



# Town of Wausau Comprehensive Plan

Adopted 2021

# Town of Wausau

---

## **Town Board**

John Prahl, Chairperson

Sharon Hunter, Supervisor

Linda Glatczak, Supervisor

## **Planning Commission**

Darrin Damrow

Sharon Hunter

Terry Peterson

Roloef Stam

Steve Schlei

Adopted 2021

Cover Photo: Town of Wausau

# Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - Introduction and Demographics.....	1
Chapter 2 - Natural Resources.....	13
Chapter 3 - Housing .....	22
Chapter 4 - Utilities and Community Facilities .....	25
Chapter 5 - Transportation .....	36
Chapter 6 - Economic Development .....	44
Chapter 7 - Land Use .....	50
Chapter 8 - Intergovernmental Cooperation.....	59
Chapter 9 - Implementation .....	64

**Maps:**

<b>Map 1 - Planning Area .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Map 2 - Natural Resources .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Map 3 - Utilities and Community Facilities .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Map 4 - Transportation.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Map 5 - Existing Land Use.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Map 6 - Future Land Use.....</b>	<b>58</b>

# Chapter 1

## Introduction and Demographics

### BACKGROUND

#### Introduction

The Town of Wausau Comprehensive Plan identifies existing conditions in the Town as well as issues and concerns on a number of topics including future development, land use, transportation, housing, and economic development. Goals and objectives have been developed relative to each of the required nine plan elements. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to enable the community to achieve them. The Implementation Element at the end of this document compiles and prioritizes all the recommended action steps and identifies who is responsible for implementation. This plan is intended to guide Town decision makers on a variety of issues over the next ten years.

#### Community Vision Statement

The vision of the Town of Wausau is to provide for the growth and development of the town over the next ten years in such a way as to balance individual private property rights with the town's need to protect property values community-wide, minimize conflicts and keep the cost of local government as low as possible.

#### Key Findings

- The Town of Wausau is located adjacent to and immediately east of the City of Wausau.
- Much of the Town east of CTH X retains a very rural character. Denser, mostly residential development is generally located west of CTH X.
- The Town has its own zoning.
- Town roads are generally in good repair and almost 3/4 of the local roads are paved. With new residential development, demand to pave more local roads has increased.
- All development in the Town uses private septic systems and wells. The nearest wastewater treatment system is located in the City of Wausau and obtaining public sewer and water is a primary factor prompting annexation.
- Housing in the Town consists primarily of owner-occupied, single family residences.
- There are currently no local parks in the Town.
- As the number of active farms declines, the influence of agriculture on the Town's economy has also declined. In the future the agricultural economy is predicted to continue to decline in the Town, as well as the County and State.

- The Town's primary intergovernmental concern is annexation. The Town does not currently have a formal or cooperative working relationship with the City of Wausau in this regard.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

This section is intended to describe the existing demographics of the Town of Wausau and identify the major demographic trends impacting the Town over the next few decades. Both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are presented for comparison.

### **Population and Households**

#### **Historical Trends**

This estimated 2018 for the Town of Wausau provided by the American Community Survey was 2,433 people. As shown in Table 1, since 1990 the Town has experienced a slow steady increase in population. This is consistent with Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin as a whole. However, the Town of Wausau increased in population to a lesser degree than the county and state (4.50%) from 1990 to 2010 and to a greater degree than the county and state (9.15%) from 2010 to 2018. Annexations have contributed to the lack of population growth.

Population growth in Marathon County has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding the City of Wausau. This likely has impacted the Town of Wausau. Most towns throughout the county have experienced modest population growth over the past two decades. Only five towns, one city, and one village had population decline between 1990 and 2010.

<b>Table 1: Demographic Change 1990-2018</b>						
<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>1990-2010 % Change</b>	<b>2010-2018 % Change</b>
<b>Total Population</b>						
<b>T. Wausau</b>	2,133	2,214	2,229	2,433	4.50%	9.15%
<b>County</b>	115,400	125,834	134,063	135,264	16.17%	0.90%
<b>State</b>	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,778,394	16.26%	1.61%
<b>Total Households</b>						
<b>T. Wausau</b>	708	796	860	967	21.47%	12.44%
<b>County</b>	41,534	47,402	53,176	55,377	28.03%	4.14%
<b>State</b>	1,822,118	2,084,544	2,279,768	2,343,129	25.12%	2.78%
<b>Average Household Size</b>						
<b>T. Wausau</b>	3.01	2.77	2.57	2.49	-14.62%	-3.11%
<b>County</b>	2.75	2.6	2.49	2.41	-9.45%	-3.21%
<b>State</b>	2.61	2.5	2.43	2.40	-6.90%	-1.23%

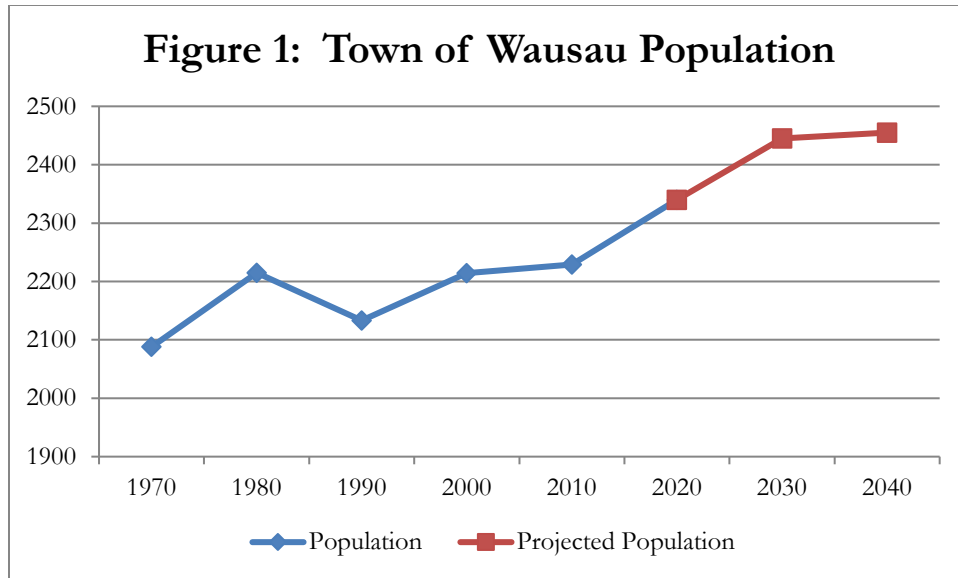
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018

Population growth has slowed dramatically throughout the state since 2010. The county and state saw only marginal increases, with the state population increasing at only a 1.61 percent rate and the county at a 0.90 percent rate. From 2010 to 2018 the Town of Wausau went from 2,229 to 2,433 residents, for a net gain of 204 people or 9.15 percent. The number of households increased 12.44 percent from 2010 to 2018 which outpaced the rate of population increase. This corresponds to the decrease in household size which dropped from 2.57 in 2010 to 2.49 in 2018.

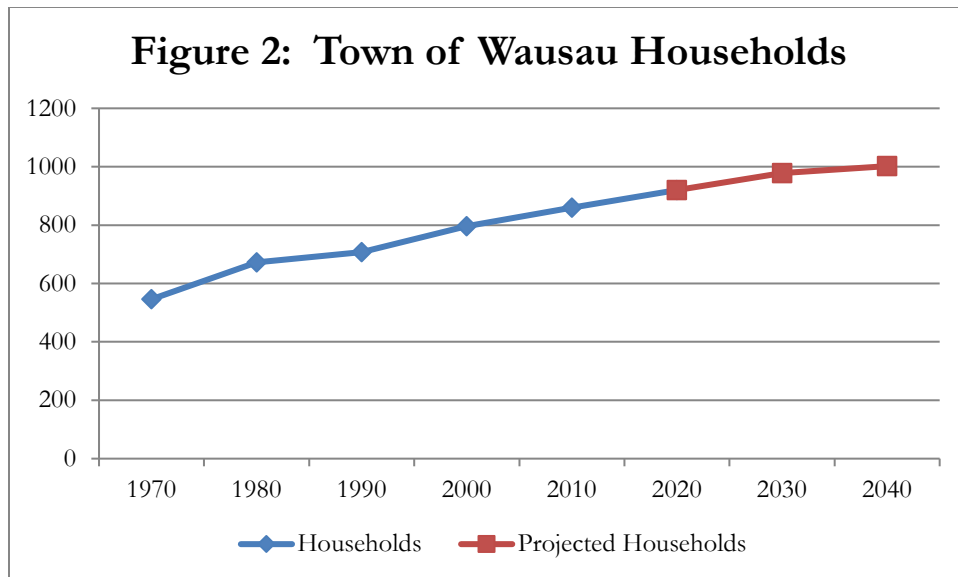
**Projections**

Figure 1 shows population projections for the Town of Wausau and Table 2 compares projected population in the Town to Marathon County, based on projections made by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). The Wisconsin DOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin’s official population projections. These projections are based on historical population and household growth in the community, with more recent years given a greater weight. The Town of Wausau is expected to grow at a slightly slower rate than Marathon County through the year 2040.

Figure 2 and Table 3 include household projections completed by the WDOA. Projections indicate that although both population and number of households are expected to increase, the number of households is expected to increase at a faster rate. This is consistent with the recent downward trend in household size. The average household size was 2.57 in 2010 and is expected to decrease to 2.42 by 2040. Growth in the number of households is expected to continue for the county and the Town through the year 2040.



*Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA*



*Source: U.S. Census, WI DOA*

Table 2: Population Projections, 2010-2040								
Total Population by Year								
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% change 2010-2040
<b>T. Wausau</b>	2,229	2,260	2,340	2,400	2,445	2,465	2,455	10%
<b>County</b>	134,063	136,510	142,200	146,595	150,130	152,120	152,790	14%

*Source: WI DOA Population Projections, 2013*



**Table 3: Household Projections, 2010-2040**

Total Households by Year								
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% change 2010-2040
T. Wausau	860	881	920	951	978	997	1,002	17%
County	53,176	54,657	57,394	59,611	61,524	62,958	63,730	20%

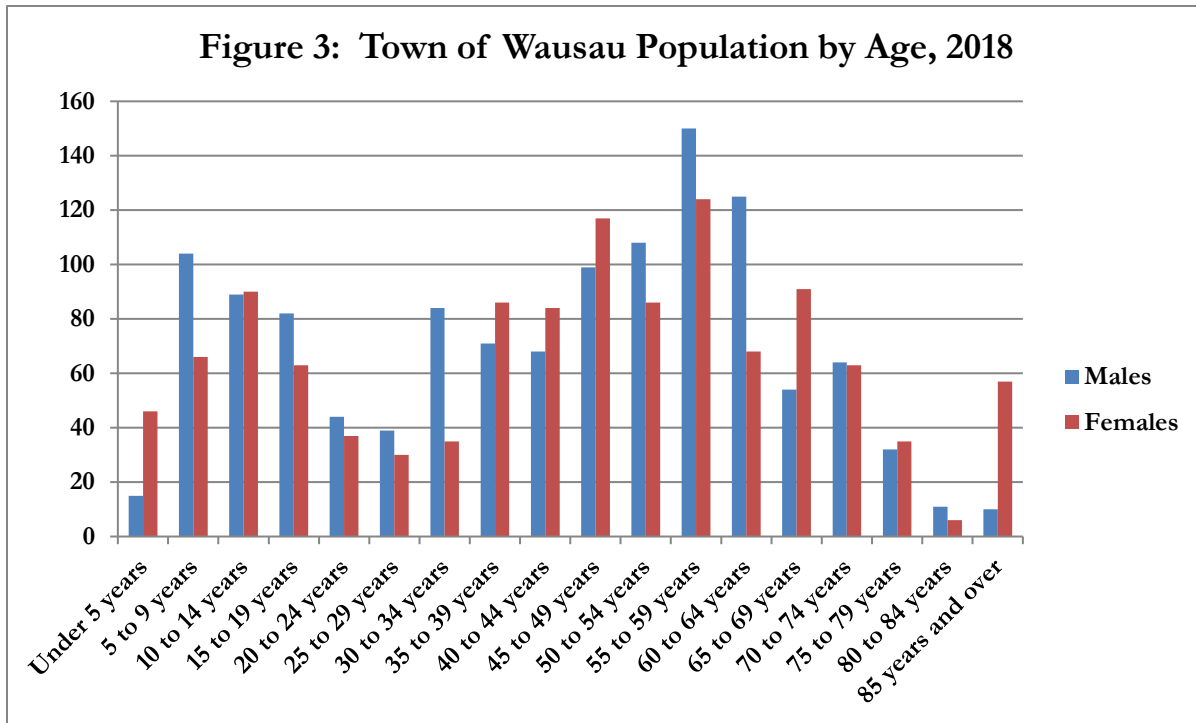
Source: WI DOA Population Projections, 2013

**Age**

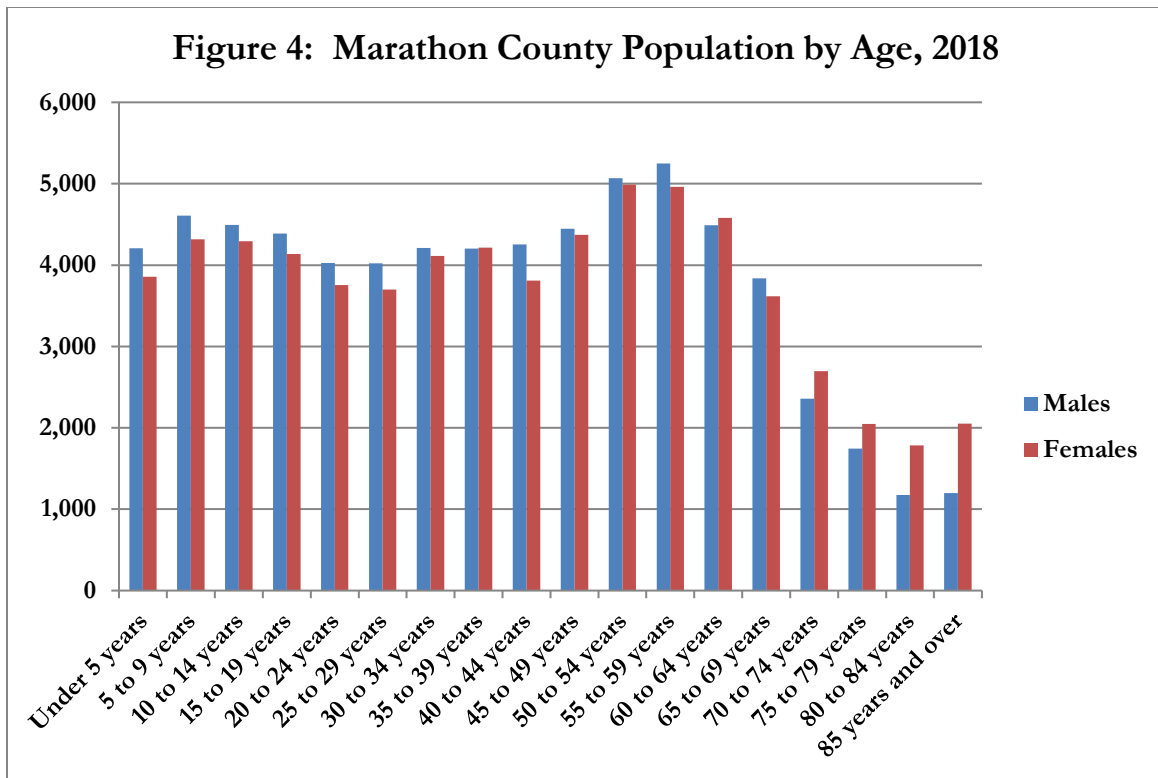
Figures 3 and 4 compare the distribution of age groups for the Town of Wausau and Marathon County. Marathon County’s population distribution is relatively even over all age range categories, showing slow, stable population growth. Comparatively, the Town of Wausau has a greater number of individuals concentrated in the higher versus lower age ranges. This is characteristic of aging populations with slow population growth. Most males in the Town are in the 55-59 age category, and most females are also in the 55-59 year old category.

In 2010, the median age in the Town was 47.3 years, up from 40.5 in 2000. The county’s median age was 39.4 in 2010. Both the Town and the county had a significantly higher median age than the state which was at 38.5 in 2010.

**Figure 3: Town of Wausau Population by Age, 2018**



Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates



*Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates*

Population distribution is important to the planning process. Two age groups are of particular note, those 17 years of age and younger and those 65 years of age or older. These are often referred to as dependent populations, but each have different needs. For example, the younger group requires schools and child care and the older group requires increased levels of medical care.

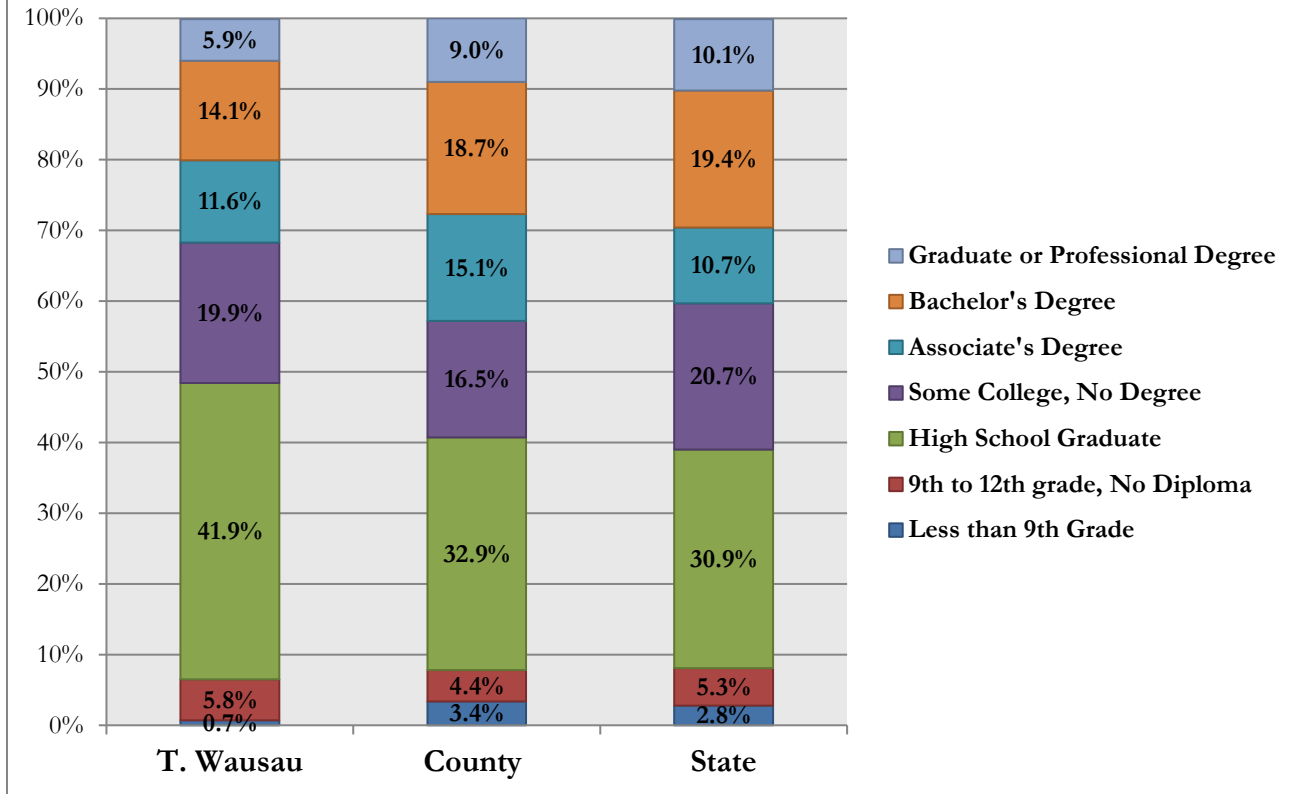
From 2000 to 2010, the population of 17 and younger group in the Town of Wausau declined from 24.3 percent of the population to 20.0 percent of the population. In short, this was a net loss of 92 people from this age cohort. From 2000 to 2010, the population percentage of those in the 65 and older group increased from 12.0 percent in 2000 to 16.9 percent in 2010, with a net gain of 112 people. Due to longer life expectancy and the size of the Baby Boomer generation, the 65 and older age group is expected to continue to increase in size. The trend is occurring at the state and national levels and to an even greater degree within the rural Wisconsin counties. This population trend whereby older age categories increase significantly while younger age categories decline will impact the future labor supply, school system, and health care industry at the national, state, and local levels.

## Education and Income Levels

### Education

Figure 5 compares educational attainment of those in the Town of Wausau to the county and the state. In 2018, 93.4 percent of town residents age 25 and older had a high school education or higher. This was 1.7 percent more than the county average and 1.5 percent higher than the state average. Although the Town of Wausau has a higher proportion of people with a high school education, it also has a higher proportion of people with high school education as the highest educational attainment.

**Figure 5: Educational Attainment 2018 (Age 25 and Older)**



Source: American Community Survey, 2018

In 2018, 20.0 percent of Town residents had earned a bachelor’s degree or higher. This was substantially less than both the county and the state at 25.6 percent and 29.5 percent respectively. Education and how it relates to economic development will be discussed in the economic development chapter.

### Income

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

Median household income for Town of Wausau residents was \$73,219 in 2018. Table 4 shows that this was substantially higher than Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin. The Town of Wausau median household income was higher than the county and state in 2000 as well, however consistent with the nation as a whole, rising incomes have not kept pace with inflation.

Table 5 illustrates that income per capita in the Town of Wausau is slightly higher than the county or the state. This was true in 2000 and the trend has continued through 2018. However, from 2000 to 2018 per capita income stagnated in the Town and did not keep pace with inflation. The county and

state per capita income rose slightly at 4.87 percent and 3.69 percent respectively.

<b>Table 4: Median Household Income</b>				
Minor Civil Division	2000	2018	*Net Change	*% Change
T. of Wausau	\$51,071	\$73,219	-\$1,774	-3.47%
Marathon County	\$45,165	\$59,543	-\$6,777	-10.22%
Wisconsin	\$43,791	\$59,209	-\$5,093	-7.92%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018  
\*Adjusted for inflation in 2018 dollars

<b>Table 5: Per Capita Income</b>				
Minor Civil Division	2000	2018	*Net Change	*% Change
T. of Wausau	\$22,248	\$32,504	-\$165	-0.74%
Marathon County	\$20,703	\$31,879	\$1,479	4.87%
Wisconsin	\$21,271	\$32,018	\$784	3.69%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018  
\*Adjusted for inflation in 2018 dollars

### Employment Characteristics

Tables 6 and 7 illustrate the breakdown of the labor force and employed population living in the Town of Wausau in 2000 and 2018. The “employed population” includes those that are 16 and older. There was an increase of 105 people in the labor force from 2000 to 2018 in the Town, for an increase of 8.17 percent. This was slightly higher than both the county and the state at 6.47 percent and 7.67 percent respectively.

Labor force participation indicates the percent of those 16 years and over that are in the labor force. The labor force participation rate increased slightly in the Town of Wausau from 2000 to 2018. This was in contrast to a decrease in both the county and the state during the same time period.

<b>Table 6: Labor Force</b>					
Minor Civil Division	Labor Force			Labor Participation Rate	
	2000	2018	2000-2018 % Change	2000	2018
T. of Wausau	1,285	1,390	8.17%	70.7%	70.9%
Marathon County	69,216	73,696	6.47%	71.7%	68.4%
Wisconsin	2,872,104	3,092,330	7.67%	69.1%	66.7%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018

In 2000, the Town of Wausau had an employed population of 1,254 people. This number increased 96 people, to 1,350 by 2018. Employment increased in both the county and the state during this time, at a rate of 6.95 percent and 8.40 percent respectively. The U.S. Census classifies individuals as unemployed if they are not working, actively seeking work, and available to accept a job. The

unemployment rate in the Town was 2.9 percent in 2018. This was 1.1 percent lower than the state and 0.5 percent lower than the county.

<b>Table 7: Employment</b>				
<b>Minor Civil Division</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2000-2018 % Change</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
T. of Wausau	1,254	1,350	7.66%	2.9%
Marathon County	66,550	71,176	6.95%	3.4%
Wisconsin	2,734,925	2,964,540	8.40%	4.0%

*Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018*

<b>Table 8: Resident Occupations 2000-2018</b>		
<b>Occupation Sector</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2018</b>
Management, business, science, and arts occupations**	382	375
Service occupations	165	126
Sales and office occupations	322	402
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	163	194
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	222	253
<b>Total employed*</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>1,350</b>

*Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018*

*\*Total employed represents employed civilian population 16 years and over*

*\*\*Some changes may be due to changes in name and categorization of occupations between the 2000 and 2018 Census*

As shown in Table 8, in 2018 most residents were employed in sales and office occupations, as compared to management, business, science, and arts occupations in 2000. The second sector most represented in 2018 was management, business, science and arts occupations followed by production, transportation, and material moving positions. Therefore, it is likely that residents are traveling to the City of Wausau or another comparably sized metro area for their work. From 2000 to 2018, the most significant increase was seen in sales and office positions. The most significant decrease during this time period was observed in service occupations.

## Demographic Snapshot

- The population has remained relatively stable over the past few decades. A significant factor that has contributed to lack of population growth is annexation.
- The Town of Wausau has experienced a significant amount of growth in the number of households despite the slow rate of population increase. This is due to a rise in smaller households.
- There are a large number of people in the older age categories and the median age of 47.3 in 2010 was higher than the county and the state.
- The Town of Wausau has a higher proportion of residents with a high school diploma than the county and state, but a lower proportion of people with any higher education.
- The median household income was \$73,219 in 2018. This was higher than both the county and the state. The per capita income of \$32,504 in 2018 was also higher than the county and the state.
- The labor participation rate is higher than the county or the state, and the unemployment rate of 2.9 percent in 2018 is lower than the state and the county.
- Most people in the Town of Wausau work in sales and office occupations. This suggests that many residents commute to jobs located outside of the Town of Wausau, but likely in the City of Wausau metro area.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

Goals and objectives have been developed relative to each of the required nine plan elements. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to enable the community to achieve them. The Implementation Element at the end of this document compiles and prioritizes all the recommended action steps and identifies who is responsible for implementation.

### Definitions

- **Goal:** A goal is a statement that describes a desired future condition. The statement is broad in scope and describes general concepts or things the community hopes to accomplish.
- **Objective:** An objective is a statement that describes a specific course of action to achieve a goal or address an issue.
- **Policy:** A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct to be followed to achieve community goals and objectives.
- **Strategies:** As the name implies, strategies are strategic approaches that may involve a series of individual actions to achieve a specific goal or objective.
- **Actions:** An action describes a specific effort that will be undertaken to achieve a specific goal or objective.





# Chapter 2

## Natural Resources

Natural resources, including water resources, soils, and other natural features, influence a community's development. These physical features directly or indirectly constrain or encourage growth. Natural and agricultural resources play an important role in the livability of a community.

The Town contains a variety of natural resources. Most wetlands and woodlands are associated with streams running through the Town. One of the Town's most significant resources is an abundance of prime farm soils. Protection and enhancement of these natural resources is a continuing priority of the Town.

### PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

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

#### **Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan**

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

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

#### **Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan**

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan is required under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage the preservation of farmland and agricultural production capacity. Most of the Town was designated as farmland preservation areas in 2013.

#### **Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan**

The Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan is a management guide for the Marathon County Forest and is updated every ten years. The mission of the plan is to manage and

protect natural resources on a sustainable basis for the ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future residents throughout the county. The report includes a number of recommendations for timber management, wildlife habitat and game management, land acquisition and forest boundary management, biodiversity management, watershed management, and tourism.

### **Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide**

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

### **USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater Through Comprehensive Planning**

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

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

The environmental features and assets that are examined in this plan include water, wetlands, floodplains, soils, and woodlands. Protection of certain features is necessary for the environment and for future generations. Certain environmental features and assets have more than merely aesthetic and leisure-time activity values; they are essential to long-term preservation of life, health, and general welfare.

### **Surface Water**

#### **Streams/Rivers**

There are many small creeks and tributaries in the Town. The major creeks include Big Sandy Creek in the southeast corner, Prael Creek which flows in a north-south direction through the eastern half of the Town, and Moore Creek which flows through the northwest corner of the Town.

#### **Floodplains**

Floodplains consist of land likely to be covered by floodwater during the regional (100-year) flood. Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe. Most areas in the Town within the 100-year floodplain are adjacent to Big Sandy Creek.

#### **Wetlands**

Wetlands in Wisconsin were defined by the State Legislature in 1978 as: *"an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions."*

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

- ***Aquatic Bed*** wetlands contain plants growing entirely on or in a water body no deeper than 6'. Plants may include pond-weed, duckweed, lotus and water-lilies.
- ***Marshes*** are characterized by standing water and dominated by cattails, bulrushes, pickerel-weed, lake sedges and/or giant bur-reed
- ***Sedge or "Wet" Meadows*** wetlands may have saturated soils, rather than standing water, more often than not. Sedges, grasses and reeds are dominant, but look also for blue flag iris, marsh milkweed, sneeze-weed, mint and several species of goldenrod and aster.
- ***Land Use Plan(s)*** – The *Town of Wausau Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2010*. This plan covers a range of topics, including land use which will be highlighted below. It describes existing conditions, defines goals and objectives, and makes recommendations regarding a desired future land use pattern for the Town
- ***Scrub/Shrub*** wetlands include bogs and alder thickets and are characterized by woody shrubs and small trees such as tag alder, bog birch, willow and dogwood.
- ***Forested*** wetlands include bogs and forested floodplain complexes. They are characterized by trees 20 feet or more in height such as tamarack, white cedar, black spruce, elm, black ash, green ash and silver maple.

Most wetlands in the Town are located adjacent to the creeks. A large wetland classified as a forested wetland exists between CTH Z and STH 52. Most other wetlands are also classified as forested, although there are also areas of scrub/shrub and emergent/wet meadow type wetlands.

## Groundwater

Depth to groundwater is shallow to moderate and supply is limited in some areas, primarily due to the presence of high bedrock. These factors do not pose concerns or limitations on residential development, but can be an issue where an ample water supply is needed for livestock.

## Soil Resources

### Soil Types

There are three major soil associations in the Town. The predominant soils consist of Fenwood-Rietbrock-Rozellville association, which occupy the western and most of the central portion of the Town. Marathon-Mylrea-Moberg soils are primarily located north of STH 52, although a small area also exists south of CTH Z. Soils in the southeast corner of the Town are in the Mahtomedi-Graycalm-Meehan association. Susceptibility for soil erosion is generally lower in the Town than the average soil loss rate in Marathon County overall and is not an issue.

### Prime Farm Soils

There is a significant amount of Class 1 and 2 prime farm soils located throughout the Town. These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils, however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all

prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The “prime farm soils” designation simply indicates that these soils are good productive farmland. Steep slopes are defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent. Most steep slopes are located on the west side of the Town, near the border with the City of Wausau, along a north-south oriented ridge. Generally, development is restricted or prohibited on steep slopes.

## Biological Resources

### Vegetation

Cropland vegetation is predominant in the eastern and northern portion of the Town, while woodlands are concentrated along the creeks and wetlands. Vegetation in developed areas generally consists of private landscaping of trees, shrubs and gardens.

### Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians. Common types of wildlife include bear, badger, wolf, deer, wild turkeys, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the Town.

### Threatened and Endangered Species

There are no identified endangered, threatened, or special concern species present in the Town.

## Issues

- **Hunting Near Residences** – With the increase in residential development, concerns have grown about recreational hunting in areas that are close to residential development. While the Town is not interested in banning hunting, some controls may be warranted such as restricting hunting to areas further east and only allowing use of shotguns.
- **Preserve Prime Agricultural Land and Rural Character** – The Town is interested in preserving its rural character without presenting too many restrictions on private property owners.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

### Brief History of the Town of Wausau

The Town of Wausau begins at the eastern edge of the City of Wausau, on a high ridge of granite. Early mill workers with families, who wanted to live away from the boardinghouses and saloons

closer to the mills, followed the logging roads northeast to build houses. There were so many mill workers in the area that it was known as Mechanic’s Ridge; a name still used to identify the area along STH 52 running east from the City of Wausau.

The original settlers were later joined by German immigrants and many began farming. The settlement of Nutterville grew around the Nutterville Hall located on STH 52. Named after James Nutter, one of the original “mechanics”, the Nutterville Hall served as a kind of community center for social and political activities in rural areas.

On the eastern boundary with Easton is the settlement of Sunset, which dates to 1867. Sunset was a crossroads community serving the farmers who located nearby on Big Sandy Creek. The community had a church and school, tavern and a cheese factory.

### Historic Preservation

There are no properties in the Town of Wausau listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Town does not have a local historic preservation commission. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) (<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS2834>) which identifies any properties that may have been surveyed in the past; the AHI does not convey special status and may not be current. There are 9 historic properties in the Town of Wausau that have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

### Archaeological Sites

Archaeological sites are identified only at the town level. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has identified 15 archaeological sites and historic cemeteries in the Town of Wausau (includes the City of Wausau, grouped together for this category).

### Issues and Opportunities

- **The Marathon County Historical Society** provides opportunities for people to “connect” with the past to discover something about their own history and where they live. They help people learn about their own connection with the community as well as its historic roots, and how the past played a role in who they are today. They accomplish this through education, preservation, research, experiences, and entertainment.
- **No Recognition Process** - Outside the City of Wausau, there is no process to recognize historic buildings or begin to plan for their protection. Once historic properties are identified, towns and villages do not have an established mechanism for recognizing them or integrating them into ongoing planning processes.

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

## Natural Resources

The Town contains a variety of natural resources. Most wetlands and woodlands are associated with streams running through the Town. One of the Town's most significant resources is an abundance of prime farm soils. Protection and enhancement of these natural resources is a continuing priority of the Town. Because the Town has little regulatory authority over natural resources, it will continue to work with Marathon County and WDNR to protect and enhance natural resources, including threatened and endangered species within the Town.

### Goal 1: Protect and enhance the sensitive natural resource areas in the Town.

- **Objective: To recognize that limited water availability may affect development in some areas.**
- **Objective: To continue working with the WDNR and Marathon County to ensure appropriate preservation of wetlands and shorelines.**
- **Objective: To encourage residents to conduct regular well testing to ensure safe water supplies.**
- **Objective: To the extent possible, limit uncontrolled runoff, over use of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants that could impact surface water.**

### Policies:

1. The Town of Wausau places a high priority on protection of its sensitive natural resources.
2. The Town of Wausau will strive to ensure development occurs in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### Strategies/Actions:

1. Continue to serve as the liaison between private property owners in the Town and the County, WDNR, and others regarding the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and other programs aimed at protection and preservation of woodlands.
2. Continue to work cooperatively with Marathon County and the WDNR to enforce regulations to protect and mitigate development impacts on wetlands.
3. Routinely provide information in the newsletter to residents on well testing.
4. Review the land division and zoning ordinance to incorporate adequate surface water management and soil erosion control measures.

### Goal 2: Protect and preserve prime farmland for agricultural production.

- **Objective: To encourage efforts to reduce soil erosion, decrease sedimentation into surface waters, and increase proper nutrient crediting to protect soil quality.**

- **Objective: To participate in regional programs through agencies such as Marathon County and the UW-Extension that promote the preservation of prime agricultural land and assist farmers in maintaining economically viable farms.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau recognizes the importance of its farmland to its livelihood and heritage and strives to preserve its productive agricultural resources.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Review and amend local ordinances as necessary to incorporate appropriate soil erosion and surface water runoff measures.
2. Work with UW-Extension to provide information to Town farmers regarding available tools, programs, and resources to help farmers stay in business, develop niche markets, etc.

**Goal 3: Discourage hunting in close proximity to residential areas.**

- **Objective: To continue to enforce and review existing ordinances regarding hunting.**
- **Objective: To identify areas where recreational hunting will not pose safety concerns for surrounding properties.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau supports hunting in locations that do not pose safety concerns for surrounding properties.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Continue to actively enforce regulations regarding hunting in the Town.
2. Identify areas in the Town where hunting is allowed under certain circumstances and restrictions.
3. Recommend hunting with rifles only on property with 40 or more acres.

## **Cultural Resources**

The Town does not have any properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and does not have a local historic preservation commission. Efforts to preserve and enhance its historic resources and cultural history will continue to be made through cooperation with the County Historical Society and support of efforts by local residents.

**Goal 1: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.**

- **Objective: To work with the County Historical Society to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.**

- **Objective: To ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau supports the preservation of historically significant buildings and sites.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Goal 2: Preserve the cultural history of the Town of Wausau.**

- **Objective: To preserve and update, as necessary, the written history of the Town of Wausau.**

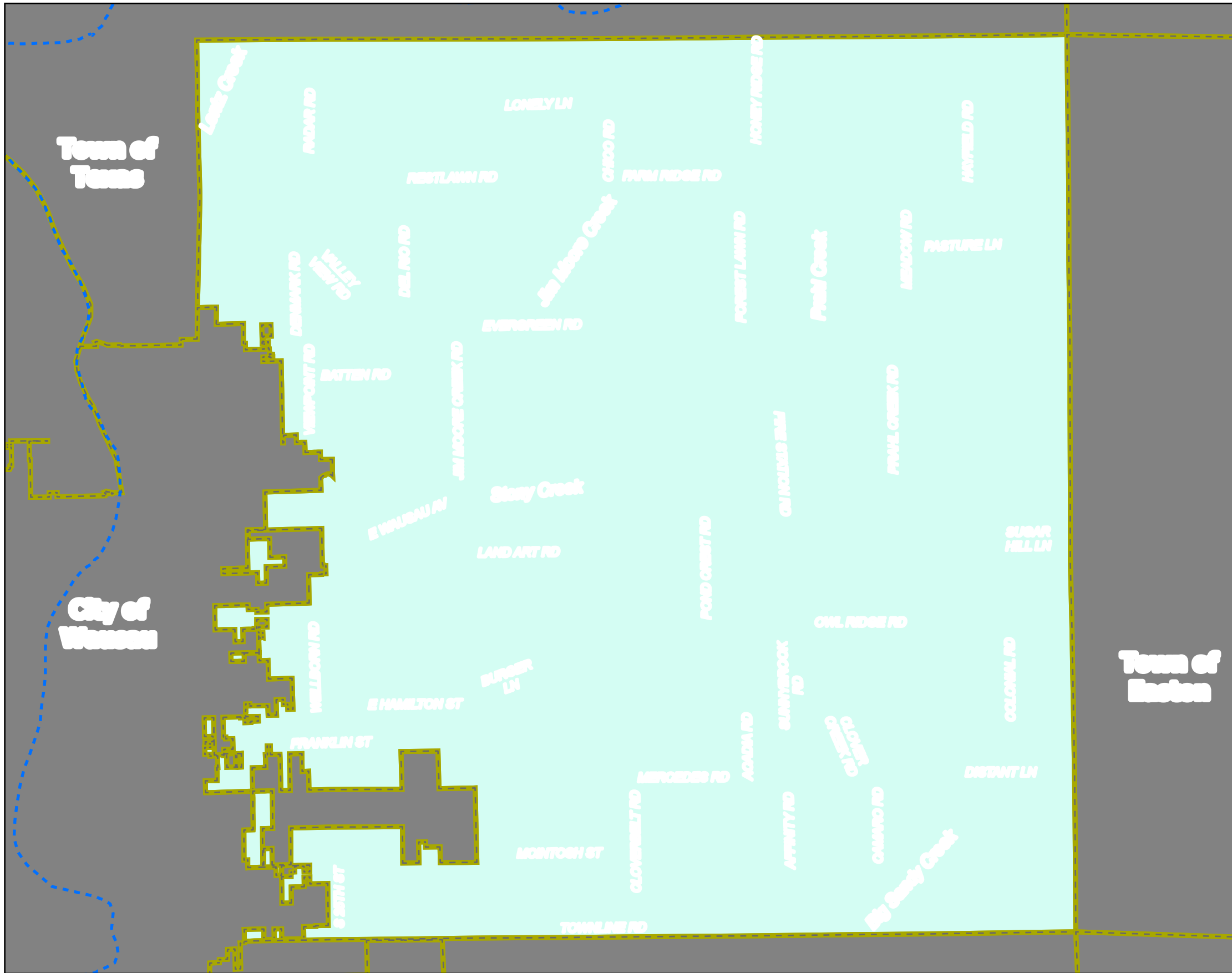
**Policies:**






1. The Town of Wausau will strive to maintain a written history of the Town.

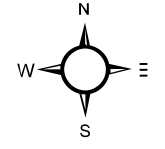
**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Maintain a copy of the written history of the Town at the Municipal Center.





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



# Chapter 3

## Housing

Housing characters and trends are an important component of a comprehensive plan. The physical location of housing determines the need of many public services and facilities.

### PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

#### **Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan**

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the application process required of the State in accessing formula program fund of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. “The Consolidated Plan provides the framework for a planning process used by States and localities to identify housing, homeless, community, and economic development needs and resources, and to tailor a strategic plan for meeting those needs.”

#### **Regional Livability Plan**

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 a number of issues affecting community livability related to housing:

- an aging population,
- smaller household sizes,
- a lack of housing options, and
- an increase in housing costs related to incomes.

### HOUSING INVENTORY

#### Housing Type and Tenure

Table 9 details housing characteristics for the Town of Wausau. The 2010 Census indicates that the Town of Wausau had 901 housing units, up from 825 in 2000. The vast majority of the units (95.4%) were occupied. The Town had an average household size of 2.57 persons. One-person households constituted 16.3 percent of all occupied households. This was far lower than the county and the state at 24.4 percent and 24.0 percent respectively. At 27.1 percent, more homes in the Town had a householder over 65 than the county (24.4%) or the state (24.0%). This is consistent with rural areas throughout northern Wisconsin.

<b>Table 9: Housing Characteristics 2010</b>			
	<b>T. Wausau</b>	<b>Marathon County</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
<b>Total housing units</b>	901	57,734	2,624,358
<b>Total occupied housing units</b>	860	53,176	2,279,768
<b>Owner occupied units</b>	763	39,090	1,551,558
<b>Renter occupied units</b>	97	14,086	728,210
<b>% owner occupied</b>	88.7%	73.5%	68.1%
<b>% 1 person households</b>	16.3%	25.8%	28.2%
<b>% with householder 65 and over</b>	27.1%	24.4%	24.0%

*Source: U.S. Census*

In 2010 the median housing value was \$167,300. The majority (96.0%) of the housing units are single-family detached homes. The remaining 4 percent are one unit attached or multi-family homes. Most homes are owner-occupied dwellings including farmsteads. A majority of houses in the Town were built beginning in 1960, but before the year 2000.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

### Housing

The majority of housing in the Town consists of single-family, owner-occupied dwellings, including farmsteads. The housing stock is generally in good condition overall and most is less than 40 years old.

**Goal 1: Accommodate demand for new residential development while preserving the rural character in the Town.**

- **Objective: To encourage new residential development in close proximity to existing residential development.**
- **Objective: To direct residential development to locations with sufficient existing road access.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau recognizes its rural and natural character as important and attractive assets that should be maintained.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Develop a brochure or newsletter insert to distribute to local realtors and/or potential homebuyers educating them on the characteristics of active farming activities (i.e., smells, noise, farm equipment using local roads, etc.).

**Goal 2: Improve property maintenance.**

- **Objective: Enforce nuisance and property maintenance regulations.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to improve property maintenance and minimize nuisances.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Periodically distribute information on property maintenance codes to Town residents (i.e., via newsletter or flyer).

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK, INTENTIONALLY.

# Chapter 4

## Utilities and Community Facilities

This section describes the existing conditions and issues relative to utilities and community facilities available to the Town of Wausau, including sewage disposal, water supply, power supply, and telecommunication facilities and services. It also describes existing conditions with regard to surface water management.

### PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

#### **Marathon County All Hazard Mitigation Plan**

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

### UTILITIES

The Town of Wausau does not provide public sewer or water service. All development is on private wells and septic systems. The Town, which has its own zoning, requires a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet in agriculturally zoned areas, 40,000 square feet in transitional ag zoning, and 20,000 square feet in residentially zoned areas for installation of wells.

#### **On-Site Waste Disposal Systems**

Chapter 15 of the General Code of Ordinance for Marathon County requires private sewage systems on all premises intended for human habitation or occupancy that are not served by public sewer. The County Code incorporates by reference rules, regulations, and laws in the Wisconsin Statutes and Wisconsin Administrative Code governing private sewage systems, including:

**Chapter SPS 383** – This refers to Chapter SPS 383 in the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Safety and Professional Services. It sets standards for regulation of private sewage systems.

**Septic tanks** – Septic tanks can be steel, concrete, fiberglass or plastic, but they all must now be equipped with a filter to prevent the movement of solids out into the soil absorption component. In addition, rock in drainfields may now be substituted with engineered foam peanuts bound in mesh or plastic chambers.

**On-site waste disposal systems** – On-site systems generally fall into four categories:

- **Conventional Systems** – these systems include an absorption field that is buried under the natural ground level. These systems cannot be built in areas where soils do not allow percolation due to high clay content or bedrock where groundwater is too near the surface, or where soils percolate too rapidly and thus pose problems for groundwater contamination.
- **Mound Systems** – these systems include an absorption field that is constructed above ground, creating a “mound”. This type of system is generally used where clay soils, groundwater, rapid permeability or bed rock prevents construction of conventional systems.
- **Mechanical Treatment Components** – these generally replace or augment the septic tank component and may include aerobic treatment tanks and/or self-contained artificial media or sand filters to clean the effluent prior to its discharge into the soil absorption component.
- **Holding Tanks** – Holding tanks are considered the system of last resort and are only allowed if other types of septic systems cannot be used. Temporary holding tanks (e.g. less than 2 years) are sometimes allowed in areas where public sewer is approved for installation in the near future.

**Permit Requirements** - The Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning, and Zoning reviews and issues permits for private sewage systems. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed septic system is suitable for the specific property and location before a permit will be issued. If deemed necessary, floodplain and/or wetland delineation may also be required prior to permit issuance. In addition, a maintenance agreement must be submitted prior to permit issuance. All septic tanks installed on or after July 1, 1980, are required to be inspected and/or pumped at least once every three years.

All development in the Town of Wausau uses private on-site waste disposal systems. Most are mound type systems due to the presence of high bedrock in some areas. To date, there have not been many problems with system failures, except in the area around 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Those properties have subsequently annexed into the City of Wausau.

## Water Supply

All development in the Town of Wausau receives water from private wells. High bedrock makes access to groundwater difficult in some area. Water supply is also limited in some area and wells drying up can be a problem. To date, water supply has been sufficient for most residential and business use. However, supplies are not always sufficient for some livestock operations.

## Surface Water Management

The Town does not currently have any regulations or standards regarding surface water management. There are currently no watersheds identified for special planning and funding in the Town of Wausau.

## Electrical Utilities and Natural Gas

The Town of Wausau receives electric power and gas from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). Some property owners may also purchase LP gas tanks for private use.

## Telecommunication Facilities and Services

Charter Communications and Frontier provide television and cable services in the Town of Wausau. There is limited cable service in the southwest corner of the Town. Frontier uses fiber optics technology to provide telephone service. There are three existing cell towers in the Town, and the Town has a cell tower ordinance.

## Solid Waste Management

The Town of Wausau contracts with a private company for solid waste management. Solid waste pick up is conducted weekly at all households. The cost of the service is added to the property tax bill as a special charge. Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor on a bi-weekly basis to all households in the township. The Town conducts a one day annual spring clean-up at the municipal center.

The Marathon County Solid Waste Management Department is in charge of waste management for non-hazardous solid waste. It consists of the 575-acre landfill, recycling programs, composting, and waste-to-energy. The Department opened a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility in May 1997, where County residents can drop off hazardous waste free of charge.

## Issues

- **Limited Water Supply** – Difficulty in obtaining water in supplies sufficient to support development or certain farm operations is a concern in some areas.
- **Site Grading Standards** – The Town is considering reviewing its site grading standards. Site grading standards help minimize and/or prevent site drainage problems.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities include an array of services and facilities associated with schools, libraries, public protection, and health care. This section describes the existing community facilities and services located in or used by the Town of Wausau.



## Schools

### Primary and Secondary Schools

The Town of Wausau is served by two public school districts. The majority of the Town is served by the Wausau School District, while small portions of the Town, north of Town Line Road and west of CTH J, are in the D. C. Everest School District.

### Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

**University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point at Wausau** – UW Stevens Point at Wausau is located in Wausau offers courses leading to a baccalaureate degree. They also offer graduate degrees including Master of Business Administration (MBA), Physician Assistant (in partnership with UW Madison), and Master’s Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (in partnership with Northern Vermont University).

**Northcentral Technical College (NTC)** - NTC, located in Wausau, offers several one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields.

## Libraries

The Town of Wausau is served by the Marathon County Public Library system which is located on First Street in downtown Wausau.

## Child Care

There are private in-home childcare facilities located within the Town.

## Public Protection

### Law Enforcement

The Town uses the Marathon County Sheriff’s Office for police protection and law enforcement.

### Fire

The Town has a volunteer fire department that can have up to 30 firefighters and first responders. The Town contracts with the City of Wausau for ambulance service.

### E-911 Dispatch Service

The Marathon County Sheriff’s Office Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County.

### Hospitals and Medical Services

**Hospitals** - There are two area hospitals in the area: Aspirus Hospital and Ascension St. Claire’s. The area is also served by two major clinics: Marshfield Clinic and Aspirus.

**North Central Health Care (NCHC)** – In addition to the hospitals and clinics described above, Marathon County is served by NCHC. According to their web site, NCHC offers outpatient, day hospital, community support and inpatient services for mental/emotional problems; vocational, life

skill training, early intervention, housing and care management services for the developmentally disabled; and assessment, individual and outpatient group counseling, intensive programming, day hospital, referral for residential and inpatient treatment, and education for alcohol and other drug problems. Services for detoxification and for persons suffering from problems with gambling addiction are also offered.

NCHC operates a nursing home (Mount View Care Center) that offers skilled nursing services at the main campus in Wausau. This facility serves persons requiring either short term or long term skilled nursing care because of complex physical needs, psychiatric and neurological diseases, dementia, or behavior problems.

## Issues

- **High Cost of Services** – The Town has concerns about the cost of ambulance services. The cost has been very reasonable through the contract with the City of Wausau. However, there is always a concern these costs could increase.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Local Parks, Trails, and Open Space

The Town of Wausau does not own or operate any public parks. Next door in the City of Wausau the 70-acre Sylvan Hill Park is designated as a “special park” focused on winter sports. The facilities include picnic areas, shelters, trails, playgrounds, and a sledding hill. Sandy Creek Park located on Highway J in the Town of Easton is maintained by the Easton, Hewitt, and Wausau Lions Club. Highway J borders the Town of Wausau.

### County or State Parks, Forest, and Trails

Area county and state facilities include:

- **Marathon Park** – Located in the City of Wausau, this is a 78-acre County park that provides a large number of facilities and programs. Marathon Park is the home of the Wisconsin Valley Fair, which utilizes a number of historic exposition buildings. The park's mature stand of white pines is highly visible along Stewart Avenue. The park also contains a wide variety of recreation facilities, including basketball and tennis courts, skating rinks, and a new grandstand area.
- **Wisconsin River Park** - North of the Town of Wausau, Marathon County owns the undeveloped Wisconsin River Park, with roughly half of this 290-acre park located on the east bank of the Wisconsin River in the Town of Texas, the other half being in the Town of Maine. The parkland has some archeological resources and, when developed, will provide access to the Wisconsin River. The park is an 80-acre woods, which is not accessible from other public lands or roads. The County has no current plans to develop the woods into a functioning park.

- **Rib Mountain State Park** – This park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and has a picnic area, hiking trails, a nature trail, and a private downhill skiing area (Granite Peak).

## Park System Needs

The Town does not anticipate the need to provide local parks and does not have a committed source of revenue to construct and maintain parks.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

### Utilities

The Town does not provide public utilities and does not plan to provide utilities in the future. Given the Town's shared border with the City of Wausau, the potential for provision of public utilities – and subsequent annexation – is ever present. While the Town has little authority to oppose annexation petitions, efforts will continue to be made to work with the City to manage development along their shared boundary.

The Town does not provide stormwater management facilities. Water quality and soil erosion are managed at the county level through implementation of the *Marathon County Land and Water Resources Management Plan*.

#### **Goal 1: Protect the Town's water resources, including groundwater sources of potable water.**

- **Objective: To recognize that limited water availability may affect development or certain farm operations in some areas.**
- **Objective: To work with the City of Wausau to improve communication about identifying and coordinating development in areas where future utility extensions are anticipated.**
- **Objective: To the extent possible, limit uncontrolled runoff, over use of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants that could impact surface water.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will continue to strive to protect its drinking water supply.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Meet with the City of Wausau to discuss establishment of a cooperative boundary agreement to plan for orderly extension of water and sewer services.
2. Coordinate with the City of Wausau to review proposed development within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction area to evaluate impacts on groundwater.
3. Obtain and distribute information to encourage Town residents to routinely test their private wells, particularly to determine levels of nitrates and radon.
4. Routinely report instances of potential groundwater contamination to the WDNR and/or Marathon County.
5. Work with UW-Extension to provide information to Town farmers and residents regarding alternatives to chemical fertilizers and weed controls.
6. Review the land division and zoning ordinance to ensure grading standards are adequate.

#### **Goal 2: Plan for efficient and environmentally sensitive on-site sanitary waste disposal.**

- **Objective: To ensure that lot sizes are adequate for on-site waste disposal systems, particularly in areas with high bedrock.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to minimize environmental impacts related to on-site sanitary waste disposal.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Coordinate with Marathon County to assist residents that have failing septic systems.
2. Work with Marathon County, UW-Extension, and WDNR to compile and make information available to residents regarding septic system maintenance and inspections.

**Goal 3: Minimize site drainage problems.**

- **Objective: To improve site drainage.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to minimize existing and potential drainage problems.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Review the land division and zoning ordinance to incorporate grading standards are adequate for surface water management and erosion control.
2. Require a certified water drainage plan be submitted along with the subdivision plan.

## Community Facilities

The Town provides a variety of community services and facilities some in cooperation with the County or adjacent municipalities. Providing high-quality and cost-effective community services is a continuing goal of the Town. The Town will continue to work with Marathon County, the school districts, and other service providers to address needed service or facility expansion or improvements as needs arise.

**Goal 1: Maintain current provision of community services.**

- **Objective: To continue to perform annual budget allocations to fund public services.**
- **Objective: To analyze future developments for their impact on the Town's tax base in relation to the cost of additional services that they would require.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to maintain current levels of community services.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Perform annual reviews and budget allocations to fund public services. Evaluate cost-effectiveness of current agreements with adjacent municipalities regarding provision of fire and emergency response services.

### **Goal 2: Provide cost-effective public safety services.**

- **Objective: To continue to work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Office to provide law enforcement services.**
- **Objective: To continue to support the volunteer fire department and maintain and improve fire equipment.**
- **Objective: To maintain the current contract with the City of Wausau for ambulance service, but review if community needs or response times change.**
- **Objective: To continue to work with surrounding communities to investigate whether fire, EMS and ambulance services could be combined for more efficient and cost-effective service.**

### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau supports the continued provision of cost-effective community services.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Conduct an annual evaluation of the Town's volunteer fire department and equipment. Use the annual reviews to identify, prioritize and budget for needed improvement Marathon County Sheriff's Office as needed to improve communications or other efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of police protection services.
2. Work with the City of Wausau as needed to improve communications or other efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of ambulance services.
3. Meet regularly with surrounding municipalities to explore opportunities to enhance community services, while keeping costs to a reasonable level.

### **Goal 3: Continue recycling.**

- **Objective: Continue to provide recycling services in the Town.**

### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will provide recycling services to the residents through a private vendor.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Collect and maintain information on recycling.
2. Continue the town wide recycling program with curbside pick-up.
3. Continue the annual spring clean-up.

## **Parks and Recreation**

While the Town does not have any public parks, community residents have expressed interest in development of neighborhood parks; likely through cooperative efforts with subdivision developers. The Town is also interested in cooperating with its neighbors to establish a regional trail system that would provide connections between various local communities and park facilities in the Wausau area.

### **Goal 1: Support the Marathon County park and forest system that serves Town residents.**

- **Objective: To encourage adequate funding for maintenance and improvements of Marathon County parks and forests.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau recognizes and supports the Marathon County park system as an important asset to the community.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Compile and display information on Marathon County parks, recreation and forestry at the Town Hall.

### **Goal 2: Support the development of regional multi-use trails.**

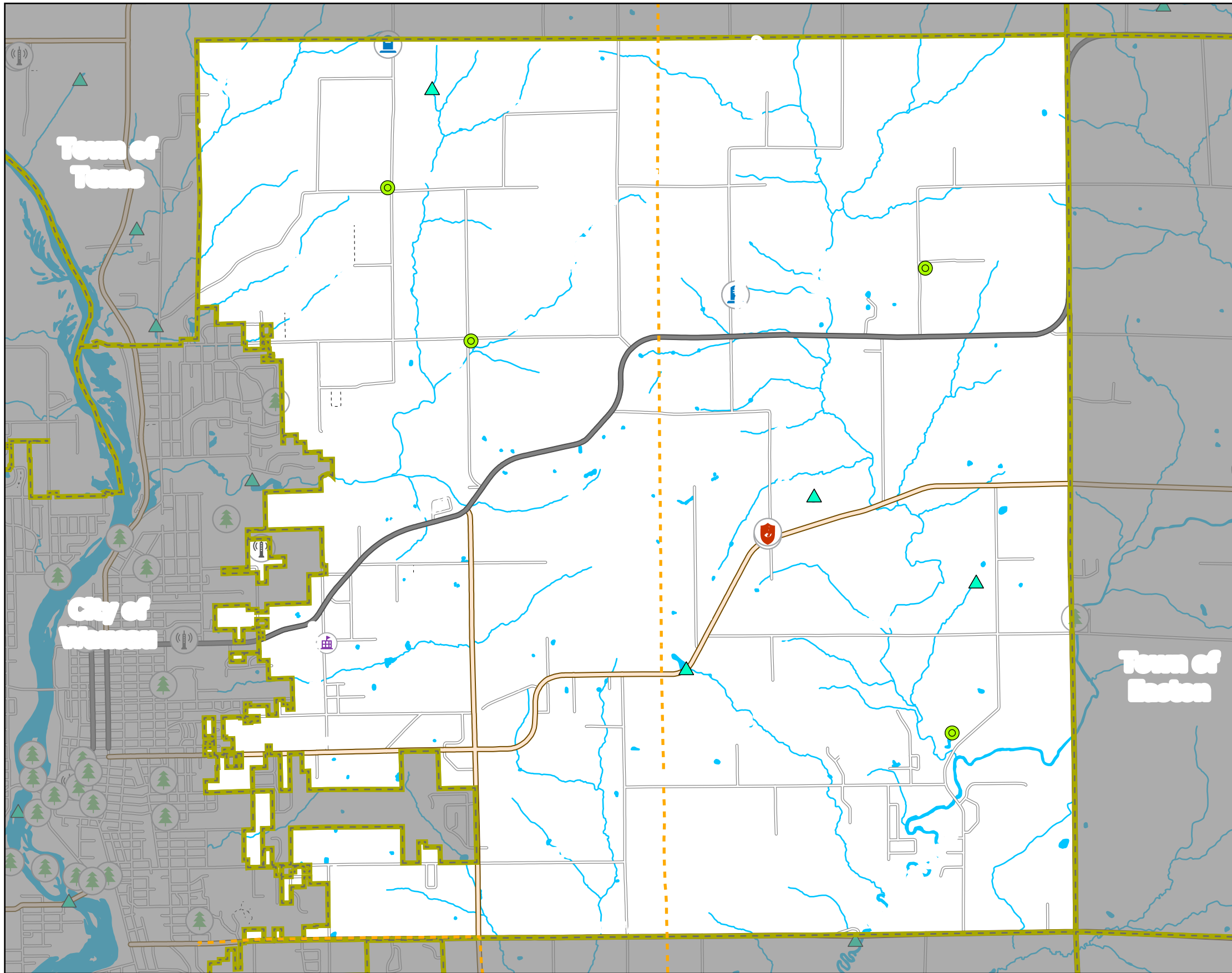
- **Objective: To coordinate with other communities and agencies to identify and obtain funds to complete and maintain a system of regional multi-use trails.**
















#### **Policies:**

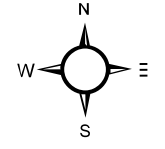
1. The Town of Wausau supports and encourages the development of an interconnected system of regional trails.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work with adjacent municipalities and Marathon County to identify and map potential routes for multi-use trails.
2. Establish requirements for provision of trail easements in conjunction with new development.



-  Minor Civil Division
-  U.S. Highways
-  State Highways
-  County Highways
-  Local Roads
-  Private Roads
-  Parks
-  Cemetery
-  Child Care Facilities
-  Fire Station & Town Hall
-  School
-  Communication Towers
-  Dams
-  High Voltage Powerline
-  Water





# Chapter 5

## Transportation

The transportation system in a community consists of a variety of roads; some are owned and maintained by local officials, others are part of the County or State road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system consists of facilities for pedestrians (e.g., sidewalks), bicyclists (e.g., trails), railroads, airports, and in more urban areas, public transit. This section describes the transportation system in the Town of Wausau and related improvements or issues affecting the system.

### BACKGROUND

The Town identified the following strengths and weaknesses related to its transportation system.

#### Weaknesses

- Roads need improvements.
- Poor alternative routes to get to town.
- No sidewalks or bike trails.
- Auto transportation is only option.
- Narrow road shoulders.
- Cul-de-sacs not conducive for fire rescue.

#### Strengths

- Mostly County and State roads which don't have to pay for maintenance.
- 71 percent of the roads are paved.

### EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING EFFORTS

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between Marathon County Planning Department staff and the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission; the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated by the Federal Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the Wausau area. Marathon County provides staff for the MPO. The County also does transportation planning for areas outside the Wausau metropolitan area.

## ROAD NETWORK

### Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in the Town of Wausau.

- **STH 52** is an east-west minor arterial through the Town of Wausau.
- **CTH Z** is a major collector that parallels STH 52 to the south.
- **CTH X** is designated as a major collector through the Town, providing a connection to STH 29 to the south in the Village of Weston.
- **CTH J** is a north-south major collect and the eastern Town boundary.
- **CTH N (Town Line Road)** is an east-west route that serves as the southern border of the Town of Wausau. CTH N is designated as a minor arterial west of Cloverbelt Road and a major collector east of Cloverbelt Road.

### Road Maintenance

Almost three quarters of all Town roads are paved (44 of 56 miles of roadway). However, the pressure to pave gravel roads has increased as new residents move into the Town from urban areas. The dust generated from the gravel roads is the biggest complaint. The Town does maintain its own roads. Private roads are serviced under contract with the land owner.

Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) – The WDOT requires all incorporated communities to prepare a Pavement Management Plan (PMP) using a pavement rating system for their local roads. The data from these plans provides the foundation for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), which is a computer resource that enables communities and the State to assess Wisconsin’s local roadway system.

The PASER system, which was designed by the Transportation Information Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the rating system used most by Wisconsin communities. PASER 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

In addition to its use in the WISLR, the rating system gives communities a detailed assessment of the appropriate maintenance method for each road segment under their jurisdiction. This assessment is then incorporated into the community’s PMP.

Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below “Fair” should be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. Roads that display a surface rating of

“Good” or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to maintain safe travel conditions. Those roads without data should be examined to ensure safe travel conditions exist along these routes. The majority of the roads within the Town of Wausau will require preventative maintenance. However, a portion of roadway will require some sort of reconstruction.

Paving Gravel Roads – Most roads in the Town are paved, however about 10 miles remain gravel. When deciding to pave gravel roads, several factors should be taken into consideration, such as: number of homes, traffic count, condition of the road, cost of maintenance.

## LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Land use and transportation have a reciprocal relationship. Land use affects the demand for transportation to and from a given geographic area. Likewise, improved transportation facilities can affect land use decisions.

### Traffic Generators

The following has generated a significant amount of traffic in the area:

- Wausau East High School along CTH X between Evergreen and STH 52.
- Residential development concentrated west of CTH X.
- Concentrated residential development in the vicinity of Mercedes/Colonial Roads and Shenandoah Ridge Road and along Cloverbelt.
- Commercial land uses concentrated along CTH X south of CTH Z and along CTH X between CTH Z and HWY 52.

### Access Management

Marathon County issues driveway permits and implements access restrictions on all properties fronting a lettered County road. The *County Trunk Highway Access-Driveway Policy* addresses the requirements regarding culverts, access width, slope, visibility and spacing. The policy is available through the Marathon County Highway Department.

The Town requires driveway permits on local roads. They have minimum driveway spacing requirements and a driveway ordinance that is modeled after the County’s policy.

## OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

### Pedestrian

There are no public sidewalks in the Town and pedestrians walk on road shoulders, which are typically narrow and gravel. This raises concerns about pedestrian safety.

## Bicycle

The Town does not provide any bicycle facilities.

## ATV/UTV Routes

There are ATV/UTV designated roads west of CTH X in the Town of Wausau.

## Transit

There is no public transit service in the Town of Wausau.

## Rail

There are no rail lines in the Town of Wausau.

## Airports

There are two airports in Marathon County:

- **Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA)** – The CWA is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services. The CWA is located east of Mosinee and accessible via I-39.
- **Wausau Municipal Airport** – The Wausau Municipal Airport, located in the City of Wausau, provides general aviation services and is fully equipped to receive large corporate jets, charters, and privately owned aircraft. Air charter, flight instruction, aircraft rental, scenic rides, as well as aviation line services such as refueling, transportation, lodging and catering are some of the services available.

## Issues

### Farm/Non-Farm Traffic

Conflicts between passenger vehicles and farm equipment are a growing concern. Widening roads to improve traffic movement and decreasing vehicle conflicts with farm equipment has been suggested as a solution. Currently, all new roads are “four-roads” (i.e., 66 feet) wide. However conflicts are anticipated to increase because farm equipment is getting larger and wider and being driven farther. The Town is considering providing wider shoulders as another possible solution.

### Road Paving

Paving of gravel roads is a perennial issue that increases as more “city folks” move into the Town. Dust on gravel roads is the primary complaint of new residents. One of the main issues for the Town is providing a consistent funding source for addressing such road improvement requests.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

County and State highways provide good access to and through the Town of Wausau. These are supplemented by a network of local roads.

### **Goal 1: Maintain and improve Town roads.**

- **Objective: To conduct an annual road analysis, using PASER to rate local road conditions and prioritize maintenance scheduling.**
- **Objective: To address when to blacktop new roads, based on criteria such as traffic volume, funding, WISL ratings, and other factors.**
- **Objective: Review annually the local road design and access requirements.**
- **Objective: To continue to seek adequate and consistent sources of revenue to fund needed road improvements.**
- **Objective: To explore opportunities to coordinate and share road improvement responsibilities with the City of Wausau in areas anticipated for future annexation.**
- **Objective: To improve enforcement of weight limits on Town roads.**

### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to ensure that roads in the Town are well maintained and designed to accommodate current and anticipated traffic volumes.

### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Continue to utilize WISLR evaluation ratings to prioritize road improvement projects.
2. Work cooperatively with Marathon County and WDOT to seek and obtain funding for road improvements.
3. Develop a plan to assist in evaluating when an existing gravel road should be paved. Criteria might include overall traffic volume, amount of truck or heavy equipment use, proximity or connection to other paved roads.
4. Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Department to enforce weight limits within the Town.

### **Goal 2: Provide for efficient and safe traffic movement throughout the Town.**

- **Objective: To work with Marathon County and the State to ensure that roads can accommodate increased traffic from new development and greater numbers of commuters.**
- **Objective: To consider widening roads that accommodate a large amount of farm and non-farm traffic.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau places a high priority on minimizing road conflicts between farm and non-farm users.
2. The Town of Wausau will strive to maintain and enhance road safety.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Department to enforce speed limits within the Town.
2. Work with Marathon County to identify "problem" intersections and plan for design improvements.
3. Continue to update design standards for roads that receive significant volumes of heavy equipment and truck traffic. These might include: thicker pavement or deeper road base; wider pavement and/or paved shoulders; installation of signage indicating frequent use by heavy/large equipment/vehicles.
4. Identify and map roads that should be widened to accommodate farm and non-farm traffic. Use map and traffic volume information to prioritize improvements during annual budget process.

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

- **Objective: To ensure subdivision and road ordinances provide adequate road design and access management requirements.**
- **Objective: To require roads in new subdivisions to be designed to accommodate future expansion where appropriate.**
- **Objective: To continue to require developer contributions for road improvements that serve new developments.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to minimize the impacts of new development on existing development and infrastructure.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Routinely review, and revise as necessary, road design and access standards in the Town's subdivision ordinance.
2. Require that roads in new subdivisions be designed to allow extensions and connections to roads in future developments on adjacent properties where possible.
3. Coordinate review of major developments/subdivisions with Marathon County to ensure local and county traffic concerns are adequately addressed.
4. Coordinate review of major developments/subdivisions with the adjacent municipalities to discuss potential traffic impacts on Town roads and opportunities to mitigate traffic problems.

**Goal 4: Improve access management along CTH X.**

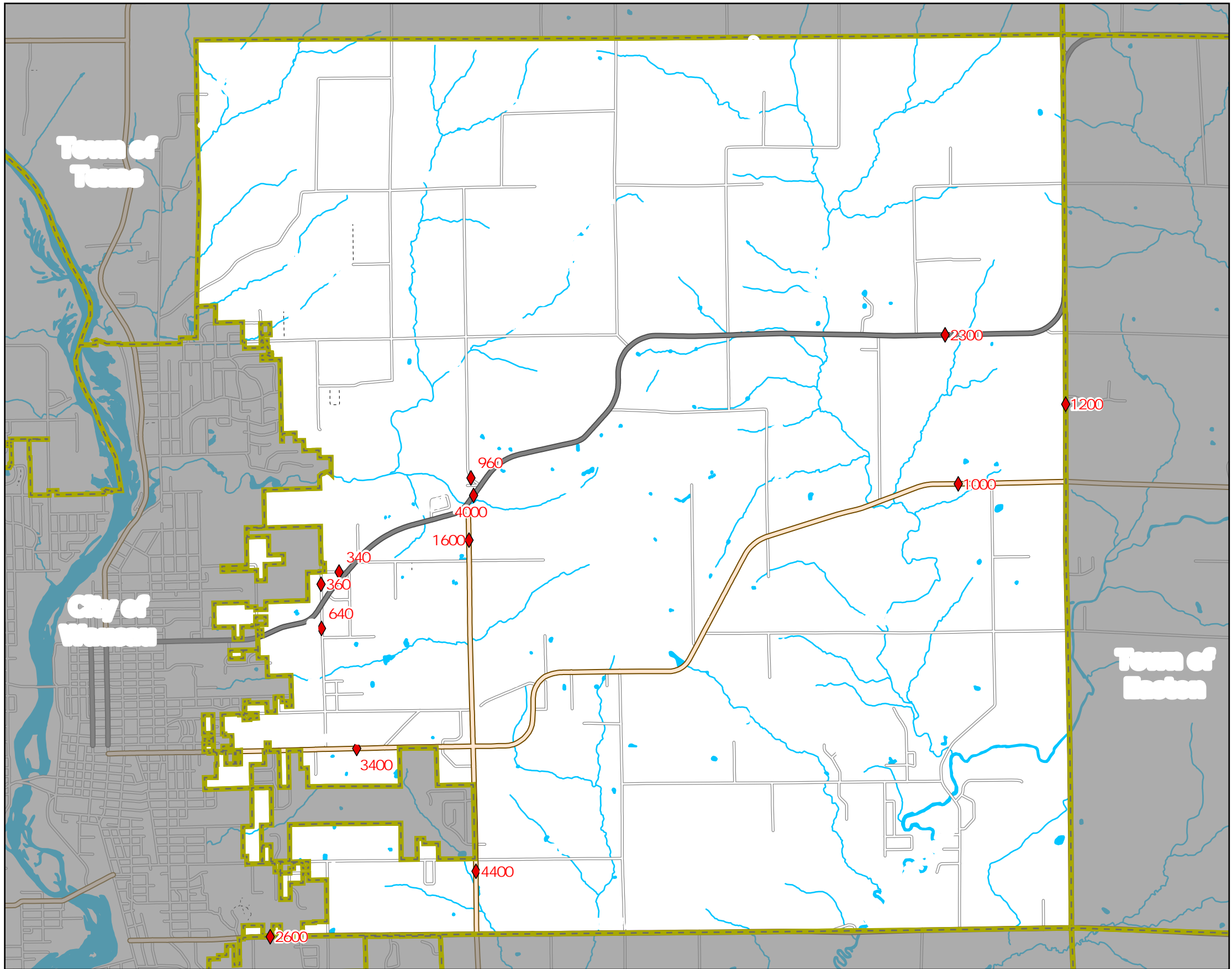
- **Objective:** To work with surrounding communities, the County and the State to ensure adequate access management provisions are provided in conjunction with road improvements and new development in the CTH X corridor.
- **Objective:** To ensure that development along CTH X occurs in areas with adequate and safe access.

**Policies:**

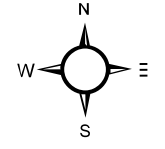
1. The Town of Wausau will continue to cooperate in efforts to improve safety and traffic management along CTH X.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work with Marathon County to establish adequate access management requirements for new commercial/industrial development along CTH X.
2. Require developers to submit traffic studies for large commercial or industrial developments.
3. Continue to participate in regional planning efforts regarding improvements to CTH X.



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





# Chapter 6

## Economic Development

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

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

### COUNTY ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Originally, the Marathon County economy was based on forest resources and diversified agriculture. Increased population and infrastructure – railroads, roads and dams for power enabled the area to evolve beyond simple agricultural and logging operations. Resources that once left the area unprocessed were 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 metal 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.

#### Key Economic Sectors

In 2019, there were 77,780 total jobs in Marathon County, up from 75,290 in 2014. Table 10 shows the ten industries with the most jobs in Marathon County in 2014 and 2019. In 2019, the Manufacturing Industry (NAICS 31) was the largest employment sector with 17,877 workers. Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62) and Government (NAICS 90) were second and third with 9,754 and 7,835 workers respectively.

**Table 10: Jobs by Industry, Marathon County 2019**

NAICS	Description	2014 Jobs	2019 Jobs	2014-2019 Net Change	2014-2019 % Change
31	Manufacturing	15,574	17,877	2,303	15%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	10,047	9,754	-293	-3%
90	Government	7,902	7,835	-67	-1%
44	Retail Trade	9,334	7,673	-1,661	-8%
52	Finance and Insurance	4,701	5,165	464	10%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	4,787	4,900	113	2%
42	Wholesale Trade	4,230	3,972	-258	-6%
23	Construction	3,047	3,246	199	7%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	2,361	2,840	479	20%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,998	2,754	-244	-8%

*Source: EMSI*

In terms of job growth, Management of Companies and Enterprises (NAICS 55) was the fastest growing industry with a growth rate 115 percent, adding 1,252 jobs from 2014 to 2019. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry (NAICS 71) was second, employing an additional 389 workers, a 44 percent increase. The third fastest industry was Transportation and Warehousing (NAICS 48) increasing 20 percent, or 479 workers. The Manufacturing (2,303 jobs), Management of Companies and Enterprises (1,252 jobs), and Transportation and Warehousing (479 jobs) Industries added the most jobs overall.

It should be noted that the number of employees in certain sectors, particularly those workers engaged in Crop and Animal production, which includes forestry, may be understated because this information utilizes the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development data; those who are self-employed or work in family businesses are not reflected in this data.

Eleven industries lost jobs from 2014 to 2019. Most notably, Retail Trade (NAICS 44) lost 1,661 jobs, decreasing 18 percent. Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62) decreased its employment by 3 percent, or 293 jobs. The third most significant decrease was seen in the Wholesale Trade industry (NAICS 42) with a loss of 258 jobs, or 6 percent.

## Job Growth

Between 2014 and 2019, Marathon County added 2,490 jobs, an increase of 3 percent. The State of Wisconsin experienced a job growth of 4 percent and the nation which increased 7 percent. Based on National Growth Effect (5,495), an Industry Mix Effect (-442), and the Competitive Effect (-2,563) the region would expect to add 5,053 jobs over the next ten year time period based on a shift share analysis.

While a location quotient analysis provides a snapshot of the economy at a given time, shift-share analysis introduces trend analysis (change over a period of time). This is an analysis technique that examines economic change and incorporates a “what-if” component. The theory behind shift-share is that local economic trends can be determined to be “up” or “down” relative to national trends, called the National Growth Component. It also identifies if the growth is in fast or slow growing industries or sectors, called the Industrial Mix; and finally, it identifies how competitive an area is for attracting different economic sectors, called the Competitive Share. Both models use the same employment data.

The industrial mix effect represents the share of regional industry growth explained by the growth of the specific industry at the national level. The national growth effect explains how much the regional industry’s growth is explained by the overall growth in the national economy. The regional competitiveness effect explains how much of the change in a given industry is due to some unique competitive advantage that the region possesses, because the growth cannot be explained by national trends in that industry or the economy as a whole. As a result of the region’s unique competitiveness, county jobs should continue to grow.

## **LOCAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT**

### **Major Local Employers**

There are several small businesses located in the Town of Wausau, for example landscaping, cabinet shop, repair shop, excavation business, builders, nurseries/tree farms, and bar/restaurants. Most are located along County roads or State highways.

### **Economic Sectors**

In 2018, there were 1,350 persons employed in the eleven basic economic sectors in the Town. That is an overall increase of over 19 percent since 2010 (see Table 11).

Between 2010 and 2018 the fastest growing sectors were other services, trade, transportation, and utilities, professional and business services, and financial activities. The most significant decrease was seen in the information and public administration sectors from 2010 to 2018. In terms of total employment, manufacturing; trade, transportation, and utilities; and education and health services include the most jobs and make up over half, or 59.9 percent, of the total jobs in the Town.

**Table 11: Employment by Sector, Town of Wausau**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining</b>	59	94	59.3%
<b>Construction</b>	72	110	52.8%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	367	290	-21.0%
<b>Trade, transportation, utilities</b>	135	267	97.8%
<b>Information</b>	11	3	-72.7%
<b>Financial activities</b>	55	100	81.8%
<b>Professional and business services</b>	53	97	83.0%
<b>Education and health services</b>	248	251	1.2%
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation, and food services</b>	53	47	-11.3%
<b>Other services</b>	27	65	140.7%
<b>Public administration</b>	49	26	-46.9%
<b>Total</b>	1,129	1,350	19.6%

*Source: U.S. Census & American Community Survey*

## Agricultural Economy

Agriculture is at the core of Marathon County’s identity and the commitment to farmland preservation is extremely high. Approximately 2,545 farms in Marathon County are operated by nearly 4,000 landowners, 99 percent of which are individuals or families. Agriculture is an important component within the Town of Wausau as well.

The Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan identifies seven farms located within the Town and three that border the Town with fewer than 300 animal units. There are two larger farming operations within the Town with 300 to 1,000 animal units. Most of these are dairy operations.

In 2013, Marathon County adopted the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) to help guide farmland preservation and resource conservation activities through 2028. The primary purpose of the program is to minimize the conversion of farmland to other uses and to protect soil and water resources from the impacts of agricultural runoff. Ideally, Marathon County seeks to minimize conversion to no more than 1,500 acres annually. Most of the farms within the Town of Wausau are designated 2013 Farmland Preservation Areas.

The economic health and vitality of the Town of Wausau is substantially influenced by the economic health of the agricultural economy. However, the degree of influence decreases as the number of farms in the Town decline. Given the Town’s adjacency to the City of Wausau, it is anticipated that farmland in the western part of the Town is most likely to be converted to other, mostly residential uses in coming years. However, agricultural vitality continues to be an important component of the Town’s economy.

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

## Economic Development

Farming remains an important part of the Town's economy and livelihood of many Town residents. However, changes in the agricultural economy will continue to impact the viability of large-scale farming in the Town, given its close proximity to the City of Wausau and subsequent increase in demand for residential development. This close proximity makes the Town a desirable location for people who work in the City but want to live in a more rural setting. To minimize conflicts between new residential development and active farming, the Town has designated much of the area west of CTH X for residential development while the east half of the Town is designated largely as agricultural and the southeast corner as trans agricultural.

Proposed improvements to CTH X will likely increase the appeal of this corridor for commercial development in the future, particularly around key intersections such as STH 52. The Town recognizes this potential and has identified areas along CTH X on its Future Land Use map to accommodate limited future commercial development.

### **Goal 1: Maintain an adequate tax base to provide vital Town services.**

- **Objective: To encourage and direct new commercial development to areas along State and County highways within the Township.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to maintain a healthy tax base.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Identify and zone parcels of sufficient size to encourage new commercial development in appropriate locations.
2. Compile and maintain a list of vacant land zoned for commercial development. Make this information available to area real estate professionals and developers.

### **Goal 2: Support the local agricultural economy to ensure that existing farms are able to remain in agriculture for as long as they choose.**

- **Objective: To support development that preserves rural character.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau recognizes the importance of farming to its livelihood and strives to protect prime farmland and active farm areas from encroachment by non-farm development.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work with UW-Extension and Marathon County to implement and monitor farmland conservation and best management practices.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

Close proximity to employment opportunities in the Wausau metropolitan area have allowed the Town to develop essentially as a “bedroom” community and retain a rural residential and agricultural character. It is also recognized that annexation of land in the western half of the Town into the City of Wausau will continue to occur. However, the Town has little control over when and where annexation will be proposed. As such, the Town will continue to work with the City of Wausau to manage development along their shared boundary.

# Chapter 7

## Land Use

Land use is a crucial component of livability and provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate a sustainable pattern of development. The existing natural landscape and land use patterns influence future land use and development. Balancing the needs of the community with land use issues requires that each situation be considered individually and that the community seeks the solution which fits the unique challenges it faces.

Located to the immediate east of the City of Wausau, development in the Town of Wausau is greatly influenced by growth in the City of Wausau. This is reflected in the concentration of development in the western third of the Town and the irregular shape of the western boundary resulting from various annexations.

### CURRENT PATTERN OF LAND USE

Most of the land area in the Town is classified under agricultural related uses, particularly east of CTH X. While the number of active farms has declined in recent years, most remaining farming consists of dairy and grain crops. Residential land uses are scattered through the Town with the highest densities in the western third adjacent to the City of Wausau and the southeast quarter of the Town. Relatively little land area is devoted to commercial or industrial land uses. Most commercial land uses are located along major roadways, primarily STH 52 and CTH X. Patches of productive forestland are scattered throughout the Town. See Map 5 Existing Land Use.

### Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

Key elements of this desired future development pattern include:

- New residential development should be concentrated west of CTH X. Directing most new development west of CTH X will help reduce demand for residential development further east on prime agricultural lands.
- Other areas of concentrated residential development should occur in the vicinity of Mercedes/Colonial Roads/Shenandoah Ridge Road and along Cloverbelt Road.
- Commercial land uses should be concentrated along State and County highways within the Township.

### Zoning

The Town of Wausau has its own zoning. Currently the minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet in areas zoned Residential, 40,000 square feet in Transitional Ag, 80,000 square feet in Agricultural. It is noted that the Town does not have staff to formally enforce the zoning code or nuisance complaints. If necessary, the County Sheriff would be called to enforce the code if problems arise.

## Shoreland Zoning

Shoreland, shoreland wetlands, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all geographic areas of the County. Wisconsin law mandates Counties to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the County outside of villages and cities. This ordinance supersedes any Town ordinance, unless a 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 land ward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

## Managed Forest Law

The Managed Forest Law (MFL) program is a landowner incentive program that encourages sustainable forestry on private woodland. In exchange for following sound forest management, the landowner pays reduced property taxes. It was enacted in 1985 and replaced the Woodland Tax Law and the Forest Crop Law.

MFL is the only forest tax law that is open to enrollment. Land enrolled in the MFL program must be managed according to a plan agreed to by the landowner. To be eligible for the MFL program, a landowner must have a minimum of 20 acres of contiguous land and at least 80 percent of that land must be productive forest land. <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestLandowners/mfl/>

## Major Opportunities and Constraints

### Annexation

According to a 1992 major amendment to the Wausau Sewer Service Area Boundary, approximately 746 acres of land in the Town have been identified to potentially receive public sewer and water. However, under current City policy, prior to serving these areas with public utilities, they would need to be annexed into the City. Given the lack of authority for towns to resist annexation and the immediate adjacency of the City of Wausau, annexation is considered a continual threat. When land is annexed, a town typically loses population and tax base in addition to land area. The constant threat of annexation can also create a disincentive to investing in planning or provision of local services to areas vulnerable to annexation.

### Utilities

Physical constraints on installation of private utilities limit development in some areas. High bedrock, in particular results in use of mound septic systems and holding tanks. Sufficient water supplies can also be difficult to find in some areas, particularly where high bedrock is present. Failure of septic systems is the primary reason residents petition to annex to the City of Wausau, particularly in the area west of 20<sup>th</sup> St.

### Issues

- **Preserve Rural Character**– The Town places a high value on its rural character and open space. There is a desire to maintain a rural, open character, although it is recognized that active farming will continue to decline as a means of livelihood. Given the close proximity to the City of Wausau, this trend will likely continue as more people choose to live in a semi-rural area with easy access to the city.



- **Annexation** – The Town is vulnerable to annexation by the City Wausau and the extension of sewers to serve the Wausau East High School. The Town does not currently have a cooperative working relationship with the City of Wausau in this regard. Therefore, the Town and City may need to consider establishing a boundary agreement that identifies a joint planning area where new development and annexations are likely to occur.
- **Urban/Rural Lifestyle Differences** – When new residents move to the Township, expectations for more services may occur. The right to hunt on private property in rural areas is a long-standing tradition. In recent years, new housing has been built close to areas where people continue to hunt, elevating safety concerns of both residents and hunters.
- **Farmland Preservation Program** – In 2013, Marathon County established the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) to monitor and encourage farmland preservation and resource conservation activities for 15 years, or through 2028. Through the program, the county seeks to minimize farmland conversion to other uses and protect soil and water resources from the impacts of agricultural runoff. Much of the Town of Wausau is farmland, including several smaller dairy operations. A majority of this land is included in designated 2013 Farm Preservation Areas, which are categorized under Marathon County Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs) programs.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

### Land Use

Located just east of the City of Wausau, the land use pattern in the Town is greatly influenced by proximity to the City. Most development has occurred west of CTH X, while the east half of the Town has remained largely agricultural. The Town's Map 6 Future Land Use reflects a continuation of this pattern – guiding most new development to areas west of CTH X. This also supports preservation of the agricultural character and active farming in the eastern half of the Town. Areas for future commercial development are generally located along CTH X.

#### **Goal 1: Proactively plan for transition from agricultural to residential land development.**

- **Objective: To manage the location and density of residential development in order to minimize development-related costs for the Town (public safety services, paved roads, etc.).**
- **Objective: To encourage new residential development in close proximity to existing residential development.**
- **Objective: Review the current transition zone between concentrated residential areas and both agricultural and commercial areas to see if needs to be expanded.**
- **Objective: To discourage residential development in prime farmland areas.**
- **Objective: To minimize conflicts between non-farm residents and farms and minimize fragmentation of large blocks of remaining farmland.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau recognizes its rural and natural character as important and attractive assets that should be maintained.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Consider expanding as needed a Transitional Agriculture zoning district to allow limited new residential development in a manner that will allow for future subdivision when public utilities become available.

#### **Goal 2: Provide tools for managing growth.**

- **Objective: To base land use decisions on the adopted comprehensive plan.**
- **Objective: To update the zoning and subdivision regulations on a regular basis to ensure they support the community vision expressed by the comprehensive plan.**

- **Objective: To work with Marathon County to improve communication regarding land divisions prior to recording with the County.**
- **Objective: To balance individual property rights with the desires of the community as a whole.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to ensure orderly and efficient growth.
2. The Town of Wausau will adopt, consistently enforce, and update its various codes and ordinances needed to achieve the plan goals.
3. The Town of Wausau encourages new development to locate in close proximity to existing developed areas.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Consider the merits of increasing the Transitional Agriculture zoning district or other tools to allow limited new residential development in a manner that will allow for future subdivision when public utilities become available.
2. Continue to require buffers between adjacent uses of different intensities. This will involve developing and adopting buffer standards, including buffer yards/setbacks, screening, and landscaping.
3. Clarify a method of routine communication with Marathon County to coordinate review of minor land divisions prior to approval.

**Goal 3: Encourage annexations to proceed in an orderly manner.**

- **Objective: To strengthen lines of communication and continue to work cooperatively with the City of Wausau to coordinate future growth and development along common borders.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau strongly supports coordination of development along common boundaries.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work with the City of Wausau to explore opportunities to establish a cooperative boundary agreement to manage growth along common boundaries.
2. Work cooperatively with the City of Wausau to prepare a coordinated zoning plan if Extraterritorial Zoning authority is initiated.
3. Review zoning districts along the city limits.

**Goal 4: Proactively plan for commercial and industrial development.**

- **Objective: To concentrate commercial development along State and County highways**

within the Township.

- **Objective: To locate new commercial development near or adjacent to existing commercial development.**
- **Objective: To discourage retail commercial uses that may create excessive traffic flow through the Town.**
- **Objective: To ensure commercial development does not negatively impact environmental resources or adjoining property values.**
- **Objective: To discourage commercial development in prime farmland areas.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau encourages the concentration of commercial development in areas with good transportation access.
2. The Town of Wausau will strive to ensure commercial development occurs in an environmentally sensitive manner with minimal impacts on surrounding properties.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Zone appropriate areas along State and County highways for commercial development to encourage such development in those locations.
2. Continue to coordinate access management with Marathon County through enforcement of driveway access standards.

**Consistency between Land Use and Zoning** – Land use and zoning designations are related, but not necessarily identical. Land use categories tend to be fairly general whereas zoning districts regulate specific land uses and development requirements. Because the land use categories are general it is common for more than one zoning district to correspond to each land use category. It is also possible that some zoning districts might be consistent with more than one land use designation. See Map 6 Future Land Use.

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

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









# Chapter 8

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

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

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

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

### LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL COOPERATION

#### Shared Services and Facilities

##### Fire and Emergency Response

The Town contracts with the City of Wausau for ambulance service. The Town also has mutual aid agreements with surrounding municipalities.

##### Law Enforcement

The Town uses the Marathon County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement and police protection.

#### Relationships to Other Governmental Entities

##### School District

The Town of Wausau is served by the Wausau and DC Everest school districts. There are no operating public or private schools located in the Town.

##### Marathon County

The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff's Office, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways, planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private

sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The County also provides oversight on compliance with County soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program.

### **Regional Agencies**

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides road pavement ratings to the Wausau. The Town is also a participating member of the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), whose primary function relates to coordination of regional transportation planning.

### **State and Federal Agencies**

The Town has little direct contact with State or Federal agencies. However State agencies regulate certain activities such as access onto State roads, shoreland, floodplain and wetland zoning oversight, navigable waters protection, compliance with water quality standards, farmland preservation tax credits and managed forest tax credit programs.

### **Existing or Potential Conflicts**

#### **Annexation**

Given its adjacency to the City of Wausau, annexation is a constant threat to the Town. However, the Town does not currently have a cooperative working relationship with the City of Wausau. The Town and City may need to consider establishing a boundary agreement that identifies a joint planning area along their shared border.

In Wisconsin, neither incorporated municipalities nor towns can initiate annexation. The process is driven by individual property owners (or developers) who petition for annexation into a city to receive sewer and water service. While towns often view annexation as a means to take their territory, cities and villages view annexations as a means to provide a more logical pattern of development and efficient provision of services.

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, & ACTIONS

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Town of Wausau cooperates with neighboring municipalities, the County, and the State on a variety of matters ranging from delivery of services to coordination of planning along common boundaries. While challenges exist – particularly regarding annexation - the Town recognizes that cooperation with its neighbors can improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of services, foster coordinated development, and enhance its overall quality of life.

### **Goal 1: Coordinate development and planning activities with surrounding communities.**

- **Objective: To communicate with surrounding communities when proposed development is on a boundary or the development could have impacts on the adjacent community.**
- **Objective: To work with surrounding communities on preservation of natural resources, including farmland preservation.**
- **Objective: To communicate with adjacent communities when planning locations for public facilities that may serve more than one community.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will strive to cooperate and coordinate with its neighbors and the region to manage growth and development.

#### **Strategies/Actions:**

1. Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to review and coordinate development along common boundaries.
2. Establish a list of contacts for adjacent municipalities and routinely inform and invite them to review pending development proposals.

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

- **Objective: To improve and maintain lines of communication with the City of Wausau to discuss future growth areas and potential annexations.**
- **Objective: To investigate the possibility of developing a boundary agreement with the City of Wausau.**

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will continue to cooperate with the City of Wausau regarding annexations, however, strongly supports coordination of development along common boundaries.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Continue to engage in regular communication with the City of Wausau on annexation issues.
2. Continue to work toward establishing a cooperative boundary agreement with the City of Wausau.

**Goal 3: Improve access management and safety along CTH X.**

- **Objective: To work with surrounding communities, the County and the State to ensure CTH X corridor improvements provide for adequate traffic management and safety.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will continue to cooperate in efforts to improve safety and traffic management along CTH X.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Require adequate access management measures are installed in conjunction with new commercial/industrial development along CTH X.

**Goal 4: Provide cost-effective public safety services.**

- **Objective: To maintain the current contract with the City of Wausau for ambulance service, but review if community needs or response times change.**
- **Objective: To continue to work with surrounding communities to investigate whether fire, EMS and ambulance services to provide efficient and cost-effective service.**

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau supports the continued provision of cost-effective public services.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Conduct annual reviews of service agreements with neighboring municipalities.
2. Continue to participate in discussions with neighboring municipalities and the Wausau metropolitan area regarding service consolidation and opportunities to share services and/or public facilities.

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

- **Objective: To encourage local officials to participate in county and state government activities and organizations.**

- **Objective:** To encourage regular participation and feedback from residents through surveys, informational public meetings, newsletters or other activities.
- **Objective:** To continue to participate with the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to coordinate timing of road maintenance and improvements with surrounding communities.

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau encourages local officials and residents to actively participate in government, planning, and policy related activities and organizations.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Maintain and post at the Municipal Center or the Town website, a calendar of monthly meetings of the various governmental agencies.
2. Maintain Town membership in the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.
3. Consider to conduct regular community surveys to solicit public input on various issues and concerns affecting the Town.

**Goal 6: Continue to communicate with Marathon County officials on issues for which they are responsible.**

- **Objective:** To continue to work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Office to provide law enforcement services.
- **Objective:** To continue to work with Marathon County on bridge and road maintenance and improvements.
- **Objective:** To continue to work with Marathon County on permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulations, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management.

**Policies:**

1. The Town of Wausau will continue to cooperate with Marathon County on issues for which the County is responsible.

**Strategies/Actions:**

1. Maintain regular contact and timely feedback to Marathon County staff regarding concerns with road maintenance and code enforcement.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK, INTENTIONALLY.

# Chapter 9

## Implementation

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

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

### IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

Having the appropriate tools to implement the recommendations in this comprehensive plan is critical. The most common implementation tools are the Town's official controls or regulatory codes. In particular, the zoning ordinance and subdivision (or land division) regulations comprise the principal regulatory devices used to protect existing development and guide future growth and development as identified in this comprehensive plan. There are also non-regulatory approaches to implementing the comprehensive plan; these generally involve decisions about how the community will spend its limited funding resources on capital improvements and staffing.

The State planning law requires that by January 1, 2010 certain programs and/or actions that affect land use must be consistent with the locally adopted comprehensive plan.

### Zoning Ordinance and Map

Zoning is used to manage and control how land is used and developed. Zoning ordinances typically establish detailed regulations concerning how land may be developed, including setbacks, the density or intensity of development, and the height and bulk of building and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to minimize undesirable side effects resulting 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 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.

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

The comprehensive plan (and future land use map) should be periodically reviewed and updated to adjust for unforeseen changes or events that were not considered at the time the initial plan and land use map were developed. The Town Board makes the final decisions regarding recommendations to Marathon County. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

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

Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may set forth reasonable regulations for 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 an asset. The Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

### **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 CIP prioritizes expenditures in a way that can influence where and when development or redevelopment occurs, and can be a powerful tool in implementing the goals of the comprehensive plan.

### **Annual Operating Budget**

The Town prepares a budget each year. 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, priorities set by the town board, and the related work plans identified by each department. The budget and the services provided by that budget are instrumental in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.



## PLAN ADOPTION, MONITORING, AND AMENDMENTS

While this comprehensive plan is intended to provide a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to the continuous stream of changes that occur in the community and/or region that may not have been foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. It is appropriate that some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others are subject to 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 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 Use, Monitoring and Evaluation

The adopted plan should be used as a tool by the Town of Wausau 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 of the Town. As such, the goals, objectives, and actions in this plan should be monitored on a regular basis to maintain concurrence with changing conditions and respond to unanticipated events.

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

### Plan Amendments

The Town of Wausau Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board

following the same process described above for initial Plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity. A list of criteria to determine the merits of proposed amendments is included in Table 12-1.

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

## Plan Updates

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

**Table 12: Criteria to Consider When Reviewing Plan Changes**

1. The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Town of Wausau Comprehensive Plan.
2. The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.
3. Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade or improve its viability.
4. The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.
5. 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.
6. There is a change in Town actions or neighborhood characteristics that would justify a change.
7. The change corrects an error made in the original plan.
8. There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.
9. The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration, or dedication.

## ACTION PLAN

The table below provides a detailed list of major actions to complete in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short, mid, and long-term priorities described in each of the nine plan elements.

Table 13 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting. It is expected that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial limitations, and other unforeseen events. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the Town citizens, staff, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

- Immediate = ASAP
- Short-term = 1-4 years
- Mid-term = 5-9 years
- Long-term = 10+ years
- On-going = Current activities that should continue indefinitely

<b>Table 13: Implementation Actions</b>	
<b>Natural Resource Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Routinely provide information in the newsletter to residents on well testing.	Short-term
Amend the land division and zoning ordinance to incorporate adequate surface water management and soil erosion control measures.	Short-term
Continue to actively enforce regulations regarding hunting in the Town.	Short-term/On-going
Work with UW-Extension to provide information to Town farmers regarding tools, programs, and resources available to help farmers stay in business, develop niche markets, etc.	Long-term
Continue to work cooperatively with Marathon County and the WDNR to enforce regulations to protect and mitigate development impacts on wetlands.	On-going
Continue to serve as the liaison between private property owners in the Town and the County, WDNR, and others regarding the Managed Forest Law (MFL) and other programs aimed at protection and preservation of woodlands.	On-going
<b>Cultural Resource Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Work with the County Historical Society and State Historic Preservation Office to determine if structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	Long-term
Maintain a copy of the written history of the Town at the Municipal Center.	On-going
<b>Housing Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Maintain low intensity zoning (e.g. Agricultural) to discourage non-farm development in the Town.	On-going

Periodically distribute information on property maintenance codes to Town residents (i.e. via newsletter or flyer).	On-going
<b>Utility Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Amend the land division and zoning ordinance to incorporate grading standards and/or best management practices (BMPs) to ensure adequate surface water management and erosion control.	Short-term
Coordinate with the City of Wausau to review proposed development within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction area. This would also involve evaluation of development impacts on groundwater in the Town and planning for orderly extension of water and sewer services.	Long-term
Identify and map areas where environmental constraints may restrict installation of on-site waste disposal systems. Consider zoning these areas for very low-density land uses and/or larger lot sizes.	Long-term
Routinely report instances of potential groundwater contamination to the WDNR and/or Marathon County.	On-going
Work with UW-Extension to provide information to Town farmers and residents regarding alternatives to chemical fertilizers and weed controls.	On-going
Work with Marathon County, UW-Extension, and WDNR to compile and make information available to residents regarding septic system maintenance and inspections and to assist residents that have failing septic systems.	On-going
<b>Community Facility Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Perform annual reviews and budget allocations to fund public services. Evaluate cost-effectiveness of current agreements with adjacent municipalities regarding provision of fire and emergency response services.	On-going
Conduct an annual evaluation of the Town's volunteer fire department and equipment. Use the annual reviews to identify, prioritize, and budget for needed improvements.	On-going
Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Office as needed to improve communications or other efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of police protection services.	On-going
Work with the City of Wausau as needed to improve communications or other efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of ambulance services.	On-going
Meet regularly with surrounding municipalities to explore opportunities to enhance community services, while keeping costs to a reasonable level.	On-going
Collect and maintain information on recycling and recycling contractors and make available at the Municipal Center or through periodic distribution to Town residents and businesses (e.g. newsletter).	On-going
<b>Parks and Recreation Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Establish requirements for provision of trail easements in conjunction with new development.	Long-term
Compile and display information on Marathon County parks, recreation and forestry at the Municipal Center.	On-going

Work with adjacent municipalities and Marathon County to identify and map potential routes for multi-use trails.	On-going
<b>Transportation Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Require that roads in new subdivisions be designed to allow extensions and connections to roads in future developments on adjacent properties where possible.	Short-term
Identify and map roads that should be widened to accommodate farm and non-farm traffic. Use the map and traffic volume information to prioritize improvements during annual budget process.	Mid-term
Develop and adopt specific criteria/thresholds to assist in the evaluating when an existing gravel road should be paved. Criteria might include overall traffic volume, amount of truck or heavy equipment use, proximity or connection to other paved roads.	Long-term
Routinely review, and revise as necessary, road design and access standards in the Town's subdivision ordinance.	Long-term/On-going
Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Office to enforce weight limits within the Town.	On-going
Work with Marathon County Sheriff's Office to enforce speed limits within the Town.	On-going
Work with Marathon County to identify "problem" intersections and plan for design improvements.	On-going
Develop design standards for roads that receive significant volumes of heavy equipment and truck traffic. These might include: thicker pavement or deeper road base; wider pavement and/or paved shoulders; installation of signage indicating frequent use by heavy/large equipment/vehicles.	On-going
Work cooperatively with Marathon County and WDOT to seek and obtain funding for road improvements.	On-going
Routinely review, and revise as necessary, developer requirements regarding contributions for road improvements in new developments.	On-going
Continue to utilize WISLR evaluation ratings to prioritize road improvement projects.	On-going
Work with Marathon County to establish adequate access management requirements for new commercial/industrial development along CTH X.	On-going
Continue to participate in regional planning efforts regarding improvements to CTH X.	On-going
Continue to utilize WISLR evaluation ratings to prioritize road improvement projects.	On-going
Work cooperatively with Marathon County and WDOT to seek and obtain funding for road improvements.	On-going
<b>Economic Development Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Identify and zone parcels of sufficient size to encourage new commercial and industrial development in appropriate locations.	Long-term
Compile and maintain a list of vacant land zoned for commercial and industrial development. Make this information available to area real estate professionals and developers.	Long-term

<b>Land Use Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Clarify a method of routine communication with Marathon County to coordinate review of minor land divisions prior to approval.	ASAP
Develop a brochure to distribute to local realtors and/or potential homebuyers educating them on the characteristics of active farming activities (i.e., smells, noise, farm equipment using local roads, etc.).	Short-term
Work cooperatively with the City of Wausau to prepare a coordinated zoning plan if Extraterritorial Zoning authority is initiated.	Long-term
Zone areas along State and County highways for commercial development to encourage such development in those locations.	Long-term
Work with the City of Wausau to explore opportunities to establish a cooperative boundary agreement to manage growth along common boundaries.	Long-term
Continue to require buffers between adjacent uses of different intensities. This will involve developing and adopting buffer standards, including buffer yards/setbacks, screening, and landscaping.	On-going
Continue to coordinate access management with Marathon County through enforcement of driveway access standards.	On-going
<b>Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Establish a list of contacts for adjacent municipalities and routinely inform and invite them to review pending development proposals.	Mid/Long-term
Continue to engage in regular communication with the City of Wausau on annexation issues.	On-going
Work cooperatively with adjacent municipalities to review and coordinate development along common boundaries.	On-going
Continue to participate with neighboring municipalities and the Wausau metropolitan area regarding service opportunities to share services and/or public facilities.	On-going
Maintain and post at the Municipal Center and the town website, a calendar of monthly meetings of the various governmental agencies.	On-going
Maintain Town membership in the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.	On-going
Conduct regular community surveys to solicit public input on various issues and concerns affecting the Town.	On-going
Maintain regular contact and timely feedback to Marathon County staff regarding concerns with road maintenance and code enforcement.	On-going