

2.0 HOUSING

The housing element considers the number of units available for residents of the Town of West Point and some conditions of that housing supply which may affect its suitability for the future. An adequate supply of the type of housing needed by the Town's population is critical to population growth and can influence the type of people who choose to live in the Town.

2.1 HOUSING VISION

- ◆ Housing for all Town residents should be safe, affordable and reflect the Town of West Point's rural character and scenic beauty set in an attractive, healthy and appropriate environment.

2.2 HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goal 1: Encourage safe, affordable housing and neighborhoods.

- Objective 1:* Encourage maintenance and repair of existing homes to promote health and safety for residents and community.
- Objective 2:* Ensure that rehabilitation; remodeling and new construction protects the integrity of the existing neighborhood regarding size, setbacks, footprints, square footage and heights.
- Objective 3:* Encourage the creation of neighborhood and community by clustering homes with off-road driveways and common well and septic systems.
- Objective 4:* Encourage developers to offer a variety of lot and house size options to promote plans of economic and social diversity.

Goal 2: Maintain the rural character of the town regarding future housing development.

- Objective 1:* To the extent feasible, discourage housing growth which exceeds the conservation design principles for new residential development.
- Objective 3:* historical averages and/or projects.
- Objective 2:* Encourage Restrict the re-zoning of working agricultural lands.
- Objective 4:* Require communal septic systems for all residential developments greater than three homes.
- Objective 5:* Preserve the rural integrity by requiring condominium and multifamily development is held to the same standards as single family development.

Goal 3: Allow reasonable residential development while preserving agricultural lands, woodlands, open space and environmentally sensitive areas and corridors.

- Objective 1:* Designate transitional areas for development over a period equal to the length of the comprehensive plan.
- Objective 2:* Create various levels of land division and lot size for current residentially zoned areas of the town based on the attributes of the different areas.
- Objective 3:* Prohibit development of working agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Objective 4:* Minimize the impact of development by maximizing the amount of stormwater runoff and sedimentation required to be maintained on site for major and minor land divisions.

Objective 5: Preserve the view line of undeveloped ridge tops and shorelines by requiring setbacks and vegetation.

Objective 6: Encourage cluster developments as a tool to preserve working agricultural lands, woodlands, open space and environmentally sensitive areas and corridors.

Policies and Proposed Programs:

- a) Change the minimum number of lots for a subdivision in the land division ordinance from four lots to three lots (the trigger for a major subdivision as opposed to the CSM for the minor subdivision).
- b) Explore Planned Unit Development as a tool to create cluster development in the town.
- c) Strengthen the Stormwater and Sedimentation Ordinance to require 85% of stormwater and sediment is held on site for major and minor subdivisions to protect water quality.
- d) Attempt to “hide” housing development from main roads to the extent possible through natural topography, vegetation (e.g. tree lines, wooded edges), and setbacks. Minimize placement of lots in open fields.
- e) Arrange lots so that houses are not placed on exposed hilltops or ridgelines. Rooflines should not be higher than the tree line.
- f) Revisit the environmental assessment tool in the land division ordinance and strengthen it to better protect the environment from housing development.
- g) Maximize preservation of common open space in proposed land subdivisions through public dedication and/or conservation easements over open space, managed through a homeowner’s association or a non-profit land trust.
- h) Integrate natural resources into subdivision design as aesthetic and conservation landscape elements.
- i) Restore the quality and continuity of degraded environmental areas within a subdivision, such as streams and wetlands.
- j) Periodically review variance request procedures and forms for compliance with housing goals.
- k) Require the Town Engineer to develop a bi-annual report to the town of housing development within the town since 1990.
- l) Require state of the art on site sanitary systems in housing development proposals to protect groundwater quality.
- m) As part of the land division process, require land dividers to identify and map in the required survey map areas potentially worthy of preservation, including woodlots, remnant prairie, wetlands, stream banks, lakeshore riparian areas, 100 year floodplains, hydric soils, soils with low or very low potential to perk, in 2 foot contour intervals with shading in areas with gradients of 20 percent or more. Include this data for adjacent land within 500 feet of proposed land division.
- n) Preserve mature trees; stone rows, fence lines, tree lines and agricultural structures such as farmsteads, barns and vertical silos wherever appropriate.
- o) For all new non-farm residential housing, maintain the greatest distance feasible between new homes and agriculture feedlot, operations, manure pits and trench silos of adjacent landowners to minimize conflicts

between agricultural operations and rural residences. Further ensure that adjacent landowners with feedlots, manure pits and trench silos are notified of any residential building proposals as part of the Town's land division or building permit process.

- p) Farmers owning land adjacent to residential uses/lots shall maintain the greatest distance feasible between any new feedlot, manure pits and trench silos from said adjacent residence.
- q) Direct residential growth to existing residentially zoned areas, giving consideration to protection of environmentally sensitive corridors and working agricultural lands.
- r) Direct new home sites to area least suitable for agriculture.
- s) Direct new home sites away from environmentally sensitive areas.
- t) Encourage home construction that utilizes green construction materials and energy efficiency.
- u) Support the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential use provided structures maintain their original look and character.
- v) Encourage the proper siting of residences so as to minimize the demand for infrastructure improvements and where practical require shared driveways.
- w) Work with Columbia County to develop zoning options for accessory living units as part of a primary residence in the rural areas of the Town that will permit elderly independent or interdependent living arrangements.
- x) Design streets and lot layouts to blend with natural land contours.
- y) Create pedestrian trails in land division of 3 lots or more.

2.3 EXISTING HOUSING PROGRAMS

2.3.1 Columbia County Zoning Ordinance

The Columbia County Zoning Code is part of the County's Code of Ordinances. The zoning code establishes 10 primary use districts, a planned residential development overlay district, a shoreland-wetland overlay district, and a floodplain overlay district. Of the 10 primary zoning districts nine allow some form of residential uses as either a permitted or conditional use. These 9 districts allow for a variety of housing types including single family, duplexes, multifamily, and mobile home parks. The zoning code allows for lots down to 20,000 square feet in size.

2.3.2 Columbia County Housing Rehabilitation Program

Columbia County administers a Housing Rehabilitation Program for the repair and improvement of housing units in the County. The program is funded through a Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) and provides no interest, deferred payment loans for household repairs and improvements to homeowners who meet certain income requirements. Landlords who agree to rent to low or moderate-income tenants can also receive no interest loans for rental properties to be paid back over a period of 5 to 10 years. The program also provides assistance with down payments and closing costs for qualified homebuyers. Columbia County and the Town of West Point should continue to support this program and attempt to make all eligible property owners aware of the benefits the program offers in an effort to achieve many of the housing related goals stated in this plan.

2.3.3 Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization with a goal of eliminating poverty housing and homelessness. The program uses volunteer labor and donations of money and supplies to build or rehabilitate simple, decent houses. Habitat homeowners are required to invest hundreds of hours of their own labor into building their Habitat house and the houses of others. The homeowners are sold their Habitat home at no profit and are financed with affordable no-interest loans. Payments made on the mortgages are used to build and rehabilitate other Habitat homes. The Sauk-Columbia County Habitat for Humanity Affiliate coordinates all aspects of the program where it operates in Columbia County. Promotion and encouragement of this program can help to achieve many of the housing related goals outlined in this plan and should be supported by Columbia County and the Town of West Point.

2.3.4 United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS)

United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS) is a private, non-profit corporation established in 1965 to advocate for and provide services to Hispanic migrant and seasonal farm workers in Wisconsin. The housing department within UMOS addresses the housing needs of migrant workers that come to Wisconsin for work each growing season. UMOS provides a variety of housing services for migrant and seasonal workers. Locally, UMOS operates migrant housing facilities near Montello and Berlin and in Dodge County near Beaver Dam. Migrant and seasonal workers are important to the local economy in parts of Columbia County and efforts should be made to support organizations like UMOS that provide decent housing to this important part of the workforce.

2.3.5 Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC)

The Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) is the statewide building code for one and two family dwellings built since June 1, 1980. The code sets minimum standards for fire safety; structural strength; energy conservation; erosion control; heating, plumbing and electrical systems; and general health and safety. A recent change in State law requires all municipalities in the State to enforce the UDC. The UDC is an important tool for use in developing quality housing in Columbia County.

2.4 HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

2.4.1 Age of Housing Supply

Table 2-1 illustrates the age of the Town of West Point's housing units in 2000. The largest percentage of housing units in the Town, 17.4 percent, were built between 1970 and 1979. Homes built before 1940 also represent a significant percentage of the housing supply at 15.8 percent.

TABLE 2-1
Town of West Point, Age of Housing Supply, 2000

Year Structure Built	Number	% of Total
1999 – 3/2000	35	3.90%
1995 – 1998	124	13.82%
1990 – 1994	81	9.03%
1980 – 1989	91	10.15%
1970 – 1979	156	17.39%
1960 – 1969	134	14.94%
1950 – 1959	107	11.93%
1940 – 1949	27	3.01%
1939 or Earlier	142	15.83%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary File 3, Sample Data

A large number of older housing units may indicate the need for rehabilitation or replacement of a significant portion of the existing housing stock during the period covered by this plan. In planning for new or replacement housing, the availability of land, utilities, transportation facilities, parks, and other infrastructure needs to be considered.

2.4.2 Units in Structure

Single-family detached homes represented 694 of the Town's housing units in 2000. Such homes made up 77.4 percent of the housing units as shown in Table 2-2. Mobile homes represent the next most common type of housing unit in the Town of West Point. There were 159 mobile homes in the Town in 2000, or 17.73 percent of all housing. There were 12 single-family attached homes and 10 duplexes in the Town in 2000 representing 1.34 and 1.11 percent respectively. There were 11 three to four unit multi-family structures and 11 five to nine unit multi-family structures in the Town in 2000, each representing 1.23 percent of the total housing.

TABLE 2-2
Number of Housing Units In Structure, Town of West Point, 2000

Number of Housing Units in Structure	Total Housing Units	Percent of Total Housing Units
1 (Single-Family Detached)	694	77.37%
1 (Single-Family Attached)	12	1.34%
2 (Duplex)	10	1.11%
3 or 4	11	1.23%
5 to 9	11	1.23%
10 to 19	0	0.00%
20 or more	0	0.00%
Mobile Home	159	17.73%
Other	0	0.00%
Totals	897	100.00%

Source: U.S. Census

2.4.3 Value of Owner-Occupied Housing

A sample of owner-occupied housing in the Town of West Point provides an estimate of the range in values of such homes as shown in Table 2-3. The number of homes valued at \$50,000 to \$99,999 constituted 10.57 percent of the Town's housing in 2000 compared to 30.05 percent of the County housing. Homes valued at \$250,000 or more constituted the largest number of homes in the Town with 24.33 percent of the Town's housing in 2000 compared to 7.88 percent of the County's housing. However, the Town of West Point had 15.10 percent of its housing valued below \$50,000 compared to 6.29 percent of the County's housing.

The number of owner-occupied homes valued at \$50,000 or more constituted 84.9 percent of the Town's housing in 2000 compared to about 93.7 percent of the County's housing. Homes valued at \$150,000 to \$199,000 constituted 17.95 percent of the Town's housing in 2000 compared to 16.37 for the County. The Town also had 94 homes valued between \$100,000 and \$149,999 and 97 homes valued between \$200,000 and \$249,000 in 2000.

The median housing value for the Town of West Point, \$189,700, was significantly higher than the median value for Columbia County, \$115,000. The availability of affordable homes for lower-income households is a growing problem in Columbia County. As the cost of homes increase, more households may find it difficult to afford adequate housing. Escalating housing costs can have affects on economic development, local tax base, and population migration in the County and the Town of West Point.

TABLE 2-3
Town of West Point and Columbia County, Value of Owner-Occupied Housing, 2000

Housing Value	Town of West Point		2.4.3.1.1 Columbia County	
	Number of Homes	Percent of Total	Number of Homes	Percent of Total
Less than \$50,000	90	15.10%	963	6.29%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	63	10.57%	4,597	30.05%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	94	15.77%	5,086	33.24%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	107	17.95%	2,505	16.37%
\$200,000 - \$249,999	97	16.28%	944	6.17%
\$250,000 or More	145	24.33%	1,205	7.88%
Totals	596	100.00%	15,300	100.00%
Median Value	\$189,700		\$115,000	

Source: U.S. Census

2.4.4 Rent For Non-Farm Housing

In 2000, most rental housing units in the Town of West Point, 36.1 percent, rented in the \$300 to \$499 per month range. That was also the range most rental housing units in the County rented for, with 44.5 percent of the rental units in the County rented in this range. No units in the Town rented for more than \$749 per month. In addition, six rental units were available for less than \$200 per month in 2000, while there were no units that required no cash rent. Median rent in the Town of West Point, \$368, was lower than the median rent for the County, \$437. In addition, the Town's median rent decreased during the decade between 1990 and 2000 while the County's increased. Table 2-4 shows the range of rent for non-farm housing in the Town of West Point and Columbia County

TABLE 2-4
Rent For Non-farm Housing Units
Town of West Point and Columbia County, 2000

Monthly Rent	Town of West Point				Columbia County			
	Number of Housing Units		Change		Number of Housing Units		Change	
	1990	2000	Number	Percent	1990	2000	Number	Percent
Less than \$200	2	6	4	200.00%	463	466	3	0.65%
\$200 - \$299	7	11	4	57.14%	786	469	(317)	(40.33)%
\$300 - \$499	20	13	(7)	(35.00)%	2,105	2,126	21	1.00%
\$500 - \$749	16	6	(10)	(62.50)%	411	1,259	848	206.33%
\$750 - \$999	0	0	0	0.00%	28	194	166	592.86%
\$1,000 or more	0	0	0	100.00%	0	41	41	100.00%
No Cash Rent	4	0	(4)	0.00%	227	227	0	0.00%
Median Rent	\$415	\$363	(\$52)	(12.53)%	\$356	\$437	\$81	22.75%

Source: U.S. Census

2.4.5 Occupancy Characteristics

Table 2-5 shows that there were a total 519 occupied housing units in the Town of West Point in 1990. That number increased by 118 units, or 22.74 percent, to 637 units in 2000. This increase in occupied housing units exceeded the increases for both the County, with a 21.17 percent increase, and the State, with a 14.4 percent increase, during the same time period. The number of owner-occupied housing units in the Town increased by 158 units in 2000. As a result, there were 596 owner-occupied units in the Town of West Point in 2000, comprising 93.6 percent of the total occupied housing units. In comparison, owner-occupied housing units accounted for 84.4 percent of the occupied housing units in 1990.

TABLE 2-5
Number of Housing Units by Occupancy Status
Town of West Point, 1990-2000

Housing Unit Status	Housing Units		Change	
	1990	2000	Number	Percent
Owner-Occupied	438	596	158	36.07%
Renter-Occupied	81	41	(40)	(49.38)%
Total Occupied Units	519	637	118	22.74%
Vacant:	284	260	(24)	(8.45)%
For sale	11	3	(8)	(72.73)%
For rent	6	8	2	33.33%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	258	244	(14)	(5.43)%
Other reason	9	5	(4)	(44.44)%
Totals Housing Units	803	897	94	11.71%

Source: U.S. Census

Renter-occupied housing units decreased between 1990 and 2000, with a decrease of 40 units or 49.4 percent. There were 81 renter-occupied housing units in 1990, or 15.6 percent of the total occupied housing units. With the decrease of 40 occupied rental housing units during the 1990's, the Town had 41 total occupied rental units in 2000, or 6.4 percent of all occupied housing units.

Vacant housing units accounted for 284 units or 35.4 percent of all housing units in 1990. In 2000, vacant housing units in the Town of Springvale accounted for 260 units or 29 percent of all housing units, an 8.5 percent decrease in vacant housing over the 10-year period. Some categories of vacant housing units increased during the 10-year period while others decreased. Those units vacant due to being for sale decreased by eight units, or 72.7 percent, while vacant rental units increased by two units or 33.3 percent over the ten-year period. Vacant seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units decreased by 14 units or 5.4 percent. These housing units make up the majority of the vacant units in the Town. The number housing units vacant for other reasons also decreased by four units or 44.4 percent during the 1990's.

2.4.6 Household Size

Table 2-6 illustrates the change in household size between 1990 and 2000 for Columbia County and the municipalities in the County, including the Town of West Point. Columbia County's household size decreased from 2.60 persons per household in 1990 to 2.49 persons per household in 2000. The household size for the Town of West Point decreased from 2.55 persons per household in 1990 to 2.48 persons per household in 2000. These decreases in household size are consistent with state and national trends. In Columbia County, only the Towns of Otsego and Scott as well as the Villages of Fall River, Friesland, and Rio experienced increases in the household size between 1990 and 2000.

TABLE 2-6
Household Size by Municipality, Columbia County, 1990-2000

Municipality	1990 Household Size	2000 Household Size
Town of Arlington	2.96	2.81
Town of Caledonia	2.89	2.60
Town of Columbus	3.10	2.91
Town of Courtland	2.93	2.65
Town of Dekorra	2.65	2.48
Town of Fort Winnebago	3.01	2.63
Town of Fountain Prairie	2.84	2.71
Town of Hampden	3.03	2.63
Town of Leeds	2.78	2.63
Town of Lewiston	2.79	2.51
Town of Lodi	2.75	2.59
Town of Lowville	2.89	2.68
Town of Marcellon	3.00	2.83
Town of Newport	2.65	2.45
Town of Otsego	2.70	2.78
Town of Pacific	2.64	2.50
Town of Randolph	3.12	3.07
Town of Scott	3.06	3.26
Town of Springvale	2.89	2.79
Town of West Point	2.55	2.48
Town of Wyocena	2.72	2.51
Village of Arlington	2.67	2.59
Village of Cambria	2.64	2.58
Village of Doylestown	2.72	2.71
Village of Fall River	2.54	2.62
Village of Friesland	2.68	2.73
Village of Pardeeville	2.57	2.38
Village of Poynette	2.58	2.46
Village of Randolph*	2.77	2.60
Village of Rio	2.39	2.45
Village of Wyocena	2.49	2.37
City of Columbus*	2.46	2.37
City of Lodi	2.50	2.44
City of Portage	2.37	2.30
City of Wisconsin Dells*	2.30	2.28
Columbia County	2.60	2.49
Wisconsin	2.61	2.50

* Columbia County Portion
Source: U.S. Census

2.4.7 Housing Unit Trends

Table 2-7 illustrates the trend in the number of housing units for Columbia County and the municipalities in the County, including the Town of West Point. Columbia County had 22,685 housing units in 2000, a 17.8 percent increase over 1990. The Town of West Point added 130 housing units between 1990 and 2000, a 16.73 percent increase.

Towns experienced the largest increase in the number of housing units, adding 1,611 housing units in the decade between 1990 and 2000, an 18 percent increase. Among towns, the Town of Lodi had the largest increase adding 387 housing units during the decade, a 43.1 percent increase. All towns had increases in housing units except the Town of Columbus, which had no increase in housing units, and the Town of Courtland, which lost six housing units between 1990 and 2000.

Cities experienced the next largest increase in the number of housing units, adding 1,044 housing units between 1990 and 2000, a 14.6 percent increase. Among cities, the City of Portage had the largest increase in the number of housing units, adding 414 housing units during the decade, an 11.6 percent increase. However, the City of Lodi had the largest percentage increase, adding 366 housing units for a 43.9 percent increase. All cities in the County, except the City of Wisconsin Dells, added over 100 housing units during the decade.

Villages added 772 housing units and had the largest total percentage increase of 24.6 percent. All villages in the County experienced growth in the number of housing units. The Villages of Doylestown and Friesland experienced the smallest increases in the total number of housing units between 1990 and 2000, each adding only three housing units for increases of 2.5 percent and 2.7 percent respectively. The Village of Poynette had the largest increase in housing units adding 286 units for a 42.6 percent increase.

TABLE 2-7
Housing Unit Trends by Municipality, Columbia County, 1990-2000

Municipality	1990 Total Housing Units	2000 Total Housing Units	Number Change 1990-2000	Percent Change 1990-2000
Town of Arlington	262	308	46	17.56%
Town of Caledonia	626	713	87	13.90%
Town of Columbus	241	241	0	0.00%
Town of Courtland	191	185	(6)	(3.14%)
Town of Dekorra	1,091	1,237	146	13.38%
Town of Fort Winnebago	287	343	56	19.51%
Town of Fountain Prairie	297	318	21	7.07%
Town of Hampden	199	219	20	10.05%
Town of Leeds	303	317	14	4.62%
Town of Lewiston	522	573	51	9.77%
Town of Lodi	898	1,285	387	43.10%
Town of Lowville	338	394	56	16.57%
Town of Marcellon	316	380	64	20.25%
Town of Newport	298	334	36	12.08%
Town of Otsego	263	287	24	9.13%
Town of Pacific	847	1,108	261	30.81%
Town of Randolph	230	240	10	4.35%
Town of Scott	235	260	25	10.64%
Town of Springvale	181	207	26	14.36%
Town of West Point	777	907	130	16.73%
Town of Wyocena	557	714	157	28.19%
Town Totals	8,959	10,570	1,611	17.98%
Village of Arlington	171	196	25	14.62%
Village of Cambria	315	339	24	7.62%
Village of Doylestown	120	123	3	2.50%
Village of Fall River	341	459	118	34.60%
Village of Friesland	111	114	3	2.70%
Village of Pardeeville	686	873	187	27.26%
Village of Poynette	671	957	286	42.62%
Village of Randolph*	188	213	25	13.30%
Village of Rio	336	401	65	19.35%
Village of Wyocena	205	241	36	17.56%
Village Totals	3,144	3,916	772	24.55%
City of Columbus*	1,729	1,914	185	10.70%
City of Lodi	833	1,199	366	43.94%
City of Portage	3,556	3,970	414	11.64%
City of Wisconsin Dells*	1,037	1,116	79	7.62%
City Totals	7,155	8,199	1,044	14.59%
Columbia County	19,258	22,685	3,427	17.80%
Wisconsin	2,055,774	2,321,144	265,370	12.91%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census, Summary File 1, 100 Percent Data

* Columbia County Portion