Chapter 1
Demographics

This chapter reviews the demographics of the Town of Jackson and identifies the major trends impacting the Town over the next few decades. Both Adams County and the State of Wisconsin are presented for comparison.

Background

The Town of Jackson is a traditional six-mile by six-mile Town with 36 sections, located in the southeast part of Adams County, Wisconsin. The Town of New Chester to the north, Marquette County to the east, the Town of Springville to the west, Town of Dell Prairie to the southwest and the Town of New Haven to the south bound the Town. It is one of the seventeen towns in the county, see Map 1 for locational reference and Map 2 for an aerial view of the Town. The Town is essentially a combination of agriculture, woodlands and open space, wrapped around and interlaced with the Neenah Creek Watershed and a concentration of glacial and man-made lakes. Seasonal residents abound in the eastern lakes region, while agriculture is more prominent in the western portion.

Planning Process

The Comprehensive Planning Process was overseen by the Town Board. They met several times with staff from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to review the 2017 plan, analyze updated data, draft new goals, and develop a new Future Land Use map. Prior to adoption, a public hearing was held. See the attachments at the end of the plan for a copy of the Public Participation Plan, Plan Commission Resolution, Public Hearing Notice, and Town Board Resolution.

Public Participation

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of the Town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and opinions on issues that they would like addressed on the future development of their Town. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public's desires and consensus. A Public Participation Plan was adopted early in the planning process to ensure the public had opportunities to engage. This Plan ensures that all meetings are posted and open to the public, all materials related to the plan are available at the Town Hall and online for public review, and that a public hearing will be held to solicit public comment prior to adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Issues and Opportunities

During the planning process for this plan update, the Town Plan Commission identified and discussed several issues/opportunities currently facing the Town. Specific issues and opportunities pertaining to each chapter's topic will be discussed within each chapter.

Population and Households

Historical Trends

The Town's population has decreased significantly over the last ten years according to the Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). It is important to note that the U.S. Census and American Community Survey data do not include non-resident property owners. As displayed in Table 1, the Town experienced an 8.3 percent increase between 2000 and 2010, but the population then decreased at a rate of 6.5 percent between 2010 and 2024. Meanwhile, the county and the state both grew from 2010 to 2024, at rates of 1.2 percent and 4 percent, respectively. Between 2010 and 2024, Jackson lost 65 people. The Town was approximately 4.4 percent of the total population of the county in 2024.

Table 1: Demographic Change 2000-2024

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2020	2024	2000-2010% Change	2010-2024% Change
Total Population						
T. Jackson	926	1,003	1,141	938	8.3%	-6.5%
Adams County	19,920	20,875	20,654	21,123	4.8%	1.2%
State	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,914,872	6.0%	4.0%
Total Households						
T. Jackson	411	539	510	468	31.1%	-13.2%
Adams County	7,924	9,341	9,111	9,517	17.9%	1.9%
State	2,084,544	2,274,611	2,377,935	2,479,480	9.1%	9.0%
Average Household Size						
T. Jackson	2.39	1.88	2.09	1.99	-21.3%	5.9%
Adams County	2.32	2.1	2.09	2.14	-9.5%	1.9%
State	2.5	2.41	2.38	2.33	-3.6%	-3.3%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010, & 2020; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010, 2020, & 2024

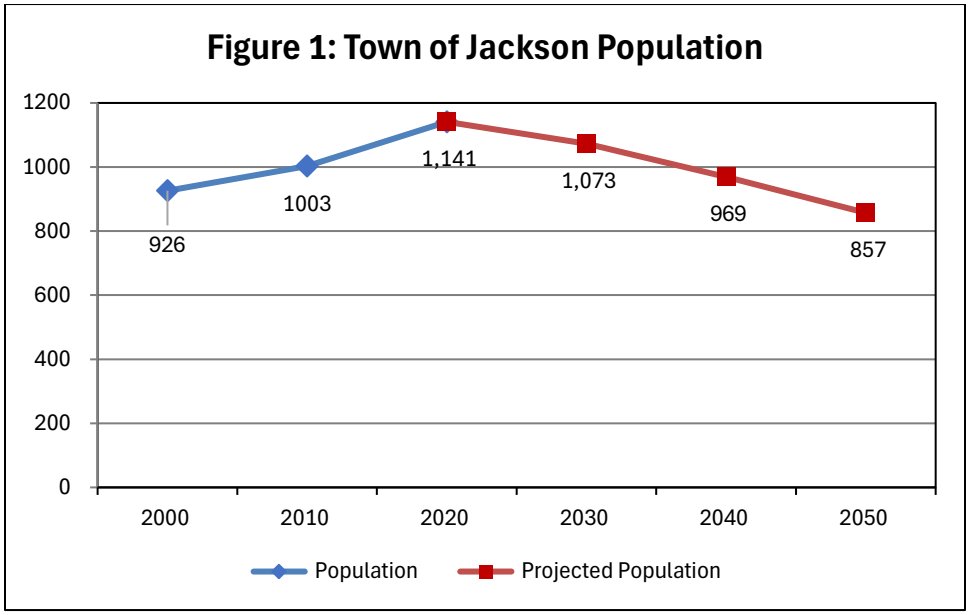
Despite significant growth from 2000 to 2010, the number of households in the Town has decreased by 13.2 percent, from 539 in 2010 to 468 in 2024, see Table 1. This contrasts with the growth that the county and state have seen from 2010 to 2024, at rates of 1.9 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

The average household size has been decreasing steadily across the nation over the past few decades. This is due to a multitude of factors including longer life spans, fewer people having children, and people having fewer children. Household size in the Town has followed this pattern, with a household size of 2.39 average people per household in 2000 dropping to 1.99 people in 2024, for a decrease of 0.40 people per household.

This decrease is also substantially more than that of the county, which has experienced a drop of 0.18 people per household from 2000 to 2024. Additionally, the Town's decrease is also more than the state which has gone from 2.50 in 2000 to 2.33 in 2024, for a net reduction of 0.17 people per household on average.

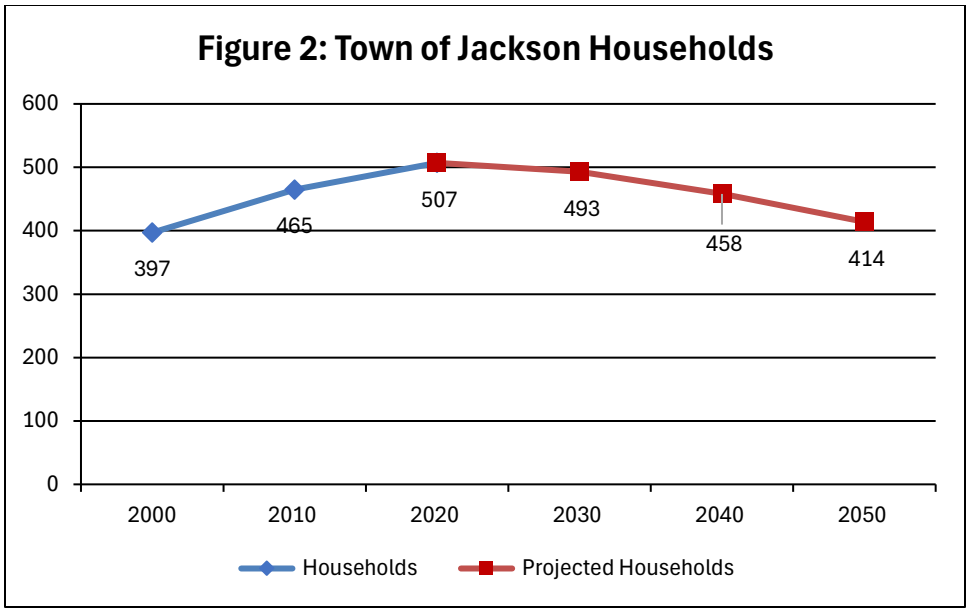
Projections

Figure 1 shows population projections for the Town of Jackson and Table 2 compares projected population in the Town to Adams County, based on projections made by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (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. The Town of Jackson is expected to experience a decrease in population through 2050 at a rate of 14.6 percent. This negative growth rate is still less than that of Adams County as a whole, which is expected to decline at a rate of 29.8 percent by 2050.



Source: U.S. Census 2000- 2020; WI DOA 2030-2050

Figure 2 and Table 3 include household projections completed by the WDOA. Projections indicate that both population and number of households are expected to decrease significantly in the Town through 2050. The number of households is expected to decrease by 2050 for Adams County as a whole, with a projected decrease of 19.7 percent from 2010 to 2050.



Source: U.S. Census 2000-2020, WI DOA 2030-2050

Table 2: Population Projections 2010-2050					
Total Population by Year					
	2020	2030	2040	2050	% change 2010-2050
Town of Jackson	1,141	1,073	969	857	-14.6%
Adams County	20,654	19,035	16,875	14,650	-29.8%

Source: WI DOA Population Projections 2024

Table 3: Household Projections 2010-2050					
Total Households Per Year					
	2020	2030	2040	2050	% change 2010-2050
Town of Jackson	507	493	458	414	-11.0%
Adams County	9,049	8,625	7,860	6,961	-19.7%

Source: WI DOA Household Projections 2026

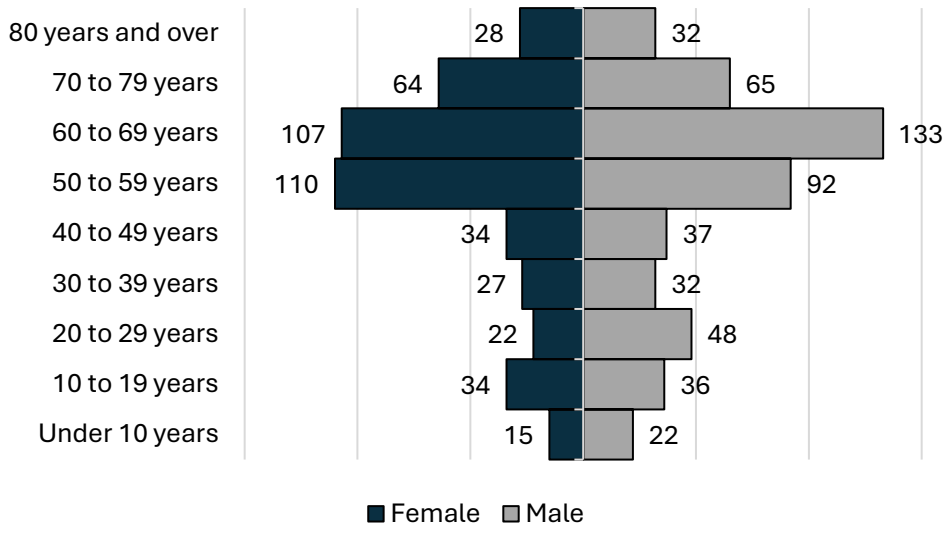
Age

Figures 3 and 4 compare the distribution of age group for the Town of Jackson and Adams County. Adams County's population pyramid is highly constrictive with far greater numbers in the higher age ranges compared to lower age ranges. For example, the largest age group in Adams County is the 60-to-69-year-old category. This is indicative of aging populations with slow population growth.

Similarly, the Town of Jackson also has a restrictive population pyramid, with a large proportion of residents in the 50-to-59 and 60-to-69-year-old age cohorts, and fewer residents in the younger age categories. For example, there were only an estimated 37 children under 10 years old, but 240 adults between ages 60 and 69. As a result, residents aged 50 and over comprise 67.3 percent of the Town's population, suggesting a

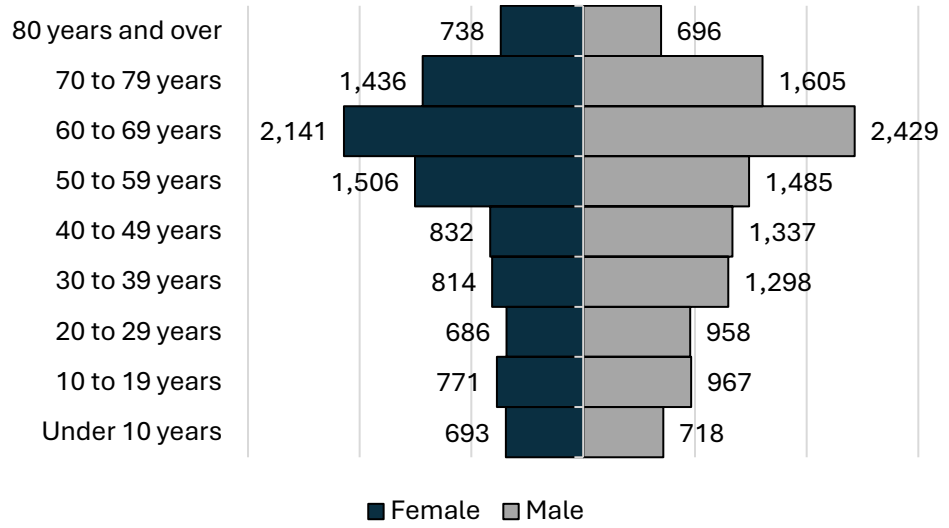
strong concentration of retired or semi-retired individuals in the Town. This is a portion of the Town's population that is likely to continue growing.

Figure 3: Town of Jackson Age Cohorts



Source: American Community Survey- 5 Year Estimates

Figure 4: Adams County Age Cohorts



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

According to the American Community Survey's 5-Year Estimates, the median age of the Town was 58.4 years in 2024, up from 53.6 in 2010. The county's median age in 2010 was 47.7 years, and it rose to 55.7 years by 2024. The median age for both the Town and the county was significantly higher than the state which had a median age of 40.2 in 2024.

Population distribution is important to the planning process. Two age groups are of note, those 17 years of age and younger and those 65 years of age or older. These are often referred to as dependent populations, but

each has different needs. For example, the younger group requires schools and childcare and the older group requires increased levels of medical care.

The U.S. Census calculates an old age dependency ratio, which is the population age 65 and older divided by the population ages 20 to 64 times 100. In 2024, the old age dependency ratio for the Town of Jackson was 59.7, up from 46.3 in 2010. The U.S. Census also calculates a youth dependency ratio, which is the population under 18 divided by the population ages 18 to 64 times 100. In 2024, the child dependency ratio for the Town of Jackson was 19.7, down from 22.9 in 2010. Clearly, the needs of those in the 65 and older group have become much more prevalent in the past few years. In contrast, the needs of the younger population are important, but are not as widespread due to the fact that the size of this group is shrinking.

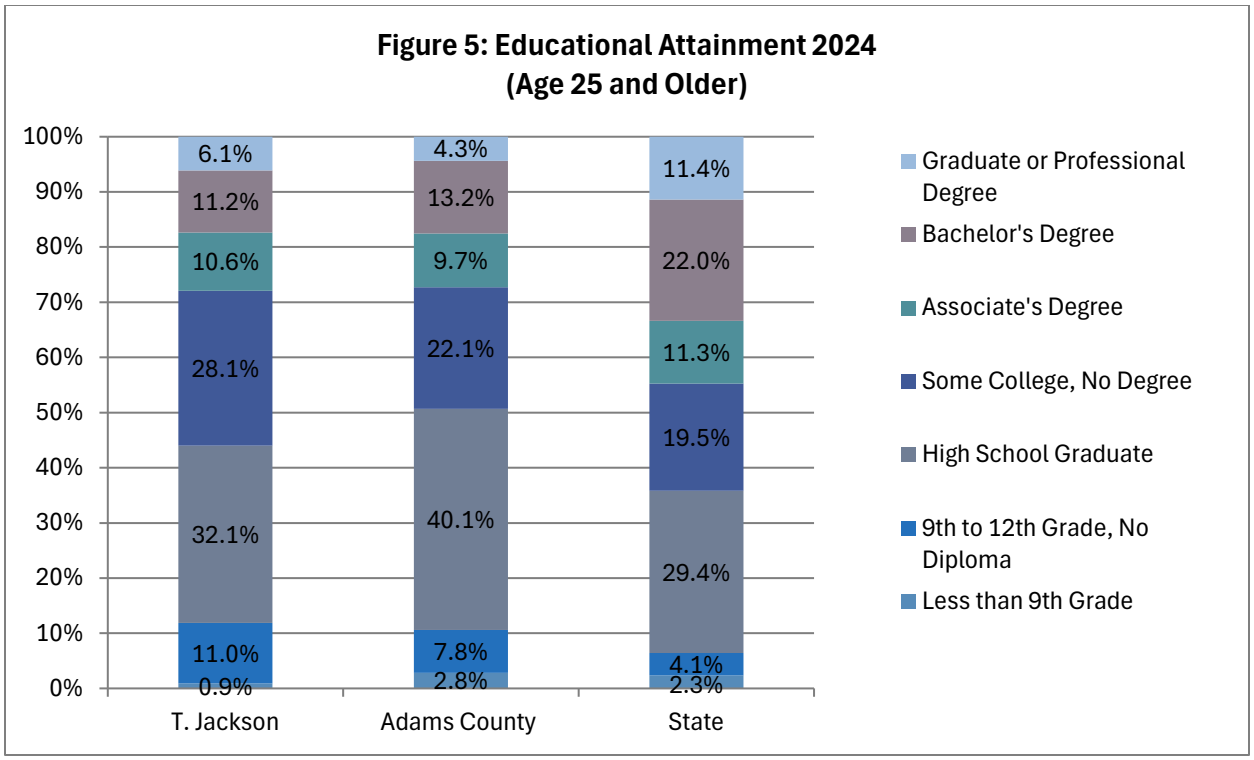
Due to longer life expectancy and the size of the Baby Boomer generation, the 65 and older age group is expected to continue to increase in size. The trend is occurring at the state and national levels and to an even greater degree within the rural Wisconsin counties. This population trend whereby older age categories increase significantly while younger age categories decline will impact the future labor supply, school system, and health care industry at the national, state, and local levels.

Education and Income Levels

Education

Figure 5 compares educational attainment of those in the Town of Jackson to the county and the state. In 2024, 88.1 percent of Town residents aged 25 and older had a high school diploma or higher. This was 1.3 percent lower than the county average and 5.5 percent lower than the state average.

According to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, there has been little to no change in the percentage of Town residents aged 25 or older who had achieved a high school diploma or higher from 2010 to 2024, in which the rate for both years was 88.1 percent. However, the percentage of Town residents aged 25 or older who have a bachelor's degree or higher has increased from 11.3 percent in 2010 to 17.3 percent in 2024. This was still lower than both the county and the state, at 17.5 percent and 33.4 percent, respectively. Education and how it relates to economic development will be discussed in the economic development chapter.



Source: American Community Survey 2024

Income

Median household income and per capita income are two commonly used measures of income. Median household income is the amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, meaning half of all households have income above that amount, and half have income below that amount. Per capita income is the average income earned per person.

Median household income for Town of Jackson residents was $59,500 in 2024, which rose considerably from $41,008. Note that $41,008 in 2010 had the same purchasing power as $58,992.91 in 2024 due to inflation, so the increase is still present but not as significant as the table makes it appear. Table 4 shows that the Town's median household income in 2024 was slightly higher than Adams County, but significantly lower than the State of Wisconsin. This is partially offset by a lower cost of living in Adams County compared to other regions of Wisconsin. The median household income in the county overall has increased since 2010, and this holds true for the Town.

Table 5 illustrates that in 2024, income per capita in the Town of Jackson was higher than the county, but lower than the state. This is a change from 2010, when income per capita in the Town was higher than both the county and the state.

Approximately 31.4 percent of households in the Town reported incomes above $100,000 and 19.6 percent reported incomes below $25,000 in 2024. Table 6 compares the poverty rate for the Town, the county, and the state from 2010 to 2024. The percentage of the population living below the poverty level in the Town has increased over 10 percent from 2010 to 2024. In 2010, the Town had a substantially lower poverty rate than

both the county and state. Since then, poverty has increased in the Town, and its poverty rate exceeded that of both the county and the state in 2024.

Table 4: Median Household Income				
Minor Civil Division	**2010**	**2024**	***Net Change**	***% Change**
T. Jackson	$41,008	$59,500	$18,492	45.1%
Adams County	$39,885	$59,442	$19,557	49.0%
Wisconsin	$51,598	$77,485	$25,887	50.2%

Source: U.S. Census 2010; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Table 5: Per Capita Income				
Minor Civil Division	**2010**	**2024**	**Net Change**	**% Change**
T. Jackson	$27,639	$38,786	$11,147	40.3%
Adams County	$21,917	$35,863	$13,946	63.6%
Wisconsin	$26,624	$43,373	$16,749	62.9%

Source: U.S. Census 2010; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Table 6: Poverty Rate		
Minor Civil Division	**2010 Poverty Rate**	**2024 Poverty Rate**
T. Jackson	5.7%	15.9%
Adams County	12.6%	14.1%
Wisconsin	11.6%	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census 2010; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Employment Characteristics

Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the breakdown of the labor force in the Town of Jackson in 2010 and 2024. The labor force includes those that are 16 and older who are working or looking for work. It does not include those who are retired or staying home with children, for example. There was a decrease of 78 people in the labor force from 2010 to 2024 in the Town, which is a decrease of nearly 15 percent. This is likely due to the rise in median age, whereby more people are entering retirement. This decline was more significant than in the county, which saw a decrease of 2.6 percent of its labor force from 2010 to 2024. In contrast, the state experienced an increased labor force of 1.9 percent during the same time.

Labor force participation indicates the percent of those 16 years and over that are in the labor force. The labor force participation rate decreased 5.1 percent in the Town of Jackson from 2010 to 2024. There was a decrease in the county and state during this period also, but to a lesser degree.

Table 7: Labor Force						
	Labor Force			Labor Participation Rate		
Minor Civil Division	2010	2024	2010-2024 % Change	2010	2024	2010-2024 % Change
T. Jackson	527	449	-14.8%	56.9%	51.8%	-5.1%
Adams County	9,139	8,902	-2.6%	50.9%	47.6%	-3.3%
Wisconsin	3,078,465	3,136,600	1.9%	69.0%	65.3%	-3.7%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates

In 2010, the Town of Jackson had an employed population of 491 people. This number decreased by 66 people to 425 by 2024, for a decline of 13.4 percent. In contrast, both the state and the county saw an increase in the employed population from 2010 to 2024, at rates of 1.7 percent and 5.6 percent, respectively. The U.S. Census classifies individuals as unemployed if they are not working, actively seeking work, and available to accept a job. The Town's unemployment rate in 2024 was 5.3 percent, and the county and state saw lower unemployment rates of 4.5 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively.

Table 8: Employment				
Minor Civil Division	2010	2024	2010-2024 % Change	Unemployment Rate 2024
T. Jackson	491	425	-13.4%	5.3%
Adams County	8,354	8,493	1.7%	4.5%
Wisconsin	2,869,310	3,031,042	5.6%	3.2%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 9: Resident Occupations 2010-2024			
Occupation Sector	2010	2024	2010-2024 Change
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	162	111	-51
Service occupations	90	57	-33
Sales and office occupations	107	94	-13
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	43	56	13
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	89	107	18
Total employed*	491	425	-66

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates

As shown in Table 9, the two employment sectors with the most employed in 2024 were management, business, science, and arts occupations, along with production, transportation, and material moving occupations. This is a slight shift from 2010, when residents were also largely employed in sales and office occupations, more so than production, transportation, and material moving occupations. From 2010 to 2024, there were increases in the areas of natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations and production, transportation, and material moving occupations. The largest decrease was seen in the areas of service occupations and management, business, science, and arts occupations.

Demographic Snapshot

- Overall, there has been a notable decline in both the Town's population and number of households since 2020. Household size has fluctuated throughout the past few decades but has overall declined from 2010 to 2024.
- The Town of Jackson is expected to experience a significant decline in both population and household size through 2050.
- There are a large number of people in the older age categories, and the median age of the Town is higher than both the county and the state.
- The median age rose 4.8 years from 53.6 in 2010 to 58.4 in 2024.
- In 2024, 88.1 percent had a high school diploma or higher and 17.3 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher in the Town of Jackson. This was less than both the county and the state.
- The 2024 median household income of $59,500 was slightly higher than the county and lower than the state. The 2024 per capita income of $38,786 was higher than the county and lower than the state.
- The labor participation rate is higher than the county but substantially lower than the state, and the unemployment rate is higher than the county and the state.
- Most people working in the Town of Jackson work in the areas of management, business, science and arts occupations or production, transportation, and material moving occupations.

Issues and Opportunities Summary

A variety of issues were identified throughout the planning process, and the following chapters of this plan will list the issues that relate to each chapter's topic. Opportunities that the Town has to address each issue are described in the Goals, Objectives, and Policies at the end of each chapter.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Each of the following Comprehensive Plan chapters' goals, objectives, and policies will be used to guide the future development of the Town. For purposes of this planning process, goals, objectives, and policies are defined as follows:

Goals

Broad statements that express general priorities about how the community should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.

Objectives

More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies

Rules or courses of action that are used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a regular basis.

The Town's 2017 Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives, and policies were presented to Plan Commission, and they were reviewed and updated during the development of this updated Comprehensive Plan.

Page intentionally left blank

Chapter 2
Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources

This chapter describes local land and water conditions in detail as well as agricultural resources and cultural heritage. It is important to consider the patterns and interrelations of natural resources on a broader scale because they do not follow geo-political boundaries. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts on natural resources are administrated at the county, state, or federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below.

It is in the best interest of the community to plan for, preserve and protect natural, historic and cultural resources, as these resources impact Town residents, Town visitors, and future generations. Additionally, these resources have more than aesthetic and recreational value, they are essential to long-term human survival and general welfare.

Previous Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resource Plans and Studies

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.

Adams County Comprehensive Plan 2018

The Adams County Comprehensive Plan addresses natural, agricultural, and cultural resources for Adams County. The goal of the Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources element is to protect natural areas, economically productive areas, including forests and scenic landscapes upon which tourism depends, and the protection of open space and unique landscape resources.

Adams County Land & Water Resources Management Plan 2026-2035

The Adams County Land and Water Resources Management Plan is drafted as a ten-year plan (2026-2035) with included Work Plan goals and objectives in accordance with the requirements set forth in Chapter 92 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

- Create a culture where landowners take ownership of their impact on the environment.
- Protect and improve groundwater quality and quantity as well as surface water quality.
- Reduce wind erosion.
- Engage and support our local youth in conservation efforts.
- No net loss of existing wetlands.
- Promote working Forests.

Adams County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2024-2028

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the current and future recreational needs of the County. This is accomplished through an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities, asking the public what they are looking for, and the establishment of recommendations to meet identified needs.

Adams County Farmland Preservation Plan 2016

The Adams County Farmland Preservation Plan focuses on preserving the agricultural production capacity, farmland, soil and water resources, and rural character in Adams County. The plan identified issues and concerns in farming practices, sets goals and policies to preserve agriculture, and identifies actions to achieve the set goals. It also sets criteria for both farmland preservation and non-farmland preservation areas.

Natural Resources

The Town of Jackson lies in the mid-latitude continental climatic zone, which is characterized by long, snowy winters and short, warm summers. Spring and fall are often short with rapid changes from summer to winter and winter to summer. Annual precipitation, throughout the area, averages about 32 inches. About one-half to two-thirds of the annual precipitation falls between May and September. Snowfalls range between 45 and 80 inches annually, with a continuous snow cover from November to early April.

In terms of the physical landscape, the protection of certain natural features is necessary for the environment and for future generations. Certain environmental features and assets have more than merely aesthetic and leisure-time activity values. They are essential to long-term human survival and the preservation of life, health, and general welfare. As such, the protection and/or management of these environmental features and assets clearly are in the public's best interest.

Land Resources

The Town of Jackson is in the southeast part of Adams County. The Town is bounded by the Town of New Chester to the north, the Town of Oxford to the east (Marquette County), the Town of Springville to the west, the Town of Dell Prairie to the southwest, and the Town of New Haven to the south. The Town of Jackson covers approximately 22,811 acres of land. Over the years, the Town has been largely dominated by agriculture and forestry, with approximately 33.3 percent of the total land being used for agriculture, and 46.1 percent being woodlands, some of which may be agricultural forests.

Topography and Geology

Adams County primarily lies at the bottom of the former Glacial Lake Wisconsin, giving it a flat, sandy terrain. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) places this portion of the County in the Central Sand Plains Ecological Landscape as a result. The Johnstown Terminal Moraine, which is a series of lakes and ridges that passes through the Town of Jackson, is a result of past glacial activity, which is why it is more rugged than other portions of the County. DNR considers this portion of the County to be in the Central Sand Hills Ecological Landscape. DNR has guides on their website describing each ecological landscape in detail, along with its physical characteristics, wildlife, and best land management practices.

Sandstone bedrock generally defined as the "Dresbach Group undifferentiated" lies under Adams County. The Dresbach Group is comprised of sedimentary sandstone of late (Upper) Cambrian Age that overlies crystalline basement rocks of Precambrian Age. Both the crystalline rock surface and the sandstones decline from less than 100 feet in the northern part to nearly 400 feet in the southern part of the county. In places, the sandstones project up through overlying materials to create the scenic sandstone mounds and castle rocks of Adams County. These sandstones range from fine to coarse in grain and are relatively permeable. The extensive outwash plains extend southward along the terminal moraine and covers nearly 400 square miles of the "driftless area". The remainder of Adams County is covered by glacial lake deposits, consisting of sand, silt, and clay covered with a fine to coarse grain.

The Town of Jackson's topography varies with some flatter areas and some hilly areas. Elevation ranges from around 860 feet above sea level on the eastern valleys to 1,110 feet above sea level in the hilly areas in the middle of the Town. The Town has some steep slopes which hinder development.

Soils

Soils are an important natural resource. To better guide development and land use within the Town, it is important to know and understand soil properties and their limitations. Soil properties affecting potential land use decisions include depth to bedrock, slope, drainage/permeability, shrink-swell potential, and flooding. Soil characteristics can vary widely across a given area, but generalizations can be made based on a soil series, which is a type of soil profile. The soil survey describes the characteristics of different types of soils including engineering properties, physical and chemical properties, and soil and water features.

As with most areas in Central Wisconsin, the Town has a variety of soil types within its boundaries. According to the USDA Web Soil Survey of Adams County, four dominant soil series were identified within the Town: Coloma sand, Okee loamy sand, Wyocena loamy sand, and Kewaunee silt loam. See the Soil Survey for more detailed information.

Forests

Woodlands are the predominant land cover within the Town, covering around 10,524 acres, or approximately 46.1 percent of the Town. Forest cover provides many vital functions, which are diverse in nature; forested lands provide for recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, economic commodity (timber products), and wildlife habitat as well as protection of sensitive environmental areas. Tree cover is essential, especially for erosion control and to reduce effluent and nutrient flows into surface water bodies and courses. Woodlands are shown on Map 6, Existing Land Use.

Some woodlands in the town are being maintained through the Managed Forest Law (MFL). This tax assessment program is available to landowners willing to manage their forest plot according to sound forestry practices as specified in a management plan.

Metallic and Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

There are no active metallic in the Town of Jackson. There is one non-metallic mine in the Town shown on Map 4: Utilities & Community Facilities.

Environmentally Remediated Areas

Brownfields are commercial or industrial properties that contain or may contain hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. Expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of these properties can be especially difficult. The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) is an online database that provides information about contaminated properties and other activities related to the investigation and clean-up of properties with contaminated soil and/or groundwater.

Contaminated sites are not uncommon as all communities with commercial and industrial development have the potential for air emissions, groundwater contamination, soil spills, and surface water contamination. There are no open listed sites in the Town of Jackson at this time.

Rare Species and Natural Communities

Wisconsin's National Heritage Inventory Program (NHI) is responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the State. The program's database, on the Wisconsin DNR website, identifies species and natural communities that are currently tracked by the NHI. As of July 2026, NHI tracked 14 species in the Town of Jackson. Two species have an endangered status, and none have a threatened status in Wisconsin; no species in the Town have a federal status. Of the 14 species tracked by NHI 9 are communities, 3 are plants, and 2 are animals or insects.

Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities from the very common to critically endangered for present and future generations. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to society.

Water Resources

The Town of Jackson, as well as the whole of Adams County, contains a range of natural surface water features, including rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands. Some have remained in a fairly pristine state and others are in need of focused efforts to improve water quality. This section discusses the characteristics of the major surface water features located within the Town.

Watersheds

A watershed is an area of land in which water drains to a common point. In Wisconsin, watersheds vary in scale from major river systems to small creek drainage areas and typically range in size from 100 to 300 square miles. River basins encompass several watersheds. There are 32 river basins in Wisconsin, which range in size from 500 to over 5,000 square miles.

Most of the Town of Jackson is in the Neenah Creek Watershed, with water flowing east as part of the Fox Wolf Basin, ultimately reaching Lake Winnebago and Lake Michigan. The western portion of the town is in the Wisconsin River basin, ultimately flowing into the Mississippi River.

Surface Water

Together the ponds, lakes, and streams total about 652 acres in the town or 2.9 percent of the total. Jordan Lake, the largest (213 acres) and deepest natural lake in Adams County, is located in the Town. These surface water resources replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. Jordan and Parker Lakes were

recently tested for Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), and the results did not show concerning levels of PFAS.

The Widow Green Drainage District is approximately 694 acres in the Towns of Jackson and New Haven. The ditch network contains approximately 11,300 feet of District operated ditches, and no private ditches. A WDNR Maintenance Dredging Agreement and ATCP 48 of the Wisconsin Administrative code under the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection regulate the construction and maintenance of District operated ditches.

Lakes

Jordan Lake, the largest (213 acres) and deepest natural lake in Adams County, is located in the Town. Its watershed is large (over 4000 acres) for a glacial lake, and it has no current water outlet. In 2019, Jordan Lake's water levels were exceptionally high, creating an overland outlet across Fur Drive towards O'Keefe Creek. Other lakes in the Town include Crooked Lake (48 acres), Deep Lake (33 acres), Goose Lake (67 acres), Hill Lake (11 acres), McDougall Lake (14 acres), Parker Lake (57 acres), Peppermill Lake (53 acres), and Wolf Lake (42 acres).

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface for a significant part of most years. Wetlands include marshes, wooded swamps, and wet meadows. Soils in these areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface. The presence of wetlands in an area can limit the type of development that can occur in that location. Wetlands are found scattered through the Town in small areas. Wetlands occur along Neenah Creek and O'Keefe Creek and also near some of the lakes and ponds in the eastern half of the Town.

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle, and local ecological systems. In a natural condition, they control floodwater by moderating peak flows, and some may act as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams as well as functioning in the reduction of water nutrients through uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. They also have a buffering effect on water acidity or alkalinity and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria, which may be found in surface or groundwater. They also serve as breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and many other animals that depend on aquatic habitat. They are also important recreational, education, and aesthetic resource. In many instances, wetlands serve as the combined roles of flood moderation, water purification and aquatic habitat, wetlands are important to the maintenance of downstream habitat as well.

Floodplains

A floodplain is an area of land that is prone to flooding, usually located adjacent to a stream or river. Floodplains in the Town are found along Neenah Creek, O'Keefe Creek, and Peppermill Creek as well a along the edges of McDougall Lake, Hill Lake, and Wolf Lake. Floodplains are shown on Map 3.

Floodplains are a natural feature not conducive to development. Inappropriate location of roadways in floodplains can result in serious flood damage. Periodic roadbed saturation and embankment washing

eventually lead to an increase in road maintenance costs. In addition to roads, floodwater can create several problems by damaging foundations of homes, electrical equipment, heating units, etc. Basements constructed on permeable sands and silts of floodplains are especially susceptible to damage resulting from seepage through walls. Thus, it is advisable to restrict development in such areas.

Groundwater

Groundwater is water found underground in the cracks and spaces in soil, sand, and rock. Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from such sources as percolation of water through improperly placed or maintained landfill sites, private waste disposal located near the water table, leaks from sewer pipes, and seepage from some types of mining operations into the aquifer. Runoff from livestock yards and urban areas and improper application of agricultural pesticide or fertilizers can also add organic and chemical contaminants in locations where the water table is near the surface. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water for domestic, agricultural, and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result; thus, endangering the quality and supply of the water in the town.

The Wisconsin DNR in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin Extension, Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and USGS, analyzed the ease whereby contaminants can be carried through overlying materials to groundwater. Variables relevant to this are depth to bedrock, type of bedrock, soil characteristics, depth to water table, and characteristics of surficial deposits.

Groundwater in Adams County is generally of good quality although some areas have non-threatening problems with iron, dissolved solids, and hardness. There are some concerns with nitrates in the groundwater supply. Local differences in quality are the result of the composition, solubility, and surface of the soil and rock through which the water moves, and the length of time that the water is in contact with these materials. Contamination of groundwater typically is the result of land uses associated with modern development. Many land use activities have the potential to impact the quality of groundwater. A landfill may leach contaminants into the ground that end up contaminating groundwater. Gasoline may leak from an underground storage tank into groundwater. Fertilizers and pesticides can seep into the ground from application on farm fields, golf courses, or lawns. Leaking fluids from cars in junkyards, intentional dumping or accidental spills of paint, used motor oil, or other chemicals on the ground can result in contaminated groundwater.

High-Capacity Wells

In Wisconsin, high-capacity wells are defined as those that can pump more than 100,000 gallons a day. They are very common in Central Wisconsin where groundwater is plentiful and easy to access. In Jackson, there are 47 high-capacity wells, which are permitted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Town should work with County and State officials to ensure that high-capacity wells minimize impacts to groundwater quality and quantity.

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

The Wisconsin DNR classifies major surface water resources. These classifications allow water bodies of particular importance to be identified because of their unique resource values and water quality. The DNR has

two categories which include Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) which have the highest quality water and fisheries in the state and are therefore deserving of special protection, and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) which have excellent water quality and valued fisheries but receive or may receive water discharges.

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) share many of the same environmental and ecological characteristics. The primary difference between the two is that ORWs typically do not have any direct point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water. In addition, any pollutant load discharged to an ORW must meet background water quality at all times. Exceptions are made for certain types of discharge situations to ERWs to allow pollutant loads that are greater than background water quality when human health would otherwise be compromised. Neenah Creek is currently the only ERW located within the Town of Jackson. There are not any ORWs located in the Town at this time.

Impaired Waters

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the "303(d) list." A water body is considered impaired if a) the current water quality does not meet the numeric or narrative criteria in a water quality standard or b) the designated use that is described in Wisconsin Administrative Code is not being achieved. A documented methodology is used to articulate the approach used to list waters in Wisconsin. Every two years, states are required to submit a list of impaired waters to EPA for approval. There are currently no impaired waters in the Town of Jackson.

Invasive Aquatic Species

Surface water resources in Adams County are threatened by the introduction of invasive aquatic species. Invasive species can alter the natural ecological relationships among native species and affect ecosystem function, economic value of ecosystems, and human health. It is recommended that the Town continue to work with the County Land and Water Conservation Department to develop public outreach education strategies. It is also beneficial that lake districts and associations continue to work with the DNR and property owners to manage invasive aquatic species within lakes and waterbodies throughout the Town of Jackson.

Agricultural Resources

Farming in Adams County has been influenced by a combination of technology and environmental awareness. Employment in farming in Adams County has declined rapidly as farms have become more reliant on machinery and chemicals and less reliant on human labor. Larger farms can now be more easily maintained by fewer people leading to a reduction in the total number of farms in the county and an increase in the average size and value per farm. Farm size, conservation practices, and effective irrigation techniques have increased productivity to make rural Adams County into profitable farmland.

Farmland

Today, the primary agricultural crop in Adams County is irrigated vegetable farming (e.g. potatoes, corn, snap beans, soybeans, and peas). Cranberry production is increasingly important too. Two cattle Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) have been built since 2010 in the county. Approximately 7,590 acres of land in the Town of Jackson are used for agriculture, which is 33.3 percent of the total land.

The Adams County Farmland Preservation Plan indicates that pockets of prime farmland exist within the Town primarily in the southern and eastern sections. The USDA defines prime farmland as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops.

Historical and Cultural Resources

A cultural resource is a broad term that can encompass many aspects of heritage. Cultural resources may include archaeological sites and cemeteries, historic buildings and landscapes, historic transportation routes, or traditional cultural properties important to Native Americans or other cultural groups. Cultural resources are those elements that signify heritage and help to evoke the sense of place that makes an area distinctive. Cultural resources include buildings; sites and landscape that help communities retain their sense of identity in an increasingly homogenized society.

Community History

European American settlement began in the early 1800s. The need to supply lumbermen in the pine forests of Northern Wisconsin with food induced the first settlements in Adams County. Prior to 1858, the Town of Quincy was the county seat of Adams County. However, in May of 1858, Julius C. Chandler issued the Adams County Independent and encouraged the populace to vote to move the county seat to a more centralized location, and the county seat was moved to the Village of Friendship. Recreation and tourism brought a development boom to certain communities throughout the county in the 1920s. Many recreational cabins were constructed for vacationers to enjoy seasonal activities along the Wisconsin River. Unfortunately, this prosperity was short-lived. Subsisting on a predominantly agricultural economy, Adams County suffered severely from the droughts and economic hardship of the Great Depression era.

However, there was renewed energy in the late 1940s when the Wisconsin River Power Company began construction on the dams creating Castle Rock and Petenwell Lakes. These dams stimulated the growth of recreational subdivisions and made the county a second home and retirement haven. This trend appears in the present day and is increasing in intensity. The accessibility of Adams County's recreational lakes has made the area very attractive to both those who desire seasonal and year-round homes.

Resources

There are several original farm homes and farm buildings in the town, but there has been no historical examination of these structures for inclusion on the Historic Registry. An old icehouse building still exists on Deep Lake. One of the oldest structures remaining in the Town is the historic Town Hall building, originally built in 1894 on a 1/4-acre of land given to the Town by the Totten Family.

In 1871, Adams County took its first step to provide long-term care for the poor by establishing a county farm in Section 28, about three miles south of Highway 82 on County Highway G, ultimately growing to 556 acres. It was a refuge for orphaned youth, the elderly, the handicapped and disabled. Residents were expected to work the land as much as they were able, and in 1878 the 16 residents produced wheat, corn, buckwheat, rye, potatoes, turnips, onions, tobacco, cheese, butter, apples and one barrel of sauerkraut. That year livestock numbers 22 cattle, 22 hogs, 3 horses plus laying hens. As the state institutions were developed to

care for the disabled and infirm, fewer were housed at the farm, and it closed in 1951. A cemetery from the farm still exists on the southeast corner of Highway G and Fur Drive and is maintained by the County.

A century farmstead has maintained family ownership for at least 100 years. The Wisconsin State Fair has recognized five century farmsteads within the Town of Jackson: Frisch farmstead, Huber farmstead, Lloyd farmstead, Nichols farmstead, and Rodger farmstead.

Lands immediately adjacent to surface waters, but not man-made drainage ditches, may have an abundance of cultural and archeological significance because they were often the location of Native American and early European settlements. The Town contains at least two significant Indian mounds, turtle and serpent, on Wolf Lake. See the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, Natural, Agricultural, & Cultural Resources element for more detailed information on this topic.

Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resources Programs

Natural, agricultural, and cultural resource programs available to the town are identified below. The following list is not all-inclusive. For specific program information, the agency or group that offers the program should be contacted.

Aquatic Habitat Protection Program

The WDNR provides basic aquatic habitat protection services. Staff members include Water Management (Regulation) Specialists, Zoning Specialists, Rivers (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission-FERC) Specialists, Lakes Specialists, Water Management Engineers, and their assistants (LTEs). The program assists with water regulation permits, zoning assistance, coordination of rivers, lake management, and engineering.

County Conservation Aids

Funds are available to carry out programs for fish or wildlife management projects as per §23.09 (12), Wis. Stats. and NR 50, Wis. Adm. Code. Projects related to providing improved fish or wildlife habitat or projects related to hunter/angler facilities are eligible. Projects that enhance fish and wildlife habitat or fishing and hunting facilities have priority. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Discovery Farms Program

Discovery Farms is a program administered by UW-Extension that works with over 40 farmers across the state in the following categories: Nitrogen Use Efficiency, Tile Monitoring, Leachate Collection Systems, Watershed water quality, and Edge-of-Field Runoff Monitoring. The program's mission is to "develop on-farm and related research to determine the economic and environmental effects of agricultural practices on a diverse group of Wisconsin farms, and educates and improves communications among the agricultural community, consumers, researchers and policymakers to better identify and implement effective environmental management practices that are compatible with profitable agriculture."

Drinking Water and Groundwater Program

This WDNR program is responsible for assuring safe, high-quality drinking water and for protecting groundwater. This is achieved by enforcing minimum well construction and pump installation requirements, conducting surveys and inspections of water systems, the investigation and sampling of drinking water quality problems, and requiring drinking water quality monitoring and reporting. A team of specialists, engineers,

hydrogeologists, and a program expert and program assistants staff the program. WDNR staff assist public and private well owners to help solve water quality complaints and water system problems. They also provide interested citizens with informational or educational materials about drinking water supplies and groundwater.

Wisconsin Fund

This is a program by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Safety and Buildings Division. Grants are provided to homeowners and small commercial businesses to help offset a portion of the cost for the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of existing failing Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS). Eligibility is based upon several criteria, including household income and age of the structure.

Endangered Resources Program

The WDNR's Endangered Resources staff provides expertise and advice on endangered resources. They manage the Natural Heritage Inventory Program (NHI), which is used to determine the existence and location of native plant and animal communities and Endangered or Threatened Species of Special Concern. The NHI helps identify and prioritize areas suitable for State Natural Area (SNA) designation, provides information needed for feasibility studies and master plans, and maintains the list of endangered and threatened species. All management activities conducted by Wildlife Management and Forestry staff must be reviewed to determine the impact on NHI-designated species. A permit for the incidental take of an Endangered or Threatened species is required under the State Endangered Species Law. The Endangered Resources Program oversees the permit process, reviews applications and makes permit decisions. Funding for the Endangered Species Program comes from several sources, including tax checkoff revenue, license plates, general program revenues (GPR), gaming revenue, Natural Heritage Inventory chargebacks, wild rice permits, general gifts and Pittman Robertson grants.

Fisheries Management Program

The WDNR funds this program primarily through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. The program assists with fishery surveys, fish habitat improvement/protection, and fish community manipulation. This program may also be used to fund public relations events and a variety of permitting and administrative activities involving fisheries.

Forest Management Program

Support for the Forest Management Program is received from the federal & state government, from recreation fees, from sale of forest products, from sale of state produced nursery stock, forest tax law payments, and other miscellaneous sources. All activities of the Forestry Program help support efforts to promote and ensure the protection and sustainable management of Wisconsin's forests.

Private Forestry

The WDNR's goal is to motivate private forest landowners to practice sustainable forestry by providing technical forestry assistance, state and federal cost-sharing on management practices, sale of state produced nursery stock for reforestation, enrollment in Wisconsin's Forest Tax Law Programs, advice for the protection of endangered and threatened species, and assistance with forest disease and insect problems.

Each county has at least one Department forester assigned to respond to requests for private forestland assistance. These foresters also provide educational programs for landowners, schools, and the general public. Both private and industrial forest landowners have enrolled their lands under the Managed Forest Law.

Managed Forest Law (MFL)

The purpose of the MFL is to promote good forest management through property tax incentives. Management practices are required by way of an approved forest management plan. Landowners with a minimum of 10 contiguous acres (80% must be capable of producing merchantable timber) are eligible and may contract for 25 or 50 years. Open lands must allow hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and sightseeing, however, up to 80 acres may be closed to public access by the landowner. There is a 5% yield tax applied to any wood products harvested. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Nonpoint Source Program (NSP)

Wisconsin's NPS Program, through a comprehensive network of federal, state, and local agencies working in partnership with other organizations and citizens, addresses the significant nonpoint sources in the state. This program combines voluntary and regulatory approaches with financial and technical assistance. Abatement activities include agriculture, urban, forestry, wetlands, and hydrologic modifications. The core activities of the program, which are research, monitoring, data assessment and management, regulation and enforcement, financial and technical assistance, education and outreach and public involvement, work to address current water quality impairments and prevent future threats caused by NPS pollution. Contact the WDNR for more information.

NRCS Conservation Programs

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) natural resources conservation programs help people reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damage caused by floods and other natural disasters. Programs include:

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA)
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) by USDA's Farm Service Agency
- Healthy Forests Reserve Program
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program
- Working Lands for Wildlife

Parks and Recreation Program

The WDNR gets it authority for administering the Parks and Recreation Program from Chapter 27 Wisconsin Statutes. This program provides assistance in the development of public parks and recreation facilities. Funding sources include: the general fund, the Stewardship Program, Land and Water Conservation fund (LAWCON), and the recycling fund, and program revenue funds.

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants

The Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP) provides funding to producer led groups that focus on nonpoint source pollution abatement activities through the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program (PLWPG). The goal is to improve Wisconsin's soil and water quality by supporting and advancing producer-led conservation solutions by increasing on the ground practices and farmer participation in these efforts.

Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations

Nonprofit conservation organizations are eligible to obtain funding for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes and restoration of wildlife habitat. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, protection of rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail, and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. All projects must be in a WDNR approved outdoor recreation plan. Contact the WDNR or NCWRPC for further information.

Wastewater Program

The Department of Natural Resources provides this program to address point and non-point source pollution control. Operating funds for this program come from the federal government's Clean Water Act funding as well as state general program revenues. The core work of this program involves the issuance of wastewater discharge permits that discharge directly to surface or groundwater and enforcing the requirements of these permits. The program monitors the impacts of industry, septic tanks, sludge, and stormwater on the environment. Pretreatment plants for wastewater are offered economic assistance and provided with plan review services before the facility is established.

Watershed Program

The WDNR seeks to protect wild and domestic animals, recreational activities, natural flora and fauna, agriculture, business, and other land uses through watershed management. Funds to run this program are provided by the federal government through Clean Water Act and through state general program revenues. The program assists with watershed planning, water quality monitoring and modeling, and development of water quality standards and policy.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

The purpose of the WRP is to restore wetlands previously altered for agricultural use. The goal of the WRP is to restore wetland and wildlife habitats. Lands that have been owned for at least one year and can be restored to wetland conditions are eligible. Landowners may restore wetlands with permanent or 30-year easements or 10-year contracts. Permanent easements pay 100% of the agricultural value of the land and 100% cost-sharing; 30-year easements pay 75% of the agricultural value and 75% cost sharing; 10-year contract pays 75% cost share only. Permanent or 30-year easements are recorded with a property deed, however 10-year contracts are not. Public access is not required. Contact the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for further information.

Wildlife Management Program

The WDNR's Bureau of Wildlife Management oversees a complex web of programs that incorporate state, federal and local initiatives primarily directed toward wildlife habitat management and enhancement. Programs include land acquisition, development and maintenance of State Wildlife Areas, and other wild land programs such as State Natural Areas. Wildlife Staff work closely with staff of state and county forests to maintain, enhance, and restore wildlife habitat. Wildlife Management staff conduct wildlife population and habitat surveys, prepare property needs analysis's, develop basin wildlife management plans and collaborate with other WDNR planning efforts such as Park, Forestry or Fishery Area Property Master Plans to assure sound habitat management. Funding comes from the federal government in the form of Endangered Species grants and Pittman-Robertson grants and from state government in the form of hunting and trapping license revenues, voluntary income tax contributions, general program revenue and Stewardship funds.

Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Wisconsin Historical Society

This office is part of the Wisconsin Historical Society and serves as the principal historic preservation agency in the state. In partnership with communities, organizations, and individuals, the SHPO works to identify, interpret, and preserve historic places for the benefit of present and future generations.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Natural and Agricultural Resources

Natural and Agricultural Resources Goal:

The Town of Jackson manages natural and cultural resources in a balanced way for current and future generations' health, enjoyment, and benefit.

Objectives:

1. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, woodlands, and groundwater resources.
2. Protect natural resources that are economically productive, such as farmlands and commercial forests.
3. Preserve cultural, historic, and architecturally significant sites and buildings.

Policies:

1. New development in the Town is encouraged in areas that will not impact local natural resources and discouraged in areas that have significant natural resources.
2. Consider the use of regulatory tools, such as transfer of development rights or purchase of development rights, to protect sensitive areas.
3. Ensure that public access to the Town's surface water resources continues in the future.
4. Establish a relationship with the Drainage District to discuss common issues related to the Town.
5. Existing agricultural uses and buildings should be taken into consideration when locating new development to minimize conflicts.
6. Support the diversification of farming types and practices to maintain agriculture as a viable economic activity.
7. Encourage local farmers to participate in the Farmland Preservation Program to preserve farmland for long-term agricultural use.
8. Encourage and support owners of woodlands to develop forest management plans and enroll in the Managed Forest Law program.
9. Work with the Adams County Historical Society, tribes, and others to provide guidance in the identification and protection of historic and cultural resources.
10. Review development proposals to minimize potential impacts to the historical and cultural resources of the Town.
11. Work with the County and state to monitor groundwater quality and quantity, especially as it relates to potential impacts from high-capacity wells, PFAS, or other industrial, utility, agricultural, or other uses.
12. Continue working with the County to test private wells for nitrates and other water quality concerns.

Chapter 3
Housing

Housing characteristics and trends are important components of comprehensive planning. The physical location of housing can determine the need of many public facilities and services. Furthermore, understanding dynamics in the market likely to affect housing development in the future provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate transportation facilities with a sustainable pattern of residential development. Understanding the factors affecting people's ability to meet their own housing needs provides a basis for reinforcing community ties, fostering economic development and environmental sustainability and improving the quality of life.

Previous Housing Plans and Studies

Adams County Housing Study 2025

In 2024, Adams County Economic Development (ACED), in partnership with the Adams County Housing Committee and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Partners Network (RPN) worked with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) to produce this study in response to growing concerns over housing affordability. The Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC) and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) soon partnered with ACED and Adams County to further enhance this project.

This project consisted of robust data collection, public surveys, public open houses, and stakeholder interviews to understand which housing types are highest in demand, and what barriers prevent an adequate supply of desired housing. This study recommends a variety of strategies and programs that each individual community may explore depending on their own needs to encourage the construction and rehabilitation of needed housing.

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the states in accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants and Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA).

The Consolidated Plan provides the Framework for a planning process used by states and localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2025

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan evaluates opportunities for improved and expanded housing throughout the North Central Wisconsin Region. The Regional Comprehensive Plan's housing chapter includes a listing of programs and strategies for enhancing the housing market and identifies the following issues facing housing in the Region:

- Affordability
- Availability
- Housing Condition
- Senior, Disability-friendly, and Low-income Housing
- Seasonal Housing

Housing Assessment

Housing Type and Tenure

In 2024, the Town of Jackson had approximately 468 occupied housing units, 92.5% percent of which were owner-occupied, see Table 10. The Town of Jackson had a significantly higher percentage of owner-occupied homes than the State of Wisconsin, and slightly more than the whole of Adams County. There were 6.3 percent more owner-occupied homes than in Adams County and 24.7 percent more than in Wisconsin. The average household size of 1.99 was slightly lower than the county and the state, at 2.14 and 2.33 respectively. In 31 percent of households the householder lived alone, and 68.6 percent of households had an individual age 60 or older. The number of households that included someone age 60 or older (68.6 percent) was slightly higher than the county at 62.7 percent and significantly higher than the state at 41.7 percent.

According to the Adams County Housing Study conducted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2025, the projected number of new housing units needed through 2040 for the Town is 94. The county is projected to need 1,333 new housing units by 2040.

Table 10: Housing Units by Type and Tenure 2024

	T. Jackson	Adams County	Wisconsin
Total occupied housing units	468	9,517	2,479,480
Owner occupied units	433	8,207	1,682,214
Renter occupied units	35	1,310	797,266
Average household size	1.99	2.14	2.33
% owner occupied	92.5%	86.2%	67.8%
% householder living alone	31.0%	31.4%	31.5%
% with individuals 60 or over	68.6%	62.7%	41.7%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Seasonal Housing

In the Town of Jackson, a significant amount of the housing stock is used seasonally. As shown in Table 11, in 2024, 532 of the 1,025 total housing units were seasonal housing units, for a total of 51.9 percent. This was substantially higher than the county percentage of 38.3 percent, and the state percentage of 6.2 percent. This

demonstrates a unique demographic characteristic of Jackson when compared with other towns in the county and the state as a whole.

Table 11: Percentage of Seasonal Housing 2024			
	Total Housing Units	Seasonal Housing Units	% Seasonal Housing Units
T. Jackson	1,025	532	51.9%
Adams County	17,008	6,519	38.3%
Wisconsin	2,778,572	172,842	6.2%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Tourist Rooming Houses

Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs) have emerged in popularity in Wisconsin over the past decade, and they are often known as Airbnbs or VRBOs. They are housing units that are rented short-term, primarily for those on vacation, rather than long-term rentals that house year-round residents. According to Adams County, there were only 15 TRHs countywide. As of 2026, the County has a total of 280 licensed TRHs, not including the Town of Rome, which administers its own zoning and permitting for TRHs. In 2026, there were 29 licensed TRHs in the Town of Jackson.

Structural Characteristics

Tables 12 and 13 detail the number and percentage of housing units by type in the Town of Jackson. Over 78 percent of the housing units are single-family detached homes, and nearly 20 percent are mobile homes. The ACS estimates that there are no housing structures that consist of 2 or more units located in the Town. This share of mobile homes is slightly higher that the county proportion of 18.1 percent, and significantly higher than the state proportion of 3.1 percent.

Adams County is also comprised mainly of single-family housing but does have a variety of housing types. Apartment style homes with five or more units make up 4.3 percent of the total housing units in Adams County. Mobile homes make up a significant amount of Adams County housing stock at 3,079 units, or 18.1 percent. According to NCWRPC's 2025 Adams County Housing Study, mobile homes can provide some of the most affordable owner-occupied housing, but they tend to depreciate over time, which makes building equity more challenging.

There is a very small percentage of multi-family housing across different structural types, which limits the variety of options homeowners and renters have to choose from. Though expanding multifamily housing options helps seniors looking to downsize as well as younger adults looking to move to the area, it is difficult to construct multifamily housing in areas that use well and septic instead of public water and sewer. A variety of housings tyles would better accommodate those at various income levels and life stages.

Table 12: Housing Units by Structural Type 2024								
	1-Detached	1-Attached	2	3 or 4	5 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total
T. Jackson	803	23	0	0	0	199	0	1,025
Adams County	12,667	222	106	163	733	3,079	29	16,970
Wisconsin	1,839,569	120,679	162,913	97,215	472,263	84,807	1,126	2,777,446

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 13: Housing Units by Structural Type (Percentage) 2024								
	1-Detached	1-Attached	2	3 or 4	5 or more	Mobile Home	Other	Total
T. Jackson	78.3%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.4%	0.0%	100%
Adams County	74.6%	1.3%	0.6%	1.0%	4.3%	18.1%	0.2%	100%
Wisconsin	66.2%	4.3%	5.9%	3.5%	17.0%	3.1%	0.0%	100%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Age Characteristics

The age of a community's housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the home often also reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1960s for example, was typically smaller and built on smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and home sizes have increased. For example, average homes constructed in the later part of the previous century and the first decade of the millennium are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades. This can be seen in both the rural and more urban environments of Adams County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

Tables and 14 and 15 outline build dates of housing units throughout the Town, county, and state based on 2024 American Community Survey data. A majority of the housing in the Town of Jackson was built in 1970 or later, for a total of nearly 70 percent. In Adams County, 77.8 percent of the total homes have been constructed since 1970. In the Town of Jackson, the greatest percentage increase resulted between 1990 and 1999, when a total of 203 or 19.8 percent of homes were constructed. Only 30.2 percent of homes in the Town were built prior to 1970. This is higher than the county at 22.2 percent, but lower than the state at 42.8 percent. This shows that the housing stock in the Town in comparatively older than the county, but newer than the state.

Assessing the number of bedrooms in the Town's housing stock provides insight regarding the size and configuration of the Town's housing stock. Overall, 76.4 percent of the housing units in the Town have two or three bedrooms, slightly more than half of those are three bedrooms. 6.3 percent have one bedroom and 4.3 percent have five or more bedrooms.

According to the Adams County Housing Study conducted by NCWRPC in 2025, most of a home's most expensive components are typically replaced every 20-30 years. This includes but is not limited to roofs,

windows, and appliances. With nearly 95% of the Town's housing being constructed before 2009, this could pose an issue for homeowners and homebuyers, as a strong demand for repairs can increase housing costs.

Table 14: Year Structure Built 2024									
	1939 or earlier	1940 to 1949	1950 to 1959	1960 to 1969	1970 to 1979	1980 to 1989	1990 to 1999	2000 to 2009	2010 or later
T. Jackson	72	61	99	77	124	168	203	167	54
Adams County	1,059	369	882	1,455	3,756	2,589	2,622	3,097	1,179
Wisconsin	495,155	146,155	285,081	262,558	394,494	262,669	347,567	347,953	236,940

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 15: Year Structure Built (Percentage) 2024									
	1939 or earlier	1940 to 1949	1950 to 1959	1960 to 1969	1970 to 1979	1980 to 1989	1990 to 1999	2000 to 2009	2010 or later
T. Jackson	7.0%	6.0%	9.7%	7.5%	12.1%	16.4%	19.8%	16.3%	5.3%
Adams County	6.2%	2.2%	5.2%	8.6%	22.1%	15.2%	15.4%	18.2%	6.9%
Wisconsin	17.8%	5.3%	10.3%	9.4%	14.2%	9.5%	12.5%	12.5%	8.5%

Source: 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Value Characteristics

Table 16 details housing values in owner-occupied homes throughout the Town, county and state. In 2024, the median housing value was $203,200 in the Town of Jackson. This was slightly higher than Adams County, at $200,800 but significantly lower than the State of Wisconsin at $266,500.

A significant proportion (45.4%) of the Town's homes are valued between $100,000 and $299,999. This is less that the county and state, with 50.8 percent and 48.5 percent, respectively. While these homes make up a large share of homes within the Town, a shortage at other housing prices means that those with higher incomes can compete for housing that is affordable to lower and middle incomes. According to the NCWRPC Adams County Housing Study, having too few units available for higher and lower incomes can strain the available housing supply for middle income households and increase prices for everyone. The study found that there is a countywide shortage of housing units at multiple income levels, which includes the Town of Jackson.

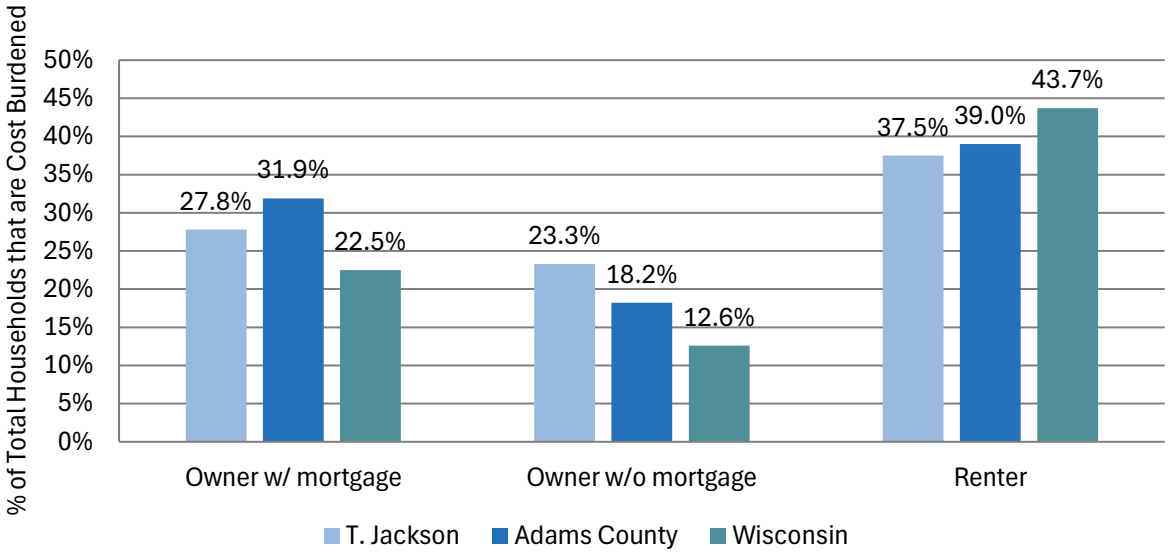
About 61 percent of owner-occupied units have a mortgage and about 39 percent do not have a mortgage. Housing is considered affordable when a household pays less than 30 percent of their income towards housing costs, and above 30 percent is known as a cost burden. Figure 6 shows the proportion of cost burdened households in Jackson compared to the county and the state, according to 2024 American Community Survey data. The Town's proportion of cost-burdened owner-occupied homes that had a mortgage was lower than the county but higher than the state. For owner-occupied homes that did not have a mortgage, the Town's proportion of cost burdened homes was higher than both the county and the state. In contrast, the proportion of cost-burdened renters in the Town was lower than both the county and the state. The median

gross rent in the Town was $1,286. This was higher than both the county and the state, which saw median rents of $828 and $1,087, respectively.

Table 16: Housing Value Owner Occupied 2024							
	Less than $50,000	$50,000 to $99,999	$100,000 to $149,999	$150,000 to $199,999	$200,000 to $299,999	$300,000 or more	Median Value
T. Jackson	10.4%	14.3%	6.9%	17.3%	21.2%	29.8%	$203,200
Adams County	8.9%	13.7%	12.3%	14.8%	23.7%	26.6%	$200,800
Wisconsin	4.0%	5.1%	8.9%	14.1%	25.5%	42.4%	$266,500

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Figure 6: Households with Housing Cost Burden, 2024



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Summary of Housing Characteristics

The Town of Jackson appears to attract a substantial number of seasonal residents along with year-round residents. Over one out of every two units are seasonal housing units. Most year-round homes are owner-occupied. Housing is generally newer than the state but older than the county on average. The Town also has significantly more affordable housing than the state, but less than the county. Most housing consists of single-family detached housing and mobile homes.

In looking at population and household projections from the Wisconsin Department of Administration, there may be a future surplus of available housing units as the population and number of households is expected to decline throughout the next few decades. However, since the population projections only account for permanent residents and given the high percentage of seasonal housing units in the Town (51.9%), this

surplus may not be as significant. Additionally, the NCWRPC Adams County Housing Study notes that although seasonal units, if offered for sale, could become a year-round residence for a homebuyer, they are not necessarily located near places with schools, jobs, hospitals, and other facilities. This increases a household's transportation costs and commute times. The prices of these units are also often too high for a local resident to afford as they tend to be owned by people who primarily reside in a different location with higher incomes.

There is a high percentage of housing units that have an individual(s) aged 60 or older in the Town. Seniors typically desire housing that is smaller, accessible, and near needed healthcare services and amenities. This need will continue throughout the upcoming decade. According to the NCWRPC Adams County Housing Study, new multifamily housing that is consistent with the overall rural character of the county can help address future housing needs that will accommodate senior residents and attract young workers.

It is important to note that there is a shortage of housing units for multiple income levels, which can cause different income levels to compete for limited housing, which increases prices. New construction and rehabilitation are needed to increase the variety of housing options for all income levels.

The high number of seasonal residents and visitors in the Town and county also present unique challenges and opportunities. Adams County has a high share of seasonal, recreational, and occasionally used housing. While these tourists and visitors create opportunities for economic development, the price, location, and configuration of these housing units don't necessarily support the needs of the local, year-round population. These are important considerations when looking at future housing policy and planning.

Housing Programs

Wisconsin Department of Administration

- Community Development Block Grant-Housing Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program
- Community Development Block Grant-Small Cities Housing Program
- Homeless Programs (EHH Program)
  - Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
  - Housing Assistance Program (HAP)
  - Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP).
- HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD)
- HOME Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA)
- Housing Cost Reduction Initiative Program (HCRI)

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

- Housing-Related Consumer Protection Services

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

- Advantage Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP)

- Housing Tax Credit (HTC)
- Wisconsin Bipartisan Housing Legislation Package 2023
  - Infrastructure Access Loan
  - Restore Main Street Loan
  - Vacancy-to-Vitality Loan
  - Home Repair and Rehab Loan
- Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers
- Foreclosure Prevention
- Advantage Conventional Loan
- FHA Advantage Loan
- First-Time Home Buyer Advantage
- Foundation Grant Program
- Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD)

- Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan Program
- Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans
- Section 504 Very-Low-Income Housing Repair Program
- Section 515 Multi-Family Housing Loan Program
- Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance Program
- Section 523/524 Rural Housing Site Loans
- Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants
- Single Family Home Loan Guarantees

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- Hazard Mitigation Assistance Programs

Other Programs

- Central Wisconsin Community Action Council
- The Historic Preservation Tax Credit
- Historic Homes Tax Credit

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Housing Goal:

Town of Jackson provides decent, safe, affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members.

Objectives:

1. Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive natural resource areas through housing location decisions.
2. Encourage a variety of housing types as well as land for new residential development.

Policies:

1. Encourage small lot residential in areas contiguous with existing housing and discourage small lot residential in rural areas.
2. Encourage residential development away from prime farmland areas.
3. Encourage residential development away from areas shown to flood hazards, potential groundwater contamination, wetlands, and other sensitive areas.
4. Support adequate affordable housing for all individuals consistent with the character of the community
5. Ensure that local land use controls and permitting procedures do not discourage or prevent the provision of affordable housing options.
6. Support the development of senior and special needs housing within the Town.

Page intentionally left blank

Chapter 4
Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities, provided by either public or private entities, are critical for community development. Utilities include things such as electrical service, natural gas, telephone, cable, and internet. Community facilities include local government buildings, libraries, educational facilities, and maintenance and storage facilities, as well as services like police, fire protection, and emergency medical services. Utilities and community facilities play an important role in the economy and livability of a community.

Previous Plans and Studies

Adams County All Hazards Mitigation Plan 2025

This plan examines general conditions, including an inventory of utilities, community facilities, and emergency services throughout Adams County. Risk assessment is at the heart of the all-hazards mitigation program. To mitigate the risks, it is necessary to assess their relative importance. The report looks at a series of mostly weather-related disasters; how they have affected the county in the past and how future instances are likely to affect the county and how local government should respond to such occurrences.

The report concludes with suggested mitigation measures that might be taken by local governments to reduce the risk from identified hazards. Counties and incorporated municipalities are required to adopt such plans with updates every five years.

Adams County Broadband Plan 2023

The objective of the Broadband Plan is to offer insights into the current state of broadband deployment in Adams County. The information presented in this plan aims to help the county understand broadband, thus assisting local officials in making well-informed decisions in supporting the right broadband deployments. The plan is to help facilitate the optimal broadband connections to residents, taking into consideration the cost associated with these deployments. Access to quality and affordable high-speed internet opens new opportunities for economic development, education, public safety, entertainment, and healthcare for Adams County.

Adams County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2024-2028

The primary purpose of this recreation plan is to meet the current and future recreational needs of the County. This is accomplished through an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities, asking the public what they are looking for, and the establishment of recommendations to meet identified needs.

Utilities

Water Service

The Town of Jackson does not have a public water supply system. Instead, private wells supply the water for public and private facilities within the Town. The Town is not aware of any water problems in the Jackson area that might affect the drinking water supply.

Wastewater

There is no public sewer system in the Town of Jackson. Therefore, all development in the Town uses on-site septic systems that discharge to underground drainage fields and may include conventional (underground), mound, pressure distribution, at-grade, holding tank, or sand filter systems. Wisconsin Administrative Code regulates these on-site wastewater treatment systems.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Town does provide curbside refuse collection through the County, which is billed on residents' tax bills. Garbage and recycling pick-up operate on a weekly basis.

Energy and Telecommunications

Electric and Natural Gas

Electric service in the Town is mostly provided by Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative, with some areas served by Alliant Energy and Pioneer Power & Light Company. Natural gas is supplied to the Town of Jackson by Wisconsin Gas.

Cable/Internet

Telephone services are provided to the Town of Jackson mainly by Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative and Verizon. The Town contains two cell towers: one at the industrial park and a Microwave tower immediately across Highway 82. The Town is wired with fiber optic cable, enabling fast internet speeds. Internet service providers in the Town include Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative, Bug Tussel, Verizon, Starlink, Viasat, and HughesNet.

According to the Adams County Broadband Plan conducted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2023, the Town of Jackson had 1,256 Broadband Serviceable Locations, with 35.1 locations per square mile. The average download speed for households with internet was 114.6 megabits per second (mbps). This was higher than both the county and state averages, which were 89.7 and 68.7 mbps, respectively. The average upload speed was 36 mbps, which was slightly lower than the county at 39.1 mbps, but higher than the state at 16.8 mbps. 82.4 percent of households had an internet subscription, higher than the county at 77.3 percent, but lower than the state at 86.9 percent.

Community Facilities

Town Hall

The Jackson Town Hall is located at 3278 W. 5th Court in Oxford. Community facilities include the Town Hall, two parks, and five boat landings. The Jackson Town Hall functions as a multi-purpose building. The Town Board consists of a chair, two supervisors, a Clerk, and a Treasurer.

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

The Adams County Sheriff's Office provides primary law enforcement services to all areas not included within municipal police department boundaries, including the Town of Jackson.

Fire

The Town of Jackson is part of the Oxford Fire District with neighboring municipalities for volunteer fire and first responders.

Maintaining rural fire service is a challenge. The Town must continue to invest in and maintain fire protection equipment to ensure the protection of the public health and safety as population and housing growth increases service demands. Fire equipment must be continually updated and replaced, and training requirements must be met. Volunteer fire departments across the state struggle with maintaining sufficient membership to meet the needs of the community.

Emergency Medical Services and Medical Facilities

The Town of Jackson has an agreement with Marquette County to provide emergency medical (EMS) / ambulance service.

The Town does not have any medical facilities within the Town. The nearest hospitals are Emplify Moundview Hospital and Clinics in Friendship and Aspirus Divine Savior Hospital in Portage. These health systems provide primary and specialty care.

Cemeteries

Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. Cemeteries within the Town of Jackson include Adams County Poor Farm Cemetery, Davis Corners Cemetery, Lakeview/Crooked Lake Cemetery, and Tanner Cemetery.

Child Care Facilities

There are no licensed childcare facilities located within the Town of Jackson.

Education

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Jackson is split into three different school districts. Most of the Town is in the Adams-Friendship School District. A part of the eastern side of the town is part of the Westfield School District. Part of the southwestern part of the Town is in the School District of Wisconsin Dells.

In December 2025, the Board of Education for the Adams-Friendship Area School District decided to begin consolidating their operations to reduce costs. The school district's three campuses will be merged into two. The current plan is for one campus to serve 4K through 5th grade, and for the other to serve 6th through 12th grade. Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, students in grades 4K through 5th grade will be located at the Adams-Friendship Elementary School, and students in grades 6th through 12th grade will be located on the High School Campus. In the 2024-2025 school year there were 486 students enrolled at the Adams-Friendship Elementary School, 446 students enrolled at the High School, and 338 students enrolled at the Middle School. The district-wide total student enrollment was 1,270 students. This is down from 1,618 students counted in 2015, for a decrease in enrollment of 21.5 percent over a decade.

Post-Graduate Education

Mid-State Technical College is a public two-year technical college with four regional campuses, one in Adams. They offer degrees, technical diplomas and certificates in a variety of high-demand career fields designed to meet local workforce needs.

The closest 4-year colleges are the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point in Portage County, and the University of Wisconsin -Madison in Dane County. The Town of Jackson is located approximately halfway between these two institutions.

Libraries

The nearest public library to the Town of Jackson is the Oxford Public Library in Oxford, in Marquette County. The Adams County Library serves the entire county. The library is located in the Adams County Community Center space and contains over 18,000 books, reference works, CDs, videos, and cassettes. The library participates in the Inter-Library Loan Program. The Jackson Town Hall is located approximately 20 miles from the Adams County Library.

Wisconsin is divided into 15 library systems. The Adams County Library is part of the South Central Library System, and the Oxford Public Library is part of the Winnefox Library System. These systems share volumes and other resources across several counties.

Recreation

Parks

Goose Lake Park is located right next to Goose Lake in the Town of Jackson. The lake is most utilized for fishing, observing wildlife, canoeing, kayaking, and other water-related activities. There is a public boat landing on the lake. The lake is maintained by the Goose Lake Watershed District.

Jordan Lake Park consists of two acres and provides clear water and good fishing for those seeking public access to Jordan Lake. The park features a concrete boat launch with a long pier making boat access easy. The gravel lot can accommodate up to 20 vehicles with boat trailers.

Deep Lake Park is a two-acre area, popular for fishing and boating. The park also includes a picnic area.

There are additional Town-owned boat landings on Peppermill and Wolf Lakes. There is also a state-owned boat landing on Crooked Lake.

The new privately owned Emrick Lake Campground and Resort is a large facility that includes a variety water and trail-based recreation activities as well as over 500 camp sites. The magnitude of this facility makes it a significant tourism destination in the Town.

Geologic Sites

Adams County is generally characterized by its flat to slightly undulating topography. There are no known notable land features located in the Town of Jackson.

State Natural Areas

State Natural Areas were acquired to protect the state's natural diversity, provide sites for research and environmental education, and serve as benchmarks for assessing and guiding use of other lands in the state. Natural areas are defined as tracts of land or water, which have native biotic communities, unique natural features, or significant geological or archeological sites. These sites do not have much facility development, though there may be a designated trail on the site. The Department of Natural Resources lists six areas within Adams County. There are no State Natural Areas located in the Town of Jackson.

Emerging Utilities and Community Facilities Trends

Renewable Energy

Wisconsin has seen an increase in large-scale wind farms and solar arrays. In Wisconsin, any solar array or wind farm generating more than 100 Megawatts is reviewed and approved by the Public Service Commission (PSC). This means that large-scale renewable energy projects cannot be regulated or banned by local and county government. The primary tool for negotiating with solar and wind developers regarding things like screening, setbacks, protecting natural features, and other performance standards is the Joint Development Agreement (JDA) process. In many cases, these projects can make payments in addition to property taxes to a local and/or county government to boost tax revenue.

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) and the Center for Land Use Education (CLUE) at UW-Stevens Point provide model ordinances and guidance regarding how to successfully execute a JDA. Note that solar and wind developers are not required to enter a JDA, but many are willing to utilize this process to minimize conflicts with neighbors.

Data Centers

Data Centers have been around for decades, but an increase in hyperscale data centers (those that are over 10,000 square feet and at least 5,000 servers) has raised concerns throughout Wisconsin in recent years. Concerns typically include noise, heat, glare, water use and contamination, local utility rates, air pollution from on-site generators, and consumption of undeveloped land.

Data Centers can be regulated by local zoning ordinances and moratoriums. For example, in 2026, Dane County began a 1-year moratorium to study the issues further and adopt regulations. Additionally, the City of Wausau adopted an ordinance that regulates data centers with the understanding that technology changes rapidly, and that the ordinance may be modified in response to changing conditions. Although Jackson lacks the infrastructure that data centers typically require, the Town may choose to work with Adams County, who

administers the Town's zoning, to adopt data center regulations as a precaution. The Wisconsin Counties Association has a model ordinance for counties to adopt regarding data center regulations.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Utility and Community Facilities Goal:

The Town of Jackson provides adequate utility infrastructure and community facilities to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Objectives:

1. Ensure utility infrastructure is safe and sufficient to meet the needs of the community.
2. Provide facilities and services to support a strong, healthy community.

Policies:

1. Develop and maintain a Capital Improvement Plan for major equipment purchases.
2. Continue to provide ambulance, volunteer fire, and first responder services to residents.
3. Consider sharing equipment and services across town boundaries to increase coverage and reduce costs.
4. Consider the feasibility of wastewater collection and treatment systems in new developments and the impacts they will have on water quality.
5. Encourage concentrated residential and other developments to consider the feasibility and water quality impacts of wastewater collection and treatment systems.
6. Continue to open the Town Hall as a multi-purpose building for community functions.
7. Explore opportunities to develop integrated, multi-use trail systems and recreational facilities.
8. Monitor and respond to potential solar and wind energy proposals and minimize conflicts if one is proposed in the Town.
9. Work with Adams County to consider adopting regulations for data centers.

Chapter 5
Transportation

The transportation system in the town includes all the state, county and local roads. The local transportation network is an important factor for the safe movement of people and goods, as well as for the physical development of the town. There is no transit, rail, air or water transportation service within the town's jurisdiction.

Previous Plans and Studies

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act)

This current federal transportation program authorizes up to $108 billion to support federal public transportation programs, including $91 billion in guaranteed funding. It also reauthorizes surface transportation programs for FY 2022-2026 and provides advance appropriations for certain programs. Major goals include improving safety, modernizing aging transit infrastructure and fleets, investing in cleaner transportation, and improving equity in communities with limited transportation access. Other federal legislation that frames transportation planning includes the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA); the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and the Clean Air Act. Environmental Justice is an applicable executive order that attempts to ensure that transportation planning and programming includes underrepresented groups such as minority and low-income populations.

Adams County Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 2013

This plan is intended to be utilized in developing a safe bicycle and pedestrian friendly transportation network throughout Adams County. There are three goals that were identified to achieve this end, to make all roads safe to walk or bike, to provide parking for schools. To achieve a safe bicycle and pedestrian friendly transportation network, the following three goals were identified:

- Make all roads safe to walk or bike
- Provide bicycle parking
- Provide Safe Routes to School

Adams County Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan 2024-2028

The purpose of this coordinated planning process is to have stakeholder involvement in the assessment of elderly and disabled transportation. This assessment identified that evening and weekend services are limited, a lack of volunteer drivers, transportation options, funding, and service to remote areas and for basic needs. The plan also identified a need for a mobility manager to serve as a hub to coordinate and guide the program. The plan identifies a five-year work program to prioritize and address the gaps identified.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2025

The 2025 Regional Comprehensive Plan (RPC) is the most recent update of a plan adopted by the NCWRPC in 1981. The RPC looks at transportation in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Adams. It looks at general trends within the Region and recommends how county and local government can address transportation issues. Transportation goals in this plan include:

1. Provide and improve transportation access to people of all ages and abilities to ensure lifelong mobility and accessibility.
2. Fund the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.
3. Enhance the Regional economy by supporting airports, freight rail, and intermodal freight opportunities.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan 2018

This plan is a regional effort to improve bicycling and walking across communities throughout the north central Wisconsin region. The Plan assesses existing conditions related to bicycling and walking, identifying other potential trail and route user groups, identifying routes and describing policies and programs to assist local governments in improving bicycling and walking to promote connectivity between communities and destinations throughout North Central Wisconsin.

Connections 2050

Connections 2050 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. Adopted in 2022, the plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. It replaces Connections 2030.

State Trails Network Plan 2003

This 2001 document (revised in 2003) clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors.

Road Network

The road system in the Town of Jackson plays a key role in development by providing both access to land and serving to move people and goods through the area. The Town utilizes the WisDOT PASER computer program to maintain an inventory of its local roads and monitor conditions and improvements of its roads. Types and intensities of land uses have a direct relationship to the traffic on roadways that serve those land uses. Intensely developed land often generates high volumes of traffic. If this traffic is not planned for, safety can be seriously impaired for both local and through traffic flows. See Map 5.

The Town of Jackson road network consists of roughly 6.0 miles of state highway, 19.7 miles of county highway and 62.5 miles of local roads. The Town utilizes the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) to

maintain an inventory of local roads and monitor conditions and improvements of its roads. This system enables the town to budget and keep track of roads that need repair.

Jurisdictional and Functional Classification

Functional Classification

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 (principal arterials, for example), are those facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), whereas at the lower limits are those local roads and streets that emphasize access.

The functional classifications are defined by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation as follows:

- **Principal Arterials** – The principal function is to serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics indicative of substantial statewide or interstate travel. They connect urban areas with populations greater than 25,000 and provide an integrated network of continuous routes.
- **Minor Arterials** – The principal function is to link cities and larger towns (and other major destinations such as resorts capable of attracting travel over long distances), and form and provide intrastate and inter-county service. They are spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, so that all developed areas within Wisconsin are within a reasonable distance of an Arterial roadway. They provide service to corridors with trip lengths and travel density greater than those served by Collectors and Local Roads.
- **Major Collectors** – The principal function is to provide service to any county seat not on an Arterial route, to the larger communities not directly served by an Arterial and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance such as consolidated schools, shipping points, county parks and other important rural industry locations. They serve the most important intra-county travel corridors (arterials or other major collectors).
- **Minor Collectors** – The principal function is to provide service to smaller communities not served by an Arterial or Major Collector, and to link locally important traffic generators with surrounding rural areas. They are spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, to collect traffic from Local Roads and bring all developed areas within reasonable distance of a Collector.
- **Local Roads** – provide access to homes and businesses. They have low speed limits and offer limited mobility for through traffic.

Using roadway classifications, the Town of Jackson has the service of four collectors: CTH A, CTH B, CTH G, and CTH EE. STH 82, which runs through the Town, is considered a principal arterial. All other roads in Town are local roads.

Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some state-owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of 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 the 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 five percent, primarily in national parks, forests and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled. As of July 2026, there were 88.2 total miles of roadways in the Town under both the jurisdiction of the Town of Jackson and Adams County.

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 Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Road mileage by jurisdiction for the Town of Jackson is indicated in Table 17.

Table 17: Road Mileage by Jurisdictional and Functional Class 2026

Jurisdiction	Arterial	Collector	Local	Totals
Federal	0	0	0	0
State	6.04	0	0	6.04
County	0	13.35	6.35	19.70
Town	0	0	62.50	62.50
Totals	6.04	13.35	68.85	88.24

Source: WisDOT 2026

In addition to these main classifications, a road or segment of road may hold a number of other designations, such as forest road, rustic road, emergency or evacuation route, truck route, bike route, etc. For example, State Highway 82 is a WisDOT-designated long truck route.

Pavement Conditions

WisDOT requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every two years as part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and WISLR are tools that local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. Towns can use this information to develop better road budgets and keep track of roads that need repair. A summary of pavement conditions in the Town of Jackson can be found in Table 18. Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “fair” must be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary.

The roads that display a surface rating of “good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions. Most Town roads are in relatively good condition, as about 3.3% of roads rate as “Poor” or “Very Poor” and about 96.7% of roads rate as “Fair” or better. However, there is room for improvement.

Table 18: Summary of Pavement Conditions 2025		
Surface Type	**Miles**	**Percent**
Unimproved	0.01	0.0%
Sealcoat or Gravel Road	6.21	10.0%
Asphalt or Concrete	56.14	90.0%
Surface Condition Rating	**Miles**	**Percent**
No Rating	0	0.0%
Very Poor	0.49	0.8%
Poor	1.53	2.5%
Fair	25.34	40.6%
Good	29.30	47.0%
Very Good	0.98	1.6%
Excellent	4.71	7.6%
Total	**62.36**	**100.0%**

Source: WisDOT

Traffic and Safety

Traffic Volumes

Annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts are measured and calculated on selected high traffic roads and highways every three, six, or ten years (depending upon functional classification) by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). Monitoring these counts provides a way to gauge how traffic volume is changing in the Town of Jackson.

Table 19: Average Daily Traffic Counts - Jackson			
Location:	**2011**	**2021**	**Change**
CTH EE East of CTH G	130	200	53.8%
CTH G 0.25 Miles North of STH 82	430	430	0.0%
CTH G 0.25 Miles North of CTH I	340	320	-5.9%
CTH I East of CTH B	150	850	466.7%
STH 82 East of CTH G to the North	3,500	2,500	-28.6%
STH 82 Between CTH G North & CTH G South	3,200	2,400	-25.0%
STH 82 1 Mile East of CTH B	3,100	2,400	-22.6%

Source: WisDOT

There are seven 2011 and 2021 state traffic count sites located in the Town, see Map 5. Annual average daily traffic (AADT) increased substantially at the site located on CTH I East of CTH B in Jackson from 2011 to 2021, at a rate of nearly 467 percent. The site located on CTH EE East of CTH G also experienced an increase in traffic, of around 54 percent. Multiple sites saw a drop in traffic, including all three sites located on STH 82.

It remains important to balance planned land use with existing roadway infrastructure. Land use type and intensity has a direct relationship with traffic volumes, with higher density and intensity of land use generally

leading to higher traffic volumes. To maximize safety, proposed land use should be considered in conjunction with the existing road network.

Increased traffic volume, congestion concentrated in certain areas, and even the types of vehicles travelling to and from a site can be impacted depending on land use. Mitigation is possible through measures such as creation of new access points, changes in circulation patterns, and general roadway modifications. Uncontrolled division of land tends to affect highways because of the increased intensity, which impairs safety and impedes traffic movements.

Evacuation Routes

The Town should meet with the Adams County Sherriff's Office to discuss a plan for evacuation of residents and visitors in the town. Areas of high population concentration like campgrounds and other high-density developments should have plans for efficient evacuations in times of emergencies.

Alternative Transportation Modes

Airports

There are no airports in the Town, but the Adams County Airport – Legion Field is a medium general service airport in the Village of Friendship. Regular commercial air and freight service is available at the Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, the Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee, and the La Crosse Municipal Airport in La Crosse.

It should be noted that there are three private landing strips within the Town in sections 23 (Bulldog Ranch), 27 (Clearwater Aero Estates), and 31 (Snamiske). Bulldog Ranch and Snamiske have the typical turf landing strips, while the Clearwater site has a 2,675-foot asphalt paved runway. All three are recognized by WisDOT.

Bus/Transit

No local or intercity bus services are provided within the Town of Jackson. The nearest stops to access inter-community bus services are at Mauston, Plover or Portage with connections to Appleton/Green Bay, Chicago, Madison, Milwaukee, Minneapolis and other communities along those lines. The bus services that serve some of these cities include Coach USA Van Galder, Greyhound, Jefferson Lines, and Flix.

Rail

Union Pacific Railroad freight trains pass through the Town of Jackson enroute between Minneapolis and Milwaukee/Chicago, but there are not depots or rail yard in the Town, with the City of Adams and Village of Oxford being the nearest stops. Canadian National has freight connections in Necedah and New Lisbon with their main line between the Twin Ports of Duluth/Superior and Milwaukee/Chicago. Passenger rail service is provided by Amtrak, which runs along the Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railway line with stops in Tomah and Wisconsin Dells.

ATV/UTV

ATV/UTV All-terrain and utility terrain vehicles are becoming increasingly popular. More communities are allowing these vehicles on local roadways. A Town Board has the authority to open roads to these types of vehicles and can designate some or all the Town's roads. The Town of Jackson has adopted an ATV ordinance.

Signage is critical to informing the public which roads are open or closed. The Town of Jackson adopted Ordinance 2018-001, an ATV/UTV Vehicle Ordinance, on June 5th, 2018. An amendment to the Ordinance was made on September 14th, 2021.

Pedestrian/Bicycle

All roads within the Town are available for bicycle and pedestrian travel. The 2013 Adams County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identified opportunities that include the Town of Jackson. Proposed bike routes would connect the community of Brooks to the lakes in the Town of Jackson and would continue into Oxford. Proposed bicycle routes would connect Adams-Friendship to Castle Rock, Quincy Rock to Grand Marsh, and Castle Rock to Oxford.

Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are recommended at the intersection of CTH G and CTH EE in the Town. The plan points out that a paved shoulder on one side of the highway forces pedestrians to walk against traffic. A recommendation was made to either pave 5-foot shoulders on both sides of the highway, or to pave a 5-foot grade separated path (or concrete sidewalk), at least 5 feet from the edge of the road. Improvements are also recommended on CTH B between CTH I and Fur Avenue. The plan recommended that 5-foot shoulders be paved on both sides of CTH B as a standalone project.

Specialized

The Aging and Disability Resource Center serving Adams, Green Lake, and Waushara Counties provides transportation services for the elderly and those with disabilities.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Transportation Goal:

The Town of Jackson maintains local transportation infrastructure to the highest standards to allow safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services.

Objectives:

1. Provide a transportation system to meet the needs of all citizens.
2. Support and maintain a safe and efficient town road network.

Policies:

1. Prepare and update a 5-year Road Improvement Plan.
2. Work with the County on all county road projects in the Town.
3. Limit heavy traffic volumes and vehicles of very high weight to roads that have been constructed or upgraded for such use.
4. Consider future road locations, extensions, or connection when reviewing development plans and proposals.
5. Consider roadway access on new development proposals with a view to increase safety and preserve capacity.
6. Utilize WISLR to inventory and rate local roads.

Chapter 6
Economic Development

The economic base of the community serves as an important driver for current and future land use. Economic characteristics include such components as the size of the civilian labor force, comparative employment growth, employment by industry, unemployment rates, and commuting patterns. Employment patterns and economic trends generally occur on a regional scale. Residents of one community often 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.

Assessment of these components of the economic base provides an important historical perspective on current land use patterns and provides insights that help to predict possible future directions and opportunities for growth of the local economy.

Previous Plans and Studies

North Central Wisconsin Regional Entrepreneurship Assessment & Strategy 2023

In 2023, NCWRPC surveyed businesses across its ten-county region to assess how business-friendly the region is for entrepreneurs. Included in this report are survey findings, recommendations, and an inventory of all programs and facilities that support entrepreneurship. An Entrepreneurship Portal containing these resources is found on NCWRPC's website.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Recovery Plan 2022

The purpose of this plan is to guide economic stabilization, recovery, and resiliency efforts within the North Central Wisconsin Region in the face of events that cause economic shocks. Helping local recovery and resiliency efforts will help the regional economy as a whole recover and grow back even stronger than before the disaster struck. A dashboard that monitors the status of economic metrics for broadband, childcare, housing, transportation, workforce and talent attraction, tourism, hospitality, economic indicators, and social indicators is found on NCWRCP's website.

North Central Region Industrial Park Inventory, Absorption, and Needs Study 2022

NCWRPC conducted a 10-county study of available industrial park acreage, the rate at which it is being developed, and how much acreage is needed in the future. The study includes recommendations for industrial park planning along with up-to-date maps of Adams County's six industrial parks. Using absorption rates from 2000 to 2020, Adams County has an estimated 32 to 48-year supply of available industrial park acreage. The Town of Jackson Industrial Park has sufficient available acreage to serve the Town's needs for the foreseeable future.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2026

Adams 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 NCWRPC is the agency responsible for maintaining that designation. As part of the designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a CEDS. This report summarizes and assesses economic development activities over the past year and presents new and modified strategies to promote growth.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2025

NCWRPC's regional comprehensive plan has an economic development chapter with the following goals:

1. Support infrastructure needed for economic development.
2. Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce.
3. Support and develop a diverse economic base ensuring growth and resiliency.
4. Develop tourism and the knowledge-based economy into leading economic sectors.
5. Support economic development that ensures a living wage for the Region's residents.

ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Wisconsin

This report, developed by the United Way, described the 29 percent of households in Adams County that are above the federal poverty level, but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or "ALICE" households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). 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 provided from these jobs.

The ALICE report shows that approximately 39 percent of Jackson households are either below the federal poverty level or are considered ALICE households, compared to 42 percent at the county level, indicating that the average household in Jackson is relatively slightly more financially prosperous than the average Adams County household.

Adams County Comprehensive Plan 2018

The Adams County Comprehensive Plan covers economic development in both the inventory and goals, objectives and policies sections. The inventory information is a brief overview of economic sectors, economic analysis, labor force analysis, and economic development programs. Goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations are identified. The economic development goals include:

- Maintain, diversify and expand the economy in the county, while maintaining the rural character of the county.
- Preserve and enhance the quality of life by promoting the compatibility with economic development.
- Encourage the coordination of economic development, including tourism efforts, throughout the county and region.

Jackson Area Economic Development

The Town of Jackson has been an agriculturally based community for generations. Agriculture is a dominant economic sector occurring in the town. Approximately one-third of the area's land is used for agriculture.

The Town contains the Adams County - South Industrial Park site, located on Highway 82 in the Town of Jackson. As of 2020, there were approximately 56 available acres. The park is close to Highway 13, Interstate 39/51, and Interstate 90/94. An issue regarding the industrial park is the upgrading of an adjacent Town road to handle traffic with higher weight limits.

Scattered throughout the town there are small businesses, other than farms, that employ a few people. There are several industrial parks and large employment centers in the cities of Portage, Mauston, Wisconsin Dells and Adams as well as the Village of Friendship. Other employment opportunities include the Federal Correctional Institution at Oxford and State Correctional facilities at New Lisbon, Portage and Mauston. Almost ten percent of employed Jackson residents work from home. Being a rural community with no legacy industrial sites, there are no major redevelopment areas in the town.

Economic Analysis

Economic Sectors

Table 20 details employment by sector for the Town of Jackson. In 2024, there were 425 people employed in the thirteen basic economic sectors in the Town, down 13.4 percent since 2010. Note that the table measures number of residents within the Town and County with each kind of job, not how many jobs are physically located within the Town or County, as many people commute.

Between 2010 and 2024, the fastest growing sector in the Town was by far Educational services, health care, and social assistance, which grew at a rate of 76.1 percent. It was followed by Public administration and manufacturing, which grew at rates of 15.8 percent and 8.6 percent, respectively. In terms of total employment, the top sector in which Town residents were employed in 2024 was Manufacturing, with 101 total residents employed. Educational services, health care, and social assistance followed with 81 employed. The most significant downward trend was seen in Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services, which saw a decline of 82.3 percent from 2010 to 2024.

In Adams County there were 8,493 people employed in 2024, up 1.7 percent since 2010. From 2010 to 2024, the fastest growing sector in the county was Public administration, which grew at a rate of 72.1 percent. Manufacturing employed the most residents (1,323) in 2024, followed closely by Educational services, health care, and social assistance (1,322). The sector that experienced the most significant downward trend was Arts, entertainment, recreation, and food services, which saw a decline of 23.3 percent from 2010 to 2024.

Table 20: Employment by Sector						
	Town of Jackson			Adams County		
Sector	2010	2024	% Change	2010	2024	% Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	40	29	-27.5%	324	279	-13.9%
Construction	25	19	-24.0%	710	574	-19.2%
Manufacturing	93	101	8.6%	1,230	1,323	7.6%
Wholesale trade	24	21	-12.5%	209	303	45.0%
Retail trade	59	62	5.1%	1,177	1,005	-14.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	28	28	0.0%	611	571	-6.5%
Information	5	3	-40.0%	86	78	-9.3%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	26	14	-46.2%	336	391	16.4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	20	20	0.0%	384	606	57.8%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	46	81	76.1%	1,351	1,322	-2.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	96	17	-82.3%	1,255	962	-23.3%
Other services, except public administration	10	8	-20.0%	312	444	42.3%
Public administration	19	22	15.8%	369	635	72.1%
Total	491	425	-13.4%	8,354	8,493	1.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2024

Labor Force Analysis

Labor Force

Labor force is defined as the number of people sixteen and over employed or looking to be employed. Both the Town's population and labor force declined from 2010 to 2024. There were 78 fewer people in the labor force from 2010 to 2024, for a loss of 14.8 percent. The percent reduction was more significant than in Adams County as a whole, which experienced a net decline of 747 individuals in the labor force, for a 2.6 percent decrease. The state of Wisconsin had a marginal increase in the labor force from 2010 to 2024, at a rate of 1.9 percent. See Table 21.

Table 21: Town of Jackson Labor Force			
	2010	**2024**	**% Change**
Population 16 years and over	927	866	-6.6%
Labor force	527	449	-14.8%
Employed	491	425	-13.4%
Unemployed	36	24	-33.3%
Unemployment Rate	6.8%	5.3%	-1.5%
Participation Rate	56.9%	51.8%	-5.0%

Source: American Community Survey 2010 & 2024

Unemployment

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total people employed. Stay-at-home parents, retirees, or people not searching for employment are not considered unemployed because they are not considered part of the labor force. In 2010, the Town of Jackson had 6.8 percent unemployment, and in 2024 that number was down slightly to 5.3 percent. The percent unemployed was slightly lower in Adams County (4.5%) and significantly lower in the State of Wisconsin (3.2%) in 2024.

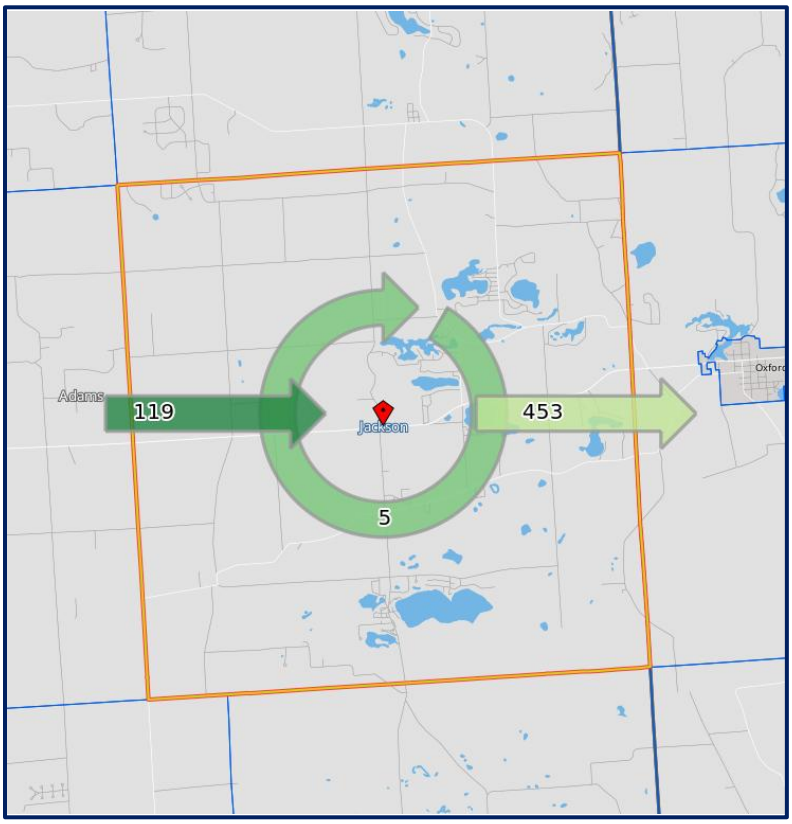
Workforce Participation

Workforce participation is a measure expressed in terms of the percentage of people actively seeking employment divided by the total working age population. People not participating in the labor force may not seek employment due to a variety of reasons including retirement, disability, staying home with children, or they are simply not looking for work. In 2010, 56.9 percent of Jackson's population over the age of 16 was in the labor force. By 2024, that percentage dropped to 51.8 percent. The state participation percentage was 65.3 percent in 2024, while Adams County's participation rate was 47.6 percent. Lower participation rates compared to the state average could reflect both the Town's and County's higher proportion of retirees.

Laborshed

A laborshed is an area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. In 2023, approximately 5 of the 124 total jobs within the Town of Jackson were filled by Jackson residents. About 119 workers traveled to Jackson during the average workday. In contrast, 453 Jackson residents commuted to locations outside of the Town for work, indicating that Jackson's laborshed extends beyond its municipal boundaries. Figure 6 shows the inflow-outflow patterns of the Town of Jackson's laborshed. According to the 2024 American Community Survey, 71.1% of Town residents commuted by driving alone, another 16.6% carpooled, and 7.3% worked from home.

Figure 6: Inflow/Outflow Analysis Town of Jackson 2023



Source: U.S. Census On-the-Map 2023

In-Migration

Many in-commuters live in close proximity to Jackson. In 2023, 7.3 percent of the Town's workers came from the Village of Lake Delton. 5.6 percent came from the City of Wisconsin Dells. The City of Adams, Baraboo, and Reedsburg are each home to 4 percent of Jackson's workers.

Out-Migration

Town of Jackson residents commuting outside of the Town's boundaries mostly travel to nearby communities. In 2023, about 453 residents were employed outside of the Town's boundaries. Most of these residents worked in nearby communities. 19 percent of Jackson's out-commuters traveled to the City of Wisconsin Dells for work, and 13.1 percent commuted to the Village of Lake Delton. The Cities of Baraboo and Portage each attracted 5.5 percent of the Town's commuters. There are several Jackson residents that traveled to further away areas, such as the Cities of Madison, Eau Claire, and Milwaukee. However, some of these workers could also have been working remotely while living in the Town, rather than commuting.

Occupations

Table 22 identifies the five main occupational categories by number and percentage and provides comparison with the Town, county and state.

Management/Business/Science workers are the largest component of the labor force in the Town of Jackson (26.1 percent), followed Production and Transportation workers. This aligns with the county where Management/Business/Science (25 percent) and Production and Transportation (22 percent) workers make up a majority of the workforce as well, and in the state where Management/Business/Science workers also make up a majority of workers by a substantial margin (40.2 percent). Sales and Office workers also make up a significant proportion of the total workers for the Town, county, and state.

Table 22: Resident Occupations 2024

Occupation	Town of Jackson		Adams County		Wisconsin	
Management/Business/Science	111	26.1%	2,126	25.0%	1,219,259	40.2%
Service	57	13.4%	1,697	20.0%	458,226	15.1%
Sales/Office	94	22.1%	1,827	21.5%	568,852	18.8%
Natural Resources/Construction	56	13.2%	972	11.4%	259,826	8.6%
Production/Transportation	107	25.2%	1,871	22.0%	524,879	17.3%
Total	425	100.0%	8,493	100.0%	3,031,042	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey 2024

Economic Development Strengths and Weaknesses

The Town's strengths for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce include its close proximity to the Interstate 90-94 and 39 corridors making it something of a midpoint between larger cities like Madison, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Chicago, and Minneapolis. This transportation linkage impacts employers in the warehousing and transportation industries and allows commuting access for employees. However, there is a lack of employment opportunities within the Town itself, forcing many residents to commute to the several industrial parks and large employment centers in the cities of Portage, Mauston, Wisconsin Dells, Adams, and the Village of Friendship. The Town of Jackson does contain the Adams County – South Industrial Park site, which provides some economic opportunity.

The Town of Jackson, like many rural areas, is threatened economically by surrounding population centers. Competing with larger communities and their respective amenities and incentive programs is difficult for smaller communities. Businesses and industries often seek locations with a high volume of traffic, easy transit, and a diverse labor force. The Town of Jackson and Adams County are lacking in many of these areas and therefore these areas must be careful that their economic development efforts are not wasted in direct competition with the efforts of larger surrounding communities.

Economic Development Programs

There are several economic development programs available to businesses and local governments in Adams County. Below is a partial list of those programs.

County

Adams County Economic Development (ACED)

ACED is a non-profit organization that promotes the economic development of Adams County, Wisconsin, and its respective cities, villages, and towns. ACED is comprised of area businesspeople, citizens, local government, utility company representatives, state agencies and elected officials, educational institutions and other organizations essential to the growth of Adams County. The organization serves the needs of new businesses coming to the area and assists existing companies.

Adams County Chamber of Commerce

The Adams County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the development of the business community in Adams County. The Chamber offers information on local business and industry and provides a variety of programs designed to assist business development.

Adams - Columbia Electric Coop (ACEC) Revolving Loan Fund

The ACEC established a USDA - Rural Development IRP revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed-rate, low down payment, low interest financing. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism and other manufacturing and service industries.

Regional

Centergy, Inc.

Centergy, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist area counties and communities in their efforts to recruit and retain businesses, stimulate new job creation, and to foster an environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth. It was created to foster cooperation among economic development partners and foster economic growth efforts in Adams, Lincoln, Marathon, Portage, and Wood Counties.

Central Wisconsin Economic Development (CWED) Fund

Revolving loan funds are available to entrepreneurs and their lenders to structure financing packages for start-up and expanding businesses to encourage economic growth in the area. CWED manages a revolving loan fund designed to address a gap in private capital markets for long-term, fixed rate, low down payment, low-interest financing.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The County is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), as are all local governments based on county membership. Membership brings with it a variety of planning benefits and services. Benefits include participation in the Economic Development District, including eligibility for a variety of grants administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

State

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is the state's primary department for the delivery of integrated services to businesses. Their purpose is to 1) foster retention of and creation of new jobs and investment opportunities in Wisconsin; 2) foster and promote economic business, export, and community development; and 3) promote the public health, safety, and welfare through effective and efficient regulations, education, and enforcement. WEDC manages a variety of programs intended to assist businesses and communities, including:

- Brownfield Program
- Capacity Building Grants (CB)
- Certified Sites
- Historic Preservation Tax Credit
- Business Opportunity Loan Fund
- Workforce Training Grants
- Idle Industrial Sites Redevelopment Program
- The Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) Program
- Community Development Investment (CDI) Grant Program
- Fast Forward Program (see below)
- Wisconsin Investment Fund
- Technology Development Loan Program

Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce Forgivable Loan Program

The Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce (HWCC) now has a new Forgivable Loan Program designed for new and existing HWCC clients. This program offers loan forgiveness of up to 25% of the approved loan for new clients, and up to 25% of the original loan amount with a maximum of $10,000 for existing clients (not to exceed $10,000).

The Wisconsin Innovation Service Center (WISC)

This non-profit organization is located at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and specializes in new product and invention assessments and market expansion opportunities for innovative manufacturers, technology businesses, and independent inventors.

Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA)

This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, provides immediate assistance and funding for the cost of transportation improvements necessary for major economic development projects.

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF)

DCF has partnered with the nonprofit First Children's Finance to finance small business loans to childcare entrepreneurs. They work with other lenders, community partners, economic developers, and directly with childcare businesses to provide financing.

Wisconsin Fast Forward

This program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, is a nationally recognized, innovative talent development solution driven by Wisconsin businesses to train and retain highly skilled workers. Grant funds support employer-led worker training projects that:

- Encourage increased collaboration between Wisconsin businesses and workforce training partners.
- Fill current and ongoing skill requirements of Wisconsin employers.
- Place workers in long-term positions with opportunities for professional growth and economic advancement.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

WHEDA administers a variety of programs to support small businesses, with several programs designed specifically for agribusiness.

Wisconsin Office of Rural Prosperity (ORP)

As part of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), the Office of Rural Prosperity seeks to foster vibrant, prosperous, and resilient rural communities across Wisconsin. ORP functions as a one-stop shop to help rural stakeholders navigate programs and resources serving rural communities and businesses. ORP's website contains a list of available grant programs, grant writing consultants, and grant writing training opportunities.

Wisconsin Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The UW SBDC is partially funded by the Small Business Administration and provides a variety of programs and training seminars to assist in the creation of small businesses in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Small Cities Program

The Wisconsin Department of Administration provides federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to eligible municipalities for approved housing and/or public facility improvements and for economic development projects. Economic Development grants provide loans to businesses for such things as the acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion, or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.

Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC)

WWBIC makes loans for small and micro businesses up to $350,000. They work with both women and men in analyzing their business' financial needs and guiding them through the loan process.

Federal

America's Seed Fund: SBIR & STTR

Through the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, America's Seed Fund provides technology-focused entrepreneurs, startups, and small businesses with funding to develop their ideas and a pathway to commercialization. Powered by a network of federal agencies, entrepreneur support organizations, and the Small Business Administration, America's Seed Fund advances federal missions and fosters a culture of innovation in the United States.

Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD)

This Planning Grant from the Federal Communications Commission, administered by Wisconsin Public Service, enables eligible entities to opt-in to receive formula funding to participate in broadband planning activities that will inform the state Five-Year Action Plan which will guide broadband deployment and implementation of the BEAD program.

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

EDA offers a guaranteed loan program as well as public works grant program. These are administered through local units of government for the benefit of the local economy and, indirectly, private enterprise.

U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development (USDA – RD)

The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. Financial programs include support for such essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities, and electric and telephone service. USDA-RD promotes economic development by supporting loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

SBA provides business and industrial loan programs that will make or guarantee up to 90% of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Economic Development Goal:

Town of Jackson has a diverse economy that is a place of opportunity where people and businesses can grow and be successful.

Objectives:

1. Promote a diverse, healthy economic base.
2. Encourage commercial and industrial development to locate adjacent to county or state highways.

Policies:

1. Encourage new businesses, especially those that are compatible in a rural setting.
2. Develop and maintain a list of available sites and buildings for new businesses.
3. Encourage home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
4. Pursue grant funding to clean-up possible contaminated commercial locations.
5. Review the costs and benefits of a proposed development project prior to approval.
6. Consider developing new ordinances that establish minimum aesthetic standards to eliminate commercial, industrial, and agricultural property with excessive debris, blighted property, and dilapidated buildings.
7. Direct new commercial and industrial development to areas designated on the Future Land Use Map.
8. Foster a commercial and/or industrial cluster at STH 82 and 5th Lane, the site of the existing Industrial Park.
9. Establish appropriate minimum/maximum lot sizes for commercial development, taking parking requirements into consideration.

Chapter 7
Land Use

Land use is a crucial component of livability and provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate a sustainable pattern of development. The existing natural landscape and land use patterns influence future land use and development. Much of the region has population and housing densities well below the state average, which in turn places more reliance on automobiles to get to and from work, shopping and other activities. Balancing the needs of the community with land use issues requires that each land use situation be considered individually and that the community seeks the solution which fits the unique challenges it faces.

Previous Plans and Studies

North Central Wisconsin Regional Comprehensive Plan 2025

Regional land use issues include dispersed land use patterns affecting an aging population's ability to stay in their homes, contamination and blight on some vacant sites, negative development impacts to environmental/landscape features, changes in land demand, and land use concerns for renewable energy. Goals of this plan are:

1. Preserve and protect the Region's landscape, environmental resources, and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.
2. Provide adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
3. Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, State, governmental, and utility costs.
4. Encourage planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

Adams County Comprehensive Plan 2018

The Adams County Comprehensive Plan includes a Land Use chapter which describes existing and future land uses, as well as regulatory tools for land use. The primary goal of the plan is to guide future development and redevelopment throughout the county. The plan identifies several issues that were discussed as part of the planning process, the issues include:

- Conflicting land uses
- Sustainable agriculture and forestry
- Environmentally sensitive areas
- Location of public facilities and infrastructure
- Community revitalization

Existing Land Use

The Town of Jackson covers an area of about 22,811 acres in Adams County. The area is characterized by thin till and pitted outwash. The typical terrain is rolling and covered with hardwoods or open for agricultural use with drainage in a southeasterly pattern for the eastern 3/4 of the Town and in a westerly pattern for the western 1/4. The natural resource base of the area is dominated by timber. Agricultural uses of the land are vitally important.

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within a town is necessary to develop a desired future land use pattern. The Existing Land Use Map was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 2025, see Map 6. Woodlands dominate 46.1 percent of the area, followed by Agriculture with 33.3 percent and Open Lands with about 6.8 percent, see Table 23. In general, agricultural, woodlands and residential uses are scattered in a "mixed" pattern. Residential development is distributed fairly evenly along the road network.

Table 23: Existing Land Use 2025

Land Use Type	2015 Acres	2025 Acres	Acreage Change 2015-2025	2025 Percentage
Agriculture	7,612	7,589	-23	33.3%
Commercial	77	77	0	0.3%
Governmental/Institutional	93	102	9	0.4%
Industrial	116	8	-108	0.0%
Open Lands	1,710	1,563	-147	6.8%
Outdoor Recreation	2	2	0	0.0%
Quarry	2	136	134	0.6%
Residential	1,170	1,248	78	5.5%
Transportation	909	909	0	4.0%
Utility	3	3	0	0.0%
Water	635	652	17	2.9%
Woodlands	10,480	10,524	44	46.1%
Total	**22,811**	**22,811**	**0**	**100.0%**

Source: NCWRPC GIS

Land Use Trends

By looking at the acreage totals from 2015 compared to 2025, trends can be identified in the Town's land use patterns. Overall, there was no change for many land use categories, but there was a decrease in agriculture, industrial, and open lands. There was also an increase in the acres of land for residential, quarry, water, and woodlands uses.

Public Lands

There are approximately 3,270 acres enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, which are subject to a substantial reduction in property taxes. In addition, tax exempt lands include approximately 334 state acres, 48 Adams County acres (not Forest Crop), and another 133 acres of tax-exempt land.

Land Supply and Demand

As shown by the existing land use inventory, a significant proportion (46.1%) of the Town is undeveloped woodlands, so the supply of land available for development appears to be adequate. Nevertheless, even under a rapid growth scenario, the supply of land in the Town of Jackson is more than sufficient to accommodate projected demand over the next 20 years for all use categories. Additionally, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) projects Jackson's population and number of households to decline through 2050. Therefore, land demand is expected to occur on an as-needed basis, rather than as a result of projected demand.

Land Values

Table 24 displays the assessed land values in the Town of Jackson. It is important to note that lands enrolled in the Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law programs and other exempt lands (such as state lands) are not included in values for Table 24. Overall, land value per acre in the Town is valued at about $19,483.49 per acre based on assessed land values from Wisconsin DOA. Residential properties have the highest value per acre, followed by "Other" properties and commercial properties.

Table 24: Town of Jackson Land Values 2025

Land Classification	Total Value of Land and Improvements	Total Acres	Average Value per Acre
Residential	$314,689,700	3,004	$104,756.89
Commercial	$8,768,000	264	$33,212.12
Manufacturing	$0	0	-
Agricultural	$1,496,900	7,681	$194.88
Undeveloped	$1,528,800	1,135	$1,346.96
Agricultural Forest	$3,420,000	1,511	$2,263.40
Forest Lands	$20,205,800	4,481	$4,509.22
Other	$3,847,400	91	$42,279.12
Total	$353,956,600	18,167	$19,483.49

Source: WI Department of Revenue

Opportunities for Redevelopment

Most of the Town consists of open farmland, scrubland, and wetlands, all of which have experienced little development. Some developed areas may not meet current development standards or may have fallen into disrepair since they were developed. Some of these properties may be in need of rehabilitation by property owners rather than needing a comprehensive redevelopment strategy. But overall, there is no large scale need for redevelopment.

Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

Any plan should seek to avoid or minimize potential future land use conflicts through controlled development, planned use-buffers, and public information and education components. To attain that outcome, it is important to identify the existing or potential conflicts between land uses in the Town. There may be some

degree of undesirability between many land use combinations, such as a residential development near a particular industrial or commercial development that might conflict with sight, sound, odor, or other undesirable characteristics. Another example could be a new residential neighborhood in proximity to a working farm, where farm equipment, odors, and sounds may not be compatible with dense residential development.

Future Land Use

Map 7 is the Future Land Use Plan Map, which details the desired arrangement of preferred land uses for the future of the Town of Jackson. The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map. The Future Land Use Map is general in nature and was developed as a general guide for future development in the county. Although general, the future land use plan map indicates appropriate future land uses, and as a result shows where rezoning may occur. In many areas the existing zoning districts already reflect the desired future land uses; while in other areas, zoning map or text changes may be required to meet some of the desired future land uses.

The identification of desired future land use types through the map does not imply that an area is immediately appropriate for rezoning. Given service demands and a desire for controlled growth, careful consideration to the timing of zoning decisions is essential. In some places, it may be desirable to rezone land to reflect the planned land use designations as soon as possible. In other cases, it may be appropriate to wait to rezone the area until an actual development proposal is brought forward.

Future land use planning assists local governments with balancing individual property rights and community goals, minimizing conflict between different land uses, and maximizing use of public expenditures. It is essential that future land use planning is ongoing and flexible. Periodic plan updates ensure that the plan continues to reflect future community preferences.

Future Land Use Map Classifications

1. **Residential:**
   Identifies areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of smaller lot sizes.

2. **Rural Residential:**
   Identifies areas that are recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the residential category. These areas will also allow a mixture of residential uses, and provide a good transition from more dense development to the rural countryside.

3. **Commercial:**
   Identifies areas recommended for commercial development, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the Town.

4. **Industrial:**
   Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial areas located throughout the Town.

5. **Governmental/Public/Institutional:**
   Identifies existing or planned government/public/institutional facilities within the Town, including recreational facilities.

6. **Agricultural Areas:**
   Identifies areas to be preserved for the purpose of general crop farming or the raising of livestock. These areas may include buildings that pertain to agriculture, including residential.

7. **Forestry Areas:**
   Identifies areas of large woodlands within the Town.

8. **Preservation and Open Space:**
   Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, DNR wetlands and steep slopes of 12 percent or greater. This could include endangered species habitat or other significant features or areas identified by the Town.

Land Use Programs and Tools

The principal land use program in Wisconsin is the comprehensive planning program. The primary land use tools are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.

Zoning

Under Wisconsin Statutes, counties and local units of government are authorized to adopt zoning ordinances. Zoning is a method for implementing or carrying out the land use plan by predetermining a logical pattern of land use development.

A zoning ordinance consists of a map and written text. The zoning map arranges the community into districts or zones, agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, etc. Within each of these districts, the text of zoning ordinances specifies the permitted land uses, the size of buildings, yard/lot dimensions, and other prerequisites in obtaining permission to develop. The goal of the zoning ordinance is to set a reasonable development pattern by keep similar and related uses together and separating dissimilar, unrelated and incompatible uses; particularly in relationship to transportation facilities, utilities and public services and facilities.

A county may promulgate a zoning ordinance as described above for the unincorporated areas of the county, that is, outside the corporate boundaries of cities and villages, but it is only effective if a town adopts it for application to its jurisdiction. Towns can elect to adopt their own zoning ordinances; however, the Town of Jackson is currently under Adams County zoning.

Shoreland Zoning

All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates development in shoreland and floodplain areas of the county outside of villages and cities in accordance with state shoreland zoning standards. Towns may apply their own zoning in shoreland areas as long as it does not impose requirements on matters regulated by their County. Adams County Shoreland Zoning regulates land use within shoreland and floodplain areas throughout the Town.

Land Division

At present, land division within the Town of Jackson is regulated by its own Land Division Ordinance. Subdivision regulation relates to the way in which land is divided and made ready for development. A community can control the subdivision of land by requiring a developer to meet certain conditions in exchange for the privilege of recording a plat. While imposing conditions restricts the use of private property, the cumulative effect of land subdivision on the health, safety, and welfare of a community is so great as to justify public control of the process.

There is some overlap between zoning and subdivision codes in terms of standards. Both ordinances, for example, can set lot sizes. Both can deal with the suitability of land for development. Implementing important plan techniques such as rural cluster development often requires use of the zoning ordinance and the subdivision ordinance.

A town land division code can provide the town the means to review and regulate new divisions of land to ensure consistency with the vision, goals, objectives, land protection criteria, and other recommendations of an adopted plan. The ordinance would require administration and enforcement by the town. Therefore, local control of divisions of land would require town funding. It also adds a layer of government involved in regulating proposals for land divisions.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Land Use Goal:

Town of Jackson makes sound land use decisions to balance the diverse needs of the community and to wisely maximize the land's potential.

Objectives:

1. Promote efficient development patterns.
2. Provide tools for managing and coordinating growth and development.

Policies:

1. Promote new development consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
2. Minimize scattered development and preserve rural character.
3. Promote the redevelopment of land with existing infrastructure.
4. Discourage new developments that would negatively impact the natural environment or existing property.
5. Minimize the loss and/or fragmentation of productive farmland and forest land.
6. Review expansion or new development of non-metallic mining operations to minimize conflict with preexisting development.
7. Maintain the Comprehensive Plan to serve as a guide for future land use decisions.
8. Participate in zoning and subdivision review decisions at the County level that affect the Town.
9. Encourage conservation easements and other tools to protect environmentally sensitive or unique resources.

Chapter 8
Intergovernmental Cooperation

The issue of intergovernmental cooperation is increasingly important; since many issues cross over political boundaries, such as watersheds, labor force, commuter patterns, and housing. Communities are not independent of each other, but rather dependent on each other. The effects from growth and change on one spill over to all surrounding communities and impact the region as a whole.

Overview

Wisconsin Statute s.66.30, entitled "Intergovernmental Cooperation", does enable local governments to jointly do together whatever one can do alone. Unfortunately, there is little public policy in Wisconsin law that encourages, let alone requires, horizontal governmental relationships such as town to town and municipality to county or town. The result is that towns, municipalities, and counties act more as adversaries than as partners.

State-wide, Wisconsin has more than 2,500 units of government and special purpose districts. Having so many governmental units allows for local representation, but also adds more players to the decision-making process. In general terms, intergovernmental cooperation is any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest. It can be as simple as communication and information sharing, or it can involve entering into formal intergovernmental agreements and sharing resources such as equipment, buildings, staff, and revenue.

As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them. Intergovernmental cooperation makes sense for many reasons including trust, cost savings, consistency, and ability to address regional issues. Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. It can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. It can lead to consistency of goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities. Finally, by communicating and coordinating their actions and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities can address and resolve issues that are regional in nature. Residents can appreciate the results of these efforts, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

A variety of factors, some long-standing and others more recent, have brought the issue of intergovernmental cooperation to the forefront. Some of these factors include:

- Local government's financial situation;
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
- Elimination of duplication of services;

- Population settlement patterns and population mobility; and
- Economic and environmental interdependence.

In addition, as more jurisdictions create and implement comprehensive plans and share them with surrounding communities, new opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation will be identified.

Intergovernmental Relationships

School Districts

The Town of Jackson is divided between the school districts of Adams-Friendship, Wisconsin Dells, and Westfield. In addition, the Wisconsin Open Enrollment program allows children to attend other nearby school districts, provided that the district has the necessary space to accept the student. There are no school district facilities located within the Town.

Post-Graduate Education

Jackson Town Hall is located approximately 20 miles from the Mid-State Technical College, City of Adams location. The main form of interaction with both school and college districts are through payment of property taxes, which help to fund both districts' operations. The Town has little participation in issues pertaining to administration or siting of new facilities. All school and college board meetings are open to the public.

Adjoining Units of Government

The Town of Jackson, the oldest of all towns in Adams County (except Quincy), borders the rural village of Oxford to the east in adjacent Marquette County. The communities of Oxford, Adams, and Wisconsin Dells serve the businesses and social needs of Jackson Township.

Adams County

Adams County directly and indirectly provides a number of services to the Town, and the Town enjoys a good working relationship with many of the responsible departments. These departments include Treasurer, Highway, Sheriff's Office, and Parks and Recreation. The County Treasurer collects local property tax for the Town. The Adams County Sheriff's Office provides primary law enforcement services to all areas not included within municipal police department boundaries, including the Town of Jackson.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, Adams County sponsors a county-wide planning effort to complete these plans and include each individual local unit in the process and resulting final plan. Examples of this include the County Outdoor Recreation plan which maintains the eligibility for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources administered park and recreation development funding of each local unit that adopts it, and All Hazard Mitigation Plans, which are required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in order for individual local units of government to qualify for certain types of disaster assistance funding. Other plans, though not required by law, may apply to the whole County. For example, in 2023, Adams County created a Broadband Plan and in 2025, the County completed its Housing Study.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) was formed under §60.0309 Wis. Stats. as a voluntary association of governments within a ten-county area. Adams County is a member of the NCWRPC, which qualifies the Town of Jackson for low-cost local planning assistance. Typical functions of the NCWRPC include (but are not limited to) land use, transportation, economic development, intergovernmental and geographic information systems (GIS) planning and services.

State and Federal Government

The Wisconsin departments of Natural Resources and Transportation are the primary agencies the Town might deal with regarding development activities. Many of the goals and objectives of this plan require continued cooperation and coordination with these agencies.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources takes a lead role in wildlife protection and sustainable management of woodlands, wetland, lakes, and other wildlife habitat areas, while Wisconsin Department of Transportation is responsible for the planning and development of state highways, railways, airports, and other transportation systems. State agencies make a number of grant and aid programs available to local units of government like the Town of Jackson. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Plan (LRIP) and the Priority Watershed Program. There are also a number of mandates passed down from the state that the Town must comply with, such as the biannual pavement rating submission for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR).

Most federal programs are administered by the states, so the Town would be dealing with the responsible state agency with regard to federal programs and regulations.

Existing or Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts

No existing or potential intergovernmental conflicts were identified in the Town of Jackson. The Town will continue to cooperate with all levels of government on issues of mutual concern, including resource protection, transportation, land use, education, and human services. Cost sharing or contracting with neighboring towns or the county will continue to provide services or public utilities efficiently.

Programs

66.0301-Intergovernmental Cooperation: Wisconsin Statute §66.0301 permits local agreements between the state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, and certain special districts, including school districts, public library systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, and others.

Intergovernmental agreements prepared in accordance with §66.0301, formerly §66.30, are the most common forms of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement and boundary changes have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process.

66.0305-Municipal Revenue Sharing: Wisconsin Statute, §66.0305, Municipal Revenue Sharing, gives authority to cities, villages, and towns to enter into agreements to share revenue from taxes and special charges with each other. The agreements may also address other matters, including agreements regarding services to be provided or the location of municipal boundaries.

Boundaries of the shared revenue area must be specified in the agreement, and the term of the agreement must be for at least ten years. The agreement must specify the formula or other means for sharing revenue, the date of payment of revenues, and the means by which the agreement may be invalidated after the minimum 10-year period.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal:

Town of Jackson is a cooperative and collaborative partner with other units of government and organizations to most effectively and efficiently provide services to residents.

Objectives:

1. Establish and maintain good working relationships with other units of government, including adjoining towns, Adams County, the State of Wisconsin, and the federal government.

Policies:

1. Promote communication between the Town and other governmental entities.
2. Periodically review existing shared service agreements and explore additional service agreements which would benefit the Town.
3. Pursue cooperative agreements regarding boundary agreements and annexation where appropriate.
4. Consider the feasibility of establishing local zoning in conjunction with other neighboring towns and sharing administrative staff.

Chapter 9
Implementation

A primary reason for a community to prepare a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework for the future, especially as it relates to decisions regarding growth and regulation of development to protect and maintain the health, safety and welfare of the community. A plan also helps 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 location of specific land uses as identified in the comprehensive plan which are mapped and also based on the plan's goals and objectives.
- 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. 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. 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. Following the adoption of this comprehensive plan update, the Town of Jackson should evaluate and update, as necessary, its related ordinances to ensure meeting this requirement.

Zoning Ordinance and Map

The Adams County Zoning Ordinance is the primary land use regulation for the Town. 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 character or 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.

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

Land division within the Town of Jackson is regulated by the Town's 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 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)
- Fire and law enforcement protection equipment

A CIP is simply a method of planning for and scheduling expenditures for public improvements over a period of several years 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.

Annual Operating Budget

The Town prepares a budget each year and it is one of the most important policy documents prepared. It is a statement of the prioritization and allocation of financial resources to achieve certain objectives over a specific time period. The budget is based on the needs of Town residents and priorities set by the Town Board.

The budget and the services provided by that budget are instrumental in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

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 is willing to invest in redevelopment. This may require some upfront investment from the community. However, as sites are improved and reused, they generate tax base.

Consistency Among Plan Chapters

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Chapter describes how each of the required chapters will be integrated and made consistent with the other chapters of the plan. Since the Town of Jackson completed all planning chapters simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan chapters. Where deemed appropriate, goals, objectives, and policies have been repeated under all applicable chapters to reinforce their importance.

Plan Adoption, Updates, 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 which must recommend the plan to the Town Board via resolution. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance. A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance during a 30-day review period prior to final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years. 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.

Plan Amendments

The Town of Jackson 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.

The following criteria shall be considered when reviewing plan amendments:

- The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
- The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Town of Jackson 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 shall 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.
- 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.
- The change does not adversely affect water quality and the overall health of residents.

Proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adopted 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 rewriting 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.

Plan Monitoring

The adopted plan should be used as a tool by Town when making land use and development decisions. 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. 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 ten 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.