

WISCONSIN LANDSCAPES

Perfecting the Places We Live to Protect the Places We Don't

Volume 6, Number 4 Winter 2002

WHY SMART GROWTH IS GOOD FOR YOUR POCKETBOOK

PART OF OUR CONTINUING SERIES ON WHY SMART GROWTH IS GOOD FOR WISCONSIN.

Growth is inevitable. At 1000 Friends, we both accept and welcome growth. But **how** we are growing is cause for concern.

It is no mystery that Wisconsin's open spaces – our farmlands, forests and prairies – are often sacrificed

to new growth. The studies documenting the loss of farmland and habitat are numerous and yet you don't need to read even one study to know this phenomenon is real – just listen to any Wisconsin resident and you will inevitably hear "I remember when that subdivision was open space." Many of 1000 Friends' outreach efforts are aimed at discussing this loss of habitat – but there are many other areas hurt by irresponsible growth.

Our pocketbooks are one area not often discussed. **Sprawl is expensive** — it costs taxpayers more in services than we get back in revenues. This point should not be lost on anyone during current budget crises.

There is a long held belief that growing and increasing the tax base is a financial boon for a community. At best, this is a half-truth. As families move into historically rural towns, their demand for urban services such as fire and police protection, road maintenance, and schools creates pressure for increased expenditures. Residential development may expand the local tax base, but infrastructure for new development in these areas generally costs more than infill and compact development inside existing communities with existing infrastructure. Furthermore, costs for new development are usually subsidized by the community as a whole.

It's common sense. A street that serves a hundred homes will be ten times more efficient than one of the same length that serves only ten. And for the doubters there are studies upon studies that quantify the point. One study done by our own board member Prof. Steve Born found that transportation and utility costs were 172 percent higher in sprawling developments than in more compact urban developments. Here is a quick overview of just how expensive sprawl is.

Roads

Roads are one of the largest contributors to sprawl. The first response to sprawling development is to build new roads to support it. Yet building new roads and expanding existing roads encourages more people to drive and makes rural areas more accessible to further development. It is an ugly cycle. Roads are also expensive to maintain. In Minnesota, road maintenance is the largest expenditure category for local government. Per capita, the cost of maintaining roads declines as density increases (MDA, 1999). An American Farmland Trust study reported that development fails to pay for maintenance of roads leading to and through subdivisions; shortfalls ranged from \$2,695 per mile to \$9,573 per mile (AFT, 1998).

Sewer and Water

The farther a development is from existing infrastructure, the more expensive it is to hook up – and taxpayers generally assume the cost of hooking up new development to sewer and water lines. Developers may pay some impact fees, but these usually do not cover the full cost. The Metropolitan Council of Minnesota estimates that it will cost \$3.1 billion for new sewer and water systems if the state's current low-density development (about two units per acre) continues while the population rises by 650,000 by 2020. Taxpayers could save \$600 million in public infrastructure costs by concentrating development (McDonnell, 1996).

Schools

As our population sprawls, we build new schools on the outskirts to service new residents. School transportation costs are higher in these less dense areas. In a sample of 200 school districts in Minnesota, the ten districts with the fewest pupils per square mile spent on average \$394 per pupil on transit costs. The ten districts with the highest number of pupils per square mile spent on average \$310 per pupil (MDA, 1999). Comparing costs for rural homes to those built in town in the same school district.

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DIRECTORS' COLUMN: THINGS THAT ARE RIGHT IN A SOBER TIME

Dear Friends,

It's a sober time. The economy is slow, our state government faces its largest deficit in a generation, there is talk of war. In times like these it's good to remind ourselves of what is right in our world. At 1000 Friends we have a lot to be thankful for.

Our staff and board are healthy and growing – in more ways than one. Our first Planning Director Nick Lelack left 1000 Friends this fall for pursuits in the private sector and we wish him and his family the very best. In December, Hal Cohen joined us as our new Planning Director. Hal comes to us from the Urban Open Space Foundation, and in addition to having wide-ranging land-use and transportation planning experience, he is an excellent writer, having had pieces published in the New York Times and many other prestigious publications. We also welcome 1000 Friends' first Development Director to the staff. Deb Nemeth has been involved with our organization since its inception as a board member; her extensive development experience with organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and the Citizens Utility Board brings a fantastic addition to our growing staff. Another, slightly different kind of addition will arrive in March, as Andrea is due to add another 1000 Friends member when she gives birth to her first child.

On the policy front, the new administration in Madison offers the chance for new ideas and a fresh perspective. We have already approached Governor-elect Doyle's staff with thoughts about how land-use policy can be improved.

Finally, **our members (you) continue to stick with us**. Our membership renewal rates are right where we hoped they would be a year ago, even with the sluggish economy. And foundations continue to be attracted to our work despite the downturn in their portfolios, which has resulted in tougher standards for grants.

But there is more to do and we hope you can help us do more. Every December we invite you to make a special year-end contribution to our work – and you will find an envelope and request in this newsletter. We hope you will respond generously.

Please have a happy and peaceful holiday season. Our warmest wishes on behalf of the staff and boards of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin,

Dave Cieslewicz 1000 Friends of Wisconsin Andrea J. Dearlove
The Land Use Institute

THE 1000 FRIENDS "CITIZENS' GUIDE TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING IN WISCONSIN, THIRD EDITION" IS AVAILABLE!!

This guide was written with the average citizen in mind. People sitting with their neighbors around a kitchen table trying to catch up with a development proposal that might change the quality of their neighborhoods, or thinking about getting involved in a local comprehensive planning process to chart a course for their community's future.

The meat of this guide is divided into six sections: (1) Setting the Stage for Change, (2) Responding to a Development Proposal, (3) Creating or Recreating a Land Use Plan, (4) A Guide to the Smart Growth Law, (5) Public Participation and (6) Resources. It's our hope that this guide will contribute not only to better land use decision-making but to better land use decisions. We believe that when people are armed with the facts they'll make decisions that are in the best interests of the broader community both now and in the future.

All members get their first copy free. After that, each copy is \$5 but we do offer discounts for bulk orders. The guides should be printed and in our offices by the first week of January. To get a copy, please call our office at 608/259-1000.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: 1000 FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN & THE LAND USE INSTI-

Friends (\$100 to \$249)

Black Earth Creek Conservation Organization, 2440 * Betty Antonie, 2437 * Richard Aster, 2372 * Jim Aulik, 2419 * Kay Barry, 2364 * John & Betty Batson, 2382 * Ken Baun, 2424 * Rodney Schreiner & Mark Blank, 2430 * Eliot Butler, 2360 * Tom & Ann Cabezas, 2429 * Jerry & Ellen Conley Gensch, 2426 * William A Craig, 2377 * Gregory Crews, 2399 * John & Julie Dedrick, 2425 * Jane Eisner, 2368 * Joe & Tracy Goode, 2421 * Lorna & Tom Hennig, 2432 * Karen R. Icke, 2434 * Mary Ann King, 2435 * Janet & Wilfred Kraegel, 2384 * Candace T. Krepel, 2394 * Jeff & Carla Moore, 2401 * Erika Gerhardt & Mike Obois, 2427 * David & Louise Petering, 2409 * Bill Reinicker, 2422 * Tom Rogers, 2428 * Tom Rulseh, 2388 * Albin & Naomi Schleper, 2381 * Mark Thompson, 2397 * Thomas S Thorstad, 2395 * Peg & Bill Unger, 2383 * Margaret Van Deurzen, 2431 * Ela & Robert Waterman, 2407 * Alan Weiner, 2415 * Andrew Welyczko, 2420 * Carla Wright, 2423

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Note: Institute members listed in regular text, 1000 Friends, Inc. members listed in italics. Member numbers follow each name.

DOUBLE TAKE. A COMPELLING LOOK AT PAST AND PRESENT

Every so often, a book or a piece of art or a film comes along that offers a striking portrayal of our surroundings and allows us to better understand that the impact we have on our landscape is not one-sided — that the decisions we make reflect us as a community. *Double Take*, by Zane Williams, is just such a book.

A combination of photography and history, *Double Take* presents more than 70 photographic pairs, each one a distinctive "then" and "now" view of the same scene, spanning nearly a century of change in downtown Madison, Wisconsin.

In unprecedented scope and detail, celebrated Wisconsin photographer Zane Williams has precisely replicated the original views of an earlier Madison photographer, Angus McVicar, who first shot these locales from the 1920s to the 1950s. The result is a treasure trove of historic and contemporary images and an uncanny testament to the changes over time in a unique American city. Sometimes startling in their

revelations of loss and gain, of progress and decay, these evocative photographic pairings dare us to look again and again at the nature of time and place. The seeming inevitability of change and the often confounding unpredictability of public taste in our physical surroundings are captured in these documentary still images, moments frozen in the rushing stream of time.

Essays by Williams, and local experts Thomas H. Garver, Harvey M. Jacobs, George A. Talbot, John O. Holzheuter, and Yi-Fu Tuan reflect upon the city and make an invaluable contribution to the lasting importance of *Double Take*.



DOUBLE TAKE: A Rephotographic Survey of Madison, Wisconsin by Zane Williams (hardcover \$45.00) is available from local and online booksellers and through the University of Wisconsin press online at www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress or by phone at (773) 568-1550.

WHY SMART GROWTH IS GOOD FOR YOUR POCKETBOOK CONTINUED



AFT found that bussing costs per year for rural homes range from \$278 to \$405; for homes in town the range was \$44 to \$155. In three of the school districts studied, annual losses including in-school and bussing costs, varied from \$72 to \$1,424 per new home (AFT, 1998). These costs could be avoided or reduced if homes were built closer to or within existing municipalities.

Fire and Police

Police and fire resources are stretched over an everincreasing area due to sprawl. In some cases new police and fire stations are built to accommodate new development, again increasing costs to taxpayers. In addition, residents of sprawl development face an increased risk to their personal safety. Response times were considerably longer in outlying suburbs of Chicago (AFT, 1998):

- · Ambulance response times were up to 50% longer.
- · Fire response was up to 33% longer.
- Police response was as much as 600% longer.

Open Space is Fiscally Beneficial to Communities

In 1999, the Wisconsin Land Use Research Program studied the costs of community services. Services addressed in the study included spending on schools, police and fire protection, refuse collection and street lighting. The study looked at the Dane County towns of Dunn, Perry and Westport. Dunn is facing the most development pressure, and Westport is the most rural of the three. On average, for every dollar in revenue, agricultural land cost \$0.13 to service, while residential on average cost \$1.11 to service.

When agriculture or open space is a large part of the tax base, it accounts for a fiscal surplus since agricultural land costs less than residential land to service. The situation is exacerbated when increased property taxes (to meet demand for residential services) puts additional pressure on farm operators.

1000 Friends proposes that we as taxpayers would be better off if we reused existing infrastructure and grew more efficiently when we build new neighborhoods. Wisconsin's innovative Smart Growth law encourages more efficient growth in the following ways.

Planning Goals

The law contains 14 goals for how we want Wisconsin to look and function in the future. No less than five of them call for efficient development or protection of resources that are vital to our economy. Goal number five is the most on point. It reads,

"Encouragement of land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs." So, it is now the policy of our state to encourage development patterns that will cost us less to build and to serve in the long-run.

Smart Growth Areas

Those communities that plan with the help of a state planning grant (and there are about 400 of them as of this writing) must identify *smart growth areas*. These areas are defined as places where existing streets, sewers and other infrastructure can be reused or where new infrastructure can built at "densities which have relatively low municipal costs." The idea is to encourage development to take place in these areas.

Traditional Neighborhoods

The law encourages the development of new *traditional neighborhoods* with mixed uses (homes, stores, offices), relatively small lots and sidewalks to encourage walking and mass transit, and other amenities like small parks that make for a real community. In addition to being better for the environment because they use less land, these new neighborhoods will be less expensive to build and to serve. A traditional neighborhood development model ordinance has been developed by board member Prof. Brian Ohm, and the 60 largest cities and villages in the state must adopt their own ordinance based on that model. Wisconsin now has more TND ordinances in place than any other state. (See our report on our website at www.1kfriends.org.)

Smart Growth Dividend

Finally, Wisconsin's Smart Growth law may soon reward local governments for growing more efficiently. The intent of the *Smart Growth Dividend* is to provide an incentive to grow more efficiently with a new state aid payment that can be used to lower local taxes or make investments in public services. The idea is that smart growth creates savings, a "dividend" that should be reinvested in local communities. The concept is still being developed and we hope it will be in place in a few years.

Easily the most often ignored factor in the pressure on local property taxes is the physical form of development. Over time, the Smart Growth law should provide us with high quality communities that will also be less costly in every way.

WISCONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS 1000 FRIENDS FINALIZES ITS 2003-2004 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

1000 Friends of Wisconsin has put the finishing touches on its third *Wis*Conservation legislative agenda. The agenda covers all aspects of state policy that affect land use and serves as our guide for land se and transportation reform priorities during the 2003-2004 legislative session.

This fall, we were lucky enough to have active and concerned members from across the state join us to meet with their legislators in their home districts. These meetings helped us build support for our legislative agenda and allowed us to get feedback from both our membership and the legislature. We learned that our agenda contains many items that resonate in this current political and fiscal climate. We believe we will have bipartisan support for a number of our core issues, including:



1. Keeping the Stewardship Fund at its current funding level of \$60 million per year, so that we can fulfill our promise to protect Wisconsin's treasured natural resources for current

and future generations.

- 2. Proposing full funding of the state's comprehensive planning grants program under the new Smart Growth law. Currently, this program is funded at \$3 million per year. We believe it would be fully funded at \$4 million. However, with the state's budget deficit, we will work to maintain current funding levels for this program, which has already assisted 354 communities across Wisconsin with their comprehensive planning and continues to be oversubscribed.
- 3. Proposing design of the Smart Growth Dividend as a meaningful incentive for comprehensive planning and for compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented growth. The law provides for the Smart Growth Dividend program to begin in 2005. We are advocating for statutory language specifically addressing how the Smart Growth dividend will operate and how it will be funded in future legislative sessions.

The Smart Growth Dividend and the planning grant programs are important agenda items this session because they each have the potential to create long-term fiscal gains on the local and state levels through more efficient use of services, infrastructure and land.

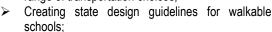
Other WisConservation agenda items include:

Transportation Policy and Funding Reform

- 1. Proposing a "Fix It First" law that prioritizes regular maintenance of our current transportation infrastructure investment over new construction.
- 2. Proposing a "Truth in Highway Building" law that requires full accounting of highway construction expenditures, including both direct and indirect costs over the entire lifecycle of proposed projects.
- 3. Proposing a "Fair Share for Other Transportation Choices" law that allocates more of our available transportation funding to the development of mass transit, pedestrian, bicycle and other alternatives to automobile travel.

Creating Better Places to Live

- 1. Reforming the Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) law so that it is not used to subsidize greenfield development.
- 2. Proposing a "Walkable Schools" Initiative that will reverse "school sprawl" by:
- Creating incentives for renovating schools in existing communities, and for building new schools in locations that do not promote sprawl development and that are accessible by a range of transportation choices;



- Requiring school districts and other decision makers to coordinate with local and regional planning bodies when making decisions about school facilities siting so that land use and transportation issues are considered; and,
- Creating a "Safe Routes to School Program" for the state.

We look forward to using *Wis*Conservation in this upcoming legislative session to advocate for creative, fiscally sound and sustainable land use policies for Wisconsin. Copies of *Wis*Conservation 2003-2004 are available at our office or on our website (in late December) at www.1kfriends.org.

A special thank you to our members who volunteered their time and talents and joined us in our in-district meetings with legislators this fall. Thank you, also, to Ward Lyles for his assistance in coordinating the many in-district meetings.



LEGISLATION & LITIGATION UPDATE

Post-Election Analysis, or, November 5th is Over-*Now* What Do We Do?

With the November election yielding a new governor and a shift in power in the state legislature, the advocacy team at 1000 Friends has had to reevaluate our position with regard to state government. Here are some of our initial thoughts about how we will work in this new environment:

- 1. We need to reemphasize the executive branch. We will offer our input on appointments and look for opportunities for executive orders. Crucial appointments with respect to land-use policy include members of the Land Council and the director of OLIS. The Department of Transportation secretary is another crucial appointment in fact, who leads the DOT may be as important for land use and the environment in the long run as who leads the Department of Natural Resources.
- 2. We have a number of legislative agenda items that should have bipartisan support and executive support because of their emphasis on fiscal responsibility, among other things. We will be focusing our advocacy efforts on these items. See "WisConservation Highlights" on page 5 of this newsletter for more details.
- 3. We have begun meetings with legislators both indistrict and at the Capitol. As a general rule, we are emphasizing policy and maintaining current funding levels for our programs; we are not asking for new money.
- 4. We will continue to work with coalitions of diverse organizations the Fair Share Coalition for transportation is one example to emphasize "strength in numbers."
- 5. On the Federal level, the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) is a major focus of land-use and transportation advocates. Wisconsin Congressman Tom Petri is the vice-chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Our transportation analyst and attorney Lisa MacKinnon has been in contact with his office and is coordinating an in-district meeting in mid-December to discuss the reauthorization.

By Lisa MacKinnon and Dave Cieslewicz

Concerned Citizens of Cross Plains Mobilize to Achieve a Land Use Victory

Land-use conflicts often come down to a David-and-Goliath showdown between a few citizens and a wealthy developer. It's a scenario that prompts many citizens who are concerned about land use to despair of how they can possibly make a difference.

In our last issue, we informed you of just such a show-down in Cross Plains – between a group of local citizens fighting the use of tax incremental financing (TIF) to fund a 60-acre business park development on prime farmland in the environmentally-sensitive Black Earth Creek watershed. Like many TIF proposals, the amount of the subsidy nearly tripled over just a few months, from about \$1.3 million to \$3.4 million.

We worked hard with a local group, called Concerned Citizens for Cross Plains, to oppose the proposal in a variety of ways. With background information we were able to provide, the group circulated fact sheets in the community and collected 516 signatures on a petition (a remarkable number given the village's population of just over 3,000) asking the Village Board to put all proposed TIF districts to binding referendum.

The results of the referendum indicated that a majority of voters opposed creating a TIF district for that development. The Village Board has since voted to stop all action on the proposed TIF district.

We applaud the efforts of Concerned Citizens of Cross Plains. All citizens should be heartened to know that they *do* have a place at the table when it comes to community development and planning, and that their efforts *can* make a difference.

If you or your community is interested in learning more about the experience of the Concerned Citizens of Cross Plains, please contact Louise Klopp at (608) 798-4249.

Dear Friend,

As the holidays approach and 2002 comes to an end, we are again encouraged to look back over the past 12 months and evaluate what we have been able to accomplish as an organization in our efforts to fight sprawl all across this state. We have been especially busy in 2002:

- > Acting as the *only* nonprofit in the state evaluating comprehensive plans for their quality and capacity to rein in sprawl;
- Creating a coalition of local officials, developers, neighborhood groups, youth groups, and others with the goal of defining and fighting for great neighborhoods;
- Creating a 50-item list of indicators to measure how well we are doing, as an organization and a state, in making smart decisions about how we use our land and its resources (Benchmarks 2002 will be available via our website in January 2003);
- Working to eliminate taxpayer subsidies for the development of open space and to reform state transportation policies so they work with – instead of undermining – anti-sprawl land-use programs;
- Promoting incentives to site schools in ways that build neighborhoods instead of spurring sprawl;
- Helping dozens of communities and hundreds of individuals better understand the land-use process and be more effective in local fights to stop sprawl.

1000 Friends of Wisconsin is innovative. We build diverse and effective coalitions. We work with both sides of the aisle. **We succeed**. But we don't just succeed in the abstract. You can see our work **on the ground** where you live in:

- > Thousands of acres of land that is protected forever including places to hike, hunt, fish and enjoy our natural treasures;
- Millions of gallons of cleaner water because of less runoff from lawns, streets and parking lots;
- Dozens of communities that are planning for their future, conserving their natural resources, protecting their historic buildings, and becoming better places to walk and bike in;
- ➤ Hundreds of communities cooperating with their neighbors, some for the first time ever;
- Millions of dollars of savings for taxpayers because growth is planned and more rational;
- Thousands of Wisconsin citizens having a real say for the first time in how their community grows and how it looks and feels and functions for themselves and their children.

It is because of you (and almost 2,500 other Wisconsinites across the state) that we have been able to accomplish great things with a small staff in a short period of time.

And while we've been successful, there is so much more to do. In 2003, we will continue to work with and sometimes watch-dog local governments to make sure they plan responsibly and inclusively for their community. We will make sure citizens are at the table when land-use issues that impact all of our lives – our property taxes, the water we drink, the opportunities we have for affordable housing and transportation options — are decided. We will take the smart growth message of natural and historic preservation and quality of life to places all over the state.

Please consider a special year-end gift that will help bring us into 2003 with the resources we need to meet and exceed your expectations for our work to fight sprawl and protect Wisconsin's urban and rural landscapes. Together, we can protect the best things about the state we all love before it's too late. On behalf of the staff and Boards of Directors of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin and the Land Use Institute, HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!

Andrea Dearlove

Dave Cieslewicz

Director, 1000 Friends Land Use Institute

Director, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Inc.

P.S. We have enclosed a self-addressed envelope with this newsletter for your convenience.



16 North Carroll Street, Suite 810 Madison, WI 53703 608.259.1000 www.1kfriends.org www.PictureSmartGrowth.org

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

If, for some reason, you get more than one newsletter per household — please pass this newsletter on to a friend who 1000 FRIENDS you think would like to learn about the work of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin. They can use the newsletter to join our **OF WISCONSIN** growing membership!

Yes, I would like to become a member of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin and join in the fight to perfect the places where we live, to protect those places where we don't! I would like to support: 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Inc. (advocacy, not tax-deductible) The Land Use Institute (research & education, tax-deductible as allowed by law)						
Please s	sign me up for an annual membershi	p at the fol	llowing level:			
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