

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Location and General Regional Context

The Village of Spring Valley was incorporated in 1895. The community primarily prospered off of the Eau Galle River, which was utilized for logging since 1857. The first settlers with families came in the 1860's. Then in 1891 iron ore deposits were discovered in the area, with the demand of iron came new businesses and homes, building the Village of Spring Valley. In 1900, the Census revealed that Spring Valley had a population of 1,021.

The Eau Galle River and iron mining had significant impacts on the development of the Village. The northern border of the downtown area is formed by the Eau Galle Dam. The Dam construction was completed in 1968 to help prevent frequent flooding in the Village. The Eau Galle River and Dam still provide the Village with a place for recreation and enjoyment today.

The Village of Spring Valley is located in both Pierce and St. Croix County, Wisconsin, but primarily in Pierce County (*see Map I-1*). The Village is approximately 8 miles from Interstate 94, which takes a large percentage of area residents into the Minnesota Twin Cities area and the Eau Claire area for work each day.

Additional information on the history of Spring Valley can be found at the Spring Valley Library, at the following webpage's: <http://www.springvalleywi.com/history.htm>, <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wipierce/springvalley1.txt>, and in the following books by Doug Blegen: *Spring Valley The Early Days* and *Spring Valley Yesteryear Revisited*.

## Comprehensive Planning Law

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law or "Smart Growth Law" was passed in October 1999 as part of the State's biennial budget. This law requires that every town, village, and city be guided by a comprehensive plan by January 1, 2010. Smart Growth was enacted to encourage long-range planning for communities and provide consistency in land use decision making.

Smart Growth planning also calls for public participation throughout the entire planning process. Before 1999, public participation and a public hearing were not required for adoption of a local plan.

State statutes require the plans to consist of nine elements, each focusing on an important sector of your community. The Village has incorporated the nine required elements into their plan and created the following chapters:

- Issues and Opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use
- Plan Implementation

The goal of Smart Growth is to ensure that communities look at how all of these elements intertwine and affect each other, creating an awareness and overall cohesive vision for the Village of Spring Valley.

### **Plan Purpose**

The purpose of the Village of Spring Valley's comprehensive plan is to ensure that the qualities of the community that residents enjoy remain and areas that can be improved upon are addressed. The plan will act as a guide for not only Village government, but also local organizations and community residents and will look at how the Village fits into the regional context.

The Comprehensive Plan can provide a variety of benefits to a community by coordinating community activities, departments, or policies; protecting resources like historic buildings/locations or forest/agricultural/wetlands/etc.; promoting economic development by revitalizing downtowns, developing housing/facilities, and retaining existing businesses; and save the community money through intergovernmental cooperation.

### **Plan Development Process**

Planning is a comprehensive and continuous process. The Plan Commission works to develop the best approach to living together in a community. Each chapter was addressed individually before moving on to the next chapter. When all were complete, the comprehensive plan was reviewed as a whole, checking for any inconsistencies.

Planning is a continuous process. The needs of the Village will continuously change with social, physical, and economic factors.

Completing the Comprehensive Plan is just the beginning of planning for the community. Local officials must examine, explain, and revise the plan when necessary. It must be kept current and used often.

## **Regional Planning Jurisdictions and Government Agencies**

While the Village of Spring Valley plans for its own future, it also is within multiple planning and government agency districts that do their own planning. Available plans will be reviewed to address any inconsistencies between them. Some of the planning and government agencies that will be contacted include:

- Mississippi River and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commissions
- Pierce County & St. Croix County
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Pierce County Economic Development Corporation
- School District of Spring Valley

## **Public Involvement and Public Participation Policy**

Wisconsin State Statutes Section 66.1001 requires a public participation plan/policy/procedure is developed for the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan. The plan/policy must address public meeting notices, publications, and open discussions must be written for every stage of the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is required that the local governing body adopts any comprehensive plan or amendments to a plan must do so with the use of a resolution, passed by a majority vote. Once a comprehensive plan is adopted one copy must be provided to the following: every governing body within the boundaries of the local government unit; the clerk of all adjacent governing bodies; the Wisconsin Land Council; the Wisconsin Department of Administration; the regional planning commission, and the local public library.

Wisconsin State Statutes also requires that all comprehensive plans must meet the minimum requirements; the resolution shall not be adopted by the regional planning commission if those requirements are not met.

The Village acknowledges, in order for the comprehensive plan to be utilized effectively, it must be created and embraced by Village residents. The Village has crafted a Public Participation Plan that helps identify key stakeholders for each element and various methods to generate public involvement. The outline of the Public Participation Plan, along with the Public Participation Resolution passed by the Village Board can be seen in Appendix A.

Initial public involvement was generated through the creation of a village plan commission. During the plan commission meetings, brainstorming session took place to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the Village of Spring Valley as well as to look at how residents would like to see their community in 20 years. The ideas and thoughts generated from this meeting were used to develop the Village's vision statement and overall planning goals.

A newsletter was published informing residents on the comprehensive planning process and forewarning residents that a community survey would be available at the voting location during the elections.

A community wide survey was conducted, to help gather public input on each element of the comprehensive plan. The survey was provided to residents during the November 2008 Presidential elections, resulting in a very high return rate of 71.7%. (463 completed surveys out of 646 voters) The survey results were used throughout the development of the Comprehensive Plan and can be viewed in Appendix B.

All other public involvement was achieved through public meetings, updates on the Village's webpage, and a public hearing was held when the plan was near completion.

### **Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Actions**

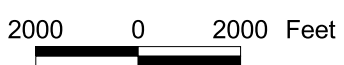
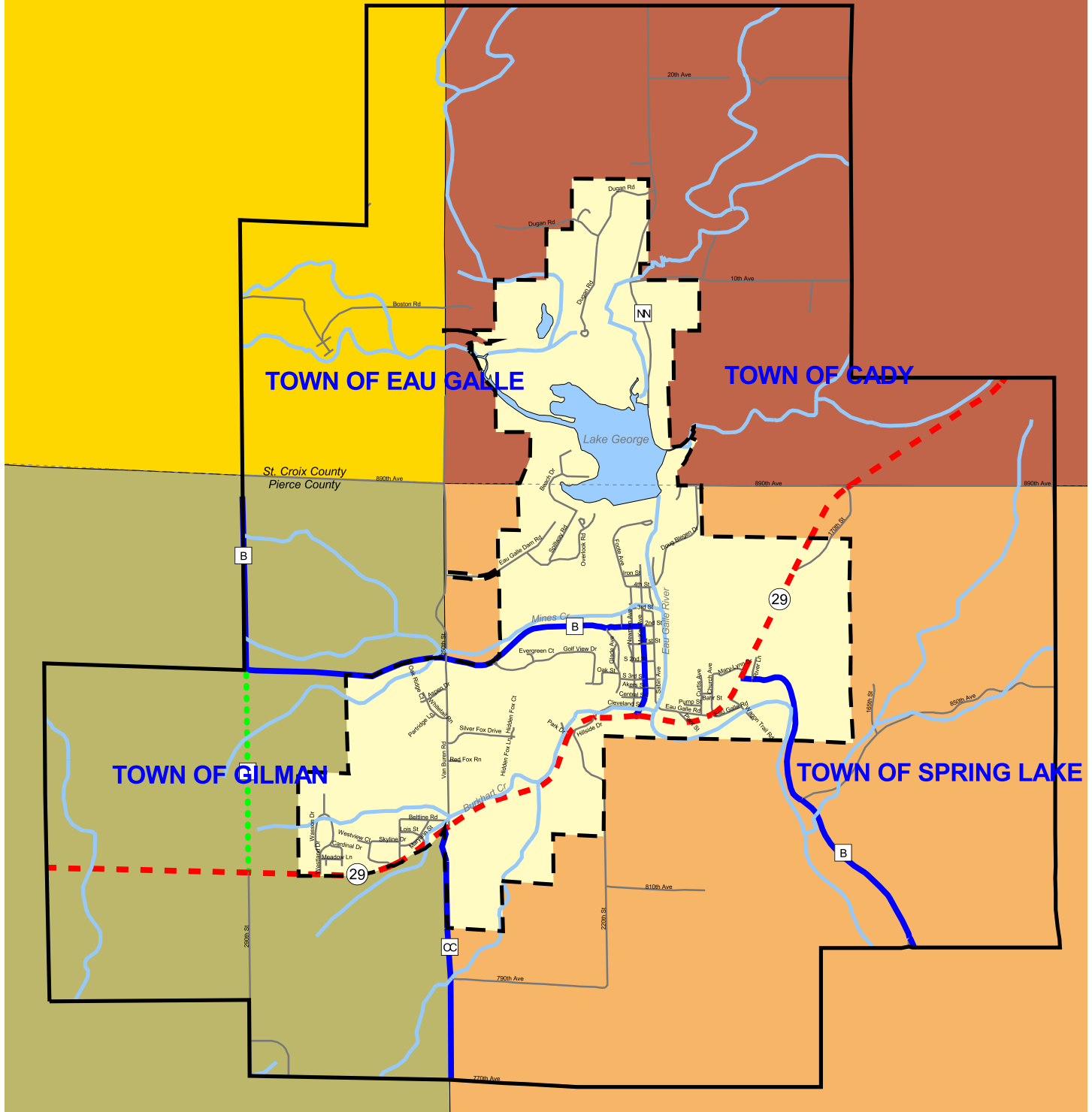
Each chapter in the Village of Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, policies, programs, and actions. These identify the long range vision of the Village in relation to each element. All goals, objectives, programs, policies, and actions may not be attainable for various reasons, therefore, it is important for these to be continuously reviewed and revised.

**Goal:** A general statement that describes a desired future result.

**Objective:** Objectives are statements that describe what the Village hopes to achieve by a goal.

**Policies, Programs, and Actions:** Policies, programs, and actions describe specific implementation strategies to be carried out in order to meet a goal and achieve the objectives. A policy can be an ordinance, a program can be a series of policies and actions, and an action can be something carried out by a group without the need of an official policy.

**Location**  
**Village of Spring Valley**  
 Pierce County, Wisconsin  
 Map 1-1



- |                |                                |                |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Village Limits | Functional Road Classification | Adjacent Towns |
| Planning Area  | Minor Arterial                 | Eau Galle      |
| County Line    | Major Collector                | Gilman         |
| Surface Water  | Minor Collector                | Spring Lake    |
| Streams        | Local Roads                    |                |
|                | Village Limits                 |                |

