

Town of Emerald Land Use Survey Spring 2006

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Executive Summary

- A substantial response rate (64%) to the Town of Emerald Land Use Survey provides results with strong statistical properties. Non-response and sample bias do not appear to be significant issues for this survey.
- The small town, rural atmosphere, natural beauty and surroundings, and being near family and friends are the primary reasons people choose to live in the Town of Emerald. The responses to questions throughout the survey suggest that residents are interested in preserving the physical characteristics that drew them to the Town in the first place.
- Similar percentages of those in the sample have lived in the Town for fewer than 10 years (45 percent) and more than 11 years (55 percent).
- Many respondents (45 percent) define themselves as non-farm residents. The second most common description was a farm land owner (36 percent). Only 3 percent define themselves as renters.
- There is a strong and consistent sentiment expressed that landowners should have some restrictions on how much of their land they will be allowed to develop.
- A majority of respondents believe it is either very important or important that the Town of Emerald develop a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development.
- Respondents were generally satisfied with the overall road network and road conditions in the Town.
- Agricultural based businesses (agriculture production and agriculture services) were the most strongly favored types of economic-business development respondents wished to encourage.
- Over half of survey respondents believe that land values in the Town are increasing at too high of a rate.
- A strong majority (94 percent) are in favor of farm land being used for agricultural use. Twenty-three percent of respondents believe that productive farm land should be allowed to be used for any purpose.
- Respondents overwhelmingly (92%) consider the Town of Emerald to be a rural area.

Purpose of Survey

The Town of Emerald Plan Commission chose to work with Jim Janke, St. Croix County University of Wisconsin Extension Educator and the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls to survey Town households regarding their opinions about key land use issues. The SRC would like to give special thanks to Barbara Nelson, Francis Klatt, and René Speer and the rest of the Emerald Plan Commission for their input into the survey process.

Survey Methods

During January and February, 2006, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls mailed surveys to 382 households in the Town of Emerald. Two weeks after the initial mailing, postcards were mailed to those from whom we had not received a completed questionnaire. Two weeks after the post card, a second questionnaire was sent to remaining non-respondents. The SRC received a total of 246 completed surveys for a 64 percent response rate, which is a very high level of response. Given this response rate and the 2000 Census estimate of 489 adults, the estimates in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 4.4 percent with 95 percent confidence. In short, the sample should provide highly accurate statistical results.

Most surveys have to be concerned with “non-response bias.” Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who don’t return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. Statisticians generally argue that if the survey response rate is 70 percent, non-response bias is unlikely to be an issue. Given the nearly 65 percent response rate achieved in the Town of Emerald survey, non-response bias is unlikely to be a problem and the results reported should accurately reflect the opinions of the citizens of the town. In addition, the SRC performed the statistical analysis described in Appendix A to test for non-response bias and, based on these results, we conclude that non-response bias is not a concern for this sample.

In addition to the numeric questions, respondents provided a number of written comments. A total of 118 individual comments were compiled by the SRC from the surveys. A complete listing of comments can be found in Appendix B. The survey instrument, with responses by question, is included in Appendix C to this report.

Profile of Survey Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic features of the people who responded to the land use survey. We have also included, when comparable data is available, information from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. The sample contains a disproportionate number of males. Males outnumber females in the Town by a slight amount (52% percent male, 48% percent female) according to the 2000 Census. This raises the prospect of sample bias if opinions of males and females differ in systematic and significant ways. The SRC tested to see if men and women have significantly different opinions about land use issues and with very few exceptions, no statistical differences exist. Women are more likely to report that senior transportation services/options are not adequate in the Town. Women are more supportive of home based business opportunities but less supportive of agriculture production and agriculture service businesses. Fewer women report having zero children (under 18) in their households than do men. The SRC concludes that sample bias based on gender is not an issue for this sample.

Table 1: Demographics							
Gender	Count	Male	Female				
Sample	204	65%	35%				
Census	691	52%	48%				
Age	Count	<25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 ⁺
Sample	227	1%	12%	23%	29%	19%	16%
Census (18 ⁺)	489	10%	13%	18%	16%	10%	7%
Employment	Count	Full-Time	Part-Time	Un-employed	Self Employed	Retired	Other
Sample	222	56%	6%	0%	19%	17%	1%
Census	533	75%		2%	14%	23%	
Income – household	Count	<\$15,000	\$15,001-24,999	\$25,000-49,999	\$50,000-74,999	\$75,000-99,999	\$100,000 ⁺
Sample	209	3%	8%	24%	35%	17%	12%
Census	238	4%	14%	34%	23%	14%	11%
Residence	Count	Non-Resident Land Owner	Resident (non-farm)	Renter	Farm Land Owner	Other	
Sample	229	12%	45%	3%	36%	4%	
Length of Residency	Count	< 5 years	5-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41 ⁺ years
Sample	211	15%	30%	15%	13%	11%	16%

In terms of the age of respondents, the sample is older than would have been expected from the Census. Those under 35 are under-represented in the sample. Further, statistical tests indicate that those under 35 hold views that are significantly different from those over 35. We found 15 variables with statistically significant differences between the mean responses of these two groups of Emerald respondents (<35 and 35+) out of 88 variables tested. Younger respondents are more supportive of residential housing development growth and less satisfied with township staff and elected officials but they are also more inclined to have no opinion about other community facilities and services (recycling programs and ambulance service.) Younger respondents also have a higher number of children (under 18) living in their households. Rather than attempting to adjust the data to account for the under-representation of young adults, age-related differences will be noted as they occur in the analysis to follow.

No one reported being unemployed and more than one-tenth (12%) of the respondents reported incomes in excess of \$100,000 per year. According to the 2000 census, the median household income in the Town of Emerald was \$47,500. In short, there is a relatively close match between the 2006 sample and 2000 Census data with respect to the income distribution in the Town.

A little less than one-half of the respondents consider themselves non-farm residents and 12% are non-resident land owners. Most respondents have lived in the Town for a relatively long time; over half have lived in Emerald Town for 11+ years.

Quality of Life

Respondents were asked to identify the three most important reasons they choose to live in the Town of Emerald. Table 2 summarizes their responses. The table shows the percentage who rated the item as their most important

	First	Second	Third
Count	234	229	227
Small town/rural lifestyle	28%	25%	20%
Natural beauty/surroundings	14%	16%	13%
Near family and friends	13%	7%	10%
Affordable housing	11%	5%	2%
Near job	8%	8%	11%
Property taxes	6%	9%	4%
Other	5%	1%	3%
Cost of home	4%	4%	6%
Low crime rate	4%	9%	12%
Quality schools	3%	5%	4%
Historical significance	1%	0%	1%
Proximity to Twin Cities	1%	5%	7%
Recreational opportunities	1%	2%	5%
Township services	1%	1%	1%
Appearance of homes	0.5%	3%	1%
Cultural/community events	0%	0%	0%

reason (e.g. 28 percent said that small town/rural lifestyle is the most important reason for choosing to live in the Town of Emerald), the percent who said that item was the second most important reason (small town/rural lifestyle was selected by 25 percent of the 229 who answered this part of the question), and the third most important (20 percent of the 227 respondents identified small town/rural lifestyle). Clearly, people choose to live in the Town primarily because of its small town atmosphere and rural lifestyle, natural beauty and surroundings, and being near family and friends. Specific written comments also included preferences for having elbow room; residents like large lots and less traffic.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Respondents' opinions about natural and cultural resources issues are summarized in Table 3 and show a strong inclination to protect resources in the Town. Respondents are particularly supportive of protecting groundwater (97 percent considered this very important or important) and farmland (91 percent deemed this very important or important). More than three-quarters of the respondents are in favor of protecting all the natural resources asked about in the survey. In addition, written comments from respondents included several stressing the importance of protecting the Town of Emerald's clean air and hunting/fishing.

	Count	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
Groundwater	240	78%	19%	0.5%	1%	3%
Farmland	240	58%	33%	4%	3%	3%
Woodlands	239	49%	42%	4%	2%	4%
Open space	238	48%	39%	7%	3%	4%
Wildlife habitat	238	46%	43%	6%	1%	3%
Creek corridors	239	34%	47%	8%	4%	7%
Prairie land/grasslands	239	32%	46%	10%	5%	6%
Wetlands	238	30%	50%	12%	3%	5%
Other	15	73%	7%	7%	0%	13%

Housing/Development

Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with respect to the need for additional housing units of different types. As Table 4 indicates, there is a preference for single family housing by Town of Emerald respondents. Sixty-two percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition that Town of Emerald should promote more single-family houses. Senior housing was also a high housing priority, 43% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that more senior housing is needed in the Town. Younger respondents (<35) are more supportive of more housing subdivisions than any other age group. Less than one-quarter of respondents feel that apartment complexes, condominiums, seasonal and recreational homes, housing subdivisions, and single wide mobile homes should be promoted. The results say that only single family housing is favored by a majority of residents.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Single family housing	232	21%	41%	16%	10%	11%
Senior housing	237	8%	35%	18%	20%	18%
Double wide mobile homes	232	4%	28%	22%	27%	20%
Apartment, duplexes	236	3%	12%	30%	40%	15%
Condominiums	239	3%	8%	30%	47%	13%
Pre-fabricated homes	232	3%	31%	21%	22%	24%
Housing subdivisions	232	3%	15%	23%	45%	14%
Single wide mobile homes	237	2%	19%	23%	37%	19%
Mobile home parks	240	1%	5%	24%	59%	11%
Seasonal and recreational homes	238	1%	19%	33%	28%	19%

Cluster design housing (smaller individual lots with more communal open space) is preferred over traditional design housing (larger lot sizes) by a majority of Town residents; about 61% of all respondents prefer cluster design vs. traditional design at 40%. Non-farm residents had the strongest preference for cluster design at 67%. Nearly half, 48%, of non-resident land owners prefer traditional design housing.

Over 50% of respondents disagree with the statement, “There should be no more housing development in the Town of Emerald,” (20% strongly disagree). As Table 5 emphasizes, over one-third of respondents also disagree with the statement, “Residential growth is desirable in the Town of Emerald.” There is a high degree of negative correlation between the results of the two statements: the respondents that disagree or strongly disagree that there should be no more housing development in the town of Emerald, generally strongly agree or agree that residential growth is desirable; respondents that strongly agree or agree that there should be no more housing development in the Town also generally disagree or strongly disagree that residential growth is desirable in the Town. So, the results are consistent in that those who want housing development believe it is desirable for the Town; those that do not support housing development believe it is undesirable.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
There should be no more housing development in the Town of Emerald.	230	18%	17%	31%	20%	13%
Residential growth is desirable in the Town of Emerald.	233	11%	38%	20%	18%	14%

Over two-thirds (69%) of younger respondents (<35) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that there should be no more housing development in the Town and that age group also had the highest percentage of respondents agreeing that residential growth is desirable in the Town.

Respondent comments about development issues indicate a sharp divide on this issue and include:

“No more developments!”

“Don’t over manage landowners. Land owners should be able to decide how to use their land.”

Agriculture and Land Use

Respondents almost unanimously believe that productive farmland should be used primarily for agricultural purposes (Table 6). Although 39% of respondents felt that productive farm land could be used for residential uses, over one-half (53%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this sentiment. Only 14 respondents reported that

	Count	Percent in Agreement	Percent in Disagreement
Agricultural use	235	94%	3%
Residential use	226	39%	53%
Any use	228	23%	68%

they strongly agree that productive farm land should be used for any purpose. Based on the final line in Table 6, the residents as a whole seem to see the need for and embrace some land use planning.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with Town land use regulations and enforcement. Table 7 summarizes the responses of the sample. Approximately one-third of respondents had no opinion of town use regulations or the enforcement of land use regulations (31% and 35%, respectively). This suggests the need for on-going educational efforts to increase the awareness of land use policies in the town. Nearly twice as many residents, who have opinions, are satisfied with land use regulations and enforcement as are dissatisfied.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Satisfied with land use regulations	235	8%	36%	18%	8%	31%
Satisfied with enforcement of land use regulations	237	8%	32%	18%	7%	35%

Table 8 on the following page, summarizes respondent opinions about a variety of

potential land use issues. More than three-quarters of the respondents strongly agree (42%) or agree (34%) that fees should be imposed on new private development to pay for the added costs of public services such as roads, highways, emergency services, etc. Fifty-five percent of respondents voice support for owners of farm land to be compensated if they choose not to develop their farm land for uses other than farming. However, forty-six percent of the respondents are opposed to using tax monies for this purpose.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Fees should be imposed on new private development to pay for the added costs of public services	237	42%	34%	14%	6%	4%
Owners of farm land should be compensated if they choose not to develop their farm land for uses other than farming	239	24%	31%	23%	11%	12%
Land values are increasing at too high of a rate in the Town	239	20%	32%	22%	8%	18%
Tax monies should be used to compensate farmers that do not develop their farm land for uses other than farming	236	17%	23%	34%	12%	14%
Conflicts between farms and neighbors are a concern in the Town	238	13%	25%	33%	16%	13%
More taxes should be paid each year to preserve open space in the Town	237	3%	20%	44%	22%	11%

Respondents were asked if land values are increasing at too high of a rate in the town. Respondents came down firmly on both sides of this statement! Fifty-two percent either strongly agree or agree that land values are increasing at too high a rate while thirty percent disagree with this opinion. Eighteen percent had no opinion on increased land values.

Table 9 indicates that Town respondents generally feel that land owners should be allowed to subdivide their land into housing lots for their children (86 percent agree or strongly agree). However, respondents were also asked if land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots (no designation as to who would live on the land) and that question garnered a forty-six percent disagreement (versus 47 percent agreement). A majority (64%) support some restrictions on how much land owners should be allowed to develop. In contrast over one-third of respondents state that land owners should be allowed to develop land any way they want.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Be able to subdivide their land into housing lots for their children	238	33%	53%	5%	2%	7%
Have some restrictions on how much of their land they would be allowed to develop	239	22%	42%	21%	11%	5%
Be allowed to develop land any way they want	235	14%	24%	39%	19%	5%
Be able to subdivide their land into housing lots	238	14%	33%	30%	16%	6%

Transportation

Respondents in the Town of Emerald are generally satisfied with the overall road network (roads, streets, and

	Count	Percent in Agreement	Percent in Disagreement
Overall road network meets needs	242	84%	13%
Road and street conditions are acceptable	242	80%	17%
Senior transportation services/options are adequate	242	25%	18%

highways) in the area; nearly 84 percent believe the road network meets the needs of Town residents. Eighty percent believe the road and street conditions are acceptable for present needs. Table 10 indicates that senior transportation services/options are seen as inadequate by some respondents. Eighteen percent of respondents do not agree that this service is meeting the needs of senior residents. Over one-fourth (27%) of survey respondents in the 55-64 age group felt that senior transportation services and options are inadequate in the Town of Emerald.

Community Facilities and Services

Emerald citizens were asked to rate the quality of various Town services. Table 11 summarizes their opinions. In many instances, a relatively high percentage of respondents had no opinion about the quality of town services (between one-quarter and one-third of all respondents had no opinion about all Town services other than snow removal and recycling programs).

	Count	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	No Opinion
Snow removal	235	27%	60%	3%	0.5%	10%
Recycling programs	237	22%	56%	6%	1%	16%
Town staff	233	16%	50%	3%	1%	31%
Town's elected officials	235	15%	51%	5%	1%	28%
Town committees	235	11%	46%	8%	0%	36%
Ambulance service	235	10%	46%	10%	0.5%	33%
Fire protection	232	10%	44%	13%	1%	32%
Public facilities (e.g. Town Hall)	232	10%	50%	13%	3%	23%
Park and recreation facilities	232	9%	42%	11%	5%	33%
Police protection	234	6%	48%	13%	2%	31%
Storm water management	234	6%	39%	6%	1%	47%

Table 11 indicates that none of the Town services inquired about is seen by a majority of the respondents as an issue that needs to be more fully addressed. Indeed, ten of the eleven items had a majority of respondents rating the service as either very good or good.

Combining very good and good ratings, the top three Town services were: snow removal, recycling programs, and the Town staff. Similarly, combining the poor and very poor ratings, the top three in terms of lower ratings were: public facilities, park and recreation facilities, and police protection. It should be noted that none of the services earned more than a 16% combined poor and very poor rating. Younger respondents (<35) are less satisfied with township staff and elected officials but they are also more inclined to have no opinion about other community facilities and services (such as recycling programs and ambulance service).

Economic Development

Table 12 summarizes the opinions of the Town of Emerald’s citizens with respect to a number of development management alternatives. They have been arranged in descending order of the percentage of respondents who said they “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement. There is a remarkable degree of consistency across these growth management issues. In all cases, a majority of respondents were supportive of the Town taking steps to manage growth, and in all cases about one-quarter “strongly agree” that such initiatives are needed and between 40 and 50 percent just “agree” that they are. The most popular suggestion was for the Town to manage commercial growth (72 percent agree or strongly agree). Approximately two-thirds of respondents feel that the Town should also take steps to manage industrial and residential growth. Managing population density was supported by 62% of respondents.

Residents who have lived in the Town for twenty-one to thirty years are the most supportive of these management options. The longest term residents (50+ years) are the least supportive of these management issues.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Commercial Growth	236	23%	49%	11%	6%	11%
Industrial Growth	236	25%	46%	12%	6%	11%
Residential Growth	239	24%	41%	15%	8%	12%
Population Density	238	22%	40%	14%	8%	15%

	Count	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
Develop a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development	240	66%	19%	14%
Rate the importance of the following to the Town of Emerald	Count	Very Important or Important	Unimportant or Very Unimportant	No Opinion
Develop a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development	237	74%	16%	10%

Table 13 highlights the level of support respondents have for the Town to develop a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development.

The results summarized in Table 13 are consistent with a theme that runs throughout this analysis. The question of using public policy decisions to limit how land is used in the Town of Emerald has been asked in a variety of ways and the answers given have been quite

consistent. In Table 6, residents were asked if the Town should allow productive farmland to be used for any use and 68 percent said “no”. In Table 9 residents were asked if landowners should be allowed to develop their land in anyway they wanted and 58 percent said “no”. In Table 12 majorities in excess of 60 percent said the town should take steps to manage all manner of growth in the Town. Again in Table 13, two-thirds of all residents said that a land use plan is needed to designate the venue for different types of development. When asked to rate the importance of developing a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development, almost three-fourths of respondents stated that this type of land use plan was either very important or important. Ten percent of respondents had no opinion. All of these responses suggest that residents are interested in using public policy to preserve the characteristics that led them to choose Emerald as their place of residence – the small town/rural atmosphere and the Town’s natural beauty.

Table 14 suggests that the types of economic or business development favored by a majority of Town residents falls within a fairly narrow band of enterprises. There is strong sentiment to build upon the traditional agricultural base of the Town. Agricultural production (87 percent), agricultural service businesses (74 percent), and direct farm marketing (64 percent), all have widespread support in the Town. The only other businesses of which a majority of Town residents are supportive are home-based businesses (79 percent), wind power generation (73 percent), and storage businesses (51 percent).

On the other end of the spectrum, fewer than 40 percent are supportive of industrial or manufacturing development (38 percent), campgrounds (36 percent), golf courses (38 percent), gravel pits (37 percent), dog boarding and kennels (32 percent), and junk yards (10 percent). Younger respondents (<35) are more supportive of convenience stores/gas stations and less supportive of golf courses.

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Ag Production	239	44%	43%	3%	1%	10%
Wind power generators	238	28%	45%	7%	3%	16%
Ag service businesses	234	23%	51%	7%	1%	17%
Direct farm marketing	234	20%	44%	8%	0.5%	27%
Home based businesses	239	16%	63%	4%	2%	15%
Convenience stores/Gas stations	237	10%	38%	23%	12%	17%
Industrial/Manufacturing	235	9%	29%	29%	18%	15%
Composting sites	235	6%	38%	29%	9%	18%
Retail/Commercial	236	6%	37%	18%	21%	19%
Campgrounds	238	6%	30%	30%	10%	23%
Storage businesses	236	5%	46%	18%	13%	18%
Golf courses	237	5%	33%	25%	16%	21%
Gravel pits	236	4%	33%	28%	9%	25%
Dog boarding and kennels	236	3%	29%	30%	9%	28%
Junk yards	237	2%	8%	32%	45%	14%

Comments from respondents about economic/business development include:

“We like the Township of Emerald as it is – encourage farming and discourage business development.”

“Emerald should have no more extra large dairies and the only industrial/manufacturing development that occurs should be done ONLY in an industrial park.”

Communications

Respondents were asked how the Town could most effectively provide information to its residents. Direct

	Count	Percentage
Direct Mailings	242	79%
Newsletters	242	55%
Public Meetings	242	26%
Newspaper Articles	242	24%
Internet	242	12%
Other	242	4%

mailing and newsletters were the top two choices. The results of their opinions are summarized in Table 15. Less desirable forms of communication are town meetings, newspaper articles, and the internet. Individual comments from respondents also suggested communicating through the telephone and e-mail.

General Issues

Respondents were asked what they consider the Town of Emerald to be: a rural area, a bedroom community, a suburban community, or something 'other' than those choices. Table 16 reports the results. Overwhelmingly, respondents describe the Town as a rural area. One respondent in the 'other' category characterized the town as "a successful mixture." Additional comments include:

Table 16: The Town of Emerald is a	Count	Percentage
Rural area	243	92%
Bedroom community	243	5%
Suburban community	243	0.5%
Other	243	2%

"The rural area should stay rural. It is getting too populated to enjoy the peace and serenity of country living."

"Maintain the rural farmland appearance!"

"Attempt to always keep a rural feel."

"We'd like the township of Emerald to stay rural."

Conclusions

A clear theme in the responses to the Town of Emerald Land Use Survey is that respondents want to protect natural resources in the Town. Respondents enjoy the rural lifestyle in the Town of Emerald and most agree that some restrictions should be placed on how much land owners should be allowed to develop.

- The most commonly cited reasons for choosing to live in the Town are its small town atmosphere and rural lifestyle. Cultural/community events only received one response.
- Respondents expressed particularly strong support for protecting natural resources in the Town. All eight resources mentioned in the survey had at least three-fourths of the respondents listing their protection as either very important or important.
- More single family housing is the housing choice most preferred by respondents; more mobile homes, apartments, and condominiums are less desired.
- Over one-third of respondents believe that there should be no more housing development in the Town.
- A majority of respondents support some restrictions on land developments.
- An overwhelming majority (86%) of respondents believe that land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots for their children. When no designation is made as to who would live on those lots, only 47% believe that land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots.
- Respondents are generally satisfied with the overall road network and road and street conditions in the Town.
- Ten of the eleven Town services mentioned had a majority of respondents rating the quality of services as either very good or good.
- Agricultural based businesses (production or services) would be welcome additions to the Town according to survey results. Junk yards were the least desired type of business development.
- Of various development strategies mentioned, (managing population density, managing residential growth, managing industrial growth, and managing commercial growth) the most popular suggestion was for the Town to manage commercial growth (72% strongly agree or agree).
- Direct mailing and newsletters were the top two choices for the most effective ways the Town can provide information to its residents.
- Ninety-two percent of respondents describe the Town as a rural area.

Appendix A – Non-Response Bias Tests

Any survey has to be concerned with “non-response bias.” Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who don’t return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. For example, suppose non-respondents strongly agree that land values are increasing at too high of a rate in the Town of Emerald (Question 16), whereas most of those who returned their questionnaire disagree. In this case non-response bias would exist and the raw results would overstate concerns about high land values in Town of Emerald.

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, there were two mailings. The SRC took the responses to the second questionnaire (60 returned questionnaires) and compared them to the first mailing (186 responses).

We found very few statistically significant differences between the mean responses of these two groups of Town of Emerald respondents (Table A1). In addition, there was no pattern to the few (3 variables of 88 tested) for which statistical differences exist. For example, respondents to the first mailing generally agree that the protection of prairie land/grasslands is important which was question 2c in the questionnaire. Those who responded to the second mailing (a mean value of 1.19, where 1 = very important and 4 = very unimportant) feel somewhat more strongly about this issue than do first mailing responders (2.13). Because of the small number of significant differences, the SRC concludes that non-response bias is not a serious concern for this sample.

Variable	Mean First Mailing	Mean Subsequent Mailing	Statistical Significance
Q2c Importance of protecting prairie land/grasslands	2.13	1.19	0.026
Q3b More apartments/duplexes are needed in the Town	3.46	3.68	0.019
Q10 Land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots	2.60	2.86	0.044

Appendix B – Comments

Question 1 – Quality of Life

Identify which of the following items are the most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Emerald.

‘Other’ responses

- farming/farming community/farm land (5x)
- born and raised there/ born here 52 years ago/ raised in the area (4x)
- no close neighbors/no neighbors (2x)
- was a farmer
- cost of our land (1999)
- grew up on the farm
- elbow room
- family history
- large lot availability
- own property do not live there
- will too
- less traffic

Question 2 – Natural and Cultural Resources

Protection of:

‘Other’ responses

- clean air
- big sky
- space between homes (acreage)
- smells
- individual Property owner rights
- hunting/fishing
- no housing development
- limits on land use
- private property
- private domain
- rural lifestyle
- more farmland
- using you own land as you wish

Question 5 – Housing/Development

Would you prefer new housing built in the Township of Emerald to reflect a traditional design or a cluster design.

Please check either Option A or Option B (not both) to indicate your preference.

‘Miscellaneous’ responses

- neither/none (5x)
- no more developments!!

Question 23 – Economic Development

What types of economic/business development would you encourage?

‘Other’ responses

- quick food delivery
- blacktop roads
- Solar Power, Bio fuels
- auto salvage yard
- solar
- senior living options

Question 29 - Communication

Check the boxes of the two most effective ways the Town of Emerald could provide information to its residents.

‘Other’ responses

- e-mail (2x)
- phone

Question 31 – General Issues

Do you consider the Town of Emerald to be?

'Other' responses

- country
- a successful mixture
- unwelcomed
- farm for food production

Question 32 – Additional Comments

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Town of Emerald concerning land use and growth?

- need to pass an ordinance to have homeowners clean up their junk in their yards. Get rid of vacant mobile homes, limit amount of mobile homes in the township and have public campground/playground in the rural area
- I see no problem with mobile homes or double wide homes. I don't think the people of Emerald who are moving in with more money than the rest of us should be able to say what kind of house their neighbors have
- this land was sold to Pheasants Forever in January 2005
- the rural area should stay rural. It is getting too populated to enjoy the peace and serenity of country living. It is becoming a neighborhood instead of living out in the country. If people have trouble with the farm noise, etc. then they don't belong in the country. I moved out here because it was quiet. I was not told I would have neighbors around me. I now have 3
- I would like to see land development if more people move in to be at least 20 acre plots
- (regarding #29) Must communicate better with township dwellers. Need new town hall, meeting center park area which could be combined (like Hudson township by Willow River Park, example) This is not a farming community anymore where everyone knows everyone's business. Need communication
- the township should encourage clean up of junk cars, junk machinery, and other items on farms or any residence in the township. Not only is this junk unsightly but gas, oil, etc. eventually leaks into our groundwater
- I don't feel you can tell a property owner what they can't do with their land after paying taxes on it for many years
- now is the time for developing a specific land use plan. Once the Stillwater bridge is built, Emerald should be prepared for an increase in growth
- maintain the Rural Farmland Appearance!
- land use plan not to designate location of development but, the amount of acres per development i.e.: 10 acres/house minimum
- hopefully keep things above board and no "sneaky" deals or "special consideration" to anyone
- the Planning of Emerald Township should be with responsible use of resources (conservation). That should benefit all citizens of every economic level
- farm, Residential Single Family
- people should have the right to build what they choose on the land they own
- focus on paving gravel roads-now! Ordinances concerning junk around existing home/farm sites
- concern over losing land via and takeover for other uses by you and private sectors 2. property taxes are way too high 3. would like to see limits but definite industrial growth to increase economic base in the area 4. would like to see land use subdivisions into no smaller than 40 acre parcels
- attempt to always keep a rural feel
- don't over manage landowners. Land owners should be able to decide how to use their land
- as long as you own land and are not harming the environment or creating a health hazard, you should be able to do as you wish with that land. Whether it is a farm, develop, etc.
- some development is fine- but please don't over develop it. We like the peace and quiet and low traffic. Although, people drive way to fast on the roads
- I moved from the city to get away from land use planning. What I do with my land is my business
- attempting to preserve farmland restricting a house to 20 acres will not work. The house is usually located on the parcel to render the remaining land difficult for a potential renter to operate the equipment efficiently. There definitely parts of the Town best suited for agriculture and other areas for housing. The Town should consider a Transfer of Developmental Rights concept. Always remember that added housing increases the cost of services and taxes will increase and not decrease
- it is very nice and well done, lets keep it that way
- people live here for the privacy and "elbow room" this community offers. We are all accountable to do our part to maintain those features. Greed should not be allowed to alter those features or it will recklessly alter this community to the detriment of all
- agriculture should be the priority-an industrial area could be designated near the town for commercial growth. Housing should not be allowed on farm land areas. Houses could be put in woodlots or near land not suitable for farming
- I don't think the board should be able to be misled into land use decision based on pressure from certain self centered people
- we'd like the township of Emerald to stay rural

- I'm sure this is a waste of time and money to fill out this survey. The officials of Emerald do what they want, when they want. We all saw that with the "Emerald Dairy"!
- I live in this community because it's small, rural, and safe. I have no interest in seeing beautiful, undisturbed land developed into another cluster of homes. I don't want to see the farmland disappear and the animals forced out of their homes!
- I was so disappointed that the township allowed Vrieze to build his huge dairy operation. Yes, it is in a different township than his other one at Baldwin, but the two dairy operations are too close. I get odors from both dairy operations depending on the wind direction. How does this operation affect the quality of the ground water? No more large dairy operations, please! It is important to plan, plan, plan!!
- we need to maintain the integrity of the landscape - we can't make more land once we overpopulate or destroy what we have now
- wooded land should be split up for housing development
- land restorations should not be put on land owners
- land owners should have the right to the use of their land
- ambulance, Fire and police response times are too long. Emerald should have no more extra large dairies and the only industrial/manufacturing development that occurs should be done ONLY in an industrial park
- PLEASE do not regulate land use. This is my primary investment and retirement strategy. I want to be able to lot and sell with out restrictions. The township should focus on making our area more attractive in industry to provide jobs for our kids. Growth is NOT a problem
- I believe in land owner rights. But greed is a factor that is hard to control. It has become more evident in the past 10 years-the old life style is gone. There is no good solution I am afraid if this becomes a developed township I will lot off my land and move out! No development looks good-Montana looks good
- don't restrict land use of township landowners
- I am pleased to be a resident in the Township. I like things the way they are
- a farmer works hard all his life and pays taxes- he should be able to sell his land the way her wants! This is probably the money he is going to retire on! Who gives the Town of Emerald the right to limit the farmer on sale of his OWN land or farm! This is his FREE CHOICE as a tax paying U.S. citizen!
- gravel roads need to be in better shape. Need more black top roads
- the government should not control the use of land owned by the people
- I would like to see the township not allow any more farming to be developed like Emerald Dairy
- do not allow any more dairy factory farms or any other large factory farms where they use manure lagoons
- there should be a notice sent out about when the town board meets and where the planning commission meets
- we have only lived in Emerald for three years. Would like to see a limit on Farm land used for housing on small lots. Too many septic systems in a small area
- the method of zoning currently in practice in use is detrimental to creating a true community of people and of families. The practice creates zones of only bedroom communities, with no true community, and it destroys the fabric of small towns in favor of generation cities of mass congestion in people, traffic, crime, in an unmovable manner. This quantitative method of dissecting a community into three lifeless or non connecting parts of ____ should be around for a qualitative method that seeks to build a true community that can be self ____ and urban and of families. Qualitative methods families live close to work, school, grocer, shopping. Residences and business are built around the family and community. Current model ____ families and community to build township businesses ____ wooded space, _____ and the very fabric of a true community.
- we would like lower house taxes
- we have St. Croix County zoning and state and federal highway rules now. Enough already.
- we like the township of Emerald as it is encourage farming and discourage business development
- please keep me informed and updated
- don't let land be developed just because the township thinks it will bring in more tax dollars. It costs the township money also, paving new roads, maintenance of roads, road signs, and more. The land owner usually regrets selling the land to a developer, and the only person who makes money is the developer, who is no where to be found when all the lots are sold, because he is some where there are no there homes around his multi-million mansion!!! thank you
- I'll do with my land as I see fit
- I have never lived in Township of Emerald
- senior living options will be the next big housing boom we should embrace this area of growth and services
- leave it the way it is
- to be able to cross creeks and wetland property to get to landlocked farmland on the other side
- our land is our savings account; we ought to be able to use it as we wish and not have people who don't own any land make us leave ours alone for them to look at
- 4a. Housing only if 5-10 acres apart, 10. within reason 5-10 acres, 23e. Corner of G & 63
- people have worked all their life to have their land they should have the right to do with it as they please.
- don't use prime farmland to build on!

- keep it the way it is - Houses on large lots single family homes
- small town environment is desirable for Emerald township
- are the opinions of farm land owners given more consideration than renter and other residents? They should be
- we need to have our own zoning regulations not the counties (St. Croix County). Example. County has 2 acre lots for homes; I think we need at least 5 acre lots to build on. It's very important not to saturate our rural area with greedy private developers which make big bucks on our farmers land. They reap the rewards and then move on, and here we sit with housing developments to look at

Question 35 – Demographics

Employment status:

'Other' responses

- student
- stay at home mom

Question 36 – Demographics

Please choose the one definition that best describes your Residency:

'Other' responses

- resident and farm land owner (3x)
- hobby farm (3x)
- process of purchasing non-farm land

Appendix C – Survey Instrument – Responses by Question

TOWN OF EMERALD LAND USE SURVEY

QUALITY OF LIFE:

1. From the following list, please identify which of the following items, a – p, are the most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Emerald. **Place the letter of your choice next to the space allotted.** (Please list top **three** only)

	Most Important	2nd Most Important	3rd Most Important		Most Important	2nd Most Important	3rd Most Important
a. Affordable housing	10.7%	4.8%	1.8%	i. Near job (employment opportunity)	7.7%	8.3%	11.0%
b. Appearance of homes	0.4%	3.1%	1.3%	j. Property taxes	6.0%	9.2%	3.5%
c. Cost of home	4.3%	3.5%	6.2%	k. Proximity to Twin Cities (amenities)	0.9%	4.8%	7.0%
d. Cultural/Community events	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	l. Quality schools	3.0%	5.2%	3.5%
e. Historical significance	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	m. Recreational opportunities	0.9%	2.2%	4.8%
f. Low crime rate	4.3%	8.7%	12.3%	n. Small town atmosphere/Rural lifestyle	27.8%	24.9%	19.8%
g. Natural beauty/Surroundings	14.1%	16.2%	12.8%	o. Township services	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
h. Near family/friends	12.8%	6.6%	10.1%	p. Other – See Comments–Appendix B	4.7%	1.3%	2.6%

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES: We would like your opinion about the importance of natural and cultural resources in the Town of Emerald and surrounding area. **Check the box that most closely describes your perspective:**

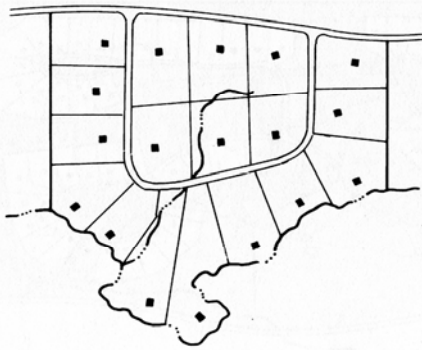
2. Protection of	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
a. farmland is . . .	57.5%	32.5%	4.2%	2.5%	3.3%
b. open space is . . .	47.9%	38.7%	6.7%	2.9%	3.8%
c. prairie land/grasslands is . . .	32.2%	46.4%	10.0%	5.0%	6.3%
d. creek corridors is . . .	33.9%	47.3%	8.4%	3.8%	6.7%
e. wetlands is . . .	30.3%	49.6%	11.8%	3.4%	5.0%
f. woodlands is . . .	48.5%	41.8%	3.8%	1.7%	4.2%
g. groundwater is . . .	77.5%	18.8%	0.4%	0.8%	2.5%
h. wildlife habitat is . . .	46.2%	43.3%	6.3%	1.3%	2.9%
i. other is : See Comments – Appendix B	73.3%	6.7%	6.7%	0.0%	13.3%

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

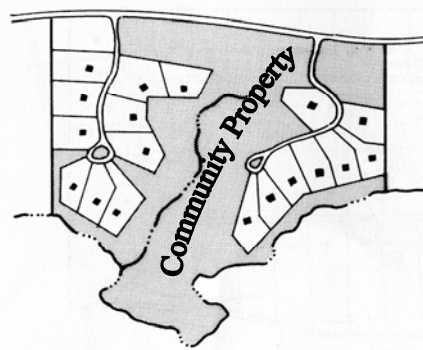
3. More of the following types of housing are needed in the Town of Emerald:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Single family housing	21.1%	40.9%	16.4%	10.3%	11.2%
b. Apartment, Duplexes	3.0%	12.3%	29.7%	40.3%	14.8%
c. Condominiums	2.9%	7.9%	29.7%	46.9%	12.6%
d. Mobile home parks	1.3%	5.0%	24.2%	58.8%	10.8%
e. Seasonal and recreational homes	0.8%	18.9%	33.2%	28.2%	18.9%
f. Senior housing	8.4%	35.0%	18.1%	20.3%	18.1%
g. Pre-fabricated homes	3.0%	30.6%	20.7%	21.6%	24.1%
h. Housing subdivisions	3.4%	15.1%	22.8%	44.8%	13.8%
i. Single wide mobile homes	2.1%	19.4%	23.2%	36.7%	18.6%
j. Double wide mobile homes	3.9%	27.6%	21.6%	27.2%	19.8%
4. a. There should be no more housing development in the Town of Emerald.	18.3%	17.4%	30.9%	20.4%	13.0%
b. Residential growth is desirable in the Town of Emerald.	10.7%	37.8%	20.2%	17.6%	13.7%

5. Would you prefer new housing built in the Town of Emerald to reflect a traditional design (Option A) or a cluster design (Option B)? **Please check either Option A or Option B (not both) below to indicate your preference.**
 See Comments – Appendix B

39.5% OPTION A



60.5% OPTION B



AGRICULTURE AND LAND USE:

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

6. We should allow productive farmland to be used for:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Agricultural use	72.3%	21.3%	3.0%	0.4%	3.0%
b. Residential use	5.3%	34.1%	32.3%	20.8%	7.5%
c. Any use	6.1%	17.1%	39.0%	28.9%	8.8%
7. Landowners should be allowed to develop land <u>any way they want.</u>	13.6%	24.3%	38.7%	18.7%	4.7%
8. Landowners should have some restrictions on <u>how much</u> of their land they would be allowed to develop.	21.8%	42.3%	20.5%	10.5%	5.0%
9. Land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots <i>for their children.</i>	32.8%	53.4%	5.0%	2.1%	6.7%
10. Land owners should be able to subdivide their land into housing lots.	14.3%	33.2%	30.3%	16.4%	5.9%
11. Owners of farm land should be compensated if they chose not to develop their farm land for uses other than farming.	23.8%	31.0%	22.6%	10.5%	12.1%
12. Tax monies should be used to compensate farmers that do not develop their farm land for uses other than farming.	16.5%	23.3%	34.3%	11.9%	14.0%
13. More taxes should be paid each year to preserve open space in the Town of Emerald.	3.0%	20.3%	44.3%	21.5%	11.0%
14. Conflicts between farms and neighbors (dust, noise, and odors) are a concern in the Town of Emerald.	13.4%	24.8%	32.8%	16.4%	12.6%
15. Fees should be imposed on new private development to pay for the added costs of public services such as roads, highways, emergency services, etc.	41.8%	33.8%	14.3%	6.3%	3.8%
16. Land values are increasing at too high of a rate in the Town of Emerald.	19.7%	32.2%	22.2%	8.4%	17.6%
17. I am satisfied with land use regulations in the Town of Emerald.	7.7%	35.7%	17.9%	7.7%	31.1%
18. I am satisfied with the enforcement of land use regulations in the Town of Emerald.	8.4%	32.1%	17.7%	6.8%	35.0%

TRANSPORTATION:

These questions ask your opinion about transportation issues in the Town of Emerald.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
19. The overall road network (roads, streets, and highways) in the Town of Emerald meets the needs of its citizens.	20.7%	62.8%	10.3%	2.9%	3.3%
20. Road and street conditions in the Town of Emerald are acceptable for present needs.	18.2%	62.0%	13.2%	3.3%	3.3%
21. Senior transportation services/options are adequate in the Town of Emerald.	5.8%	19.0%	14.9%	3.3%	57.0%

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES:

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

22. Rate the quality of the following services in the Town of Emerald:	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	No Opinion
a. Ambulance service	10.2%	46.0%	10.2%	0.4%	33.2%
b. Fire protection	10.3%	44.0%	13.4%	0.9%	31.5%
c. Public facilities (e.g. Town Hall)	10.3%	50.4%	12.5%	3.4%	23.3%
d. Park and recreation facilities	8.6%	41.8%	11.2%	5.2%	33.2%
e. Police protection	6.4%	47.9%	12.8%	2.1%	30.8%
f. Recycling programs	21.5%	55.7%	5.9%	1.3%	15.6%
g. Snow removal	27.2%	59.6%	2.6%	0.4%	10.2%
h. Storm water management	6.4%	39.3%	5.6%	1.3%	47.4%
i. Town staff	15.9%	49.8%	3.0%	0.9%	30.5%
j. Town's elected officials	14.9%	51.1%	5.1%	1.3%	27.7%
k. Town committees	10.6%	45.5%	7.7%	0.0%	36.2

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The following questions ask how you view economic development in the Town of Emerald.

23. What types of economic/business development would you encourage?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Ag production (crops and livestock)	43.5%	43.1%	2.9%	0.8%	9.6%
b. Ag service businesses	23.1%	51.3%	7.3%	1.3%	17.1%
c. Direct farm marketing	20.1%	44.0%	8.1%	0.4%	27.4%
d. Composting sites	6.0%	38.3%	28.5%	8.9%	18.3%
e. Convenience stores/Gas stations	10.1%	38.0%	23.2%	12.2%	16.5%
f. Campgrounds	6.3%	30.3%	30.3%	10.1%	23.1%
g. Dog boarding and kennels	3.4%	29.2%	30.1%	8.9%	28.4%
h. Golf courses	5.1%	32.9%	25.3%	16.0%	20.7%
i. Gravel pits	4.2%	33.1%	28.0%	9.3%	25.4%
j. Home based businesses	15.9%	63.2%	4.2%	2.1%	14.6%
k. Industrial/Manufacturing	9.4%	29.4%	28.9%	17.9%	14.5%
l. Junk yards	1.7%	7.6%	32.1%	45.1%	13.5%
m. Retail/Commercial	5.5%	36.9%	17.8%	21.2%	18.6%
n. Storage businesses	4.7%	46.2%	17.8%	13.1%	18.2%
o. Wind power generators	27.7%	44.5%	7.1%	2.9%	17.6%
p. Other: See Comments – Appendix B	62.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – cont.

The Town of Emerald should take steps to manage.....	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
24. Town Population Density	22.3%	40.3%	14.3%	8.4%	14.7%
25. Town Residential Growth	23.8%	41.0%	14.6%	8.4%	12.1%
26. Town Industrial Growth	25.4%	45.8%	11.9%	6.4%	10.6%
27. Town Commercial Growth	22.5%	49.2%	11.4%	5.5%	11.4%
28. The Town of Emerald should develop a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development.	21.3%	45.4%	10.4%	9.2%	13.8%

COMMUNICATION:

29. Check the boxes of the two most effective ways the Town of Emerald could provide information to its residents.

(Percentage is combination of respondents 1st and 2nd choices – example 2.9% of respondents picked the internet as their first choice and 9.4% picked the internet for their 2nd choice = 12.3% of respondents checked the internet).

78.5%	a. Direct Mailings	24%	e. Newspaper Articles
12.3%	b. Internet	4.2%	f. Other: See Comments – Appendix B
54.9%	c. Newsletters		g. Other:
26.1%	d. Public Meetings		

GENERAL ISSUES:

The following question asks how you view select general issues facing the Town of Emerald.

Rate the importance of the following to the Town of Emerald.	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
30. The Town of Emerald should develop a land use plan that would designate the location of different types of development.	30.0%	43.5%	9.3%	7.2%	10.1%

31. Do you consider the Town of Emerald to be: (please mark one choice only)

92.2%	a. rural area?
5.3%	b. bedroom community?
0.4%	c. suburban community?
2.1%	d. other: (specify) See Comments – Appendix B

32. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Town of Emerald concerning land use and growth?

See Comments – Appendix B

DEMOGRAPHICS:

Please tell us some things about you. These results will be used for statistical purposes only; **your individual responses will remain completely confidential.** Please choose only one answer per question.

33. Gender:	65.2% Male	34.8% Female				
34. Age:	0.9% 18-24	11.9% 25-34	22.9% 35-44	28.6% 45-54	19.4% 55-64	16.3% 65 and older
35. Employment status:	56.3% Employed full time		6.3% Employed part time		0.0% Unemployed	
	19.4% Self employed		17.1% Retired		0.9% Other: See Comments	
36. Please choose the one definition that best describes your Residency:	12.2% Non-Resident Land Owner		45.0% Resident (non-farm)		2.6% Renter	
	36.2% Farm Land Owner		3.9% Other: See Comments			
37. Number of adults (over 18) in household:	15.9% =1	70.0% =2	8.4% =3	5.3% =4	0.0% =5	0.4% =6 or more
38. Number of children (under 18) in household:	60.8% =0	13.1% =1	15.6% =2	8.0% =3	1.5% =4	1.0% =5 or more
39. Income range:	3.3% Less than \$15,000		8.1% \$15,001 – \$24,999		23.9% \$25,000 – \$49,999	
	34.9% \$50,000 – \$74,999		17.2% \$75,000 – \$99,999		12.4% \$100,000 or more	
40. How long have you lived in the Town of Emerald?	15.2% Less than 5 years		29.9% Five to ten years		15.2% Eleven to twenty years	
	12.8% Twenty-one to thirty years		11.4% Thirty-one to forty years			
	7.6% Forty-one to fifty years		8.1% More than fifty years			

Thank You for Completing the Survey!

Please return your survey by _____ to:
 Survey Research Center
 University of Wisconsin - River Falls
 410 S. Third St.
 119 Regional Development Institute
 River Falls, WI 54022-5001

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