

**VILLAGE OF MERRIMAC, WISCONSIN
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025**

January 2005

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Map 1-1 Regional Context

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Element 1

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Summary

The Village of Merrimac is a small community located on Lake Wisconsin in southeast Sauk County. It is located approximately 12 miles south of the City of Baraboo, the largest city within close proximity.

The area is served by two major transportation corridors including STH 78, and STH 113 by way of the Merrimac Ferry (picture on right). The Merrimac Ferry, which crosses the Wisconsin River between Sauk and Columbia counties, is Wisconsin's only free ferry. It shuttles WIS 113 traffic between Okee on the east bank and Merrimac on the west. Although the ferry has long been a unique identifier for the area, many residents are still hopeful a bridge will be built.



The 2000 Census recorded 416 persons residing within Merrimac, a 6 percent increase since 1990. Anecdotal evidence indicates many of these new residents are of retirement age and many reside in Merrimac on a seasonal basis. The 2000 Census indicates almost 20 percent of the available housing units within the Village are seasonal. At the same time, residents feel the grade school population is decreasing and has been for some time. The loss of the local elementary school is a concern for many residents.

The Village is facing a number of issues as it continues to experience changes in the local economy, and in the distribution of population. Downtown redevelopment and enhancement, as well as population stabilization and public facilities development are new challenges the Village will face in the next twenty years.

This comprehensive plan provides current baseline information, issue identification, goals and objectives formulation, and recommendations for the Village of Merrimac as it plans for the coming years. The plan includes elements mandated by Wisconsin State Statute 66.1001. This plan is also an update of the *Village of Merrimac Comprehensive Plan* adopted June 1994.

1.1.2 Element Guide

Each element of the Village of Merrimac Comprehensive Plan includes baseline information gathered from primary (Village of Merrimac, Sauk County, etc) and secondary (2000 Census, etc.) sources. Each element also includes a vision statement and a set of goals, objectives, and policies. Lastly, for each element there has been determined a series of recommendations for action in achieving the visions and goals identified through the Merrimac planning process. This section defines vision statements, goals and objectives, policies, and recommendations as follows:

Vision Statement: A vision statement is a short paragraph that identifies the preferred end state, or future condition, for each element within the comprehensive plan. The statement is written in future tense and describes an ideal condition.

Goal: A goal is a statement that describes what should happen to improve an existing condition. The statement is written in general terms and offers a desired condition.

Objective: An objective is a statement that identifies a course of action to achieve a goal. An objective states what should be done to address an issue.

Policy: A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct that should be followed in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan. Policies are written as actions that can be implemented, or as general rules to be followed by decision-makers.

Actions: A recommendation is a specific action step that should be taken to realize a future vision. There are recommendations at the end of each element, and a consolidated list of recommendations in the Action Plan (Table 9.5.1) located in the Implementation Element.

1.2 Public Process

1.2.1 Planning Committee Meetings

A series of Planning Committee Meetings were held to determine implementation strategies, review draft plans and provide guidance on plan recommendations. All meetings were adequately noticed and open to the public.

1.2.2 Community SWOT Exercise

In January 2004 there was held a Community SWOT exercise to gather data for the development of issues. Meeting participants were asked to provide specific examples of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for the Merrimac community.

1.2.3 Intergovernmental Meeting

On August 4, 2004 the Merrimac Planning Committee held an intergovernmental forum. The intergovernmental meeting provided an opportunity for County, State, and local agencies and communities to discuss short- and long-term visions and issues with the Village of Merrimac. Attendees included Town of Merrimac, Sauk County Planning and Zoning, Merrimac Fire & Rescue, and the Sauk County Sheriff's Department.

1.2.4 Community Survey

In May, 2004 the Merrimac Planning Committee distributed and tabulated a community survey to solicit broad community input concerning elements of the comprehensive plan. There were 47 surveys returned out of 218 for a 22 percent return rate. The survey was sent out with the water utility bills and collected via collection boxes located at the Village Hall. The survey was incorporated into this document as a means to supply additional support for issue identification and as a base to help the Committee determine public support for possible initiatives. The low response rate precludes the survey as acting as a policy director; its function is advisory only. Other opportunities for public input are mentioned in this element and in the Public Participation Plan. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix F.

1.2.5 Open House

The open house was held Wednesday January 12, 2005 to provide an informal opportunity for the community residents to view plan maps and other illustrations and talk with consultants and plan committee members about the recommended plan. Eleven citizens were present to look over and discuss maps. There was also a formal presentation of planning goals for the 20-year planning period.

1.2.6 Public Hearings

A public hearing was held Wednesday January 12, 2005 in accordance with State law, before the Village Board for adoption of the comprehensive plan. The purpose of the hearing was to present the final plan document, entertain comments, and adopt the plan. There were no comments from the public other than one addition from the Town of Merrimac to better explain the relationship of participating entities of the Merrimac Fire District. The Board approved the recommended change.

1.2.7 Other Opportunities for Public Input

All residents, local business owners, and individuals concerned about the future of Merrimac have the opportunity to submit comments on the comprehensive plan at any point in time.

1.2.8 Issues Identified During the Planning Process

Housing

- Senior housing: as the median age of residents continues to increase, residents feel there will also be an increased need for senior housing.
- Home maintenance: with 35 percent of homes in Merrimac built before 1939, there will be continued demand for home improvement to maintain current stock. Funding identification and promotion will be vital in the home improvement effort.

Transportation

- Access: the Village does not maintain a permanent local access point across the Wisconsin River. The Merrimac Ferry is operated seasonally and is subject to operation limitations.
- No bridge: Many residents would like to see a bridge constructed across Lake Wisconsin to allow permanent year-round access to the Village from STH 113.
- Improvements to STH 78: the reconstruction or STH 78 is a concern for residents, as it remains the primary transportation corridor. The Village wants to remain active in all phases of the reconstruction and planning.
- STH 12 Reconstruction: STH 12 offers direct access from the Madison area to various Wisconsin Dells attractions. Improvements might bring increased traffic volumes through the Village. Residents are unsure of the extent that there may be an impact locally.

Utilities and Community Facilities

- Lack of local police protection: the Village receives police protection from the Sauk County Sheriff's Department. The absence of local police is realized primarily in long response time.
- Local ordinance enforcement: with limited staffing levels, some ordinances are hard to enforce or go unrecognized.
- Vitality of Post Office: residents wish to maintain access to local post office facilities and want to ensure the post office remains within the Village.
- Vitality of Merrimac Elementary: residents of Merrimac greatly value the local elementary school and wish to make certain it is maintained within the community.
- Lack of local facilities: residents of Merrimac currently travel to other communities for health care facilities, post-primary schools, and some other services.

- No free public boat landing: Merrimac does not contain a free boat landing where non-residents can launch personal watercraft.
- Infrastructure repair: any additional improvements to the public infrastructure place a great financial burden on the limited population.

Agricultural, Natural, Cultural Resources

- Lake quality: the good water quality of the Wisconsin River and Lake Wisconsin is very important to the quality of life for Merrimac residents. The community survey identified that stricter enforcement of current regulations would help enhance the quality of the local environment, including Lake Wisconsin.
- Local churches: maintaining local churches structures, and keeping congregations healthy is an important issue for many residents.

Economic Development

- Lack of financial incentives: information on potential financial incentives for improvement or development of local businesses is not locally available.
- No promotion entity: there is no local entity that works to promote, attract and retain local businesses.
- Loss of business: the largest local business, the “Shopper Stopper”, recently left Merrimac leaving a large unused warehouse facility.
- Condition of downtown: some residents feel the condition of the buildings in the downtown are in poor condition. There are also very few local businesses. Respondents of the community survey rated the diversity of businesses in Merrimac as “poor”.
- Losing tourist dollars: there are very few local businesses that capture the local tourist traffic after exiting the Merrimac Ferry.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Information delivery: there is a need for better communication and more timely delivery of information concerning local projects that are being performed by state agencies (WDNR, WisDOT).
- DOT Communication: the Merrimac Ferry remains a big issue with local residents and communication with the DOT should remain constant and timely.

Land Use

- Redevelopment of Badger Ordnance: the Badger Army Ammunition Plant occupies a large portion of the local region immediately west of the Merrimac. Redevelopment of the site will likely impact the Village.
- Shoreland development: the development of the shoreland surrounding Lake Wisconsin is both important to the local tax base, and important to preserve.
- Zoning code: the current code needs to be updated to include a wider array of land use categories and regulations.
- Annexation: there needs to be identified a formal annexation policy that is mutually agreed upon with the Town of Merrimac.
- Extraterritorial Zoning: development along the corporate border is an issue and there is growing interest in exploring extraterritorial control.

1.3 20-Year Community Vision

Over the next 20 years, the Village of Merrimac will stabilize the population with a diverse age distribution. There will be available a range of housing choices by price and features and a vibrant small business environment in the downtown. Residents and visitors alike will be able to travel through the Village using a range of mode choices and the Merrimac Ferry will continue to provide unique access across Lake Wisconsin. The Village of Merrimac will maintain and enhance recreational character while exploring opportunities for increased coordination with area municipalities and service providers.

1.4 Population Trends

Since 1990, the Village has increased in total population by 6.1 percent (24 persons). The distribution of age in 2000 indicates most residents (33.9%) are between the ages of 35 and 54. See Table 1.4.1. The median age for the Village was 40.7 in 2000, which is higher than the State overall at 36.0. Anecdotal evidence indicates there has been a growth in the number of retired persons living within the Village, many of whom are seasonal. The grade school population has also decreased in recent years.

Table 1.4.1: Age Distribution, 2000

	1990		2000		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 5 years	33	8.4%	17	4.1%	-48.5%
5 to 9 years	40	10.2%	30	7.2%	-25.0%
10 to 14 years	17	4.3%	33	7.9%	94.1%
15 to 19 years	23	5.9%	36	8.7%	56.5%
20 to 24 years	19	4.8%	10	2.4%	-47.4%
25 to 34 years	61	15.6%	39	9.4%	-36.1%
35 to 44 years	44	11.2%	75	18.0%	70.5%
45 to 54 years	36	9.2%	66	15.9%	83.3%
55 to 59 years	23	5.9%	24	5.8%	4.3%
60 to 64 years	24	6.1%	18	4.3%	-25.0%
65 to 74 years	47	12.0%	43	10.3%	-8.5%
75 to 84 years	18	4.6%	20	4.8%	11.1%
85 years and over	7	1.8%	5	1.2%	-28.6%
Total Population	392		416		6.1%

1990,2000 Census, SF-1

The following population projections were derived using a preliminary report from the Wisconsin Department of Administration (2002). The report indicates the Wisconsin population will grow by an approximate average of 3.1 percent in each of the 5-year periods between 2000-2020. Beyond 2020, the report indicates, there will likely be a slower rate of growth (between 2.2 percent and 2.7 percent) as the Baby Boomer generation age into their 60s and early 70s. These same assumptions were implemented in Table 1.4.2 for Medium Population Growth.

Table 1.4.2 indicates the Village can expect to grow by 44 people in the next twenty years if a low rate of population growth occurs, or by 142 people if the Village has high population growth--

approximately twice as fast as the State overall. The medium population growth expected for the Village is approximately 67 people by 2025 if it grows at the average state level. It should be noted that major land use decisions, such as annexations and subdivision development, could dramatically alter the outcome of these projections.

Table 1.4.2: Population Projections 2025

Growth Rate	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<i>Low Population Growth</i>	416	425	434	443	452	460
<i>Medium Population Growth</i>	416	429	442	456	470	483
<i>High Population Growth</i>	416	442	469	498	529	558

*Derived from "Wisconsin Population Projections: 2000-2030 A Preliminary State-Level Report" May 2002
Wisconsin Department of Administration*

1.5 Education

As shown in Table 1.5.1, 83 percent of Merrimac residents over the age of 25 have an educational attainment of a high school degree or higher. There are 12 percent that have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Table 1.5.1: Educational Attainment, 2000

	Number	Percent
<i>Population 25 years and over</i>	265	100
Less than 9th grade	2	0.8
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	42	15.8
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	127	47.9
Some college, no degree	52	19.6
Associate degree	10	3.8
Bachelor's degree	30	11.3
Graduate or professional degree	2	0.8
Percent high school graduate or higher	83.4	
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	12.1	

2000 Census, SF-3

1.6 Housing Forecasts

The following housing projections are based on three different growth scenarios, breaking out anticipated occupancy types. These projections are based on 2000 Census Data representing existing housing consumption and forecasting future need between 2005-2025.

Table 1.6.1 shows the three projection scenarios. The Medium Growth Projection uses a rate of 2.7 percent household growth observed in Sauk County between 2000-2003 from the Demographic Services Center as prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration in July of 2003. The

Low Growth Projection reports growth 5 percent below Medium Growth in 2025 and the High Growth Projection 5 percent above the Medium Growth projection in 2025.

Based on these three scenarios, the Village of Merrimac is likely to see between 172 and 179 housing units in the Village by 2010. By 2025, housing growth could potentially reach 200 units, based on a high growth rate. It should be noted that major land use decisions, such as annexations and subdivision approvals, could dramatically alter the outcome of these projections.

Table 1.6.1: Housing Needs Projections 2000-2025

<i>Low Growth Projection</i>	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Owner Occupied Housing Units	131	133	136	138	141	143
Renter Occupied Housing Units	35	36	36	37	38	38
Total Housing Units-Low Growth	166	169	172	175	178	181
<i>Medium Growth Projection</i>	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Owner Occupied Housing Units	131	135	138	142	146	150
Renter Occupied Housing Units	35	36	37	38	39	40
Total Housing Units-Low Growth	166	170	175	180	185	190
<i>High Growth Projection</i>	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Owner Occupied Housing Units	131	136	141	147	152	158
Renter Occupied Housing Units	35	36	38	39	41	42
Total Housing Units-Medium Growth	166	172	179	186	193	200

Projections by MSA based on data from the State DOA and the US Census

Assumptions for Preparing Housing Needs Projections

General: Population of 416 (2000 Census); 218 housing units, 166 households (2000 US Census).

Low Growth: Based on Wisconsin Department of Administration's population growth from 2000-2003 for Sauk County less 5 percent by 2025.

Medium Growth: Based on Wisconsin Department of Administration's population growth from 2000-2003 for Sauk County (approximately 2.7% household growth annually).

High Growth: Based on Wisconsin Department of Administration's population growth from 2000-2003 for Sauk County plus 5 percent by 2025.

1.7 Employment and Income

Table 1.7.1 lists employed residents over age 16 by industry. Most residents (19%) are employed in the manufacturing industry. An additional 15 percent of residents (28) are employed in the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services industry, and another 15 percent are employed in the retail trade industry.

Table 1.7.1: Workers by Industry, 2000

	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2	1.0
Construction	21	11.0
Manufacturing	37	19.4
Wholesale trade	11	5.8
Retail trade	28	14.7
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4	2.1
Information	9	4.7
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	6	3.1
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	10	5.2
Educational, health, and social services	25	13.1
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	28	14.7
Other services (except public administration)	2	1.0
Public administration	8	4.2
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	191	100.0

2000 Census, SF-3

Table 1.7.2 lists employed residents over the age of 16 by occupation. Most residents (26%) are employed in sales and office occupations. Production, transportation, and material moving employs 44 residents (23%). Management, professional, and related occupations employ 42 workers (22%).

Table 1.7.2: Workers by Occupation, 2000

	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related	42	22.0
Services	32	16.8
Sales and office	50	26.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0	0.0
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	23	12.0
Production, transportation, and material moving	44	23.0
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	191	100.0

2000 Census, SF-3

Median household income in the Village was \$41,250 in 2000. This compares approximately the same as Sauk County and a little lower than the State, at \$41,941 and \$43,791 respectively. When compared against the County and State, the Village contains a higher concentration of residents with

incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999, and a lower percentage of residents with incomes above \$75,000. See Table 1.7.3 below.

Table 1.7.3: Median Household Income, 2000

	Village		Sauk County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Households	155	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than \$10,000	6	3.9	6.7	7.1
\$10,000 to \$14,999	8	5.2	5.8	5.8
\$15,000 to \$24,999	27	17.4	13.4	12.7
\$25,000 to \$34,999	28	18.1	13.8	13.2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	30	19.4	21.0	18.1
\$50,000 to \$74,999	43	27.7	23.2	22.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8	5.2	9.1	10.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	3	1.9	4.7	6.4
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2	1.3	1.1	1.5
\$200,000 or more	0	0	1.2	1.5
Median household income (dollars)	41,250		41,941	43,791

2000 Census, SF-3

Employment forecasts are not available for local towns, municipalities, or counties. However, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development prepares employment projects for 11 geographic regions within the State. The South Central region is composed of six counties; Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Marquette, and Sauk. Table 1.7.4 shows projected employment by occupation to year 2010.

The projections indicate the greatest employment growth in the service (+17%) and professional and related (+19%) occupations. Comparing Table 1.7.4 to Table 1.7.2 above (Workers by Occupation, 2000), it appears the greatest opportunity for growth in the Village is in the professional and management occupation. Although the Village has a high concentration of workers in the production, transportation, and material moving occupation, these occupations will grow slower than service-type industries. The increased projection for service-sector jobs follows a nation trend away from manufacturing jobs as overseas competition, increased environmental regulation, and a changing economy make domestic manufacturing more expensive for local producers.

Table 1.7.4: Projected Employment in South Central Wisconsin, 2000-2010

Occupational Group	Estimated employment in 2000	Projected employment in 2010	Change	Percent Change	New Jobs	Replacements ⁽¹⁾	Total	Average Annual Salary ⁽²⁾ (\$)	Hourly Wage Rate - Middle Range ⁽³⁾ (\$)
Total, All Occs.	405,490	451,950	46,460	11.46%	4,650	9,750	14,400	\$33,290	\$9.55 - \$19.79
Mgmt, Bus, Financial	35,230	39,310	4,080	11.58%	410	650	1,060		
Professional & Related	80,590	96,110	15,520	19.26%	1,570	1,620	3,190		
Service	76,240	89,250	13,010	17.06%	1,300	2,420	3,720		
Sales & Related	37,200	40,890	3,690	9.92%	370	1,260	1,630		
Office/Admin. Support	67,340	71,110	3,770	5.60%	380	1,410	1,790		
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	940	1,040	100	10.64%	10	30	40		
Const/Extraction	18,230	20,090	1,860	10.20%	190	340	530		
Install /Maint /Repair	14,400	15,670	1,270	8.82%	130	300	430		
Production	48,410	49,060	650	1.34%	70	1,120	1,190		
Trans/Material Moving	26,930	29,430	2,500	9.28%	250	620	870		

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development, Local Workforce Planning Section, June 2003

1 Replacements are an estimate of the number of job openings expected because people have permanently left a given occupation. Permanent exits occur if someone dies, retires, or otherwise leaves the labor force. Permanent exits also include openings resulting from someone permanently changing occupations. For example, a person leaves their job as a cashier and becomes a truck driver. Openings resulting from people changing employers, but staying in the same occupation are not included.

2 Average Annual Salary: An occupation's average hourly wage is calculated by summing the wages of all employees in a given occupation and then dividing by the total number of employees in that occupation. In most cases, the annual average salary is equal to the average hourly wage multiplied by 2,080.

3 Hourly Wage Rate - Middle Range: The middle range identifies the 25th and 75th percentiles in the hourly wage distribution for a given occupation. Fifty percent of the workers in the occupation earn wages in this range. In most cases, the entry level wage is at or below the 25th percentile.

Element 2

HOUSING ELEMENT

This element provides a baseline assessment of Merrimac’s current housing stock. The housing characteristics of a community are an important element of a comprehensive plan. First, the physical location of housing often determines where municipal service provisions need to be concentrated. Second, the condition of housing stock is often a good indicator of social and economic conditions present within a community. Finally, identifying housing clusters of new development will often indicate where future housing is likely to locate, and what capital improvements might be necessary to accommodate new populations. The information presented in this element of the Village of Merrimac’s Comprehensive Plan will provide officials with information about the current housing stock and detail occupancy characteristics. It will also list housing issues and recommendations to help guide future housing development.

2.1 Housing Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac will endeavor to offer a wide array of housing choices in excellent condition. Residents will find adequate housing easily and affordably within the Village and will be able to stay throughout their life cycle, as their income, family, and individual needs change.

2.2 Housing Goals and Objectives

2.2.1 Goal: Increase the quantity and quality of senior housing within the community.

Objectives:

- Encourage aging residents to remain within the community by providing senior housing that is below market rate.
- To help senior homeowners to apply for property tax relief loan from the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA).

2.2.2 Goal: Identify and provide home repair programming to address aging housing stock.

Objectives:

- Identify home improvement programming and advertise to local residents who may have code violations.
- Improve the appearance of the community by improving the exterior condition of local housing stock, especially older homes.
- Coordinate with local sources, the fire department, and concerned residents to determine the best ways to assist low income and elderly residents with cleanup and repairs.
- Establish a list of “problem homes” and send letters to these homeowners detailing exterior code violations and available programming.

2.2.3 Goal: Determine appropriate locations where new residential lots should be developed.

Objective:

- Provide developers with a preferred development area to build new homes
- Plan for development of infrastructure to service new locations

2.2.4 Goal: Determine appropriate options for increasing affordable housing.

Objective:

- Develop multi-family zoning designations in the zoning code that will allow for development of affordable condominiums and apartments.
- Discuss providing provisions for affordable housing in Planned Unit Developments.

2.3 Housing Policies

2.3.1 Retain and support existing historical structures within the community.

2.3.2 Identify appropriate locations for new residential development in the land use plan.

2.3.3 Identify and apply for home improvement grant funding.

2.3.4 Encourage the development of senior housing.

2.3.5 Utilize the PUD (planned unit development) ordinance to allow multi-family residential, single-family residential, commercial, recreational, and office use.

2.4 Existing Housing Conditions

A majority of the information listed in the following section was taken directly from US Census 2000 sample data collected on April 1, 2000. Where possible current information is also incorporated.

2.4.1 Housing Stock Characteristics

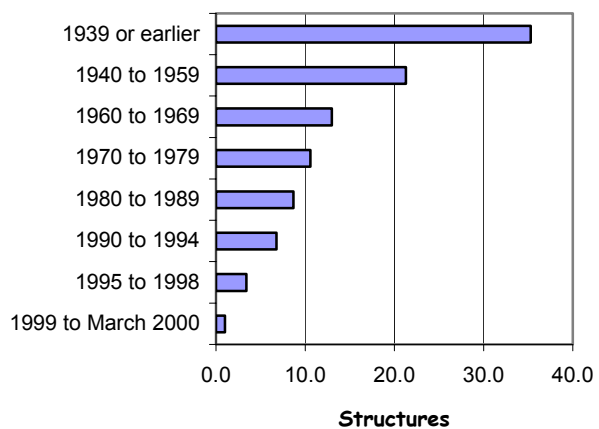
Table 2.4.1 shows the age of local housing stock by the year the structure was built. As of March 2000, a majority (35%) of the available housing stock was built prior to 1939. Construction since 1990 makes up approximately 11 percent (23 units).

Table 2.4.1: Year Structure Built, 2000

	Number	Percent
1999 to March 2000	2	1.0
1995 to 1998	7	3.4
1990 to 1994	14	6.8
1980 to 1989	18	8.7
1970 to 1979	22	10.6
1960 to 1969	27	13.0
1940 to 1959	44	21.3
1939 or earlier	73	35.3

2000 Census, SF-3

Figure 2.4.1: Year Structure Built, 2000



As indicated in Table 2.4.1a, 86 percent of the units in available housing structures are single-family (177). Mobile homes account for an additional 6 percent (13units), a complete listing is provided below.

Table 2.4.1a: Units in Structure, 2000

	Number	Percent
1-unit, detached	177	85.5
1-unit, attached	6	2.9
2 units	3	1.4
3 or 4 units	8	3.9
5 to 9 units	0	0
10 to 19 units	0	0
20 or more units	0	0
Mobile home	13	6.3
Total housing units	207	100

2000 Census, SF-3

There is a wide range of housing values in the Village. In 2000, the median value for a home in the Village was \$114,100. Most homes, 40 percent, range between \$50,000 and \$99,999. See Table 2.4.1b below. The Wisconsin Board of Realtors reports a median selling price of \$125,000 for single-family homes in Sauk County during 2002.

Table 2.4.1b: Housing Values, 2000

	Number	Percent
Less than \$50,000	2	1.8
\$50,000 to \$99,999	44	40.0
\$100,000 to \$149,000	27	24.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	10	9.1
\$200,000 to \$299,999	17	15.5
\$300,000 to \$499,999	10	9.1
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0
Median (dollars)	114,100	

2000 Census, SF-3

2.4.2 Occupancy Characteristics

According to the 2000 Census, the Village of Merrimac had 218 total housing units. Of these, 76 percent (166) were occupied at the time of the Census. There were 52 vacant housing units, and 43 units were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. The number of seasonal units is very high at almost 20 percent of the total housing stock. This is likely due to the Village's proximity to Lake Wisconsin. See Table 2.4.2.

Table 2.4.2: Housing Occupancy, 2000

	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	218	100
Occupied Housing Units	166	76.1
Vacant Housing Units	52	23.9
Homeowner Vacancy rate (percent)	0.8	
Rental Vacancy rate (percent)	5.4	

2000 Census, SF-1

2.4.3 Housing Tenure

The Village had 166 occupied housing units in 2000. Owner-occupied units accounted for 79 percent (131) and renter-occupied units for 21 percent (35). The average household size for owner-occupied units was 2.49, and 2.57 for renter-occupied units. See Table 2.4.3.

Table 2.4.3: Housing Tenure, 2000

	Number	Percent
Occupied Housing Units	166	100
Owner-occupied housing units	131	78.9
Renter-occupied housing units	35	21.1
Average household size (owner-occupied)	2.49	
Average household size (renter-occupied)	2.57	

2000 Census, SF-1

2.4.4 Senior Housing

There is no senior housing within the Village. Senior housing can be found in nearby communities including Baraboo, Prairie du Sac and Sauk City. In 2000, over 20 percent of local residents were over the age of 60, and with many new single-family homes being built as “retirement homes” there is a projected future need for senior care housing as these new populations and existing residents continue to age.

2.4.5 Special Needs Housing

There is no special needs housing located within the Village of Merrimac. The closest communities that offer special needs housing are Baraboo, Prairie du Sac and Sauk City. Community Based Residential Facilities within Baraboo offer diverse care including Bethesda Lutheran Group Home (for developmentally disabled) and Harbor House (care for the advanced aged). The Pines Assisted Living in Prairie du Sac offers care for physically disabled. There are no adult family homes for the disabled or adult daycare facilities located within close proximity of the Village. There is one residential care apartment, Maplewood Village located in Sauk City, that offers independent apartment units in which the following services are provided: room and board, up to 28 hours per week of supportive care, personal care, and nursing services. This plan does not recommend development of special needs housing within the Village due to its small size and proximity to an existing supply located in nearby communities.

2.4.6 Affordable Housing

Several factors impact the varied levels of housing affordability in Sauk County. These factors include rent and mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities for the home. Household size and income are also key factors contributing to what housing options are available and accessible to residents.

Statistically speaking, those spending in excess of 35% of their total household income on housing costs may be facing affordability difficulties. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development recommends that rental-housing costs not exceed 30% of the monthly income. HUD also indicates that mortgage lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is less than 29% of the monthly household income. The percentage of households in the Village of Merrimac that pay more than 35% of their income on housing costs is higher than that of the County (12.8%) and State (9%) among owner-occupied households, with 14.5 percent paying more than 35%. For renters, 17.5 percent pay more than 35% of their household income on rent.

As noted in section 2.4.1 Merrimac offers a median home value of \$114,100 compared to Sauk County overall at \$125,000. Although this number is lower than the County overall, there is still a high percentage of income invested in housing compared to the County and State overall. Based on this analysis there is a need for increased affordable housing opportunities within Merrimac.

2.5 Housing Issues Raised During Planning Process

Condition of housing stock: with over 50 percent of the housing stock within the Village built before 1959, there are some units that are in need of upkeep. The community survey indicated that most people think residents would use low- or zero-interest home improvement loans if they were offered by the Village.

Senior housing: Merrimac does not currently contain specialized housing for seniors. As the current population reaches retirement age, the need for development of housing facilities to accommodate this age group will continue to grow. The community survey indicated that of those who had an opinion, about 60 percent thought there needed to be “a lot more” senior housing available locally.

Housing variety: 88 percent of the housing stock within the Village is single-family housing. Increasing the variety of housing stock would allow for a greater diversity in the resident population, income and age groups. The community survey indicates that many residents are interested in seeing more development of moderately priced rather than higher-priced homes.

Access: Merrimac has been subject to limited housing growth throughout its history due to major access constraints caused by the lack of a bridge over Lake Wisconsin.

2.6 Housing Actions

Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law requires communities engaging in the comprehensive planning process to provide an adequate supply of housing needs to meet existing and forecasted housing demand.

Merrimac’s current housing stock currently falls short on affordable housing, and housing for seniors. If Merrimac grows at approximately the same rate as Sauk County overall, there can be expected an increased housing demand of between 20 and 30 additional units by 2025, and that primarily single-family homes. Increasing the availability of multi-family, or affordable housing opportunities could inflate this estimate.

This section provides actions on how Merrimac can provide for future housing needs, improve the quality of the current supply, and increase the quantity of senior housing options.

Actions:

2.6.1 Create a new residential zoning district that allows for mixed-use, and multiple-unit residences to encourage adequate provision for projected housing needs and to increase senior housing options.

2.6.2 Determine a suitable site for a senior housing development and prepare the site appropriately.

2.6.3 Explore development of a housing market analysis to determine shortfalls or barriers in the local housing market.

2.6.4 Acquire and promote available CDBG programming monies available for residential home improvement.

2.7 Programs

2.7.1 WHEDA Home Ownership Mortgage Homes (HOME)

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) offers the HOME loan for income-qualified applicants. The HOME loan features low down payments and below-market interest rates that are fixed for the term of your loan. For more information contact WHEDA at 1-800-334-6873, or visit www.wheda.com.

2.7.2 WHEDA Home Improvement Loans

The Home Improvement Loan offers a fixed interest rate loan with no equity requirement. This means the borrower can qualify for the Home Improvement Loan even if they just purchased their home. Additionally, the fixed interest rate is available up to 15 years to help allow for affordable payments. County income limits apply.

2.7.3 Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)

Local sponsors compete annually for state HCRI funds to provide assistance to reduce the housing costs of low- and moderate-income households and encourage the purchase of affordable housing units. The money may be used for a wide variety of housing activities, from closing costs and down payment assistance for home buyers, to rent and security deposit assistance for renters and homeless persons. The program uses funds to help people stabilize their housing situation, enabling individuals and families to obtain affordable housing. Organizations that are eligible to compete for funds include local governments, housing authorities, non-profit and for-profit corporations, and Native American Indian Tribes. Information regarding the Housing Cost Reduction Initiative Program can be obtained by calling (608) 267-6904.

2.7.4 Special Needs—State Shelter Subsidy Program (SSSG)

The State Shelter Subsidy Program (SSSG) provides grants to support homeless and emergency shelter program's operations. SSSG funds cannot exceed 50% of an agency's annual operating budget. Eligible applicants are a county or municipal governing body or agency, for-profit entities, an Indian tribal government, a community action agency, or other private non-profit organization. Only generic emergency facilities and voucher programs are eligible.

DHIR distributes funds throughout the State by formula, based on past shelter use and anticipated need, to the three "regions" of the State defined by statute (Milwaukee County, Dane County and the remainder of the State).

This program is part of the Bureau of Housing, Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Relations, Wisconsin Department of Administration. It is funded through the State of Wisconsin. Information regarding the State Shelter Subsidy Program may be obtained by calling (608) 266-8273.

Element 3

TRANSPORTATION

This element includes a compilation of background information, visions, goals, objectives, policies, maps, and recommendations to guide the future development and maintenance of various modes of transportation in the Village of Merrimac.

3.1 Transportation Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac will offer an easily navigable street layout that offers convenient and efficient movement of vehicles throughout the community. The Village will also maintain access across the Wisconsin River by way of a new bridge. The Merrimac Ferry will continue to operate on a limited seasonal basis and attract tourist traffic to the area. State Highways 78/113 will provide plentiful access to other communities and through traffic will regularly stop at local businesses. Pedestrians and bicyclists will also find it easy to navigate around Merrimac.

3.2 Transportation Goals and Objectives

3.2.1 Goal: Be an active participant in the redevelopment of STH 78.

Objective:

- Attend regular meetings of the WisDOT to express local desires.
- To maintain easy and efficient access to this primary transportation linkage in the planning stages of the redevelopment.
- Encourage appropriate development of pedestrian access, and lighting along the redeveloped route.

3.2.2 Goal: Encourage the development of a bridge.

Objective:

- To lobby local officials and agencies to analyze development of a bridge that would extend STH 113 across Lake Wisconsin.
- Express to State and County officials the importance of reliable transportation access.
- To enhance communication efforts with WDOT on Merrimac Ferry plans and operations.

3.2.3 Goal: Effectively maintain current transportation facilities.

Objective:

- Continue to provide for efficient movement of traffic throughout the Village by implementing annual upgrades as appropriate.
- Promote the maintenance of existing facilities, such as sidewalks, in locations where they exist.

3.2.4 Goal: Maintain good municipal traffic flow and access.

Objective:

- To continue current methods of automobile control signage.
- To analyze traffic flow improvements on an as-needed basis.

3.3 Transportation Policies

- 3.3.1 Continue to utilize an annual roadway evaluation system, such as PASER, to determine a ranking for street upgrades.
- 3.3.2 Utilize an annual system of funding allocation, such as a Capital Improvement Plan, to ensure adequate funding for needed upgrades and repair.
- 3.3.3 Address the safety and mobility needs of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians when planning street system improvements.
- 3.3.4 To recommend addition of sidewalk and other pedestrian trail linkages in new residential development areas.
- 3.3.5 To explore alternate sources of funding, especially transportation enhancement grants [Transportation Enhancement Program (TE), or Surface Transportation Discretionary Program (STP-D)], to improve facilities slated for redevelopment.

3.4 Existing Transportation Facilities

3.4.1 Street Network

The Village of Merrimac contains State Highways, municipal streets, and town roads. The Village contains STH 113, which provides direct access to the City of Baraboo to the north and includes the State's only free ferry that crosses Lake Wisconsin to the south. STH 78 runs along the southern border of Merrimac offering direct access to the Sauk City area to the west and Interstate 90/94 to the east. Municipal streets within Merrimac serve to provide local access to neighborhoods and commercial districts. There is no formal grid pattern to the street layout, though streets on the eastern side of the Village are more rectilinear than those to the west. Several town roads provide direct access to the Village from the Town of Merrimac, these include: Bluff Road and Marsh Road to the north. See Map 3-1.

3.4.2 Transit Service

Most communities in Sauk County are small enough that the provision of a transit system is not financially justified. As such, the Village does not provide transit service. The State of Wisconsin does maintain a van pool providing access to the City of Madison.

3.4.3 Rail Road Service

There is rail access to the Village of Merrimac. Wisconsin & Southern Company maintains tracks that run northwest through the Village.

3.4.4 Aviation Service

The nearest commercial airport to the Village is the Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, Wisconsin. The airport is less than an hour drive from most location in Sauk County. There are several general aviation airports within a closer proximity to Merrimac including: Baraboo/Dells Airport in Baraboo; Reedsburg Municipal Airport in Reedsburg; Sauk Prairie Airport in Prairie du Sac; and Lone Rock Tri-County Regional Airport in Lone Rock.

Map 3-1 Transportation

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3.4.5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

There is no formal sidewalk policy in place. Pedestrian and bicycle travel is limited to road shoulders and limited sidewalks. The STH 78/113 reconstruction will incorporate sidewalk and bicycle facilities linking the western side of the Village to central locations.

3.4.6 Highways

Locally, STH 113 runs east/west through the Village. This is a highly utilized local route providing a local extension of STH 78 that follows the path of Wisconsin River north/south.

Regionally, Interstate 90/94 cuts across the northeast corner of Sauk County and is the strategic transportation corridor between Minneapolis and Chicago. US Highway 12, State Highways 33 and 23 and County Highway H provide multiple interstate access points. US Highway 12 and State Highway 23 are the main north-south arterials; State Highways 33 and 60 function as the main east-west arterials. Almost all of US Highway 12 is scheduled to be upgraded to a four-lane road from Madison, north to the I90/94 in the next five years.

3.4.7 Transportation Facilities for the Disabled

There is limited elderly transportation service available through Sauk County’s Volunteer Driver Escort Service.

3.4.8 Trucking

Twenty-four trucking firms provide over-the-road transportation in Sauk County.

3.4.9 Water Transportation

The Merrimac Ferry, which crosses the Wisconsin River between Sauk and Columbia counties, is Wisconsin's only free ferry. It shuttles WIS 113 traffic between Okee on the east bank and Merrimac on the west. The ferry is open for service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, normally from April 15 through November 30.

3.4.10 Commute to Work

Table 3.4.10 shows commuting choices for resident workers over age 16. Almost 77 percent (144) people drove alone to work. The mean travel time to work was 27.3 minutes in 2000.

Table 3.4.10: Commuting to Work

	Number	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	188	100.0
Car, truck, or van--drove alone	144	76.6
Car, truck, or van--carpooled	31	16.5
Public transportation (including taxicab)	0	0.0
Walked	8	4.3
Other means	3	1.6
Worked at home	2	1.1
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	27.3	

2000 Census, SF-3

3.4.11 Street Evaluation System

Merrimac does have a completed PASER analysis of roadway condition. The analysis is used to prioritize roadway improvement scheduling. The most recent pavement rating (2004) indicates most roads are in “good” condition or better. A rating of “good” means the surface is showing signs of

aging but there is sound structural condition. Sealcoat or other nonstructural overlay could extend the life of the roadway. Roads in “poor” condition include Lakeview Avenue and Weynand Road. These roads may be in need of patching or major overlay. Cook Street was identified as being in “very poor” condition and in need of reconstruction. Reconditioning of all streets rated lower than “fair” should be budgeted for as soon as possible.

3.5 State and Regional Transportation Plans

3.5.1 USH 12 Corridor Growth Management Plan (2003)

The Plan includes an overall vision and detailed recommendations for the entire 24-mile Highway 12 corridor in Sauk County. The corridor is loosely defined as encompassing all the communities adjacent to Highway 12. Given Merrimac’s proximity to this roadway, the potential for increased traffic flow through the Village exists. Efforts to increase the viability of the downtown should include discussions concerning the capture of increased vehicular traffic that travels through the Village.

3.5.2 STH 78/113 reconstruction

Reconstruction on STH 113 is currently underway. Scheduled improvements for STH 78 (WDOT Project ID 5630-04-00) includes the area located on STH 78, beginning at Weynand Road in the Village of Merrimac and extending east and north approximately 1.73 miles to the northern Village Limits. Storm sewer, sidewalks, and curb and gutter will be installed throughout the project length. The proposed typical cross section varies throughout the project as follows:

1. Weynand Road to Austin Drive - 36 feet curb face to curb face, including two 12 foot driving lanes and accommodation for bicycles. A turn lane will be located for vehicles turning right at the STH78/STH 113 South (ferry approach) intersection. New sidewalk will be placed on the south side of STH 78 from Weynand Road to Lu Foster Lane and from Baraboo Street to Austin Drive. New sidewalk will be placed on the north side of the roadway from Lakeview Avenue to Baraboo Street.
2. Austin Drive to River Street - 44 feet curb face to curb face, including two 12 foot driving lanes and 8 foot parking lanes on both sides of the roadway. New sidewalk will be placed on the south side of the roadway from Austin Drive to Grove Street.
3. River Street to the north village limits of Merrimac - 36 feet curb face to curb face, including two 12 foot lanes, accommodation for bicycles, and sidewalks to Pacific Road.

3.5.3 2002-06 Sauk County Highway Improvement Plan

The Highway Improvement Program for Sauk County identifies and prioritizes county road improvement projects spanning a 5-year planning period. There are no county highways in the Village of Merrimac.

3.5.4 Wisconsin State Highway Plan (2000)

The Plan pertains to State Roads in Wisconsin (STH). There are no specific projects identified within the Plan, though it does recommend strategies and actions to improve the State’s highway system. The Plan emphasizes preservation of pavement and bridges, traffic movement, and improved safety. Merrimac should refer engineers to this plan when STH 113 is reconstructed.

3.6 Transportation Issues Raised During Planning Process

- Access: the Village does not maintain a permanent local access point across the Wisconsin River. The Merrimac Ferry is operated seasonally and is subject to operation limitations.
- No bridge: Many residents would like to see a bridge constructed across Lake Wisconsin to allow permanent year-round access to the Village from STH 113.
- Improvements to STH 78: the reconstruction of STH 78 is a concern for residents, as it remains the primary transportation corridor. The Village wants to remain active in all phases of the reconstruction and planning.
- US 12 Reconstruction: US Highway 12 offers direct access from the Madison area to various Wisconsin Dells attractions. Improvements might bring increased traffic volumes through the Village. Residents are unsure of the extent that there may be an impact locally.
- Lack of sidewalks: There is no formal sidewalk policy in place. Pedestrian and bicycle travel is limited to road shoulders and limited sidewalks. The community survey identified that most respondents rated both the supply of sidewalks, and the quantity of walking or bicycling trails within the Village as “poor”.
- Speeding: The community survey indicated that 85% of respondents feel that speeding is either a serious- or moderate problem in the Village. Further, most feel stricter enforcement is the best way to address the problem.

3.7 Transportation Actions

Merrimac’s current transportation system is adequate for existing users. However, with planned improvements to the state highway system, especially STH 78/113, it will be important for the Village to remain active in planning efforts. There is also a desire to increase the availability of multi-modal transportation through Merrimac.

This section provides recommendations on how Merrimac can provide for future transportation needs and improve the quality and ease of use of the current system.

Actions:

- 3.7.1 Work with Sauk County Sheriff’s Department to reduce speeding by increasing local enforcement efforts.
- 3.7.2 Remain in communication with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation concerning the redevelopment of STH 78 and participate in redevelopment discussions, boards, and commissions.
- 3.7.3 Continue to utilize PASER roadway analysis system to determine priorities for street upgrades.
- 3.7.4 Develop a formal Capital Improvement Plan to program infrastructure improvements.
- 3.7.5 Perform a parking analysis of the downtown and adjacent areas to determine appropriateness of current system.
- 3.7.6 Determine what “traffic-calming” measure the Village might be interested in and solicit bids for cost estimates.

- 3.7.7 Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan for existing transportation corridors, especially as they may relate to an extension of the Ice Age Trail from Devil's Lake State Park.
- 3.7.8 Continue to transfer the cost of roadway extensions to new development back to the developer.
- 3.7.9 Maintain and improve existing crosswalks throughout the Village by regularly painting crosswalk areas and installing pedestrian signage.
- 3.7.10 Work with Sauk County Commission on Aging and other appropriate entities to identify increased transportation opportunities for disabled and aging residents.
- 3.7.11 Establish a regular meeting schedule with the WDOT to discuss operation of the Merrimac Ferry and other WDOT controlled properties within the Village.
- 3.7.12 Continue to promote the desire for a bridge to link Sauk and Columbia counties.
- 3.7.13 Work with the WDOT to secure transportation enhancement grant funding to improve the quality and design of lighting when STH 78 is redeveloped.



Example of appropriate pedestrian-style lighting for commercial areas

Element 4

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This element includes background information, visions, goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the Village of Merrimac. As required by Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the element describes location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the Village and includes recommendations for future utilities needs and upgrades.

4.1 Utilities and Community Facilities Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac will continue to offer affordable water and sewer service that operates efficiently and effectively. Fire services will provide service to area communities quickly and will be properly staffed and equipped. The Village will also support the local post office, and the Merrimac Elementary School which are highly valued and utilized by the community.

4.2 Utilities and Community Facilities Goals and Objectives

4.2.1 Goal: Maintain current utility infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, telephone).

Objective:

- Ensure timely and efficient delivery of services.
- Perform routine maintenance and testing to ensure optimum utility provision.
- Form an ad hoc committee to explore locations for new municipal water well.

4.2.2 Goal: Improve local code enforcement.

Objective:

- Uphold local ordinances to make the community a better place to live.
- Work with Sauk County Sheriff's Department to enforce speed limits.
- Explore possibility of hiring a part-time constable to enforce local ordinances and provide assistance to local authorities.

4.2.3 Goal: Maintain vitality of local public and semi-public facilities.

Objective:

- Work with the Sauk Prairie School District to ensure adequate funding and operation of Merrimac Elementary.
- To encourage viability of local church structures and programs.

4.2.4 Goal: Provide recreation facilities for residents.

Objective:

- Maintain local park facilities.
- Encourage free, open access to Wisconsin River.
- Review recommendations set forth in the Village of Merrimac 1999-2004 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Update the existing Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

4.2.5 Goal: Maintain local emergency response facilities and resources.

Objective:

- To ensure proper funding and maintenance for facilities.
- Work with fire department and the emergency service to recruit new volunteers, especially people that remain within the Village during the day.

4.3 Utilities and Community Facilities Policies

4.3.1 Continue to maintain and correct deficiencies in existing utilities and facilities in a timely and efficient manner.

4.3.2 Explore creating a Village volunteer program to establish a pool of potential volunteers for the Fire Department and other Village events, and to encourage existing and new residents to volunteer within the community.

4.3.3 The Village of Merrimac limits extension of sewer and water provision to properties located inside jurisdictional boundaries. Cost of extension for services is borne upon the applicant, if service is provided.

4.4 Existing Utilities and Community Facilities Conditions

4.4.1 Sanitary Sewer System

The Village's wastewater treatment facility has a rated capacity of 76,000 gallons per day. The average daily flow is about 35,000 gallons per day in summer, dropping to 28-30,000 gallons per day in winter. The system is a recirculating sand filter process with an anoxic reactor to promote nitrogen removal. The system utilizes Kaldnes Moving Bed Bio-Reactor (MBBR) to provide a growth surface for denitrifying bacteria.

The wastewater collection system is in good shape overall, and infiltration and inflow has not historically been excessive. The original collection system was installed in 1976, and consists mostly of 8" vitrified clay pipe. More recent sewer extensions and replacements consist of SDR 35 PVC sewer pipe.

All lift stations were upgraded in 2003. See Map 4-1. The collection system contains 5 duplex submersible lift stations, 2 duplex submersible grinder stations, and a simplex grinder station serving single residences. A recent condominium plat included low-pressure sewer system with grinder pumps serving the condo units, and plans are underway for a small sewer extension also utilizing individual grinder pumps. The main lift station that pumps all wastewater from the Village to the treatment facility has a rated capacity of 250 gpm. Standby pumping capability is provided by a 6" trailer mounted trash pump as well as a trailer mounted generator.

Map 4-1 Utilities

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4.4.2 Water Supply

The Village utilizes a single well for water supply. The well was drilled in 1959, and is 236 feet deep with an 18 inch casing pipe. The well was rehabilitated in 1987 and again in 1996. After the last rehabilitation effort, the well was producing approximately 300 gpm. Chlorine is added to the water supply.

The Village owns a second parcel of land that was originally intended to be for a second well, in the event one was needed. The lot does not meet the minimum parcel size of 100' x 100' required by the current DNR code governing well siting, so a new site may need to be selected if adjoining land cannot be obtained.

Water storage is provided in a 75,000 gallon elevated spheroid reservoir, constructed in 1999. The reservoir provides approximately two days of storage, and can supply a fire flow of 500 gpm for two hours at a maximum daily water demand condition.

The water distribution system consists of approximately 24,000 feet of 6" diameter and about 3,400 feet of 8" diameter ductile iron pipe. Some demetalization of the ductile iron has been found to be occurring, and the Village had undertaken some water main replacement in concert with highway work. Due to the layout of the Village along Lake Wisconsin, the water system contains some long, dead ends that branch out from the centrally located well. A main break, several of which occur each winter, on one of the long dead end portions, can result in a loss of service to residents downstream of the break. Looping has been looked at, but is expensive and would not presently serve any additional properties. As land develops, opportunities to install water system loops should be considered.

4.4.3 Storm Sewer System

There are limited storm sewer facilities within Merrimac. The central portion of the Village does contain a few surface drainage improvements, and some culverts exist along roadways. Existing storm drainage flows into Lake Wisconsin.

4.4.4 Solid Waste Disposal/Recycling Facilities

The Village provides local waste and recycling pick-up.

4.4.5 Community Facilities

Merrimac maintains a central Village Hall that includes storage and maintenance facilities for utility vehicles. See Map 4-2.

4.4.6 Post Office

Merrimac has one post office located at 110 School Street (pictured at right).



4.4.7 Fire Protection

Merrimac Fire & Rescue, Inc. is located at 100 Church Street in Merrimac. The station serves approximately 1,000 people in the Village, Town of Merrimac, and part of the Town of Caledonia and is volunteer-operated. Approximately 30 members serve the station and most are EMS certified. The Department recently completed a 20-year improvement plan which includes provisions for a new brush truck in 2005 and a new engine in 2007.

4.4.8 Law Enforcement

The Village receives police service from the Sauk County Sheriff's Office. The Sauk County Sheriff's Office has 88 full time employees. There are (14) Administrative positions which include a Chief Deputy, an Administrative Assistant, a Captain of the Security Division with two Security Sergeants, a Captain of the Field Services with three Patrol Division Lieutenants, three Patrol Sergeants, one Detective Sergeant, and one Communication Division Sergeant.

4.4.9 Rescue/Emergency Medical Services

The Merrimac Fire & Rescue provides ALS emergency medical service through First Responders.

4.4.10 Health Care Facilities

There are three main health care facilities located in Sauk County: Reedsburg Area Medical Center, St. Clare Hospital, and Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital.

Reedsburg Area Medical Center is an independent, nonprofit organization that is locally controlled. The modern facility has of 53 acute care beds, 50 long term care beds, and eight day care surgery beds. The Emergency Department is staffed 24-hours a day with specially trained emergency room physicians. The Urgent Care Center is open weekday evenings, weekends and most holidays.

St. Clare Health Services, Baraboo, WI, includes a 100-bed acute care hospital, a 100-bed long-term care facility with a 20-bed assisted living wing, and a health care foundation. The hospital has a state of the art full-time emergency department and an urgent care clinic. Other services include a dialysis center and urgent care clinic in neighboring Lake Delton, WI.

Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & Clinics (SPMH & C) is located in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin and operates four primary care clinics in Lodi, Black Earth, Plain, and Spring Green. The hospital facility features 36 acute care beds and a full array of outpatient departments. Approximately 30 physicians serve as full-time active members of the medical staff, while another 65 physicians offer consulting and courtesy services. The hospital has a full-time emergency department as well as an urgent care clinic.

4.4.11 Library

Merrimac does not have its own library. Residents have access to 9 libraries located throughout Sauk County.

4.4.12 Schools

The Village has one local elementary school, Merrimac Elementary, in the Sauk Prairie School District. It is located at 360 School Street and educates children in grades K-5. In 2003 there were 52 students, for 2004 there are 59 students enrolled which is still below capacity. The enrollment for Sauk Prairie Schools has held steady overall for the past few years. There are 4 other elementary schools in the district. The Sauk Prairie Middle School is located in Sauk City, and the Sauk Prairie High School is located in Prairie du Sac. See Map 4-3.



Merrimac Elementary

Higher education opportunities in the region include the Madison Area Technical College – Reedsburg Campus which awards associate degrees, technical diplomas, certificates and apprenticeships, and offers classes that transfer to four-year degree programs. UW-Baraboo/Sauk County offers freshman/sophomore-level university instruction leading to an Associate of Arts degree. After building an academic foundation at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, students can continue their work towards a bachelor’s degree at a UW baccalaureate campus or other schools of their choice.

4.4.13 Child Care Facilities

There are no commercial childcare facilities within the Village. Friends and family or small home occupation businesses provide local daycare.

4.4.14 Parks and Recreation Facilities

The Village of Merrimac owns and maintains two local parks: Memorial Park (Village River Park), and Village Ball Park.

Memorial Park (pictured at right) is located along the Wisconsin River and includes bathroom facilities, handicapped accessible parking and fishing pier, and playground facilities. It is the only park with facilities located on the shores of Lake Wisconsin. It also serves as the focal point of water-oriented recreation activities in Merrimac.



Village Ball Park (pictured at left) is located between Second Street and STH 78 and provides a forum for organized summer sports in Merrimac. The Ball Park contains a small baseball diamond, bleachers and a concession stand.

There has been a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan created for the period ranging from 1999-2004. The Plan lists existing park conditions, goals and objectives, and needs for the existing park system. Some of the recommendations have already been implemented including updated handicapped accessible parking lots and bleachers to Village Ball Park in 2002.

4.4.15 Electricity and Natural Gas

Alliant Energy provides both electric and natural gas service to the Village. Development and placement of electric utility extensions has not traditionally been a problem for Merrimac.

4.4.16 Telephone and Television Services

Local cable is provided by Merrimac Area Cable. Telephone service is through Verizon.

4.4.17 Cemeteries

There are cemeteries in the immediate Merrimac vicinity: Oak Hill Cemetery, Kingston Cemetery, and Saint John Cemetery.

4.5 Issues Raised During Planning Process

- Lack of local police protection: the Village receives police protection from the Sauk County Sheriff's Department. The absence of local police is realized primarily in long response time.
- Local ordinance enforcement: with limited staffing levels, some ordinances are hard to enforce or go unrecognized.
- Vitality of Post Office: residents wish to maintain access to local post office facilities and want to ensure the post office remains within the Village.
- Vitality of Merrimac Elementary: residents of Merrimac greatly value the local elementary school and wish to make certain it is maintained within the community.
- Lack of local facilities: residents of Merrimac currently travel to other communities for health care facilities, post-primary schools, and some other services.
- No free public boat landing: Merrimac does not contain a free boat landing where visitors and residents can launch personal watercraft.
- Infrastructure repair: any additional improvements to the public infrastructure place a great financial burden on the limited population.

4.6 Actions for Community Utilities and Facilities

Merrimac's current utility system meets its existing demand. However, looping the municipal water system would provide for more reliable service. There is also a need to increase the enforcement of local ordinances, and to increase participation in volunteer services including Merrimac Fire & Rescue. Increased recreational facilities and water access have also been identified as long-term needs.

This section provides recommendations on how Merrimac can continue to provide sufficient delivery of services to the local community, and plan for increased efficiency and capacity.

Actions:

- 4.7.1 Acquire a site for a second municipal drinking well as soon as funding becomes available.
- 4.7.2 Increase working relationship with local police authorities including Sauk County Sheriff's Department to increase local code enforcement. Pursue working with Town of Merrimac to develop local neighborhood watches, or hire a part-time officer during peak activity times.
- 4.7.3 Work with the Sauk Prairie School District to ensure the viability of Merrimac Elementary and maintain the operation of the facility.
- 4.7.4 Update the 1999-2004 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for existing and planned open space and recreation facilities within the Village (recreational facilities at Memorial Park pictured on right).



- 4.7.5 Identify increased areas for access to Lake Wisconsin and sign appropriately.
- 4.7.6 Encourage Village residents to volunteer for the fire department. Recruit non-traditional volunteers, including women and retirees.
- 4.7.7 Develop and adopt a capital improvement plan which schedules infrastructure upgrades and funding requirements over time.
- 4.7.8 Continue the cooperative relationships with the Town of Merrimac and Town of Caledonia in providing fire protection and emergency services.
- 4.7.9 Loop municipal water system for all new development extensions, and plan for looping to the existing system as financially viable.
- 4.7.10 Work with Alliant Energy to identify appropriate locations for utility extensions.
- 4.7.11 Observe appropriate siting and public meeting requirements to guide future development of power plants/transmission lines.

4.7 Forecasted Utilities and Community Facilities Needs

Population is expected to increase gradually over the next twenty years, so many services and facilities are likely to be upgraded over time with increases in population. The addition of a second well would provide more flexibility in the operation of the water system. This is a long-term need and would be necessitated by increases in the local population. Looping dead-end mains or installing hydrants for flushing purposes will also make for a more manageable water system. When STH 78 is redone, many water mains will need to be relocated. There is some demineralization and main breaks in the current system, which will require updating in the short-term.

Increased local enforcement of existing codes and ordinances is also a short-term need. Coordinating with the Town of Merrimac to hire a part-time enforcement officer should be evaluated for feasibility. Upgrades to Merrimac Fire & Rescue, though separate expenses from the municipal fund, include a new brush truck in 2005 and possibly a new engine in 2007. The Municipal Hall is also in need of some exterior maintenance including roof and siding.

Table 4.7.1 Community Facilities Needs Table

Utilities/Facilities	Approximate Timeframe	Comments
Sanitary Sewer	N/A	Current system is sufficient
Water Supply	Short-Term	Looping mains is a short-term need
Storm Sewer	Long-Term	Plan for on-site retention and detention of stormwater in new developments
Solid Waste	n/a	Private service provider used
Community Facilities	Short-Term	Structural upgrades to Municipal Hall
Fire Department	Short-Term	Brush truck and new engine
Police	Mid-Term	Discuss combining efforts with Town of Merrimac
Parks	Long-Term	Increase facilities as population dictates

Short-Term: approximately 1-4 years in the future

Mid-Term: approximately 5-8 years in the future

Long-Term: approximately 9+ years in the future

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Map 4-2 Community Facilities

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Map 4-3 Jurisdiction

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Element 5

AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

This element includes an analysis of existing agricultural, natural and cultural resources in and around the Village of Merrimac. The chapter presents existing conditions, visions, goals, objectives, policies and programs for the conservation and promotion of effective management of agricultural, natural and cultural resources in the Village. Lake Wisconsin is especially important to local residents, and the natural features of the area very much define local identity.

5.1 Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac contains many scenic and natural wonders that will be carefully preserved and utilized to help create a unique community identity. Local residents and visitors alike will continue to enjoy many recreational opportunities on Lake Wisconsin. Regional attractions will bring many people through the Village including the Merrimac Ferry which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

5.2 Natural Resources Goals and Objectives

5.2.1 Goal: Maintain quality and diversity of natural areas.

Objective:

- Encourage continued WDNR monitoring of local waterways.
- Encourage preservation of privately owned local forestland.
- Help to preserve local habitat for threatened or endangered wildlife.
- Encourage proper upkeep and preservation of area attractions including Devil's Lake State Park, and Devil's Head Resort and Golf Course.

5.2.2 Goal: Provide opportunities for safe access and activity in Lake Wisconsin.

Objective:

- Explore development of additional public access points for boat launching or fishing activities.
- To ensure a range of recreational activities are available to users of Lake Wisconsin.

5.3 Natural Resources Policies

5.3.1 Explore preservation of forestland through public ownership by gift or donation.

5.3.2 Maintain appropriate access and viewsheds to the Wisconsin River.

5.3.3 Identify environmental standards, and best practice recommendations for new businesses locating in the Village, especially along the Wisconsin River corridor.

5.4 Cultural Resources Goals and Objectives

5.4.1 Goal: Preserve historical structures and places within the Village.

Objective:

- Form local chapter of the Historic Preservation Society to record and preserve historic structures.
- Encourage rehabilitation of historic structures using appropriate design elements and materials.
- Encourage upkeep and viability of local churches

5.5 Cultural Resources Policies

5.5.1 Provide support for the preservation of historic resources.

5.5.2 Identify ways to enhance the entryway into the Village particularly along STH 78.

5.5.3 Observe historic preservation recommendations concerning appropriate building materials and design elements as documented by the Nation Trust for Historic Preservation.

5.6 Agricultural Resources Goals and Objectives

5.6.1 Goal: Preserve active farmlands.

Objective:

- Protect existing farmland from development pressures for as long as the farmer wants to maintain the use.
- Explore programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, that seek to maintain prime soils and cropland.

5.7 Agricultural Resources Policies

5.7.1 Discourage development of agricultural land, especially development that is not consistent with surrounding uses.

5.7.2 Encourage development to occur in areas that are easily served with utilities and public services.

5.8 Natural Resource Inventory

5.8.1 Topography

The Village of Merrimac is nestled between rich agricultural land and the Wisconsin River. While there are gentle rolling hills approaching the Village, most of the built environment is located on relatively flat land. Merrimac is also located in an area of plentiful forestlands, including large stands of deciduous forest and limited coniferous forests and grasslands.

5.8.2 Land Capability Classification

Map 5-1 shows soil classifications for the Merrimac area. Class I, II, and III soils cover a majority of the Village and surrounding area. Class one soils have few limitations that restrict their use. Class II soils have some limitation such as wetness, erosion, or droughtiness that require conservation practices. Class III soils have many limitations with special management practices.

There are sections of Class IV, V, and VI soils near the corporate limits and central portion of the Village. Class IV soils have severe limitations that require careful management. Class V soils are suited mainly to pasture due to permanent limitations such as wetness and stoniness. Class VI soils have limitations that make them generally unsuitable for cultivation and limit use to pasture, woodland or wildlife.

On the far western and eastern corners of the Village there are located some Class VII or VIII soils. Class VII soils have very severe limitations that restrict their use to pasture, woodland and wildlife. Class VIII soils have very severe limitations and use is generally restricted to recreation and wildlife. Soil classifications are shown in acres in Table 5.8.2 below.

Table 5.8.2: Soil Classification

	Acres	Percent
Class 1	0.0	0.0
Class 2	38.8	8.2
Class 3	351.3	73.9
Class 4	51.0	10.7
Class 5	0.0	0.0
Class 6	17.4	3.7
Class 7	15.6	3.3
Class 8	1.0	0.2
Total	475.06	

5.8.3 Lake Wisconsin Watershed

The Lake Wisconsin Watershed is located mostly in Sauk and Columbia Counties although the southernmost tip extends into Dane County. The watershed is named for Lake Wisconsin, an impoundment of the Wisconsin River created by the Wisconsin Power & Light dam at Prairie du Sac. Overall population in the Lake Wisconsin Watershed for 2000 was estimated to be around 14,300. Main municipalities include the villages of Dane, Merrimac, and Poynette and the City of Lodi.

The watershed is developing at a high rate. This development pressure may impact natural plant communities and habitat and cause water quality problems if not controlled. There is also significant development around the lake that has a potential impact to Lake Wisconsin and its shoreline. The watershed does experience problems as a result of nonpoint sources of pollution and has been ranked as a medium priority with respect to nonpoint source pollution reduction.

5.8.4 Groundwater

Recent upgrades to the water system have made groundwater flow adequate for existing users. Water quality is good with few additives (such as chlorine) added to the supply.

5.8.5 Stream Corridors

There have been no stream corridors identified within the Village of Merrimac.

5.8.6 Surface Water

Merrimac is located on Lake Wisconsin which is part of the Wisconsin River system created by the dam in Prairie du Sac. It is 9500 acres and has 57 miles of shoreline. Depth varies to a maximum depth of 40 feet.

The Wisconsin River is the largest river in Wisconsin and the namesake of the state. The Wisconsin River stretches 430 miles from Lac Vieux Desert on the Wisconsin-Michigan boundary in the north to Prairie du Chien in southwestern Wisconsin, where it empties into the Mississippi River.



View of Lake Wisconsin from Memorial Park, Village of Merrimac Wis.

5.8.7 Floodplains

Floodplain areas are designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Designated areas are those that are prone to flooding during a 100-year storm event adjacent to navigable waters. Floodplains within the Village are located adjacent to the Wisconsin River in low-lying areas. See Map 5-2.

5.8.8 Wetlands

There are sporadic wetland areas within Village limits with most occurring near the Wisconsin River shoreline in the western portion of Merrimac. These areas are prime habitat for a variety of aquatic plant and animal life.

5.8.9 Woodlands

There are several areas within the Village where stands of deciduous forestland exist. Primary locations include areas adjacent to Baraboo Street and stretches to the east along STH 78, and lands just north of corporate limits.

5.8.10 Steep Slopes

There are no steep slopes within the Village exceeding 12% grade.

5.8.11 Rare Species Occurrences/Wildlife Habitat

The following table lists sensitive elements that may be located in the Village of Merrimac. Information presented is from the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory database available through the Department of Natural Resources and is described at the township level.

Group	Scientific Name	Common Name
Community	Southern Dry-Mesic Forest	Southern Dry-Mesic Forest
Community	Southern Mesic Forest	Southern Mesic Forest
Community	Open Bog	Open Bog
Fish	Aphredoderus Sayanus	Pirate Perch
Fish	Cycleptus Elongatus	Blue Sucker
Fish	Etheostoma Clara	Western Sand Darter
Fish	Macrhybopsis Aestivalis	Speckled Chub
Fish	Macrhybopsis Storeriana	Silver Chub
Beetle	Hydrocanthus Iricolor	Burrowing water beetle
Beetle	Lioporeus Triangularis	Predaceous diving beetle
Herptile	Elaphe Obsoletea	Black Rat Snake
Herptile	Emydoidea Blandingii	Blanding's Turtle
Herptile	Thamnophis Proximus	Western Ribbon Snake
Invertebrate	Tritogonia Verrucosa	Buckhorn
Plant	Asclepias Lanuginosa	Woolly Milkweed
Plant	Gentiana Alba	Yellow Gentian
Plant	Nothocalais Cuspidata	Prairie False-Dandelion
Plant	Panicum Wilcoxianum	Wilcox Panic Grass
Plant	Polystichum Acrostichoides	Christmas Fern
Plant	Solidadago Sciaphila	Shadowy Goldenrod

5.8.12 Open Space/Environmental Corridors

The Village of Merrimac owns and maintains two local parks. Offering public open space and access along the Wisconsin River, Memorial Park includes bathroom facilities, handicapped accessible parking and fishing pier, and playground facilities. The other park contains a small baseball diamond and was updated in 2002 to include handicapped accessible parking lots and bleachers. Most of the land located along the Wisconsin River/Lake Wisconsin is privately owned. Opportunities for additional public open space acquisition and development exist in the northern (undeveloped) portions of the Village.

5.8.13 Nonmetallic Mineral Resources

There are no areas in the Village that are currently used for extraction of nonmetallic mineral resources.

5.9 Cultural Resources Inventory

5.9.1 Historic Resources

The Merrimac Ferry, which crosses the Wisconsin River between Sauk and Columbia counties, is Wisconsin's only free ferry. It shuttles WIS 113 traffic between Okee on the east bank and Merrimac on the west.



Ferry service has been provided in this area for more than a century. In 1844,

four years before Wisconsin became a state, Chester Mattson, the second settler on the site of the village of Merrimac, obtained charters to provide ferry service at this location. The ferry was operated long before the development of a regular roadway. Mattson charged either 35 cents or \$1 to ferry a team and wagon across the river, depending upon who you're talking to. But, whatever the fare, the ferryman earned it for his muscles provided a good share of the ferry's power until a gasoline engine was added around the turn of the century. Another private investor, W.P. Flanders, took over the service in 1849 for the sum of \$700, and for many years it continued as a private operation.

Although the ferry has undergone many changes through the years, the Merrimac Ferry is still a sturdy and popular survivor among the river ferries. Today, it is the only ferry remaining on the Wisconsin State Trunk Highway network. The Merrimac Ferry is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Wisconsin Historical Society's Architecture & History inventory database lists 44 historic buildings located within the Town/Village of Merrimac. A full listing can be located at www.wisconsinhistory.org.

5.9.2 Archeological Resources

The Wisconsin Historical Society lists the Oak Hill Cemetery as a significant archaeological site in the immediate Merrimac area.

There are two cemeteries in the Merrimac area, these include:

- Saint John German Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery
- Oak Hill Cemetery

5.9.3 Community Design

Older sections of the community contain smaller cottage-type dwellings, and many remain seasonal habitat. Deteriorating conditions of some small homes has led to the razing of these structures and redevelopment of the lot with larger raised ranch homes, or larger two-story homes especially near the lake. Most of the new home construction is for year-round housing. The community survey identified a desire for more neighborhood beautification projects as a means to enhance the local environment.

The downtown, or center of the Village can be described as the area immediately adjacent to STH 78/113 corridor. The Merrimac Ferry landing occupies a central position within the Village and most traffic will pass through the downtown after exiting the ferry. For this reason, it is important to identify the downtown area with unique buildings and shopping opportunities. Currently, the downtown is very nondescript with many deteriorating buildings, limited street-facing windows, and little pedestrian access.

5.9.4 Recreational Resources

Merrimac is located on the Wisconsin River which provides many water-based opportunities including fishing, water sports, boating, and waterfowl hunting.



Merrimac is also located within close proximity of the Wisconsin Dells area which offers many recreational opportunities, museums, restaurants and entertainment venues.

Located just north of Merrimac, Devil's Lake State Park is situated along the Ice Age Trail. With spectacular views from 500 foot cliffs, miles of hiking trails, swimming areas including 2 large sandy beaches, hundreds of campsites, mountain bike trails, cross country ski trails, great climbs and more, Devil's Lake is a popular vacation destination.

5.10 Agricultural Resource Inventory

5.10.1 Active Agriculture

There are several active agricultural sites within the Village with the largest occurring in the northwest corner of Merrimac along Cemetery Street. With the seasonal/recreational nature of the area, the growing housing demand, and the declining farm economy it is unlikely that working agricultural land will be long preserved within the Village.

5.10.2 Productive Farm Soils

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the United States Department of Agriculture, there are sporadic areas through the Village containing prime farmland. Prime farmland refers to the quality of soils for growing crops and is based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Sauk County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils, however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The "prime farmland" designation simply indicates that these soils are good for agricultural purposes. See Map 5-3.

5.11 Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Issues

Active Farmland: in the community survey most residents identified a desire to keep active farms viable into the future, but to balance the farm owner's desire to sell the land for other uses should farming no longer be a viable use of the land. Survey respondents indicated that if active farmland were to be converted to other uses they would prefer the land be used for housing, commercial, or parks and trail uses.

Preservation of Natural Environment: respondents of the community survey indicated a desire to preserve existing woodlands, wetlands, and river corridors in Merrimac. They believe this can be accomplished through better enforcement of existing regulations.

Neighborhood Beautification: the community survey identified a strong desire for neighborhood beautification projects. Additionally, a majority of the survey respondents indicated that allocation of tax dollars for these projects would be a good use of public funding, and that they would pay more for them.

5.12 Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Actions

Merrimac enjoys a rich natural environment due to its location on Lake Wisconsin. The lake is a valuable resource and residents feel it is important to maintain safe access to this resource. Culturally speaking, the Village attracts visitors due to the historic Merrimac Ferry which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2002, approximately 27 percent of Village land was used for agricultural purposes. Residents would like to maintain the rural atmosphere of the place while providing for an appropriate level of new development to occur on former agricultural sites.

This section provides recommendations on how the Village can continue to preserve and enhance the local agricultural, natural and cultural resources that define Merrimac.

Actions:

- 5.12.1 Monitor the Lake Wisconsin area and inform DNR of instances where enforcement actions should be investigated.
- 5.12.2 Encourage preservation of privately owned forestland and promote programs to help preserve natural forest areas.
- 5.12.3 Promote existing best management practices (BMPs) along Lake Wisconsin to preserve riverbanks and enhance viewsheds along the resource.
- 5.12.4 Form a local chapter of the National Historic Preservation Society and perform an historic resources inventory for the Merrimac area.
- 5.12.5 Formalize a plan (possibly an update of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) to identify future locations for public access to Lake Wisconsin.
- 5.12.6 Promote awareness of agricultural preservation programs and invite agricultural experts from agencies including the UW-Extension to identify methods to help keep local farming operations viable.
- 5.12.7 Focus development interests on infill development rather than undeveloped land to allow more of the natural environment to remain untouched for a longer period of time.

5.13 Programs

A complete list of Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resource Programs is provided in **Appendix D**.

Map 5-1 Land Capability

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Map 5-2 Environmental

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Map 5-3 Prime Soils

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Element 6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development element includes visions, goals, objectives, policies and recommendations to help guide development of economic resources within the Village. This element also includes an assessment of local strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses, and identifies possible environmentally contaminated sites.

6.1 Economic Development Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac will contain many unique businesses, conveniences and attractions, and adequate employment opportunities for local workers. The local economy will be strong and residents will patronize many of the local establishments for basic needs, entertainment, and for services. The downtown will also be very active, with many revitalized historic facades, and will attract many tourists in the summer months.

6.2 Economic Development Goals and Objectives

6.2.1 Goal: Maintain and enhance small business community.

Objective:

- Create a local economic development and promotion entity.
- Enhance viability of local businesses through incentive programming and development assistance.
- Promote the redevelopment of existing properties and historic structures for retail use.
- Encourage development of an array of local services.
- Explore development of a downtown design ordinance to identify the commercial district as unique and attractive (including regulations on unique lighting, façade, and awnings as pictured at right).
- Identify programming to help revitalize the exterior conditions of downtown buildings.
- Encourage existing business owners to form a downtown development association for the purposes of promoting existing and new businesses.
- Identify ways to capture the local tourist traffic exiting the Merrimac Ferry.



6.2.2 Goal: Identify ways to capitalize on proximity to Baraboo/Sauk Prairie area.

Objective:

- Partner with existing Chamber of Commerce in Dells, or Sauk Prairie areas to get local businesses and events on existing websites.
- Develop signage that is posted near these higher-traffic areas identifying unique recreation and shopping opportunities in Merrimac.
- Explore mutual events or promote unique travel destination routes using the Merrimac Ferry for traveling to the Wisconsin Dells area.

- Develop local identification and promotion materials.
- Focus on creating further recreation development opportunities.

6.2.3 Goal: Promote the area to unique restaurant and retail developers.

Objective:

- Identify and prepare specific sites for retail or restaurant development.
- Identify or develop funding programs for new business development.
- Explore applying to the Wisconsin Main Street program. Research the program and imitate its techniques where appropriate.
- Explore development of an entertainment district, or block, within the Village with unique building features and signage.

6.3 Economic Development Policies

6.3.1 Encourage unique design characteristics for retail and commercial buildings.

6.3.2 Evaluate viability of reserving funding for a revolving business loan fund, or other economic development programming.

6.3.3 Establish a formal commercial district where development of commercial and service entities is encouraged.

6.4 Economic Development Existing Conditions

6.4.1 Labor Market

Table 6.4.1 details the employment status of workers in the Village as compared to Sauk County and the State. Referring to the table, the Village is a little lower the County and State overall in most categories. The Village does have a higher percentage of people over age 16 not in the labor force.

Table 6.4.1: Employment Status, 2000

	Village		Sauk County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
<i>Population 16 years and over</i>	304	100.0		
In labor force	195	64.1	71.6	69.1
Civilian labor force	195	64.1	71.5	69.0
Employed	191	62.8	68.5	65.8
Unemployed	4	1.3	3.0	3.2
Percent of civilian labor force		2.1	4.2	4.7
Armed Forces	0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Not in labor force	109	35.9	28.4	30.9
 <i>Females 16 years and over</i>				
<i>Population 16 years and over</i>	147	100.0		
In labor force	90	61.2	66.1	64.1
Civilian labor force	90	61.2	66.1	64.1
Employed	90	61.2	63.4	61.4

Table 6.4.1: Employment Status, 2000

	Village		Sauk County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
<i>Own children under 6 years</i>	16	100.0		
All parents in family in labor force	16	100.0	74.7	68.4
Private wage and salary workers	155	81.2	79.5	81.1
Government workers	23	12.0	10.9	12.5
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	13	6.8	9.1	6.1
Unpaid family workers	0	0.0	0.6	0.3

2000 Census, SF-3

Figure 6.4.1 below shows the percentage of workers by occupation within the Village in year 2000. Most workers (26%) were employed in sales and office occupations. A complete breakdown is listed in the Issues and Opportunities Element, Section 1.8.

Figure 6.4.1: Workforce by Occupation, 2000

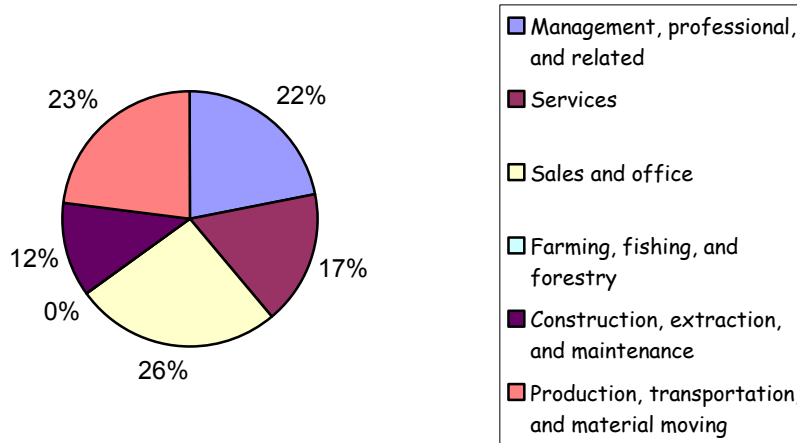


Table 6.4.1a shows workforce by industry in 2000. The Village had the highest percentage of workers employed in the manufacturing industry (19%). The Village is slightly higher than the County and State percentages for construction and for information industries.

Table 6.4.1a: Workforce by Industry, 2000

	Village		Sauk County	State of Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2	1.0	5.3	2.8
Construction	21	11.0	7.8	5.9
Manufacturing	37	19.4	19.1	22.2
Wholesale trade	11	5.8	3.2	3.2
Retail trade	28	14.7	13.2	11.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4	2.1	4.0	4.5
Information	9	4.7	1.5	2.2
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	6	3.1	4.3	6.1
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	10	5.2	5.2	6.6
Educational, health, and social services	25	13.1	17.6	20.0
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	28	14.7	12.1	7.3
Other services (except public administration)	2	1.0	3.1	4.1
Public administration	8	4.2	3.5	3.5
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	191	100.0	100.0	100.0

2000 Census, SF-3

Table 6.4.2 shows income characteristics of Village residents as compared to both Sauk County and the State. The Village shows lower income levels across all categories than the County and State. However, the Village observed a higher percentage change of median household income between 1990-2000 than the County or State, at 65 percent.

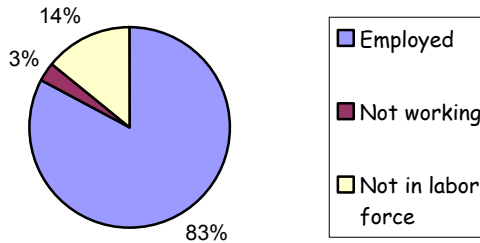
Table 6.4.2: Income Characteristics, 1990-2000

	1990			2000			Percentage Change 1990-2000		
	Village	Sauk County	Wisconsin	Village	Sauk County	Wisconsin	Village	Sauk County	Wisconsin
Median Family Income	\$ 31,250	\$31,441	\$35,082	\$42,656	\$49,091	\$52,911	36%	56%	51%
Median Household Income	\$25,000	\$26,217	\$29,442	\$ 41,250	\$41,941	\$43,791	65%	60%	49%
Per Capita Income	\$ 12,781	\$11,697	\$ 13,276	\$ 19,090	\$19,695	\$21,271	49%	68%	60%

2000 Census, SF-3

Figure 6.4.2 lists labor force participation for Sauk County residents in January 2001. Nearly 86 percent of the County’s labor force worked or sought work in 2001. This participation rate was higher than the statewide rate (72.8%) and the national rate (66.9%). It was also the highest of Wisconsin’s 72 counties and higher than Sauk County’s participation rate of the late 1990s (83% to 85%). (Source: Estimated from WI Dept. of Administration population estimates, Jan. 2001, US Census Bureau, and WI Local Area Unemployment Statistics)

Figure 6.4.2: 2001 Labor Force Participation



Sauk County’s unemployment rate rose in 2000 and 2001, see Table 6.4.2a. Estimates indicate the unemployment rate in 2001 was 3.6 percent.

Table 6.4.2a: Sauk County Civilian Labor Force Data

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor force	33,100	33,500	33,700	33,700	35,100	36,500
Employed	31,900	32,200	32,500	32,700	34,000	35,200
Unemployed	1,210	1,250	1,140	920	1,050	1,310
Unemployment rate	3.7%	3.7%	3.4%	2.7%	3.0%	3.6%

WI Department of Workforce Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, revised March 2002

6.4.2 Local Employers

Most local residents work outside the Village of Merrimac. Communities like Baraboo, Sauk City, and even Madison are close enough to the Village to offer a greater array of employment opportunities and acceptable commuting times. Within the Village, Merrimac Communications is the largest employer with a staff of 12.

6.5 New Businesses Desired by Merrimac Residents

Merrimac residents appreciate their unique surroundings including the immediate Lake Wisconsin positioning. Although they would enjoy having more services and business enterprises located within the Village, the market in terms of sufficient local demand, is not present for many commercial or service-type developments. At the same time, residents agree that having some sort of local convenience store that includes minor grocery amenities is needed within Merrimac and should be the focus in the short term. In the long-term, a downtown that provides more shopping, eating, and recreational opportunities would help to keep tourist traffic within the Village after exiting the Merrimac Ferry.

6.6 Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Strengths: the Merrimac area was built largely upon its location on Lake Wisconsin. Small businesses developed out of the seasonal needs of residents for entertainment and basic shopping needs. Merrimac maintains a strong infrastructure for future business development with good utilities and roadway access. The proximity of the Village to Baraboo and the Wisconsin Dells area to the north, as well as the Sauk Prairie area to the south positions Merrimac in the heart of recreational tourist country. The Village has a unique resource in the Merrimac Ferry that has the possibility to be the gateway from southern locations (such as Madison) to the Dells area. There are also available business sites that can be redeveloped relatively easily. Lake Wisconsin provides a local resource for seasonal retail provision including fishing and bait shops, water sports, and assorted winter activities such as skiing or snowshoeing. The reuse of the Badger Army Ammunition Plant land, and close proximity to Devil's Head Resort and Golf Course also afford opportunities for growing the local economy.

Weaknesses: there is a lack of local promotion entities to focus on creating a regional identity for Merrimac and promote local businesses. Start-up funds, and rehabilitation funding for business people trying to establish businesses in Merrimac are also lacking. Compounding the rehabilitation issue are altering land uses located along commercial corridors (Main Street, Wisconsin, Cook Street) making it hard to identify a downtown district. For travelers utilizing the Merrimac Ferry, many exit unaware they are traveling through the downtown, and many keep driving to their destination because there are not sufficient businesses to capture this through traffic. Most respondents of the community survey rated the local business community as being "weak".

6.7 Commercial Sites

Approximately 8 percent (40 acres) of land in the Village is currently used for commercial purposes. All of this land is located near STH 78/113. Available land for additional development along these transportation corridors is limited due to alternate existing uses (residential and public). The greatest opportunity for new commercial development, outside of conversion from other uses, includes the far east and far west ends of the Village along STH 78/113 where undeveloped agricultural land is available.

6.8 Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has identified eleven (11) sites within the immediate Merrimac area that may contain contamination. See Table 6.8.1. Additional details can be found online at the following link: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/brrts/index.htm>.

Table 6.8.1: Possible Brownfield Sites, Merrimac

DNR Activity Number	Activity Type	Site Name	Address
03-57-000797	LUST	Buds Realty	STH 78 & STH 113
04-57-271110	Spills	E12688 Bay Rd	E12688 Bay Rd
03-57-195923	LUST	Ferry Crossing Bar & Grill	306 Main St.
04-57-049719	Spills	HWY 78	HWY 78
04-57-186811	Spills	HWY 78	HWY 78

03-57-002489	LUST	Kevels 76 Station	7147 STH 78
09-57-294496	No Action Required	Merrimac Elementary School	360 School St.
03-57-002672	LUST	Merrimac Fire Dept	120 School St.
03-57-120626	LUST	Merrimac Mobil	106 Main St.
09-57-292456	No Action Required	Merrimac Vil	100 Cook St.
03-57-178525	LUST	Merrimac Vil	107 Front St.

Wisconsin DNR, BRRTS

There are several grant programs available through state and federal agencies to help ameliorate environmental contamination issues. One of these, the Blight Elimination and Brownfields Redevelopment (BEBR) program, provides up to \$100,000 for environmental assessments, and \$500,000 for environmental remediation projects to eligible communities. Grant communities are required to provide at least 25 percent of the project funding. Additional details can be found online at the following link: <http://www.commerce.state.wi.us/CD/CD-bfi-programs.html>.

6.9 County & Regional Programs

6.9.1 Sauk County

The Sauk County Development Corporation (SCDC) actively promotes economic development of all local communities within the county. SCDC acts a resource for local businesses and communities by maintaining databases of local business sites, employers, and job opportunities. The Corporation also facilitates the development of the local workforce, and promotes stewardship of Sauk County’s natural resources.

6.9.2 Sauk County University of Wisconsin - Extension

With an office in each Wisconsin county, Cooperative Extension develops practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research. County-based Extension educators are University of Wisconsin faculty and staff who are experts in agriculture and agribusiness, community and economic development, natural resources, family living and youth development. The Sauk County - UW Extension is located in Baraboo.

6.10 State of Wisconsin Economic Development Programs

6.10.1 State Economic Programs

A complete list of economic development programs is available in Appendix C.

6.11 Economic Development Actions

Merrimac is positioned to establish itself as the gateway to area attractions including Devil’s Lake State Park, the Baraboo Area, and the Wisconsin Dells. Increasing the amount and variety of businesses in the downtown would allow the Village to capture the dollars of Merrimac Ferry users and tourists traveling to recreational destinations within the area. To aid in this endeavor, it is vital

for Merrimac to identify itself with unique stores and identifiable business spaces to bring increased awareness and patronage to the downtown.

This section provides recommendations on how the Village can increase its role as a commercial player in southeastern Sauk County.

Actions:

6.11.1 Create a local economic development and promotion entity. This organization will function to promote existing Merrimac businesses and attract increased new business development. Formation of the entity should include establishing boundaries and creating a Business Improvement District and exploring the creation of a business development position.

6.11.2 Work with the County and UW-Extension to identify local and state programming to help aid in business development and recruitment. This includes identifying start-up funding or incentive programming.

6.11.3 Work with regional retailers and the restaurant community to enhance the opportunities for development of an entertainment district, or niche retail corridor within the Village.

6.11.4 Explore the possibility of identifying the central business district within the Village with specialized signage and implementation of an overlay zone to focus façade renovations on a particular style (such as “Main Street” pictured on right).



6.11.5 Institute zoning that allows for redevelopment of existing housing stock along Main Street to be utilized for both commercial and residential usage.

6.11.6 Work with Town of Merrimac to direct interested business entities to locate within Village borders.

6.11.7 Advertise downtown events, or new businesses in area papers and newsletters.

6.11.8 Explore local capacity to develop and administer a revolving loan fund for façade renovation or business start-up funding.

6.11.9 Work with the Wisconsin Dells Chamber of Commerce to promote the Village and Merrimac Ferry.

Element 7

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

This element of the comprehensive plan analyzes the relationship of the Village of Merrimac in terms of planning and decision making to adjacent local governmental units and quasi-public, regional, state, and federal governmental entities. It looks at these governmental entities' planning and land use control/growth management documents, agreements, and programs and how they relate to the Village.

7.1 Intergovernmental Cooperation Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac will maintain excellent communication and cooperation with the surrounding town, sharing many local services and distributing costs for community facilities. Communication with Sauk County will remain strong, as will cooperation and interaction with State agencies including the WDNR and WDOT. The Village will continue to work with local organizations, the Sauk Prairie School District, and others to ensure a timely stream of information delivery between all parties.

7.2 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals and Objectives

7.2.1 Goal: Increase local code enforcement.

Objective:

- To work with WDNR, WDOT, Town of Merrimac and local agencies to identify instances of possible rule violation.
- To explore adding code enforcement alerts (for property violations, etc.) as a regular agenda item at Village Board meetings.
- To increase regular communication with Sauk County Sheriff's Department to identify areas for increased enforcement.

7.2.2 Goal: To increase communication with the Town of Merrimac.

Objective:

- To explore holding periodic meetings with the Town of Merrimac to discuss topics of mutual interest.
- To encourage the development of a local website to disseminate meeting minutes and other local information.
- To circulate agendas and meeting minutes with the Town of Merrimac.

7.2.3 Goal: To increase interaction with the Department of Transportation.

Objective:

- To attend all meetings of the WDOT where reconstruction of STH 78 is discussed.
- To develop a local committee of residents, business, and area organizations to continue working with the WDOT.

- To ensure a safe pedestrian environment is maintained along Main Street.
- To request periodic updates on local WDOT actions concerning local highways, property acquisition and the Merrimac Ferry.

7.3 Intergovernmental Cooperation Policies

7.3.1 To formally invite pertinent groups, agencies, or entities to public meetings where the topics discussed are of known importance to the invitee.

7.3.2 To remain active on regional committees and boards of local interest

7.4 Merrimac's Intergovernmental Relationships

7.4.1 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The WDNR interaction with Merrimac occurs on an as-needed basis. The Village's location on Lake Wisconsin predisposes its need for shoreland protection. The WDNR has suggested the Village explore development of water setbacks and other protection of shore cover along shorelines as part of the review guidelines for residential and commercial development. There is an opportunity for the Village to increase interaction with the WDNR in obtaining grants for recreational grounds, especially near Lake Wisconsin.

7.4.2 Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Communication with the WDOT is fair. With future plans to develop increased commercial development along the State Highway corridors, and improvements to STH 113 currently and to STH 78 scheduled for 2007 additional coordination and increased communication with the Department is essential. The unique arrangement of the public ferry crossing on STH 113 is also a subject of regular communication, though the Village would like to have more regular updates from the Department on a periodic basis.

7.4.3 Sauk County

The Village of Merrimac receives police protection from the Sauk County Sheriff's Department. Interaction between the Department and the Merrimac Fire & Rescue First Responders services has been good and the current emergency communication system is sufficient. The Sheriff's Department does provide radar trailer services throughout the County to help curb speeding, periodic speed monitoring within the Village is also helping to reduce vehicle speeding. The Sheriff's Department also includes the Lake Patrol services on Lake Wisconsin which helps maintain a safe environment for residents who recreate on the lake.

Sauk County Planning and Zoning provides limited assistance since the Village administers shoreland zoning. County Planning and Zoning is interested in working more closely with the Village on implementation of planning strategies especially in the areas of cooperative boundary agreements between the Village and the Town of Merrimac. Communication with this department, and other Sauk County departments including Emergency Management where there has been close interaction, is sufficient for Merrimac's current needs.

7.4.4 Surrounding Municipalities

Town of Merrimac: The Town of Merrimac, a portion of the Town of Caledonia, and the Village of Merrimac belong to the Merrimac Fire District. The Merrimac Fire Department (the facility for the District) is located in the Village of Merrimac. Town residents also utilize some Village facilities

including parks, rental of the Village Hall for activities, and attendance of Village programs including the exercise program for seniors. There is an opportunity for the Town and Village to work closely on focusing commercial and industrial development interests to the Village, and in working to develop boundary agreements for expansion or utility provision. Joint committees comprised of members from each entity have mutual interests for future discussion including maintaining Merrimac Elementary, lobbying for a bridge to link Sauk and Columbia counties. Exchanging minutes from pertinent meetings with more frequency would also enhance the relationship between the Town and Village.

Town of Caledonia (Columbia County): Communication with the Town is somewhat limited due to the fact it does not share any contiguous borders with the Village. Most communication centers on maintaining fire and emergency services from Merrimac to part of Caledonia. There is an emergency service committee that provides the forum for most communications between the two entities.

7.4.5 Sauk Prairie School District

Merrimac Elementary is located within the Village at 360 School Street and educates children in grades K-5. The District provides after school services to outlying schools, like Merrimac Elementary, at Grand Avenue Elementary in Prairie du Sac. Children are able to take a bus from Merrimac to Prairie du Sac to participate in educational programming. Merrimac is exploring developing its own after school program. There is an opportunity for the Village and Merrimac Elementary to work on developing and promoting a local program.

7.4.6 Existing or Potential Conflicts

There are not anticipated to be any local conflicts. In fact, the Town of Merrimac has identified a policy of directing commercial development interests to the Village in their land use plan which will foster interaction. There are many opportunities for cooperating with the Town on local economic development and on extraterritorial agreements. At the same time, communication with state agencies, especially the WDOT, could be greatly enhanced with regular communication. The presence of the Merrimac Ferry, and STHs 78/113 predisposes the Village to necessary communication that is currently lacking. Timely information delivery concerning State highway projects and ferry operations should be improved.

7.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions

As with most communities, the intergovernmental communication between the Village and area agencies and entities is not as strong as it could be. If the Village is to keep abreast of important developments or opportunities there will need to be a more concerted effort made to increase contact with pertinent agencies.

The following actions will help Merrimac to achieve greater intergovernmental cooperation in handling local issues.

Actions:

- 7.5.1 The WDOT is planning improvements along STH 78 in 2007. Coordination and participation with the Village is essential to ensuring adequate access is maintained, and appropriate improvement scheduling determined. An ad hoc committee should be established with local residents, businesses and other stakeholders as the construction date nears to ensure the proposed facilities meet local expectations of access and appearance.

- 7.5.2 Begin discussion with the Town of Merrimac concerning the development of a mutual interest committee to focus on business development and grant acquisition. A separate committee should also be established to focus on fair boundary agreement options.
- 7.5.3 Hold periodic meetings with State and local agencies and groups to strengthen communication and opportunities for sharing of information, programs, and concerns of mutual interest.
- 7.5.4 Work with local associations, businesses, and other groups to develop a Merrimac area website to promote the area, post important meeting minutes, and create increased opportunities for communication access with local officials.

Element 8

LAND USE

This element contains visions, objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property. The element also contains types and densities of existing land uses within the Village and analyzes trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land use conflicts. The chapter also includes maps and land use projections.

8.1 Land Use Vision Statement

The Village of Merrimac will implement appropriate tools to help preserve the recreational character of the community. There will be a healthy mix of land uses offering residents the opportunity to live, shop and work in the Merrimac area. The local economy will also benefit from the development of a commercial district that complements surrounding land uses and draws visitors to downtown Merrimac.

8.2 Land Use Goals and Objectives

8.2.1 Goal: Maintain current density levels.

Objective:

- Promote land use development that does not detract from the natural beauty of the area.
- Direct new development to established, planned areas.

8.2.2 Goal: Update current zoning regulations.

Objective:

- Include a section to the zoning ordinance that includes provisions for multi-family or mixed-use zoning.
- Identify multiple zoning designations to separate and provide buffers between divergent land uses.
- Develop recommended design guidelines for special districts, like downtown commercial corridors.

8.2.3 Goal: Maintain plentiful open spaces, and natural areas.

Objective:

- Restrict new development in areas along natural corridors such as Lake Wisconsin.
- Explore development of additional parks and open spaces in the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- Explore public ownership of natural areas (through purchasing, or donation).

8.2.4 Goal: Develop an extraterritorial agreement procedure.

Objective:

- Work with the Town of Merrimac to encourage development of commercial enterprises inside the Village.

- Determine appropriate areas for future annexation based upon land use needs (i.e. industrial land development will require annexation of land).
- Promote enhanced discussion of local development projects, especially those located just outside municipal borders.

8.3 Land Use Policies

8.3.1 Enforce zoning regulations.

8.3.2 Develop regulations for an overlay district for commercial corridors to include design, access, and use guidelines.

8.3.3 Preserve natural areas and wildlife corridors that contribute to the character of the Village.

8.3.4 Prevent over development of areas that would affect Village density levels, or create adverse traffic impacts and incompatible land use.

8.4 Existing Land Use

8.4.1 Land Cover

Table 8.4.1 shows the breakdown of Village land by use. This table was generated using tax assessment categories by parcel. The total for public lands was obtained by including lands not on the tax roll, which may result in higher percentages of public land as some semi-public lands (such as churches) are also included in this category. See Map 8-1.

In the Village, a majority of the acreage is dedicated to residential use (48%). Agricultural land uses are the second most dominant with 135 acres (27%). Public lands and commercial lands are the next most common land use, with 48-acres and 40-acres respectively. See Table L-U below.

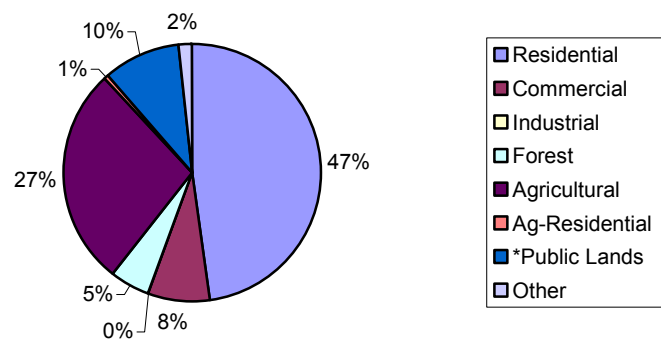
Table 8.4.1: Village Land Use

	Acres	Percent
Residential	235.71	47.63935
Commercial	39.55	7.993452
Industrial	0	0
Forest	25	5.052751
Agricultural	135.29	27.34347
Ag-Residential	3	0.60633
*Public Lands	48.17	9.73564
Other	8.06	1.629007
Village Total	494.78	100

**tax exempt properties*

Sauk County Dept. of Planning and Zoning, 2002

Figure 8.4.1: Village Land Use



Map 8-1 Land Cover

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8.4.2 Net Residential Density

The residential density for the Village of Merrimac is .92 units per acre of residential land. In 2000, that amounted to 0.84 persons per acre overall.

8.4.3 Land Use Trends

The Village's location on Lake Wisconsin makes it a very attractive residential community. Most of the parcels along the lake are residential, there are few undeveloped parcels left on the lakeshore. Housing development has been very modest over the last decade with 8 percent growth in housing units between 1990-2000. As shown in Table 8.4.3, most residential units are single-unit detached structures. The growth in these structure was 20 percent over the last decade. There were also increases in single-unit attached homes, 2 unit homes, and 3 or 4 unit houses. The number of mobile homes in the village decreased by 24 percent (4). The Table shows there are no remaining units containing 10 to 19 units. The category of "other" also decreased by 100 percent between the decades although it may be a result of Census reclassification.

Table 8.4.3: Changes in Housing Units, 1990-2000

	1990		2000		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
total units	192	100.0	207	100	8%
1-unit detached	148	77.1	177	85.5	20%
1-unit attached	2	1	6	2.9	200%
2 units	0	0	3	1.4	0%
3 or 4 units	3	1.6	8	3.9	167%
5 to 9 units	0	0	0	0	0%
10 to 19 units	4	2.1	0	0	-100%
20 or more units	0	0	0	0	0%
Mobile home	17	8.9	13	6.3	-24%
Other	18	9.4	0	0	-100%

1990,2000 Census STF-3

Most commercial properties are located along Main Street and Grove Street. There are sporadic public lands located throughout the Village. All agricultural lands are located in the northern portion of the Village, away from the lakeshore. See Map 8-2.

8.4.4 Building Permits

Building applications can be picked up at the Municipal Building. Completed applications are forwarded to the Village's building inspector who has approval over the request unless a special permit, such as conditional use, is required. Special permit requests are forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Committee for recommendation.

8.4.5 Land Divisions

The Planning and Zoning Committee reviews applications for land divisions. If recommended for approval, the application is forwarded to the Village Board for final approval. Disputes concerning land use can be brought before the Board of Zoning Appeals for resolution.

8.4.6 Equalized Values

According to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, in 2002 the assessed value for real estate in the Village was \$34,293,300. In 2003, equalized values increased by 6 percent (\$1,962,000) to \$36,255,300 for real estate.

8.5 Redevelopment Opportunities

The Village is interested in formalizing a downtown district of shops, restaurants, and other commercial and service entities. Redevelopment along Main Street should focus on the conversion of residential uses to commercial uses, or mixed commercial/residential uses within the same building accommodating street-level commercial. Current redevelopment opportunities include the lot located across from the Ferry Landing, a former gas station, which is still suitable for gas station or convenience store use. There is also a vacant lot on north side of Village that used to be an 8-unit apartment building that burned down. This property is best redeveloped with residential use.

8.6 Land Use Conflicts

The planning process identified no land use conflicts between existing uses within the Village. The potential for industrial development north of the Village should account for the inclusion of a buffer between that potential land use and current residential uses that proliferate Merrimac. The land use plan identifies the railroad tracks and potential commercial uses to shield these incompatible land use types. To enhance the relationship between commercial uses and residential uses in the downtown the marriage of these two uses in mixed-residential development should be explored where possible along Main Street and Wisconsin Street.

8.7 Land Use Projections

The following land use calculations assume static boundaries for the Village. The Wisconsin Department of Administration projects household growth throughout Sauk County over the next 20 years. The residential land use requirements through year 2025 are shown in Table 8.7.1 below. The calculations utilize an estimated residential acreage consumption of .92 units/acre as observed in 2000. It should be noted that a portion of the 23 projected acres of residential development are likely to occur outside current corporate limits. Commercial development is expected to grow with residential increases. If the current ratio of commercial to residential land use holds constant, there will be about 4.4 additional acres of commercial land developed by 2025. Agricultural land will decrease with conversion to residential and commercial land uses, a projected loss of 27 acres by 2025. There is no industrial development within Merrimac corporate limits nor is there any anticipated in the next 20 years. However, the Village is open to the option of industrial development immediately north of the Village outside corporate boundaries near the wastewater treatment plant.

Table 8.7.1: Land Use Projections in Acres (moderate growth)

Land Use	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Residential	235.7	240.3	244.9	249.5	254.1	258.7
Agricultural	135.3	129.45	124.07	118.69	113.30	107.92
Commercial	39.6	40.85	41.63	42.42	43.20	43.98
Industrial	0	0	0	0	0	0

Map 8-2 Land Use

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8.8 Recommended Land Use Plan

Map 8-3 shows the location of desired future land use patterns for the Village and the area immediately outside corporate limits.

8.8.1 Residential

Single-family residential land is projected to be the most pressing need for Merrimac over the next 20 years. If Merrimac grows at roughly the same rate as Sauk County overall, there can be expected an additional 23 acres of residential land consumed by 2025. The Merrimac Planning Committee has decided that most of this growth will likely occur immediately north of Village limits in the Town of Merrimac on agricultural land, and west of the Village south of STH 78 towards Sauk City. Within corporate limits, residential development is likely to occur on existing agricultural and undeveloped parcels located east of Baraboo Street. New residential developments in the Idlewild Road area are also likely to annex to the Village over the next 20-year planning period. While most development is anticipated to include single-family homes, some developments might include duplex- or two-family homes and will be considered on a case-by-case basis as development proceeds.

8.8.2 Commercial/Mixed Use

The commercial district in Merrimac has traditionally been Main Street. The Merrimac Ferry landing location along Wisconsin Street has also increased the potential for increased commercial development along this corridor. It is the intent of the Planning Committee that both sides of Main Street, from Baraboo Street to School Street be planned for commercial development in the future. Similarly, all adjacent properties along Wisconsin Street would best be utilized for small-scale commercial enterprises that capture tourist traffic exiting the Ferry. Restaurants and similar entities are the preferred use. Larger-scale commercial developments are more appropriately located in the area immediately north of STH 78/113, south of the railroad tracks on land currently used for agriculture. Most of this area is located immediately outside the western Village limits.

8.8.3 Parks and Open Space

Recreational lands, and open access to Lake Wisconsin is a valued resource in Merrimac. Opportunities for increased parks and open space development, especially along the waterfront are a priority for the Village. However, given current market conditions this land is very valuable and currently developed land is unlikely to become available for public use. However, there is one undeveloped parcel just beyond northern corporate limits along Pacific Road that could be developed with minor park and recreation improvements. Should residential development continue to grow in the northern portion of Village limits, this location offers convenient access to the Lake.

8.8.4 Industrial

Although there is no industrial development forecasted over the next 20 years within the Village, the land use plan indicates an approximate location for the development of an industrial site northwest of the Village proper. The area is located directly east of the Merrimac wastewater treatment plant, north of the railroad tracks. The Proposed Future Land Use Map indicates this area will be buffered to the south by commercial or light industrial enterprises between the railroad tracks and STH 78.

8.9 Land Use Actions

Merrimac has modest diversity in land uses, and good separation between uses that allow for a livable community. To ensure continuance of a healthy environment the Village will need to take careful consideration for expanding land use categories, updating current regulatory tools, and formalizing development policies.

This section provides actions on how the Village can more effectively control the pattern of land development in the future.

Actions:

- 8.9.1 The Village should determine lot size standards for each classification of land use.
- 8.9.2 The zoning code needs to be updated to better account for the different land uses prevalent in Merrimac. Expanding the categories of land use will allow decision-making bodies with more precise information to determine compatibility with surrounding land uses and allows for more control over development standards for special uses. The current zoning code also lacks some basic land use categories such as “multiple-family” residential, an identified future need.
- 8.9.3 The Village should communicate with the Town of Merrimac concerning the development of extraterritorial agreements for Village expansion and municipal service provision.
- 8.9.4 A downtown overlay district ordinance should be explored to define special parameters for development of downtown businesses. This ordinance should include design guidelines including street orientation and signage, and provisions for mixed-use.
- 8.9.5 Land use decisions need to be consistent and follow the prescribed course as defined within this plan. Major changes in the pattern of development should include an update of this plan, especially the land use plan, through official action.

8.10 Land Use Programs

8.10.1 Zoning Regulations

The zoning code is outdated and requires updating. It contains provisions for residential and nonresidential districts and defines policies concerning nonconformance and variances to the ordinance. The ordinance does not contain districts for multi-family use or mixed-uses like commercial and residential. See Map 8-4.

8.10.2 Land Division/Subdivision Regulations

The Village does have a completed subdivision ordinance. It lists the pre-application procedure, a list of public improvements to be paid for by the developer (including streets, sidewalks, utilities), and street design guidelines. The ordinance also includes a parkland dedication requirement, or fee in lieu of dedication to help construct parks. The ordinance lacks special project guidelines for cluster subdivision guidelines, or specific regulations for other subdivision design types.

Map 8-3 Proposed Land Use

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Map 8-4 Zoning

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8.10.3 Extraterritorial Controls

To ensure orderly development and use of land in areas adjacent to a municipality, Wisconsin law grants communities under 10,000 population extra-territorial zoning and platting jurisdiction for areas within one and one-half miles of the corporate limits. Extraterritorial zoning power allows any community that has a planning commission and has adopted a zoning ordinance to prepare and provide for the enforcement and administration of an extraterritorial zoning ordinance. In addition, extraterritorial platting power allows municipalities to grant plat approval of any subdivision within its extraterritorial jurisdiction. Also, under Wisconsin Statutes, municipalities are allowed to cooperate in planning for the growth and development of the lands within the extraterritorial area. This includes the ability to establish municipal boundaries and determine in advance the provision of municipal services.

8.10.4 Historic Preservation

The Village does not currently maintain a list of historic structures. Adoption of a historic preservation ordinance, that encourages proper redevelopment of historic structures, including appropriate design and materials, would help maintain historic structures that help identify Merrimac.

Element 9

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Village of Merrimac comprehensive plan involves decision-making by both public officials and the citizens of the community. These decisions will be measured by the concern for the welfare of the general community; the willingness to make substantial investments for improvement within the community, and the realization that certain procedures must be followed and adhered to for the continued high quality environment found within the Village. Suggested implementation measures include:

- The implementation and enforcement of regulatory ordinances and non-regulatory activities based on the goals and objectives identified in the comprehensive plan.
- The development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth by the Village in this plan.
- The establishment and support of a continued planning process providing for periodic review and updates to the plan and land use control measures.
- The support of committees and local organizations to carry out specific community improvements as identified in the comprehensive plan.

9.1 Regulatory Measures

Regulatory measures used to guide development are an important means of implementing the recommendations of a comprehensive plan. Various examples, including the zoning ordinance, and subdivision regulations comprise the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development as well as help to guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. The Village Board officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

9.1.1 Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is used to guide and control the use of land and structures on land. In addition, zoning establishes detailed regulations concerning the area where lots may be developed, including setbacks and separation for structures, the density of the development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose for zoning is to avoid undesirable side effects of development by segregating incompatible uses and by maintaining adequate standards for individual uses.

The establishment of zoning districts is generally conducted after careful consideration of the development patterns indicated in the comprehensive plan. Amending zoning district boundaries has the overall effect of changing the plan (unless amendments correspond to changes within the plan), therefore, it is reasonable to assume that indiscriminate changes may result in weakening of the plan. The Village Board makes the final decisions on the content of the zoning ordinance and the district map. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

9.1.2 Subdivision Ordinance

Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly growth and development of unplatted and undeveloped land. These regulations are intended to protect the community and occupants of the proposed subdivision by setting forth reasonable regulations for public utilities, storm water drainage, lot sizes, street design open space, other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset to the Village. The Village Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

9.1.3 Downtown Overlay District

Overlay districts are typically developed in conjunction with the preparation of a comprehensive land-use plan. They can provide significant improvements to delineated districts. Careful consideration of economic impacts, natural impacts, and private rights should be exercised when using overlay districts.

An overlay district is an additional zoning requirement that is placed on a geographic area but does not change the underlying zoning. Overlay districts have been used to impose development restrictions or special considerations on new development. For the Village of Merrimac, these may include design specifications and parameters for mixed-use. The overlay district must be adopted as part of the zoning code by the Village Board following appropriate public hearing procedures.

9.2 Non-regulatory Measures

9.2.1 Capital Improvement Plan

This is an ongoing financial planning program intended to help implement planning proposals. The program allows local communities to plan for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. Capital improvements or expenditures are those projects that require the expenditure of public funds for the acquisition or construction of a needed facility.

Capital improvement programming is a listing of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over the next few years. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, discusses means of financing them, and establishes priorities for them over a four-to-six year programming period. Improvements or acquisitions considered a capital improvement include:

- Public buildings (i.e. – fire and police stations)
- Park acquisition and development
- Roads and highways
- Utility construction and wastewater treatment plants
- Joint school and other community development projects
- Fire and police protection equipment

A capital improvement plan or program is simply a method of financial planning for these types of improvements and scheduling the expenditures over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of public funds. In addition, each year the capital improvement program should be extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and can be modified to the community's changing needs.

Preparation of a Capital Improvement Program

The preparation of a Capital Improvement Program is normally the joint responsibility between the community administrator or plan commission, village president, various department heads, governing body, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. In communities that have a community development plan or comprehensive plan, a planning agency review of the proposed capital improvement program is desirable.

9.3 Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the implementation element describe how each of the nine-elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since the Village of Merrimac completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist.

This Comprehensive Plan references previous planning efforts, and details future planning needs. To keep consistency with the Comprehensive Plan the Village should incorporate existing plans as components to the Comprehensive Plan, and adopt all future plans as detailed elements of this Plan.

Additionally, the Village of Merrimac will continue to make educated decisions based upon available information and public opinion. Planning will revolve around the 20-year Planning Vision (below) and decisions will incorporate a comprehensive look at all elements to determine appropriate cohesiveness of the decision against stated visions.

Over the next 20 years, the Village of Merrimac will stabilize the population with a diverse age distribution. There will be available a range of housing choices by price and features and a vibrant small business environment in the downtown. Residents and visitors alike will be able to travel through the Village using a range of mode choices and the Merrimac Ferry will continue to provide unique access across Lake Wisconsin. The Village of Merrimac will maintain and enhance recreational character while exploring opportunities for increased coordination with area municipalities and service providers.

9.4 Plan Adoption, Monitoring, Amendments and Update

9.4.1 Plan Adoption

In order to implement this plan it must be adopted by the Village Planning and Zoning Committee. After the Committee adopts the Plan by resolution, the Village Board must adopt the plan by ordinance. This action formalizes the plan document as a frame of reference for general development decisions over the next 20 years. Once formally adopted, the Plan becomes a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and for coordinating legislative decisions.

9.4.2 Plan Use and Evaluation

The Village of Merrimac will base all of its land use decisions against this Plan's goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations including decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions.

The Village of Merrimac can expect gradual change in the years to come. Although this Plan has described policies and actions for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future

condition of the Village. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions.

The Plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Village Board, Planning and Zoning Committee, and any other decision-making body should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should consist of reviewing actions taken to the implement the plan visions, goals and objectives. The evaluation should also include an updated timetable of actions to help realize priority goals throughout the 20-year period ending 2025.

9.4.3 Plan Amendments

The Village of Merrimac Comprehensive Plan 2025 may be amended at any time by the Village Board following the same process to amend the plan as it originally followed when it was initially adopted (regardless of how minor the amendment or change is).

Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the Plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically be minor changes to the plan’s maps or text. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity. Any proposed amendments should be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Committee for their review and recommendations prior consideration by the Village Board for final action.

9.4.4 Plan Update

According to the State comprehensive planning law the Comprehensive Plan must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to an amendment, the plan update is a major re-write of the plan document and supporting maps. The State planning law also requires that by January 1, 2010 all programs and/or actions that affects land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. To meet this deadline, the Village should update its Comprehensive Plan and related ordinances on or before the year 2010.

9.5 Action Plan

The plan implementation table on the following pages provides a detailed list and work schedule of major actions that the Village should complete as part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of Merrimac, Village staff, and local/state governments. The completion of recommended actions in the timeframe presented may be affected and or impacted due to competing interests, other priorities, and financial limitations facing the Village.

Table 9.5.1: Action Plan		
Action	Who is responsible?	Schedule
Housing		
1. Create a multiple-unit zoning designation	Consultant	Immediate
2. Determine sites for new senior housing	Village	2005-06
3. Perform a housing market analysis to determine impediments	Village, Consultant	2005
4. Acquire funds and promote CDBG home improvement programs	Village	2006

Table 9.5.1: Action Plan

Action	Who is responsible?	Schedule
Transportation		
1. Work with WDOT to obtain transportation enhancement grants	Village	2005-07
2. Work with local and County authorities to reduce speeding	Village	Ongoing
3. Actively participate in redevelopment of STH 78	Village, WDOT	2005-07
4. Continue to communicate desire for reliable access to STH 113 to WDOT	Village	Ongoing
5. Analyze roadway conditions for systematic upgrade	Village, Village Engineer	Ongoing
6. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan	Village, Consultant	2005
7. Develop cost estimates for "traffic calming" improvements	Consultant	2005
8. Develop a bike and pedestrian plan	Consultant	2006
9. Regularly maintain crosswalks, pedestrian access	Village	Ongoing
Utilities and Community Facilities		
1. Drill a second municipal drinking well	Village	2008
2. Plan for looping municipal water in new developments	Village	Ongoing
3. Pursue joining with Town of Merrimac to hire a seasonal constable	Village	2005
4. Work with Sauk Prairie School District to increase local youth programs	Village, School District	2005
5. Update 1999-2004 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan	Consultant	2005
6. Identify areas for increased access to Lake Wisconsin	Village	Ongoing
7. Work to increase volunteer activities and participation	Village	Ongoing
8. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan	Village, Consultant	2005
Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources		
1. Inform WDNR of instances where enforcement might be necessary	Village, WDNR	Ongoing
2. Explore public ownership of forests and wetlands when available	Village	Ongoing
3. Work with Sauk County Historical Society to identify significant structures	Village, Historic Society	Immediate
4. Maintain appropriate access and viewsheds of Lake Wisconsin	Village	Ongoing
5. Promote use of best management practices (BMPs) along Lake Wisconsin	Village	Ongoing
6. Promote agricultural preservation awareness	Village	Ongoing
Economic Development		
1. Create a Merrimac economic development entity	Village, Downtown Businesses	Immediate
2. Work with County and UW-Ex to identify business funding	Village, County, UW-Ex	Ongoing
3. Delineate boundaries for a downtown district	Village	Immediate
4. Formalize annual downtown action plan with Merrimac development entity including advertising and partnerships	Village, Entity	2005, Ongoing
5. Form ad hoc committee to evaluate viability of creating local redevelopment programming	Village	Immediate
6. Identify niche commercial and restaurant entities to target for creation of Merrimac's special downtown district	Village, Entity	2005-
7. Improve local zoning ordinances to allow for mixed-use commercial and residential development within the downtown	Village	2005
8. Work with Town of Merrimac to focus local development of commercial and industrial development in the Village.	Village, Town	Ongoing

Table 9.5.1: Action Plan

Action	Who is responsible?	Schedule
9. Work with Wisconsin Dells Chamber of Commerce to promote the Merrimac area	Village, Dells C.O.C.	2006
Intergovernmental Cooperation		
1. Establish an ad hoc committee with the WDOT to oversee the STH 78 redevelopment.	Village	2006-7
2. Establish a Merrimac Community Committee with the Town of Merrimac to focus on economic development, boundary agreements, and a website.	Village, Town	2005
3. Request periodic meetings with pertinent agencies, including the WDOT, to local community facilities	Village	Ongoing
Land Use		
1. Determine minimum lot size standards by zoning classification.	Village P&Z	Immediate
2. Update zoning code to include additional land use categories.	Village P&Z, Consultant	Immediate
3. Work with the Town of Merrimac to formalize extraterritorial agreements	Village, Town	2006
4. Observe land use plan in land use decisions.	Village	Ongoing

Appendix A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Appendix B

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICES

Appendix C

Economic Development Programs

Wisconsin Department of Commerce (DOC)

Community-Base Economic Development Program (CBED)

CBED provides financing assistance to local government and community-based organizations that undertake planning or development projects or that provide technical assistance services that are in support of business and community development. Eligible activities under the program include: planning, development, and assistance projects; business incubator/technology-based incubator grants; venture capital fair; and regional economic development grants. Cities, villages, towns, counties, tribes, and community-based organizations may apply for planning funds. Funds are available on an annual basis through a competitive application process.

Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant for Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED)

This program is designed to assist communities with expanding or upgrading their infrastructure to accommodate businesses that have made a firm commitment to create jobs and invest in a community. Eligible activities under the program are those improvements to public facilities, such as water systems, sewerage systems, and roads, that are owned by a general or special purpose unit of government, which will principally benefit one or more businesses and that as a result will induce the business(es) to create additional jobs and to invest in the community. A general purpose unit of government in the State with a population less than 50,000 is eligible to apply for funds under the program. Eligible projects must comply with the following criteria: businesses must create or retain, at a minimum, one full-time equivalent job for each \$10,000 of PFED funding; at least 51 percent of jobs must be made available to persons of low-to-moderate income; business investment must at least equal the PFED funding; business must demonstrate the feasibility of the startup or expansion project; government must demonstrate its financial need; and government must provide at least 25 percent of project funding. Application through the CDBG-PFED Program can be submitted at anytime.

Community Development Block Grant for Economic Development (CDBG-ED)

The CDBG-ED program is designed to assist businesses that plan to expand within or relocate to Wisconsin and invest private funds and create jobs. Each year, Wisconsin receives a certain amount of funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be used to provide Community Development Block Grants to local units of government, including counties, cities, villages, and towns, which use the funds to provide loans to local businesses. These businesses, in return for the use of the public funds, provide private investment towards the assisted activities and create job opportunities, principally for the benefit of low and moderate income individuals. Typically, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce awards between \$3,000 and \$10,000 of grant funds per full-time jobs created by the subject business. Eligible improvement projects include construction and expansion, working capital, and acquisition of existing businesses, land, buildings, and equipments. The program requires that at least 50 percent of the total eligible improvement project cost be funded through private resources, at least 51 percent of the jobs created or retained by the business be filled or made available to persons of low and moderate income, and the total amount of assistance does not exceed \$1 million. Application through the CDBG-ED Program can be submitted at anytime.

Local Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) for Economic Development

As mentioned above, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce's CDBG-ED program provides grant funds to local units of government, who in return loan the funds to local businesses to help them structure financial packages necessary to commence start-up operations or expand present operations. The loans provided to businesses are repaid directly to the communities. When a business makes repayments to a community on a loan, including principal and interest payments, a portion of these payments may be used by the community to capitalize a local Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). A community can then use the money retained in the RLF to make additional loans to businesses wishing to expand or locate in the community. The amount of money that can be retained by a community from CDBG-ED loan repayments to capitalize an RLF is dependent on the population of the community. In administering an RLF program, a community becomes a lender and accepts all of the responsibilities of a commercial lender when it makes an RLF loan to a business.

Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program

Wisconsin's Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) program offers cities, villages, and towns within the State the opportunity to support industrial development through the sale of federal tax-exempt bonds. The program is used by communities to build their economic base and add jobs and investment. An IRB is a long-term, usually fixed rate financing package offered primarily to manufacturing businesses for capital investment projects (construction, expansion, land, and/or equipment). Within the program, the businesses are responsible for paying the interest and principal on the loan. The local units of government are primarily participating in the program as sponsors through the application process and are not responsible for debt service, or liable in the case of default. Annually, the three application deadlines for IRB financing are January 15th, May 15th, and August 15th. The applications submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Commerce are first reviewed and scored by DOC staff and then forward to the Volume Cap Allocation Council (council that oversees the program) for review and approval or denial.

Customized Labor Training (CLT) Program

The CLT program provides training grants to new or existing businesses within the State that are implementing new technology or production processes. It will provide up to 50 percent of the cost for customized training.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)

Transportation Facilities for Economic Assistance and Development (TEA) Program

The TEA program provides funds to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for transportation facility improvement projects that are necessary to help attract employers to Wisconsin, or to encourage businesses to remain and expand in the State. Funding through the TEA program is determined on the number of jobs anticipated to be created and/or retained by a proposed business expansion or construction project. The program requires a 50 percent local match, which is setup on a reimbursement basis. Applications for funds under the program occur on a quarterly basis during the fiscal year, with deadline dates of June 1st, September 1st, December 1st, and March 1st.

Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Tax Incremental Financing

In 1975, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) program. The main reason the Legislature established the program was to give cities and villages within the State a financial mechanism to help fund public works and economic development projects, which without the program would probably not occur. TIF districts can be created at any time during the year. However, if a community would like to receive the full tax revenue benefits from a specific new development within a subject TIF district for a particular year (for example, starting on January 1, 2000), the community must create the district by a resolution that is approved by the governmental body (city council or village board) prior to September 30th of that year. If the TIF district creation approval occurs after the September 30th deadline, the district will not commence until the following year (for example, starting instead on January 1, 2001). Under the first scenario, because of the public notice and hearing requirements under state statutes, to meet the approval deadline, the process must, at the latest, start by the end of July.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

Small Business Guarantee

This program provides loan guarantees of up to 80 percent on new loans for upgrading or expanding an existing business. The maximum guarantee amount is \$200,000 on loans up to \$750,000 and \$80,000 on loans up to \$250,000 for working capital. The program is designed to assist in the acquisition or expansion of existing small businesses. Businesses interest in the program must meet the following requirements: must employ 50 or fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) positions at the time of application; must create or retain jobs; must be located in Wisconsin; and the owner(s) must have on-site management of the business. Projects eligible under the program include acquiring or expanding an existing business, expanding into a new line of business that complements the existing business or mixed use properties. Interested parties can apply for loans under the program at anytime.

U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)

Public Works and Development Facility Grant Program

Under this programs, grants are provided to help distressed communities attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs. Among the types of projects funded by the program are water and sewer facilities that primarily serve industry and commerce; access roads to industrial parks and sites; port improvements; and business incubator facilities. Priority consideration is given to projects that improve opportunities for the successful establishment or expansion of industrial or commercial facilities; assist in creating or retaining private sector jobs in the near term, as well as providing additional long-term employment opportunities; benefit the long-term unemployment and member of low-income families residing in the area served by the project; fulfill a pressing need of the area and can be started and completed in a timely manner; and demonstrate adequate local funding, with evidence that such support is committed. An area will be eligible for submitting an application for a grant if it meets one of the following criteria: average local unemployment for the most recent 24-month period is one percent greater than the national average; local per capita income level is 80

percent or less of the national average per capita income level; or a special need's case (substantial economic distress), as determine by EDA. To be eligible for a project grant, the application for assistance must include a Comprehensive Economic Development (CED) Strategy acceptable to EDA. Up to \$1,000,000 can be funded under the program. EDA will participate from 50 percent to 80 percent of project costs. Eligible applicants include towns, villages, cities, Indian tribes, and economic districts. Applications may be submitted year round.

Rural Development

Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program

This program provides loan guarantees of up to 80 percent for eligible projects. Maximum guarantee of \$10 million for each business. The program was established to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and to improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities. An eligible applicant is any legal entity organized and operated on a profit or non-profit basis, including individuals, public and private organizations, and federally recognized Indian tribal groups. Borrowers must be proposing to engage in improving, developing or financing business, industry, and employment and improving the economic and environmental climate in rural areas. The community in which the project is located must have a population of less than 50,000. Eligible projects include business start-ups, expansions, and acquisitions. Applications may be submitted at any time.

Community Facility Loan Program

This program provides loan guarantees of up to 90 percent for eligible projects; however, unless extraordinary circumstances exist, typically the program will guarantee up to 80 percent. The program is designed to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve public and community facilities that provide essential services in rural areas and towns with populations of less than 50,000. Eligible applicants for the loan program include municipalities, counties, special purpose districts, Indian tribes, and non-profit corporations. The applicants must demonstrate that they are unable to obtain the loans from private or cooperative lenders without the guarantee at reasonable rates and terms. Rural Development guarantees the loans made by banks or other eligible lenders. The following are the types of public and community facilities covered under the loan program: municipal buildings, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, rural retirement centers, centers for the developmental disabled, day care centers, fire and rescue, libraries, social or cultural facilities, water treatment and distribution, sewage collection and treatment, solid waste collection and disposal, storm drainage, streets, curbs and gutters, airports, bridges, municipally owned residential, industrial sites, and natural gas distribution and utilities to industrial sites. Applications may be submitted at any time.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

7(a) Loan Guarantee Program

This program offers loan guarantees of up to \$750,000 per business on a loan provided through a lender. The maximum allowable guaranty percentage on a loan will be determined by the loan amount. The purpose of this program is to provide loan guarantees to lenders which are unable to provide conventional financing to small businesses. Businesses interested in the program must be able to demonstrate an ability to repay loans and prove management ability. Debt refinancing is allowable, subject to guarantee rules given that the lender certifies in writing that the debt is and

always has been current, and debt refinancing clearly and significantly benefits the cash flow. Size standards vary by industry. Generally, any small business that is independently owned and operated and is not dominated in its field is eligible. The loans can be used for business start-ups, expansions, acquisitions, and operational expenses.

Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago

Community Investment Program (CIP)

CIP funds are available through advance (loans) to member financial institutions in Illinois and Wisconsin that hold stock in the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago in accordance with the Bank's most recent Credit Policy guidelines. The members can, in turn, lend CIP funds to private profit making, non-profit, or public entities. This program was mandated by Congress to provide funding for member financial institutions for commercial and economic development activities which will directly benefit low to moderate income individuals or are located in a low to moderate income area. Funds may be used to finance commercial and economic development projects that benefit low and moderate income families or activities that are located in low or moderate income neighborhoods. Projects that provide housing for families earning less than 115 percent of area median are also eligible.

Appendix D

Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Programs

Cultural Resources Programs

Historic Homeowner's Tax Credit Program

Wisconsin homeowners can claim a 25 percent income tax credit for rehabilitation of their historic personal residences. To qualify, an owner must spend at least \$10,000 on eligible work and must submit a tax credit application. The application must be approved before work begins. The maximum credit per project is \$10,000 or \$5,000 for married persons filing separately.

Historic Preservation Tax Credits for Income-Producing Historic Buildings

Owners of historic income-producing properties in Wisconsin may be eligible for two income tax credits that can help pay for their building's rehabilitation. The Wisconsin Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation (DHP) administers both programs in conjunction with the National Park Service (NPS). The programs are:

Federal Historic Preservation Credit. This program returns 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating historic buildings to owners as a direct reduction in their federal income taxes.

Wisconsin Supplemental Historic Preservation Credit. This program returns an additional 5 percent of the cost of rehabilitation to owners as a discount on their Wisconsin state income taxes. Owners that qualify for the Federal Historic Preservation Credit automatically qualify for the Wisconsin supplement *if* they get NPS approval before they begin any work.

Agricultural Resources Programs

Farmland Preservation Program

This State of Wisconsin program provides Sauk County landowners with over \$500,000.00 of tax relief credits annually. Anyone who owns at least 35 acres and produces \$6,000 in agricultural products per year or an average of \$18,000 over three years can participate. The amount of tax credit will vary, depending on the household income and the amount of real estate taxes.

Animal Waste Management Program

The purpose of this ordinance is to regulate the location, design, construction, installation and alteration of animal waste storage facilities and use of animal waste from these facilities in order to prevent water pollution and thereby protect the health of Sauk County residents and transients; prevent the spread of disease; and to promote the prosperity and general welfare of the citizens of Sauk County. It is also intended to provide for the administration and enforcement of the Ordinance and to provide penalties for its violation.

The ordinance requires a permit be obtained prior to the installation or alteration of a storage facility. Any person considering installing, enlarging, or altering manure storage facilities should contact the Land Conservation Department to obtain an application. In order to receive the permit, the permittee must develop a storage facility plan and a nutrient management plan that meets NRCS technical standards. You can obtain an Animal Waste Storage Facility Plan Checklist from the LCD which briefly discusses plan requirements. Staff from the Land Conservation Department (LCD) can assist you with the plan or a private consultant can be employed. Since the technical standards may dictate certain aspects of your facility design, it is important to contact the LCD early in the planning process.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The Conservation Reserve Program, administered by the Farm Service Agency, encourages farmers to voluntarily plant permanent areas of grass and trees on land that needs protection from erosion, to act as windbreaks, or in places where vegetation can improve water quality or provide food and habitat for wildlife. Landowners can set aside cropland with annual rental payments based on amount bid. Farmers must enter into contracts lasting between 10 and 15 years. In return, they receive annual rental payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost-share assistance to establish the protective vegetation. Eligibility varies by soil type and crop history. The Farm Service Agency holds periodic sign-ups throughout the year. However, there is a continuous sign-up for buffers, waterways and other high priority environmental practices.

Natural Resources Programs

Land and Water Resource Management Program

The Sauk County Land and Water Resource Management Program is designed to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, and conserve the natural resources as outlined in the Land and Water Resource Management plan prepared by the Land Conservation Department (LCD). The program provides cost-share and technical assistance to land owners who install best management practices of their farm.

Landowners who are interested in obtaining cost share funds for a particular practice should fill out an LWRM Application and return it to the LCD office. Applications are ranked according to practice cost, priority areas, and environmental benefit. If approved, landowners can receive up to 70% cost sharing for a particular project.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program, administered by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, provides technical and financial help to landowners for conservation practices that protect soil and water quality. Nutrient management and prescribed grazing are eligible practices in Sauk County. To be eligible, applicants must be agricultural producers. Agricultural producers sign 5 to 10 year contracts and may be eligible for up to 75% cost sharing with a limit of up to \$10,000 per year and \$50,000 for the life of the contract.

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

The Wetlands Reserve Program, administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, offers landowners financial benefits for restoring and protecting drained wetlands. In turn, the landowner agrees to allow NRCS the rights of access, management, and monitoring in the easement area. To be eligible to enroll in a WRP easement, the landowner must have owned the land for one year and the land must be able to be restored to wetland conditions. Landowners may restore wetlands with permanent or 30-year or 10-year contracts. Permanent easements pay 100% of the agricultural value of the land and 100% cost-sharing; 30-year easements pay 75% of the agricultural value and 75% cost-sharing; 10-year contracts pay 75% cost-sharing only. Permanent or 30-year easements are recorded with property deed.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, is intended to develop or improve fish and wildlife habitat on privately owned land. Up to 75% of the costs of restoration are eligible, up to a maximum of \$10,000. Almost any type of land is eligible, including agricultural and non-agricultural land, woodlots, pastures and stream banks. Normally a 10-year contract is required to maintain the habitat.

Forestry Incentive Programs (FIP)

The Forestry Incentives Program, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, is designed to share up to 65 percent of the costs of tree planting, timber stand improvements, and site preparation for natural regeneration on non-industrial private forest lands. Federal cost share money is available with a limit of \$10,000 per person per year. To be eligible, a landowner must own 10 or more acres of land suitable for conversion from non-forestland into forestland. A management plan is required.

Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program

The Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, is designed to assist private landowners in protecting and enhancing their forested lands, prairies, and waters. Qualified landowners can be reimbursed up to 65% of the cost of eligible practices. A practice must be identified in the landowners Forest Stewardship Plan (except if applying for plan development) to be eligible for cost sharing. The minimum grant amount is \$100 per landowner per year, and the maximum grant amount is \$10,000 per landowner per year. Landowners are required to contact their DNR forester for guidance prior to completing the application, and written approval must be obtained before beginning a practice.

Managed Forest Law

The Managed Forest Law, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, is a landowner incentive program designed to encourage sustainable forestry on private woodlands in Wisconsin. The law, through a written forest management plan, couples landowner objectives and timber harvesting, wildlife management, water quality and recreation to maintain a healthy and productive forest. To be eligible, a landowner must own a minimum of 10 contiguous acres of forestland with a minimum of 80% of the land in forest cover. Currently the Managed Forest Law reduces property taxes to \$1.74 per acre if the land is "closed" to public access. Up to 80 acres may be closed to public access by the landowner. Forest land taxes can be further reduced to \$.74 an acre if it is designated "open" to the public.

Appendix E

RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCE FOR ADOPTION

RESOLUTION

RE: ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AS PREPARED BY THE VILLAGE OF MERRIMAC PLANNING COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the Village Board of the Village of Merrimac requested MSA Professional Services, Inc. to work with the Plan Committee for the purposes of preparing a recommended Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Merrimac; and

WHEREAS, numerous persons involved in local planning provided information at regular and special meetings called by the Merrimac Planning Committee; and

WHEREAS, members of the public were invited to make comments at said meetings, wherein the Comprehensive Plan herein adopted was reviewed and commented upon by members of the public; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Merrimac Planning Committee has reviewed the recommended Comprehensive Plan at a regular monthly meeting; and

WHEREAS, members of the public, adjacent and nearby local governmental units, and Sauk County will be given a 30-day review and comment period prior to the public hearing, which will be conducted by the Village Board for the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, after said public hearing, the Village Board will decide whether to adopt by ordinance the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan may be used as the basis for, among other things, updating the zoning ordinance, accomplishing extra-territorial zoning, and as a guide for approving or disapproving actions affecting growth and development within the jurisdiction of the Village of Merrimac; and

WHEREAS, this Comprehensive Plan may from time to time be amended, extended, or added to in greater detail.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Village of Merrimac Planning Committee that the recommended Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted as a part of the Village of Merrimac's Comprehensive Plan pursuant to s.62.23 and s.66.0295, Wis. Stats. and that the Planning and Zoning Committee recommends said Comprehensive Plan to the Village of Merrimac for adoption by ordinance, after a 30-day public review and comment period and public hearing.

APPROVED:

Chairperson
Planning Commission

Date:_____

ATTEST:

Ordinance No. _____

An Ordinance to Adopt the Comprehensive Plan of the Village of Merrimac, Wisconsin.

The Village Board of the Village of Merrimac, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

Section 1. Pursuant to section [59.69(2) and (3)(for counties)/62.23(2) and (3)(for cities, villages, and towns exercising village powers under 60.22(3))] of the Wisconsin Statutes, the Village of Merrimac, is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in section 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 2. The Village Board of the Village of Merrimac, Wisconsin, has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by section 66.1001(4)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 3. The Planning and Zoning Committee of the Village of Merrimac, by a majority vote of the entire committee recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to Village Board the adoption of the document entitled "Village of Merrimac Comprehensive Plan 2025," containing all of the elements specified in section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 4. The Village has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, in compliance with the requirements of section 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 5. The Village Board of the Village of Merrimac, Wisconsin, does, by enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the document entitled, "Village of Merrimac Comprehensive Plan 2025," pursuant to section 66.1001(4)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Section 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Village Board and [publication/posting] as required by law.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20__

Village President

(Published/Posted):[date]

(Approved, Vetoed):

Attest:

Village Clerk

Appendix F

Community Survey