

STORY OF NOW



WATER

We have the best groundwater in Wisconsin - safe, clean, drinkable
Our good water quality supports recreation based tourism (trout fishing)
We have problems with flooding causing erosion, nutrient and soil loss
Fewer cattle grazing are affecting the soil's ability to retain water
Concerns about drinking water are forcing farmers to go deeper when they dig wells
Awareness of water's role in unique and fragile environment

FARMING

LESS VARIETY IN FARM TYPES & SIZES

More big farms
Fewer dairy farms
Less cattle grazing
Land is expensive
Topography is ideal for grazing and hard for cropping

DEEP ROOTEDNESS TO THE AREA

Longstanding, multi-generational connection to land
Co-op model valued including Westby, Organic Valley, Co-op Store
Longing for farm succession



HEALTH

Off-farm employment is needed to access health insurance (and financially support farm operations)
Variety of accessible healthcare options exist
More isolation, less opportunity to interact because of fewer school, church, and community gathering places; COVID worsened isolation
Need to consider public health

COMMUNITY

Divisions between newcomers and long-standing members
Lacking a sense of community cohesiveness
People returning to area as they age
Desire for jobs, schools, outdoor recreation, and services that attract and keep people in the community
Metro residents buying land for recreation

