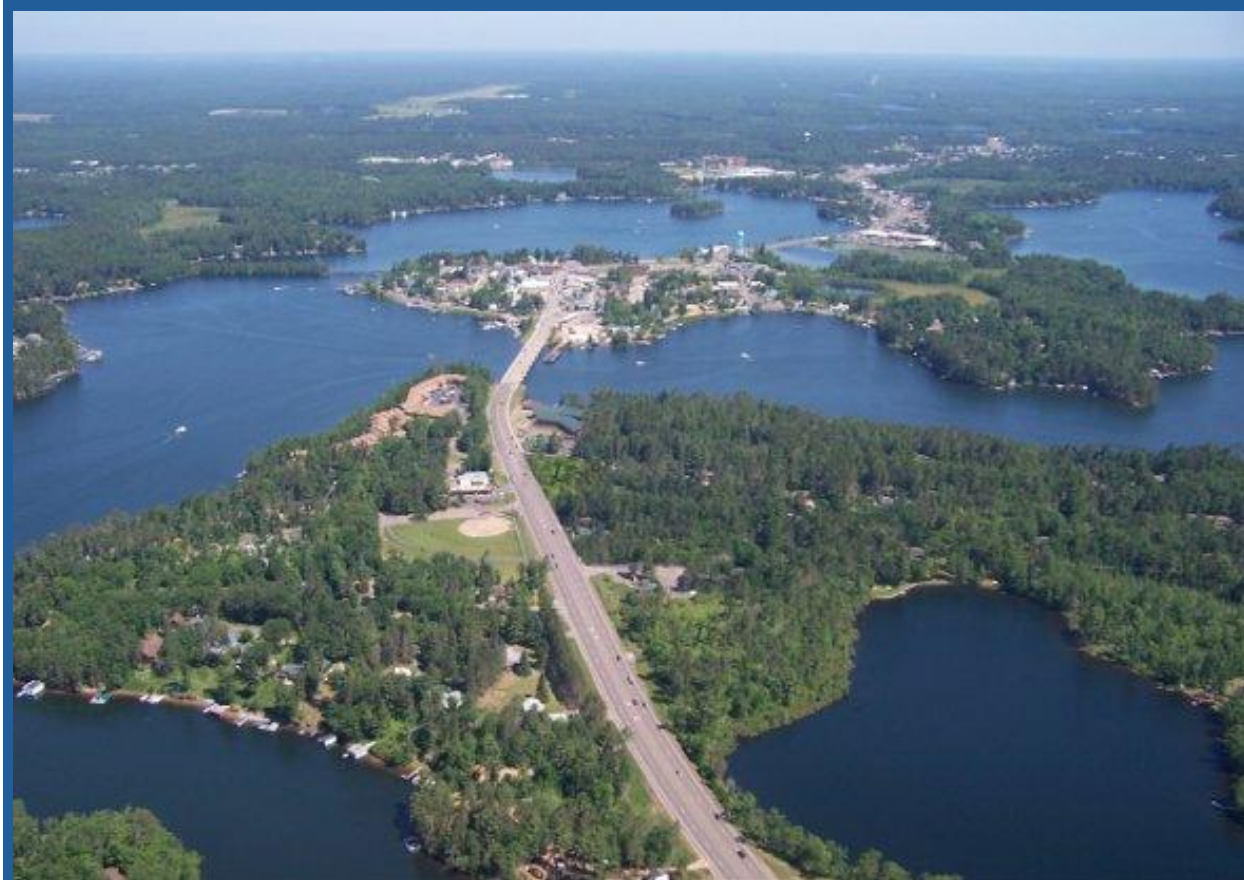


Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan 2026



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This plan was developed by the Town of Minocqua Plan Commission with assistance from the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC)

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Chapter 1: Issues and Opportunities

Introduction

The Town of Minocqua is a large township, nearly five standard townships in area. The Town occupies the northwest corner of Oneida County, Wisconsin. The City of Rhinelander lies southeast of the Town. The Town of Minocqua is bordered by the towns of Woodruff, Hazelhurst, Little Rice and Lynne in Oneida County; Emery and Fifield in Price County; and Lac du Flambeau in Vilas County. It is one of twenty towns in the County. See Map 1.

The Planning Process

The Town of Minocqua participated in the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan development program with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to develop plan documents and facilitate the process in preparing a comprehensive plan for the Town. The Town Plan Commission oversaw the development of the plan and met to analyze and discuss information that was gathered and presented by the NCWRPC. The planning process was open to the public and the Town's adopted public participation program and documentation of comprehensive plan adoption are in the Attachments.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to comply with the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law, Statute 66.1001. This plan addresses the elements and factors spelled out in the "definition" of a comprehensive plan under the statute. This plan is intended to be a guide for the future development of the Town not only for the Town of Minocqua as a town comprehensive plan but also for Oneida County as part of the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan.

A. Background Information

This chapter, the first of nine chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan, explores potential issues that may have an effect on the development of the Town over the 20-year planning period of the plan. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [§66.1001(2)(a) Wis. Stats.], this chapter contains trends and forecasts with jurisdictional comparisons for some basic demographics including: population, households, employment, age, education, and income. Although forecasts typically cover the 20-year planning period, in some cases, the only acceptable sources had lesser time periods for their forecasts. Official sources are used for data and forecasting, including the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Demographic Service Center, and the U.S. Census.

In addition to this review of basic town statistics, a variety of tools are utilized to identify issues, including a review of past plans, brainstorming by the Town Plan Commission, a public hearing, and observations of the NCWRPC professional planning staff.

Plans are required to be updated every 10 years, roughly corresponding to the decennial census with fresh community data. This is the minimum amount of time between extensive review and update of issues and related objectives, policies, and goals.

1. Population Trends and Forecasts

In 2024, an estimated 5,074 people lived in Minocqua. Since the 2010 Census, the Town of Minocqua’s population increased by 15.7%, see Table 1. Both the county and the state grew slower than Minocqua, with growth rates of 6.0 and 4.8 percent, respectively. Minocqua added 689 people from 2010 to 2024. This follows a pronounced decrease in population between the 2000 and 2010 Census; the population rebounded and exceeded its 2000 total by the 2020 Census.

Table 1 displays the total population for the Town of Minocqua, the neighboring towns, the county, and the state. Although Minocqua has grown faster than the county and the state, towns surrounding Minocqua have grown at very different rates. The Towns of Woodruff (-24.2 percent), Lynne (-18.4 percent), and Hazelhurst (-2.1 percent) saw a decrease in population since 2010, with all other towns growing more slowly than Minocqua during the same period.

Table 1: Population Trends

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2024 | 2010-2024 Change | 2010-2024 % Change |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------|
| T. Minocqua | 4,859 | 4,385 | 5,062 | 5,074 | 689 | 15.7% |
| T. Lac du Flambeau (Vilas Co.) | 3,004 | 3,441 | 3,552 | 3,644 | 203 | 5.9% |
| T. Woodruff | 1,982 | 2,055 | 2,044 | 1,558 | -497 | -24.2% |
| T. Hazelhurst | 1,267 | 1,273 | 1,299 | 1,246 | -27 | -2.1% |
| T. Arbor Vitae (Vilas Co.) | 3,153 | 3,316 | 3,403 | 3,505 | 189 | 5.7% |
| T. Lake Tomahawk | 1,160 | 1,043 | 1,155 | 1,135 | 92 | 8.8% |
| T. Little Rice | 314 | 306 | 388 | 338 | 32 | 10.5% |
| T. Lynne | 210 | 141 | 139 | 115 | -26 | -18.4% |
| T. Emery (Price Co.) | 325 | 297 | 308 | 299 | 2 | 0.7% |
| Town of Fifield (Price Co.) | 989 | 901 | 905 | 950 | 49 | 5.4% |
| Oneida County | 36,776 | 35,998 | 37,845 | 38,167 | 2,169 | 6.0% |
| Wisconsin | 5,363,675 | 5,686,986 | 5,893,718 | 5,960,975 | 273,989 | 4.8% |

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

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) produces population projections a few years after a Census is taken. They are considered the state’s official population projections and are based on existing fertility and life expectancy trends. These population projections in Table 2 show the Town of Minocqua’s population growing to 5,099 by 2030 followed by a decline to 4,713 in 2050, which is a result of the Town’s high median age and the national trend of families having fewer children or no children at all. The Town of Little Rice is the only other community in Table 2 that is projected to grow slightly by 2030, and all communities are projected to decline through 2050. Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin as a whole are also projected to have a population decrease in the coming decades.

Alternatively, NCWRPC provided another set of population projections that reflect an estimated population based on the rate that the population changed between 2000 and 2020. This results in a

Town population increase of 6.4 percent, a county increase of 4.4 percent, and a statewide increase of 15.6 percent by 2050, with mixed results for surrounding towns. See Table 3.

Table 2: Census 2020 Population and State Population Forecasts to 2050

| | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | 2020-2050 Net Change | 2020-2050 % Change |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| T. Minocqua | 5,062 | 5,099 | 4,954 | 4,713 | -349 | -6.9% |
| T. Lac du Flambeau (Vilas Co.) | 3,552 | 3,508 | 3,326 | 3,052 | -500 | -14.1% |
| T. Woodruff | 2,044 | 2,037 | 1,959 | 1,845 | -199 | -9.7% |
| T. Hazelhurst | 1,299 | 1,297 | 1,249 | 1,179 | -120 | -9.2% |
| T. Arbor Vitae (Vilas Co.) | 3,403 | 3,355 | 3,175 | 2,910 | -493 | -14.5% |
| T. Lake Tomahawk | 1,155 | 1,122 | 1,052 | 967 | -188 | -16.3% |
| T. Little Rice | 388 | 406 | 409 | 402 | 14 | 3.6% |
| T. Lynne | 139 | 131 | 119 | 105 | -34 | -24.5% |
| T. Emery (Price Co.) | 308 | 303 | 289 | 270 | -38 | -12.3% |
| Town of Fifield (Price Co.) | 905 | 855 | 783 | 704 | -201 | -22.2% |
| Oneida County | 37,845 | 37,320 | 35,525 | 33,135 | -4,710 | -12.4% |
| Wisconsin | 5,893,718 | 5,890,915 | 5,841,620 | 5,710,120 | -183,598 | -3.1% |

Source: WDOA 2024

Table 3: Census 2020 Population and NCWRPC Population Forecasts to 2050

| | 2020 | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 | 2020-2050 Net Change | 2020-2050 % Change |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| T. Minocqua | 5,062 | 5,168 | 5,276 | 5,386 | 324 | 6.4% |
| T. Lac du Flambeau (Vilas Co.) | 3,552 | 3,876 | 4,230 | 4,615 | 1,063 | 29.9% |
| T. Woodruff | 2,044 | 2,076 | 2,108 | 2,141 | 97 | 4.8% |
| T. Hazelhurst | 1,299 | 1,315 | 1,332 | 1,349 | 50 | 3.8% |
| T. Arbor Vitae (Vilas Co.) | 3,403 | 3,538 | 3,678 | 3,824 | 421 | 12.4% |
| T. Lake Tomahawk | 1,155 | 1,153 | 1,150 | 1,148 | -7 | -0.6% |
| T. Little Rice | 388 | 434 | 485 | 542 | 154 | 39.7% |
| T. Lynne | 139 | 116 | 96 | 80 | -59 | -42.6% |
| T. Emery (Price Co.) | 308 | 300 | 292 | 284 | -24 | -7.6% |
| Town of Fifield (Price Co.) | 905 | 867 | 830 | 795 | -110 | -12.2% |
| Oneida County | 37,845 | 38,395 | 38,953 | 39,519 | 1,674 | 4.4% |
| Wisconsin | 5,893,718 | 6,184,929 | 6,490,529 | 6,811,229 | 917,511 | 15.6% |

Source: NCWRPC 2026

2. Household Trends and Forecasts

In 2024, there were an estimated 2,635 households in Minocqua, which was a 7.2 percent increase since 2010. See Table 4. The Town's average household size is 1.9, down from 2.22 in 2000. By comparison, Oneida County's average household size was 2.15, and Wisconsin's is 2.29 in 2024. Communities like Minocqua that have a higher median age tend to have smaller household sizes due to more households being retired relative to the number that are raising children. Impacts to housing demand are discussed further in Chapter 3: Housing and Chapter 7: Land Use.

Table 4: Households

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2024 | 2010-2024 Change | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| | | | | | Total | Percent |
| T. Minocqua | 2,189 | 2,459 | 2,029 | 2,635 | 176 | 7.2% |
| T. Lac du Flambeau (Vilas Co.) | 1,093 | 1,530 | 1,684 | 1,517 | -13 | -0.8% |
| T. Woodruff | 866 | 897 | 867 | 793 | -104 | -11.6% |
| T. Hazelhurst | 528 | 615 | 471 | 552 | -63 | -10.2% |
| T. Arbor Vitae (Vilas Co.) | 1,373 | 1,551 | 1,576 | 1,503 | -48 | -3.1% |
| T. Lake Tomahawk | 475 | 528 | 411 | 444 | -84 | -15.9% |
| T. Little Rice | 138 | 176 | 173 | 172 | -4 | -2.3% |
| T. Lynne | 92 | 88 | 50 | 77 | -11 | -12.5% |
| T. Emery (Price Co.) | 125 | 145 | 184 | 136 | -9 | -6.2% |
| Town of Fifield (Price Co.) | 436 | 406 | 413 | 511 | 105 | 25.9% |
| Oneida County | 15,333 | 17,475 | 15,677 | 17,493 | 18 | 0.1% |
| Wisconsin | 2,084,556 | 2,274,611 | 2,377,935 | 2,535,198 | 260,587 | 11.5% |

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

3. Age Distribution

Population distribution by age is important in the planning process. Two age groups are examined here: 1) people 5 to 17 years old, and 2) people 65 years and older. These two age groups are often referred to as dependent populations and have different needs. The younger group requires schools, and the older group is retiring from the workforce. Table 5 shows each of these groups in 2010 and 2024.

In 2010, the median age of Minocqua's population was 55.3 years. At that time, residents of the County had a lower median age (47.2 years). Both the Town and the County had populations older than the State (35.8 years) as a whole. The Town of Minocqua had a lower proportion of population (12.6 percent) in school (5-17 age class) than the County (14.3 percent), and the State (17.2 percent). Minocqua's older population (65+ age class) percentage of 35.9 was higher than both the County (20.8 percent), and the State (13.7 percent).

By 2024, the median age of Minocqua's population had advanced by 2.2 years to 57.5, which is less than the County (5.5 years) and State (4.9 years), likely due to the fact that the Town's age was already considerably higher in 2010 than the County and the State. The Town's median age of 57.5 is much higher than the State's, which is 40.7. All the surrounding towns and the County have higher median

ages than the State. The Town of Minocqua's school age population (5-17 age class) declined slightly to 10.8 percent in 2024. This is still a lower proportion of the population than the County (12.7%), and the State (15.6%); both of which remained about even from 2000 to 2024. Minocqua's older population (65+ age class) percentage of 35.9 is also much higher than both the County, which rose slightly (20.8%), and the State, which also increased (19.6%).

Note that the 16 to 64 age group comprises the vast majority of the Town’s workforce. This age group fell from 56 percent of the population in 2010 to 50.6 percent of the population in 2024. Similarly, the County decreased from 60.3 percent to 55 percent during the same time, and the state decreased from 62.9 percent to 59.7 percent. This will impact the ability to fill jobs as retirements continue but working age adults become scarcer over time.

Table 5: Age Distribution

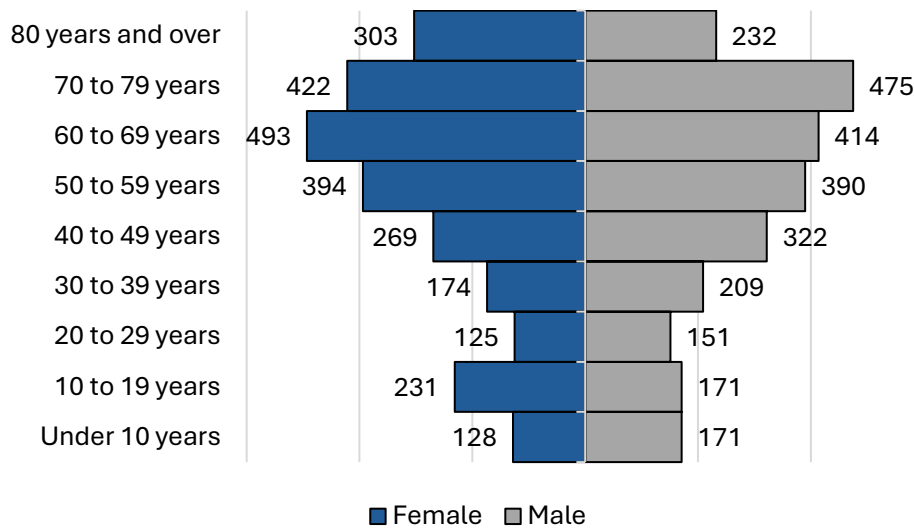
| | | Percent of Population | | | | Median Age |
|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|------------|
| | | Under 5 | 5-17 | 18-64 | 65+ | |
| T. Minocqua | 2010 | 1.8% | 12.6% | 56.0% | 29.6% | 55.3 |
| | 2024 | 2.7% | 10.8% | 50.6% | 35.9% | 57.5 |
| T. Lac du Flambeau (Vilas Co.) | 2010 | 6.8% | 19.2% | 56.6% | 17.4% | 42.6 |
| | 2024 | 5.7% | 17.0% | 49.7% | 27.6% | 46.1 |
| T. Woodruff | 2010 | 5.4% | 18.2% | 55.6% | 20.8% | 42.5 |
| | 2024 | 2.9% | 10.3% | 50.5% | 36.3% | 60.1 |
| T. Hazelhurst | 2010 | 6.9% | 11.9% | 63.9% | 17.3% | 48.7 |
| | 2024 | 2.9% | 16.0% | 50.3% | 30.8% | 57.1 |
| T. Arbor Vitae (Vilas Co.) | 2010 | 4.3% | 17.2% | 55.3% | 23.2% | 46.3 |
| | 2024 | 0.1% | 26.8% | 47.3% | 25.8% | 45.7 |
| T. Lake Tomahawk | 2010 | 3.4% | 14.7% | 59.5% | 22.4% | 49.1 |
| | 2024 | 2.5% | 16.2% | 52.9% | 28.4% | 50.8 |
| T. Little Rice | 2010 | 3.4% | 14.7% | 59.5% | 22.4% | 50.2 |
| | 2024 | 4.1% | 6.8% | 56.6% | 32.5% | 55.9 |
| T. Lynne | 2010 | 5.4% | 7.6% | 51.3% | 35.7% | 54.6 |
| | 2024 | 1.8% | 4.3% | 42.6% | 51.3% | 65.8 |
| T. Emery (Price Co.) | 2010 | 5.6% | 13.6% | 66.3% | 14.5% | 46.8 |
| | 2024 | 2.7% | 12.4% | 57.1% | 27.8% | 55.2 |
| Town of Fifield (Price Co.) | 2010 | 4.5% | 7.2% | 57.0% | 31.3% | 56.5 |
| | 2024 | 2.7% | 8.8% | 48.4% | 40.1% | 59.9 |
| Oneida County | 2010 | 4.6% | 14.3% | 60.3% | 20.8% | 47.2 |
| | 2024 | 4.0% | 12.7% | 55.0% | 28.3% | 52.7 |
| Wisconsin | 2010 | 6.2% | 17.2% | 62.9% | 13.7% | 35.8 |
| | 2024 | 5.1% | 15.6% | 59.7% | 19.6% | 40.7 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

A shifting age structure affects a variety of services and needs within the community including transportation, housing, elderly care, and schools. It will become increasingly important to retain or

attract younger age groups to provide for service demands and maintain the workforce. Figure 1 displays the population pyramid for the Town. Historically, these Figures were called pyramids because the base (younger age groups) was the largest, and the top (older age groups) was smallest. This has changed as older adults live longer than previous generations, and younger adults have fewer children or no children at all. It also reflects Minocqua’s position as an attractive place to retire due to its abundant outdoor recreation, which brings in older adults leaving other communities. In Minocqua’s case, the pyramid is nearly inverted, with the largest groups being between age 50 and 79, and the smallest groups being between 20 and 39 years old and under 10 years old.

Figure 1: 2024 Age Cohorts for the Town of Minocqua



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

Nearly half of all households have someone over 65 (48.9 percent), and 14.2 percent of households contain children under 18. Perhaps most reflective of the nature of those who do reside in the town is the fact that 42.8 percent of housing units are listed for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. Since this is a slight decrease from 45.8 percent reported in the Town’s 2010 Comprehensive Plan, it seems reasonable to assume that many of the older residents of Minocqua have converted such seasonal dwellings to year-round homes and are now full-time residents.

4. Education Levels

The educational attainment level of people within a community is often an indicator of the overall income, job availability, and well-being of a community. In 2010, 95 percent of the Town of Minocqua's population age 25 and over were high school graduates, compared to 91.9 percent in the County and 89.4 percent in the State. By 2024, the percentage of high school graduates had increased to 98.4 percent in the Town and also rose in both the County to 96 percent and the State to 93.6 percent. See Table 6 for details. The number of residents in Town who are 25 and older and have four or more years of college has dipped slightly from 31.8 percent in 2010 to 30.8 percent in 2024, while it increased countywide from 22.4 percent to 28.7 percent and statewide from 25.8 percent to

33.4 percent during the same time. This could indicate a need to encourage those who leave Minocqua for college to return to the community to fill jobs vacated by an increasing retired population.

Table 6: Education Levels

| | T. Minocqua | | Oneida Co. | | Wisconsin | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------|------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2010 | 2024 | 2010 | 2024 | 2010 | 2024 |
| Less than 9th Grade | 1.2% | 0.7% | 2.1% | 1.0% | 3.7% | 2.3% |
| 9-12 Grade / No Diploma | 3.8% | 0.9% | 6.0% | 3.1% | 6.9% | 4.1% |
| High School Diploma | 33.1% | 27.8% | 34.3% | 29.3% | 34.0% | 29.4% |
| College/No Degree | 23.5% | 25.8% | 25.7% | 25.2% | 20.6% | 19.5% |
| Associate Degree | 6.5% | 13.9% | 9.5% | 12.7% | 9.0% | 11.3% |
| Bachelor Degree | 19.7% | 17.2% | 14.6% | 18.3% | 17.1% | 22.0% |
| Graduate/Professional Degree | 12.1% | 13.7% | 7.8% | 10.4% | 8.6% | 11.4% |
| Total Persons 25 & Over | 3,482 | 4,245 | 27,098 | 29,646 | 3,739,243 | 4,099,973 |
| Percent high school graduate and over | 95.0% | 98.4% | 91.9% | 96.0% | 89.4% | 93.6% |
| Percent bachelors degree or higher | 31.8% | 30.8% | 22.4% | 28.7% | 25.8% | 33.4% |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

5. Income Levels

In 2010, the median household income for the Town was barely lower than the County, but about 12 percent lower than the State. This is half of the 24 percent difference between Town household income and statewide household income reported in the Town’s former comprehensive plan in 1990. This further decreased to being only 10.8 percent lower in 2024. On a per capita basis, the income of Minocqua's residents was 9.9 percent higher than the County and 15.9 percent higher than the State. This grew to being 20 percent higher than the County and 18.1 percent higher than the state. While wage growth is a positive indicator, inflation continues to be a concern, and it can increase the price of housing, making it more difficult to buy or rent a place to live. These topics are discussed further in Chapter 3: Housing and Chapter 6: Economic Development. See Table 7.

Table 7: Income Levels

| | 2010 | | | 2024 | | |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-----------|
| | T. Minocqua | Oneida Co. | Wisconsin | T. Minocqua | Oneida Co. | Wisconsin |
| Median HH Income | \$45,469 | \$45,857 | \$51,598 | \$69,112 | \$69,371 | \$77,488 |
| Per Capita Income | \$30,856 | \$28,085 | \$26,624 | \$51,220 | \$42,684 | \$43,361 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

6. Employment Characteristics, Trends, and Forecasts

According to the 2024 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the population aged 16 years and older was 4,450, and 2,237 of these people were not in the labor force. The civilian labor force (population 16 and over) living in Minocqua was 2,213 people in 2024, with 39 people unemployed

for an unemployment rate of 1.8%. The unemployment rate for the County was 2.0% in 2024. The primary occupation of Minocqua residents in the labor force in both 2010 and 2024 was Management, professional, & related, though sales & office occupations have increased considerably since 2010. See Table 8.

Table 8: Occupation of Employed Workers

| | T. Minocqua | | Oneida Co. | |
|--|-------------|------|------------|-------|
| | 2010 | 2024 | 2010 | 2024 |
| Management, professional, & related | 775 | 906 | 5,220 | 6,258 |
| Service | 465 | 275 | 3,184 | 2,616 |
| Sales & Office | 431 | 620 | 4,687 | 3,745 |
| Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations | 318 | 164 | 2,299 | 1,881 |
| Production, transportation, and material moving occupations | 99 | 209 | 2,412 | 2,962 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

The leading industry sector in the Town was Education, Health, and Social Services in 2010, but by 2024 it had lost one-third of its jobs. By contrast, retail trade, wholesale trade, transportation, warehousing, and utilities, and public administration saw high amounts of growth by 2024. See Table 9.

Table 9: Industry Sectors

| | T. Minocqua | | Oneida Co. | |
|---|-------------|------|------------|-------|
| | 2010 | 2024 | 2010 | 2024 |
| Ag., Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, & Mining | 66 | 2 | 383 | 216 |
| Construction | 271 | 179 | 1,843 | 1,303 |
| Manufacturing | 110 | 61 | 2,028 | 2,195 |
| Wholesale Trade | 9 | 45 | 428 | 490 |
| Retail Trade | 194 | 349 | 2,613 | 2,546 |
| Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities | 54 | 148 | 780 | 708 |
| Information | 54 | 49 | 435 | 290 |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, & Leasing | 93 | 122 | 802 | 1,071 |
| Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services | 137 | 109 | 1,228 | 1,506 |
| Education, Health, and Social Services | 630 | 419 | 4,080 | 3,619 |
| Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services | 379 | 339 | 1,851 | 1,599 |
| Public Administration | 41 | 135 | 679 | 1,069 |
| Other Services | 50 | 217 | 652 | 850 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

The County's economy is heavily based on retail trade, manufacturing, and education, health, and social services. Between 2010 and 2024, manufacturing saw a slight increase in employment, while the other two industries saw a decrease. But all three employ a much higher share of the workforce than the other industries. Health and social services in particular could rebound as an aging population will require more care as a large share of the population shifts into the oldest age ranges within the next decade.

Note that these figures are all based on the number of workers residing in the Town and what they do for employment rather than where they are employed. Data on jobs within the Town's boundaries as well as future employment projections are discussed in detail in Chapter 6: Economic Development.

B. Issue Identification

1. Review of Demographic Trends

Demographic change is a principal factor in predicting future community growth. Population characteristics relate directly to the community's housing, education, utility, recreation, and facility needs, as well as future economic development. Over time, fluctuations in local and regional economies can influence population change. From Part A, Background Information, a number of issues and opportunities facing the Town of Minocqua can be identified:

- The Town of Minocqua is currently in a period of increasing growth.
- Household formation is driven by the decline in average household size or persons per household, and a growing retirement population.
- A shifting age structure affects a variety of services and needs within the community including transportation, housing, elderly care, and schools.
- Levels of educational attainment have increased significantly.
- Median household income has grown significantly, remaining at a similar level to the County but still behind the overall State median. Per capita income, however, is higher, likely due to fewer people per household on average.
- The Town is experiencing an increase in the number of housing units being used for seasonal purposes and as Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs).

2. Past Planning Efforts

The Town has a history of land use planning with the assistance of North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). The Town's previous comprehensive plan, adopted in 2010, was based heavily on a 2002 land use plan also developed with assistance from NCWRPC. In early 2026, the Town worked with NCWRPC to update each chapter's data and content to reflect changes since 2010, with Plan Commission leading the review and editing of the updated drafts.

The Town is part of the County's five-year outdoor recreation plan, which was updated in 2024. Major recreation projects planned by the Town include completing enhancements to Torpy Park, upgrading facilities in other parks, and expanding bicycle and pedestrian facilities. See Chapter 4 for a full list of parks and recreation facilities and their planned upgrades. In 2026, the Town updated its own Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan to further support improvements throughout the Town.

3. Town Plan Commission Brainstorming

After reviewing the background data and previous planning efforts as presented above, the Town Plan Commission discussed various issues it felt were pertinent to the future development of the Town. These issues are as follows:

- Lack of economic growth (measured in part by secure, year-round jobs with salary and benefits).
- Strong desire to "keep things natural", reemphasize the importance of the "Northwoods Character" and "go green" by encouraging non-polluting light manufacturing, high technology businesses and other eco-friendly business (green business park concept).
- The Commission also noted that the Lakeland Airport is a big factor in the current and future development of the Town.
- Labor shortages make it difficult to fill open positions in the Town.
- A shortage of housing makes affordability a concern, which also makes it difficult to attract workers to the Town.
- High construction costs (materials, labor, etc.) and a lack of available contractors make it challenging to expand the housing supply.
- Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs) reduce housing affordability and availability as housing units are converted to seasonal rentals.

Some opportunities for the Town to build on were also discussed, including great health care facilities, schools and other quality of life factors such as low levels of crime and pollution.

C. Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Programs

Each of the following seven topical chapters of this comprehensive plan includes a set of goals, objectives and policies, which the Town Board will use to guide the future development and redevelopment of the Town over the next 20 years.

For purposes of this plan, goals, objectives, and policies are defined as follows:

- Goals: Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the Town 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. Accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.
- Policies: Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Decision-makers use policies on a day-to-day basis.

Each chapter also includes a listing of possible programs that the Town might implement in order to advance the goals and objectives of this plan. The listing does not imply that the Town will utilize every program shown, but only that these programs are available to the Town and may be one of many possible ways of achieving the Town's goals.

Chapter 2: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources

This chapter, the second of nine chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan, is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(e) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation, and promotion of the effective management, of natural resources such as groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface water, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources consistent with zoning limitations under §295.20(2), parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.

A. Background

All planning efforts need to examine relevant previous plans about the community and the surrounding county. Those plans are discussed below:

1. Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2020-2029

This plan was developed by the Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department with assistance from various local, regional, and state agencies and input from members of the community. It provides a framework for local, state, and federal conservation program implementation efforts. Implementation of this plan will help protect and improve the valuable water, soil, and other natural resources in Oneida County. Some of the Plan's recommendations include protecting shoreland areas, reducing nonpoint source pollution, replacing failing septic systems, and reducing wildlife conflicts.

2. Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2024-2028

Completed in November 2023, this plan involves the County's Forestry, Land, and Recreation Committee. The primary purpose of this Recreation Plan is to provide continued direction in meeting the county's current and future recreation needs. This direction takes the form of an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities, followed by establishing recommendations to meet identified needs. Adoption of this plan and its subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Stewardship Fund, and many other federal and state funding programs. A copy is available in the Oneida County Forestry Department.

3. Oneida County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2021-2035

The mission of the county forest is to manage, conserve, and protect the natural resources within the county forest on a sustainable basis for present and future generations. This plan is administered by the County's Forestry, Land, and Recreation Committee and it contains information about forest resource planning, outdoor recreation planning, silvicultural practices, aesthetic management zones, trails and access control, biological communities, and wildlife species that exist within the county forest. A copy is available in the Oneida County Forestry Department.

B. Inventory

1. Water Resources

a. Surface Water

Surface water resources support the area's economy by drawing tourists and providing a good quality of life for residents. Oneida County contains one of the highest concentrations of natural lakes in the world.

Minocqua is part of several watersheds. A jagged watershed boundary divides the Town into three parts. The northwestern part of Town lies in the Upper South Fork Flambeau River watershed. The eastern part of Town lies mainly in the Upper Tomahawk River watershed, with a notch of this part along the Lac du Flambeau border lying in the Bear River watershed. The southern part lies in the Middle Tomahawk River watershed. All of these watersheds drain into the Mississippi River.

Oneida County Shoreland Zoning is in effect. Actual shoreland jurisdiction measurements are coordinated through the County Zoning Department. Refer to Map 2: Natural Resources for water bodies in the Town.

Several waterbodies within the Town are listed as Outstanding (ORW) or Exceptional (ERW) Resource Waters. ORWs include Tomahawk Lake (T39N R6E Sec 36), Willow Flowage (T38N R5E Sec 32), and the Squirrel River (T39N R5E Sec 21). ERWs include Langley Creek (T38N R5E Sec 17), Stony Creek (T38N R4E Sec 30), and Little Willow Creek (T38N R4E Sec 30).

ORWs and 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.

Surface water resources in Oneida County are threatened by the introduction of invasive aquatic species. These species out-compete native species and degrade habitats. Lake associations within the Town are putting forth significant efforts to fight existing invasive species and prevent new ones from entering. The Town of Minocqua works with the associations to care for its waters and address the invasive species problem.

b. Wetlands

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle and local ecological systems. In terms of hazard mitigation, they act as water storage devices in times of high water. Like sponges, wetlands are able to absorb excess water and release it back into the watershed slowly, preventing flooding and minimizing flood damage. As more impermeable surfaces are developed, this excess capacity for water runoff storage becomes increasingly important.

Wetland plants and soils have the capacity to store and filter pollutants ranging from pesticides to animal wastes. Calm wetland waters, with their flat surface and flow characteristics, allow particles

of toxins and nutrients to settle out of the water column. Plants take up certain nutrients from the water. Other substances can be stored or transformed into a less toxic state within wetlands. As a result, the lakes, rivers and streams are cleaner.

Wetlands that filter or store sediments or nutrients for extended periods may undergo fundamental changes. Sediments will eventually fill in wetlands and nutrients will eventually modify the vegetation. Such changes may result in the loss of this function over time. Eradication of wetlands can occur through the use of fill material. This can destroy the hydrological function of the site and open the area to improper development. The WDNR has promulgated minimum standards for managing wetlands.

The wetlands shown for the Town of Minocqua were mapped from the WDNR Wetlands Inventory, see the Natural Resources Map. Approximately 35,410 acres, or 32.9 percent of the Town's total area, contains wetlands.

c. Floodplains

A floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year. The primary value of floodplains is their role in natural flood control. Flood plains represent areas where excess water can be accommodated whether through drainage by streams or through storage by wetlands and other natural detention/retention areas. Specific areas that will be inundated will depend upon the amount of water, the distance and speed that water travels, and the topography of the area. If uninterrupted by development, the areas shown on a map as floodplains should be able to handle the most severe regional flood, i.e. those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years.

The 100-year floodplain was digitized by the NCWRPC from FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, for planning purposes only, refer to the Natural Resources Map. Approximately 17,110 acres, or 15.9 percent of the Town's total area, are within floodplains. Note that wetlands and floodplains frequently overlap.

d. Groundwater & Geology

Groundwater is water that occupies spaces between soil particles or cracks in the rock below the land surface. It originates as precipitation that infiltrated into the ground. The type of soil and bedrock that a well is drilled into often determines water's pH, saturation index, and the amount of hardness or alkalinity in water. The type of soil and bedrock in a region also determines how quickly contaminants can reach groundwater.

The majority of the Town lies within a glacial drift aquifer, which is the major source of ground water in most of the county. The fractured crystalline bedrock underlying the county is not considered a significant source of water, although locally it provides a small amount for domestic uses. Yields from wells in areas of glacial outwash range from a few gallons to 2,000 gallons per minute.

Groundwater quality in Oneida County and the Town of Minocqua is generally good. The aquifer water principally contains calcium, magnesium, and bicarbonate ions, and a high concentration of iron also exists, but it is not considered a health hazard. In areas with moraines, the aquifer water is hard.

Susceptibility of groundwater to pollutants is defined here as the ease with which a contaminant can be transported from the land surface to the top of the groundwater called the water table.

Many materials that overlie the groundwater offer good protection from contaminants that might be transported by infiltrating waters. The amount of protection offered by the overlying material varies, however, depending on the materials. Thus, in some areas, the overlying soil and bedrock materials allow contaminants to reach the groundwater more easily than in other areas of the state. Groundwater contamination susceptibility in Oneida County is "most susceptible" based upon soil characteristics, surficial deposits, depth to water table, depth to bedrock, and type of bedrock.

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 applications 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.

The impact road salt has on water is a growing concern. Salts can be washed over land or through groundwater into nearby surface water and can remain in soil and groundwater for decades. Increases in sodium and chloride can also increase mobilization of heavy metals in soil along major highways. Groundwater contamination can also negatively affect well water taste in areas with heavy salt concentrations.

In lakes and streams, salty water is dense and sinks into pockets in the substrate, preventing it from mixing and diluting. The result is that this colder water, which many fish and aquatic organisms depend on for wildlife habitat, becomes deoxygenated. Even at moderate levels, road deicing agents can enter wetlands and effect amphibian health and reproduction and alter wetland food webs. Native plants in wetlands are also impacted by salt, making it easier for invasive species to spread. In summary, salt impacts a wetland's habitat quality and ability to protect groundwater quality. Finally, vegetation along highways where salt is applied is more likely to experience insects, pathogens, and other diseases because the salt can become airborne when applied. This makes them less likely to withstand harsh winter conditions, and it makes it easier for salt tolerant invasives to take over plant communities.

Wellhead protection plans are developed to achieve groundwater pollution prevention measures within public water supply wellhead areas. A wellhead protection plan uses public involvement to delineate the wellhead protection area, inventory potential groundwater contamination sources, and manage the wellhead protection area. All new municipal wells are required to have a wellhead protection plan. The Lakeland Sanitary District, which provides public water supply to part of the Town of Minocqua has a wellhead protection plan in place.

2. Land Resources

a. Forests

Forests play a key role in the protection of environmentally sensitive areas like steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. Expansive forests provide recreational opportunities, aesthetic benefits, and economic development.

The pre-settlement composition of forestland in the Town of Minocqua was of mixed conifers and deciduous tree species that included white pine, red pine, beech, hemlock, yellow birch, and sugar maple.

All forests are dynamic, always changing from one stage to another, influenced by natural forces and humans. Changes can be subtle and occur over long periods, or can happen in seconds from a timber harvest, windstorm, or fire.

According to DNR, 38,653 acres of private woodlands in the Town were enrolled in Managed Forest Law (MFL) as of 2026. This program provides a low annual tax rate per acre and requires a management plan for the property that must include some harvesting along with allowing some public uses based on acreage thresholds. When timber is harvested from MFL properties, a harvest tax is also assessed. This provides an incentive to keep woodlots in active production and allows some community access to the site in exchange for greatly reduced taxes. See the programs section at the end of this chapter for more detail on this program.

b. Metallic & Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

When the Town's 2010 Comprehensive Plan was written, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources estimated that there could be no more than five metallic mineral mines developed in Wisconsin over the twenty-year period between 1997 and 2017. This includes the Flambeau Mine now closed (Rusk Co.), the Crandon Project closed in 2003 which is now owned by two tribes (Forest Co.), and the known Lynne (Oneida Co.), Bend (Taylor Co.), and Reef (Marathon Co.) deposits. This estimate is based on the current state of knowledge about the geology of northern Wisconsin and the steps necessary to discover an ore body and the time it takes to complete the regulatory requirements. There is one known non-metallic quarry in the Town of Minocqua, as well as a few closed or inactive sites.

The Town has adopted its own metallic mining licensing ordinance to establish local minimum operational standards for mining operations conducted within the Town, and a process by which to systematically consider mining licenses in a manner that promotes the health, safety, welfare, and convenience of the Town and its residents.

c. Soils & Productive Agricultural Areas

According to the Wisconsin Land Use Databook, the Town of Minocqua between 1991-1993 was 3.0 percent agricultural, 58.3 percent forested, and 36.0 percent wetlands. The town's total land area is 150.6 square miles. Of the total land area, 0.3 percent was used for row crops, 0.1 percent was used for foraging, and 2.6 percent was grassland.

There is currently very little agricultural activity within the Town. Most agricultural activities include Christmas trees, hobby farming and limited cranberry production. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs and results in the least damage to the environment, see the Natural Resources Map.

d. Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Environmentally sensitive areas are typically defined by the local jurisdiction and often include many of the areas referred to in this section such as special groundwater protection areas, threatened or endangered species habitat, floodplains, wetlands and other unique or special resources where encroachment or development could have negative consequences. The Town of Minocqua has not established a specific guideline for defining environmentally sensitive areas, however, some potentially sensitive areas are discussed below.

One type of area, which might fall under the environmentally sensitive designation, is contaminated or potentially contaminated sites in part because they may need special care or monitoring to prevent further environmental degradation or hazard to human life. The WDNR Internet database known as the Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) lists 121 sites, 119 of which are closed and 2 that are open.

The following sites were listed as “open” in the database as of 2026, which means they are not yet remediated to DNR standards for continued use or reuse:

- Musky Shores, 12079 Musky Shores Dr (LUST)
- (Former) Minocqua Cleaners (ERP), St. Germain Street East

Below is a list of DNR categories for sites that appear in BRRTS:

- Abandoned Container (AC): Potentially hazardous contents was inspected and recovered. No known discharge to the environment occurred.
- Environmental Repair Program (ERP): Discharges of hazardous substances or environmental pollution that are not LUST activities.
- Facility-wide: Large sites with continuing operations that have smaller contamination releases over time.
- General Property (GP): Records related to liability exemptions, liability clarifications, and cleanup agreements.
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST): Contamination that resulted from a leaking underground storage tank.
- Legacy Sediment: Places where historical discharges occurred to navigable waterways and the contamination is still causing adverse effects to the environment.
- Materials Management: A property that received contaminated materials from a response action site in compliance with Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 718.
- No Action Required by RR Program (NAR): Locations where a discharge to the environment occurred or likely occurred but DNR determines the responsible party does not need to undertake an investigation or cleanup.

- Off-Sites: Properties affected by contamination from another property
- Spills: Discharges of hazardous substances that are an immediate threat and generally must be cleaned up quickly.
- Voluntary Part Liability Exemption (VPLE): A party volunteers to conduct an environmental investigation and cleanup of an entire property and then receives limits on future liability for that contamination.

LUST sites have contaminated soil and/or groundwater with petroleum, which includes toxic and cancer-causing substances. ERP sites are sites other than LUSTs that have contaminated soil and/or groundwater.

e. Rare Species & Natural Communities

Oneida County is home to two endangered species: Black Tern and American Marten, as well as a variety of threatened species and species of concern. The Town of Minocqua has many sections with occurrences of endangered resources (rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants & animals, and high-quality natural communities) as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory, which is continually updated.

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.

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. State Natural Areas located in the Town are as follows:

- Patterson Hemlocks - State Natural Area #216 (T39N R4E Sec 3). This, approximately 304-acre, site protects a large block of old-growth northern mesic forest on an isthmus between Clear and Fuller Lakes with large hemlock, yellow birch, and white pine throughout.
- Squirrel River Pines, State Natural Area #244 (T39N-R5E, Sections 16, 20, 21). Approximately 1,363 acres, this site features a fine example of northern dry-mesic forest situated on a narrow, sandy peninsula running northeasterly towards the Squirrel River.
- Finnerud Pine Forest, State Natural Area #31 (T39N R6E Sec 21). This 141-acre site features an old-growth red pine stand more than 140 years old.
- Upper Tomahawk River Pines, State Natural Area #239 (T38N R5E Sections 11, 12, 14, 15, 22, 23, 27). At 842 acres, this site features several undisturbed stands of large red pine located along a wild and undeveloped reach of the Tomahawk River.

f. Historical & Cultural Resources

Numerous buildings in the Town appear on the Wisconsin Architectural History Inventory. In 2010, the Town Plan Commission selected the most notable, listed below by historic name, followed by current name if different from historic name, and location.

- Villa Venise Lodge (Squaw Lake Point Rd 3 mi S of STH 70);
- St. Mathias Church (Chippewa St at corner with Chicago Ave);
- Masonic Temple (Lake Shore and Oneida);
- Torpy Park Pavilion (Torpy Park);
- Thirsty Whale boat house;
- Gas station (Lamplighter Gifts, Oneida & Chicago Ave);
- Squirrel Dam (Jansen Rd and Squirrel River);
- Ella M Boesel Boathouse (9282 Country Club Rd);
- Walter, Luther, and Anna Boathouse (9574 Country Club Rd).
- Musky Shores resort buildings (8329 Schroeder Rd);
- Jansen's Squirrel Lake resort buildings (Jansen Rd);
- Minocqua Country Club buildings (9299 Country Club Dr);
- Blue Lake Resort buildings (7636 Blue Lake Island Rd);
- Pine Hill Cabins (8544 Hower Rd); and
- Driftwood resort buildings (8400 Driftwood Place).

There are five listings on Wisconsin or National Registers of Historic Places within the Town:

- Ella M Boesel Boathouse (9282 Country Club Rd);
- Fishers Island (prehistoric burial);
- Phillip Orth Boathouse (9204 Country Club Rd); and
- Texaco Service Station (329 Front St)
- Luther and Anna Walter Boathouse (9574 Country Club Rd).

In 2010, the Plan Commission also added a number of significant historical/cultural sites not on either of the lists above, including:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Lakeside Landing (7863 Leary Rd) | • Hixon Road School (9858 Blue Lake Rd) |
| • Heritage House (315 Oneida St) | • Bosacki's Boat House (305 W Park Ave) |
| • Belle Isle (301 Front St #301) | • Aqua Bowl (422 W Park Ave) |
| • Paul Bunyan Sign (8653 U.S. 51) | • Minocqua Trestle (Bearskin State Trail) |
| • Town Community Center (415 Menominee St) | • Old Minocqua Bridge Fishing Pier (Old U.S. 51 remnants) |

C. Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Programs

Programs available to the Town of Minocqua to achieve their goals and objectives with regard to agricultural, natural and cultural resources 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.

Use the Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, available in the County Land and Water Conservation Department, to coordinate implementation of the following land and water resource management programs preceded with an asterisk (*). The Land and Water Resource Management Plan will show which agency is taking the lead to solve a particular resource problem.

*Aquatic Habitat Protection Program. WDNR provides aquatic habitat protection services through their Water Management (Regulation) Specialists, Zoning Specialists, Rivers Specialists, Lakes Specialists, Water Management Engineers, and their assistants (LTEs). Programs assist with water regulations, 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.

Drinking Water and Groundwater Program. This WDNR program ensures safe, high quality drinking water and groundwater by enforcing minimum well construction and pump installation requirements, conducting surveys and inspections of water systems, investigating and sampling drinking water quality problems, and requiring drinking water quality monitoring and reporting. WDNR staff assists with water quality issues and provides educational materials.

*Endangered Resources Program. The DNR's Endangered Resources staff provides endangered resources expertise. 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 permitting, applications, and approvals.

*Fisheries Management Program. This WDNR 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. Funding for the forestry program is supported primarily by a fixed rate mill tax on all property in the State of Wisconsin. Other support is received from the federal 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.

Managed Forest Law (MFL). WDNR's MFL promotes good forest management through property tax incentives. Management practices are required under 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 sight-seeing; 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.

*Nonpoint Source Program (NSP). Wisconsin's NSP Program, through a network of federal, state, and local agencies partnering with other organizations and citizens, addresses nonpoint pollution 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 — research, monitoring, data assessment and management, regulation and enforcement, financial and technical assistance, education and outreach and public involvement — address current and future water quality issues caused by NPS pollution.

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. NRCS provides funding opportunities for agricultural producers and other landowners through a variety of programs listed on their website, including but not limited to:

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)
- Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
- Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP)
- Water Bank and Watershed Programs
- Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Program
- Watershed Rehabilitation Program (REHAB)
- Wetland Mitigation Banking Program (WMBP)
- Working Lands for Wildlife

Parks and Recreation Management Program. This WDNR program helps develop public parks and recreation facilities under Wis. Stat. Chapter 27. Funding sources include the general fund, the Stewardship Program, Land and Water Conservation fund (LAWCON), and program revenue funds.

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 that provides assistance as well as educational programs for landowners, schools, and the public.

Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations. Nonprofit conservation organizations may obtain funding from WDNR for conservation land or easement acquisition and wildlife habitat restoration. Priorities include 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 the restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects.

*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 closely 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). This voluntary program restores wetlands which were altered for agricultural use. The program is administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in consultation with the Farm Service Agency and other federal agencies.

Wildlife Management Program. WDNR's Bureau of Wildlife Management oversees a variety of programs that incorporate state, federal and local initiatives for wildlife habitat management and enhancement. They 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 state and county forest staff to maintain, enhance, and restore wildlife habitat. WDNR staff conduct wildlife population and habitat surveys, prepare property needs analysis, develop wildlife management plans, and collaborate with other Park, Forestry or Fishery Area Property Master Plans to ensure proper implementation.

Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS). This office serves as the principal historic preservation agency in the state. SHPO partners with communities, organizations, and individuals, working to identify, interpret, and preserve historic places.

D. Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resource Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Goals:

1. Protect and enhance natural areas, including wetlands, water bodies, forest lands, wildlife habitats open spaces and groundwater resources.
2. Protect and enhance economically productive areas, including lakes, forests and recreational areas.
3. Preserve and enhance scenic, cultural, historic, archaeological and recreational sites.

Objectives and Policies:

1. Preserve the land now in forest resource use in accordance with Town Land Use Plan.
2. Discourage forest fragmentation throughout the Town.
3. Ensure that all new development in the Town minimizes negative impact on natural resources and adjoining property values.
4. Encourage growth that protects wildlife habitat and natural areas.
5. Promote development that minimizes groundwater impacts from on-site septic systems and other sources.
6. Encourage the extension of public sewers where development densities and/or soil conditions are inadequate for on-site septic treatment and water quality is threatened and minimize the impact of any sewage treatment plants on neighboring properties.
7. Work with property owners, county and state agencies to keep lakes free of unwanted invasive species.
8. Continue to support the efforts of lake associations within the Town to control and prevent aquatic invasive species.
9. Work with Oneida County to enforce existing regulations of septic systems to protect groundwater quality.
10. Implement best practices for salt application on roadways to reduce the harmful impacts on surface water and groundwater that result from salt runoff. Wisconsin Salt Wise maintains a list of best practices here: <https://www.wisaltwise.com>

Chapter 3: Housing

This chapter, the third of nine chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan, is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, and maps and programs to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [§66.1001 (2)(b) Wis. Stats.], this chapter provides a basic housing stock assessment and identifies policies and programs that promote the development of housing for all residents of the Town including a range of choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups and disabilities; that promotes the availability of land for low-income housing; and that maintains the existing housing stock.

In 2025, the Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) partnered with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) to create a countywide housing study that is referenced later in this chapter. The study noted a need for as many as 1,358 housing units countywide by 2030, with the highest priority being rental units costing between \$900 and \$1,249 per month and owner-occupied units costing \$200,000 to \$400,000. Expanding this supply frees up more housing options and prices. In summary, that study's top recommendations were:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Subdivision/Zoning Ordinance updates | 6. State and Regional Partnerships |
| 2. Comprehensive Planning | 7. Housing Committee Action |
| 3. Tax-exempt Property Disposition | 8. Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) |
| 4. Developer Outreach | 9. Housing Preservation |
| 5. Educational Events | 10. Housing Study Monitoring |

Additionally, the 2025 Oneida County Comprehensive Plan's housing goals are 1. Encourage adequate supply of affordable housing for all individuals of all income levels consistent with the county's rural character and 2. Encourage residential development in suitable areas.

Forecasts for housing demand (residential land) are discussed in the Land Use Chapter. The existing residential housing base is shown on Map 6: Existing Land Use. The potential future residential housing areas to meet forecasted demand is shown on Map 7: Future Land Use Plan.

A. Housing Stock Assessment

1. Age Characteristics

Table 10 indicates the age of the housing stock in the Town of Minocqua and surrounding area based on the year housing structures were built as reported in the 2024 American Community Survey. Most homes within Minocqua (over 55%) have been built since 1980. There was strong growth in housing units starting in the 1970s, which continued through the decades until the late 2000s recession. Since then, relatively few units have been built, with only 7 percent in the 2010s and 1.6 percent after 2020. Development pressure persists, but limited land and high construction costs result in slower development compared to previous decades. However, a higher percentage of housing units has been built in the Town since 2000 compared to the County and State, showing that slowed housing development is not unique to the Town.

Table 10: Year Structure Built

| | 1939 or earlier | 1940-1959 | 1960-1979 | 1980-1999 | 2000-2019 | 2020-Present |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| T. Minocqua | 7.5% | 10.9% | 25.7% | 29.5% | 24.7% | 1.6% |
| T. Woodruff | 4.3% | 20.9% | 22.8% | 21.7% | 29.9% | 0.4% |
| Oneida Co. | 9.5% | 14.5% | 26.1% | 28.6% | 20.3% | 0.9% |
| Wisconsin | 17.8% | 15.6% | 23.6% | 22.0% | 19.6% | 1.4% |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

2. Occupancy Characteristics

Table 11 breaks down the occupancy status of housing units in the Town of Minocqua. Seasonal homes make up about 42.8 percent of the housing units in the Town versus about 54.3 percent owner occupied when looking at the total housing units. When considering just the year-round, occupied housing units, 73.7 percent are owner-occupied and 26.3 are renter occupied. Neighboring Woodruff has a similar percentage of seasonal homes, but the owner occupancy rate for year-round occupied housing its much lower (51.9 percent) with a higher rate of renter occupied units (48.1 percent), while Oneida County as a whole leans slightly more towards full time residency with 57 percent being occupied year-round over 39 percent seasonal. But they are well behind the statewide average of 89.2 percent of units being occupied year-round and 10.8 percent being seasonal. See Table 11.

Table 11: Occupancy Status

| | Total Housing Units | Occupied Units | | | Vacant Units | |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| | | Owner-Occupied | Renter-Occupied | Total Units | Total | Seasonal Units |
| T. Minocqua | 4,855 | 73.7% | 26.3% | 2,635 | 2,220 | 2,080 |
| T. Woodruff | 1,527 | 51.9% | 48.1% | 793 | 734 | 661 |
| Oneida Co. | 30,814 | 82.3% | 17.7% | 17,493 | 13,321 | 12,013 |
| Wisconsin | 2,778,572 | 67.8% | 32.2% | 2,479,480 | 299,092 | 172,842 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

3. Structural Characteristics

Most housing units in the Town of Minocqua are of the detached single-family type (79.9 percent), see Table 12. However, the Town does have has wide variety of other housing types. This diversity of residential structural types is supported by the higher level of service available, particularly sewer and water, in certain portions of the Town. Rural towns typically contain single family detached and mobile home type units with little of any other types.

Table 12: Structure Type

| | 1 detached | 1 attached | 2 | 3 or 4 | 5 to 9 | 10 to 19 | 20+ | Mobile Home | Other | Total |
|-------------|------------|------------|------|--------|--------|----------|------|-------------|-------|-------|
| T. Minocqua | 79.9% | 1.7% | 3.6% | 3.4% | 3.1% | 0.8% | 3.6% | 4.0% | 0.0% | 100% |
| T. Woodruff | 79.7% | 1.8% | 1.6% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 4.6% | 3.4% | 8.3% | 0.0% | 100% |
| Oneida Co. | 84.1% | 1.1% | 2.6% | 1.4% | 1.6% | 1.5% | 1.6% | 6.2% | 0.0% | 100% |
| Wisconsin | 66.2% | 4.3% | 5.9% | 3.5% | 4.9% | 3.7% | 8.4% | 3.1% | 0.0% | 100% |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

4. Affordability and Value Characteristics

Homeowners and renters are considered “cost-burdened” when they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs each month. Table 13 shows the median monthly costs for homeowners with a mortgage, homeowners without a mortgage, and renters, as well as the median value for owner-occupied homes. Home values are higher in the Town of Minocqua than in the Town of Woodruff, Oneida County, and State of Wisconsin, but monthly costs and cost burden are slightly lower for homeowners than they are for the state. Despite having lower rents than the state, the Town has a higher cost burden than the Town of Woodruff, Oneida County, and the state. This could indicate a larger gap between housing costs for renters, who are more likely to have lower incomes than homeowners, and the cost of rent. The cost burden rate for both Towns, the County, and the State was similar for homeowners with no mortgage, and both Towns had lower cost burden rates for homeowners than the County or the state.

Table 13: Housing Costs and Values

| | House w/ Mortgage | | House, no Mortgage | | Rent | | Median Home Value |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| | Monthly Cost | % Cost burdened | Monthly Cost | % Cost burdened | Monthly Cost | % Cost burdened | |
| T. Minocqua | \$1,657 | 22.5% | \$511 | 10.1% | \$955 | 55.9% | \$311,100 |
| T. Woodruff | \$1,618 | 12.3% | \$510 | 12.4% | \$838 | 51.4% | \$282,400 |
| Oneida Co. | \$1,409 | 25.1% | \$499 | 10.5% | \$885 | 43.6% | \$238,400 |
| Wisconsin | \$1,701 | 23.1% | \$644 | 12.7% | \$1,142 | 44.9% | \$294,700 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2024

According to the 2025 Oneida County Housing Study, it is difficult to find housing for the seasonal work force with rental terms that are less than a year. It is also difficult to attract workers who, despite owning a home in another part of Wisconsin, may have to pay more and have fewer choices when they relocate to Oneida County. Minocqua has limited land that is served by public water and sewer due to the presence of extensive wetlands and lakes, making it difficult to construct more housing that isn’t large lot, single family development on well and septic. Expanding the variety of housing types will help address cost burden and workforce attraction, and it should be balanced with maintaining the area’s Northwoods feel.

B. Tourist Rooming Houses

Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs), such as Airbnb and VRBO, have surged in popularity over the last few years, especially as remote work allows people to work while traveling. Wisconsin State Statute allows local government to regulate certain aspects of these properties but does not allow local government to prohibit them. These properties are especially common in the Town. These rentals are much more expensive than traditional rental housing since they usually play the same role a hotel or cabin would. There is a concern that short-term rentals make it harder for seasonal or year-round residents to find a place to live. On the other hand, certain kinds of short-term rentals that aren't TRHs might be needed for seasonal workers during peak tourism season.

The Town currently has a 7-day minimum stay requirement for TRHs. TRHs must also be licensed with Oneida County and the Wisconsin Department and Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The Town should monitor state law changes to these properties and the impact they have on the local housing market.

As of Spring 2026, Oneida County Planning and Zoning had 101 active TRH permits in the Town of Minocqua. The actual number of units could be higher, as some sites feature multiple cabins or rental units. Additionally, the County's Planning and Zoning department has only issued permits since 2019; the County Health Department has additional permit data, but it is only available by ZIP code, rather than municipal boundary. For ZIP code 54548, the County Health Department had 148 permits, and the actual number of rentable housing units is higher than this due to some sites having multiple rentals. Though it is difficult to get an exact number, there is clearly a strong presence of TRHs in the Town of Minocqua.

C. Financial Tools

The Town recently created its first Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and recently approved its use for the construction of a 112-unit multifamily housing project. TIF is discussed in detail in Chapter 6: Economic Development since it supports commercial and industrial development as well, but it is a new tool available to the Town to support residential construction. Additionally, the Town's Premier Resort Area Tax (PRAT) is effective July 1, 2026. This is a tax allowed in areas of Wisconsin with strong tourism to help pay for infrastructure. In Minocqua, a 0.5 percent tax is certain businesses and lodging establishments. Both tools follow Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) requirements.

D. Housing Programs

Various organizations offer a variety of programs to assist with the purchase, rehabilitation, or construction of housing. Many of these programs are listed below:

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 Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program
- HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD)
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA)
- Housing Cost Reduction Initiative Program (HCRI)

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and Department of Financial Institutions (DFI)

- Housing- and Mortgage-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

Oneida County Economic Development Corporation leads housing efforts such as the 2025 Oneida County Housing Study and actively works to recruit developers interested in building housing to the area.

Oneida County Housing Authority is a local non-profit organization responsible for assisting in the development and maintenance of public housing facilities. The authority is funded by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), and it maintains public housing facilities in Woodruff.

E. Housing Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. Provide a diversity of housing opportunities available to all ages and income levels throughout the community.

Objectives and Policies:

1. Encourage affordable housing for both families and senior citizens.
2. Allow apartments, condominiums, and other forms of higher density residential development in appropriate locations.
3. Encourage housing specifically for the elderly; particularly congregate housing and other types of housing associated with healthcare.
4. Maintain the quality and condition of existing housing by adopting and enforcing property maintenance codes.
5. Encourage affordable accommodations for seasonal employees.
6. Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
7. Develop a set of best practices to better manage the impacts that Tourist Rooming Houses have on the availability and affordability of housing.
8. Promote & support legislative changes seeking to enable more local control over and/or limiting the number of Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs).

Chapter 4: Utilities and Community Facilities

This chapter, the fourth of nine chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide future development of utilities and community facilities. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [s.66.1001 (2)(d) Wis. Stats.], this element inventories existing public utilities and community facilities and assesses future needs for such services including those beyond the control of the Town located outside the community and/or under another jurisdiction.

A. Inventory and Analysis of Existing Utilities and Community Facilities

1. Water and Wastewater Facilities

Public sewer and water are supplied to the core built-up area of the Town of Minocqua along highways 51 and 70, including the Island. Service is provided through the Lakeland Sanitary District, which also includes parts of Arbor Vitae and Woodruff. Refer to the Community Facilities Map for boundary extent of current service area.

The Lakeland Sanitary District, which operates separately from the Town, operates two high-volume wells (well #3 was abandoned in 2020). It has two storage towers, with capacities of 300,000 gallons and 75,000 gallons, and roughly 17 miles of water pipes. There are also 19 miles of sewers within the District.

In 2022, the District engaged MSA Professional Services to create a Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Upgrade Plan. This Plan had three alternatives for sludge and solids processing: Alkaline Stabilization, Low Temperature Sludge Drying, and new ATAD for providing Class A biosolids. The Plan recommended continuing the ATAD process due to its cost effectiveness. There was also a recommendation for a collection system debris drying bed and retrofitting the existing primary clarifiers to operate as anaerobic selector tanks for biological phosphorus removal (Bio-P). The Sanitary District is eligible for Clean Water Fund Program funding from WDNR to help pay for the upgrades. As of late 2025, the treatment plant was under construction for these upgrades.

For the remainder of the Town water and wastewater is handled on an individual private basis. Water supply is accessed by individual private wells. The drilling, use and abandonment of private water supply wells is regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The disposal of wastewater is handled by private on-site septic systems that discharge wastewater to underground drainage fields and which may include conventional (underground), mound, pressure distribution, at-grade, holding tank, and sand filter systems. These on-site wastewater treatment technologies are regulated by both the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) and Oneida County Planning and Zoning.

2. Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

Although the Oneida County Landfill, located in the Town of Woodboro, no longer has active land filling, the site still handles disposal, recycling, and composting of waste within Oneida County. Waste collected at the site is hauled out of the County by Waste Management Inc. under contract

(subject to change) with the County. There is a small demolition waste area on site. There are no plans to reopen/expand landfilling operations, and it is unlikely that Oneida County would develop a new landfill elsewhere.

Private haulers provide "curbside" pick up of garbage and recycling for residents in the Town of Minocqua. Items can be dropped at the landfill by residents for a tipping fee. There are a number of former town dumpsites within the Town, which are no longer in operation and officially closed. There is also a Hauling & Transfer Station located at 9113 County J in the Town.

3. Power and Telecommunications Facilities

Electrical service is provided by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS) via the transmission and distribution system of the American Transmission Corporation (ATC). Service is virtually available throughout the Town, but the 3-phase power service needed for most commercial or industrial use is limited primarily to the highways 51 and 70 corridors, refer to the Community Facilities Map.

The ATC distribution system that provides electricity to the area is located at the northwestern end of the portion of the transmission system known as the "Rhineland Loop". When the Town's 2010 Comprehensive Plan was written, demand for electricity in the Woodruff-Minocqua area had been increasing at about 4% per year, and the distribution system needed additional transmission support to maintain local reliability. To reinforce the power grid, a new 7-mile, 115-kV power line was constructed in 2012 between the Clear Lake Substation on Hwy 47 near Mid Lake Road to the new Woodmin distribution substation on Hwy 47 near Arnett Road west of Woodruff.

WPS also provides natural gas service throughout the northeast corner of the Town. Gas mains are also shown on the Community Facilities Map. Propane is available for home and business delivery from several vendors.

Telephone service is provided by AT&T, Brightspeed (which recently took over CenturyLink's infrastructure), Frontier, HughesNet, Spectrum, and Viasat to some portions of the Town. These companies also provide internet service. Additionally, Bug Tussel and Starlink provide wireless internet service. There are a number of cellular towers in the Town, and AT&T, Cellcom, and Verizon (including Verizon's Visible series wireless carrier) currently provide Cellular service.

The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Act (BEAD), which started in late 2021, has the goal of expanding internet access to underserved areas with 100 Mbps download speeds and 20 Mbps upload speeds. According to 2023 federal data, there were 5,068 households in Oneida County that qualified for expansion. In 2025, changes to the program, known as BEAD BOB (Benefit of the Bargain) require existing broadband expansion proposals to be re-evaluated prioritize cost savings over fiber installation. This means that wireless providers will likely be favored in rural areas, which saves infrastructure costs, but not necessarily subscription fees. Wireless is also sometimes not as reliable or fast as fiber internet. See the Wisconsin Public Service Commission's BEAD Awardees Map for locations that qualify for funding under BEAD. Awardees will be served by one of the following: SpaceX (Starlink), Hilbert Communications (Bug Tussel Wireless), and Bertram Communications, all

of which are wireless providers. For more information, see the Public Service Commission's BEAD-related web pages.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) of Wisconsin has a series of online maps as of 2026: The Wisconsin Broadband Map, Wisconsin Broadband Almanac, Wisconsin BEAD Awardees Map, Broadband Grant Footprint, and several federal broadband maps. They can be found on PSC's website.

4. Recreational and Educational Facilities

The Town of Minocqua has an extensive recreation system in place and follows the Oneida County Outdoor Recreation plan for this system. See Map 4: Recreation. The Town's existing recreational facilities are as follows:

Torpy Park & Beach – 705 Oneida Street. This 4-acre park is located downtown on Lake Minocqua. The upper-level features two large pavilions, green space and scenic lake overlooks. The lower level includes sand beach, playground, two tennis courts, sand volleyball court, picnic shelters with grills and tables, seasonal concession stand and rest rooms. Parking is available on-site.

Veterans Park – 230 West Front Street. This half-acre park has a small pavilion, benches, bicycle rack and year-round ADA accessible restrooms. A veterans memorial marker is positioned in the center of the green space. This is the location of the Town's annual Memorial Day ceremony, presented by the Minocqua American Legion post.

Bearskin Trailhead Park – 615 Bearskin Way. This park is located downtown behind the U.S. Post Office and is jointly owned by the Town and Wisconsin DNR. It serves as the trailhead for the Bearskin State Trail which offers hiking, bicycling and snowmobiling. The initial trail segment is a historic trestle with scenic overlooks of Lake Minocqua. The park has ADA accessible restrooms and picnic tables.

Public Fishing Pier – 305 East Park Avenue. This is a large, handicap-accessible fishing pier with non-accessible docking for ten boats adjacent to the U.S. Highway 51 bridge on Lake Minocqua. The pier is a segment of the former wooden bridge across Highway 51. The popular pier has eleven public parking spaces, hand railings with slots for wheelchair accessible fishing and over 5,300 square feet of decking including a section that is wheelchair friendly.

Aqua Bowl – 415 West Park Avenue. This is the site of the longest-running water ski show in the nation, the Min-Aqua Bats. Free shows with concessions are presented every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00 P.M. during the summer season. Bleacher seating and porta-potties available during shows.

Dorwin Park – 503 Flambeau Street. This half-acre park is located downtown on the grounds of the Minocqua Museum. Facilities include a picnic shelter, benches, planters, and walkways.

Cedar Park – 560 Cedar Street. This half-acre wooded shoreline park is located east of the Minocqua Center on Lake Minocqua. This park has landscaping, a walkway down the slope to the lake, a picnic table and pier for fishing and docking.

Minocqua Ball Park – 9615 Fieldstone Drive. This park is located on Highway 51 South, just south of downtown. Facilities include a baseball field, playground, sand volleyball court and restrooms. The park also serves as one of the staging areas for the Minocqua 4th of July Parade.

Minocqua Park Complex – 10295 Highway 70 West. This former “Circle M Corral” amusement park property is 27 acres in size and has been redeveloped to include four baseball fields with concession stand, playground, two sand volleyball courts, multi-purpose field and green space, covered pavilion with kitchen and ADA accessible restrooms.

Minocqua Winter Park – 7543 Squirrel Hill Road. This renowned Nordic ski facility features over 105 km of trails, including 72 km of 12- to 30-foot-wide trails groomed for skating and striding and 16 km of narrow trails groomed for striding only. Aside from cross country skiing, available winter activities include 16 km of snowshoe trails, tubing, sledding, skijoring (skiing with dogs), telemark hill, and an ice-skating pond. An overlook area has been developed on the peak of Squirrel Hill offering scenic views of the surrounding area. A disc golf course is planned for the near future. The heated chalet has restrooms, concessions, equipment rental and sales and a waxing room. Parking is available on-site. In 2015, NCWRPC created the Minocqua Winter Park Study to explore more year-round uses for the site to improve its economic sustainability. Included in it are a list of proposed new uses as well as upgrades to the chalet and parking facilities.

Public Access to Water: There are several improved boat landings maintained by the Town of Minocqua. Three landings for Lake Minocqua are located downtown. Other town-owned landings are located on Amber Lake, Bear Lake, Booth Lake, Papke Lake, Squirrel Lake, Swamsauger Lake and Thoroughfare Channel.

Other facilities include:

- LAMBO Mountain Bike “Zip Trail” – 7849 Adventure Lane. The Lakeland Area Mountain Biking Organization (LAMBO) has developed a free use mountain bike trail system on hilly, wooded acreage owned by the Town and the Wisconsin DNR. Over six miles of bike trails plus a separate two-mile trail for hiking and snowshoeing. Trails are groomed specifically for fat tire biking during the winter months.
- Lakeland Ice Arena – 7961 Old Highway 51. The Lakeland Ice Arena is a non-profit skating facility that supports the development of skating among people of all ages and abilities. It offers various programs from youth to adults including hockey leagues, open skating, figure skating and learn to skate programs.
- Schlecht Lake Ski Trail – 7667 Leary Road. This 10km trail system is maintained by Wisconsin DNR and has 3 km lit for night skiing in winter. The trails are available for hiking in summer. The trail's natural grassy knolls wind around three lakes and hardwood forest making it a spectacular sight in the fall. The location just south of downtown makes it very accessible to users.
- Lakeland Area Dog Park – 9863 Plaza Drive. The non-profit dog park organization operates this 1.65-acre fenced dog park that includes separate enclosed areas for large and small dogs. Water is available onsite during summer months.

- Minocqua Gun Club – 7877 Gun Club Road. This facility is located 1.5 miles south of downtown. There is a large clubhouse along with four trap fields, a skeet range, sporting clays, a wobble trap and double birds. Minocqua Gun Club is a not-for-profit public shooting facility.

Major recommendations of the County’s current outdoor recreation plan include finalizing reconstruction and landscaping at Torpy Park, rehabilitating the Thirsty Whale and Schoolhouse Bay boat landings, replacing Minocqua Ball Park playground, Install paved shoulders on STH 70 from Morgan Road to Camp Pinemere Ln, and develop bicycle/pedestrian trails along STH 70 between S Morgan Rd and the Minocqua Park Complex as well as along STH 51 between Manitou Park Dr and Northern Rd. The Town is also currently investigating the feasibility of an event center that can host sporting events.

The Town of Minocqua is part of two different school districts including: MHLT (Minocqua, Hazelhurst, Lake Tomahawk) also known as Minocqua J1 and Lakeland Union High School. MHLT Elementary School and Lakeland Union High School are in Minocqua and have enrollments of about 525 and 726, respectively, as of the 2023-2024 school year. This is a decrease in enrollment from 550 for the elementary school and 890 for the high school in 2010. Trinity Lutheran School is a private school and early childhood center that has about 35 enrolled in Kindergarten through 8th grade as well as 11 early childhood program students.

The Minocqua Public Library serves the Town at 415 Menominee St. The Library is part of the seven-county Wisconsin Valley Library System. In 2025, there were 103,833 physical items that were checked out, 38,749 digital items checked out, and 8,020 active card holders. Over the year, the library held 428 events that were attended by 9,511 people of all ages. Overall, 73,101 people visited the library, with 1,457 study room bookings and 576 event room bookings.

5. Emergency Services

Police protection in the Town of Minocqua is provided by the Minocqua Police Department with seven patrol officers. In addition to its chief the Department also has a lieutenant, water patrol and parking officers, as well as a team of dispatchers and administrative staff.

The Minocqua Fire Department moved to its current location at 9589 W Clawson Dr in 2017, which replaces the former Station 1. Station Number 2 remains on Bo-di-lac Drive and serves the northwest portion of the Town. The department has 22 volunteer firefighters including certified emergency medical technicians (EMT). The Department has mutual aid agreements with surrounding fire departments as well as its own first responder network.

The nearest hospital facilities are the Marshfield Medical Center in Minocqua, which opened in 2020, and Aspirus Health’s Howard Young Medical Center located in Woodruff. These facilities provide 24-hour emergency service and critical care. Marshfield Clinic and Aspirus Health also operate clinics in Minocqua and Woodruff, respectively.

Oneida County contracts with Aspirus to provide a county-wide ambulance service. Oneida County Ambulance Service provides emergency medical response to all unincorporated municipalities

(including Minocqua) within Oneida County along with some outside areas of Vilas, Lincoln, Langlade, and Forest Counties.

6. Other Facilities

The local road system is the most significant public facility maintained by the Town and is covered in the Transportation Element. The Town Hall is part of the multipurpose Minocqua Community Center (415 Menominee St). The Town Hall is available for Town residents and groups to use for meetings or events.

The Town owns 90 acres of undeveloped land in the form of former town dumps / landfills including 40 acres adjacent to Highway 51, another 40 acres on the west side and 10 acres in the Bo-di-lac area. The Town is seeking to find suitable uses for reuse / redevelopment of these sites.

There are three mapped cemetery locations identified within the Town, including. The Minocqua Memorial Cemetery is the only traditional cemetery, and it is located on Blue Lake Road. The Ascension and the St. Matthias Garden Plot locations each have a columbarium only.

B. Assessment of Future Utility & Community Facility Needs

Needs related to economic development and revitalization of the downtown area including associated infrastructure have been the primary focus of the Town. Examples of major recent projects include upgrades to Torpy Park, the new transmission line between the Clear Lake and Woodmin substations, and the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Planning efforts.

The Town contracts for many services from outside providers such as waste disposal and recycling. Often the Town has little control over service providers such as power companies or schools. These providers are ultimately responsible for planning to meet their contractual obligation to the Town or to meet the demands of their customers within the Town. However, the growth and development of the Town has implications for the provision of services and the facilities needed to provide these services. This plan is provided by the Town to identify this growth so that outside providers may be informed of conditions within the Town and plan accordingly.

For services more directly under the control of the Town, like roads, the Town prepares regular capital improvements plans and budgets that set timetables to address its equipment and facility needs. The Towns' timetable for rehabilitation of road facilities is discussed in Chapter 5.

C. Utilities and Public Facilities Programs

Providing public infrastructure (i.e. roads, police and fire protection) is one of the major functions of local government. In addition to these public services, both public and private entities provide electricity and telephone service as well as such specialized services as childcare, healthcare, and solid-waste disposal. Taken together these constitute the utilities and community facilities that represent much of the backbone of modern life. Beyond what these facilities do for Minocqua residents and visitors, they also represent a huge investment of public and private resources.

The efficient utilization of these resources is one of the basic principles of comprehensive planning. Already in-place infrastructure is a public asset that must be safeguarded for the future, both to

conserve and protect environmental values and to maximize the benefits of economic growth. Development that bypasses or ignores existing infrastructure resources is wasteful of the public investment that they represent. Development patterns that require the extension of utilities and the expansion of public facilities while existing facilities go unused at other locations is not the best use of scarce public resources. Both the state and federal governments offer programs that assist communities with the development of critical infrastructure and facilities. These programs are listed in more detail in the Economic Development Element of this plan.

D. Utility and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. To maintain orderly, planned growth, which promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of Town residents and makes efficient use of public facilities and services, and tax dollars.

Objectives and Policies:

1. The Town will maintain a long-range development plan that will serve as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions. New development will be permitted based on consideration of the plan, as well as other Town, County, and State plans and ordinances.
2. New development should be responsible for paying the cost of any utility extensions or new services required for that development without unfairly burdening the existing taxpayers of the Town.
3. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on groundwater quality and quantity.
4. Consider cost effectiveness of future development proposals in covering required services, utilities and community facilities.
5. Share services across municipal boundaries whenever possible.
6. Implement the recommendations of the County's Outdoor Recreation Plan.

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Chapter 5: Transportation

This chapter is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(c) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for people with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation. This element compares the Town's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans. The element also identifies highways within the Town by function and incorporates state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban area and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans and rail plans that apply in the Town of Minocqua.

A. Review of State & Regional Transportation Plans & Programs

This section contains a review of state and regional transportation plans and how they affect the Town of Minocqua.

1. Connect 2050: Let's Connect Wisconsin 2022

Connect 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 states that other existing state-level plans created prior to Connect 2025 remain in effect until another plan supersedes them. These plans include:

- Bicycle Transportation plan 2020. This 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 like old rail lines is an important strategy to make these connections.
- Corridors 2030. USH 51 is identified as a major freight and tourism corridor along with listing a series of planned improvements for the corridor between 2008 and 2030.
- Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020. This plan supports WisDOT's role in implementing pedestrian infrastructure along state trunk highways (STHs).
- Rail Plan 2050. Statewide objectives in this plan include enhancing rail safety and security, supporting freight rail, ensuring the long-term viability of rail corridors, ensuring the long-term viability of branch and short line networks, encouraging intercity passenger rail network investment, supporting commuter rail, and planning for intercity passenger and commuter rail.
- State Airport System Plan 2030. This plan provides details about both the Lakeland Airport and nearby Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport (RHI).
- State Freight Plan. Statewide goals for this plan include pursuing long-term funding, focusing on partnerships, pursuing continuous improvement, expanding data-driven decision-making processes, increasing options, connections, and mobility for people and goods, maximizing technological benefits, maximizing transportation safety, maximizing transportation system

reliability and reliability, and balancing transportation needs with those of the natural environment, socioeconomic, historic, and cultural resources.

- Transportation Asset Management Plan 2023-2032. This plan's goal is to keep Wisconsin's portion of the National Highway System (NHS) safe, efficient, resilient, and in a state of good repair at minimal cost.

Additionally, the Active Transportation Plan 2050 is currently being drafted, which will supersede the Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020 and Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 while including other modes of active transportation.

2. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) 2022-2026

This current federal transportation program authorizes \$1.2 trillion for transportation and infrastructure spending, including up to \$108 billion to support federal public transportation programs. It also reauthorizes surface transportation programs for Fiscal Year 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.

3. State Trails Network Plan

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created this plan in 2003 to identify a statewide network of trails and to provide guidance to the DNR for land acquisition and development. Many existing trails are developed and operated in partnership with counties. By agreement the DNR acquires the corridor and the county government(s) develop, operate, and maintain the trail.

One existing trail relates to Minocqua. The Bearskin State Trail, named for the Bearskin Creek, is an 18-mile former railroad corridor surfaced with compacted granite for walking and bicycling in summer, and snowmobiling in winter. This trail passes in a north-south orientation through the Town, and connects Minocqua with Tomahawk, via the Hiawatha Trail, to the south. This Plan also envisions Segment 15 as a potential connection between Woodruff, Minocqua, Rhinelander, and Ashland.

4. North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan 2018

This plan assesses bicycling and walking conditions, identifies potential trails and route user groups, and describes policies and programs to assist local governments with bicycling and walking to promote connectivity throughout North Central Wisconsin. Goals include mobility, functionality, safety, and connectivity.

5. Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan 2002

In 2002, this plan was created to guide the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Oneida County. The vision of this plan is to increase the mobility of people within the County by making walking and bicycling viable and attractive transportation choices. There are three existing trails in Minocqua. The Bearskin State Trail starts in downtown Minocqua and runs south along an old railroad

bed. The Rustic Road loop is an on-road set of routes that still needs an off-road connector on STH 70. Off Mercer Lake Rd is an on-road route that uses Scotchman Lake Road to the Price County Line.

6. NCWRPC Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) 2025

The 2025 Regional Comprehensive Plan is the most recent update of a plan adopted by NCWRPC in 1981. The RCP looks at transportation in all ten counties that make up the North Central Region, including Oneida. 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, and 3. Enhance the Regional economy by supporting airports, freight rail, and intermodal freight opportunities.

B. Transportation Mode Inventory

1. Highways and Trucking

a. Functional and Jurisdictional Identification

Public highways are generally classified by two different systems, the functional and the jurisdictional. The jurisdictional class refers to which entity owns the facility and holds responsibility for its operations and maintenance. The functional class refers to the role the particular segment plays in moving traffic within the overall system. Each is described in more detail below.

In addition to these main classifications, a road or segment of road may hold a variety of other designations including county forest road, rustic road, emergency route, truck route, etc. Truck routes are discussed at the end of this section, under Trucking. There are two rustic roads within the Town of Minocqua. Mercer Lake Rd, & Blue Lake Rd, together, are Rustic Road #58, and Sutton Rd is Rustic Road #59.

The highway system within the Town of is a network of federal, state and county highways together with various local roads and streets, see Map 3: Utilities and Community Facilities. The jurisdictional breakdown is shown in Table 14. Included are functional classifications as well, which are explained in detail later in this Chapter.

Table 14: Functional and Jurisdictional Classification

| Jurisdiction | Functional Classification | | | Totals |
|---------------|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Arterials | Collector | Local | |
| State* | 15.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 15.8 |
| County | 0.0 | 0.6 | 0.0 | 0.6 |
| Town | 0.0 | 52.2 | 141.1 | 193.3 |
| Totals | 15.8 | 52.8 | 141.1 | 209.7 |

Source: WisDOT

The Town of Minocqua is served by U.S. Highway (USH) 51, and State Highway (STH) 70. USH 51 in Minocqua from the north split of the one-way pairs downtown to CTH J was reconstructed with new curb, gutter, storm sewer, on-street bike accommodations and sidewalks in the early 2010s.

Corridors 2030 considers USH 51 a priority corridor due to its traffic volumes. According to WisDOT, which records average daily traffic volumes (number of vehicles) for major state roadways, traffic on USH 51 within the Town was 14,500 vehicles per day just south of the island in 2025.

STH 70 is a significant east-west corridor cutting across northern Wisconsin. The significance of this corridor is reflected in the increasing level of traffic. According to WisDOT, which records average daily traffic volumes (number of vehicles) for major state roadways, traffic on STH 70 just west of USH 51 within the Town has increased about 17.1% between 1998 and 2015 (from 8,880 to 10,400 vehicles per day).

Corridors 2030 was designed to enhance economic development and meet Wisconsin's mobility needs well into the future. The 3,750-mile highway network was comprised of two elements: a multilane backbone system connecting major population and economic regions of the state and a two- and four-lane connector system that links significant economic and tourism centers to the backbone system.

The backbone system is a 1,450-mile network of multilane divided highways interconnecting the major population and economic centers in the state and tying them to the national transportation network. The connector system is 2,300 miles of high-quality highways that link other significant economic and tourism centers to the backbone network. All communities over 5,000 in population are to be connected to the backbone system via the connector network. Within Oneida County, USHs 8, 45 and 51 (north of USH 8) are designated as connectors in the Corridors 2030 system.

The Town is served by CTH J which connects the county highway system to USH 51 and is the Town's only direct link to the county network. County roads typically serve rural land uses and distribute local traffic to the regional arterial system. Town roads are an important component of the county-wide transportation system. Town roads serve local development, as well as the forestry areas. WisDOT does some traffic counts on local roads classified as collectors. A 2022 count on Pine Lake Road between Manhardt Road and Bootjack Lake Road showed 160 vehicles per day, which has been fairly consistent back to 2000.

The Towns of Minocqua and Lynne have begun the process of petitioning Oneida County to convert an approximately 30-mile stretch of road known as Squirrel Lake Road, Pine Lake Road, and Willow Road as a county highway. This north-south route connects USH 8 near Tripoli with STH 70 and it needs substantial repair. Increased traffic volumes and heavy truck use mean that it may be better suited as a county highway to alleviate the financial burden of such a long and heavily traveled route being maintained by just two Towns. The Towns are also willing to collaborate with Oneida County by exploring whether the Towns can continue to plow these roads or assist in another way.

A functional classification system groups streets and highways into classes according to the character of service they provide. This character of service ranges from providing a high degree of travel mobility to providing land access functions. The current classification system used in Wisconsin consists of five classifications divided into urban and rural categories. Functional classifications are used to determine eligibility for federal aid. For purposes of functional classification, federal regulations define urban as places of 5,000 or more population, so the rural

classifications apply throughout the Town. Table 15 summarizes the rural functional classification system.

Table 15: Rural Highway Functional Classification System

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Principal Arterials | Serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve to connect all urban areas greater than 5,000 population. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into 1) Interstate highways and 2) other principal arterials. |
| Minor Arterials | In conjunction with the principal arterials, they connect cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movements. |
| Major Collectors | Provide service to moderate sized communities and other interarea traffic generators and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes. |
| Minor Collectors | Collect traffic from local roads and provide links to all remaining smaller communities, locally important traffic generators, and higher function roads. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road. |
| Local Roads | Provide access to adjacent land and provide for travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads. |

Source: WisDOT

Traffic counts are measured by WisDOT using the average annual daily traffic (AADT). Looking at AADT over time can provide some insight into roads that may need upgrading or increased maintenance in the future. Table 16 shows AADT in 2009 and 2022, with many roads seeing significant traffic increases and only four locations showing a decrease. Map 5: Transportation depicts additional traffic counts.

Table 16: Traffic Counts

| Traffic Count Location | 2009 | 2022 | % Change |
|--|--------|--------|----------|
| Pine Lake Rd N Of Price Co. Rd | 170 | 160 | -5.9% |
| Bo-Di-Lac Dr Between Booth Lake & Buckskin Lake | 230 | 380 | 65.2% |
| Squirrel Lake Road South of STH 70 | 820 | 720 | -12.2% |
| Mercer Lake Rd South of STH 70 | 450 | 340 | -24.4% |
| STH 70 Between Mercer Lake Road & Duvall Ct | 3,200 | 7,200 | 125.0% |
| Blue Lake Rd West of USH 45 | 1,300 | 1,400 | 7.7% |
| Country Club Rd Btwn Thoroughfare Rd & Brikland Ct | 640 | 680 | 6.3% |
| Thoroughfare Rd East of USH 51 | 2,000 | 2,300 | 15.0% |
| USH 51 Between Country Club Rd & Park St | 13,500 | 14,700 | 8.9% |
| Front St Between Flambeau St & USH 51 SB | 2,100 | 1,800 | -14.3% |
| USH 51 Btwn STH 70 West & CTH J | 18,800 | 25,800 | 37.2% |
| USH 51 South of STH 70 | 17,800 | 24,200 | 36.0% |
| STH 70 West of USH 51 | 13,700 | 17,000 | 24.1% |

Source: WisDOT

b. Trucking

USH 51 is the principal truck route within the Town as designated by WisDOT. This corresponds with its role as Corridors 2030 connecting route, linking to the backbone highway system, and facilitating the movement of goods between Oneida County and the rest of the state/nation. State highways 47 (east of USH 51) and 70 are also state designated long truck routes within the Town, while STH 47 is a restricted 65-foot truck route west of USH 51.

Local truck routes often branch out from these major corridors to link local industry with the main truck routes as well as for the distribution of commodities within the local area. Mapping these local routes is beyond the scope of this study, and local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

c. Surface Conditions

The Town of Minocqua uses the Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The PASER system is the rating system used by most Wisconsin communities. The PASER system rates road surfaces of a scale of 1 to 10.

- “1” and “2” = very poor condition
- “3” = poor condition
- “4” and “5” = fair condition
- “6” and “7” = good condition
- “8” = very good condition
- “9” and “10” = excellent condition

Table 17 shows a summary of Town road pavement conditions in Minocqua. Note that these totals only include local roads, so County and State Highways are excluded. Town 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. Only 35.9 percent of roads in the Town are rated “good” or better, with 10.4 percent rated “poor” or “very poor.” Combined with 53.6 percent of roads in the “fair” category, there will likely need to be several significant road projects in the coming years. Table 17, below, summarizes PASER data along with surface type.

Table 17: Road Surface Conditions

| Condition | Miles | Percent |
|------------|-------|---------|
| Very Poor | 4.0 | 2.1% |
| Poor | 16.1 | 8.3% |
| Fair | 103.5 | 53.6% |
| Good | 54.5 | 28.2% |
| Very Good | 4.9 | 2.5% |
| Excellent | 10.1 | 5.2% |
| No Rating | 0.1 | 0.0% |
| Total | 193.3 | 100.0% |
| Type | Miles | Percent |
| Unimproved | 3.4 | 1.8% |
| Gravel | 38.7 | 20.0% |
| Sealcoat | 4.1 | 2.1% |
| Asphalt | 147.1 | 76.1% |
| Total | 193.3 | 100.0% |

Source: WisDOT

2. Transit and Transportation Facilities for the Disabled

The Oneida County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) coordinates driver-escort service to residents of Oneida County, which includes Minocqua. Escort drivers provide transportation to elderly and disabled residents of Oneida County that qualify as a priority trip purpose. Travel includes both in and out of county travel, and volunteers have driven any day or time necessary. The County also operates specialized transit vans in the Minocqua-Woodruff area to provide transportation to meal sites, medical appointments and shopping. Lakeland Cab of Minocqua provides taxi service in the area.

Northwoods Transit Connections provides fixed route transit between several communities in Oneida and Vilas Counties, connecting Minocqua with Woodruff, Sugar Camp, Three Lakes, Eagle River, Rhinelander, Conover, Phelps, Land O' Lakes, Hazelhurst, and St. Germain. Users pay a small fee and call ahead to reserve a ride.

3. Bicycles, Mobility Devices, Micromobility, and Walking

The Bearskin State Trail is an existing state trail that starts in downtown Minocqua and runs south along an old railroad bed. In 2002, Oneida County developed the Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan with assistance from the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. This plan established a number of scenic, on-road bike routes throughout the County.

More recently, the County's Outdoor Recreation Plan recommends constructing a biking/walking trail in the south side right-of-way of Highway 70 from Mercer Lake Road to South Morgan Road, which, along with Old Hwy 70, would have designated bike lanes. Originally called the Great Minocqua Bike Loop when the Town had its own Outdoor Recreation Plan, this would allow biking from downtown along the Bearskin Trail to Blue Lake Road to Mercer Lake Road to the trail on Highway 70 back to

downtown without crossing a highway. Construction would be made compatible with snowmobiles for year-round use.

On rural town roads where traffic volumes are less than 1,000 vehicles per day, generally, no special improvements are necessary to accommodate bicycles. This "shared-use" concept applies to most roads within the Town. Bicyclists and pedestrians commonly utilize these town roads.

Electric personal assistive mobility devices such as wheelchairs, scooters, E-bikes, and Segways can utilize many of the same trails and roadways as cyclists and pedestrians. E-bike speed limits are regulated by state law. E-bikes and scooters have raised concerns due to their combination of higher speeds and quiet operation, especially on mixed trails where they must pass pedestrians and those with strollers, or on the island where there are narrower sidewalks that are heavily used. While there are some signs indicating speed limits and other restrictions, there is an opportunity to further educate and enforce these provisions since these devices have grown in popularity.

4. Railroads

There is no rail service in proximity to the Minocqua area. Shipments needing rail service would have to be trucked to nearby cities with rail access such as Tomahawk, Rhinelander, or Wausau.

5. Air Transportation

a. Lakeland Airport

The Lakeland Airport/Noble F. Lee Memorial Field is cooperatively owned and operated by the Towns of Woodruff, Minocqua, Arbor Vitae, and Lac du Flambeau. The facility is located within the Town of Arbor Vitae. This transport/corporate airport is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service, and small airplanes (piston or turboprop) used in commuter air service.

Total aviation operations (take-offs and landings) at Lakeland Airport were 27,190 in 2025 according to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The airport is served by Lakeland Aviation of Minocqua, Inc., a full-service fixed base operator and includes single hangars, multi-unit T-hangars, and a terminal building.

b. Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport

The Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport in Rhinelander is the closest airport to Minocqua with regular scheduled passenger service. This airport is an air carrier / air cargo airport, which is designed to accommodate virtually all aircraft. According to the FAA, there were about 24,958 total aviation operations (take-offs and landings) in 2025, down from 42,340 in 2000.

6. Water Transportation

There are no harbors or ports within the Town, so there is no significant water transport of passengers or freight. Some of the streams within the Town could support a canoe or small boat potentially but such use would be primarily recreational in nature. No water trails have been designated at this time.

7. Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs)

OHVs primarily consist of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and Utility Task Vehicles (UTVs), and they have grown in popularity over the past decade. Most town roads are currently open to OHVs, except on the island, and on STH 70 between USH 51 and Blumenstein Road. The Lakeland ATV/UTV Club promotes the development of ATV/UTV trails and routes in Minocqua while providing education and volunteering opportunities.

8. Snowmobiles

Snowmobiles are common in winter months, and routes are depicted on Maps 5 and 5b. The Cross Country Cruisers and Forest Riders snowmobile clubs coordinate trail maintenance and operations of these trails.

C. Transportation Programs

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is the primary provider of programs to assist local transportation systems. Programs for municipalities like Minocqua include road and bridge assistance programs, transit assistance programs, and other forms of aid that assist with improvements to highways, airports, harbors, bike, rail, and pedestrian facilities. See WisDOT's website for an up-to-date list of these programs.

D. Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. Support and maintain a safe and efficient Town road system.

Objectives and Policies:

1. Land uses that generate heavy traffic will be avoided on local roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
2. Consider establishing impact fees for new developments that necessitate upgrading of Town roads.
3. Roadway access will be better spaced along the existing Town road network to address blind spots, increase safety and preserve capacity through the Town driveway permit ordinance.
4. Future road locations, extensions or connections will be considered when reviewing development plans and proposals.
5. Update street signage to improve visibility for all Town residents and address issues of signing private easement roads.
6. Town roads serving residential areas must accommodate access requirements for emergency services (fire, EMS, ambulance, etc.) as well as school bus and snowplow.
7. Work with the Oneida County Trails Council to develop bike and pedestrian routes and trails within the Town that connect to a system linking adjoining communities. (Example: connection to Bearskin State Trail).
8. The Town should work with WisDOT to protect access to businesses along and in the vicinity of USH 51 and STHs 47 and 70.
9. Work with WisDOT, Oneida County, and surrounding communities in transportation planning efforts to ensure consistency.
10. To ensure the most economical construction costs, the Town should continue its practice of re-paving large amounts of roads at a time once every 10 years.
11. Reconsider rustic road designations if increasing traffic volumes result in safety, maintenance, or other issues.
12. Consider utilizing the Town's new Premier Resort Area Tax (PRAT) for road construction costs.

Chapter 6: Economic Development

This chapter of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in the Town. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [§66.1001 (2)(f) Wis. Stats.], this chapter analyzes the labor force and economic base, ensures designation of adequate sites for business and industry, evaluates potentially contaminated sites for reuse, and identifies applicable county, regional and state economic development programs.

A.) Labor Force and Economic Base Analysis

According to the 2024 ACS, the population aged 16 years and older was 4,450, and 2,213 of these people were in the labor force for a participation rate of 49.7. The unemployment rate is a low 1.8 percent, and there was an increase of 4.1 percent in the number of employed Town residents between 2010 and 2024. But since the labor force participation rate fell by 5.1 percent and the unemployment rate fell by 2.2 percent during this time, finding workers to fill jobs remains a challenge. This decrease in participation is partially due to an increase in the Town’s median age, which translate to an increase in retirements. Those who are not looking for work are not considered to be participating in the labor force, such as retirees or stay-at-home parents. See Table 18.

Oneida County and Wisconsin saw similar trends- a decreasing unemployment rate and a decreasing labor force participation rate between 2010 and 2024, despite a slight increase in the total number of people in the workforce.

Table 18: Labor Force Characteristics

| Category | T. Minocqua | | | Oneida Co. | | | Wisconsin | | |
|--------------------|-------------|-------|----------|------------|--------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| | 2010 | 2024 | % Change | 2010 | 2024 | % Change | 2010 | 2024 | % Change |
| Population 16+ | 3,967 | 4,450 | 12.2% | 30,529 | 32,608 | 6.8% | 4,458,387 | 4,805,425 | 7.8% |
| Labor Force | 2,174 | 2,213 | 1.8% | 18,886 | 17,812 | -5.7% | 3,078,465 | 3,136,600 | 1.9% |
| Employed | 2,088 | 2,174 | 4.1% | 17,802 | 17,462 | -1.9% | 2,869,310 | 3,031,042 | 5.6% |
| Unemployment Rate | 4.0% | 1.8% | -2.2% | 5.5% | 2.0% | -3.5% | 6.7% | 3.2% | -3.5% |
| Participation Rate | 54.8% | 49.7% | -5.1% | 61.9% | 54.6% | -7.3% | 69.0% | 65.3% | -3.7% |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 % 2024

The primary occupation of Minocqua residents in the labor force in both 2010 and 2024 was Management, professional, & related. This field has also grown since 2010, along with sales and office occupations as well as production, transportation, and material moving occupations. Service occupations and natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations decreased during this time. See Table 19.

Table 19: Occupation of Employed Workers

| | T. Minocqua | | Oneida Co. | |
|--|-------------|------|------------|-------|
| | 2010 | 2024 | 2010 | 2024 |
| Management, business, science, and arts occupations | 775 | 906 | 5,220 | 6,258 |
| Service occupations | 465 | 275 | 3,184 | 2,616 |
| Sales and office occupations | 431 | 620 | 4,687 | 3,745 |
| Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations | 318 | 164 | 2,299 | 1,881 |
| Production, transportation, and material moving occupations | 99 | 209 | 2,412 | 2,962 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

The leading industry sector in the Town was educational, health care, and social assistance services for both 2010 and 2024, but the number of residents employed in this industry decreased by about one-third during that time. This is also the leading sector countywide, and though the sector also decreased countywide, it did not decrease nearly as much as it did for the Town. See Table 20.

Table 20: Industry Sectors of Employed Workers

| | T. Minocqua | | Oneida Co. | |
|--|-------------|------|------------|-------|
| | 2010 | 2024 | 2010 | 2024 |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining | 66 | 2 | 383 | 216 |
| Construction | 271 | 179 | 1,843 | 1,303 |
| Manufacturing | 110 | 61 | 2,028 | 2,195 |
| Wholesale trade | 9 | 45 | 428 | 490 |
| Retail trade | 194 | 349 | 2,613 | 2,546 |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities | 54 | 148 | 780 | 708 |
| Information | 54 | 49 | 435 | 290 |
| Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing | 93 | 122 | 802 | 1,071 |
| Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services | 137 | 109 | 1,228 | 1,506 |
| Educational services, and health care and social assistance | 630 | 419 | 4,080 | 3,619 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services | 379 | 339 | 1,851 | 1,599 |
| Other services, except public administration | 41 | 135 | 679 | 1,069 |
| Public administration | 50 | 217 | 652 | 850 |

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2024

These figures are all based on the number of workers residing in the Town and what they do for employment, not where their job is located. Information regarding the number of jobs available in the Town of Minocqua itself is not readily available.

Commuting patterns provide one way to estimate the number of jobs within a community. The 2023 commuting data from U.S. Census-on-the-Map shows a total of 2,474 workers traveling to the Town of Minocqua for work, while another 667 workers both live and work in the Town. An estimated 1,467 workers live in Minocqua but commute outside of the Town to a job somewhere else. Workers who commute into Minocqua come from places such as Rhinelander (104), Woodruff (79), and Lac du Flambeau (46). In contrast, 104 residents of the Town travel to Lac du Flambeau for work while 92 go to Rhinelander and 72 go to Woodruff.

According to the Greater Minocqua Area Visitors Bureau, the Town's population "nearly quadruples" during summer months, meaning that the seasonal population approaches 20,000 during peak tourism season. Since these are visitors who do not commute to a job, they are not included in commute statistics. But this seasonal population has a tremendous economic impact on the Town.

B.) Assessment of Local Conditions

The Town has a number of strengths that may be helpful in attracting or retaining business. These include an active, high-visibility business area with many developable sites available (51 S. corridor), recreational amenities, natural "Northwoods" environment, large number of lakes for waterfront living and a wide range of recreational activities, quality health care facilities, schools, low levels of crime and pollution.

Some weaknesses in attracting or retaining business and industry include a lack of highspeed / wireless internet capacity, gaps in cellular coverage, power grid fluctuations, limited sewer and water infrastructure, high speed limits on Highway 51 S. corridor, limited workforce and job training / educational opportunities. There are a number of potential locations for commercial sites within the Town. Map 7 (see Chapter 7, Land Use) identifies areas planned for potential commercial or industrial use in the Town of Minocqua.

The Town's Ad-Hoc Committee on Housing and Labor meets as needed to address issues related to addressing the shortage of workers and housing. Examples include the creation of the Town's first Tax Incremental District (TID) which led to the development of 112 units of workforce multifamily housing.

Reuse of environmentally contaminated sites, or brownfields, is an important emphasis in Wisconsin. The Town supports the reuse of such sites provided that the Town is secure of liability issues. Sites listed in the WDNR Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) database for the Town of Minocqua are mentioned in Chapter 2, Natural Resources. The Town is also interested in the reuse of three former Town dump / land fill sites for economic development or other community benefit.

C.) Economic Development Programs

Various organizations at the County, Regional and State level offer a variety of programs to assist with the economic development. Many of these programs are listed below:

Local:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The Town of Minocqua has one TIF district which facilitates new residential, commercial, and industrial development.

Minocqua Area Visitors Bureau

This organization, formerly known as Let's Minocqua, offers information on local business, tourism, and industry by promoting events and programs for the business community. The organization collects the Town's 5.5 percent room tax. Currently, 75 percent of this tax goes towards tourism promotion through the Visitors Bureau, and the remaining 25 percent goes to the Town budget.

County:

Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC)

Founded in 1989, the Oneida County EDC was created as a partnership between business and industry with the responsibility of growing new and existing businesses Countywide. Contact OCEDC for a current list of revolving loans and other programs related to Economic Development.

Regional:

Central Wisconsin SCORE

Central Wisconsin SCORE consists of a team of experienced entrepreneurs who volunteer their experience and knowledge to help small business professionals start, develop, and grow businesses. SCORE offers free business advice, business training, and numerous templates and tools. SCORE also offers the opportunity to be connected with mentors and provides business education tools such as events, online courses, recorded webinars, and a startup roadmap.

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.

Grow North

Grow North 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 Forest, Florence, Langlade, Lincoln, Marinette, Oconto, Oneida, and Vilas Counties.

The GRID (Guiding Rural Innovation and Development)

The GRID acts as a one-stop connection to a wide-ranging list of business resources for entrepreneurs and small businesses in Northern Wisconsin.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The county is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 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.

Manufacturing Outreach Center (MOC)

UW-Stout's Manufacturing Outreach Center provides operations assessments, technology training, and on-site assistance to help firms in Northern Wisconsin modernize and streamline manufacturing processes.

State:

Impact Seven Business Lending Loans

This program provides flexible, affordable loans to a wide variety of business types, specializing in commercial and mixed-use real estate and affordable housing. From large catalytic development projects to Main Street businesses, Impact Seven invests in the people and places that build community.

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 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

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.

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.

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-Stevens Point 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 to 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.

The 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.

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.

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. The program also offers technical assistance and information to help agricultural and other cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their member services.

D.) Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. Promote the stabilization and expansion of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities.

Objectives and Policies:

1. Work to revitalize the downtown area through initiatives to enhance the lakefront, pedestrian safety and comfort, business climate, etc. in order to make it a more attractive, tourist friendly destination. Encourage upkeep and improvements to exteriors of commercial buildings.
2. Identify and promote new areas for the development of commerce within the Town.
3. Encourage eco-friendly, non-polluting light manufacturing and high technology businesses.
4. Develop business park and encourage high-tech / green (eco-friendly / low pollution) themes.
5. Coordinate efforts to promote job growth with private interests, neighboring governments, & local economic development organizations.
6. Develop options for providing water and sewer infrastructure necessary to support new commercial and industrial development.
7. Promote telecommunications infrastructure and other technology development and expansion. In particular, bring high-speed internet access to a majority of the Town.
8. The architecture and character of new commercial and industrial development should be consistent with materials and architectural traditions of the "Northwoods". The use of wood, native stone, brick and other natural materials is encouraged.
9. Industrial and commercial development should enhance environmental resources or adjoining property values.
10. Encourage economic development through more appropriate speed zones on Hwy 51 between the Island and the Town of Hazelhurst and through use of traffic control devices where appropriate.
11. Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
12. Encourage & promote use of local suppliers and contractors.

Chapter 7: Land Use

This is the seventh of nine chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(h) Wis. Stats.] for a "compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property". This chapter reviews existing land uses, trends, programs, and future land use.

A. Existing Land Use Inventory

Current land use activity (See Map 6: Existing Land Use) in the Town is characterized by large blocks of forest land with residential development mainly along the lakeshores. More intensive use can be found around the Minocqua chain of lakes, particularly the Highway 51 and island "downtown" commercial core. The Town is home to a wide range of land uses from small, "mom and pop" tourist shops to super Walmart. Much of the commercial development is tourist oriented including many hotels and restaurants. There are large sections of woodlands with limited access, much of which is industrial forest. Such large contiguous woodland blocks are necessary to maintain economically viable forests.

Table 21 presents the current breakdown of land-use types within the Town. The majority of the Town is woodlands at about 85,730 acres or almost 80%. Water covers about 11% of the Town. The next most significant land use type is residential at about 6% with 6,670 acres. The other land uses combined use only about 3.4% of the total land area.

Table 21: Existing Land Use 2024

| Land Use | Acres | Percent of Total |
|--------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Agriculture | 50 | 0.0% |
| Commercial | 959 | 0.9% |
| Governmental | 219 | 0.2% |
| Industrial | 59 | 0.1% |
| Mobile Home Park | 36 | 0.0% |
| Open Lands | 593 | 0.6% |
| Outdoor Recreation | 591 | 0.5% |
| Quarry | 135 | 0.1% |
| Residential | 6,670 | 6.2% |
| Transportation | 1,103 | 1.0% |
| Utility | 7 | 0.0% |
| Water | 11,410 | 10.6% |
| Woodlands | 85,730 | 79.7% |
| Total | 107,561 | 100.0% |

Source: NCWRPC 2024

B. Land Use Trends

1. Land Supply

As shown by the existing land use inventory, the majority of the Town is "undeveloped" woodlands, so the supply of land "available" for development appears to be adequate. Much of this undeveloped area is large block industrial forest, which is most productive if roads are not cut into it and subdivided. Nevertheless, even under a rapid growth scenario, the supply of land in the Town of Minocqua is more than sufficient to accommodate projected demand over the next 20 years for all use categories. But areas served by public water and sewer utilities, along with areas near water or other amenities, will likely be in highest demand for development despite having the most limited availability.

2. Land Demand

Based on the population projections discussed in Chapter 1, Table 22 summarizes the projected land demand based on the current acres of each land use per person:

Wisconsin DOA Projections indicate that just over 121 acres are needed for development by 2030, but a projected decrease in population after 2030 means declining demand for land.

NCWRPC Projections indicate that, with continued population growth through 2050, around 300 acres of developable land are needed per decade between 2020 and 2050, for a total demand of 920 acres.

Table 22: Land Use Demand in Acres

| Projection | Category | 2020-2030 | 2030-2040 | 2040-2050 |
|---------------|--|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Wisconsin DOA | Projected new residents | 37 | -145 | -241 |
| | Year-round Residential (1.32 acres/person) | 49 | -191 | -318 |
| | Seasonal Residential (1.32 acres/person) | 49 | -191 | -318 |
| | Commercial (0.19 acres/person) | 7 | -28 | -46 |
| | Industrial (0.01 acres/person) | 0 | -1 | -2 |
| | Total | | 105 | -412 |
| NCWRPC | Projected new residents | 106 | 108 | 110 |
| | Year-round Residential (1.32 acres/person) | 140 | 142 | 145 |
| | Seasonal Residential (1.32 acres/person) | 140 | 142 | 145 |
| | Commercial (0.19 acres/person) | 20 | 21 | 21 |
| | Industrial (0.01 acres/person) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | | 300 | 307 |

Source: Wisconsin DOA & NCWRPC

Though the DOA's population projections are considered the official state projections, the Town's large seasonal population and increase in outdoor recreation and tourism means that land demand will likely exceed these projections. Additionally, retirees who have visited Minocqua as tourists may continue to move to the Town as their retirement destination, increasing the year-round population. Therefore, the NCWRPC projections predict an alternative scenario that could result from these factors.

Overall, the Town has an abundant supply of undeveloped land and is expected to be able to meet this demand, but the most desirable locations have the most limited land. For example, the 2025 Oneida County Housing Study found a shortage of housing on or near the island in Minocqua, because older homes that could be considered starter homes are sometimes demolished for higher end housing. This makes it challenging for the seasonal workforce to find housing near work since local incomes are often lower than the incomes of those who visit the Town seasonally, leading to increased competition for housing.

Additionally, shrinking household sizes means that demand for housing can continue even if there is not a population increase, since more housing units are needed to house the same number of people when household sizes decrease. Finally, only a portion of the Town is served by public water and sewer, limiting density beyond this area. For example, it is difficult to construct a multifamily residential building on well and septic. Wetlands, floodplains, and surface water are also abundant in Minocqua's most desirable areas, which act as barriers to new development.

a. Residential

The overall residential demand for land in the Town of Minocqua ranges from a DOA projected increase of 37 year-round residents between 2020 and 2030 and an NCWRPC projected increase of 324 residents between 2020 and 2050. Table 22 shows projected residential land demand based on household projections for the Town and the current 1.32-acre average acres of residential land per capita, resulting in a need for 49 acres of residential land between 2020 and 2030 based on DOA projections, and around 140 acres of land for each decade between 2020 and 2050 based on NCWRPC projections for a total demand of 427 acres by 2050. Additional acreage is likely needed for the growing seasonal population as well as the variety of lodging options in residential settings has increased, known as Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs).

Seasonal housing comprises nearly half of the total units within the Town. Although some seasonal homes are being converted to full-time permanent residences, it is assumed for planning purposes that there will be roughly one seasonal housing unit for every year-round housing unit. The result is a demand of one acre of seasonal residential housing for every acre of year-round housing projected. This means that there is a combined demand of 98 acres between 2020 and 2030 under DOA projections, and a combined demand of 854 acres between 2020 and 2050 under NCWRPC projections. With smaller household sizes, however, it is possible that the residential acreage per person decrease over time, decreasing the acreage of land needed for housing. This is because older households may choose to downsize into smaller, lower-maintenance housing units and younger households may not need as much space as larger families in the past did. As multifamily housing or smaller housing options are built, they should be designed to complement the Town's Northwoods character while minimizing impacts to surrounding properties.

Changing demographics could drive demand for creative solutions to rehabilitate or repurpose existing housing while retrofitting them with features that allow older adults and those with disabilities to live independently within them longer, such as by adding ramps or telehealth infrastructure.

b. Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural:

Commercial and industrial development is subject to market forces and difficult to predict. Based on existing density and DOA population projections, only 7 acres of commercial land and less than one acre of industrial land are needed between 2020 and 2030, with a decrease in demand after 2030. However, should economic development efforts reverse the projected population decrease after 2030, more land may be needed for this type of development. If trends continue under the NCWRPC population projections, around 20 acres of commercial land and 1 acre of industrial land are needed per decade, for a total of 62 acres and 3 acres by 2050, respectively.

Since it is the Town's intention to promote the preservation of agricultural land, the level of agricultural land within the Town is anticipated to remain stable over the planning period. Some lands are expected to be taken out of agriculture while new areas are likely to come under farming, resulting in minimal net change. Currently, there are nearly 50 acres of agricultural land in the Town.

3. Land Values

Overall equalized land values in the Town have increased about 240 percent over the last 27 years (note that 2008 values are not adjusted for inflation). However, not all categories of land increased at the same rate. Residential property values increased by about 241 percent, while manufacturing increased by almost 1475 percent. Commercial properties rose by over 296 percent, and "other" land uses increased by over 736 percent. See Table 23, Equalized Land Values, below.

Table 23: Equalized Land Values 2025

| Type of Property | 2008 | 2025 | 2025 Acres | 2025 Value per Acre | % Change |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Residential | \$782,312,700 | \$2,671,185,700 | 8,200 | \$325,754 | 241.4% |
| Commercial | \$99,059,800 | \$392,431,800 | 1,691 | \$232,071 | 296.2% |
| Manufacturing | \$182,400 | \$2,872,600 | 12 | \$239,383 | 1474.9% |
| Agricultural | \$6,200 | \$9,600 | 125 | \$77 | 54.8% |
| Undeveloped | \$1,145,700 | \$4,364,600 | 8,907 | \$490 | 281.0% |
| Ag. Forest | \$35,600 | \$50,000 | 37 | \$1,351 | 40.4% |
| Forest | \$27,716,600 | \$25,845,300 | 9,690 | \$2,667 | -6.8% |
| Other | \$8,000 | \$66,900 | 2 | \$33,450 | 736.3% |
| Total | \$910,467,000 | \$3,096,826,500 | 28,664 | \$108,039 | 240.1% |

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR)

4. Opportunities for Redevelopment

Properties with known environmental contamination on them are discussed in detail in the Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources and Economic Development chapters, for more details. There are a number of former town dump / landfill sites, including two 40-acre parcels and a ten-acre parcel, that the Town sees potential for reuse in the future. Quarries have a built-in redevelopment mechanism via reclamation regulations. The existing quarries within the Town have several years of life left. Reclamation to a usable state is required upon closure of any quarry.

5. Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

An area of concern is the clear cutting of larger forested tracts for timber or pulpwood, and the subsequent sale and development of these and other large parcels for residential lots. The availability and marketing of these parcels/developments draws more interest in the local land market and has the potential to inflate growth beyond the anticipated projection. This may stress available public facilities and services. Unkempt or poorly maintained buildings and properties including accumulating junk and vehicles have been generally labeled as “eyesores” and identified as a conflict issue by the Town Plan Commission. This Plan seeks to avoid or minimize potential future land use conflicts through controlled development, planned use-buffers and public information and education components.

C. Land Use Programs

A number of different programs directly and indirectly affect land use within the Town. The principal land use programs include the Oneida County Zoning and Land Division ordinances. The Town of Minocqua also has its own residential subdivision ordinance, as well as a number of other ordinances contained within its municipal code. Official mapping authority is available but not widely used. See the Implementation Chapter of this Plan for more on these ordinances.

D. Future Land Use

The Future Land Use map (Map 7) represents the long-term land use recommendations for all lands in the Town. Although the map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate future development of the Town.

Town of Minocqua Plan Commission members participated in a mapping exercise with NCWRPC staff to identify the desired future land uses by using the Land Use Map Classifications from the previous Town land use plan, as described below. Town Plan Commission members used their broad knowledge of the Town to draw shapes on a map representing the different land uses. The goal was to produce a generalized land use plan map (future land use) to guide the Town's growth. See the Future Land Use map.

Land Use Map Classifications:

Land use classifications are groups of land uses that are compatible, and that separate conflicting uses. The classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning but are intended for use as a guide when making land use and zoning decisions. See Map 7: Future Land Use.

1. Forestry Identifies areas of woodlands and forests with some limited agriculture. Year-round occupancy is not permitted.
2. Commercial Identifies areas recommended for commercial development. Does not include home-based businesses.
3. Single Family Residential Identifies areas recommended for quiet seclusion for single family homes with limited traffic.
4. Rural Residential Identifies outlying areas of low density to preserve rural character.

5. Multi-family Identifies areas appropriate for high-density, multiple family living units.
6. Recreation Identifies areas where recreational based commercial operations co-exist with residential development including multi-family developments.
7. Rural Recreation Identifies areas where recreational based commercial operations co-exist with residential development but does not include high-density multiple family developments.

2025 Wisconsin Act 173

Wisconsin Act 173 became law in 2026, and it requires comprehensive plans to project residential land demand in five-year increments and list the minimum and maximum densities for areas mapped for residential use in a municipality's future land use map. Areas that are owned by local, state, and federal government, as well as areas within the 100-year floodplain or wetlands, are excluded from density calculations. For the Town of Minocqua, the densities permitted are as follows:

Single Family Residential: Oneida County District 2, Single Family Residential, is to be used for this land use category. See Section 9.22 and Appendix A of the County's Zoning Ordinance for permitted densities for this land use and zoning district.

Rural Residential: Oneida County District 15 (Rural Residential) is to be used for this land use category. See Section 9.29 and Appendix A of the County's Zoning Ordinance for permitted densities for this land use and zoning district.

Multi-family Residential: Oneida County District 3, Multiple Family Residential, is to be used for this land use category. See Section 9.23 and Appendix A of the County's Zoning Ordinance for permitted densities for this land use and zoning district. Oneida County Districts 4 (Residential and Farming) and 14 (Residential and Retail) may also be used for this land use category: see Section 9.24 and Appendix A of the County's Zoning Ordinance for permitted densities for this land use and zoning district.

Note that this does not mean that this comprehensive plan automatically re-zones areas in each land use category as the zoning district listed for each land use category. Rather, a rezoning and/or comprehensive plan amendment in the future should ensure that the zoning district and future land use category are consistent with each other.

Table 22 lists the land demand in acres based on population projections from DOA and NCWPRC. Because these projections are only available in ten-year increments, and Act 173 requires five-year increments, the five-year demand is calculated by dividing each decade in two as indicated in Table 24. Note that the DOA projection reflects the "low" range of acreage demand and the NCWPRC projection reflects the "high" range of demand, with actual demand likely falling somewhere between the two.

Table 24: Act 173 Residential Demand Projections

| Projection and Residential Land Use | 2025-2030 | 2030-2035 | 2035-2040 | 2040-2045 | 2045-2050 | Total 2025-2050 |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| DOA Year-Round | 24 | -96 | -96 | -159 | -159 | -485 |
| DOA Seasonal | 24 | -96 | -96 | -159 | -159 | -485 |
| DOA Total | 49 | -191 | -191 | -318 | -318 | -970 |
| NCWRPC Year-Round | 70 | 71 | 71 | 73 | 73 | 358 |
| NCWRPC Seasonal | 70 | 71 | 71 | 73 | 73 | 358 |
| NCWRPC Total | 140 | 142 | 142 | 145 | 145 | 716 |

Source: DOA & NCWRPC

E. Land Use Goals, Objectives, & Policies

To address competing development concerns, a resource-based land management policy is proposed. This policy utilizes physical characteristics of the land to guide where development should occur. The following land use policy statement is a means of guiding future development and redevelopment within the Town towards a more orderly and rational pattern:

Goal 1:

Maintain orderly planned growth that promotes the health, safety and general welfare of Town residents and makes efficient use of land and efficient use of public services, facilities and tax dollars.

Objectives and Policies:

1. The Town will maintain a long-range Comprehensive Plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions. New development will be permitted based on consideration of this Plan, as well as other Town, County, and state plans and regulations.
2. Land uses should be planned so that development occurs in an orderly manner and land use conflicts are avoided.
3. New development should not adversely the property value or livability of neighboring properties.
4. Future commercial development should be clustered in planned development districts rather than extended in a strip along the major highway corridors
5. Encourage industry and non-retail commercial development to locate in a business park setting.
6. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial structures.
7. Encourage land uses, densities and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental and utility costs.

8. Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial uses.
9. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
10. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve the rural community.

Goal 2:

Promote and regulate development that preserves the rural character of the Town and minimizes groundwater impacts from on-site septic systems and other sources.

Objectives and Policies:

1. The location of new development will be restricted from areas in the Town shown to be unsafe or unsuitable for development due to flood hazard, potential groundwater contamination, loss of farmland, highway access problems, incompatibility with neighboring uses, etc.
2. All residential development should be set back from the roads and buffered by either natural vegetation or evergreen plantings.
3. Use-buffer areas may be used as shields to lessen the impacts of potentially conflicting land use types located in relatively close proximity; i.e. rural residential type development should be planned as a buffer between single-family and forestry or agricultural. Landscape buffers should also be used, especially where use-buffers are unfeasible.

Goal 3:

Preserve the productive farmland and forest in the Town for long-term use and maintain forestry and agriculture as important economic activity and way-of-life.

Objectives and Policies:

1. Marginal lands, not suited to forestry or agricultural uses, should be the focus of development activity in the Town. Land best suited to timber production or agriculture should remain in that use, to the extent possible, and new development should be steered toward land less well adapted to productive use.

Chapter 8: Intergovernmental Cooperation

This chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [§66.1001(2)(g) Wis. Stats.], the chapter first analyzes the relationship of the Town of Minocqua to school districts, adjacent local governmental units, the Region, the state, and other governmental units; then it incorporates plans and agreements under sections 66.0301, 66.0307, and 66.0309 of Wisconsin Statutes; and finally it concludes with an identification of existing or potential conflicts between the governmental units and a process to resolve such conflicts.

A.) Assessment of Intergovernmental Relationships, Plans, and Agreements

1.) School District

The Town of Minocqua is part of three different school districts including: MHLT (Minocqua, Hazelhurst, Lake Tomahawk) also known as Minocqua J1, Arbor Vitae-Woodruff, and Lakeland Union High School. Refer to the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter for more information. MHLT Elementary School and Lakeland Union High School are located in Minocqua.

The Nicolet Technical College district includes the Town of Minocqua, however it no longer operates any facilities in the Town since the closure of its former Lakeland campus.

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.

2.) Sanitary District

The Lakeland Sanitary District supplies water and sewer service around the Minocqua chain of lakes and Highway 51 / island "downtown" commercial core. The District also includes parts of the Towns of Woodruff and Arbor Vitae. The District is administered by an independent Board of Commissioners under state guidelines. Refer to Community Facilities Map for service area.

3.) Adjacent Local Governments

a.) Surrounding Townships

The Town of Minocqua is bordered by the towns of Lynne, Little Rice, Hazelhurst and Woodruff in Oneida County (south and east). To the north in Vilas County, Minocqua is adjacent to the towns of Arbor Vitae and Lac Du Flambeau. Price County and the towns of Fifield and Emery are to the west.

The Town Fire and Police Departments have mutual aid with all surrounding departments. The Lakeland Airport is a cooperative venture between Minocqua and the Towns of Arbor Vitae, Lac Du Flambeau and Woodruff.

b.) Oneida County

Oneida County directly and indirectly provides a number of services to Minocqua. The Town enjoys a good working relationship with many departments, including Finance, Highways, Sheriff, Parks and Zoning.

The County Highway Department maintains and plows County, state and federal highways within the Town. The Town's ambulance coverage is provided by the County, as well. The Sheriff manages the 911-dispatch center, not only for ambulance but also for dispatching the Town Fire Department, EMS and police. The Forestry and Outdoor Recreation Department maintains a countywide park system and county forest system for the use and enjoyment of all residents including the Town of Minocqua. County departments administer zoning in the Town, as well as providing land records and land conservation services.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, the 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 WDNR-administered park and recreation development funding of each local unit that adopts it, and All Hazard Mitigation Plans which historically have been required by FEMA in order for individual local units of government to qualify for certain types of disaster assistance funding.

4.) 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. Oneida County is a member of the NCWRPC, which qualifies the Town of Minocqua 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.

5.) 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 will 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, 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 Minocqua. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Program (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.

B.) Existing / Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts

The following intergovernmental conflicts were identified in Minocqua:

- With WisDOT regarding the speed limit along Highway 51 South business corridor.
- With WisDOT regarding the placement of median along portions of Highway 51 north of the Island.
- With WisDNR regarding NR 115 (Shoreland and Shoreland-Wetland Zoning).
- With Oneida County's existing zoning ordinance and the limitations it has. This includes managing storage units, and wanting more options and local control for the Town.
- With the State of Wisconsin and its removal of local control from Tourist Rooming Houses (TRHs).

The following potential intergovernmental conflicts may arise in Minocqua:

- With Sanitary District re extending sewer service along Highway 51 South business corridor.
- With WisDOT regarding the long-range vision for US 51 corridor.
- With the State of Wisconsin, which is considering allowing two units on every residential property by right statewide.

The process for resolving these conflicts will in part be a continuation of past practices as new mechanisms evolve. The Town will continue to meet with surrounding towns and/or Oneida County when significant issues of mutual concern arise.

C.) Intergovernmental 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.

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 10 years. 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.

Incorporation:

Wisconsin Statutes, 66.0201 – Incorporation of villages and cities; purpose and definitions, and 66.0211 – Incorporation referendum procedure, regulate the process of creating new villages and cities from Town territory. Wisconsin Statute, 66.0207 – Standards to be applied by the department, identifies the criteria that have to be met prior to approval of incorporation.

The incorporation process requires filing an incorporation petition with circuit court. Then, the incorporation must meet certain statutory criteria reviewed by the Municipal boundary Review Section of the Wisconsin Department of Administration. These criteria include:

- Minimum standards of homogeneity and compactness, and the presence of a "developed community center."
- Minimum density and assessed valuation standards for territory beyond the core.
- A review of the budget and tax base in order to determine whether or not the area proposed for incorporation could support itself financially.
- An analysis of the adequacy of government services compared to those available from neighboring jurisdictions.
- An analysis of the impact incorporation of a portion of the Town would have on the remainder, financially or otherwise.
- An analysis of the impact the incorporation would have on the region. Many of the other types of programs typically discussed here are urban fringe city-town in nature and do not apply to a town like Minocqua including boundary agreements, extraterritorial actions, and annexation.

D.) Intergovernmental Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1:

1. Seek mutually beneficial cooperation with all levels of government.

Objectives and Policies:

1. Investigate cost sharing or contracting with neighboring towns and the County to provide more efficient service or public utilities.
2. Investigate joint operation or consolidation when considering expanded or new services or facilities.
3. Work with Oneida County to maintain countywide plans such as the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, County Comprehensive Plan, Land and Water Resource Management Plan, Outdoor Recreation Plan, and more.

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Chapter 9: Implementation

This chapter, the ninth of nine chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan, is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(i) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of programs and specific actions to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in the previous chapters. This chapter includes a process for updating the plan, which is required every 10 years at a minimum.

A. Action Plan Recommended to Implement the Comprehensive Plan

Action Plan Recommended to Implement the Comprehensive Plan

This Plan is intended to be used as a guide by local officials, both town and county, when making decisions that affect growth and development in Minocqua. It is also important that local citizens and developers become aware of the Plan. Some steps taken to implement this Plan include the adoption of written public participation guidelines, a Plan Commission resolution recommending Plan adoption by the Town Board, a formal public hearing, Town Board approval of the Plan by ordinance, distribution of the Plan to affected government units and ongoing Plan Commission reviews and updates.

Recommendation 1: Plan Commission

It is incumbent upon the Town Board that once the Plan is approved, it will be used to guide decisions that affect development in the Town.

The Town of Minocqua Plan Commission is to measure the Town's progress toward achieving the Plan on an annual basis and make a full review and update of the Plan every 10 years. (See Section B, below.)

The primary implementation tools for this Plan are the Oneida County Zoning and Land Division ordinances. These ordinances provide the underlying regulatory framework that supports many of the Plan's policies. Currently the Town Plan Commission reviews zoning and subdivision applications and makes formal recommendations to the Town Board. Although the County makes the decision on the zoning petition, the Town has veto authority over zoning changes approved at the county level. The Comprehensive Plan should be an important consideration in this process. Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that a local government's land use related decisions and actions be consistent with that unit's Comprehensive Plan.

The previous chapters of this Plan contain a compilation of programs the Plan Commission may consider in working to implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendation 2: Intergovernmental Cooperation

Town of Minocqua cooperation with neighboring communities and other units of government will minimize intergovernmental conflict and ensure that the goals and objectives of this plan are fully realized. Key recommendations include the following:

- Work with Oneida County to incorporate the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan into the 2025 Oneida County Comprehensive Plan.
- Work with Oneida County to maintain the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan for reducing the impacts of natural disasters on the Town and County and maintain the County's Outdoor Recreation Plan to remain eligible for WDNR funding.
- Continue to build on the initial framework established in the Intergovernmental Cooperation Chapter of this Plan.

Recommendation 3: Information and Education

Make copies of this Plan and all materials, maps, programs and information mentioned in the Plan available to the public. A compilation of all these Plan materials should be displayed at the Town Hall for anyone to review when the facility is open or upon reasonable request. In addition, the same information should be made available on the Internet.

B.) Plan Review and Update

An annual review is to be completed by the Plan Commission, comparing how each land use decision made during the year measured up to the goals and policies of the Plan. If a pattern of land use decisions is inconsistent with the Plan goals and policies, then consider the following options:

- Make appropriate revisions to bring decision-making back in line with Plan goals and policies.
- Review the goals and policies to ensure they are still relevant and worthwhile.
- New implementation tools may be considered to gain more control over land use decisions.

A comprehensive plan update is required every 10 years by the State. At a minimum, the Plan Commission should do a detailed review of each element of the plan, and statistical information should be updated. An essential characteristic of any planning program is that it reflects the desires of the Town's citizens.

C.) Plan Amendment Procedure

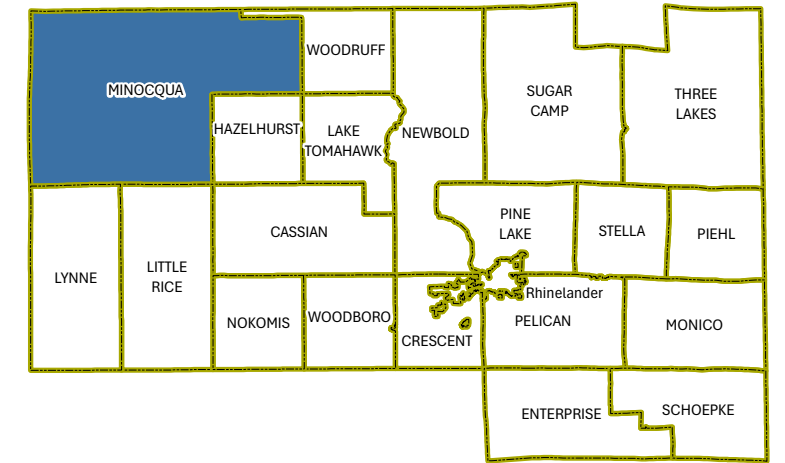
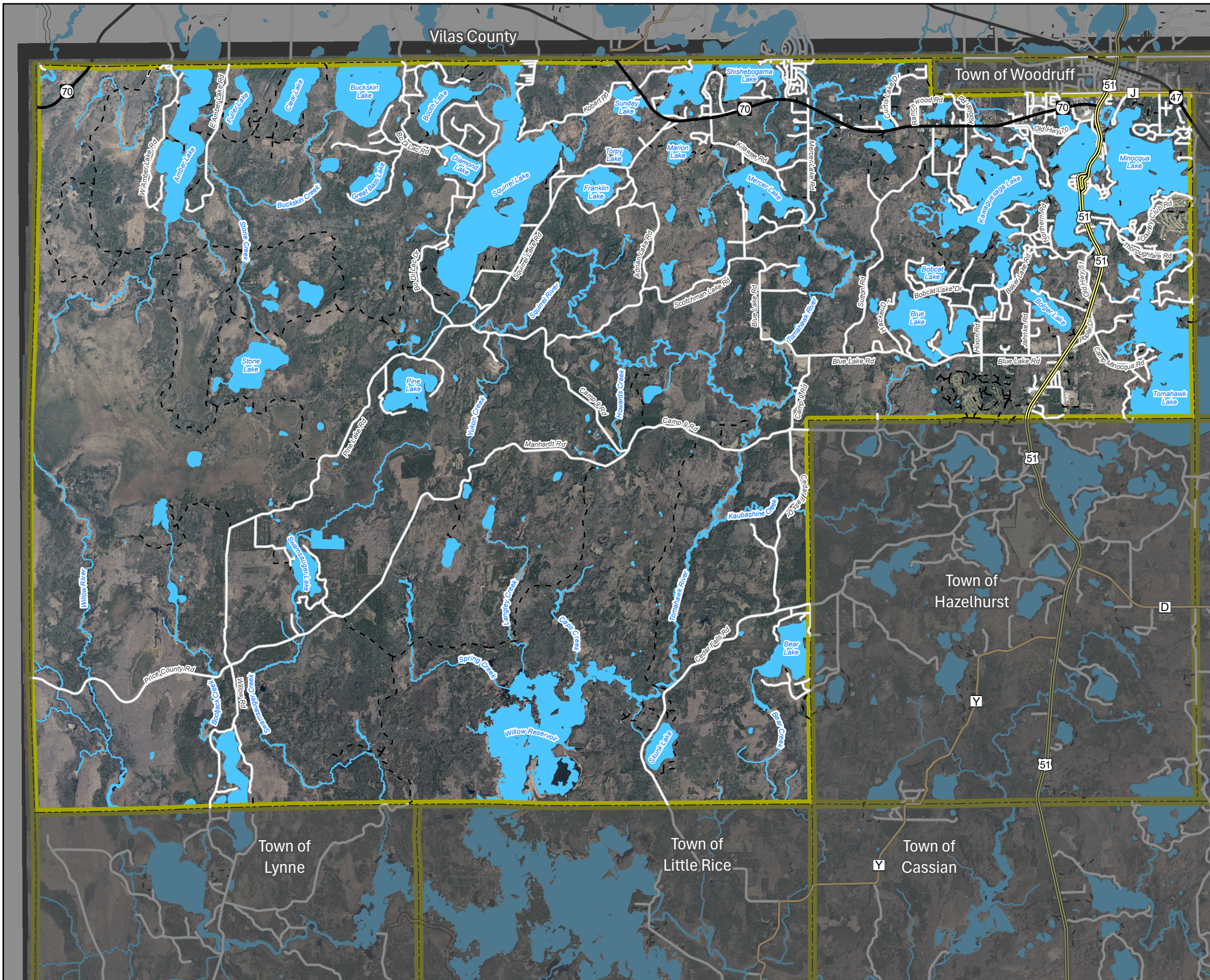
Amendments to this Plan may include minor changes to plan text or maps or major changes resulting from periodic review. Frequent changes to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided. The Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the same process used to adopt the Plan will also be used to amend it, specifically:

- An amendment or change may be initiated by either the Plan Commission or the Town Board and may result from a regular review or a request from a resident.
- The Plan Commission prepares the specific text or map amendment being considered, holds a public meeting, and votes to recommend approval or disapproval of the proposed amendment, by resolution to the Town Board.
- A copy of the proposed plan amendment is sent to all government units within the Town (i.e. school and sanitary districts) to adjacent towns and to Oneida County.

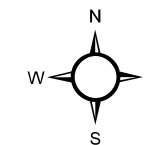
- Town Clerk publishes a 30-day Class 1 notice announcing a Town board public hearing on the proposed changes. At the same time, the Town Clerk also mails this notice to all owners and operators of nonmetallic mines within the Town.
- The Town Board conducts the public hearing and votes to either approve by ordinance, disapprove, or approve with changes by ordinance. Any approved changes are sent to:
 - All school districts, and the technical college district that serve the Town;
 - All adjacent Town Clerks;
 - Oneida County Clerk, and Oneida County Planning & Zoning;
 - The local library
 - North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
 - WDOA, Division of Intergovernmental Relations, Comprehensive Planning Program

D.) Plan Consistency Between Chapters

The state comprehensive planning law requires that the implementation chapter describe how each chapter of the plan will be integrated and consistent with the other chapters. Preparing all the chapters of the Town of Minocqua Comprehensive Plan simultaneously has ensured that there are no known inconsistencies between the different chapters of the Plan.



- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Water

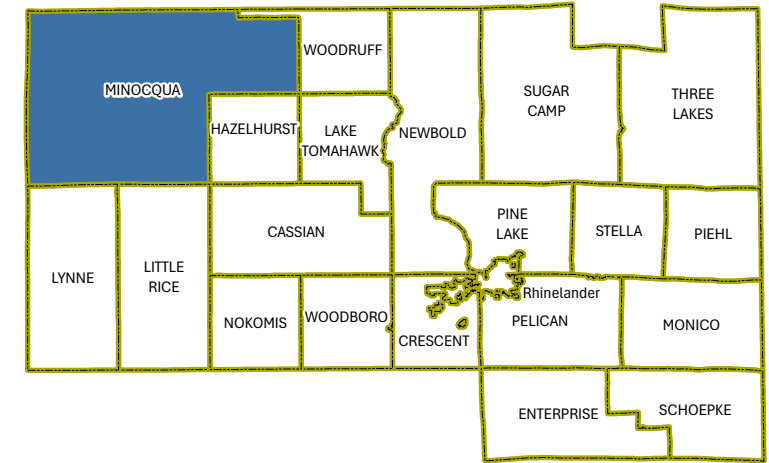
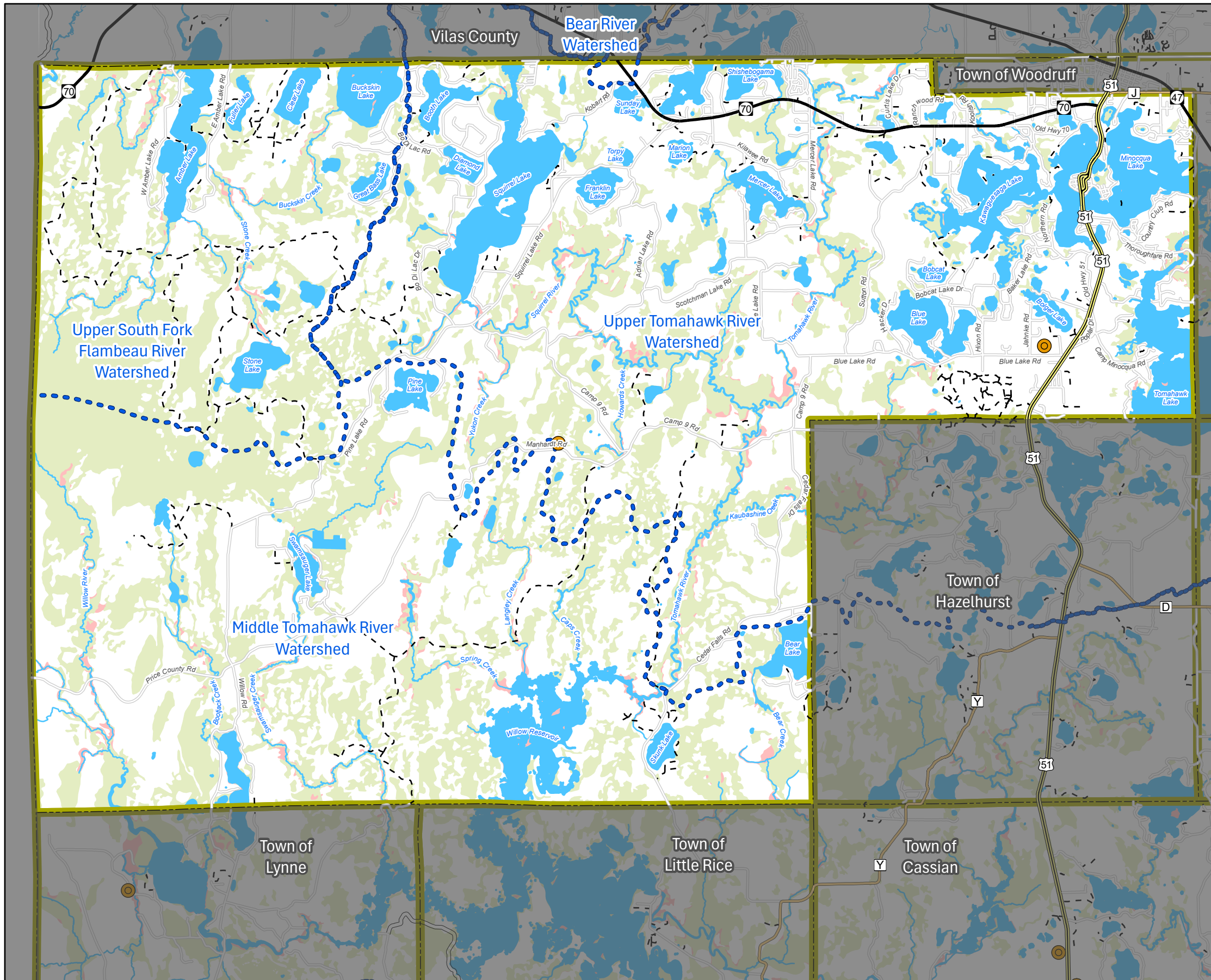


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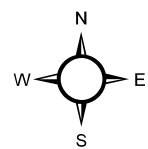
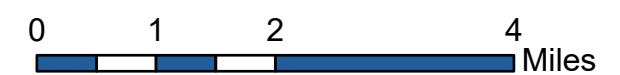


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- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Watershed Boundary
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Water

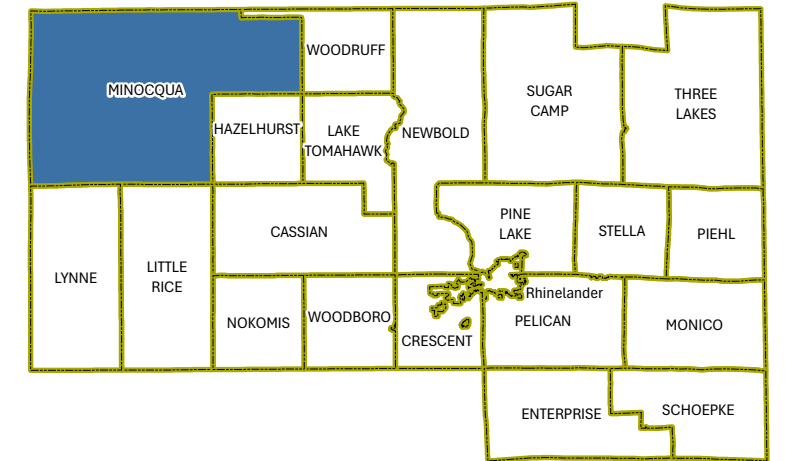
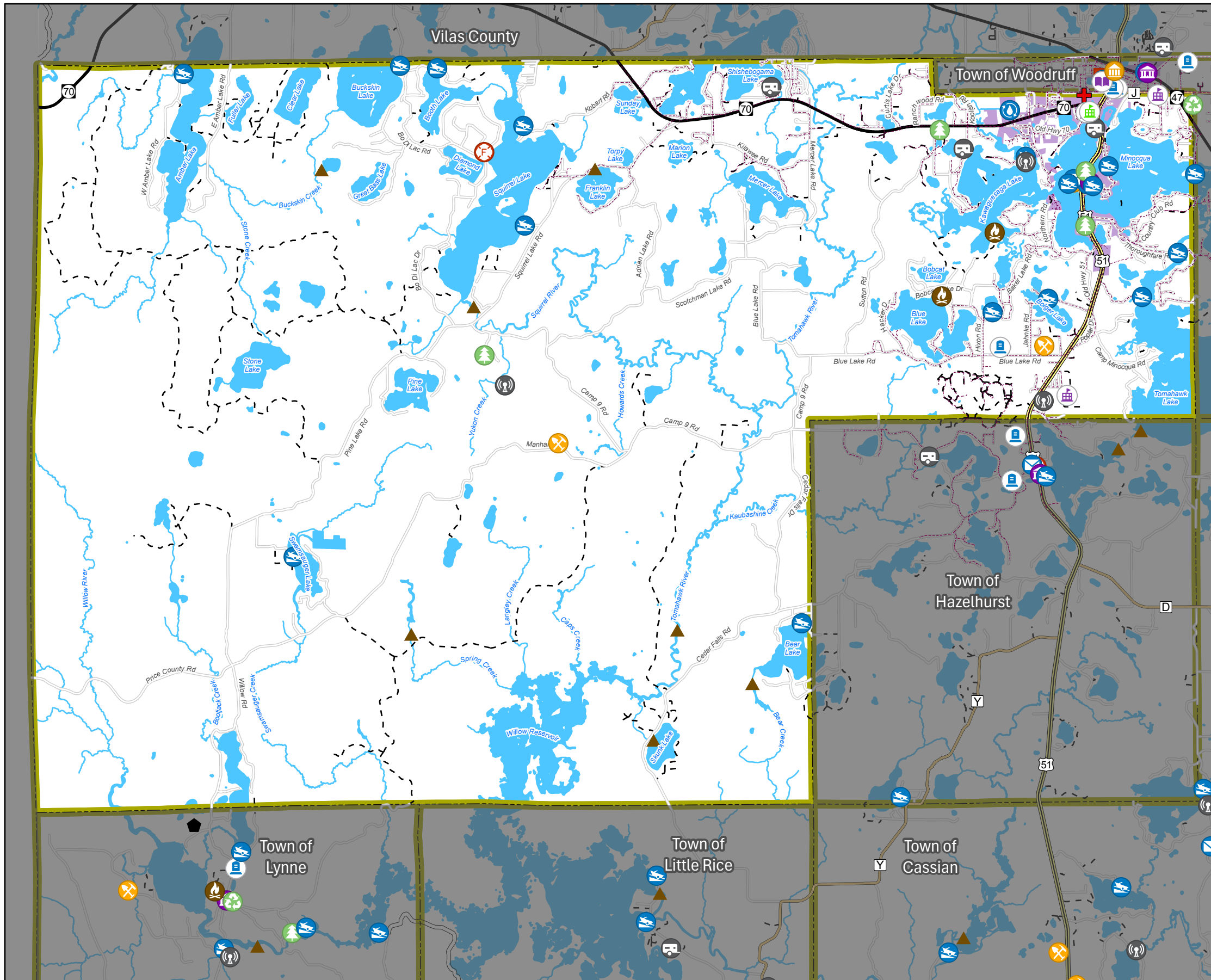


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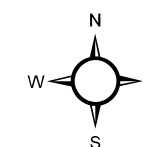


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- Minor Civil Division
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- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Gas Mains
- Communication Towers
- Ambulance Service
- Cemetery
- Fire Station
- Former Landfill
- Health Services
- Hospital
- Library
- Mobile Home Parks
- Museum
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Police Station
- Post Office
- School
- Tech College
- Town Hall
- Transfer Sites
- Youth Camp
- Parks
- Boat Launch
- Dams
- Municipal Water Supply
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Lakeland Sanitary District
- Water

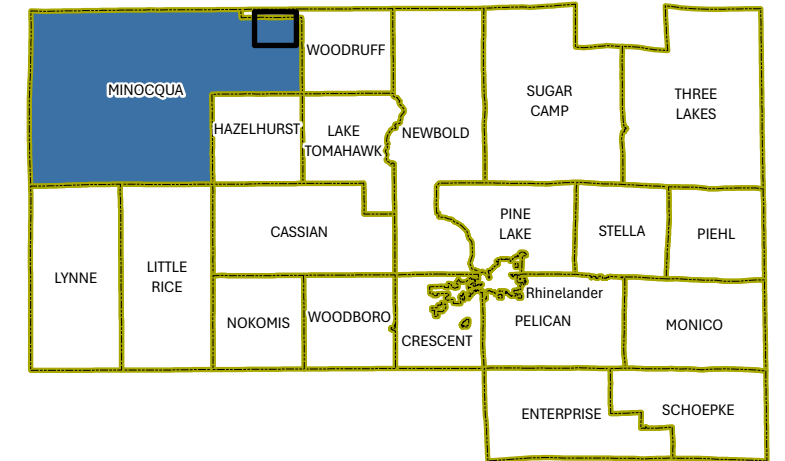
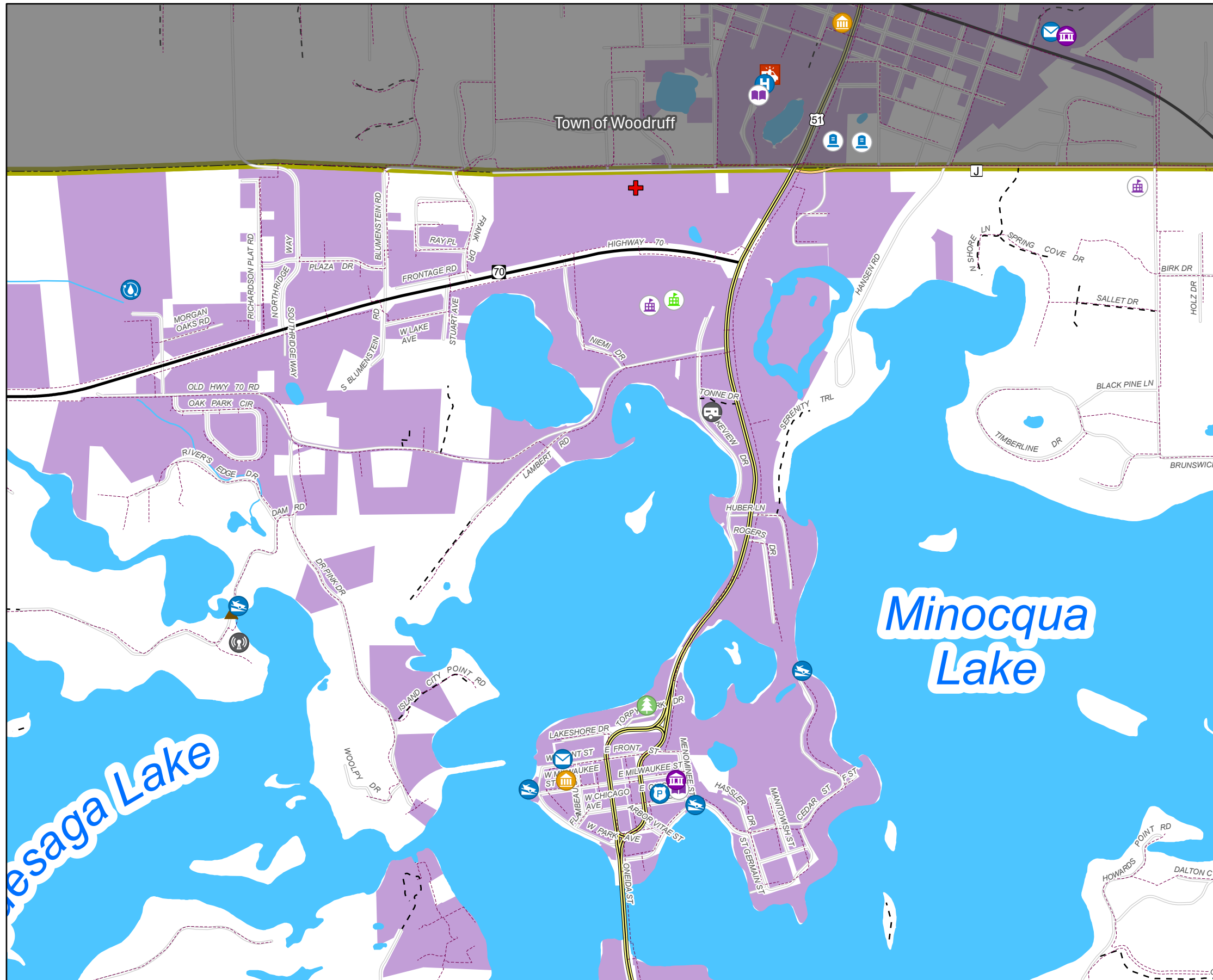


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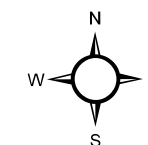
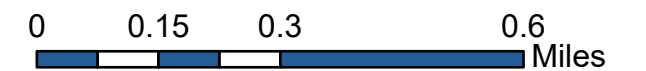


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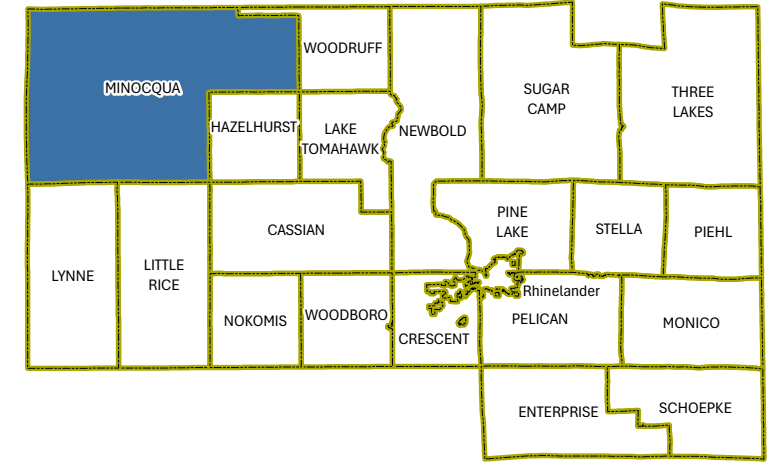
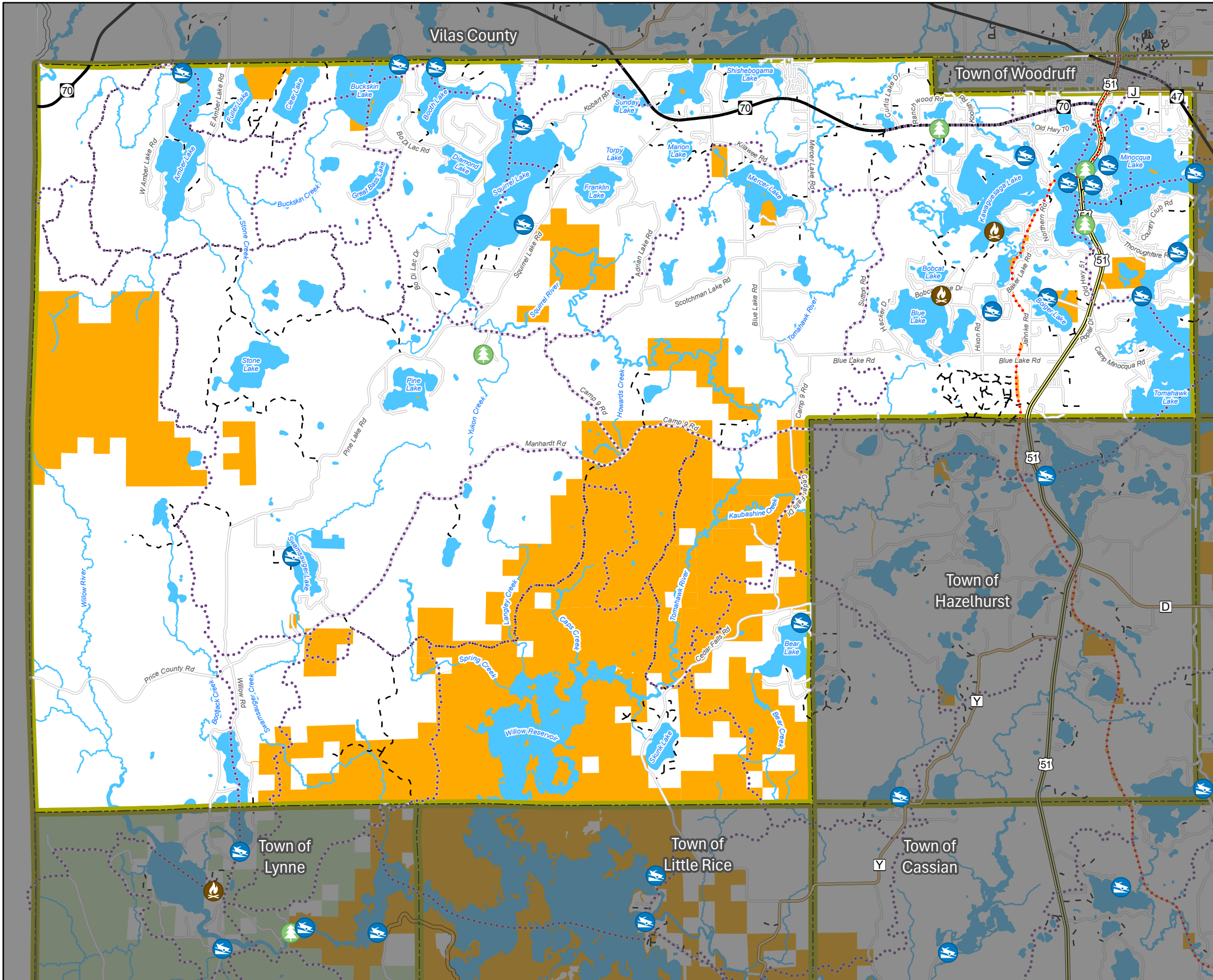


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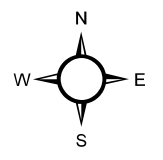
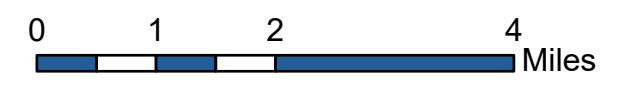


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- Minor Civil Division
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- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Bearskin-Hiawatha State Trail
- Snowmobile Trail
- Parks
- Boat Launch
- Youth Camp
- State Land
- County Forest
- Water

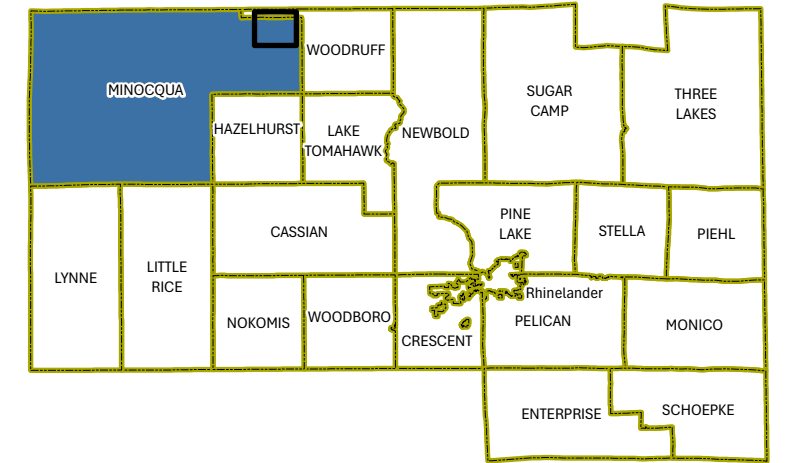
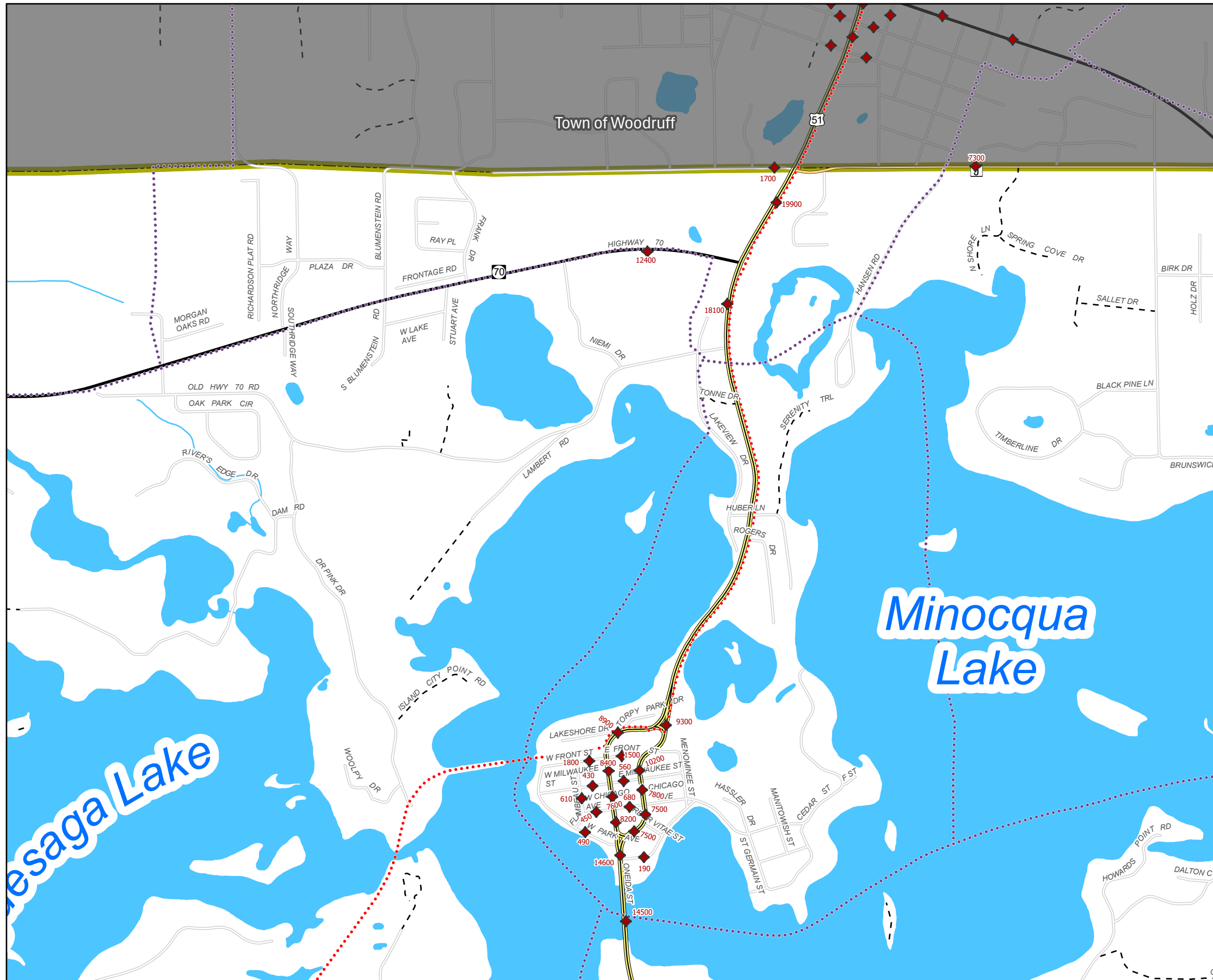


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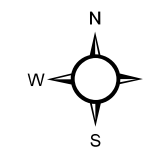
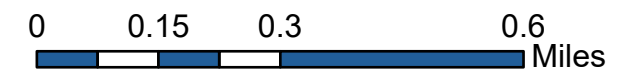


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- Minor Civil Division
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- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Bearskin-Hiawatha State Trail
- Snowmobile Trail
- Traffic Counts
- Water

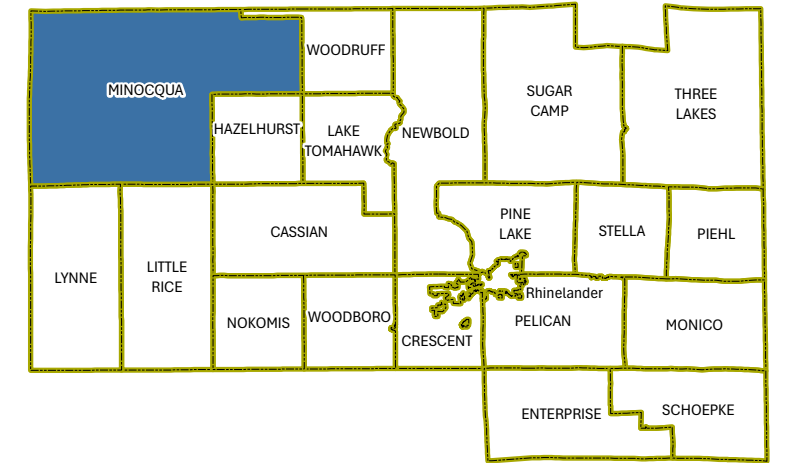
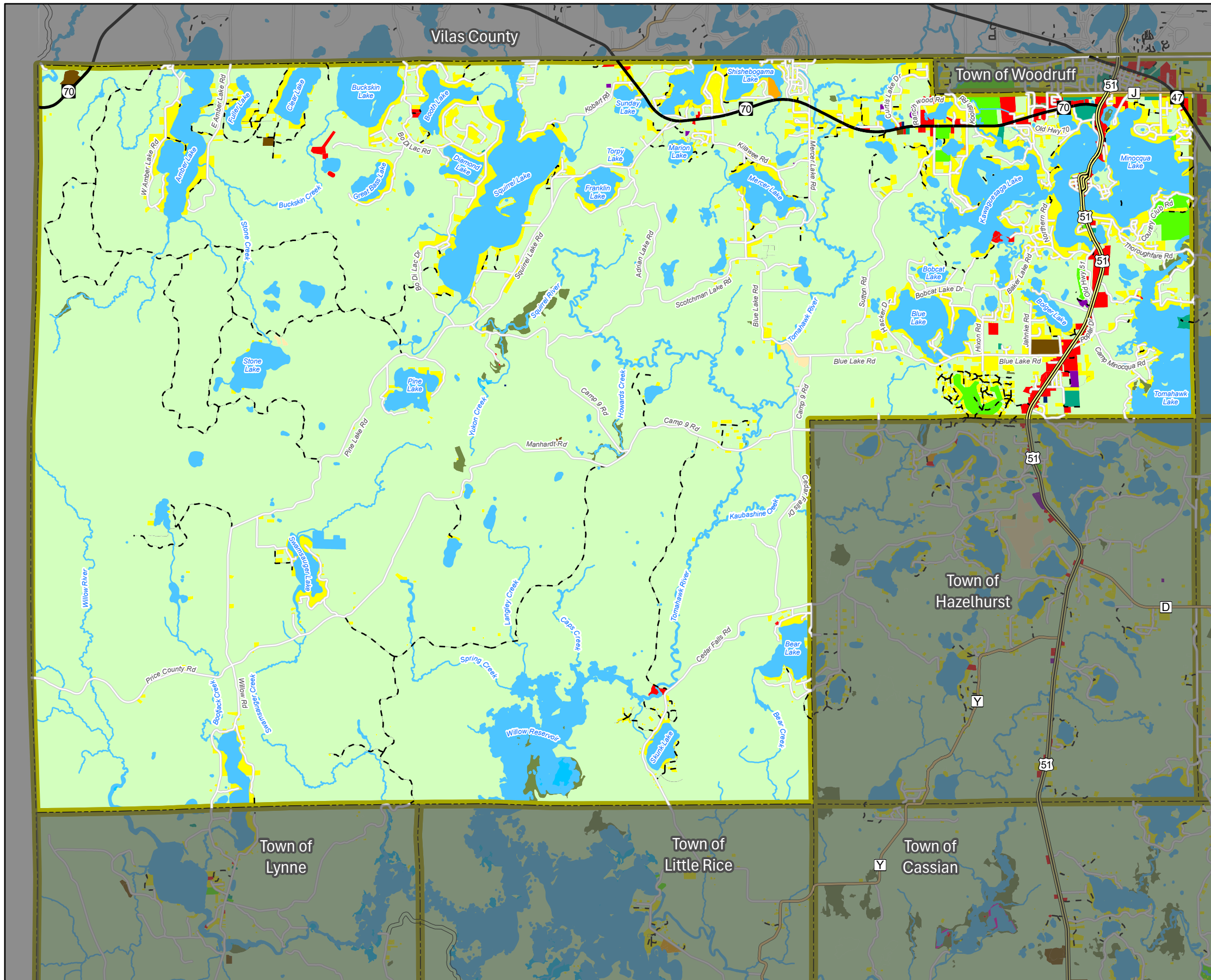


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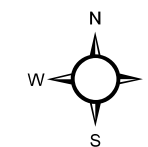


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- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Cranberry Bog
- Governmental / Institutional
- Industrial
- Mobile Home Park
- Open Lands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Quarry
- Residential
- Transportation
- Utility
- Woodlands
- Water

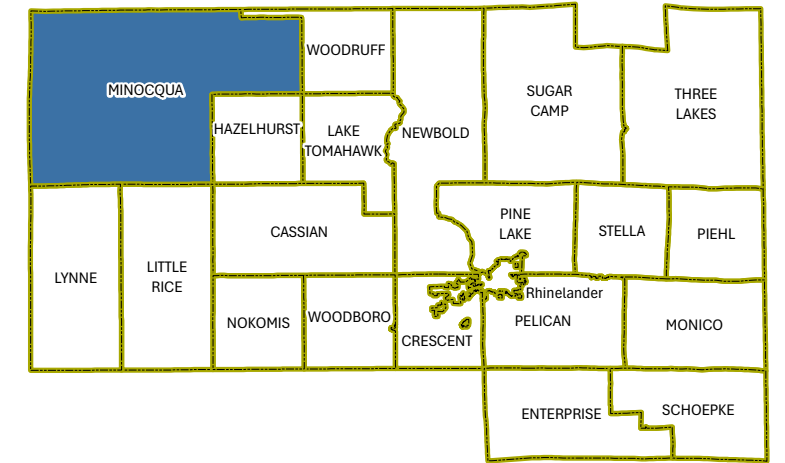
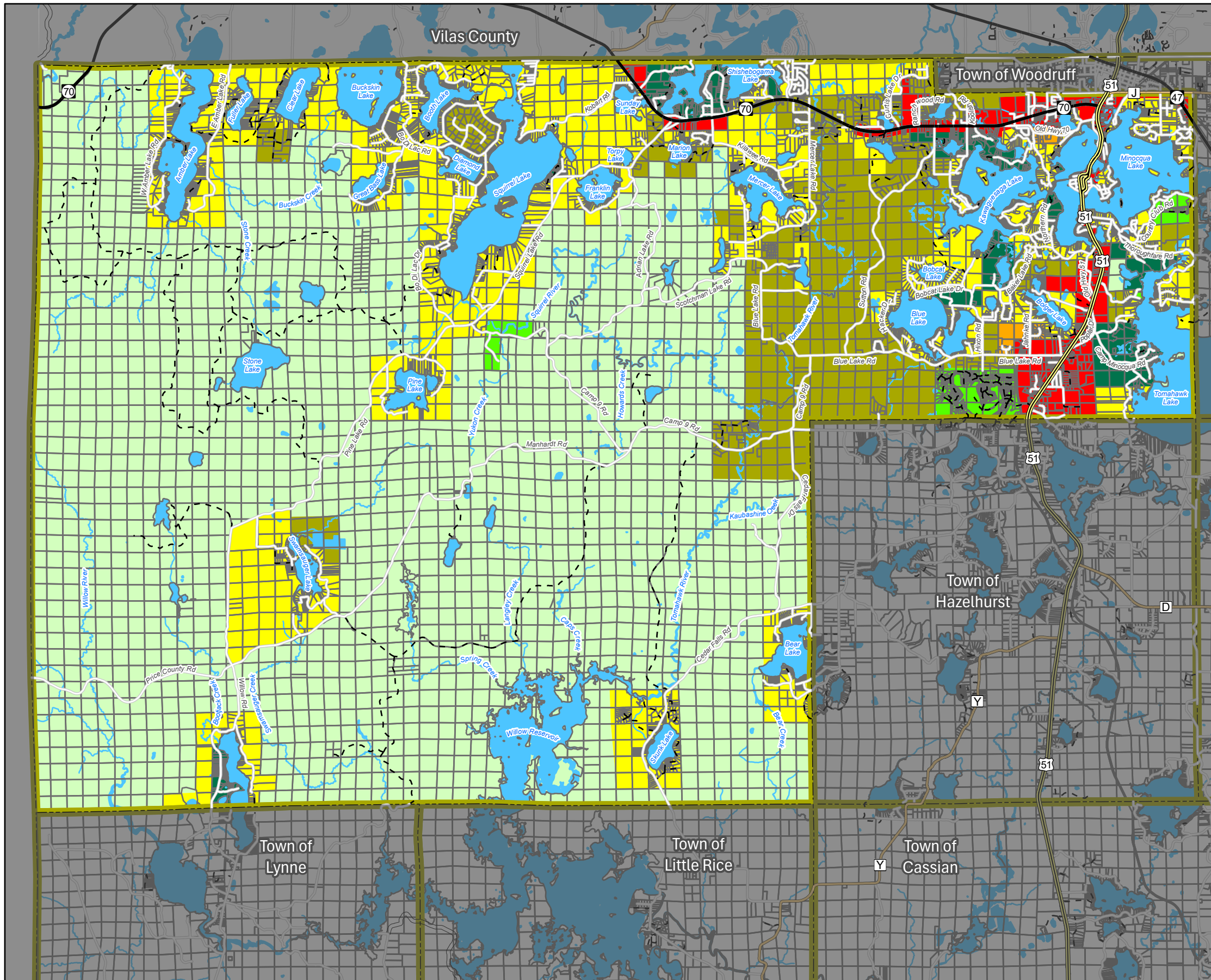


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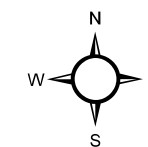


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- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Minor Civil Division | Future Land Use |
| U.S. Highway | Forestry |
| State Highway | Commercial |
| County Highway | Single Family Residential |
| Local Roads | Rural Residential |
| Private Roads | Multi-Family |
| Forest Roads | Recreation |
| Parcels | Rural Recreation |
| | Water |



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