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Comprehensive Planning

# TRENDS & REALITIES

October 5, 2015



***“IT’S TOUGH TO MAKE  
PREDICTIONS, ESPECIALLY  
ABOUT THE FUTURE”***

Yogi Berra

# Trends and Realities

## The Bubble Bursts

Recession: A significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months, normally visible in real GDP, real income, employment, industrial production, and wholesale-retail sales.

# 2008 - The Great Recession

- Businesses and jobs were lost;
- Stable neighborhoods became unstable with foreclosures;
- Development slowed, if not stopped altogether;
- Agriculture, on the other hand, survived the recession quite well with strong commodity prices;
- For the first time in decades, the disparity between the prices of land for development vs the price of land for farming began to close.



# Socio-Economic Trends

**Population projections for many communities have been throttled back.**

- Person per household size continues to decline.
- For some communities, mostly rural, which have seen little new housing development, this could mean an actual decrease in population.
- Many lots within platted subdivisions now lie vacant, with a good number reverted to agricultural use.
- Also, for the first time in recorded history, there are now more single adults than married in the U.S.

# Socio-Economic Trends

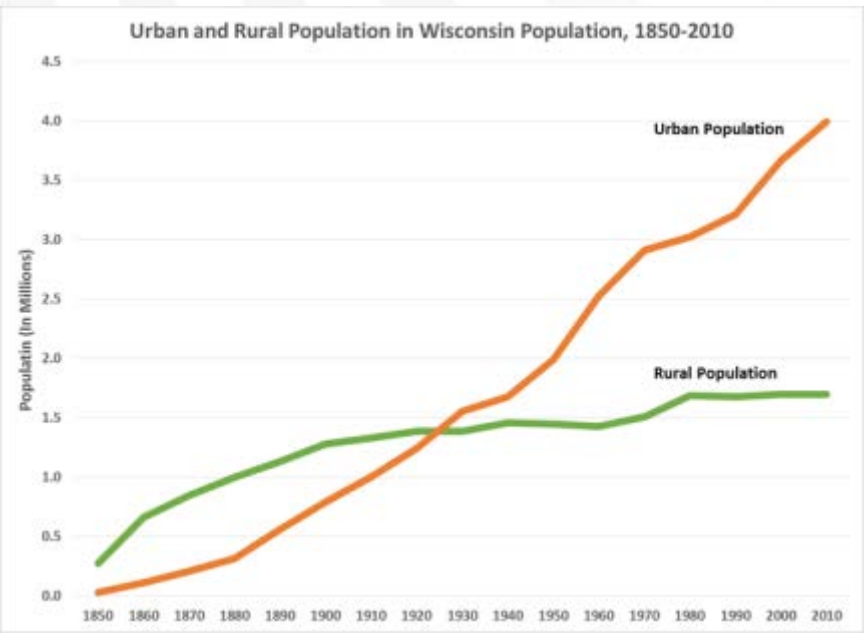
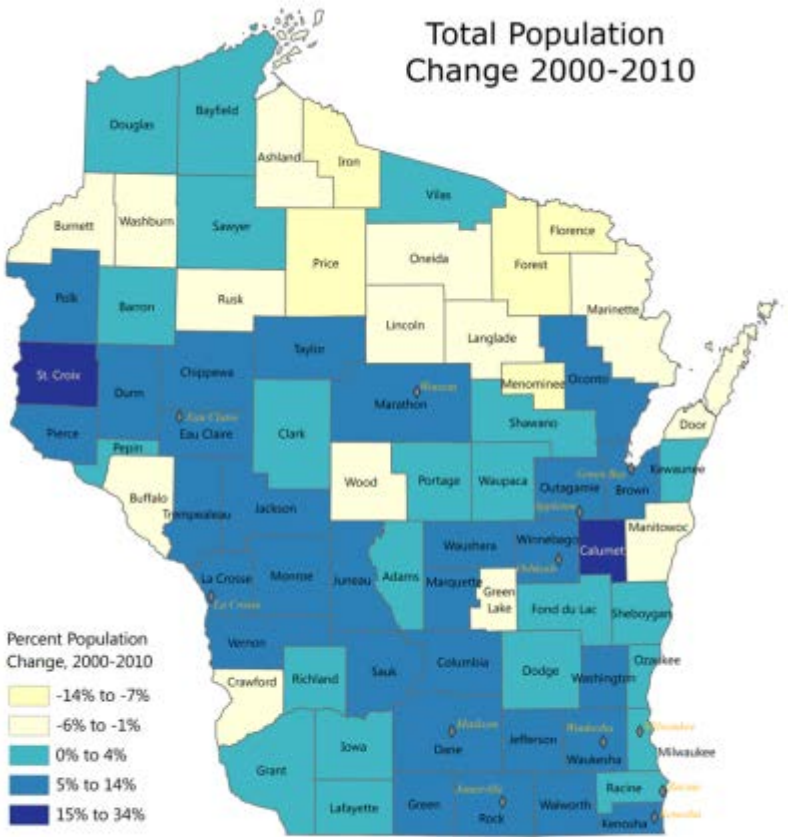
**The Baby Boomer generation (those people born between 1946 and 1964) population bubble continues to move into retirement; with it, carrying a demanding set of needs.**

- This generation is very independent and the “Me” generation will still demand services they feel entitled to due to a work life of paying taxes.
- Services and infrastructure like police, fire, garbage, utilities etc. must not be sacrificed.
- Housing and health care must be affordable to meet retirement incomes.

# Population “Megatrends”

- 1) Population growth in metro fringe or ex-urban areas
- 2) Population decline in rural areas of the state
- 3) Race/ethnic diversity increasing, primarily in urban counties
- 4) Dramatic increase in Latino population in both urban & rural communities
- 5) Pace of aging is accelerating – Age wave is on the horizon
- 6) Increases in poverty and use of “safety nets”
- 7) Greater distances between jobs and where people live

# Patterns of Population Change



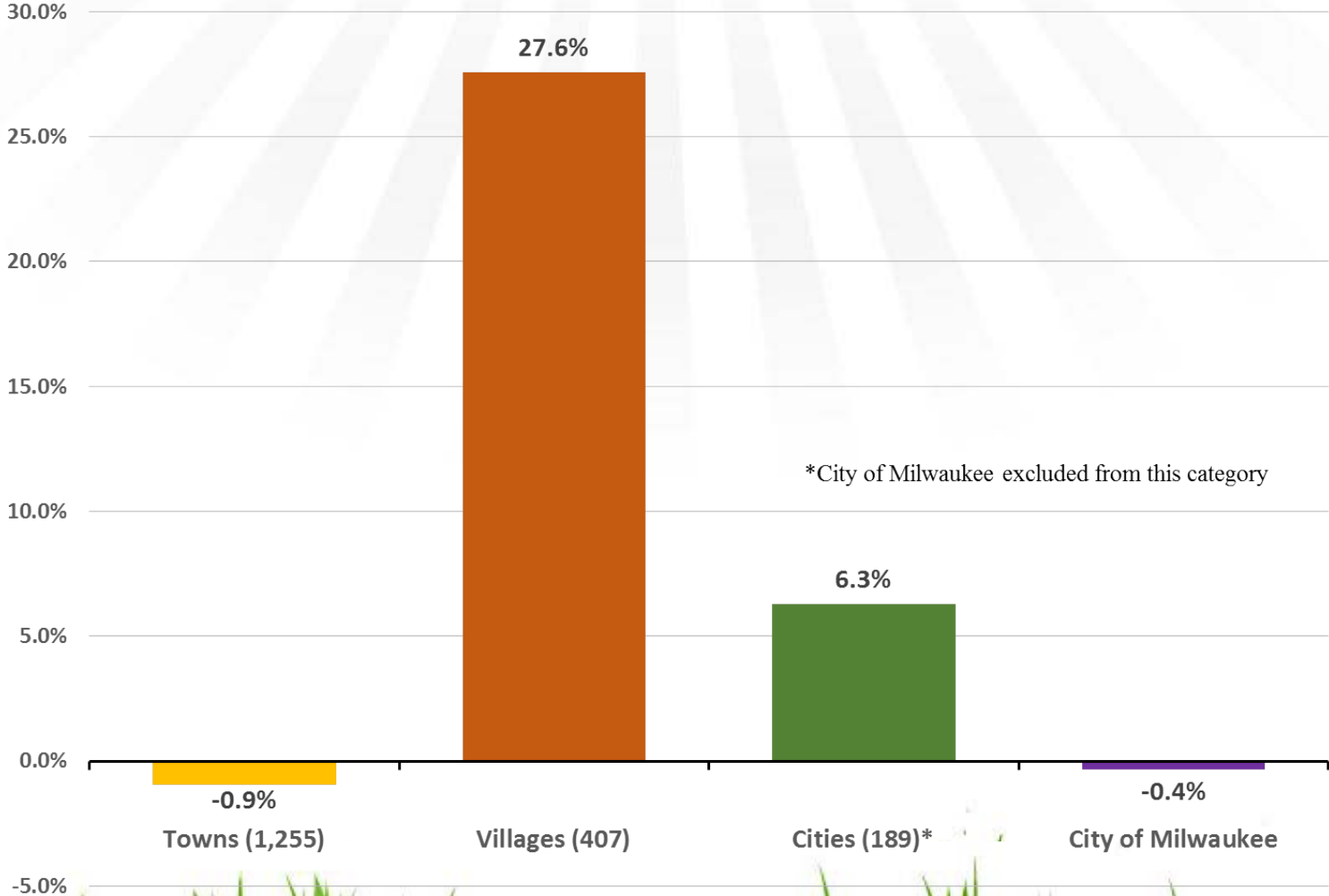
Data source: Census 2000 and 2010 Redistricting Data

Applied Population Laboratory  
 UW-Madison  
 Department of Community & Environmental Sociology



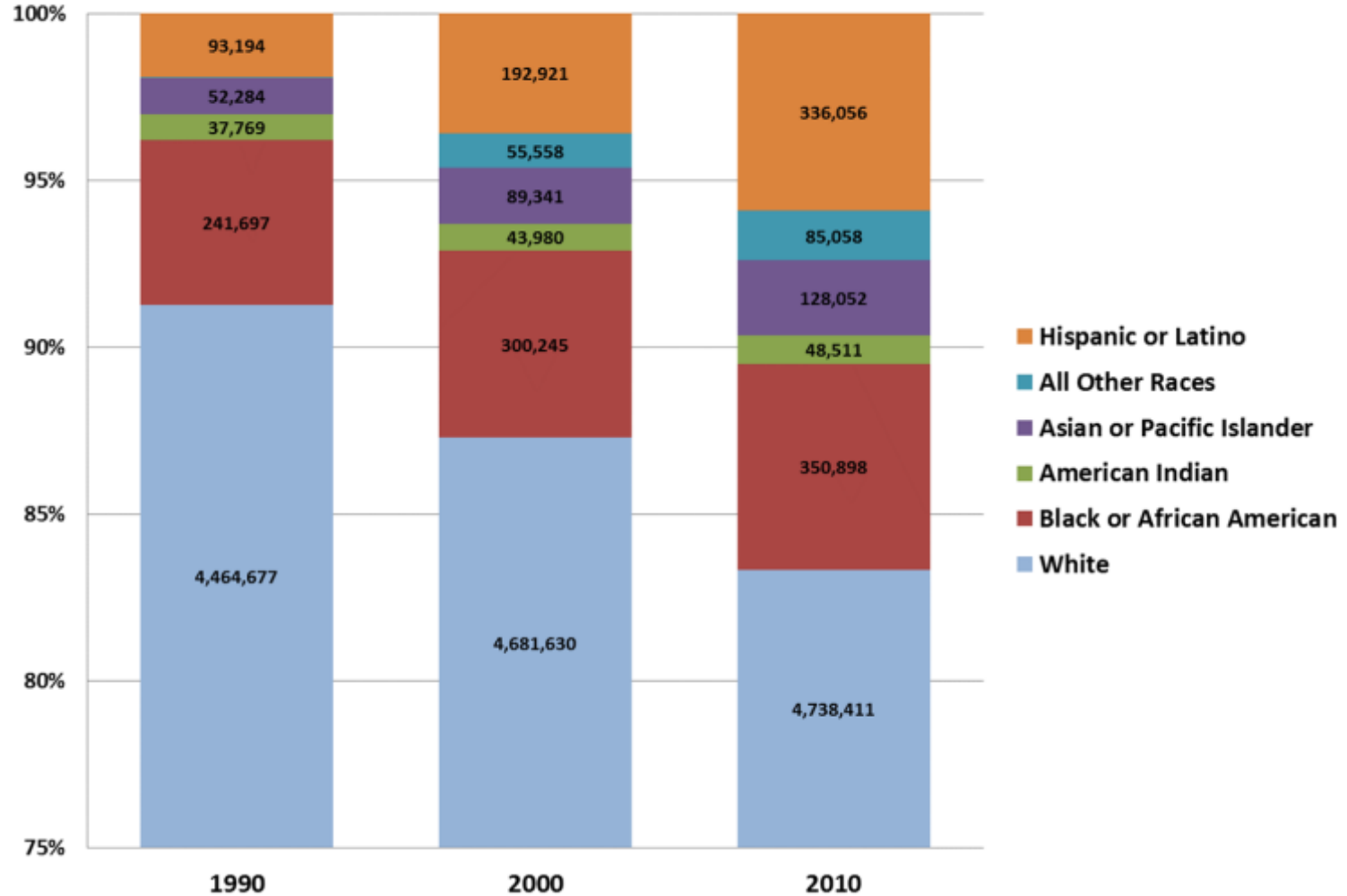
# Patterns of Population Change

Change in Population: Towns, Villages & Cities, 2000-2010



# Wisconsin's Diversity is Increasing

Wisconsin Share of Total Population by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 to 2010



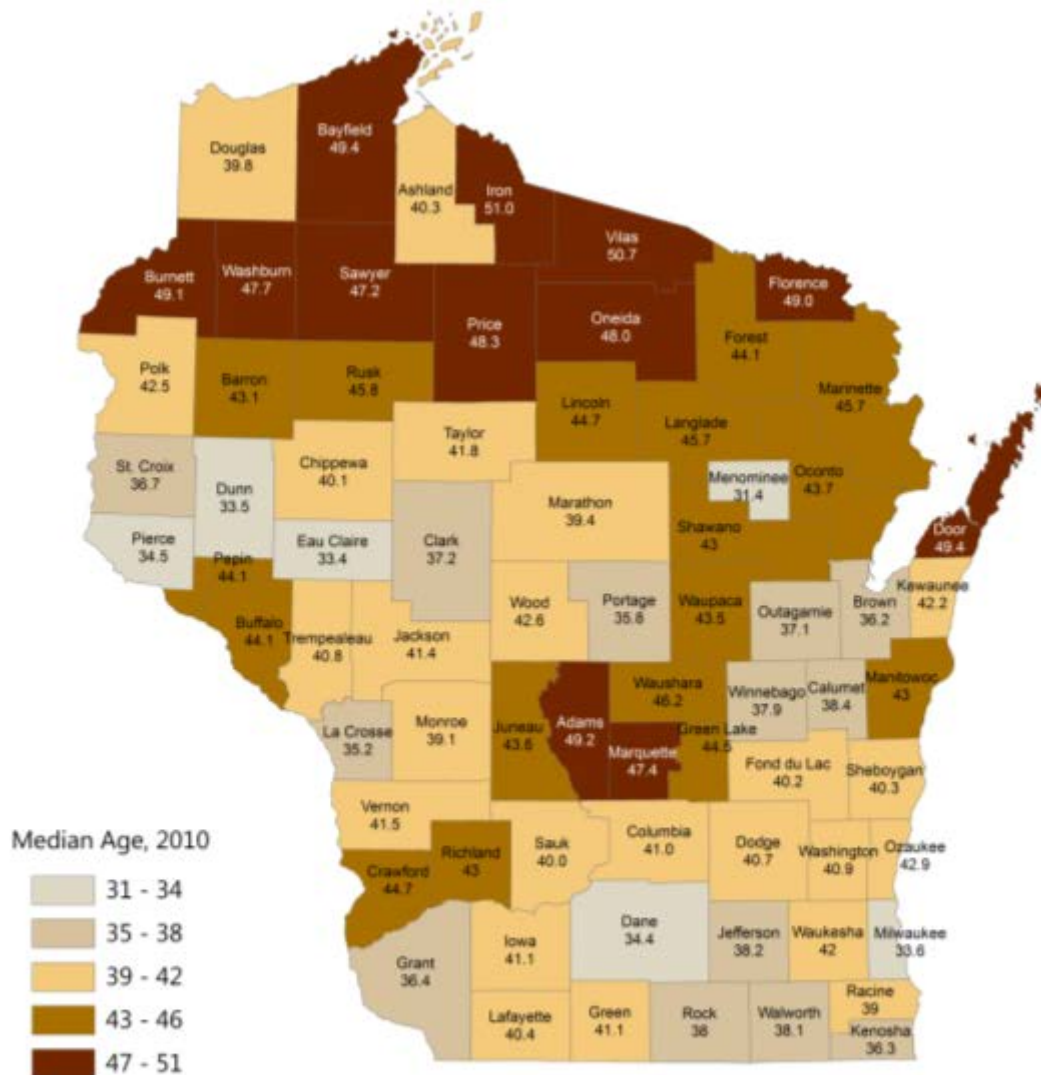
# Impacts of Ethnic Diversity

**As Hispanic and Asian populations grow as a percentage of the US population, cultural values will change relative to land use.**

- Many of these cultures are used to living in more dense environments. They have little interest in, or financial ability for, suburban type living.
- Work ethics much different than the suburban raised white populations.
- These cultures have already made their impacts on local school districts relative to teacher requirements.
- Social programs offered by larger municipalities and counties have reformed as well.



# Geographic Patterns of Age and Aging



WI median age: 38.5

Data source: Census 2010

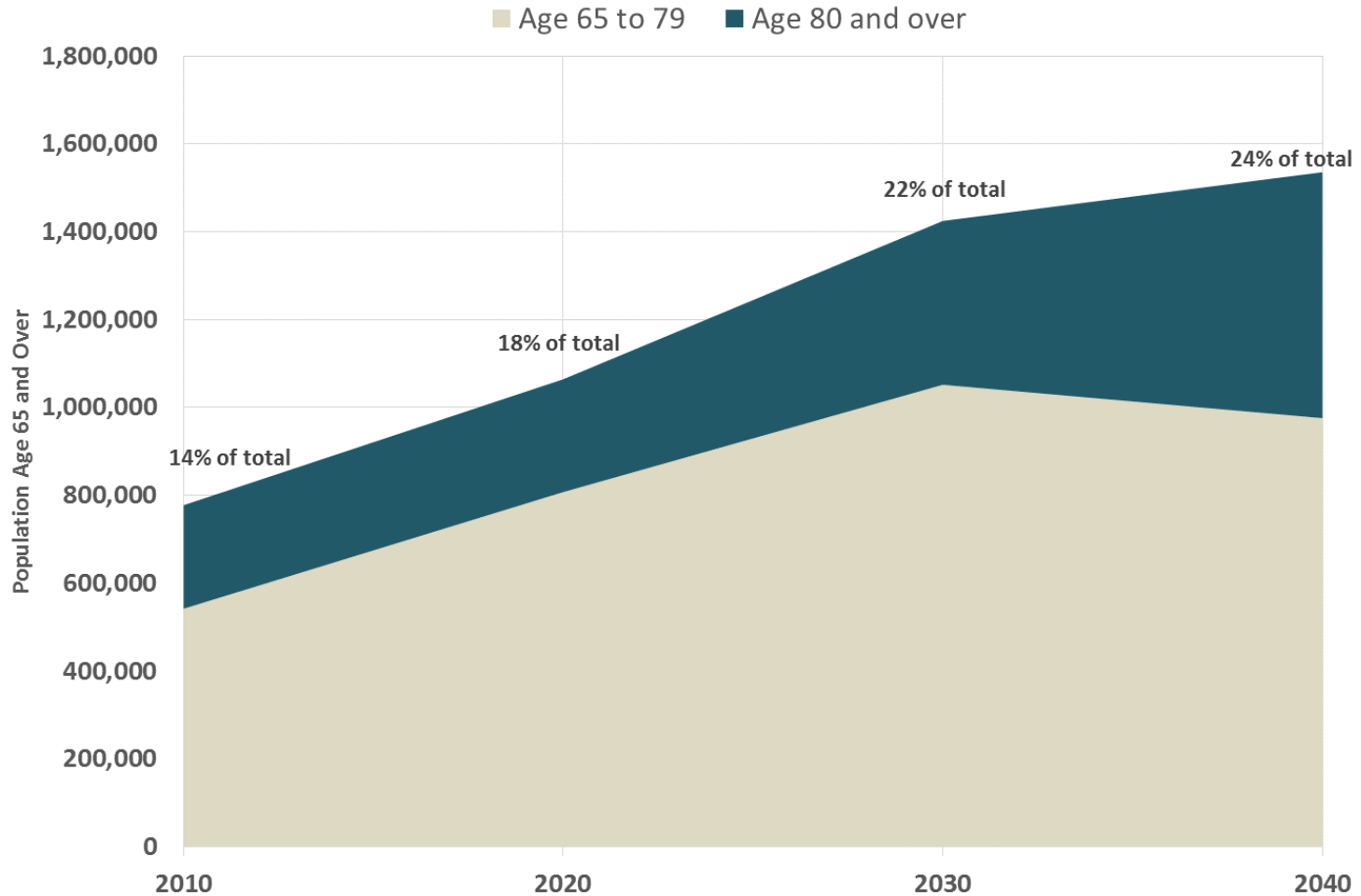
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Extension

# The Age “Wave” Is Coming

Population Age 65 and Over in Wisconsin, 2010-2014



# Housing Trends

**The impact of the “Baby Boomer” generation on the future housing market is about to see an adjustment.**

- In the coming years, baby boomers will be moving on and will likely want to sell their homes to move closer to services and medical arrangements.
- Like any seller, they will be hoping there are people behind them to buy their homes. It is estimated there will be 1.5 to 2 million homes coming on the market nationwide every year at the end of this decade from senior households selling off.
- Who will be behind them to buy? The answer is likely not enough buyers for the amount and types of homes on the market.

# Housing Trends

## **McMansions are out and smaller is better.**

- According to data from the American Housing Survey, from 1989 and 2009, 80 percent of new homes built in that era were detached single-family homes. A third of them were larger than 2,500 square feet. Forty (40) percent were built on lots of half an acre to 10 acres in size.
- This source predicts that 74 percent of new housing demand will come from the people who bought these traditional homes, now empty-nesters, wanting to downsize.
- It's basic; smaller family size and more single households will not require large homes on large lots.

# Housing Trends

**It is likely that a vast majority of future households with children will still want traditional sized houses.**

- Some demand for “traditional” subdivision type single family housing will always be evident. However, it is projected that about a quarter of the buyers will want something else, like condos, rental units and urban townhouses.
- Historically, that demand was very low, near zero percent in some regions. This is a small share but still a huge shift within the housing market.
- This trend may lead to why many baby boomers may not find buyers for their original, larger homes, especially in rural areas. The trend may also suggest that buyers will want smaller more reasonably priced homes they will be able to sell quicker in the future.



# Housing Trends

**The cost to build versus buying an existing house in an already flooded home market will likely make building a new home a lesser value.**

- To access most of the homes that will hit the market, car travel will still be required. Although a portion of the upcoming home buyers will still want to build new, this percentage will likely decrease.
- Also, agricultural land prices are at an all-time high. This means the cost to develop subdivisions within more rural areas will be even more expensive, especially in areas of active farming where the demand for farm land is high.
- Expect to see an increase in households accommodating multiple generations.

# Agricultural Trends

From an agricultural perspective, farming was one of the few industries that survived the Great Recession without major issues.

Couple this fact with the almost stagnant housing development market, much land returned to be managed as agriculture.

The gap in land values between development and agriculture has closed substantially.



# Agricultural Trends

**Wisconsin agriculture will likely stay strong for the foreseeable future.**

- Competition between different agriculture niches like vegetable and grain crops vs dairy has increased the competition for farmland driving up agricultural land prices for purchase and rent.
- Few agricultural professionals project this trend to change as populations in developing countries grow increasing the demand for food worldwide.
- Which leads to a fundamental planning question: Will rural governmental units like towns, reverse some of their prior plans which called for “Rural Residential” and now designate them for agriculture use?
- Most planners have never experienced this type of reversal before.

# Transportation Trends

The times they are a changin'.

Technology, climate change policy, and personal choice are driving the transportation industry like never before.

Big changes are in store as these three areas converge in the future.



# Transportation Trends

The “Millennial” generation is not that into cars as past generations.

- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) indicates a growing number of youth are less interested in obtaining a driver’s license.
- In 2011, the percentage of 16-to-24 year olds with driver’s licenses dipped to another new low. Just over two-thirds of young Americans (67 percent) were licensed to drive in 2011. That’s the lowest percentage since at least 1963.
- Why are fewer young people getting driver’s licenses and driving less? Is it the economy? Is it the cost of gas, insurance and vehicle ownership? Are they too busy cuddling with their iPhones and iPads to get behind the wheel? Uber impact?



# Transportation Trends

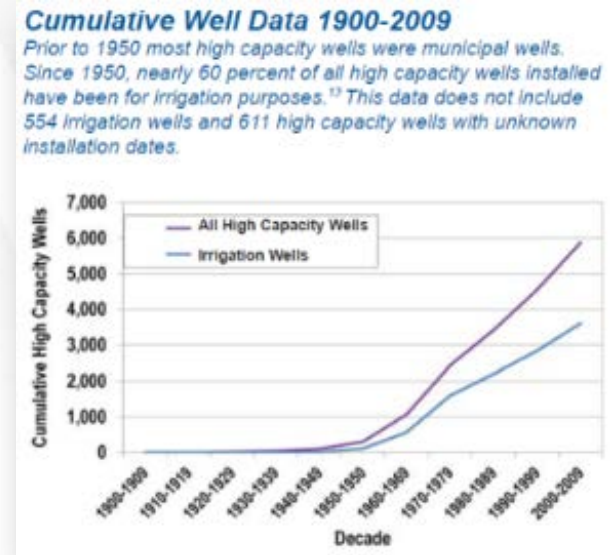
## Increased interest and use of Mass Transit.

- Millennials seem to be defying their sheltered, suburban upbringing by not purchasing a driver's license and choosing transit instead. In fact, according to 2013 survey data provided by *TransitCenter*, transit ridership is at a 50 year high.
- The reason may be as simple as driving being a barrier to using an iPhone.
- Obviously, rural communities will not be able to provide the luxury of public transit, but if the Millennials seek or choose it specifically as their mode of choice, rural communities will have a harder time maintaining or growing their future housing base.
- It's apparent, the millennial generation appears very attracted to urbanized environments. Most have known no other lifestyle.

# Environmental Trends

## Groundwater is becoming more precious and political.

- Competing uses for groundwater – whether business or personal use – are stressing the supply and quantity of groundwater in some areas of our State.
- More areas are experiencing problems with drinking water quality – nitrates and e-coli from agricultural sources, naturally occurring arsenic and radium, and now pharmaceuticals being the latest contaminant.
- The legislative arena continues to debate over high capacity well impacts. “Water Wars are apt to get more frequent and complex as the years progress. Will local plans be able to have an impact?



# Environmental Trends

## **Surface Water Quality is of increasing importance .**

- Tens of millions of dollars are spent every year by both public and private sources to protect our water quality in our State. Wisconsin has a long history of having a 'water ethic' and it's clear that our residents enjoy and value their water resources.
- New paradigms will be emerging to manage point and non-point source pollution such as the WDNR's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program. This program would essentially offer up public and private dollars spent on 'point source' pollution for rural land management practices that reduce phosphorus inputs to our surface waters.



# Environmental Trends

## Climate Change will impact man-made and natural systems .

- Scientist predicted and the public has generally accepted we will experience more extreme events. Floods and drought will become more common.
- Stormwater and drainage systems will be tested. Bridges, culverts, roads will need to be designed to handle these extreme events increasing costs.
- Farmers will need to invest in agricultural crops or systems that are more accommodating to extreme events.
- Invasive species, pests and crop disease will adapt to climate change demanding farmers and agronomists to stay on the cutting edge of innovation.

# Regionalization Trends

Once thought of as a term related to the government takeover of rights, regionalization as a solution, will grow out of financial necessity.

Probably now more than ever, communities, especially rural ones, are realizing they can't provide everything to all people. The financial resources are just not there to do so and the social desire to pay for them is not strong enough.



# Regionalization Trends

**Younger generations have little interest in where the boundary of one government ends and the other begins. They are “Systems Thinkers”.**

- Like an animal seeking quality habitat to survive and prosper, future inhabitants of communities will be attracted to areas that provide places to walk, bike, shop, receive medical attention, be employed, obtain training/education, socialize and much more. They will want their solutions and needs met instantaneously.
- Working collectively across community borders will be paramount in providing the nectar in which residents and visitors will find appealing. If the “habitat” is there, they will come.
- Cities keep the country, country. Towns create the sense of place for cities. They function as a system and rely on the assets of each other to sustain.

# Regionalization Trends

**Increased technology has made the opportunity to provide services across boundaries easier and more efficient.**

- Emergency response and transportation systems have made huge strides in this area. There is no reason to think, utility or other services couldn't benefit from similar applications in the future.
- These are exactly the same concepts that private special interest groups and industries have used to break down local control barriers, so why couldn't governments unite to achieve their desires? The answer is, they can.

# Perfect Storm

**Could we be entering an era where we are experiencing a Planner's Perfect Storm?**

- More efficient land use patterns designed to meet the future needs and preferences of future users.
- Livable, healthy, sustainable communities.
- Local agriculture supporting local demands, creating local jobs.
- Responsible party environmental protection.

# Tonight's Process

You will be asked to give your answers to two questions:

- 1. What are Williamstown's Strengths/Opportunities ? (Use Yellow Post It Cards to record your comments)**
- 2. What are potential Issues or Problems (Use Green Post It Cards)**
  - Record each answer on a separate “post it” card. There is no limit to the amount of answers you can submit per question.
  - Please hand all your post it cards to the facilitators.
  - Once you have handed in all your cards, enjoy some refreshments while the facilitators summarize your answers.
  - Stick around as you will be asked to vote on the responses

# Tonight's Process -Voting

**Once the Facilitators have separated all the answers into “like” themes, you will be given six (6) voting dots.**

- Use three voting dots per question and vote for your three favorite choices (themes) per question.
- **Red Dots** are your first priority, **Green Dots**, your second priority and the **Yellow Dots** your third priority.
- Once you have voted, you are free to leave or stay. Results will be tabulated after tonight's meeting and posted on the Town's web site within a week. Leave your e-mail address if you would like the results sent directly to you.
- Comments don't stop after tonight. Contact the Town with any additional thoughts you may have. Your opinions are valuable.



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**THANK YOU!**

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