Town of Ringle Comprehensive Plan 2017

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1. PLAN INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Town of Ringle Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide town, county, state and federal decision makers as well as developers and residents on a variety of issues over the next twenty years. This plan documents existing conditions in the Town and identifies primary issues or concerns to address in the future and identifies policies and actions to address those concerns. It includes information that assists in making decisions about such topics as future development, land use, transportation, housing, and economic development.

Local plans must also address the State's fourteen planning goals outlined in Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001, to the extent applicable. The State planning goals and countywide guiding principles are summarized in Appendix C.

Some key findings include:

- The Town of Ringle is located east of the Village of Weston and Town of Weston, and along the STH 29 corridor. The Town's population was 1,711 at the 2010 census. The Town includes the unincorporated community of Ringle. The Town has experienced major population growth over the past three decades, increasing by 718 persons, or 104 percent.
- Ringle residents are concerned about managing new development and trying to preserve the rural character of the Town. They are interested in using tools such as zoning, and examining whether to change minimum lot size or look at new regulations to manage growth.
- Residents within Ringle use individual on-site waste disposal systems and have private wells. The Town has considered the development of small, focused sewage systems for small areas, but has not proceeded with any further study.
- The Town of Ringle should continue to work with the Marathon County Landfill (located in Ringle) and the landfill operators to address any issues related to odors, to ensure that there are no pollution issues, to discuss any potential expansion of the operation, and to better plan for land uses near the landfill.
- Ringle residents have identified the need to plan for future park land in the Town and to identify potential locations.
- The Mountain Bay State Trail is a unique asset in Ringle that could be maximized by developing compatible and complimentary uses near the trail head.
- Recreational assets in Ringle are growing, with the rerouting of the Ice Age Trail, the development of mountain bike trails and a disc golf course on the Marathon County landfill property, and the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail vision.

Public Participation

Public participation is an important part of the planning process. Allowing and encouraging public involvement in the planning process provides the citizens of the town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and present issues that they would like addressed. Local officials should use this input to guide the policies and decisions made. A robust public engagement strategy will lead to a better plan that has broader support from the people of the town. During the development of this plan, public meetings were held that allowed the public to provide their input. The plan was available for anyone to view at various draft stages throughout the process on the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) website. NCWRPC staff members were also available to receive comments throughout the process.

Goals, Objectives, Policies

Goals and objectives have been developed for each of the plan chapters. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to enable the community to achieve them. Definitions are provided below to clarify the purpose and intent of each category.

Definitions:

Goal: A goal is a statement that describes a desired future condition. The statement is broad in scope and describes general concept he community hopes to accomplish.

Objective: An objective is a a more specific target that will help to acheive a goal or address an issue.

Policy: A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct to be followed to achieve community goals and objectives.

Strategies: Strategies are approaches that involve a series of individual actions to achieve a goal or objective.

Actions: An action describes a specific effort that will be undertaken to achieve a goal or objective.

List of Acronyms

- 303 (d) list—waters designated as "impaired" under section 303 (d) of the U.S. Clean Water Act.
- AHI—Architecture & History Inventory (a database of the Wisconsin Historical Society).
- ATC—American Transmission Company
- BMPs—Best Management Practices
- CCC—Civilian Conservation Corps (a 1930s construction and conservation program).
- CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral Network
- CDBG—Community Development Block Grant
- CES—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)
- Comm 83—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce, setting standards for regulation of private sewage systems. This was renumbered in 2013 to SPS 383 as administration transfered from the Department of Commerc to the Department of Safety and Professional Services.
- CPI-Consumer Price Index
- CPZ—Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (Marathon County)
- CRP—Conservation Reserve Program
- CTH—County Trunk Highway
- CWA—Central Wisconsin Airport
- DWD—Department of Workforce Development
- EMS—Emergency Medical Services
- ERW—Exceptional Resource Waters, a designation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.
- ETZ—Extra-Territorial Zoning
- FCL—Forest Crop Law
- FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Agency
- FIRM—Flood Insurance Rate Maps, the official source of flood data from FEMA.
- HOME—Home Investment Partnerships Program
- HUD—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- LHOG—Local Housing Organization Grant
- LWRMP—Land and Water Resource Management Plan (Marathon County)
- MFL—Managed Forest Law
- NCHC—North Central Health Care
- NCWRPC—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- NRHP—National Register of Historic Places
- NTC—Northcentral Technical College
- ORW—Outstanding Resource Waters, a designation under the U.S. Clean Water Act.
- PASER—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating
- PMP—Pavement Management Plan
- PSCW—Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
- SHPO—State Historic Preservation Office
- STF Data—Summary Tape File, referring to data files of the 2000 U.S. Census.
- STH—State Trunk Highway
- TIP—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)
- USDA—United States Department of Agriculture
- UW-MC—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County
- Wausau MPO—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
- WDA—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture
- WDNR—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- WDOA—Wisconsin Department of Administration
- WEDC-Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

- WisDOT—Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- WHEDA—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority
- WISLR—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads
- WPS—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

This analysis describes the demographics of the Town of Ringle and identifies the major demographic trends impacting Ringle over the next few decades. Both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are also listed for comparison.

Population and Households

Historical Trends

The estimated 2015 population of the Town of Ringle provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration is 1,735 people. As shown in **Table 2-1**, Ringle has experienced major population growth over the past three decades, growing at a much faster rate than Marathon County or the State of Wisconsin. Household growth over the past three decades in Ringle was higher than population growth. The average household size declined faster than that of the County and State, contributing to the rate of household growth that was over twice as high as the County and State growth rates.

The population of Marathon County grew from 125,834 in 2000 to 134,063 in 2010, an increase of 6.5 percent, compared to a 6.0 percent increase in the state and 9.7% in the United States. Population growth in Marathon County has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau. Most towns experienced modest percentage growth over the last two decades. Most of the communities with very high percentage growth also have relatively small populations. Five towns, as well as one city and one village, had population decline between 1990 and 2010.

Projections

Figure 2-1 shows population projections for Ringle and **Table 2-2** compares projected population in Ringle to Marathon County, based on projections made by the Wisconsin DOA. The Wisconsin DOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official population projections. These projections are based on historical population and household growth in the community, with more recent years given a greater weight. The Town of Ringle is expected to continue population growth through the year 2040 at a faster rate than Marathon County, similar to the growth seen historically.

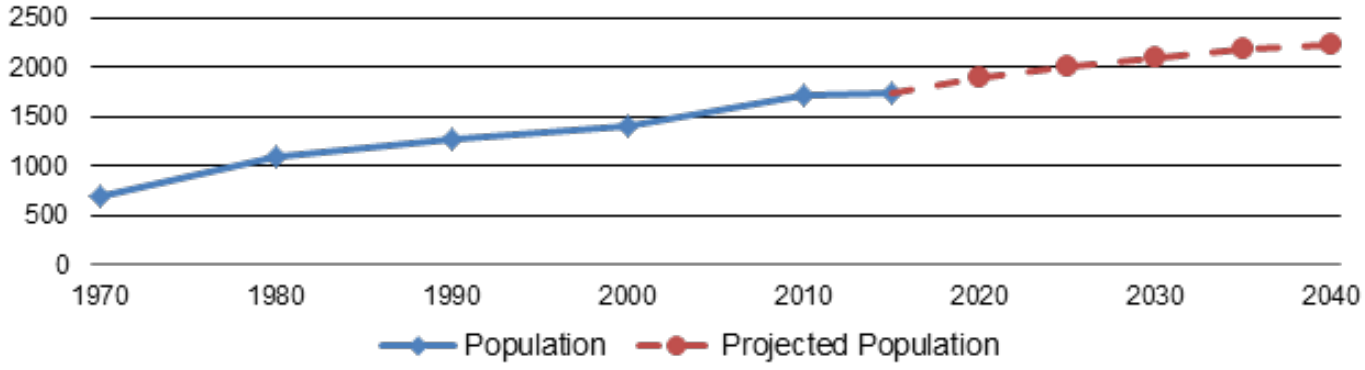
Figure 2-2 and **Table 2-3** includes household projections completed by the WDOA. These projections show that the number of households is expected to grow more quickly than the population, continuing historic trends for decreasing household sizes. The average household size was 2.86 in 2010 and was expected to decrease to 2.60 by 2040. Household growth is expected to continue through the year 2040 for both the county and the town.

Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1980-2010

Minor Civil Division	1980	1990	2000	2010	1980 - 2010 % Change	2000 - 2010 Net Change
Total Population						
Ringle	1,097	1,279	1,408	1,711	55.97%	21.52%
County	111,270	115,400	125,834	134,063	20.48%	6.54%
State	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	20.85%	6.03%
Total Households						
Ringle	333	388	473	619	85.89%	30.87%
County	37,865	41,534	47,402	53,176	40.44%	12.18%
State	1,652,261	1,822,118	2,084,544	2,279,768	37.98%	9.37%
Average Household Size						
Ringle	3.29	3.26	2.98	2.76	-16.11%	-7.38%
County	2.85	2.75	2.6	2.49	-12.63%	-4.23%
State	2.77	2.61	2.5	2.43	-12.27%	-2.80%

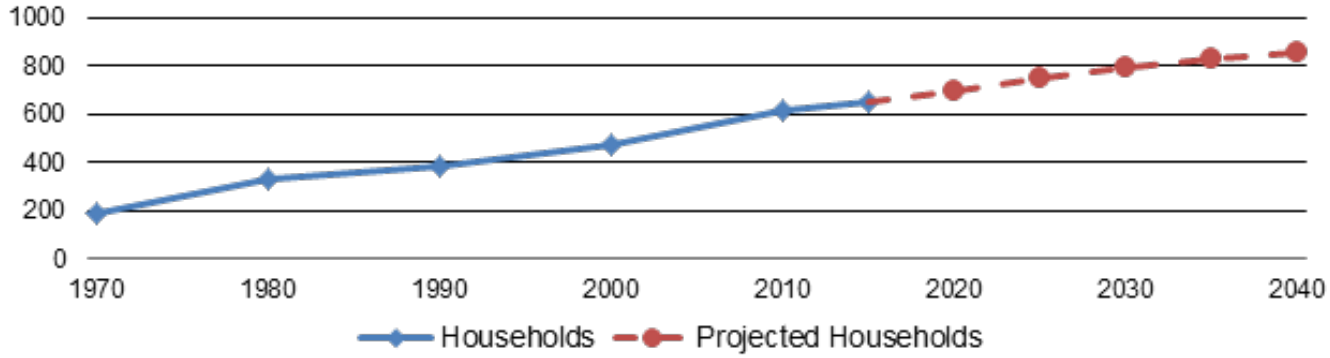
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2010. 2010 U.S. Census DPDP1

Figure 2-1: Town of Ringle Population



Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA

Figure 2-2: Town of Ringle Households



Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA

Table 2-2: Population Projections, 2010-2040

Total Population by Year								
	2010	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**	**2030**	**2035**	**2040**	**% change 2010 - 2040**
Ringle	1,711	1,775	1,900	2,010	2,105	2,180	2,235	31%
County	134,063	136,510	142,200	146,595	150,130	152,120	152,790	14%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Projections, 2013

Table 2-3: Household Projections, 2010-2040

Total Households by Year								
	2010	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**	**2030**	**2035**	**2040**	**% change 2010 - 2040**
Ringle	619	649	700	748	791	829	858	39%
County	53,176	54,657	57,394	59,611	61,524	62,958	63,730	20%

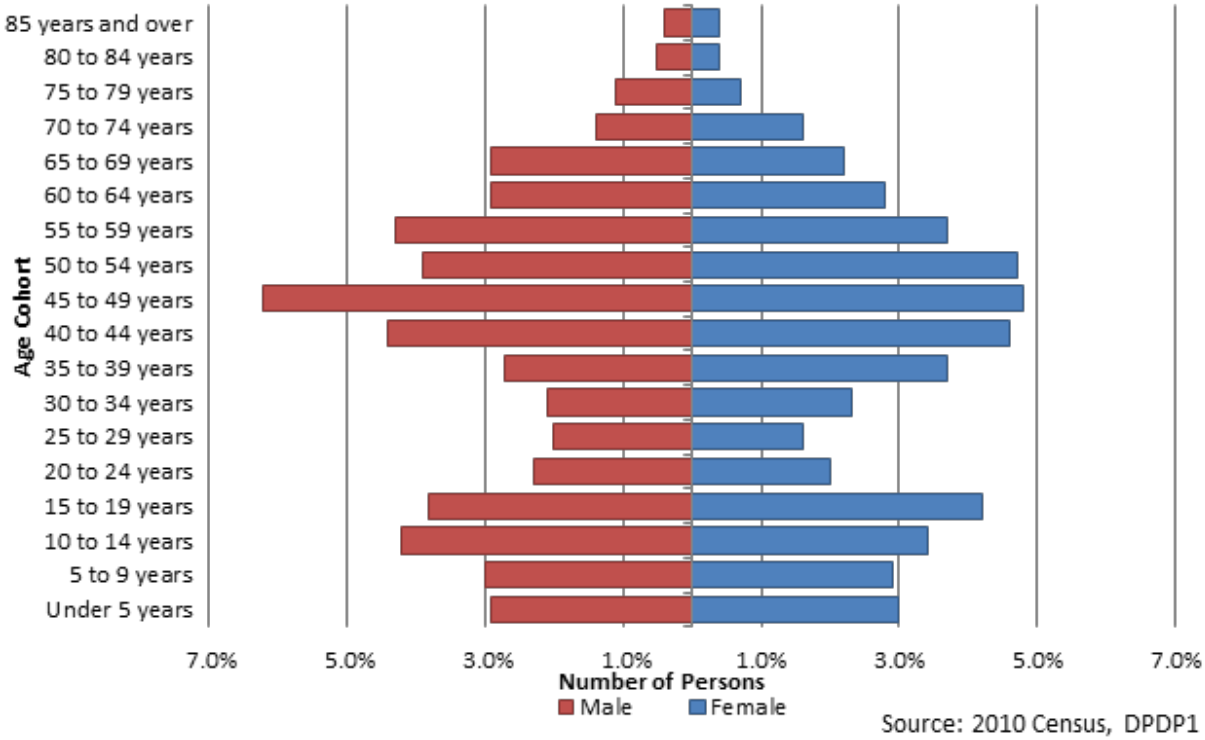
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Household Projections, 2013

Age

Figure 2-3 and 2-4 compare age the distribution of age groups between the Town of Ringle and Marathon County. Ringle varied from the County and State numbers in several categories. Ringle has higher proportion of teenagers and adults aged 40 to 49 than the County and the State. Both Marathon County and the Town of Ringle have a much smaller proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 than the State. Ringle also has a higher proportion of young retirees (60-69), but a lower proportion of those aged 70+.

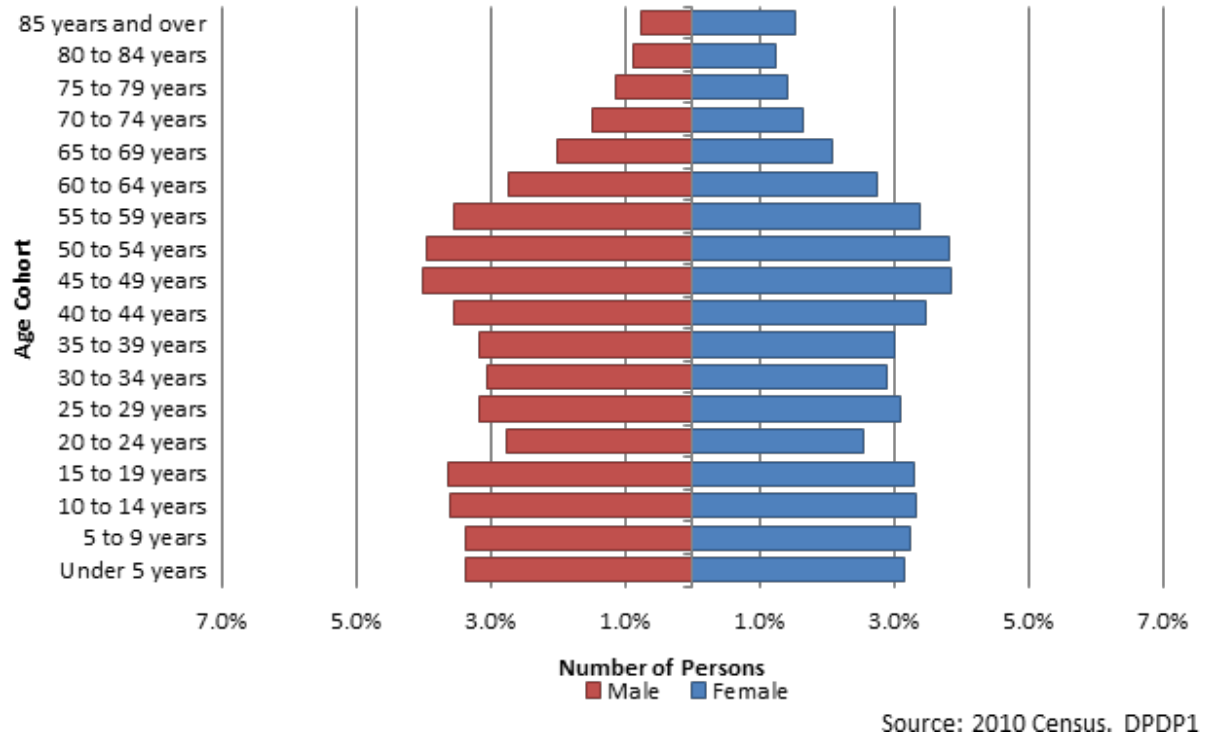
These characteristics contribute to the median age of Ringle being higher than both the County and the State. Ringle has a median age of 42 years, while the State is 38.5 years and the County is 39.4 years. Median age has been increasing over the last two decades as

Figure 2-3: 2010 Town of Ringle Age Cohorts



Source: 2010 Census, DPDP1

Figure 2-4: 2010 Marathon County Age Cohorts



Source: 2010 Census. DPDP1

the population ages, due in large part to the number of baby boomers, who are now entering retirement age. The aging of the population will continue due to the size of the Baby Boomer generation. The Town of Ringle has a large proportion of its population between 40 and 60 years old, and as these groups age the need for services will change.

Education and Income Levels

Education

According to 2008–2012 American Community Survey data, 91.1 percent of Ringle residents that are 25 or older have at least a high school education. This is slightly higher than both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin. However, the proportion of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher is lower than Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin. These comparisons show that there has been growth since 2000, but the proportions relative to the State and County have remained similar.

Figure 2-5 shows that although Ringle has a higher proportion of people with a high school education, it also has a higher proportion of people with high school education as the highest educational attainment. Educational attainment and how it relates to economic development will be discussed in the economic development chapter.

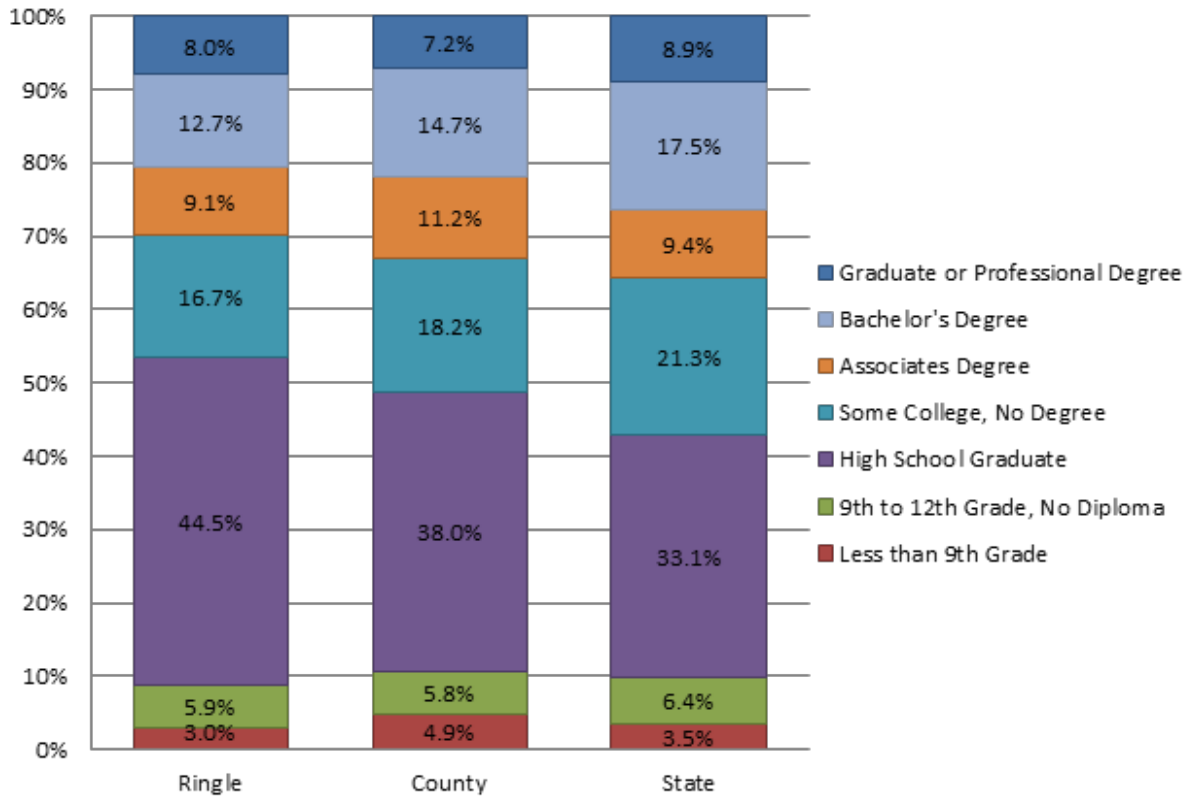
Income

Median household income and per capita income are two commonly used measures of income. Median household income is the income for the middle point of households, meaning half of all households fall below that income, and half are above. Per capita income is the measure of total income per person.

Median household income for Town of Ringle residents was $73,077 in 2012. **Table 2-4** shows that this was substantially higher than Marathon County and the State. Ringle had a substantially higher median household income in 2000 as well, although the gap has widened over the decade. **Table 2-5** shows that the per capita income gap is much smaller between the Town of Ringle and the County or State. Ringle residents had higher proportion of households in income ranges falling between $50,000 and $150,000 than the State and County.

The median household income has declined between 2000 and 2010 in all three jurisdictions after adjusting for inflation to 2012 dollars, but it has declined less in Ringle than the County or State. The per capita income in Ringle has grown since 2000, even after adjusting

Figure 2-5: Educational Attainment, Age 25 and Older, 2010



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Table 2-4: Median Household Income

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	*Net Change	*% Change
Town of Ringle	$57,891	$73,077	-$4,109	-5.32%
Marathon County	$45,165	$53,762	-$6,456	-10.72%
Wisconsin	$43,791	$52,627	-$5,759	-9.86%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 ACS & NCWRPC.
*Adjusted for inflation in 2012 dollars.

Table 2-5: Per Capita Income

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	*Net Change	*% Change
Town of Ringle	$20,210	$29,386	$2,440	9.06%
Marathon County	$20,703	$27,173	-$430	-1.56%
Wisconsin	$21,271	$27,426	-$935	-3.30%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 ACS & NCWRPC.
*Adjusted for inflation in 2012 dollars.

for inflation, while the State and County have declined in the same time period.

Employment Characteristics

Table 2-6 and **2-7** illustrate the breakdown of the employed population and labor force living in Ringle in 2000. The "employed population" is defined as people living in Ringle who are 16 years and older. The labor force in Ringle grew by 22.2 percent between 2000 and 2010, showing a much higher rate of growth than the County and State, but about equal to the rate of population growth in Ringle. The labor force participation rate of Ringle residents 16 and over is higher than the County and State and grew between 2000 and 2010, when the County, State, and most other nearby communities declined. In 2000, Ringle had an employed population of 798, which increased by 18 percent to 940 by 2010. This growth was also at a much higher rate than the County and State, but the population growth in Ringle was also at a higher

Table 2-6: Labor Force

	Labor Force			Labor Force Participation Rate	
Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	2000	2010
Town of Ringle	833	1,018	22.21%	76.8%	77.7%
Marathon county	69,216	74,779	8.04%	74.7%	71.1%
Wisconsin	2,872,104	3,090,671	7.61%	69.1%	68.5%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Table 2-7: Employment

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	Unemployment Rate
Town of Ringle	798	940	17.79%	7.7%
Marathon county	66,550	69,248	4.05%	7.3%
Wisconsin	2,734,925	2,856,318	4.44%	7.5%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

rate. The self-reported unemployment rate in the Town of Ringle, the proportion in the labor force but not working, is marginally higher than the County and State.

As shown in **Table 2-8**, most residents were employed in management business, science, and arts occupations; sales and office; or production, transportation and material moving occupations. Management, business, science and arts occupations; service occupations; and natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations grew as a proportion of occupations while sales and office and production, transportation, and material moving occupations declined as a proportion of all occupations.

Demographic Snapshot

- Ringle has experienced major population growth over the past three decades, growing at a much higher rate than Marathon County or the State of Wisconsin.
- Household growth over the past decade was higher than population growth and higher than the County or State. The average household size is higher than that of the County or State.
- Both population and households in Ringle are expected to continue growth at a higher rate than the County over the next 30 years, but slower than the last 30 years. Households are expected to continue growing faster than population.
- Ringle has more people in the age groups from 40 to 70, but a lower proportion of young adults and adults that are 70 or older. The Town of Ringle has a higher median age than the State and County.
- Ringle has a higher proportion of residents with a high school diploma than the County and State, but a lower proportion of people with any higher education.
- Median household income in Ringle is much higher than either the County or State medians, but per capita income is just slightly higher.
- Despite the higher median age, Ringle has a higher labor force participation rate, which grew between 2000 and 2010, while the State and County declined.

Table 2-8: Resident Occupation 2000 - 2010

Occupation Sector	2000	2010
Management, business, science, and arts occupations**	25.8%	28.0%
Service occupations	10.0%	19.3%
Sales and office occupations	29.8%	22.3%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations**	10.9%	11.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	23.4%	18.5%
Total Employed*	798	940

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administratio; American Community Survey 2008-2012

* "Total Employed" represents employed civilian population 16 years and over

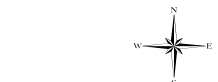
** Some changes may be due to changes in name and categorization of occupations between the 2000 and 2010 Census.

Map 1

Locational

Town of Ringle

Marathon County, Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

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3. NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Since natural resource features do not follow geo-political boundaries, it is important to consider their patterns and inter-relationships on a broader scale. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the county, state or federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions.

Recent Planning Efforts Related to Natural and Agricultural Resources

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by the County specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used as resources to guide local policy and decision making regarding resource management and protection. In addition to the plans listed below, Marathon County and several local communities have adopted park and outdoor recreation plans that discuss natural resource based recreational facilities and protection strategies.

Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2010

The Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of soil and water conservation in Marathon County from 2010 to 2020. The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee identified the following long-term program outcomes for the natural resource protection efforts in Marathon County:

- Land use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts, maximize infrastructure investments, and protect rural character.
- Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.
- Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.

Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as "priority" watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. The County's Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) works with the WDNR to implement the program. Program funding is used to hire staff to assist in developing management plans for each watershed and to provide cost sharing to landowners for implementation of "best management practices" (BMPs) to achieve the program objectives.

Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide, 2001

This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the Marathon County Groundwater Plan in 1988. It is intended to guide local and County officials in setting policy. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.

Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan

This plan includes recommendations to guide management of forest land in Marathon County in accordance with the County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department's mission to manage and protect the sustainability of the county forest for ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources and information regarding the roles of the various agencies and regulatory frameworks related to forest management.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2013 - 2028

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage growth and development in a manner that will preserve the rural character; protect the agricultural base and natural resources; and contribute to the County's overall goal of promoting public safety, health and prosperity within the County. This plan is the primary policy document in directing preservation of agricultural production capacity, farmland preservation, soil and water protection, and future land development while respecting private property rights and individual units of government.

Water Resources

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state while, due to poor water quality, many others suffer from phenomena such as algae blooms and fish kills. Surface water pollution reduces the biodiversity of our streams and lakes, negatively impacting both the natural habitat and the local economy. When surface water is polluted, livability and tourism are negatively affected by reducing or eliminating the ability to fish, swim, or otherwise use the water recreationally.

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) designations are derived from an amendment to the U.S. Clean Water Act, which directed states to identify waters that were largely unaffected by pollution and should remain that way. States were required to develop "anti-degradation" policies to protect these waters from pollution. As a result, wastewater entering an ORW must be as clean as the water in the "outstanding" water body. The anti-degradation policies only apply to point sources of pollution, such as an industrial discharge pipe. However, Wisconsin has other programs in place to control non-point source pollution, such as animal waste and pesticides in farm runoff, urban runoff, and failing septic systems.

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board also wanted to extend higher levels of protection to top trout waters. As such, the WDNR established a second category of waterways to be protected under the anti-degradation policy; these are the ERW. Wastewater entering ERW must meet minimum clean water standards, although higher standards are encouraged where feasible.

There are no ORW in Ringle. ERW in Ringle include:

- Mole Brook
- Various tributaries to the Plover River

Water resources that have been significantly degraded are identified as "impaired waters." Four of the 22 watersheds in Marathon County have been identified as "impaired waters" on the "303 (d) list" of the U.S. Clean Water Act. The list identifies waters that do not meet current water quality standards and need water quality improvement and protection. There are no impaired waters identified in Ringle. The County's resource management planning efforts are described in more detail in the *Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*.

Streams/Rivers

The Eau Claire River crosses the northwest section of Ringle. One tributary, Mole Brook, is classified as ERW. The Plover River crosses the extreme southeastern corner of the Town. Most of the Town falls within the watersheds of the Eau Claire and the Plover and Little Plover Rivers.

The Eau Claire River.
Source: Brad Sippel, NCWRPC

Floodplains

Floodplains shown on the natural resources map consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during the 0.1 annual percent chance (100-year) flood. Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway (the channel of a river used to carry floodwater during a flood) and the flood fringe (the remainder of the floodplain outside of the floodway, generally covered by shallow slow moving waters).

The floodplains in Ringle are generally located between ⅛ and ½ mile around the Eau Claire River, around the Plover River just southwest of the Village of Hatley, and around one of the unnamed tributaries to the Plover River located north of the Village of Hatley. Development should be limited in the floodplains due to the potential for property damage, increased flooding elsewhere, and risk to human life.

Wetlands

Wetlands serve vitally important ecological functions, as well as functions that directly benefit humans. Once damaged, wetlands are difficult and costly to replace. Wetlands protect the quality of surface waters by reducing erosion and intercepting and filtering sediment, excess nutrients, heavy metals and other pollutants. Wetlands also provide natural flood control and damage prevention by reducing flood peaks.

Wetlands are also important sources of food, shelter, breeding, spawning, nesting, and wintering habitats for fish and wildlife. Development in wetlands should be avoided to prevent the loss of these valuable functions. If development in wetlands is unavoidable, existing wetland functions should be replaced in the same sub-watershed through the restoration or creation of additional wetlands or in-lieu-fee mitigation.

Some wet environments are universally perceived as wetlands while others can be recognized and delineated only by trained experts. Wetlands in Wisconsin were defined by the State Legislature in 1978 as: "an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions."

Programs in three levels of government - local, state and federal - regulate activities in wetlands. There are dozens of wetland types in Wisconsin, characterized by vegetation, soil type and degree of saturation or water cover. Some of the more prominent wetland types are:

- Aquatic Bed wetlands contain plants growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6 feet. Plants may include pond-weed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies.
- Marshes are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges and/or giant bur-reed.
- Sedge or "Wet" Meadows wetlands may have saturated soils, rather than standing water, more often than not. Sedges, grasses and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze-weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- Scrub/Shrub wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow and dogwood.
- Forested wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

The largest wetland areas in Ringle are forested and located along rivers and stream tributaries. A large forested wetland with adjacent wet meadows and scrub/shrub areas is located in the south central section of Ringle west of CTH Q. The natural resources map delineates the wetlands in Ringle as identified by the DNR. These are generalized and any specific develop proposals should be evaluated at the site level by a qualified professional to determine the extent of any existing wetlands.

Groundwater

Groundwater supply is variable, being more plentiful in the sandy soils in the west, but scarcer in the east central section where bedrock levels are high. Water quality is good overall.

Soil Resources

Soil Types

There are several soil associations present in the Town. The western portion contains Mosinee-Meadland-Dancy, split by the Eau Claire River, which is bounded by Mahtomedi-Fordum-Sturgeon soils. There is a finger of Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville soils through the center of the Town, with Kennan-Hatley and small amounts of Chetek-Rosholt-Oesterle soil in the southeast.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes in Ringle are located along the glacial moraine between the Eau Claire and Plover Rivers. Steep slopes are generally considered those higher than 12 percent. Steep slopes are more likely to be damaged by development and contribute a greater amount to soil erosion when disturbed.

Soil Erosion

Soil erosion can lead to the loss of prime farm soils and the degradation of water quality due to nutrient runoff. Soil erosion can occur through crop tilling, construction sites, and nonmetallic mining. As the impervious surface of an area increases, storms produce more runoff and increase the erosion due to higher runoff speeds. According to the 2010 Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, susceptibility for soil erosion within Ringle is lower than the average soil loss experienced by Marathon County as a whole, which is two tons lost per acre per year. Three to five tons per acre per year is considered "tolerable," and the watersheds in Ringle show erosion rates between 0 and 1.99 per year. Given that the average allowable soil loss rate for Marathon County is 4.4 tons per acre per year, the susceptibility for soil erosion in Ringle is low, with maximum soil loss of 1.0 – 2.0 tons/acre/year.

Prime Farm Soils

Prime farm soils are divided into classes. These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops, and are shown on the Prime Farmland map as "prime farmland." Class 2 soils, shown as "prime farmland if drained" are also very good agricultural soils, however they may be prone to wetness and are less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The prime farm soils designation simply indicates that these soils are good productive farmland. Farmland of statewide importance do not meet the requirements for prime farmland, but the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection has determined they are important farm soils.

Class 2 prime farm soils predominate in Ringle and are concentrated along the western border and in the northwest, west of CTH Q. Smaller concentrations of Class 1 soils are located along the Plover River in the southeast and between the Eau Claire River and Mole Brook in the north central section.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

According to land cover maps, much of Ringle is covered by woodlands. There are significant sections owned by forest products companies that have public access for recreation. Wetlands, floodplains, and open lands consist of different types of vegetation. Ringle is home to the floodplain forest natural community.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, wild turkeys, bear, badger, wolf, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the County. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to county parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and Rib Mountain State Park.

The Ringle Marsh Forest Unit is a county forest located in Ringle south of STH 29. The Ringle Marsh Unit is a mix of upland forest, primarily aspen, northern hardwoods, red oak, and a few pine/spruce plantations and a large marsh on 3,000 acres of land. A wide variety of wildlife is present in the marsh, including sandhill cranes. The unit is open to recreational hunting, snowmobiling, and hiking.

The sandhill crane uses land in Ringle for habitat.
Image Source: Wikimedia Commons

Threatened and Endangered Species

Threatened and endangered species and communities that have been located within Ringle are listed on the following page. Additionally, there are many species that are associated with the communities listed that may be present in Ringle, as well as species that have been found in Marathon County but not necessarily identified in Ringle. These include the Four-toed Salamander, the Great Egret, the Red-shouldered Hawk, and the Northern Goshawk. Sensitive species have been removed where applicable for the protection of the species.

The Black Redhorse is an ednangered fish found in Ringle
Image Source: John Lyons, Wisconsin DNR

Species

- Henslow's Sparrow - Threatened
- Wood Turtle – Threatened
- Black Redhorse – Endangered

Communities

- Floodplain Forest
- Stream - fast,hard,warm

The Red-shouldered Hawk is a bird listed as threatened that is highly associated with the Floodplain Forest natural community present in Ringle
Image Source: Jim Woodford, Wisconsin DNR

Soil and Water Contamination

The Wisconsin DNR tracks confirmed polluted sites through the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment (BRRTS). The BRRTS only tracks reported contamination, so it is possible that other unreported contamination exists within Ringle, and there may be potential for remediation and redevelopment of contaminated properties.

All but one polluted site identified by the Wisconsin DNR BRRTS within the Town of Ringle has been cleaned and closed. The remaining site, Bogies East Tavern, has ongoing clean up occuring. This open site has private well contamination, groundwater contamination and soil contamination caused by unleaded and leaded gasoline.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources may encompass many components of a community, including a community's heritage, archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to indigenous peoples or other cultural groups. Cultural resources also include arts and the way of life in a community. Cultural resources are those elements around us that signify our heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive.

Brief History of the Town of Ringle

The Town of Ringle is located along the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railroad (later Chicago & Northwestern [CNW]) that was built through the area in 1880. The settlement of Ringle at the intersection of CTH Q and the railroad once contained a sawmill, two general stores and two schools. The Town was known for the Ringle brick yard, which provided the red brick used for buildings in the eastern portion of the County. The brick yard operated until the mid-twentieth century. Ringle was established as a Township in 1901. Early settlers included a colony of Dutch, but the Town also attracted residents of Polish and German heritage in the early years.

Historic Properties

There are no properties in Ringle listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission, however, Ringle does have a newly organized historical society that has begun to investigate the community's heritage.

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties that have been surveyed in the past; the Inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. The AHI includes a farmstead on Duncan Road that was surveyed in 2007.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified two archaeological sites and no known historic cemeteries in Ringle. The Town wishes to cooperate with any future studies done by Marathon County.

Cemeteries, Burial Mounds, Other Burials

Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are currently 133 cemeteries and burial areas identified in Marathon County, and it is likely that other cemeteries and burials may be present. Suspected burial mounds or unmarked burials must be reported to the State Burial Sites Preservation Office. If human remains are uncovered during excavation, all work must cease pending review of the Burial Sites Preservation Office. All cemeteries and burials in Marathon County should

be catalogued under Wis. Stat. 157.70 to provide maximum protection of these sites.

The Arts

Other cultural elements include the arts in a community, such as music or visual arts. The Q and Z expo center regularly hosts both local and nationally known musical acts, and brings people from across central and northern Wisconsin.

Issues

- Water Resource Protection – Development and agriculture adjacent to water resources, such as the Eau Claire River and the Plover River, has the potential to degrade the water quality. When development is proposed near important bodies of water, how soil characteristics affect the storm water runoff and private waste disposal systems needs to be considered for each site.
- County Ownership of Land – While there is a significant amount of land held by Marathon County as county forest, county ownership has not caused a problem for Ringle. If large amounts of land were purchased and removed from the tax rolls, there could be a problem of reduced tax base for Ringle. Until that time, the amount of land set aside has helped to retain a more rural character in some areas of Ringle, and protects wildlife and habitat.
- Environmental Protection – There is a desire to protect woodlands, wetlands, and open space from haphazard and fragmented development.
- Changes in Climate – Local impacts of a changing climate may include changes in the growing season, increased likelihood of droughts and wildfires, higher frequency of strong storms and flooding. These changes may impact the health of the community by changing agriculture, diseases borne by food, water, and wildlife, increasing risks of wildfire, and affecting levels of some air pollutants. It is important for the Town to adapt toand mitigate these changes.
- Invasive Species - Diseases and non-native invasive pests such as Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt have the potential to devastate vegetation in the Town. While Emerald Ash Borer has not yet been found in Marathon County, it has been found in the nearby Counties of Portage, Wood and Oneida and has spread rapidly.
- Lack of Current Information – Although a brief countywide historic properties survey was carried out in 1975-77, there has been no update. Many properties identified at that time may be gone, while other properties not previously surveyed may now be evaluated in a new context. It is necessary for the community to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties. The newly organized historical society in Ringle may be able to initiate, or participate, in this effort.
- No Recognition Process – Outside the City of Wausau, there is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, towns and villages do not have an established mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.
- Rural Character and Historic Resources – In Marathon County, residents have expressed a strong desire to preserve the rural character of the County and raised concerns about increasing ex-urban development and the decline of working farms. An important part of rural character is the rural landscape and the buildings that convey that sense of place. While it is important to address the location and type of new development, there is also a need to preserve some visible reminders of rural character, including working farms. Without preserving some of the existing resources, including farmsteads and farmlands, the very characteristics that attracted residents will increasingly be lost.
- Protection of Archaeological Sites and Cemeteries – Cultural resources planning includes identification and protection of archaeological sites and historic cemeteries. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of reported sites and cemeteries, representing a fraction of sites that are actually present. This information is often overlooked and should be incorporated into the planning process for local communities.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Protect and enhance the Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW), navigable waters, and wetlands in Ringle.

Objectives

- Minimize intensive development in areas that could affect views of, or the water quality and habitat, of ERWs and wetlands.
- Support restoration of native vegetation along ERWs.
- Continue working with the WDNR and Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands and shorelines.
- Provide leadership in disseminating information about wetland preservation and management for Ringle residents.
- Lobby the State Legislature for financial support or tax breaks for property owners who have limited use of natural resources lands.
- Create and maintain public access to navigable waters and recreational assets.

Policies

- Encourage the protection and enhancement of local ERW and wetlands.
- Require new developments adjacent to the Eau Claire River to preserve public access to the river.
- Follow guidance provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to protect waterways.
- Use Wisconsin DNR wetland inventory data to guide development decisions.

Strategies/Actions

- Initiate discussions with the County and WDNR to evaluate current development practices and continue to identify sensitive resources.
- Identify a point person who will be responsible for gathering and distributing wetland information to Ringle residents.
- Work with UW-Extension and WDNR to collect wetland preservation and management information.
- Initiate discussions with the County and State on how to effectively lobby for financial support or tax breaks.
- Work with UW-Extension, the County, and the Wisconsin DNR to implement conservation buffers and restore native plants.
- Develop and maintain access to the Eau Claire River and other navigable waters.
- Work with the Village of Weston and Marathon County to implement the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail vision.

Goal 2: Protect and enhance the woodlands in Ringle.

Objective

- Prevent the fragmentation of large sections of woodlands and encourage good forest practices.

Policies

- Encourage the protection and enhancement of local woodlands.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with UW-Extension, the County, the WDNR, and local branches of the U.S. Forest Service to research and distribute information on good forest practices to local forest land owners.
- Pursue conservation easements and/or purchase of development rights with willing landowners.
- Use zoning and other land use regulatory tools to keep most new development contiguous to existing development.
- Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance to allow the development of conservation subdivisions.

Goal 3: Protect the Town's water resources, including potable water.

Objectives

- Work with WDNR and Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.
- Maintain communication with the WDNR, Marathon County and the landfill operators to ensure that there is no groundwater contamination from the landfill.

- Encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure that water is safe.

Policies

- Support the protection of water resources.

Strategies/Actions

- Develop incentives to encourage conservation subdivisions, such as allowing higher density development under certain conditions.
- Continue yearly testing around the landfill.
- Continue to educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject. Utilize the resources of the WDNR and UW-Extension for this information.
- Regularly remind residents to test their wells, such as including information in an annual newsletter.

Goal 4: Protect and preserve prime farmland for agricultural production.

Objective

- Minimize the fragmentation of farmland by development.
- Use agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce soil erosion, decrease sedimentation into surface waters, and increase proper nutrient crediting to protect the land.

Policies

- Support the protection of prime farmland as an important agricultural resource.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to implement and monitor farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.
- Consider adopting and maintaining a certified farmland preservation zoning district.

Goal 5: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.

Objectives

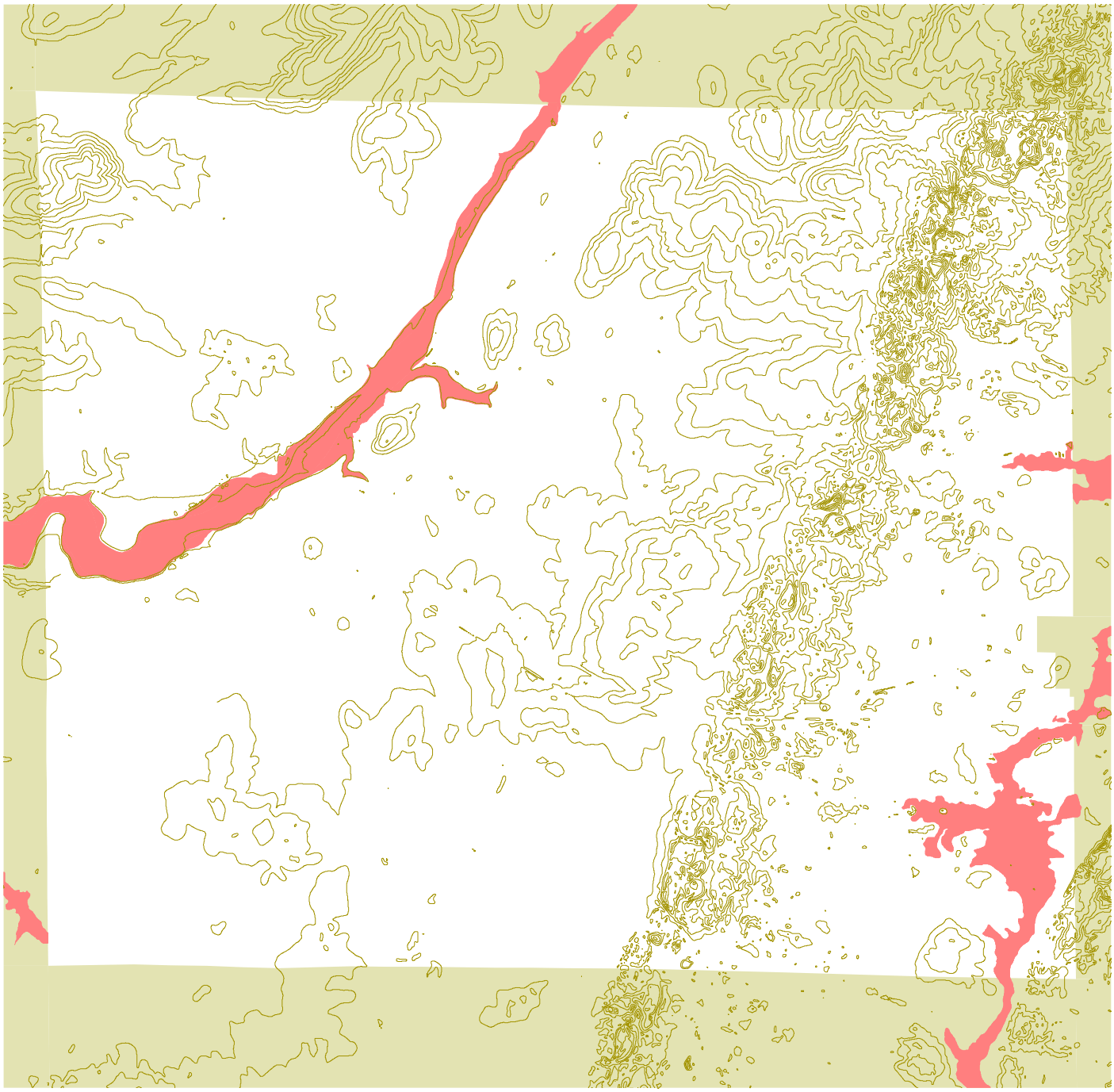
- Work with the local historical society and/or the County Historical Society to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.
- Ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.

Policies

- Support the preservation of historically significant buildings and sites.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Map historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites, and make maps readily available for project planning and development review.



- Rib Mountain State Park - Rib Mountain State Park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and has the following facilities: a picnic area with 65 tables, a camping area with 31 developed sites, 3 hiking trails, a nature trail, and a downhill skiing area with 12 runs, and a reservable shelter.

Future Parks, Trails, and Open Space

- Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail - The Village of Weston and Marathon County have collaborated on a vision for the establishment of the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail. The future development focuses on expanding the use of the Eau Claire River for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, tubing, and swimming. Several existing or proposed access points are located in Ringle, including near Riverside Elementary School, Club House Road, and Ringle Avenue. The plan promotes the improvement of these access points with improved ramps, parking, signage, restrooms, and picnic areas.

- Mountain Bike Trails - The Central Wisconsin Offroad Cycling Coalition has recieved approval and is planning to begin construction on singletrack mountain bike trails around the Marathon County Landfill. This trail development is part of a larger plan to establish the Wausau area as an International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) Ride Center, which is expected to be a large tourism draw.

- Ice Age Trail - The Ice Age Trail has planned segments to still be constructed. There is a planned reroute currently under construction through the Marathon County Landfill to improve the hiking experience and more closely highlight glacial features. There are additional planned reroutes for the Ice Age Trail segments that are north of the landfill. There is also a segment planned in Mission Lake County Park.

Issues

- Limited Water Availability – High bedrock levels make it difficult to dig wells and provide adequate water for residential or other uses, thus limiting development potential in Ringle. Due to the soils in Ringle, the contamination of wells is likely. The well serving Riverview Elementary School has nitrate contamination and is not suitable for drinking.

- Relationship with the County Landfill — The Town of Ringle should continue to work with the County Landfill and the operators to address any issues related to odors, any potential expansion of the operation and to ensure that there are no pollution issues. In particular, the Town will be concerned about the revenues from tipping fees and the resulting impact on fees shared with Ringle. There may also be concerns about types of development that may be appropriate in the area near the landfill. There have also been concerns regarding odors from the landfill, southeast of the landfill property.

- Improve Broadband and Cellular Service – Some Ringle residents have raised concerns about telephone and internet service. Some residents are served by local exchanges and have inadequate access to internet service. Broadband access is vital for the new economy to support people that work from home and to provide the level of service many residents expect. Ringle may need to revise or revisit requirements for telecommunication facilities to accommodate the demand for faster and more reliable cellular and wireless data coverage.

- Private Waste Disposal Systems – Private waste disposal systems are a concern for the future. There are concerns that contamination may occur in the sand and gravelly soils, which are poor systems for on-site waste treatment. Small lot sizes increase the potential for contamination of adjacent wells, but also increase the feasibility of public utility service. Other systems in use are holding tanks and mound systems. Private waste disposal systems are regulated by the County.

- Sewer Districts – In the past, Ringle investigated establishing a sewer district for a small, defined area. Although this was not pursued, it may be a tool to consider in some locations if the development pressure continues and there is adequate density of development to make a sewer district feasible. The town may be able to cooperate with the Village

of Weston for sanitary sewer extensions. Any new sewer districts or expansion of existing sewer districts will require approval of the WDNR. If a sewer district is established the Town may need to revise its zoning code to increase the allowable density for lots within the sewer district to ensure the sewer service is efficient and cost effective.

- Park Development — Ringle residents have identified a need to plan for future parkland in the Town. There is some interest in having a shelter, or place for holding events. There is also some support for providing ball fields, as well as play equipment in a park. The Town already owns land that could be developed for park purposes. There are other jurisdictions working on park development in the Ringle area, and Ringle should collaborate with these entities to develop the parks. The County and the Central Wisconsin Offroad Cycling Coalition are currently planning to develop mountain bike trails at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. Multiple jurisdictions are also collaborating to develop access to the Eau Claire River and establish it as a water trail, known as the Eau Claire River Water Trail Vision.
- Park Funding— Residents have discussed options for funding the acquisition and maintenance of parks. Some options that may be explored include accepting park donations from developers, charging fees on new development that are earmarked for a park fund, or developing parks on property owned by the Town. Options for both park acquisition and maintenance should be considered before proceeding with development of any parks.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Ensure a sufficient supply of potable water.

Objectives

- Discourage concentrated development in areas with limited water availability.
- Work with the WDNR and Marathon County to protect critical groundwater recharge areas.
- Proactively plan and identify any areas that may have public water systems in the future.

Policy

- Support the maintenance and protection of the drinking water supply.

Strategies/Actions

- Identify and map areas within the Town that have limited water supply.
- Work with the DNR and the County to identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.
- Zone or place development regulations on areas that have limited water supply or are within a critical groundwater recharge area.
- Identify potential future development areas, and ensure that adequate water is available.

Goal 2: Maintain a good working relationship with the County Landfill and the operators.

Objective

- Continue to use the solid waste committee to work with the landfill and its operators.
- Anticipate revenue levels for Town programming and budgeting purposes.
- Discuss and determine appropriate development in the area of the Landfill.

Policies

- Maintain a good working relationship with the County Landfill and its operators.

Strategies/Actions

- Plan regular meetings of the Solid Waste Committee.
- Involve County and local planners in discussion about development surrounding the Landfill.

Goal 3: Improve telecommunication services as population density increases.

Objectives

- Determine whether there are opportunities to hook into fiber optic systems and improve wireless services.
- Keep ordinances up to date regarding the regulation of telecommunication facilities.
- Advocate for additional provision of services when needed.

Policy

- Support the investigation and implementation of improved telecommunication services.

Strategies/Actions

- Contact local service providers to determine opportunities to hook into existing fiber optic systems.
- Regularly survey residents to determine need for improved telecommunication services.

Goal 4: Plan for efficient, safe, and environmentall sound on-site sanitary waste disposal in Ringle.

Objectives

- Ensure that lot size requirements are adequate for private waste disposal systems to prevent well contamination and environmental degradation.
- Ensure that on-site waste disposal systems will not have negative effects on wetlands, rivers or streams in Ringle.
- Consider the creation/expansion of a sewer district in defined areas (Ringle village, River Road areas) if lot sizes and density make it a feasible option.

Policies

- Encourage appropriate and efficient use of on-site sanitary waste disposal systems.
- Encourage property owners to have soil surveys performed prior to building.
- Use USDA and NRCS soil data to guide decision making for developments

Strategies/Actions

- Develop lot size and buffer guidelines for installing waste disposal systems within a certain distance from wetlands, rivers, or streams.
- Identify or hire staff to monitor waste disposal systems on a regular basis.
- Investigate and plan desired lot sizes and density in the Ringle village and River Road areas. Use this information to determine if sewer district expansion is feasible.

Goal 5: Support and maintain existing community facilities.

Objective

- Maintain the Town Hall as a seat of local government and community meeting hall.

Policy

- The Town of Ringle recognizes the importance of the Town Hall as a gathering place for the community and as a government center of the Town.

Strategies/Actions

- Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis.

Goal 6: Ensure sufficient fire service protection.

Objectives

- Continue to support the volunteer fire department and maintain and improve fire equipment.
- Maintain an adequate number of trained volunteer fire department staff.

Policies

- The Town of Ringle recognizes the importance of a well-trained, well-equipped, and well-staffed volunteer fire department.

Strategies/Actions

- Develop a list of improvements or new equipment that is needed by the fire department. Prioritize needs.
- Develop criteria for the minimum number of fire people needed on staff to adequately to serve the area.

Goal 7: Ensure adequate emergency response.

Objective

- Maintain current contracts for ambulance service and review if community needs or response times change.

Policy

- Require the maintenance of adequate emergency response.

Strategies/Actions

- Regularly record, review, and audit emergency response times.
- Meet annually to determine if existing service is adequate.

- Initiate conversations with surrounding communities about service-sharing, if applicable.

Goal 8: Support the Marathon County park and forest systems that serve Ringle residents.

Objective

- Encourage appropriate funding for maintenance and improvements of local Marathon County parks and forests.

Policy

- The Town of Ringle recognizes the county park and forest systems as an important asset to the community.

Strategies/Actions

- Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements or maintenance to local County parks and forests.
- Work with the county to set up a local volunteer program for surrounding parks, to generate local interest in the park and help the County with small maintenance issues (i.e. trash pick-up, trail clearing, etc.)

Goal 9: Provide adequate park and recreation space to serve new and existing residents.

Objectives

- Investigate options for funding park land acquisition and maintenance.
- Identify what recreational facilities are needed in Ringle.
- Identify potential locations for parks that can meet recreational needs.
- Support the establishment of the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail vision.
- Support the establishment of mountain bike trails in Ringle.

Policies

- The Town of Ringle recognizes the need for local parks system.
- Support the investigation and implementation of parklands in the Town.
- Support shared use of school property for recreational purposes.

Strategies/Actions

- Create a local parks committee to initiate and carry through with these actions.
- Consider updating land division ordinances to require parkland dedication or fee-in-lieu of dedication.
- Continue to evaluate the need for additional parks as development/population increases.
- Survey residents for potential improvements to parkland currently owned by the Town of Ringle.
- Work with the Village of Weston, Town of Weston, City of Wausau, City of Schofield, Wisconsin DNR and Marathon County to implement the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail vision.
- Coordinate with Marathon County and Central Wisconsin Offroad Cycling Coalition (CWOCC) on the development of mountain bike trails on the Marathon County landfill property and adjacent land.

Goal 10: Develop a meeting place for community activities.

Objectives

- Provide a shelter house or other park facility that can accommodate group activities.
- Clarify public use policies of the existing small park.

Policies

- Support the planning and construction of a meeting place for community activities.

Strategies/Actions

- Investigate possible areas for a new park facility that can accommodate group activities (perhaps include as a question on the survey mentioned in Goal #2)
- Create and adopt clearer guidelines for use of the existing small park.
- Post signs with these new park regulations.

Goal 11: Use the Mountain-Bay Trail to encourage development of other recreational facilities.

Objective

- Ensure that other park or recreational development is coordinated with, and takes advantage of the trail.

Policies

- Encourage complimentary recreational development adjacent to the Mountain-Bay Trail.
- Support the development of mountain bike trails at the Marathon County landfill property.

Strategies/Actions

- Initiate conversations with trail officials to help identify areas along the trail that may be suitable for other recreational development.
- Consider purchasing land adjacent to the trail for new Town recreation facilities.

Map 4

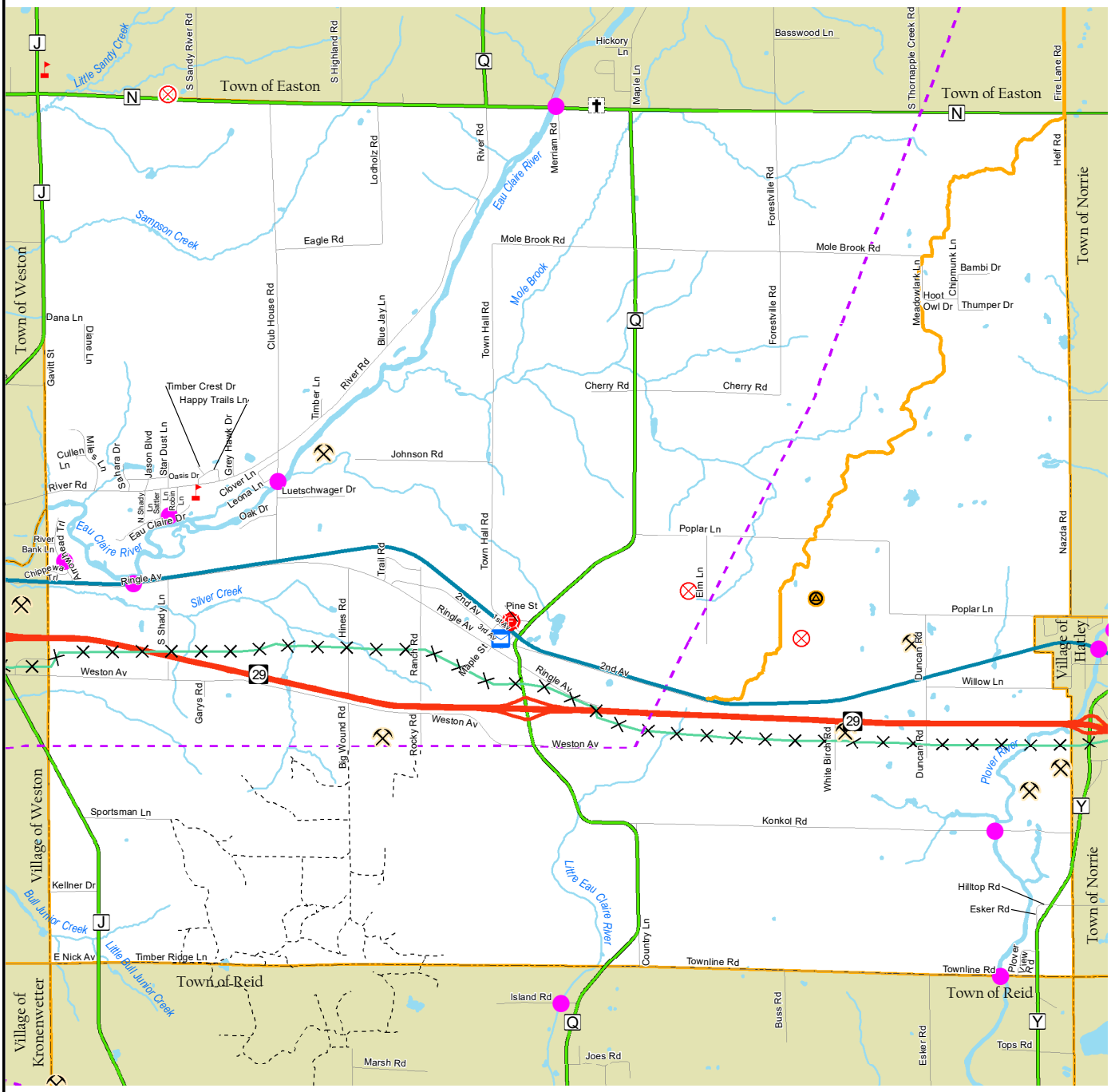
Utilities & Community Facilities

Town of Ringle

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Abandoned Landfill
- Cemeteries
- Fire Station
- Landfill
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Post Office
- Schools
- Town Halls
- High Voltage Powerline
- Gas & Oil Pipeline
- Ice Age Trail
- Mountain-Bay State Trail
- Ringle Forest Unit Trails
- Public Water Access



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co, 2015 Airphoto interpretation

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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6. TRANSPORTATION

A community's transportation system consists of a variety of roads; some are owned and maintained by local officials, others are part of the County or State road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system includes separate facilities for pedestrians (e.g., sidewalks), bicyclists (e.g., trails), railroads, airports, and public transit.

The transportation system in Ringle appears to meet resident needs and functions adequately, but conditions have deteriorated over the last decade. In a 2002 survey of residents, transportation needs did not appear as a major concern. Of the approximately 160 residents who returned surveys, only about 20 percent identified roads (unpaved, needing repair, or roads in winter) as an issue. A similar percentage identified various road improvements as priorities.

Recent Plans and Studies Related to Transportation

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the body designated by the Federal Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO. The County also does transportation planning for areas outside the Wausau metropolitan area. Local governments, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission are also responsible for transportation planning in the area.

Connections 2030

Connections 2030 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. Adopted in 2009, the plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

Regional Livability Plan

Transportation is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Transportation Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the transportation network through the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing transportation. The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the modes of transportation to work, the age of drivers in the region, and the high transportation maintenance cost. The three transportation goals of the Plan are as follows:

- Goal 6: Provide and improve transportation access to people of all ages and abilities to ensure lifelong mobility and accessibility.
- Goal 7: Fund the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.
- Goal 8: Enhance the regional economy by supporting airports and freight rail.

Transportation Improvement Program 2016-2019

The TIP includes all programmed transportation projects receiving Federal and/or State funds. The TIP is updated every two years.

State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review

This plan was prepared in 1997 by a multi-departmental team working with communities along the STH 29 corridor in the western part of Marathon County. The primary goal was to identify recommendations to allow local communities to protect STH 29 from impacts related to unplanned growth.

Marathon County Functional/Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study

This 1998 plan identifies and groups classes of roadways that provided similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway's function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.

Wausau Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

This plan analyzes and makes recommendations for improving bicycling and walking in the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization boundaries. This plan incorporates the 5 E's concept of planning for non-motorized transportation in the Wausau metro area, they are: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation. The plan also uses a perceived cyclist stress factor for the roads to help determine which roads are more desirable for people to ride on. These then are used to create a list of infrastructure improvements for the metro

communities to develop and enhance their non-motorized transportation network.

Marathon County Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

This plan analyzes service gaps and needs in public transit and human services transportation then proposes strategies to address the gaps and needs. A five-year work plan was written to cover 2014 through 2018.

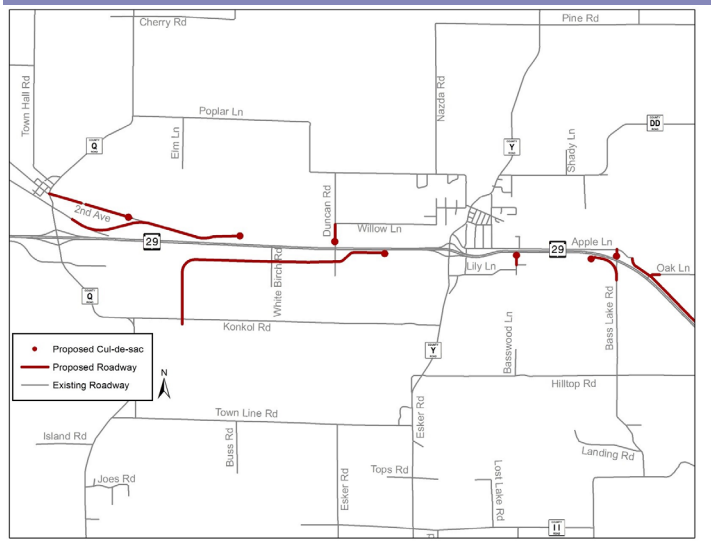
Marathon County Transportation Program Needs Assessment

The study, prepared by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, was completed in October 2014. The study looked at transportation services for elderly and disabled residents within the Wausau area provided by the Marathon County Transportation Program and MetroRide. This study identified numerous issues and deficiencies with regard to providing demand responsive services for persons in the Greater Wausau Area and Marathon County. The study also provides a plan and recommendations for enhancing paratransit services over a five-year period primarily.

WIS 29 Corridor Preservation Plan, Ringle to Wittenberg

This plan proposes removing all at grade access on WIS 29, constructing cul-de-sacs at 14 locations, constructing additional grade-seperated crossings and an additional interchange. The preferred alternative proposes some access changes to Duncan Road, 2nd Avenue, Ringle Avenue, and a new road connecting White Birch Road and Duncan Road to Konkol Road. **Figure 6-1** shows a preferred future alternative for corridor manamgement.

Figure 6-1: Wisconsin Highway 29 Preferred Alternative



Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Road Network

Classification

Functional

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (i.e. principal arterials), are facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), while at the lower limits are local roads and streets that emphasize access over speed and efficiency.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

- Principal Arterials serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population or connect major centers of activity and the highest traffic volumes and the longest trip desires.
- Minor Arterials, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intracommunty continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.
- Collectors provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from the arterials through the area to the local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from the local streets and channel it onto the arterial system.
- Local Streets comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order of systems. Local streets offer then highest level of access, but the lowest level of mobility for automobiles.

Jurisdictional

Roads are commonly classified in one of two ways: by ownership or by purpose. Jurisdictional responsibility refers to ownership of a particular road, while

functional classification, as described above, identifies the road by the level of service it provides.

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some state owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a "Federal-aid highway" does not alter its ownership or jurisdiction as a State or local road, only that its service value and importance have made that road eligible for Federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.

Ownership is divided among the federal, state, and local governments. States own over 20 percent of the national road network. The federal government has responsibility for about 5 percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on State and Federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the State generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation.

Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in Ringle. All major roads are summarized by functional classification, jurisdiction, and annual average daily traffic (AADT), when available.

Looking at AADT over time can provide some insight into roads that may need upgrading or increased maintenance in the future. The AADT on most roads with counts in Ringle has remained fairly steady County Highway J had a large increase in AADT between 1998 and 2013, at 53 percent. Ringle Avenue had a modest increase of 300 vehicles per day over the same 12 year period. Traffic volumes on STH 29 increased modestly between 1998 and 2001, but have remained relatively steady between 2001 and 2010.

State Trunk Highway 29

STH 29 is an east-west, four-lane divided principal arterial. STH 29 runs through southern Ringle providing access to the Wausau metropolitan area to the west and Green Bay to the east. Grade-separated interchanges with CTH Q and CTH Y provide access to STH 29. West of the CTH Q interchange STH 29 access is controlled, whereas, east of this interchange at grade access is allowed at White Birch Road and Duncan Road. Corridor preservation plans created by

Table 6-1: STH 29/CTH Q Interchange Ramp AADT

Location	2001 AADT	2016 AADT
Westbound on-ramp	440	440
Westbound off-ramp	210	240
Eastbound on-ramp	280	270
Eastbound off-ramp	490	440

Source: Wisconsin DOT

Table 6-2: STH 29/CTH Y Interchange Ramp AADT

Location	2016 AADT
Westbound on-ramp	1,600
Westbound off-ramp	240
Eastbound on-ramp	210
Eastbound off-ramp	1,400

Source: Wisconsin DOT

WisDOT indicate that direct access to STH 29 from these roads will likely be removed in the future.

East of Duncan Road, STH 29 had an AADT volume of 9,400 in 1998, 12,100 in 2001, and 12,000 in 2013. East of CTH Q, the AADT volume on STH 29 was 9,000 in 1998, 11,900 in 2001, and 11,800 in 2013, a 31 percent increase in volume. **Table 6-1** shows the 2001 and 2016 ramp counts for the STH 29 and CTH Q interchange, showing very little change in that time period. **Table 6-2** shows ramp counts at the recently constructed CTH Y interchange.

County Trunk Highway N

- CTH N is an east-west major collector and the northern boundary of the Town. CTH N had an AADT volume between Forestville Road and Thornapple Creek Road of 1,400 in 1998, 1,600 in 2001, and 1000 in 2010. Between Sandy River Road and Clubhouse Road, CTH N had an AADT volume of 2,000 in both 1998 and 2001, and a volume of 1,600 in 2010.

Ringle Avenue

- Ringle Avenue is designated as a major collector within Ringle. Ringle Avenue parallels STH 29 and had an AADT volume east of CTH J of 1,600 in 1998, 1,200 in 2001, and 1,900 in 2010. The 2010 count just west of CTH J in Weston was 6,200,

showing the traffic varies drastically between the east and west sides of CTH J.

County Trunk Highway Q

- CTH Q is a minor collector connecting to STH 29 to the south and CTH N to the north. Between Town Hall Road and Poplar Road, CTH Q had an AADT volume of 490 in 1998, 470 in 2001, and 560 in 2010. Between Ringle Avenue and STH 29, CTH Q had an AADT volume of 880 in 1998, 960 in 2001, and 920 in 2010. South of Weston Avenue, CTH Q had an AADT of 860 in 1998, 750 in 2001, and 690 in 2010.

Count Trunk Highway J

- CTH J is a major collector that serves as the western boundary in the northwest corner of the Town and diagonals eastward into Ringle's southwestern corner. South of Weston Avenue, CTH J had an AADT volume of 1,700 in 1998, 1,600 in 2001, 1,900 in 2010, and 2,600 in 2013.

County Trunk Highway Y

- CTH Y is a major collector that travels through the southeastern corner of Ringle. This section of CTH Y had an AADT volume of 1,500 in 1998, 1,600 in 2001, and 1,700 in 2010. CTH Y intersects with STH 29 just east of the Town.

Crashes

According to data compiled by the Traffic Safety Commission, most crashes in Ringle occur on County Highway N and State Highway 29, including several fatal crashes on each road between 2001 and 2016. There were also two fatal crashes that occurred on County Highway Q, one at the intersection of County Highway Q and Poplar Road in 2013, and one South of Konkol Road in 2003. There were no bicycle or pedestrian crashes reports during this time period.

Road Maintenance

The Town has a capital improvements program for maintenance and utility planning. Budgeting is done on an annual basis within the framework of the five-year program. No program has been undertaken to plan, or systematically connect new roadways. However, the Plan Commission encourages developers to connect local roads to main routes and not create cul-de-sacs in new developments.

In Ringle, 52.8 miles of roads are paved, while 16.6 miles are gravel. The construction of STH 29 resulted in a number of dead-end roads in the Town, as access to the State Highway was terminated. Speed limits in Ringle are generally 45 mph. There are no problem intersections identified.

The expense of road reconstruction is high since rebuilding roads in Ringle often requires hauling in sand and gravel to create a solid base. The Town provides snowplowing service.

WisDOT maintains road surfaces ratings on a scale of 1 to 10 through the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) system. This scale is broken down as follows:

"1" and "2" = very poor condition

"3" = poor condition

"4" and "5" = fair condition

"6" and "7" = good condition

"8" = very good condition

"9" and "10" = excellent condition

Table 6-3: Pavement Surface Condition Summary

Road Pavement Type	Road Condition	Miles of Road
Sealcoat or Gravel Road	Total	17.51 miles
	Failed	12.38
	Poor	0.36
	Fair	0.08
	Good	4.09
	Excellent	0.60
Asphalt or Concrete Road	Total	51.89 miles
	Failed	0
	Very Poor	1.52
	Poor	3.83
	Fair	8.62
	Good	20.85
	Very Good	10.53
	Excellent	6.54

Source: WisDOT Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) 2017

As shown in **Table 6-3**, the majority of roads in the Town are paved with either asphalt or concrete. 2016 data from the WISLR rating system in WisDOT shows 18 miles of road are rated as poor or worse condition

in 2016, which is up from four miles in 2004. 34 miles are rated fair or good, up slightly from 29 miles in 2004. 18 miles are rated very good or excellent, down from 28 miles in 2004.

Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below "Fair" should be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. Roads that display a surface rating of "Good" or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to maintain safe travel conditions. Those roads without data should be examined to ensure safe travel conditions exist along these routes. A majority of the roads in the Town are rated in "Good" or better condition and will require only preventative maintenance.

Land Use and Transportation

Land use and transportation have a reciprocal relationship. Both the use and the pattern of land use affects the demand for transportation to and from a given geographic area and the viability of the various modes of transportation. Likewise, improved transportation facilities affect land use decisions. Scattered development can make public transportation inefficient and can isolate vulnerable populations that are unable to drive.

Land Use and Development

On average, single-family residential uses generate about ten trips per dwelling unit per day.

The amount of traffic generated from new households and employment will depend on the location of new development in relation to typical trip destinations.

Access Management

Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize the relationship between highway operations and the use of abutting lands. Under Chapter 233, the WisDOT was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining State trunk highways or connecting highways. Regulations enacted by WisDOT establish the principles of subdivision review. They require new subdivisions to: (1) have internal street systems; (2) limit direct vehicular access to the highways from individual lots; (3) establish building setbacks; and (4) establish access patterns for remaining unplatted land.

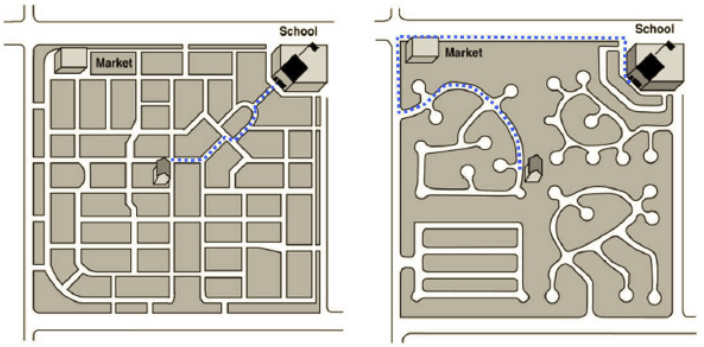
Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered County road. The County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. The policy is available through the Marathon County Highway Department. The Town of Ringle issues driveway permits on local roads and has no spacing requirements.

Connectivity

Providing a strong connected network of roads and pedestrian facilities can help distribute traffic, reduce travel distances and times, improve routing for transit and reduce walking distances. Good connectivity also provides better routing opportunities for emergency and delivery (solid waste, recycling, snow plow, mail) vehicles. They can also reduce speeding and increase safety. All of these effects can play a positive role in reducing congestion and traffic on the street network.

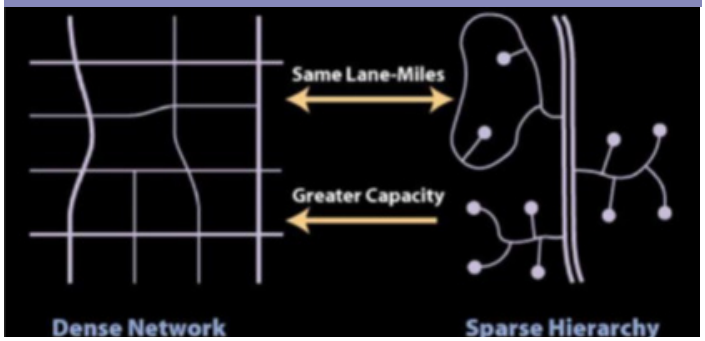
Connectivity is achieved by providing connections within individual developments, between developments and by having a well planned collector road network to compliment the arterial highway network. Well connected road networks typically have shorter road lengths with more intersections, minimize the use of dead-end streets, strategically use but minimize cul de sacs, create bicycle and pedestrian connections, and offer multiple options in route choice. **Figure 6-2** demonstrates the difference

Figure 6-2: Connectivity and Trip Distance



Source: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. Street Connectivity Zoning and Subdivision Model Ordinance

Figure 6-3: Connectivity and Capacity



Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Strategic Regional Throughfare Plan

between a well connected street network on the left, and a poorly connected network on the right. Research has also shown that a network of many small highly connected streets has the same number of lane miles, but higher capacity than a less connected network of large streets, as demonstrated in **Figure 6-3**.

Trip Patterns

The Town has convenient access to the Wausau metropolitan area and specifically to Weston. Three parallel roads in Ringle run west to Weston, including STH 29, River Road, and Ringle Avenue, while CTH N runs west into Wausau. Residents are likely to do their shopping in the Wausau area.

Rustic Roads

The Wisconsin Rustic Roads program was created to provide hikers, bicyclists and motorists an opportunity to leisurely travel through the state's scenic countryside. Rustic roads may be dirt, paved or gravel and should be lightly traveled, have outstanding natural features along its borders, and are at least two miles long. River Road in Ringle has the potential to be designated as a rustic road, and it may be worth exploring this designation as a way to promote tourism and recreation in this area.

River Road is a scenic local road in Ringle that is popular with bicyclists and may be suitable as a rustic road.
Source: Brad Sippel, NCWRPC

Other Transportation Modes

Pedestrian

There are no public sidewalks in Ringle. Pedestrians may share the road with motor vehicles, although many perceive that this is unsafe and it therefore reduces the potential to walk to destinations, thereby increasing the number of local trips taken by car. Paved shoulders and sidewalks may serve to improve both the real and perceived safety for pedestrians. Given the presence of an elementary school and some fairly clustered residential areas, providing some additional pedestrian infrastructure and safety measures connecting residential areas to the elementary school may enhance the safety and viability of children walking to school.

Numerous studies show that children that walk to school perform better, and safe routes to school improve the opportunities and safety for children to walk or bike to school.[1] According to crash data available from the Transportation Operations and Safety Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, there have been no recorded pedestrian crashes in Ringle between 2001 and 2015. However, perceptions of safety keep many people that would like to walk from doing so.

Figure 6-4: Connecting Rural Town Centers and Neighborhoods

Connecting neighborhoods to destinations in the Town with low stress facilities for bicycles and pedestrians is important.
Source :FHWA Small Town and Rural MultiModal Networks

Bicycle

Bicycling is a very economical and efficient mode of transportation. All roads within the town, except

1 http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/what-are-health-benefits-children-who-walk-or-bicycle-school. Accessed 2017

portions of STH 29, are open to bicycles. However, perceptions of safety keep many people that would like to bicycle from doing so. Providing safe facilities for bicycling usually attracts people to bicycle that wouldn't do so without those facilities. While many destinations in the Weston and Wausau area are outside of comfortable bicycling distance for most Ringle residents, the land use pattern of Ringle means there are destinations and residential areas within the Town that are within an easy and comfortable bicycling distance of each other, including the elementary school and the Ringle village area.

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin, 1996 identified recommended bicycle routes in Marathon County. These recommended routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as designated bicycle routes. Suggested routes in Ringle include CTH Q, CTH N, River Road, and the Mountain-Bay Trail. These roads are popular with bicyclists and adopting and signing them as routes may improve safety and ease of navigation and wayfinding for bicyclists.

The Wisconsin DOT rates the suitability of state and county highways for bicycle travel, most recently in 2015. Most county highways in Ringle are rated as "best condition," however, CTH N west of CTH Q and CTH J are rated as undesirable. Since many of the town roads in Ringle lack the necessary connectivity, bicyclists must travel on the county highways to reach most regional destinations. The Town should support the improvement of county highways and addition of wide paved shoulders for bicycle and pedestrian travel. The following image demonstrates ways in which connectivity for bicycles and pedestrians can be improved between destinations.

The Mountain-Bay Trail runs through Ringle along an abandoned railroad corridor. The trail connects Weston in the west to Green Bay in the east, allowing for regional travel and bicycle tourism. The plans for the Mountain Bay Trail are to eventually connect to Rib Mountain. The Ice Age National Scenic Trail also intersects with the Mountain Bay Trail near the Marathon County Landfill. The Mountain Bay Trail also serves as a high quality and safe bicycle and pedestrian connection between Ringle and Weston when it is not snow covered. New road crossings of the trail are limited.

There have been no bicycle crashes reported in the Town of Ringle between 2001 and 2015.

The Mountain Bay Trail runs through Ringle.
Source :Brad Sippel, NCWRPC

Transit

There is no general transit service in Ringle. Elderly, needy, and disabled transit service is provided throughout the County through North Central Health Care (NCHC). The services include semi-fixed routes that are scheduled, and demand services available with a 48-hour notice.

Rail

There is no rail access within the Town of Ringle.

Airports

The Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services, connecting to Chicago, Minneapolis, Detroit, and Milwaukee. The CWA is located east of Mosinee and accessible via I-39.

Issues

- Funding – Future road maintenance, improvement costs and funding options may be limited, depending on state aid availability.
- Maximizing Mountain-Bay Trail benefits — Although the Mountain-Bay Trail runs through Ringle, there have been limited opportunities to provide amenities or derive other benefits from the Trail. Businesses, especially tourism related businesses such as bed and breakfast establishments, campgrounds, and restaurants near the trail have the potential to benefit from both Ringle residents as well as people using the trail. Providing amenities and signage near the trail may encourage trail users to stop in Ringle and patronize local businesses.
- Road Crossings of the Mountain-Bay Trail – The State of Wisconsin has sought to limit additional road crossings of the Trail. As a result, some landowners with larger developable parcels that require new streets may not have adequate access and may find their parcels landlocked if they need access across the Trail.
- Paving Gravel Roads –When paving gravel roads, there are many factors that should be taken into consideration, such as traffic volume, maintenance costs, costs to pave the road, and the importance of the road to the public. The Town should consider adopting policies whether to pave gravel roads to ensure the process to pave roads is fair and objective.
- Changing Transportation Systems – New technologies including electric vehicles (EVs), plug-in hybrids, and autonomous (driverless) vehicles have been rapidly advancing and growing in popularity. It is necessary to adapt to these changes by updating ordinances and road standards to reflect the needs of these new technologies.
- Connectivity – Connectivity of town roads is an important issue as more development occurs. Many town roads are dead ends, some due to natural constraints such as creeks, rivers, and tributaries, which forces traffic onto collector and arterial roads, increasing the likelihood of congestion and delays due to traffic volumes, road closures, or incidents. The Town should plan new road segments where feasible to connect existing roads as development occurs, to reduce the dependence on arterial highways for local trips and provide alternative routes for road users. The lack of connectivity also makes bicycle and pedestrian travel more difficult.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Improve traffic safety within the Town.

Objective

- Prevent situations which make crashes more likely to occur.

Policy

- Encourage improved traffic safety within the Town.

Strategies/Actions

- Consider traffic calming in areas with more population, destinations, trips, or crashes.
- Use existing guidelines to review driveway access along Town roads.
- Evaluate speed limits as population grows.
- Evaluate the safety of roads and intersections
- Coordinate with law enforcement, Marathon County and WisDOT when crashes occur to identify potential contributing factors to crashes and correct them.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve town roads.

Objectives

- Continue the annual road budgeting process so that maintenance and improvements can be programmed and adequately funded.
- Formalize criteria for determining when and if roads should be paved, at such time that documentation is necessary for efficient planning.

Policies

- Support programs to help maintain and improve the condition of Town roads.
- Use road rating systems, such as PASER and WISLR, to prioritize maintenance and improvements to town roads.

Strategies/Actions

- Develop and adopt specific criteria/thresholds to assist in the decision-making process of whether or not to pave a roadway.
- Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.
- Continue focus on blacktopping roads with high traffic.

Goal 3: Ensure that new development will not have negative impacts on the local road network or create traffic issues within the Town.

Objectives

- Incorporate road planning into development review processes.
- Use existing subdivision and road ordinances to guide road planning and access to Town roads in new development.
- Plan for connected road networks.

Policies

- Plan for the relationship between roads and new development.
- Encourage the inclusion of facilities for non-motorized transportation into new subdivision designs.
- Encourage well connected internal road networks for new subdivisions.
- Ensure new subdivisions provide adequate right of way to connect to adjacent land that may be developed in the future.
- Require connections to adjacent or nearby roads.

Strategies/Actions

- Make roadway considerations a part of the standard development review.
- Review existing subdivision and road ordinances and utilize when planning for roads and Town road access.
- Require added lane or shoulder width and/or sidewalks along certain roads in new subdivisions, to support bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Educate developers on new regulations/guidelines by holding meetings or creating a brochure or that accompanies the development application.
- Update ordinances to require connections to adjacent subdivisions or roads in new developments.

Goal 4: Improve access management along STH 29.

Objectives

- Work with surrounding communities, the County and the State to improve STH 29.
- Ensure that development along STH 29 occurs in areas that will have adequate access in the future.

Policies

- Encourage coordination between local, county, and State entities regarding development and access along STH 29.
- Support improved access management along STH 29.

Strategies/Actions

- Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.
- Ensure that Ringle is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.
- Identify and map areas along the STH 29 corridor in Ringle that are most appropriate for future development and have appropriate access.
- Use the future land use map to guide development reviews in the STH 29 corridor.

Goal 5: Ensure that new development near the Mountain-Bay Trail has adequate access.

Objective

- Review all development proposals near the trail to ensure that no parcels become landlocked because of prohibitions on additional trail crossings.

Policies

- Carefully review all development proposals near the Mountain-Bay Trail.
- Encourage developments adjacent the Mountain Bay Trail to provide bicycle and pedestrian connections to the trail.

Strategies/Actions

- Advise developers of existing regulations regarding the trail.
- Review development proposals near the Mountain-Bay Trail and ensure access to the trail is provided when appropriate.

Goal 6: Adapt to a changing transportation system.

Objective

- Update Town ordinances as more information becomes available about the needs of electric vehicles and autonomous vehicles.

Policies

- Consider the needs of autonomous vehicles and Electric vehicles as road construction occurs and as more information becomes available regarding these technologies.
- Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians with road maintenance, construction and reconstruction projects by considering expected volume of traffic, amount of truck traffic, and potential bicycle and pedestrian traffic to provide suitable bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.
- Ensure public transportation options meet the needs of the aging population.

Strategies/Actions

- Update ordinances as new information regarding autonomous vehicles and electric vehicles becomes available and best practices are released.
- Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians when road projects occur by providing appropriate infrastructure based on the volume, speed of traffic, and destinations.
- Explore public and private on demand transportation options to assist seniors and others without access to a motor vehicle.

Map 5

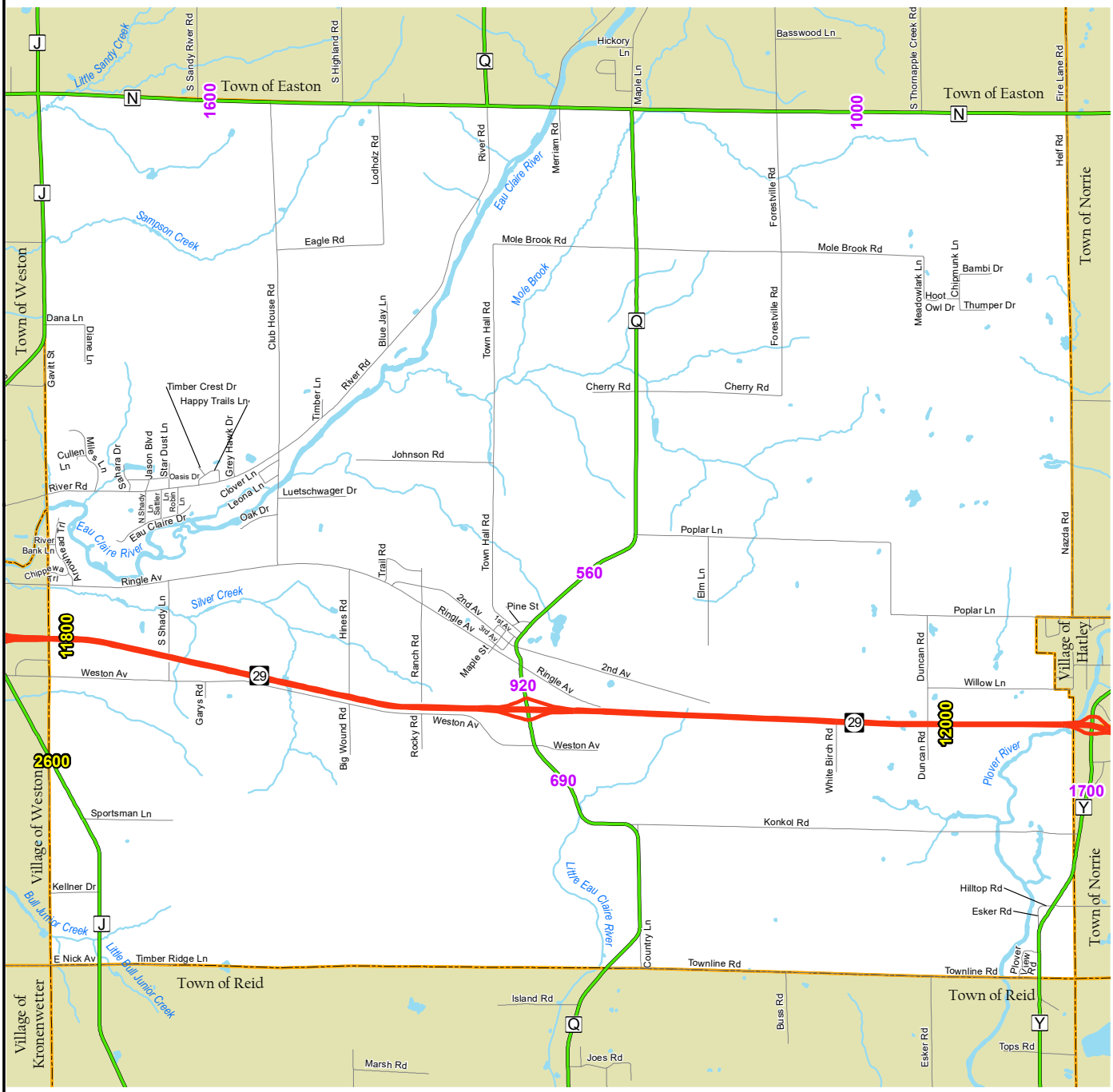
Transportation

Town of Ringle

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Water
- 500 Average Daily Traffic Count, 2013
- 500 Average Daily Traffic Count, 2010



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co, Wis DOT

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

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7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The condition of the local economy directly influences local growth and development, and therefore must be considered when planning for a community's future. Employment patterns and economic trends generally occur on a regional scale. Oftentimes residents of one community work in another. Similarly changes in a major industry can impact jobs and growth far beyond the community where the business is physically located.

It is therefore important to understand a local community's economy in light of its regional context. The following section provides a brief overview of the economy in Marathon County, in terms of key economic sectors and the regional labor force. A more specific description of Ringle includes employment trends, major local employers or industries, and where most residents work. Potential economic development opportunities and/or issues regarding the local economy are also identified.

Recent Plans and Studies Related to Economic Development

Following is a list of previous plans and studies related to economic development in Marathon County that will affect the Town of Ringle:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Marathon County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. The report summarizes and assesses economic development activities of the past year and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year.

Key components from this regional level plan include an inventory of the physical geography of the Region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are reviewed as well as an in-depth analysis of the economic status of the Region.

Regional Livability Plan (RLP)

Economic Development is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2015. The Economic Development Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the economic health of the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing the local economy. The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the disparity between the available labor force and employment, the need for a living wage, and broadband internet access. The four economic development goals of the Plan are as follows:

- Goal 2: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce.
- Goal 3: Support and develop a diverse economic base ensuring economic growth and resiliency.
- Goal 4: Support infrastructure needed for economic development.
- Goal 5: Develop tourism and the knowledge-based economy into leading economic sectors.

United Way LIFE Report

The LIFE Report is a joint effort of Marathon County and the United Way. Its purpose is to provide a reference for the community to evaluate strengths and weaknesses and identify priority issues. The report, which is published every two years, serves as a tracking vehicle to show how the community has changed over time. Two of the sections of the report focus on education and on the economic environment.

The education report tracks childcare, kindergarten readiness, enrollment by racial and economic differences, school district expenditures, reading comprehension, mathematics proficiency, high school graduation rates, and higher education. Challenges facing education according to the 2013 report include limited access to child care in rural areas, school district revenue cuts, an increase in economically disadvantaged students, and fewer residents attaining post-secondary education relative to state averages.

The economic environment report tracks many economic indicators including employment, job satisfaction, income, unemployment, poverty, economic impacts of transportation, and tourism. Challenges facing the economic environment according to the 2013 report include high unemployment despite employer needs in select industries, resident concerns about jobs providing living wages and career advancement, and a strain on county services to unemployed residents.

Marathon County: A Next Generation Talent Magnet

This report, developed by Next Generation Consulting, addresses the question, "What will it take for Marathon County to be a destination for top talent?" As part of the research process, a "handprint" for Marathon County was developed to contrast the County's assets with other communities. According to the study, Marathon County meets or exceeds the standards of its peer regions in five of the seven measured indexes – vitality, earning, cost of lifestyle, after hours, and around town. The County falls short in two categories – social capital and learning. The report also identifies nine priority areas of focus to address moving forward. The top four priority areas were: 1) Engage emerging leaders, 2) Create green economy, e.g. industries, 3) Create "next generation" businesses, and 4) Develop a long-term funded plan.

ALICE Report: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

This report, developed by the United Way of Marathon County, describes the 31 percent of households in Marathon County that are above the federal poverty level (10 percent of households are below the poverty level) but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or ALICE households. These households are largely employed but do not earn enough in wages to meet the "household survival budget," which does not allow for any savings. The report states that many ALICE households provide vital services, such as retail, health care, child care, and security, but cannot make ends meet on the income from these jobs. It also breaks down the data by the municipal level, and shows that 25 percent of the households in the Town of Ringle are either below the federal poverty level or are ALICE households.

County Economic Environment

The population of Marathon County grew from 125,834 in 2000 to 134,063 in 2010, an increase of 6.5% compared to a 6.0% increase in the state and a 9.7% in the U.S. The most recent estimates show an annual growth rate of 0.4% in Wisconsin and Marathon County, and a 0.7% annual growth in the United States (Wisconsin Department of Administration [WDOA], Demographic Services, 2015, US Census Bureau 2014). Population growth has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau.

Originally, the Marathon County economy was based on forest resources and diversified agriculture. Increased population and infrastructure – railroads, roads and dams for power enabled the area to evolve beyond simple agricultural and logging operations. Resources that once left the area unprocessed were transformed into finished products in the County, providing employment opportunities and adding value in forest products and agricultural processing. A number of related manufacturing operations grew up in the area, some based on forest products and agricultural products, others supplying the existing industries with fabricated metal products. As these industries progressed, so did industries such as transportation, communications, public utilities, government, trade, finance, insurance and real estate.

Key Economic Sectors

Key sectors of a regional economy can be identified by size, by growth or decline in employment, or

Table 7-1: Top 10 Economic Sectors by Location Quotient, Marathon County (2015)

Industry Code	Industry Description	Location Quotient	Total Employment	LQ Change 2010-2015
NAICS 321	Wood Product Manufacturing	10.68	2,471	-3.33
NAICS 322	Paper Manufacturing	9.49	2,030	-0.94
NAICS 112	Animal Production and Aquaculture	6.70	626	-0.22
NAICS 327	Nonstore Retailers	5.71	908	0.57
NAICS 333	Machinery Manufacturing	5.10	2,282	0.46
NAICS 332	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	5.08	2,586	0.24
NAICS 524	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	4.83	3,540	0.79
NAICS 424	Primary Metal Manufacturing	3.19	2,330	0.59
NAICS 337	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	2.56	409	-0.59
NAICS 311	Food Manufacturing	2.56	1,578	0.35

Source: EMSI 2015.3

by a concentration of the industry in the local area exceeding the national concentration. An industry that shows a higher concentration of employment than the national average is considered a "basic industry" and is identified by a technique called "Location Quotient" analysis. Basic industries are those sectors that export a product or service from the local community into the national or international economy. They are a critical part of the "economic engine" for a region, affecting the growth and health of many dependent sectors such as retail, transportation, construction, and local services.

If an LQ is equal to one, then the industry has the same share of its area employment as it does in the United States). An LQ greater than one indicates an industry with a greater share of the local area employment than the United States. Industries that have a high location quotient (LQ) and employ a large number of people reflect both significant size and importance as businesses that export a product or service and bring new wealth to the region.

Industries with high location quotients in Marathon County are shown on **Table 7-1**. Industries with high employment are shown in **Table 7-2**. The three top industry subsectors in Marathon County by location quotient are Wood Product Manufacturing, Paper Manufacturing and Animal Production and Aquaculture. However, all three industry subsectors have declined in total employment between 2010 and 2015, by 18%, 17% and 8% respectively. Other industries have grown in employment, including nonstore retailers, fabricated metal product manufacturing and primary metal manufacturing, each with over 30% growth in employment.

Comparing **Table 7-1** and **Table 7-2** demonstrates that industries with the highest location quotient do not necessarily have the highest employment. The top three industries in terms of total employment are local government, ambulatory health care services, and food services and drinking places, each with over 4,000 employees. Many of these industries are not relatively concentrated in Marathon County, but they serve an important function as top employers. Of the top three employment industries, local government is the only industry subsector that declined between 2010 and 2015.

Agricultural Economy

Located in the agricultural area of eastern Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of Ringle is affected by the economic health of the agricultural economy. However, the agricultural economy is subject to national and international pressures, creating challenges for rural areas seeking to adapt to the changing economic environment and preserve their rural agricultural heritage.

According to the Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan:

> Agricultural practices in the County have changed significantly over the past 30 years. There are numerous reasons for these shifts in agricultural activities and practices including changes in economics, population growth, societal changes, operational practices, support services

Table 7-2: Top 10 Economic Sectors by Employment, Marathon County (2015)

Industry Code	Industry Description	Employment	Employment Change 2010-2015	Location Quotient
NAICS 903	Local Government	6,553	-154	0.96
NAICS 621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	4,903	2,177	1.38
NAICS 722	Food Services and Drinking Places	4,150	54	0.76
NAICS 332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,487	894	4.83
NAICS 524	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	3,293	-480	2.56
NAICS 333	Machinery Manufacturing	2,800	507	5.10
NAICS 424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	2,442	91	2.38
NAICS 622	Hospitals	2,398	-498	1.01
NAICS 541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,361	88	0.49
NAICS 238	Specialty Trade Contractors	2,353	392	0.90

Source: EMSI 2015.3

and state and national policies. The county's rapid population increase has played a role in the loss of farmland, most significantly in the Wausau metro areas along the Wisconsin River corridor. Although the rural areas both east and west of the Wausau area remain committed to agriculture, the trends indicate that the face of agriculture requires unique service and program support. Agriculture is very diverse among the six regions identified in this plan. The agricultural industry's reduction in the number of dairy farms along with the increases in dairy, corn and soybean production are perhaps the most prominent of the changes in agriculture. Even with the changes in the agricultural industry, Marathon County remains one of the top counties in the state in terms of sales of several agricultural commodities.

Marathon County's farmers own and manage over 490,628 total acres of land, nearly 50% of the land base. Nearly 331,948 acres of this land is cropland and pasture. Dairy is the primary agricultural product in Marathon County, but it also includes more specialty products such as Christmas trees, ginseng, maple syrup, small scale truck farms, and commercial commodity farms. The agricultural industry contributes approximately 2.54 billion in revenues and nearly 13,650 jobs to Marathon County's economy.

Some trends in agriculture that affect the agricultural economy include:

- Dairy herds are becoming fewer and larger.
- A large number of agricultural operators are nearing retirement.
- Increased capital costs and technical education requirements increase the barrier of entry for new farmers.
- Demand for organic farming is growing, meeting organic requirements can be more costly but products can be priced at a premium.
- Soil erosion and water quality concerns are growing due to poor water quality in many areas, particularly the Wisconsin River. The Wisconsin River is currently undergoing a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process to limit the concentration of phosphorus.
- Farmland fragmentation and nuisance complaints by rural residents are increasing the costs of farming.
- Larger farm equipment damages local roads and farm traffic is increasing.
- Conflicts between various land uses in rural areas are increasing.

*Sources: Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, Agricultural Issues in Marathon County, January 10, 2003 and Report of the Marathon County Task Force on the Rural Economy, April 2003. Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2013.

Local Economic Environment

Table 7-3 illustrates population and employment information for the Town of Ringle. While the 2008-2012 unemployment rate was 7.7 percent, the most recent 2011-2015 data shows the unemployment rate has dropped to 4.7 percent. **Table 7-4** shows employment by industry for employed Ringle residents, demonstrating that most residents are employed in manufacturing, while the second most are employed in education, health care, and social assistance. This demonstrates that although there are few jobs within the Town of Ringle, Ringle residents are dependent on surrounding employment centers for income.

Employment Projections

Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) produces projections to 2025, and the five year growth rate between 2020 and 2025 was assumed to continue through 2040 for the purposes of this plan. **Table 7-5** shows projections for the zip code 54471, which includes a large portion of the Town of Ringle, and Marathon County.

Table 7-3: Employment Statistics, 2010

	Town of Ringle	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Population 16 and over	1,310	105,138	4,512,525
Civilian Labor Force	1,018	74,779	3,090,671
Total Employed	941	69,248	2,856,318
Labor Force Participation Rate	77.7%	71.1%	68.5%
Unemployment Rate	7.7%	7.3%	7.5%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Table 7-4: Town of Ringle Resident Employment by Industry, 2010

Industry	Employed Residents	Percent of Total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	14	1.49%
Construction	66	7.02%
Manufacturing	278	29.57%
Wholesale trade	38	4.04%
Retail trade	65	6.91%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	40	4.26%
Information	8	0.85%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	64	6.81%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	52	5.53%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	186	19.79%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	47	5.00%
Public administration	25	2.66%
Other services	57	6.06%
TOTAL	940	100.00%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey B08526
* "Total Employed" represents employed civilian population 16 years and over

Table 7-5: Employment Projections in 5-Year Increments for Zip Code 54471

	Total Employment by Year						
Year	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Jobs in 54471	229	258	270	278	286	295	303
County	71,535	76,065	78,340	82,744	87,396	92,309	97,498

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International; NCWRPC

Issues

Commercial Development Potential – There is very little commercial development in Ringle. The interchange of CTH Q and STH 29 just south of the Ringle settlement, the Ringle village area, and the CTH Y and STH 29 interchange are potential locations for future commercial development.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Encourage commercial development in appropriate areas in Ringle.

Objectives

- Encourage commercial development to locate in the Ringle village, and at the County Highway Q and State Highway 29 interchange.
- Allow appropriate home occupations in residential areas.

Policy

- Support commercial development in appropriate areas.

Strategies/Actions

- Survey residents on what types of commercial development they would like to see.
- Use maps to review development applications and guide future development.
- Evaluate ordinances to ensure appropriate home occupations that do not generate excessive traffic or other nuisances are allowed in residential areas of Ringle.

Goal 2: Encourage the redevelopment of contaminated properties

Objective

- Identify and secure funding for potentially contaminated or blighted properties that would be eligible for remediation and redevelopment funding.

Policies

- Support the redevelopment and remediation of contaminated and blighted properties
- Work with the owners of contaminated or blighted property.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with the Wisconsin DNR to identify potential contaminated properties.
- Secure funding to remediate and redevelop contaminated or blighted properties.

8. LAND USE

The Town of Ringle is about 42.1 square miles located in the center of eastern Marathon County, between the rapidly growing community of Weston on the west and the Village of Hatley on its eastern boundary. STH 29 runs through the southern portion of the community and CTH N is its northern boundary.

Previous Studies

Regional Livability Plan

Land Use is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Plan, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Land Use Assessment Report, a component of the Plan, looks in detail at the land uses through the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing land use. The Regional Livability Plan addresses two issues related to land use: housing density and farmland preservation. The two land use goals of the Plan are as follows:

- Goal 9: Preserve and protect the region's landscape, environmental resources, and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.
- Goal 10: Manage and reduce vacant land and structures.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan

The purpose of the Farmland Preservation Plan is to guide and manage growth and development of land use in a manner that will preserve the rural character, protect the agricultural base and natural resources, and contribute to the safety, health, and prosperity of Marathon County's communities. The Farmland Preservation Plan identifies 15 year growth areas and farmland preservation areas for each Town within the County. In Ringle the 15 year growth area in concentrated between Ringle Avenue and STH 29, and adjacent to existing development along River Road. Farmland preservation areas are generally around prime farmland and existing productive agricultural areas. This plan forms the basis for Farmland Preservation Tax Credits.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan is a policy plan. The overall goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to add a county-level perspective and planning direction that complements and strengthens local planning efforts, as well as provide guidance to the communities within Marathon County. The plan describes existing and future land uses, and regulatory tools for land use.

Current Pattern of Land Use

Formed in 1901, the Town of Ringle was named after John Ringle, who operated the Ringle brick yards near the present Village center along CTH Q. The Milwaukee, Lakeshore & Western Railroad (later Chicago and Northwestern) was built through the area in 1880 and provided rail connections for the development of the brick yard and small settlement that grew around it. The settlement was platted to face the railroad alignment, now the Mountain-Bay State Trail.

In general, the predominant land use in Ringle is woodland. Marathon County forest land occupies approximately 3,000 acres in the southwest corner of the Town. Approximately 2,000 acres are owned by forest products businesses and approximately 200 acres by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) along the Plover River in the extreme southeast corner of the Town. The DNR also owns land northeast of the Marathon County Landfill around the Ice Age Trail. There are also segments of open land in conjunction with the woodlands and property owned by the paper industry. As of January 2017, there is Managed Forest Land open to the public near scattered throughout the Town, including near Rocky Road and STH 29, Town Hall Road and the Mountain Bay State Trail, CTH Q north of Clay Pond, adjacent to Mole Brook Creek near Cherry Road, and between CTH J and Club House Road.

Ringle is the location of a major industrial use, the Marathon County Landfill. The landfill owns over 575 acres in the east central section of Ringle, with access from STH 29. The Town has a four-member Solid Waste Board that works with the landfill operators on any issues related to odors, potential expansion or other concerns.

Farmland is concentrated in the north central portion of the community, especially north of Mole Brook Road and and Eagle Road. Additional crop land is located along Ringle Avenue (old STH 29) and south of the river in the west central section of the Town. There are scattered cropland areas in the southeast corner of the Town along the Plover River and south into the Town of Reid. Most of the agricultural areas follow the prime farmland soils in the Town of Ringle, although there are areas considered prime farmland that are not currently used for agriculture.

Residential development in the Town has been strongly influenced by transportation access and by the availability of water for wells. Similar to many other rural towns, residential development in Ringle has lined the primary roads. In most cases, these are parcels of 5-10 acres. There are other parcels in which owners have purchased 40 acres or more as a residence. The heaviest concentration of residential development is in the northwest section of the Town along River Road. This development connects to Weston and is somewhat a continuation of that community's growth. The area is in a location that may be served by sewer and water in the future and has developed at a density that may make such improvements more feasible.

Other scattered residential parcels are located along CTH J south of STH 29, along Townline Road on the southern boundary of the Town, and a strong concentration along Konkol Road east of CTH Q in the southeast quadrant. The area along Konkol Road has developed with a series of long, narrow, 10-acre lots with a narrow frontage on the street. There has been a cluster of residential development on the eastern edge of the Town, near the Village of Hatley. On the northern edge of the Town, residential development has occurred along Mole Brook Road, and along CTH N.

In addition to a large amount of land devoted to woodlands, Ringle's land use is affected by the Eau Claire River on the northwest, and the Plover River in the southeast. Several creeks also divide the land and have affected development potential.

Existing Land Use

Table 8-1 describes the various land use categories. The acreage and percent of land shown on **Table 8-1** were determined from aerial photos and are not intended to be accurate to the parcel level.

Table 8-1: Existing Land Use, 2015

2015 Land Use	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Agriculture	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland, pasture, agricultural related structures, farm residences, limited scattered rural residential	4,030	14.95%
Commercial	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	54	0.20%
Governmental / Institutional	Schools, churches, cemeteries, town halls, fire departments, National Guard	226	0.84%
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers, mining operations, landfills, quarries	55	0.21%
Open Lands	Open land in wooded areas, along streams, prairies and savannas, wetlands	3,574	13.26%
Outdoor Recreation	Ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, parks, trails, campgrounds, shooting ranges	58	0.21%
Residential	One family structures, farm residences, manufactured housing, multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments, subdivisions.	1,068	3.96%
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	878	3.26%
Water	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, and reservoirs	322	1.19%
Woodlands	Forested land, tree nurseries, paper forests, forested wetlands, limited scattered rural residential	16,691	61.92%
Total Land Area		26,956	100%

Source: Marathon County Land Use, 2015 Aerial Photo Interpretation by NCWRPC

Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Ringle completed a Comprehensive Plan in 2005 and this update was adopted in 2017.

Zoning

Ringle has its own zoning code, adapted from the County zoning code. Ringle has made a few changes to the code. The Town has had a planning commission since 1973.

Shoreland Zoning

Shoreland, shoreland wetlands, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all geographic areas of the County. Wisconsin law mandates counties to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the County outside of villages and cities. With very limited exceptions, this ordinance supersedes any Town ordinance. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the land ward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

Farmland Preservation Program

The State of Wisconsin has a Farmland Preservation Tax Credit Program. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their State income tax by being in a certified farmland preservation zoning district and/or signing having land inside an Agricultural Enterprise Area and entering into a farmland preservation agreement with DATCP.

According to the Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, the Town of Ringle did not have a certified farmland preservation zoning district as of 2013. The Town of Ringle will have to certify a farmland preservation zoning district in order for landowners within the Town to claim Farmland Preservation Tax Credits.

Forest Crop Law (FCL) and Managed Forest Law (MFL)

With a large amount of forest land in the County, forest tax laws have a major effect on land uses. The tax laws require 25- to 50-year contracts, so they are a good indicator of the amount of land that is intended to remain undeveloped for the near future.

In the State, over 2.6 million acres are enrolled under the FCL and the MFL. Because high taxes had encouraged the cutting of timber for revenue, the laws were developed to encourage better forest management and provide tax relief to the woodland owners. Land set aside under the FCL (which was combined into the MFL in 1986) required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section, set aside under a 25- or 50-year contract, and public access for hunting and fishing activities. Current contracts will continue until their expiration dates. This land is typically shown in plat books to identify locations. Land set aside under the FCL in Marathon County is often owned by forest products companies, although many individuals also own large enough parcels to participate.

The MFL was enacted in 1985 and requires at least 10 acres of contiguous forest land. Due to the smaller acreage requirement, many individual landowners take advantage of the MFL. Landowners may close to public access up to 320 acres of their forest lands set aside under MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners

Table 8-2: Land in Forest Preservation Programs (in acres), 2002 - 2015

Year	Forest Crop Law	Managed Forest Law Open	Managed Forest Law Closed
1998	1811.7	726.2	889.7
2002	80	2,290.2	1,253.2
2016	40	518.6	2,975.7
Change	-1,771.7	+207.6	+2,086.0

Source: Local assessors with Municipal Board of Review and Wisconsin Department of Revenue, 2016 Data from Wisconsin DNR

Table 8-3: Public Owned Forest Land (in acres), 1998-2016

	Land Owner (in acres)		
Year	**County**	**State**	**Federal**
1998	1800.9	236.5	0
2002	1797.8	223.7	0
2016	1,730.7	1,209.7	0
Change	-70.2	+973.2	0

Source: Local assessors with Municipal Board of Review and Wisconsin Department of Revenue, 2016 Statement of Assessment

must choose a 25- or 50-year contract. The landowner pays an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes. If the land is withdrawn from MFL prior to the contract period it is subject to a withdrawal tax.

Table 8-2 shows land in Ringle currently enrolled in the FCL and/or MFL programs. Land enrolled under FCL has declined as those contracts expire and land added into the growing MFL program.

Development Trends

Land Supply

Considering open lands and forestland as "available," and subtracting the land enrolled in forest preservation programs and publicly owned land, the Town of Ringle has 13,790 acres of land available. Another 4,030 acres of land are in agriculture and may be available for development. This was calculated using North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) aerial photo interpretations. Much of this available land may have development limitations or constraints such as wetlands, floodplains, or difficulty with wells or private onsite waste disposal systems, reducing or eliminating the development potential of this land. **Table 8-3** shows County and State owned forest land in Ringle.

Ringle's developable land is somewhat limited by the amount of forested and marsh land and the high bedrock levels that make it difficult to dig wells for residential use. Much of the land along County roads has already been parceled out for residential development. There appears to be some land available for development in areas along River Road near the Riverside Elementary School, where new housing is being built. Additional land could be available if farmland is sold for development.

Land Values

Table 8-4 shows the change in land values in Ringle between 2008 and 2016. There was a small reduction in the number of acres assessed as residential, while the number of residential parcels increased slightly. The value of all types of land except commercial has decreased slightly over the eight year period. The amount of land classified as undeveloped has increased slightly.

Accommodating Future Growth

The Town of Ringle has experienced a significant population growth of 56 percent between 1980 and 2010. Ringle's population is projected to increase another 31 percent between 2010 and 2040 (WDOA). Household growth in Ringle has been even faster than population growth at 86 percent between 1980 and 2010, and is projected to continue growing, increasing a total of 39 percent between 2010 and 2040. Ringle's location relative to Weston likely means it will remain attractive to people looking for a rural residential environment. Towns along the STH 29 corridor have experienced rapid growth. Development of the Aspirus Hospital in Weston and other development nearby has influenced growth in Town of Ringle.

According to Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) data derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, there are 258 jobs in the zip code 54471, which includes most of Ringle, in 2015. It is projected by EMSI that there will be an increase of 20 jobs in 54471 over the next 10 years, to 278 in 2025.

Future Land Use

The Town of Ringle Future Land Use map (**Map 7**) illustrates a potential future pattern of land uses. Land uses are assigned at the parcel level, but are not expected to follow parcels as land uses change, but are instead intended to be a general guide showing areas that are appropriate for that particular land use. For example, a parcel depicted as woodland may also have agricultural uses occuring, but this is not shown since the future land use designation is shown at the parcel level.

Map 7 includes distinct land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development should occur. The future land use map land use acreage calculations showin in **Table 8-5** should not be compared to the existing land use, as the methods of measuring land use are not equal between the two maps. The future land use map is based on the issues, goals and objectives described in each of the previous chapters, and should be a guide based on the goals and expectations of the community. Descriptions of each land use category and the number of acres within each category are provided in **Table 8-5**.

Future residential land should be concentrated in the River Road and Ringle village areas, adjacent to existing development. These areas will allow for the most efficient use of land, are close to amenities such as the elementary school, and reduce the additional property tax burden of new development. This will also reduce the fragmentation of agricultural land and woodlands, both reducing potential conflicts between residential and agricultural uses, and reducing the impact of human settlements on the natural environment. Future neighborhood level commercial

should be located in these areas, and highway oriented commercial should be located near highway interchanges.

Some limited scattered residential and commercial may occur in woodland and agricultural areas, however this should be limited to avoide fragmentation of productive agricultural land and valuable wildlife habitat.

Residential and commercial development should be avoided in environmentally sensitive areas, areas that are typically downwind of the Marathon County Landfill, and areas that have high potential to contaminate groundwater or adjacent properties with wastewater or runoff. The floodplains are shown as woodlands on **Map 7**, to discourage development in the floodplain and help protect the Plover RIver and the Eau Claire River.

Land Needs

An estimate of land needed for future residential development was based on projected household growth between 2015 and 2040 derived from WDOA household projections and an average density of two acres per unit for new housing. Future acres needed for residential development were then estimated by multiplying the projected number of households in 2040 by the average density. In the Town of Ringle, is

Table 8-4: Change in Assessed Land Value (per acre) 2008 - 2016

Land Classification	Characteristics in Ringle	2008	2016	Change 2008 - 2016	Percent Change 2008 - 2016
Residential	# of Acres	1,995	1,878	-117	-5.9%
	Parcel Count	731	743	12	1.6%
	Per Acre Land Value	$12,406	$11,994	-412	-3.3%
Commercial	# of Acres	48	48	0	0.0%
	Parcel Count	20	23	3	15.0%
	Per Acre Land Value	$16,490	$16,902	413	2.5%
Manufacturing	# of Acres	0	0	0	0.0%
	Parcel Count	0	0	0	0.0%
	Per Acre Land Value	$0	$0	0	0.0%
Agriculture	# of Acres	4,974	5,047	73	1.5%
	Parcel Count	267	308	41	15.4%
	Per Acre Land Value	$176	$161	-15	-8.7%
Forest	# of Acres	7,142	6,414	-728	-10.2%
	Parcel Count	275	264	-11	-4.0%
	Per Acre Land Value	$2,378	$2,252	-126	-5.3%
Agricultural Forest	# of Acres	2,037	1,990	-47	-2.3%
	Parcel Count	109	125	16	14.7%
	Per Acre Land Value	$1,150	$1,142	-9	-0.7%
Undeveloped	# of Acres	3,154	3,301	147	4.7%
	Parcel Count	262	317	55	21.0%
	Per Acre Land Value	$618	$468	-149	-24.2%
Other	# of Acres	88	89	1	1.1%
	Parcel Count	50	50	0	0.0%
	Per Acre Land Value	$12,239	$10,927	-1,312	-10.7%
Total	# of Acres	19,438	18,767	-671	-3.5%
	Parcel Count	1,714	1,830	116	6.8%
	Per Acre Land Value	$48,770,800	$43,385,000	-5,385,800	-11.0%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessment

estimated that approximately 420 acres of land will be needed to accommodate new residential development through 2040.

The land needed for non-residential development is based on projected addition of 20 jobs between 2015 and 2025 and an estimated average density of 3.32 employees per acre in the Eastern Group planning sub-area. In the Town of Ringle, it is estimated that six acres will be needed to accommodate new non-residential development through 2025. It is estimated that 14 acres will be needed through 2040 based on employment projections shown in the Economic Development Chapter. However, the type of non-residential development will heavily influence the land needed, as land intensive activities such as storage yards consume much more land per employee than other business such as restaurants.

Sufficient acreage to meet estimated demand for new development has been provided in the appropriate land use categories on the future land use map. Land developed for new residential and commercial use will most likely be converted from agricultural use and limited woodland use, rather than subdividing existing residential lots. Pursuing redevelopment in already developed areas, such as the historic settlement on Ringle Road adjacent to the Mountain Bay Trail, can reduce the conversion of agricultural and forestland.

Consistency between Land Use and Zoning

Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for

Table 8-5: Future Land Use

Land Use Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Agriculture	Tilled agriculture , fallow, pasture and undetermined agriculture, power lines and towers, water towers, municipal wells	5,122	19.01%
Commercial	Retail stores, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company	551	2.04%
Governmental/ Public/ Institutional	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities	636	2.36%
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers, mining operations	252	.94%
Outdoor Recreation	Public and private parks, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, camp grounds, shooting ranges, etc.	1,083	4.02%
Residential	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes, multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments	2,403	8.92%
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads	882	3.27%
Water	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	324	1.20%
Woodlands	Privately-owned forested land, including nurseries, paper mill forests, etc.	15,696	58.25%
Total Land Area		26,645	100%

Source: Future Land Use map

more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation. Additionally, although the Future Land Use Map shows parcel lines, the future land use categories are not expected to precisely follow parcel lines, but instead show general areas where certain land uses are appropriate. For example, the development of a single family residence within an area shown as agricultural may be appropriate based on the characteristics of the parcel or the proximity to other residential uses. Zoning categories, on the other hand, are specific to each parcel.

Consistency between land use and zoning is required by state statutes. This generally occurs when a community is considering a proposed zoning change. The decision to approve a zoning change must be based on the adopted comprehensive plan, and specifically, the future land use map. Generally, if the requested zoning is consistent with the land use designation on the property it should be approved, unless unique circumstances indicated the rezoning would negatively impact surrounding properties or the community. If a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation, the community should consider denying the rezoning request.

In situations where a rezoning request is not consistent with the land use designation - but the community believes the requested zoning is appropriate in the specific location and would benefit the community - the zoning change can be approved, however, the land use map should be amended accordingly to establish land use and zoning consistency. The process for amending the land use map is discussed in greater detail in the implementation chapter.

Issues

- Provision of Water – The high bedrock level through the central and eastern portions of the Town of Ringle prohibits residential or industrial development because of the difficulty of drilling wells and having adequate water.
- Developable Land – Much of the land in Ringle is forested or cannot be developed because of its proximity to rivers and creeks, thus placing an additional prohibition on where development can occur in the Town.
- Residential Development Pressure – Development in Weston, four miles from the Ringle boundary, is expected to increase demand for residential lots in Ringle. The Town of Ringle will need to consider where and how to accommodate development pressure.
- Mountain-Bay State Trail – The Mountain-Bay State Trail runs through Ringle, offering opportunities to provide services or amenities for trail users, or to enhance adjacent land uses.
- Ice Age Trail – A segment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail begins at the Mountain-Bay State Trail and runs northeast to the intersection of CTH N and CTH Y in Ringle. The Town may want to consider opportunities to provide services or amenities for trail users.
- Commercial Development Potential – There is very little commercial development in Ringle. The interchange of CTH Q and STH 29 just south of the Ringle settlement, the Ringle village area, and the CTH Y and STH 29 interchange are potential locations for future commercial development.
- Parcel Size and Development Patterns –Lot sizes may need to be examined, given concerns about private sewage systems and potential groundwater contamination. The Town should monitor for water quality problems related to private sewage systems. The Town may also want to consider whether conservation subdivisions or other development tools are needed, or whether different types of development patterns should be identified for various sections of Ringle.
- Relationship with the County Landfill — The Town of Ringle should continue to work with the County Landfill and the operators to address any issues related to odors or any potential expansion of the operation. The landfill is expected to reach capacity around 2023, but expansions are expected

to stay within the confines of the current landfill property. There may be concerns about the types of development that are appropriate in the area near the landfill. The landfill will soon include more recreational land uses, including approximately 10 miles of mountain bike trails, and a disc golf course is under consideration.

- Private Waste Disposal Systems – Private waste disposal systems are a concern because of their impact on potential pollution and because of the effects they may have on lot size and development patterns. Many older systems are subject to failure, and there are concerns that contamination may occur in the sand and gravelly soils. Other systems now in use are holding tank and mound systems. Private waste disposal systems are regulated by the County.
- Potential Loss of tax base due to Annexation – Ringle should be aware that some residential areas on its fringe could opt to join adjacent villages, which could reduce Ringle's tax base. Residents in the more urbanized development along River Road in the northwest section, and those in the housing growing out from Hatley on the Town's eastern boundary could request annexation from adjacent villages, if there were a need for village sewer and water facilities.
- Zoning – The Town of Ringle zoning code has not been comprehensively updated should be updated to add districts such as conservation subdivisions to manage future growth.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Proactively plan for increased demand for rural residential land development.

Objectives

- Identify areas where different types of residential development, such as large lots or subdivisions, should occur.
- Direct rural residential uses away from sensitive lands such as wetlands, creeks and rivers.
- Ensure that development occurs in areas with adequate road access.

Policies

- Discourage developments from occurring around natural resource areas.
- Encourage development in areas that can be served by available infrastructure.

Strategies/Actions

- Evaluate future development requests to ensure that the revenue generated from the taxes on these developments will balance with or exceed the expenditures required to provide services to them.
- Set guidelines for required buffers around identified sensitive areas – no development can occur within buffer, or development must be xx feet away from stream, etc.

Goal 2: Provide tools for managing growth.

Objectives

- Base land use decisions on Ringle's adopted plan for future development.
- Update the zoning code to provide regulatory options for land use decision making.
- Use subdivision regulations to better guide development review and specify subdivision requirements.
- Discourage the placement of non-farm commercial or industrial uses in active farming areas

Policies

- Encourage the use and adoption of tools to manage new growth.
- Discourage development in active farmland.

Strategies/Actions

- Use the adopted plan for future development as a tool when reviewing development applications.
- Update the zoning code to include guidelines that coordinate with the adopted plan for future development.
- Adhere to County subdivision regulations or develop local regulations that achieve the goals of the community.

Goal 3: Preserve the rural settlement pattern in Ringle.

Objectives

- Establish development regulations that will protect rural character.
- Locate compatible land uses in proximity with each other in an effort to prevent future land use conflicts.

Policy

- The Town of Ringle recognizes its rural character as an important and attractive asset.

Strategies/Actions

- Continue to focus development on the west side of the Town, where water is more readily available.
- Set and adopt guidelines for minimum lot size, especially on east side of Town.
- Guide higher density development to areas that would not greatly compromise rural character.
- Consider landscaping or screening guidelines for lot frontage for rural development.

Goal 4: Ensure that development near the Landfill will be compatible.

Objective

- Continue to work with the County Landfill and the operators to plan any additional development in the vicinity of the Landfill.

Policy

- Encourage compatible land uses near the County Landfill.

Strategies/Actions

- Maintain contact with the Solid Waste Committee and solicit their input on development in the area

Goal 5: Coordinate with adjacent communities on development and/or annexation projects that may affect them.

Objective

- Meet with adjacent communities including the Village of Weston, the Village of Hatley and others whenever there are common issues.

Policy

- Encourage communication with adjacent communities when there are common issues.

Strategies/Actions

- Maintain a list of the appropriate person(s) to call when development is occurring on the Town boundary or may have an impact on another community.
- Initiate meetings with other communities when Ringle has new development proposed in the vicinity of those communities. Disclose potential impacts and discuss possible mitigation or cooperation.
- Attend meetings initiated by other surrounding communities.

Map 6

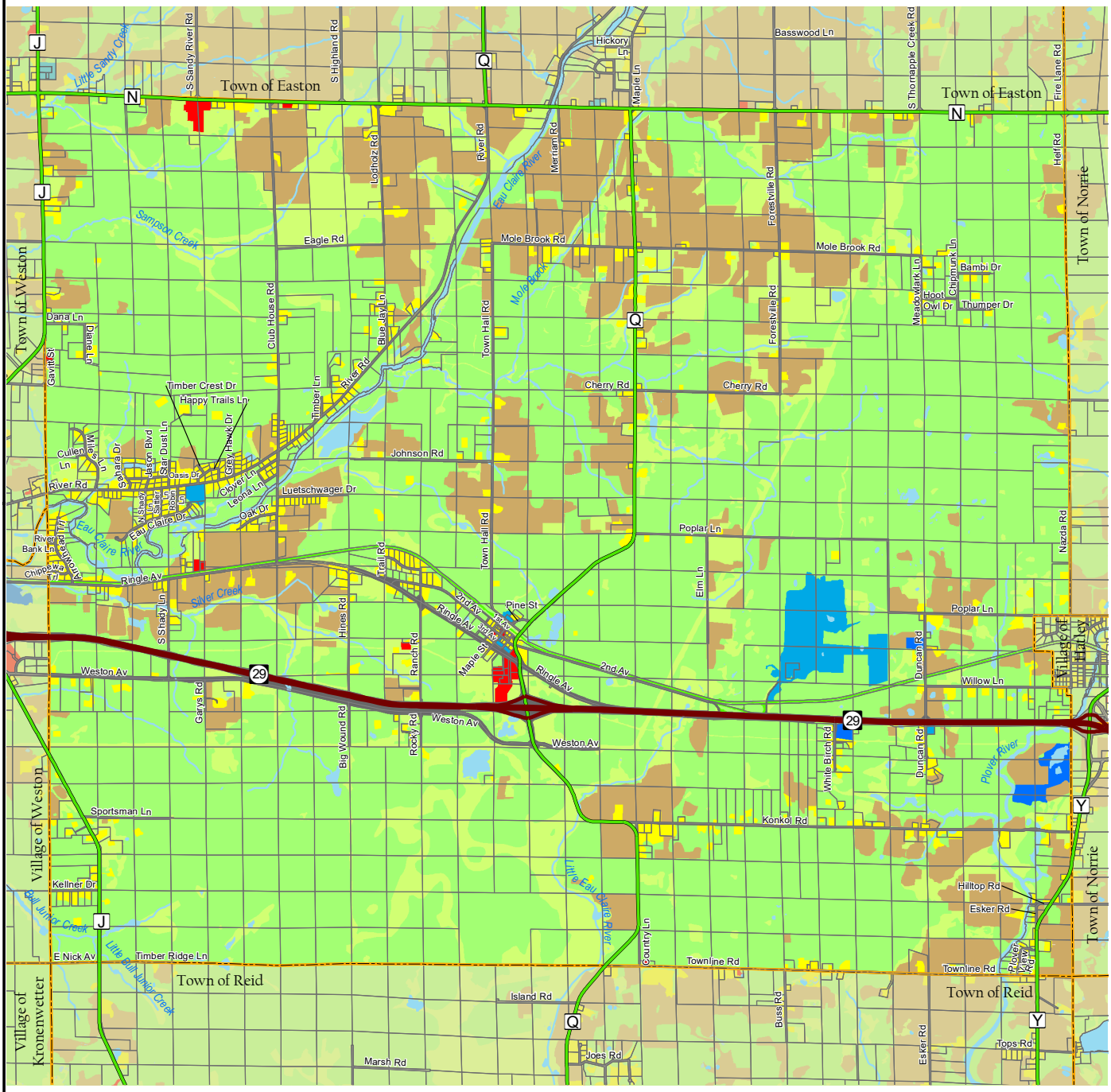
Existing Generalized Land Use

Town of Ringle

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Parcels
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Governmental / Institutional
- Industrial
- Open Lands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation
- Water
- Woodlands



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co, 2015 Airphoto interpretation

This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

NCWRPC

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Map 7

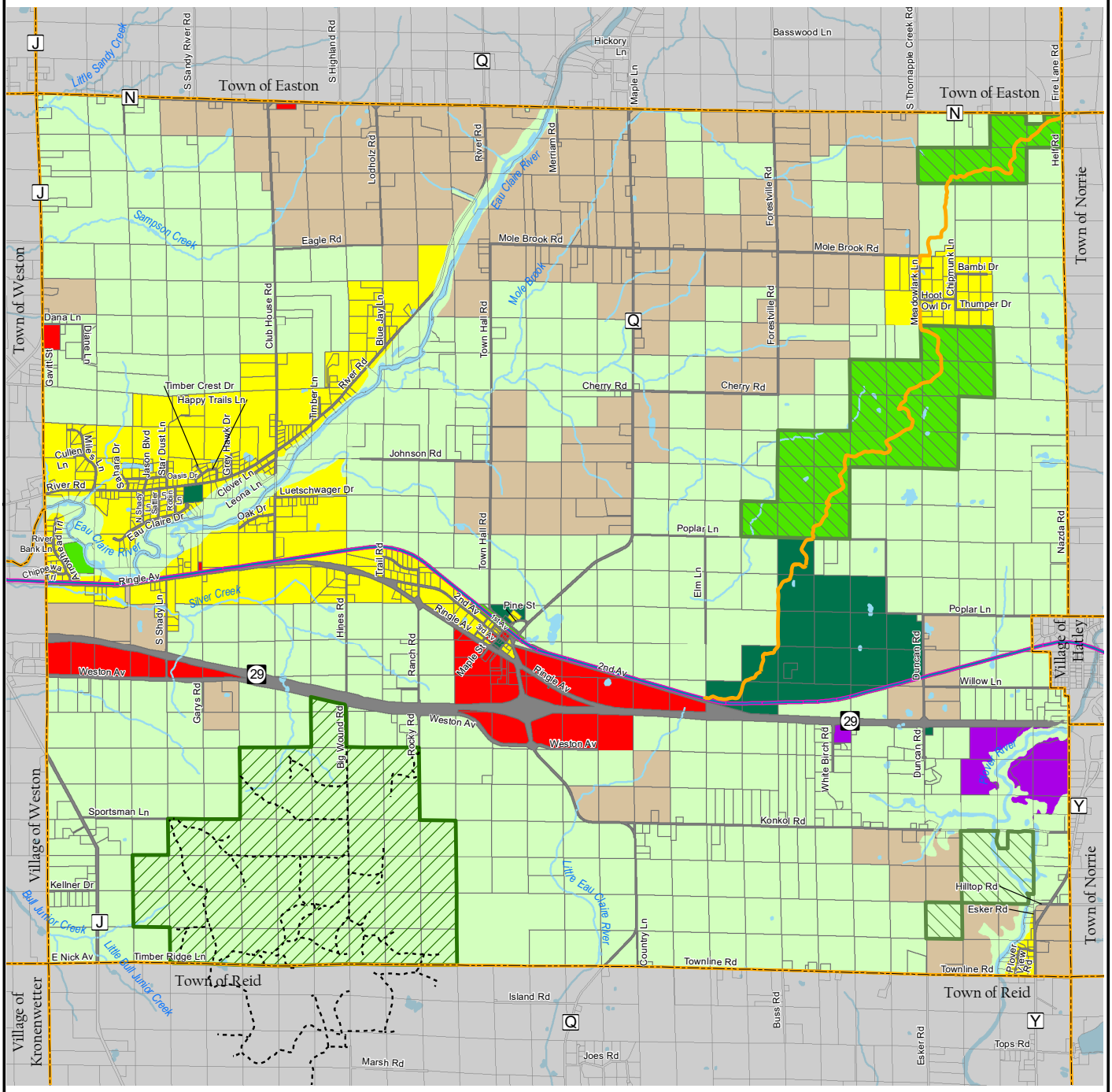
Future Land Use Plan

Town of Ringle

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- Parcels
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Governmental / Public / Institutional
- Industrial
- Outdoor Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation
- Water
- Woodlands
- Ice Age Trail
- Mountain-Bay State Trail
- Ringle Forest Unit Trails
- Marathon County Forest
- State of Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co.

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9. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

This analysis presents an inventory of existing mechanisms that the Town of Ringle uses to coordinate with other units of government, including: Marathon County, adjacent towns, the school district, the State of Wisconsin and the federal government. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the existing cooperative mechanisms and summarize the major challenges and issues regarding intergovernmental cooperation and regional planning, including:

- Opportunities to reduce or eliminate duplication of services;
- Incompatible goals, policies and development;
- Mechanisms for conflict resolution;
- Opportunities for joint planning and decision-making.

Mechanisms for cooperation and coordination primarily take the form of intergovernmental agreements, leases and contracts, and regulatory authority. These can occur between the Town of Ringle and other local, regional, State or Federal entities. Following is a brief description of the various functional areas and services that require intergovernmental coordination at various levels.

Local and Regional Level Cooperation

Shared Services

Fire and Emergency Response

The Town of Ringle has its own volunteer fire department, and provides mutual aid to the Village of Weston, the Village of Hatley and the Town of Easton. The Town contracts with the Village of Weston for ambulance service.

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement is provided by the County sheriff.

Utilities

The Town does not provide sewer or water services; residents have private waste disposal systems and individual wells. If the Town wishes to establish sewer or water services for it's residents, it may need to cooperate with surrounding municipalities.

Surrounding Municipalites

The Town of Ringle is bordered by the Town of Easton to the north, Town of Norrie and Village of Hatley to the east, Town of Reid to the south, and Town of Weston and Village of Weston to the west. These surrounding municipalities are concurrently preparing comprehensive plans, which will increase opportunities for coordination and cooperation on matters of common interest.

School Districts

Ringle is included in the D. C. Everest School District, with both the middle school and the high school located in Weston. Riverside Elementary School is located along River Road in the northwest corner of Ringle.

Marathon County

The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff's Department, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The County also provides oversight on compliance with County soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program.

Regional Agencies

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides planning and mapping assistance.

State and Federal Agencies

The Town has little direct contact with State or federal agencies. However State agencies regulate certain activities such as access onto state roads, shoreland, floodplain and wetland zoning oversight, navigable waters protection, compliance with water quality standards, farmland preservation tax credits and managed forest tax credit programs. State and federal agencies also provide funding that influence development and land use, such as transportation aids, brownfield redevelopment grants, loans, and assistance, housing assistance, and school aids.

Existing or Potential Conflicts

Potential Loss of Tax Base

Ringle has the potential to lose tax base if residents in the northwestern section along River Road seek sewer and water service from Weston and choose to

be annexed by Weston. Similarly, residents outside Hatley on the eastern boundary of Ringle may choose to be annexed to Hatley to take advantage of utility services. Ringle will need to work cooperatively with adjacent towns to resolve any issues that could arise as a result of annexation.

Relationship with the County Landfill

The Town of Ringle should continue to work with the County Landfill and the operators to address any issues related to odors, any potential expansion of the operation and to ensure that there are no pollution issues. In particular, the Town will be concerned about the revenues from tipping fees and the resulting impact on fees shared with Ringle. There may also be concerns about types of development that may be appropriate in the area near the landfill. Limiting residential development near the landfill should reduce complaints or hazards due to noise, pollution, or lighting.

Goal, Objectives and Policy

Goal 1: Coordinate development with surrounding communities.

Objectives

- Communicate with surrounding communities when proposed development is on a boundary or the development could have impacts on the adjacent community.
- Encourage development in areas where sanitary sewers and water may be available in the future.

Policy

- Encourages communication with adjacent communities when new development potentially affects those communities, or occurs on the border with those communities.

Strategies/Actions

- Maintain a list of the appropriate person(s) to call when development is occurring on the Town boundary or may have an impact on another community.
- Meet with potentially affected communities to disclose potential impacts and discuss possible mitigation or cooperation.
- Identify and map areas which have available sanitary and water service, and are suitable for development.

Goal 2: Ensure that annexations proceed in an orderly manner.

Objective

- Establish lines of communication with neighboring communities to discuss potential annexations.

Policy

- Support orderly annexation.

Strategies/Actions

- Attend meetings initiated by other surrounding communities.
- Schedule/attend regular meetings during the annexation process.

Goal 3: Improve access management along STH 29.

Objective

Work with surrounding communities, the County and the State to improve STH 29.

Policies

- Encourage coordination between local, County, and State entities regarding development and access along STH 29.
- Support improved access management along STH 29.

Strategies/Actions

- Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.
- Ensure that Ringle is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.
- Share and coordinate future land use maps with other communities.

Goal 4: Provide the most cost-efficient, effective services to residents in areas such as road maintenance, snowplowing, or other services.

Objectives

- Explore opportunities to work with adjacent communities where there are potential cost savings in service delivery.
- Coordinate timing of road maintenance with adjacent communities.

Policies

- Work with adjacent communities to provide cost savings in road maintenance and services.

Strategies/Actions

- Initiate meetings with surrounding Towns and the County to discuss road maintenance schedules, snow-plowing and other service activities.

Goal 5: Encourage participation by Town officials and residents in all levels of government.

Objectives

- Encourage local officials to participate in county and state government activities and organizations.
- Encourage regular participation and feedback from residents through surveys, informational public meetings, newsletters or other activities.

Policy

- Encourage local officials and residents to participate in local planning activities and organizations.

Strategies/Actions

- Invite representatives from county and state activities and organizations to speak at Town meetings.
- Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents annually, asking for suggestions or feedback on Town government, life in the Town and other questions that will help Town decision-makers govern effectively.
- Designate a main contact person who will be responsible for organizing and/or distributing public information materials.
- Hold meetings during times that working residents and families with children are able to attend.
- Develop a website for the Town where residents can go for information, including ordinances such as the zoning and building codes.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

The primary reason a community prepares a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework to influence decisions regarding management of growth and regulation of development to protect and maintain the health, safety and welfare of the community, and to set priorities for public expenditures. To be effective, this plan should be actively used as a tool to guide decisions concerning:

- The implementation and enforcement of regulatory ordinances based on the goals and objectives identified in this plan.
- The development of programs and support systems that further the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.
- The implementation of specific community improvements as identified in the comprehensive plan.
- The establishment and support of a continued planning process providing for periodic review and updates to this plan and other land use control measures.

Implementation Tools

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are the Town official controls or regulatory codes. The zoning ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations are used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. Other regulatory tools include purchase of development rights (conservation easements), transfer of development rights, and purchasing of ecosystem services. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; these generally involve decisions about how the community will spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements, staffing and maintenance. These decisions will affect the development demand and the location of development in the Town.

The State planning law requires certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan. To meet this requirement, Ringle should evaluate and update related ordinances after the adoption of the comprehensive plan update. The Town Board officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

Zoning Ordinance and Map

Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable externalities from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's environment. The zoning ordinance also controls the scale and form of development, which heavily influences how people will interact with their environment and their neighbors.

The establishment of zoning districts and the zoning map indicates where specific types of development can and should be located. Zoning districts shown on the zoning map should be coordinated with the land use plan and map. While the zoning map and land use map do not need to directly match at the time the land use map is adopted, the intent is that the land use map will serve as a guide indicating how the property should eventually be zoned. Therefore, indiscriminate zoning changes may result in weakening of the comprehensive plan. In fact, changes to zoning district boundaries should only be made if they are consistent with the adopted land use map and the goals of the comprehensive plan.

However, there may be situations where changing the zoning district boundary makes sense and is in the best interest of the community. If changing the zoning would result in a conflict with the future land use map, the land use map should also be changed. However, the future land use map should only be changed if it does not accurately reflect the community's desired land use pattern. Achieving consistency between zoning and land use designation is also discussed in the Land Use Element.

Many communities have or are considering changing their zoning districts from a use based code to a form based code. A form based code primarily regulates the scale and form of development rather than the specific uses. This often provides more flexibility to developers and better achieves a more walkable and efficient land use patterns. Uses that are truly incompatible with each other, such as heavy industrial and residential are

still seperated. It may be worth considering adopting a form based code for the more dense areas of the Town, such as along River Road and the Ringle Avenue areas.

As discussed below, the comprehensive plan (and future land use map) should be periodically reviewed and updated to adjust for unforeseen changes or events that were not considered at the time the initial plan and land use map were developed.

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

Subdivision regulations are an important tool ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may regulate lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be a public asset.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

This is an ongoing financial planning program that allows local communities to plan ahead for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. A capital improvement plan consists of a list of proposed projects according to a schedule of priorities over a four-to-six year period. It identifies needed public improvements, estimates their costs, and identifies financing methods and sources. Public improvements or expenditures typically considered in a CIP include:

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)
- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Utility system construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.
- Joint school and other community development projects
- Fire and police protection equipment

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years in order to maximize the use of limited public funds. Each year the CIP should be reviewed and extended one year to compensate for the previous year that was completed. This keeps the improvement program current and allows for modifications to meet the community's changing needs.

The preparation of a CIP is normally a joint responsibility between the town board, plan commission, staff, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. The proposed capital improvement plan should be reviewed in light of the priorities outlined in the comprehensive plan.

Purchase of Development Rights

Purchase of development rights programs provide a way to financially compensate willing landowners for not developing their land. When buying development rights, the community obtains a legal easement, sometimes referred to as a conservation easement, that (usually) permanently restricts development on the land. The landowner, however, still owns the land and can use or sell it for purposes specified in the easement, such as farming, timber production, or hunting.

Since PDR programs are flexible, program administrators can customize purchases of development rights to meet the objectives of both landowners and communities. For example, an easement designed to preserve agricultural resources might allow the landowner to build an additional home or two as long as their placement does not limit the property's long-term agricultural potential.[1]

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of development rights programs enable landowners within valuable agricultural, natural and cultural resource areas to be financially compensated for choosing not to develop some or all of their lands. These landowners are given an option under municipal zoning to legally sever the "development rights" from their land and sell these rights to another landowner or a real estate developer for use at another location. The land from which the development rights have been purchased is permanently protected through a conservation easement or other appropriate form of restrictive covenant, and the development value of the land where the transferred development rights are applied is enhanced by allowing for new or special uses, greater density or intensity, or other regulatory flexibility that zoning without the TDR option would not have permitted.[2]

1 Definition source: Gayle Miller & Douglas Krieger. Purchase of Development Rights: Preserving Farmland and Open Space. PlannersWeb. Plannersweb.com

2 Definition source: John Theilacker. Pennsylvania Land Trust. Conservationtools.org

Brownfield Redevelopment

Pursuing funding from state agencies for redevelopment of contaminated sites can reduce the uncertainty that otherwise prevents contaminated properties from being redeveloped. Action by the Town to evaluate contaminants or begin remediating the property is often necessary before the private sector will is willing to invest in redevelopment. While this may require some upfront investment from the community, property values around the redeveloped properties often increase and it reduces the conversion of land from agriculture and woodland uses.

Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments

While this comprehensive plan provides a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to changes that occur in the community and region that were not foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. Some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others need updating on a more regular basis. Plan maps should also be updated periodically. In general, key maps, such as the future land use map, should be reviewed annually to make sure they are still current.

Plan Adoption

The first step in implementing this plan involves adoption of the plan by local officials. The formal review and adoption process involves plan review by the Plan Commission (or other planning committee) who must adopt the plan by resolution of majority vote. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance (of majority vote). A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance prior to Board final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years.

Plan Use, Monitoring and Evaluation

The adopted plan should be used as a tool by Ringle when making land use and development decisions. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives regarding coordination of growth and development. Decisions concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions should be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations outlined in this plan.

Although this plan describes policies and actions for future implementation, it is impossible to predict the exact future condition of Ringle. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions in this plan should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions and respond to unanticipated events.

This plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Town Board, Plan Commission, and any other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing the goals and objectives to ensure they are still relevant and reflect current community desires. Then the strategies and actions should be reviewed and refined to eliminate completed tasks and identify new approaches if appropriate. The evaluation should also include an updated timetable of actions to clarify priorities.

Plan Amendments

The Ringle Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board following the same process described above for initial Plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity. A list of criteria to determine the merits of proposed amendments is below.

As noted above, proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adoption by the Town Board. The public should be notified of proposed Plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, the Town might consider soliciting public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the official public hearing.

Plan Updates

According to the State comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates often involve re-writing of whole sections of the plan document and significant changes to supporting maps. A plan update should include a thorough examination

of the community's goals and objectives based on an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

The following criteria should be considered when reviewing plan amendments and updates:

- The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Ringle Comprehensive Plan.
- The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
- Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve its viability.
- The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
- The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including trees, slopes and groundwater, or the impact could be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.
- There is a change in town actions or neighborhood characteristics that would justify a change.
- The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
- There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.
- The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration or dedication.

Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the implementation chapter describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since Ringle completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan elements. Where deemed appropriate, goals, objectives, and actions have been repeated under all applicable elements to ensure they do not get "lost".

This Comprehensive Plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts (e.g, LRTP, Groundwater Study) to ensure they are considered in planning decisions in conjunction with the recommendations of this Plan. Summary descriptions of recent and concurrent planning efforts are provided throughout the plan. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans. Some related plans, such as the Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan, are incorporated by reference in this plan and are essentially considered appendices of this plan even though they are separate documents.

Action Plan

Table 10-1 provides a detailed list of major actions to complete in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short, mid, and long-term priorities described in each of the nine plan elements. It also identifies the parties that will play key roles in implementing the actions.

Table 10-1 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting and project assignment. It is expected that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial limitations, and other unforeseen events. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of Ringle, committees, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

- Immediate = As soon as possible
- Short-term = 1-4 years
- Mid-term = 5-9 years
- Long-term = 10+ years
- On-going = Activities to continue indefinitely

Table 10-1: Implementation Plan Actions

Action	Priority
Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources	
Initiate discussions with the county and WDNR to evaluate current development practices and continue to identify sensitive resources.	Short-term
Identify a point person who will be responsible for gathering and distributing wetland information to Ringle residents.	Short-term
Work with UW-Extension and WDNR to collect wetland preservation and management information.	Short-term
Develop and maintain access to the Eau Claire River and other navigable waters.	Ongoing
Initiate discussions with the county and state on how to effectively lobby for financial support or tax breaks.	Mid-term
Work with UW-Extension, the county, and the WDNR on how to implement conservation buffers and restore native plants.	Ongoing
Work with UW-Extension, the county, the WDNR, and local branches of the U.S. Forest Service to research and distribute information on good forest practices to local forest land owners.	Short-term
Pursue conservation easements and/or purchase of development rights with willing landowners.	Mid-term
Use zoning and other land use regulatory tools to keep most new development contiguous to existing development.	Short-term
Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance to allow the development of conservation subdivisions.	Mid-term
Develop incentives to encourage conservation subdivisions, such as allowing higher density development under appropriate conditions.	Mid-term
Continue yearly testing around the landfill.	Ongoing
Continue to educate residents on well testing through brochures or speakers on the subject. Utilize the resources of the WDNR and UW-Extension for this information.	Ongoing
Regularly remind residents to test their wells, such as including information in an annual newsletter.	Ongoing
Work with UW-Extension, Marathon County, and the NRCS to implement and monitor farmland conservation practices, including BMPs.	Ongoing
Consider adopting and maintaining a certified farmland preservation zoning district.	Short-term
Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	Ongoing
Map historic buildings, cemeteries/burials, and archaeological sites, and make maps readily available for project planning and development review.	Short-term
Work with the Village of Weston and Marathon County to implement the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail vision.	Mid-term
Housing	**Priority**
Identify and map areas within the Town that have limited water supply.	Short-term
Zone or place development regulations on areas that have limited water supply or are within other critical water areas.	Mid-term

Identify and map service area boundaries.	Short-term
Use the future land use map to guide decision making for new development.	Ongoing
Create a conservation subdivision zone in the zoning code and determine the appropriate place for them.	Mid-term
Create a form or new system of recording code enforcement actions that have taken place. Review the forms to identify buildings that require enforcement.	Long-term
Contact and meet with area housing agencies.	Short-term
Summarize meetings or obtain information to provide to the public.	Ongoing
Utilities, Community Facilities and Parks	**Priority**
Identify and map areas within the Town that have limited water supply.	Short-term
Work with the DNR and the County to identify and map critical groundwater recharge areas.	Short-term
Zone or place development regulations on areas that have limited water supply or are within a critical groundwater recharge area.	Short-term
Identify potential future development areas, and ensure that adequate water is available.	Short-term
Plan regular meetings of the Solid Waste Committee.	Ongoing
Involve County and local planners in discussion about development surrounding the Landfill.	Ongoing
Contact local service providers to determine opportunities to hook into existing fiber optic systems.	Mid-term
Survey residents to determine need for improved telecommunication services.	Mid-term
Develop lot size and buffer guidelines for installing waste disposal systems within a certain distance from wetlands, rivers, or streams.	Mid-term
Identify or hire staff to monitor waste disposal systems on a regular basis.	Mid-term
Investigate and plan desired lot sizes and density in the Ringle village and River Road areas. Use this information to determine if sewer district expansion is feasible.	Short-term
Identify necessary repairs and allocate funds to maintain and/or improve the Town Hall on a regular basis.	Short-term
Develop a list of improvements or new equipment that is needed by the fire department. Prioritize needs.	Short-term
Develop criteria for the minimum number of fire people needed on staff to adequately to serve the area.	Mid-term
Regularly record, review, and audit emergency response times.	Ongoing
Meet annually to determine if existing service is adequate.	Ongoing
Initiate conversations with surrounding communities about service-sharing, if applicable.	Short-term
Initiate conversations with the County to learn of plans for improvements or maintenance to local County parks and forests.	Short-term
Work with the County to set up a local volunteer program for surrounding parks, to generate local interest in the park and help the County with small maintenance issues (i.e. trash pick-up, trail clearing, etc.)	Mid-term
Create a local parks committee to initiate and carry through with these actions.	Short-term
Consider updating land division ordinances to require parkland dedication or fee-in-lieu of dedication.	Short-term

Continue to evaluate the need for additional parks as development/population increases.	Ongoing
Survey residents for potential improvements to parkland currently owned by the Town of Ringle.	Mid-term
Investigate possible areas for a new park facility that can accommodate group activities (perhaps include as a question on the survey mentioned in Goal #2)	Short-term
Create and adopt clearer guidelines for use of the existing small park.	Short-term
Post signs with these new park regulations to encourage park use.	Mid-term
Initiate conversations with Mountain Bay Trail officials to help identify areas along the trail that may be suitable for other recreational development.	Short-term
Consider purchasing land adjacent to the Mountain Bay Trail for new Town recreation facilities.	Mid-term
Coordinate with Marathon County and Central Wisconsin Offroad Cycling Coalition (CWOCC) on the development of mountain bike trails on the Marathon County landfill property and adjacent land.	Short-term
Work with the Village of Weston and Marathon County to implement the Lower Eau Claire River Water Trail vision.	Mid-term
Transportation	**Priority**
Consider traffic calming in areas with more population, destinations, trips, crashes, etc.	Ongoing
Evaluate the safety of roads and intersections.	Ongoing
Coordinate with law enforcement, Marathon County, and WisDOT when crashes occur to identify potential contributing factors to crashes and correct them.	Ongoing
Continue to use existing guidelines to review driveway access along Town roads.	Ongoing
Continue to evaluate speed limits as population grows.	Ongoing
Develop and adopt specific criteria/thresholds to assist in the decision-making process of whether or not to pave a roadway.	Short-term
Meet annually to prioritize and program road repair and improvements.	Ongoing
Continue focus on blacktopping roads with high traffic.	Ongoing
Make roadway considerations a part of the standard development review.	Short-term
Review existing subdivision and road ordinances and utilize when planning for roads and Town road access.	Short-term
Require added lane or shoulder width and/or sidewalks or a multi-use trail along collector and arterial roads in new subdivisions and between subdivisions to support bikes and pedestrians.	Ongoing
Educate developers to new regulations/guidelines by holding meetings or creating a brochure or development guide that accompanies the development application.	Mid-term
Update ordinances to require connections to adjacent subdivisions or roads in new developments.	Short-term
Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.	Ongoing
Be sure that Ringle is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.	Ongoing
Identify and map areas along the STH 29 corridor in Ringle that are most appropriate for future development and have appropriate access.	Short-term
Use the future land use map to guide development reviews in the STH 29 corridor.	Mid-term

Advise developers of existing regulations regarding the trail.	Short-term
Review development proposals near the Mountain-Bay Trail and ensure access to the trail is provided when appropriate.	Ongoing
Update ordinances as new information regarding autonomous vehicles and electric vehicles becomes available and best practices are released.	Ongoing
Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians when road projects occur by providing appropriate infrastructure based on the volume, speed of traffic, and destinations.	Ongoing
Explore public and private on demand transportation options to assist seniors and others without access to a motor vehicle.	Mid-term
Economic Development	**Priority**
Survey residents on what types of commercial development citizens would like to see.	Mid-term
Use maps to review development applications and guide future development.	Ongoing
Evaluate ordinances to ensure appropriate home occupations that do not generate excessive traffic or other nuisances are allowed in residential areas of Ringle.	Short-term
Work with the Wisconsin DNR to identify potential contaminated properties.	Short-term
Secure funding to remediate and redevelop contaminated or blighted properties.	Mid-term
Land Use	**Priority**
Evaluate future development requests to ensure that the revenue generated from the taxes on these developments will balance with or exceed the expenditures required to provide services to them.	Short-term
Set guidelines for required buffers around identified sensitive areas – no development can occur within buffer, or development must be xx feet away from stream, etc.	Mid-term
Use the adopted plan for future development as a tool when reviewing development applications.	Immediate
Update the zoning code to include guidelines that coordinate with the adopted plan for future development.	Short-term
Adhere to County subdivision regulations or develop local regulations that achieve the goals of the community.	Ongoing
Continue to focus development on the west side of the Town, where water is more readily available.	Ongoing
Set and adopt guidelines for minimum lot size, especially on east side of Town.	Short-term
Guide higher density development to areas that would not greatly compromise rural character.	Ongoing
Consider landscaping or screening guidelines for lot frontage for rural development.	Mid-term
Maintain contact with the Solid Waste Committee and solicit their input on development in the area	Ongoing
Maintain a list of the appropriate person(s) to call when development is occurring on the Town boundary or may have an impact on another community.	Short-term
Initiate meetings with other communities when Ringle has new development proposed in the vicinity of those communities. Disclose potential impacts and discuss possible mitigation or cooperation.	Short-term
Attend meetings initiated by other surrounding communities.	Ongoing

Intergovernmental Cooperation	Priority
Maintain a list of the appropriate person(s) to call when development is occurring on the Town boundary or may have and impact on another community.	Immediate
Meet with potentially affected communities to disclose potential impacts and discuss possible mitigation or cooperation.	Short-term
Identify and map areas which have available sanitary and water service, and are suitable for development.	Short-term
Attend meetings initiated by other surrounding communities.	Ongoing
Schedule/attend regular meetings during the annexation process.	Ongoing
Maintain contact with the State and continue to express interest in a corridor study along STH 29.	Ongoing
Ensure that Ringle is represented in any committees or meetings held by the state or other entities on the STH 29 corridor.	Ongoing
Share and coordinate future land use maps with other communities.	Immediate
Initiate meetings with surrounding Towns and the County to discuss road maintenance schedules, snow-plowing and other service activities.	Short-term
Invite representatives from county and state activities and organizations to speak at Town meetings.	Mid-term
Develop a survey which can be mailed out to residents annually, asking for suggestions or feedback on Town government, life in the Town and other questions that will help Town decision-makers govern effectively.	Mid-term
Designate a main contact person who will be responsible for organizing and/or distributing public information materials.	Immediate
Hold meetings during times that working residents and families with children are able to attend.	Ongoing
Develop a website for the Town where residents can go for information, including ordinances such as the zoning and building codes.	Short-term

APPENDIX A: PLAN ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE FOR PLAN ADOPTION

Ordinance # ORD2017 – 2

Town of Ringle

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Section I – TITLE/PURPOSE

The title of this ordinance is the Town of Ringle Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the Town of Ringle to lawfully adopt a comprehensive plan as required under s. 66.1001 (4) (c). Wis. Stats.

SECTION II – AUTHORITY

The town board of the Town of Ringle has authority under its village powers under ss. 60.62 (4) and 62.23 (1), Wis. Stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. Stats., to adopt this ordinance. The comprehensive plan of the Town of Ringle must be in compliance with s. 66.100 (4) (c), Wis stats., in order for the town board to adopt this ordinance.

SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

The town board of the Town of Ringle, by this ordinance, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and roll call vote by a majority of the town board present and voting, provides the authority for the Town of Ringle to adopt its comprehensive plan under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. Stat., and provides the authority of the town board to order its publication.

SECTION IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The town board of the Town of Ringle has adopted written procedure designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by s. 66.100 (4) (a), Wis. Stats.

SECTION V – TOWN PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Plan Commission of the Town of Ringle, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the town board the adoption of the Town of Ringle Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2), Wis. Stats.

SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of Ringle, has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, with notice in compliance with the requirements of s. 66.1001 (4) (d), Wis. Stat.

SECTION VII – ADOPTION OF TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The town board of the Town of Ringle, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled Town of Ringle Comprehensive Plan Ordinance under pursuant to s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. Stats.

SENTION VIII – SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance of its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions of applications of this ordinance that can be given effect without the invalid provision of application, and to this end, the provisions of this ordinance are severable.

SECTION IX – EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting.

The town clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wis. Stats.

Adopted this 14th day of August 2017.

Town Board Chairman Al Christensen

Attest:

Town Clerk Paula Zynda

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Town of Ringle
Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The Town of Ringle recognizes the importance of public participation in the planning process. As such, a goal during the comprehensive planning process will be to inform and involve the public in the planning process.

I. Plan Development:

Throughout the plan process, the Plan Commission will provide oversight for the update of the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission will also recommend adoption of the Public Participation Plan to the Town Board.

The public participation plan will incorporate the following:

1. All meetings for the planning process will be posted and open to the public.

2. Plan related materials will be available at the Town Hall for review by the public.

3. The draft plan and maps will be available on a website for review by the public.

4. A public hearing will be held to solicit comment from the public.

5. The Comprehensive Plan will be distributed as outlined in state statute.

The Plan Commission will review and recommend adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to the Town Board.

II. Implementation, Evaluation & Update:

The Comprehensive Plan will be used as a general guideline for development in the Town. The plan will support the existing zoning and other regulations that the Town has in place.

As with all plans, it is critical for the Comprehensive Plan to be maintained and updated on a regular basis to keep it current as things change.

Any planning process is subject to change, and this public participation plan is no different. Over the planning period the process may vary from that presented.

Resolution for the Adoption of a
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

THE TOWN OF RINGLE DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the Town is updating its Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, public participation is critical for the development of a plan; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Town Board to approve a process to involve the public in the planning effort; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board does approve and authorize the Public Participation Plan as attached to this resolution.

I, Paula Zynda, Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at a Town Board meeting, held at the Town Hall on the 12th day of September, 2016, at 6:00 p.m.

Paula Zynda
Clerk

APPENDIX C: STATE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS

State Comprehensive Planning Goals

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires that the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of local governmental units be consistent with the fourteen planning goals in the State planning legislation, which include:

1. Promote the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.
2. Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes and woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protect economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state government, and utility costs.
6. Preserve cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.
7. Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Build community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels throughout each community.
10. Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
11. Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.
12. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that provides mobility, convenience, and safety, which meets the needs of all citizens including transit-dependent and disabled.

Town of Ringle
Comprehensive Plan
2017