

BURNETT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

Town of Union

During the summer of 2009, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls sent comprehensive planning public opinion surveys to 130 residents and property owners in the Town of Union. A total of 52 questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 40 percent. This number of returned surveys will provide estimates that are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 13 percent.

**1. Mark the three (3) most important reasons you and your family choose to live in Burnett County:
(Mark (•) three only)**

4%	Agriculture	0%	Community services and facilities	0%	Health care services
2%	Quality schools	4%	Near job/employment opportunities	17%	Near family and friends
8%	Cost of home	65%	Recreational opportunities	6%	Low property taxes
6%	Low crime rate	42%	Small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle	2%	Quality neighborhood
69%	Natural beauty	42%	Proximity to Twin Cities	8%	Other:

2. Rate the quality of the following services and facilities:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
a. County parks	8%	56%	19%	4%	13%
b. County public health services	4%	27%	20%	2%	47%
c. County road maintenance	6%	48%	32%	12%	2%
d. County recycling programs	12%	48%	16%	4%	20%
e. County zoning code enforcement	6%	27%	16%	10%	41%
f. County building code enforcement	6%	38%	20%	8%	28%
g. County nuisance ordinance enforcement	4%	16%	20%	18%	41%
h. Emergency dispatch service (911)	18%	30%	12%	4%	36%
i. Police protection/law enforcement	8%	38%	26%	6%	22%
j. Fire protection	14%	38%	14%	6%	28%
k. Public libraries	10%	32%	10%	4%	44%
l. Local public school system	18%	24%	4%	4%	50%
m. Wireless telecommunication service	2%	16%	22%	33%	27%
n. Local Town/Village hall	4%	36%	30%	2%	28%
o. Local Town/Village road maintenance	6%	40%	40%	6%	8%

3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in Burnett County?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
14%	71%	12%	2%	2%

4. Which two of the following ways of paying for the costs associated with growth and development do you prefer? (Mark (•) two only)

	Development impact fees	User fees	Taxes	No Opinion
a. Paying for public infrastructure (e.g. roads)	23%	38%	29%	23%
b. Paying for public services (e.g. police protection)	12%	31%	44%	23%

5. Provide your opinion on the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. The location of new residential development should be managed to ensure efficient delivery of public services.	4%	71%	2%	6%	16%
b. Community services (schools, police, fire, etc.) should be provided jointly by communities if money can be saved & service quality is maintained.	24%	61%	0%	4%	10%
c. My community should coordinate with the county and neighboring communities to plan for an aging population's housing needs.	20%	49%	8%	8%	14%
d. Burnett County communities should pool resources to attract/retain companies that will create jobs.	35%	45%	8%	0%	12%
e. It is important to support the preservation of productive agricultural land in my community.	29%	48%	6%	4%	13%
f. There is too much farmland being converted to non-farm uses in my community.	12%	24%	24%	4%	35%
g. Ag uses should be restricted close to residences.	8%	16%	36%	12%	28%
h. New residential development should be located away from agricultural operations.	10%	47%	14%	6%	22%
i. Identifying and protecting historical sites and structures is important to me.	21%	58%	10%	6%	4%
j. Additional use of roads for motorized all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) is needed in my community.	24%	31%	16%	24%	4%
k. ATV infrastructure (trails, signage, maintenance, etc.) should be funded through user fees.	31%	51%	12%	0%	6%

6. Assume that you are in charge of allocating the county budget:

	There is a \$100 surplus. Distribute it among the following:	There is a \$100 deficit. Balance the budget by cutting it from the following:
a. Emergency services (police, fire, ambulance)	\$18	\$4
b. Recreation (trail development/maintenance, boat landings, parks, etc.)	\$11	\$15
c. Environment (aquatic invasive species protection, shoreline preservation, etc.)	\$11	\$17
d. Social services	\$5	\$24
e. Economic development	\$5	\$16
f. Roads and bridges	\$13	\$5
g. Education	\$10	\$8
h. Taxes	\$27 (decrease)	\$11 (increase)
Total = must add to 100	\$100	\$100

7. The county is exploring strategies to improve the wireless communication network and recognizes that maintaining the "Northwoods Character" is central to the quality of life for its residents. With this in mind, it is more important to allow: (Mark (•) one only)

Fewer, but taller communication towers	More, but shorter communication towers	No Opinion
54%	22%	24%

8. With respect to internet service at your residence in Burnett County, do you currently have:

Dial-up modem	High speed/broadband (e.g. DSL)	None	Don't know
14%	32%	52%	2%

9. If you have (or could have) access to broadband internet service, how often do (or would) you work from home in Burnett County?

Wouldn't work from home	Less than 1 day/week	1 – 2 days/week	3 or more days/week
58%	15%	15%	13%

10. Historically, some recreational-oriented commercial uses have been allowed on waterfront property adjacent to residential development. Which of the following commercial uses may be appropriate in these areas? (Mark (•) all that apply)

54%	Restaurants and cocktail lounges	35%	Bed and Breakfasts	8%	Hotels/motels
44%	Sporting goods and bait sales	60%	Resorts	48%	Marinas
12%	None of the above are appropriate	2%	Other		

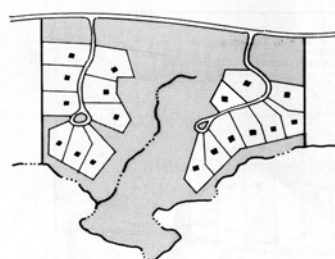
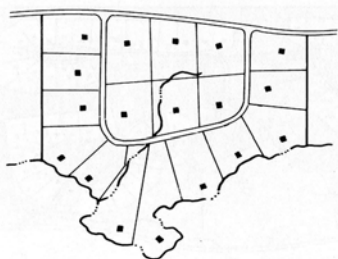
11. Seasonal residents are those that have their primary residence outside of Burnett County, but have a secondary residence within the County. In some cases, these residences are rented out on a short-term basis when not occupied by the owner. Please provide your opinion on the following conditions as they apply to short-term seasonal rentals:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. The septic system should be designed and maintained to support the number of guests	47%	47%	4%	0%	2%
b. Neighbors should have access to owner contact information	20%	47%	20%	2%	10%
c. Noise limits on outdoor use of the property should be imposed (late hours)	33%	53%	12%	0%	2%
d. Landscaping along side property lines should be required	16%	18%	33%	12%	20%
e. Reference checks of prospective renters should be required	12%	33%	31%	4%	20%
f. Short-term rental of residential units should not be allowed	12%	12%	56%	6%	14%

12. Traditionally, rural housing developments have been designed on large lots as in the diagram (Option A) on the left below. An alternative layout for rural housing is the “cluster” concept, which has smaller lots and permanently preserved open space as in the diagram (Option B) on the right below. Each option contains the same number of homes. Please mark which one you prefer:

33% Option A

67% Option B








13. Clustering of residential building lots should be required in order to preserve the following:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Productive agricultural land	22%	40%	9%	7%	22%
b. Forest land	33%	41%	9%	7%	11%
c. Rural open space	22%	50%	7%	4%	17%
d. Natural and environmental features	36%	43%	6%	4%	11%

14. What types of businesses/industries do you believe are the most important for Burnett County to attract? Please rate each of the following (5=High Priority to 1=Low Priority):

	5	4	3	2	1	No Opinion
a. Agricultural related businesses	13%	15%	36%	19%	4%	13%
b. Commercial, retail, and services	15%	27%	38%	4%	6%	10%
c. Health care services	32%	30%	26%	2%	0%	11%
d. Industrial and manufacturing development	23%	32%	21%	9%	6%	9%
e. Downtown development – “Main Street”	18%	29%	31%	8%	4%	10%
f. Home based businesses	6%	13%	35%	17%	8%	21%
g. Tourism and recreation	31%	31%	22%	4%	4%	8%
h. Tech related businesses (e.g. biotech, computers)	15%	42%	19%	8%	4%	13%

15. Residential density refers to the number of homes within a specific area and is usually expressed as the “number of homes per acre” or “number of homes/acre”. For instance, two (2) homes within a 40-acre area are twice as dense as one (1) home within a 40-acre area. Likewise, one (1) home within a 20-acre area is twice as dense as one (1) home within a 40-acre area. What is the most appropriate limit on density for each of the following non-waterfront areas outside of villages within the county? Mark (•) only one choice for each area described in a, b, and c. Use the table and diagrams below to answer the questions.

(note that the placement of the dots in the following graphics does not necessarily represent where a home would be built in the given residential density option)	More than 8 homes/ 40 acres	8 homes/ 40 acres = 1 home/ 5 acres	4 homes/ 40 acres = 1 home/ 10 acres	2 homes/ 40 acres = 1 home/ 20 acres	1 home/ 40 acres	Other Density: specify	No Opinion
							
	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
a. Ag areas - farming will be preserved & expanded long-term	4%	4%	6%	23%	26%	6%	30%
b. Forest areas -managed & harvested long-term	8%	0%	18%	14%	27%	4%	29%
c. Other rural areas	9%	11%	22%	7%	7%	0%	44%

d. Please provide any additional comments you have about residential density issues:

**16. As development occurs over time in Burnett County, the most important things to preserve are:
(Mark (•) up to three)**

21%	Agriculture	52%	Large areas of contiguous forests	27%	Lakefront access
69%	Water Quality	37%	Views of the natural environment	65%	Wildlife habitat
2%	None	2%	Other		

17. How much would you be willing to pay annually to help preserve your selections in Question 16?

24%	\$0	11%	\$10	29%	\$50
9%	\$5	18%	\$20	9%	Other

**18. What are your two (2) preferred methods of receiving information from Burnett County?
(Mark (•) two only):**

Direct Mailing	Newsletters	Newspaper Articles	Radio	Website	Other
56%	50%	33%	8%	19%	6%

**18a. If you chose radio in Q18, which radio station would you prefer to receive information from?
(Mark (•) one only)**

WHWC 88.3 FM	WOJB 88.9 FM	WGMO 95.3 FM	WJMC 96.1 FM	WXCX 105.7 FM	WCMP 1350 AM /100.9 FM	Other
0%	10%	30%	10%	30%	10%	10%

DEMOGRAPHICS: Please tell us some things about you:

19. Gender:	Male	Female	20. Age:	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	67%	33%		0%	0%	9%	17%	35%	39%
21. Highest level of formal education:	High school or less		Some college	2-year college degree	4-year college degree	Grad/Professional degree			
	22%		28%	15%	26%	9%			
22. Household Income Range:	Less than 15,000		15,000 – 24,999	25,000 – 49,999	50,000 – 74,999	75,000 – 99,999	100,000 or more		
	3%		5%	35%	13%	23%	23%		

23. Which of the following describes your residential status in Burnett County?

Full-time	Seasonal (primary residence outside Burnett County)	Non-resident
39%	53%	8%

24. How many years have you resided or owned property in Burnett County?

Less than 1 year	1 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years	16 – 20 years	20+ years
0%	4%	22%	16%	4%	53%

25. Total acres owned in Burnett County:

Less than 1 acre	1 – 5 acres	6 – 10 acres	11 – 20 acres	21 – 40 acres	40+ acres
14%	43%	12%	10%	8%	12%

26. If your residence within Burnett County is used seasonally:

a. How many months each year is it generally used?

0% Less than 1 month

5% 1 month

8% 2 months

3% 3 months

8% 4 months

51% 5 or more months

26% Residence is not seasonal

b. When occupied, how many people generally use the residence at any given time?

10% 1

21% 2

19% 3

14% 4

10% 5

7% 6 or more

19% Residence is not seasonal

27. Location of residence or land within Burnett County: (Mark (•) one only)

0% Anderson (Town)

0% Jackson (Town)

0% Rusk (Town)

0% Trade Lake (Town)

0% Blaine (Town)

0% La Follette (Town)

0% Sand Lake (Town)

100% Union (Town)

0% Daniels (Town)

0% Lincoln (Town)

0% Scott (Town)

0% Webb Lake (Town)

0% Dewey (Town)

0% Meenon (Town)

0% Siren (Town)

0% Webster (Village)

0% Grantsburg (Town)

0% Oakland (Town)

0% Siren (Village)

0% West Marshland (Town)

0% Grantsburg (Village)

0% Roosevelt (Town)

0% Swiss (Town)

0% Wood River (Town)

28. My residence within Burnett County is: (Mark (•) one only)

0% Within a village

2% A rural hobby farm residence (not primary source income)

50% A shoreline residence

4% A rural farm residence

44% A rural non-farm residence

0% No residence in Burnett County

29. If you could change one (1) thing about Burnett County, what would it be?

Thank You for Completing the Survey! Your survey responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

Please return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope by xxxxxx, 2009 to:
Survey Research Center
124 RDI Building
University of Wisconsin - River Falls
410 S. Third St.
River Falls, WI 54022-5001