



# Town of Black Earth Comprehensive Plan Public Opinion Survey, 2008

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## Executive Summary

From late January to early March 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls collected data from residents of the Town of Black Earth. Two surveys were sent to all of the 259 households in the Town for which we had addresses. Given the estimated number of adults in the Town (361), the total number of surveys returned (261) is an outstanding return rate (72%). Because the participation rate is high, the estimates in this report are expected to be accurate to within +/- 3.2 percent with 95 percent confidence. Statistical tests indicate that “non-response bias” is not a problem with this sample. In short, the results of this survey should provide an accurate snapshot of public opinion about land use issues in the Town.

Several things are striking about the results of this survey. First, despite what appears to be a population that is undergoing a fair amount of change, based on the length of time respondents reported living in the Town, there are remarkably few consistent differences of opinion based on length of time spent in the Town. This is relatively uncommon in our experience. When a substantial number of people move into a jurisdiction, there are often stark differences between how the long-term residents and the new arrivals see the world. This is not apparent to any great degree in these data. Likewise, there are virtually no gender differences of opinion in the Town of Black Earth; the planning preferences of men and women in the Town align closely, which is somewhat unusual based on similar surveys the SRC has done. The only semi-consistent demographic difference is between resident and non-resident landowners and this probably reflects the quite different economic interests of these two groups. In short, there are fewer demographic divides than we typically see in land use surveys.

Second, the level of satisfaction with the quality of life in the Town is quite high and tends to be related to the perception that the Town is doing a pretty good job of taking care of the things they control and that matter to the citizens – maintaining the roads and using its decision-making authority to maintain the characteristics of the Town about which they most care (its rural atmosphere, natural beauty and environmental quality, and low density development). Associated with this level of satisfaction with life in the Town is broad agreement about the goals that the Comprehensive Plan should include (protecting the environment, preserving farm land and agricultural opportunities, preserving the Town’s rural character, avoiding expenditures that promote urbanization, and controlling non-agricultural development).

Third, there are patterns of responses that were broadly consistent across different sections of the questionnaire. In particular, concern about preserving the environment and small-scale agriculture seem apparent in multiple sections of the survey. For example, respondents favor the use of cluster designs to preserve open space, they are opposed to development on environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands, and they are supportive of PDR and TDR programs that could be used to guide where development does take place in the Town.

Fourth, the two areas of general unease that come through in this survey are concerns about the level of taxation (common in many/most jurisdictions around the state) and about the need for more economic development in the Town. The survey indicates that, with respect to economic development, the respondents would like to see it concentrated along state highways and, to a lesser extent on County roads.

## Study Purpose

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

## Survey Methods

In late January 2007, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to 259 Town residences. Because of the relatively small size of the Town's population and a goal of receiving surveys from at least 186 residents (to achieve statistical accuracy to within plus or minus 5% with 95% confidence), two copies of the survey were included in each mailing. If only one adult lived at a given address, recipients were instructed to simply discard the second questionnaire. The response rate from Town residents was truly outstanding. A total of 261 surveys were returned, 72 percent of the estimated adult population in the Town. Given this rate of return, the estimates we will discuss in this report should be accurate to within plus or minus 3.2% with 95% confidence. For example 58% of respondents said that the natural beauty of the area was one of the top three reasons they chose to live in the Town of Black Earth. Given the response rate to this survey, there is only a 5% chance that the actual percentage of Town residents who chose to reside there because of the natural beauty of the area is less than 54.8% ( $= 58\% - 3.2\%$ ) or more than 61.2 percent ( $= 58\% + 3.2\%$ ). In short, the results of this survey should provide a highly accurate opinion of public opinion about land use issues in the Town.

Most surveys have to be concerned with “non-response bias”. Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who do not return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. However, when 70% or more of the target population returns their survey, non-response bias is rarely an issue. Never the less, the SRC tested 76 variables included in the questionnaire and found only eight instances in which responses from the first mailing and those from the second were statistically different.

**Based upon a standard statistical analysis that is described in Appendix A, the Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that non-response bias is not a concern for the Town of Black Earth survey.**

In addition to the numeric responses, respondents provided additional written comments that 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 B to this report contains the complete compilation of comments.**

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

## Profile of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of respondents to the Town of Black Earth Comprehensive Plan survey. Where comparable data were available from the 2006 American Community Survey Census or the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, they were included to indicate the degree to which the sample represents the underlying adult population in the Town of Black Earth. The data in Table 1 show that, in general, the sample matches the underlying population quite well. The only major deviation between the sample and Census data is with respect to the proportion of respondents who are less than 35 years of age.

<b>Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents</b>							
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>				
Survey	238	52%	48%				
Census (18+)	336	54%	46%				
<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	242	0%	2%	17%	32%	24%	25%
Census	336	7%	15%	22%	25%	17%	15%
<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>	<b>Self</b>	<b>Unemp</b>	<b>Retired</b>	
Sample	242	45%	20%	7%	3%	24%	
Census (16+)	320	58%		12%	2%	28%	
<b>Commute Time to Work (one-way)</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>0 – 9</b>	<b>10 - 14</b>	<b>15 - 19</b>	<b>20 - 29</b>	<b>30 - 44</b>	<b>45+</b>
Sample	223	38%	7%	7%	18%	24%	7%
Census (Total households)	198	22%	10%	3%	15%	35%	16%
<b>Residential Status</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Resident Landowner</b>	<b>Renter</b>	<b>Non-Residential Landowner</b>	<b>Other</b>		
Survey	241	87%	0%	12%	1%		
<b>Length Town Resident</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>0-5 Years</b>	<b>5.1-10 years</b>	<b>10.1-15 years</b>	<b>15.1-20 years</b>	<b>20.1-30 years</b>	<b>30+ years</b>
Survey	226	12%	15%	13%	9%	10%	32%

Table 1 depicts a population that includes about one-quarter retirees and few who are unemployed. Nearly one-third of the 70 percent of the sample that reported being employed (full-time, part-time, or self-employed) said that they spent at least half an hour commuting to work (one way). This proportion was substantially smaller than the 51 percent who, in the

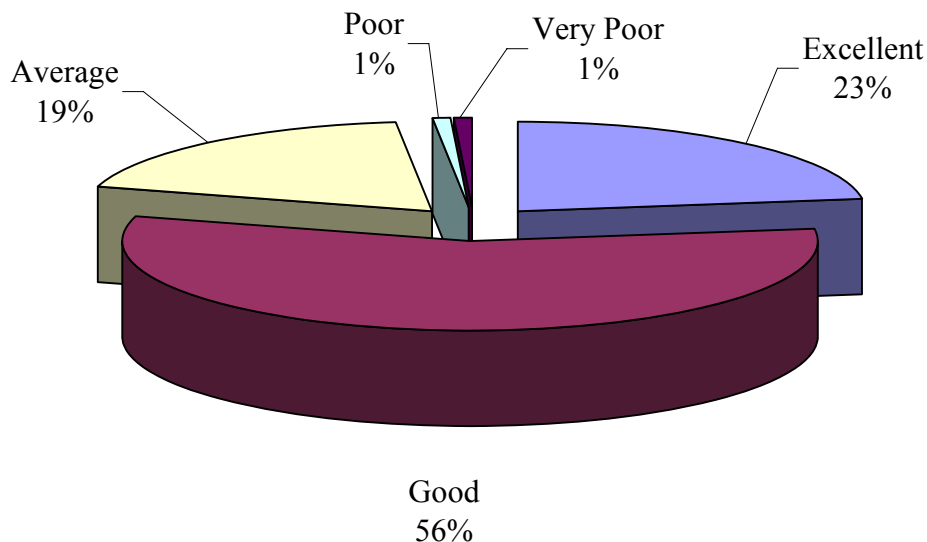
Census, said they spent 30 minutes on the road to get to their job. Table 1 also indicates that about one-third of the Town’s population has lived there for more than 30 years and about equal proportions who have lived there for less than 5 years, between 5 and 10 years, 15 and 20 years, and 20 to 30 years.

In general, the sample seems to represent the adult population in the Town of Black River reasonably well.

## Quality of Life

Figure 1 indicates that most people rate the quality of life in the Town of Black Earth as good (56 percent) or excellent (23 percent). Only 2 percent seem dissatisfied with life in the Town. Older residents rate the quality of life in the Town of Black Earth significantly higher than younger ones. Younger residents are more likely to say that the quality of life in the Town is “average.”

Figure 1: Overall Quality of Life in Town of Black Earth



The SRC examined the factors that are associated with the rating that each respondent gave to the quality of life in the Town of Black Earth. Factors that did **not** have a statistically significant relationship with residents opinions about the Town’s quality of life include the number of acres they own in the county (small and large landowners have similar opinions), the length of residence in the Town (newer and longer-term residents have similar assessments), gender (no “gender gap”), the length of their commute to work (those driving further and those walking across the barnyard were similar), or their interest in preserving agricultural land for agriculture. Instead, the things that seem to be important in terms of satisfaction with the quality of life are:

- the quality of the road network (the happier they were with the roads, the higher the rating they gave the Town)
- the importance they place on preserving the rural nature of the Town (the more they agree that the new Comprehensive Plan should do this, the happier they are with the quality of life)
- the importance they place on protecting the environment, natural resources and natural beauty of the area (the more they agree that the new Comprehensive Plan should do this, the happier they are with the quality of life)
- the density policy (the more they support the current density policy, the higher the quality of life rating they gave)
- merging with other communities (the more strongly they disagreed with this policy option, the higher the quality of life they assigned to the Town)

In short, the citizens of the Town seem to want the revised comprehensive plan to preserve the aspects of the place that drew them to the area in the first place: its good roads, rural character, natural beauty and high quality environmental amenities, relatively low-density development, and independence.

Respondents were asked to identify the one thing that they would change about the Town if they could. Fewer than half of the citizens responded to this question. Among those who did respond, lowering taxes (especially property taxes) was by far the most common factor they would change (nearly one-third of the 97 responses had to do with tax relief). The only other categories identified by more than 10% of the respondents focused on governance issues (*“improve communications with residents,” “Get rid of ‘Good Ol’ Boys’ and control freaks like \_\_\_\_\_”*) and the need for more economic development in the Town (*“high speed internet service to rural areas,” “More grocery stores and fast food restaurants”*).

Figure 2: Three Most Important Reasons to Live in Town of Black Earth

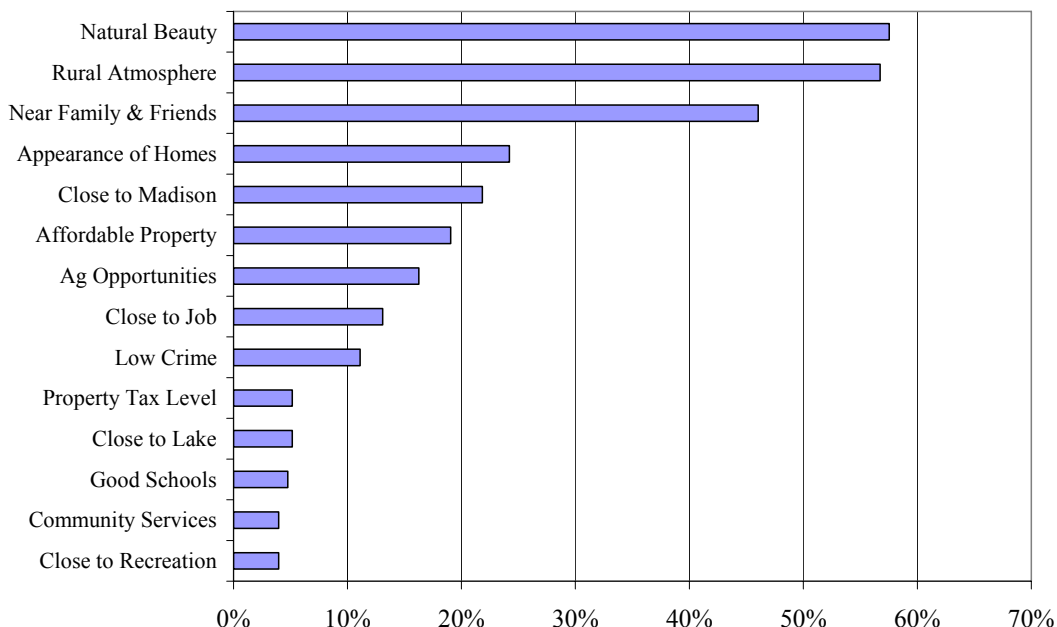




Figure 2 shows the most important reasons respondents have chosen to live in the Town of Black Earth. More than half of all respondents ranked the natural beauty and the rural atmosphere of the Town among the top three reasons for living in Black Earth. Nearly half (46 percent) said that being near family and friends was one of the three most important reasons for living in the Town. About one-fifth of the respondents noted the appearance of homes, the proximity of Madison, and the affordability of property in Black Earth.

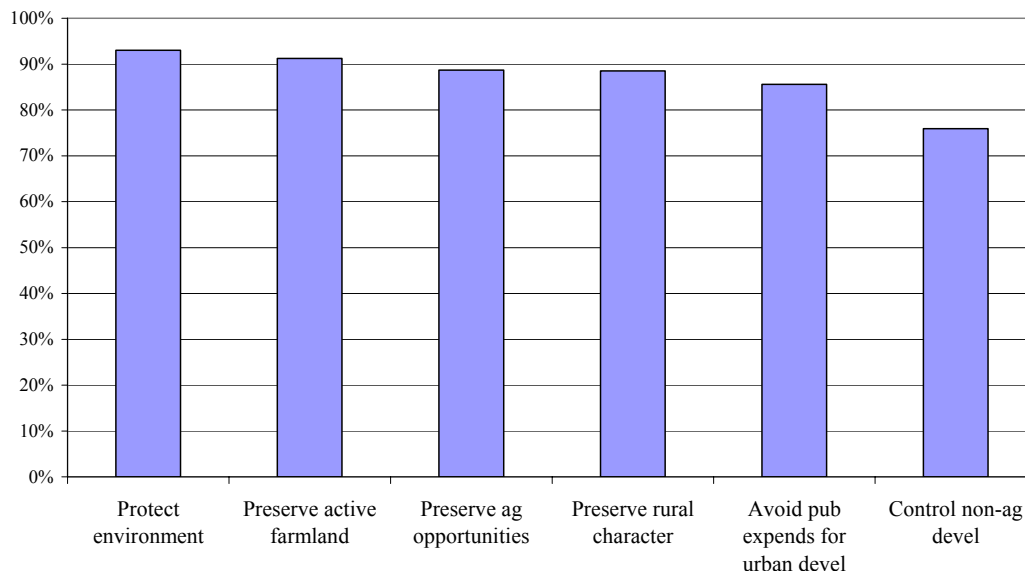
The reasons given for living in the Town of Black Earth vary by demographic group. Perhaps the most interesting demographic difference for choosing to live in the Town is with respect to how long they have lived there. Newer arrivals chose the Town because of the appearance of the homes, to be near water (a lake, stream or pond), to be close to recreational opportunities, the Town's proximity to Madison, and to be "close" to their job. The "closeness" to one's job is a relative concept; newer arrivals were also significantly more likely to spend more time commuting to work than were longer-term residents. Longer-term residents were significantly more likely to cite agricultural opportunities, the natural beauty of the area, the quality of the schools, and being near family and friends as reasons for living in the Town.

As was true for newer residents, being close to Madison was also important to women and younger Town residents. Those reporting that they have full-time employment said that the affordability of property and being close to their job were key reasons for locating in the Town.

## General Planning Issues

Respondents were asked to give their opinions about a variety of goals for the comprehensive land use plan. Large majorities (at least 76%) agree or strongly agree that the comprehensive plan should include all of the goals included in Figure 3 (protecting the environment, preserving active farmland, etc.).

Figure 3: Percent Who Agree or Strongly Agree that the Town of Black Earth's Comp Plan Should:



Given the broad level of support for all of the goals included in Figure 3, demographic differences of opinion tend to be ones of degree rather than reflecting completely different perspectives. For example, non-residential landowners agree significantly less strongly that the comprehensive plan should preserve active farmland than do residential landowners. However, a strong majority (70%) of non-residential land owners agree or strongly agree that such farmland should be preserved but this is significantly less than the 92 percent of residential landowners who feel this way. The split between the views of residential and non-residential landowners is the most interesting of the demographic differences with respect to these general planning goals. Besides being somewhat less sold on the need to preserve active farmland, non-residential land owners are less supportive of comprehensive land use goals to preserve agricultural opportunities, control non-agricultural development, protect the local environment, preserve the Town's rural character, and the need to avoid public expenditures in support of urban development.

Respondents were asked to identify any additional goals they think should be added to the Comprehensive Plan. A total of 42 suggestions were received and the category of suggestions receiving the largest percentage of comments dealt with expanding the tax base (21% of all comments). Typical of the comments in this set of suggestions include:

*Allow "more commercial and housing development to get a bigger tax base for the schools"*

*"I would like to see additional businesses, homes, etc. built here to help off-set our outrageous property taxes"*

Closely related to a desire to broaden the tax base was a general interest in economic development for the Town. Typical of these comments, which constituted another 12% of the suggestions for additional goals are:

*"We need some development that should have started slowly years ago. For some reason, people on the town board did not want. We have to have some development or we turn into a ghost town! Without any schools!"*

*"Regarding economic development - I could see encouragement of farmstead enterprises (bakery, cheesery, woolen mill, etc.)"*

Other topics that citizens noted as possible comprehensive plan goals include encouraging small-scale agriculture (14%), housing issues (14%), and environmental protection (12%). A complete list of their suggestions is included in Appendix B.

Respondents were also asked their opinion about including a number of initiatives in their comprehensive plan: developing cooperative boundary agreements, intergovernmental service agreements, etc. Their opinions are summarized in Table 2. There is nearly universal agreement (93% agree or strongly agree) that the Town should consider developing cooperative boundary agreements with neighboring jurisdictions. In a separate portion of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate how important they think it is for the Town to seek

agreements with neighboring jurisdictions on future land use, public services and annexations. A very large majority (89%) said that this was “important” or “very important” for the Town to do.

<b>Table 2: In Its Comprehensive Plan, Black Earth Town Should:</b>					
	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Develop co-op boundary agreements	237	19%	73%	4%	3%
Develop intergovernmental service agreements	227	22%	63%	11%	4%
Merge Black Earth and Mazomanie Fire Depts.	239	34%	45%	15%	6%
Expand Highway 14	240	25%	43%	20%	12%
Merge with other municipalities	235	20%	44%	24%	11%

Support is also strong for developing intergovernmental service agreements (85% agree or strongly agree) and merging the Black Earth Fire District with the Mazomanie Fire Department (79%). Roughly two-thirds of respondents support expansion of Highway 14 (68%) and merging with other, unspecified, municipalities (64%).

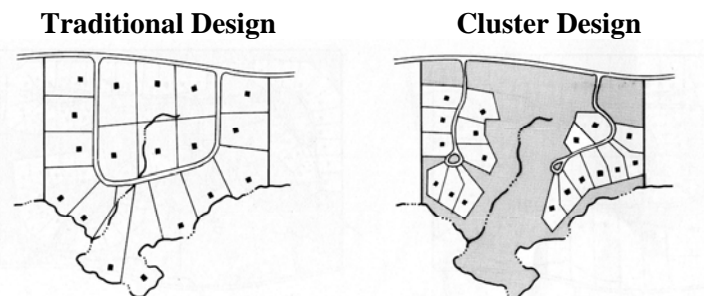
## Housing

In one of the key housing questions, residents were asked to indicate their preference for housing developments based on a traditional design (large lots, little open space) versus a cluster design (smaller lots with permanently preserved open space) as depicted in the diagrams in Figure 4. By a substantial margin, the people in Black Earth Town prefer developments that use the cluster design; fewer than one in six prefer the traditional design and slightly more than one in four recommend a neutral stance with respect to these two development design options. This result seems to conform to the factors associated with higher quality of life ratings discussed above – specifically the open spaces associated with the cluster design would, perhaps, do a better job of preserving the rural character and natural beauty of the Town.

The cluster design is favored by a majority of residents of all ages except for those over 65; respondents in this age category were nearly evenly split between remaining neutral (38%) and those favoring the cluster design (41%). Support for the cluster design tends to be stronger among resident landowners compared to non-resident landowners and among more recent arrivals than those who have lived in the Town for more than 30 years.

**Figure 4: Preferences for Traditional versus Cluster Designs for Developments**

**Encourage Traditional Design**      **Remain Neutral**      **Encourage Cluster Design**  
**16%**      **28%**      **56%**



The data in Table 3 indicate that there is relatively strong support for the Town's density policy, which allows one new home per 35 acres owned as of March 1, 1981. Nearly three-quarters support (38%) or strongly support (36%) this policy. Support for the Town's density policy is significantly stronger among those who have lived in Black Earth for a longer period of time. At one level, support for the density policy is inconsistent with the support for cluster development (Figure 4). It does, however, speak to the interest that Town residents have for maintaining open space and the rural atmosphere of Black Earth.

<b>Table 3: Town of Black Earth Citizen Support for:</b>					
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Support</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Strongly Oppose</b>
Town's Density Policy	243	36%	38%	18%	8%
Multi-Family Dwellings	245	9%	33%	35%	22%

There is relatively strong opposition to the construction of multiple family dwellings such as apartments in the Town. While the proportion of Town citizens who "oppose" and "support" multifamily dwelling units is very similar (35% and 33%, respectively), the strength of feeling is clearly with those in opposition (22% strongly oppose compared to only 9% who strongly support this type of housing development).

## Natural Resources

Relatively strong majorities of Town of Black Earth citizens agree or strongly agree that development on steep and erosive slopes (85%), on agricultural land (74%), and on ridge tops (64%) should be limited. A narrow majority (54%) feel this way about developments in the middle of woods or forests.

<b>Table 4: The Town Should Limit Development On:</b>					
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Steep/Erosive Slopes	244	59%	25%	11%	6%
Agricultural Land	244	49%	25%	17%	9%
Ridge Tops	238	35%	29%	28%	8%
Middle of Woods/Forest	239	26%	28%	36%	10%

The most interesting demographic difference of opinion about limiting growth in the areas covered in Table 4 is with respect to resident and non-resident landowners. While a majority of both groups tends to support restrictions on developments in these areas, the level of support is significantly weaker among non-resident landowners with respect to development on agricultural land, on ridges, and in the middle of woods or forests. To the extent that non-resident landowners view their property as an investment, restrictions on development in these areas would be expected to reduce the value of their investment. Hence, their somewhat lower level of support for such restrictions is probably consistent with their economic self-interest.

Respondents were asked, “*If development were to take place (on one of the 4 types of areas covered in Table 4), in what order would you prefer the development to happen?*” Combining their first and second choices gives the following result:

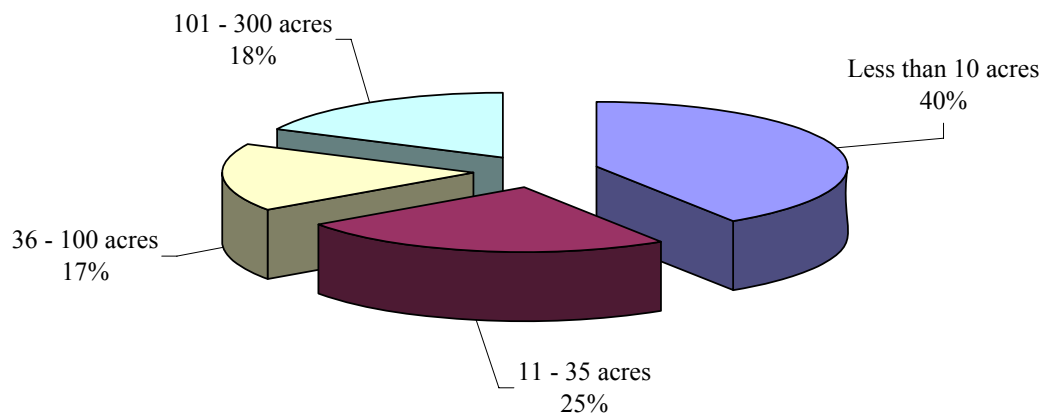
- 67% prefer the middle of woods or forests
- 59% prefer ridge tops
- 40% prefer agricultural land
- 26% prefer steep and erosive slopes

Respondents’ preferences seem fairly clear; if development is to occur, a majority would rather it happen in the woods or on ridge tops. This result appears consistent with the concern respondents seem to have about preserving the rural character, small-scale agriculture, and environmental quality of the area.

## Agricultural Use/Land Use

Figure 5 illustrates the amount of land owned by survey respondents. Two people (less than 1 percent) reported owning no land in the county and no one reported owning more than 300 acres (which was a response option).

Figure 5: Acres Owned in the Town of Black Earth



- **Of those with more than 100 acres:** slightly more than one-third (39%) reported that they primarily use their land for farming within the family, nearly half (48%) said their land was primarily farmed by someone outside the family or was primarily open space. About three-quarters said their land was used for crops (77%) and about a quarter for livestock (27%).
- **Of those with 36 – 100 acres:** nearly one-quarter (24%) reported being family farms and about one-in-five (21%) said others farmed their land. Of those whose land was

used in agriculture, 43% said it was used to produce crops and 31% to produce livestock. Forty-five percent said their land was primarily open space and nearly as many (43%) said their land was primarily a rural residence.

- **Of those with 11 – 35 acres:** the primary uses are as rural residences (62%) and as open land (39%). Very few in this category farm their own land (10%) but a number do rent land to non-family members for agricultural purposes (16%).
- **Of those with 10 acres or less:** Almost all of those with less than 10 acres (91%) said they use their land primarily as a rural residence.

Interestingly, more than 40 percent of non-resident landowners report having between 36 and 100 acres and more than one-quarter report owning more than 100 acres of land in the Town. So, the holdings of non-residential landowners tend to be significantly more than just a lot on which to build a second or retirement home. In fact, the amount of land owned by non-residential landowners is significantly larger than for residential landowners.

Two of the more recently developed tools used by some Wisconsin jurisdiction to manage growth are the purchase or transfer of development rights. Those receiving a Town of Black Earth questionnaire also received the following definitions:

- **Purchase of Development Right (PDR):** a public or private government initiative that acquires the development rights of property to limit development and protect natural features or open space.
- **Transfer of Development Rights (TDR):** a technique, involving the designation of development (receiving) zones and protected (sending) zones, for guiding growth away from sensitive resources and toward controlled development centers by transferring development rights from one area to another via local law authorization such as a deed or easement.

Having been given these definitions, respondents were asked if they favored the development of a PDR program and the authorization of a TDR program in the Town. Table 5 summarizes their responses and indicates that a majority of the sample are in favor of both options. PDRs are slightly more popular

<b>Table 5: The Town of Black Earth Should:</b>		
	Count	Percent Yes
Have a PDR program	237	62%
Allow TDR among property owners	234	55%

There are relatively few significant differences with respect to how different groups of Town citizens view PDR and TDR programs. Non-

residents are significantly less supportive of PDRs than are residents and support is generally greater the longer a person has lived in the Town. However, those who have lived in the Town for more than 30 years are somewhat less supportive of PDRs than those who have lived there for 15 -30 years.

With respect to TDRs, those who are more than 65 years of age and retirees are substantially less supportive than their younger counterparts. Those who are self-employed are more supportive of TDRs than those who are employed by others (full- or part-time).

Landowners and residents were also asked about the future of agriculture in the Town; their opinions are summarized in Table 6. By a very strong majority (84%), the people of the Town of Black Earth agree or strongly agree that its Comprehensive Plan should take into account the possible future demand for feed and fuel crops. On the other hand, very few Town residents support the development of large-scale animal agriculture.

<b>Table 6: Opinions about Agriculture in the Town of Black Earth</b>					
	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Comp Plan Should Consider Future Feed/Fuel Demand	233	32%	52%	11%	5%
Town Should Allow Farms with:	Count	Percent Yes			
1,000+ cattle	245	19%			
5,000+ hogs	246	13%			
1,000,000+ poultry	246	11%			

## Economic Development

The economic development questions included in the questionnaire focused on whether the

<b>Table 7: Economic Development Opinions</b>		
Town Should Allow:	Count	Yes
Commercial Development	241	64%
Industrial Development	237	42%
Other Development	67	51%
Allow Commercial Zoning:	Count	Yes
Along State Highways	242	81%
Along County Roads	242	53%
Along Town Roads	241	39%

Town should consider changes to its zoning regulations. In the first set of questions, respondents were asked if the Town should consider allowing commercial, industrial, or other types of development in the Town. Respondents were supportive of considering commercial developments for the town but not of industrial development. Many of the “other” development responses were variations on a theme of business development (small business, family businesses, etc.); a few mentioned

recreational or arts-oriented businesses.

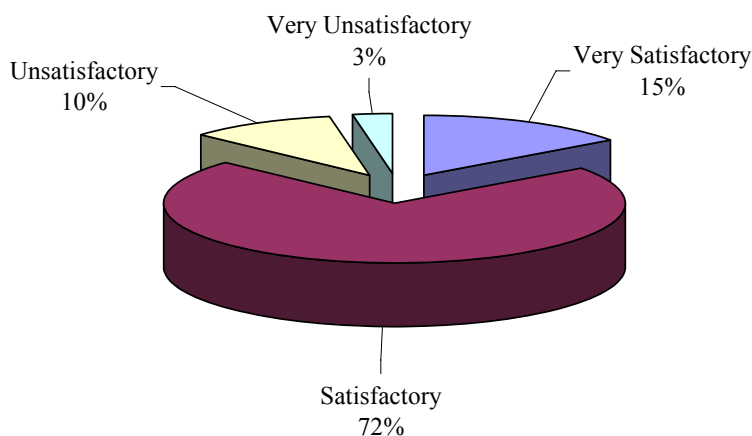
With respect to where commercial developments should take place, Black Earth residents are fairly clear that they would allow them along state highways and not along Town roads. They are split very closely on whether commercial development should occur along County roads.

Surprisingly, given that there are few consensus positions in Table 7, demographic differences of opinion about economic development are few.

## Transportation

As noted at the outset of this report, there is a high level of correlation between how respondents rated the condition of roads in the Town and how they viewed the overall quality of life in Black Earth. In fact, the condition of the roads was the factor that was most closely associated with the overall quality of life rating. The good news is that by and large respondents were reasonably satisfied with the quality of their roads. As noted in Figure 6, only 13 percent rated Town roads as unsatisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Figure 6: Condition of Roads in Town of Black Earth

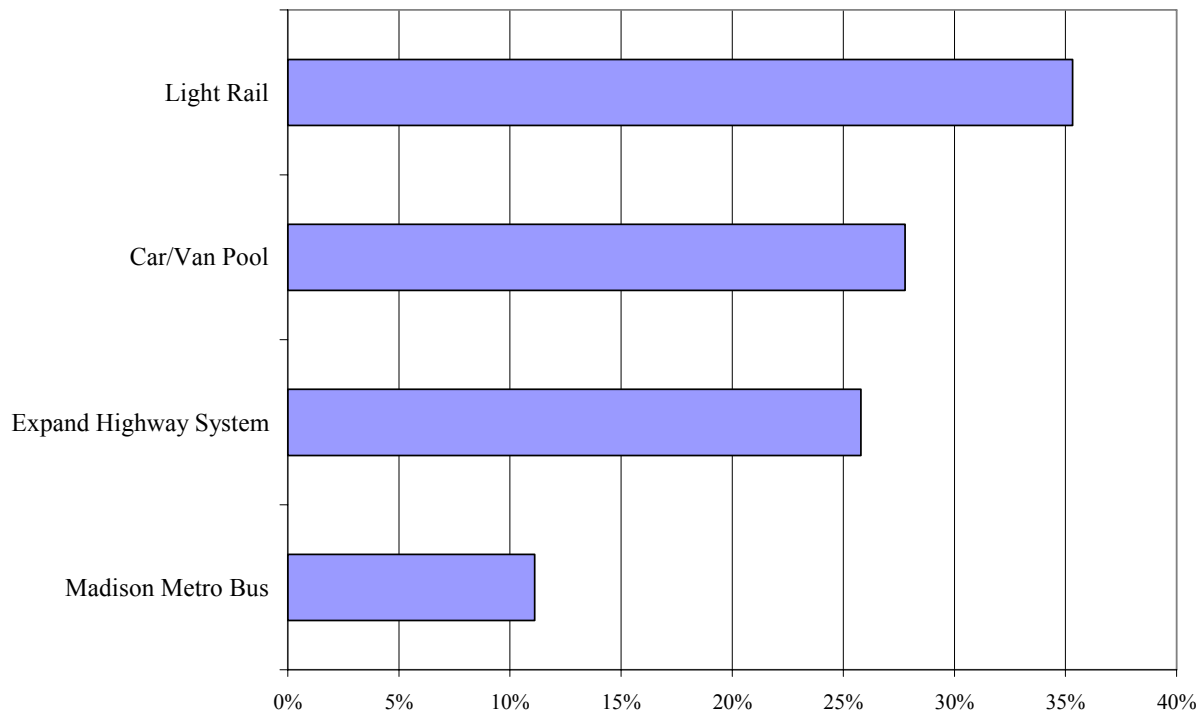


Older residents, those 55 and older, tended to rate the overall condition of roads in the Town more highly than did younger respondents. Those with full-time employment and the self-employed rated the roads slightly less highly.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the best way to get commuters to Madison and back from outlying parts of Dane County. Given concerns expressed by Town respondents about tax levels, it is somewhat surprising that the commuting option selected by the largest proportion of the sample (35%), developing commuter or light rail transit on existing tracks or abandoned rail right-of-way, is likely to require the highest level of public investment. Developing car or van pools (28%) and expanding the highway system (26%) have roughly equal levels of support. Relatively few Town respondents felt that an extension of the Madison Metro bus line was the best alternative (11%).



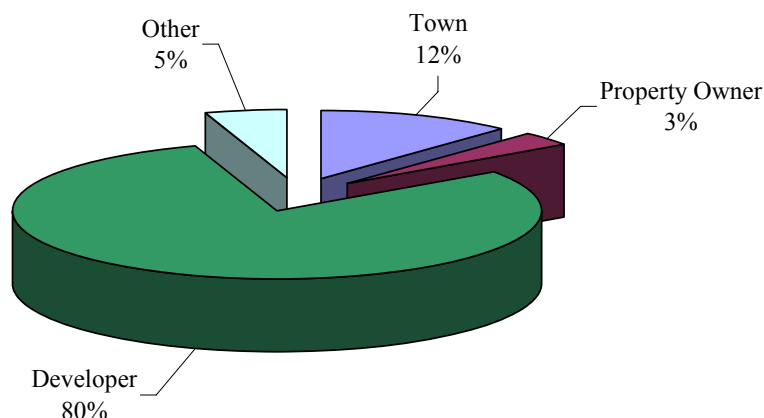
Figure 7: Preferred Madison Commute Option



## Community Facilities

When development or growth requires that road or infrastructure improvements be made in the Town of Black Earth, the overwhelming opinion of the sample (80%) is that developers should pay for them. Only 12% feel that these improvements should be paid for by the Town's taxpayers. The 5% who selected "Other" tended to say either that the cost of improvements should be split (e.g. between the developer, the Town and the property owner) or that the nature of the development would dictate who should pay (e.g. developments with 5 or more lots should be paid for by the developer and those with less than 5 should be covered by the Town or property owner). The longer people have lived in the Town, the less likely they are to feel that the Town should cover these costs of development. In contrast, non-residents are significantly more likely to feel that the Town should cover these costs.

Figure 8: When Development Requires Roads and Infrastructure, Who Should Pay



Input was sought on the role the Town should play in the regulation or location of several types of infrastructure and the opinions of respondents are summarized in Table 8. Large majorities feel that it is important for the Town to be involved in all four of the items listed in Table 8:

- 88% agree or strongly agree that the Town should try to influence the placement of power lines
- 85% agree or strongly agree that the Town should regulate the placement of communication towers and that it should try to influence the placement of other utilities (especially wind turbines and natural gas pipelines)
- 77% agree or strongly agree that the Town should control light pollution

Table 8: The Town of Black Earth Should:					
	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Influence Power Line Placement	245	38%	49%	9%	3%
Regulate Communication Tower Placement	247	36%	49%	11%	4%
Influence Other Utility Placement	194	31%	54%	12%	3%
Control Light Pollution	241	39%	38%	20%	3%

The only significant demographic differences of opinion with respect to the items in Table 8 are based on length of residence in the Town and the age of the respondent. Those who are older (65+) and those who have lived in the Town of Black Earth (30+ years) tend to be less fervent in their opinions about the need for the Town to try and influence the placement of power lines and other utilities. They are significantly more likely to “agree” rather than “strongly agree” that the Town should become involved in these issues.

## Conclusions

The extremely high response rate achieved in this survey should provide an accurate snapshot of opinions of residents and non-resident landowners in the Town of Black Earth. The similarity between the demographic profile of the sample and data from the Census lend additional confidence that these data are a good reflection of Town opinions.

Several things are striking about the results of this survey. First, despite what appears to be a population that is undergoing a fair amount of change, based on the length of time respondents reported living in the Town, there are remarkably few consistent differences of opinion based on length of time spent in the Town. This is relatively uncommon in our experience. When a substantial number of people move into a jurisdiction, there are often stark differences between how the long-term residents and the new arrivals see the world. This is not apparent to any great degree in these data. Likewise, there are virtually no gender differences of opinion in the Town of Black Earth; the planning preferences of men and women in the Town align closely, which is somewhat unusual based on similar surveys the SRC has done. The only semi-consistent demographic difference is between resident and non-resident landowners and this probably reflects the quite different economic interests of these two groups. In short, there are fewer demographic divides than we typically see in land use surveys.

Second, the level of satisfaction with the quality of life in the Town is quite high and tends to be related to the perception that the Town is doing a pretty good job of taking care of the things they control and that matter to the citizens – maintaining the roads and using its decision-making authority to maintain the characteristics of the Town about which they most care (its rural atmosphere, natural beauty and environmental quality, and low density development). Associated with this level of satisfaction with life in the Town is broad agreement about the goals that the Comprehensive Plan should include (protecting the environment, preserving farmland and agricultural opportunities, preserving the Town's rural character, avoiding expenditures that promote urbanization, and controlling non-agricultural development).

Third, there are patterns of responses that were broadly consistent across different sections of the questionnaire. In particular, concern about preserving the environment and small-scale agriculture seem apparent in multiple sections of the survey. For example, respondents favor the use of cluster designs to preserve open space, they are opposed to development on environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands, and they are supportive of PDR and TDR programs that could be used to guide where development does take place in the Town.

Fourth, the two areas of general unease that come through in this survey are concerns about the level of taxation (common in many/most jurisdictions around the state) and about the need for more economic development in the Town. The survey indicates that, with respect to economic development, the respondents would like to see it concentrated along state highways and, to a lesser extent on County roads.

## Appendix A – Non-Response Bias Test

Most surveys have to be concerned with “non-response bias”. Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who do not return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. For example, Question 2 of the Town of Black Earth survey asked residents to rate the overall quality of life in the town on a scale from “excellent” (= 1) to “very poor” (= 5). Suppose only people who were quite happy with the quality of life in the Town responded to the survey. If this were the case, the overall quality of life rating would overstate the true level of satisfaction of the overall population and we would be said to have non-response bias. When 70% or more of the target population returns their survey, non-response bias is rarely an issue. Never the less, the SRC tested for non-response bias.

The standard way to test for non-response bias is to compare the responses of those who return the first mailing of a questionnaire to those who return the second mailing. Those who return the second questionnaire are, in effect, a sample of non-respondents (to the first mailing), and we assume that they are representative of that group. In this survey, 203 people responded to the first mailing and 50 responded to the second mailing.

We found only eight variables with statistically significant differences between the mean responses of these two groups of respondents (Table A1) out of 76 tested. As Table A1 shows, respondents to the second mailing were much more likely to choose to live in the Town of Black Earth to be close to a lake/pond/stream and for community services. Otherwise, the differences in mean values between the first and second mailings are generally quite small. **The Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that non-response bias is not a concern for this sample.**

Table A1 – Statistically Significant Differences Between Responses of First and Second Mailings			
Variable	Mean First Mailing	Mean Second Mailing	Statistical Significance
Q1d Live in Black Earth to be close to lake/pond/stream	0.01	0.20	.000
Q1g Live in Black Earth for community services	0.01	0.16	.000
Q1n Live in Black Earth for rural atmosphere	0.61	0.38	.003
Q3 Support multi-family dwellings in Town	2.81	2.34	.001
Q4 Support Town’s density policy	2.03	1.73	.043
6b Town should limit development on ridge tops	2.17	1.76	.011
12c Land in Town is primarily open land	0.30	0.16	.044
23b Merge Black Earth and Mazomanie Fire Departments	2.00	1.68	.022

## **Appendix B – Written Comments**

### **Question 22g**

*What additional goals would you like to see added to the Comprehensive Plan?*

#### **Development (15 responses)**

- As land owners we are the ones in control of land use not the developers or anyone else
- Controlled development to bring down taxes.
- Design standards - especially in town for commercial development to mandate upscale look. No more pole barn construction on Hwy144/78
- Development from village outward. Avoid scattered pockets of development include policies that restrict light pollution.
- Do not use the farmland to build on. We all need to eat.
- Encourage preservation of contiguous farmland and forested areas. In other words, while enforcing the 1 in 35 rule, encourage rezoning to cluster the developed lots near each other and near existing cities
- If you want cluster housing, the landowner should be allowed more than one house per 35 acres. Increase the density for clustering.
- Let more commercial and housing development to get a bigger tax base for the schools
- More development allowed - our school district needs more children. We need more relocation in the town.
- Promote single family housing, but not on prime ag land.
- Promote single family housing. This may require changing the one house per 35 acre rule. This growth in housing should not take place on prime ag/crop/pasture land.
- Send a clear message to developers that there will not be a large development without transfer of development rights (stick with 1 split for 35 acres)
- Smart growth with a possible surcharge for all who build to help with the school district deficit. In Waunakee with all their growth they are constantly building schools. Let the developers absorb a little, not receive considerable profits for the lots.
- There is a need for growth to support the local school system.
- We need some development that should have started slowly years ago. For some reason, people on the town board did not want. We have to have some development or we turn into a ghost town! Without any schools!

#### **Taxes (7 responses)**

- Control taxes
- Controlled development to bring down taxes.
- From 22 above: Family farms only, does not include absentee owned "tax shelters" or investment or large commercial operation.
- I would like to see additional businesses, homes, etc. built here to help off-set our outrageous property taxes
- Keep property taxes affordable
- reduce taxes by allowing more residents
- Why are the taxes so high?

#### **Environment (6 responses)**

- Create public open space or parks

- Develop wind, hydro and solar energy plans.
- Encourage use of natural resources- wind turbines- grants. Options that are more environmentally friendly.
- More sharing of natural resources through creation of parks, bike trails, conservancies, etc.
- Promote small scale ag-related business opportunities (e.g. CSA's). Protect water resources, wetlands, and scenic vistas.
- Protect and encourage prairies and oak savannahs.

#### **Businesses (5 responses)**

- Business that will fit the small town.
- I would like to see a more thriving downtown. I think the shoe box brings so much that we should attract them down 78 with stores, business, and restaurants.
- I would like to see additional businesses
- Regarding economic development - I could see encouragement of farmstead enterprises (bakery, cheesery, woolen mill, etc)
- The encouragement of small farming operations that produce food for local human consumption (vegetables, meat, poultry).

#### **Transportation (5 responses)**

- Also the encouragement of mass transit, car and van-pooling, etc. by providing park and ride areas, etc.
- Better driveway ordinance for safe use by emergency vehicles
- Better roadways, Highway and rural roadways.
- Mass transit/commuter options
- Support Highway 14 expansion

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

- Common Sense/Flexibility
- Don't control placement of cell towers, make them look like palm trees or windmills.
- Encourage organic farming opportunities.
- If we, as a town, have a firm commitment to the above stated goals, then I don't think we need to add anything
- Include the sark sky policies
- question 21: public services only is EMS fire dept
- Should not have included the Village of Black Earth and Mazomanie. They will end up dictating our land use.

#### **Question 24**

***If you could change one thing about the Town of Black Earth, what would it be?***

#### **Taxes (33 responses)**

- Lower property taxes (4x)
- Lower taxes (4x)
- Taxes (3x)
- Taxes are too high! (3x)
- Concern that township land base for taxes will be not able to maintain operational costs.
- High cost of taxes

- I'd lower property taxes
- Keep property taxes in check.
- Less tax on property, consideration for retired persons with fixed incomes
- Lower land values
- Lower taxes-please
- Our outrageously high property taxes! we need to audit and/or better manage so that the property owners aren't hurt financially!!
- Property tax
- Property taxes are out of control
- Real estate taxes are too high, and are increasing quickly.
- Real estate taxes, too high, increase rapidly.
- Reduce taxes, reduce valuations
- Tax breaks to the wrong kind of farmland (see 22g).
- Tax equity between farmers and other residents. All homes should be assessed equally by value not who owns it. Same with non ag crop land or active pasture. A woodland is a woodland no matter who owns it.
- Taxes are out of control-near the highest in Dane Co. We get very little for the amount of taxes we pay.
- The high taxes.
- We are seriously considering leaving Dane county due to 11.5% property tax increase last year.
- You're taxing me right out of the state

#### **Development (13 responses)**

- A developer should not be able to lot out prime farmland. (2x)
- All the new home sites on the South side of Black Earth should have been commercial or industrial - not home sites.
- Eliminate developers
- Encourage sub-divisions rather than large lots. Landowners need more than 1 per 35 density to cover development costs. Seven per 35 acres to cover infrastructure.
- Give it more protection against expansion of the villages
- Have upscale design standards for our town's commercial development along major highways.
- I would like to see a shift of more land (not all of it, but more of it) to the production of food for local consumption, as opposed to commodity crops like corn and soybeans.
- More growth
- Restrict construction of new housing developments without buyers for the lots.
- Should investigate combined models of Black Earth, Mazo, and Cross Plains
- That residents would better appreciate the preservation of rural character and quality education.
- The pace of rural residential development

#### **School (7 responses)**

- I am concerned we cannot afford our school system in the future...
- I worry that the schools needs exceed the populations' ability to support it.
- Lower the taxes while still improving the quality of school district.

- Our school board needs help big time-from outsiders that know what they are doing
- Our school district should merge with another.
- School system quality.
- The schools are in desperate shape and will limit future development

#### **Business (7 responses)**

- Bring back a good quality grocery store. People have to eat. I'm sure a good grocery store would be profitable just like the gas stations in Black Earth are.
- Get a grocery store
- Make the building that the grocery store was in back to a store again.
- More grocery stores and fast food restaurants.
- More inviting business fronts on Main St. More small business on Main St., shops, restaurants, etc.
- Patron's coop- their appearance, staff, facilities are (in general) a notch below what I'd like.
- The facades are out dated and appear as though nothing is happening here.

#### **Board of Supervisors (6 responses)**

- Supervisor XXX (2x)
- Get rid of "Good Ol' Boys" and control freaks like XXX.
- Method of electing Town Board
- Much more care by the land use committee & town board in maintaining the rural character of the town
- The caucus system for electing supervisors

#### **Transportation (6 responses)**

- Highway 14 expansion.
- Improve safety of roads with needed guard railings
- Improve safety of roads with needed guard railings.
- Public transportation to Madison
- reduce speed limit
- Roadways

#### **Senior Center (5 responses)**

- The town should allow tax base to fund the Northwest Dane Senior Center. (2x)
- Support senior center. Only town board of 9 that does not
- Support the programs of Northwest Dane Senior Services through the budget- paying the annual amount.
- The board of supervisors denial of support for Northwest Dane Senior Services

#### **Utilities (5 responses)**

- Allowing competition in for my phone, gas, and electric services. Why pay a middleman who contracts through the big companies anyway?
- Have competitive services offered for our utilities
- High speed internet service to rural areas
- Internet service-high speed
- Underground electrical would also be a help in keeping the rural landscape more eye appealing.

#### **Communication (4 responses)**



- Improve communications with residents (2x)
- Also, excellence of local publications should be maintained to alert voters to candidates with loaded development agendas
- Possibly setting up a website

#### **Environment (2 responses)**

- Greater emphasis on the environment-protection of the water shed, especially care of Black Earth Creek
- Take more actions to enforce areas (natural) around and along waterways (streams, creeks etc.).

#### **Jobs (2 responses)**

- Need something to bring people to work.
- We need places to work in Black Earth. Bring jobs to town.

#### **Miscellaneous (12 responses)**

- Be more open to changes (2x)
- Be more progressive
- Better management of patrolman
- Bicycle riding law enforcement
- Give Ken Olson a raise in pay
- Not sure how comprehensive expansion is envisioned
- Road patrolman needs more rules-better management of his time-not what he thinks he should do.
- The fire department layout for where they have to go if there is a fire. Lots of people would not be safe for the distance is far greater than it would be from fire department. We are much closer. Black Earth is way over by Sauk City. That is simply crazy.
- The stuck up people.
- The township is too small to continue as a separate entity
- We should have a township annual party like the Town of Vermont does. This would encourage neighborliness and perhaps make issues like school funding less divisive.

### **Question 25**

#### ***Other comments about land use and comprehensive planning in the Town:***

#### **Development (13 responses)**

- Add home lots from the village edge out to bring city services out with the development.
- Do not change towns policy of 35 acres per home
- Give more leeway to individual land owners
- I REALLY dislike ridge top building. If we limit one thing that should be it. EVERYONE has to see ridge top buildings so limiting them would affect our aesthetic appearance a lot.
- Land use decisions need to be fair, consistent and in line with established policies
- Land use decisions need to be fair, consistent and in line w/ established policies
- Let land owners that have land that is of no use for farming be able to divide their 35+ acres into smaller 10 acre lots with one home per 10 acres provided town doesn't pay anything for roads, etc.

- Let the property owner control their own destiny. We do not need a dictator as to whom we should sell our property. We should be able to sell our property as we see fit.
- Mostly, it's all good, but a little commerce would be ok for revenue. Also, get rid of 35 acre limit from '81. Allow 5 and 10 acre home sites. Get rid of Dane County's 3 divisions limit.
- Stronger building codes
- The Albany town approved a "cluster design" sub division that is an excellent example how townships and developers work together. see [www.sugarrivercrossing.com](http://www.sugarrivercrossing.com) Albany is in Green County
- The land use planning goals must be clear, with well-defined criteria for development proposals, and they need to be followed
- This will be a very hot topic in the future. Landowners want to get their money from land as they are taxed, developers want to put up more houses. Dane Co. wants the township to stay open space-Problems!

#### **Rural Character/Farmland (10 responses)**

- Allow subdivisions while protecting rural character. May need to reconsider 1 to 35 ruling.
- Attention and diligence required to maintain the rural character of the town and keep the development concentrated near the villages, where development occurs in the town, enforce the 1 in 35 rule and minimize the break up of farms into smaller chunks
- Don't lose rural character.
- Farm land is sacred we need to make sure we take care of it. The human population continues to increase. We will have to be able to feed everyone. There is very little likelihood that we will build more farm land.
- In the future it will be vital to have active farmland. The population continues to grow. Thus more mouths to feed, yet less land each year to grow even more food. We have to become much more responsible.
- Keep it rural/allow some housing
- Let's not lose rural atmosphere.
- Preservation of farmland very important.
- Preserve productive farmland. We'll need it someday, much worse than we do now.
- Stick with 35 acre per home site rule. Quit allowing homes to be built on lands that were cropland within the last 15 years. I hate seeing a house plopped in a field. Protect the rural unspoiled appearance by limiting development in open areas.

#### **Environment (5 responses)**

- Choosing developers that have environmental and aesthetic goals is critical in keeping black earth as an attractive place to live and visit, now and in the future.
- Possibly develop a recreation trail, etc.
- Protect Black Earth Creek
- Remove dam in Black Earth Creek, which in return would hopefully help flooding problems with Black Earth and village.
- We need to watch/manage the development upstream in the Black Earth Creek Watershed. More concrete upstream equals more likelihood of flooding downstream.

#### **Taxes (5 responses)**

- Increase tax base (more houses) to spread over more taxpayers/homeowners.

- Local govt's (all public sector activities) need to do a better job of consolidating services to help control costs, i.e. Taxes.
- Need more residents to spread tax burden, or merge into town of Mazomanie
- We get very little in the amount of services for our incredibly high property taxes. We need more businesses and homes built to offset these high taxes.
- We need to increase the tax base to spread real estate taxes over more taxpayers

#### **Business (2 responses)**

- A few more commercial properties would be nice such as more restaurants and a grocery store
- Work with Village to enhance business/retail options in the Village to compliment residential in Town. Protect natural resources and water bodies and vistas.

#### **Schools (2 responses)**

- Consider who's paying the bills-we need more emphasis on our schools
- Try to have small growth each year. This will help the school enrollment. No growth is why they schools are in the shape they are in.

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

- A survey such as this should be given annually. The survey results should be published.
- Good Job!
- It is a very good thing to have this in place. Thank you for working on it.
- Merge with Village of Black Earth
- Some parts of California have cell towers that are a solitary brown pole with the array painted green, disguised as palm trees.
- There is a timely effort but many of us want to retain what we like here but find it difficult to do what is required
- To help the community stay alive. The roadways must expand and/or be improved.
- Town of Black Earth needs to either allow more growth or merge with Black Earth Village and surrounding townships.
- We live in one of the most beautiful townships in Dane County. If we don't work hard and make hard decisions for preserving this uniqueness, it will be lost forever.
- We need some growth, but with the prices the lots in town were priced (very high), people can not afford to put up a nice house after paying that much money for the land.

## Appendix C: Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

### TOWN OF BLACK EARTH PLANNING PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

#### QUALITY OF LIFE

1. From the following list, mark the **THREE** most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Black Earth? (● mark top three only)

19%	a. Affordable property	11%	i. Low crime rate
24%	b. Appearance of home site	55%	j. Natural beauty of area
13%	c. Close to employment	46%	k. Family roots /Near family & friends
5%	d. Close to lake/pond/stream	5%	l. Property tax level
22%	e. Close to Madison	5%	m. Quality of school district
4%	f. Close to recreational activities	57%	n. Rural atmosphere
4%	g. Community services	4%	o. Other, specify
16%	h. Farming opportunities		

2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the Town of Black Earth?	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
	23%	57%	19%	4%	5%

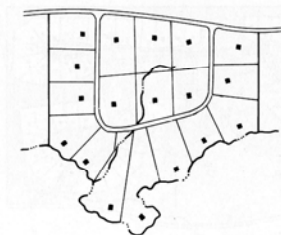
#### HOUSING

	Strongly Support	Support	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
3. Would you support multi-family dwellings (e.g. apartments) in the Town?	9%	33%	35%	22%
4. Do you support the Town's density policy of allowing one new home per 35 acres owned as of March 1, 1981?	36%	38%	18%	8%

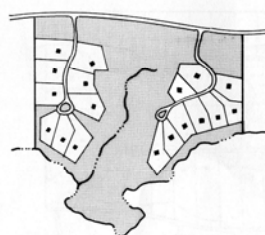
5. Traditionally rural housing developments have been designed on large lots as in the diagram on the left below. An alternative layout for rural housing is the “*cluster*” concept, which has smaller lots and permanently preserved open space as in the diagram on the right below. What position should the Town take relative to *clustered* designs?

Encourage Traditional Design	Remain Neutral	Encourage <i>Cluster</i> Design
16%	28%	56%

Traditional Design



*Cluster* Design



## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

- | 6. The Town should limit development: | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| a. On agricultural land               | 49%            | 25%   | 17%      | 9%                |
| b. On ridge tops                      | 35%            | 29%   | 28%      | 8%                |
| c. In the middle of a woods or forest | 26%            | 28%   | 36%      | 10%               |
| d. On steep and erosive slopes        | 59%            | 25%   | 11%      | 6%                |
7. If development were to take place in what order would you prefer the development to happen, first (mark ①), second (mark ②), third (mark ③), fourth (mark ④).

Land type	①	②	③	④
a. Agricultural land	25%	15%	21%	39%
b. Ridge tops	24%	35%	28%	13%
c. Middle of a woods or forest	36%	31%	21%	12%
d. Steep and erosive slopes	12%	14%	23%	51%

## **AGRICULTURE/LAND USE**

- |  |                        |                         |                 |                         |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 8. Should there be a <i>purchase of development rights (PDR)</i> program in the Town?                            | Yes<br>62%             | No<br>38%               |                 |                         |
| 9. Do you think <i>transfer of development rights (TDR)</i> among property owners should be allowed in the Town? | 55%                    | 45%                     |                 |                         |
| 10. Should the following types of large-scale livestock/poultry operations be allowed in the Town?               | Yes                    | No                      |                 |                         |
| a. 1000 or more cattle   | 19%                    | 81%                     |                 |                         |
| b. 5000 or more hogs   | 13%                    | 87%                     |                 |                         |
| c. 1 million or more poultry   | 11%                    | 89%                     |                 |                         |
| 11. How many acres of land do you own in the Town of Black Earth?  |                        |                         |                 |                         |
| 1% a. Not a land owner in the Town   | 14% c. 11 to 35 acres  | 18% e. 101 to 300 acres |                 |                         |
| 40% b. 10 acres or less  | 17% d. 36 to 100 acres | 0% f. Over 300 acres    |                 |                         |
| 12. If you own land in the Town of Black Earth, what are its primary uses? (● mark all that apply)               |                        |                         |                 |                         |
| 14% a. Farming by family   | 10%                    | e. Non-farm business    |                 |                         |
| 17% b. Farming by non-family   | 25%                    | f. Crops                |                 |                         |
| 27% c. Open land (wetland, woodland, Conservation Reserve Program, etc.)   | 14%                    | g. Livestock            |                 |                         |
| 63% d. Non-farm residence  |                        |                         |                 |                         |
| 13. The Town <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> should take into account possible future demand for feed and fuel crops.  | Strongly Agree<br>32%  | Agree<br>52%            | Disagree<br>11% | Strongly Disagree<br>5% |

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- |   |     |     |
|---|-----|-----|
| 14. Should the Town consider allowing the following types of development: | Yes | No  |
| a. Commercial development?  | 64% | 36% |
| b. Industrial development?  | 42% | 58% |
| c. Other?, specify _____  | 51% | 49% |

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (cont.)**

15. Should the Town consider commercial zoning applications (under limited conditions) along:	Yes	No
a. State highways?	81%	19%
b. County roads?	53%	47%
c. Town roads?	39%	61%

## **TRANSPORTATION**

16. How would you rate the condition of the Town roads?	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory	
	15%	72%	10%	3%	
17. How many <u>minutes</u> , one-way, is it normally from your home to your primary work place?					
0 – 9	10 – 14	15 - 19	20-29	30-44	45+
38%	7%	7%	18%	24%	7%
18. What is the best way to get commuters to Madison and back from the outlying parts of Dane County? (● mark one only)					
35% a. Develop commuter or light rail transit on existing tracks or abandoned rail right-of-way					
11% b. Extension of Madison Metro bus lines					
26% c. Expansion of the highway system					
28% d. Car/van pool					
1% e. Other					

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

19. When growth or development requires road and infrastructure improvements in the Town, how should they be funded? (● mark one only)					
12% a. Town	80% c. Developer				
3% b. Property owner	5% d. Other, specify				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
20a. The placement of communication towers should be regulated by the Town.	36%	49%	11%	4%	
20b. The Town should try to influence the location of power lines.	38%	49%	9%	3%	
20c. The Town should try to influence the location of other utilities, specify _____	31%	54%	12%	3%	
20d. Should the Town control <i>light pollution</i> ?	39%	38%	20%	3%	
21. How important is it for the Town to seek agreements with neighboring jurisdictions on future land use, public services, and annexations.	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
	42%	47%	4%	3%	4%

## **GENERAL PLANNING ISSUES**

22. The Town should continue to support the following goals from the original land use plan and include them in the new <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> .	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Preserve active farmland	58%	33%	6%	3%
b. Preserve agricultural opportunities	50%	39%	8%	3%
c. Control non-agricultural development	39%	37%	19%	5%
d. Protect the environment, natural resources, and natural beauty	61%	32%	6%	1%
e. Preserve the rural character of the Town	51%	38%	9%	2%
f. Avoid public expenditures for urban development	47%	38%	11%	3%

22g. What additional goals would you like to see added to the *Comprehensive Plan*?

See Appendix B

23. The Town should consider the following in the development of the <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Merging with other municipalities	20%	44%	24%	11%
b. Merging of Black Earth Fire District with Village of Mazomanie Fire Department	34%	45%	15%	6%
c. Expansion of Highway 14	25%	43%	20%	12%
d. Developing <i>cooperative boundary agreements</i> with neighboring jurisdictions	19%	73%	4%	3%
e. Developing <i>intergovernmental service agreements</i>	22%	63%	11%	4%

24. If you could change one thing about the Town of Black Earth, what would it be?

See Appendix B

25. Other comments about land use and *comprehensive planning* in the Town:

See Appendix B

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Please answer the following questions about yourself. All personal and individual information will remain confidential. Your responses will be combined with those from other participants for statistical analysis only.

26. Gender:	Male	Female	27. Age:	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
	52%	48%		0%	2%	17%	32%	24%	25%
28. Employment Status:	Employed full-time	Self employed	Unemployed	Employed part-time	Retired			Other	
	45%	20%	3%	7%	24%			6%	
29. Which of the following best describes your residential status in the Town of Black Earth?	Resident Landowner	Renter	Non-Resident Landowner	Other					
	87%	0%	12%	4%					
30. If you are a Town of Black Earth resident, how long have you lived in the Town?	Not a Resident	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	
	9%	0%	12%	15%	13%	9%	10%	32%	

### **Thanks for completing the survey!**

Please return the completed survey in the postage-paid envelope provided to:

*Survey Research Center*  
 124 Regional Development Institute  
 University of Wisconsin - River Falls  
 410 S. 3rd St.  
 River Falls, WI 54022-9989