

# *Town of Polk Smart Growth Kickoff Meeting*

## *S.W.O.T. Workshop Results*

### *February 23, 2006*

Residents attending the Town of Polk Smart Growth Kickoff meeting had an opportunity to participate in a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.) assessment of their community. Residents worked in groups of 6-10 people brainstorming issues on each component of the S.W.O.T. workshop. After each component, groups were asked to “\*” three issues that were of most importance that they would like to share with the entire group of participants. The following is the result of that workshop.

**Strengths:** Something that makes a community stand out when compared to other communities; Resources or capabilities that help a community be successful/strong.

- \*Highway system
- \*Recreation (skiing, golf, lakes)
- \*Gravel resources
- \*Rural nature – 5 acre lots
- \*Agricultural history of town and future preservation opportunities
- \*Relaxed, low-stress, and safe atmosphere to raise families in the town
- \*Beautiful Kettle Moraine scenery
- \*Location – easy access to metro area
- \*Natural resources (lakes, farmland, gravel)
- \*Low taxes
- \*Effective government (Common sense approach)
- \*Recent protection of open spaces for growth
- \*Potential growth
- Quality schools
- Rural Setting
- Kettle Moraine system (recreational opportunities)
- Sufficient industrial tax base and reasonable residential tax rate
- Schools
- Churches
- Open spaces
- Air quality
- Low property taxes
- Recreational opportunities
- Spacious living/private property/large lots
- Low taxes
- Adequate services in local area
- Highway system
- Low density
- Kettle Moraine terrain
- Education system
- Centrally located in County to urban centers

**Weaknesses:** Deficiencies in resources for a community to be successful.

- \*Cannot stop annexations
- \*Financial strength for future
- \*Loss of land to surrounding communities
- \*No sewer system
- \*High cost of real estate
- \*Losing land to annexation
- \*Towns are not protected legislatively from cities and villages
- \*Lack of participation by public
- \*Lack of dissemination of information
- \*Inability to protect town borders
- \*Lack of Town Board responsiveness to citizens on zoning and other issues
- \*Lack of respect for citizen input
- \*Towns lack of concern for protecting water quality (landfill)
- Updating of State Highway 60
- Town park system
- No defense against annexation and developers
- Lack of communication/no web-site
- Lack of involvement of residents to issues
- More transportation alternatives such as park and rides along freeway 41/45

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**Opportunities:** Something that could be done to improve a community; Factors or situations that can affect a community in a favorable way.

- \*Investigate incorporation as a village to protect borders
- \*Protect water quality by limiting development and “green” technologies.
- \*Encourage mini-farms
- \*Better relationships/communication between town board and residents
- \*Maintain our rural setting as is
- \*School systems and university system
- \* Three highway systems in township
- \*25 miles to city (metropolitan)
- \*Keep taxes low
- \*Keep our beautiful country atmosphere
- \*Maintaining rural character smart planning on 5 acre parcels/future development
- \*Controlling population
- \*Create relationship with other communities
- \*Boundary agreements
- \*Commercial development (planned) maintain 5 acre zoning / cluster
- Renewable energy
- P.D.R. Program to protect farmland
- Detour regional traffic causing safety problems
- Open spaces
- Recreation
- Health care systems
- Maintain the Kettle Moraine
- Long range planning
- Main freeway (41/45) established
- Creation of recreational trails (walking/bike)

**Threats:** Anything that could jeopardize the future success of a community; Factors or situations that can affect a community in a negative way.

- \*Bigger roads – bad for town residents (Highway 164 and reliever route)
- \*Loss of farmland and rural character
- \*Suburbanization of Town from Milwaukee
- \*Annexation
- \*Loss of farmland or rural atmosphere
- \*Water quality and quantity
- \*Cancer of Slinger/Hartford/Jackson sprawl
- \*Too much development too fast
- \*Decreasing lot sizes (maintain existing sizes 5 acre min.)
- \*Annexations without services
- \*Urban development
- \*Loss of prime farmland
- Annexation by villages and city: Hartford, Slinger, Jackson
- Water quality
- 5 acre parcels
- Commercial Development
- Eminent Domain
- Increased traffic/inadequate roads
- Increase demands on education system
- Drop in property values, due to rezoning
- Annexation
- New residents expectations
- Lack of planning at local level
- Increase in industrial/commercial growth
- Loss of open space
- Growth of multi-government “special use” taxes
- Over crowding of schools
- Major east-west road
- Increased traffic/population
- Future up-keep of roads
- Pollution – noise
- Water quality and quantity