



**Town of Hull  
Comprehensive Plan  
2025**

# **Town of Hull Comprehensive Plan**

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Adopted April 14, 2025

**Prepared with the Assistance of the:**

**North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

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# Chapter 1

## Demographics

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

### BACKGROUND

The Town is located in the western portion of Marathon County. The Town is bounded by the Town of Holton to the north, the Town of Colby (in Clark County) to the west, the Town of Frankfort to the east and the Town of Brighton to the south. The Cities of Abbotsford and Colby share borders with the Town in the western portion of the Town and the Village of Unity shares a border with the Town along the southwest portion of the Town. Development in the Town is dominated by agriculture with pockets of residences and scattered commercial establishments.

### Planning Process

In the beginning of 2024, the Town initiated a process to update its plan. The state planning law – 66.1001 – requires that a comprehensive plan be updated every ten years. A variety of Planning Commission meetings were held over the course of 2024 to prepare the plan. A final Planning Commission meeting was held in the beginning of 2025 to review the final draft and recommend adoption of the plan by the Town Board. The plan was adopted by the Town Board on April 14, 2025.

### Public Participation

An important part of any planning process is public involvement. Public involvement provides the citizens of the town an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and opinions on issues that they would like addressed regarding the future development of their town. Local officials use this input to guide policies and decisions with greater awareness of the public's desires and consensus. See the adopted Public Participation Plan in **Appendix A**. The Town of Hull posted all Planning Commission meetings to invite the public and held a Public Hearing to collect public input.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Population and Households

#### Historical Trends

According to the latest data from the American Community Survey, the Town of Hull's population was an estimated 803 people in 2022. As shown in **Table 1**, this represents a 3.9 percent increase since 2000. Most of the Town's population increase during this time took place between 2000 and 2010, as the Town's population actually decreased between 2000 and 2010. In comparison, the populations of Marathon County and Wisconsin both increased by nearly ten percent between 2000 and 2022, with populations also increasing between 2010 and 2022.

| Table 1: Population Trends |           |           |           |           |                    |                    |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Minor Civil Division       | 2000      | 2010      | 2020      | 2022      | 2000-2022 % Change | 2010-2022 % Change |
| Town of Hull               | 773       | 750       | 756       | 803       | 3.9%               | 7.1%               |
| Town of Brighton           | 611       | 612       | 620       | 592       | -3.1%              | -3.3%              |
| Town of Colby              | 908       | 874       | 922       | 880       | -3.1%              | 0.7%               |
| Town of Frankfort          | 651       | 670       | 635       | 637       | -2.2%              | -4.9%              |
| Town of Holton             | 907       | 873       | 859       | 865       | -4.6%              | -0.9%              |
| City of Abbotsford         | 1,956     | 2,310     | 2,275     | 2,186     | 11.8%              | -5.4%              |
| City of Colby              | 1,616     | 1,852     | 1,952     | 2,132     | 31.9%              | 15.1%              |
| Village of Unity           | 368       | 343       | 384       | 408       | 10.9%              | 19.0%              |
| Marathon County            | 125,834   | 134,063   | 138,013   | 137,820   | 9.5%               | 2.8%               |
| Wisconsin                  | 5,363,675 | 5,686,986 | 5,893,718 | 5,882,128 | 9.7%               | 3.4%               |

*Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018-2022*

There were 244 households in the Town of Hull in 2022, which represents a decrease of about 5 percent from the number of households in 2000, as shown in **Table 2**. During the same period, the number of households in Marathon County increased by 18.4 percent, while the State experienced a 16.4 percent increase during the same time period. There was great variation among the surrounding communities, with the fastest growth in the number of households occurring in the Town of Brighton (22.8 percent), while the City of Abbotsford experienced a five percent decrease during this time. In 2022, the average household size in the Town of Hull was 3.29, up from 2.86 in 2010. In comparison, Marathon County's average household size was 2.46 in 2022, down from 2.52 in 2010.

| Table 2: Households  |           |           |           |           |                    |                    |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Minor Civil Division | 2000      | 2010      | 2020      | 2022      | 2000-2022 % Change | 2010-2022 % Change |
| Town of Hull         | 256       | 262       | 257       | 244       | -4.7%              | -6.9%              |
| Town of Brighton     | 197       | 214       | 208       | 242       | 22.8%              | 13.1%              |
| Town of Colby        | 269       | 270       | 273       | 272       | 1.1%               | 0.7%               |
| Town of Frankfort    | 213       | 242       | 230       | 228       | 7.0%               | -5.8%              |
| Town of Holton       | 297       | 308       | 306       | 335       | 12.8%              | 8.8%               |
| City of Abbotsford   | 822       | 864       | 855       | 778       | -5.4%              | -10.0%             |
| City of Colby        | 620       | 714       | 792       | 738       | 19.0%              | 3.4%               |
| Village of Unity     | 145       | 145       | 163       | 175       | 20.7%              | 20.7%              |
| Marathon County      | 47,702    | 53,176    | 56,517    | 56,484    | 18.4%              | 6.2%               |
| Wisconsin            | 2,084,544 | 2,279,768 | 2,428,361 | 2,425,488 | 16.4%              | 6.4%               |

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018-2022

## Projections

**Figure 1** shows population projections for the Town of Hull and **Table 3** compares projected population in the Town to Marathon County, based on projections made by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). The Wisconsin DOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official population projections. These projections are based on historical population and household growth in the community, with more recent years given a greater weight. The Town of Hull is projected to experience a 13.4 percent decrease in population between 2022 and 2040. In comparison, Marathon County is projected to increase by about eleven percent during this time.

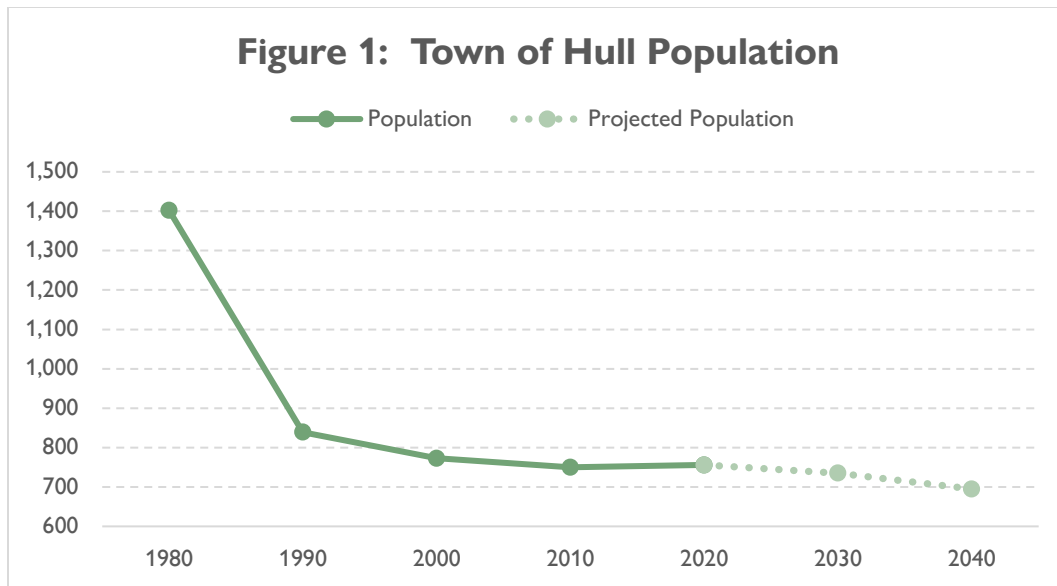
**Figure 2** and **Table 4** include household projections completed by the WDOA. The number of households in the Town of Hull is projected to increase by 13 households, or a 5.3 percent increase between 2022 and 2040. This is slower than both the County (12.8 percent) and the State (10.0 percent) in terms of a projected increase. Further analysis of housing unit change can be found in the Housing and Land Use Chapters of this comprehensive plan.

| Table 3: Population Projections |         |         |         |         |         |                    |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|
|                                 | 2022    | 2025    | 2030    | 2035    | 2040    | 2022-2040 % Change |
| Town of Hull                    | 803     | 745     | 735     | 715     | 695     | -13.4%             |
| Marathon County                 | 137,820 | 146,595 | 150,130 | 152,120 | 152,790 | 10.9%              |

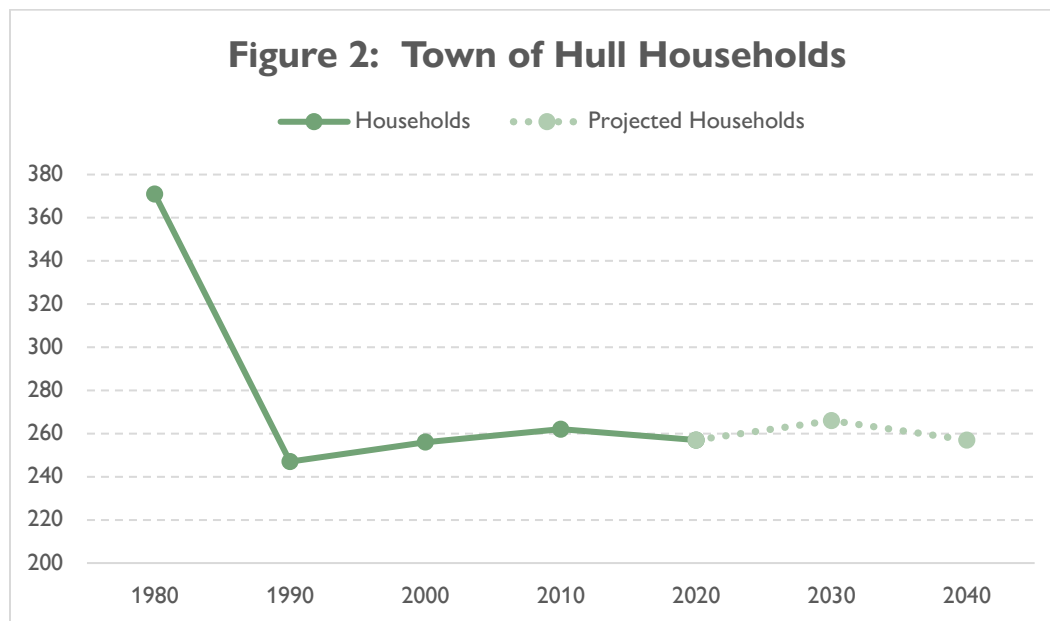
Source: WI DOA Official Population Projections

| Table 4: Household Projections |        |        |        |        |        |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------------|
|                                | 2022   | 2025   | 2030   | 2035   | 2040   | 2022-2040 % Change |
| Town of Hull                   | 244    | 267    | 266    | 262    | 257    | 5.3%               |
| Marathon County                | 56,484 | 59,611 | 61,524 | 62,958 | 63,730 | 12.8%              |

Source: WI DOA Official Population Projections



Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA



Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA

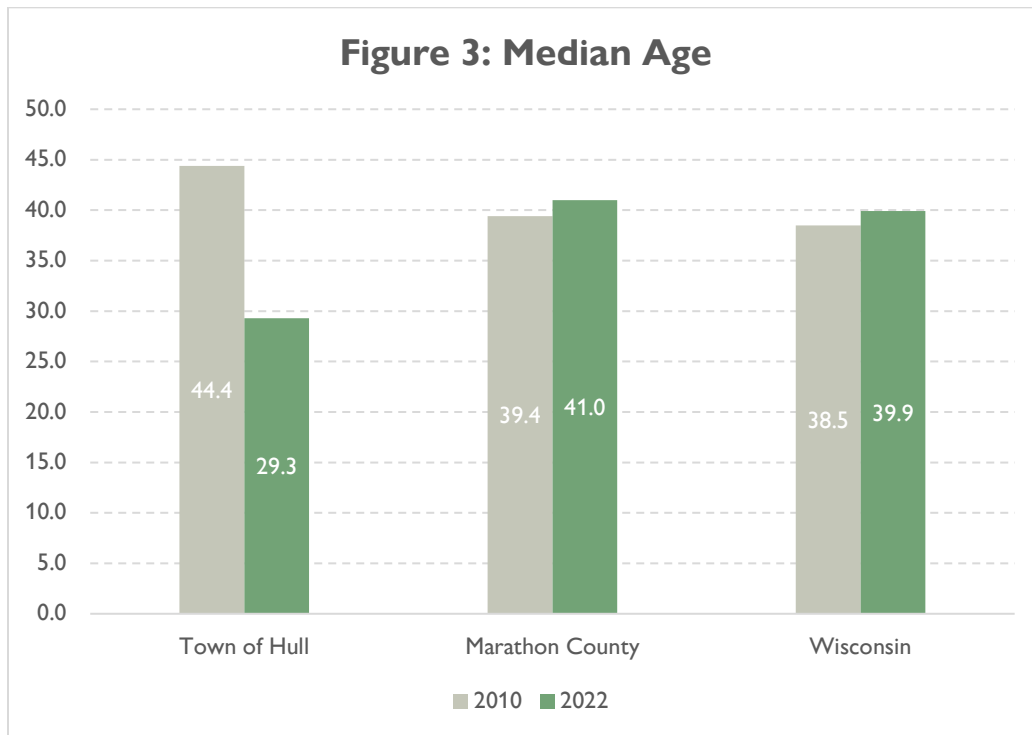
## Age

As shown in **Figure 3**, the median age in the Town of Hull was 29.3 in 2022, significantly lower than it was in 2010 (44.4). The Town of Hull's median age of 29.3 was significantly lower than the median age in both Marathon County (41.0) and Wisconsin (39.9) as a whole in 2022. Two age groups are particularly significant, those 65 and over and those under 18. The population under 18 is a dependent population that requires more services including quality childcare, schools, and specialized health care needs. Those 65 and over may require access to healthcare, transportation, and community services. The U.S. Census provides an age dependency ratio, which is the ratio of dependents (people younger than 15 or older than

64) to the working age population (those ages 16-64). The old age dependency ratio is the number of those over 65 divided by the number working age population and the child dependency ratio is that ratio of those under 16 divided by the working age population.

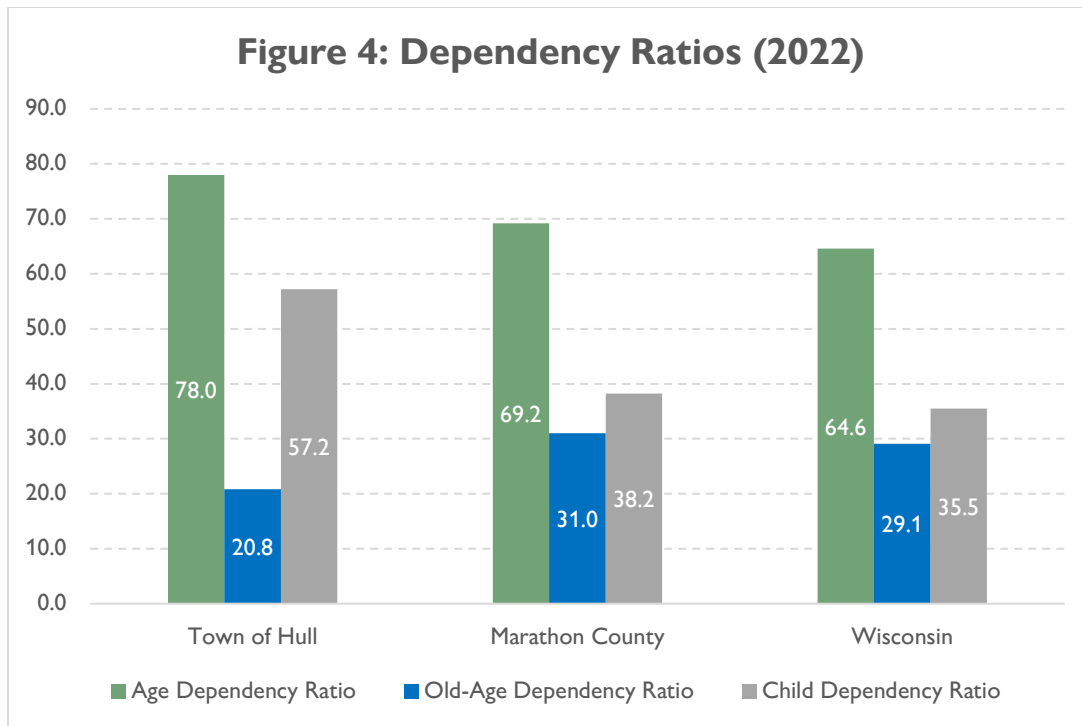
As shown in **Figure 4**, the Town of Hull has a higher age dependency ratio, at 78.0, than Marathon County (69.2) and Wisconsin (64.6). In other words, there are over seven dependents for every ten working aged adults within the Town of Hull. The Town of Hull has a significantly higher Child Dependency ratio (57.2) than both the County (38.2) and the State (35.5). The Town of Hull's Old-Age Dependency ratio of 20.8 is significantly lower than those of Marathon County (31.0) and Wisconsin (29.1). These numbers reinforce the importance of support services in the Town ranging from accessible healthcare, quality childcare, and social support systems.

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



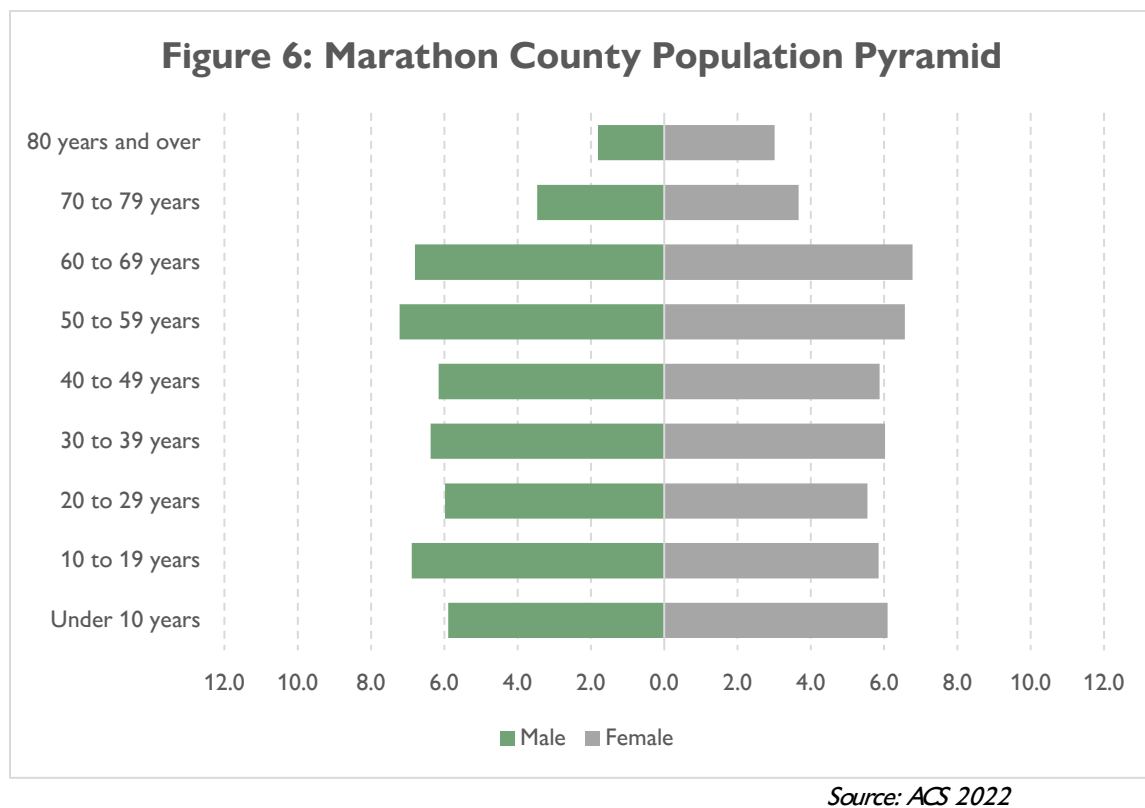
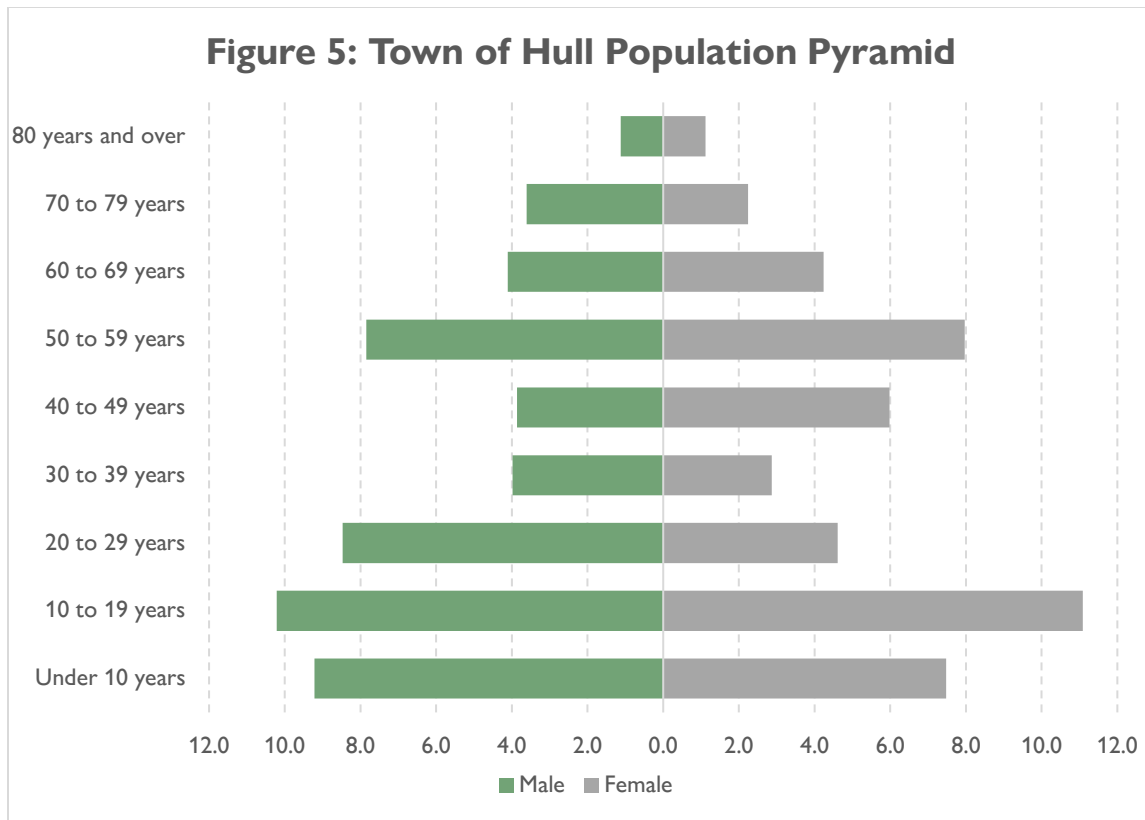
*Source: ACS 2010 & 2022*





*Source: ACS 2022*

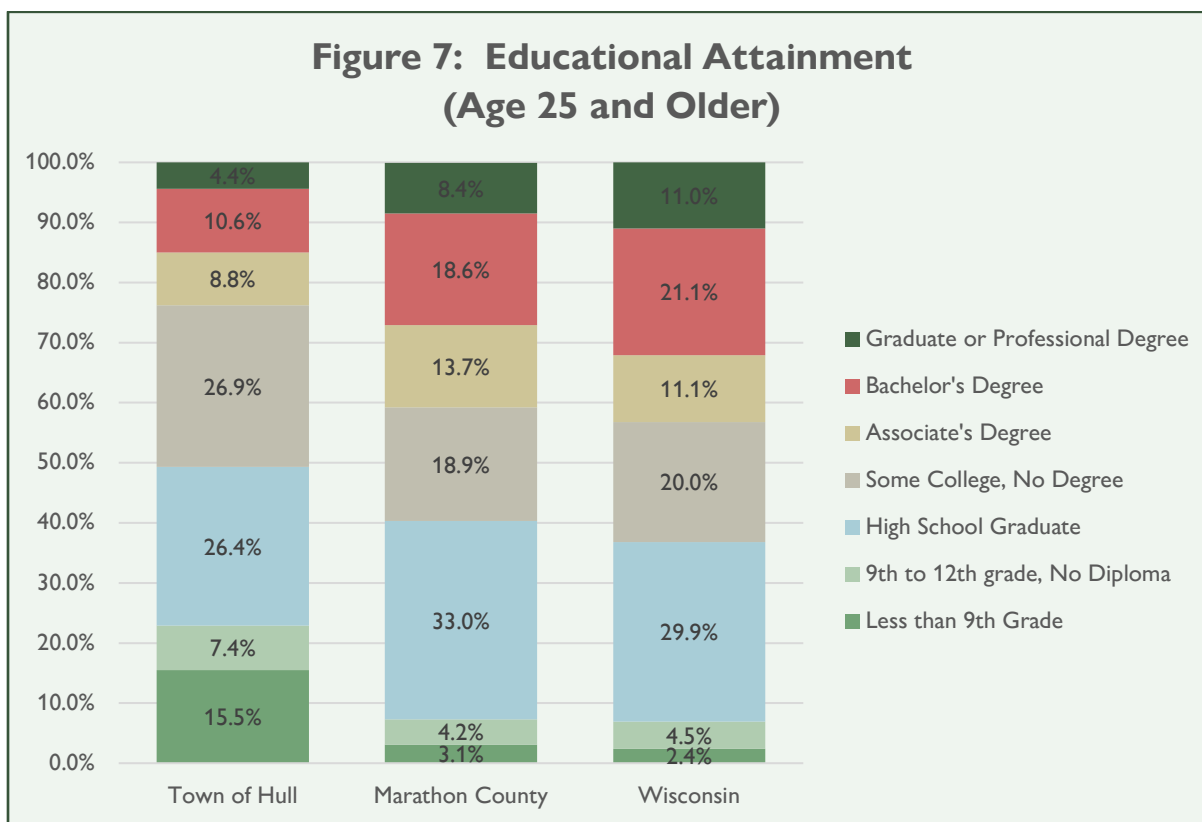
**Figures 5 and 6** compare the distribution of age groups for the Town of Hull and Marathon County. Marathon County's population pyramid is slightly expansive showing slow and stable growth. In comparison to Marathon County, the Town of Hull has a larger proportion of the population in the lower age ranges, a lower proportion of the population in the middle age ranges (specifically the 30 to 39 age range), and a similar proportion of the population in the higher age range.



## Education and Income Levels

### Education

**Figure 7** compares educational attainment of those in the Town of Hull to the County and the State by showing the highest level of education completed by residents ages 25 and older. In 2022, 77.1 percent of town residents ages 25 and older had a high school education or higher. This was significantly lower than the County and State averages. In the Town of Hull, 15 percent of the population held bachelor's or other advanced degrees compared to 27 percent of County residents and 32 percent of State residents.



*Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

### Income

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

Median household income for Town of Hull residents was \$72,222 in 2022. **Table 5** shows that this was slightly lower than Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin. Median household income within the Town of Hull was also lower than in the County and State in 2010. When adjusted for inflation, median household income in the Town increased by over 23 percent between 2010 and 2022. During this time, Marathon County experienced a slight increase in median household income of 2.1 percent while median household income in Wisconsin increased by 4.6 percent.

**Table 6** illustrates that income per capita in the Town of Hull was lower than both the County and the State in 2022. The Town of Hull's per capita income was also lower than Marathon County's and Wisconsin's in 2010. When adjusted for inflation, per capita income in the Town of Hull increased by nearly 27 percent between 2010 and 2022. This was a significantly faster increase than both the County and State, which rose at rates of 11.9 percent and 12.3 percent respectively.

| <b>Table 5: Median Household Income</b> |              |              |             |                             |                             |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Minor Civil Division</b>             | <b>2000*</b> | <b>2010*</b> | <b>2022</b> | <b>% Change<br/>2000-20</b> | <b>% Change<br/>2010-20</b> |
| Town of Hull                            | \$75,111     | \$58,511     | \$72,222    | -3.8%                       | 23.4%                       |
| Marathon County                         | \$76,758     | \$71,764     | \$73,248    | -4.6%                       | 2.1%                        |
| Wisconsin                               | \$74,423     | \$69,250     | \$72,458    | -2.6%                       | 4.6%                        |

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)

\*: Adjusted for inflation

| <b>Table 6: Per Capita Income</b> |              |              |             |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Minor Civil Division</b>       | <b>2000*</b> | <b>2010*</b> | <b>2022</b> | <b>% Change<br/>2000-20</b> | <b>% Change<br/>2010-20</b> |
| Town of Hull                      | \$28,428     | \$24,631     | \$31,199    | 9.7%                        | 26.7%                       |
| Marathon County                   | \$35,185     | \$34,751     | \$38,886    | 10.5%                       | 11.9%                       |
| Wisconsin                         | \$36,150     | \$35,732     | \$40,130    | 11.0%                       | 12.3%                       |

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)

\*: Adjusted for inflation

## Employment Characteristics

**Tables 7 and 8** illustrate the breakdown of the labor force and employed population living in the Town of Hull in 2010 and 2022. The “employed population” includes those that are 16 and older. Between 2010 and 2022, the Town's labor force decreased by 6 persons. This is likely due to the decrease in overall population during the same time period.

Labor force participation indicates the percentage of those 16 years and over that are in the labor force. The labor force participation rate slightly increased within the Town of Hull from 2010 to 2022, increasing by two percentage points during this time. This contrasts with the County and the State where labor force participation rates significantly decreased during this time.

**Table 7: Labor Force Characteristics**

| Minor Civil Division | Labor Force |           |                    | Labor Participation Rate |       |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------------|-------|
|                      | 2010        | 2022      | 2010-2022 % Change | 2010                     | 2022  |
| Town of Hull         | 400         | 394       | -1.5%              | 66.6%                    | 68.6% |
| Marathon County      | 74,962      | 74,139    | -1.1%              | 72.2%                    | 67.0% |
| Wisconsin            | 3,078,465   | 3,129,606 | 1.7%               | 69.0%                    | 65.7% |

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)

In 2010, the Town of Hull had an employed population of 385 people; see **Table 8**. Employment within the Town of Hull increased to 392 people by 2022, representing a 1.8 percent increase. Employment increased in Marathon County during the same period, increasing by 2.6 percent. The State experienced a 5.3 percent increase in employment from 2010 to 2022. The U.S. Census classifies individuals as unemployed if they are not working, actively seeking work, and available to accept a job. The unemployment rate in the Town was 0.3 percent in 2022, lower than Marathon County's rate of 2.1 percent and the State's rate of 2.2 percent.

**Table 8: Employment**

| Minor Civil Division | 2010      | 2022      | 2010-2022 % Change | Unemployment Rate |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Town of Hull         | 385       | 392       | 1.8%               | 0.3%              |
| Marathon County      | 69,980    | 71,774    | 2.6%               | 2.1%              |
| Wisconsin            | 2,869,310 | 3,020,890 | 5.3%               | 2.2%              |

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)

**Table 9: Occupation of Employed Workers**

| Occupation                                       | Town of Hull |      | Marathon County |        |
|--|--------------|------|-----------------|--------|
|  | 2000         | 2022 | 2000            | 2022   |
| Management, Professional & Related               | 160          | 136  | 19,745          | 26,418 |
| Service  | 43           | 17   | 8,127           | 10,499 |
| Sales & Office                                   | 60           | 87   | 17,457          | 14,094 |
| Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance | 88           | 77   | 6,716           | 6,662  |
| Production, Transportation & Mineral Moving      | 77           | 75   | 14,505          | 14,101 |
| Total  | 428          | 392  | 66,550          | 71,774 |

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)

As shown in **Table 9**, most residents in the Town of Hull were employed in Management, business, science, and arts occupations. The second sector most represented was the area Sales & Office occupations, followed by Production, transportation, and material moving occupations. From 2010 to 2022, the most significant increase in employment were seen in Sales & Office occupations while all the other occupational groups experienced a decrease in employment among Town residents.

## Demographic Snapshot

- The Town of Hull has experienced an increase in population and a decrease in the number of households since 2010. Population growth within the Town has outpaced household growth during this time, leading to a slight increase in household size.
- The Town of Hull is projected to decrease in terms of the number of people through 2040 and is projected to increase in the number of households through 2040.
- There are a large number of people in the lower age categories. In 2022, the Town's median age of 29.3 was significantly lower than Marathon County's median age of 41.0 and Wisconsin's median age of 39.9.
- The median age significantly decreased from 44.4 in 2010 to 29.3 in 2022.
- The Town of Hull has a lower proportion of residents with a high school diploma, bachelor's degree, or graduate/professional degree than the County and State.
- The Town of Hull's median household income of \$72,222 in 2022 was slightly lower than the median household incomes of Marathon County and Wisconsin. Additionally, per capita income within the Town was lower than both the County and State in 2022. This is likely due to the Town having a significantly higher average household size than Marathon County and Wisconsin.
- The labor participation rate is slightly higher than the County or the State, and the unemployment rate of 0.3 percent in 2022 is lower than the State and the County.
- Most people in the Town of Hull work in Management, Professional, and Related occupations.

# Chapter 2

## Natural Resources

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

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

### PREVIOUS NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, & CULTURAL RESOURCE PLANS AND STUDIES

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by the county specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used as resources to guide local policy and decision-making regarding resource management and protection.

#### **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2021-2030**

The Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of soil and water conservation in Marathon County from 2021 to 2030. The Land Conservation and Zoning Committee identified the following long-term program outcomes for the natural resource protection efforts in Marathon County:

1. Land Use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts, maximize infrastructure investments and protect rural character.
2. Improve and protect the surface and ground water assets to enhance public health and safety, recreational opportunities and economic development.
3. Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.
4. Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.

### **Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2024-2033**

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage the preservation of farmland and agricultural production capacity. There are an abundance of agricultural areas in the Town, making this program of overall importance to the County in general and may have an impact on Town residents, for example, related to emerging trends such as the local foods movement.

### **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan, 2006-2020**

The Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan is a management guide for the Marathon County Forest and is updated every ten years. The mission of the plan is to manage and protect natural resources on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future residents throughout the County. The report includes a number of recommendations for timber management, wildlife habitat and game management, land acquisition and forest boundary management, biodiversity management, watershed management and tourism.

### **Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide, 2001**

The Groundwater Protection Guide was an extension of a 1988 groundwater plan. In April 2001, the guide was created to assist county and local officials in setting policy related to groundwater. It also serves as a resource for information about groundwater and strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection. The County is considering a new groundwater planning effort.

### **USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater through Comprehensive Planning, 2007**

In a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the University of Wisconsin System and the U.S. Geological Survey, a website has been made available with data and information on geology, general hydrology and groundwater quantity and quality. The website was developed to aid government officials and planners in addressing groundwater in their comprehensive plans. The most recent data available for Marathon County was published in 2007. The full Marathon County report is available on the website: <https://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/find/marathon/index.html>.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Examining the natural environment is essential to the planning process. For instance, soils, topography, and geology can pose limitations to certain types of development, while an inventory of surface water resources, vegetation types, environmentally significant areas, and historical features identify those resources and areas which should be protected from over-development. This section of the plan identifies both the land and water resources of the Town.

### **Land Resources**

The Town is located in the western portion of Marathon County. The Town is bounded by the Town of Holton to the north, the Town of Colby (in Clark County) to the west, the Town of Frankfort to the east and the Town of Brighton to the south. The Cities of Abbotsford and Colby share borders with the



Town in the western portion of the Town and the Village of Unity shares a border with the Town along the southwest portion of the Town. The Town of Hull covers about 20,850 acres of land.

### **Topography and Geology**

Marathon County's terrain is primarily the result of glaciation. The western areas of Marathon County consist of broad, nearly level to sloping ground moraines. Pre-settlement this area was dominated by wetlands, which were drained to make way for agriculture. This area is characterized by a flat to gently rolling landscape, with large tracts of contiguous farmland and forest in the wetter areas and along streams.

Most of the soils found in Marathon County are best used for cropland and woodlands. The soils of Marathon County are primarily derived from the weathering of glacial drift, outwash, and bedrock. The Town of Hull is covered primarily by the Loyal-Withee-Marshfield soil group, and, in the southeast corner of the Town, the Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozelville soil group. The Town experiences, on average, a soil loss of 1.0 – 2.0 tons/acre/year. Susceptibility for soil erosion is similar to the average soil loss experienced by Marathon County as a whole and is not a major concern.

The primary concerns with soil erosion are the potential loss of productive farm soils and the impact of sediment and nutrient runoff on water quality. To maintain soil productivity, an average soil erosion rate of three to five tons per acre per year for cropland is considered allowable or tolerable ("T" level). The average soil loss rate for Marathon County is two tons per acre per year. To preserve water quality, the County's goal is to keep soil erosion rates below "T" levels, particularly in water quality management areas.

### **Forests**

According to land cover maps, approximately 3,834 acres, or about 18 percent of the Town of Hull is covered by woodlands. These woodlands are an important resource in the Town. Forests provide protection for environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, shorelands, wetlands, and flood plains. In addition, expansive forests provide recreational opportunities aesthetic benefits, and economic development.

Privately owned forestland includes approximately 415 acres enrolled in Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, as of 2023. About 160 acres of these lands are currently open to public access. These programs have been established to preserve and protect woodlands through practicing proper management techniques.

### **Metallic and Non-Metallic Mineral Resources**

Non-metallic mining is a widespread activity throughout the State of Wisconsin. There is currently one permitted active non-metallic mine located within the Town.

### **Environmentally Remediated Areas**

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

and clean-up of properties with contaminated soil and/or groundwater. Contaminated sites are not uncommon as all communities with commercial and industrial development have the potential for air emissions, groundwater contamination, soil spills, and surface water contamination. Contaminated sites originate when a property is used for such activities as a gas station, industrial processing facility, a landfill, or a laundromat. There are no listed open sites on the BRRTS currently in the Town of Hull while there are seven spill sites listed as closed and one site listed with no action required.

### Rare Species and Natural Communities

Wisconsin's National Heritage Inventory Program (NHI) is responsible for maintaining data on the locations and status of rare species, natural communities, and natural features throughout the State. The program's database, on the Wisconsin DNR website, identifies species and natural communities that are currently tracked by the NHI. As of May 2024, NHI tracked one species – the Woodland Jumping Mouse – and two communities – Stream--Fast, Hard, Cold and Rich Northern Mesic Forest – in the Town of Hull.

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

### Water Resources

Marathon County contains abundant natural surface water features, including rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands. The Town of Hull contains some of these rivers and streams within its boundaries. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others are in need of focused efforts to improve water quality. This section discusses the characteristics of the major surface water features located within the Town.

#### Watersheds

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

Marathon County is geographically located in the Central Wisconsin Basin, which is a subset of the entire Wisconsin River corridor located in Central Wisconsin. The Central Wisconsin River Basin is comprised of 29 watersheds, 17 of which are all or part in Marathon County. The Town of Hull is entirely within the Upper Big Eau Pleine River watershed.

#### Surface Water

Marathon County has 202 lakes with a total surface area of 28,322 acres. Many lakes lie in kettle holes left by the retreat of the glaciers. Seepage lakes are the most common type of lake in the county. These lakes do not have any surface outflow but depend on underground movement of water through highly permeable glacial soils for drainage. Most lakes are quite shallow, with depths ranging from less than one foot to a maximum of 34 feet. The County has 356 rivers and streams with a surface area of 3,748 acres.

The interconnected network of rivers and streams that cross Marathon County is characteristic of a landscape influenced by glacial impacts. The Town of Hull contains about 260 acres of surface water, including streams and rivers which comprise about one percent of the Town's total land area.

### **Rivers and Streams**

The Big Eau Pleine River is the primary waterway in the Town, along with Dill Creek and Winding Creek. Both the river and creeks are part of the Big Eau Pleine River Watershed, which is considered an impaired watershed.

### **Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters**

The Wisconsin DNR classifies major surface water resources. These classifications allow water bodies of particular importance to be identified because of their unique resource values and water quality. The DNR has two categories which include Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) which have the highest quality water and fisheries in the state and are therefore deserving of special protection, and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) which have excellent water quality and valued fisheries but receive or may receive water discharges.

Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) share many of the same environmental and ecological characteristics. The primary difference between the two is that ORWs typically do not have any direct point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water. In addition, any pollutant load discharged to an ORW must meet background water quality at all times. Exceptions are made for certain types of discharge situations to ERWs to allow pollutant loads that are greater than background water quality when human health would otherwise be compromised. There are no waterbodies listed as an Outstanding Resource Water or an Exceptional Resource Water within the Town.

### **Impaired Waters**

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to develop a list of impaired waters, commonly referred to as the "303(d) list." A water body is considered impaired if a) the current water quality does not meet the numeric or narrative criteria in a water quality standard or b) the designated use that is described in Wisconsin Administrative Code is not being achieved. A documented methodology is used to articulate the approach used to list waters in Wisconsin. Every two years, states are required to submit a list of impaired waters to EPA for approval.

The Big Eau Pleine River and Dill Creek are listed as impaired waterbodies due to high Phosphorus levels and degraded biology leading to poor fish community conditions stemming from an unknown pollutant.

### **Invasive Aquatic Species**

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

waterbodies throughout the Town of Hull. The Town currently has documented cases of Reed Canary Grass, which is an invasive wetland plant.

## 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 to 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.

Most wetlands within the Town of Hull are located adjacent to the Big Eau Pleine River and Dill Creek and their tributaries. Wetlands are shown in **Map 2 – Natural Resources**.

## 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. Floodplains 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 substantial (regional) flood, i.e. those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years. Floodplains are shown in **Map 2 – Natural Resources**.

## Groundwater

Groundwater is water found underground in the cracks and spaces in soil, sand, and rock. It is replenished by rain and snow melt that seeps down into cracks and crevices beneath the land's surface. 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. Wells are drilled 20 to 200 feet deep to yield 5 to 50 gallons per minute, but yields of 200 gallons per minute are possible. Shallow wells in these deposits are subject to pollution.

Groundwater is the major source of water consumption in Marathon County. All public and private water supplies and most domestic, industrial, and agricultural water supplies in the county rely on

groundwater. As residential development continues to expand in the rural areas of the county and agricultural methods intensify, the concern for groundwater protection grows. Groundwater within the Town is variable from shallow to moderately deep and is in short supply for the southeast quarter at current development and land uses. Groundwater is generally available for current land uses in the rest of the Town.

Contamination of groundwater typically is the result of land uses associated with modern development. Many land use activities have the potential to impact the quality of groundwater. A landfill may leach contaminants into the ground that end up contaminating groundwater. Gasoline may leak from an underground storage tank into groundwater. Fertilizers and pesticides can seep into the ground from application on farm fields, golf courses, or lawns. Leaking fluids from cars in junkyards, intentional dumping or accidental spills of paint, used motor oil, or other chemicals on the ground can result in contaminated groundwater.

The Wisconsin DNR in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin Extension, Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and USGS, analyzed the ease whereby contaminants can be carried through overlying materials to groundwater. Variables relevant to this are depth to bedrock, type of bedrock, soil characteristics, depth to water table, and characteristics of surficial deposits. Most areas in western Marathon County, including the Town of Hull, have been identified as being less susceptible to contamination.

## **AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

Agriculture has played a dominant role in the culture and economy of Marathon County for the past century. A significant number of people throughout the county are employed in agricultural-related industries and the economic health of many rural communities is directly tied to agriculture. Agriculture in Wisconsin has experienced several changes in the past decades including relying more upon technological advances to farm successfully and conversion of significant amounts of cropland to non-farm uses. This has created more recognition of the need for meaningful farmland preservation programs.

### **Farmland Resources**

According to land cover maps, agricultural lands comprise 14,547 acres (70%) of the Town. Farmland is much a part of the history, culture, and economy of the Town of Hull. Croplands constitute the most sizeable land use category within the Town. Preservation and attention to these resources is and will continue to be a priority.

#### **Prime Farm Soils**

Prime farmland soils cover approximately 80 percent of the Town of Hull. These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils, however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The “prime farm soils” designation simply indicates

that these soils are good productive farmland. Over 700 acres are held under farmland preservation contracts, which provide certain tax incentives to encourage land to be kept in active farming. This is discussed in greater detail in the Land Use section.

### Farmland Preservation

Farmland preservation is available to landowners within the Town of Hull and throughout Marathon County, as it impacts local economy and culture. The **Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan** details county policies and strategies with the goal of supporting and sustaining active farms. The Farmland Preservation Plan identifies and distinguishes farm preservation areas from non-farm preservation areas and future development areas. A majority of the Town is designated as Farmland Preservation Areas.

Property owners in farm preservation areas may participate in the Farmland Preservation Program, an income tax credit program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners can receive a state income tax credit in exchange for keeping land in agricultural use. These tax credits are intended as an incentive to keep land in active farming and meet soil conservation standards. Property owners determine if they would like to participate in farmland preservation practices.

## HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

### Community History

Prior to 1870 the territory in Northern Wisconsin was a vast wilderness, undeveloped except in the region about the rivers. In 1870 a company of speculators formed to build a railroad from Menasha through the forest region to Lake Superior in order to claim the government land available to railroads. This was the Wisconsin Central Railroad. Between March and September of 1872, the construction crew had extended the track through the forest, north and west of Stevens Point for fifty-one miles, when the work halted on account of financial difficulties – a financial crisis in Europe and two disasters, the Boston fire and the Chicago fire in this country. For a time it looked as though the whole project would collapse, but Gardner Colby, an Eastern financier who was president of the railroad company, used extraordinary means to raise funds and keep the project going. At the place where the work stopped, a settlement sprang up of about one hundred inhabitants. It was called Camp 51 and was later named Colby after the president of the railroad.

After railroads had penetrated the area, the population increased speedily. In fact, the first settler was actually the Wisconsin Central Railroad. It passed through a splendid timber country, and the sawmills sprang up almost simultaneously with the railroad. From the mill settlements farmers went in east and west making farms in Clark and Marathon Counties. At Colby a farmer settlement sprang up and in the townships of Hull and Holton were the strongest farming communities in the first years, there being a large amount of government lands which was taken up by homesteaders. They had to go through the same experience as the earliest pioneers, except that they were a little nearer to a base of supplies along all the railroad stations. Otherwise, their work was as hard and their distress at times was very severe. They had to cut their roads themselves, and were deprived all comforts for some years, but their compensation for braving the wilderness came sooner, because they were nearer markets and a railroad to connect them to civilization.

Then in 1873 came the organization of the Town of Hull. D.B. Hull was a farmer who lived in Section 20 and helped organize the township which was named after him. D.B. Hull was born in New York, February 25, 1832. When he was 23 years old he left his home. His father was a farmer and wheelwright. Mr. Hull came to Wisconsin and located at Stevens Point, Portage County, where he worked in the woods and farmed till 1872. In the meantime in the year 1862, he enlisted in the third Wisconsin Cavalry, Company H. He was mustered out in 1863 and returned to Stevens Point. He then moved to his homestead, Section 20, Town of Hull, then called Wien. He was married to Mary Christian of Clinton County, New York.

## Cultural Resources

Historic structures and cultural areas provide a sense of place, enhance community pride, and reinforce social and cultural enrichment. The identification of existing historic structures and cultural areas are an important consideration in all town planning efforts, as these features are critical to defining a community's look and character.

There is one property within the Town listed on the Wisconsin Architectural History Inventory – the Winding Creek Rearing Pond. Additionally, a significant proportion of the Town of Hull's housing units were constructed in 1939 or earlier, many of which are farmsteads. This demonstrates the historical significance that agriculture had on the early development of the Town.

## Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Programs

There are a variety of programs available to the Town related to natural, agricultural, and cultural resources. Some of these 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.

### Private Forestry

The WDNR's goal is to motivate private forest landowners to practice sustainable forestry by providing technical forestry assistance, state and federal cost-sharing on management practices, sale of state produced nursery stock for reforestation, enrollment in Wisconsin's Forest Tax Law Programs, advice for the protection of endangered and threatened species, and assistance with forest disease and insect problems. Each county has at least one Department forester assigned to respond to requests for private forestland assistance. These foresters also provide educational programs for landowners, schools, and the general public. Both private and industrial forest landowners have enrolled their lands under the Managed Forest Law.

### Managed Forest Law (MFL)

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

### Parks and Recreation Program

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

### Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations

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

### Nonpoint Source Program (NSP)

Wisconsin's NPS Program, through a comprehensive network of federal, state and local agencies working in partnership with other organizations and citizens, addresses the significant nonpoint sources in the state. This program combines voluntary and regulatory approaches with financial and technical assistance. Abatement activities include agriculture, urban, forestry, wetlands and hydrologic modifications. The core



activities of the program — research, monitoring, data assessment and management, regulation and enforcement, financial and technical assistance, education and outreach and public involvement — work to address current water quality impairments and prevent future threats caused by NPS pollution. Contact the WDNR for more information.

### **Drinking Water and Groundwater Program**

This WDNR program is responsible for assuring safe, high quality drinking water and for protecting groundwater. This is achieved by enforcing minimum well construction and pump installation requirements, conducting surveys and inspections of water systems, the investigation and sampling of drinking water quality problems, and requiring drinking water quality monitoring and reporting. A team of specialists, engineers, hydrogeologists, and a program expert and program assistants staff the program. WDNR staff provide assistance to public and private well owners to help solve water quality complaints and water system problems. They also provide interested citizens with informational or educational materials about drinking water supplies and groundwater.

The Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center allows residents in the Town of Hull and other areas in central Wisconsin to determine the safety of their well water by providing the opportunity to have their well water tested. Residents can send in water samples of their well water to any state-certified testing laboratory, including the Water and Environmental Analysis Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, which houses the Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center.

### **Aquatic Habitat Protection Program**

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

### **Endangered Resources Program**

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

### **Fisheries Management Program**

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

### **Wildlife Management Program**

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

### **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 damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. NRCS provides funding opportunities for agricultural producers and other landowners through these programs:

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

### **Wetlands Reserve Program**

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program which was established to restore wetlands on lands which were previously altered for agricultural use. The program is administered by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service in consultation with the Farm Service Agency and other federal agencies.

Land is eligible for enrollment in the WRP if the landowner has owned that land for at least one year, and the land is restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits. Landowners may choose to restore wetlands with a permanent or 30-year easement, or enter into a cost-share restoration agreement with the USDA. If a permanent easement is established, the landowner will receive payment up to the agricultural value of the land and 100% of the wetland restoration costs. The 30-year easement payment is just 75% of what would be provided for a permanent easement on the same site, and 75% of the restoration costs. Voluntary

cost-share restoration agreements are generally for a minimum of 10 years, and 75% of the cost of restoring the land to wetlands is provided. In all instances, landowners continue to control access to their land.

### **Discovery Farms Program**

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

### **Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants**

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

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

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

The Marathon County Historical Society is available to assist Town of Hull residents with preserving their own history, and artifacts that also build upon the history in Marathon County. Their mission is to collect, preserve, and exhibit materials related to the history of Marathon County, and to use those materials to help people learn about North Central Wisconsin, connect with their roots, and explore their own historical connections.

## Natural Resources and Cultural Resources Issues

- **Woodlands** – There is a desire to preserve woodlands in the Town of Hull.
- **Abandonment of Pets** – The abandonment of unwanted pets is a concern to the residents.
- **Prime Agricultural Land** – Preservation of prime agricultural land is an issue that Town residents would like to address.
- **Lack of Current Information** – Although a brief countywide historic properties survey was carried out in 1975-77, there has been no update. Many properties identified at that time may be gone, while other properties not previously surveyed may now be evaluated in a new context. It is necessary for the community to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties.
- **No Recognition Process** – Outside of the City of Wausau, there is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, towns and villages do not have an established mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.
- **Rural Character and Historic Resources** – In Marathon County, residents have expressed a strong desire to preserve the rural character of the County and raised concerns about increasing ex-urban development and the decline of working farms. An important part of rural character is the rural landscape and the buildings that convey that sense of place. While it is important to address the location and type of new development, there is also a need to preserve some visible reminders of rural character, including working farms. Without preserving some of the existing resources, including farmsteads and farmlands, the very characteristics that attracted residents will increasingly be lost.
- **Protection of Archaeological Sites and Cemeteries** – Cultural resources planning includes identification and protection of archaeological sites and historic cemeteries. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of reported sites and cemeteries, representing a fraction of sites that are actually present. This information is often overlooked and should be incorporated into the planning process for local communities.
- **Loss of Barns and Other Farm Buildings** – The residents of the Town of Hull are concerned with the loss of farm buildings, as these represent the heritage of the community.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

### *Goal 1: Preserve forestland.*

#### **Objectives:**

- Explore opportunities for public ownership of forestland (purchase, donation, etc.).
- Encourage private participation in programs, such as the Managed Forest Law, to preserve forests.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull strongly encourages private landowners to utilize existing programs, such as the Managed Forest Law to preserve stands of timber.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Update applicable Town ordinances to ensure that waterways, groundwater, and forests are adequately protected.
- Identify areas with large stands of forested area and encourages those owners to participate in the Managed Forest Law, and other applicable programs.

### *Goal 2: Preserve prime farmland.*

#### **Objectives:**

- Identify prime farm soil areas.
- Encourage the preservation of areas with prime farm soils.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will direct future development away from areas designated as prime farm soils.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify prime farm soils.
- Meet with owners of prime farm soil areas to discern their needs in relationship to their land, as well as the long-term intentions for their property.
- With UW-Extension and Marathon County assistance, develop a plan to enable these property owners to preserve their land, while maintaining economic viability.
- Work to find a solution between agricultural businesses and farmland preservation.

### ***Goal 3: Protect water quality and quantity throughout the Town.***

#### **Objectives:**

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify critical zones, such as groundwater recharge areas, and update applicable Town ordinances.
- To effectively regulate the storage and spreading of manure in the Town of Hull.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull discourages development that will have a detrimental impact on the Town's groundwater quality.
- The Town of Hull supports the creation and implementation of nutrient management plans to effectively address the handling of animal waste.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas, such as groundwater recharge areas, where development could impact the water table and overall water quality.
- In conjunction with UW-Extension and Marathon County, investigate the development of regulations relating to farm chemicals, lawn fertilizers, and other sources of groundwater pollution.
- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to monitor the impact of high-volume wells on the Town's water supply.
- Coordinate with Marathon County and UW-Extension to develop a policy on the spreading and hauling of manure in the Town of Hull.

### ***Goal 4: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.***

#### **Objectives:**

- To work with the County Historical Society to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.
- To ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials, or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull encourages the preservation of historic sites and buildings

**Strategies and Actions:**

- Review Town ordinances, and update as needed, to ensure that they provide the necessary protection to cultural resources in the Town of Hull.
- Work with the County Historical Society to identify historic resources so they can be considered in future planning.

***Goal 5: Prevent the abandonment of unwanted pets in the Town.*****Objectives:**

- Work with the Marathon County and Clark County sheriff's departments to enforce ordinances relating to abandoning pets.
- Coordinate with the Marathon and Clark County Humane Societies to raise awareness of their services.

**Policies:**

- The Town of Hull prohibits the abandonment of pets in the Town borders.
- The Town of Hull supports the ongoing efforts of the Clark County and Marathon County Humane Societies.

**Strategies and Actions:**

- Work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department and the Clark County Sheriff's Department to enforce ordinances related to the abandonment of unwanted pets.
- Coordinate with the Marathon and Clark County Humane Societies to raise awareness of their services.

# Chapter Three

## Housing

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

### Previous Plans and Studies

#### Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \*(HUD) in the application process required of the states in accessing formula program funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) "The Consolidated Plan provides the Framework for a planning process used by states and localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs."

#### Regional Livability Plan, 2015

The 2015 Regional Livability Plan (RLP), written by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), addresses issues of livability in the areas of housing, transportation, economic development and land use. The RLP identifies a number of issues affecting community livability related to housing:

- Aging Population
- Smaller household sizes
- Lack of Housing Options
- Increase in Housing Costs related to incomes

#### ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Wisconsin, 2023

This report, developed by the United Way, described the 20 percent of households in Marathon County that are above the federal poverty level, but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or "ALICE" households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). These households are largely employed but do not earn enough in wages to meet the "household survival budget," which does not allow for any



savings. The report states that many ALICE households provide vital services, such as retail, health care, childcare, and security, but cannot make ends meet on the income provided from these jobs.

- The ALICE report shows that 23 percent of Town of Hull households are either below the federal poverty level or are considered ALICE households, indicating that the average household in the Town of Hull is slightly less financially prosperous than the average Marathon County household at-large. This is based on 2021 data, so affordability is likely a larger challenge as housing prices and inflation have increased since then.

## Housing Stock Assessment

### Housing Type and Tenure

In 2022, the Town of Hull had 244 occupied housing units, nearly all of which were owner-occupied, as shown in **Table 10**. The Town of Hull had a significantly higher percentage of owner-occupied homes than Marathon County (73 percent) and a significantly higher percentage than the State of Wisconsin (68 percent). The average household size of 3.29 was significantly higher than both the County (2.46) and the State (2.45). Nearly 20 percent of households within the Town were occupied by a single householder and about 34 percent of households had at least one individual age 60 and older.

| Table 10: Housing Units by Type and Tenure |              |                 |           |
|--|--------------|-----------------|-----------|
|  | Town of Hull | Marathon County | Wisconsin |
| Total Housing Units                        | 265          | 59,980          | 2,734,511 |
| Total Occupied Housing Units               | 244          | 56,484          | 2,425,488 |
| Vacant Housing Units                       | 21           | 3,496           | 309,023   |
| Seasonal Housing Units                     | 16           | 899             | 178,711   |
| Owner-occupied Housing Units               | 230          | 41,182          | 1,641,590 |
| Renter-occupied Housing Units              | 14           | 15,302          | 783,898   |
| Average Household Size                     | 3.29         | 2.46            | 2.45      |
| Percent Owner-occupied                     | 94.3%        | 72.9%           | 67.7%     |
| Percent Householder Living Alone           | 19.7%        | 27.1%           | 30.7%     |
| Percent with Individuals 60 or Over        | 34.0%        | 41.7%           | 40.9%     |

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

### Structural Characteristics

According to the 2018-2022 American Community Survey data, all of the housing units in the Town of Hull are classified as single-family, as shown in **Table 11**. Both the Town of Hull and Marathon County have a housing stock with a higher percentage of single-family housing than the State as a whole. The lack of multi-family housing in the Town contrasts with Marathon County and the State as about 19 percent of housing units in Marathon County are multi-family and about 26 percent of housing units in Wisconsin are multi-family.

| Table 11: Housing Units by Structural Type |               |        |              |       |             |      |           |
|--|---------------|--------|--------------|-------|-------------|------|-----------|
|  | Single-Family |        | Multi-Family |       | Mobile Home |      | Total     |
| Town of Hull                               | 265           | 100.0% | 0            | 0.0%  | 0           | 0.0% | 265       |
| Marathon County                            | 46,903        | 78.2%  | 11,482       | 19.1% | 1,595       | 2.7% | 59,980    |
| Wisconsin                                  | 1,934,556     | 70.7%  | 713,394      | 26.1% | 86,561      | 3.2% | 2,734,511 |

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

## Age Characteristics

The age of a community's housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the home often also reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1940's for example, was typically smaller and built on smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and home sizes have increased. For example, average homes constructed in the later part of the previous century and the first decade of the millennium are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades. This can be seen in both the rural and more urban environments of Marathon County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

**Table 12** outlines build dates of housing units throughout the Town, County, and State based on 2022 American Community Survey data. Over 47 percent of the Town of Hull's housing units were built before 1940, compared to about 17 percent of housing units in Marathon County and about 19 percent of housing units statewide. About 21 percent of housing units within the Town of Hull were built between 1970 and 1999, a significantly lower proportion than both Marathon County (39 percent) and Wisconsin (37 percent). Housing growth has slowed significantly over the past decade, as only about three percent of the Town's housing stock has been built since 2010, a trend that is also being experienced within Marathon County and Wisconsin. Nationwide, home supply has not been constructed to meet demand since the Great Recession of 2008, leading to increased competition and higher prices.

| Table 12: Year Structure Built |              |        |                 |        |           |        |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------|--------|
|                                | Town of Hull |        | Marathon County |        | Wisconsin |        |
| Before 1939                    | 126          | 47.5%  | 10,138          | 16.9%  | 504,575   | 18.5%  |
| 1940-1949                      | 13           | 4.9%   | 3,035           | 5.1%   | 147,777   | 5.4%   |
| 1950-1959                      | 22           | 8.3%   | 6,061           | 10.1%  | 287,354   | 10.5%  |
| 1960-1969                      | 2            | 0.8%   | 4,731           | 7.9%   | 262,836   | 9.6%   |
| 1970-1979                      | 12           | 4.5%   | 9,123           | 15.2%  | 394,115   | 14.4%  |
| 1980-1989                      | 20           | 7.5%   | 6,426           | 10.7%  | 263,915   | 9.7%   |
| 1990-1999                      | 23           | 8.7%   | 7,863           | 13.1%  | 365,107   | 13.4%  |
| 2000-2009                      | 39           | 14.7%  | 8,914           | 14.9%  | 333,032   | 12.2%  |
| 2010 or Later                  | 8            | 3.0%   | 3,689           | 6.2%   | 175,800   | 6.4%   |
| Total                          | 265          | 100.0% | 59,980          | 100.0% | 2,734,511 | 100.0% |

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

## Value Characteristics

**Table 13** details housing values in owner-occupied homes throughout the Town, County, and State. In 2022, the median housing value was \$206,300 in the Town of Hull. This was higher than Marathon County's median housing value of \$194,500, and lower than the State of Wisconsin's median home value of \$231,400. Over a third of the homes within the Town (about 36 percent) are valued between \$100,000 and \$199,999. There is housing across a broad spectrum of valuations in the Town.

| Table 13: Housing Values of Owner-Occupied Units, 2022 |                    |                      |                        |                        |                        |                   |              |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
|  | Less than \$50,000 | \$50,000 to \$99,999 | \$100,000 to \$149,999 | \$150,000 to \$199,999 | \$200,000 to \$299,999 | \$300,000 or More | Median Value |
| Town of Hull   | 4.3%               | 7.4%                 | 19.6%                  | 16.5%                  | 32.6%                  | 19.6%             | \$206,300    |
| Marathon County  | 3.5%               | 9.9%                 | 18.2%                  | 20.4%                  | 27.9%                  | 20.1%             | \$194,500    |
| Wisconsin  | 4.0%               | 7.2%                 | 12.9%                  | 16.7%                  | 26.7%                  | 32.4%             | \$231,400    |

*Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022*

## Housing Affordability

Several factors contribute to the affordability of housing in Marathon County. These factors include rent and mortgage payments, maintenance expenses, lot size, and required or desired amenities for the dwelling. Household size and income are key factors contributing to what housing options are available and accessible to residents.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban (HUD) development recommends that housing costs do not exceed 30 percent of monthly income. If housing costs exceed 30 percent of monthly income, a household is considered cost-burdened. HUD also indicates that lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is no greater than 31 percent of the monthly household income. Low-income households that pay more than 30 percent of their income toward rent may have difficulty affording other household necessities such as food, childcare, and healthcare costs. Severely cost-burdened households are at risk of becoming homeless.

**Table 14** shows that the percentage of owner-occupied households in the Town of Hull that are cost-burdened is higher than the County and lower than the State for those with a mortgage and for those without a mortgage. **Table 15** shows that the percentage of renter-occupied households in the Town of Hull that are cost-burdened is lower than the County or the State.

| <b>Table 14: Housing Affordability (Owner-Occupied Units)</b> |                      |                              |                    |                              |
|---|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|   | <b>With Mortgage</b> | <b>Percent Cost-Burdened</b> | <b>No Mortgage</b> | <b>Percent Cost-Burdened</b> |
| Town of Hull  | \$1,405              | 21.9%                        | \$506              | 11.7%                        |
| Marathon County   | \$1,404              | 17.1%                        | \$557              | 9.4%                         |
| Wisconsin   | \$1,602              | 22.0%                        | \$624              | 12.1%                        |

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

\*Cost-Burdened means a household is paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs

| <b>Table 15: Housing Affordability (Renter-Occupied Units)</b> |                          |                              |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
|  | <b>Median Gross Rent</b> | <b>Percent Cost-Burdened</b> |
| Town of Hull   | \$500                    | 20.0%                        |
| Marathon County  | \$898                    | 42.9%                        |
| Wisconsin  | \$992                    | 43.1%                        |

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

\*Cost-Burdened means a household is paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs

## Specialized Housing

In Marathon County, housing for seniors and populations with special needs is primarily provided in the urbanized areas in and around Wausau. The Marathon County Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Marathon County United Way all maintain a list of these housing options throughout Marathon County. As the number of elderly populations increases in the coming years, there will most likely be a greater need for a wider variety of housing options.

### Senior Housing

Housing for seniors typically consists of a range of housing options that provide a spectrum of assistance starting with individual units or homes with little or no assistance, independent living communities for seniors that remain independent, assisted living facilities for those who are no longer able to live on their own, and nursing homes for those that need skilled medical care.

According to research by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the overwhelming majority of seniors prefer to “age in place,” or remain in their home throughout retirement. This can be difficult for those in rural areas such as the Town of Hull, as the ability to access medical care and necessary goods and services can become burdensome.

Northwest Marathon County is served by senior housing options in several communities. The Village of Athens is home to two facilities, while the Abbotsford/Colby area, the Village of Edgar, and the City of Wausau also provide nearby senior housing options.

## Summary of Housing Characteristics

The Town of Hull is abundant with homes and farmsteads and many residents live and work within the Town, particularly in the area of agriculture. The Town itself has an overriding rural character, and is abundant with natural resources, agricultural resources, and cultural resources.

Most housing consists of single-family detached housing that is owner-occupied. A substantial amount of the Town's stock housing was constructed before 1940 and falls into mid-valuation ranges. With the trend towards smaller and more households in the upcoming decades, the community would benefit from a wide range of housing options. Consistent with the state as a whole, new housing construction over the past decade has stalled. There is a need for construction of additional housing units to accommodate demand. It would be desirable to construct housing in a variety of styles to create affordability and more adequately meet the needs of those at various income levels and desiring a range of amenities. Affordability is more commonly an issue for owners, rather than renters in the Town.

There are a large number of residents nearing retirement age in the Town. Seniors typically desire housing that is smaller, accessible, and near needed healthcare services and amenities. This need will continue throughout the upcoming decades. These are important considerations when looking at future housing policy and planning.

## Housing Issues

- **Residential Development Pressure** – There is increasing pressure for rural residential housing in Hull.
- **Directing Growth** – The Town would like to direct most growth to areas around the Cities of Colby and Abbotsford.
- **Mobile Homes** – Mobile homes are limited to second family residences on farms.
- **Annexation** – There is increasing pressure to prevent annexation from surrounding communities

# Housing Programs

There are a variety of state and federal housing programs geared at addressing a variety of housing issues. Grants and low interest loans are available for counties, communities, or individual homeowners and renters. The following are some housing resources administered through the state using state or federal funds that are available to participants.

## **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)**

- Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
- Rental Assistance (Section 8) Programs
- Multifamily Loan Fund
- National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling
- WHEDA Advantage
- FHA Advantage
- First-Time Home Buyer Advantage
- WHEDA Tax Advantage
- WHEDA Foundation Grant Program

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

- Single Family Direct Home Loans
- Single Family Home Loan Guarantees
- Mutual Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grants
- Rural Housing Site Loan
- Housing Preservation & Revitalization Demonstration Loans & Grants
- Housing Preservation Grants
- Multi-Family Housing Direct Loans
- Multi-Family Housing Loan Guarantees
- Multi-Family Housing Rental Assistance

## **State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR)**

- Housing Grants and Loans
- Homelessness Assistance and Prevention
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)
- HOME Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program
- HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD)
- Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program
- Housing Cost Reduction Initiative Program (HCRI)
- CDBG – Small Cities Housing and Revolving Loan Program

### **The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

- The HUD Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program
- The HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers
- CDBG – Small Cities Program

## Goals, Objectives & Policies

Although the Town has not historically played a role in housing, it supports equal opportunity housing, and understands the importance of sound housing stock for its residents and the community as a whole. A review of housing stock assessment information has led to the establishment of the following housing policy statement:

### *Goal 1: Locate future residential development near existing services.*

#### **Objectives:**

- Encourage future residential development to locate near the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby.
- Encourage the development of zoning measures that protect and preserve natural and agricultural areas.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will direct future residential developments to areas surrounding or contiguous to existing developed areas, such as the Cities of Colby and Abbotsford.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Explore developing a land division ordinance for the Town.
- Explore the feasibility of reducing the minimum lot-size requirement throughout the Town.



# Chapter Four

## Transportation

Transportation is necessary for the effective movement of people and goods within the community. It is also essential to connect those within the Town with connections outside of the Town. Transportation is also critical to development and land use. This chapter provides an inventory of the existing transportation facilities and services within the Town of Hull.

Transportation is a crucial component of livability and provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate transportation facilities within a sustainable pattern of development. The existing network, from roads to rails needs to be coordinated to maximize efficiency for the overall system. The connection between home and work is an important part of any transportation system. A range of transportation alternatives should be supported, including walkability whenever possible.

### Previous Plans and Studies

#### Regional Livability Plan, 2015

Transportation is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Plan (RLP), adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Transportation Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the transportation network throughout the ten-county region and identifies trends and issues facing transportation.

The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the modes of transportation to work, the age of drivers in the region, and the high transportation maintenance cost. The three transportation goals of the RLP are as follows:

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

#### Locally Developed, Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan, 2024

Marathon County developed this five-year plan that was facilitated by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The plan analyzes service gaps and needs in public transit and human services transportation and proposes strategies to address the gaps and needs.

### **Connections 2050**

Connections 2050 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. Adopted recently, the plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. WisDOT is currently updating several of the modal plans.

### **Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

This 2018 plan is a region-wide effort to improve bicycling and walking across the communities. The plan assesses existing conditions related to bicycling and walking, identifying other potential trail and route user groups, identifying routes and describing policies and programs to assist local governments in improving bicycling and walking to promote connectivity between communities and destinations throughout north central Wisconsin.

### **State Trails Network Plan**

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

### **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act)**

This current federal transportation program authorizes up to \$108 billion to support federal public transportation programs, including \$91 billion in guaranteed funding. It also reauthorizes surface transportation programs for FY 2022-2026 and provides advance appropriations for certain programs. Major goals include improving safety, modernizing aging transit infrastructure and fleets, investing in cleaner transportation, and improving equity in communities with limited transportation access. These funds will be distributed via formulas and grants to the states. Local units will be able to access the funds through various grant programs.

## **Road Network**

The Town of Hull is split by CTH F and CTH N. STH 13 runs along the western boundary of the Town. The road network within the Town of Hull is a network of state and county highways together with various local roads. The jurisdictional and functional breakdown of the Town of Hull road network is shown in **Table 16**.

### **Functional Classification**

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of the services they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example), are those facilities

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

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

- **Principal Arterials** serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas with populations greater than 5,000 or connect major centers of activity. They carry the highest traffic volumes and are designed to accommodate longer trips.
- **Minor Arterials**, like principal arterials, minor arterials also serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators, providing intra-community continuity and service for trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.
- **Collectors** provide both land access service and traffic circulation, within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from the arterials through the area to the local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from the local streets and channel it into the arterial system.
- **Local streets** comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and access to higher order systems. Local streets offer the lowest level of mobility and high volume through-traffic movement on these streets is usually discouraged.

**Table 16: Road Mileage by Jurisdictional and Functional Class**

| Jurisdiction | Functional Classification |           |       | Totals |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|
|              | Arterial                  | Collector | Local |        |
| State*       | 5.67                      | 0.00      | 0.00  | 5.67   |
| County       | 0.00                      | 11.59     | 0.00  | 11.59  |
| Town         | 0.00                      | 0.08      | 44.81 | 44.89  |
| Totals       | 5.67                      | 11.68     | 44.81 | 62.15  |

Source: WisDOT & NCVRPC

\*: WisDOT has jurisdiction over interstate and federal highways

## Jurisdiction

Roads are commonly classified in one of two ways: by ownership or by purpose. Jurisdictional responsibility refers to ownership of a particular road, while functional classification, as described above, identifies the road by the level of service it provides.

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some State-owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a “Federal-aid highway” does not alter its ownership or jurisdiction as a State or local road, only that its

service value and importance have made that road eligible for Federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.

As previously noted, these functional classifications are generally equated with the jurisdictional divisions. In the more developed larger urban communities, this relationship may not be as rigid, whereas the local community constructs and maintains all classes of the roadway system. However, in the typical rural transportation system the jurisdictional and the functional classifications maintain a closer relationship. The greatest emphasis of traffic in rural areas is generally on non-local efficient movement, whereas local access is secondary due to relatively low population densities.

## Major Road Facilities

Functional classification and jurisdiction are summarized below for all major roads within the Town of Hull.

- State Highway 29 is a four-lane divided principal arterial which serves as the border between the Town of Hull and the Town of Holton.
- State Highway 13 is a two-lane principal arterial and serves as the border between the Town of Hull and the Town of Colby.
- County Highway N is an east-west major collector that travels through the Town of Hull.
- County Highway F is a north-south major collector that runs along the southern border of the Town.

## Local Roads

The Town of Hull local road network consists of approximately 45 miles of local roads, most of which are unpaved. As part of the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) the Wis. DOT requires all local units of government to submit road condition rating data every 2 years. The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) program and WISLR are tools that local governments can use to manage pavements for improved decision making in budgeting and maintenance. Towns can use this information to develop better road budgets and monitor roads in need of repair.

## Road Maintenance

The Town of Hull 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 on a scale of 1 to 10. This scale is broken down as follows:

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

**Table 17** shows a summary of pavement conditions in the Town of Hull. 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. An aggregate 2.55 miles of roads in the Town, or about 6 percent of the Town’s roads, are in need of improvement. Approximately 69 percent of roadways in the Town are gravel roads. Asphalt or concrete roads account for the remaining 31 percent of the total.

| <b>Table 17: Summary of Pavement Conditions, 2023</b> |              |                                 |
|---|--------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Surface Condition Rating</b>                       | <b>Miles</b> | <b>Percent of Total Mileage</b> |
| Very Poor   | 1.65         | 3.7%                            |
| Poor  | 0.00         | 0.0%                            |
| Fair  | 0.90         | 2.0%                            |
| Good  | 27.64        | 61.6%                           |
| Very Good   | 4.99         | 11.1%                           |
| Excellent   | 9.69         | 21.6%                           |
| Total   | 44.87        | 100.0%                          |

*Source: WisDOT 2023*

## Trucking

State Highways 29 and 13 are the truck routes that serve the Town as designated by WisDOT. 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. Local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

## Rail

There is no rail access to the Town. The former railroad line has been converted to an ATV/snowmobile trail maintained by Marathon County. Shipments needing rail service would have to be trucked to nearby cities with rail access such as Marshfield or Wausau.

## Airport

Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties and is governed by the Central Wisconsin Joint Airport Board. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services. The Central Wisconsin Airport is located east of Mosinee and is easily accessible via I-39. In 2011, the airport underwent a terminal renovation and expansion project which increased operational space, expanded the security checkpoint, increased parking, and relocated rental cars to a separate facility. The airport is currently served by three airlines, Delta, American and United Airlines.

## Bus/Transit

There is no public transit service available in the Town. North Central Health Care provides paratransit services for persons over 60 or persons with disabilities who live within Marathon County. The service includes semi-fixed routes that are scheduled, and demand service available with 48-hour notice. Information and services are available by calling 715-841-5101.

## Bicycling and Walking

All roads are available for bicycle and pedestrian travel in the Town of Hull, with the exception of STH 29. No sidewalks exist. Roads that do not have sidewalks may not provide sufficient shoulder areas for safe pedestrian access.

The 2018 North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan recommends the addition of on-road bicycle infrastructure along County Highway F within the Town of Hull.

## Specialty

The Aging and Disability Resource Center serves Marathon County residents with a variety of resources including those related to transportation. More details about transportation services for ambulatory and non-ambulatory residents can be found on their website. Some examples include Abby Vans, which provides weekend transportation services county-wide and Wheels to Work which assists Marathon County families/individuals to overcome transportation obstacles between home and work.

# Transportation Issues

- **Road Plowing** – The Town would like to improve the road plowing that is provided by Marathon County.
- **Housing/Transportation Connection** – The Town recognizes that more housing will increase the demand placed on its transportation systems.
- **STH 29** – STH 29 improvements will limit access to this highway in the future. This will be a concern to residents, as it could impact development potential, as well as increasing development pressure in some areas.
- **Road Upgrades** – A portion of Huckleberry Road needs to be upgraded to Town standards.
- **Road Paving** – There is a long-term desire to pave all roads.

## Transportation Programs

Below is a listing of programs that may be of assistance to the Town with regard to the development of the local transportation system. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is the primary provider of programs to assist local transportation systems. A wide variety of programs are available to serve the gamut of jurisdictions from county down to the smallest town. The programs most likely to be utilized by rural towns such as Rolling include:

- General Transportation Aids
- Flood Damage Aids
- Town Road Improvement Program
- Town Road Improvement Program – Discretionary
- Local Bridge Improvement Assistance
- Local Transportation Enhancements
- Traffic Signing & Marking Enhancement Grant
- Rustic Roads

More information on these programs can be obtained by contacting the WisDOT region office in Wisconsin Rapids or on the Internet at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/index.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/index.htm).

# Goals, Objectives & Policies

## *Goal 1: Maintain the Town's Transportation system.*

### **Objectives:**

- Maintain the annual process of roadway analysis (PASER) and prioritize maintenance scheduling through the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
- To develop a retainer system for road or other capital repairs which occur as a direct result of large farm equipment and trucks on local roadways.
- Work with the farms in the Town to assist in the reduction of conflicts between farm and non-farm vehicles.
- Maintain and improve the ongoing cooperation with surrounding Towns regarding road maintenance.
- Work with Marathon County to improve snowplowing on County-maintained roads.
- To work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department to effectively enforce weight limits on Town roads.
- To increase the speed at which washed out roads are repaired.
- Develop a strategy to determine the best placement of culverts throughout the Town in an effort to best reduce the impacts of farm equipment on Town roads.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull seeks to maintain and enhance its existing relationships related to the maintenance of roadways along its borders.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Continue the CIP and use of PASER to budget for future road improvements and maintenance.
- Develop requirements and accompanying standards as the basis for a retainer system to ensure that any damage done to Town roads by large equipment and trucks is repaired.
- Work with Marathon County to develop a program/protocol to inform new rural residents about the realities of farm equipment on Town roads.
- Meet with surrounding Towns and Cities as needed to renew existing agreements and enhance agreements, where appropriate.
- Meet with Marathon County and the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby to identify methods to improve snowplowing in the Town.
- Investigate contracting with either Abbotsford or Colby to enhance snowplowing in the Town.
- Meet with the Marathon County Sheriff's Dept. and other affected Towns to develop a program to enhance the enforcement of weight limits on Town roads.
- Identify roads that frequently wash out and develop a plan to reduce or eliminate this occurrence.
- Develop a program/plan to quickly repair roads damaged by washouts.



## ***Goal 2: Preserve access to STH 29.***

### **Objectives:**

- Work with WisDOT to maintain the current number of access points to STH 29 from Town roads.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull wishes to maintain the existing number of access points to STH 29.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Meet with WisDOT on a regular basis to communicate the Town's position on access to STH 29.
- Develop a collaborative plan with WisDOT to ensure that Town access to STH 29 is maintained.

# Chapter Five

## Utilities and Community Facilities

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

### Previous Plans and Studies

#### Marathon County All Hazards Mitigation Plan

This document examines general conditions, including an inventory of utilities, community facilities and emergency services throughout the County. Risk assessment is at the heart of the All-Hazards Mitigation program. In order to mitigate the risks, it is necessary to assess their relative importance. The report reviews a series of weather disasters; how they have affected the county in the past and how future instances are likely to affect the County and how local government should respond to such occurrences. The report concludes with suggested mitigation measures that might be taken by local governments to reduce the risk from identified hazards. Counties and incorporated municipalities are required to adopt such plans with updates every five years.

### Utilities

#### Water Service

The Town of Hull does not have a public water supply system. Instead, private wells supply the water for public and private facilities within the Town. Concerns exist over water quality as properties continue to develop.

#### Wastewater

There is no public sewer system in the Town of Hull. Therefore, all development in the Town uses on-site septic systems. The Town, which has Town zoning, requires a minimum lot size of 1-acre for installation of individual septic systems and wells. Generally, these private sewage systems fall into four categories:

- Conventional systems – these systems include an absorption field that is buried under the natural ground level.

- At-grade systems – consist of a septic tank and soil absorption bed. Treatment begins in the first inch of soil.
- Mound systems – these systems include an absorption field that is constructed above ground creating a “mound”.
- Holding tank systems – these systems are considered a last resort and are only allowed if other septic systems cannot be used. Because of the geology and soil types in the area, most homes in the Town use holding tanks.

## **Solid Waste and Recycling**

Residents in the Town of Hull contract for solid waste disposal privately. The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. It consists of the 575-acre landfill, recycling programs, composting, and waste-to-energy.

## **Stormwater Management**

Surface water management (also referred to as “storm water management”) is one of the key components in efforts to improve water quality. It primarily involves controlling the volume, quality, and storage of runoff. Marathon County is especially concerned about non-point sources of pollution, including failing septic systems, urban runoff, and issues often identified with rural areas such as soil erosion, animal waste and pesticides. Non-point pollution is best addressed at the watershed level.

# **Energy and Telecommunications**

## **Electric and Natural Gas**

The Town of Hull receives electric power from Xcel Energy and Clark Electric. Most residents of the Town of Hull must provide their own LP gas service and storage, while others have access to natural gas via WE Energies.

## **Solar Energy Potential**

The Town of Hull recognizes the potential impacts to our community of large-scale Solar Energy projects (100 MW or greater) can be both positive and negative. Since the landscape of our Township offers prime conditions for solar energy development, the Town recognizes the need to encourage the siting of potential solar projects to specific areas that best fit the needs and desires of both the citizens and the agricultural community while minimizing negative impacts on existing land use trends and public interests.

## **Wind Energy Potential**

The Town of Hull recognizes both the positive and negative impacts to our community of large-scale wind energy projects. Although wind energy can be a very cost-effective source of electricity, wind energy

developments do pose potential issues for the Town, mainly regarding visibility, noise, negative impacts on property values, and harmful impacts on wildlife.

The Town has a health and safety ordinance in place for regulating wind energy that complies with the local government regulatory limitations set by 2009 Wisconsin Act 40 - [ch. PSC 128, Wis. Adm. Code](#) and State Statute [§.66.0401](#). Under current state law, a local ordinance may require a study, money compensation, and annual reports, among other requirements.

## Cable/Internet

Several companies currently provide fixed wireline or fixed wireless high speed internet access throughout the Town including Spectrum, Frontier, Country Wireless, T-Mobile, and US Cellular. Additionally, several companies provide internet access via satellite or mobile access. Cable service is available through Spectrum. There are currently two communication towers located within the Town.

# Community Facilities

## Town Operations

The Hull Town Hall is a highly utilized multi-use facility used for reunions, receptions, Town meetings, and various other community functions year-round.

## Schools

The Town of Hull is served by two public school districts: nearly all of the Town is served by the Colby School District, with only a very small area just east of Abbotsford served by the Abbotsford School District. The Colby School District has one elementary school, a middle school, and a high school. Residents of Hull who live in the area served by the Colby School District attend Colby Elementary at 202 Dolf Street, and Colby Middle and High School on North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Colby. The Abbotsford School District operates an elementary school and a combined junior and senior high school. Residents of Hull who are served by the Abbotsford School District attend Abbotsford Elementary at 112 West Spruce Street in Abbotsford, and Abbotsford Junior/Senior High School at 307 North Fourth Avenue in Abbotsford. Residents of Hull are also served by a K-8 Catholic school.

## Post-Secondary Education

- **Northcentral Technical College** – located in Wausau, offers several one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields.
- **Mid-State Technical College** – located in Marshfield, is one of 16 regional colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College system, with campuses in Adams, Marshfield, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids. They offer associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certificates in a wide variety of high demand fields.

- **University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP)** – located in the City of Stevens Point, UWSP was founded in 1894. When combined with its satellite campuses in Wausau and Marshfield, total enrollment is over 8,000. The campus offers 80 baccalaureate degrees, 17 graduate programs, and 90 minors, and is known for its robust fine arts and natural resources programs.
- **University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point at Wausau** – offers courses leading to a baccalaureate degree. They also offer graduate degrees including Master of Business Administration (MBA), Physician Assistant (in partnership with UW Madison), and Master’s Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (in partnership with Northern Vermont University).
- **University of Wisconsin Stevens Point at Marshfield** – located in Marshfield, students can work toward a variety of bachelor’s degree options including business administration, nursing, and social work.

## Libraries

The Town of Hull is served by the Marathon County Library System, as well as municipal libraries in Abbotsford and Colby. The Marathon County Public Library – Wausau Headquarters serves as the main branch of the library system and is located in downtown Wausau.

## Cemeteries

There are no cemeteries located within the Town. However, the Town is part of a cemetery committee in partnership with both the City and Town of Colby.

## Public Safety

- **Law Enforcement** – Police protection for the Town of Hull is provided by the Marathon County Sheriff’s Office.
- **Fire and Emergency Response** – The Town of Hull is part of a shared fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) district – Central Fire & EMS – with the City of Abbotsford and Village of Dorchester.
- **E-911 Dispatch Service** – The Marathon County Sheriff’s Office Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County.

## Hospitals and Medical Services

There are three main hospitals in proximity to the Town of Hull. Marshfield Medical Center is located at 611 Saint Joseph Avenue in Marshfield and offers a full array of services, specialty services and a complete rehabilitation unit. Marathon County, Aspirus Wausau Hospital at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard in Wausau and Marshfield Clinic Hospital in Weston. The Wausau Hospital is a multi-specialty regional health center.

Nearby health care facilities include Marshfield Clinic Colby-Abbotsford Center in Colby, a Marshfield Clinic in the Village of Stratford, and Aspirus clinics in the Villages of Athens and Marathon City.

## Childcare

The Wisconsin Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network is a membership organization made up of community-based CCR&R agencies serving the State of Wisconsin. Marathon County is within Region 6, which is served by Childcaring, Inc., located in Wisconsin Rapids.

CCR&R agencies assist parents in selecting quality childcare, help to increase the supply of childcare in areas that may be lacking sufficient care, offer information and technical support to potential childcare providers, and give technical assistance and support to existing childcare programs. Each agency manages a database of existing childcare providers and programs, collects data about childcare rates, provider and teacher salaries, the number of parents and children using their services, the type of care requested and the children's ages. There are two licensed childcare facilities in the City of Colby, and four other licensed childcare facilities located within ten miles of the Town.

## Recreation

### Parks

The Town of Hull does not own or operate any public parks. However, Cherokee County Park and Winding Creek Rearing Station are located within the Town of Hull.

Nearby Marathon County parks include:

**Cherokee Park** is located in the Town of Hull on CTH F. Cherokee Park is 69 acres located on the Big Eau Pleine River, with an impoundment that provides for swimming and fishing. A handsome and well-maintained Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era shelter overlooks the river and provides space for group gatherings. Facilities at Cherokee Park include benches, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, play equipment, and a hiking trail.

**The 45°N - 90°W Geographic Marker** is a county-operated park located within the Town of Rietbrock. A quarter-mile pathway will lead you to the point that is the exact center of the Northwest Hemisphere where the 45th Parallel of Latitude intersects the 90th Meridian of Longitude. There are only four 45° - 90° locations in the world, and this is the only conveniently accessible marker in the world. There is a perceived significance that this geographical location is responsible for the prevalence

and high quality of ginseng in Marathon County. This park contains a gravel path, picnic tables & seating, and a surveyor's marker & monument sign explaining the geological significance of the location.

**Big Eau Pleine Park** - Marathon County owns and maintains Big Eau Pleine Park, which is half in Green Valley and half in Bergen. Big Eau Pleine is the County's largest park, at 1,450 acres located on a peninsula on the north shore of the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. Active recreation areas are concentrated in two main sites on the shores of the reservoir. Park facilities include: campgrounds, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, CCC-era shelters, drinking fountains, boat launches, swimming beaches, play equipment. The extensive trail system allows for cross-country skiing, hiking, and nature walks. Fishing is a popular activity.

**Amco Park** includes an open picnic shelter, permanent picnic tables, water pump, shelter, play equipment, and vault toilets. There are no reservations taken for park facilities.

**Big Rapids Park** Contains an upper and lower area. The lower area includes picnic tables, swim beach, picnic area, vault restrooms, no grills, dumpster. The upper area consists of playground equipment, a water pump, open shelter, 2 grills, picnic tables, horseshoe pits, dumpster, and a paved path.

**Rib Mountain State Park** is the closest state park to the Town of Hull. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and contains picnicking amenities, hiking trails, and reservable facilities that include a scenic amphitheater, indoor gathering space, and picnic shelters. The top of the park offers spectacular views of the Wausau area and Wisconsin River. Granite Peak Ski Area is on the north face of the mountain and offers downhill skiing and snowboarding.

## Utilities and Community Facilities Issues

- **Cell Towers** – There are only two police squad cars in the western portion of the County. Residents feel this is inadequate to deal with the needs in the region.
- **Solar Energy Farms** – There are concerns about harmful impacts of commercial solar development on prime farmland and the agricultural landscape.
- **Wind Energy** – There are concerns about harmful impacts such as noise, health, aesthetics, negative, loss of productive farmland, and negative impacts on property values associated with wind energy developments.
- **Loss of Prime Farmland** – There are concerns about the loss of prime farmland to commercial developments, including commercial wind and solar developments.

# Goals, Objectives & Policies

## *Goal 1: Ensure a sufficient supply of potable water.*

### **Objectives:**

- To discourage concentrated development in areas with limited water availability.
- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify critical zones, such as groundwater recharge areas, and update applicable Town ordinances.
- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to monitor the impact of high-volume wells on the water table.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull does not approve of development occurring in locales with limited water availability.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Working in conjunction with Marathon County and the WDNR, identify critical groundwater zones.
- Update existing Town ordinances to protect these critical groundwater areas through such mechanisms as requiring setbacks, or regulating uses on or near these sites.
- Develop criteria to govern the drilling of high-capacity wells in the Town of Hull.
- Monitor the impact of existing and future high-capacity wells on the water table.

## *Goal 2: Maintain current provision services.*

### **Objectives:**

- To perform annual budget allocations to fund public services.
- Continue to find methods of cost saving, such as equipment sharing, with surrounding municipalities to increase the efficiency by which services are provided.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull supports efforts to cooperatively provide services with surrounding municipalities and Towns.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Perform an annual budget process to allocate funds to public services.
- Meet with surrounding Towns and Cities to identify methods through which cost savings may be achieved.



### ***Goal 3: Provide effective public safety services.***

#### **Objectives:**

- Work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department and the Cities of Colby and Abbotsford to continue to provide effective police and EMS services to the area.
- Investigate a joint service agreement with either the City of Abbotsford or the City of Colby for police protection.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Meet with the Marathon County Sheriff's Dept. on an annual basis.

### ***Goal 4: Support the Marathon County Park and forest system that serve residents of the Town of Hull.***

#### **Objectives:**

- To encourage appropriate funding for maintenance and improvements of local Marathon County parks and forests.
- To encourage improvements and appropriate upkeep for Cherokee County Park.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull supports the funding of the Marathon County park and forest system.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Encourage appropriate funding levels for the Marathon County park system.
- Meet with the Marathon County Parks Department to develop a long-term plan for improvements to Cherokee County Park.

# Chapter Six

## Economic Development

The economic base of the community serves as an important driver for current and future land use. Economic characteristics include such components as the size of the civilian labor force, comparative employment growth, employment by industry, unemployment rates, and commuting patterns. Employment patterns and economic trends generally occur on a regional scale. Residents of one community often work in another. Similarly, changes in a major industry can impact jobs and growth far beyond the community where the business is physically located. It is therefore important to understand a local community's economy in light of its regional context.

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

### Previous Plans and Studies

#### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), 2021

Marathon County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The NCWRPC is the agency responsible for maintaining that designation. As part of the designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a CEDS. This report summarizes and assesses economic development activities over the past year and presents new and modified strategies to promote growth.

#### Regional Livability Plan (RLP), 2015

Economic Development is one of four elements included in the RLP, adopted by the NCWRPC in 2015. The Economic Development Assessment Report within the RLP observes in detail the economic health of the ten-county region and identifies trends and issues facing the local economy.

The RLP addresses three economic development issues:

- Available Labor Force and Employment – Businesses need a workforce with the proper education to meet the demands of an ever-changing job market. High labor needs combined with an older workforce preparing for retirement will result in a labor force shortage and inability to meet the workforce needs of area businesses. The future availability of a quality labor force is a major concern for the business community.
- Living Wage – over the past ten years, the region's cost of living (i.e. home prices and rent) have increased faster than per capita and household incomes. Consequently, many working adults

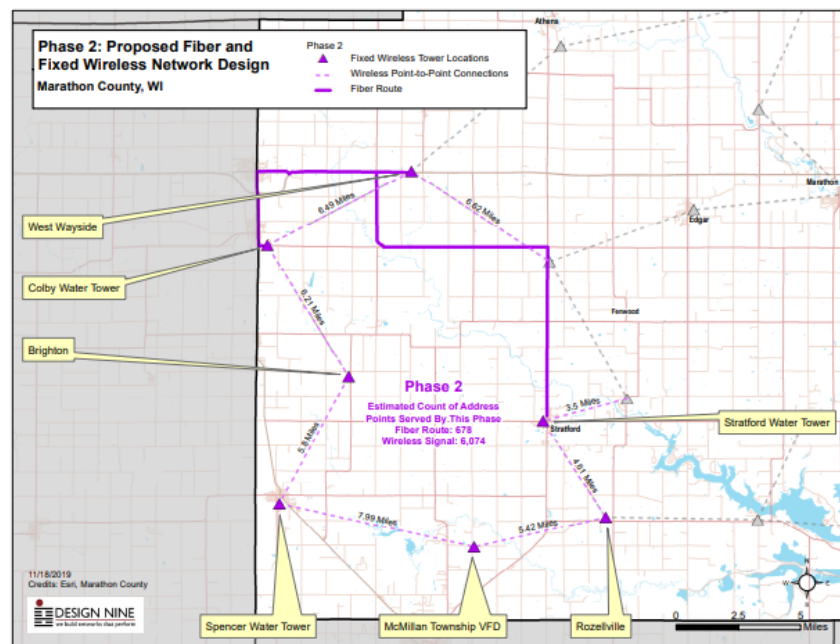
must seek public assistance and/or hold multiple jobs in order to meet the basic needs of their families. Occupations paying a living wage provide families resources for savings, investments, education, and the purchasing of goods which improves the local economy and increases the quality of life of the region's population.

- Broadband – High-speed broadband connections are crucial for government services, healthcare, education, library systems, private businesses, and residents. Improving the region's telecommunication network can assist existing businesses, attract new businesses, and allow residents to access education opportunities.

### **Broadband for Marathon County - Broadband Assessment and Plan, 2019**

The Broadband Feasibility Study is the latest action Marathon County has taken in proactively planning for high-speed internet. In the fall of 2018, Marathon County Extension engaged community stakeholders in dialogue about broadband and cellular coverage within the County. Phase two continues building fiber to the west end of the County.

**Figure 7: Phase Two Proposed Fiber and Wireless, Page 71**



### **ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Wisconsin, 2023**

This report, developed by the United Way, described the 20 percent of households in Marathon County that are above the federal poverty level, but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or “ALICE” households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). These households are largely employed but do not earn enough in wages to meet the “household survival budget,” which does not allow for any savings. The report states that many ALICE households provide vital services, such as retail, health care, childcare, and security, but cannot make ends meet on the income provided from these jobs.

- The ALICE report shows that 23 percent of Town of Hull households are either below the federal poverty level or are considered ALICE households, indicating that the average household in the Town of Hull is slightly less financially prosperous than the average Marathon County household at-large. This is based on 2021 data, so affordability is likely a larger challenge as housing prices and inflation have increased since then.

### **Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, 2016**

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan sets an economic development goal of being the most prosperous county in the state. The plan analyzes education, workforce development, economic development, and sets goals and objectives in these key areas. Goals include:

- Ensuring that every resident has the opportunity to receive a world-class education
- Ensuring that every worker have family supporting job and that every business has a strong workforce
- Ensuring that Marathon County is a diverse economy and place of opportunities where people and businesses can grow to be successful

## **Economic Environment**

### **County Economic Environment**

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

Marathon County data is presented for comparison, because the Town of Hull is located within Marathon County. It should be noted that most of the predominant economic data for Marathon County is derived from the Wausau metropolitan region, as most of the Marathon County population is centered in this area.

### **Economic Sectors**

**Table 18** details employment by sector for the Town of Hull and Marathon County. In 2022, there were 392 persons employed in the thirteen basic economic sectors in the Town, a nearly two percent increase from the Town’s total employment in 2010. In 2022, the leading industry sectors for Town of Hull employed residents were the Manufacturing, Retail Trade, and Construction sectors.

Overall, there were 71,774 persons employed in the basic economic industry sectors in Marathon County in 2022. Employment within Marathon County has increased by 2.6 percent since 2010 when there were 69,980 persons employed. The leading industry sectors within Marathon County in 2022 were the Education, Health and Social Services; Manufacturing; and Retail Trade sectors.

Between 2000 and 2022, there were several dramatic shifts in employment throughout industries within Marathon County. Three sectors – the Other Services; Public Administration; and the Education, Health, and Social Services sectors – experienced significant increases in employment between 2010 and 2022, with each of these sectors experiencing increases in employment of over 15 percent. Only four sectors – the Information; Manufacturing; Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services; and the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining sectors – experienced a decrease in employment within the County during this time.

| <b>Table 18: Employment by Industry Sector</b>                             |                     |             |                 |                        |               |                 |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>Sector</b>  | <b>Town of Hull</b> |             |                 | <b>Marathon County</b> |               |                 |
|  | <b>2010</b>         | <b>2022</b> | <b>% Change</b> | <b>2010</b>            | <b>2022</b>   | <b>% Change</b> |
| Ag., Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining                                   | 118                 | 47          | -60.2%          | 2,231                  | 2,186         | -2.0%           |
| Construction   | 35                  | 55          | 57.1%           | 3,891                  | 4,002         | 2.9%            |
| Manufacturing  | 71                  | 69          | -2.8%           | 16,870                 | 14,600        | -13.5%          |
| Wholesale Trade  | 0                   | 11          | 100.0%          | 2,369                  | 2,408         | 1.6%            |
| Retail Trade   | 22                  | 61          | 177.3%          | 7,697                  | 8,012         | 4.1%            |
| Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities                                    | 8                   | 26          | 225.0%          | 3,116                  | 3,160         | 1.4%            |
| Information  | 0                   | 0           | 0.0%            | 1,026                  | 710           | -30.8%          |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing                                  | 7                   | 7           | 0.0%            | 5,471                  | 5,796         | 5.9%            |
| Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Mgmt Services | 10                  | 38          | 280.0%          | 3,865                  | 4,078         | 5.5%            |
| Education, Health, and Social Services                                     | 83                  | 50          | -39.8%          | 14,895                 | 17,681        | 18.7%           |
| Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services           | 15                  | 8           | -46.7%          | 4,702                  | 4,552         | -3.2%           |
| Public Administration  | 0                   | 3           | 100.0%          | 1,393                  | 1,609         | 15.5%           |
| Other Services   | 16                  | 17          | 6.3%            | 2,454                  | 2,980         | 21.4%           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>385</b>          | <b>392</b>  | <b>1.8%</b>     | <b>69,980</b>          | <b>71,774</b> | <b>2.6%</b>     |

*Source: American Community Survey (2018-2022)*

## Labor Force Analysis

Labor force is defined as the number of persons, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employed. **Table 19** compares the labor force of the Town of Hull with that of Marathon County. Between 2010 and 2022, the Town of Hull experienced a 1.5 percent decrease in the labor force, as the Town's labor force increased from 400 residents in 2010 to 394 residents in 2022. The decrease in the Town's labor

force during this time is similar to the decrease experienced in Marathon County during the same time period. With a labor force consisting of 74,139 persons in 2022, Marathon County's labor force has decreased by 1.1 percent since 2010, when the County's labor force consisted of 74,962 persons.

| <b>Table 19: Town of Hull Labor Force</b> |                     |             |                       |                        |             |                       |
|---|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
|   | <b>Town of Hull</b> |             |                       | <b>Marathon County</b> |             |                       |
|   | <b>2010</b>         | <b>2022</b> | <b>Percent Change</b> | <b>2010</b>            | <b>2022</b> | <b>Percent Change</b> |
| Population 16 years and over              | 601                 | 574         | -4.5%                 | 103,816                | 110,583     | 6.5%                  |
| Labor Force                               | 400                 | 394         | -1.5%                 | 74,962                 | 74,139      | -1.1%                 |
| Employed                                  | 385                 | 392         | 1.8%                  | 69,980                 | 71,774      | 2.6%                  |
| Unemployed                                | 15                  | 2           | -86.7%                | 4,856                  | 2,327       | -52.1%                |
| Unemployment Rate                         | 2.5%                | 0.3%        | -88.0%                | 4.7%                   | 2.1%        | -55.3%                |
| Participation Rate                        | 66.6%               | 68.6%       | 3.0%                  | 72.2%                  | 67.0%       | -7.2%                 |

*Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)*

## Unemployment

Unemployment is defined as the difference between the total civilian labor force and total persons employed. Stay-at-home parents, retirees, or persons not searching for employment are not considered unemployed because they are not considered part of the labor force. In 2010, the Town of Hull had 2.5 percent unemployment, and the 2022 unemployment rate was lower at 0.3 percent. The Town of Hull's unemployment rate was lower than Marathon County (2.1%) and higher than the State of Wisconsin (2.2%) in 2022.

## Workforce Participation

Workforce participation is a measure expressed in terms of a percentage of persons actively seeking employment divided by the total working age population. People not participating in the labor force may not seek employment due to a variety of reasons including retirement, disability, choice to be a homemaker, or are simply not looking for work. In 2010, about two thirds of the Town of Hull's population over the age of 16 was in the labor force. In 2022, the Town of Hull had a slightly higher labor force participation rate, at nearly 69 percent. The Town's labor force participation rate in 2022 was higher than Marathon County's participation rate of about 67 percent. The Town of Hull also had a much higher participation rate than the State (65.7%), while Marathon County had a slightly higher participation rate than the State.

## Laborshed

A laborshed is an area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. In 2021, there were 304 jobs located within the Town of Hull, with 298 of these jobs being filled by persons who live outside of the Town. In contrast, there were 270 workers who live in the Town of Hull that commuted to locations outside of the Town for work, as shown in **Figure 8**. This indicates that Hull's laborshed extends beyond its municipal borders.

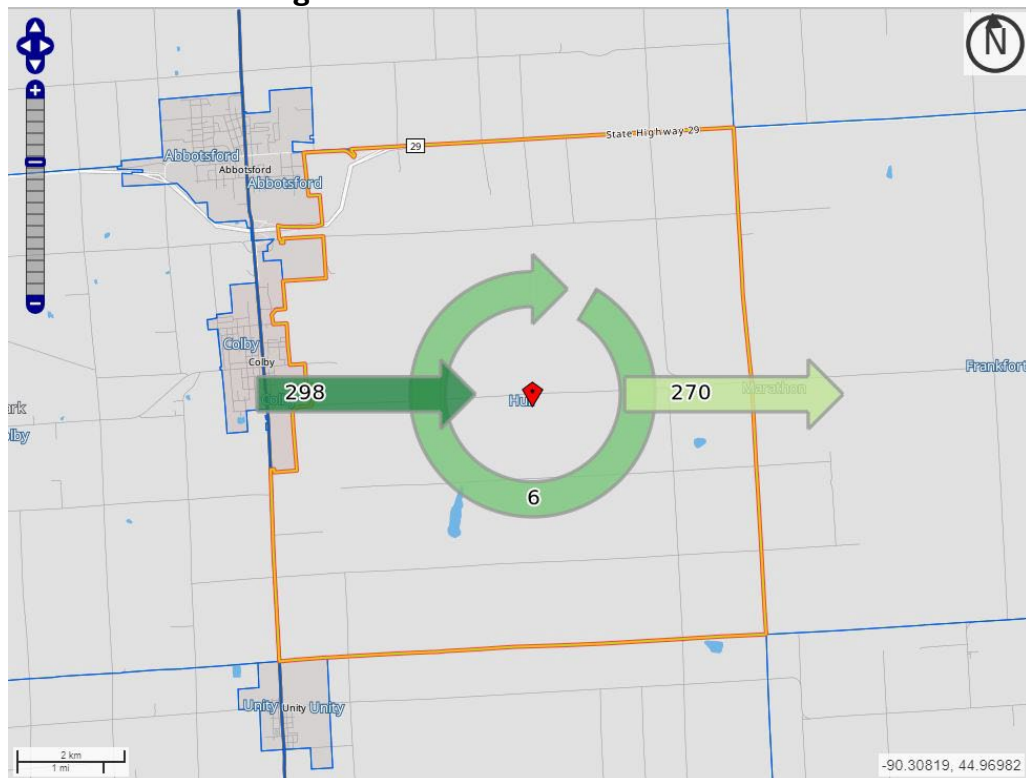
### In-Migration

The majority of workers that commute into the Town for work live in close proximity to the Town, with many of these workers either living within Marathon County or in neighboring Clark County.

### Out-Migration

The most substantial group of outbound commuters (those who live in the Town but work outside of the Town) travel to the City of Abbotsford for work. Other common work locations for Town residents include the Cities of Marshfield, Wausau, and Colby and the Villages of Dorchester and Marathon City.

**Figure 8: Town of Hull Laborshed**



*Source: U.S. Census On the Map*

### Occupations

As shown in **Table 20**, most residents in the Town of Hull were employed in Management, business, science, and arts occupations. The second sector most represented was the area Sales & Office occupations, followed by Production, transportation, and material moving occupations. From 2010 to 2022, the most significant increase in employment were seen in Sales & Office occupations while all the other occupational groups experienced a decrease in employment among Town residents.

| Table 20: Occupation of Employed Workers         |              |      |                 |        |
|--|--------------|------|-----------------|--------|
| Occupation                                       | Town of Hull |      | Marathon County |        |
|  | 2000         | 2022 | 2000            | 2022   |
| Management, Professional & Related               | 160          | 136  | 19,745          | 26,418 |
| Service  | 43           | 17   | 8,127           | 10,499 |
| Sales & Office                                   | 60           | 87   | 17,457          | 14,094 |
| Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance | 88           | 77   | 6,716           | 6,662  |
| Production, Transportation & Mineral Moving      | 77           | 75   | 14,505          | 14,101 |
| Total  | 428          | 392  | 66,550          | 71,774 |

Source: U.S. Census and American Community Survey (2018-2022)

## Economic Development Programs

There are a number of economic development programs available to businesses and local governments in Marathon County. A partial list of those programs is listed below:

### Local:

#### Tax Increment Financing

In 2004, the WI State Legislature enacted changes to the state's Tax Increment Financing statutes. One significant change involved allowing townships to establish tax increment districts for specified economic development projects. Tax Increment Financing has been employed by numerous communities throughout the state to promote redevelopment in blighted areas and finance new industrial development.

### County:

#### MCDEVCO

MCDEVCO acts as an economic development coordinator for all of Marathon County. The purpose of the Corporation is to promote the social and economic welfare of the residents of Marathon County. The primary focus is to lessen the burdens of government by reducing the need for public assistance; and to alleviate unemployment, relieve poverty, and eliminate blighted areas that had surfaced within the County. The organization's fundamental objectives are to bring about civic betterments and social improvements designed to promote the common good and general welfare of Marathon County.

#### MCDEVCO Revolving Loan Funds

MCDEVCO's Revolving Loan Funds provide gap financing that can be used to finance acquisition of existing businesses, land, building, and equipment; working capital; or construction/expansion projects. Gap financing builds strong communities for Marathon County. Economic development through gap financing attracts new businesses and allows small businesses to grow.



## Regional:

### North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

The Town is a member of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, as are all local governments in Marathon County based on county membership. Membership brings with it a variety of planning benefits and service. 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. In addition, resulting in membership with the NCWRPC, the County is a member of the Central Wisconsin Fund which 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.

### Central Wisconsin Development Fund

The Central Wisconsin Development Fund (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. It is targeted at the timber and wood products industry, tourism, and other manufacturing and service industries.

## State:

### Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

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

- 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

### Rural Economic Development Program

This program administered by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) provides grants and low interest loans for small business (less than 25 employees) start-ups or expansions in rural areas. Funds may be used for "soft costs" only, such as planning, engineering, and marketing assistance.

### **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: acquisition of real estate, buildings, or equipment; construction, expansion or remodeling; and working capital for inventory and direct labor.

### **University of Wisconsin Extension Office**

The Center for Community Economic Development, University of Wisconsin Extension, creates, applies and transfers multidisciplinary knowledge to help people understand community change and identify opportunities.

### **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 Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**

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

### **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.

## **Federal:**

### **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

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

### **US Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA – RD)**

The USDA Rural Development program is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of 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.

### 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.

## Economic Development Issues

- **Farm Economy** – Farming is becoming an increasingly difficult endeavor as young people no longer have the desire to farm, and growth pressures increase.
- **Business Retention** – Retaining existing businesses is a concern, as they provide jobs and tax base for the community.
- **Farmland Preservation** – Lands enrolled in the Farmland Preservation program face development restrictions, which hinder economic development opportunities.

# Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Although the Town of Hull has not, historically, played a role in economic development, it supports efforts to stabilize and expand the economic base and employment opportunity for its residents and the community as a whole. A review of economic base assessment information has led to the establishment of the following economic development policy statement:

## *Goal 1: Strengthen the viability of the local agricultural economy.*

### **Objectives:**

- Explore the development of niche markets for agricultural products (e.g. organic/hydroponic).
- Encourage secondary business development, such as outdoor markets or canneries, around the agricultural economy.
- Work with Marathon County and other agencies such as the UW-Extension, to explore regional approaches to aiding the agricultural economy, such as regional manure digesters and farm preservation contracts.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will consider the use of TIF to encourage the development of agriculturally related industries and developments

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Review and update as appropriate, Town policies regarding the development of secondary agricultural development.
- In cooperation with Marathon County, UW-Extension, and other neighboring communities, develop a regional plan to encourage enhancement and further development of the regional agricultural economy.

## *Goal 2: Attract, retain and enhance local businesses.*

### **Objectives:**

- Meet with existing business owners to identify their needs.
- Work with Marathon County, the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby, and other appropriate agencies to provide area businesses with support.
- Consider taking some land out of farmland preservation to open it up for business development.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will consider the use of TIF to encourage the development of agriculturally related industries and developments.

**Strategies and Actions:**

- Review and update as appropriate, Town policies regarding the development of secondary agricultural industries.
- In concert with the County and UW-Extension, develop a visitation program to meet with local agricultural operators and other businesses to discover how to assist them in being more successful.
- Work with the Cities of Abbotsford, and Colby to develop a commercial corridor plan for the area.
- Work with area cities and other appropriate entities to develop a “Buy Local” program to support local merchants.

# Chapter Seven

## Land Use

Land use is a major component of the Comprehensive Plan. Analysis of land use is a means of broadly classifying how land is used across the entire Town. Each type of use has its own characteristics that can determine compatibility and location to other land uses in the Town. Land use information is used to examine the current pattern of development and serves as the framework for formulating how land will be used in the future. There are two primary maps associated with this chapter: the first is a land use map, that examines how land is currently being used, and the second is a future land use map, that lays out desired land use in the future.

### Previous Plans and Studies

#### Regional Livability Plan (RLP), 2015

Wisconsin requires that regional planning commissions develop a comprehensive plan for the area they serve. These plans are advisory only. The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan which serves Marathon County prepared the Regional Livability Plan (RLP) in 2015. The RLP is focused on four elements, one of these is Land Use. The plan identifies two land use goals:

- Preserve and protect the Region's landscape, environmental resources and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.
- Manage and redevelop vacant structures.

#### Marathon County Comprehensive Plan, 2016

The Marathon County Comprehensive Plan chapter on land use analyzes pattern of development, existing land use, and future land use. The plan sets the following land use goals:

- Minimize scattered rural development and preserve rural character.
- Preserve active farming.
- Encourage redevelopment of under-utilized areas.
- Provide tools for managing and coordinating growth.

#### Town of Hull Comprehensive Plan, 2005

Town of Hull Comprehensive Plan is a policy plan that describes existing and future land uses, and regulatory tools for land use. The overall goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide consistency between official mapping, zoning and subdivision ordinances, local plans, and other implementation tools.

## Existing Land Use

The Town of Hull covers about 20,854 acres in the western portion of Marathon County. The Town is bounded by the Town of Holton to the north, the Town of Colby (in Clark County) to the west, the Town of Frankfort to the east and the Town of Brighton to the south. The Cities of Abbotsford and Colby share borders with the Town in the western portion of the Town and the Village of Unity shares a border with the Town along the southwest portion of the Town.

Knowledge of the existing land use patterns within a town is necessary to develop a desired “future” land use pattern. The **Existing Land Use Map** was developed using air photos from a countywide flight in 2021, with updates by residents in 2024. Twelve basic categories were used to classify the various existing land uses. The categories include Agriculture, Commercial, Governmental/Institutional, Industrial, Open Lands, Outdoor Recreation, Quarry, Residential, Transportation, Utility, Water, and Woodlands.

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.

### Existing Land Use Classifications

The **Existing Land Use Map** outlines the existing land use pattern throughout the Town. The intent of an existing land use map is to illustrate the location of existing land use categories within the Town for planning purposes. Land use classifications are grouped by the use most central to each parcel. For example, lands classified as residential may also have a barn or home-based business on site.

Existing land use classifications and acreage totals are presented in **Table 21**. Agriculture accounts for the largest share of the Town’s land area at about 70 percent. The next largest land use category is Woodlands at about 18 percent, followed by Residential at about 5 percent and Transportation at about 3 percent. Uses such as Commercial, Industrial, Governmental, Open Lands, and Water occupy the rest of the Town.

| <b>Table 21: Existing Land Use</b> |               |                         |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Land Use</b>                    | <b>Acres</b>  | <b>Percent of Total</b> |
| Agriculture                        | 14,547        | 69.8%                   |
| Commercial                         | 28            | 0.1%                    |
| Governmental / Institutional       | 2             | 0.0%                    |
| Industrial                         | 18            | 0.1%                    |
| Open Lands                         | 566           | 2.7%                    |
| Outdoor Recreation                 | 8             | 0.0%                    |
| Quarry                             | 12            | 0.1%                    |
| Residential                        | 943           | 4.5%                    |
| Transportation                     | 635           | 3.0%                    |
| Utility                            | 2             | 0.0%                    |
| Water                              | 260           | 1.2%                    |
| Woodlands                          | 3,834         | 18.4%                   |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>20,854</b> | <b>100.0%</b>           |

Source: NCMRPC

## Managed Forest Law & Public Lands

There are 415 acres enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program and approximately 182 acres of additional tax-exempt land in the Town. This is a voluntary program between willing landowners and the State of Wisconsin.

## Land Supply and Demand

As shown by the existing land use inventory, the majority of the Town is "undeveloped" agricultural areas or woodlands, so the supply of land "available" for development appears to be adequate. Even under a rapid growth scenario, the supply of land in the Town of Hull is more than sufficient to accommodate projected demand over the next 20 years for all use categories.

## Land Values

**Table 22** displays the assessed land values in the Town of Hull. It is important to note that lands enrolled in the Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law programs and other exempt lands are not included in values for Table 22. Overall, land value per acre in the Town is valued at about \$4,214 per acre based on assessed land values from tax information submitted to the Department of Revenue. Residential properties have the highest value per acre, followed by those properties designated as other and commercial.



**Table 22: Assessed Land Value (per acre), 2023**

| Land Classification | Total Value of Land and Improvements | Average Value per Acre |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Residential         | \$38,339,600                         | \$98,813               |
| Commercial          | \$2,080,500                          | \$69,350               |
| Manufacturing       | \$13,005,000                         | \$722,500              |
| Agriculture         | \$3,408,400                          | \$245                  |
| Undeveloped         | \$2,195,200                          | \$1,050                |
| Forest              | \$2,996,000                          | \$1,454                |
| Agricultural Forest | \$3,068,600                          | \$3,056                |
| Other               | \$17,826,400                         | \$100,714              |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>\$82,919,700</b>                  | <b>\$4,214</b>         |

*Source: VT Department of Revenue*

## Opportunities for Redevelopment

The vast majority of the Town currently consists of open farmland, wetlands and woodlands, all of which has experienced very little development. Hence the need for “redevelopment” is negligible. Some developed areas may not meet current development standards or may have fallen into disrepair since they were developed. Some of these properties may be in need of rehabilitation by property owners rather than needing a comprehensive redevelopment strategy.

## Major Opportunities and Constraints

There is little incentive for younger people to take over farms. This reduces the value of land for agricultural purposes and increases its value for other purposes. The Town is also experiencing a trend where the number of farms is decreasing, while the size of farms is increasing.

## Future Land Use Map

The **Future Land Use Map** 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.

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

The identification of desired future land use types through the map does not imply that an area is immediately appropriate for rezoning. Given service demands and a desire for controlled growth, careful consideration to the timing of zoning decisions is essential. In some places, it may be desirable to rezone

land to reflect the planned land use designations as soon as possible. In other cases, it may be appropriate to wait to rezone the area until an actual development proposal is brought forward.

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

Town of Hull Plan Commission members participated in a mapping exercise with NCWRPC staff to identify the desired future land uses by using twelve common Land Use Map Classifications, 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.

The map includes ten land use categories to guide where new residential and non-residential development should be encouraged to locate or where development should be discouraged. Descriptions of each land use category are provided below.

## Future Land Use Map Classifications

### **Barren Land**

Unused open land in wooded areas, along streams, and along roadsides.

### **Commercial Services**

Identifies areas that are recommended for commercial and business development, varying in scale and intensity, as well as existing commercial establishments located throughout the Town.

### **Cropland**

Identifies areas designed to foster the preservation and use of agricultural land and related uses including the associated farmsteads. Cropland areas are those with tilled agriculture and areas of prime farmland.

### **Forest Land**

Identifies areas of woodlands within the Town, as well as areas for reforestation.

### **Industrial and Quarry**

Identifies areas recommended for industrial development, as well as existing industrial uses.

### **Other Agriculture**

Identifies agricultural areas consisting of fallow, pasture and undetermined agricultural uses, power lines and towers, water towers, and municipal wells.

### **Public/Quasi-Public**

Identifies existing or planned governmental/public/institutional facilities within the Town, including churches, cemeteries, government buildings, and recreational facilities.

### **Quarry**

Gravel pits and non-metallic mining operations.

### **Recreational**

Areas of outdoor recreation include parks and undeveloped spaces such as county forests and DNR wildlife areas.

### **Rural Mixed Use**

Allowable uses: Commercial, rural residential, and agriculture.

### **Single Family Residential**

Identifies areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of one family structures, farm residences, and/or mobile homes.

### **Water and Wetlands**

Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.

# Land Use Programs and Tools

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

## Comprehensive Planning Programming

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law was established in state statutes in 1999. The comprehensive plan is intended to be a local government's guide to community physical, social, and economic development. Comprehensive plans are not meant to serve as land use regulations in themselves; instead, they provide a rational basis for local land use decisions with a twenty-year vision for future planning and community decisions.

The Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law does not mandate how a local community should grow, but it requires public participation at the local level in deciding a vision for the community's future. The uniqueness of individual comprehensive plans reflects community-specific and locally driven planning processes.

While a local government may choose to include additional elements, a comprehensive plan must include at least all of the nine elements below as defined by the Comprehensive Planning Law (s. 66.1001).

- Issues and Opportunities (Demographics)
- Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources
- Housing
- Utilities and Community Facilities
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Land Use
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Implementation

## Zoning

Basically, zoning is a set of regulations used to minimize land use conflicts and promote development that supports a community's values. It regulates how property is used and how development occurs as well as the physical placement of buildings on land. Under Wisconsin Statutes, counties and local units of government are authorized to adopt zoning ordinances.

A zoning ordinance consists of a written text and a map. The text of a zoning ordinance specifies the permitted land uses, the size of buildings, yard/lot dimensions, and other prerequisites in obtaining permission to develop, while the zoning map arranges the community into districts or zones, such as agriculture, residential, commercial, or industrial. Each of these districts has different regulations. The goal of the zoning ordinance is to establish a reasonable development pattern by keeping similar and

related uses together and separating dissimilar, unrelated, incompatible uses, particularly in relationship to transportation facilities, utilities and public services and facilities.

Zoning within the Town of Hull is regulated by Marathon County. The vast majority of land in the Town is zoned A-1 for agricultural uses.

## **Consistency between Land Use and Zoning**

Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation.

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

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

## **Shoreland Zoning**

All counties, including Marathon County, are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates development in shoreland and floodplain areas for the entire county outside of villages and cities in accordance with state shoreland zoning standards. Towns may apply their own zoning in shoreland areas as long as it does not impose requirements regulated by a county.

## **Land Division**

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

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

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

## Official Mapping

An Official Map is a map adopted by a municipality that specifies locations of future roads and other utilities or public facilities, along with right-of-way widths and other specifications. When a land division is approved, it must accommodate dimensions for future facilities according to the Official Map. Currently, the Town of Hull does not have an official map.

## Other Tools

Additional tools and approaches can be utilized by the Town to achieve the goals of the plan. These include but are certainly not limited to the following: fee simple land acquisition, easements (purchased or volunteered), deed restrictions, land dedication, and ordinances or programs regulating activities such as impact fees, land division, building permits, and erosion control.

## Land Use Issues

- **Farmland Preservation** – The trend of selling farmland has increased. The 35-acre minimum has worked to preserve some farmland.
- **Farm Buildings** – Oftentimes, when a farmer sells land, the house and buildings are left to decay. This is a concern for residents.
- **Concentration of New Growth** – The Town would like to direct most growth towards the regional urban centers, such as Abbotsford and Colby.
- **County Zoning** – Residents feel that County zoning works, but that the Town does not get support from the County, mostly due to its location on the western fringe of the County's boundary.
- **Undesirable Land Uses** – There is a desire to clean up the junkyard in Hull. This can present public health issues as well as aesthetic issues.
- **Annexation** – Annexation by Colby and Abbotsford is a major concern, as the Town loses control and tax base.

# Goals, Objectives & Policies

## *Goal 1: Maintain the rural character of the Town.*

### **Objectives:**

- Direct future growth to areas contiguous to existing developed areas, such as the City of Abbotsford and the City of Colby.
- Encourage participation in incentive programs, such as MFL or Farmland Preservation Program to preserve the Town's rural character.
- Identify and protect areas of prime agricultural soil.
- Explore options to make it easier for housing development while maintaining the Town's rural character.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will direct future residential developments to areas surrounding or contiguous to existing developed areas, such as the Cities of Colby and Abbotsford.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Identify prime farm soils and direct growth to other areas, away from this resource.
- Identify areas with large stands of forested area and encourage those owners to participate in the Managed Forest Law, and other applicable programs.

## *Goal 2: Effectively enforce nuisance regulations.*

### **Objectives:**

- To ensure that regulations relating to the dumping of solid waste and trash are adequately enforced.
- Work with the owner of the junkyard to develop a plan to clean up this property.
- To obtain adequate support from Marathon County relating to the cleanup of junkyards and other blighted areas.
- To ensure that vacant buildings are removed in a timely manner.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will work with Marathon County Sheriff's Dept. to actively enforce a prohibition on the dumping of solid waste and trash in the Town.

### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Conduct meeting(s) with the owner of the junkyard to identify a long-term strategy to clean up the property.
- Develop and enforce an overall nuisance / junk ordinance.
- Meet with owners of properties with vacant buildings to develop a plan to remove existing, vacant buildings.

### ***Goal 3: Improve the Town's interaction with land use ordinances.***

#### **Objectives:**

- Work with Marathon County to ensure that Town needs relating to land use controls are met.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Meet with Marathon County, on a regular basis, to ensure Town land use needs are met through the County's zoning code and staff support.

### ***Goal 4: Maintain appropriate size farms.***

#### **Objectives:**

- To limit dairy farms to an appropriate size.

#### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will review farm developments in excess of 500 animal units.

#### **Strategies and Actions:**

- Develop an ordinance to review farms in excess of 500 animal units.



# Chapter Eight

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

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

### Overview

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

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

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

The major beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation is the local resident. They may not understand, or even care about, the details of a particular intergovernmental issue, but residents can appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

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

- Local government's financial situation;
- Opportunity to reduce costs by working together;
- Elimination of duplication of services;
- Population settlement patterns and population mobility; and
- Economic and environmental interdependence.

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

## Intergovernmental Relationships

### School Districts

The Town of Hull is served by two public school districts: nearly all of the Town is served by the Colby School District, with only a very small area just east of Abbotsford served by the Abbotsford School District. The Colby School District has one elementary school, middle school, and a high school. Residents of Hull who live in the area served by the Colby School District attend Colby Elementary at 202 Dolf Street, and Colby Middle and High School on North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Colby. The Abbotsford School District operates a combined elementary, junior and senior high school. Residents of Hull who are served by the Abbotsford School District attend school at 307 North Fourth Avenue in Abbotsford. Residents of Hull of Hull are also served by a K-8 Catholic school.

### Post-Secondary Education

- **Northcentral Technical College** – located in Wausau, offers several one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields.
- **Mid-State Technical College** – located in Marshfield, is one of 16 regional colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College system, with campuses in Adams, Marshfield, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids. They offer associate degrees, technical diplomas, and certificates in a wide variety of high demand fields.
- **University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP)** – located in the City of Stevens Point, UWSP was founded in 1894. When combined with its satellite campuses in Wausau and Marshfield, total enrollment is over 8,000. The campus offers 80 baccalaureate degrees, 17 graduate programs, and 90 minors, and is known for its robust fine arts and natural resources programs.
- **University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point at Wausau** – offers courses leading to a baccalaureate degree. They also offer graduate degrees including Master of Business

Administration (MBA), Physician Assistant (in partnership with UW Madison), and Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (in partnership with Northern Vermont University).

- **University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (UWSP) at Marshfield** – located in Marshfield, students can work toward a variety of bachelor's degree options including business administration, nursing, and social work.

## Shared Services

- **Fire and Emergency Response** – The Town of Hull is part of a shared fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) district – Central Fire & EMS – with the City of Abbotsford and Village of Dorchester.
- **Law Enforcement & E-911 Dispatch** – The Marathon County Sheriff's Department provides police protection and E-911 dispatch services for the Town of Hull.

## Surrounding Communities

The Town of Hull generally has good relationships with the surrounding communities. Residents have indicated that they have good communication and cooperation with the surrounding towns.

- **Road Maintenance and Plowing Agreements** – The Town of Hull has a road maintenance and plowing agreement with the Towns of Johnson, Holton, and Brighton.

## Marathon County

Marathon County directly and indirectly provides a number of services to the Town and the Town enjoys a good working relationship with many of the responsible departments. These departments include law enforcement through the Sheriff's Office, 911 dispatch services, access permits, maintenance and improvement of county highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The county also provides oversight on compliance with county soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, Marathon County sponsors a county-wide planning effort to complete these plans and include each individual local unit in the process and resulting final plan. Examples of this include the County Outdoor Recreation plan which maintains the eligibility for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources administered park and recreation development funding of each local unit that adopts it, and All Hazard Mitigation Plans which are required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in order for individual local units of government to qualify for certain types of disaster assistance funding.

## 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. Marathon County is a member of the NCWRPC, which qualifies the Town of Hull for low-cost local planning assistance. Typical functions of the NCWRPC include (but are not limited to) land use, transportation, economic development, intergovernmental and geographic information systems (GIS) planning and services.

## State and Federal Government

The Wisconsin departments of Natural Resources and Transportation are the primary agencies the Town might deal with regarding development activities. Many of the goals and objectives of this plan 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, lakes, and other wildlife habitat areas, while Wisconsin Department of Transportation is responsible for the planning and development of state highways, railways, airports, and other transportation systems. State agencies make a number of grant and aid programs available to local units of government like the Town of Hull. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Plan (LRIP) and the Priority Watershed Program. There are also a number of mandates passed down from the state that the Town must comply with, such as the biannual pavement rating submission for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR).

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

## Programs

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

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

**66.0305 – Municipal Revenue Sharing:** Wisconsin Statute, §66.0305, Municipal Revenue Sharing, gives authority to cities, villages, and towns to enter into agreements to share revenue from taxes and

special charges with each other. The agreements may also address other matters, including agreements regarding services to be provided or the location of municipal boundaries.

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

## Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues

- **City Merger** – The issue of whether or not the Cities of Colby and Abbotsford will someday merge has been raised.
- **Cooperation** – Cooperation levels with neighboring Towns have been fine in the past.
- **Fringe Development/Annexation** – Fringe development from Colby and Abbotsford is a concern for Hull, as is continued annexation. This fringe development and annexation could slowly deplete the Town's tax base.

# Goals, Objectives, and Policies

## *Goal 1: Protect the Town's tax base.*

### **Objectives:**

- Work with the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby to prevent large annexations that would negatively affect the tax base of the Town.
- Develop boundary agreements with the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby to determine the extent and future growth into the Town.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull will coordinate with the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby to create a joint land use plan.
- The Town of Hull supports the creation of a cooperative boundary agreement with the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby.

### **Strategies & Actions:**

- Meet jointly with the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby to identify growth areas for all communities.
- Develop a joint boundary agreement between the Town and the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby.

## *Goal 2: Maintain and enhance intergovernmental relations.*

### **Objectives:**

- Actively communicate with the Cities of Abbotsford and Colby, specifically during any future merger discussions.
- To develop and hold regularly scheduled meetings along a Council of Governments model to discuss issues of regional interest.

### **Policies:**

- The Town of Hull supports the creation of a forum for the further enhancement of intergovernmental relationships.

### **Strategies & Actions:**

- Work with other regional governments to develop a regular meeting to discuss issues of regional concern (i.e.; Quarterly meetings held in a Council of Governments (COG) format).
- Meet with area communities to review and discuss the possibility of purchasing equipment and supplies cooperatively to save costs.

# Chapter Nine

## Implementation

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 the Town of Hull. 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, Plan Commission formation, a Plan Commission resolution recommending Plan adoption by the Town Board, an open house meeting, 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.

### Implementation Tools

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

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

### Zoning Ordinance and Map

Zoning within the Town of Hull is regulated by Marathon County. Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable externalities from development by segregating and/or buffering incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment.

The zoning ordinance also controls the scale and form of development, which heavily influences how people will interact with their environment and their neighbors.

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

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

### **Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance**

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

### **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

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

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)
- Park and trail acquisition and development
- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)
- Fire and police protection equipment

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

The preparation of a CIP is normally a joint responsibility between the town board, plan commission, staff, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from



community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. The proposed capital improvement plan should be reviewed in light of the priorities outlined in the comprehensive plan.

### **Annual Operating Budget**

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

### **Brownfield Redevelopment**

Pursuing funding from state agencies for redevelopment of contaminated sites can reduce the uncertainty that otherwise prevents contaminated properties from being redeveloped. Action by the Town to evaluate contaminants or begin remediating the property is often necessary before the private sector is willing to invest in redevelopment. While this may require some upfront investment from the community, as sites are improved and reused they generate tax base.

### **Other Tools:**

Some additional tools that could be utilized by the Town, include: fee simple land acquisition, easements (purchased or volunteered), and impact fees, among others.

## **Consistency Among Plan Chapters**

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

## **Plan Adoption, Amendments, Updates and Monitoring**

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

### **Plan Adoption**

The first step in implementing this plan involves adoption of the plan by local officials. The formal review and adoption process involves plan review by the Plan Commission (or other planning committee) who must adopt the plan by resolution of majority vote. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded

to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance (of majority vote). A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance prior to Board final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives regarding coordination of growth and development.

## Plan Amendments

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

The following criteria shall be considered when reviewing plan amendments:

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

Proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adopted by the Town Board. The public should be notified of proposed Plan changes and allowed an opportunity for

review and comment. For major amendments, the Town might consider soliciting public opinion through surveys and/or community meetings prior to the official public hearing.

## **Plan Updates**

According to the State comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates often involve re-writing of whole sections of the plan document and significant changes to supporting maps. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives based on an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption.

## **Plan Monitoring**

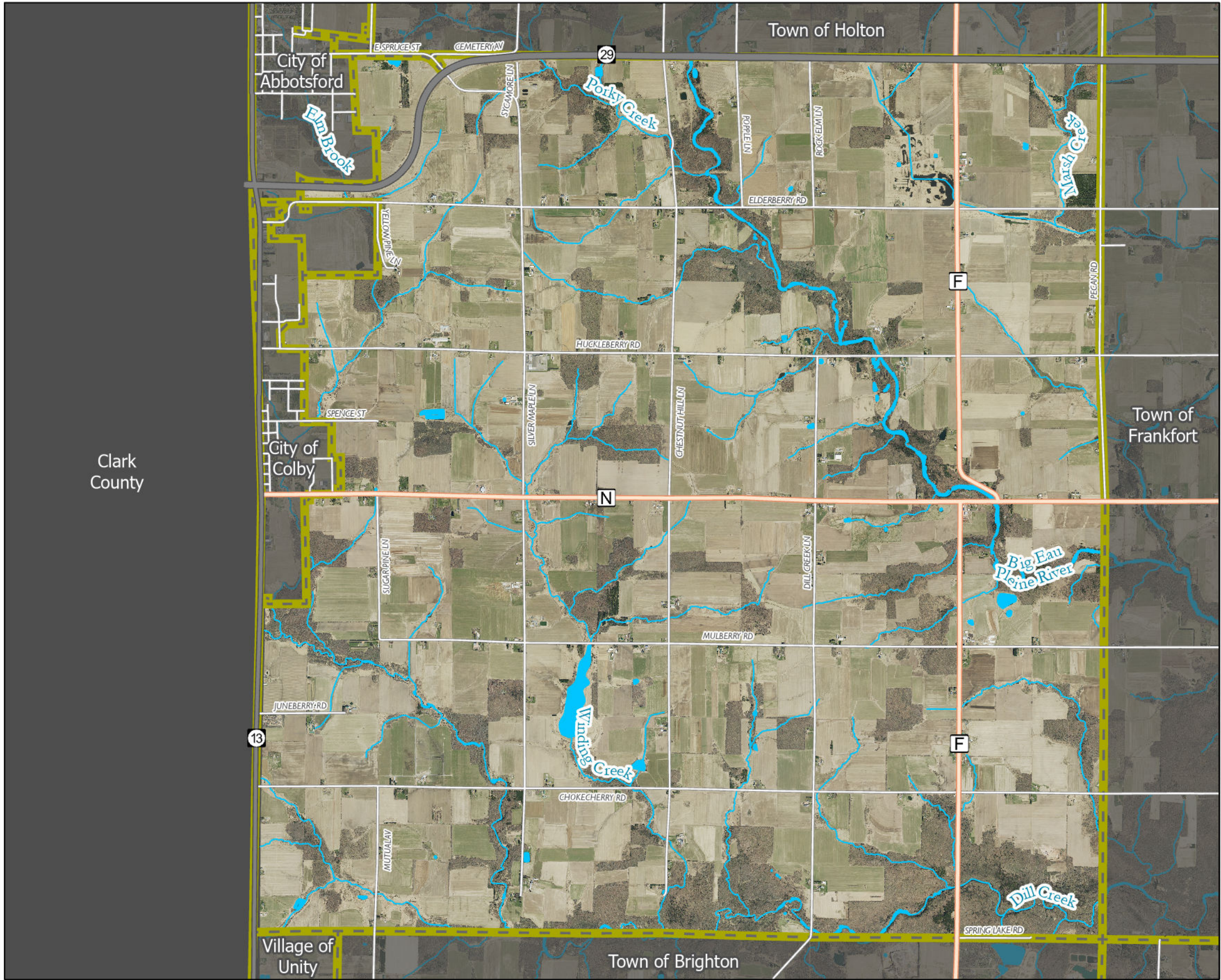
The adopted plan should be used as a tool by Town when making land use and development decisions. Decisions concerning private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions should be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations outlined in this plan.

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

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

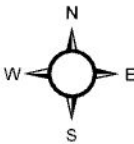
## Maps





Planning Area

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Water



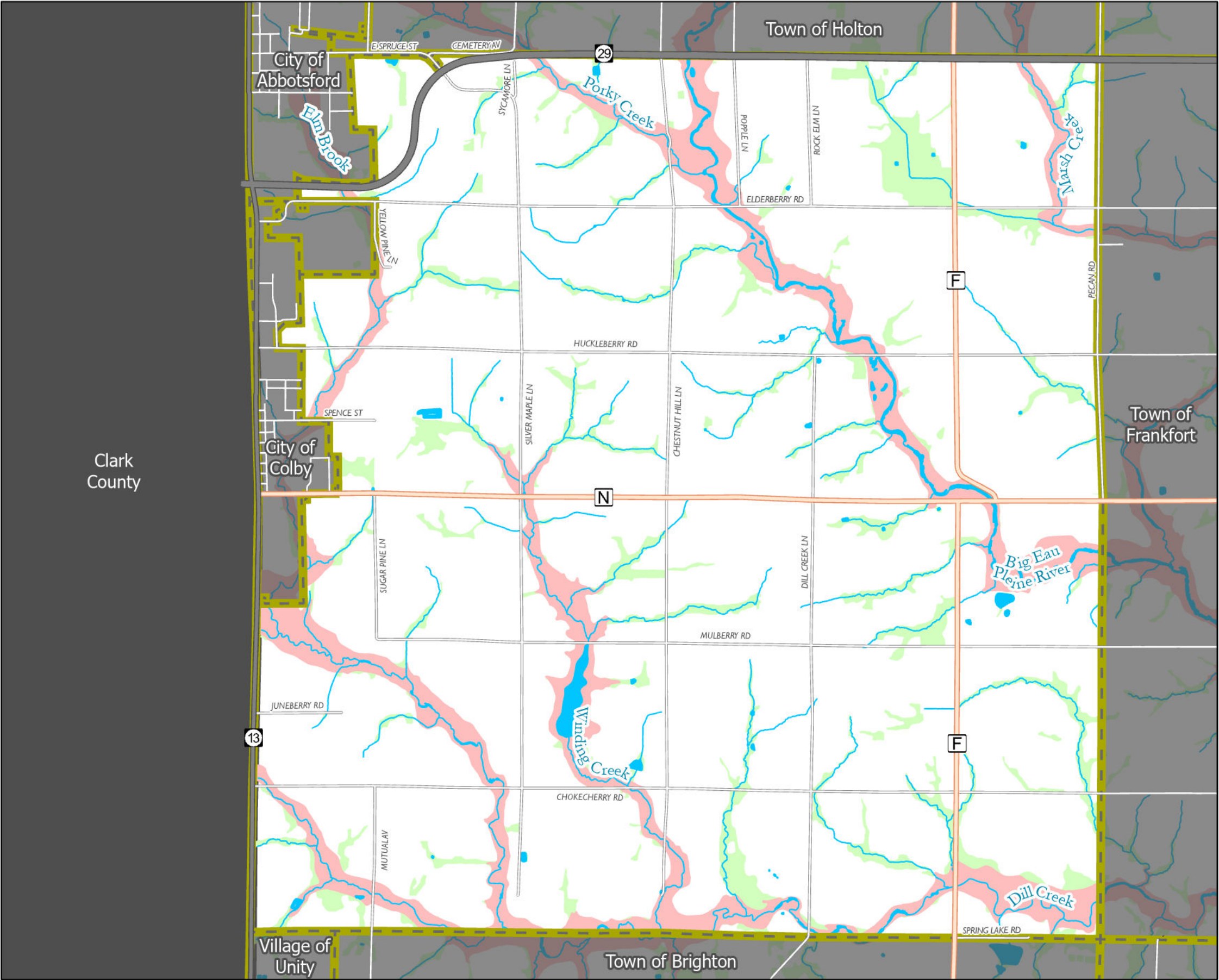
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North Central  
Wisconsin Regional  
Planning Commission

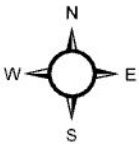
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Natural Resources

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Wetlands
- Floodplain
- Water



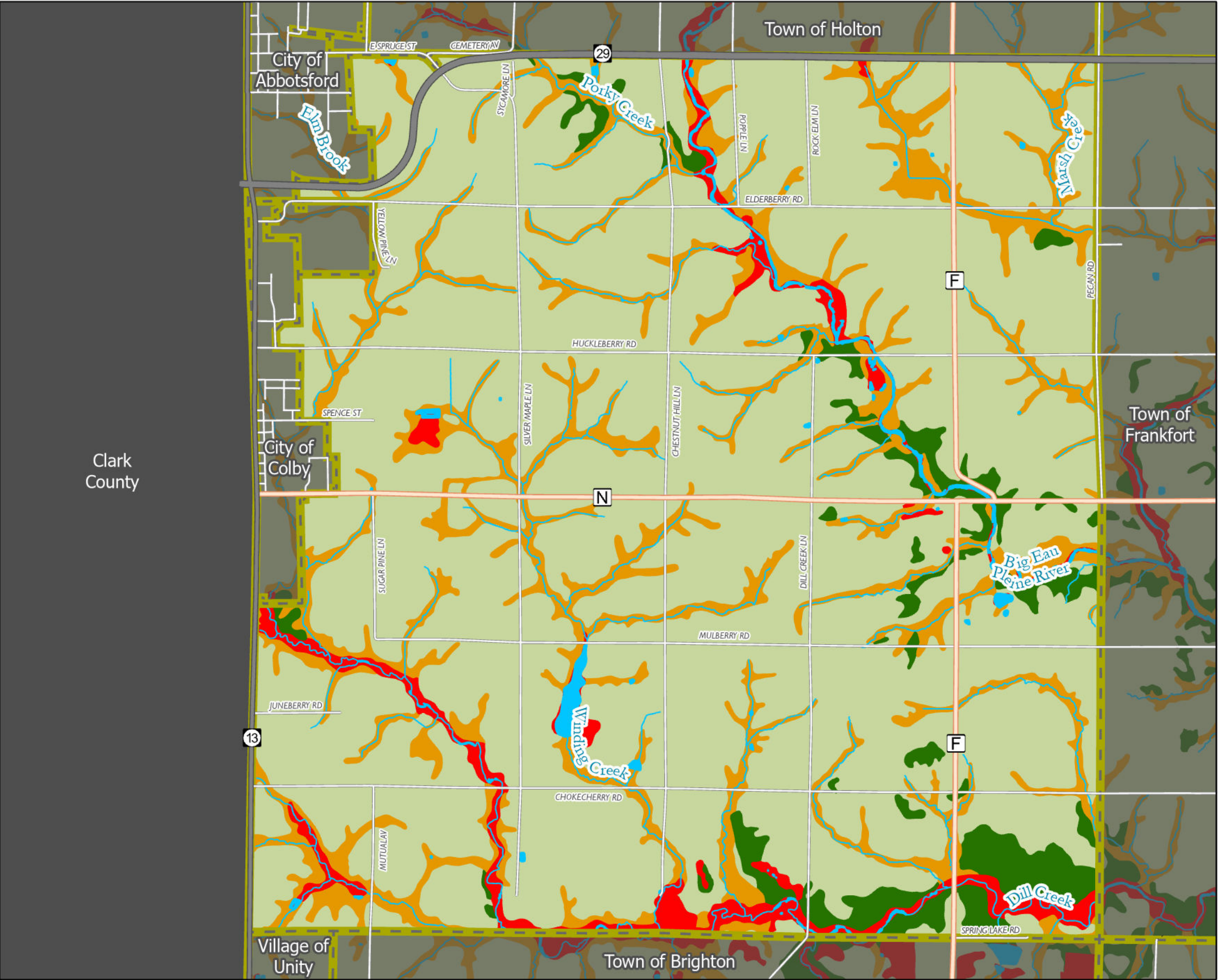
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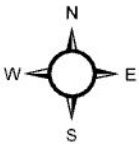
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Prime Farmland

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Water
- Farmland Classification
  - Farmland of statewide importance
  - All areas are prime farmland
  - Prime farmland if drained
  - Not prime farmland



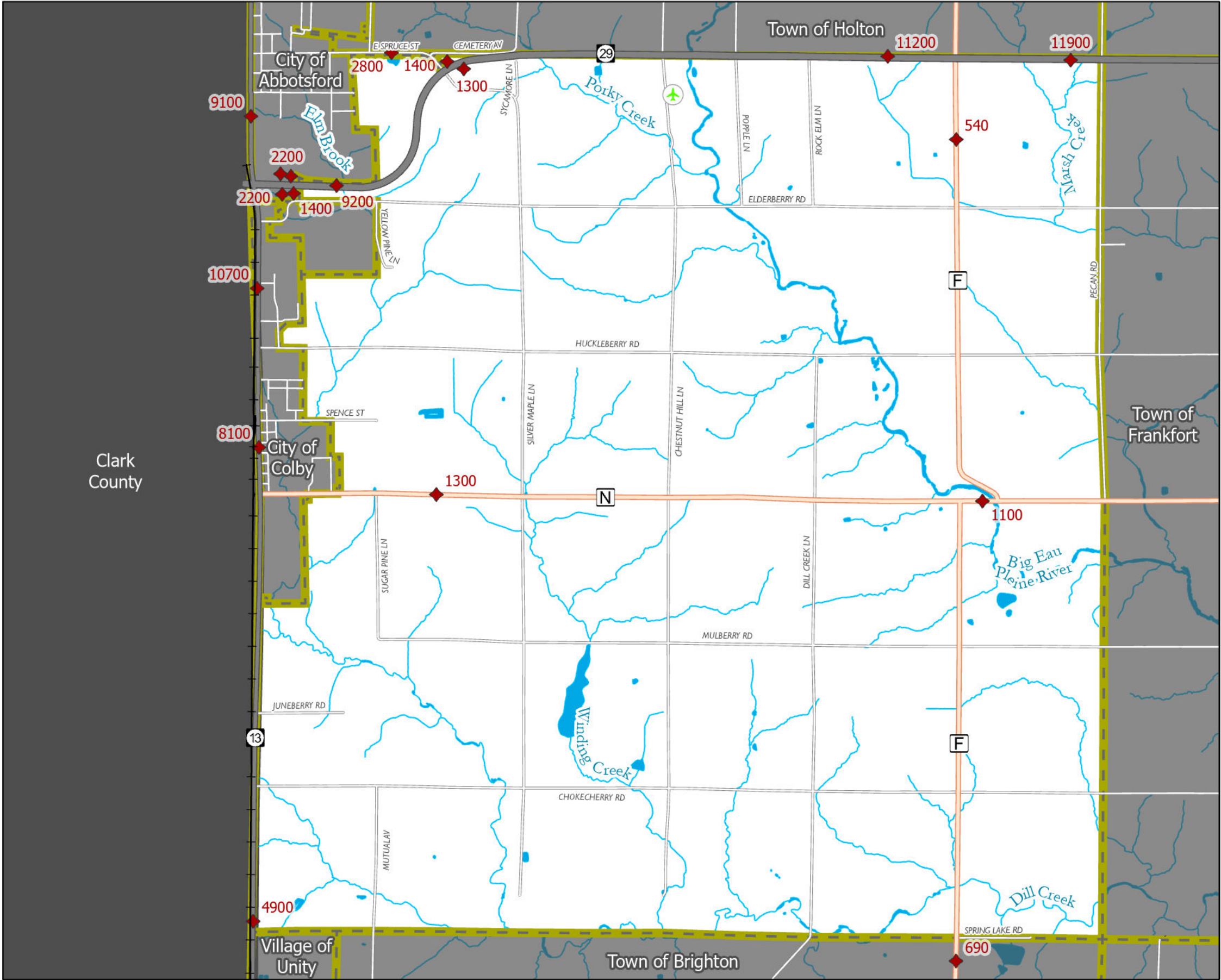
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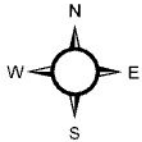
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Transportation

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Railroad
- Grass Strip (Private) Airport
- Traffic Counts
- Water



Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co  
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Utilities & Community Facilities

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Cherokee Park
- Winding Creek Rearing Station
- Gas & Oil Pipeline
- High Voltage Powerline
- Child Care Facilities
- Fire Station/Ambulance
- Former Landfill
- Industrial Park
- Non Metallic Mines
- Police Station
- School
- Town Hall
- Communication Towers
- Dams
- Municipal Water Supply
- Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Water

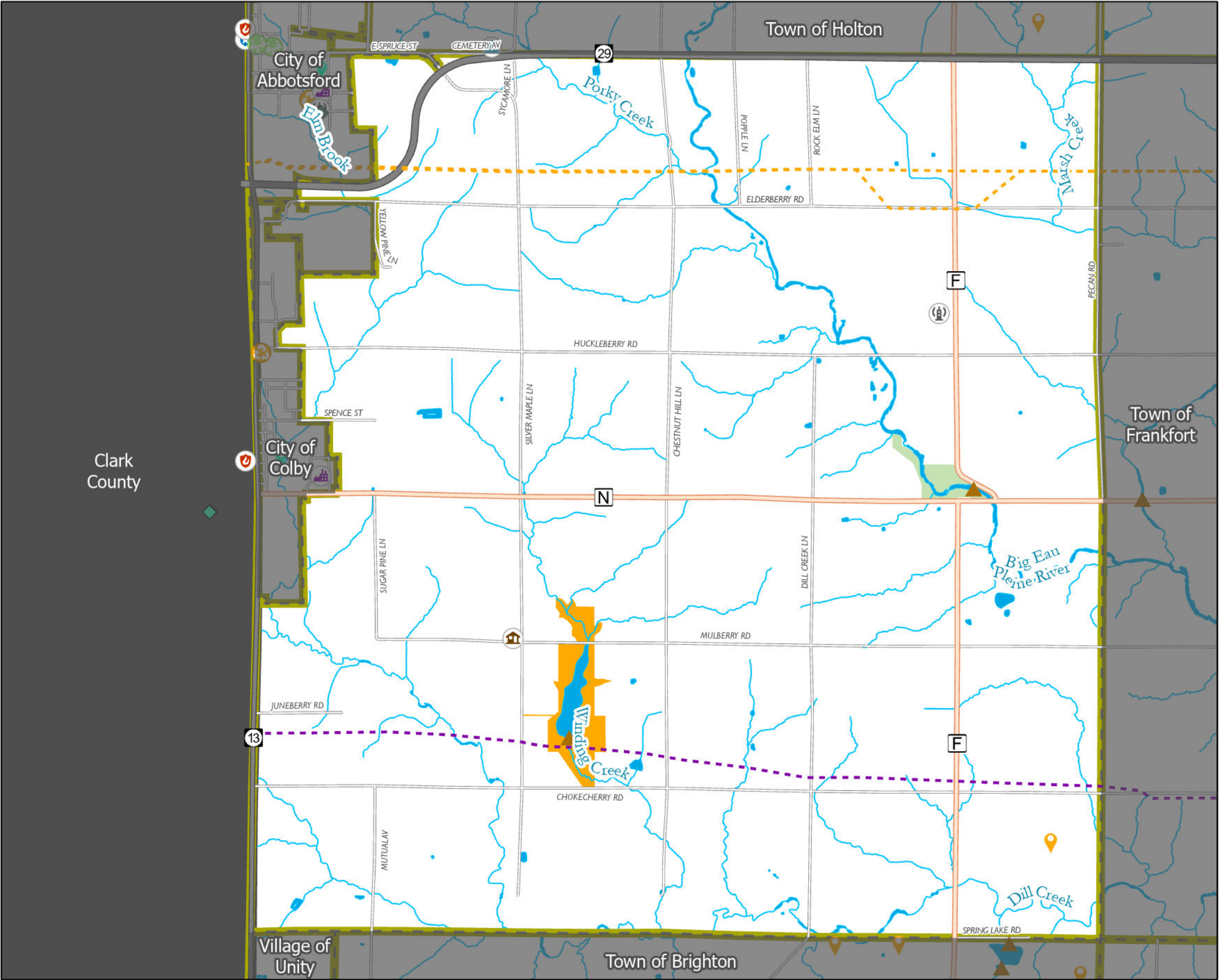


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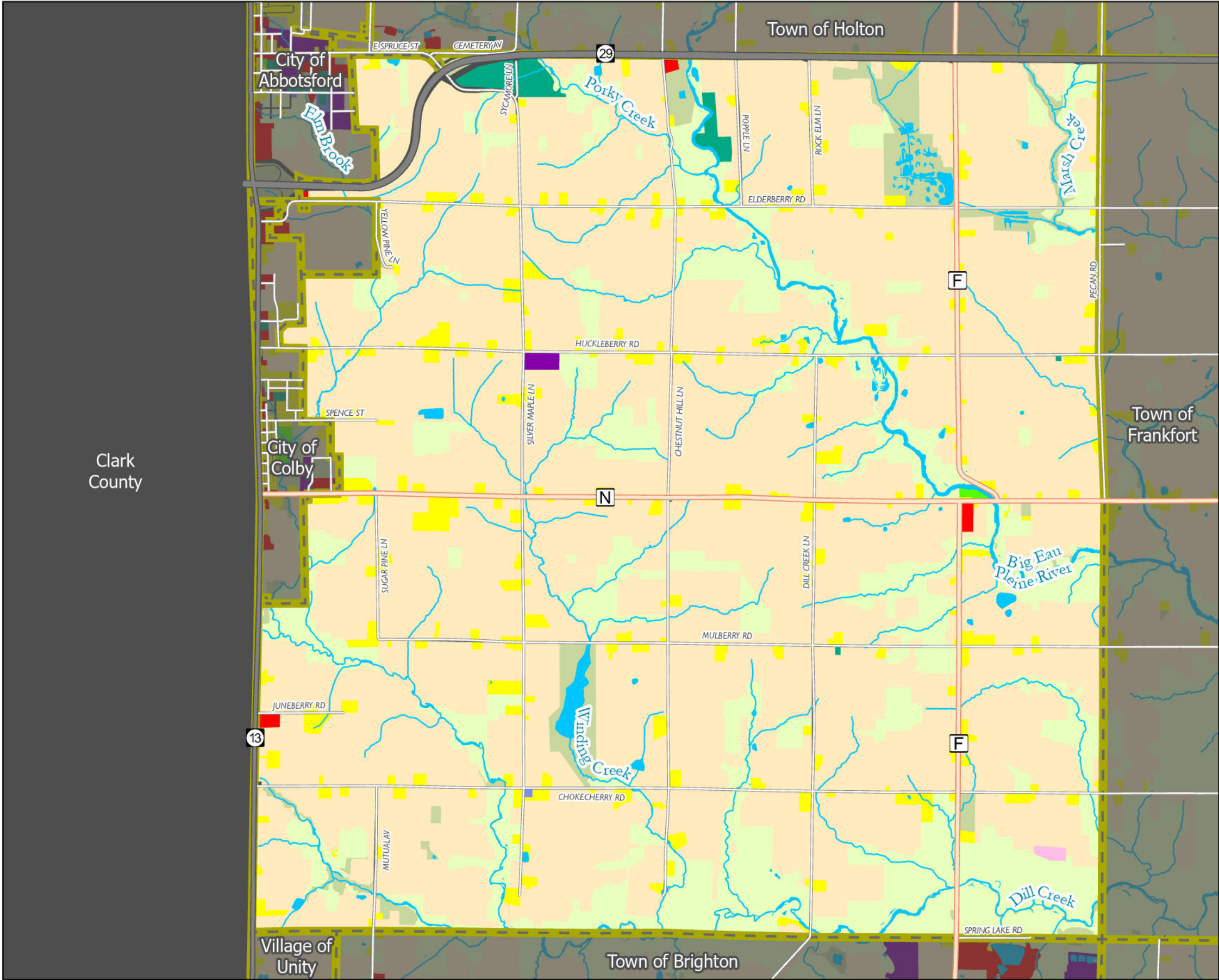


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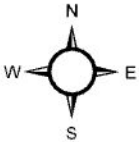






Existing Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Existing Land Use 2020
  - Agriculture
  - Commercial
  - Governmental / Institutional
  - Industrial
  - Open Lands
  - Outdoor Recreation
  - Quarry
  - Residential
  - Transportation
  - Utility
  - Woodlands
  - Water



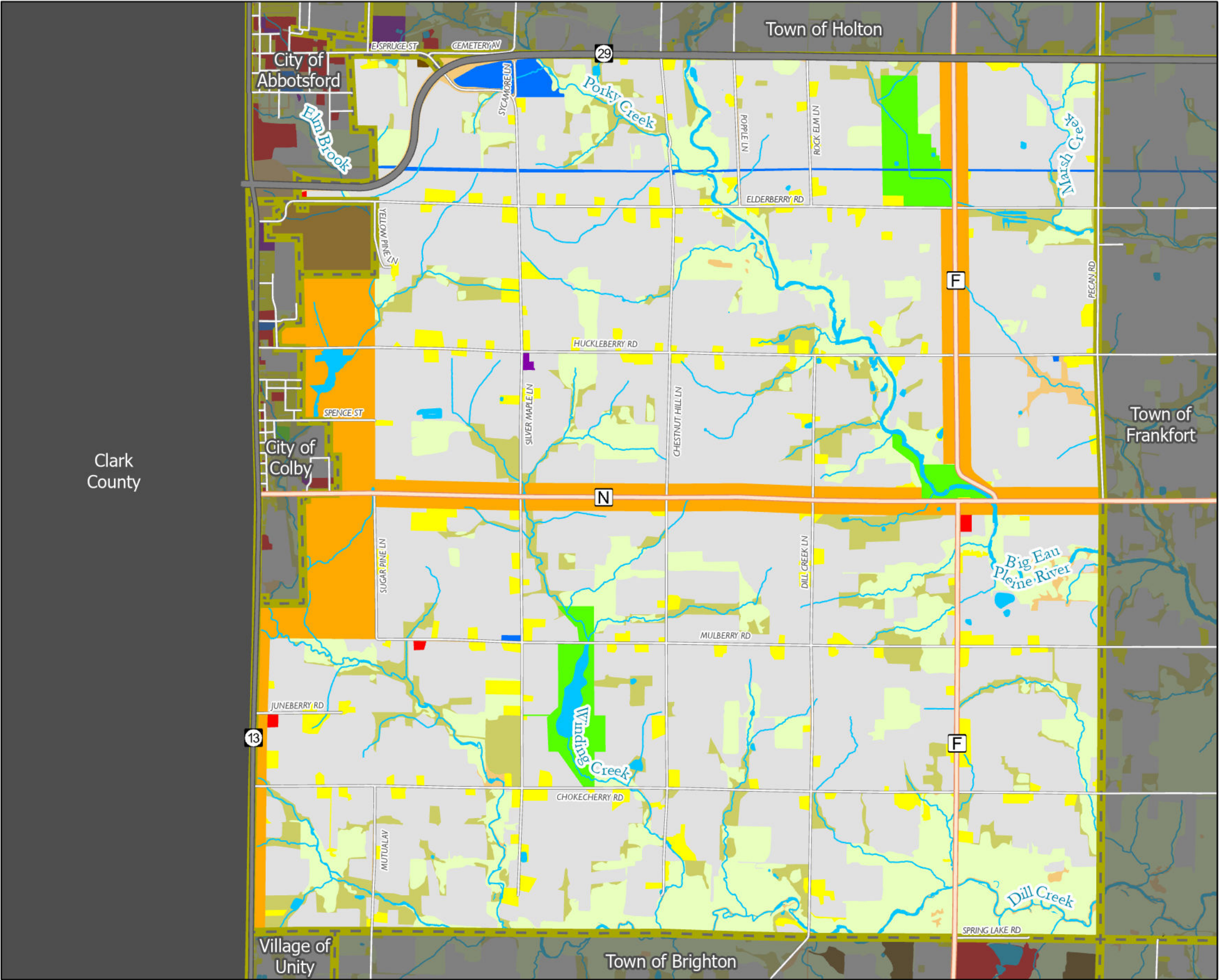
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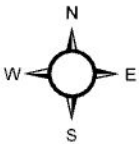




Future Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Private Roads

- Future Land Use
- Single Family Residential
  - Commercial
  - Rural Mixed Use
  - Industrial
  - Quarry
  - Barren
  - Crop Land
  - Other Agriculture
  - Forest Land
  - Public/Quasi-Public
  - Recreational
  - Water



Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co  
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# **Appendix A**

## **Public Participation Plan**

## **Town of Hull**

### **Public Participation Plan (PPP)**

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

#### **I. Plan Development:**

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

The public participation plan will incorporate the following:

1. All meetings for the planning process will be posted and open to the public.
2. Plan related materials will be available at the Town Hall for review by the public.
3. The draft plan and maps will be available on a website for review by the public.
4. A public hearing will be held to solicit comment from the public.
5. The Comprehensive Plan will be distributed as outlined in state statute.

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

#### **II. Implementation, Evaluation & Update:**

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

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

---

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

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

THE TOWN OF HULL DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

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

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

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

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

I, Jenny Reynolds, Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at a Town Board meeting, held at the Town Hall on the 11th day of March, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

  
Clerk

## **Appendix B**

### **Adoption Resolution**

PLAN COMMISSION RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION # 25-01

Town of Hull, Marathon County, Wisconsin

The Plan Commission of the Town of Hull, Marathon County, Wisconsin, by this resolution, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and by a roll call vote of a majority of the town plan commission present and voting resolves and recommends to the town board of the Town of Hull as follows:

Adoption of the Town Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Hull Plan Commission, by this resolution, further resolves and orders as follows:

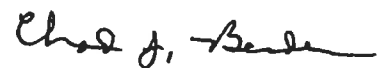
All maps and other materials noted and attached as exhibits to the Town of Hull Comprehensive Plan are incorporated into and made a part of the Town of Hull Comprehensive Plan.

The vote of the town plan commission in regard to this resolution shall be recorded by the clerk of the town plan commission in the official minutes of the Town of Hull Plan Commission.

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

Adopted this 5<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025.

Attest:





## **Appendix C**

### **Adoption Ordinance**

## ORDINANCE FOR PLAN ADOPTION

ORDINANCE # 25-01

Town of Hull, Marathon County, Wisconsin

### SECTION I – TITLE/PURPOSE

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

### SECTION II – AUTHORITY

The town board of the Town of Hull has authority under its village powers under s. 60.22, Wis. stats., its power to appoint a town plan commission under ss. 60.62 (4) and 62.23 (1), Wis. stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., to adopt this ordinance. The comprehensive plan of the Town of Hull must be in compliance with s. 66.1001 (4) (c), Wis. stats., in order for the town board to adopt this ordinance.

### SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

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

### SECTION IV – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The town board of the Town of Hull has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every stage of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by s. 66.1001 (4) (a), Wis. stats.

### SECTION V – TOWN PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

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

### SECTION VI – PUBLIC HEARING

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

SECTION VII – ADOPTION OF TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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

SECTION VIII – SEVERABILITY

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

SECTION IX – EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting.

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

Adopted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of April 2025.



Attest:

*Burt Rolih*  
*David J Haas*  
*James Reynolds*

**Town of Hull**  
**Comprehensive Plan**  
**2025**