



**WAUSHARA COUNTY GROUP D QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS SUMMARY**  
**City of Wautoma, Village of Redgranite, Town of Dakota, Town of Marion and**  
**Town of Wautoma**

The following report is a summary of the group D questionnaire results. A complete copy of the report is available for review at the respective community city, village and town halls, Wautoma and Redgranite Public Libraries and the Waushara County Zoning Office.

A questionnaire was conducted for the City of Wautoma, Village of Redgranite and the towns of Dakota, Marion and Wautoma Comprehensive Planning Committees to gather opinions from residents and landowners regarding land use and development issues. A representative sample of questionnaires was sent out to the Town of Marion. Within the remaining municipalities, questionnaires were sent out to all landowners. Additional questionnaires were available at the respective municipalities for renters and other residents or landowners who did not receive a questionnaire by mail. The questionnaire was translated into Spanish and was available through the UW-Extension office and St. Joseph's Church in Wautoma. Each household was asked to complete one questionnaire. Three thousand five hundred and fifty seven questionnaires were distributed among the five municipalities and 1,230 were returned, resulting in an overall response rate of 35 percent.

**Waushara County Group D**

Municipality	No. of Questionnaires		Response
	Sent	Returned	Rate
C. Wautoma	702	235	33%
V. Redgranite	413	151	37%
T. Dakota	735	248	34%
T. Marion	947	342	36%
T. Wautoma	760	254	33%
Total	3,557	1,230	35%

The questionnaire contained 16 questions for the City of Wautoma and Village of Redgranite and 17 questions for the towns of Dakota, Marion and Wautoma. There was one open ended question and two additional questions where written input was solicited. Some respondents did not answer all the questions.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **General Information**

- 70 percent of the respondents indicated that they were full-time (permanent) residents of their respective municipalities.
- 41 percent of the respondents indicated that they were retired, corresponding to the 36 percent of the respondents who noted that they were 65 years old or older.

- 66 percent of the respondents signified that they had lived in their municipality for 11 or more years and 64 percent own less than 5 acres.
- The majority of the respondents indicated that they live on a typical city or village lot (23.4%), lakeshore/lake view or waterfront lot (22.1%) or rural property of under (18.9%) or equal to 5 acres or more (17.7%).

### **Rate Your Municipality**

- The majority of the respondents rated the quality of the environment (82.4%), recreational opportunities (67.2%), and parks/public recreation lands (76.6%) as good or very good.
- Respondents also felt that municipalities were doing a good or very good job of providing fire protection (76.8%), law enforcement (73.9%), school facilities (66.2%), library (62.6%) and emergency medical services (71.4%).
- 65 percent of the respondents rated economic opportunities as poor to fair.
- People indicated that small town living/rural atmosphere, quiet/peaceful, scenery/environment, low crime rate and the friendliness of the area were the top aspects of their municipalities that they value most.
- The top issues that people felt were facing their municipalities included: lack of job opportunities; new businesses and activities for youth; increase in taxes and land prices; low wages; and vacant buildings and storefronts.

### **Existing Development**

- Generally the majority of people indicated that there was about the right amount of all types of housing in their respective municipalities and the overall area.
- A third of the respondents in the Village of Redgranite felt that there was not enough low to moderate income development, while a third in the City of Wautoma felt that there was too much.
- A quarter of all respondents and a third in the City of Wautoma said that more condominiums were needed.
- A third of the respondents saw a need for more assisted living for the elderly; this percentage was higher in the towns than in the two incorporated municipalities.
- Over forty percent of the respondents felt that there were too many mobile home parks in the municipalities and within the overall area.

## **Future Development**

- Approximately 80 percent of the respondents from all municipalities support small scale retail (79.7%) and industrial development (80.3%).
- Over 80 percent of the respondents indicated that they would support or accept service (65.4%/18.2%), tourism (63.0%/19.5%), and small scale agricultural (65.8%/17.5%) development.
- Large scale agricultural development garnered the lowest support of all types of development surveyed.

## **Planning for the Future**

- Protection of groundwater, wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams was the number one overall issue and the most important issue in the towns of Dakota, Marion and Wautoma.
- Protection of private property rights was the second most important overall issue.
- Improving the quality of life for our children and grandchildren was the third most important issue overall and second most important in the City of Wautoma and Village of Redgranite.
- Attraction of good paying jobs was the most important issue in the City of Wautoma and Village of Redgranite.
- Protection of woodlands was the second most important issue in the Town of Dakota and the third most important issue in the towns of Marion and Wautoma.
- Providing cost effective community facilities was the fourth most important issue in the Village of Redgranite.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

Overall, about 70 percent of the respondents indicated that they were permanent year round residents within their respective communities and this category captured the highest percentage of respondents in all five municipalities. About 21 percent of the respondents were seasonal residents, the highest percentage being in the Town of Marion (40.6%). Forty-one percent, or a significant number of people indicated that they were retired. This corresponds to the 36 percent of respondents who noted that they were 65 years old or older. Overall, 66 percent of the people said that they had lived here for 11 or more years, (this figure includes part-time residents) and 64 percent own less than 5 acres. The majority of people live on a typical city or village lot (23.4%), lakeshore/lake view or waterfront lot (22.1%), rural property of less than 5 acres (18.9%), or rural property of 5 or more acres (17.7%).

## **RATE YOUR COMMUNITY**

Respondents were asked to rate their municipality on the quality of the environment; economic, educational and recreational opportunities; access to goods and services; the quality of public facilities and services; on the aspects that they value most; and the top issues facing their municipalities.

The majority of respondents rated the quality of the environment (82.4%), recreational opportunities (67.2%), parks/public recreation lands (76.6%), fire protection (76.8%), law enforcement (73.9%), school facilities (66.2%), library (62.6%), and emergency medical (71.4%) as good to very good. Slightly lower approval ratings (fair to good) were given to educational opportunities (63.5%), access to goods and services (71.5%), maintenance/condition of roads/streets (73.7%), snow removal (66.9%), adult educational opportunities (56.2%), and availability of hospitals and medical services. On the other hand, economic opportunities were rated poor to fair by 65 percent of the respondents.

The top five aspects that respondents valued most included: small town living/rural atmosphere (22.4%); quiet/peaceful (20.2%); the scenery/environment (15.4%); low crime rate (9.0%); and the friendliness of the area (9.4%).

While respondents were in basic agreement regarding the top issues facing their municipalities, respondents in the City of Wautoma, Village of Redgranite and the Town of Wautoma felt that the top issue was the lack of job opportunities, while respondents in the Town of Dakota and the Town of Marion rated increase in taxes as the number one issue. Other issues that ranked within the top five included lack of new businesses (second overall), increase in land prices (fifth overall), and low wages (fourth overall). While not ranking as top five issues collectively, lack of activities for youth and vacant buildings/storefronts were among the top five issues within the respective municipalities.

## **EXISTING DEVELOPMENT**

Respondents were asked if they felt if there was too much, about right, or not enough of the following housing types: single family; low to moderate income; duplexes; multi-unit apartments; condominiums; assisted living – elderly; mobile home parks; and high income development. Generally, the majority of people indicated that there was about the right amount of all types of housing in their respective municipalities and the overall area. However, even though respondents indicated that they overwhelmingly thought that there was enough single family and duplex development, the response to the remaining housing types was more mixed.

A third of the respondents in the Village of Redgranite felt that there was not enough low to moderate income development, while a third in the City of Wautoma felt that there was too much. Twenty-one percent of the respondents in the village thought that more apartments were needed. A quarter of all respondents and a third in the City of Wautoma said that more condominiums were needed. A third of the respondents saw a need for more assisted living for the elderly, this percentage was higher in the towns than in the two incorporated municipalities.

Over forty percent felt that there were too many mobile home parks in the municipalities and within the overall area. A quarter of the respondents indicated that the amount of high income housing was too much and an equal number said there wasn't enough.

Between 20 to 30 percent of the respondents failed to answer the questions in this category. A lower response rate, however, is not calculated into the overall total responses for the questions in this section.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Respondents were asked if they felt that there was a need for new development in the area and, if there was, what type of new development they believe would be best. People were asked if they supported; do not support, but accept; do not support; or have no opinion on the following types of development: Large, moderate and small scale industrial development; service and tourism development; small, and moderate to large agricultural development; and small and large retail development.

Respondents from all municipalities overwhelmingly threw their support behind small scale retail (79.7%) and industrial development (80.3%). However, even though people were willing to support or accept larger industrial and retail development, as the scale of the proposed development increased, the support and acceptance decreased. Over 80 percent of the respondents indicated that they would support or accept service (65.4%/18.2%), tourism (63.0%/19.5%), and small scale agricultural (65.8%/17.5%) development. Large scale agricultural development garnered the lowest support among the types of development surveyed. A third of the respondents indicated that they would support this, while a third indicated that they would accept this and a quarter indicated that they could neither support nor accept large scale agricultural development.

## **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of various decisions that should be considered when planning for the future. These issues involved: the promotion of development that minimizes costs and the redevelopment lands with existing infrastructure; encouragement of coordination and cooperation between municipalities and neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices; the protection of groundwater, wetlands, lakes, rivers, streams, agricultural lands, woodlands and private property rights; preservation of cultural, historic and archaeological sites; provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels; attraction of good paying jobs; community participation in land use planning and decision making; attractiveness of the community; and improving the quality of life for our children and grandchildren.

While people indicated that all issues were important, some issues emerged as more important than others. Differences were also seen among the municipalities. The top issues were the protection of groundwater, wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams (1<sup>st</sup> overall and in the towns of Dakota, Marion and Wautoma); protection of private property rights (2<sup>nd</sup> overall and in the towns of Dakota, Marion and Wautoma); improving the quality of life for our children and

grandchildren (3<sup>rd</sup> overall and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the City of Wautoma and Village of Redgranite); attraction of good paying jobs (4<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> in the City of Wautoma and Village of Redgranite); protection of woodlands (5<sup>th</sup> overall and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Town of Dakota, 3<sup>rd</sup> in the towns of Marion and Wautoma); and providing cost effective community facilities (9<sup>th</sup> overall and 4<sup>th</sup> in the Village of Redgranite).