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## Introduction

To plan effectively for future land uses, the Town must have a clear understanding of the location, use and capacity of existing utilities and community facilities. This information, coupled with demographic trends and projections, provides a realistic picture of service supply and demand. The community facilities and utilities discussed in this chapter were carefully considered in the development of the *Future Land Use Maps* presented later in this plan.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law includes 14 goals for local comprehensive planning. Of those goals, those listed below specifically relate to planning for utilities and community facilities in Empire:

- Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial and industrial structures.
- Providing infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

### Utilities & Community Facilities Vision

**In 2025, the Town of Empire coordinates with neighboring communities and the County to ensure that Town residents have easy access to efficient utilities and quality facilities. Through fiscal responsibility and shared service agreements with its neighbors, the Town continues to provide high-quality and cost-effective services to the residents of Empire.**

## Utilities Inventory– Location, Use, Capacity

This section documents those utilities currently provided by Empire, private providers, Fond du Lac County and neighboring communities for residents of the Town.

### WASTEWATER COLLECTION & TREATMENT <sup>1</sup>

There are three sanitary districts serving areas within the Town of Empire. The location of these districts are mapped on the *Utilities and Community Facilities Map* provided later in this chapter. What follows is a brief description of each district.

- **Town of Empire Sanitary District No. 1 (Lake de Neveu).** This Sanitary District is located along the western edge of Empire. The district encompasses land to the south and east of STH 45 along the perimeter of Lake de Neveu. The district is primarily residential in nature with an estimated 125 households.

<sup>1</sup> Information from this section collected from the *Fond du Lac Sewer Service Area Plan Update*, prepared by the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in cooperation with the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 2001.

The Town Board originally formed Sanitary District No. 1 in 1967 based on concerns for water quality within the Lake de Neveu area. The original sanitary district encompassed 276.3 acres which contained about 90 homes and 20 vacant lots. The district was relatively inactive until 1993 when renewed interest in water quality concerns arose based on substantial evidence of privately owned on-site wastewater system failures. Since 1993, several additional developments have been added to the district bringing the total area covered to 365 acres.

Sanitary District No. 1 is currently served by a system of approximately 16,000 lineal feet of eight-inch gravity sewers which drain waste to a lift station located on USH 45 near de Neveu Creek, then to an approximate 2,400 foot four-inch force main that extends northwesterly to an existing four-inch interceptor located between Glynn Avenue and Takodah Drive in the City of Fond du Lac. All waste is eventually treated at the City of Fond du Lac Wastewater Treatment Facility. Sanitary District No. 1 currently owns capacity in the interceptor and treatment plant for 42,000 gallons per day of which 30,000 gallons per day is currently utilized.

Projections completed by the ECWRPC as part of the *Fond du Lac Sewer Service Area Plan Update* project 32 new households will be constructed within the district over the period between 2000 and 2020. Potential district expansion to the east is likely through the planning period, as new residential development occurs and existing on-site systems fail on or near the Niagara Escarpment. Sanitary District No. 1 lies completely within the “Town Growth Area” as designated in the 1995 growth agreement between the Town of Empire and City of Fond du Lac.

- **Town of Empire Sanitary District No. 2 (Mary Hill Park).** This small district was formed in 1949 based on concerns for water quality within the Lake Winnebago Area. It is located south of STH 23 and covers approximately 23.62 acres. Sanitary District No. 2 is comprised entirely of single-family residential uses. The district is operating near capacity (build out) with 19 households and a population of approximately 60 persons. The ECWRPC projected in the *Fond du Lac Sewer Service Area Plan Update* that up to five new households could be developed in the district through 2020. The district could only be expanded if a larger interceptor line were constructed.

Sanitary District No. 2 is currently served by a system of eight-inch gravity sewers, which are directed into a ten-inch interceptor sewer located north of STH 23 near St. Mary Springs High School. All waste is eventually treated at the City of Fond du Lac Wastewater Treatment Facility. Sanitary District No. 2 currently owns capacity in the interceptor and treatment plant for 7,000 gallons per day, all of which is currently utilized.

The Mary Hill Park District lies completely within the “City Growth Area” as designated by the 1995 growth agreement between the Town of Empire and the City of Fond du Lac. This district has the potential to be annexed into the City of Fond du Lac to accommodate new growth in the area.

**...COMMUNITY SURVEY SPOTLIGHT...**

Q20: New developments should be required to develop shared sanitary systems or join a sanitary district.

Agree:	65.2%
Disagree:	21.6%
No Opinion:	13.2%

- **Town of Empire Sanitary District No. 3.** This district was formed in 1993 based on concerns for water quality within the Lake Winnebago area. The district is located along CTH T/Artesian Road at its intersection with CTH K. It includes approximately 140 acres and serves 170 residential households, a few churches and a business.

Sanitary District No. 3 is currently served by a system of eight-inch gravity sewers that drain waste to a fifteen-inch interceptor sewer located along Fourth Street in the City of Fond du Lac. All waste is eventually treated at the City of Fond du Lac Wastewater Treatment Facility. The district currently owns capacity in the interceptor for 38,000 gallons per day, most of which is utilized. A relief sewer is necessary for the district to accommodate significant amounts of new development.

The ECWRPC projected in the *Fond du Lac Sewer Service Area Plan Update* that Sanitary District No. 3 will expand to accommodate an additional 145 new households through 2020. The district lies partially within both the Town and City Growth Areas as designated by the 1995 growth agreement between the Town of Empire and City of Fond du Lac. In general, the portion of the district to the west of CTH K is contained within the City Growth Area, while the balance is within the Town’s Growth Area.

In areas beyond the sanitary districts, development has traditionally required individual, on-site treatment. Alternatives to individual, on-site treatment include clustered systems, re-circulating sand/gravel filters, Living Machines®, and municipal systems. Each alternative has strengths and weaknesses when compared to conventional on-site, individual systems.

**Want More Information?**

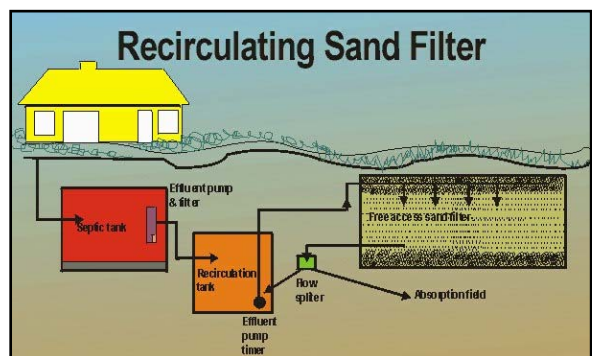
To review the Wisconsin State Statutes with respect to the use of alternative treatment systems visit:  
[www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/comm/comm083.pdf](http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/code/comm/comm083.pdf)

For more details about RS/GF:  
[www.epa.gov/ORD/NRMRL/pubs/625r00008/tfs11.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ORD/NRMRL/pubs/625r00008/tfs11.pdf)

For more information on Infiltration wetlands:  
[www.epa.gov/ORD/NRMRL/pubs/625r00008/tfs7.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ORD/NRMRL/pubs/625r00008/tfs7.pdf)

- **Clustered Systems.** Clustered treatment systems provide an economical alternative to individual systems, particularly in areas with space limitations. Like septic tanks and mounds, shared systems are infiltration systems. They differ from the former two in that multiple homes “feed” into one treatment and discharge unit. Although economies of scale are created when multiple units utilize a shared drain field, issues related to soil percability remain. The advantage of a clustered system from the perspective of soil inundation is that, since the system is located off-site, the site can be selected based upon ideal performance criteria. On-site systems are limited to the best location available *within that particular home site*.

- **Re-circulating Sand/Gravel Filters.** Re-circulating sand/gravel filters (RS/GF) offer an economically viable, environmentally benign alternative to conventional drain field-based treatment systems. The basic components of a RS/GF system include a septic tank, recirculation tank, and sand or gravel filter. Water discharged from the system far exceeds the quality of a conventional system, and at a fraction of the price. RS/GFs have been in use for more than a century and are a WDNR permitted alternative to septic tanks and mound systems. The primary challenge to installation of this type of system, like the other alternative systems, is a lack of awareness of their availability on the part of landowners and developers.



SOURCE: ToolBase Services, 2005.

- Infiltration Wetlands.** Infiltration wetlands have been used as effective wastewater treatment systems for more than thirty years. They have become the dominant treatment system for communities in the Minneapolis metropolitan region not served by municipal wastewater treatment. Although there are a variety of wetland-based systems used to treat effluent, the most common is a *sub-surface flow* wetland. Sub-surface flow wetlands utilize an anaerobic reactor (septic tank) for pretreatment followed by a forced-bed aeration system and wetland treatment cells. Infiltration wetlands are designed to achieve tertiary treatment at a fraction of the cost of a municipal system. They become cost-effective at the small scale when treating effluent from eight or more homes.



SOURCE: North American Wetlands Engineering, 2004.

- Living Machines®.** Living Machines are a patented wastewater treatment system that is growing in popularity around the world. They entail a series of tanks teeming with live plants, trees, grasses, algae, fish, shrimp, snails and a diversity of microorganisms and bacteria. Each tank is a mini-ecosystem designed to eat or break down waste. The process takes about four days to turn wastewater crystal clear. It is chemical-free, odor-free, and, compared to conventional wastewater treatment, costs less financially and ecologically.<sup>2</sup> Living Machines are WDNR permitted systems and are currently in use at the Conserve School in Land O' Lakes, at Cedar Grove Cheese Factory in Cedar Grove, and at Edgewood College in Madison.



SOURCE: Living Machines, Inc., 2001.

Each of these systems is permissible under COMM 83. The Town of Empire will consider these systems for all development proposals located beyond the sanitary districts.

## STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Open grass lined natural drainage ways (i.e. ditches) slow the flow of storm water, reduce erosion, filter pollutants, and allow infiltration of the groundwater in Empire. As has been the tradition, Empire will continue to use open, grass lined drainage ways as its primary tool for storm water control. Ditches are effective at meeting local needs and compliment the rural character of the area.

### What is Storm Water Runoff?

It is water from rainstorms or snowmelt that flows over the land rather than evaporating or soaking into the ground. Areas with more impervious surface (i.e. roads, sidewalks, rooftops and parking lots) generate more storm water runoff.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpted from *The Living Machine*, Jeff Wolovitz, Penn State Department of Research and Policy, 2000.

Stormwater management requirements for construction sites and agricultural practices are enforced by Fond du Lac County. The *Empire Land Division Ordinance* requires a storm water management plan for new developments to ensure that storm water runoff after development does not exceed the peak rate/volume of runoff at predevelopment conditions. For most developments this requires construction of storm water detention facilities that are sufficient in size and appropriately situated so that the amount of storm water runoff from the area of the proposed subdivision is no greater than occurs in the land's undeveloped state<sup>3</sup>. In addition detention facilities, the Town encourages the use of open greenways to slow down and absorb storm water rather than using underground storm sewers to move water.

Given the rate and density of projected future development, existing practices are expected to meet future development needs.

## **WATER SUPPLY**

Currently, all water service is provided by individual private, on-site wells in the Town of Empire. The cost of well installation ranges between \$7,000 and \$17,000 depending on soil conditions, depth and casing requirements. Shared / cluster wells (serving 2-6 homes) provide a viable alternative to individual private wells offering lower initial costs per home than individual wells (\$4,000 – 7,000 per home). However, shared wells do require effective agreements to address sharing a single well among homeowners, metering, and designing developments around the placement of shared wells.

Additional information about groundwater is provided in the Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter. Shallow wells, the groundwater divide along the Niagara Escarpment, and rapid movement of water through the escarpment bedrock present potential concerns for groundwater contamination in Empire (Bender, 1997).

## **ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS**



Alliant Energies provides electricity and natural gas service to the Town of Empire. To provide electricity, Alliant has two substation properties in the Town. One is located near the intersection of CTH UU and STH 23 and the other is located along the western Town boundary.

Alliant Energy Corporation (Wisconsin Power and Light) is a growing energy-services provider with operations both domestically and internationally. Headquartered in Madison, Alliant Energy provides electric, natural gas, water and steam services to 1.3 million customers in 1,000 communities in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois. Alliant has no immediate plans to expand the type or level of services offered in Empire. Changes to service are evaluated regularly by Alliant.

## **WIND ENERGY**

Concurrent with the development of this Comprehensive Plan, application materials were being prepared for the siting of 18 wind turbines in the Town of Empire. The proposed turbines would be located in the southeastern part of Empire (east of CTH UU and South of Walnut Road). In the Town of Eden an additional 23 wind towers are planned for a total of 41 in the Towns of Eden and Empire.

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<sup>3</sup> The twenty-five (25) year, twenty-four (24) hour storm frequency for Fond du Lac County is the standard to determine both preconstruction and post-construction runoff.



## Community *Facilities* Inventory

This portion of the chapter profiles the community facilities available to Town residents, including facilities operated by Fond du Lac County and private providers.

### PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Town of Empire has beautiful natural areas and scenic vistas throughout the community that contribute to the unique, rural character of the Town. Presently, there are no local parks<sup>4</sup> to provide public access to these features. At the Vision Meeting held on March 31, 2005, residents expressed their desire for a Town park facility, including amenities like a picnic shelter, playground equipment, and ball fields. A similar interest was expressed as part of the last survey effort conducted by the Town in 1997. As part of the Transportation Chapter of this plan, resident desire for trail facilities is documented based on comments at the Vision Meeting, as well as, local surveys.

Based on this information, providing a local park facility is a priority to Empire residents. To address this priority it is important to understand how much parkland is actually needed. One way of measuring the adequacy of a community's recreational facilities is to determine the number of people they serve or have the capacity to serve. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends a community standard of 10 acres of local recreation land per 1,200 residents. The current population of Empire is 2,736 persons (2004 DOA Population Estimate). To meet this standard, the Town would need to provide at least 23 acres of parkland. By 2025, Empire's population is projected to increase to 2,946 residents, which will mean the Town would need to provide 24.5 acres of parkland. The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission recommends 10 acres of local recreation land per 1,000 residents. Using this more generous standard, almost 30 acres of parkland should be provided by 2025. It is important to note here that park acreages can include linear park facilities (i.e. trails) as well as more traditional park spaces.

Many Wisconsin towns look first at the properties they already own when considering new park facilities. For the Town of Empire, that translates into the one acre of land on which the Town Hall is located. This site is not large enough to accommodate needed park space. Moreover, this property is somewhat separated from areas of the Town where most residents are living and it is not on an identified trail or bicycle route. Alternative locations for potential parks are illustrated on the *Utilities and Community Facilities Plan Map* as well as the *Future Land Use Maps*.

To plan for the acquisition and design of a park facility the Town should develop an *outdoor recreation plan*, using this Comprehensive Plan as a general guide in that effort. This type of detailed plan will include a specific action plan for developing local recreational facilities, including potential funding sources. The need for an *outdoor recreation plan* was documented in the *1998 Town of Empire Comprehensive Plan* developed by the ECWRPC.

By adopting and periodically updating an *outdoor recreation plan*, the Town will become eligible for state grant funds. Grants, donations, park impact fees (which can be collected from developers proposing any new land divisions or subdivisions) are all tools available to offset taxpayer costs for new park space.

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to point out that Empire residents do have access to park facilities available in the City of Fond du Lac. In addition, given the rural nature of the community, residents generally have larger parcels (as compared to city lots) that provide areas for recreation and outdoor enjoyment. These points are raised not to dismiss the need for local park space, but rather, to explain why parkland has not been established in the Town.

## COMMUNICATION FACILITIES

Access to communication facilities is very important in the modern economy. Several communication companies provide service to Empire (and the Fond du Lac area). The quality of communication services depends on the capacity of the lines and towers serving the Town.

- **Local and Long Distance Telephone Service.** SBC Ameritech and TDS are the primary local telephone service providers to Empire. Each company offers services and packages that are consistently upgraded to reflect new technologies and services. A variety of national companies provide landline long distance service to Empire and many residents use their cell phones to make long distance calls.
- **Internet.** The Town of Empire has its own Internet web page, [www.town-empire.org](http://www.town-empire.org). The site provides names and contact information for elected officials and committee members. In addition, local ordinances and plans are also posted on the web site. An opportunity exists to expand the web site information to include meeting agendas and announcements, as well as, other information for residents.

With respect to Internet access, Charter Communications offers broadband cable modem service for residential Internet access. High speed DSL service is not available, but dial-up modem access is available from several providers.

- **Newspapers.** The *Fond du Lac Reporter* is the primary paper serving the area. The Town uses this paper, which is published daily, to post meeting announcements, minutes, and other articles of general interest.
- **Television and Radio.** There are no television or radio stations located in Empire, but signals are available from surrounding communities. Charter Communications offers traditional cable and digital packages for Town residents. Some residents have also purchased satellites to receive additional channels. Television and radio coverage is expected to continue to meet resident needs over the life of this plan.
- **Postal Service.** The Town of Empire does not have its own postal zip code. The nearest post offices are located in Fond du Lac, Eden and Mount Calvary.
- **Cellular/PCS Towers.** Ever advancing communication technologies, have greatly increased the need for towers to provide receiving and sending capabilities. The federal government formally recognized this need by passing the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. Under Section 704 of the Act, the Town has the power to regulate the placement, construction and modification of personal wireless facilities, as long as the rules do not unreasonably discriminate between providers or prohibit service.

At present, there are three towers located in the Town. The first is located at CTH H and Pine Road. This tower is used by local energy providers. It is not used for cellular customer service. A second tower is located in the southern portion of the Town near Maple Road. This tower is owned and maintained by WisDOT. It is used as a closed-circuit dispatch tower for state police and other state uses. The other tower in Empire is located near the eastern boundary along STH 23. This tower was erected by a company that leases space to multiple cellular companies. This



WisDOT Tower on Maple Road



tower has space available to accommodate additional co-locations of antenna to accommodate additional cellular service providers.

Any requests for tower facilities require approval under the *Town of Empire Zoning Ordinance*. All towers in the Town are required to provide for co-location of multiple users on a single tower. The space available on the tower near STH 23 has been sufficient to meet tower demands.

It is anticipated that in the next 5-10 years that the primary coverage area for wireless service in the Town of Empire will be adjacent to USH 151 and STH 23. Beyond that timeframe, cellular coverage demand near STH 45 may also increase.

## CEMETERIES

There are four cemeteries in the Town of Empire. The oldest of which is the Rienzi Cemetery located on the east side of CTH K. That cemetery has gravestones dating back to the mid-1800's and includes several civil war heroes. South of the Rienzi Cemetery is the Catholic Calvary Cemetery Association Cemetery (St. Joseph Cemetery). To the north and on the west side of CTH K is the Ledgeview Memorial Cemetery. On CTH UU the Empire Cemetery is located. This Methodist cemetery was established in 1852 as a one-acre site that increased to 3 acres in 1879. These cemeteries, along with space available in cemeteries in nearby communities is expected to be adequate over the planning period without the need to develop additional cemetery space in the Town.



## HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

The nearest medical facility to the Town of Empire is the Aurora Health Center located at 210 Wisconsin American Drive (east of USH 151 adjacent to STH 23). This 105,000 square foot facility is open Monday-Friday, with additional walk-in care hours on Saturday. Aurora offers comprehensive care including: OB/GYN, internal medicine, cardiology, pediatrics, physical therapy and diagnostic services, among others.

In addition to the Aurora facility, the Fond du Lac area is served by Agnesian Healthcare Network, with its own hospital and several clinics in Fond du Lac. Many more doctors and dentists maintain private practices in the area. The Fond du Lac area also has numerous nursing homes offering skilled short and long-term care. Several retirement communities in Fond du Lac offer assisted living and nursing home services.

At this time, there are no plans for construction of a new health care facility in the Town or expansion of the Aurora facility. Existing providers are expected to meet Town needs through 2025 and beyond. If additional medical facilities should locate in areas of the Town, they should be directed to those areas identified on the *Future Land Use Maps* that are allocated for commercial uses in proximity to important roadways.

## CHILDCARE FACILITIES

A number of private childcare facilities are available to Empire residents from providers in Fond du Lac and other nearby communities. In general, people seek childcare providers located either near their homes or near their places of employment. Since there are no large childcare facilities in Empire and most residents work in nearby communities, Town residents utilize childcare options near their places of employment. Town residents also have informal networks of child care (i.e. family or friends) and some residents provide licensed childcare from their homes. The Town has no direct influence over the establishment of new childcare facilities. At this time, the *Empire Zoning Ordinance* does not specifically regulate childcare centers. However, it does include provisions for home occupations, which can be used to effectively locate a small childcare business in a residence. Language could be added to the *Empire Zoning Ordinance* to clarify how childcare facilities may be permitted in the Business (BD) District by conditional use with an approved site plan.

## LIBRARY

The nearest public library for Empire residents is located on Sheboygan Street in the City of Fond du Lac. The Fond du Lac Public Library has a wide variety of materials and programs available to residents. More specifically, the library has nearly 250,000 books, more than 7,500 audio materials, more than 7,600 video materials and more than 400 serial subscriptions. The library also has an Internet-based catalog to allow for convenient access to library resources from home.



In addition to its Sheboygan Street facility, the Fond du Lac Public Library operates a bookmobile. Weekly and bi-weekly stops are scheduled at schools, childcare centers, neighborhoods, subdivisions, and outlying communities (including Empire). The bookmobile is stocked with best sellers, paperbacks, magazines, videos, compact discs, children's books, videos, and read-alongs. The bookmobile also sponsors a summer reading club and story times for children in the summer.



## SENIOR SERVICES

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 264 people (10.1%) living in Empire were age 65 or over. This was down slightly from the 1990 U.S. Census when 280 persons (11.21%) over the age of 65 were reported. Like youth populations, seniors demand particular services to meet their specific needs.

To address senior needs, the Fond du Lac County Department of Senior Services provides seniors with access to information, services and programs to support physical, emotional, social and financial well-being. Services include congregate and home delivered (i.e. meals-on-wheels) meals, transportation services, benefit counseling and energy bill assistance. Services provided by the Fond du Lac County Department of Senior Services and supporting organizations are profiled in the 60+ booklet available online at [www.co.fond-du-lac.wi.us](http://www.co.fond-du-lac.wi.us).

## SCHOOL DISTRICTS<sup>5</sup>

The Town of Empire is served by two school districts: Fond du Lac and Campbellsport. About 80 percent of Empire is in the Fond du Lac School District. There are no public school buildings within Empire's boundaries and neither district has plans to construct any facilities in the Town.

To understand the quality of the education offered in these two districts a brief look at standardized tests scores is provided here. The Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) is administered in schools across the state (with similar tests in other states) to assess student achievement in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Test topics include reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Both the Campbellsport and Fond du Lac School District test scores rate as satisfactory when compared to State and Federal standards. In comparing the two districts to one another:

- Test scores for the districts were nearly identical for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, with Campbellsport having slightly higher 10<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores.
- In language arts, Campbellsport students reported results a few percentage points higher in each grade than the Fond du Lac District students.
- With respect to mathematics and science, both districts were identical in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, Fond du Lac results were higher in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, but Campbellsport students scored higher in 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- In social studies both districts had nearly identical results in each grade. In this category, the number of students performing above average was higher than in any other subject.

Additional evidence of the quality of the Fond du Lac School District was recently reflected by its ranking as the 15th best public urban education system in the nation in a study conducted by the magazine, *Expansion Management*. The study examined more than 2,800 school districts throughout the country with a combined enrollment of 34.5 million students. Other Wisconsin schools making the list included: Sheboygan (#2), Madison (#3), Oshkosh-Neenah (#6), Appleton (#7) and Eau Claire (#10).

A brief profile of the Campbellsport and Fond du Lac School Districts is provided below.

- **Campbellsport School District.**  
This district includes four schools – Campbellsport Elementary (K-6), Campbellsport High (10-12), Campbellsport Junior High (7-9) and Eden Elementary (K-6). Table 20 provides a historical detail of the school district's enrollment over the last five years.
- **Fond du Lac School District.**  
Empire students who attend school in the Fond du Lac School District go to the Lakeshore Elementary School (K-5 – 447 students), Woodworth Middle School (6-8), and the Fond du Lac High School (9-12).

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<sup>5</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Data available [www.data.dpi.state.wi.us/data/selschool.asp](http://www.data.dpi.state.wi.us/data/selschool.asp).

TABLE 17 SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT TRENDS					
CAMPBELLSPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT			FOND DU LAC SCHOOL DISTRICT		
School Year	Number of Students	Change in Number of Students	School Year	Number of Students	Change in Number of Students
2000-2001	551	(46)	2000-2001	7241	(64)
2001-2002	344	(210)**	2001-2002	7220	(13)
2002-2003	340	(4)	2002-2003	7245	17
2003-2004	351	11	2003-2004	7270	33
2004-2005	NA	NA	2004-2005	NA	NA

SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

\*\* Significant change due to district boundary changes/school consolidation.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

The Town of Empire has convenient highway access to many outstanding colleges, universities and technical schools. Within an hour drive, residents can attend classes at Marian College, Moraine Park Technical College, Ripon College, Marquette University, Lakeshore Technical College, Fox Valley Technical College, and the University of Wisconsin campuses in Fond du Lac, Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay and Oshkosh.



## TOWN HALL

Empire's Town Hall is located on CTH T on a one-acre parcel. This facility is available to all residents for meetings. At present, the facility meets basic needs for Town meetings, office and storage space. The property does have some space available for expansion of the facility if additional office, meeting, or storage space is needed.

## Community *Services* Inventory

### SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING

The Town contracts with Waste Management (an independent service provider) to provide residential and institutional waste disposal service and recycling. Garbage and recycling are collected curbside once each week. Businesses independently contract for waste disposal services. Waste Management has provided solid waste disposal and recycling services with the Town since it has offered curbside pick-up to residents. The Town evaluates its contract (and is open to considering other bids) on a three-year cycle.

#### ...COMMUNITY SURVEY SPOTLIGHT...

Q21: Is the present garbage/recycling system working?

Yes:	96.9%
No:	1.0%
No Opinion:	2.1%

## POLICE PROTECTION<sup>6</sup>

Police protection for Empire is provided by the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department.

With 53 sworn officers (including captains, lieutenants, and shift supervisors), the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department is able to provide the community with 24-hour coverage. At any given time a minimum of four deputies are on duty. In addition, at least one supervising officer is also on duty.

The Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department has 911 dispatch available to respond to emergency calls. Emergency response times vary depending on the location of a squad car from the scene of the emergency, but are usually ten minutes or less. The department has informal agreements with City and Village police departments within the County to provide occasional back-up assistance and vice versa.

The department maintains a fleet of ten marked squad cars. Vehicles are replaced on a yearly basis.

The Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department anticipates no major problems serving the Town of Empire. In fact, the department anticipates that response times to Empire will probably decrease when the improvements to USH 151 and eventual expansion of STH 23 are completed.

### Police Protection Standards

The traditional Wisconsin standard for small rural police protection is 1.6 officers / 1,000 persons. The FBI Standard is 2 officers/1,000 persons. In 2005, the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department had 53 full-time police officers service an estimated population of 33,615, or 1.60 full-time police officers per 1,000 residents.

### ...COMMUNITY SURVEY SPOTLIGHT...

Q25: How would you rate police protection services in the Town?

Excellent:	11.0%
Good:	50.1%
Fair:	13.1%
Poor:	4.1%
Don't Know:	20.3%

## FIRE PROTECTION

Fire protection is provided by the Mount Calvary and Eden Fire Departments.

### Empire Fire Protection Facts

- About 30% of the Town is protected by the Mount Calvary Fire Department and the balance is protected by the Eden Fire Department.
- The Eden and Mount Calvary Fire Departments rely on volunteers firefighters.
- Emergency response times between the dispatch of a 911 page and a vehicle leaving the first station is generally 1-2 minutes for both departments.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) rates fire protection service for communities across the United States. The rating system scale is out of 10 with 1 being the best. Most insurance underwriters use the fire protection rating to calculate residential, commercial and industrial insurance premiums. Fire districts are evaluated on a cyclical basis that is determined by district growth and the size of the population served. The Mount Calvary Fire department was rated a 5. This rating was completed in the summer of 2005. A 5 rating is an average rating. Improving this rating probably would require employing some full-time professional firefighters. The Eden Fire Department has an ISO rating of 7 (2001 rating). This lower rating reflects its older station, pump truck capacities, and the age of the fleet (i.e. 25-year replacement schedule vs. 10-year in Mount Calvary).

<sup>6</sup> Information obtained from telephone interview with Fond du Lac County Sheriff Department Captain Cox on June 24, 2005.



More information about the Mount Calvary and Eden Fire Departments is provided below.

**Mount Calvary Fire Department.**<sup>7</sup>

The Mount Calvary Fire Department serves approximately thirty percent Empire with a volunteer force of between 40 and 45 firefighters. On a typical call the department is in route within 2-3 minutes of receiving a 911 page.

The Mount Calvary Fire Department has a fleet of emergency vehicles including:

- 2-Front Line Engines (pumper trucks)
- 2-Tanker Trucks
- 1-Equipment Van
- A Brush Truck with a Tank and Pump for wild land Fires and Car Crashes
- A 6-Wheeler for wild land Fires and Rescue.

The Mount Calvary Fire Departments vehicles are replaced on about a ten-year cycle. The department has no immediate plans to increase the number of vehicles it maintains, though in the long-term it would like to acquire a ladder truck.

In 2000, the Mount Calvary Fire Department moved into a new station. The department anticipates that this facility will be adequate to meet the long-term needs of the department and has no plans for changes in its facilities, staffing, or equipment.

**Eden Fire Department.**<sup>8</sup>

Approximately seventy percent of Empire is served by the Eden Fire Department. The department has a single station located in the Village of Eden. The station is fifteen years old. The volunteer force of 45 often has a waiting list of additional volunteers interested in joining the department. On a typical call, the department is in route within 3-4 minutes of receiving a 911 page.

The Eden Fire Department prides itself in its ability to purchase a replacement vehicle every 5 years. The department replaces tanker trucks on a twenty-five year rotation schedule.

- 2-Tanker Pierce Tanker Trunk (1,250 gallon per minute pumping capacity)
- 3-Tanker Trucks (1981 – 1,500 gallon, 1994 -3,200 gallon, and 1999 -, 2,000 gallon tank)
- 1-Equipment Truck
- A Brush Truck

The department also has a 1954 500 Gallon Pumper Truck that it maintains at the station. By keeping this truck at the station, the department is able to send all of its other vehicles to fire calls without violating insurance agreements.

The Eden Fire Department believes it will be able to continue to provide fire protection to the Town of Empire for the foreseeable future. No changes to its station or expansion of the fleet of vehicles is planned.

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<sup>7</sup> Telephone interview with Mr. Biersbach, Mount Calvary Fire Department, June 29, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Telephone interview with Ed Castella, Eden Fire Department, June 30, 2005.



## AMBULANCE SERVICE

Ambulance service for Empire is provided by the by Mount Calvary Fire Department EMT service and the City of Fond du Lac. Both services are dispatched by Fond du Lac County 911 center and provide 24-hour emergency response to the Town. With each service, EMT's stay at the living quarters within each station so that they can quickly respond to calls.

### ...COMMUNITY SURVEY SPOTLIGHT...

Q24: How would you rate the fire protection/emergency medical services in the Town?

Excellent: 12.3%

Good: 47.6%

Fair: 10.0%

Poor: 1.0%

Don't Know: 20.3%



## Utilities and Community Facilities Issues & Opportunities

During development of this plan residents, landowners, and the Empire Plan Commission had the opportunity to raise issues and concerns about available utilities and community facilities. What follows is a summary of identified issues and concerns. Actions to address these items are provided in the Utilities and Community Facilities section of the Implementation Chapter.

### KEEPING TAXES AT REASONABLE LEVELS

Town residents respect the fiscal discipline demonstrated by local officials and value their reasonable taxes. Given limited finances coupled with long-term uncertainties surrounding Wisconsin's shared revenue program, the Town of Empire understands the need to carefully consider all expenditures. This

consideration certainly extends to providing utilities and community facilities for the community. To provide efficient, cost-effective services, the Town has a history of working with neighboring communities and Fond du Lac County to consolidate services (i.e. fire protection, police protection, senior services, road maintenance, etc.). Regionalizing services can minimize duplication and promote cost efficiency, which may reduce the tax burden for all residents. To keep local taxes at a reasonable level, Empire will continue to consider shared service opportunities with neighboring communities.

...COMMUNITY SURVEY SPOTLIGHT...	
Taxes	
Q33: Are the property taxes you pay fair considering ht services you receive?	
Yes:	76.0%
No:	15.9%
No Opinion:	0.1%

### WIND ENERGY

The recent applications for wind turbines have prompted resident reaction at the Kick-off and Vision sessions related to the visual impact of turbines, noise impacts, and impacts on wildlife. In July 2005, an application for 133 turbines in Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties near the Horicon Marsh was approved. This prompted additional reaction in the Town.

Empire does not have an ordinance specifically focused on the regulation of wind turbines. To effectively regulate their placement and operation, the Town should consider adopting such an ordinance. A model ordinance is available from the Wisconsin Department of Administration. The ordinance is available on-line at [http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docs\\_view2.asp?docid=2869](http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docs_view2.asp?docid=2869). Regardless of local ordinance, ultimately, the State has the final word on placement of wind turbines.

The installation of wind turbines will result in benefits and challenges in Empire. Challenges are largely focused on three things: visibility, noise and wildlife impacts.

- With respect to **visibility**, wind towers are highly visible. Modern wind turbines typically stand between 200 and 260 feet, with blade rotors of 50 to 225 feet in diameter. Wind power plants consist of clusters or lines of turbines spread across hilltops, ridgelines, or open stretches of water. Viewed from a distance of half a mile or less, details of turbines are visible. Turbines are generally seen as insignificant at a distance of seven miles. All residents within the Town of Empire would be located within seven miles of proposed tower sites. Therefore, the towers will be visible to most landowners. Some landowners have expressed concern about possible impacts on property values associated with wind tower views. No formal studies have been completed to document whether the siting of a wind tower has an impact on property values in the region. In addition, wind towers may become more visible at night because the Federal Aviation Administration requires that towers over 200 feet tall be provided with a light.

- With respect to **noise**, during operation, wind power plants produce steady, low-volume noise, caused by wind trailing off rotor blades and by the machinery driven by the rotors. The wind itself may mask any such noise produced by the turbine. The list below provides a comparison of noise volumes.

<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>DISTANCE (feet)</u>	<u>SOUND LEVELS (decibels)</u>
Jet Engine	200	120
Freight Train	100	70
Vacuum Cleaner	10	70
Freeway	100	70
Large Transformer	200	55
Wind in Trees	40	55
Light Traffic	100	50
300 kW Wind Turbine	400	45
Soft Whisper	5	30

SOURCE: Paul Gipe, *Wind Energy Comes of Age*, 1995, as cited in National Wind Coordinated Committee, "Wind Energy Environmental Issues," *Wind Energy Series*, January 1997 and "The Environmental Case for Wind Power in Wisconsin," Elizabeth Ridlington and Jennifer Giegerich, July 2005.

- Finally, with respect to impacts on **wildlife**, many studies have been done across the country. In comparison to other power sources, wind energy has a modest impact on wildlife. This is because wind energy does not require the mining or transportation of fuel, nor does it produce air pollution or contribute to global warming. Wind installations do consume some land for each turbine and may alter wildlife behavior in the surrounding areas. Some species change their feeding, breeding and nesting habits outside the immediate area of wind towers. In areas where the land is already used for intensive agriculture (i.e. row crops), then the wildlife impact and habitat loss is minor. In more remote areas, the disruption from a wind farm will be more significant. Overall, wind power projects are responsible for one or two of very 10,000 bird collision-deaths in the country annually.<sup>9</sup> The application for the wind farm adjacent to the Horicon Marsh faced severe scrutiny from environmentalists concerned with impacts on migrating birds. Nevertheless, after a careful review of the application and evidence provided, the application was approved.

There are some potential benefits to consider with respect to the siting of wind towers in Empire. First, the area being considered has a relatively low population density. This will help to limit the impact of the towers (particularly with respect to noise) to the limited number of people living within 500 or 1000 feet of the proposed structures. Moreover, the lease of land for the turbines will provide a source of revenue for those landowners on which the tower is sited. Since many of these landowners are farmers, the supplemental income will help to sustain their farm operation. Finally, by siting 18 towers in the community, demand for additional residential development in this portion of the town will likely be reduced, therefore, helping the town to retain its undeveloped lands and farmland resources.

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<sup>9</sup> Wallace Erickson, et. al., *Avian Collisions with Wind Turbines: A Summary of Existing Studies and Comparison to Other Sources of Avian Collision Mortality in the United States*, National Wind Coordinating Committee, August 2001.

**What is an Official Map and How Can it Help Empire Establish Parks and Trails?**

An official map is one of the oldest plan implementation tools at the disposal of a local community. It is used to manage the problem of reserving land for future public use. Section 62.23(6) of the Wisconsin Statutes provides that the governing body of any local municipality may establish an official map for the precise identification of right-of-way lines and site boundaries of streets, highways, waterways, and parkways, and the location and extent of railway right-of-ways public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds. Such a map has the force of law and is deemed to be final and conclusive with respect to the location and width of both existing and proposed streets, highways, waterways, and trails, the location and extent of railway right-of-ways public transit facilities, and parks and playgrounds.

**LOCAL PARK FACILITIES**

As part of the Kick-Off Meeting held in February 2005 several residents identified a lack of parks as a weakness of Empire. Similarly, at the March 2005 Vision Meeting, park and trail facilities were identified as desired amenities in 2025. This chapter:

- Provides direction for establishing local park facilities using regional and national measures;
- Identifies potential park and trail sites;
- Recommends a process for preparing a detailed *outdoor recreation plan*; and,
- Suggests some potential funding sources (other than taxes) to finance local park and recreation projects.

**...COMMUNITY SURVEY SPOTLIGHT...**

**Parks**

Q26: Should Empire purchase and maintain a town park?  
 Yes: 22.0%      No: 61.9%      No Opinion: 16.1%

Q27: Would you be willing to pay additional taxes to purchase and maintain a park?  
 Yes: 20.6%      No: 69.9%      No Opinion: 9.5%

Q28: What types of uses would you like to see in a Town Park?  
 Trails: 29.3%      Picnic Shelter: 19.9%      Playground: 12.7%  
 Baseball Diamond: 7.6%      Tennis Courts: 4.6%  
 A Town Park Should Not Be Created: 19.1%

**OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS**

As part of the SWOT Exercise completed in February 2005, some residents expressed concern about the potential for school overcrowding (or the need for new school construction) if too much growth occurs in the Town. Both the Campbellsport and Fond du Lac school districts monitor their enrollment levels to plan for facility, staff, and equipment needs. No major spikes in enrollment are expected that would result in an overcrowding situation. Continued coordination between the Town of Empire and the local school districts with respect to new development proposals will help the schools plan effectively for growth.

**WATER QUALITY / RUNOFF**

There are increasing concerns about the impact of storm water runoff on receiving water resources (i.e. Lake de Neveu, area creeks/streams, Lake Winnebago). This concern was expressed by some residents at the Kick-Off Meeting. Specifically, residents were concerned about the impact of additional development (and its associated impervious surface area). As development occurs, additional streets, parking areas and buildings are constructed which increase impervious surface. Within a watershed, as impervious surface area increases, area streams and other surface waters can be adversely impacted. In fact, relatively low levels of impervious coverage can have a significant impact on the quality of area streams. To mitigate these impacts, the Town can pursue the following:

- **Watershed Planning.** All watershed-planning activities in the Town of Empire should be coordinated with the Fond du Lac County Land Conservation Department to identify critical habitats, aquatic corridors and water pollution areas.

- **Land Conservation Techniques.** Land conservation techniques include: conservation subdivisions, setbacks and buffers, and land acquisition following the development patterns outlined on the *Future Land Use Maps*.
- **Site & Subdivision Design Techniques.** Effective site design techniques encourage the use of native landscaping, limit impervious surface, enforce setbacks and buffers, and protect natural resources. Subdivision design techniques such as “conservation subdivisions” would require open space areas to retain and absorb storm water.
- **Storm Water Best Management Practices (BMP).** Storm water best management practices seek to reduce storm water pollutant loads, maintain ground water recharge and quality, protect stream channels and safely maintain the 100-year floodplain. Successful BMP’s include ponds, wetlands, infiltration, filtering systems and open drainage channels.
- **Erosion and Sediment Control.** Typically, erosion and sediment control requirements affect construction sites. Probably one of the most effective techniques is to reduce the time that soil is exposed. As with the other mitigation techniques outlined in this subsection, education will be critical to success.

## HIGH SPEED INTERNET

During the planning process, some residents expressed concerned about lack of high-speed Internet access in the community. Residents can only use dial-up Internet connections or satellite dish service. These two options are not considered “high-speed.” A faster option available today is cable Internet access. It is faster than dial-up, but more expensive due to the high costs related to the extension of cable service into parts of the Town not currently served. The approximate cost to expand cable coverage is \$100 per foot of cable.

Another strategy to make wireless Internet service available is to construct a tower or place an antenna on a silo (or perhaps wind turbine). If properly located, such a tower (or antenna) could provide the majority of the Town with high-speed access. An individual or company could provide this service.

Yet another option is for the Town is to encourage technology updates when new subdivisions are created. The Town can require developers to extend technological services, such as cable, to new subdivisions.

## TOWN HALL SPACE



For many years the Town Hall has provided ample space for Empire. However, the Town Hall has limited storage and office space available to meet the needs of elected officials and the clerk. Kitchen facilities with access to the meeting space (to accommodate rental users and larger functions) are not available. Possible remodeling and/or reorganization of interior spaces through a facilities assessment is recommended. A facilities assessment will inventory existing space utilization and needs in an effort to recommend opportunities for improvements related to office layouts, storage spaces, and perhaps even expansion of the building.



## **Utilities and Community Facilities Programs (& Funding Options)**

Empire is always open to considering opportunities available to finance needed utilities and community facilities. There are numerous grant and loan programs that the Town may seek to help finance future improvements. Programs are available through the State of Wisconsin and the federal government. What follows is a description of some opportunities available to the Town.

### **WATER AND WASTEWATER GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAM**

The USDA Rural Development (Rural Utility Service) has a water and wastewater grant and loan program to assist cities, villages, tribes, sanitary districts, and towns in rural areas with a population up to 10,000. The program provides loans and grants to construct, improve, or modify municipal drinking water and wastewater systems, storm sewers, and solid waste disposal facilities. These funds may be used by the sanitary districts to finance future improvements.

### **STATE TRUST FUND LOAN PROGRAM**

The Board of Commissioners of Public Lands provides this loan program with terms of up to 20 years and deeply discounted interest rates. Loans may be used for a variety of purposes including: road improvements, community centers/halls, trail development, and property acquisition. The funds available fluctuate annually. The current annual loan limit is \$3,000,000. The Town of Empire could utilize these funds for development of new park facilities, trails, road projects (including projects to pave shoulders for trail routes) and for improvements to the Town Hall.

### **RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY FACILITY GRANTS**

The USDA Rural Development also offers grants to communities seeking to build or improve their community buildings (i.e. halls, libraries, community center, and fire departments). These grants are awarded to communities with a population up to 10,000 based on a competitive application process.

### **STATE STEWARDSHIP FUND**

The Stewardship Fund is the State of Wisconsin's land acquisition program for public outdoor recreation and habitat protection. Administered by the Department of Natural Resources, the fund makes millions of dollars a year available to buy land for parks, trails, habitat, hunting grounds, and local parks and campgrounds. This program could be used to preserve the lands along the ledge to the east of CTH K.

### **A TOWN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM**

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a five to six year short-range plan with updates occurring annually. A general CIP includes a community's capital items such as:

- Park acquisition and improvements
- Trail development projects
- Public buildings improvements and maintenance
- Emergency vehicle or road maintenance vehicle purchase and replacement
- Street maintenance and reconstruction
- Replacement of aged sanitary sewer and water mains

Capital items are generally defined as those items that are expensive (cost \$5,000 or more) and will last at least 3-5 years. The CIP also includes improvement projects required for the community's future and the appropriate timeline and funding to be followed to implement the improvements.

The Town of Empire does not currently use a CIP. To more effectively implement this plan, as well as other community objectives, the Town should consider using a CIP approach to plan for future expenditures, thereby linking planning to the annual budgetary process.

## **Coordination with Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters**

Utilities and community facilities can dictate future planning for a community if capacity, location, and services are not adequate to support development. Therefore, it is important to inventory existing utilities and community facilities and understand how utilities and community facilities will be provided over the planning period. Furthermore, utilities and community facilities have a direct impact on the other chapters of the comprehensive plan. In particular, the Housing, Economic Development, Land Use, and Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapters are most directly impacted by utilities and community facilities.

### **HOUSING**

Improvements such as roads, sewer, water, parks, recreational facilities, and schools all need to be coordinated with the housing decisions and vice versa. The recommended method to coordinate improvements is to follow the land use pattern presented on the *Future Land Use Maps* as closely as possible and plan for future improvements in a CIP.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Availability of sanitary sewer service is an important factor influencing the location of residential subdivision and commercial development. When considering future development potentials influence of this infrastructure was looked at to determine what types and how much development was reasonable to anticipate and what, if anything, would be the potential economic impact on the Town.

### **FUTURE LAND USE CHAPTER**

Land use drives the need for utilities and community facilities. Conversely, the availability of utilities and community facilities can determine where development can occur. The *Future Land Use Maps* were developed after careful consideration of where utilities and community facilities are now available, or will be available, within the planning period. In addition, the *Future Land Use Maps* carefully consider the economic feasibility of utilities and community facility extensions to serve areas planned for future development. Areas where the extension of sewer service, alternative treatment systems or other basic infrastructure is cost prohibitive are not encouraged for future development.

### **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**

As is obvious from this chapter, the Town does participate in coordinated efforts to provide efficient services. The sanitary districts and the boundary agreement with the City are primary examples of these efforts. The Transportation and Intergovernmental Cooperation goals and objectives found in the Implementation Chapter support continued coordination to efficiently provide needed utilities and community facilities to the Town.

