

## SCCPDC - ISSUES IDENTIFICATION EXERCISE

### (A) *County Character:*

- ◆ Logging Industry and Vacation Land
- ◆ To me the county is defined as rural with large areas of undeveloped land, either publicly or privately owned with the abundance of forest, water; lakes, rivers, etc. Access to the resources of this area affords a sense of place tied to this rural setting.
- ◆ Up Northwood's and water
- ◆ History of Chippewa Flowage, tribal and non-tribal
- ◆ Recreational opportunities offered by the natural resources
- ◆ Though the County is split geographically, economically, and socially, the one unifying feature is our natural resources. It appears generally accepted that all are proud of our lakes, rivers, streams, and forests
- ◆ Rural, wilderness, not overly developed, open forest and farmland (except for Town of Hayward)
- ◆ Full time residents are pleasant, helpful, and friendly
- ◆ Sporting opportunities
- ◆ Edgewater has comprehensive plan, is to be included into county plan
- ◆ The "woods & water" of Sawyer County has defined the character of our county. From Native American History, the logging Industry, early tourism & fishing - to Sawyer County's now world renowned events – this county is known for relaxation with a purpose. Skiers, bikers, snowmobiles, musky fishermen are just a few of the types of people drawn to the county or do call Sawyer County home.
- ◆ The Native American school, college, clinic, and government center show growth and caring in our Native American population.
- ◆ Our sense of place may come from coming back to our roots – as seen by the retirees moving to the county where they either grew up or vacationed at as a youngster.
- ◆ Sawyer Co. is the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> largest county in the State (1,256 sq. mi.). Federal, State, County and Tribal lands along with many private parcels in forest land management make for diverse recreational opportunities.
- ◆ History from the years past and stories from older generations.
- ◆ Logging and Chippewa Flowage
- ◆ The availability of public recreational and forestry lands. The forests the clean lakes and rivers.
- ◆ Large unpopulated forest tracts
- ◆ Clean air
- ◆ Clean water
- ◆ Public land
- ◆ Diverse population
- ◆ Forests
- ◆ Low population density
- ◆ Public trails

- ◆ The recreational resources:
  - Lakes, rivers snowmobile trails, parks, golf courses, cross-country ski trails
- ◆ Lumber industry
- ◆ Native Americans
- ◆ Schools
- ◆ World class events

**(B) *Transportation Issues:***

- ◆ More public transportation needed
- ◆ Create a public transportation system that would afford working individuals the ability to use it effectively to commute
- ◆ If a system existed how do we market that system effectively so individuals would be encouraged to leave their cars at home
- ◆ Bike lanes on all major roads
- ◆ expand recreational trails for all users/keeping separate trails for motorized and non motorized trail users
- ◆ Keeping roads in good condition
- ◆ Lack of funding to the County and Towns for the overall repair and maintenance of our highway system
- ◆ Some county highways need to be repaved – overall the road system is ok
- ◆ Bus system is good for a rural area. Hayward is too small for a bus system; however an open trolley type bus operating on Main Street during the summer would be an attraction.
- ◆ Transportation Issues have improved in Sawyer County with the LCO/Sawyer County Transit system. Education of the population who could utilize the transit may be necessary.
- ◆ Not much of an issue. All State roads are improved. The county roads are in pretty good repair, except for EE to the Price County line.
- ◆ Good
- ◆ Replacing bridge on County B. County B upgrade from 70 to W.
- ◆ Improve public / private transit for people to get to medical appointments, etc.
- ◆ Individual farming, but all small farms have gone out and only large corporate farms are left, which leave a lot of unused wasted land. Hard to get taxes out of.
- ◆ High energy costs
- ◆ Major roads from small communities are for the most part, in good condition. There is concern about ratings on county bridges on main thoroughfares.
- ◆ Need more public transportation
- ◆ Dealing with the seasonal traffic
- ◆ Signs
- ◆ Use airport more
- ◆ Smart growth of system

**(C) Housing Issues:**

- ◆ More affordable housing
- ◆ Lack of middle and low range affordable housing, and/ or rental properties, lack of assisted living type housing for the elderly or disabled
- ◆ Many unkept properties in the city of Hayward/LCO
- ◆ Low and middle income housing for working people
- ◆ Lake property and land is very expensive. Too pricey for low income housing.
- ◆ This is a huge issue. There is far too little housing for “tweeners”. Lake homes are far too expensive for most residents, and most moderately priced homes are in parts of the County far removed from employment
- ◆ Overdeveloping the area with condominiums that produce high density populations – this is especially directed to the shoreland districts
- ◆ Housing subdivisions – if not careful the farm fields will be come look alike homes and the rural character of the county will be lost.
- ◆ Sawyer County has Housing Issues, not so much with supply, maintenance or rehabilitation as with people’s expectations.
- ◆ Housing doesn’t appear to be a major problem. This may be from a lack of industry in the SE part of the County.
- ◆ Not enough housing
- ◆ Funding is available, but can’t seem to get help from anyone.
- ◆ Lots of properties for sale, but they are not selling. Many people are only here for a short period in the summer. Having permanent jobs may increase the need for more and better housing, but it is a circular issue.
- ◆ Pricing is out of hand. Cost too much for all the permits and inspectors to build a new house.
- ◆ Shortage of rental properties particularly those that meet criteria for low-income elderly.
- ◆ Lack of grant funds for rehabilitation.
- ◆ Shortage of service people for maintenance and repairs – electricians and plumbers in particular.
- ◆ Rising real estate taxes.
- ◆ Zoning restrictions and regulations make building difficult and expensive for young people and old people
- ◆ Affordable housing
- ◆ Senior housing
- ◆ Water and sewer issues

**(D) Utilities & Community Facilities Issues:**

- ◆ Coordinate planning with land use, transportation and natural resources. Promote use of existing facilities and encourage development of public facilities, such as parks, public access, and walking trails.
- ◆ Lack of water access for the general public; swimming beaches, boat launch sites, Facilities like bike paths, and parks.
- ◆ Public utilities - sewer districts -should be created around now highly populated lakes to stop water quality degradation.

- ◆ Desire to bury all overhead wires
- ◆ Cell phone towers within townships
- ◆ A HUGE area of concern is the 60% - 70% of the County that has a lack of cell reception.
- ◆ More parks would be beneficial to residents and visitors alike
- ◆ Sawyer County, WI-DNR and many Townships provide terrific parks, boat landings and public recreation areas.
- ◆ Facilities and services are pretty good. With the Tuscobia Trail there is a need for new trail head facilities in the Draper Township adjacent to the trail.
- ◆ More parks and camping
- ◆ County Seat is in the NW corner
- ◆ We need improved internet access for the whole SE part of the County. Parks and access to County Forest land. Availability of quiet sports access would afford more recreational opportunities for little investment.
- ◆ Costs are too high.
- ◆ There seems to be a need for more law enforcement coverage in areas outside of Hayward. The more remote areas could also use some county park facilities. Fire protection is always a big issue and as volunteerism diminishes, may become real need. More nursing homes and assisted living facilities are badly needed.
- ◆ Need a countywide sewage treatment facility to eliminate land spreading of septage on agricultural field
- ◆ Need more places with sewer and water (will drive economic development)
- ◆ County land for parks (Nelson Lake)! We need more public parks

**(E) *Agriculture, Cultural and Natural Resource Issues:***

- ◆ We need to protect, conserve, and manage our wetland, lakes, and renewable resources.
- ◆ maintain large blocks of land for agriculture and forestry-
- ◆ Encourage the continuation of small family farms.
- ◆ Continued management of forestry lands for productivity (timber harvesting) and recreation.
- ◆ Keeping and promoting quality culture-library, theater, festivals
- ◆ Preserve clean air and water
- ◆ Should honor LCO requests for protection of culturally sensitive areas
- ◆ Do all we can to protect water quality
- ◆ Development and over-development of lakeshore property.
- ◆ Fragmentation of large blocks of timberland.
- ◆ Loss of the small family farm
- ◆ Rural, farm, forest, character of county must be protected
- ◆ Agricultural areas have been disappearing in Sawyer County as the small family farm has a difficult time making a living in this marginal ag area.
- ◆ Cultural Resources are usually lost with the older generations passing on.

- ◆ In Sawyer County you will find almost every small community with some form of history collected, whether it is through the tribe, a township, a historical society, or museum.
- ◆ Natural Resources groups within Sawyer County are willing to come together to protect the natural features and landscape.
- ◆ Most of the farming is in the SW part of the County. Environmentally Sawyer County is in pretty good shape and it should continue to stay that way. All historic and cultural resources should be protected.
- ◆ Mercury content of fish. County Gov. and LCO and work together
- ◆ Making sure that our water and air quality remain good or are improved. Insisting on sustainable management of the forest resources. Protecting the historic resources of the County for future generations.
- ◆ Large corporate farm machinery is so big it wrecks all our town roads. Roads are made for smaller machinery like it used to be 40 years ago.
- ◆ Demise of the family farm. The biggest threat to our clean and quiet natural resources is the influx of new people building homes, septic systems, using their all terrain vehicles and in the forests without any regard for the land.
- ◆ Sawyer County forest need to be managed more effectively to insure a balance between production and biodiversity
- ◆ Agricultural areas diminishing due to housing and development pressure
- ◆ Insufficient focus on groundwater protection
- ◆ Need to develop wilderness areas in county forest
- ◆ Not enough access to lakes
- ◆ Not enough parks
- ◆ Spearing of fish

**(F) *Natural & scenic features:***

- ◆ Scenic areas not developed, small remaining lakes, county forest without large trail networks, small non-motorized campgrounds (Federal Forest Land) , rice producing areas, area flowages and rivers (Namakegon, Chippewa, St. Croix).
- ◆ Rich flora and fauna
- ◆ Abundant wildlife
- ◆ Large old growth forest in small plots
- ◆ Chippewa Flowage and it's islands
- ◆ Keeping forest natural looking
- ◆ Lakes. We gott'em, most of the rest of the world (except Canada) don't.
- ◆ Forest, lakes, streams, and open space
- ◆ The Chippewa Flowage, as well as lakes, ponds, rivers & streams are exceptional features of Sawyer County. Forests, maintained as Federal, state, county forest and even private landowners who share their land with the public through WI-DNR programs, are incredible features available to the public in Sawyer County.
- ◆ Lakes Rivers and forests

- ◆ Chippewa River, State and Federal Forests, Plum Creek land
- ◆ National Forests, Rivers and Lakes
- ◆ The forests, lakes and rivers with their wildlife and diverse communities of plants and animals.
- ◆ Lakes and rivers
- ◆ BLUE lakes
- ◆ The big rivers
- ◆ Chippewa and Flambeau Blue Hills overlooks
- ◆ Slough Gundy Chequamegon National Forest
- ◆ Flambeau River State Forest
- ◆ Sawyer County Forest
- ◆ Namekagon River
- ◆ Lakes
- ◆ Forests
- ◆ Trails (walking, snowmobiling, cross country)

**(G) *Cultural or historic resources:***

- ◆ Identify and preserve historic, cultural and scenic places.
- ◆ LCO tribal history (a cultural center would be nice), Honor the Earth Pow-Wow, Hayward Carnige Library building, Lumberjack World Championship (Logging History), Birkie, Fat tire Fest.
- ◆ LCO history, Old post and new post
- ◆ Tourism history
- ◆ Logging history
- ◆ The logging era changed Sawyer County dramatically
- ◆ LCO, logging, and sports
- ◆ Native American culture; fishing resources; public land; events such as the Fat Tire Race, Birkie Ski Race, World Championship Lumberjack Show, County Fair, etc all contribute to the culture and resources of Sawyer County.
- ◆ Farming , logging and recreation
- ◆ Old Town Halls, shops, etc. Loretta needs to be recognized for its history of the Hines Lumber Co.
- ◆ Hines Lumber era history, some areas are signed, this is great.
- ◆ The lumber history. Locations of old camps.
- ◆ Pulp wood – lumber
- ◆ Schools and libraries
- ◆ Historical societies
- ◆ Elderly citizens, although there are very few left
- ◆ Sawyer County Historical Museum
- ◆ Mary Ellen Bakers
- ◆ Native Americans
- ◆ Lumber industry

**(H) Land Use Issues:**

- ◆ Coordinate a development pattern consistent with our commercial, industrial, and residential uses.
- ◆ Fragmentation of large blocks of Agricultural and Forestry land are a growing concern. Continued development of secondary homes by non-resident owners who often behave differently with a lack of respect for the people who actually live in the County. Conflicting land uses abound within the County often tied to money / profits of outside developers. (Not in the best interest of residence who live here)
- ◆ Towns and adjoining communities are beginning to see that cooperation (trail systems, zone districts, transportation layout, etc. are going to be important in the future. Pace of develop has been overwhelming within the County within the past 10 years.
- ◆ Growth within surrounding counties does not appear to be having a direct impact on Sawyer County's growth.
- ◆ Growth needs to be defined, is growth more second homes, more fast food restaurants or more permanent residence, or some combination of multiple factors. If you are going to look at growth and plan for it must be concretely defined.
- ◆ The pace of development is moving so rapidly that regulations are not drafted and enacted fast enough to preserve the character of the community and its' environment.
- ◆ Sawyer County needs to encourage more small light industrial / manufacturing jobs. The area has an abundance of low wage service sector jobs but few living wage jobs. At the same time we lack professionals in the medical fields (doctors, nurses etc.) Tourism has a wide economic impact on the county being one of the driving economic forces within the county. Tourism planning needs to be addressed (what type of tourism should the area promote) just like land use planning. Also how can wages be increased in the tourism area. We need to address how to keep young people in the area though education and advanced learning opportunities.
- ◆ Lake property (lots) that should not be represented as lake lots
- ◆ Development of marginal lakeshore property and small lakes. The new Wilderness category of lakes will help for decades to come
- ◆ The problem is with the land speculators and developers who, after completing a project (subdivisions, condominiums, etc.) leave the area and don't have to live with the results. The price of land (shoreland) is being driven by part-time residents who have no sense of ownership in the community.
- ◆ Mind-set is an issue. Personal agendas are a problem.
- ◆ Land use planning perhaps will always be an issue. It is very difficult to stay with a land use plan when zone district changes are always taking place. The towns and the county have to stay with it. Sawyer County is still on a fast pace for development.

- ◆ I believe the DNR and County have too much control over certain people's private property.
- ◆ Since the county apparently had lax land use and construction policies until recently, I think that the older residents are resistant to the new ordinances, but with more people and more development we are going to lose the quality of our resources if we don't protect them from depletion and pollution.
- ◆ All small farms are forced out and large corporate farms won't pay much
- ◆ Division of land into small parcels not consistent with surrounding land use.
- ◆ Protecting agricultural and forest lands
- ◆ Cranberry bogs
- ◆ Spreading of septage on agricultural fields
- ◆ To find a balance between the rights of land owner and the rights of all

**(I) *Economic Development Issues:***

- ◆ Attract and retain quality business and industry to improve employment and personal income. Tourism is a huge impact, bringing more local development and jobs. They just need to be higher paying jobs, to help retain a better local workforce.
- ◆ Sawyer County needs to encourage more small light industrial / manufacturing jobs. The area has an abundance of low wage service sector jobs but few living wage jobs. At the same time we lack professionals in the medical fields (doctors, nurses etc.) Tourism has a wide economic impact on the county being one of the driving economic forces within the county. Tourism planning needs to be addressed (what type of tourism should the area promote) just like land use planning. Also how can wages be increased in the tourism area. We need to address how to keep young people in the area through education and advanced learning opportunities.
- ◆ Year round economy
- ◆ Tourism is very important to the County
- ◆ A "big box" store, like Menard's, Lowe's, or Home Depot would be nice. Not only do I refuse to pay 5 times as much for materials, many of the local vendors have made an opulent living from gouging their friends and neighbors.
- ◆ Paying residents a decent living wage should not be that far-fetched. Many of our "retirees" are in their second home. The thought that they don't want to pay local employees, officials, teachers, etc. as much as wherever they came from is unbelievable.
- ◆ Economic development is not necessarily a good thing. It is a double edge sword that appears to be progress, but can result in increased population. This results in higher taxes for support services (i.e. police, fire, school, road, etc.)
- ◆ There are not enough adequate local jobs for Sawyer County residents.
- ◆ Manufacturing/industry type jobs would be an asset.

- ◆ I do not know what the county strengths, challenges & difficulties are in attracting new business.
- ◆ Economic development is important. Perhaps there could be more promotion of wood working industries (cabinet making, outdoor furniture, etc). Give tax incentives for these industries to get started. Tourism is the big industry now
- ◆ Convince motels, we need more people to do grant writing, this would help employ people.
- ◆ Year around industry for permanent jobs, tourism is too unpredictable.
- ◆ We need the regular incomes of permanent jobs, but we need the infrastructure and educational opportunities to attract employees to settle here or stay here. Again this is circular (one depends on the other) We need to support the tourism industry, but we need to encourage the expansion of other opportunities that don't kill what we already have.
- ◆ Old people dying off, young people have no jobs to keep them around here
- ◆ Sawyer County's current economic sectors can be categorized in two major categories, Forestry and Tourism. Each can be further broken into divisions such as logging, pallet manufacturing, wood products production under the Forestry heading and lodging, food service, and retail services on the tourism side. The demographic studies have shown that Sawyer County's largest employment sector is retail trade while manufacturing accounted for 9.2% in 2006. Other studies and surveys have shown that the majority of full time and second home owners have selected the Sawyer County area to live in for the "Up North" atmosphere and appeal. It seems that any increase in industry in the area must be balanced with this in mind. Due to lack of population (labor force) and other logistics it is unlikely that "heavy industry" would choose to locate in the county nor would it necessarily be welcomed. But "light" industry would be welcomed and promoted. Included could be increased manufacturing surrounding the forest products industry such as pallet manufacturing, hard wood milling, wood pellet manufacturing and furniture making to name a few. Also the service areas could be promoted such as phone centers and order facilities that are currently outsourced to other countries. Sawyer County government has been proactive in its support of economic development through support of the Sawyer County Development Corporation and the Hayward Lakes Visitor and Convention Bureau. Both organizations appear to be active in the pursuit of growth in each ones particular sector, SCDC in affordable housing and business development and HLVCB in their tourism promotion. Job availability seems to be greatest in the Hayward area as it is the largest community in the county. In other locations well paying jobs are scarce with limited availability of jobs in technical areas, health care, management, and other professional fields. Sawyer County needs to provide ease of access for businesses and industries that would consider locating in our area. Good roads, rapid

- transportation (air-rail) and services (water, sewer, phone, internet) are essential for promoting future development.
- ◆ We need more health care availability – more nursing homes, therapy, assisted living and/or home health care services. We need some small businesses – light industry – that can pay decent wages and provide benefits to employees. We need to keep these people working in the smaller communities so they will spend a larger share of their income there for goods and services.
  - ◆ Non-polluting industries are needed
  - ◆ Develop this land use plan and try to stick to it's recommendations
  - ◆ We need to attract businesses that have head of household jobs
  - ◆ County needs to fight for these jobs

**(J) *Desired Businesses:***

- ◆ Forestry, recreation, and service industry
- ◆ Additional secondary educational facilities
- ◆ Computer/ Research facilities
- ◆ Expanded Health care facilities
- ◆ Bio-fuel production
- ◆ Low impact manufacturing on the environment
- ◆ Sawyer County has historically been in the tourist industry. The cost of an average family to visit the area is increasing to a point that it is not economically realistic to spend any time in the area.
- ◆ Affordable resorts and campgrounds (not de facto trailer parks) that permanent sites are not allowed.
- ◆ Heavier industries like Louisiana Pacific and the new wood pellet plant. Industries with a stable product base.
- ◆ Medium and light manufacturing
- ◆ Only in areas zoned industrial
- ◆ Wood working, recreation, encourage broader farming in ag areas.
- ◆ Wood shops, convenience, gift shops
- ◆ More convenience stores, motels in the southern part of the County.
- ◆ Car repair shops
- ◆ We need to add diversity to our “industrial” base. Provide opportunities for people who want the quality of life that we have here who can work from their homes or small facilities with electronic access to the rest of the world.
- ◆ Small factories – wasted pellets?
- ◆ Health care
- ◆ Modular housing.
- ◆ Non-polluting
- ◆ Tourism related
- ◆ Green
- ◆ Businesses with head of household jobs
- ◆ Year round jobs
- ◆ Jobs with insurance

**(K) Strengths in attracting new business:**

- ◆ It's natural resources
- ◆ Good public school system
- ◆ The natural resources that attract people to this area
- ◆ Lots of timber
- ◆ New power line
- ◆ Rail
- ◆ Good highways
- ◆ Cheap labor costs compared to say, New Jersey
- ◆ Really good schools
- ◆ Recreational opportunities
- ◆ Trained labor force, depending on the job
- ◆ Maybe we don't have any at this time
- ◆ So far the industry is wood and wood products
- ◆ Access to water and wildland based recreation
- ◆ Clean water and air.
- ◆ Wood resources for small cottage industries.
- ◆ People with ideas.
- ◆ Employees want to live away from cities and the noise and dirt and heavy population. We have a good workforce here. Unfortunately, most of them are now working in Ladysmith, Phillips, Park Falls, Birchwood, etc.
- ◆ Renewable natural resources
- ◆ Great place to live
- ◆ Natural resources
- ◆ Schools

**(L) Challenges/difficulties in attracting/retaining business:**

- ◆ Ensure future commercial and industry development are compatible with Sawyer County's character
- ◆ Lack of educated, motivated workforce
- ◆ Lack of infrastructure.
- ◆ Lack of varied and reliable telecommunications
- ◆ Lack of workforce
- ◆ Quality factory labor
- ◆ Other cities and counties offering tax exemptions and incentives
- ◆ Cities with higher unemployment
- ◆ Dependable labor. This is in part due to the many retired people in the area.
- ◆ State and County help in providing information on how to get started.
- ◆ General support.
- ◆ Dependable, trained labor. Educational opportunities especially away from Hayward.
- ◆ Dissention among the ranks. The minute there's any kind of change in a procedure or proposed improvement, half the population decided it's

not a good idea, and that's before they've bothered to ask questions and/or done any research on the time in question.

- ◆ Cold winters
- ◆ Mosquitoes and deer ticks
- ◆ Lack of highly trained and well educated work force
- ◆ Expensive taxes
- ◆ Lack of water and sewer
- ◆ Lack of trained labor force

**(M) Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues:**

- ◆ Coordinate and develop formal agreements. Share facilities when possible.
- ◆ Local units of government often feel trumped on and over overruled by county government. Sharing of municipal services between intergovernmental units could occur more if parties were educated as to cost saving and would be willing to relinquish territorialism.
- ◆ The county for the most part has good working relationships with tribal government. Not sure about adjacent counties.
- ◆ Key to this is good community representation at the county level
- ◆ Numerous complaints about level of punishment for local crime—often sentences are light and stayed
- ◆ The Townships have from time to time problems on building permits
- ◆ Conditional use permits and variance
- ◆ The LCO band should play a larger role in the County government. There is an obvious majority use of some services including law enforcement, social services, etc. A larger portion of the tax burden should fall on LCO and they should have an automatic seat on the County Board
- ◆ Generally they respect the local towns wishes, however the local towns cannot override the county board
- ◆ Over the last ten plus years, I have seen Intergovernmental cooperation strengthen and grow.
- ◆ Communication is pretty limited or non-existent.
- ◆ There seems to be very little interest for the towns to work together. This may be the result of the very independent nature of the people who live here. This can only be alleviated by building trust and it may fall to new residents taking an interest in Town politics.
- ◆ I have a good deal of communication with the county offices and feel Town of Winter has a good working relationship with those offices. In most cases our opinions are considered and honored where possible. The problem I see is lack of communication between the departments in the courthouse.
- ◆ Improving working relationship with LCO tribe
- ◆ Need to work more with Native Americans
  - Casino, unfair competition, land signs