past year. The percentage of those who had visited Poplar Lake increased slightly from 20 percent to 29 percent, while the percentage who had visited Lotus Lake was essentially the same (34% in the 1997 survey compared to 35% in this survey).

**Figure 3. Lakes Visited in Past Year**

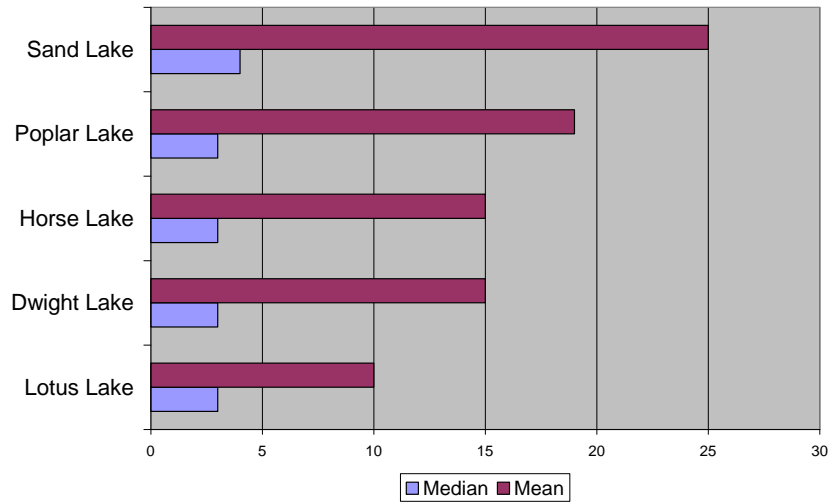


A smaller proportion of single-adult households reported visiting Poplar Lake than households with two or more adults.

Respondents who reported lake visits during the past year were then asked how many times they visited each lake. As shown in Figure 4 the mean number of visits ranges from 25 (Sand Lake) to 10 (Lotus Lake). However, the use of the mean to analyze usage patterns of these lakes may not present an accurate view of the frequency of lake visits. For all lakes, there were a relatively small number of respondents who reported very high number of visits per year, which markedly increases the calculated mean number of visits and skews the results. For example, eight respondents reported visiting Sand Lake 365 times (daily); an additional three respondents reported visiting between 100 and 250 times per year. This phenomenon was not confined to Sand Lake. All of the other four lakes had a small number of respondents who reported at least 100 visits per year. An analysis of the frequency distribution of visits for each lake reveals that the “typical” number of visits was considerably less than the mean and confirms that the mean is skewed upward by the small number of respondents whose annual visits number in the hundreds. The SRC calculated the median number of visits, which is the number which splits the frequency distribution in half. The median is less sensitive to extreme scores than the mean.

When the median is used, a different picture of lake visits emerges. As shown in Figure 4, the median number of visits to each lake is much lower than its mean. The median number of visits to Sand Lake is four times per year, while the median for each of the other lakes is three. The use of the median gives a much more realistic view of the number of lake visits by the “typical” respondent.

**Figure 4. Lake Visits - Mean and Median**



## Natural Resources

Respondents were presented with a list of six natural resource items and asked how important it is to protect each resource. As shown in Table 6, Town of Osceola respondents gave a high level of importance to the protection of all natural resources on the list; large majorities said that it is important to protect every resource listed. Lake protection was supported particularly strongly (93%).

<b>Table 6: Importance for Town of Osceola to Protect Natural Resources</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Un-important</b>	<b>Very Unimportant</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Lakes	461	62%	31%	4%	2%	2%
River corridors	465	47%	40%	7%	2%	4%
Wildlife corridors (land that knits together wetlands, woods, and fields)	461	46%	39%	9%	3%	3%
Woodlands	463	45%	41%	8%	3%	3%
Wetlands	463	42%	39%	12%	3%	4%
Prairie land/grasslands	462	38%	40%	13%	4%	4%

Typical of the comments related to natural resources include:

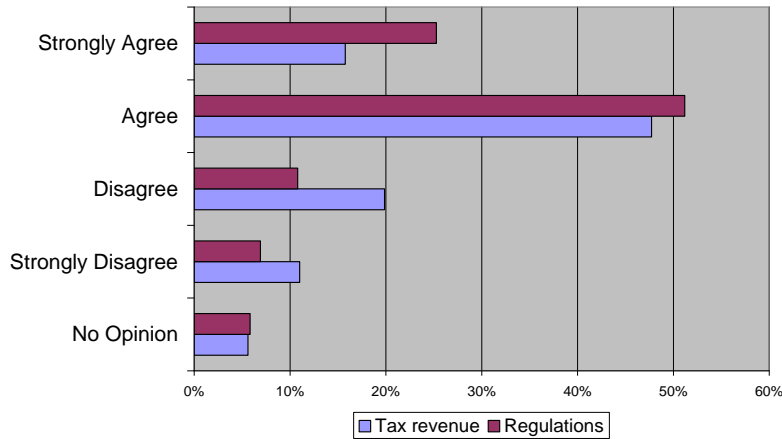
*“Do not destroy the natural beauty of the area, it is our greatest asset.”*

*“Preserving the natural resources is also a critical factor as that is the reason why many people choose this area for both permanent residence and seasonal residence.”*

This substantial level of agreement was uniform across all demographic groups. There were only minor variations in the high level of importance that each group placed on the protection of these natural resources in the Town.

Respondents were then asked two questions about implementing protection of the natural resources in the list. The first asked whether tax revenues from the Town of Osceola should be used to protect these resources, and the second asked whether the Town should use regulations to protect these resources. As shown in Figure 5, a majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with using Town tax revenue and regulatory authority for natural resource protection. Agreement for the use of regulations was somewhat stronger (75% strongly agree or agree) than for the use of tax revenue (64% strongly agree or agree).

**Figure 5. Use Town Taxes and Regulations for Natural Resource Protection**

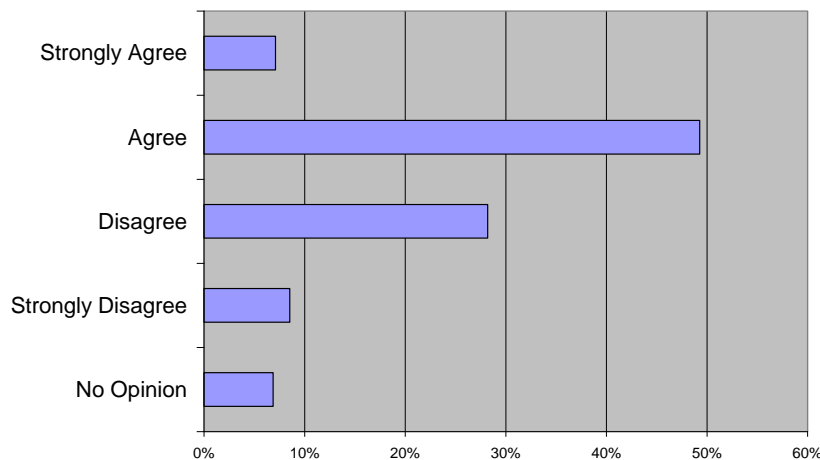


Female respondents indicated a slightly higher level of agreement with using taxes and regulations to protect the Town’s natural resources than did males. The level of agreement for the use of taxes and regulations was slightly higher among residents who have lived in the Town for 15 or fewer years.

## Housing

Figure 6 indicates a majority of respondents said that residential growth is desirable in the Town, with 56 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing. At the same time, however, a substantial minority did not believe residential growth is a positive for the Town (37% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing).

**Figure 6. Residential Development is Desirable in the Town of Osceola**



This issue was addressed in a slightly different manner in the 1997 survey, in which 43 percent said “yes” when asked if they would like to see additional residential development in the Town. If we assume that a

yes response is equivalent to agree or strongly agree in the 2008 survey, then public opinion has shifted from 43 percent to 56 percent who have a positive view of residential development. The proportion of no opinion responses dropped from 26 percent in 1997 to seven percent in 2008. Thus respondents from the Town of Osceola were more likely to have an opinion about this issue in 2008, and more of the public have developed a positive opinion than a negative opinion about residential development in the 11 years between the two surveys.

Renters were more likely agree to or strongly agree that residential growth is desirable. Farmland owners and longer-term residents (greater than 15 years) are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree. As shown in Table 7, a majority of respondents said that there is a need for more senior housing, single family housing, and affordable housing. The strength of agreement was particularly strong in regard to senior housing and single family housing: nearly three of four respondents agreed or strongly agreed there is a need for more housing of these types.

Respondents were less sure, however, about the need for additional seasonal or recreational housing, with a plurality (43%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and nearly as many (38%) agreeing or strongly agreeing. An additional 18 percent had no opinion.

Respondents were definitive regarding their opinions about the need for housing subdivisions, various types of multiple family housing, and mobile homes. Majorities were opposed to housing subdivisions, multiple family units (condominiums, apartments, and duplexes), and mobile homes. Respondents were most strongly opposed to mobile homes, either freestanding units or mobile home parks: over 80 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Town needs more of these housing units.

<b>Table 7: Opinions About the Need for Additional Housing Types</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Senior housing	457	18%	55%	12%	6%	10%
Single family housing	455	18%	55%	12%	5%	10%
Affordable housing	457	12%	45%	20%	12%	11%
Seasonal and recreational homes	459	2%	35%	29%	15%	18%
Housing subdivisions	457	2%	32%	30%	22%	14%
Duplexes	451	2%	25%	41%	19%	13%
Condominiums/Apartments	457	3%	23%	40%	22%	12%
Freestanding mobile homes	457	1%	5%	36%	47%	10%
Mobile home parks	457	1%	7%	33%	49%	9%

A similar question was asked in the 1997 survey. Respondents were asked whether there was a need for various categories of housing types and given two options, yes or no. There was no choice for no opinion. In addition the categories in the 1997 survey do not exactly match those used in this survey. In order to make comparisons between the two surveys, the SRC combined the multi-family and condominium categories in the 1997 survey. The condos/apartments category and duplex category were combined in the 2008 survey. In order to aid the analysis, the no opinion responses were dropped from the 2008 survey and the percentages were recalculated for the remaining response categories. For purposes of comparison, we assumed that a yes response in the 1997 survey was equivalent to a strongly agree or agree response in this survey. Among those who had an opinion, the percentage of respondents who believe that there was a need for additional single family housing increased from 67 percent in 1997 to 81 percent in 2008. Similarly, the proportion of respondents who said there is a need for elderly/senior housing increased from 66 percent to 80 percent. In contrast the percentage of respondents who see a need

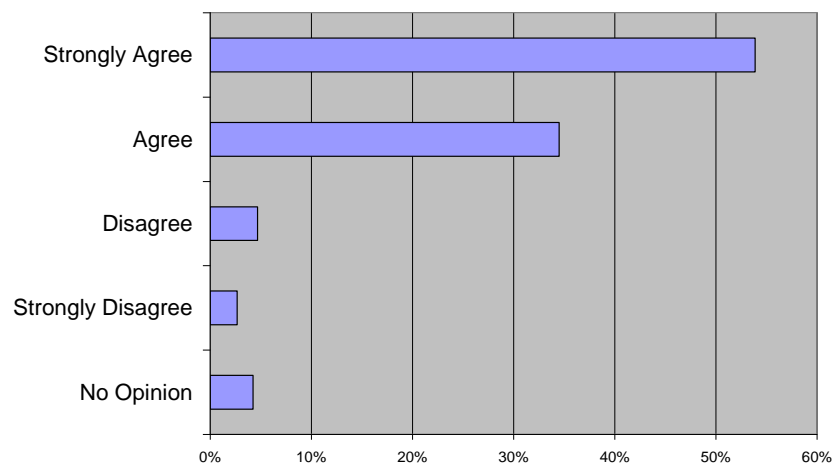


for the combined multi-family housing types (apartments, condos, and duplexes) dropped from one in three in 1997 to fewer than one in five in 2008.

Women and renters were slightly more likely to see a need for more affordable housing in the Town. Renters were also more likely to agree or strongly agree that more single family housing is needed. A higher proportion of younger respondents (under age 45) see a need for more housing subdivisions.

Aesthetics are important to residents of the Town. As shown in Figure 7, a very large majority of respondents said they strongly agree (54%) or agree (35%) that the external appearance of residences in their neighborhoods is important. Written comments revealed a concern about the accumulation of junk around more than a few houses in the Town. Typical of the written comments regarding this concern are statements such as the following: *“Do something about residents that have yards full of junk, cars and other things!!”*

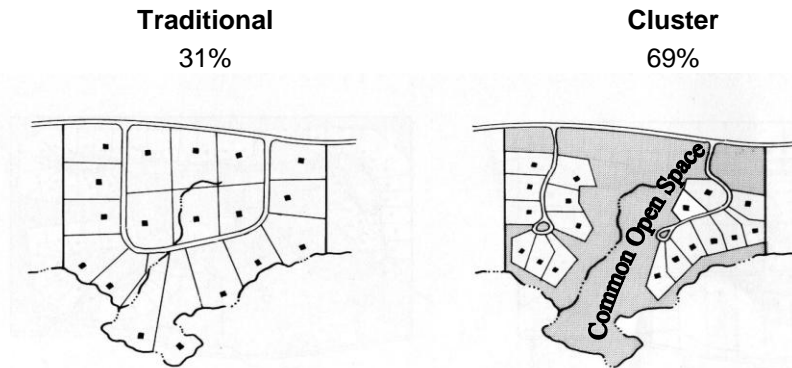
**Figure 7. External Appearance of Houses in Neighborhood is Important**



There were no statistically significant differences in the responses to this question among the demographic groups.

Respondents were then asked for their preference for the layout of rural housing lots. They were shown diagrams of a traditional rural housing development with large individual lots and a “cluster” development with smaller lots and preserved common open space. As shown in Figure 8, Town of Osceola respondents clearly prefer the cluster layout to the traditional design by a margin exceeding two-to-one. The following is a typical comment regarding this question: *“I am very strongly in favor of cluster housing. This is the best way to allow for residential developments while preserving open spaces for recreation, farming, and preservation of natural resources.”*

**Figure 8. Preference for the Layout of Rural Housing**



## Transportation

Town of Osceola residents are largely satisfied with the overall road network in the Town and the condition of its roads. As shown in Table 8, 87 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Town’s road network meets citizen needs, and four of five respondents said that the condition of the Town’s roads is acceptable. Unlike some earlier questions in the survey that elicited a substantial percentage of no opinion responses, nearly every respondent had an opinion about the condition of the Town’s roads.

A majority (56%) agreed or strongly agreed that additional biking and walking lanes are needed along public roadways.

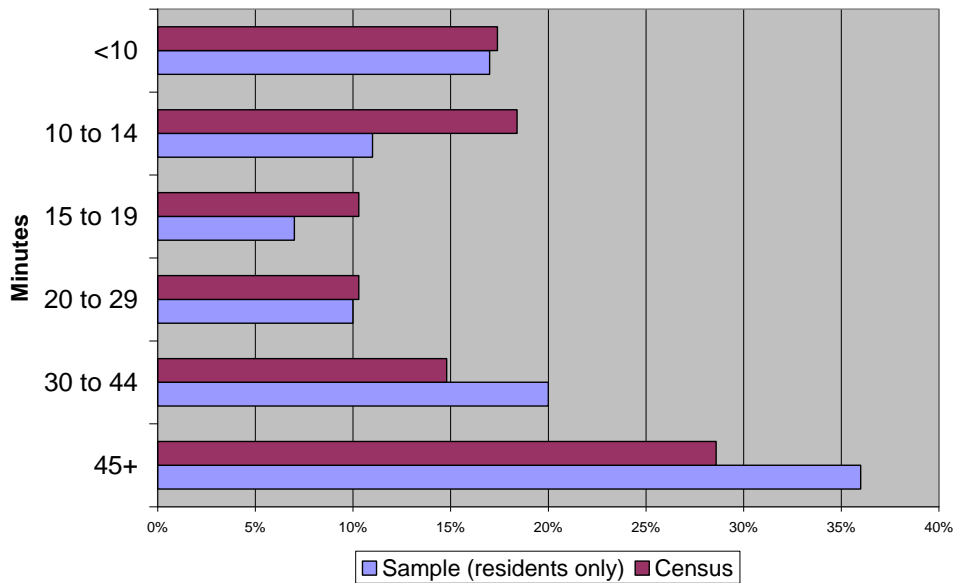
Compared to the earlier question about the need for more off-road trails for non-motorized uses (see Figure 2), the percentage of respondents who see a need for off-road trails (61%) is similar to those who see a need for additional biking and walking lanes along roadways (56%).

<b>Table 8: Opinions About Transportation Issues</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Overall road network in the Town meets citizen needs	464	12%	75%	8%	3%	3%
Overall condition of roads in the Town is acceptable	465	9%	67%	17%	5%	2%
Additional biking & walking lanes needed along public roadways in Town	465	21%	35%	27%	9%	8%

Respondents with children in the household were more likely to agree or strongly agree that more biking and walking lanes are needed along public roadways, while a higher proportion of retirees disagree or strongly disagree.

The last question among those related to transportation asked how many minutes it takes respondents to travel to their place of work. Figure 9 presents the data from those respondents who work outside of their home and compares those data to the 2000 Census. Over half (55%) of employed respondents drive at least 30 minutes to their place of work, and more than one in three travel 45 or more minutes to work. The survey data indicate that commute times were slightly longer than reported in the 2000 Census, although the Census data is not directly comparable since it includes teenage workers who were not part of the survey sample.

**Figure 9. Travel Time to Work**



Travel times to work were less for younger respondents (under age 45) and for respondents from households without children.

### Agriculture and Land Use

The next section in the questionnaire asked a series of questions about various issues related to agriculture and land use in the Town. (See Table 9). Osceola respondents were nearly unanimous (97%) in their agreement that agricultural use should be allowed on productive farmland. On the other hand, a majority (55%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that residential uses should be allowed on productive farmland. Nearly two of three respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that any use should be allowed on productive farmland. One respondent put it this way: *“I think our elected officials must realize that agriculture has long been a way of life in our township and should preserve that. Once you put a house in a prime agricultural field it will never produce food again and we all need to eat.”*

Table 9: Opinions About Uses of Productive Agricultural Land						
Use productive farmland for:	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Agricultural use	449	60%	37%	1%	0%	2%
Residential use	427	7%	27%	38%	20%	7%
Any use	428	9%	16%	36%	28%	11%

There were no substantial differences in the response patterns among demographic groups.

The next group of three questions focused on land owner rights. As shown in Table 10, a majority of Osceola respondents do not believe that property owners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want (63%). At the same time, they support the right of land owners to develop as much of their land as they want as long as it meets the subdivision regulations regarding minimum lot size. Based on the answers to these three questions and the preceding question (Table 9) and the responses in the Housing Section (Table 7 and Figure 8), it appears that Osceola respondents support some degree of local land use regulation, would prefer that residential development consist of single family units located on land that is

not productive for agricultural use, and that groups of single family houses be designed using the cluster concept.

<b>Table 10: Opinions About Property Rights</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Land owners should be allowed to develop any way they want	455	15%	22%	42%	20%	2%
Land owners should have restrictions on how much of their land they can develop	459	12%	46%	25%	12%	5%
Land owners should be able to subdivide their land consistent with minimum lot size regulations	454	13%	51%	23%	8%	6%

Residents who have lived in the Town more than 15 years were more likely to believe that land owners should be able to develop their land any way they want and male respondents were more likely to disagree that there should be restrictions on how much of their land a property owner should be allowed to develop. Farmland owners were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots consistent with minimum size regulations, while non-resident landowners were more likely to agree or strongly agree.

As shown in Table 11, most Osceola respondents don't feel that conflicts between farm operations and neighboring residences about noise, dust or odors are a substantial problem. Only 17 percent agreed or strongly agreed that these conflicts are common, while a majority disagreed or strongly disagreed. More than one in four had no opinion about this issue.

More than seven in ten respondents agree or strongly agree that agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences.

<b>Table 11: Opinions About Proximity of Houses to Agricultural Operations</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Conflicts (dust, noise, odors) between farms and neighbors are common	460	3%	14%	44%	11%	27%
Ag uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences	460	28%	43%	16%	5%	7%

Not surprisingly, a larger proportion of farmland owners said they agree or strongly agree that agricultural uses should not be restricted because residences are nearby. As one respondent said, *“Don't tell me I can't have a rooster who crows or a pig whose waste smells.”*

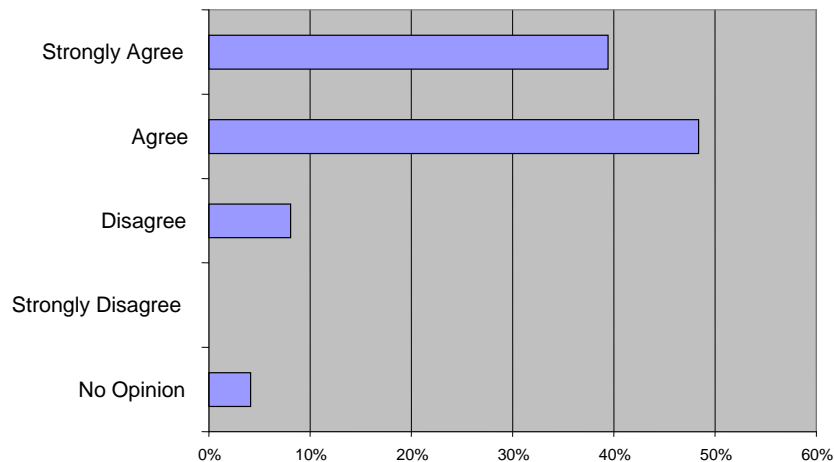
Some Wisconsin Towns have put programs in place to purchase the development rights of farmland, open space, or important natural areas. As shown in Table 12, two-thirds of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the use of the Town's public funds for this type of program. A related program attempts to preserve farmland, open space, or important natural area by the use of the transfer of development rights among private land owners. Osceola respondents had split opinions about this type of program; 44 percent agreed or strongly agreed and 45 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

<b>Table 12: Opinions About Purchase and Transfer of Development Rights</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Use public funds for purchase of development rights	457	33%	35%	26%	0%	7%
Allow transfer of development rights between property owners	459	34%	10%	45%	0%	11%

A higher proportion of retired respondents disagreed with the Town’s use of either of these programs.

Respondents were asked whether environmentally sensitive areas should be protected by the use of regulations. As shown in Figure 10, nearly nine in ten respondents agree (48%) or strongly agree (39%) with the use of regulations to protect such areas. Taken together with the responses to the earlier questions about the protection of natural resources (see Table 6 and Figure 5), Osceola respondents indicated a consistent concern about the protection of the natural resources and environment of their Town and a willingness to use taxes and regulations to protect them.

**Figure 10. Use Regulations to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

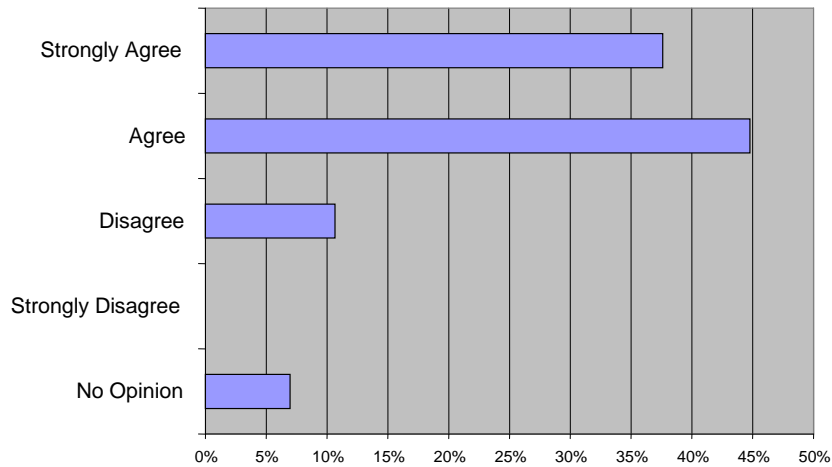


There were no substantial differences in the response patterns among demographic groups.

Respondents were next asked whether fees should be imposed on new, private developments to pay for the added costs such as roads, emergency services, etc. By a large margin, Osceola respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the cost of providing additional services should be born by new development. (Figure 11).

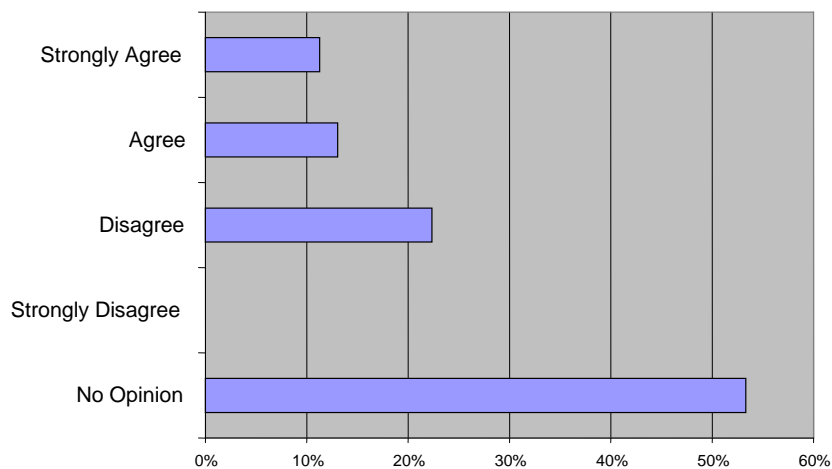
The level of support for this statement did not vary significantly among the demographic groups.

**Figure 11. Fees on New Private Development for Public Services**



A majority (53%) of Osceola respondents have no opinion about how well land use regulations are being enforced in the Town. As shown in Figure 12, among those with an opinion, there is no clear pattern; 23 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they are dissatisfied, but a similar percentage indicated they were satisfied. The large proportion of those with no opinion is not surprising, since most people are unlikely to have had the need to be involved with the enforcement of land use regulations unless they have requested a variance or rezoning.

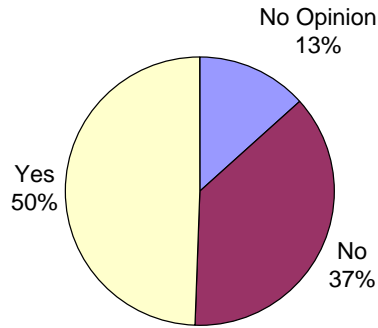
**Figure 12. Dissatisfied with Enforcement of Land Use Regulations in the Town**



As in previous questions, the pattern of responses to this question did not vary significantly among the demographic groups.

Respondents were next asked questions about the minimum lot size for residential development. Half the respondents believe that the one acre minimum lot size should be uniform across the Town rather than be allowed to vary based the circumstances of the location. The other half consisted of a substantial minority (37%) who believe the minimum lot size should be variable and those with no opinion (13%). (Figure 13)

**Figure 13. Should the 1 Acre Minimum Lot Size be Uniform Throughout the Town**



The 37 percent of respondents who favored deviations from a uniform minimum lot size were asked if they support a different lot size in four specific situations. Two situations were for reduced minimum lot sizes, while the other two called for increased lot sizes. Among those who favor varying the minimum lot size, the highest level of agreement was to increase the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas and to preserve wildlife corridors; over 80 percent) said they agreed or strongly agreed. There was substantial support for reducing lot sizes adjacent to higher density local communities such as Dresser and Osceola; two of three respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Respondents were less sure about reducing lot sizes if shared septic systems were used; slightly less than half agreed or strongly agreed, perhaps because of a concern for negative impact on groundwater quality. Thus it appears that Town of Osceola respondents who favor a variation of the minimum lot size were most interested in raising the requirement when doing so protects a natural resource and were lukewarm to reducing the lot size when they have concerns about potential negative environmental impact. (See Table 13).

<b>Table 13: Opinions About Variations from the 1 Acre Minimum Lot Size</b>						
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Smaller lot sizes adjacent to higher density local communities	189	16%	49%	15%	14%	5%
Smaller lot sizes with shared septic	190	10%	38%	25%	16%	11%
Larger lot sizes in environmentally sensitive areas	190	34%	47%	8%	4%	6%
Larger lot sizes to preserve wildlife corridors	188	42%	40%	6%	5%	6%

There were some demographic variations among those who favor a flexible minimum lot size. Retired respondents were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with varying the lot size adjacent to higher density communities, while those who have completed formal post-secondary education were more likely to agree or strongly agree. Non-resident land owners, those 45 plus years old, and respondents with post-secondary education were more likely to agree or strongly agree that minimum lot sizes should be reduced if shared septic systems were available. Single-adult households had a smaller proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with increasing the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas.

Retired respondents were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with increasing the minimum lot size to preserve wildlife corridors, while those from households with over \$50,000 annual income were more likely to agree or strongly agree with increasing the lot size to protect wildlife corridors.

## **Economic Development**

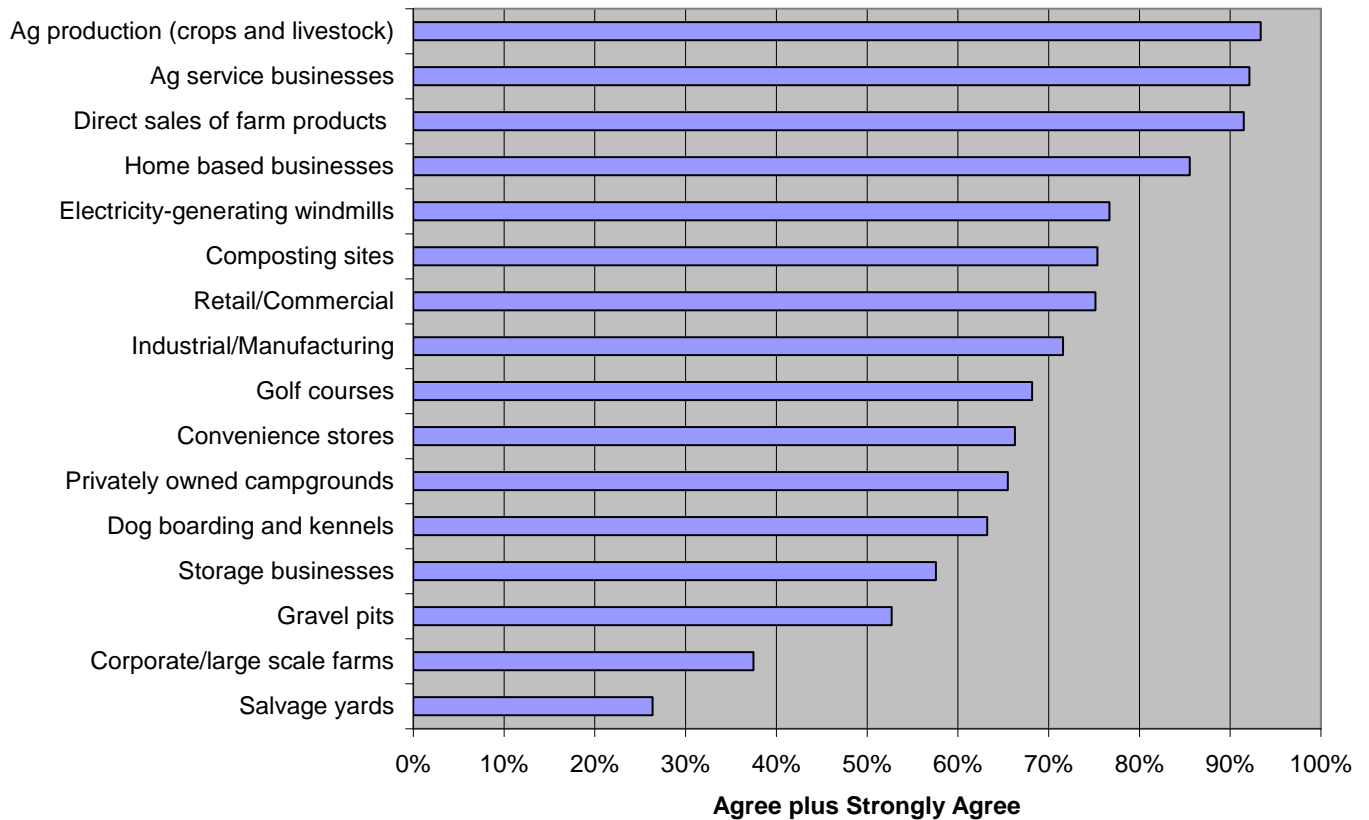
Residents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the appropriateness of different types of businesses in the Town of Osceola. Their opinions are summarized in Figure 14 and Table 14. Over 90 percent said that agricultural production, agricultural service businesses and direct sales of farm products are appropriate businesses in the Town. Their support of agricultural production, however, does not extend to large farm operations (defined as over 700 dairy cows or 1,000 beef steers/cows). Compared to the 90 percent who agreed that farms and farm-related businesses are appropriate for the Town, fewer than 40 percent said that large scale farm operations are acceptable.

A large majority (85%) believed that home based businesses are appropriate and more than seven in ten said the following businesses were appropriate: electricity-generating windmills, composting sites, retail/commercial, and industrial/manufacturing. Golf courses, convenience stores/gas stations, privately owned campgrounds, and dog boarding/kennels were viewed as appropriate by at least 60 percent of the respondents. Between 50 and 60 percent of respondents said storage businesses and gravel pits were appropriate in the Town.

Salvage yards were decidedly unpopular; two-thirds of respondents said they disagree or strongly disagree that this type of business is appropriate for the Town of Osceola.



**Figure 14. Appropriate Businesses in the Town of Osceola**



**Table 14: Types of Businesses Appropriate for the Town of Osceola**

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Ag production (crops and livestock)	453	39%	54%	2%	0%	4%
Ag service businesses	458	31%	61%	2%	0%	6%
Direct sales of farm products (vegetables, fruit, meat, trees)	459	29%	62%	4%	1%	3%
Electricity-generating windmills	455	25%	51%	10%	4%	9%
Composting sites	451	19%	56%	12%	2%	11%
Home based businesses	457	17%	68%	5%	0%	9%
Retail/Commercial	459	14%	61%	13%	4%	7%
Golf courses	459	13%	55%	17%	5%	9%
Industrial/Manufacturing	454	13%	59%	17%	5%	7%
Convenience stores/gas stations	451	12%	55%	22%	6%	5%
Privately owned campgrounds	458	10%	56%	19%	5%	11%
Dog boarding and kennels	457	7%	57%	19%	6%	12%
Storage businesses	455	7%	51%	26%	7%	10%
Corporate/large scale farms (Over 700 dairy cows or 1,000 beef steers/cows)	456	6%	32%	36%	14%	12%
Gravel pits	459	6%	47%	27%	8%	12%
Junk/Salvage yards	455	5%	21%	37%	28%	8%

Retirees were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree that large scale farm operations are appropriate in the town. Respondents from households with less than \$50,000 annual income had higher levels of support for industrial/manufacturing types of businesses. Single-adult households had a lower level of agreement for home-based businesses. Golf courses were viewed more favorably by respondents who had lived in the Town 15 years or less and who have annual household incomes exceeding \$50,000. Retirees were more likely than working respondents to have said they have no opinion regarding golf courses. Older respondents (age 45 years or more) were more likely to disagree that dog boarding and kennels are appropriate in the Town, while those from higher income households indicated higher levels of agreement for dog boarding and kennels.

## Specific Issues

Respondents were asked to rate the level of importance of four specific issues. The results are presented in Table 15. Majorities said that all four issues were important or very important, but there were variations among the levels of importance for each. There was near unanimity (95%) among the respondents that contamination of well water is an important or very important issue.

A substantial majority of respondents said that loss of productive farmland (85%) and rural residential development (83%) were important or very important issues. The responses to these two questions are similar to concerns about rural residential development on productive farmland as shown in Table 9.

Land annexation by Dresser and the Village of Osceola is an issue of importance to respondents, with two-thirds rating it as important or very important. Noticeably more respondents said they had no opinion (16%) to this issue than said they had no opinion regarding the previous issues on the list. Retired respondents and those from households with annual income under \$50,000 were more likely to have no opinion about the annexation issue.

<b>Table 15: Opinions About Specific Planning Issues in the Town of Osceola</b>						
<b>How important are the following issues in the Town of Osceola?</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Very Unimportant</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Well water contamination	461	68%	27%	2%	0%	3%
Rural residential development	460	38%	45%	10%	2%	5%
Loss of productive farmland	462	44%	41%	11%	0%	4%
Land annexation by Villages of Osceola and Dresser	455	29%	37%	15%	4%	16%

Aside from the two groups who had a higher proportion of no opinion responses noted above, there were no substantial differences in the responses to any of the listed issues among the demographic groups.

Annexation was the subject of a question in the 1997 survey, in which respondents were asked whether the Town should work to stop annexation by the Villages of Dresser and Osceola. Their choices were yes, no, and no opinion. If we assume that the very important and important response categories in the 2008 survey are the same as a yes response on the 1997 survey, the collective opinion of Osceola respondents has shifted in the past 11 years. Respondents have become more opinionated on this topic, and the shift has been toward viewing annexation as an issue of concern. Forty-one percent said yes in 1997, and an equal percentage had no opinion. In this survey, 63 percent said annexation by the Villages of Osceola and Dresser is a very important or important issue. The percentage of those without an opinion dropped to 16 percent. Since the percentage of those saying annexation is not an important issue was the

same as those who responded no in the 1997 survey, the increase in those who see this issue as important came from the shift away from the no opinion responses.

## Additional Comments

When asked if they had additional comments about land use and community planning in the Town, 122 respondents provided comments. The comments were grouped into various topics and are summarized in Table 16. In some cases, a single comment covered more than one topic; in those cases the comment has been split into appropriate categories. Thus the total number of comments (128) in Table 16 is larger than the number of respondents who provided a comment. The complete list of comments is included in Appendix A.

As shown in Table 16 comments were spread across twelve categories representing a variety of issues. There were only a few percentage points separating the categories. Comments related to residential development/lot size elicited the greatest proportion of the total, with 13 percent. Close behind were comments about recreation, natural resources, appearance/aesthetics in the community, the need for the Town to plan for its future, taxes, regulations, and agriculture.

Typical comments include:

*“The cluster developments or similar ideas may work well if people will buy them.”*

*“Need more parks with good playgrounds for the kids, a place where kids can go and do stuff.”*

*“Preserving the natural resources is also a critical factor as that is the reason why many people choose this area for both permanent residence and seasonal residence.”*

*“The town needs to take this opportunity of a depressed housing market to get something in place to guide the next growth spurt in the direction the residents want.”*

<b>Table 16: Additional Comments About Land Use and Community Planning in the Town of Osceola</b>		
	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
Residential Development/Lot Size	16	13%
Recreation	14	11%
Appearance/Aesthetics	12	9%
Natural Resources	11	9%
Need for Planning	11	9%
Taxes	11	9%
Regulations	10	8%
Agriculture	9	7%
Renewable Energy	6	5%
Transportation/Roads	6	5%
Economic Development	3	2%
Public Services	2	2%
Miscellaneous	17	13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **Conclusions**

Osceola respondents consider the Town to be good place to reside and value living in Osceola because they are able to experience a lifestyle based on a small town/rural atmosphere, to live in surroundings characterized by natural beauty, and to be near their family and friends.

Osceola respondents were satisfied with most community services and facilities. Very few services or facilities received poor or very poor ratings. The school system was rated the highest among this group.

The appeal of the rural atmosphere of Osceola and its natural surroundings is expressed in various ways in the responses to questions throughout the survey. Osceola respondents expressed strong desire to protect the natural resources of the Town that are the basis for the natural beauty that is so important to them; they are willing to use public funds and government regulations to protect these natural resources and for recreational facilities such as parks. A large majority of respondents visit one or more of the lakes at least once per year. Although they believe that additional single family homes and senior citizen housing are needed, they want the town to retain its rural atmosphere.

## Appendix A – Town of Osceola Written Comments

### Question 1

*From the following list please identify which of the items are the most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Osceola.*

*‘Other responses’*

#### **Atmosphere (6 responses)**

- Community support
- Everyone is friendly and not a lot of crime.
- Neighbors
- Relaxation
- Style of my home
- To get the kids out of the city of Minneapolis

#### **Born/Raised here (4 responses)**

- Born here (2x)
- Grew up here (2x)

#### **Own Property (3 responses)**

- Family Property, 100 years
- Inherited property
- Seasonal lake property

#### **Miscellaneous (7 responses)**

- Cost of living
- Court ordered joint legal custody of the kids.
- Good and fair representation - no self interests
- Home is paid
- Hope Church
- Husband has lived here all of his life.
- We are trying to sell

### Question 9

*How important is it for the town of Osceola to protect the following?*

*‘Other responses’*

#### **Pollution (7 responses)**

- Air
- Darkness at night
- Light pollution
- Night lights
- Noise pollution
- Springs
- Water Quality

#### **Invasive Species (1 response)**

- Eliminate invasive species - buckthorn and honeysuckle.

**Land (7 responses)**

- Agricultural land
- Crop land
- Farm land (2x)
- Indian Mounds
- Oak savannahs
- Private property rights

**Miscellaneous (8 responses)**

- ATV trails
- DNR
- DNR job
- Everything should stay untouched.
- General appearance
- If public funds are used I strongly disagree.
- Over development
- Protect shooting ranges

**Question 32**

*Which of the following types of economic/business development are appropriate in the town of Osceola?*

*'Other responses'*

**Recreation (7 responses)**

- Activities for children ages 5-16
- Arcade or roller rink; something for kids to do
- ATV Trails
- Gun clubs
- Horse boarding
- Museums
- Off-road motorized vehicle trails

**Renewable energy (7 responses)**

- Electrical stations on agricultural land
- Electricity generating wind mills around town, we need them.
- Geo-thermal generators
- Hydrogen development
- Solar
- Solar collections for electricity
- Solar grids or anything renewable

**Retail/Restaurants (8 responses)**

- More restaurants (2x)
- Big-box retail
- Clothing stores
- Department and food stores
- Eateries

- No big-box stores
- Tourist related business

**Services (1 response)**

- Quality childcare services

**Miscellaneous (7 responses)**

- Anything that pays taxes
- Clean up residential yards
- Free market
- More waste management areas
- Tax payer funded operations
- Tech jobs
- Waste water lagoon systems

**Question 33**

*How important are the following issues in the Town of Osceola?*

*'Other responses'*

**Recreation (5 responses)**

- ATV Trails (2x)
- Motorized trail development
- Noise pollution and lead pollution from gun club
- Wildlife recreation areas

**Development (4 responses)**

- Any major development such as commercial should be presented to public awareness first and surveyed.
- New housing developments
- Overall Development
- Sewer development

**Appearance of homes/Property (3 responses)**

- Appearance of homes
- Kept up property
- Littering and pick up

**Taxes (3 responses)**

- One of the most important issues is Real Estate taxes. They will drive me out.
- School taxes
- Taxes

**Sustainability (2 responses)**

- Renewable energy programs
- Sustainability

**Housing (1 response)**

- Enough rental units - NO MORE!

### **Miscellaneous (9 responses)**

- F & A Dairy lagoon system
- Farmers contaminate lakes and streams.
- Flashing lights and stop arms at remaining 2 railroad crossings
- Government gone wild
- Leave things the way they are, no change.
- Let people be free
- Tech, white collar
- Telephone
- Wider road right of way due to increased traffic volume

### **Question 34**

*Do you have additional comments about land use and comprehensive planning in the Town of Osceola?*

*'Comments'*

### **Residential Development & Lot Size (16 responses)**

- 40 acres, 40 lots. 40 septic systems- the development by me off 240th, very poor ideas!
- I am very strongly in favor of cluster housing. This is the best way to allow for residential developments while preserving open spaces for recreation, farming, and preservation of natural resources. The current 1 acre minimum just encourages piecemeal development at its worst. In general, I hope this plan truly reflects the wishes of the "citizens" and I thank the board for requesting our input.
- I believe setting regulations on lot size would be a plus in Osceola. There is so much development going on that there will be no open space. If the regulations are set, then people will have to either live here with the rules or go elsewhere, but we have a choice.
- Idea of varying the minimum lot size, but in general I believe it should be higher than 5 acres instead of one acre. I believe this is the case on the other side of the St. Croix River in Minnesota. I believe the one acre minimum was put in place due to pressure from builders and realtors.
- I think our elected officials must realize that agriculture has long been a way of life in our township and should preserve that. Once you put a house in a prime agricultural field it will never produce food again and we all need to eat.
- If you want to keep eating U.S. grown food leave the land alone. No sub-dividing, build homes on marginal land.
- Land annexation - completely against it. Should not turn taxable property over to the villages.
- Minimum residential lot sizes should be two acres.
- No more development /fix existing homes
- Residential building needs to be monitored. All usage of existing homes needs to be utilized before more new homes go up. No residential structure should be able to be purchased and not lived in. Existing country homes are being purchased and nobody is living in the houses, as well as new homes are being built with no family in them.
- Question #25: In many areas, developers are levied a charge, per lot developed, to secure funds for purchasing development rights by township. New Jersey has done a great job with this provision.
- The cluster developments or similar ideas may work well if people will buy them.
- The reason I support smaller lot sizes is because it leaves more land for agriculture and wild areas. If everyone builds on 5 to 10 acres we consume more land for residential. I think agriculture and conservation need to be supported. Stop land consuming developments. Please be sure I receive a copy of the results of this survey.



- Think lot size not important in town but in rural areas at least 20 acres.
- Too many housing developments popping up and so many houses for sale. So much good farm land being used up.
- We don't need anymore roads or residential developments

### **Recreation (14 responses)**

- Hiking and biking trails unlocking towns need to started 10 years ago!
- I also believe that any body of water that is considered a lake should have public access. Private residential owners do not own that water. For example Osceola Lake. But there should still be regulations on all lakes.
- I would like out town to be able to use ATV on town roads and trails, Minnesota can and most Wisconsin towns can why not us? Please don't take any more rights away from us this is still a free country not a socialist country.
- If Osceola would open trails it would bring additional profits into town.
- Need more parks and community centers
- Need more parks with good playgrounds for the kids, a place where kids can go and do stuff. All year round, need more walk, run, bike, 4x4, trails. Go to [www.xccent.biz](http://www.xccent.biz) info@xccent.biz
- No additional parks and trails are needed because a state park is within one mile.
- The town of Osceola must permit motorized vehicles (ATV snowmobiles) on some selected trails.
- There needs to be a large focus on ATV and motorized trails in Osceola/Dresser. This is a great source of revenue for the community and adds greatly to the quality of life. They are also self-sustaining unlike walking and biking trails. There is also an ATV/snowmobile manufacturer in that would benefit.
- Town of Osceola has nothing to do for the children. It is very hard to find things to do as a family.
- We need nice parks for families. They should have safe quality equipment for children. They should be maintained. We go to New Richmond and spend many days at Mary Park.
- We need to find a compromise between making Osceola an affordable community to live in while not increasing parks! I would love to see more child oriented parks in Osceola. I should not have to drive to Stillwater to bring my child to a decent park.
- Yes, they take the old high school down and could have used the building for lots of things, like after school activities for young children and so on.
- I believe if the town finances something, it should be for all types of recreation, not just one group (i.e. bike trails). These should be multi use. I know in other cities, skiing, hiking, and horse trails are used together and others use four-wheeler, ski, and snowmobile trails.

### **Appearance/Aesthetics (12 responses)**

- As for how a home or property looks, that should be only for the homeowner to decide
- Clean up the junk yards.
- Cell phone towers could be designed to like more like windmills. i.e. old world agriculture
- Deal with the problems you have already with junk car storage, old buildings, overgrown lots and worry about that besides future planning that must take place.
- Do something about residents that have yards full of junk, cars and other things!!
- Enforce laws regarding junk in people's yards. I'm tired of seeing 20-30 junk cars and buses scattered about.
- I am concerned about the number of home owners "junk" in their yards. This needs to be addressed by our governing body with firmness. (enforcement and/or fines)

- I don't think that some residents take pride in their homes and yards. They either overlook their upkeep or can't afford it and some have a large amount of rubbish in their yards. That tarnishes stranger's opinion of our nice community.
- Need to address the issues of junk properties. Residents using their property to keep junk cars, snowmobiles, and all unusable junk in general.
- Plan so that Osceola is a neat inviting community-not junky.
- Please do not allow the town to look like a strip mall with duplexes and mobile homes.
- There needs to be regulation of multiple, junk cars, construction materials and often junk stored on residences. Also multiple livestock (horses) on small parcels creating a feed lot like atmosphere.

### **Natural Resources (11 responses)**

- Do not destroy the natural beauty of the area, it is our greatest asset.
- Government should be promoting resource reclamation and reuse.
- I agree with some of the previous questions. I know I'm not the only one who is concerned about the water contamination or wells going dry.
- I believe that it is possible to protect our natural resources and still have planned growth. Stricter zoning is essential because once it is developed we will never be able to "undevelop" it. It would be a crime to ruin what we have been so fortunate to have been entrusted with, our beautiful valley.
- I strongly believe that additional motorized trails, etc. for ATV's and motorcycles will cause irreparable and permanent damage to the land, as well as seriously harm the quietness of the rural community.
- Plant more trees.
- Preservation is important.
- Preservation of rural aspects such as food production, woodlands, undeveloped spaces, clean water and air, darkness at night, and quietness are important. Some of these things are difficult to reclaim once lost.
- Preserving the natural resources is also a critical factor as that is the reason why many people choose this area for both permanent residence and seasonal residence. Farmland/agricultural use is valuable, but 700 dairy cattle farms and 1000 beef steer farms should not be developed near lakes, rivers, or wetlands as they have already had a significant impact on the area
- Preserving the river is important. Boat landing needs to be fixed and the "canoe" people need to be more respectful of the river and boaters.
- Think green in as many ways as possible

### **Need for Planning (11 Responses)**

- A township, like a village, should be appealing and diverse with a broad range of people. It needs people and jobs to pay property taxes to keep it all going. At the same time respect the really beautiful areas, enhance what's already there. Its beauty is unmatched. Another thing of beauty too is having something for everyone. In other words, do not become a modern day Stillwater! Too expensive and therefore closed to below average income taxpayers. Osceola is special because it retains its old fashioned attitude toward development. It is still not some self-important person's "Vision" of what other people should have. After living in El Paso, TX, a place that does not have any "quality of life." I can tell you I miss Osceola!
- Let's keep this a rural community.
- Look at other towns to see how they plan years ahead, it seems we are 30 years behind. Open space and road/trail use is a big issue.
- Need to develop land use codes now before further random development comes this way.

- Osceola is one of the nicest small towns left in the area. I hope they recognize people want the small town life; they need to limit development and maintain the beautiful rural area we have. Don't become Stillwater.
- Set policy for future land purchase/usage... The township tax payers should not be using their tax dollars to stop people from using the land inappropriately...set land use policy that all must abide by!
- Smart Growth
- The town needs to take this opportunity of a depressed housing market to get something in place to guide the next growth spurt in the direction the residents want.
- This beautiful region needs to be careful as we move forward - developments provide tax base, but are an eyesore and are unsustainable use of resources. Encouraging small farms to stay in Osceola, or come here will enhance everyone's surroundings food networking and preserve the environment.
- We bought our land to be as far removed from the Twin Cities as possible. We like the rural and small town flavor. Don't bring the Twin Cities to Osceola please.
- We need to make sure the town follows a comprehensive growth plan and that we don't have a free, build as we want - thus avoiding no planned business housing, and recreational areas.

### **Taxes (11 responses)**

- Also, we may sell and more at the earliest opportunity to a place where school taxes and property taxes are not so incredibly high.
- Don't keep raising property taxes on the low income people, tax them by their income not your land value.
- Homeowners should not pay tax on DNR restricted wetland acreage that is not included on your tax roll.
- I also think land trust options should be available to protect large landowners from increasing property tax burdens
- I don't want my taxes raised for any reason. People in our town are hurting financially right now.
- Low or no input fees - taxes should take care of this. God knows they are high enough. Any form of TDR is a bad idea. It will make home prices sky rocket in an already bad economy. New homes pay for themselves and generate revenue for the town in less than three years. See economic impact study at scuhba.com
- Low property taxes.
- Property taxes are too high.
- Reducing property taxes is very important.
- Taxes, most part on residential homes are way too expensive! As a homeowner, I feel I am paying too much for living here. If kept at this rate I will not be able to pay to live here! Lower taxes on property!
- Where are the retired residents going to live when they get taxed out of their homes?

### **Regulations (10 responses)**

- As much as I wish everyone were environmentally sensible, I do not believe property regulations should bankrupt landowners.
- Government intervention should be kept to a minimum unless the air, water, food, and resources we all share are being compromised or threatened.
- I also am concerned about becoming over regulated. Don't tell me I can't have a rooster who crows or a pig whose waste smells.

- I think people should be able to do whatever they want with their own property. I don't think large businesses should be able to come in and buy out regular landowners for their gain. But every example is different.
- Let the free market decide how land should be used i.e. people who work should decide what kind of land they use their money to buy not government. i.e. tax dollars from fuel should be used for roads not bike, hiking trail. Let fees generate from walkers and bikers develop their trails.
- Regulations are needed but must be made with common sense and within reason with flexibility for specific needs.
- Respect individual property rights! I can't think of one government success in the last 200 years, you would best serve our community by doing nothing.
- The regulation questions are difficult to answer. It depends on the land and the regulation being imposed. In general, there better be a very good reason for government to restrict a landowner's use of his land.
- We bought what we bought, please don't change our land use rights, we own ten acres in "rural" Dresser. (Township of Osceola)
- Who are we to say what people can or can't do with their privately owned land?

### **Agriculture (9 responses)**

- Also the issue of town residents turning a 1-2 acre lot with home into a hobby farm with horses, chickens, and beef. This makes it a burden on neighbor's tax paying people who wondering about the impact on their home values. Not to mention the quality of nearby private well water. Nothing seems to be brought up about this. Should the state be involved after contacting them about the above town problem?
- .....direct sale farming should be encouraged.
- Liquid manure farmers should not be allowed to spread liquid manure with out knifing it into the ground within 24 hours.
- The Town of Osceola needs to do a better job of regulating the F&A Dairy Lagoon System (to DNR and state of Wisconsin regulations) and coordinate this with the Village of Dresser (since the lagoon system is in the Town of Osceola but F&A Dairy is in the Village of Dresser). It should potentially be closed and the sewage transferred to Osceola's waste water treatment plant.
- There isn't much really productive farm land in the Town of Osceola to protect.
- Use our farmland to grow food for our residents
- We need to keep farmland as farmland.
- We need to try to keep and farm, any size farm that is running. This country has been going to hell in a hand basket. And without us making our own we are doomed.
- Would it stop this growing problem out here buying up farm land and trying to stop our way of life by saying they want us to not raise chickens? The roosters bother them by their crowing, the spreading of manure really is nasty - get real! Why can't the developers charge more? Putting up the developments our water town down several water levels from ours. Put in their own sewer system and pay dearly. Maybe then they would leave our way of life as it is and stay away or don't they eat eggs, milk, or meat?

### **Transportation/Roads (6 responses)**

- Develop a truck route (semi) that allows trucks to get to the industrial park without going through downtown Osceola! With Hwy 8 detour in August and the Hwy 243 bride concern, our truck traffic through downtown is a huge safety concern!
- Improve 248th street with better shoulders due to high volume of traffic to and from Education Drive.

- It is imperative to have wide enough right of way for future wider roads. Proper planning promotes logical development.
- Safe bike routes.....should be encouraged
- The roads are snow covered all winter long until you hit St. Croix County. Then they are clean.
- Would like to see support of light rail to the Twin Cities for work and recreation.

### **Renewable Energy (6 responses)**

- I'm not sure we have the wind speed/consistence to utilize wind energy... I've heard that our areas do not have enough wind speed to gain from windmills.
- I would love my own personal windmill, but they were tried over by Lindstrom and didn't pay for themselves.
- We have a great opportunity to use electricity generating windmills in Osceola but need to think ahead.
- We need to look into windmills, this river Valley gets windy, instead okay sticking to fossil fuels let's use the wind. Within the first 3-6 months one mill will pay for itself, stop the Polk-Burnett monopoly!
- Wind mills are great but not in the St. Croix River Valley. Same for all [unreadable].
- Wind power and other alternative energy types could be a boom to this area. Make sure we have a plan.

### **Economic Development (3 responses)**

- Osceola is a dead town. Lack of shopping, goods, and services prevents Osceola from being a place you can go and fill family shopping needs.
- Please do not allow big retail chain box stores in our town to run our local business and allow our community money to go to some corporate headquarters in another state.
- We think there are enough junk yards and gravel pits in Osceola. The gravel pits sometimes run 24-7 and that causes a lot of noise and trucks traveling on our roads that are already in need of repair. We also pay taxes and should be able to have peace and quiet in our homes in the evening and at night. Hours should be regulated.

### **Public Services (2 responses)**

- Police protection by the sheriff's department is very inadequate. The town needs to contract more with local police for patrol. We never see the sheriff's department and we live on a major road.
- Use of public funds for items on 6a-i should be lower priority than essential services like 3a-k

### **Miscellaneous (17 responses)**

- No (2x)
- A strict, very strict control over barking dogs. City people move to the country and figure they can have dog and let it do what it wants.
- Get some people from the R.E. industry instead of the goof balls.
- I believe that fences in existence since our property came into being which was is 1972 should not be a burden to prove whether it is the correct boundary line. I have limited retired income and I have to prove where my property lines run. I have lived here since 1990 and because of building around me I have to prove what is mine now AT MY EXPENSE. The new property line runs down the side of my house.
- I feel they need a better system for notifying property owners when there is a proposal on the table that will affect their property. Just because I don't use my address as where I receive mail and my son has a P.O. Box, I wasn't informed of a meeting regarding a substation to be built adjacent to

my land until it was too late for me to attend. My son, who has land adjoining mine, was never informed. This meeting caused decisions to be made which will greatly affect the value of my home.

- I moved here 7 hours ago it is very costly living here, I wish I never moved here.
- Just moved here a year ago. Not sure on how I feel about these issues, due to lack of knowledge on these subjects.
- Please get it correct - we are not getting more land.
- Specific issues: questions are misleading and deceiving.
- Stop spending tax dollars on surveys.
- Thank you for allowing a seasonal resident to respond to this survey as we pay 50% of the taxes in the town and have historically have had no voice in the planning process. Somewhat like taxation without representation. I am not sure what is driving the need to start planning, but this survey comes late to the process as there has already been both types of development options (Cluster and acre lots) in play and has been for several years. Comprehensive planning is a critical step that in the past has not been done in the towns of Dresser and Osceola so it is good that there may be some time to stop some out of control development in the area.
- The town has done a good job in the past.
- We are summer people only, pay our taxes and watch the development of the area with disgust but have no vote.
- We need new blood on the planning commission.
- Windmill generators-fine. The smell of cow-fine. Driving 25 mph-fine. It's all a part of the character of Osceola. We should do whatever it takes to keep and preserve it.
- Yeah - You are all \*\*\*\*\* in the head.

### **Question 37**

#### ***Employment Status***

#### ***'Other responses'***

#### **Stay at home (4 responses)**

- Stay at home mom (2x)
- Homemaker
- Homemaker/stay at home mom

#### **Business owner (1 response)**

- Part owner of a business

#### **Miscellaneous (4 responses)**

- Child evangelist
- Retired and part time
- Not seeking employment
- Volunteer

### **Question 38**

#### ***Which of the following best describes your residential status in the Town of Osceola? 'Other responses'***

#### **Homeowner (7 responses)**

- Condo owner (2x)
- Cabin owner
- Lake home
- Rural Homeowner

- Town home
- Town home near the city limits on golf course

**Landowner (7 responses)**

- Summer people (2x)
- Lake property owners
- Own Land- Live elsewhere
- Renter and landowner
- Seasonal Resident
- Woodlot acreage owner

**Resident (2 responses)**

- Resident owner
- Town resident

**Business (1 response)**

- Rural Businesses

**Farm (1 response)**

- Hobby farm

**Miscellaneous (1 response)**

- Former resident who loved Osceola and the area

## Appendix B: Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

### TOWN OF OSCEOLA COMMUNITY PLANNING SURVEY

#### QUALITY OF LIFE

1. From the following list, please identify which of the following items, a – m, are the most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Osceola: (**Please list top three only**)

	<b>Most Imp.</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Most Imp.</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Most Imp.</b>		<b>Most Imp.</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Most Imp.</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Most Imp.</b>	
a. Appearance of homes	1%	1%	2%	g. Near job (empl. opp.)	12%	9%	7%	
b. Cost of home	8%	6%	8%	h. Property taxes	7%	4%	3%	
c. Cultural/Community events	1%	0%	2%	i. Proximity to Twin Cities (amenities, etc.)	3%	10%	14%	
d. Low crime rate	4%	6%	7%	j. Quality schools	9%	14%	6%	
e. Natural beauty/Surroundings	18%	14%	14%	k. Recreational opportunities	2%	7%	8%	
f. Near family and friends	16%	10%	7%	l. Small town atmos./Rural lifestyle	16%	17%	22%	
				<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>
				25%	58%	15%	1%	0%

2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the Town of Osceola?

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

These questions ask your opinion about community facilities and services in the Town of Osceola.

3. Rate the quality of the following services in the Town of Osceola:	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
a. Ambulance service	23%	34%	15%	1%	0%	28%
b. Fire protection	24%	35%	14%	1%	0%	25%
c. High speed internet	11%	22%	28%	15%	5%	19%
d. Library	14%	37%	25%	6%	1%	17%
e. Mobile (cell) phone coverage	6%	20%	31%	26%	12%	6%
f. Park and recreation facilities	17%	37%	32%	7%	2%	4%
g. Police protection	16%	38%	29%	7%	1%	9%
h. Public facilities (e.g., Town Hall)	15%	34%	29%	5%	1%	16%
i. Public school system	34%	39%	13%	1%	1%	12%
j. Recycling programs	12%	36%	32%	7%	3%	9%
k. Street and road maintenance	10%	34%	39%	12%	3%	1%
		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
4a. I oppose the construction of mobile (cell) phone towers because of their visual impact on the landscape.		5%	16%	38%	33%	9%
4b. I am not concerned about the visual impact of electricity-generating windmills.		30%	41%	16%	8%	5%
4c. I oppose the construction of electricity-generating windmills because of the noise they create.		2%	8%	41%	34%	15%
5a. Additional off-road trails for <u>motorized</u> vehicles are needed in the Town.		20%	20%	19%	27%	13%
5b. Additional off-road trails for only <u>non-motorized use</u> (e.g., hiking, walking, horses) are needed in the Town.		22%	39%	16%	13%	10%



	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
6. The Town of Osceola should use public funds to support the following recreational opportunities:					
a. Ballfields, active recreation areas	9%	49%	21%	12%	8%
b. Bicycle routes	14%	46%	20%	14%	6%
c. Enhance boat landings/beaches	12%	55%	19%	7%	8%
d. Hiking and skiing trails	9%	47%	24%	12%	8%
e. Horse trails	5%	22%	38%	20%	16%
f. Hunting/fishing access	13%	45%	23%	10%	9%
g. Parks	16%	64%	9%	6%	4%
h. Publicly-owned campgrounds	6%	34%	32%	14%	13%
i. Snowmobile/ATV trails	15%	29%	28%	19%	10%

	<b>Sand Lake</b>	<b>Poplar Lake</b>	<b>Horse Lake</b>	<b>Dwight Lake</b>	<b>Lotus Lake</b>	<b>None</b>
7. Which lakes/beaches have you visited in the past year? <b>Mark ● as many as apply. If None, go to question 9.</b>	41%	29%	26%	17%	34%	28%

8. How often have you visited each lake in the past year?

<b>Sand Lake</b>	<b>Poplar Lake</b>	<b>Horse Lake</b>	<b>Dwight Lake</b>	<b>Lotus Lake</b>
Mean = 25 times Median = 4 times	Mean = 19 times Median = 3 times	Mean = 15 times Median = 3 times	Mean = 15 times Median = 3 times	Mean = 10 times Median = 3 times

**NATURAL RESOURCES. We would like your opinion about the importance of protecting natural resources in the Town and surrounding area.**

	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Very Unimportant</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
9. How important is it for the Town of Osceola to protect the following?					
a. lakes	62%	31%	4%	2%	2%
b. prairie land/grasslands	38%	40%	13%	4%	4%
c. river corridors	47%	40%	7%	2%	4%
d. wetlands	42%	39%	12%	3%	4%
e. woodlands	45%	41%	8%	3%	3%
f. wildlife corridors (land that knits together wetlands, woods, and fields.)	46%	39%	9%	3%	3%

g. other: **See Appendix A**

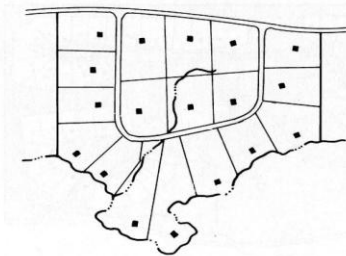
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
10a. Town tax revenues should be used to protect the preceding list of resources (9a to 9g).	16%	48%	20%	11%	6%
10b. The Town of Osceola should use regulations to protect the preceding list of resources (9a to 9g).	25%	51%	11%	7%	6%

**HOUSING/DEVELOPMENT** We would like your opinion about housing development in the Town of Osceola.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
11. Residential growth is desirable in the Town of Osceola.	7%	49%	28%	9%	7%
12. More of the following types of housing are needed in the Town of Osceola:					
a. Affordable housing	12%	45%	20%	12%	11%
b. Condominiums, Apartments	3%	23%	40%	22%	12%
c. Duplexes	2%	25%	41%	19%	13%
d. Freestanding mobile homes	1%	5%	36%	47%	10%
e. Housing subdivisions	2%	32%	30%	22%	14%
f. Mobile home parks	1%	7%	33%	49%	9%
g. Seasonal and recreational homes	2%	35%	29%	15%	18%
h. Senior housing	18%	55%	12%	6%	10%
i. Single family housing	18%	55%	12%	5%	10%
13. The external appearance of residences in my neighborhood is <u>important</u> to me.	54%	35%	5%	3%	4%
14. Traditionally, rural housing developments have been designed on large lots as in the diagram (Option A) on the left below. An alternative layout for rural housing is the “cluster” concept, which has smaller lots and permanently preserved open space as in the diagram (Option B) on the right below. <b>Please mark either Option A or Option B (not both) below to indicate your preference.</b>					

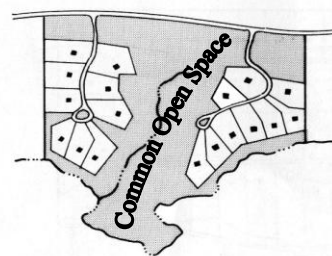
**OPTION A**

31%



**OPTION B**

69%



**TRANSPORTATION** These questions ask your opinion about transportation issues in the Town of Osceola.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>		
15. The <u>overall road network</u> (roads, streets, and highways) in the Town of Osceola meets the needs of its citizens.	12%	75%	8%	3%	3%		
16. The <u>overall condition of roads and streets</u> in the Town of Osceola is acceptable for present needs.	9%	67%	17%	5%	2%		
17. Additional biking lanes and walking lanes are needed <u>along public roadways</u> in the Town of Osceola.	21%	35%	27%	9%	8%		
18. If one or more adults in your household works outside the home, how many minutes (one way) does it take the one who drives the furthest to commute to work each day?							
	<b>Under 10</b>	<b>10-14</b>	<b>15-19</b>	<b>20-29</b>	<b>30-44</b>	<b>45+</b>	<b>NA</b>
	13%	9%	5%	8%	16%	27%	22%

**AGRICULTURE AND LAND USE**

The following questions are asking for your opinion about agriculture and land use in the Town.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
19. We should allow productive farmland to be used for:					
a. Agricultural use	60%	37%	1%	0%	2%
b. Residential use	7%	27%	38%	20%	7%
c. Any use	9%	16%	36%	28%	11%
20. Landowners should be allowed to develop their land <u>any way they want</u> .	15%	22%	42%	20%	2%
21. There should be restrictions on <u>how much</u> of their land owners should be allowed to develop.	12%	46%	25%	12%	5%
22. Landowners should be able to subdivide their land consistent with minimum lot size regulations into housing lots.	13%	51%	23%	8%	6%
23. Conflicts between farms and neighbors (dust, noise, and odors) are common in the Town of Osceola.	3%	14%	44%	11%	27%
24. Agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences.	28%	43%	16%	5%	7%

**Some Wisconsin Towns have put programs in place that allow land owners to sell and transfer the development rights to their land. Sale of development rights ensures the land will be used in agriculture or remain as open space in the future. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

25. The Town of Osceola should use public funds to purchase development rights to preserve farmland, maintain open space or protect important natural areas.	33%	35%	26%	0%	7%
26. The Town of Osceola should allow developers to purchase development rights from one Town property and transfer them to another in order to increase the number of lots that can be developed on the receiving property (increase density).	34%	10%	45%	0%	11%
27. Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected through regulations.	39%	48%	8%	0%	4%
28. Fees should be imposed on new private development to pay for the added costs of public services such as roads, highways, emergency services, etc.	38%	45%	11%	0%	7%
29. I am dissatisfied with the enforcement of existing land use regulations in the Town of Osceola.	11%	13%	22%	0%	53%
30. Do you believe that the current <u>1 acre minimum</u> residential lot size should be uniform throughout the Town?		Yes (go to Q32) 50%	No (go to Q31) 37%	No Opinion (go to Q32) 13%	
31. If you answered “no” to Q30, please answer the following: <b><u>Variations from the 1 acre minimum residential lot sizes should be allowed in the following situations:</u></b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
a. Smaller lot sizes in areas adjacent to higher density local communities (e.g. Osceola/Dresser).	16%	49%	15%	14%	5%
b. Smaller lot sizes/greater density if shared septic systems are available.	10%	38%	25%	16%	11%
c. Larger lot sizes/lower density in environmentally sensitive areas (lakes, steepness of terrain, etc.).	34%	47%	8%	4%	6%
d. Larger lot sizes/lower density to preserve wildlife corridors (land that knits together wetlands, woods, and fields).	42%	40%	6%	5%	6%

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** The following question asks how you view economic development in the Town of Osceola.

32. The following types of economic/business development are appropriate in the Town of Osceola.	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
a. Ag production (crops and livestock)	39%	54%	2%	0%	4%
b. Ag service businesses	31%	61%	2%	0%	6%
c. Composting sites	19%	56%	12%	2%	11%
d. Convenience stores/gas stations	12%	55%	22%	6%	5%
e. Corporate/large scale farms (Over 700 dairy cows or 1,000 beef steers/cows)	6%	32%	36%	14%	12%
f. Direct sales of farm products (vegetables, fruit, meat, trees)	29%	62%	4%	1%	3%
g. Dog boarding and kennels	7%	57%	19%	6%	2%
h. Golf courses	13%	55%	17%	5%	9%
i. Gravel pits	6%	47%	27%	8%	12%
j. Home based businesses	17%	68%	5%	0%	9%
k. Industrial/Manufacturing	13%	59%	17%	5%	7%
l. Junk/Salvage yards	5%	21%	37%	28%	8%
m. Privately owned campgrounds	10%	56%	19%	5%	11%
n. Retail/Commercial	14%	61%	13%	4%	7%
o. Storage businesses	7%	51%	26%	7%	10%
p. Electricity-generating windmills	25%	51%	10%	4%	9%
q. Other: <b>See Appendix A</b>					

**SPECIFIC ISSUES** The following question asks how you view select issues facing the Town of Osceola.

33. How important are the following issues in the Town of Osceola?	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Very Unimportant</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
a. Well water contamination	68%	27%	2%	0%	3%
b. Rural residential development	38%	45%	10%	2%	5%
c. Loss of productive farmland	44%	41%	11%	0%	4%
d. Land annexation by Villages of Osceola and Dresser	29%	37%	15%	4%	16%
e. Other: <b>See Appendix A</b>					

34. Do you have additional comments about **land use and comprehensive planning** in the Town of Osceola?

**See Appendix A**

**DEMOGRAPHICS** Please tell us some things about you: **Please choose only one answer per question.**

35. Gender:	Male	Female	36. Age:	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
	59%	41%		0%	15%	22%	23%	21%	19%

37. Employment Status:	Employed full-time	Self-employed	Employed part-time	Unemployed	Retired	Other: <b>See Appendix A</b>
	55%	13%	6%	1%	24%	1%

38. Which of the following best describes your residential status in the Town of Osceola?

Farmland owner	Rural Resident (non-farm)	Non-Resident Landowner	Renter	Other: <b>See Appendix A</b>
7%	79%	10%	1%	3%

39. Number of adults (18 or older) in household:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6+
		17%	72%	7%	3%	0%	0%

40. Number of children (under 18) in household:	59%	13%	19%	6%	1%	1%	0%
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41. If you are a Town resident, how long have you lived in Town of Osceola?

Less than 1 year	1 to 5 years	5.1 – 10 years	10.1 – 15 years	15.1 – 20 years	20.1 to 30 years	Over 30 Years
4%	19%	22%	15%	7%	12%	21%

42. Highest Level of Education:	Less than high school	High school diploma	Some college/tech	Tech college graduate	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
	1%	19%	26%	16%	20%	17%

43. Household Income range:	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 - 24,999	\$25,000 – 49,999	\$50,000 – 74,999	\$75,000 – 99,999	\$100,000 or more
	2%	5%	22%	29%	19%	23%

**Thank You for Completing the Survey!**

**Your survey responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.**

Please return your survey by April 4, 2008 to:

*Survey Research Center*

University of Wisconsin - River Falls

410 S. Third St.

River Falls, WI 54022-5001