

Working with Small Communities

APA-WI 2017 Annual Planning Conference
Getting there together: Bridging the Divide
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Presented By:

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vierbicher
planners | engineers | advisors



Road Map for Discussion

- Introductions
- About New Glarus
- Town and Village Quick Facts
- Common Small Town Issues
- Tools for working with small communities
- Questions?

Katherine A. Westaby, AICP

- Vierbicher Community Development Consultant.
- Private and municipal development experience, specializing in:
 - Comprehensive Plans
 - Housing Studies
 - Outdoor Recreation Plans
 - Policy
 - Workflow and Processes
 - Alderperson for my local community

Bryan Gadow, AICP

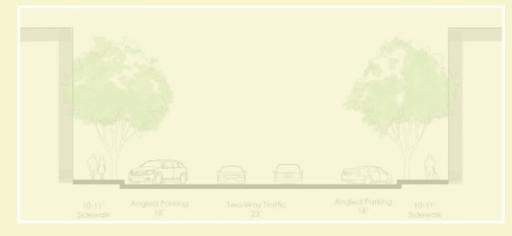
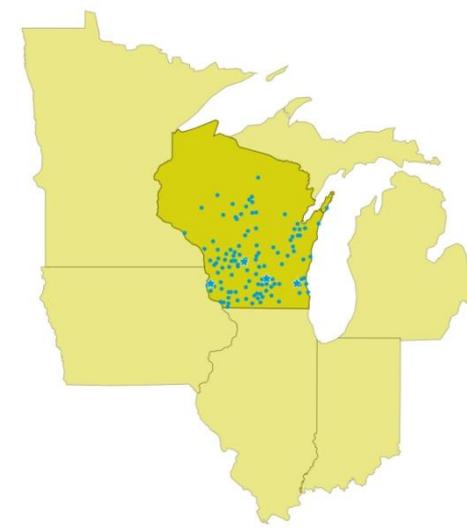
- Village Administrator of New Glarus
- 10+ Years of municipal development experience, specializing in:
 - Land Use and Zoning Review for the Village
 - Municipal Finance and Budgeting
 - Economic Development

Timothy Schleeper, PE

- Vierbicher Project Manager
- Civil Engineer, B.S. UW-Madison 1993
- 20+ Years of private and municipal engineering experience, specializing in:
 - Municipal infrastructure reconstruction (streets, sewer, water, etc.)
 - New private developments (subdivisions, urban site redevelopment)
 - Construction and technical design

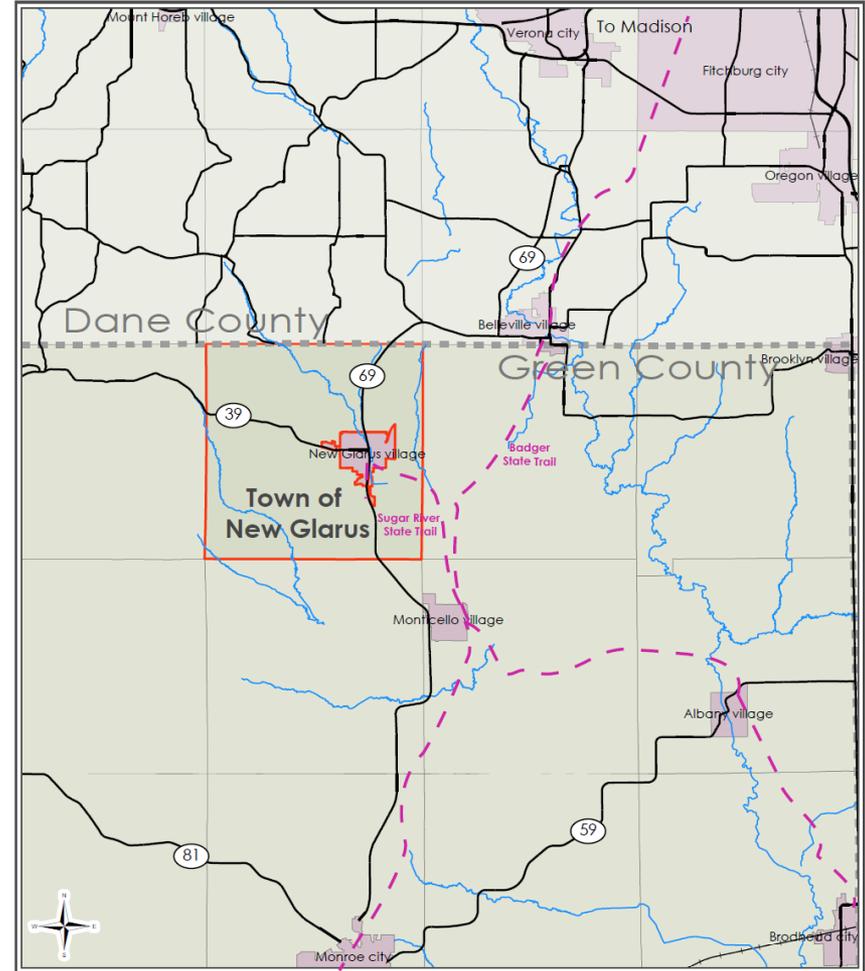
Vierbicher Profile

- Community Planning and Civil Engineering firm
 - Wisconsin Based
 - Started in 1976 in Reedsburg
 - Offices in Madison, Pewaukee, Reedsburg, Prairie du Chien
 - 60 Employees
 - Clients in Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois
- Primary Services
 - Comprehensive Planning
 - Economic Development
 - Urban Design & Concept Plans
 - Landscape Architecture
 - Municipal Infrastructure & Subdivisions
 - Surveying and Land Divisions
 - Stormwater Plans and Water Quality Management



About the New Glarus Area

- Green County Communities
 - 17 Miles north of Monroe
 - 30 Miles southwest of Madison
 - Trail head for the Sugar River Trail
- Town of New Glarus
 - 20,000 acres
 - Population of 1,400
 - Expected to grow to 2,020 by 2040.
- Village of New Glarus
 - 1,140 acres
 - Population of 2,150
 - Expected to grow to 2,280 by 2040



About Village of New Glarus



- Known as “America’s Little Switzerland”
 - Additional growth and economic development is limited
 - Significant valley / ridge topography
 - Floodplain / Wetlands limit expansion near Sugar River and tributaries
 - Local economy is predominately tourism-driven
 - Limited large manufacturers such as the New Glarus Brewing Company, Jack Links, and Planet Wise.
 - Limited land available for multiple family developments, unless areas are rezoned for higher density.
 - Village is surrounded by the Town of New Glarus, providing challenges for future growth opportunities.

About Village of New Glarus



- Village – Town Relationship
 - Village is looking for additional growth, Township is more cautious, wanting to maintain rural character.
 - Cordial, but lack strong partnership (each does own thing)
 - Joint Park and Recreation Committee meets twice per year to discuss issues of shared interest.
 - Unsuccessful Cooperative Boundaries Agreement in 2006 previously setback relations.
 - Currently working to explore areas for future partnership (e.g. Recreation District, Library funding).

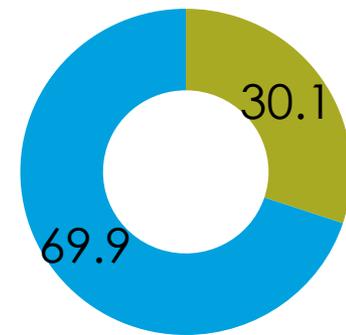
Towns – Quick Facts

- **Powers and Duties:** Chapter 60 of State Statutes
- **Governance:**
 - An elected Town board (Chair and 2-5 supervisors)
 - An elected or appointed clerk and treasurer or combined office of clerk-treasurer
 - Constables, Assessors, Patrolmen
- **Services:** All Towns must:
 - Operate local polling places for elections
 - Conduct property tax assessment, dispute procedures, billing and collection
 - Ensure fire protection and ambulance service
 - Ensure that there is a recycling program
 - Maintain Town highways.

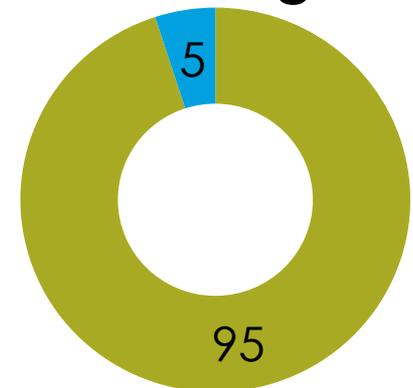
Towns – Quick Facts

- **“Town”:** A “town” is a form of local government. A “township” is a geographic surveyor's unit measuring six by six miles square. Many towns, but far from all, have roughly the dimensions of a township. There are 1,255 Towns in Wisconsin
- **Citizens:** 1,709,491 Wisconsinites live in a town, or 30.1% of the state's population.
- **Land Area:** 95% of Wisconsin's land area is within a town.
- **Transportation:** Towns maintain 61,996 miles of town highways. That is approximately half of the 112,362 miles of public highways of all types (federal, state, county, city, village and town) located within the State of Wisconsin.

Population Percentage



Land Percentage



Village Quick Facts

- **“Village”:** A “village” is an autonomous incorporated area within one or more counties. It provides various services to its residents and has a degree of home rule and taxing jurisdiction over them.
- **Citizens:** 869,515 Wisconsinites live in a village, or 15% of the state’s population.
- **Size:** In order to incorporate as a village, a community must have at least 150 citizens if it is in a rural area or 2,500 if it is in an urban area.
- **Governance:** Villages are governed by a Village President and a Board of Trustees. Village officers include a president, clerk, treasurer, and assessor. Villages may also elect to hire a village manager to oversee day-to-day operations instead of an elected village president.

Town Vs. Village Governance

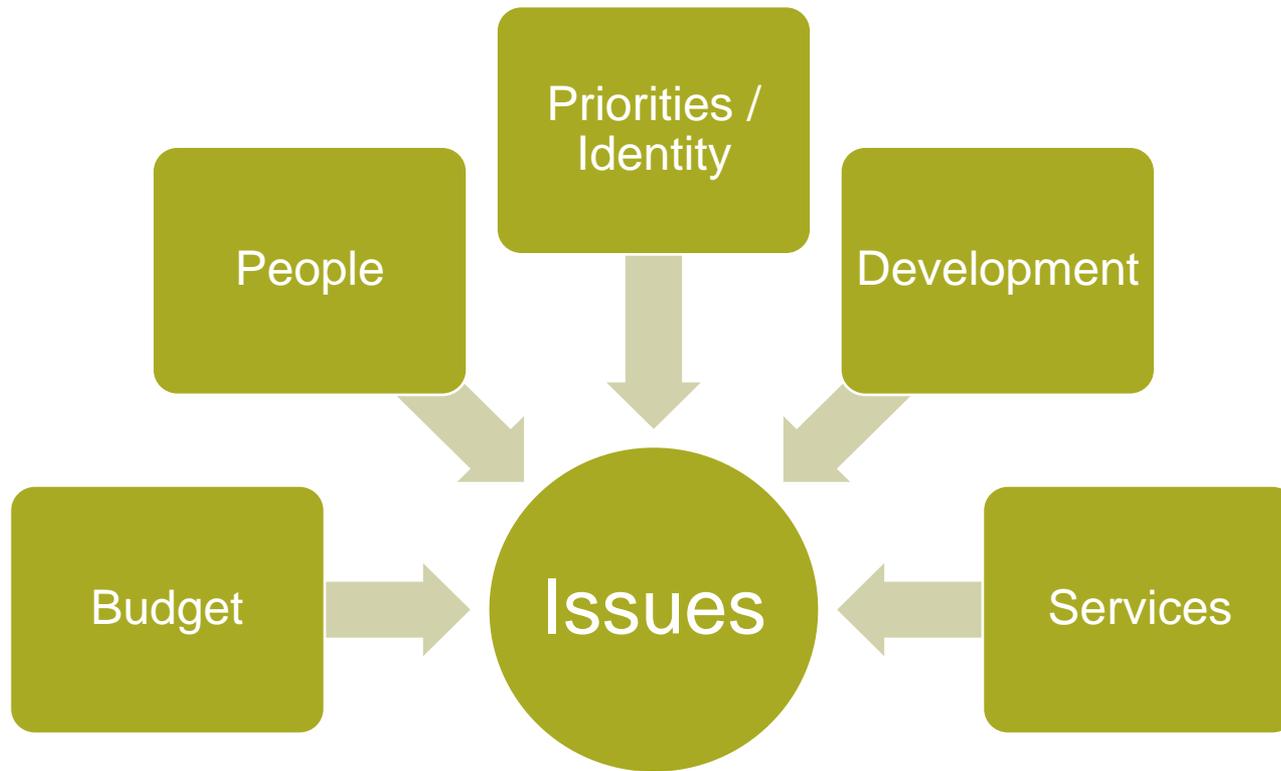
- **“Home Rule”**: The right to local self government including the powers to regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare; to license; to tax; and to incur debt.
- Towns have less authority than villages and cities; they do not have home rule granted to them by the state, but instead have only the specific powers granted to them under state statute.

Unincorporated Areas?

- Administered by a town or municipality in which they exist. They serve as useful local reference to specific places and are important references and sometimes included in vital records.
- Many of these named places contain a small cluster of houses, a church or local business such as store or tavern.
- They do not have any governmental function.



Town & Village Issues



Budget Issues

- Limited sources of local revenue (property taxes)
- State funds are stretched and in demand
- Many pots to fill!
 - Road Maintenance
 - Fire / EMS / Police
 - Staff
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Buildings and Equipment

People Issues

- Governance
 - Neighbors governing neighbors
 - Most who serve are not “politicians”
- Staffing
 - Many Towns have part time Clerks/Treasurers/Maintenance
 - “Large” projects require significant volunteerism to move forward
 - Village staff “wear many hats”
- Constituents
 - Variable levels of engagement
 - Often only react to “big” issues

Priority & Identity Issues

- Budget and Governance
 - Who sets priorities?
 - Reduce / Conserve / Maintain / Enhance / Grow
- Community Identity
 - Are we:
 - Rural / Agricultural?
 - Residential / Bedroom?
 - Tourism / Entertainment?
 - Manufacturing / Business?
 - Recreational / Environmental?

Development Issues

- Costs
 - New roads and infrastructure have to be maintained
 - Low density costs more than compact development
 - Approval Process takes time (staff time, consultant time, Board time)
- Attitude towards development
 - Loss of community character / identity
 - Opposition to 'excessive' regulations
 - Hesitant to use consultants for help (planners, engineers, attorneys)
- Record Keeping
 - Land division information is often not in one place
 - Staff knowledge of "process"

Service Issues

- Road Maintenance / Snow Removal
- Fire protection / EMS / Police
- School / Library
- Parks / Recreation
- Garbage / Recycling / Brush collection
- Internet / Connectivity

- Demand increases due to changing population
 - “Urban” residents moving to the “country” (City / Village to Town)
 - “Rural” residents moving to the “city” (Town to Village)
 - New businesses and business expansion (Development / Redevelopment)
 - Home business and virtual offices

The Challenge

CONSISTENCY
IS 

As governing council members change, municipal staff change and budgets remain lean; a consistent presence is needed to bridge these transitions to maintain community plans and carry infrastructure projects forward. However, how can small communities without full-time professional staff, or budgeted consulting staff provide this consistency?



Bridging the Budget Gap

- Develop a 5 year Capitol Improvement Plan
 - Identify needs and projects
 - Prioritize based on collaboration with staff / constituents
 - Determine how the needs and projects are funded
- Leverage grant and public funding programs
 - Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), Wisconsin Department of Tourism, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Tax Incremental Funding
- Learn More with the Vierbicher Bulletin

<https://www.vierbicher.com/vierbicher-bulletin/>

Funding Sources

- USDA Rural Development Community Facilities – No Deadlines
 - Maximum loan 100% of project cost
 - Maximum grant limited grants available
 - Eligible communities – Less than 20,000 population
 - Eligible projects – Municipal buildings, fire stations, police stations, libraries and health clinics
- USDA Rural Development Rural Utilities – No Deadlines
 - Maximum loan 100% of project cost
 - Maximum grant 0% to 75% depending on median income
 - Eligible communities – Less than 10,000 population
 - Eligible projects – Municipal wastewater system improvements, municipal drinking water system

Funding Sources

- WDOT STP Urban & Rural – Deadline July 10, 2017
 - 80% funding for street improvements for local roadways classified as collectors or above.
- WDOT Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) – Deadline Nov. 1, 2017
- DOT Alternatives Program – Deadline Jan 29, 2018
 - Program replaces the transportation enhancement, Recreation Trails, and Safe Routes to School.
 - 80% Funding available for eligible costs
- WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant – May 1st
 - Requires CORP within last 5 years
 - Requires 50% match
- WDNR Recreational Boating Facilities Grant – February 1st (potential funding)

Bridging People Issues *

- Attitude is key
- All who serve deserve clear, thoughtful, accurate documents to review
 - Prepared by staff and consultants for the Board
 - Prepared by petitioners for review by the Board
- Working with staff and boards to understand and interpret ordinance and planning documents in plain language
- Consultants should be an extension of staff
- Engage constituents meaningfully and with purpose

**From our perspective*

Collaboration

Effective Leadership requires collaboration

“A collaboration is a purposeful relationship in which all parties strategically choose to cooperate in order to accomplish a shared outcome.” — Hank Rubin, Institute for Collaborative Leadership

“Collaboration needs a different kind of leadership; it needs leaders who can safeguard the process, facilitate interaction and patiently deal with high levels of frustration” — Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School

Collaboration

“Getting value from difference is at the heart of the collaborative leader’s task... they have to learn to share control, and to trust a partner to deliver, even though that partner may operate very differently from themselves.” — David Archer and Alex Cameron, authors “Collaborative Leadership, How To Succeed In An Interconnected World”

Development Barrier Tools - 1

- Plans
 - Mapping is a powerful tool that is underutilized
 - Create a map of land divisions (past and future)
 - Determine areas for growth and preservation
- Attitude towards development
 - Everyone should benefit from thoughtful development
 - Ordinances are the roadmap developers use to guide them
 - Developers should be expected to follow procedures and standards presented in the Ordinance
 - Development is a risk and can be expensive:
 - Caveat emptor!
 - If you want it don't 'add on' to make it financially unsustainable.

Development Barrier Tools - 2

- Ordinances and Guides
 - Update strategic and policy documents to:
 - accommodate growth through compact and contiguous development
 - consider using “Smart Growth” approaches to create compact, walkable, mixed-use places
 - Use Cluster Development to Transition From Town to Countryside
 - Create Annexation Policies and Development Standards That Preserve Rural Character
 - Plan and Encourage Rural Commercial Development
 - Address Premature and Obsolete Subdivisions
 - Incorporate Fiscal Impact Analysis in Development

Coordinating Planning Efforts

- Sharing Information
 - Committees and Commissions should be aware of all planning efforts...EARLY
 - Collaborate with others to find solutions for the efficient delivery and funding of local government services consistent with the needs of citizens.

Questions, Answers, Discussion

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