

Town of Schoepke
Comprehensive Plan
Plan Commission Draft April 2025

Town of Schoepke Comprehensive Plan

Town Board

Bob Mott – Chair

Chuck Moore – Supervisor

Kelly Kraetsch - Supervisor

Plan Commission

Jim Frymark

Brenda Spaude

Rhonda Bell

Charles Moore

Kimberly Balow

Rick Lowe

Julie Taylor - Clerk

Veronica Duvall - Treasurer

Adopted Month Date, Year

Prepared with the Assistance of the:

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Table of Contents

Chapters

Chapter One: Demographics.....	1
Chapter Two: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources.....	13
Chapter Three: Housing.....	28
Chapter Four: Utilities and Community Facilities	37
Chapter Five: Transportation	44
Chapter Six: Economic Development	52
Chapter Seven: Land Use	63
Chapter Eight: Intergovernmental Cooperation.....	75
Chapter Nine: Implementation	79

Maps

Map One: Planning Area	84
Map Two: Natural Resources.....	85
Map Three: Utilities and Community Facilities	86
Map Four: Transportation	87
Map Five: Existing Land Use.....	88
Map Six: Future Land Use.....	89

Appendices

- A. Public Participation Plan
- B. Adoption Resolution
- C. Adoption Ordinance

Chapter One

Demographics

This chapter reviews the demographics of the Town of Schoepke and identifies the major trends impacting the Town over the next few decades. Both Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin, as well as several of the communities that surround the Town, are presented for comparison.

Background

The Town of Schoepke is located in the eastern quarter of Oneida County, Wisconsin. The Town is bounded by the Towns of Elcho (Langlade County), Enterprise, Monico, Nashville (Forest County), and Pelican.

Planning Process

In the summer 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 2022 to prepare the plan. A final Planning Commission meeting was held in the fall of 2022 to review the final draft and recommend adoption of the plan by the Town Board. The plan was adopted by the Town Board on month, date, year.

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 Schoepke posted all Planning Commission meetings to invite the public and held a Public Hearing to collect public input.

Demographics

Population Trends and Forecasts

The estimated 2022 population for the Town of Schoepke provided by the American Community Survey is 395 people. As shown in **Table 1**, the Town has experienced a steady increase in population since 2000, with population increasing by over 12 percent between 2000 and 2022. During this time, the Town's population increased at a faster rate than most of the surrounding communities, as well as Oneida County, which experienced an increase in population of only 2.8 percent in comparison. It is also important to consider the Town's significant seasonal population during the summer months. With abundant access to natural resources, particularly water resources such as Pelican Lake, the Town of Schoepke is a popular vacation destination in the summer months and thus experiences a drastic increase in population during this time.

Table 1: Population						
Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2020	2022	2000-22 Net Change	2000-22 % Change
Town of Schoepke	352	387	388	395	43	12.2%
Town of Enterprise	274	315	353	378	104	38.0%
Town of Monico	364	309	260	343	-21	-5.8%
Town of Pelican	2,902	2,764	2,809	2,810	-92	-3.2%
Town of Elcho	1,317	1,233	1,168	1,201	-116	-8.8%
Town of Nashville	1,157	1,064	1,215	1,175	18	1.6%
Oneida County	36,776	35,998	37,845	37,799	1,023	2.8%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	5,882,128	518,453	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018-22

State population projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2015 and 2040, as shown in **Table 2**. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA), the population in the Town of Schoepke is projected to increase by nearly 20 percent in population between 2020 and 2040. In comparison, Oneida County is projected to only increase by about 2.3 percent during this time.

Table 2: Population Projections						
Minor Civil Division	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change 2020-40
Town of Schoepke	388	445	465	475	465	19.8%
Oneida County	37,265	38,905	39,985	39,745	38,500	2.3%
Wisconsin	6,005,080	6,203,850	6,375,910	6,476,270	6,491,635	8.1%

Source: WDOA Population Projections 2013

Household Trends and Forecast

There were 220 households within the Town of Schoepke in 2022, significantly more than the total number of households in 2000 when there were 156 households within the Town, as shown in **Table 3**. In comparison, the number of households in Oneida County experienced a slight increase of about 2.2 percent during this time. Average household size in the Town of Schoepke was 1.80 persons in 2022, down from an average household size of 2.26 in 2000. In comparison, Oneida County had an average household size of 2.30 in 2022, down from an average household size of 2.40 in 2000.

Table 3: Households						
Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2020	2022	2000-22 Net Change	2000-22 % Change
Town of Schoepke	156	188	187	220	64	41.0%
Town of Enterprise	124	146	187	214	90	72.6%
Town of Monico	128	127	127	171	43	33.6%
Town of Pelican	1,167	1,183	1,237	1,239	72	6.2%
Town of Elcho	613	579	573	549	-64	-10.4%
Town of Nashville	485	477	526	452	-33	-6.8%
Oneida County	15,333	16,003	17,404	16,417	1,084	7.1%
Wisconsin	2,084,544	2,279,768	2,428,361	2,425,488	340,944	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2018-22

Like population, household projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2010 and 2040, as shown in **Table 4**. The number of households was calculated by dividing the total population for each 5-year increment by the projected average persons per household.

Like the population projections, the WDOA household projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official projections in accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 16.96 and are based on the historical population trends of individual communities. Assuming that population within the Town grows over the next two decades, the number of households is projected to increase by 52 households, or a 27.8 percent increase between 2020 and 2040. This is a significantly faster increase than Oneida County's projected increase of 5.3 percent and the State's projected increase of 12 percent during this time.

Table 4: Household Projections

Minor Civil Division	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% Change 2020-40
Town of Schoepke	187	223	234	241	239	27.8%
Oneida County	16,986	17,796	18,344	18,346	17,892	5.3%
Wisconsin	2,491,982	2,600,538	2,697,884	2,764,498	2,790,322	12.0%

Source: WDOA Population Projections 2013

Age Distribution

Population distribution by age is important in the planning process. Two age groups are examined here: 1) people below the age of 18, and 2) people ages 65 and older. These two age groups are often referred to as dependent populations and have different needs. The younger group requires schools, and the older group is retiring from the workforce.

Between 2000 and 2022, the number of children ages 17 and younger within the Town of Schoepke, as a percentage of the population, decreased from accounting for 18.2 percent of the population in 2000 down to only accounting for 4.8 percent of the population in 2022, as shown in **Figure 1**. The percentage of population below the age of 18 also decreased in Oneida County and Wisconsin as well during this time. This trend may be partly explained by the 2008 economic recession and difficult financial circumstances for young families.

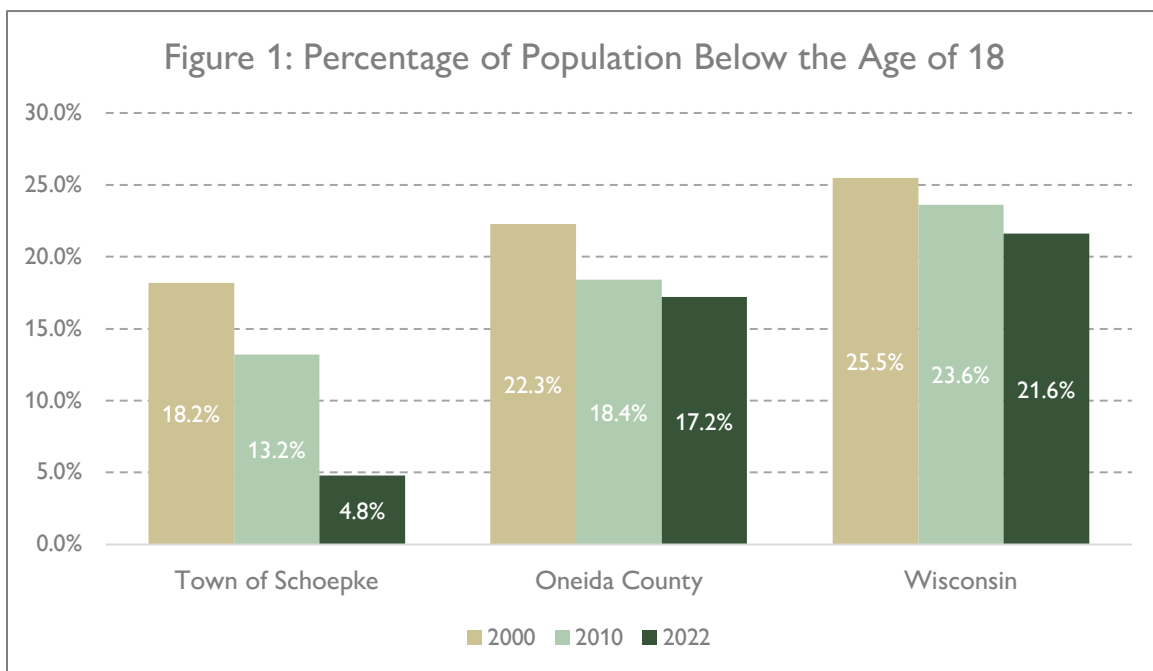
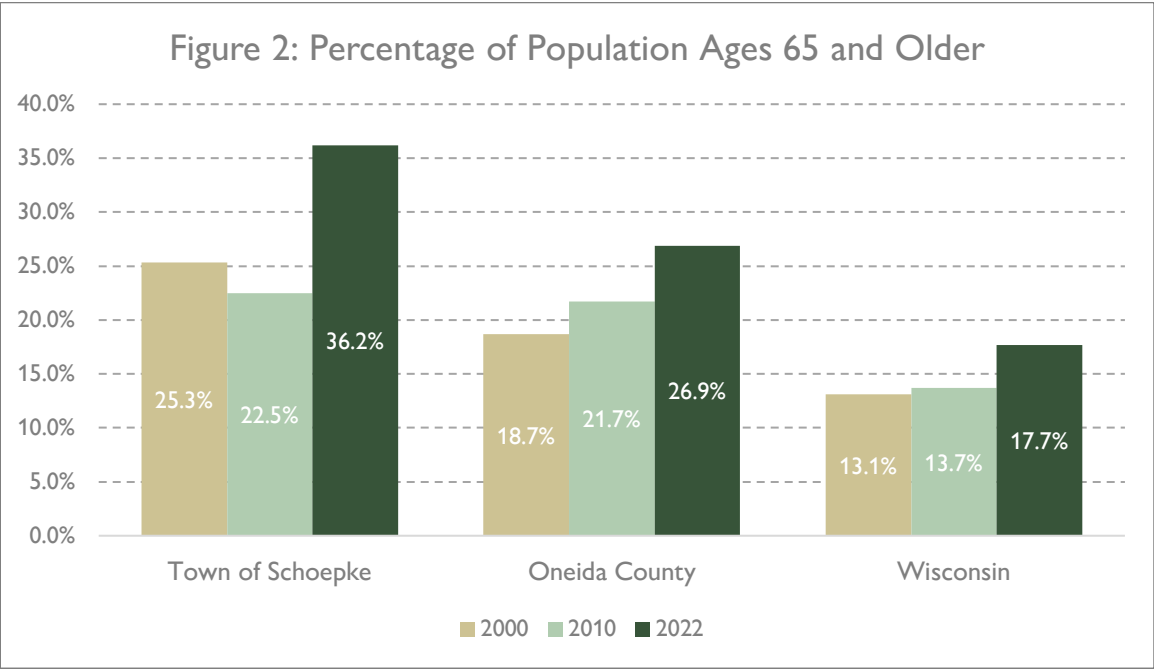
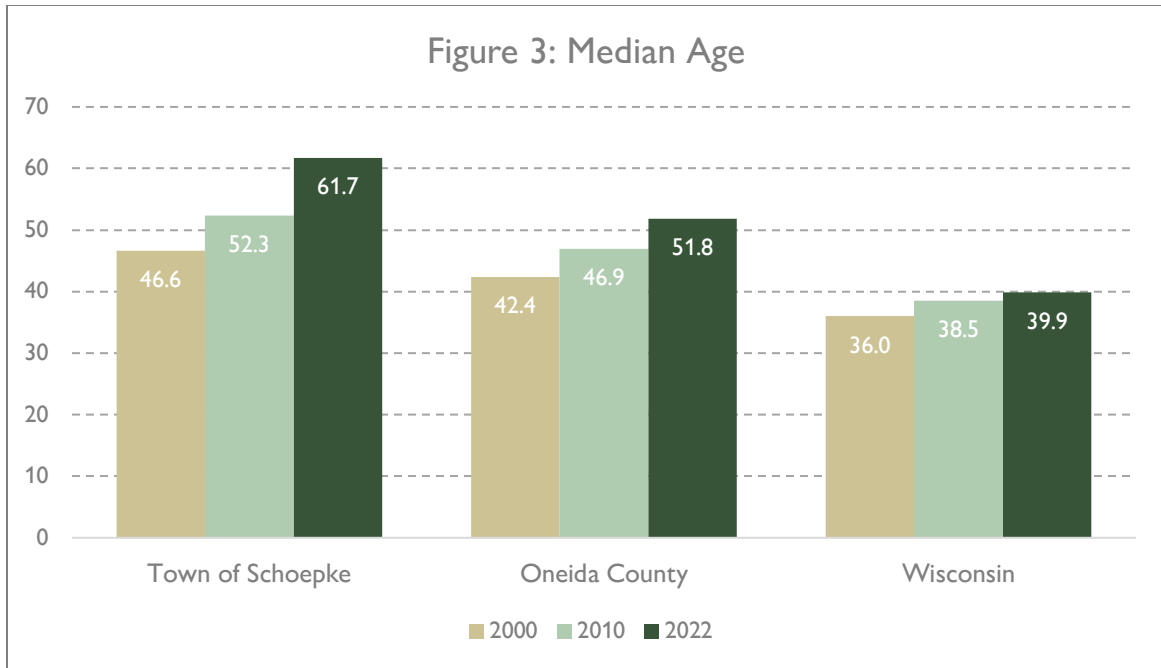


Figure 2 displays the proportion of population ages 65 and older in the Town of Schoepke, Oneida County, and Wisconsin. Between 2000 and 2022, the number of adults ages 65 and older

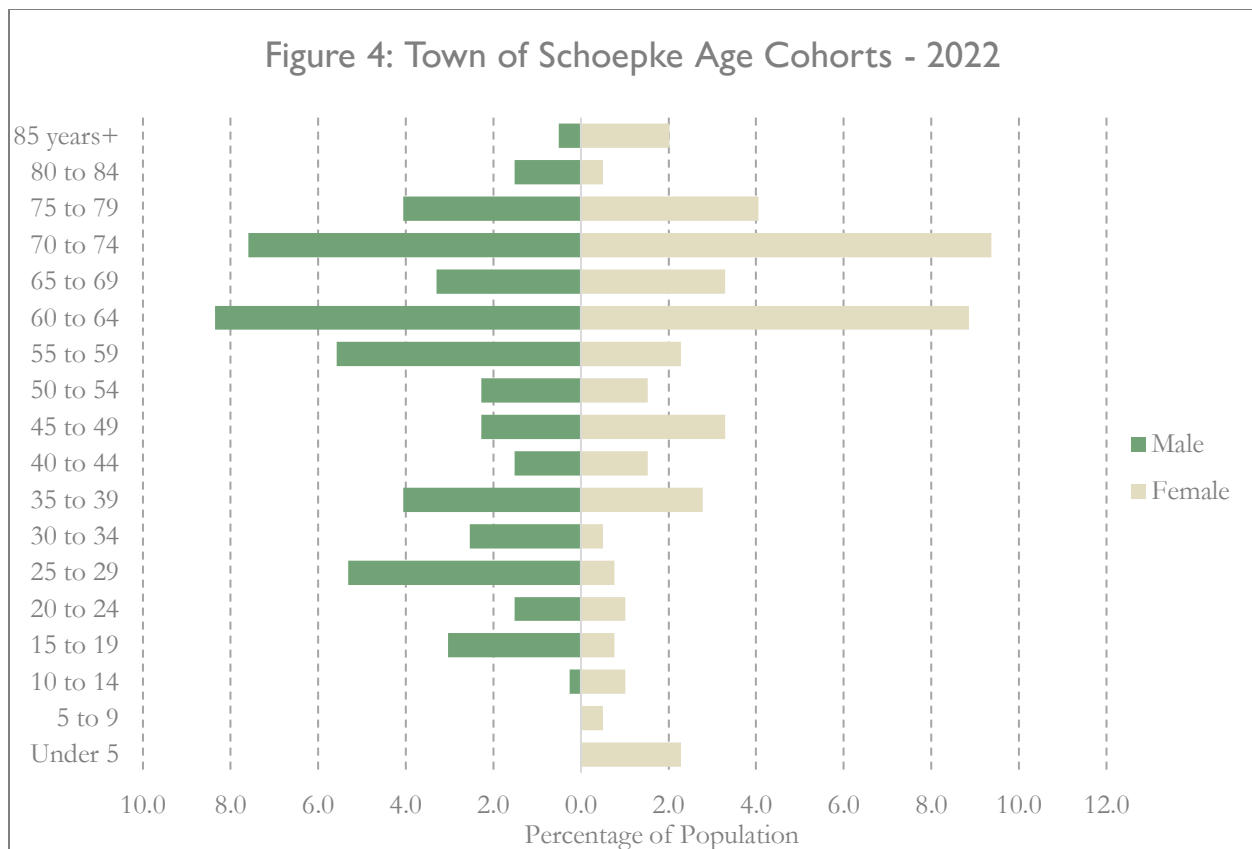
within the Town of Schoepke, as a percentage of the population, increased from accounting for 25.3 percent of the population in 2000 up to accounting for 36.2 percent of the population in 2022. The percentage of population ages 65 and older also increased in Oneida County and Wisconsin during the time.



The estimated median age in the Town of Schoepke in 2022 was 61.7, which is significantly higher than the median age in Oneida County (51.8) and Wisconsin (39.9), as shown in **Figure 3**. The median age of 61.7 in the Town of Schoepke reflects the Town’s high proportion of residents nearing retirement age and a low proportion of young residents.



The Town of Schoepke's population pyramid, **Figure 4**, displays the population distribution broken down into age cohorts in 2022. The population distribution by age cohort in the Town of Schoepke could best be described as an hourglass shape. The majority of residents within the Town of Schoepke fall between the ages of 60 and 74, with small proportions of residents in the younger and older age groups.



Education Levels

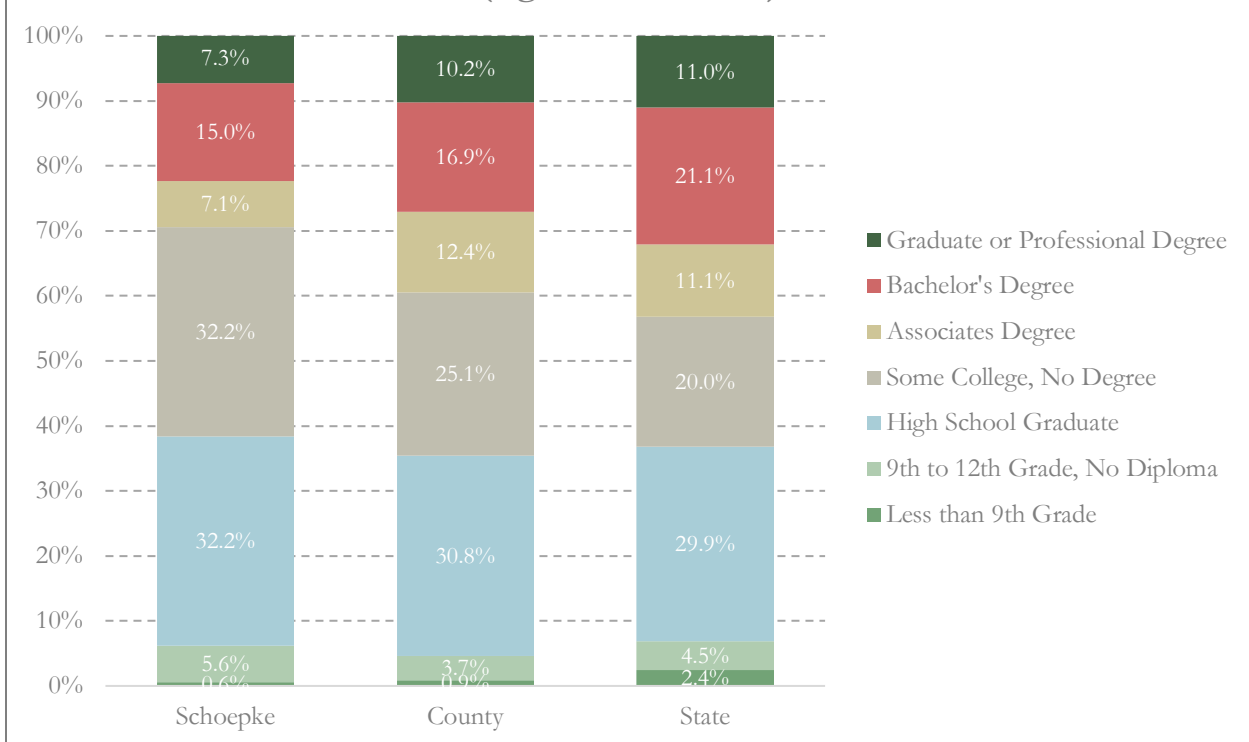
The educational attainment level of persons within a community is often an indicator of the overall income, job availability and well-being of a community. Educational attainment in the Town of Schoepke has significantly increased since 2000. The percentage of population aged 25 and older with a high school education increased from 79.0 percent in 2000 to 93.8 percent in 2022, as shown in **Table 5**. Additionally, the percentage of those with an associate’s degree or higher has increased from 16.1 percent in 2000 to 29.4 percent in 2022, while the percentage of those with a bachelor’s degree or higher has increased from 6.5 percent in 2000 to 22.3 percent in 2022. These increases were in line with those experienced in Oneida County and Wisconsin. It should be noted that a significant percentage of the Town’s workforce work in the Trades. Trades jobs often require educational options such as certifications that are not tracked by the Census.

The Town of Schoepke has a lower percentage of people with a high school degree or higher than Oneida County and a slightly higher percentage than the State of Wisconsin as a whole. The Town of Schoepke has a lower percentage of people with a bachelor’s degree or higher than Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin as a whole. **Figure 6** displays a comparison between Schoepke, Oneida County, and Wisconsin for all educational attainment categories for the year 2022.

Table 5: Educational Attainment Trends, 2000-2022

Educational Attainment	Town of Schoepke			Oneida County			Wisconsin		
	2000	2010	2022	2000	2010	2022	2000	2010	2022
Percent high school graduate or higher	79.0%	90.0%	93.8%	85.1%	90.9%	95.4%	85.1%	89.4%	93.1%
Percent with associates degree or higher	16.1%	24.3%	29.4%	26.8%	31.9%	39.5%	30.0%	34.7%	43.2%
Percent with bachelor's degree or higher	6.5%	14.6%	22.3%	20.0%	21.8%	27.1%	22.4%	25.8%	32.0%

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

Figure 6: Educational Attainment (Age 25 and Older)

Income Levels

Table 6 shows median household income for the Town of Schoepke. The median household income for Town of Schoepke households was \$57,000 in 2022, up from \$28,929 in 2000. However, after adjusting for inflation, real median household income experienced a less drastic increase during this time, as the inflation-adjusted median household income for the Town of Schoepke in 2000 was \$48,183. Oneida County experienced a significantly slower increase in median household income during this time, as Oneida County's median household income experienced a 5.5 percent increase, rising up to \$66,111 in 2022.

Table 6: Median Household Income

Minor Civil Division	2000*	2010*	2022	% Change 2000-22	% Change 2010-22
Town of Schoepke	\$48,183	\$67,307	\$57,000	18.3%	-15.3%
Oneida County	\$62,657	\$59,499	\$66,111	5.5%	11.1%
Wisconsin	\$72,937	\$66,948	\$72,458	-0.7%	8.2%

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

*: Adjusted for inflation

Table 7 shows per capita income for the Town of Schoepke. Per capita income is the average obtained by dividing aggregate income by the total population of an area. Since 2000, the Town's per capita income increased by over 26 percent when adjusted for inflation, faster than both Oneida County and Wisconsin.

Table 7: Per Capita Income

Minor Civil Division	2000*	2010*	2022	% Change 2000-22	% Change 2010-22
Town of Schoepke	\$33,535	\$33,637	\$42,315	26.2%	25.8%
Oneida County	\$32,888	\$36,440	\$40,086	21.9%	10.0%
Wisconsin	\$35,428	\$34,544	\$40,130	13.3%	16.2%

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

*: Adjusted for inflation

Employment Characteristics

Tables 8 illustrates the breakdown of the labor force within the Town of Schoepke in 2000, 2010 and 2022. The labor force is defined as the number of persons, sixteen and over, employed or looking to be employed. Between 2000 and 2022, the Town of Schoepke experienced a 39 percent increase in the labor force, as the Town's labor force increased from 272 residents in 2000 to 378 residents in 2022.

Labor force participation rate indicates the percentage of those 16 years and over that are in the labor force. Over the past two decades, the Town's labor force participation rate has decreased from about 52 percent in 2000 down to about 46 percent in 2022.

In 2000, the Town of Schoepke had an employed population of 135 people. Over the past two decades, the number of employed residents within the Town has increased up to 156 in 2022, an increase of 24 percent.

The U.S. Census classifies individuals as unemployed if they are not working, actively seeking work, and available to seek a job. In 2022, the unemployment rate in the Town of Schoepke was 5 percent, representing an increase from the Town's unemployment rate of 2.2 percent in 2000.

Table 8: Town of Schoepke Labor Force				
	2000	2010	2022	Percent Change
Population 16 years and over	272	391	378	39.0%
Labor Force	141	254	175	24.1%
Employed	135	222	156	15.6%
Unemployed	6	32	19	216.7%
Unemployment Rate	2.2%	8.2%	5.0%	127.3%
Participation Rate	51.8%	65.0%	46.3%	-10.6%

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

Table 9 displays the occupational employment for residents in the Town of Schoepke and for residents in Oneida County. In 2022, most residents within the Town of Schoepke were employed in Management, Professional & Related occupations, while most Oneida County residents were also employed in Management, Professional & Related occupations. The second-most represented occupational group among Town of Schoepke residents was the Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance occupational group, while the Sales & Office occupational group was also the second-most represented in Oneida County.

Table 9: Occupation of Employed Workers				
Occupation	Town of Schoepke		Oneida County	
	2000	2022	2000	2022
Management, Professional & Related	25	58	5,117	5,701
Service	26	18	2,747	2,718
Sales & Office	40	36	4,465	3,472
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	15	38	2,266	1,898
Production, Transportation & Mineral Moving	29	6	2,604	3,020
Total	135	156	17,199	16,809

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

Table 10 displays the breakdown of employment for Town of Schoepke and Oneida County residents by industry sector. In 2022, the leading industry sectors for Town of Schoepke employed residents were the Education, Health, and Social Services; Construction; and Retail Trade sectors. In Oneida County, the leading industry sectors in 2022 were the Education, Health, and Social Services; Manufacturing; and Retail Trade industry sectors.

Table 10: Employment by Industry Sector

	Town of Schoepke			Oneida County		
	2000	2022	% Change 2000-20	2000	2022	% Change 2000-20
Ag., Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	5	2	-60.0%	526	343	-34.8%
Construction	11	32	190.9%	1,455	1,215	-16.5%
Manufacturing	26	13	-50.0%	2,080	2,432	16.9%
Wholesale Trade	2	10	400.0%	425	490	15.3%
Retail Trade	33	20	-39.4%	2,815	2,283	-18.9%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	0	1	100.0%	689	653	-5.2%
Information	0	0	100.0%	434	226	-47.9%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing	0	10	100.0%	636	982	54.4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Mgmt Services	7	9	28.6%	898	1,398	55.7%
Education, Health and Social Services	16	44	175.0%	3,953	3,604	-8.8%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	16	5	-68.8%	1,694	1,585	-6.4%
Public Administration	8	3	-62.5%	861	690	-19.9%
Other Services	11	7	-36.4%	733	908	23.9%
Total	135	156	15.6%	17,199	16,809	-2.3%

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

Review of Demographic Trends

Demographic change is a principal factor in predicting future community growth. Population characteristics relate directly to the community's housing, education, utility, recreation, and facility needs, as well as future economic development. Over time, functions in local and regional economies can influence population change.

Demographic Snapshot

- The population within the Town of Schoepke has steadily increased since 2000, while the number of households within the Town has also steadily increased.
- The Town of Schoepke is projected to experience an increase in population over the next several decades.
- There are a large number of residents within the Town that fall in the older age groups. In 2022, the Town had a median age of 61.7, significantly higher than the median age of Oneida County and significantly higher than the State's median age.
- The Town of Schoepke has a lower proportion of residents with a high school diploma or higher than Oneida County and a slightly higher proportion than Wisconsin. In terms of higher education, the Town has a lower proportion of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher than both Oneida County and Wisconsin.
- The Town's median household income of \$57,000 is lower than the median household income in both Oneida County and Wisconsin. The Town's per capita income of \$42,315 is higher than both the County and the State.
- The Town's labor force participation rate has decreased over the past two decades, while the unemployment rate has significantly increased during this time.

Chapter Two

Natural, Cultural, & Agricultural Resources

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

Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, 2020-2029

This Plan provides a framework for local/state/federal conservation program implementation efforts. Implementation of this plan will help protect and improve the valuable water and soil natural resources in Oneida County. Some of the plan's recommendations include protecting shoreland areas, reducing nonpoint source pollution, replace failing septic systems, and reduce wildlife conflicts. A copy is available in the Oneida County Land Conservation Department.

Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2024-2028

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

Oneida County Farmland Preservation Plan, 2015

The Oneida County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of Wisconsin Statutes. The Plan's purpose is to guide and manage farmland preservation and agricultural production capacity from 2015 to 2024. The plan functions as the primary policy document setting forth directions for how the County intends to preserve agricultural production capacity, farmland, soil and water resources, and rural character.

Farmland Preservation Areas - Parcels that meet the Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) mapping criteria. Landowners in this area may apply for farmland preservation income tax credits. No non-agricultural development is planned in the next fifteen years for those areas identified.

Criteria for Farmland Preservation Areas:

- Lands depicted on the Soils Map as farmlands.
- Lands depicted on the Land Use Map as agriculture, cranberry bog, open lands, or woodlands.
- Lands depicted on the Future Land Use Map that allow agriculture or forestry to occur

Lands are excluded if they are any of the following:

- Local, county, state, and federal lands
- "Planned Out" lands on Map 5 of the FPP
- Parcels less than 5 acres
- Tax exempt land

Farmland preservation areas cover a significant portion of the Town of Schoepke. However, there are currently few areas of land currently being used for agricultural production purposes within the Town.

Oneida County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2006-2020

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

Pelican Lake Comprehensive Management Plan 2013

Conducted in 2013, this lake management plan helps to better understand the Pelican Lake ecosystem and its current condition, helping to guide the Pelican Lake Association in determining future plans and programs for the enhancement of the lake.

USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater through Comprehensive Planning

In a joint effort by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the University of Wisconsin System, and the United States Geological Survey, a website was made available with data and information on geology, general hydrology, and groundwater quantity and quality. The website was developed to aid government officials in their comprehensive plans, including this plan. The most recent data available for Oneida County was public in 2007. The Oneida County report can be accessed here: <https://wi.water.usgs.gov/gwcomp/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.

Water Resources

Surface water resources support the area's economy by drawing tourists and providing a good quality of life for residents. Oneida County contains one of the highest concentrations of natural lakes in the world. Oneida County Shoreland Zoning is in effect. Actual shoreland jurisdiction measurements are coordinated through the County Zoning Department.

The Town of Schoepke has significant surface water resources including Pelican Lake, Upper Post Lake, Lake Lucille, the Wolf River, the Pelican River, Enterprise Creek, Pedro Creek, Stockley Creek, and Lucille Creek. Coordination between all levels of government, public and private entities are essential in the operation and continued maintenance of this system. Combined, these water bodies are significant attractions, which contribute to the entire area's tax base and trades.

The western portion of the Town of Schoepke lies within the Pelican River watershed, while the eastern portion of the Town lies within the Upper Wolf River and Post Lake watershed, as shown in the **Natural Resources Map**.

Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters

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.

Upper Post Lake and the Wolf River are listed as Outstanding Resource Waters. Four waterbodies within the Town (Walczak Creek, Palm Creek and two unnamed creeks) are listed as Exceptional Resource Waters.

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. Pelican Lake is listed as an impaired water located within the Town.

Invasive Aquatic Species

Surface water resources in Oneida County are threatened by the introduction of invasive aquatic species. These species outcompete native species and degrade habitats possibly by decreasing biodiversity from having less plant and animal species. There are two waterbodies within the Town that have documented infestations of aquatic invasive species, as well as occurrences of purple loosestrife and reed canary grass scattered throughout the Town. Contact the County Land Conservation Department for public outreach education strategies.

- **Pelican Lake** – Curly-Leaf Pondweed, Eurasian Water-Milfoil, Banded Mystery Snail, Chinese Mystery Snail, Rusty Crayfish, Yellow Iris
- **Upper Post Lake** – Curly-Leaf Pondweed, Banded Mystery Snail, Chinese Mystery Snail, Rusty Crayfish, Purple Loosestrife

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. The wetlands shown for the Town of Schoepke were mapped from the WI DNR Wetlands Inventory and are shown in the **Natural Resources Map**.

Floodplains

A floodplain is generally defined as land where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any year. The primary value of floodplains is their role in natural flood control. Flood plains represent areas where excess water can be accommodated whether through drainage by streams or through storage by wetlands and other natural detention/retention areas. Specific areas that will be inundated will depend upon the amount of water, the distance and speed that water travels, and the topography of the area. If uninterrupted by development, the areas shown on a map as floodplains should be able to handle the severest (regional) flood, i.e. those that have a probability of occurring once every one hundred years. The 100-year floodplain was digitized by the NCWRPC from FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, for planning purposes only, and are shown in the **Natural Resources Map**.

Groundwater & Geology

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

Groundwater is an important resource since it is used for all domestic, agricultural, and commercial purposes in the Town. According to the Oneida County Soil Survey report, the main aquifer in the county is glacial drift, particularly glacial outwash and ice-contact sand and gravel. The total mineral content is less than 150 milligrams per liter. The main components in the water are calcium, magnesium, and bicarbonate ions. A large concentration of iron is in the groundwater

throughout the county but is not considered to be a health hazard.

The source of all groundwater is precipitation percolating down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone called an aquifer. Water in an aquifer travels from its source to a discharge point, such as a well, wetland, spring, or lake. During periods of increased precipitation or thaw, this vast resource is replenished with water moving by gravity through permeable soils. This is known as a water table system.

In some instances, groundwater moves because of pressure created by a confining layer of impervious rock known as an artesian system. The existence of granitic bedrock causes difficulties with obtaining groundwater in some areas of the Town. This hard rock is very difficult to drill through and thereby limits the availability of water. This bedrock layer is generally between ten and sixty feet below the ground and is present throughout the Town. The bedrock comes closer to the surface in the eastern part of the Town.

Land Resources

Topography and Geology

Oneida County is in the Northern Highlands physiographic region of Wisconsin where crystalline rock is overlain by thick glacial deposits. The surface of the Town can be described as having a varied topography. The Town and County were covered by glacial ice during the most recent glaciation period. Glacial activity formed several distinct types of glacial deposits such as end moraine and glacial ground moraine. End moraine deposits are composed of glacial till which is an unsorted mixture of gravel, sand, silt, clay, and occasional boulders. Adjacent to the end moraine deposits are glacial ground moraine deposits. A glacial ground moraine is also composed of till and gives rise to the rolling undulated type topography.

Forests

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

Boreal Northern Forest is the predominant forest community in the Town of Schoepke. Schoepke lies north of the climatic transition belt known as the “tension zone”. The Boreal Northern Forest community consists of mixed deciduous and coniferous forests and may be composed of pines, maples, oaks, birch, hemlock, and other hardwood and conifer species. According to “Wisconsin’s Biodiversity as a Management Issue” (a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) report), the composition of the Boreal Northern Forest in Oneida County is primarily made up of pine, both white and red, as well as hemlock, sugar maple and yellow birch.

Approximately 26,800 acres of the land in Town consists of forestland – both private-owned and industry-owned. There are also about 1,166 acres of land owned by the State of Wisconsin and managed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Schoepke has large tracts of land designated as Forestry zoning districts by the Oneida County zoning ordinance. These districts were established to protect the integrity of the county’s forested lands by preserving the land in a relatively natural state. The forestlands in the Town offer both recreational opportunities as well as economic benefit. Preservation of the Town’s forestland maintains the rural Northwoods character of the community.

All forests are dynamic, always changing from one stage to another, influenced by natural forces and humans. Changes can be subtle and occur over long periods, or can happen in seconds from a timber harvest, windstorm, or fire. A significant portion of the land in the town is owned by private investors. Some private woodlands in the county are enrolled in Managed Forest Law (MFL). This program provides a low annual tax rate per acre and requires a management plan for the property that must include some harvesting along with allowing some public uses based on acreage thresholds. When timber is harvested from MFL properties, a harvest tax is also assessed. This provides an incentive to keep woodlots in active production and allows some community access to the site in exchange for greatly reduced taxes. See the programs section at the end of this chapter for more detail on this program.

Pelican River Forest

The Pelican River Forest project, completed in January 2024, is Wisconsin's largest conservation project, protecting approximately 70,000 acres of working forestland in Oneida, Forest, and Langlade counties, supporting both local economies and environmental benefits. Portions of the Pelican River Forest are located within the Town of Schoepke.

Metallic & Non-Metallic Resources

There are no active metallic mines within the Town, nor are there any current active non-metallic mining operations within the Town.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Environmentally sensitive areas are typically defined by the local jurisdiction and often include many of the areas referred to in this section such as special groundwater protection areas, threatened or endangered species habitat, floodplains, wetlands and other unique or special resources where encroachment or development could have negative consequences. Some potentially sensitive areas are discussed below.

Potentially contaminated sites might fall under the environmentally sensitive designation in part because they may need special care or monitoring to prevent further environmental degradation or hazard to human life. The WDNR Internet database known as the Bureau of

Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) lists two sites, both of which are considered “closed” and remediated to DNR standards making them available for use.

Rare Species & Natural Communities

As of September 2024, the Town of Schoepke has ten occurrences of endangered resources (rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants & animals, and high-quality natural communities) as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory, as shown in **Table 11**.

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.

Table 11: Rare Species & Natural Communities		
Common Name	Status	Group
Bald Eagle	-	Bird
Common Goldeneye	SC/M	Bird
Northern Dry-mesic Forest	NA	Community
Northern Flying Squirrel	SC/P	Mammal
Northern Mesic Forest	NA	Community
Northern Sedge Meadow	NA	Community
Northern Wet Forest	NA	Community
Open Bog	NA	Community
Spring Pond	NA	Community
Spruce Grouse	THR	Bird

Source: Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory

Agricultural Resources

Soils & Productive Agricultural Resources

Soil is composed of varying proportions of sand, gravel, silt, clay, and organic material. The soils in the Town primarily result from glacial till, glacial outwash, or glaciolacustrine deposits, and a few formed from organic material.

The majority of the Town is covered in soils that are considered to be prime farmland or a farmland of statewide importance. While this does not mean that these lands are being used for agricultural purposes, it does mean that soils throughout the Town have the potential to provide for productive farmland.

Approximately 1,200 acres of the land within the Town consists of cropland. According to the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, a short growing season limits the number of viable crops in Oneida County. Given the Town's climate and soil conditions, commonly planted crops can include potatoes, snap beans, hay crops, and oats. Most farms specialize in potatoes. Historically, potatoes have grown well in Schoepke and a substantial amount of ground has been relegated to agricultural use. Today, potatoes remain a reliable crop for area growers.

Historical & Cultural Resources

The National Register of Historic Places recognizes properties of local, state, and national significance. Properties are listed in the National Register because of 1) their associations with significant persons or events, 2) because they contain important information about our history or prehistory, or 3) because of their architectural or engineering significance. The National Register also lists important groupings of properties as historic districts. In addition, the National Park Service highlights properties that have significance to the nation as a whole by conferring them the status of National Historic Landmark.

The Wisconsin State Register of Historic Places parallels the National Register. It is designed to enable state-level historic preservation protection and benefits. Most of the properties in Wisconsin listed in the National Register are also listed in the State Register. According to the National and State Register, two historic places have been identified within the Town of Schoepke (745 US Highway 45 and 465 Max Rd). The Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI), provided by the Wisconsin Historical Society, lists historical and architectural information on properties in Wisconsin. The AHI contains data on buildings, structures and objects that illustrate Wisconsin's unique history. The majority of properties listed are privately owned. Listed properties convey no special status, rights or benefits. There were 12 properties listed within the Town of Schoepke in the inventory.

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.

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.

County Conservation Aids

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

Discovery Farms Program

Discovery Farms is a program administered by UW-Extension that works with over 40 farmers across the state 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 the following categories: Nitrogen Use Efficiency, Tile Monitoring, Leachate Collection Systems, Watershed water quality, and Edge-of-Field Runoff Monitoring.

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.

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.

Family Forest Carbon Program

The Family Forest Carbon Program enables private forest owners across 19 states, including Wisconsin, to access the voluntary carbon market, a growing market that has been traditionally inaccessible to smaller forest owners, providing landowners with income they can use toward forest management costs or to help pay property taxes.

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.

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 20 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 320 acres per township may be closed to public access by the landowner. 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.

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

Parks and Recreation Program

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

Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants

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

Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations

Nonprofit conservation organizations are eligible to obtain funding for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes and restoration of wildlife habitat. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, protection of rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail, and

restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Wastewater Program

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

Watershed Program

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

Wetlands Reserve Program

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.

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.

Wisconsin Fund

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

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

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

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, water bodies, forestlands, wildlife habitats open spaces and groundwater resources within the scope of current federal, state and local legislation.
2. Protect economically productive areas, including forests and recreational areas within the scope of current federal, state and local legislation.
3. Preserve scenic, cultural, historic, archaeological and recreational sites within the scope of current federal, state and local legislation.
4. Continue to support best practices for forestry management.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the preservation of the land now in agricultural use.
2. Prevent new development in the Town from negatively impacting natural resources by working with the County to ensure all permits are in place.
3. Minimize impacts to the Town's natural resources from metallic or non- metallic mining.
4. Promote development that minimizes groundwater impacts from on-site septic systems and other sources.

Policies:

1. Make residents, developers and potential landowners aware of aspects of living in a rural area.
2. Work with Oneida County to enforce existing regulations of septic systems to protect groundwater quality.
3. Protect wildlife habitat and natural settings within the scope of current federal, state and local legislation.
4. Work with Oneida County to mitigate surface runoff and its negative impacts on the environment.

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."

Grow North Region Housing Study, 2021

The Grow North Region Housing Study analyzes the Grow North Region's (which includes Oneida County) housing stock and housing trends, as well as workforce housing within the Grow North Region. This analysis identifies needs, such as a need for additional housing throughout the Grow North Region, what types of housing are needed throughout the Region, and which steps are needed to solve housing gaps within the Region. This housing study also developed a set of goals and strategies to address the housing issues identified. The identified goals in the Grow North Region Housing Study are as follows:

- Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals and households of all income levels throughout the Region.
- Increase the number of rental units within the Region.
- Encourage and Support a diverse mix of housing within the Grow North Region.

- Encourage housing that accommodates seniors, those with special needs, and those that are extremely-low income.

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

Oneida County Comprehensive Plan, 2013 – Currently being Updated

The Oneida County Comprehensive Plan closely examines the state of housing throughout Oneida County, examining housing issues and qualities such as age of housing units, housing value, housing types, seasonal housing, and general housing characteristics. The identified goals in the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan as pertains to housing are as follows:

- Encourage adequate supply of affordable housing for all individuals of all income levels consistent with the rural character of the county.
- Encourage residential development in suitable areas
- Encourage the use, maintenance and renovation of existing housing as a source of affordable housing

Housing Stock Assessment

Housing Type and Tenure

There were 635 total housing units within the Town of Schoepke in 2022, 220 of which were occupied, as shown in **Table 12**. Among occupied households, the Town of Schoepke (86%) had a higher percentage of occupied homes that were owner-occupied than both Oneida County (83%) and the State of Wisconsin (68%). The Town's average household size of 1.85 was significantly lower than the County (2.30) and lower than the State (2.43). About 35.5 percent of households within the Town were occupied by a single householder and about 40.5 percent of households had at least one individual age 65 and older.

Table 12: Housing Units by Type and Tenure, 2022

	Town of Schoepke	Oneida County	Wisconsin
Total Housing Units	635	30,614	2,734,511
Total Occupied Housing Units	220	16,417	2,425,488
Owner-Occupied Units	188	13,558	1,641,590
Renter-Occupied Units	32	2,859	783,898
Average Household Size	1.85	2.30	2.43
Percent Owner-Occupied	85.5%	82.6%	67.7%
Percent Householder Living Alone	35.5%	32.7%	30.7%
Percent with Individuals 65 or Over	40.5%	38.7%	27.5%

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 Oneida County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

Table 13 indicates the age of the housing stock in the Town of Schoepke area that is based on the year the structures were built as reported in the 2018-2022 American Community Survey. About 13 percent of the Town's housing units were built before 1940, compared to only about nine percent of housing units in Oneida County and about 19 percent of housing units statewide. Over 39 percent of housing units within the Town of Schoepke were built between 1970 and 1999, a lower proportion than Oneida County (48 percent) and a slightly higher proportion than Wisconsin (37 percent). Housing growth has slowed significantly over the past decade, as only about nine percent of the Town's housing stock has been built since 2010, a trend that is also being experienced within Oneida County and Wisconsin.

Table 13: Year Structure Built

	Town of Schoepke		Oneida County		Wisconsin	
Before 1939	80	12.6%	2,779	9.1%	504,575	18.5%
1940-1949	40	6.3%	1,672	5.5%	147,777	5.4%
1950-1959	59	9.3%	2,816	9.2%	287,354	10.5%
1960-1969	75	11.8%	2,787	9.1%	262,836	9.6%
1970-1979	80	12.6%	4,987	16.3%	394,115	14.4%

1980-1989	93	14.6%	4,461	14.6%	263,915	9.7%
1990-1999	77	12.1%	5,192	17.0%	365,107	13.4%
2000-2009	74	11.7%	4,228	13.8%	333,032	12.2%
After 2010	57	9.0%	1,692	5.5%	175,800	6.4%
Total	635	100.0%	30,614	100.0%	2,734,511	100.0%

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

Structural Characteristics

The vast majority of housing units (about 92 percent) in the Town of Schoepke are single-family, as shown in **Table 14**. Both the Town of Schoepke and Oneida County have a housing stock with a significantly higher percentage of single-family housing than the State as a whole. There are only 9 housing units within the Town that are multi-family units, with multi-family housing units accounting for only 1.4 percent of the Town's housing stock, which is significantly lower than both Oneida County and Wisconsin. Mobile homes comprise about seven percent of the housing stock in Schoepke, a higher proportion than both Oneida County and Wisconsin.

Table 14: Housing Units by Structural Type

	Single-Family		Multi-Family		Mobile Home		Total
Town of Schoepke	583	91.8%	9	1.4%	43	6.8%	635
Oneida County	26,211	85.6%	2,721	8.9%	1,682	5.5%	30,614
Wisconsin	1,934,556	70.7%	713,394	26.1%	86,561	3.2%	2,734,511

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

Value Characteristics

Table 15 details housing values in owner-occupied homes throughout the Town, County, and State. In 2022, the median housing value was \$263,200 in the Town of Schoepke. This was higher than both Oneida County (\$214,700) and the State of Wisconsin (\$231,400). Over 30 percent of the homes within the Town are valued between \$100,000 and \$199,999. The abundance of houses with lake frontage within the Town plays a role in the Town having higher housing values than the County and State. There is housing across a broad spectrum of valuations in the Town.

Table 15: 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
T. Schoepke	1.1%	6.4%	17.6%	12.8%	25.5%	36.7%	\$263,200
Oneida County	5.0%	10.7%	14.2%	15.5%	25.4%	29.2%	\$214,700
Wisconsin	4.0%	7.2%	12.9%	16.7%	26.7%	32.4%	\$231,400

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

Seasonal Housing

Seasonal housing plays an important role in the demographics and economy of Oneida County. Every year, thousands of absentee landowners visit their properties in the Northwoods for recreation. Most of these landowners permanently reside and are employed across Wisconsin or Illinois. As a result, there is a significant number of homes in the area that are vacant for long periods of time (usually in winter).

Seasonal housing makes up a significant portion of the Town’s housing stock. In 2022, seasonal housing accounted for nearly 62 percent of the Town’s total housing stock, as shown in **Table 16**. Seasonal housing also makes up a significant portion of the housing stock in Oneida County, as about 42 percent of all housing units within the County were considered seasonal in 2022. Seasonal housing is much more common in both the Town and County than it is throughout the State as a whole, as only about seven percent of housing units across the State are considered to be seasonal housing units.

Table 16: Percentage of Seasonal Housing, 2022			
	Total Housing Units	Seasonal Housing Units	Percent Seasonal Housing Units
Town of Schoepke	635	392	61.7%
Oneida County	30,614	12,767	41.7%
Wisconsin	2,734,511	178,711	6.5%

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

Housing Affordability

Several factors contribute to the affordability of housing in Oneida 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.

Median monthly costs for homeowners, with and without a mortgage, and for renters are shown in **Table 17**. For homeowners with a mortgage, costs are higher in Schoepke than in Oneida County. For homeowners without a mortgage, costs are lower in Schoepke than in Oneida County. Median gross rent is lower in the Town of Schoepke than it is in Oneida County. Both the Town and County had a lower median gross rent in 2022 than the state as whole.

Table 17 also displays the percentage of households that are considered to be cost-burdened. About 26 percent of owner-occupied households in Schoepke are cost-burdened, compared to about 19 percent of owner-occupied households in Oneida County. Renter households are significantly more likely to be cost-burdened than owner-occupied households. About 40 percent of renter-occupied households within the Town of Schoepke were cost-burdened in 2022, a lower percentage than both Oneida County (46%) and Wisconsin (43%).

Table 17: Housing Affordability, 2022					
	With Mortgage	Without Mortgage	Cost-Burdened (Owner-Occupied)	Median Gross Rent	Cost-Burdened (Renter-Occupied)
T. Schoepke	\$1,750	\$467	25.5%	\$643	40.0%
Oneida County	\$1,379	\$481	18.5%	\$876	46.2%
Wisconsin	\$1,602	\$624	18.3%	\$992	43.1%

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022

Specialized Housing

In Oneida County, housing for seniors and populations with special needs is primarily provided in the urbanized areas in and around Rhinelander, while Crandon provides these resources in neighboring Forest County. The Oneida County and Forest County Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Northwoods United Way all maintain a list of these housing options throughout both Oneida and Forest Counties. 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 Schoepke, as the ability to access

medical care and necessary goods and services can become burdensome. This highlights the importance of senior transportation services and universal design (home design that creates access for all people). The closest senior housing facilities are located in the Rhinelander and Crandon areas. The area surrounding the Town of Schoepke will likely need additional housing options for seniors in upcoming years.

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 Department of Administration

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

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

- Housing-Related Consumer Protection Services

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

- Advantage Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP)
- Housing Tax Credit (HTC)
- Wisconsin Bipartisan Housing Legislation Package 2023
 - Infrastructure Access Loan
 - Restore Main Street Loan
 - Vacancy-to-Vitality Loan
 - Home Repair and Rehab Loan

- Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers
- Foreclosure Prevention
- Advantage Conventional Loan
- FHA Advantage Loan
- First-Time Home Buyer Advantage
- Foundation Grant Program
- Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program

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

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

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- Hazard Mitigation Assistance Programs

Other Programs

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

Goals, Objectives & 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:

Goals:

1. Promote housing development that provides a variety of housing choices for residents of all income levels, age groups, and people with special needs.
2. Promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low- and moderate-income housing.
3. Maintain and rehabilitate the existing housing stock as appropriate.

Objectives and Policies:

1. The Town will direct residential development to areas designated on its Future Land Use Plan Map. The Town will discourage residential development in agricultural or silvicultural areas except for related use (i.e.: farm family or worker).
2. The Town will encourage residential developers to provide a variety of housing types for all income and age groups.
3. The Town will maintain designation of adequate areas for residential development on its Future Land Use Plan Map.
4. The Town will promote, via this Plan, programs to assist residents in maintaining or rehabilitating existing housing units.
5. The Town will consider options for monitoring short-term rentals, including requiring short-term rental units to acquire permits in an effort to mitigate potential disturbances and overuse of existing infrastructure.

Chapter Four

Utilities and Community Facilities

Utilities and community facilities play an important role in the livability of a community. This is because 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, and cable communications. 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.

Previous Plans and Studies

Oneida County All Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2023

This document is required for local governments to be eligible for certain disaster mitigation programs. The report looks at general conditions in Oneida County, including population, transportation, land use, and economics. An inventory of utilities, community facilities and emergency services form the background for understanding how the County might respond to a disaster. Risk assessment is at the heart of the All-Hazards Mitigation program. To mitigate the risks, it's necessary to assess their relative importance. Examples of hazards include floods, tornadoes, winter storms, drought, fire, and hazardous materials accidents. The likelihood of any given hazard occurring is estimated based on historical data, and the impact of these hazards is evaluated. The plan seeks to recommend how County government should respond to such occurrences and suggests mitigation measures to reduce the risk caused by identified hazards.

Inventory

Utilities and community facilities provided by the Town of Schoepke or by other public or private entities are inventoried and evaluated as to their present condition and adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the Town. Many of the major facilities are identified on the **Utilities and Community Facilities Map**.

Water and Wastewater Facilities

The Town of Schoepke has no public water supply system or sanitary sewer service. Water supply is accessed via individual private wells. The drilling, use and abandonment of private water supply wells is regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

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

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

The Town contracts with a private hauler to provide "curbside" pick up of garbage and recycling for residents in the Town of Schoepke. Additionally, Town residents can drop off yard waste, brush, dirt, concrete, bricks, bare wood, and metal at the Town dump located on Dump Road. The Town Dump is open seasonally, generally from Memorial Day through Labor Day, with drop-off hours offered on Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays.

Another option for residents is the Oneida County Landfill, located in the Town of Woodboro. The landfill handles collection, recycling and composting of solid and hazardous waste within Oneida County.

Power and Telecommunication Facilities

Electric and natural gas service are provided through Wisconsin Public Service to households and businesses in the Town. Natural gas is available in the village area and around most of Pelican Lake. Liquid Petroleum (LP gas) is available for home and business deliver from several vendors. A high-voltage electric transmission line passes through the Town north-to-south, roughly paralleling Highway 45.

Internet service continues to expand as an economic development necessity, and access to internet service varies greatly throughout Oneida County. Landline and cellular phone service are also essential for communications. Topographic features limit where lines can be buried or where cellular signals can reach. Broadband is currently being expanded throughout the County, and by extension the Town.

Oneida County is currently improving and developing broadband options with various companies as part of a Countywide effort to expand service. Landline phone service providers in Oneida

County include CenturyLink and Frontier. Cable TV lines provide digital signals known as wireline access, and other providers use satellite or wireless technology. There are several internet service providers offering internet service options to residents within the Town. Mobile internet and Cellular coverage is available from AT&T, Cellcom, Sprint, and Verizon. Other providers may get a signal in the County where roaming agreements exist.

Oneida County is working with internet service provider Bug Tussel to improve internet connectivity throughout the County as part of the BEAD program. As part of this effort, Bug Tussel is laying 225 miles of fiber to bring internet service to all of Oneida County by 2029, with 140 miles already installed. This expansion will enhance response times for first responders and is expected to boost the local economy and quality of life. The County is seeking an additional \$25-35 million in funding from the BEAD program to continue the project, with other companies also working on improving service. Overall, the goal is to ensure all areas in the County have reliable Wi-Fi, helping both residents and businesses thrive.

Parks, Recreation, and Other Youth Facilities

Park and park-like facilities within the Town of Schoepke include roughly two-acres of lakefront property where the Town Hall is located. Although there are no formal facilities at this location, swimming and fishing are allowed. There is a ballpark located on Manitowoc Street. Additionally, there are a wide variety of resorts and campgrounds located within the Town that offer opportunities for residents and visitors to access the Town's recreation opportunities, primarily lake access.

Oneida County has one of the largest concentrations of natural lakes in the world. One of the largest lakes within the County is Pelican Lake. Pelican Lake is a 3,585-acre lake partially located within the Town of Schoepke. Pelican Lake is a major source of tourism and recreational opportunities and has five boat launches offering public access. The Pelican Lake Association is a non-profit organization that seeks to preserve, protect, and enhance the waters of Pelican Lake.

The Pelican River Forest is a 70,000-acre conservation easement that is partially located within the Town of Schoepke. The Pelican River Forest contains a network of trails that are open to all uses.

There are several non-profit groups related to outdoor recreation that serve the Town, which are listed below:

- Sno-Devils Snowmobile Club Inc – Groom roughly 160 miles of trails that connect to the Northern Wisconsin trail network

- Pel-Cho Mudd Nutz ATV/UTV Club – Secure and maintain approximately 35 miles of off-road trails connecting the area to surrounding county trails. Many County roads and 35 mph or less designated Schoepke Town roads also accommodate UTV traffic.
- Pelican Lake Association Inc. – The purpose of the Association is to protect, preserve, and improve the waters and surrounding environment of Pelican Lake. The Association is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes.
- Pelican Lake Women’s Civic Club – Primarily provides three \$1,000 scholarships to the Elcho High School but also funds other community resources such as Food pantry, Pelican Lake Fire Department, Humane Society, Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault shelter Lily’s House, and Homeless shelter Frederick Place.
- Mecikalski Stovewood Building Foundation – Group fundraises and maintains a National Register Historic Site located at 465 Max Road. Mission is to preserve the historical buildings and cultural history, including period furnishings.
- Pelican Lake Fire Department – Holds fundraisers to generate additional funds for equipment required for public benefit.

Education

The Town of Schoepke is part of the Elcho School District and is also served by various parochial schools located in the area. The Nicolet Technical College, located in Rhinelander, serves the Town. The University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP) is the nearest four-year university, with the nearest campus being the UWSP campus at Wausau.

Libraries

The nearest public libraries to the Town are located in Elcho and Rhinelander. Nicolet Technical College also contains a library in Rhinelander.

Cemeteries

There are currently four cemeteries located within the Town. Three of the cemeteries are owned by the Town, while the fourth is a Catholic cemetery.

Emergency Services

Police protection in the Town of Schoepke is provided by the Oneida County Sheriff’s Department. The Town is involved in a joint venture with the Town of Enterprise in the Pelican Lake Fire District, Inc., that serves both towns, from a co-owned fire hall located on County Road B. EMS/ambulance service is provided by the County, in conjunction with Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital using an ambulance stationed in Rhinelander. The Town has mutual aid

agreements with all surrounding town volunteer fire departments. Maintaining necessary staffing levels is an ongoing issue for the volunteer Department. The Town is looking to re-establish EMS/ambulance service through the Fire District.

The nearest medical facility is Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital in Rhinelander. Aspirus Langlade Hospital is located in Antigo and is also available. These hospitals provide 24-hour emergency service and critical care. There is an Aspirus Clinic in Elcho. Additionally, the Town is serviced by Flight-for-Life with several landing spots located within the Town. Life Link out of Minocqua and Aspirus Med Flight out of Wausau provide helicopter medical assistance, and Oneida County Dispatch coordinates which one to use based on area and availability.

It should be noted that the Town has several private roads that need to be kept clear for emergency services purposes as well.

Other Government Facilities

The local road system is the most significant public facility maintained by the Town and is covered in the **Transportation Chapter**. The Town Hall is located on the shores of Pelican Lake along US Highway 45. The Town Hall serves as a meeting room available for Town residents use and other organizations, and includes a kitchen and restrooms.

Utilities and Public Facilities Programs

Providing public infrastructure – roads, sewer and water service, schools, police and fire protection – is one of the major functions of local government. In addition to these public services, both public and private entities provide electricity and telephone service as well as such specialized services as child-care, health-care and solid-waste disposal. Taken together these constitute the utilities and community facilities that represent much of the backbone of modern life. Beyond what these facilities do for us, they also represent a huge investment of public and private resources.

The efficient utilization of these resources is one of the basic principles of comprehensive planning. Already in-place infrastructure is a public asset that must be safeguarded for the future, both to conserve and protect environmental values and to maximize the benefits of economic growth. Development that bypasses or ignores existing infrastructure resources is wasteful of the public investment that they represent.

Both the state and federal governments offer programs that assist communities with the development of critical infrastructure and facilities. These programs are listed in more detail in the **Economic Development Chapter** of this plan.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. Encourage adequate public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial and industrial uses.
2. Provide ambulance, volunteer fire and first responder services to residents.
3. Consider cost effectiveness of future development proposals in covering required services, utilities and community facilities.

Objectives:

1. Consider the potential impacts of development proposals on groundwater quality and quantity.
2. Explore opportunities to develop integrated, multi-use trail systems and recreational facilities.
3. Inform residents on the proper maintenance of septic systems, proper private well maintenance, proper care of the lake and surrounding environment, and the benefits of recycling.
4. Share equipment and services across Town boundaries, where possible.
5. Encourage public use of the Pelican River Forest. Optimize the close proximity of 80 miles of open public trails to stimulate tourism growth.

Policies:

1. Work with adjoining towns, the county, the state, and individual landowners to address known water quality issues.
2. The feasibility of wastewater collection and treatment systems on water quality should be considered by major developments.
3. Develop and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan for major equipment purchases.
4. Encourage owners of private roads to maintain recommended road standards for emergency service accessibility.

Chapter Five

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 Schoepke. The **Transportation Map** identifies the transportation infrastructure within the Town of Schoepke.

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

The 2015 Regional Livability Plan (RLP), written by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, addresses issues of livability in the areas of housing, transportation, economic development, and land use. The RLP identifies three major transportation issues.

- **Modes of Transportation to Work** – The region’s workforce is extremely dependent on the automobile. In 2012, over 80 percent of the region’s workforce drove alone to work on a daily basis. Another 10 percent carpooled, leaving less than 10 percent for the non-automobile methods such as walking, biking, and using transit. The average commute time in Oneida County, was 19.2 minutes.
- **Age of Drivers in the Region** – The region is seeing a change in the number of licensed drivers by age groups. Between 2004 and 2013, the region saw a 20 percent decrease in the number of drivers between the ages of 17 and 19. During the same years, the region also had a 20 percent increase in drivers over age 65. These changes mean communities will have a need for multimodal options for the younger ages and options to increase safety as drivers age.

- **Transportation Maintenance Cost** – It is expensive to maintain the transportation infrastructure in the region. The current reliance on state fuel tax and registration fees is inadequate, unstable, and may soon be outmoded. The inability to fund improvements and maintenance on transportation infrastructure will impact the ability to transport goods and provide safe, reliable, and efficient roads.

Connections 2030

This is Wisconsin's latest long-range, statewide, multimodal transportation plan. It identifies a series of system-level priority corridors that are critical to Wisconsin's travel patterns and the state economy.

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

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created this plan in 2001, to identify a statewide network of trails and to provide guidance to the DNR for land acquisition and development. Many existing trails are developed and operated in partnership with counties. By agreement the DNR acquires the corridor and the county government(s) develop, operate, and maintain the trail.

Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan, 2002

In 2002, this plan was created to guide the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Oneida County. The vision of this plan is to increase the mobility of people within the County by making walking and bicycling viable and attractive transportation choices.

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. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation will likely be the agency administering these funds.

Road Network

The highway system within the Town of Schoepke is a network of federal and state highways together with various Town roads. The jurisdictional and functional breakdown of the Town of Schoepke road network is shown in **Table 18**.

Table 18: Road Mileage by Jurisdictional and Functional Class				
Jurisdiction	Functional Classification			Totals
	Arterial	Collector	Local	
State*	4.61	0.00	0.00	4.61
County	0.00	16.22	0.00	16.22
Town	0.00	0.00	30.67	30.67
Totals	4.61	16.22	30.67	51.50

Source: WisDOT & NCWRPC.

* WisDOT has jurisdiction over interstate and federal highways.

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.

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, identified 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.

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

- U.S. Highway 45 is a Principal Arterial
- County Highways G and Q are classified as a Major Collector
- County Highways B, M, and Z are classified as Minor Collectors
- All other roads within the Town are classified as local roads.

Road Maintenance

The Town of Schoepke 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 19 shows a summary of pavement conditions in the Town of Schoepke. 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 19.49 miles of roads in the Town, or 63 percent, are in need of improvement. Approximately 40 percent of roadways in the Town are gravel or unimproved roads. Asphalt or sealcoat roads account for the remaining 60 percent of the total.

Table 19: Summary of Pavement Conditions, 2023		
	Miles	Percent of Total Mileage
Very Poor	3.04	9.9%
Poor	6.30	20.5%
Fair	10.15	33.1%
Good	6.74	22.0%
Very Good	4.47	14.6%
Excellent	0.00	0.0%
Total	30.70	100.0%

Source: WisDOT 2023

The Town has full-time weight-limits on several smaller roads, while the County has seasonal weight-limits on County Highways. Permits for weight-limit exceptions are granted on a case-by-case basis.

Other Modes of Transportation

Bicycle and Pedestrian

Bicycling and walking is legally allowed on all county highways and local roads within the Town. Walking on road shoulders is encouraged when possible to increase safety. The 2002 Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan and the 2018 North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan plans propose establishing offroad infrastructure running parallel to US Highway 45 within the Town of Schoepke.

Airport

The Rhinelander/Oneida County Airport (RHI) in Rhinelander is the closest public airport to Schoepke. RHI has one concrete runway that is 6,799 feet long, and one asphalt runway that is 5,201 feet long. The airport had just over 25,000 enplanements in 2010 and is classified by WisDOT as a “commercial” airport.

Delta Connection Airline now provides two daily flights between the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and a third flight from Minneapolis-St. Paul in the evening in route to Ford Airport in Iron Mountain Michigan. United Express Airline offers summer seasonal service to Chicago O’Hare International Airport.

Public Transportation

Northwoods Transit Connections provides public transportation in Oneida and Vilas Counties with on-demand service 5 days per week from 8:00am - 5:00pm. The Oneida County Department on Aging coordinates volunteer driver-escort service to residents of Oneida County, which includes Schoepke. Escort drivers provide transportation to elderly and disabled residents of Oneida County that qualify as a priority trip purpose such as medical appointments and grocery shopping. For rides or other info call the Oneida County Department on Aging at 715-369-6170.

Trucking

U.S. Highway 45 is a main truck route within the Town as designated by WisDOT. This corresponds with its role as a Corridors 2020 connecting route, linking to the Backbone highway system, and facilitating the movement of goods between Oneida County and the rest of the state/nation.

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 with the local area. Mapping these local routes is beyond the scope of this study, and local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

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 Schoepke 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 Rhinelander or on the Internet at www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/index.htm.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

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

Objectives and Policies:

1. Land uses that generate heavy traffic should be avoided on local roads that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use.
2. Roadway access should be spaced along the existing Town road network to increase safety and better preserve capacity.
3. Future road locations, extensions or connections should be considered when reviewing development plans and proposals.
4. Update road signage to improve visibility for all Town residents.
5. Town roads serving residential areas must accommodate access requirements for emergency services (fire, EMS, ambulance, etc.) as well as school bus and snowplow.

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

Oneida 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.

ALICE: A Study of Financial Hardship in Wisconsin, 2022

This report, developed by the United Way, described the 26 percent of households in Oneida County that are below the federal poverty level and/or 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 38 percent of Schoepke households are either below the federal poverty level or are considered ALICE households, indicating that the proportion of households financially stressed in Schoepke is higher to the proportion in Oneida County.

Economic Environment

County Economic Environment

Historically, the Oneida 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.

Due to the low amount of economic activity which takes place exclusively within the Town and the fact that the local workforce is primarily employed outside the Town, Oneida County data is presented for comparison.

Economic Sectors

Table 20 details employment by sector for the Town of Schoepke and Oneida County. In 2022, there were 156 persons employed in the thirteen basic economic sectors in the Town, up 15.6 percent since 2000. In 2022, the leading industry sectors for Town of Schoepke employed residents were the Education, Health, and Social Services; Construction; and Retail Trade sectors, most of which are located in Rhinelander.

Overall, there were 16,809 persons employed in the basic economic industry sectors in Oneida County in 2022. In contrast to the increase in employment experienced in the Town of Schoepke, employment within Oneida County has decreased by 2.3 percent since 2000, when there were 17,199 persons employed within Oneida County. The leading industry sectors within Oneida County in 2022 were the Education, Health, and Social Services; Manufacturing; and Retail Trade industry sectors.

Between 2000 and 2022, there were several dramatic shifts in employment throughout industries within Oneida County. Only five sectors – the Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing; Professional and Business Services; the Other Services; the Manufacturing; and the Wholesale Trade sectors - experienced growth within the County during this time. All other industry sectors experienced declines within the County during this time, with the Information and the Natural Resources & Mining sectors experiencing the fastest declines in employment.

Table 20: Employment by Industry Sector						
	Town of Schoepke			Oneida County		
	2000	2022	% Change 2000-20	2000	2022	% Change 2000-20
Ag., Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	5	2	-60.0%	526	343	-34.8%
Construction	11	32	190.9%	1,455	1,215	-16.5%
Manufacturing	26	13	-50.0%	2,080	2,432	16.9%
Wholesale Trade	2	10	400.0%	425	490	15.3%
Retail Trade	33	20	-39.4%	2,815	2,283	-18.9%

Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	0	1	100.0%	689	653	-5.2%
Information	0	0	100.0%	434	226	-47.9%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing	0	10	100.0%	636	982	54.4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative & Waste Mgmt Services	7	9	28.6%	898	1,398	55.7%
Education, Health and Social Services	16	44	175.0%	3,953	3,604	-8.8%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	16	5	-68.8%	1,694	1,585	-6.4%
Public Administration	8	3	-62.5%	861	690	-19.9%
Other Services	11	7	-36.4%	733	908	23.9%
Total	135	156	15.6%	17,199	16,809	-2.3%

Source: U.S. Census and 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 21** compares the labor force of the Town of Schoepke with that of Oneida County. Between 2000 and 2022, the Town of Schoepke experienced a 24.1 percent increase in the labor force, as the Town's labor force increased from 141 residents in 2000 to 175 residents in 2022. The increase in the Town's labor force during this time is in stark contrast to the decrease experienced in Oneida County during the same time period. With a labor force consisting of 17,187 persons in 2022, Oneida County's labor force has decreased by 6.2 percent since 2000, when the County's labor force consisted of 18,327 persons.

Table 21: Labor Force

	Town of Schoepke			Oneida County		
	2000	2022	% Change	2000	2022	% Change
Population 16 years and over	272	378	39.0%	29,592	32,148	8.6%
Labor Force	141	175	24.1%	18,327	17,187	-6.2%
Employed	135	156	15.6%	17,199	16,809	-2.3%
Unemployed	6	19	216.7%	1,112	377	-66.1%
Unemployment Rate	2.2%	5.0%	127.3%	6.1%	1.2%	-80.3%
Participation Rate	51.8%	46.3%	-10.6%	61.9%	53.5%	-13.6%

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 2000,

the Town of Schoepke had 2.2 percent unemployment. By 2022, the Town's unemployment rate had increased to five percent. The Town's unemployment rate was higher than both Oneida County (1.2%) and 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 2000, about 52 percent of the Town's population over the age of 16 was in the labor force. By 2022, that percentage was significantly lower at about 46 percent, which was lower than the participation rate in Oneida County. Both the Town of Schoepke and Oneida County had a lower participation rate than the State (65.7%).

Laborshed

A laborshed is an area or region from which an employment center draws its commuting workers. In 2021, there were 21 jobs located within the Town of Schoepke. Only one of these jobs were filled by a Town of Schoepke resident, while the remaining 20 jobs were filled by workers who live outside of the Town. In contrast, there were 169 workers who live in Schoepke that commuted to locations outside of the Town for work, as shown in **Figure 8**. This indicates that the Town's laborshed extends beyond its municipal borders.

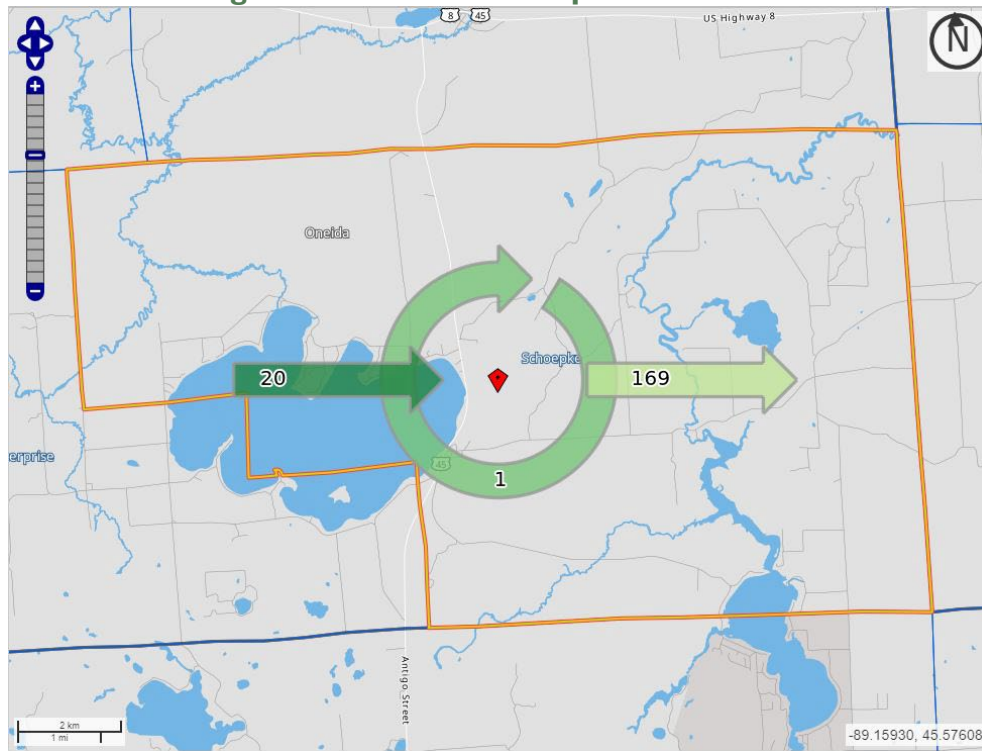
In-Migration

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 Oneida County or in neighboring Forest & Langlade Counties.

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 Rhineland for work. Other common work locations for Town residents include Antigo, Wausau, and Marshfield.

Figure 7: Town of Schoepke Laborshed



Source: U.S. Census On the Map

Occupations

Table 22 displays the occupational employment for residents in the Town of Schoepke and for residents in Oneida County. In 2022, most residents within the Town of Schoepke were employed in Management, Professional & Related occupations, while most Oneida County residents were also employed in Management, Professional & Related occupations. The second-most represented occupational group among Town of Schoepke residents was the Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance occupational group, while the Sales & Office occupational group was also the second-most represented in Oneida County.

Table 22: Occupation of Employed Workers				
Occupation	Town of Schoepke		Oneida County	
	2000	2022	2000	2022
Management, Professional & Related	25	58	5,117	5,701
Service	26	18	2,747	2,718
Sales & Office	40	36	4,465	3,472
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	15	38	2,266	1,898
Production, Transportation & Mineral Moving	29	6	2,604	3,020
Total	135	156	17,199	16,809

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 Oneida County. A partial list of those programs is provided below:

Local:

Tax Increment Financing

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. WI State Legislature continually updates Tax Increment Financing. Therefore, it should be reviewed often for current changes.

County:

Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC)

The Oneida County Economic Development Corporation (OCEDC) was founded in 1989 as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) Corporation to act as an economic development coordinator for all of Oneida County. OCEDC assists individuals investigating the feasibility of going into business, works with existing business to expand and retain economic viability, and works to attract new business in an effort to expand our economic base and provide employment alternatives to the citizens of Oneida County. OCEDC also acts as a conduit between business and government on a local, regional, state, and federal level.

Oneida County Revolving Loan Fund

A Wisconsin Department of Commerce Economic Development Grant was awarded to Oneida County, which enabled the county to establish a revolving loan fund in order to assist local businesses. The fund is managed and administered by the OCEDC.

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 Oneida 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 (EDA). 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 help businesses 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 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 percent of the principal and interest on loans to companies, individuals, or government entities for financing in rural areas. Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation acts as an agent for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that provide financing for fixed asset loans and for working capital.

Goals, Objectives & Policies

Although the Town of Schoepke 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:

Goals:

1. Promote the stabilization of the current economic base.

Objectives:

1. Encourage new retail, commercial & industrial development to locate adjacent to county or state highways.
2. Encourage industry development that does not negatively impact environmental resources or adjoining property values.
3. Encourage businesses that are compatible with the Town's infrastructure and zoning.
4. Review costs and benefits of a proposed development project prior to approval.

Policies:

1. Accommodate home-based businesses that do not significantly increase noise, traffic, odors, lighting, or would otherwise negatively impact the surrounding areas.
2. Support efforts to promote economic development within the county.
3. Commercial and industrial development should be directed to designated planned areas consistent with the Future Land Use Map.
4. Intensive industrial uses should be steered to areas that have the service capability to support that development.
5. The Town should start a policy of attending and participating in area or regional economic development related meetings and events for networking purposes and to represent the opportunities for businesses to locate in the Town.

Chapter Seven

Land Use

Land use analysis is a means of broadly classifying how land is used. Each type of use has its own characteristics that can determine compatibility, location, and preference to other land uses in the Town. The land use plan brings together consideration for both the physical development as well as the social characteristics of the Town. Land use mapping and related information is used to analyze the current pattern of development and serves as the framework for formulating how land will be used in the future.

To arrive at an optimum plan that will be both effective and implemented, the plan must account for past development activity as well as current market factors and conditions that shape where and how land will be developed. This chapter discusses uses of land in the Town of Schoepke. The existing land use types are defined, current land uses are analyzed, and existing and potential land use conflicts are identified.

Previous Plans and Studies

Oneida County Comprehensive Plan, 2013 [currently being updated]

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

Regional Livability Plan, 2015

Land use is one of the four elements included in the RLP, adopted by NCWRPC in 2015. The Land Use Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the land uses through the ten-county region and identifies issues and trends related to land use: housing density and farmland preservation. The two land use goals of the plan are as follows:

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

Existing Land Use Inventory

Current land use activity in the Town is characterized by large blocks of forestland with scattered farming, and residential development. There are large sections of forest with limited access, most of which is privately owned. These large contiguous forest blocks are necessary to maintain economically viable forests.

Table 23 presents the current breakdown of land-use types within the Town. The majority of the Town is woodlands with nearly 27,000 acres, or about 83 percent, being woodlands. The next most significant land use types are water, agriculture, and residential. The other land uses combined account for about one percent of the Town's total land area. The **Existing Land Use Map** displays the existing land use within the Town.

Table 23: Existing Land Use, 2020		
	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	1,082	3.4%
Commercial	16	<0.1%
Governmental	3	<0.1%
Open Lands	111	0.3%
Outdoor Recreation	47	0.1%
Residential	894	2.8%
Transportation	132	0.4%
Water	3,139	9.7%
Woodlands	26,871	83.2%
Total	32,296	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

Land Use Trends

Land Supply and Demand

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

Land Values

Table 24 displays the assessed land values in the Town of Schoepke. It is important to note that lands enrolled in the Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law programs and other tax-exempt

lands are not included in values for Table 24. It should also be noted that improvements (structures) are also not included in the values. In 2024, the assessed value per acre in the Town was valued at about \$12,728 per acre. Properties classified as “Residential” have the highest value per acre within the Town, followed by properties classified as “Commercial” and “Other”.

Table 24: Assessed Land Value (per acre), 2024		
Land Classification	Total Value of Land	Total Value per Acre
Residential	\$113,341,700	\$110,040.49
Commercial	\$5,653,600	\$97,475.86
Manufacturing	\$0	\$0.00
Agriculture	\$147,400	\$163.78
Undeveloped	\$1,186,800	\$388.35
Forest	\$8,440,900	\$1,737.88
Agricultural Forest	\$261,000	\$973.88
Other	\$604,100	\$37,756.25
Total	\$129,635,500	\$12,728.08

Source: WI Department of Revenue

Opportunities for Redevelopment

While there are properties that could be redeveloped for other uses in Schoepke, the likelihood of doing so is limited. The amount of undeveloped land readily available for residential development in Schoepke precludes the likelihood that existing developments will be removed in favor of this use. Commercial and industrial activities have limited market potential given the rural nature of the community.

The Town of Schoepke will support metallic mining in its land with a Prove It First caveat concerning the methods to be used. The proposed mining method to be employed must first be shown to have been used without significant surface or groundwater contamination at a similar site in Wisconsin or the United States for at least 5 years after the mine was closed and the site reclaimed.

Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts

The ongoing conversion of seasonal dwellings on Pelican Lake and other lakes in the town to year-round residences can lead to some conflicts between newer residents and more established rural lifestyles. Newer residents, often accustomed to urban life can engender demand for a higher level of services (snowplowing, fire protection), but can also lead to conflicts between residents and more traditional uses such as forestry.

The high number of housing units being used as short-term rentals pose potential conflicts for the Town. Wisconsin's "Right-to-Rent" law (Wis. Stat. 66.1014) limits the ability of local governments to restrict short-term rentals. Local governments such as the Town of Schoepke are limited to regulating aspects of the short-term rentals such as requiring licenses for short-term rental operators and regulating the maximum number of days a short-term rental unit can be rented out (no less than 180).

As lake frontage within the Town fills in, development of back lots and increasing demands on existing Town Roads not designed to handle the load is a significant concern of the Town.

Unkempt or poorly maintained buildings and properties including accumulating junk and vehicles have been generally labeled as "eyesores" and identified as a conflict issue by the Town Plan Commission.

This Plan seeks to avoid or minimize potential future land use conflicts through controlled development, planned use-buffers and public information and education components.

Future Land Use

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.

Town of Schoepke Plan Commission members participated in a mapping exercise with NCWRPC staff to identify the desired future land uses by using eight 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.

Future Land Use Map Classifications:

Future land use classifications are groups of land uses that are compatible and separates 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.

Agriculture

This land use planning district is intended to cover all the land uses in Schoepke that are engaged in farm practices. The district assumes that the land will remain as large parcels to promote efficiency in farming activities, farm houses are also permitted as a necessary part of the farm use. The following zoning districts (per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: 1-A Forestry and 1-B Forestry.

Single-Family Residential

This land-use planning district is intended to allow single-family residential uses. The district allows for more density around the Town's lakes. The district allows for churches, cemeteries, day care centers, customary home occupations, professional and services offices, bed and breakfast establishments, schools, libraries, community buildings, museums, public park and playground, and pre-existing licensed resorts, hotels, motels, and tourist rooming houses. This district has no special limitation on land divisions; minimum parcel size is determined by the zone prescribed under the official county zoning map. The following zoning districts (per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: Single Family.

Commercial

This land-use planning district is intended to allow for general commercial activities. This district is intended to cover most of the commercial operations in Schoepke with the exception of home occupations. This district is mainly located in the Pelican Lake community. The following zoning districts (per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: Single Family, Multiple Family Residential, Residential and Retail, Recreational, B-1 Business, and B-2 Business.

Outdoor Recreation

This use defines land that is publicly owned and maintained for purposes of outdoor recreation and open space. The following zoning districts (per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: Recreational.

Governmental / Institutional

This district identifies land owned and maintained by government or institutional entities. Town and other governmental properties are covered by this district. The following zoning districts

(per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: General Use District.

Open Lands

This use defines land that is publicly owned and maintained for purposes of outdoor recreation and open space. The following zoning districts (per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: General Use District.

Transportation

This district is limited to existing roadways within the Town of Schoepke.

Woodlands

This land use planning district is intended to cover all the land uses in Schoepke that are either undeveloped or used for forestry. Open space recreational uses such as golf courses, campgrounds, and wilderness areas are permitted with special consideration. The following zoning districts (per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance) are considered to be consistent with the intent of this land use district: 1-A Forestry and 1-B Forestry.

Land Use Programs

To implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, there are some basic tools that are available to the Town. There are zoning, subdivision ordinance, and official mapping.

Zoning

Zoning is a major tool used to regulate land uses and implement a comprehensive plan. The zoning ordinance regulates the use of property to advance the public health, safety, and welfare of the community. It has been used throughout the United States and in Wisconsin since the 1920's.

A zoning ordinance creates different use zones or districts within a community. Each district has a list of permitted uses, which are uses that are desirable in a district. Districts may also contain a list of special uses, sometimes called special exceptions or conditional uses, which are allowed under certain circumstances, and require review by a local government body to be allowed. All other uses are prohibited.

Zoning regulations are adopted by local ordinance and consist of two major components, a map and related text. The zoning map displays where the zoning district boundaries are, and the text describes what can be done in each type of district. The Future Land Use Plan and zoning are similar but they are not the same.

Zoning should be derived from, and be consistent with, the policy recommendations adopted in the comprehensive plan. The desired land uses should “drive” the development of specific zoning ordinance provisions including district descriptions, permitted uses, conditional uses, and the zoning map. This consistency has been important in upholding legal challenges in the Courts. Following the planning process it is critical that the zoning ordinance be updated to incorporate the findings of the plan.

Land Division

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

Of all the land use control devices available, subdivision regulation has probably the greatest potential. When compared with zoning, a well-administered subdivision control is more useful in achieving planning goals and its influence is far more lasting. Once land is divided into lots and streets are laid out, development patterns are set. Subdivision regulations can ensure that those development patterns are consistent with community standards. Subdivision regulations can also ensure the adequacy of existing and planned public facilities such as schools, wastewater treatment systems, and water supply to handle new growth. Finally, subdivision regulation can help ensure the creation and preservation of adequate land records. As is the case for shoreland zoning, Oneida County administers subdivision regulation within the Town of Schoepke. Additionally, all one- and 2-family dwellings and modular homes are required to adhere to uniform statewide construction standards and inspection procedures as per the State’s Uniform Dwelling Code.

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.

Shoreland Zoning

All counties are mandated by Wisconsin law to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land-use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the county outside of villages and cities. As a result, shoreland zoning within Schoepke is administered by Oneida County. This ordinance supersedes any town ordinance, unless the town ordinance is more restrictive. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area

that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

Farmland Preservation Program

The State of Wisconsin has a Farmland Preservation Tax Credit Program. The goals of the program are twofold: to preserve Wisconsin farmland by means of local land use planning and soil conservation practices, and to provide property tax relief to farmland owners. Landowners keeping land in agricultural use can claim a credit on their state income taxes. See the **Oneida County Farmland Preservation Plan** for more information.

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

The Forest Crop Law is no longer open to new participants except through the purchase of land currently under this law. The length of the original contracts was for either a 25-or-50 year period. Forest Crop contracts cannot be renewed, however conversion into the Managed Forest Law program is possible. Participants must follow a written management schedule, including mandatory activities of cutting mature timber, and thinning plantations and natural stands. A ten percent yield tax is applied. Public access for fishing and hunting activities must be permitted on Forest Crop land.

The purpose of the Managed Forest Law (MFL) is to encourage sustainable forestry on private woodlands in Wisconsin. The law incorporates timber harvesting, wildlife management, water quality, and recreation to maintain a healthy and productive forest. To be eligible for the MFL program, a landowner must have a minimum of 20 acres, 80 percent of which must be productive forest land. Landowners designate the land “open” or “closed” and commit to a 25-or-50 year sustainable forest management plan. Lands designated as open may be used by the public for hunting, fishing, hiking, sightseeing, and cross country skiing.

The plan sets a schedule for specific forestry practices, and in return participants make a payment in lieu of traditional property taxes. Lands enrolled or renewed as of January 1, 2017, are not eligible if they contain a building or an improvement associated with a building. Mandatory practices during the MFL entry period include harvesting timber, thinning plantation and natural stands, pine release, pre- and post-harvest treatments, and controlling soil erosion.

The benefits of these programs to Schoepke include:

- Protection against over timber harvesting;
- Long-term investment in area forestry;
- Encouraged woodland expansion;
- Preservation and management of wildlife habitat;

- Preservation of the Town's "northwoods character" and;
- FC and MFL-open lands are available for recreational use by public.

The benefits to the individual property owner include:

- A lower payment in lieu of property taxes;
- Protection against annual increases in property taxes, and;
- Private land forestry technical assistance.

Further participation in these programs by private landowners is a vital component to ensure the preservation of the Town's natural "northwoods character". It would be beneficial for the Town of Schoepke to continue informing private landowners of the forestry management and preservation programs as well as other available resource protection programs, and to encourage private landowners to continue to participate in such programs.

Impact of Public and Private Resource Protection Programs:

The Town of Schoepke benefits from significant public and private participation in land and resource protection programs. State owned land, forestry management programs, and a conservation easement currently impact more than 18,708 acres, which is more than half of the available land in the Town.

About 17,217 acres of woodlands and forestlands are currently enrolled in WI DNR's Managed Forest lands (MFL) program. As a result of the associated deed restrictions, the continued and expanded participation in these programs assist in the preservation of natural resources. This provides a means to enhance and retain the "northwoods character" of the Town.

Woodlands, forests, waterbodies, and other natural amenities are among the Town's most notable assets. Public and private resource protection programs safeguard these resources for future generations.

Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Program:

In October of 1999, the Governor signed into law Wisconsin Act 9, the Budget Bill, containing substantial revisions of statutes governing comprehensive planning. The law has been revised by the signing of two additional bills into law. The first is AB 872, containing "technical revisions" which was signed May 10, 2000. The second bill, signed April 13, 2004, is AB 608, which reduced the number of items that must be consistent with the plan to three, these are: official mapping, subdivision ordinances and zoning ordinances. Taken together these bills represent the most sweeping revision of the State's planning enabling laws in half a century.

The law (§66.1001 WI Stats.) requires all jurisdictions within the state that exercise control over land-use to prepare a comprehensive plan by 2010. It lays out the nine required chapters of the plan and requires a public participation process. Jurisdictions that do not have a comprehensive plan in place by the deadline may not engage in actions that impact land-use.

The comprehensive planning law is significant in many ways. The law creates for the first time a definition of a comprehensive plan; it requires that almost all local units of government have a plan; it sets requirements for public participation; and requires that the plan be consistent with local implementations tools. Most important, is that it maintains that the process be locally driven so all local units of government decide their own future.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goals:

1. Maintain orderly planned growth that promotes the health, safety and general welfare of Town residents and makes efficient use of land and efficient use of public services, facilities, and tax dollars.
2. Promote and regulate development that preserves the historical character of the Town.
3. Follow the County guidelines for on-site septic systems.
4. Preserve the productive farmland and forest in the Town for long-term use and maintain agriculture and forestry as important economic activities and a way-of-life.

Objectives:

1. Small or medium scale commercial development intended to serve local needs will be encouraged.
2. All industrial development proposals will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
3. Commercial and industrial development will be directed to main roads that are better able to handle the traffic.
4. The location of new development will be restricted from areas in the Town shown to be unsafe or unsuitable for development due to flood hazard, potential groundwater contamination, loss of farmland, highway access problems, incompatibility with neighboring uses, etc.
5. Marginal lands, not suited to agricultural or forestry uses, should be considered for development activity in the Town.

Policies:

1. The Town will maintain a long-range Comprehensive Plan, which will serve as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions. New development will be permitted based on consideration of this Plan, as well as other Town, County, and state plans and ordinances.
2. The Town may actively participate in zoning and subdivision review decisions at the County level, which affect the Town. This includes zoning amendment and subdivision requests acted on by the County Planning and Zoning Committee, as well as variance and conditional use requests acted on by the County Zoning Board of Adjustment. This plan will be cited as the basis for all such actions including "disapproval" of proposed zoning amendments under §59.69 Wisconsin Statutes.
3. Use-buffer or landscaped areas may be used as shields to lessen the impacts of potentially conflicting land use types located in relatively close proximity; i.e. rural residential type development should be planned as a buffer between single-family and forestry or agricultural.
4. The Town may consider proposals involving the keeping or raising of livestock or other animals, fish, and fowl on a case-by-case basis in relation to the potential impact on water quality and neighboring land uses, consistent with Wis. Stat. 93.90.
5. The Town of Schoepke will support metallic mining in its land with a Prove It First caveat concerning the methods to be used. The proposed mining method to be employed must first be shown to have been used without significant surface or groundwater contamination at a similar site in Wisconsin or the United States for at least 5 years after the mine was closed and the site reclaimed.
6. The Town recognizes VRBO's and the impact they may have on residential zones and septic systems. VRBO's will be required to obtain, maintain and provide all necessary permitting requirements.

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.

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

Background

Overview

As discussed earlier in the plan, the Town is surrounded by the Towns of Elcho (Langlade County), Enterprise, Monico, Nashville (Forest County), and Pelican. These are important intergovernmental relationships for the Town. Efforts should be made to maintain good working relationships with the surrounding towns and the County.

Statewide, Wisconsin has over 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.

Benefits

There are many reasons intergovernmental cooperation makes sense. Some examples include:

- **Trust:** Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust between jurisdictions. 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.

- **Cost Savings:** Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.
- **Consistency:** Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.
- **Address Regional Issues:** Communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues, which 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 costs savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

Intergovernmental Relationships

Surrounding Towns

The Town of Schoepke is involved in a joint venture with the Town of Enterprise in the Pelican Lake Fire District, Inc. that provides fire service to both towns. The Fire District has mutual aid agreements in place with the surrounding communities.

County

Oneida 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 Sheriff, Health, and Land Records. The Town contracts with the County for EMS service, provided by Aspirus Rhinelander Hospital.

The County Sheriff provides protective services through periodic patrols and on-call 911 responses. The Sheriff also manages the 911-dispatch center, not only for police protection, but also for ambulance/EMS response and dispatching the Town Fire Department. Oneida County also administers a county-wide mutual aid organization - MABAS Division 114 - and holds safety drills on a regular basis. The Forestry, Land and Outdoor Recreation Department maintains a countywide park system and county forest system for the use and enjoyment of all residents including the Town of Schoepke. The County Planning & Zoning Department administers shoreland zoning in the Town.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, the County sponsors a countywide planning effort to complete these plans and include individual local units 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 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. Statutes as a voluntary association of governments serving a ten-county area. Oneida County is a member of the NCWRPC, which includes all of its local units of government.

NCWRPC provides both regional and 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, 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 Schoepke. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) and the Priority Watershed Program. There are also a number of mandates passed down from the state that the Town must comply with, such as the biannual pavement rating submission for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR).

Most federal programs are administered by the states, so the Town would be dealing with the responsible state agency with regard to federal programs and regulations. The Town works with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the South Pelican Dam.

School District

Schoepke is in the Elcho School District and is also served by various parochial schools located in the area. The Nicolet Technical College district includes the Town of Schoepke and has its nearest campus in Rhinelander. The University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point is the nearest four-year university.

The main form of interaction with both school and college districts are through payment of property taxes, which help to fund both districts' operations.

Goals, Objectives & Policies

Goals:

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

Objectives:

1. Maintain current agreements and explore additional opportunities with adjacent communities for services.

Policies:

1. Continue to host meetings with surrounding communities and the county to review service agreements and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
2. Maintain a close relationship with the School District related to existing and new facilities.
3. Work with the surrounding townships to develop cooperative boundary agreements.
4. Investigate cost sharing or contracting with neighboring towns and the County to provide more efficient service or public utilities.
5. Investigate joint operation or consolidation when considering expanded or new services or facilities.

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 Schoepke. 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, Schoepke 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

The Town of Schoepke is currently under Oneida County general zoning. 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 Schoepke adopted 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 Schoepke 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 Schoepke 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 Schoepke 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.

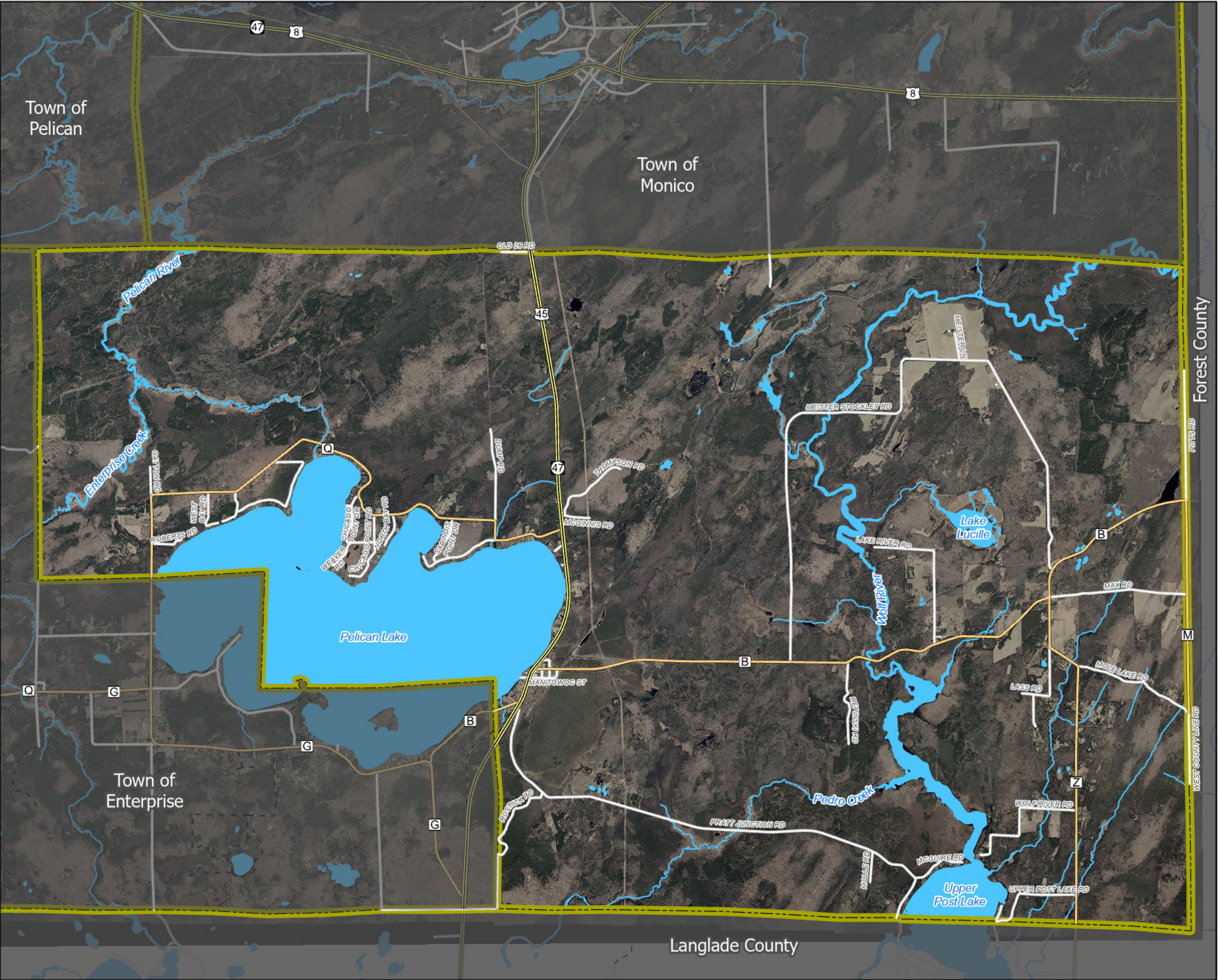
Plan Monitoring

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.

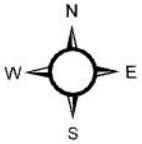
This plan should be evaluated at least every 5 years, and updated at least every 10 years. Members of the Town Board, Plan Commission, and any other local decision-making bodies should periodically review the plan and identify areas that might need to be updated. The evaluation should involve first reviewing 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
- U.S. Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Water



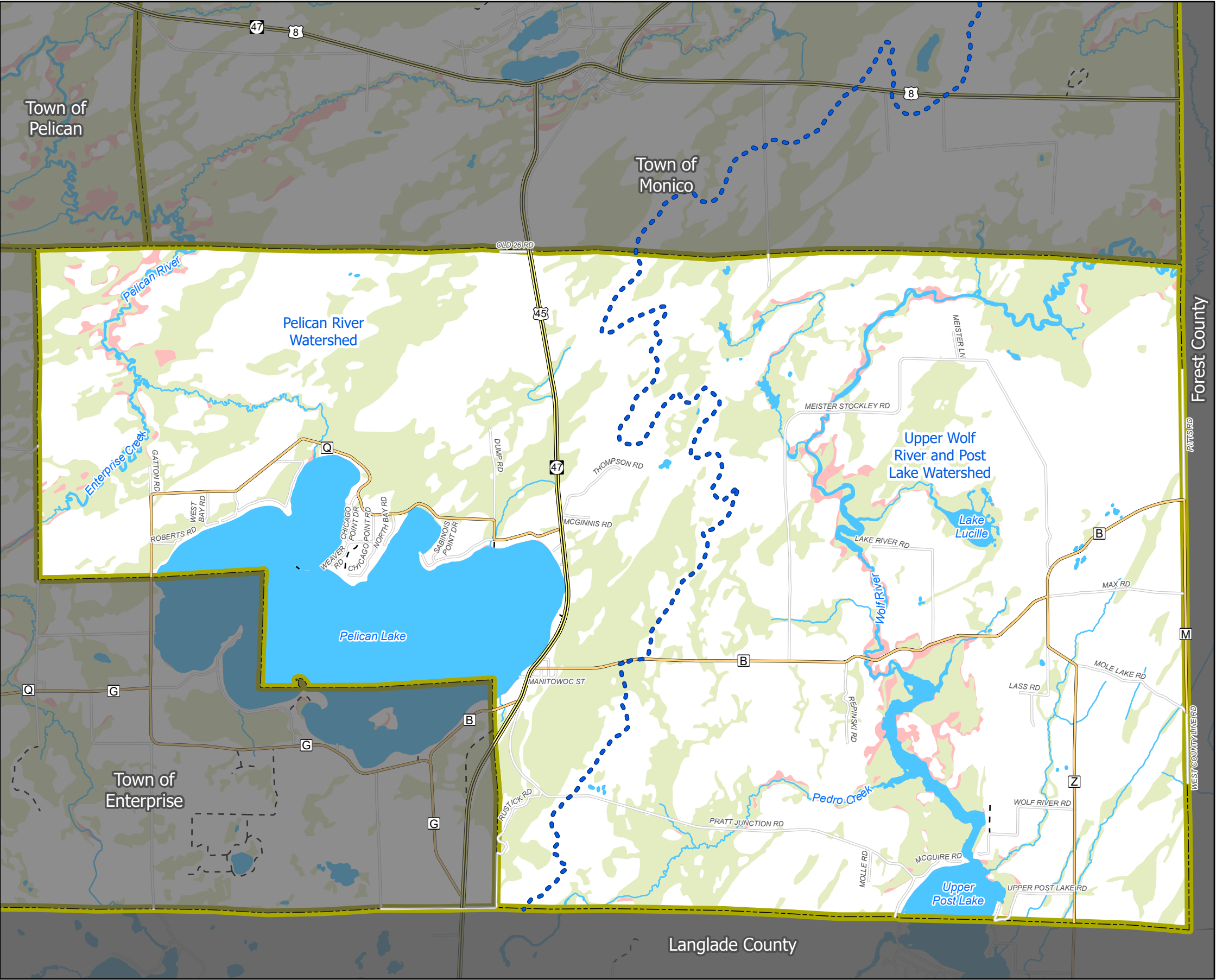
Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



Prepared By:
North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

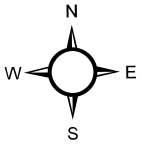
210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

Natural Resources



- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Watershed Boundary
- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Water

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

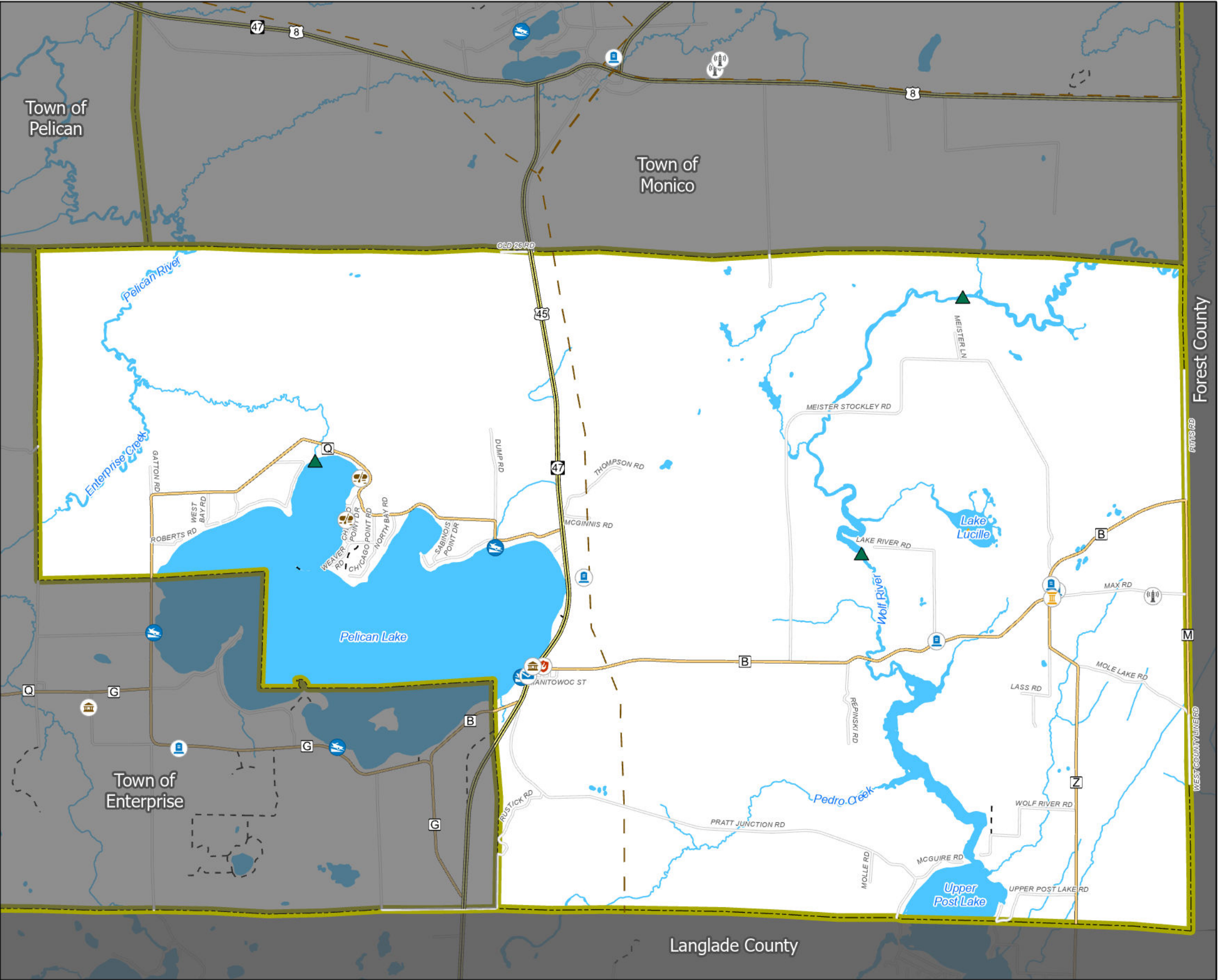


Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



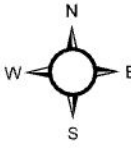
Prepared By:
North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org



Utilities & Community Facilities

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- High Voltage Powerline
- Communication Towers
- Dams
- Boat Launch
- Canoe Access Point
- Campgrounds
- Ambulance Service
- Cemetery
- Fire Station
- Museum
- Post Office
- Town Hall
- County Forest
- State Land
- Water



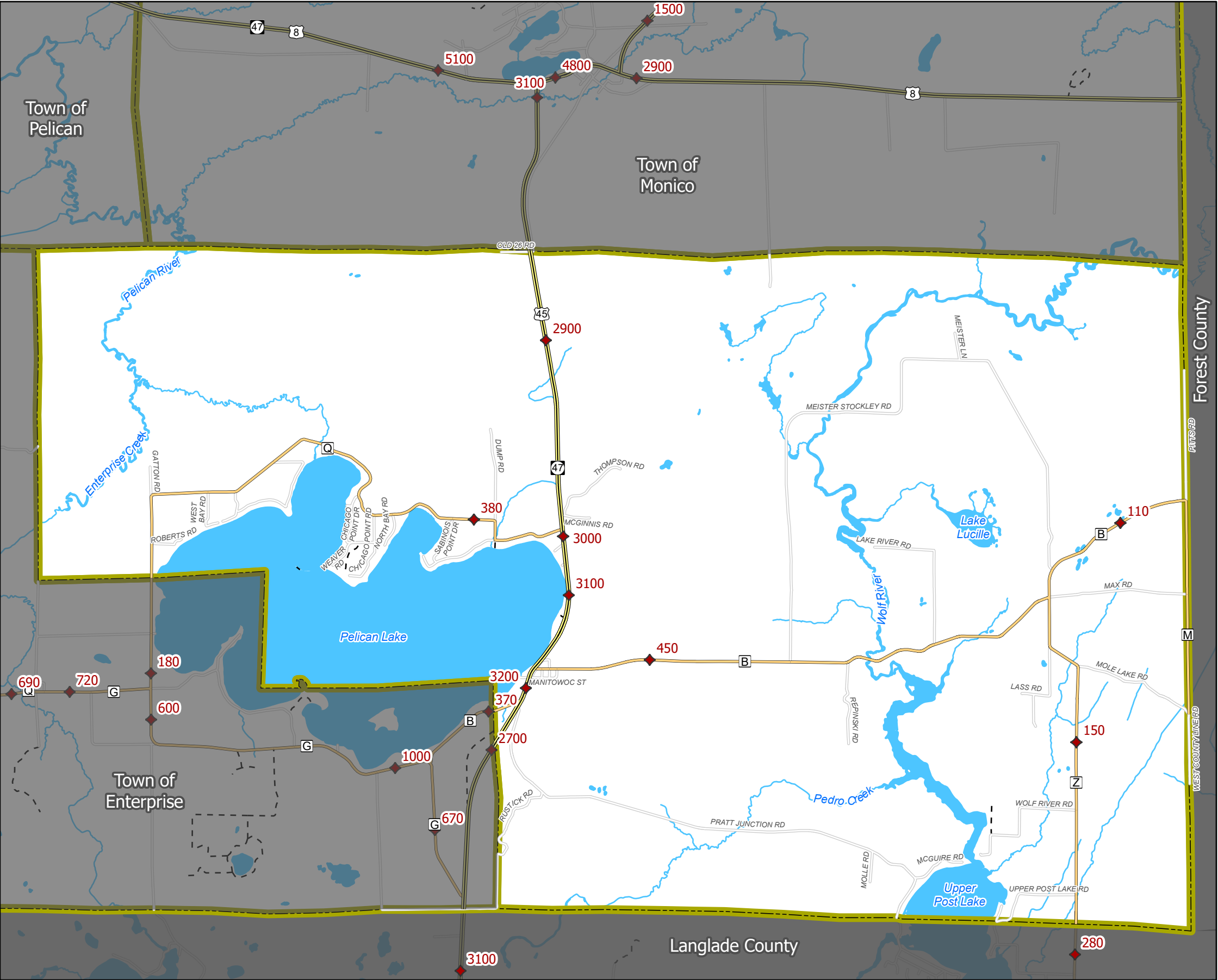
Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



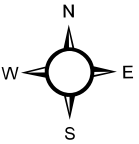
Prepared By:
North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

Transportation



- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Traffic Counts
- Water

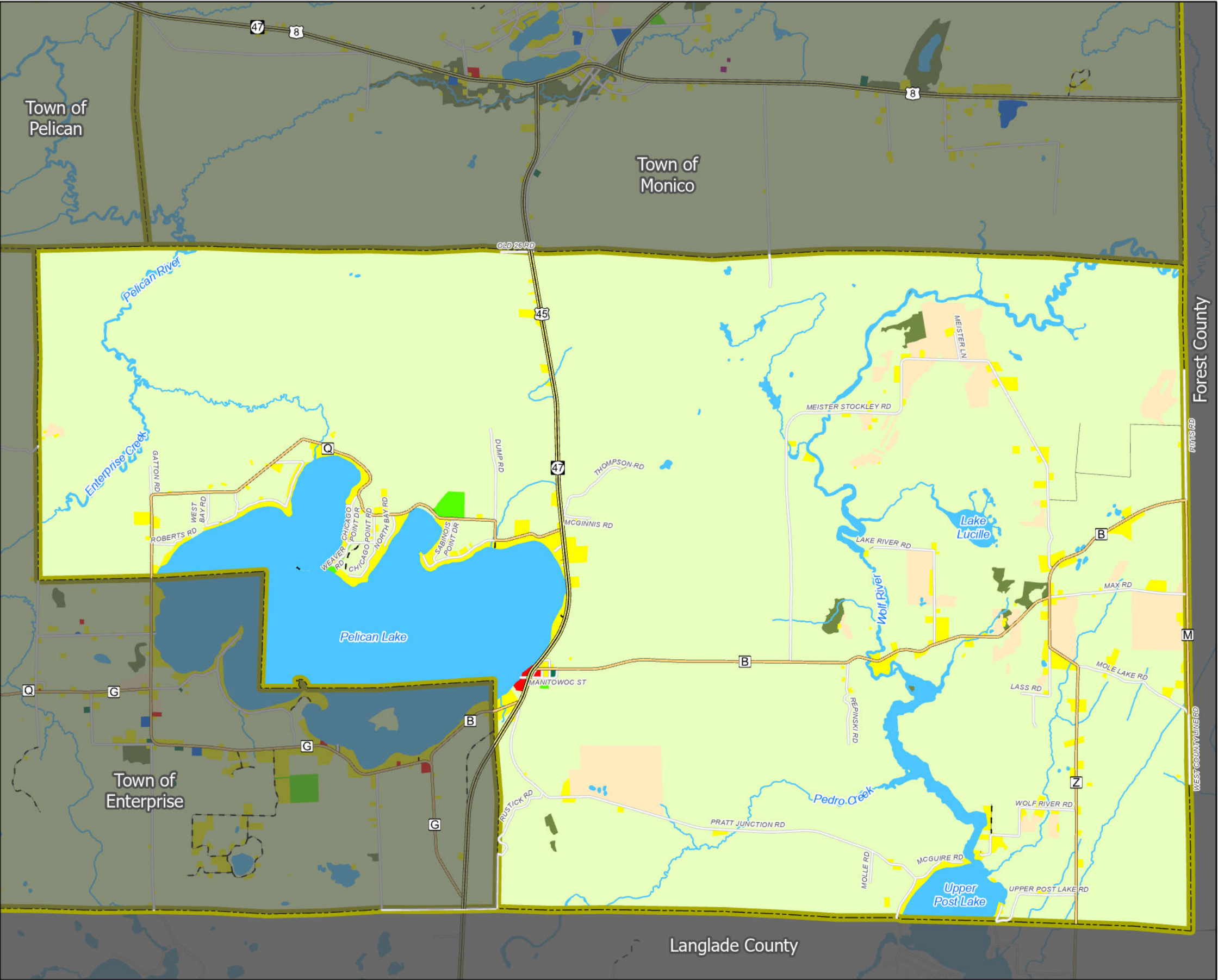


Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
 This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



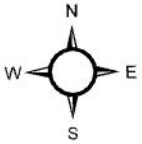
Prepared By:
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
 715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org



Existing Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Existing Land Use 2020
 - Agriculture
 - Commercial
 - Governmental / Institutional
 - Industrial
 - Open Lands
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Residential
 - Transportation
 - Utility
 - Woodlands
 - Water

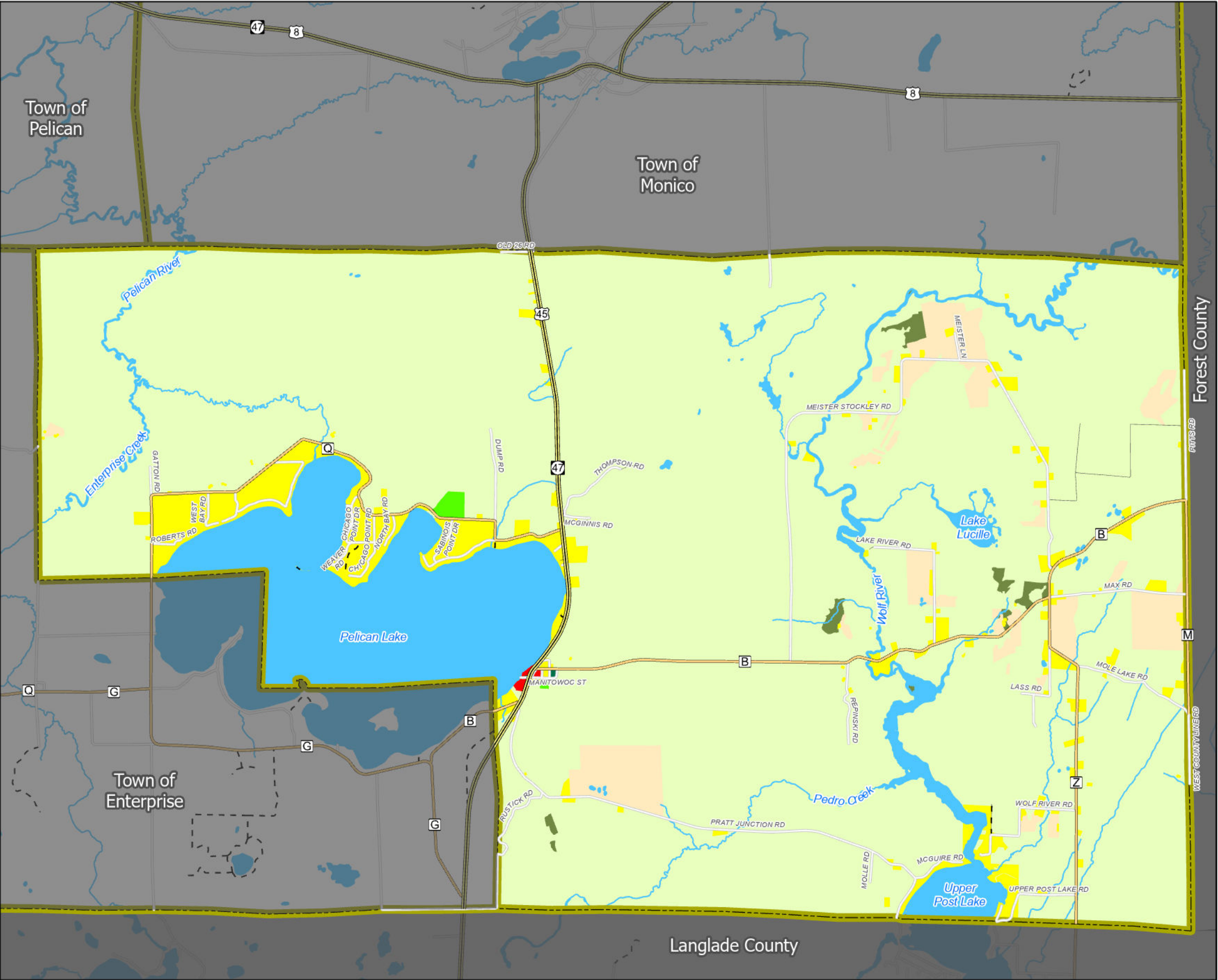


Source: WisDOT, WI DNR, NCWRPC, Oneida Co
This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. NCWRPC is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained.



Prepared By:
North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org



Future Land Use

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Future Land Use
 - Agriculture
 - Commercial
 - Governmental / Institutional
 - Open Lands
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Single Family Residential
 - Transportation
 - Woodlands
 - Water



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



Prepared By:
**North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission**

210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

Appendix A

Public Participation Plan

Appendix B

Adoption Resolution

Appendix C

Adoption Ordinance

**Town of Schoepke
Comprehensive Plan
2025**