

VILLAGE OF ELM GROVE
Comprehensive Plan
Community-Wide Household Survey

Descriptive Summary of Survey Results

December 1, 2006

Executive Summary

Methodology and Purpose of the Survey

A household survey was prepared for the *Village of Elm Grove Comprehensive Plan* (the Plan) as a means of soliciting attitudes on a broad range of issues to be considered in development of the Plan. The survey results are intended to provide assistance in developing Plan goals and strategies.

Residents, local businesses and property owners voiced their opinions on various topics such as utilities and infrastructure, transportation, housing, land use, and community appearance. In general, survey participants provided answers based on their level of interest, perceived need, level of concern and level of priority.

The Village of Elm Grove distributed a household survey on August 8, 2006 to all postal patrons. A total of 3,318 surveys were circulated and an additional 52 were requested by individuals (for a total of 3,370 surveys). Survey participants were permitted 30 days to return the survey. A total of 1,049 surveys -- representing a 31% return-rate -- were received by the Village.

The survey results provide a wide array of useful data; but, like all surveys, it reflects certain limitations. One shortcoming of this survey is the complexity of issues and topics that were addressed. To a large extent, information that would increase understanding of an issue was not available at this phase of the planning process. Variables such as public costs, adverse economic impacts and other constraints could not be provided as a component of the survey questions.

Plan Element Findings

As the *Village of Elm Grove Comprehensive Plan* takes form, it will address multiple community development issues, which are also referred to as elements. These Plan elements focus on diverse and broad planning and development themes. To a great extent the survey sought to address the Plan elements; useful data obtained from the survey regarding Plan elements is provided below.

Land Use

A majority of responses indicated support of mixing residential and business uses in the same building as redevelopment occurs in the downtown area.

Community Design

Overall, responses denoted a favorable opinion regarding modifications to Watertown Plank Road (east and west of the railroad tracks) that include pedestrian paths and sidewalks, street trees, and landscape planting.

Transportation and Circulation

While a considerable percentage of survey participants indicated “low priority” and “no interest” to future expansion of the Village pathway system (response rates for these two categories totaled greater than 50% for pathways along Hollyhock, Gremoor, Gebhardt and North Elm Grove Road), a significant percentage of responses (53%) were supportive of constructing a pathway along Juneau Boulevard (between Legion Dr. and Highland Dr.).

In general, responses did not reveal a high level of interest for improvements to or construction of roads and intersections located along the periphery of the Village. (Greater than 60% of survey participants identified the Pilgrim Parkway/Elm Grove Road intersection and Wisconsin Avenue extension projects as either low or no interest). However, potential extension of 124th Street was identified as a high priority in slightly less than one-half of responses (48.4%).

Vehicular parking, including both on- and off-street facilities, was perceived as less important to the design of Watertown Plank Road than pedestrian/bicycle, landscape and lighting elements.

Housing

While responses did not overwhelmingly reveal a great need for or interest in potential development of owner-occupied condominium units, a slight majority of responses (54.1%) pointed to support for development of condominium units valued between \$250,000 and \$400,000.

By a wide margin (4:1), survey responses suggested opposition to development of renter-occupied housing.

Utilities and Facilities

A substantial majority of survey participants (71.8%) expressed support for establishing a municipal water system in the downtown business district.

By a less significant margin, slightly over one-half of responses (52.4%) indicated support for establishing a municipal water system in residential areas of the Village.

In general, residents and business owners expressed a high level of satisfaction with existing community services, facilities and programs.

By far, survey responses indicated the least satisfaction with electric utility services.

48.8% of all survey participants favored fully supporting the library with local funding if the need should arise in the future. Approximately one-fifth (18.6%) of responses to this issue indicated uncertainty (i.e. “undecided”) about this potential municipal issue.

Specific Survey Results

Reporting of Results

For the purpose of this summary, statistical measures (i.e. percentages) represent the frequency that a specific answer to a question occurs. Thus, the survey percentages consider the occurrence of missing answers (omissions).

An appendix included at the conclusion of this summary indicates the frequency of missing responses per question. The frequency of missing answers per given question ranges from 0.5% to 23%. The overall median value for the frequency of missing answers is 6.0%. Additional detail related to the frequency of missing responses can be found in the “Frequency Table” document, available online at http://www.elmgrovetwi.org/comprehensive_planning.htm.

Survey questions concerning potential for a Village-wide pathway system (Question 8), community services related to education and recreation (Question 11), and future high-density housing development (Question 12) generated greater “non-responses” than other questions (in most cases greater than or equal to 10%). It is likely that survey participants chose to omit a response to these questions because they did not fully understand the issues related to the aforementioned topics.

Profile of Respondents

Survey participants included residents, resident business owners and non-resident business owners. While residents comprised the bulk of responders, approximately 1 out of 12 survey responses (8.6%) represented business owners. Of all business owners responding to the survey, approximately two-thirds reside within the Village.

Survey responses represented a fairly uniform geographic distribution within the Village. Responses from the northeast sector of the Village (area 3) represented slightly more than one-third of total responses (34.8%), while the southwest area (area 1) was represented by one-quarter of responses (25.9%). The remaining areas of the Village (areas 2 and 4) each represented 20 percent of survey participation.

There is a minor disparity between the survey sample and 2000 Census data with respect to age of respondents. Responses from those under age 45 (16.6%) are significantly under-represented in the sample, while those over 55 (57.2%) are over-represented. Where the response bias is more partial to opinions from specific age groups, a descriptive annotation has been incorporated into this summary.

Age Group	% of Village Residents* <i>US Census 2000</i>	% of Survey Responders
25-34	7.4 %	2.5 %
35-44	21.0 %	14.1 %
45-54	23.0 %	23.4 %
55-64	17.1 %	21.3 %
65-74	16.2 %	18.7 %
74+	15.3 %	17.4 %

* Percentage of residents based on population 25 years and older

The majority of responses indicate affiliation with the Village as a resident or business owner for 10 or more years (70.1%). Slightly more than one-quarter (27.2%) of respondents have been residents or business owners for *30 or more* years.

Slightly less than one-third (29.4%) of responses are from household compositions that presently include children (18 years of age and less).

Comments and Opinions

A broad range of opinions regarding the future planning of Elm Grove were provided by survey participants. Both quantitative and descriptive viewpoints related to public works and capital improvements, municipal programs and services, property taxes and redevelopment were voiced by survey participants.

Land Use

Mixed Use. A majority of responses (58.3%) endorsed the concept of including housing units as part of a mixed-use approach in redeveloping areas of the downtown. There was greater approval for this concept from responses within the “25-44 year old” age group (78.7%) than those within the “65+ year old” age group (41.7%). Likewise, of 83 business owners that responded to this question, the majority (68.9%) encouraged this concept.

Community Design

Downtown Appearance. When asked to provide opinions regarding the need to improve or evaluate a street or area of the Village, survey participants voiced issues about the condition and economic functioning of the downtown. Of a total of 358 “open ended” responses, 14.7 % denoted concerns about the physical conditions of the of the business district. Responses noted the dated appearance and facades of buildings, lack of visual cohesiveness of various streetscape elements, and absence of physical continuity within the street corridor that would otherwise promote “pedestrian friendliness”.

Business District Traffic. In terms of vehicular parking, survey participants noted the complexities of navigating the downtown environment, and locating space to park automobiles. Of 196 comments related to traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, and roadway surface quality, 31 responses (15.8%) focused on transportation issues along Watertown Plank Road within the business district.

Economic Development

Downtown Commercial Visitation and Retail Enterprise. Of survey participants that responded to a question about frequency of visiting local commercial enterprise, the largest percentage of responses (42.6%) indicated weekly visitation to three to four different business establishments in Elm Grove, while 18.8% of responses indicated visitation to more than four local business weekly.

Mixed-use Housing. As previously stated, 58.3% of responses indicated endorsing the concept of including housing units within the same structure as a business (mixed of uses) in redeveloping areas of the downtown district.

Transportation

Several survey questions addressed transportation or transportation-related elements that included construction and reconstruction of streets, street intersections, pedestrian paths and bicycle transportation facilities.

Village-wide Vehicular Transportation. Of 358 “open ended” comments (for questions 3 and 4), 228 responses (63.7%) indicated concerns with transportation-related issues. The Watertown Plank Road corridor was more frequently cited than other roads (15.6 % of “open ended” comments for Questions 3 and 4) that need further evaluation or improvement. Of road intersections, hazards related to the junctures of Watertown Plank Road/Pilgrim Parkway, and Juneau and Watertown Plank Road were more frequently cited than other intersections.

Survey participants were asked about their opinion concerning improvements to local roads and intersections – generally located along the periphery of the community -- that have been the subject of previous studies and analyses. In general, survey participants placed a “low priority” or voiced “no interests” regarding enhancements to road corridors and intersections listed in the survey. The extension (construction) of 124th Street was the only corridor rated as a “high priority” (48.4%) by more than 40 % of survey responses.

In regards to potentially extending 124th Street, responses from persons affiliated with the northeast quadrant of the Village (Area 3) indicated “no interest” to the greatest degree (33.5%), while approximately one-quarter of responses from other areas expressed a “no interest” opinion.

Opinions regarding the enhancement of the intersection of Pilgrim Parkway and Watertown Plank Road were split between those that view this crossroads as a high (36.3%) and a low (34.7%) priority. There was less “high priority” support for widening Pilgrim Parkway to four lanes (27.4%). Less than one-sixth of responses (15.7%) considered the intersection of South and North Elm Grove Road as a high priority need for reconstruction. A similar level of endorsement (15.3%) was expressed for constructing an intersection on Pilgrim Parkway, thereby allowing for an extension of Wisconsin Avenue into the City of Brookfield.

Village-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation. Opinions regarding expansion of a pedestrian and bicycle pathway system ranged considerably from “high priority” to “no interest” depending on the specific location of a pathway segment. This survey question received a lower response rate (87.3% to 92.3%) from survey participants than most other questions.

Responses indicated support (53.8%) for a pathway along Juneau Boulevard (between Legion Drive and Highland Drive).

“No interest” responses were the greatest for implementing paths that extend from Tonawanda School along Gremoor Drive (34.1%, “no interest”) and Hollyhock Lane (33.5%, “no interest”).

Watertown Plank Road Enhancements. Survey participants were asked about the importance of various physical elements to be considered if and when portions of Watertown Plank Road east and west of the railroad tracks undergo reconstruction.

Overall, slightly greater support was expressed for street enhancements that would potentially occur to the *west* portion (Question 7) rather than the *east* portion (Question 6) of the corridor, with the exception of on-street public parking.

Responses indicated that the highest priorities for street amenities included pedestrian paths/sidewalks, street trees, and landscape plantings.

Amenity	Watertown Plank Road EAST OF RAIL TRACKS “high priority”	Watertown Plank Road WEST OF RAIL TRACKS “high priority”
Pedestrian paths/sidewalk improvements	64.3%	66.2%
Landscape plantings	53.2%	54.5%
Street trees	57.0%	56.8%

Overall, public parking matters were rated as less important than the aforementioned street amenities. Only one-quarter (25.4%) of responses indicated that on-street parking was a “high priority” design element within the *east* portion of Watertown Plank Road. Slightly less (20.8%) support was articulated for this facet of design within the western portion of the corridor.

Elements that included street furniture and public gathering places were regarded as the least critical components of street design. Approximately 4 out of every 5 respondents voiced “no interest” or “low priority” when asked about the importance of these facets.

As a general rule, residents were more supportive of street enhancements within the Watertown Plank Road corridor than were business owners, although on- and off-street parking earned greater support from business owners than residents.

Parking in Downtown Area. As part of reconstruction or potential redevelopment of Watertown Plank Road, survey participants rated the importance of vehicular parking elements that could be considered in tandem with street design. Approximately 40% to 50% of responses indicated a low priority for vehicular parking facilities. Off-street parking elements along Watertown Plank Road were perceived as a more important consideration to the west of the railroad tracks, than to the east of the railroad tracks.

Housing

Attached Unit Housing. Survey participants were asked their opinions about additional new development of various housing choices. Responses to the survey were most supportive (54.1%) of condominium units valued at \$250,000-\$400,000 – a level of opinion expressed by respondents of all ages. Support for attached housing units valued between \$250,000 and \$400,000 received the greatest approval from all age groups.

Survey responses from the southwest quadrant of the Village (Area 1) endorsed units valued at \$250,000-\$400,000 slightly more than responses in other geographic locations, while responses from those that reside in the northwest quadrant (Area 2) of the Village were more supportive of high value condominiums than other housing values.

Less than one-quarter (22.5%) of responses suggested support for new condominium units valued at *less* than \$250,000. A greater level of interest in “luxury” condominium development valued at \$400,000+ was expressed by those that represent the “18-44 year old” age group (58.0%) than those within the “65+ year old” age group (36.7%).

Village-wide, the least support for housing choices was for renter-occupied housing units (9.5%). More enthusiasm was expressed for developing “assisted living facilities” (37.8%), although 52.7% did not favor such development.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Parks. Recreational facilities and services targeted for specific age groups received slightly less positive ratings than other services, and the poor response rate for this topic likely indicates a “lack of knowledge” about recreational services offered for various age groups. In general, “excellent” ratings given for recreational services that target youth (ages 11 and under) were greater (24.7%) than for young adults (12-17 years) (18.7%) and the adult/senior population (18.3%)

Responses from those within the “65 and older” age group indicated higher ratings for parks and park-related facilities and services than those within the “18-44 year” age group.

Utilities and Facilities

Municipal Water. Establishing a municipal water system in both the downtown and residential areas of the Village (*with costs paid by those who receive the service*) received support from the survey participants. Over 70% (71.5%) of responses indicated a favorable opinion for municipal water in the business district, while slightly more than one-half (53.5%) endorsed municipal water in residential areas. Business owners that participated in the survey responded in a similar manner. Due to the complexity of this issue, unforeseen planning obstacles and implementation costs, a noteworthy percentage of all responses indicated “undecided” in their opinion regarding this matter (downtown area, 12.9%; residential areas, 17.4%).

Question 19 of the survey allowed respondents to selectively comment on matters they deemed to be of relevance. Of 26 participants electing to further comment on municipal water, nearly three-quarters (73%) expressed interest in establishing a municipal water system.

Support for municipal water was more strongly indicated by responses from persons affiliated with the southeast quadrant (Area 4) of the Village than those from other areas. Responses from those affiliated with the northwest quadrant of the Village (Area 2) were slightly less supportive of municipal water than those from other geographic areas. There was no strong correlation between age of respondents and endorsement or opposition of municipal water.

Utilities and Community Services. Survey participants were asked to rate the existing level of local community services and facilities on a scale from “excellent – average – poor.” In general, the existing quality of local community services and facilities received excellent and above average ratings. Police, emergency medical, and fire protection services received “high marks” for the level of service, as over 50% of responses indicated a rating of “excellent” for these services.

A majority of responses (51.9%) from residents and business owners indicated satisfaction with the existing quality and service of garbage and recycling, the Department of Public Works yard waste facility and snow removal. Brush collection received slightly less favorable scores than the aforementioned services.

Library. Library services were also rated “excellent” in one-half of survey responses. A larger percentage of responses from persons within the “65+ years” age group (67.8%) rated library services higher than those within the “18-44 year” age group (39.1%).

Slightly less than one-half (48.8%) of the survey responses indicated a favorable opinion regarding fully funding the library with local finances, if the need should arise in the future. Although 29.0% of responses indicated “no support” for fully funding the library facility, a significant percentage of responses (18.6%) were “undecided” in regards to this matter. The latter response was augmented by requests for more detailed information about the potential funding issue.

APPENDIX

Frequency of Missing Answers from Selected Questions

Question No.	Topic	No. of Missing-responses <i>(out of 1,049 total)</i>	Missing Response Rate	Response Rate
1	Water for Business	38	3.6%	96.4%
2	Water for Residents	21	2.0%	98.0%
3	-----	--	--	--
4	-----	--	--	--
5	Business Visits per Week	5	0.5%	99.5%
6a	Gathering Spaces (EAST WTP Road Design)	59	5.6%	94.4%
6b	Sidewalk Improvements	5	0.5%	99.5%
6e	Landscaping	55	5.2%	94.8%
6d	Street Trees	35	3.3%	96.7%
6e	Signage for Peds/Bikes	36	3.4%	96.6%
6f	Striped Bike Lanes	44	4.2%	95.8%
6g	Off-street Parking	55	5.1%	94.9%
6h	On-street Parking	49	4.7%	95.3%
6i	Street Lighting	58	5.5%	94.5%
6j	Street Furniture	66	6.3%	93.7%
7a	Gathering Spaces (WEST WTP Plank Road Design)	59	5.6%	94.4%
7b	Sidewalk Improvements	41	3.9%	96.1%
7c	Landscaping	51	4.9%	95.1%
7d	Street Trees	55	5.2%	94.8%
7e	Signage for Peds/Bikes	63	6.0%	94.0%
7f	Off-street Parking	68	6.5%	93.5%
7g	On-street Parking	77	7.3%	92.7%
7h	Street Furniture	68	6.5%	93.5%
8a	Path, Hollyhock Lane	133	12.7%	87.3%
8b	Path, Gremoor Dr.	130	12.4%	87.6%
8c	Path, Gebhardt Rd.	112	10.7%	89.3%
8d	Path, Highland Dr.	103	9.8%	90.2%
8e	Path, Juneau Blvd WEST	81	7.7%	92.3%
8f	Path, Juneau Blvd EAST	122	11.6%	88.4%
8g	Path, North Elm Grove Road	111	10.6%	89.4%
9a	Pilgrim Parkway, Reconstruction	54	5.1%	94.9%
9b	Pilgrim and Watertown Plank Road Intersection, Reconstruction	61	5.8%	94.2%
9c	North & South Elm Grove Road Intersection, Reconstruction	90	8.6%	91.4%
9d	124 th Street , Extension	38	3.6%	96.4%
9e	Wisconsin Avenue, Intersection Construction	101	9.6%	90.4%
10	Support Mixed Use Buildings	58	5.5%	94.5%

Question No.	Topic	No. of Missing-responses (out of 1,049 total)	Missing Response Rate	Response Rate
11a	Police, Level of Service	30	2.9%	97.1%
11b	Fire, Level of Service	50	4.8%	95.2%
11c	Emergency Med, Level of Service	87	8.3%	91.7%
11d	Street Repair, Level of Service	39	3.7%	96.3%
11e	Parks, Level of Service	70	6.7%	93.3%
11f	Electric, Level of Service	77	7.3%	92.7%
11g	Sewer, Level of Service	89	8.5%	91.5%
11h	Education K-12, Level of Service	148	14.1%	85.9%
11i	Snow Removal, Level of Service	32	3.1%	96.9%
11j	Brush Collection, Level of Service	54	5.1%	94.9%
11k	Garbage Recycling, Level of Service	52	5.0%	95.0%
11l	Yard Waste Facility, Level of Service	100	9.5%	90.5%
11m	Recreation, Senior Level of Service	183	17.4%	82.6%
11n	Recreation, Young Adult Level of Service	241	23.0%	77.0%
11o	Recreation, Youth Level of Service	231	22.0%	78.0%
11p	Library, Level of Service	64	6.1%	93.9%
12a	Condos > \$400 K (Housing Choices)	110	10.5%	89.5%
12b	Condos \$250- \$400 K (Housing Choices)	75	7.1%	92.9%
12c	Condos < \$250 K (Housing Choices)	116	11.1%	88.9%
12d	Rental Housing (Housing Choices)	106	10.1%	89.9%
12e	Assisted Living (Housing Choices)	100	9.5%	90.5%
13	Support Library Funding	38	3.6%	96.4%