

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Genesee is located near the center of Waukesha County in the beautiful Kettle Moraine area of southeast Wisconsin. The area was founded by German, Welsh, Irish and English immigrants in the 1830's and 40's. The Wisconsin State Legislature approved the original town boundaries of Genesee on March 21, 1843.

The unincorporated area of Genesee Village (North Genesee), located about one-quarter mile south of Highway 59 on Highway 83, was first settled in 1837, and became home to businesses, a church and school. However, Genesee Village declined after 1851, when the Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad elected to lay its tracks about a mile south. That area became known as Genesee Depot. Many nearby dairy farms made Genesee Depot one of the largest milk shipping points in the nation at the time, with daily stops for freight and passenger trains. After WWII, railroad service declined and the train depot closed in 1960.

As the economy of Genesee Depot was declining, the economy of the Town of Genesee was changing. As the number of full time dairy farms which once operated in the town ceased milk production, including large corporate farms like Park Farms, Wern Farms, Keystone Farms and Brookhill Farms, farming declined and much of the land was sold for a variety of purposes, but primarily for residential development. Since 1970, the Genesee Depot area and the Town have begun to revitalize. Buildings, including the old 1897 train depot which was moved and converted to a restaurant, have been refurbished, new commercial buildings have been built, new businesses and shops have opened and a new town hall was constructed in 1995. The increase in residential development has shaped the character of the Town in recent times.

Comprehensive Plan Purpose

The Town of Genesee Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide the short-range and long-range growth and development of the town over the next 25 years. The plan sets forth a vision of what the community wishes to become. It identifies areas to be developed and/or preserved, recommends types of uses for specific areas of the town, identifies needed transportation and community facilities needed to serve future land uses and provides strategies to implement the plan. Ultimately, the plan will be used by the community in making decisions relating to the use of land.

The comprehensive plan is prepared in conjunction with the "Development Plan for Waukesha County". The Town of Genesee is part of an intergovernmental cooperation effort led by Waukesha County. The Town has been an active member of the Waukesha County Advisory Committee and is working in coordination with Waukesha County to prepare a comprehensive plan under the State of Wisconsin's "Smart Growth" Planning Law as outlined in Chapter 66.1001 Wisconsin State Statutes. The comprehensive

planning law requires local units of government complete and adopt a comprehensive plan by January 1, 2010.

The law also requires that the comprehensive plan address the following nine (9) elements:

1. Issues and Opportunities
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Utilities and Community Facilities
5. Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources
6. Economic Development
7. Intergovernmental Cooperation
8. Land Use
9. Implementation

This comprehensive plan is organized in nine (9) chapters containing all of the required elements listed above. Each chapter defines the element and outlines the town's goals/policies related to the element. This plan meets the statutory elements and requirements of the "Smart Growth" law.

General Location/Planning Area

The Town of Genesee is located in the southwest quadrant of Waukesha County. The Town is bounded on the north by the Village of Wales/Town of Delafield; on the west by the Town of Ottawa; on the south by the Village of North Prairie/Town of Mukwonago; and on the east by the City of Waukesha/Town of Waukesha, all in Waukesha County. The Town, as shown on Map I, contains approximately 19,740 acres, 3,395 acres less than its original size. The Town was reduced from its original size by the incorporation of the Village of North Prairie in 1910, and was again reduced in size in 1922 with the incorporation of the Village of Wales. All of the area outside the Village of North Prairie and the Village of Wales, which constitutes the Town of Genesee, has been included in the study area. It should be noted that the planning area covers those areas currently within the Town of Genesee, except those areas slated to be annexed by the Village of North Prairie or the Village of Wales through established boundary agreements between the Town of Genesee and the adjacent Villages.