Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan 2017

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Cover Photos: Village of Spencer

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Introduction

The Village of Spencer's comprehensive plan is intended to guide village decision-makers, property owners, developers, civic and non-profit organizations and community members in the growth, development, and improvement of the Village of Spencer. Each chapter of this plan documents existing conditions in the village and identifies primary issues or concerns the village may need to address in the future. It includes information on the village's demographics, natural resources, land use, transportation, utilities, housing, cultural resources, community facilities, parks, economic development, and intergovernmental cooperation.

The chapters of this plan also outline the community's goals and objectives to address the issues and opportunities identified, and guide future growth. Goals and objectives have been developed for each of the plan chapters. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to guide the community to achieve the established goals. The implementation chapter at the end of this document compiles and prioritizes all the recommended action steps.

Local plans must also address the state's fourteen planning goals outlined in Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001, to the extent applicable. The state planning goals and countywide guiding principles are summarized in Appendix C.

20 Year Community Vision Statement

It is the vision of the Village of Spencer to be a distinct small community that provides a safe, affordable, pleasant, and healthy place to live and work.

Public Participation

Public participation is an important part of the planning process. Allowing and encouraging public involvement in the planning process provides the citizens of the village an opportunity to express their views, ideas, and present issues that they would like addressed for the future development of the village. Local officials should use this input to guide the policies and decisions made. A robust public engagement strategy will lead to a better plan that has broader support from the people of the village. During the development of this plan, public meetings were held that allowed the public to provide their input. The plan was available for anyone to view at various draft stages throughout the process on the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) website. NCWRPC staff members were also available to receive comments and discuss the plan throughout the process.

Goals, Objectives, Policies

Goals and objectives have been developed for each of the plan chapters. For each of the goals and objectives, specific policies, strategies and/or actions are recommended to enable the community to achieve them. The implementation chapter at the end of this document compiles and prioritizes all the recommended action steps and identifies who is responsible for implementation. Definitions are provided below to clarify the purpose and intent of each category.

Definitions:

Goal: A goal is a statement that describes a desired future condition. The statement is broad in scope and describes a general concept the community hopes to accomplish.

Objective: An objective is a more specific target that will help to achieve a goal.

Policy: A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct to achieve community goals and objectives.

Strategies: Strategies are approaches that involve a series of individual actions to achieve a goal or objective.

Actions: An action describes a specific effort to achieve a goal or objective.

List of Acronyms

303 (d) list—waters designated as "impaired" under section 303 (d) of the U.S. Clean Water Act.

AHI—Architecture & History Inventory (a database of the Wisconsin Historical Society).

ATC—American Transmission Company

BMPs—Best Management Practices

CCC—Civilian Conservation Corps (a 1930s construction and conservation program).

CCR&R—Child Care Resource and Referral Network

CDBG—Community Development Block Grant

CES—Cropland Evaluation System (Marathon County)

Comm 83—Chapter 83 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code under the Department of Commerce, setting standards for regulation of private sewage systems. This was renumbered in 2013 to SPS 383 as administration transferred from the Department of Commerce to the Department of Safety and Professional Services.

CPI-Consumer Price Index

CPZ—Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (Marathon County)

CRP—Conservation Reserve Program

CTH—County Trunk Highway

CWA—Central Wisconsin Airport

DWD—Department of Workforce Development

EMS—Emergency Medical Services

ERW—Exceptional Resource Waters, a designation by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

ETZ—Extra-Territorial Zoning

FCL—Forest Crop Law

FEMA—Federal Emergency Management Agency

FIRM—Flood Insurance Rate Maps, the official source of flood data from FEMA.

HOME—Home Investment Partnerships Program

HUD—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

LHOG—Local Housing Organization Grant

LWRMP—Land and Water Resource Management Plan (Marathon County)

MFL—Managed Forest Law

NCHC—North Central Health Care

NCWRPC—North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

NRHP—National Register of Historic Places

NTC—Northcentral Technical College

ORW—Outstanding Resource Waters, a designation under the U.S. Clean Water Act.

PASER—Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating

PMP—Pavement Management Plan

PSCW—Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

SHPO—State Historic Preservation Office

STF Data—Summary Tape File, referring to data files of the 2000 U.S. Census.

STH—State Trunk Highway

TIP—Transportation Improvement Program (Marathon County)

USDA—United States Department of Agriculture

UW-MC—University of Wisconsin—Marathon County

Wausau MPO—Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

DATCP—Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

WDNR—Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

WDOA—Wisconsin Department of Administration

WEDC-Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

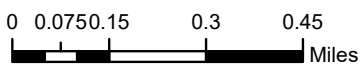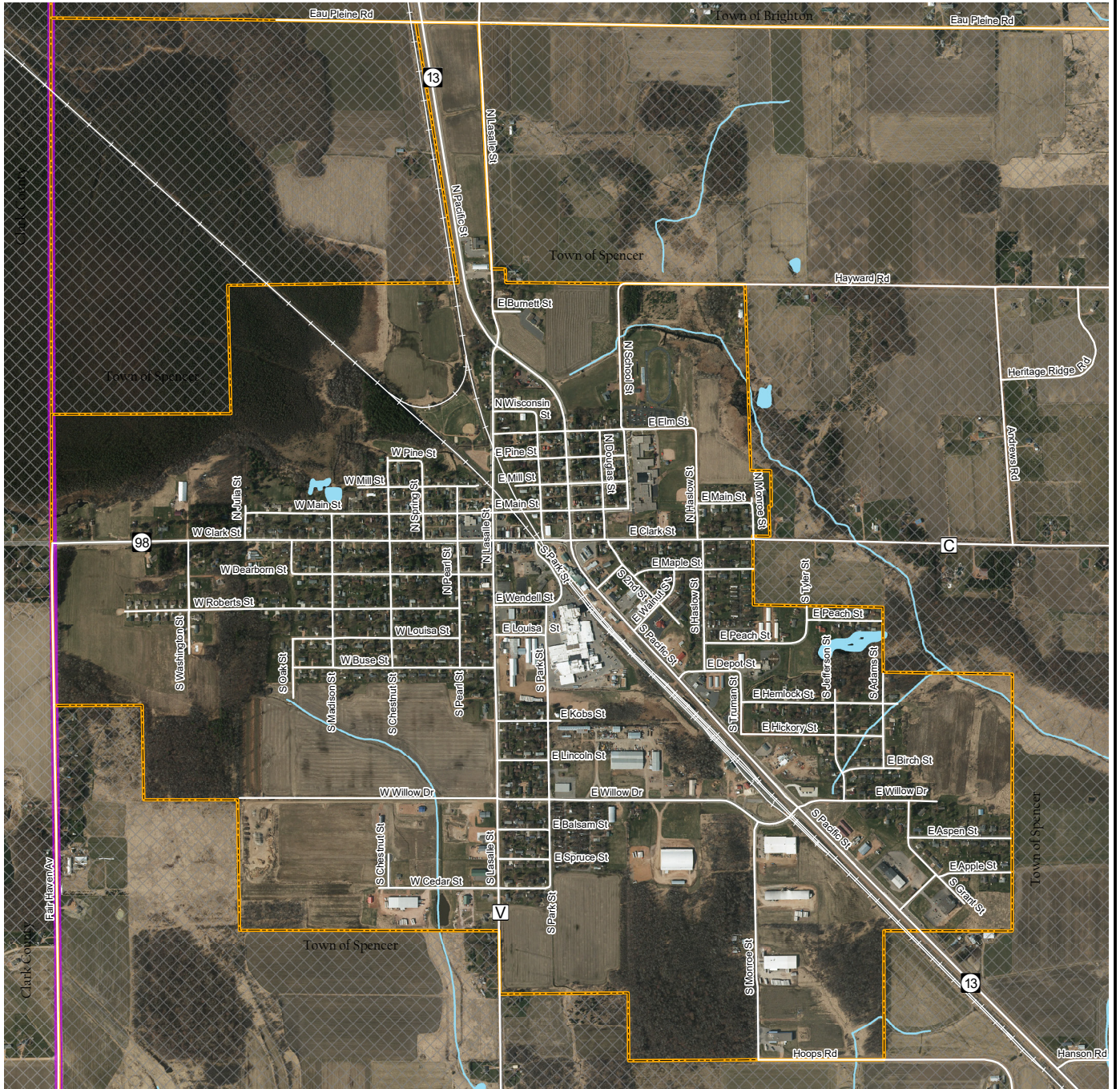WisDOT—Wisconsin Department of Transportation

WHEDA—Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority

WISLR—Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads

WPS—Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

Map 1
Location
Village of Spencer
Marathon County, Wisconsin

Town of Brighton

Town of Spencer

Town of Spencer

Town of Spencer

Town of Spencer

Eau Pleine Rd

Eau Pleine Rd

Hayward Rd

Heritage Ridge Rd

Andrews Rd

N Lasalle St
N Pacific St
N School St
N Wisconsin St
E Burnett St
E Pine St
E Elm St
N Douglas St
W Pine St
W Mill St
E Mill St
N Haslow St
E Main St
N Monroe St
N Julia St
W Main St
E Main St
W Clark St
E Clark St
W Dearborn St
E Maple St
S Tyler St
W Roberts St
E Peach St
S Washington St
E Wendell St
E Peach St
E Louisa St
S Jefferson St
S Adams St
W Louisa St
E Depot St
S Oak St
W Buse St
E Hemlock St
S Madison St
S Chestnut St
S Pearl St
E Kobs St
E Hickory St
S Truman St
E Lincoln St
E Birch St
W Willow Dr
E Willow Dr
E Willow Dr
S Pacific St
W Cedar St
E Balsam St
E Aspen St
E Spruce St
E Apple St
S Lasalle St
S Park St
S Grant St
S Monroe St
Hoops Rd
Hanson Rd
Fair Haven Av
Clark County
N Pearl St
N Spring St
S Park St
S Pacific St
S Chestnut St
N Lasalle St
S Haslow St
S Walnut St
S Sand St

13
13
98
C
V

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 0.45 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co

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

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2. DEMOGRAPHICS

This chapter describes the existing demographics of the Village of Spencer and identifies the major trends impacting the village. This section mainly focuses on data from 2000 to 2010, both from the U.S. Census as well as the American Community Survey. Both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are also listed for comparison.

Population and Households

Historical Trends

The estimated 2015 population of the Village of Spencer provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration is 1,932 people. As shown in **Table 2-1,** Spencer has experienced major population growth over the past four decades, growing at a much faster rate than Marathon County or the State of Wisconsin. Household growth over the past three decades in Spencer was higher than population growth, increasing by over double since 1970. The average household size declined slower than that of the county and state, and is still smaller than both the county and the state.

The population of Marathon County grew from 125,834 in 2000 to 134,063 in 2010, an increase of 6.5 percent, compared to a 6.0 percent increase in the state and 9.7% in the United States. Population growth in Marathon County has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau. Most towns experienced modest percentage growth over the last two decades. Most of the communities with very high percentage growth also have relatively small populations. Five towns, as well as one city and one village, had population decline between 1990 and 2010.

Projections

Figure 2-1 shows population projections for Spencer and **Table 2-2** compares projected population in Spencer to Marathon County, based on projections made by the Wisconsin DOA. The WDOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 16.96. These projections are based on historical population and household growth in the community, with more recent years given a greater weight. The Village of Spencer is expected to continue population growth through the year 2035 at a slower rate than Marathon County, and begin declining after 2035.

Like population, household projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2010 and 2040. **Table 2-3** includes household projections completed by the WDOA. These projections show that the number of households is expected to grow more quickly than the population, reflecting historic trends for decreasing household sizes. The average household size was 2.36 in 2010 and is expected to decrease to 2.22 by 2040. Household growth is expected to continue through the

| Table 2-1: Demographic Change, 1970-2010							
Minor Civil Division	**1970**	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**% Change 1970 to 2010**	**% Change 2000 to 2010**
Total Population							
Spencer	1,181	1,754	1,757	1,932	1,925	63.00%	-0.36%
County	97,457	111,270	115,400	125,834	134,063	37.56%	6.54%
State	4,417,821	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	28.73%	6.03%
Total Households							
Spencer	407	701	720	800	816	100.49%	2.00%
County	29,771	37,865	41,534	47,402	53,176	78.62%	12.18%
State	1,328,804	1,652,261	1,822,118	2,084,544	2,279,768	71.57%	9.37%
Average Household Size							
Spencer	2.90	2.50	2.44	2.42	2.36	-18.62%	-2.48%
County	3.27	2.90	2.75	2.60	2.49	-23.85%	-4.23%
State	3.22	2.35	2.68	2.50	2.43	-24.53%	-2.80%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2010. 2010 U.S. Census DPDP1

Table 2-2: Population Projections, 2010-2040

| | Total Population by Year | | | | | | | % Change | Net Change |
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040		
Spencer	1,925	1,945	2,000	2,035	2,060	2,065	2,050	6%	125
County	134,063	136,510	142,200	146,595	150,130	152,120	152,790	14%	18,727

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Projections, 2013
*2010 population is an actual census count, while other years are projections.

## Figure 2-1: Village of Spencer Population
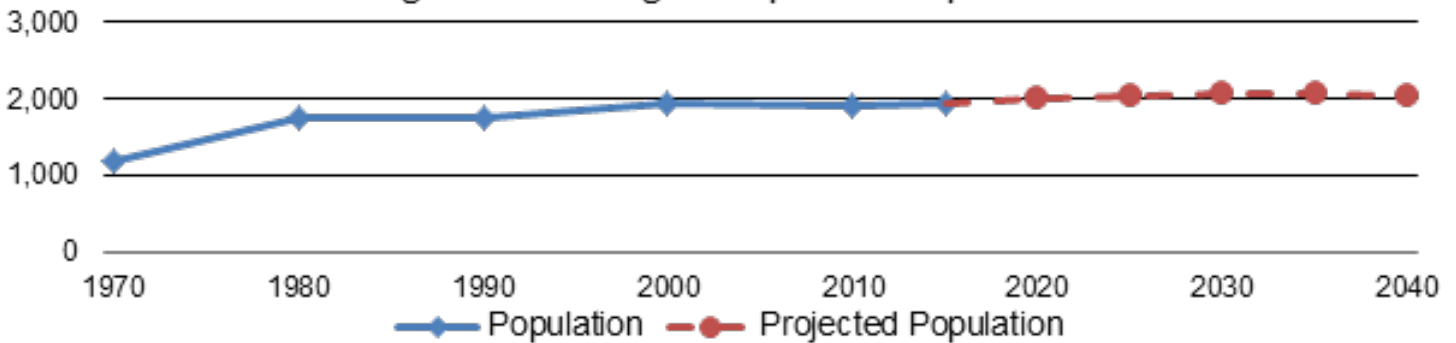
Source: U.S. Census. WI DOA

Table 2-3: Household Projections, 2010-2040

| | Total Households by Year | | | | | | | % Change | Net Change |
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040		
Spencer	816	833	864	887	907	920	923	13%	107
County	53,176	54,657	57,394	59,611	61,524	62,958	63,730	20%	10,554

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Household Projections, 2013
*2010 households is an actual census count, while other years are projections.

Figure 2-2: Village of Spencer Households
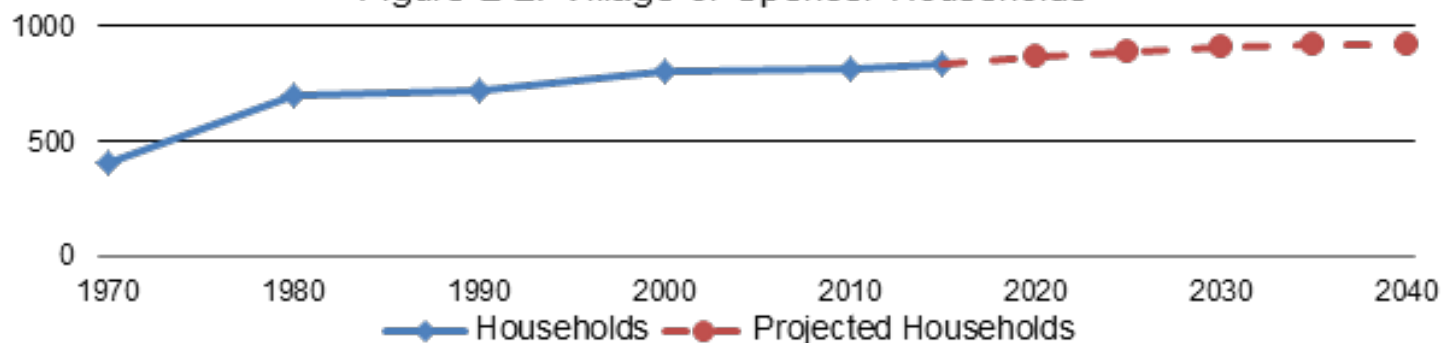
Source: U.S. Census. WI DOA 2013

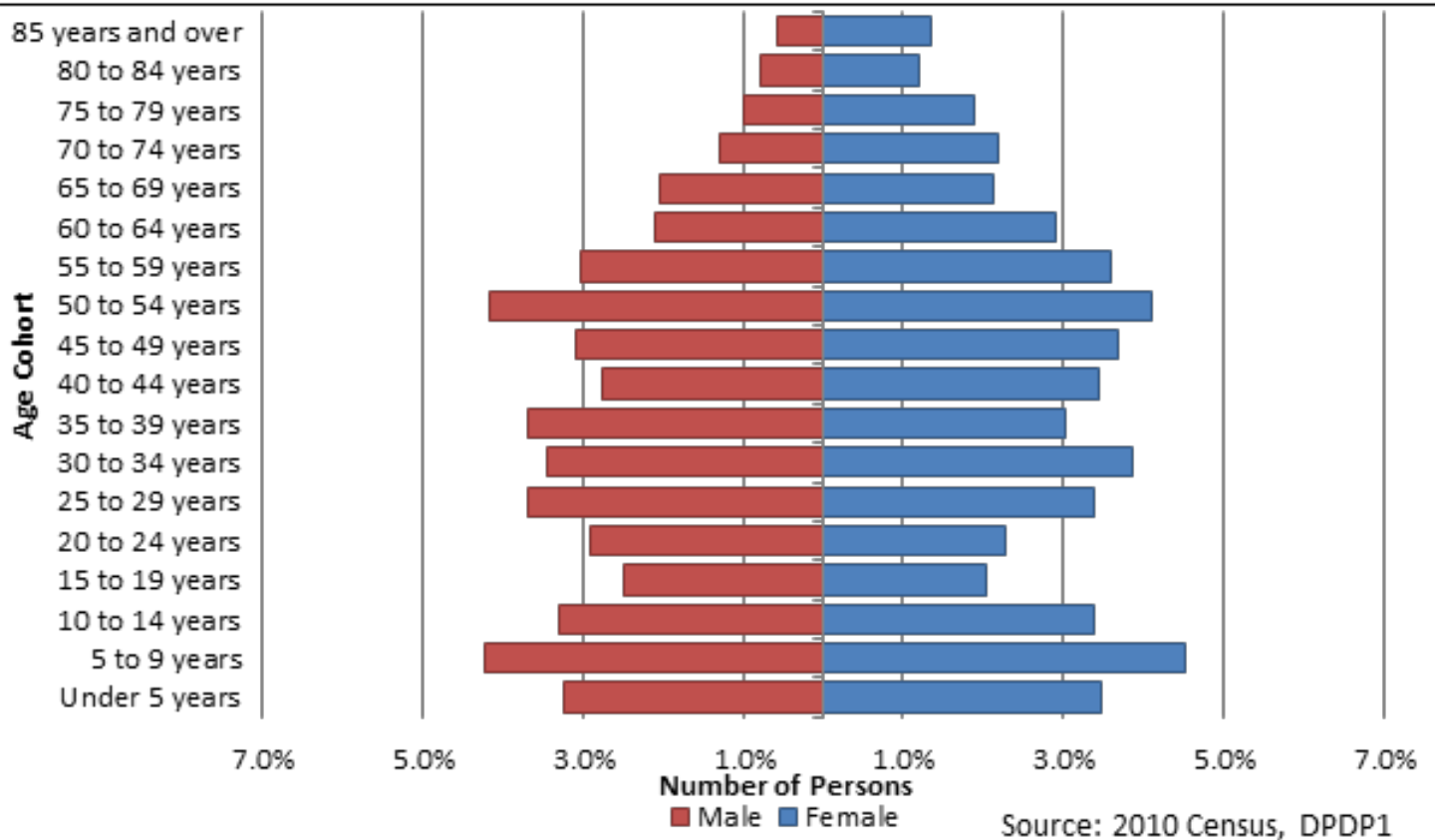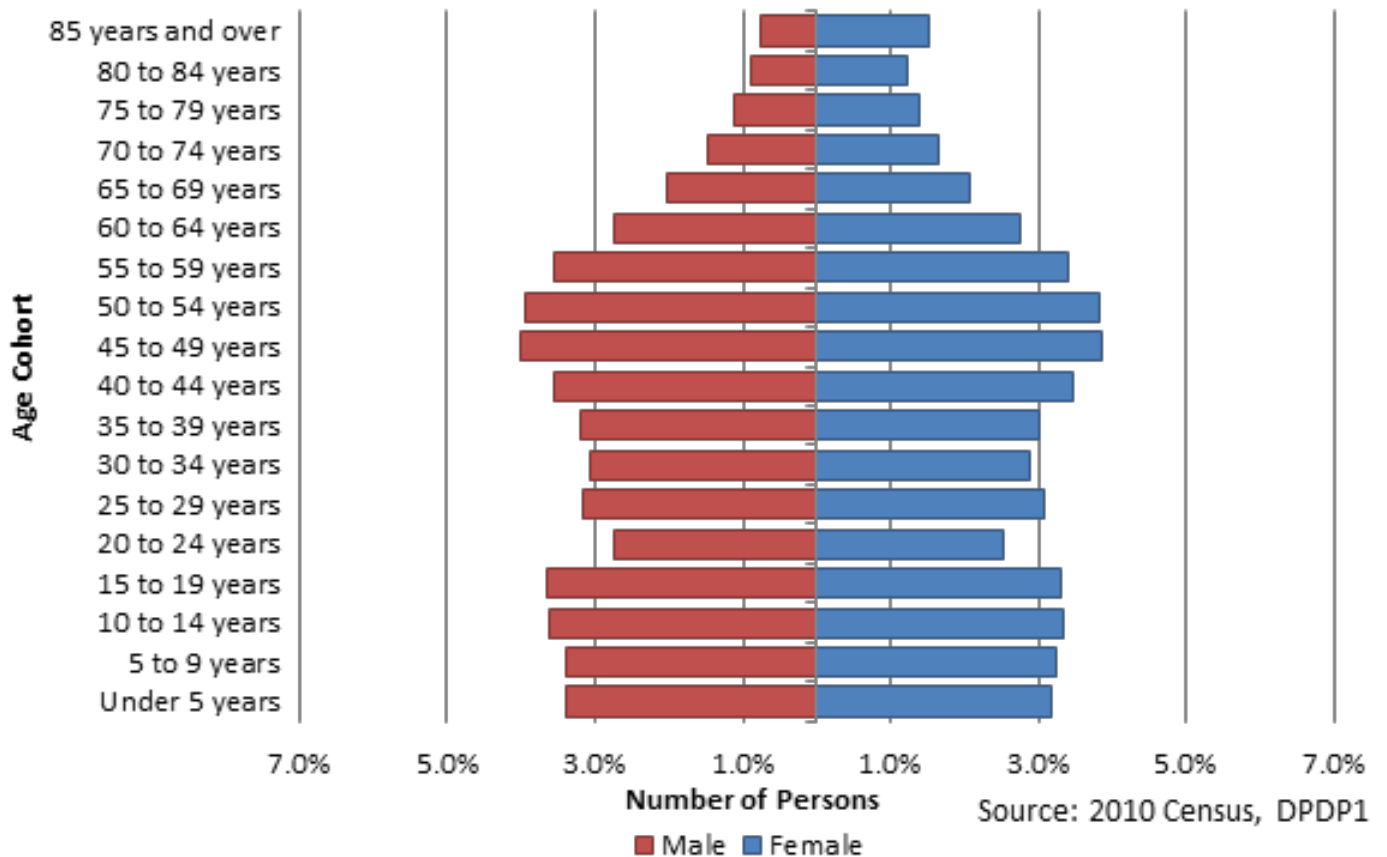## Figure 2-3: Village of Spencer Age Cohorts, 2010

Source: 2010 Census, DPDP1

Figure 2-4: Marathon County Age Cohorts, 2010

Source: 2010 Census, DPDP1

year 2040 for both the county and the village, but at a slower rate in the village.

Age

Figure 2-3 and **Figure 2-4** compare the distribution of age groups between the Village of Spencer and Marathon County. The age distribution in Spencer was very similar to the county with some slight variation in some age cohorts.

The median age of Spencer is slightly lower than both the state and the county. Spencer has a median age of 38.1 years, while the state is 38.5 years and the county is 39.4 years. Median age has been increasing over the last two decades as the population ages, due in large part to the number of Baby Boomers, who are now entering retirement age. The aging of the population will continue due to the size of the Baby Boomer generation. The Village of Spencer and Marathon County have a large proportion of their population between 40 and 60 years old, and as these groups age the need for services such as housing, transportation, and healthcare will change.

Education and Income Levels

Education

According to 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey data, 90.4 percent of Spencer residents that are 25 or older have at least a high school education, up from 82.7 percent in 2000. This is comparable to both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin. However, the proportion of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher at 11.5 percent is significantly lower than Marathon County (21.9%) and the State of Wisconsin (26.4%), and has remained relatively the same since 2000.

Figure 2-5 compares educational attainment in Spencer to Marathon County and the state. This shows that the proportion of residents in the village with some college, but no degree is higher than the state and county. This may mean that village residents are more likely to have technical certificates or other non-degree advanced training. Spencer residents have a slightly higher level of high school educational attainment, and lower levels of higher education.

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

Table 2-4: Median Household Income, 2010

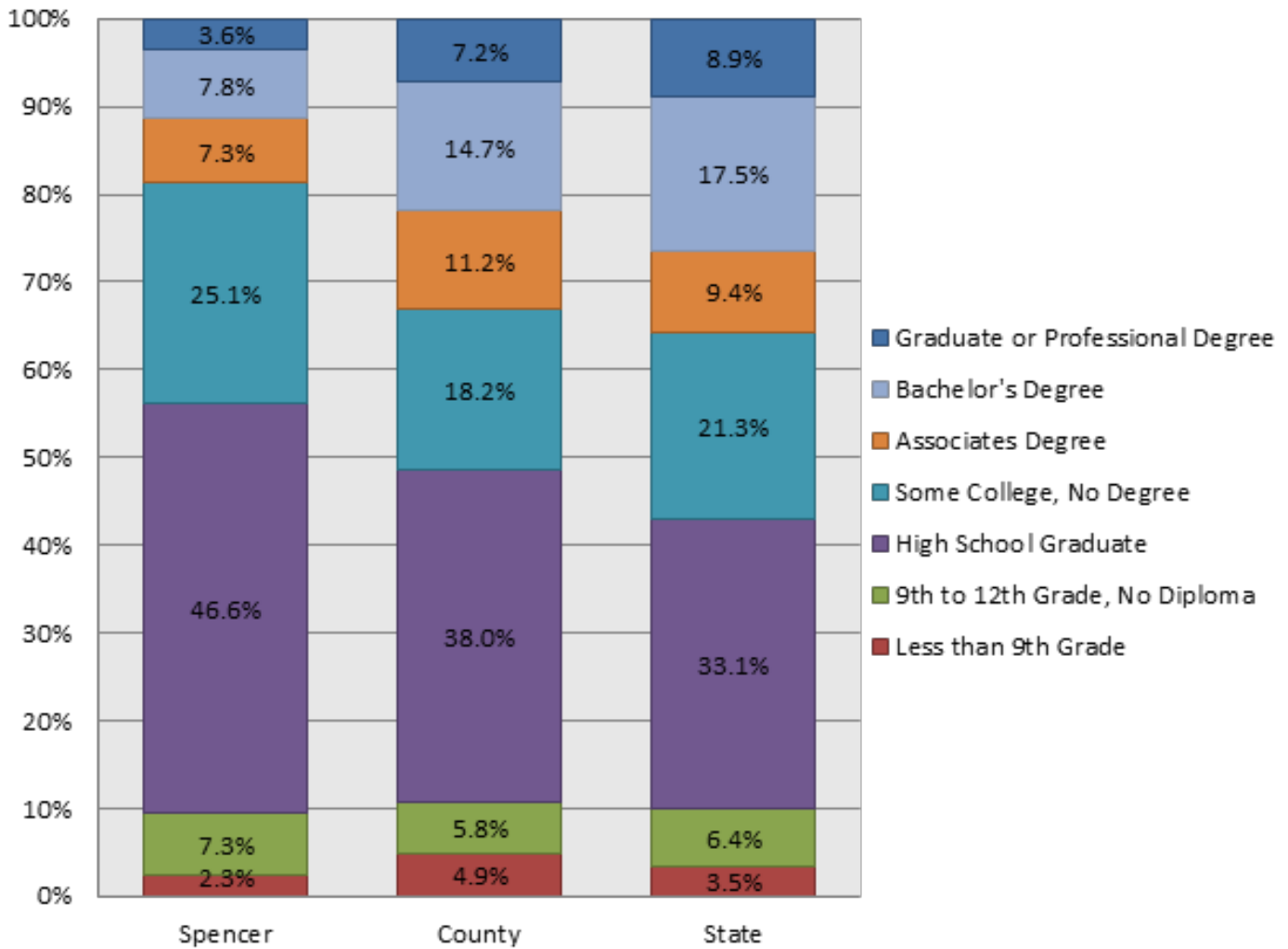| Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	Adj. Net Change*	% Change*
Village of Spencer	$40,665	$56,583	$2,364	4.36%
Marathon County	$45,165	$53,762	-$6,456	-10.72%
Wisconsin	$43,791	$52,627	-$5,759	-9.86%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 ACS & NCWRPC.
*Adjusted for inflation in 2012 dollars.

Table 2-5: Per Capita Income, 2010

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	Adj. Net Change*	% Change*
Village of Spencer	$17,665	$22,737	-$816	-3.46%
Marathon County	$20,703	$27,173	-$430	-1.56%
Wisconsin	$21,271	$27,426	-$935	-3.30%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 ACS & NCWRPC.
*Adjusted for inflation in 2012 dollars.

Figure 2-5: Educational Attainment, Age 25 and Older, 2010

Spencer
- 3.6%
- 7.8%
- 7.3%
- 25.1%
- 46.6%
- 7.3%
- 2.3%

County
- 7.2%
- 14.7%
- 11.2%
- 18.2%
- 38.0%
- 5.8%
- 4.9%

State
- 8.9%
- 17.5%
- 9.4%
- 21.3%
- 33.1%
- 6.4%
- 3.5%

Legend:
- Graduate or Professional Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Associates Degree
- Some College, No Degree
- High School Graduate
- 9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma
- Less than 9th Grade

Source: 2008-2012 American Community

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 Village of Spencer residents was $56,583 in 2012. This was slightly higher than Marathon County and the state. Spencer had a slightly lower median household income in 2000, after adjusting for inflation. However, per capita income is lower in the village than the county or state. Most (47.8%) of Spencer households are in income ranges falling between $50,000 and $99,999. About 22 percent of households fall under $24,999 and 27.8 percent make between $100,000 and $199,999.

The median household income in Marathon County and the state has declined between 2000 and 2010, but it has grown in Spencer, after adjusting for inflation to 2012 dollars. The per capita income in Spencer has declined slightly since 2000 after adjusting for inflation, similar to the state and county.

Employment Characteristics

Jobs, Labor Force Participation Rates, and Unemployment Rates

Tables 2-6 and 2-7 illustrate the breakdown of the employed population and labor force living in Spencer in 2000. The "employed population" is defined as people living in Spencer who are 16 years and older. The labor force in Spencer grew by 12.8 percent between 2000 and 2010, showing a marginally higher rate of growth than the county and state, and higher than the rate of population growth in Spencer. The labor force participation rate of Spencer residents 16 and over is similar to the county and state and grew between 2000 and 2010, while the county, state, and most other nearby communities declined.

In 2000, Spencer had an employed population of 1,024, which increased by 8.5 percent to 1,111 by 2010. This growth was also slightly higher than the county

and state, and higher than the population growth in Spencer. The self-reported unemployment rate in the Village of Spencer, the proportion of people in the labor force but not working, is marginally lower than the county and state.

Table 2-8 shows a breakdown of occupations for working Spencer residents. Most residents were employed in production, transportation, and material moving (25.7%) and management, business, science, and arts occupations (25.1%). Since 2000 the proportion of residents working in service occupations has increased while those working in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations and sales and office occupations have declined.

Demographic Trends

- The Village of Spencer increased in total population between 1970 and 2010 by 63 percent. Between 2000 and 2010, the population decreased by less than half of a percent.

- The median age for the village is lower than the state and county, and the median age in the state has grown faster than the median age in the village.

- 90.4 percent of village residents have a high school education or higher, up from 82.7 percent in 2000.

- Household income has increased for village residents, while per capita income has decreased between 2000 and 2010 after adjusting for inflation.

- In 2014 there were 894 people working in the Village of Spencer. There were approximately 1,111 employed residents living in the Village of Spencer.

- The labor force participation rate has increased between 2000 and 2010.

Table 2-6: Labor Force

Minor Civil Division	Labor Force			Labor Force Participation rate	
	2000	**2010**	**2000-2010 % Change**	**2000**	**2010**
Village of Spencer	1,058	1,193	12.76%	71.1%	73.5%
Marathon County	69,216	74,779	8.04%	74.7%	71.1%
Wisconsin	2,872,104	3,090,671	7.61%	69.1%	68.5%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Table 2-7: Employment

Minor Civil Division	2000	2010	2000-2010 % Change	Unemployment Rate
Village of Spencer	1,024	1,111	8.50%	6.6%
Marathon County	66,550	69,248	4.05%	7.3%
Wisconsin	2,734,925	2,856,318	4.44%	7.5%

Source: U.S. Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Table 2-8: Employment by Industry

Occupation Sector	2000	2010
Management, business, science, and arts occupations**	25.0%	25.1%
Service occupations	14.7%	18.2%
Sales and office occupations	22.9%	20.5%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations**	12.3%	10.4%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	25.1%	25.7%
Total Employed*	1,024	1,111

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration; American Community Survey 2008-2012
* "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 2010 Census.

3. NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Since natural resource features do not follow geo-political boundaries, it is important to consider their patterns and inter-relationships on a regional scale. In addition, many of the programs for protecting or mitigating impacts to natural resources are administered at the county, state or federal level. Thus, an overview of recent county-wide natural resource planning efforts is described below, followed by a description of local natural resource conditions. Natural resources covered in this chapter include biology, geology, and geography including terrain, soils, water, forests, wetlands, wildlife and habitat.

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

Recent Planning Efforts Related to Natural and Agricultural Resources

In the last decade, several plans were prepared by the county specifically to address protection and management of natural resources. These plans may be used as resources to guide local policy and decision-making regarding resource management and protection. In addition to the plans listed below, Marathon County and several local communities have adopted park and outdoor recreation plans that discuss natural resource based recreational facilities and protection strategies. These are described in more detail in the utilities and community facilities.

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:

- Land use activities are well planned to enhance community development, minimize conflicts,

maximize infrastructure investments, and protect rural character.

- Maintain the soil and water resources as productive assets through topsoil and organic matter conservation.

- Marathon County agriculture and woodlot producers are economically strong.

Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as "priority" watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, State-funded Priority Watershed Program. The county's Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) works with the WDNR to implement the program. Program funding is used to hire staff to assist in developing management plans for each watershed and to provide cost sharing to landowners for implementation of "best management practices" (BMPs) to achieve the program objectives.

Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide, 2001

This guide is an extension of the efforts established with adoption of the Marathon County Groundwater Plan in 1988. It is intended to guide local and county officials in setting policy. It also serves as a resource of information about groundwater and other natural resources and recommends strategies to address issues related to groundwater protection.

Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Land Use Plan

This plan includes recommendations to guide management of forest land in Marathon County in accordance with the county Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department's mission to manage and protect the county forest on a sustainable basis for ecological, economic, educational, recreational, and research needs of present and future generations. It provides substantial information on existing forest resources and as well as information regarding the roles of the various agencies and regulatory framework related to forest management.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan

The purpose of this plan is to guide and manage growth and development in a manner that will preserve the rural character; protect the agricultural base and natural resources; and contribute to the county's overall goal of promoting public safety, health and prosperity within the county. This plan is the primary policy document in directing preservation of agricultural production capacity, farmland preservation, soil and water protection, and future land development while respecting private property rights and individual units of government.

Natural and Agricultural Resources

Water Resources

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others are in need of focused efforts to improve water quality. Navigable waterways in Wisconsin are owned by and available to Wisconsin citizens through the Public Trust Doctrine in the Wisconsin Constitution, making them an exceptionally important recreational asset. Water quality is important for wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation, such as fishing, boating and swimming. The Wisconsin DNR identifies exceptional and outstanding resource waters that are largely unaffected by pollution and should remain so, however, there are none located in the village.

Water resources that have been significantly degraded are identified as "impaired waters". Four of the 22 watersheds in Marathon County have been identified as "impaired waters" on the "303 (d) list" of the U.S. Clean Water Act. The list identifies waters that do not meet current water quality standards and merit water quality improvement and protection. In Spencer, these watersheds include:

- Upper Yellow River in the southern portion of the village

- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County

Resource management plans for these watersheds and the Lower Big Rib River watershed have been completed as part of the Priority Watershed Program, a state-funded, voluntary program administered by the county. The county's resource management planning efforts are described in more detail in the Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (2010).

Streams/Rivers

A tributary to the Little Eau Pleine River runs through the north part of the village. The south and west half of the village is within the Upper Yellow River Watershed, which is considered an "impaired" and high priority watershed and is vulnerable to nonpoint source pollution due to topography and soil characteristics.

Floodplains

There are no areas mapped by FEMA in the 100-year (1% annual chance) floodplain within the village. The village is shown as Zone X, an area determined to be outside of the 500 year (0.2% annual chance) floodplain. 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). However, this does not prevent the potential for flooding from stormwater, making stormwater management infrastructure an important investment for the village.

Wetlands

Wetlands serve vitally important ecological functions as well as functions that directly benefit humans. Once damaged, wetlands are difficult and costly to replace. Wetlands protect the quality of surface waters by reducing erosion and intercepting and filtering sediment, excess nutrients, heavy metals and other pollutants. Wetlands also provide natural flood control and damage prevention by reducing flood peaks. Wetlands are also important sources of food, shelter, breeding, spawning, nesting, and wintering habitats for fish and wildlife. Development in wetlands should be avoided to prevent the loss of these valuable functions. If development in wetlands is unavoidable, existing wetland functions should be replaced in the same sub-watershed through the restoration or creation of additional wetlands or in-lieu-fee mitigation.

Some wet environments are universally perceived as wetlands while others can be recognized and delineated only by trained experts. 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 feet. 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.

- 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.

There are pockets of wetlands around the edges of the village. The largest is an area of forested and emergent/wet meadow wetlands in the northwest corner of the village. There are emergent/wet meadow and forested wetlands associated with the Little Eau Pleine River tributary in the northeast corner of the village. There are also some forested wetlands in the southeast corner of the village.

Groundwater

Depth to groundwater is moderately deep to shallow. Locating water for wells can be difficult in the area, and the water has high iron content.

Land use activities have the potential to impact the natural quality of water. A landfill may leach contaminants into the ground that contaminate the groundwater. Gasoline may leak from an underground storage tank into groundwater. Fertilizers and pesticides can seep into the ground from farm fields, golf courses or lawns. Intentional dumping or accidental spills of paint, used motor oil, or other chemicals on the ground can result in contaminated groundwater.

Additionally, impervious surfaces such as pavement and structures affect the availability of groundwater. As impervious surfaces increase, rain water runs off into lakes, streams and wetlands, picking up contaminants as it goes. The results are: less recharge to groundwater, thereby reducing the amount of groundwater that can be withdrawn from the aquifer; more flooding; and runoff contaminated with pesticides, fertilizers, oil, and other waste. The reductions in baseflow, increased flood flows and nonpoint source pollution may have significant impacts on the flora and fauna that inhabit a stream, lake or wetland.[1]

Soil Resources

Soil Types

Except for a small area in the northwest corner, the entire village is covered in soils of the Loyal-Withee-Marshfield association. Susceptibility for soil erosion is fairly low, similar to the average soil loss experienced by Marathon County as a whole and is not a major concern. Most of the soil types in the village pose limitations for dwellings with basements and local roads.

Soil Erosion

Soil erosion can lead to the loss of prime farm soils and the degradation of water quality due to nutrient runoff. Soil erosion can occur through crop tilling, construction sites, and nonmetallic mining, and is more likely on steep slopes and on certain soils. As the impervious surface of an area increases, storms produce more runoff and increase the erosion due to higher runoff speeds. According to the 2010 Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan, the average susceptibility for soil erosion within the three watersheds within Spencer is lower than the average soil loss experienced by Marathon County as a whole, which is two tons lost per acre per year. Three to five tons per acre per year is considered "tolerable," and the watersheds in Spencer show erosion rates between 0 and 1.99 tons per acre per year, with lower rates in the Upper Yellow River watershed than the Little Eau Pleine River and Popple River watersheds.

1   Lindorff, Dave, Christine Mechenich and Chuck Warzecha. 2002. Groundwater and Its Role In Comprehensive Planning. Comprehensive Planning and Groundwater Factsheet 1. Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Prime Farm Soils

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture soil survey, much of the prime farmland in the village has already been developed. Most of the village is considered prime farmland, with some areas that are considered prime farmland if they are drained, and some sections near streams that are not prime farmland. The largest area of prime undeveloped farmland is located in the southwest part of the village, west of STH 13. Both prime farmland and prime farmland if drained are found in this location.

Biological Resources

Vegetation

The village is mostly developed and vegetation primarily consists of urban type landscaping of trees, shrubs and private gardens. Natural wooded areas are located along the banks of the Little Eau Pleine River and along the edges of the village.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat

Wildlife resources include a variety of game and non-game species of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians that typically live in Marathon County. Common types of wildlife include deer, wild turkeys, raccoon, squirrels, songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Wildlife resources are abundant in the many undisturbed sanctuaries, refuges, reserves, and scattered habitats located throughout the county. Numerous other species of migrating birds use habitat in Marathon County for food, shelter, and resting stops during seasonal migration.

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to county parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and Rib Mountain State Park. Woodland and managed forests also serve as wildlife habitat. Village trees, private landscaping, and parks also have the potential to serve as habitat if they are designed and managed appropriately.

Threatened and Endangered Species

There are several threatened, endangered, and special concern species present in the Spencer area listed below. Sensitive species, such as cave bats, are not included on this list for species protection. Site level analysis should be performed when reviewing development proposals due to suppression of some sensitive species and the potential for species to shift

Blanding's Turtle, a Special Concern species present in the Spencer area
Image Source: Wisconsin DNR

A Wood Turtle at a nesting site, a Threatened species present in the Spencer area
Image Source: Rich Staffen, Wisconsin DNR

across the area. Communities listed in the WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory are also listed.

Species

- Blanding's Turtle

- Small Forget-me-not

- Yellow-headed Blackbird

- Wood Turtle

Communities and Other

- Northern Wet Forest

- Northern Mesic Forest

- Open Bog

3. Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resources

- Bird Rookery

Cultural Resources

Brief History of the Village of Spencer

Spencer began as one of several towns that grew as a result of the Wisconsin Central Railroad construction in the 1870s. The town was developed by Civil War veterans who helped build the railroad and decided to stay. Like nearby Unity, the Village of Spencer was located in the white pine belt, and James Robinson's first sawmill opened on what is now Mill Street in 1874. The Village of Spencer suffered a fire in 1886 that resulted in the community being rebuilt with locally produced brick. The village was incorporated in 1902. Like other early logging communities, Spencer transitioned into a dairy economy. A major business in the village in the 1920s was the Dairy Belt Cheese & Butter Company, which later purchased the Spencer Milk Products Company and manufactured evaporated milk. This business was eventually sold to Land O' Lakes Creameries, still a large business in the community.

This Spencer Area Historical Society is an important part of the village, as it helps to preserve and maintain the community's history and historical artifacts.

Historic Properties

There are no properties in Spencer listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The community does not have a local historic preservation commission. Archaeological sites are identified only at the town level.

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties that may have been surveyed in the past; the inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. No historic properties in Spencer have been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

Cemeteries, Burial Mounds, Other Burials

Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are currently 133 cemeteries and burial areas identified in Marathon County, and it is likely that other cemeteries and burials may be present. Suspected burial mounds or unmarked burials must be reported to the state Burial Sites Preservation Office. If human remains are uncovered during excavation, all work must cease pending review of the Burial Sites Preservation Office. All cemeteries and burials in Marathon County should be catalogued under Wis. Stat. 157.70 to provide maximum protection of these sites. There is no information on cemeteries within the Village of Spencer.

Arts

The arts are integrated throughout the community, not just in people that are called or make a living as artists, but also through the creativity that is present in every person. The mix of businesses, environmental assets, creative collaborations, entrepreneurship, food, and recreation all form the arts and cultural resources of a community.

The Village of Spencer is home to the LuCille Tack Center for the Arts, a fine arts center for rural, central Wisconsin. This center brings a mix of high quality cultural events, family entertainment, and educational programs. The LuCille Tack Center for the Performing Arts was completed in 1996. In August 1994, the Spencer School District received a bequest from LuCille Tack, a life-long Spencer resident, to construct a fine arts center. This facility houses a 500 seat theater and art gallery. It is managed by an independent, community based arts organization and many volunteers. The mission of the LuCille Tack Center is to provide an environment that encourages a variety of opportunities to enlighten, enrich and develop artistic growth for community members of all ages.

The LuCille Tack Center for the Arts.
Image Source: Village of Spencer

Events and Activities

Events and activities, such as the Spencerama days, contribute to the cultural resources of the community. Events and activities provide an opportunity for

members of the community to interact with each other and create a shared experience in the community.

Issues

- Water Availability - It is difficult to find water in the village. This could be an issue when drilling future village wells.

- Forested Land - Preservation of forested land is a concern to residents within the village. Some programs described in the land use chapter may help encourage the preservation of forested land.

- Changes in Climate – According to the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts, local impacts of a changing climate may include changes in the growing season, increased likelihood of droughts and fires, higher frequency of strong storms and flooding, and changes to temperature sensitive habitats such as cold water trout streams. These changes may impact the health of the community by changing agriculture, diseases borne by food, water, and wildlife, and affecting levels of some air pollutants. It is important for the village to adapt to these changes by updating stormwater infrastructure, incorporating green infrastructure into developments, keeping development outside of floodplains, and preserving wildlife habitats and native species.

- Invasive Species - Diseases and non-native invasive pests such as Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt have the potential to devastate vegetation in the village. While Emerald Ash Borer has not yet been found in Marathon County, it has been found in the nearby counties of Portage, Wood and Oneida and has spread rapidly.

- Groundwater Contamination - Land uses such as auto repair, gasoline stations, and industrial uses have the potential to contaminate groundwater supplies, especially in areas with shallow groundwater or permeable soils.

- Agricultural/Residential Land Use Conflicts – The Village of Spencer is surrounded by and includes some agricultural lands, but mostly contains residential land. There is the potential for conflicts between these land uses due to noise, odors, and pollution on the agricultural side and the fragmentation of farmland and nuisance complaints on the residential side. Maintaining an orderly growth pattern that avoids sprawling and fragmented residential development and maintaining buffers between agricultural and residential land can help to reduce these conflicts.

- Lack of Current Information - Although a brief countywide historic properties survey was carried

3. Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resources

out in 1975-77, there has been no update. Many properties identified at that time may be gone, while other properties not previously surveyed may now be evaluated in a new context. It is necessary for the county to have current information about cultural resources in order to maximize planning and make the best use of historic properties.

- 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.

- Rural Character and Historic Resources - In Marathon County, residents have expressed a strong desire to preserve the rural character of the county and raised concerns about increasing ex-urban development and the decline of working farms. An important part of rural character is the rural landscape and the buildings that convey that sense of place. While it is important to address the location and type of new development, there is also a need to preserve some visible reminders of rural character, including working farms. Without preserving some of the existing resources, including farmsteads and farmlands, the very characteristics that attracted residents will increasingly be lost.

- Protection of Archaeological Sites and Cemeteries - Cultural resources planning includes identification and protection of archaeological sites and historic cemeteries. The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains a list of reported sites and cemeteries, representing a fraction of sites that are actually present. This information is often overlooked and should be incorporated into the planning process for local communities.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Maintain and enhance the forest areas in and around the Village of Spencer.

Objectives

- Explore public ownership of forested land.

- Encourage private participation in programs, such as the Managed Forest Law, to preserve forests.

- Explore a comprehensive tree planting and maintenance program for the village.

- Encourage conservation subdivisions rather than traditional land divisions near forest areas that will be preserved long term.

Policies

- Support the responsible public and private ownership of forestland.

- Monitor invasive species and pests, such as Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with Marathon County and private property owners to encourage participation in the Managed Forest Law.

- Work with the WDNR to develop a tree management plan and identify funding for implementation.

- Develop an action plan for the eventuality of Emerald Ash Borer and other diseases impacting tree health in the village.

- Amend the zoning code to allow conservation subdivisions.

- Encourage conservation easements/purchase of development rights on forested land.

- Maintain Tree City USA status.

Goal 2: Protect the groundwater supply

Objectives

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify critical zones, such as groundwater recharge areas, and update applicable village ordinances to protect these areas.

- Reduce the impacts of stormwater and runoff.

Policies

- Discourage development in areas that may have a negative impact on the village's water supply.

- Use stormwater best management practices (BMPs) in village projects.

- Encourage stormwater best management practices (BMPs) in private development.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas critical to maintaining the village's groundwater supply.

- Review and update village ordinances to ensure that hazardous development is prohibited from identified locations important to the groundwater supply.

- Update zoning and subdivision codes to require stormwater BMPs be integrated into new developments.

- Upgrade public stormwater infrastructure to improve water quality.

Goal 3: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.

Objectives

- Work with the county Historical Society and the Spencer Historical Society to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.

- Ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.

Policy

- Support the preservation of historic sites and structures.

Strategies/Actions

- Coordinate with the state and county Historical Societies, and the Spencer Area Historical Society to identify historic resources.

- Meet with property owners and stakeholders to develop a plan to preserve and enhance existing historic sites and structures.

Goal 4: Preserve historically significant buildings and sites.

Objectives

- Identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.

- Ensure that any known cemeteries, human burials or archaeological sites are protected from encroachment by roads or any development activities.

Policy

- Preserve historically significant structures and locales within the jurisdiction.

Strategies/Actions

- Coordinate with the state and county historical societies, and the Spencer Area Historical Society to identify historic resources.

- Meet with property owners and stakeholders to develop a plan to preserve and enhance existing historic sites and structures.

- Help interested property owners obtain information on their property if they feel it is historically significant.

- Celebrate historic local sites with a pamphlet or other materials for dissemination.

- Consider forming a historic preservation committee to deal with historic preservation issues.

Goal 5: Promote and preserve arts and cultural activities

Objectives

- Support the LuCille Tack Center for the Arts.

- Support public art in the community

Policy

- Support the LuCille Tack Center for the Arts
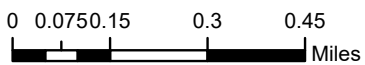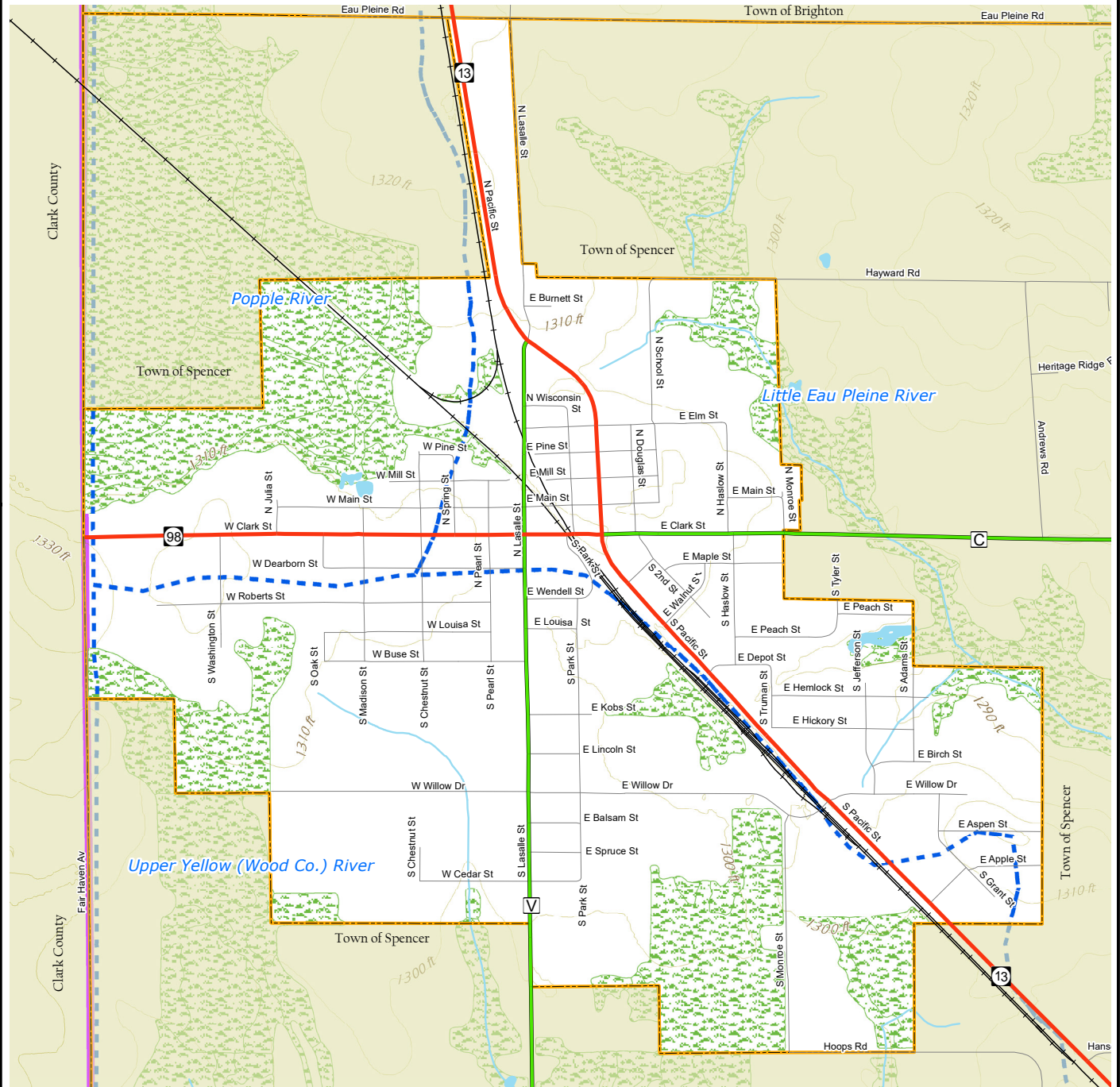
Strategies/Actions

- Seek out and approach property owners/businesses and artists to create murals in the downtown/central business district.

- Explore public art programs and funding available to the village.

- Approach artists about art opportunities on public property.

Legend

Minor Civil Divisions	Watershed Boundaries
US Highway	Contours 10ft
State Highways	Wetlands
County Highways	
Local Roads	
Railroad	
Water	

Town of Brighton

Eau Pleine Rd

Town of Spencer

Popple River

Little Eau Pleine River

Town of Spencer

Clark County

Upper Yellow (Wood Co.) River

Town of Spencer

Clark County

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co.

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

0 0.075 0.15   0.3   0.45
                                    Miles

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
NCWRPC
210 McClellan St., Suite 210, Wausau, WI 54403
715-849-5510 - staff@ncwrpc.org - www.ncwrpc.org

Map 3
Soil Drainage
Village of Spencer
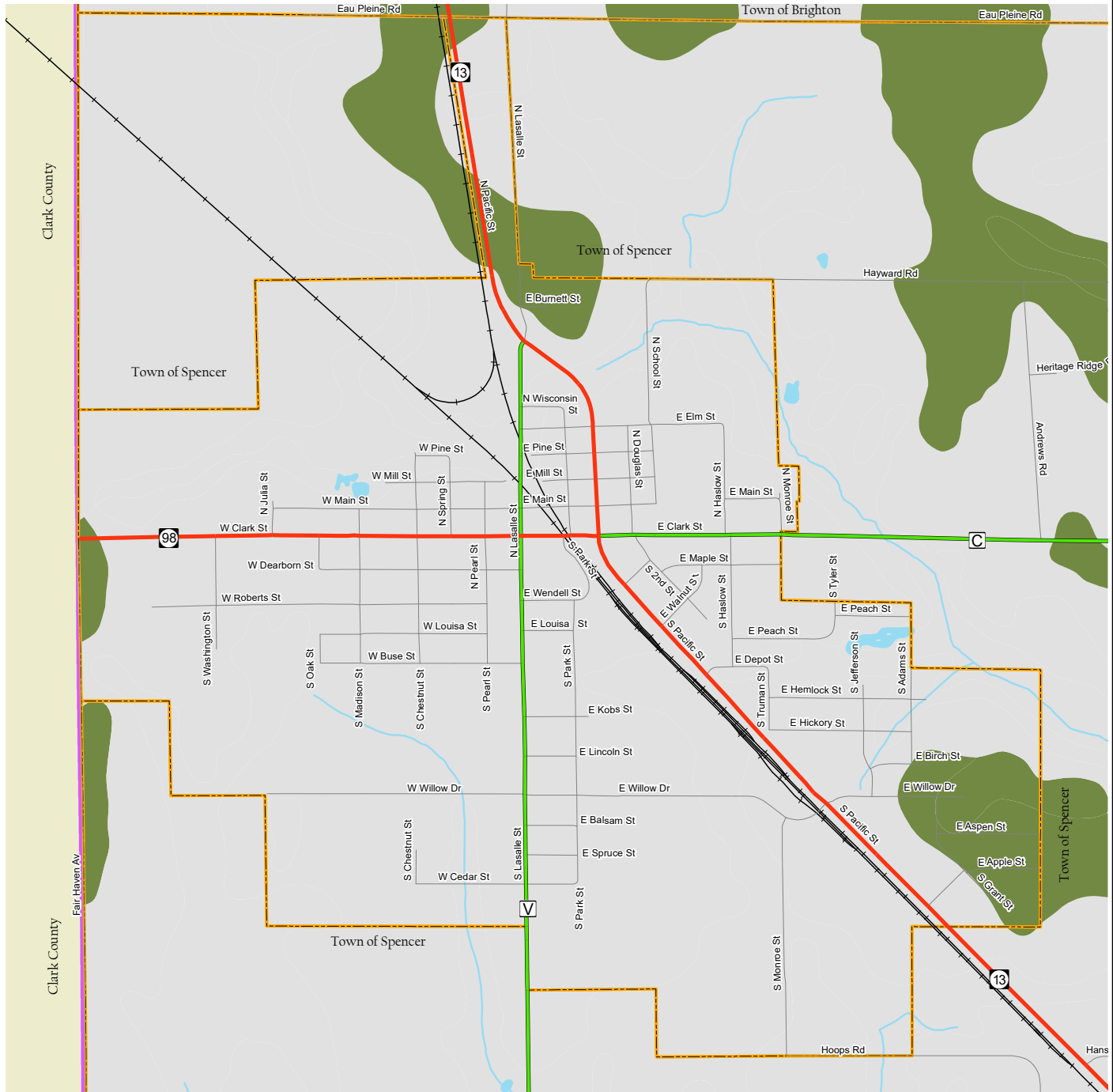Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

Minor Civil Divisions
US Highway
State Highways
County Highways
Local Roads
Railroad
Water

Poorly Drained
Moderate to Well Drained

Clark County

Town of Brighton

Eau Pleine Rd

Town of Spencer

Hayward Rd

Town of Spencer

Heritage Ridge

Andrews Rd

E Burnett St

N Lasalle St

N Pacific St

N School St

N Wisconsin St

E Pine St

E Elm St

W Pine St

E Mill St

N Douglas St

W Mill St

W Main St

N Julia St

N Spring St

E Main St

N Haslow St

N Main St

N Monroe St

W Clark St

E Clark St

C

W Dearborn St

N Pearl St

N Lasalle St

S Park St

E Maple St

S Tyler St

W Roberts St

E Wendell St

S 2nd St

S Walnut St

S Haslow St

E Peach St

E Louisa St

E Louisa St

S Jefferson St

S Adams St

E Peach St

W Louisa St

E Depot St

S Washington St

S Oak St

S Madison St

S Chestnut St

S Pearl St

S Park St

E Kobs St

S Truman St

E Hemlock St

E Hickory St

E Lincoln St

E Birch St

W Willow Dr

E Willow Dr

E Willow Dr

S Pacific St

S Chestnut St

S Lasalle St

E Balsam St

E Aspen St

E Spruce St

E Apple St

S Grant St

Town of Spencer

W Cedar St

V

Town of Spencer

S Monroe St

Hoops Rd

Clark County

Fair Haven Av

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co, Wis DOT

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

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Miles

4. HOUSING

Housing characteristics and trends are an important component of a comprehensive plan. This chapter explores past planning efforts, discusses relative housing issues for the community, analyzes the housing inventory and trends, and provides information on housing assistance programs. Planning for housing will better help the Village of Spencer and the local housing market provide housing opportunities for households of all ages, races, and income levels.

Data contained in this section reflect three methodologies of data collection employed by the U.S. Census. Data from the 2000 Census: SF [Summary File]-1 or 2010 Census are collected through a household-by-household census and represents responses from every household within the country. To get more detailed information in 2000, the U.S. Census also randomly distributed a long-form questionnaire to 1 in 6 households throughout the nation. The third method was employed by the Census Bureau to replace the long form in 2010, called the American Community Survey. These numbers are a sample of the population similar to the long form, but data is collected annually and compiled into a 5 year rolling average, which is represented by the label, i.e. 2008-2012 American Community Survey. Numbers may differ for similar statistics between each method, due to survey limitations, non-response, or other attributes unique to each form of data collection.

Recent Plans and Studies Related to Housing

Regional Livability Plan

Housing is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Plan, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Housing Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the housing stock and the affordability of housing throughout the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing housing. The Regional Livability Plan addresses two issues: the type of housing stock and housing affordability. The housing goal of the plan is as follows:

- Goal 1: Promote a variety of safe and affordable housing options that meet the needs of all community members.

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 funds of Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. The State Consolidated Housing Plan (CHP) is primarily focused on how government action can address special needs, not on the workings of the private housing market.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan

Housing is one of the issues addressed in the Marathon County Comprehensive Plan. The plan discusses affordability for renters and owners, showing that rental affordability is worse than the Wisconsin average, but owner affordability is better than the Wisconsin average. Ten issues were identified that include rising housing costs, rural character, migrant worker housing, homelessness, and housing rehabilitation. Several objectives relate to housing, including a variety of safe and affordable housing options and safe and walkable neighborhoods.

Housing Inventory

The following information provides a summary overview of the type, character and conditions of the housing stock in the Village of Spencer.

Housing Type and Tenure

The 2010 Census shows the Village of Spencer has 816 occupied housing units, up slightly from 800 in 2000. 622 (or 76%) of these units are owner-occupied. The village has an average household size of 2.36 persons. 27.8% of all households are one person households. 25.7% of village households have a householder 65 years or older, about the same as in 2000. **Table 4-1** compares some housing unit characteristics in the Village of Spencer to Marathon County and Wisconsin.

Changes in Housing Stock

Table 4-2 shows changes in the housing stock between 2000 and 2010 according to U.S. Census and American Community Survey data. This table shows some differences compared to Table 4-1 due to sampling error, and if possible the data in Table 4-1 should be used. Total housing units have increased by 24 and the number of occupied housing units rose by 16. Vacancy decreased from 6% to 5%. The number of owner-occupied housing units increased slightly. The census reports a 68 unit increase in the number of single-family units.

Table 4-1: Number of Housing Units by Type and Tenure

Area	Village of Spencer	Marathon County	Wisconsin
Total Housing Units	875	57,734	2,624,358
Total Occupied Housing Units	816	53,176	2,279,768
Owner Occupied Units	622	39,090	1,551,558
Renter Occupied Units	194	14,086	728,210
Average Household Size	2.36	2.49	2.43
% Owner Occupied	76.2%	73.5%	68.1%
% 1 Person Households	28.9%	25.8%	28.2%
% With Someone 65 years or older	25.9%	24.4%	24.0%

Table 4-2: Changes in Housing Stock

	2000	2010	# Change	% Change
Total Housing Units	851	833	-18	-2%
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	799	788	-11	-1%
Vacancy %	6%	5%	-1%	-10%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	608	671	63	10%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	191	117	-74	-39%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as percent of Total	76%	85%	9%	12%
Number of Homes for Seasonal/Rec Use	2	3	1	50%
Number of Single Family Homes	594	662	68	11%
*Detached	589	642	53	9%
**Attached	5	20	15	300%
Number of Duplexes	54	31	-23	-43%
Multi Family Units 3-9 units	74	45	-29	-39%
Multi Family Units 10+	27	10	-17	-63%

Table 4-3: Age of Housing Stock

Total Units	Year Built								
	2010 or later	2000 to 2009	1990 to 1999	1980 to 1989	1970 to 1979	1960 to 1969	1950 to 1959	1940 to 1949	1939 or earlier
855	5	56	115	63	298	86	45	42	145
	0.6%	6.5%	13.5%	7.4%	34.9%	10.1%	5.3%	4.9%	17.0%

Table 4-4: Physical Housing Stock Characteristics

Community	Median Rooms	Characteristic (% of Total Units)			
		1 unit, detached or attached	In buildings with 10 or more units	Lacking complete plumbing facilities	Lacking complete kitchen facilities
Village of Spencer	5.7	77.1%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Marathon County	5.9	76.8%	6.5%	0.5%	0.8%
Wisconsin	5.5	70.9%	9.9%	0.5%	0.9%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey DP04

Housing Age

The age of a community's housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, amenities, and potential maintenance costs. Age of the home often also reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1940s, for example, was typically smaller and built on smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and home sizes have continuously increased. In some cases this can be due to higher minimum lot and home sizes in zoning codes and restrictions created in the post war years. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

Table 4-3 shows housing age for the community. Housing development spiked in the 1970s with nearly 300 units built in the village during this decade. Housing from this decade makes up almost 35 percent of the housing, compared to 15 percent for Marathon County. Recent housing growth from the 1990s and 2000s makes up approximately 21% of the total housing stock, a lower proportion than Marathon County. The Village of Spencer has a slightly lower proportion of housing built before 1959.

Physical Housing Characteristics

Table 4-4 shows at several select measures of physical condition and compares them to figures for Marathon County and Wisconsin. The median number of rooms (a measure of home size) in the Village of Spencer is slightly smaller than the county, and slightly larger than the state. Over 75% of the community's housing stock is classified as being a "single family" home, similar to the county, and about five points higher than the state. Very few of the units in the village are in buildings with 10 or more units, 5.4 percent are in 3 to 9 unit buildings, and 7.2 percent are in buildings with two to four units. Census data indicates that all homes in the village have complete plumbing and kitchen facilities.

Table 4-5: Median Housing Values

	Median Value ($)
Village of Spencer	$112,600
Marathon County	$142,600
Wisconsin	$169,000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 & 2010, 2010-2014 American Community Survey DP04

Housing Values

Median Value

Table 4-5 shows the median (or middle value) of select owner-occupied homes for each specified area. This value includes only single-family houses that are located on less than 10 acres. Additionally, this statistic only considers homes without a business or medical office on the property. Census data indicates that the Village of Spencer has a median home value below that of the county and the state.

Table 4-6: Range of Housing Values

Value	Village of Spencer		Marathon County	
	#	%	#	%
Less than $50,000	108	16.1%	1,970	5.0%
$50,000 to $99,999	147	21.9%	7,476	19.1%
$100,000 to $149,999	266	39.6%	11,699	30.0%
$150,000 to $199,999	118	17.6%	8,117	20.8%
$200,000 to $299,999	21	3.1%	6,346	16.3%
$300,000 or more	11	1.6%	3,438	8.8%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

Range of Values

Table 4-6 shows the range of housing values that exist in the community. Compared to the proportions for Marathon County, the Village of Spencer has a higher percentage of homes valued below $100,000, and very few above $200,000.

Housing Affordability

In Marathon County, median and per capita income levels are generally lower than the state. For many of these people this poses a difficulty in paying for decent, safe and sanitary housing. This fits a pattern throughout rural America, where rural households had a greater housing cost burden than their urban counterparts.

The affordability of housing is dependent upon the cost of housing and household incomes in an area. Several factors impact the cost of housing, including maintenance expenses, amenities, scarcity of housing, and utility costs. Household size and income are key factors contributing to what housing options are available and accessible to residents. It is important to have a range of units that are affordable for households of different sizes and needs.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that housing costs not exceed 30% of the monthly income. If housing costs exceed 30% of income, a household is considered cost burdened. HUD also indicates that mortgage lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is less than 29% of the monthly household income. Low income households that pay more than 30% of their income towards rent may have difficulty affording other household necessities. The percentage of owner occupant households in the Village of Spencer that pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs is much lower than that of the county and state, at 14 percent and 6.4 percent. The Comprehensive Housing Affordability Survey

(CHAS) tabulated by HUD shows that 43.5 percent of renter households in Spencer are cost burdened, and half of these cost burdened households are considered extremely low income. This has increased substantially since 2000, when 23.8 percent of renter households were cost burdened, according to HUD.

Table 4-7 shows that select median owner-occupied costs with a mortgage in the Town are higher than Marathon County and similar to Wisconsin, while those without a mortgage and renters are lower than Marathon County and Wisconsin. Contract rent is the monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included. For vacant units, it is the monthly rent asked for the rental unit at the time of enumeration. Gross rent is the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.) if these are paid by or for the renter (U.S. Census STF 3 Technical Documentation Guide).

Multi-family housing and accessory dwelling units are two more affordable housing choices. An accessory dwelling unit is a second dwelling unit created on a lot with an existing house. One of the more persistent objections to multi-family housing and accessory dwelling units is that these units compromise the property values of single-family dwellings. In recent years evidence has emerged that, rather than diminishing the value of single-family housing, well-designed and maintained multi-family housing can increase the value of nearby neighborhoods as well as reduce overall local government costs.

Local governments can take actions to foster affordable housing. An affordable housing trust fund is one such alternative, perhaps using a Small Cities CDBG grant to start the fund. The Low Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC) can be used to help developers construct new affordable housing units.

Table 4-7: Median Monthly Costs by Tenure, 2010							
	Owner Occupied				**Renter Occupied**		
	With Mortgage	**% Cost Burden**	**No Mortgage**	**$ Cost Burden**	**Median Contract Rent**	**Median Gross Rent**	**% Cost Burden**
Spencer	$1,118	14.0%	$456	6.4%	$411	$653	69.8%
Marathon County	$1,313	28.8%	$474	12.5%	$562	$685	42.4%
Wisconsin	$1,460	33.2%	$523	16.3%	$624	$749	48.2%

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey
*Cost burdened is defined as a household paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs.
**Median contract rent is the rent agreed upon between landlord and tenant, while median gross rent includes utility costs.

One of the most widely used and easily available forms of affordable housing is the manufactured home. Modern manufactured housing is virtually indistinguishable from site-built housing, but can be constructed for roughly 75 percent of the cost. Manufactured housing offers a realistic alternative for providing affordable homes that can fit well with existing neighborhoods or be developed as new communities.

Aging mobile home or "trailer" parks are an increasing problem. Many of these places were built prior to the adoption of HUD and local standards regulating land use and have fallen into disrepair. Modern manufactured housing is built to higher standards and should be integrated into development. There are some areas of a community that present barriers to manufactured housing, including historic infill and conservation areas, but otherwise manufactured housing can seamlessly integrate with site built housing and provide more affordable housing options. Subdivision and zoning codes should encourage good siting and design without unnecessarily limiting the use of manufactured housing. These standards and the

An accessory dwelling unit above a garage is an affordable type of housing. Accessory dwelling units can also be seperate structures.
Image Source: missingmiddlehousing.com

A bungalow court is a high density housing option that can be affordable, low maintenance, and attractive.
Image Source: missingmiddlehousing.com

A bungalow court is a high density housing option that can be affordable, low maintenance, and attractive.
Image Source: missingmiddlehousing.com

A duplex configured as a two-flat offers another more affordable and lower maintenance type of housing.
Image Source: missingmiddlehousing.com

process for applying them should be applied equally to all housing forms.

Elderly/Retiree Housing Needs

Wisconsin is aging. This increase in number of seniors creates a special set of housing issues. As people age they have more needs for specialized services. The most obvious of these is for health care, but there is a more subtle relationship between an aging population and their housing needs. An integrated view of senior housing needs to be developed that includes a continuum of housing options ranging from assistance to age in place all the way to assisted care facilities.

According to research by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the overwhelming majority of seniors prefer to "age in place" or remain in their home throughout retirement. This can be difficult in rural areas for many residents that are no longer able to access the necessary goods and services or keep up with the property maintenance of larger parcels.

Strategies that promote and allow aging in place can reduce the need for senior housing by allowing seniors to stay in their homes longer. These strategies include strengthening transportation access to services and goods such as health care, assistance with household care and maintenance, and designing housing to serve the needs of the resident throughout their life, such as visitable design and universal design. For new housing these standards may be incorporated into the zoning code, or negotiated in a developer agreement. For retrofitting existing housing, the village can provide assistance to residents that need to upgrade their homes to continue living in them.

In Marathon County, housing for seniors and populations with special needs is primarily provided in the urbanized areas in and around Wausau. The Marathon County Aging and Disability Resource Center, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and the Marathon County United Way all maintain a list of these housing options throughout the county. As the number of elderly persons increases in the coming years, there will most likely be an increased need for these types of housing options. This trend will be seen throughout Marathon County, the State of Wisconsin, and the nation.

The southwestern portion of Marathon County is served primarily by housing options in the Villages of Stratford and Spencer, and the City of Marshfield. Secondary senior housing options are in the Cities of Abbottsford, Colby, and Wausau. The Village of Stratford is home to the Donald Sykes Villa, the Northside Elder Estate, the Northside Apartments, and the Weber Avenue Apartments. The Ponderosa Apartments (I-III) are located in the Village of Spencer, and currently have a waiting list for entry. The waiting list at the Ponderosa, as well as other regional locations, may indicate a need for more of this type of development to serve the existing population.

Homelessness

Data on homelessness is difficult to collect. According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, during the 2015/2016 school year the Spencer District reported zero homeless students, and there were two reported during the 2014/2015 school year. In recent years, the peak was five students between 2008 and 2010. It is likely that there are more homeless children and adults that go unnoticed or uncounted. Homelessness is often thought of as people living on the streets, but it is often a more hidden problem, consisting of people that have unstable housing, living in shelters, staying with friends or family temporarily, or living in a vehicle. In Wisconsin during the 2015/2016 school year, only 1.4 percent of homeless students were unsheltered at night, and the rest were doubled up, in a homeless shelter, or stayed in a hotel.

The efforts of most organizations working on preventing homelessness in Marathon County are directed towards preventing people from becoming homeless. Preventing homelessness is the preferred means of intervention, as it is less costly to all involved, and it helps maintain household stability. It is also widely recognized that homelessness is often the result of other problems such as housing costs, unemployment, poor credit, mental illness, domestic abuse, housing discrimination and drug addictions. Vice versa, homelessness and housing insecurity can also cause many of the aforementioned issues, such as unemployment, drug abuse, and mental illness.

Tight rental markets increase the likelihood of a family becoming homeless for minor transgressions, or even for reporting unsafe housing conditions to officials. As such, providing an integrated network of support is essential to address this complex issue. In some cases, better quality basic services such as housing assistance, schools, employment services, and transportation can prevent homelessness. To address these issues the Marathon County Housing and Homelessness Coalition was created in 2012. Their mission is to raise awareness, find solutions, and eradicate homelessness.

Migrant Worker Housing

Spencer and other communities in Marathon County have identified concerns about providing adequate housing for migrant workers, particularly in the western half of the county. Currently, many of these migrant workers pass through to work on large agricultural operations. Based on anecdotal evidence, these workers are often housed at their work site, sometimes in temporary housing. Many rural communities have expressed concerns about the quality and availability of housing for migrant workers. Farmworkers typically have very low incomes and often experience overcrowded and substandard living conditions, many times with their children.

Assistance Programs

The village has its own housing improvement program through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) which operates on a revolving loan basis. Currently, the village has $80-90,000 available to help improve local housing conditions.

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

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

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

Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing

- Housing Grants and Loans
- Shelter for Homeless and Transitional Housing Grants

- Wisconsin Fresh Start
- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness
- Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program
- Rental Housing Development Program
- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program
- Emergency Solutions Grant Program
- Continuum of Care Supportive Housing Program
- Housing Rehabilitation Program – Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- CDBG Emergency Assistance Program
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA)

Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy Services

- Home Energy Assistance Program
- Low Income Weatherization Program

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

- The Trade and Consumer Protection Division is responsible for the investigation of unfair and deceptive business practices and handles individual consumer complaints involving landlord/tenant complaints, and home improvement transactions.

Trends

- The proportion of owner occupied housing in the village is high compared to the state.
- Rental housing affordability has declined since 2000, and a higher proportion of renters now pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs.
- Between 2000 and 2010, total housing units have increased while the number of renter occupied units decreased slightly
- Recent housing growth from the 1990s and 2000s is lower than the county. A large proportion of the housing in the village is from the 1970s.

- Over 75% of the community's housing stock is classified as being a "single family" home, more than the county and the state.

- Household sizes are decreasing, and are projected to continue decreasing over the next 25 years.

- The Village of Spencer, on average, has smaller housing than the county, but larger than the state.

- Housing needs will change as residents age, likely towards smaller, lower maintenance housing.

Issues

- Multi-family Housing – The village has noted that they may need to provide additional multi-family housing options to accommodate an increase in single person households and combat the reduction in housing affordability.

- Senior Housing – Additional senior housing will likely be needed as baby boomers get older. To fully meet the needs of the aging population in Marathon County and the village, this will likely need to be accommodated both through senior specific housing and through strategies that promote aging in place.

- CDBG Funds – There is a desire to make the village's CDBG funds easier to administer and more attractive to prospective borrowers.

- Housing Affordability – There is a large proportion of cost burdened renter households in the village and it has grown since 2000. Rental housing is often needed for new households. A lack of suitable rental housing reduces the ability for employers to attract the workforce and reduces the ability for the village to attract and retain residents.

- Housing – Employment Mismatch – There are over 800 jobs in the Village of Spencer, however only 50 of those jobs are filled by residents of the village. The remaining 756 jobs are filled by people that commute into the village, while 688 village residents commute elsewhere for work. This may be an indication of a spatial mismatch between jobs and housing, and there is not suitable housing for people that work in the village to live.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Develop a range of housing choices throughout the Village of Spencer.

Objectives

- Identify sites in the village that are best suited for multi-family housing.

- Zone sites for future multi-family housing.

- Increase the number of units suitable for seniors.

- Work with potential developers, Marathon County, WHEDA, and other appropriate agencies to assist with funding and construction of senior- and multi-family housing units.

- Work with potential developers and property owners to assist with the funding and construction of hotel and motel units.

Policies

- Support the development of a range of housing options for village residents.

- Encourage mixed neighborhoods with a variety of single family and multifamily housing types in close proximity in appropriate areas, such as near the central business district and the school.

- Encourage Universal Design and Visitable Design in new housing and in old housing retrofits.

Strategies/Actions

- Use zoning to accommodate both multifamily and single family housing in appropriate areas, such as near the downtown and the schools.

- Identify sites for future senior housing facilities, hotel units, and other multi-unit housing.

- Develop a village policy to aid the development of future senior- and multi-family housing facilities.

- Work with owners of existing multi-unit housing (including hotels) to improve or expand facilities.

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance based on model ordinances.

- Evaluate the zoning code to ensure minimum lot sizes, minimum unit sizes, and other requirements do not unnecessarily hinder the development of a range of housing or affordable housing.

- Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance to allow for greater variety of housing options near environmentally sensitive areas.

Goal 2: Increase participation in the village's CDBG Housing program.

Objectives

- Examine and improve the administration and application process for CDBG funds.

- Work with Marathon County to identify changes or modifications to the existing process that could encourage more applications for the CDBG funds.

Policy

- Support the continued use of the CDBG housing program.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with the Marathon County Housing Authority to develop changes or modifications to the existing housing program to encourage greater participation.

- Develop a strategy to notify the public about the availability of the CDBG housing funds.

5. UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This section discusses the utilities available to the Village of Spencer, including sewage disposal, water supply, power supply, stormwater management, and telecommunication facilities and services. This chapter also discusses community facilities, services and parks, such as schools, trails, public space, community centers, meeting areas, fire, EMS, and law enforcement.

Utilities

Sanitary Sewer Service

Sewer Service Area

The sewer service area for the Village of Spencer encompasses the area within the current village boundaries. All but two homes are served by the village sewer system. Some areas within the village are non-serviceable or are challenging to service with sanitary sewer.

Sewer Treatment and Collection Facilities

The Spencer wastewater treatment facility is in good shape. It currently operates at about 50% capacity, with ample capacity to serve anticipated future development within the service area. The wastewater collection system (pipe network and lift stations) is generally in good condition, although some pipes are very old. Sewer pipes and mains are replaced and upgraded in conjunction with road reconstruction or in response to known problems. The wastewater treatment plant also receives holding tank waste from surrounding townships.

Public Water Service

Service Areas and Supply

The village obtains its water supply from groundwater. The village distributes water to properties within its municipal boundary. The village currently has three wells with adequate capacity to meet existing and short-term future demand, and one of these wells is expected to be abandoned in the near future. The village recently drilled a new well. In addition, the water supply in the area can be high in iron, and the village has a water treatment facility to improve the drinking water quality.

Groundwater is an important source of water for the village. Groundwater is discussed in further detail in the natural resources section. It is important to protect groundwater supplies, especially near the wells that withdraw the village's public water supply. The groundwater near the village is moderately susceptible to contamination according to the United States Geological Service (USGS) "Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater Through Comprehensive Planning" project. There are likely potential sources of contamination in the village, such as leaking underground storage tanks, animal housing, agriculture, stormwater retention ponds, auto service and repair, grain storage, petroleum storage, and others. The Village of Spencer has a wellhead protection plan and a wellhead protection ordinance to protect the groundwater near the village's water supply.

Distribution Systems

The village's water distribution system is in good working condition, with approximately 747 meters in service. The storage capacity of the water system in the village is approximately 250,000 gallons. Old pipes are more likely to leak and can cause significant water loss and expenses if they are not maintained or replaced. Generally old pipes are replaced in conjunction with road reconstruction or in response to a known problem. The village has a capital improvement program that indicates when pipes will be replaced, typically within a 5-year programming schedule.

In 2014 the 90th percentile test result for lead was 0.84 micrograms per liter, well below the EPA action level of 15 micrograms per liter. This is an improvement over 2011 when the 90th percentile result was 2.7 micrograms per liter. The testing results for copper are also well below the EPA action level.

The Village of Spencer water tower.
Source: Village of Spencer

Storm Water Management

In 2010, Marathon County adopted an updated Land and Water Resource Management Plan (LWRMP) in accordance with Wisconsin statutes (Wisconsin Act 27, Chapter 92.10). The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources.

The county is particularly concerned about nonpoint sources of pollution, including failing septic systems, urban runoff, and issues often identified with rural areas such as soil erosion, animal waste and pesticides. Nonpoint pollution is best addressed by watershed. Marathon County encompasses portions of 22 watersheds. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has ranked these watersheds according to water pollution impacts and designated five as "priority" watersheds to receive special planning and funding through the voluntary, state-funded Priority Watershed Program. Resource

Rain gardens reduce runoff while adding a landscaping element.
Source: epa.gov/green-infrastructure

Permeable pavement reduces runoff.
Source: epa.gov/green-infrastructure

management plans for the following watersheds have been completed:

- Springbrook in the Town of Harrison

- Upper Yellow River in the Town of Spencer

- Upper Big Eau Pleine in western Marathon County

- Lower Big Eau Pleine in the south-central part of the County.

- Lower Big Rib River

The Village of Spencer straddles three different watersheds, the Popple River, the little Eau Pleine River, and the Upper Yellow River. There are no local regulations on storm water management or erosion control measures. As shown in **Map 3**, the majority of the village is rated as poorly drained, with very small segments of moderate to well drained land at the edges of the village.

Stormwater management is important to reduce the impacts of runoff, soil erosion, animal wastes and pesticides and prevent contamination of the water supply and natural resources in the village. Stormwater

Green infrastructure such as bioswales and rain gardens can be incorporated into streets and parking lots.
Source: epa.gov/green-infrastructure

5. Utilities and Community Facilities

management is necessary to reduce flooding and other issues caused by storms in developed areas. The village recently completed a stormwater management plan in 2016 to guide future decisions regarding stormwater management.

Stormwater incentive programs can encourage residents of the village to manage their own stormwater. For example, a stormwater fee can be charged to property owners based on impervious surface area, and credits can be issued to property owners that manage their own stormwater onsite through rain gardens, bioswales, or rain barrels. These incentives then reduce the load on the stormwater system, reducing the need for public investment.

Electrical and Gas Utilities

Electrical power is provided to the Village of Spencer by Northern States Power (Xcel Energy) and Clark Electricity. Most electrical wires in the Village of Spencer are exposed, running along streets, alleys, or through easements. Burying electrical lines improves the aesthetics of an area and reduces damage to wires caused by trees and storms. Burying wires in pedestrian heavy areas such as downtown can improve the sidewalks by reducing barriers, and create a more attractive streetscape.

Natural gas service is provided by WE Energies, which is the trade name of the Wisconsin Electric Power Company and Wisconsin Gas Company.

Telecommunication Facilities and Services

- Television/Cable providers – Charter Communications

- Telephone/Fiber Optics – Frontier North Inc.

- Cellular service: There is one cellular tower in the Village of Spencer, and several towers and antennas in the vicinity of the village.

- Broadband: Broadband coverage in the Village of Spencer is shown as good by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Advertised download speeds for cable based broadband provided by Charter Communications are 100 Mbps, while advertised upload speeds are 5.0 Mbps. There are wireless and satellite broadband options at lower download and upload speeds in the village as well.

Solid Waste Management

The village contracts with a private company for curbside waste pickup. The Marathon County Landfill is available to residents with other waste disposal needs.

Solid waste management is best dealt with in a hierarchical structure under the following hierarchy: reduce, reuse, recycle, waste to energy, incinerate, and landfill. Studies have shown that it is possible to significantly reduce the volumes of both solid and hazardous waste generated by the United States.

Likewise, recycling reduces the amount of waste that might otherwise have to be disposed of in a landfill. Waste to energy, incineration, and gasification have proven to be effective as part of a larger waste disposal strategy. Land disposal is the least desirable means of managing solid and hazardous waste because the amount of space they require and the dangers associated with them create adverse effects to human and ecosystem health. Composting can help reduce food waste and provide beneficial mulch or soil as a byproduct.

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.

Recycling

Curbside recycling service greatly increases the amount of recycled materials, reducing the landfill space needed. Single-stream recycling also increases the amount of materials recycled by residents. Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor weekly.

Community Facilities and Services

This section describes the schools, libraries, and other community facilities for the Village of Spencer.

Village Office

The Spencer municipal building is a relatively new building located roughly in the center of the village. This building includes the Spencer Police Department, the Village Office, and the Spencer branch of the Marathon County Public Library system. There is a meeting room available for rent.

The Spencer municipal building in the center of the village.
Source: Village of Spencer

Schools

Primary and Secondary Schools

The Village of Spencer is served by the Spencer School District. The Spencer School District has a combined elementary, junior, and senior high school at 300 School Street in the Village of Spencer. The student population in the Spencer district is in gradual decline, and current facilities meet future needs. Keeping the quality of instruction high with declining students, and therefore potentially declining funding may be challenging. Downsizing oversized facilities may need consideration if the student population continues to decline.

Table 5-2: Spencer School District Enrollment	
Year	**Enrollment Pre-K - Grade 12**
1996-1997	895
1997-1998	895
1998-1999	876
1999-2000	898
2000-2001	900
2001-2002	865
2011-2012	777
2012-2013	776
2013-2014	769
2014-2015	771
2015-2016	751

Source: State of Wisconsin, Department of Public Instruction, WISEdash Portal

The LuCille Tack Center for the Performing Arts is housed in Spencer Public School. Its performance series features a variety of acts.

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

The University of Wisconsin – Marathon County (UW-MC), located in Wausau, offers lower level (freshman/sophomore) college classes, leading to a baccalaureate degree. Associate degrees are offered in arts & sciences, and bachelor's degrees (through collaborative degree programs with UW - Oshkosh and UW - Stevens Point) offered in business administration, general studies, and nursing. Enrollment in 2014-2015 was approximately 1,100 students, down slightly from the enrollment in 2002-2003 of approximately 1,300 students. It is common for enrollment to decline in periods of low unemployment.

Northcentral Technical College (NTC), with a central campus located in Wausau, offers 40 one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields. Approximately 2,300 full- and part-time students attend classes, although more than 16,000 people take at least one class annually. Enrollment in 2013-2014 was approximately 17,000 people. There is an NTC location on the north side of the Village of Spencer.

The Spencer branch of Northcentral Technical College.
Source: Village of Spencer

University of Wisconsin – Marshfield/Wood County - Residents of the Village of Spencer also have access to the UW-Marshfield site for educational opportunities. Programs and degrees offered are similar to UW-MC.

Libraries

The village is served by the Marathon County Public Library system which includes eight branches across the county. The Marathon County Public Library System had a total circulation of 939,268 items in 2015, and also has access to materials through interlibrary

loans. The Spencer branch is a small library that is located in the village municipal building.

Police

Police protection is provided by the Village of Spencer Police Department. It is currently staffed with a chief, two full time officers, and three part time officers. The police station is located in the municipal building.

Source: Village of Spencer

Fire/ Emergency Response

The village has a Volunteer Fire Department that also provides Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) services to the four surrounding Towns. Service was greatly improved with the new facilities center constructed in 1994. The village has a Class 3 fire rating.

Source: Village of Spencer

E-911 Dispatch Service

The Marathon County Sheriff's Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County. The Communications Division services 85 user agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiner's Office.

The users are served by a microwave linked voted repeater radio system, consisting of a control center at the Sheriff's Department, and nine remote radio tower sites spread throughout the county. The system is also utilized by the Marathon County Highway Department and the Wausau Fire Department to support their radio communications.

Hospitals and Clinic

Village of Spencer residents primarily use medical facilities in Marshfield affiliated with Marshfield Clinic.

There are two major hospitals in Marathon County, Aspirus Wausau Hospital at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard in Wausau and Ministry St. Clare's Hospital in Weston. The Wausau Hospital is a multi-specialty regional health center.

St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield and St. Michael's Hospital in Stevens Point are both operated by Ministry Health Care. St. Joseph's Hospital is located at 611 Saint Joseph Avenue in Marshfield and offers a full array of services, specialty services and a complete rehabilitation unit, and is now part of the Marshfield Clinic system.

North Central Health Care (NCHC)

In addition to the hospitals and clinics described above, Marathon County is served by NCHC, a public agency that also serves Langlade and Lincoln counties. The NCHC main campus is located at 2400 Marshall Street in Wausau. Additional offices are located in Antigo (Langlade Health Care Center) and Merrill and Tomahawk (Lincoln Health Care Center). 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.

Child Care

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

CCR&R agencies assist parents in selecting quality childcare, help to increase the supply of childcare in areas that may be lacking sufficient care, offer information and technical support to potential child care providers, and give technical assistance and support to existing childcare programs.

Each agency manages a database of existing childcare providers and programs, collects data about childcare rates, provider and teacher salaries, the number of parents and children using their services, the type of care requested and the children's ages.

There are multiple private, home-based child care providers in the Village of Spencer. There is only one licensed child care facility in the Village of Spencer, and one in the Town of Spencer on Highway 13.

The Spencer Kids Group, located on Clark Street in the village, is a safe and encouraging place for kids to go after school and during the summer.

Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Local Parks, Trails and Open Space

The Village of Spencer owns and maintains five parks.

Lions Park

A five-acre park located at 109 Park Street, Lions Park has tennis courts, a skateboard ramp, basketball hoops, a volleyball court, a gazebo, a shelter, and play equipment.

ARC Park

Located at 501 North LaSalle Street, ARC Park has a lighted softball diamond, with bleachers and concession stand. Children's play equipment is also located in the park.

Haslow Park

A small neighborhood park, three-quarters of an acre in size, Haslow Park is located at the corner of Depot Street and Haslow Street. Facilities include a basketball hoop, shelter, and play equipment.

Lions park.
Source: Village of Spencer

The gazebo at Lions park.
Source: Village of Spencer

Madison Street Park

This park is a third of an acre neighborhood park located at the corner of Madison Street and Buse Street. Facilities include a basketball court and play equipment.

Veterans Park

This park was recently created to honor local veterans. It features a small shelter and a memorial.

Veterans Park
Source: Village of Spencer

County and State Parks, Forest and Trails

There are no Marathon County parks in Spencer and the Marathon County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007-2012 identifies the Spencer area as an area where a service deficiency exists.

The closest Marathon County parks to Spencer are Big Eau Pleine Park, half of which is in the Town of Green Valley and the other half in Bergen and Big Rapids Park in the Town of Eau Pleine.

Big Eau Pleine Park

Big Eau Pleine is the county's largest park, at 1,450 acres, located on a peninsula on the north shore of the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. Active recreation areas are concentrated in two main sites on the shores of the reservoir. Park facilities include: campgrounds, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era shelters, drinking fountains, boat launches, swimming beaches, play equipment, and disc golf. The extensive trail system allows for cross-country skiing, biking, hiking, and nature walks. There is a single-track trail system that allows mountain biking and hiking. Fishing is a popular activity.

Big Rapids Park

Big Rapids Park is a 33-acre park located on the Big Eau Pleine River. The river is impounded in the park to create a swimming area and fishing opportunities. Facilities include picnic tables, grills, restrooms, changing rooms, a shelter, play equipment, and hiking trails.

Cherokee Park

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

McMillan Marsh

The McMillan Marsh is a 4,172 acre state Wildlife Management Area, which straddles the town line between McMillan and Spencer. A bicycle and hiking trail provides access to the McMillan Marsh on an abandoned railroad right of way during parts of the year. This trail is closed during certain times of the year to minimize the impact on wildlife.

George W. Mead Wildlife Area

The George W. Mead Wildlife Area is a very large Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) conservation and recreation area in the southeast portion of the Town of Day, extending across Green Valley and into the Town of Bergen, creating a conservation area of approximately 20,000 acres. Much of the area is wetland surrounding a series of lakes and flowages connected by the Little Eau Pleine River. Portions of the Mead Wildlife Area are open for hiking, biking, hunting, and fishing.

Nine Mile Forest Unit

Located in Rib Mountain and the Town of Mosinee, Nine-Mile is a recreation area with many miles of hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country ski trails. There are over ten miles of singletrack mountain bike trails that range in difficulty from beginner to expert. Bicycling is also allowed on the cross-country ski trails during the skiing off season. Skiing is promoted with a ski chalet and over 25 kilometers of one-way loops. The forest is open to hunting and snowmobiling. Nine Mile has 4,755 acres of mixed uplands, marshes, and water impoundments.

Burma Road Forest Unit

Located in the towns of Mosinee and Emmet, the 1,473-acre forest is a mix of aspen and northern hardwood, with recreational opportunities including an ATV trail, hunting, snowmobiling, and camping.

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 the following facilities: a picnic area with 65

Rib Mountain State Park
Source: Wisconsin DNR

tables, a camping area with 31 developed sites, hiking trails, a nature trail, an enclosed shelter available for rent, paved walkways and bicycle facilities along the road, and a downhill skiing area.

Park System Needs

Existing village parks are in good repair and are sufficiently maintained. There is a need identified for a micro park near Gordy's in the south part of the village. There may be a need for additional micro parks. The village is planning to complete an outdoor recreation plan that will identify park needs and goals in 2017. There is no formal requirement for park dedication in the village subdivision ordinance. However, the village may negotiate for new parks in conjunction with new residential development.

Issues

- High Iron - High iron concentrations in the water can cause problems in the village.

- Storm Water Drainage – Storm water management and drainage is a continual challenge due to the flat topography of the area.

- Parkland Dedication - The village may want to establish parkland dedication requirements in its subdivision regulations.

- Local Medical Services - There is a need for offices for nursing/doctor clinics and assisted living facilities in the community.

- Additional Micro Parks - There may be a need for additional small parks in the village.

5. Utilities and Community Facilities

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Provide for the village's future water system needs.

Objectives

- Monitor drinking water quality and water treatment needs.

- Protect the village's groundwater and well recharge areas.

Policies

- Protect the village's groundwater supply.

- Enforce the wellhead protection ordinance.

Strategies/Actions

- Enforce the wellhead protection plan and wellhead protection ordinances.

Goal 2: Address storm water/drainage concerns in the Village of Spencer.

Objectives

- Consider options for a storm water utility to offset the costs of constructing and maintaining a storm water system.

- Implement the recommendations of the recently completed stormwater management study.

Policies

- Require future developments to maintain post-development runoff levels at the same level as pre-development.

- Build stormwater management into all city projects

- Use green infrastructure stormwater management to slow runoff and increase infiltration where soil characteristics make it feasible.

Strategies/Actions

- Investigate the potential for a storm water utility.

- Implement recommendations from the recently completed stormwater study.

- Investigate the feasibility and benefit of using green infrastructure, and incorporate green infrastructure into park and public space designs where feasible, including streets.

Goal 3: Encourage the provision of medical services at the local level.

Objectives

- Work with nearby medical facilities, including the Marshfield Clinic Health System, to locate a community medical facility in Spencer.

- Explore adopting policies that provide initial start-up funding for new utility extension to aid development in specified areas.

Policy

- Support the location of a medical facility within the village limits to serve existing residents.

Strategies and Actions

- Meet with representatives from the Marshfield Clinic and MCDEVCO to encourage the development of a local medical facility in the village.

Goal 4: Provide effective public safety services.

Objective

- Work with the surrounding towns to continue to provide effective fire and EMS services.

Policy

- Support the continuation of existing partnerships for the provision of fire, EMS, and police services.

Strategies/Actions

- Meet on an as needed basis to ensure that the fire, EMS, and police services continue to receive the needed support to fulfill their duties.

Goal 5: Provide adequate outlets for the children in the village.

Objectives

- Support the Spencer Kids Group to provide outlets for young people.

- Support proper funding for the Spencer Public Library.

Policy

- Support the continued operation of the the Spencer Kids Group.

Strategies/Actions

- Meet with the Spencer Kids Group leaders to develop a plan for the continuation of their efforts.

- Work with Marathon County, MCDEVCO, and local stakeholders to identify and secure private funding support to continue or enhance the efforts of the Spencer Kids Group.

- Include the Spencer School District in all discussions and ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance the Spencer Kids Group.

Goal 6: Support community cultural events.

Objective

- Support the LuCille Tack Center.

Policy

- Support the ongoing mission of the LuCille Tack Center.

Strategies/Actions

- Invite the Center directors to meet with the Village Board and Chamber of Commerce on a regular basis to maintain and enhance cooperation and communication efforts between the village and the Center.

- Work with Center directors and advocates to identify and develop additional funding sources for the LuCille Tack center.

Goal 7: Provide an efficient emergency action plan for the village.

Objective

- Work with all entities to develop a workable emergency action plan according to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) standards.

Policy

- Support the development of an emergency action plan that meets NIMS standards.

Strategies/Actions

- Ensure applicable people are trained in NIMS standards.

- Develop a comprehensive emergency action plan.

Goal 8: Provide adequate park and trail space and amenities for current and future village residents.

Objectives

- Develop a comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (CORP) for the village.

- Obtain grant funding to develop and improve the village park system.

- Develop multi-use trails throughout the village.

Policies

- Use a public planning process to develop an outdoor recreation plan for the village.

- Maintain an up to date comprehensive outdoor recreation plan to maintain eligibility for WDNR grants.

- Support the development of a regional multi-use trail system.

Strategies/Actions

- Budget for and complete a comprehensive outdoor recreation plan for the village.

- Work with local stakeholders and community groups to develop the comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.

- Utilize the comprehensive outdoor recreation plan as a basis for applications to the Wisconsin DNR for funding assistance.

- Investigate requiring future developments to set aside land or a fee-in-lieu for the incorporation of park and open space to provide space for future residents.

- Develop a multi-use trail plan or integrate multi-use trails into the CORP to prioritize trail segments and improve the competiveness for grant funding.

- Work with the county and other local governments to develop a plan for a regional multi-use trail system.

- Coordinate with other governments to identify and secure money for the creation of multi-use trail facilities.

Goal 9: Develop a plan to beautify and maintain public areas.

Objectives

- Identify public areas that can be made more attractive.

- Work with local community organizations to fund and maintain public areas.

- Explore the creation of a business improvement district in the central business district.

Policy

- Support the beautification of public areas as a means of enhancing the quality of life for existing residents and workers and making the village appealing to potential new residents and businesses.
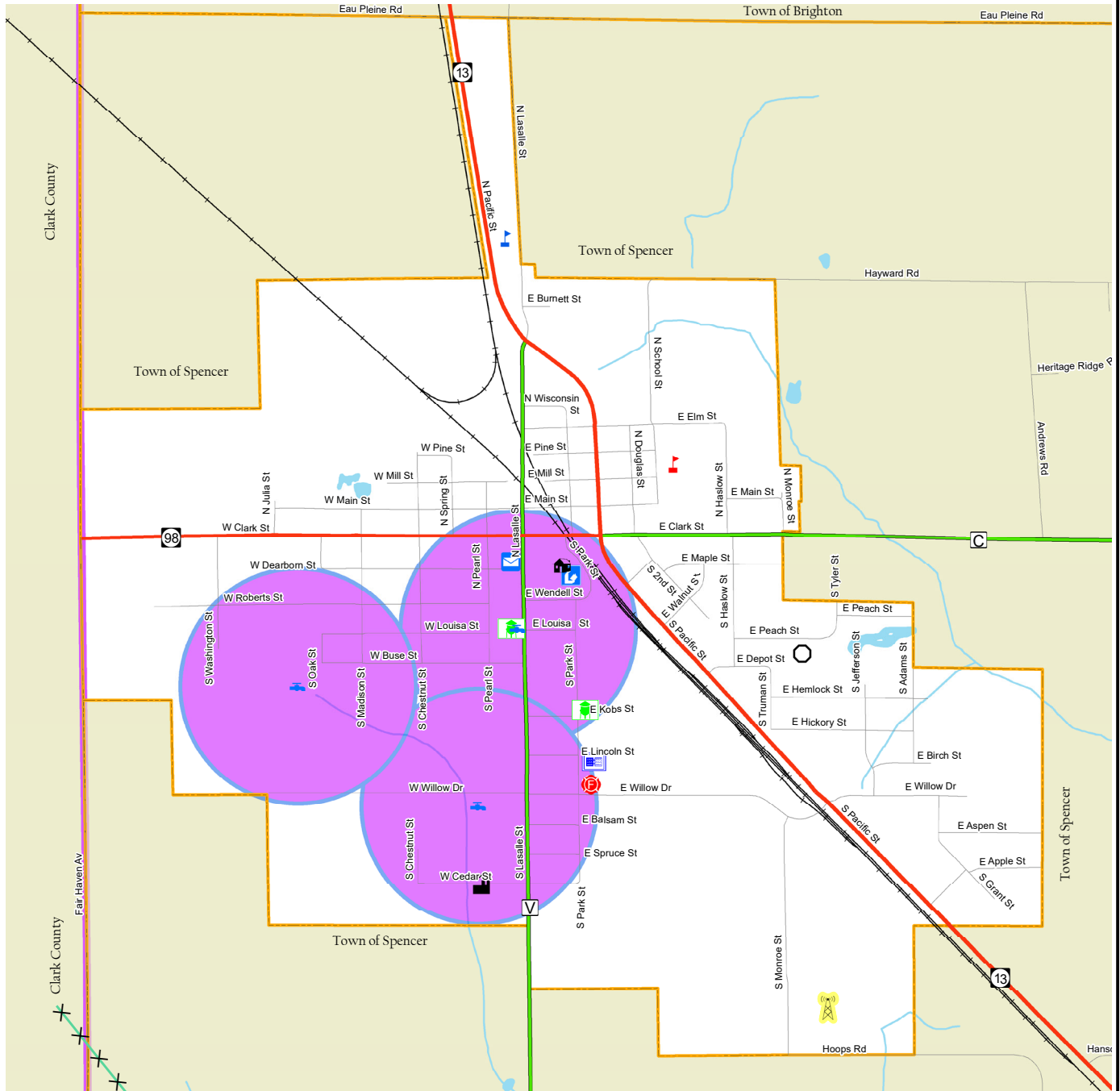
Strategies/Actions

- Assign maintenance and beautification of public areas to one of the standing committees of the village board.

- Develop a long-range plan for the beautification of public spaces.

- Contact community organizations, residents, property owners and businesses to increase support and participation in improvement efforts.

- Survey businesses on the potential for creating a business improvement district in areas that would benefit from public improvements. Clearly identify the benefits and costs of a BID to local businesses.

- Hold information sessions on the creation of a BID for businesses and residents.

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Gas & Oil Pipeline

- Celltower
- Village Wells
- Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Water Towers
- Wellhead Protection Area 1200 ft. Buffer
- Fire Station / Ambulance Service

- Village Hall / Police Dept.
- Industrial Park
- Library
- Post Office
- Schools
- Technical School
- Water Treatment Plant

Town of Brighton

Clark County

Town of Spencer

Town of Spencer

Eau Pleine Rd
Eau Pleine Rd
Hayward Rd
Heritage Ridge R
Andrews Rd

N Lasalle St
N Pacific St
E Burnett St
N School St
N Wisconsin St
E Pine St
W Pine St
W Mill St
E Mill St
N Douglas St
E Elm St
N Haslow St
E Main St
N Monroe St
W Main St
E Main St
N Julia St
N Spring St
W Clark St
E Clark St
C
W Dearborn St
N Pearl St
E Maple St
S Tyler St
W Roberts St
N Lasalle St
S Park St
S 2nd St
E Wendell St
E Peach St
W Louisa St
E Louisa St
E Peach St
S Haslow St
S Jefferson St
S Adams St
S Washington St
W Buse St
S Madison St
S Chestnut St
S Pearl St
S Park St
E Depot St
E Hemlock St
S Oak St
E Kobs St
E Hickory St
S Truman St
E Birch St
E Lincoln St
E Willow Dr
W Willow Dr
E Willow Dr
E Balsam St
E Aspen St
S Chestnut St
S Lasalle St
E Spruce St
E Apple St
W Cedar St
S Grant St
S Park St
V
Town of Spencer
S Monroe St
Hoops Rd
Hans

Fair Haven Av
Clark County
N Pacific St
E Wendell St
S Pacific St
13
98
13
Town of Spencer

W

N

E

S

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co.

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

0   0.075 0.15   0.3   0.45
Miles

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

6. TRANSPORTATION

The transportation chapter inventories the components of a community's transportation system consisting of roads, sidewalks, paths and trails, airports, railroads, and public transit. Some roads are owned and maintained by local officials, others are part of the county or state road systems. In addition to roads, the transportation system includes separate facilities for pedestrians (e.g., sidewalks), bicyclists (e.g., trails), railroads, airports, and public transit. This section describes the transportation system in the Village of Spencer and related improvements or issues affecting the system.

The village is bordered on the north by Eau Pleine Road and Hayward Drive, which provides access to CTH F. STH 13 runs diagonally through the village, railroad tracks run parallel to 13. CTH C/STH 98 is the most direct east/west route through the village. Sidewalks exist in some areas of the village. The railroad divides the east and west parts of the village creating a barrier to connectivity, while on either side of the railroad the streets are generally laid out in a well-connected grid pattern, especially the streets branching off of Clark Street. There exists some railroad crossing issues within the village, and a need for a formal sidewalk policy.

Recent Plans and Studies Related to Transportation

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the body designated by the Federal Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO. The county also does transportation planning for areas outside the Wausau metropolitan area. Local governments, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission are also responsible for transportation planning in the area.

Connections 2030

Connections 2030 is the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) long-range transportation plan for the state. Adopted in 2009, the plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Livability Plan

Transportation is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Transportation Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the transportation network through the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing transportation. The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the modes of transportation to work, the age of drivers in the region, and the high transportation maintenance cost. The three transportation goals of the plan are as follows:

* Goal 6: Provide and improve transportation access to people of all ages and abilities to ensure lifelong mobility and accessibility.

* Goal 7: Fund the maintenance and expansion of the transportation system.

* Goal 8: Enhance the regional economy by supporting airports and freight rail.

Marathon County Transportation Improvement Program 2016-2019

The TIP includes all programmed transportation projects receiving federal and/or state funds. The TIP is updated every two years.

State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review

This plan was prepared in 1997 by a multi-departmental team working with communities along the STH 29 corridor in the western part of Marathon County. The primary goal was to identify recommendations to allow local communities to protect STH 29 from impacts related to unplanned growth.

Marathon County Functional/Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study

This 1998 plan identifies and groups classes of roadways that provided similar levels of service. The plan recommended that the unit of government having the greatest basic interest in the roadway's function would carry out the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the classified roadways.

Marathon County Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan

This plan analyzes service gaps and needs in public transit and human services transportation then proposes strategies to address the gaps and needs. A five-year work plan was written to cover 2014 through 2018.

Marathon County Transportation Program Needs Assessment

The study, prepared by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, was completed in October 2014. The study looked at transportation services for elderly and disabled residents within the Wausau area provided by the Marathon County Transportation Program and MetroRide. This study identified numerous issues and deficiencies with regard to providing demand responsive services for persons in the Greater Wausau Area and Marathon County. The study also provides a plan and recommendations for enhancing paratransit services over a five-year period primarily.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan

This 2004 plan is intended to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region, including the Counties of Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas and Wood. The plan vision is to increase the mobility of people in the region by making bicycling a viable and attractive transportation choice, connecting people to destinations. The plan includes facility design recommendations, policies, and network recommendations to improve bicycling in the region.

Road Network

Classification

A functionally classified road system is one in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. At the upper limit of the system (principal arterials, for example) are facilities that emphasize traffic mobility (long, uninterrupted travel), while at the lower limits are local roads and streets that emphasize access over speed and efficiency.

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

- Principal Arterials serve corridor movements having trips length and travel density characteristics of an interstate or interregional nature. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population or connect major centers of activity, the highest traffic volumes and the longest trip desires.

- Minor Arterials, in conjunction with principal arterials, serve cities, large communities, and other major traffic generators providing intracommunity continuity and service to trips of moderate length, with more emphasis on land access than principal arterials.

- Collectors provide both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The collector system distributes trips from the arterials through the area to the local streets. The collectors also collect traffic from the local streets and channel it onto the arterial system.

- Local Streets comprise all facilities not on one of the higher systems. They serve to provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order of systems. Local streets offer the highest level of access, but the lowest level of mobility.

Jurisdiction

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

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some State owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a "federal-aid highway" does not alter its ownership or jurisdiction as a state or local road, only that its service value and importance have made that road eligible for federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.

Ownership is divided among the federal, state, and local governments. States own over 20 percent of the national road network. The federal government has responsibility for about 5 percent, primarily in national parks, forests, and Indian reservations. Over 75 percent of the road system is locally controlled.

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on state and federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the state generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs

and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the state department of transportation.

Major Road Facilities

According to the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), the Village of Spencer has approximately 10.43 miles of roads. Approximately 9.32 miles of roads are paved with either asphalt or concrete, 0.90 miles are unpaved or sealcoated, and 0.21 miles are earth surfaced. Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in the village. Functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available, are summarized for major roads.

Looking at AADT over time can provide some insight into roads that may need upgrading or increased maintenance in the future. As shown in **Table 6-1,** the AADT on most roads with counts in Spencer has remained fairly steady, decreasing in some areas while increasing in others.

- STH 13 is a principal arterial that runs through the village providing a connection to the City of Marshfield to the south and to Abbotsford and STH 29 to the north.

- CTH C/STH 98 is an east-west major collector connecting to STH 97 to the east. CTH C becomes STH 98 west of STH 13. STH 98 connects to Clark County to the west.

- CTH V is a north - south major collector that originates from the Village of Spencer and connects to U.S. Highway (USH) 10 to the south in Wood County.

Crashes

There were approximately 191 reported crashes in the village between 2005 and 2016. 147 crashes in Spencer only resulted in property damage, 43 resulted in injuries, and there was one fatality in 2009 as the result of a crash with a deer. 111 (58%) of all crashes occurred on Highway 13, of which 72 percent resulted in property damage. However, there have been significant improvements made to Highway 13 during this time period. 36 Crashes occurred on STH 98, 85 percent of which resulted in property damage. Two crashes involved pedestrians and two involved a bicyclist.

Road Maintenance

The village generally follows a capital improvement program (CIP) for road improvements. Local streets are mostly paved, with some gravel. The current policy is to require curb and gutter due to drainage issues in the area. However, there is some disagreement with the need for curb and gutter on all streets given the higher costs associated with building curb and gutter. Curb and gutter more quickly moves stormwater, which can help prevent the flooding of adjacent properties, and provides more physical seperation between automobiles and pedestrians when sidewalks are provided. Stormwater infiltration may be better

Table 6-1: Traffic Counts (Annual Average Daily Traffic)							
Location	**1998**	**2001**	**2004**	**2007**	**2010**	**2013**	**2016**
State Trunk Highway 13							
South of Clark Street	7,500	4,000	N/A	N/A	8,800	8,200	8,300
North of Clark Street	9,200	8,800	N/A	N/A	5,600	5,700	6,100
North of CTH F	8,500	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
North of Eau Pleine Road	6,600	6,800	N/A	7,000	6,500	N/A	N/A
County Trunk Highway C/State Trunk Highway 98							
East of STH 13	1,800	2,400	2,200	2,100	1,700	N/A	N/A
West of LaSalle Street	4,500	4,600	N/A	4,100	4,000	3,500	N/A
East of LaSalle Street	5,400	5,100	N/A	N/A	4,300	3,600	5,000
Between Park and STH 13	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,800	4,600	5,800
West of South Washington Street	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,700	2,700	3,200	N/A
County Trunk Highway V							
South of Clark Street	2,100	2,400	2,100	2,000	1,900	N/A	N/A
North of Clark Street	N/A	N/A	1,200	1,500	1,300	N/A	N/A

Source: Wisconsin DOT

without curb and gutter in areas that have residential densities of 4 units per acre or less. Areas with high parking demand may need curb and gutter to prevent damage to grass strips.

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

Table 6-2 shows pavement conditions in the village. There are fewer gravel roads in 2017 in the village than there were in 2004, with less than a mile of gravel or sealcoated roads remaining. There are fewer roads rated as very good or excellent condition compared to 2004, and more roads rated as failed, very poor, and poor.

Table 6-2: Summary of Pavement Conditions	
Surface Type	**miles**
Unimproved or Graded Earth Road	0.21
Sealcoat or Gravel Road	0.90
Asphalt and Concrete	9.32
Surface Condition Rating	**miles**
Failed	0.36
Very Poor	0.68
Poor	1.47
Fair	1.38
Good	1.94
Very Good	3.14
Excellent	1.45

Source: Wisconsin DOT

Roads exhibiting a surface condition rating at or below "fair" must be examined to determine what type of reconstruction or strengthening is necessary. Those roads that are classified as graded earth roads should be examined for structural integrity to ensure safe travel. The roads that display a surface rating of "good" or better will only require minimal preventative maintenance to promote safe travel conditions.

Other Transportation Modes

Pedestrian

Walkability is increasingly becoming a desirable trait in a place to live. Walkability is more than sidewalks, also requiring a well-connected, easy to navigate layout of streets and paths and a land use pattern that promotes mixed uses and provides destinations within walking distance. A sense of safety is needed to promote walking which includes safe crossings, low stress walking areas, and well-lit areas.

The village identified a need for sidewalks along major roads, especially where major destinations are connected, such as schools, churches, parks, businesses, employment and housing. A sidewalk spanning the north-south length of the village along STH 13 was recently constructed, filling in many of these gaps, but the northern section does not yet reach all the way to North Central Technical College. There is no sidewalk policy currently, however, there is a sidewalk review policy.

The village should consider creating an active transportation plan or including walking and bicycling in the outdoor recreation plan to help identify and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, such as filling in sidewalk gaps, crossing enhancements, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, multi-use trails, and other safety improvements. Having such a plan in place will make the village more competitive when applying for funding to complete improvements.

There were two crashes involving pedestrians between 2005 and 2015, one on E Clark Street at LaSalle Street, and one on E Willow Drive at S Monroe Street.

Bicycle

Bicycling is a very economical and efficient mode of transportation. All roads within the village are open to bicycles. However, perceptions of safety keep many people that would like to bicycle from doing so. Providing safe facilities for bicycling usually attracts people to bicycle that would not do so without those facilities.

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin, 1996 identified recommended bicycle routes in Marathon County. These recommended routes were based on traffic

counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as designated bicycle routes. The Marathon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identified CTH V, CTH C and CTH F north of CTH C as recommended bike routes connecting to the Village of Spencer.

The Wisconsin DOT rates the suitability of state and county highways for bicycle travel, most recently in 2015. This assessment rated CTH V south of the village as "undesirable," STH 13 is rated as "high volume with wide paved shoulders" both north and south of the village, and CTH C is rated as "best condition" immediately adjacent to the village. CTH C is downgraded to "moderate condition" east of CTH F.

Map 5 depicts a potential future corridor for a trail and route system throughout Spencer. Further study of site level conditions will be needed to determine the exact route for any future multi-use trails.

There were two bicycle crashes reported between 2005 and 2015, both of which occurred on STH 13, one at Willow Drive and one at E Main Street. The angle of railroad tracks in Spencer creates a potential hazard for bicycles, scooters, skateboards, wheelchairs and other wheeled vehicles. This can be addressed through some additional pavement and signage, as demonstrated by **Figure 6-1**.

Figure 6-1: Safe Crossing of Railroad Tracks

Source: Bike Austin
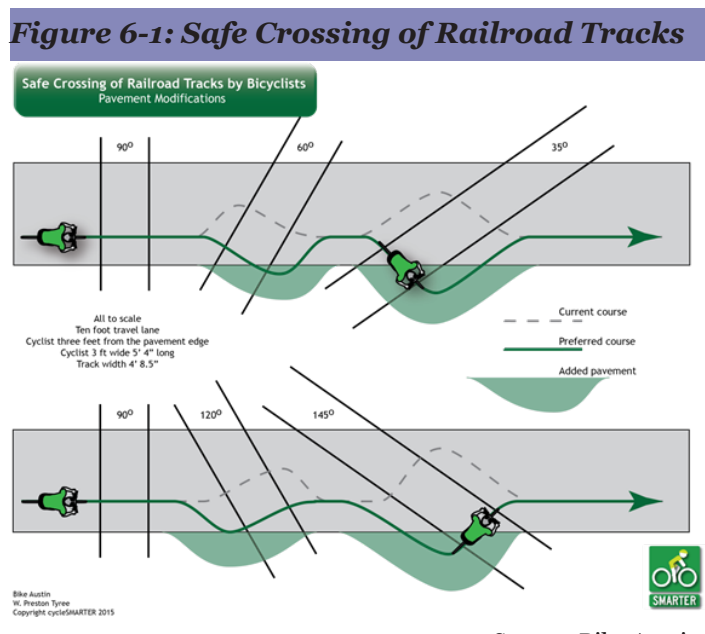
Transit

There is no public transit service available in the village. Elderly and disabled transit service is provided throughout the county through North Central Health Care (NCHC). The services include semi-fixed routes that are scheduled, and demand services available with a 48-hour notice. While this type of service is needed, it does not provide the flexibility many residents need to stay in their homes as they age or to provide consistent and reliable transportation to employment for those without access to a vehicle. More transit options will likely be needed as the population ages and rates of driver licensing decrease.

Rail

Two Canadian National railroad lines run through the Village of Spencer, parallel to STH 13 between Marshfield and the village. The two lines diverge north of West Clark St. (STH 98). One line heads into Clark County and connects to Superior, Wisconsin and St. Paul-Minneapolis, while the other line runs through Abbotsford to Medford. A connection exists between the two northern lines in the northwest section of Spencer.

Airports

The Central Wisconsin Airport (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. Service is provided through American Airlines, United and Delta, offering flights that connect through Minneapolis, Chicago, and Detroit.

Land Use and Transportation

Land use and transportation have a reciprocal relationship. Both the use and the pattern of land use affects the demand for transportation to and from a given geographic area and the viability of the various modes of transportation. Likewise, improved transportation facilities affect land use decisions. Scattered development can make public transportation inefficient and can isolate vulnerable populations that are unable to drive.

Access Management

Wisconsin was one of the first states to recognize the relationship between highway operations and the use of abutting lands. Under Chapter 233, the WisDOT was given the authority to establish rules to review subdivision plats abutting or adjoining state trunk highways or connecting highways. They require new subdivisions to: (1) have internal street systems; (2) limit direct vehicular access to the highways from individual lots; (3) establish building setbacks; and (4) establish access patterns for remaining unplatted land.

Connectivity

Providing a strong connected network of roads and pedestrian facilities can help distribute traffic, reduce travel distances and times, improve routing for transit and reduce walking distances. Good connectivity also provides better routing opportunities for emergency and delivery (EMS, fire, police, solid waste, recycling, snow plow, mail) vehicles. They can also reduce speeding and increase safety. All of these effects can play a positive role in reducing congestion and traffic on the street network. **Figure 6-2** demonstrates the difference between a well connected street network on the left and a poorly connected network on the right.

Figure 6-2: Connectivity and Trip Distance
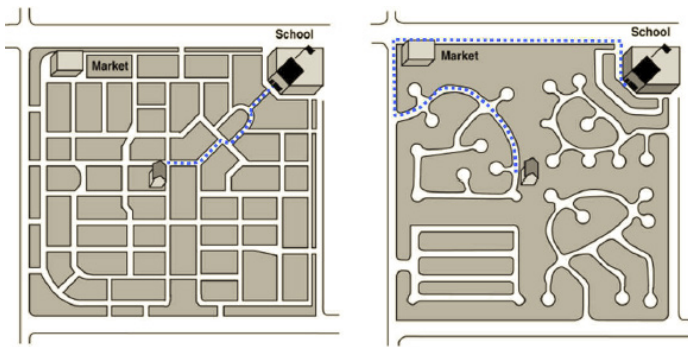
Source: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. Street Connectivity Zoning and Subdivision Model Ordinance

For automobiles, a poorly connected network increases travel distances and requires travelling on larger collector and arterials for local trips, increasing the amount of traffic on these roads. In well connected networks, streets can be narrower because there are more options to distribute traffic, improving safety and speeds.

Connectivity is achieved by providing connections within individual developments, between developments and by having a well planned collector road network to compliment the arterial highway network. Well connected road networks typically have shorter road lengths with more intersections, minimize the use of dead-end streets, strategically use but minimize cul de sacs, create bicycle and pedestrian connections, and offer multiple options in route choice. Research has also shown that a network of many small highly connected streets has the same number of lane miles, but lower capacity than a less connected network of large streets, as demonstrated by **Figure 6-3**

The older portions of the village already have a well connected street network, which makes this area more bicycle friendly and walkable, and reduces the likelihood of congestion or delays for motor vehicles and emergency responders. Some areas with large parcels and areas on the outside of the village are less well connected, and the railroad tracks present a barrier to connectivity between the east and west portions.

Figure 6-3: Connectivity and Capacity
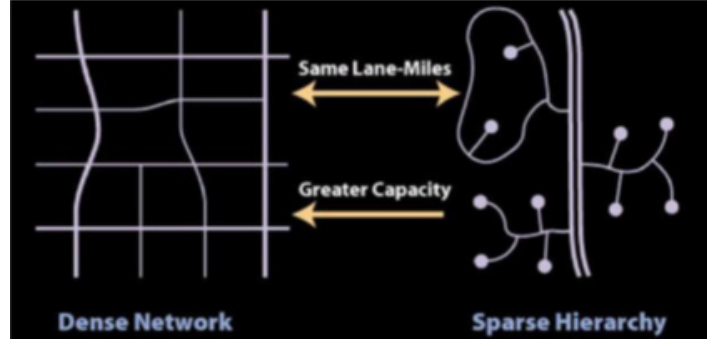
Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Strategic Regional Throughfare Plan

Land Use and Development

On average, single-family residential uses generate about ten trips per dwelling unit per day. The amount of traffic generated from new households and employment will depend on the location of new development in relation to typical trip destinations. Some car trips can be avoided by locating development in close proximity to destinations, and by ensuring appropriate infrastructure exists for walking and bicycling.

Issues

- **Downtown Streetscape.** - There is a desire to revitalize the mix of businesses in the old Central Business District (CBD) and improve its appearance. Appearance improvements could be integrated into transportation improvements in the form of parking configuration, pedestrian facilities, and streetscape design.

- **Street Connectivity** – While most of the minor streets in the village are fairly well connected, STH 13 and the Canadian National Railroad divide the village in half, and connectivity between the two sides is fairly poor. Additionally, some subdivisions have effectively cut off street connectivity for any future adjacent subdivisions by not reserving right of way at the edge of the subdivision. STH 13 is one of the only through north-south streets south of STH 98. Pedestrian connections like the sidewalk that extends from the cul-de-sac on W Mill Street to N LaSalle Street are very important to maintain walkability in areas of the village that are less connected.

- **Railroad Impacts** – While there have been numerous improvements to the railroad that runs through the center of the village in recent years, there are still issues with long trains blocking the roads occasionally. It has also been observed that trains have been growing in size recently. If this trend continues, problems around access and congestion due to long trains may continue to grow. Parts of the village where the railroad crosses a road or sidewalk at an angle can also pose hazards for bicycles, motorcycles, scooters, wheelchairs, and other wheeled vehicles. Caution signage and ensuring the road or sidewalks are designed to allow enough room for these vehicles to cross perpendicular to the tracks can improve the safety of these crossings.

- **Employment-Housing Mismatch** - There are over 800 jobs in the Village of Spencer, however only 50 of those jobs are filled by residents of the village. The remaining 756 jobs are filled by people that commute into the village, while 688 village residents commute elsewhere for work. This may be an indication of a spatial mismatch between jobs and housing, and there is not suitable housing for people that work in the village to live.

- **Transit Service** – The lack of convenient transit service combined with the employment-housing mismatch reduces the ability for village residents without access to a reliable motor vehicle to hold stable employment. Public transit needs are likely to increase as the population ages, although the median age in the village is lower than Marathon County.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation** – There are some areas of the village, particularly along major highways, that pose safety concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians. Many of these areas do not have sidewalks and require walking in the road or in the unimproved right of way amongst high traffic volumes and speeds, with no alternative routes. This situation is hazardous for citizens without the ability to drive a vehicle, and it creates dependency on a motor vehicle for those that would otherwise choose to walk or bicycle. There was a sidewalk recently started to span the north-south length of the village along STH 13. This walk is complete between the south end of STH 13 and the intersection of STH 13 and N. LaSalle Street, however the area north of here, leading to the Northcentral Technical College campus, does not have a connected sidewalk network. This is an important destination and people have been observed walking and using wheelchairs along the edge of STH 13.

- **Trail Development** - Abandoned rail corridors have provided opportunities for developing multi-use trails in many communities. If use of the railroad through the village is ever discontinued, the village should pursue converting it into a multi-use trail for bicycles and pedestrians. The village should also identify other opportunities for trail development to connect destinations within and near the village.

- **Changing Transportation Systems** – New technologies including electric vehicles (EVs), plug-in hybrids, and autonomous (driverless) vehicles (AVs) have been rapidly advancing and growing in popularity. Ordinances and road designs will likely need to be updated to accommodate new technologies. AVs may need segregated lanes, and eventually lanes may be narrowed, freeing up right of way space for bicycles and pedestrians. Intersection design is likely to change to accommodate AVs and keep traffic flowing. Local infrastructure, such as the availability of charging stations, has the potential to influence sales of EVs.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Revitalize the CBD's streetscaping appearance.

Objectives

- Develop a downtown revitalization/redevelopment plan that addresses the CBD's appearance.

- Through the capital improvements process (CIP), budget for upgrading facilities such as sidewalks, streetscape design, and parking in the village CBD.

Policy

- Continue the revitalization of the CBD

Strategies/Actions

- Work with stakeholders and owners to develop a long-range plan for the revitalization/redevelopment of Spencer's downtown.

- Develop a strategy to involve the whole village in the process.

- Through the CIP, budget for upgraded facilities on downtown streets.

- Identify and utilize resources, such as CDBG funds, TIF, general funds, the Main Street program, MCDEVCO, UW-Extension, DNR Brownfields, WEDC, and others to help revitalize the CBD.

Goal 2: Effectively deal with the railroad through the center of the village, specifically in regards to the impact it has on fire, police, and EMS response times.

Objectives

- Work with Marathon County, WisDOT, the railroad, and other appropriate entities to mitigate the issues caused by longer and/or more frequent trains travelling through the village.

- Maintain and update this action plan on a regular basis.

Policy

- Supports the continued improvement of connectivity and access across the railroad tracks.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with Marathon County, WisDOT, the railroad, and other appropriate entities to mitigate the issues caused by longer and/or more frequent trains travelling through the village.

- Add caution signage near sidewalks and roads with angled railroad crossings.

- Ensure sidewalks and roads have additional pavement as needed to allow perpendicular crossings of railroad tracks.

Goal 3: Address the need for private and/or public transportation between Spencer and key services in Marshfield.

Objectives

- Explore the possibility of providing efficient affordable transportation to Marshfield.

- Explore reduced taxi fares, or other funding programs for private transportation.

- Explore resident and business donations of vehicles, time, or money to help transport seniors.

- Explore public transportation options.

Policies

- Help seniors and people with special needs find adequate transportation.

- Support the development of efficient affordable transportation between Spencer and Marshfield.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with private entities to investigate the feasibility of providing transportation to Marshfield.

- Investigate the feasibility of providing public transportation to Marshfield.

- Identify local residents to participate in volunteer programs for transportation of senior citizens.

- Investigate methods of transportation used in other communities, such as providing public funding to reduce taxi fares.

- Maintain a brochure on transportation options at the Village Office and on the village website.

Goal 4: Develop pedestrian walkways and bicycle accommodations between destinations

in the village including housing, schools, employment, and shopping.

Objectives

- Complete a walkway along STH 13 from Northcentral Technical College to East Apple St.

- Develop a multi-use trail system throughout the village.

- Develop the pedestrian transportation network in underserved areas of the village.

Policies

- Support the construction of pedestrian walkways to all areas of the village.

- Require pedestrian connections across dead ends and cul-de-sacs.

- Accommodate all modes of transportation as village street projects occur.

Strategies/Actions

- Work with WisDOT and WDNR to identify right of way to build walkways, multi-use trails, and on-street bicycle accommodations where needed.

- Develop a budget for the construction and maintenance of walkways, multi-use trails, and on-street bicycle accommodations.

- Pursue a multi-use trail on the railroad right of way if the use of the railroad is ever discontinued or abandoned.

- Develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along any roads that serve as collectors or arterials.

- Repeal the prohibition on riding a bicycle on the street when there is a "usable path" adjacent to the roadway in Chapter 186, Section 186-5.

- Repeal the prohibition on riding two abreast on village streets.

- Change the wording in Chapter 186, Section 186-5, B (1) from "as near as possible" to "as near as practicable" to match Wisconsin state statutes and improve the safety of bicyclists.

- Repeal the prohibition on entering and leaving a bicycle lane in Section 186-5 J (2) to allow bicyclists preparing for a left turn to leave the bicycle lane.

- Consider allowing bicyclists on sidewalks in some sections of the village where conflicts with

pedestrians are less frequent and there are minimal driveway or street crossings of the sidewalk.

- Create multi-use trail and sidewalk connections between dead ends and other poorly connected areas of the village where new roads are not feasible or desirable in the near future.

- Ensure sidewalks and roads have additional pavement as needed to allow perpendicular crossings of railroad tracks.

Goal 5: Create and maintain a network of complete and connected village streets.

Objectives

- Address the economic challenges of completing work for all existing and new streets.

- Plan for future village streets.

- Develop a long-range plan for the completion of all existing and new streets in the village.

Policy

- Require that developers provide connections to continue streets into adjacent subdivision at the edges of subdivision.

Strategies/Actions

- Develop a plan for economically maintaining streets that are not scheduled for paving in the near future.

- Update ordinances to require street construction and dedication to village standards in new developments.

- Update ordinances to require the reservation of right of way to connect village streets to future subdivisions.

- Consider adopting an official map to reserve right of way for future village streets.

Goal 6: Adapt to a changing transportation system.

Objectives

- Update village ordinances and road designs as more information becomes available about the needs of electric vehicles and autonomous vehicles.

- Accommodate non-motorized transportation.

- Accommodate and adapt to new technologies and transportation modes.

Policies

- Consider the needs of autonomous vehicles (AVs) and electric vehicles (EVs) as road construction occurs and as more information becomes available regarding these technologies.

- Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians with road maintenance, construction and reconstruction projects by considering expected volume of traffic, amount of truck traffic, and potential bicycle and pedestrian traffic to provide suitable bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

- Ensure public transportation options meet the needs of the aging population.

- Update ordinances as new information regarding autonomous vehicles and electric vehicles becomes available and best practices are released.

Strategies/Actions

- bicycles and pedestrians when road projects occur by providing appropriate infrastructure based on the volume, speed of traffic, and destinations.

- Explore public and private on demand transportation options to assist seniors and others without access to a motor vehicle.

- Change parking spots to dedicated drop-off zones as AVs increase in use.

- Update intersection designs to safely and efficiently accommodate all modes of transportation, possibly including dedicated space for AVs, standard automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

- Consider the location of EV charging stations in the village.

- Consider how parking demand will likely be lower as new development occurs and as roads are resurfaced or reconstructed.

- Consider relaxing or reducing parking requirements in the village zoning code.
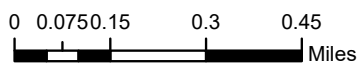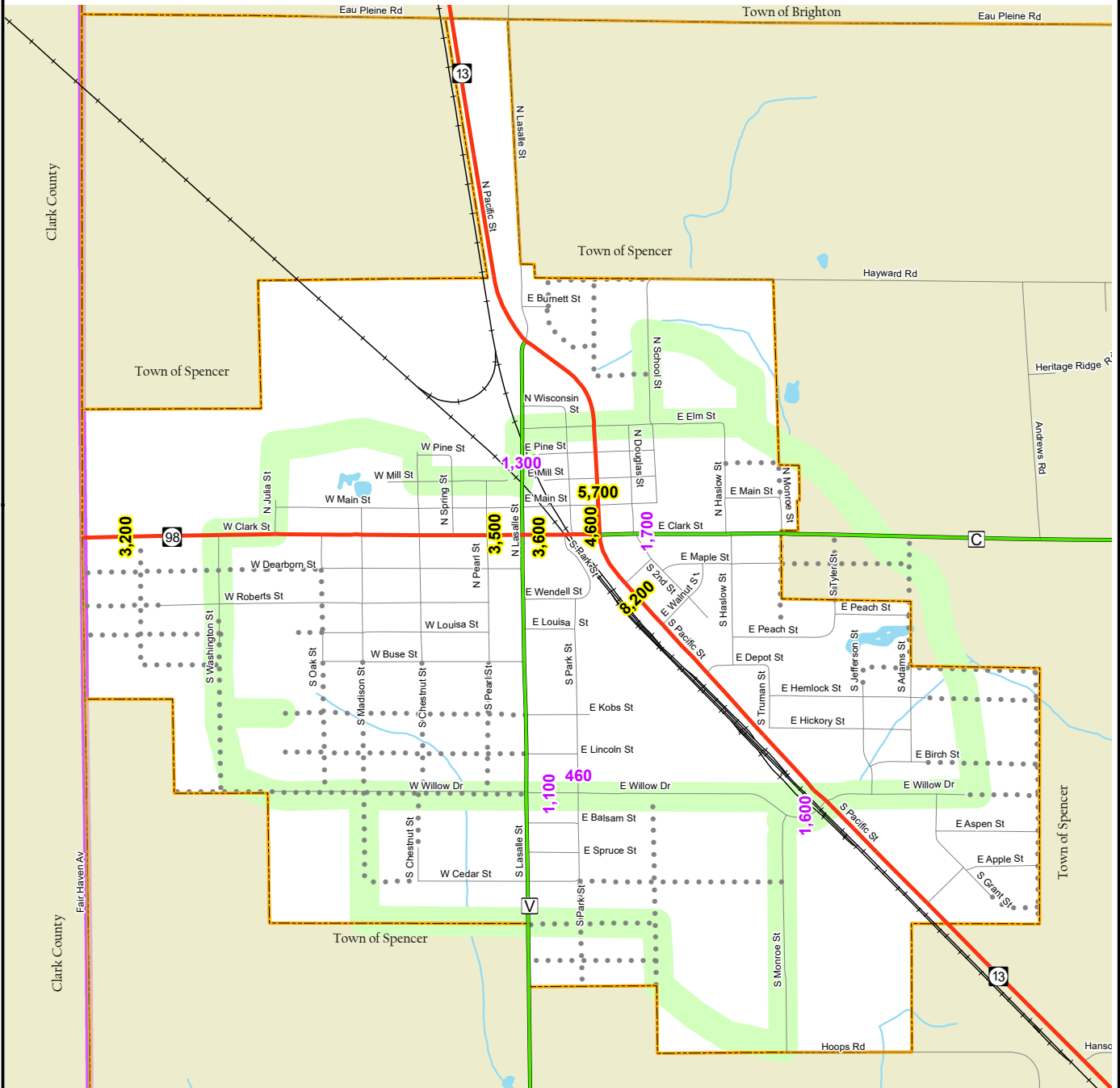
Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad

Proposed Trail Corridor
Proposed Roads
Water

500 Average Daily Traffic Count, 2013
500 Average Daily Traffic Count, 2010

Map 5
Transportation
Village of Spencer
Marathon County, Wisconsin

Town of Brighton
Eau Pleine Rd
Town of Spencer
Hayward Rd
Heritage Ridge Rd
Andrews Rd
Clark County
Fair Haven Av

E Burnett St
N Lasalle St
N Pacific St
N Wisconsin St
N School St
E Elm St
W Pine St
E Pine St
N Douglas St
N Haslow St
E Main St
N Monroe St
W Mill St
E Mill St
W Main St
N Julia St
N Spring St
E Main St
N Pearl St
N Lasalle St
S Park St
E Clark St
W Clark St
E Maple St
W Dearborn St
S 2nd St
S Walnut St
S Haslow St
S Tyler St
E Peach St
W Roberts St
E Louisa St
E Wendell St
S Pacific St
E Peach St
W Louisa St
E Depot St
S Jefferson St
S Adams St
W Buse St
S Washington St
S Oak St
S Madison St
S Chestnut St
S Pearl St
E Kobs St
E Hemlock St
S Truman St
E Hickory St
E Birch St
E Lincoln St
W Willow Dr
E Willow Dr
E Willow Dr
S Chestnut St
S Lasalle St
S Park St
E Balsam St
E Aspen St
E Spruce St
S Monroe St
S Pacific St
E Apple St
W Cedar St
S Grant St
Town of Spencer
Hoops Rd

3,200 3,500 3,600 4,600 5,700 1,300 1,700 8,200 1,100 460 1,600

Town of Spencer

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 0.45 Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co, Wis DOT

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

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7. 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. Residents of one community often work in another. Similarly, changes in a major industry can impact jobs and growth far beyond the community where the business is physically located.

It is therefore important to understand a local community's economy in light of its regional context. The following section provides a brief overview of the economy in Marathon County, in terms of key economic sectors and the regional labor force. Included is a more specific description of employment trends, major local employers or industries, and where most residents of the Village of Spencer work. Potential economic development opportunities and/or issues regarding the local economy are also identified.

Data in this chapter comes from a variety of sources, including Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), which uses the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) as its source data; directly from the QCEW; the American Community Survey (ACS); and the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) through the U.S. Census "On the Map."

Recent Plans and Studies Related to Economic Development

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Marathon County is one of ten counties included in the North Central Wisconsin Economic Development District as designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is the agency that is responsible for maintaining that federal designation. As part of maintaining that designation, the NCWRPC annually prepares a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. The report summarizes and assesses economic development activities of the past year and present new and modified program strategies for the upcoming year.

Key components from this regional level plan include an inventory of the physical geography of the region and its resident population. Labor, income, and employment data are reviewed as well as an in-depth analysis of the economic status of the region.

Regional Livability Plan (RLP)

Economic Development is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Report, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) in 2015. The Economic Development Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the economic health of the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing the local economy. The Regional Livability Plan addresses three issues: the disparity between the available labor force and employment, the need for a living wage, and broadband internet access. The four economic development goals of the plan are as follows:

- Goal 2: Ensure the future availability of a skilled and flexible workforce.

- Goal 3: Support and develop a diverse economic base ensuring economic growth and resiliency.

- Goal 4: Support infrastructure needed for economic development.

- Goal 5: Develop tourism and the knowledge-based economy into leading economic sectors.

United Way LIFE Report

The LIFE Report is a joint effort of Marathon County and the United Way. Its purpose is to provide a reference for the community to evaluate strengths and weaknesses and identify priority issues. The report, which is published every two years, serves as a tracking vehicle to show how the community has changed over time. Two of the sections of the report focus on education and on the economic environment.

The education report tracks childcare, kindergarten readiness, enrollment by racial and economic differences, school district expenditures, reading comprehension, mathematics proficiency, high school graduation rates, and higher education. Challenges facing education according to the 2013 report include limited access to child care in rural areas, school district revenue cuts, an increase in economically disadvantaged students, and fewer residents attaining post-secondary education relative to state averages.

The economic environment report tracks many economic indicators including employment, job satisfaction, income, unemployment, poverty, economic impacts of transportation, and tourism. Challenges facing the economic environment according to the 2013 report include high unemployment

despite employer needs in select industries, resident concerns about jobs providing living wages and career advancement, and a strain on county services to unemployed residents.

Marathon County: A Next Generation Talent Magnet

This report, developed by Next Generation Consulting, addresses the question, "What will it take for Marathon County to be a destination for top talent?" As part of the research process, a "handprint" for Marathon county was developed to contrast the county's assets with other communities. According to the study, Marathon County meets or exceeds the standards of its peer regions in five of the seven measured indexes – vitality, earning, cost of lifestyle, after hours, and around town. The county falls short in two categories – social capital and learning. The report also identifies nine priority areas of focus to address moving forward. The top four priority areas were:

1. Engage emerging leaders

2. Create green economy, e.g. industries

3. Create "next generation" businesses, and

4. Develop a long-term funded plan.

ALICE Report: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

This report, developed by the United Way of Marathon County, describes the 31 percent of households in Marathon County that are above the federal poverty level (10 percent of households are below the poverty level) but still struggle to afford basic household necessities, or "ALICE" households. These households are largely employed but do not earn enough in wages to meet the "household survival budget," which does not allow for any savings. The report states that many ALICE households provide vital services, such as retail, health care, child care, and security, but cannot make ends meet on the income from these jobs.

It also breaks down the data by the municipal level, and shows that 41 percent of the households in the Village of Spencer are either below the federal poverty level or are ALICE households, higher than the Town of Spencer but similar to the villages of Stratford, Weston, and Marathon City, and the City of Schofield.

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 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.

Key Economic Sectors

Location Quotient

Key sectors of a regional economy can be identified by size, by growth or decline in employment, or by a concentration of the industry in the local area exceeding the national concentration. An industry that shows a higher concentration of employment than the national average is considered a "basic industry" and is identified by a technique called "location quotient" analysis. Basic industries are those sectors that export a product or service from the local community into the national or international economy. They are a critical part of the "economic engine" for a region, affecting the growth and health of many dependent sectors such as retail, transportation, construction, and local services.

If an LQ is equal to one, then the industry has the same share of its area employment as it does in the United States). An LQ greater than one indicates an industry with a greater share of the local area employment than the United States. Industries that have a high location quotient (LQ) and employ a large number of people reflect both significant size and importance as businesses that export a product or service and bring new wealth to the region.

Industries with high location quotients in Marathon County are shown on **Table 7-1**. Industries with high employment are shown in **Table 7-2**. The three top industry subsectors in Marathon County by location quotient are wood product manufacturing, paper manufacturing and animal production and aquaculture. However, all three industry subsectors have declined in total employment between 2010 and 2015, by 18%, 17% and 8% respectively. Other industries have grown in employment, including nonstore retailers, fabricated metal product manufacturing and primary metal manufacturing, each with over 30% growth in employment.

Comparing Table 7-1 and Table 7-2 demonstrates that industries with the highest location quotient do not necessarily have the highest employment. The top three industries in terms of total employment are local government, ambulatory health care services, and food services and drinking places, each with over 4,000 employees. Many of these industries are not relatively concentrated in Marathon County, but they serve an important function as top employers. Of the top three employment industries, local government is the only industry subsector that declined between 2010 and 2015.

Gross Regional Product and Exports

In 2016, there were 70,780 jobs in Marathon County and the county had a Gross Regional Product of 6.97 billion in 2014. In 2014, Marathon County generated 10.8 billion dollars in export revenue. Export revenue is money received in the region through foreign and external domestic sources. Manufacturing was the highest export industry accounting for over five billion dollars, or 47 percent of total export revenue. Finance and insurance was the second highest export industry accounting for over 1.2 billion dollars, or 11 percent of total export revenue. Health care and social assistance was the third highest export accounting for over $834 million. The ability to export goods and services is

Table 7-1: Top 10 Economic Sectors by Location Quotient, Marathon County (2015)

Industry Code	Industry Description	Location Quotient	Total Employment	LQ Change 2010-2015
NAICS 321	Wood Product Manufacturing	10.68	2,471	-3.33
NAICS 322	Paper Manufacturing	9.49	2,030	-0.94
NAICS 112	Animal Production and Aquaculture	6.70	626	-0.22
NAICS 327	Nonstore Retailers	5.71	908	0.57
NAICS 333	Machinery Manufacturing	5.10	2,282	0.46
NAICS 332	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	5.08	2,586	0.24
NAICS 524	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	4.83	3,540	0.79
NAICS 424	Primary Metal Manufacturing	3.19	2,330	0.59
NAICS 337	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	2.56	409	-0.59
NAICS 311	Food Manufacturing	2.56	1,578	0.35

Source: EMSI 2015.3

Table 7-2: Top 10 Economic Sectors by Employment, Marathon County (2015)

Industry Code	Industry Description	Employment	Employment Change 2010-2015	Location Quotient
NAICS 903	Local Government	6,553	-154	0.96
NAICS 621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	4,903	2,177	1.38
NAICS 722	Food Services and Drinking Places	4,150	54	0.76
NAICS 332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,487	894	4.83
NAICS 524	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	3,293	-480	2.56
NAICS 333	Machinery Manufacturing	2,800	507	5.10
NAICS 424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	2,442	91	2.38
NAICS 622	Hospitals	2,398	-498	1.01
NAICS 541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,361	88	0.49
NAICS 238	Specialty Trade Contractors	2,353	392	0.90

Source: EMSI 2015.3

essential to the county's economy as it introduces new money to the economy, rather than simply circulating money that is already in the region. This influx of new revenue is redistributed throughout the economy at local restaurants, suppliers, and retailers.

Job Growth

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 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 regions unique competitiveness, the county should continue to grow.

Between 2011 and 2016, Marathon County added 5,840 jobs, an increase of nine percent. The State of Wisconsin experienced a job growth of 8.8 percent and the nation increased 10.3 percent. Based on the national growth effect (7,264), an industry mix effect (-1,413), and the competitive effect (158) the region would expect to add 5,851 jobs in this industry over the next ten year time period based on a shift share analysis.

A selected number of industries by employment in Marathon County in 2011 and 2016 are displayed in **Table 7-1**. In 2016, the manufacturing industry (NAICS 31) was the largest employment sector with 16,505 workers. Health care and social assistance (NAICS 62) and retail trade (NAICS 44) were second and third with 9,707 and 9,050 workers respectively.

In terms of job growth, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (NAICS 21) was the fastest growing industry from 2011 with a growth rate of 304 percent, adding 76 jobs. The management of companies and enterprises industry (NAICS 55) was second, employing an additional 609 workers, an 85 percent increase. The third fastest industry was real estate and rental and leasing (NAICS 53), increasing 43 percent, or 142 workers. The manufacturing (1,741 jobs), health care and social assistance (1,618 jobs), and retail trade (796 jobs) industries added the most jobs overall. Construction came in fourth, adding 716 jobs.

It should be noted that the number of employees in certain sectors, particularly those workers engaged in crop and animal production, which includes forestry,

Table 7-3: Jobs by Industry (Select Industries) - Marathon County

Industry Code	Description	2011 Jobs	2016 Jobs	2011 - 2016 Change	2011 - 2016 % Change
NAICS 31	Manufacturing	14,764	16,505	1,741	12%
NAICS 62	Health Care and Social Assistance	8,089	9,707	1,618	20%
NAICS 44	Retail Trade	8,254	9,050	796	10%
NAICS 90	Government	7,257	7,316	59	1%
NAICS 72	Accommodation and Food Services	4,582	4,448	-134	-3%
NAICS 52	Finance and Insurance	4,726	4,379	-347	-7%
NAICS 42	Wholesale Trade	4,155	4,363	208	5%
NAICS 23	Construction	1,980	2,696	716	36%
NAICS 48	Transportation and Warehousing	2,171	2,142	-29	-1%
NAICS 56	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,877	1,953	76	4%
Total	64,940	64,940	70,780	5,840	9%

Source: EMSI 2016
#Not all industries are represented in this table.

7. Economic Development

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.

Six industries lost jobs from 2011 to 2016. The finance and insurance (NAICS 52) lost 346 jobs, decreasing 7 percent. Other services (NAICS 81) decreased its employment by 14 percent, or 269 jobs. Accommodation and food services (NAICS 72) shrank by 134 jobs while Information (NAICS 51) lost 85 jobs. Transportation and warehousing (NAICS 48) and educational services (NAICS 61) lost 29 and 23 jobs respectively.

Agricultural Economy

Located in the agricultural area of western Marathon County, the economic health and vitality of Spencer is affected by the economic health of the agricultural economy. The Marathon County agricultural economy contributed 821 million dollars to the county's income, or 12.1 percent of the county's income in 2012. The crop and animal production (NAICS11) provided employment for 1,043 persons in 2016. The county's top commodities in 2012 were milk ($249.8 million), grain ($78.8 million), and cattle ($40.1 million). Twenty-two plants process milk in the county providing jobs.

There are 485 farms in the county. Forty-eight percent of the county's land, or 479,045 acres, is devoted to agricultural production. This is an 18.31 percent reduction in farmland since 1987. In 1987, an acre of farmland was valued at 751 dollars, while in 2012 an acre was valued at 2,916 dollars.

Other forces that create an environment of change in the rural area:

- The average age of the current agricultural owner/operator is nearly 53.6; a large number are nearing retirement.

- The low entry rate into agriculture reflects the high capital investment and low profit margins. Furthermore, there are fewer farm operators who are reporting farming as their primary occupation.

- The number of dairy farms decreased by nearly 16 percent between 2007 and 2012. This continues a decade long trend.

- Local milk production is not sufficient to reliably meet the demand of local dairy processors.

Local Economic Environment

Local Jobs

There has been a slight loss of jobs between 2002 and 2014. Jobs declined between 2002 and 2010, and increased between 2010 and 2014. In 2014, there were 806 people working within the Village of Spencer, which was a decrease of 119 jobs since 2002. The low point during this time period was 711 jobs in 2007 near the start of the Great Recession. **Table 7-4** shows that the number of jobs have increased gradually between 2007 and 2014.

Worker Earnings

Between 2010 and 2014, earnings have declined for workers in the village. In 2010, 58.6 percent of workers were earning more than $3,333 per month, while 10.7 percent were earning less than $1,250 per month. By 2014, 50 percent of workers were earning more than $3,333 per month, and 10.7 percent were earning less than $1,250 per month.

Table 7-4: Jobs in Village

	2002	2010	2014	2002-2010 % Change	2002-2010 Net Change
Total Primary Jobs	925	737	806	-3.7%	-35

Source: U.S. Census, On the Map 2016

Table 7-5: Jobs by Worker Age

	2002		2010		2014	
Age 29 or Younger	124	13.4%	66	9.0%	96	11.9%
Age 30 or 54	655	70.8%	451	61.2%	430	53.3%
Age 55 or Older	146	15.8%	220	29.9%	280	34.7%

Source: U.S. Census, On the Map 2016

Worker Age

Table 7-5 shows that within the village 29.9 percent of the village's working population was aged 55 or older in 2010. By 2014, the percentage had increased to 34.7 percent. Between 2002 and 2014 there was a large increase in the proportion of workers 55 and older. Over one-third of the workers in the village are 55 or older. The jobs held by these workers will need to be filled as these workers retire. This may be challenging with the low unemployment rate seen across Marathon County.

Worker Industry

In 2010, manufacturing was the largest industry by jobs in the village, employing roughly 521 people, or 70.7 percent of workers. This was a decrease from 2002, but by 2014 there were 565 people employed in this sector. Educational services employed the second largest number of people in 2010, with 80 jobs. This indicates that the Village of Spencer's economy is largely based on a single industry, and efforts to diversify should help insulate the village from economic disruptions. On the other hand, a concentrated industry creates opportunities for cost savings, industry clustering and economies of scale.

Education

Educational attainment was not available for all workers in the village or from the year 2002. However, the educational attainment of workers has decreased from 2010 to 2014. In 2010, 4.2 percent of workers had less than a high school education, while by 2014 that had increased to 8.1 percent. In 2010, 40.7 percent of workers had a high school diploma, but no college, and that had fallen to 36.1 percent by 2014. The proportion of workers with some college or an associate degree increased from 27.5 percent to 28.0 percent. The number of workers with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree decreased from 18.6 percent to 15.9 percent. Comparing these figures to educational attainment of Spencer residents from the demographics chapter highlights that village residents may have a higher educational attainment than those that work in the village.

Commutes

Only 6.2 percent of the workers in Spencer lived in the village in 2014. The village imported 93.8 percent of its workforce from the surrounding areas. Roughly 16.3 percent of workers in Spencer were living in the City of Marshfield. The rest came from scattered cities and villages nearby, such as Loyal, Stratford, Abbotsford, Colby, and Wisconsin Rapids. Only 34.5 percent of workers lived in Marathon County, with 23.7 percent commuting from Wood County and another 16.4 percent coming from Clark County.

Business and Industrial Space

Spencer has a traditional downtown that is an important space for business. There are several successful businesses downtown, however, there are also vacant or blighted buildings in the downtown. Per acre property values in the downtown are typically much higher than other types of development, and the return on investment of downtown revitalization is often high. Investing resources into improving the downtown may help attract businesses and improve the downtown business environment.

Figure 7-1 shows the per acre assessed value of two downtown properties, at $741,667 and $635,714. As a comparison, the relatively new Citizens State Bank of Loyal property has a per acre assessed value of $493,424. This comparison demonstrates how the increased property values resulting from downtown revitalization could provide large gains for the Village of Spencer.

The village recently established an 80 acre industrial park and tax increment finance district (TID) that fronts CTH V on the southwest side of the village. Sewer, water and paved streets will continue to be

Figure 7-1: Downtown Property Values

The property on top has a per acre assessed value of $741,667, while the bottom property is $635,714.
Source: Marathon County GIS, Google Maps

installed as development takes place. Electricity and Natural Gas are available. As of 2015 there are approximately 20 acres remaining.

In addition to the industrial park, MCDEVCO owns land with railway access available in lot sizes to suit the needs of industry. This property is also located within the TID with sewer, water and paved streets. Electricity and natural gas are available. Comparisons between select characteristics of the two industrial parks are listed below.

The Spencer Business and Industrial Park
Source: Village of Spencer

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing (TIF) helps cities and villages in Wisconsin attract industrial and commercial growth in underdeveloped and blighted areas. A city or village can designate a specific area within its boundaries as a TIF district (TID) and develop a plan to improve its property values. The village finances land acquisition or public works needed, and the taxes generated by the increased property values pay the debt service for the improvements. The tax incremental revenue bonds, issued for a maximum maturity of 20 years, with extensions possible, are repaid with the incremental tax revenues generated from the increased value of improvements within the TID.

Employment Projections

Employment projections are made available at the zip code level through 2025 by Economic Modeling

Specialists International (EMSI). The zip code encompassing the Village of Spencer is 54479, which includes the village and much of the surrounding area. In 2015 this zip code had a total of 1,161 jobs. Almost half of these jobs, 489, are in manufacturing.

Table 7-6 shows these projections from 2010 through 2025. Manufacturing accounts for only 6 new jobs over the 15 year period. The largest job growth by percentage of jobs is expected to occur in the construction industry and the professional, scientific and technical services industry. Job growth in the county is expected to be nearly twice the job growth in the 54479 zip code. By the year 2025 it is expected that there will be approximately 1,212 jobs in the zip code 54479. Many of these jobs are likely to be located in the Village of Spencer.

Table 7-6: Employment Projections in 5-Year Increments						
	2010	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**	**2010-2025 Change**	**2010-2025 % Change**
54479	1,122	1,161	1,192	1,212	90	8.0%
County	64,646	70,120	72,859	74,475	9,829	15.2%

Source: Source: EMSI 2017.1

Issues

- Declining Retail – The retail base of the old downtown area is declining. While existing businesses are doing ok, it is difficult to start up a new business. The village believes the mix of downtown businesses may need to shift to more professional services (e.g., lawyers, insurance, etc.) and some limited medical services (e.g., dentist).

- Downtown Revitalization - There is a desire to revitalize the mix of businesses in the old central business district (CBD) and improve its appearance. Some appearance improvements could be integrated into transportation improvements in the form of parking configuration, pedestrian facilities, and streetscape design.

- Business Parks – The Village of Spencer would like to increase the promotion and marketing of its business parks and the community as a whole.

- Employment-Housing Mismatch - A significant number of people that work in the village commute in from outside, while a significant number of village residents commute out to other jobs. Investigating the reasons for this mismatch may allow the village to increase the number of people that both live and work in the village.

- Dependence on Manufacturing Industry – A large proportion of the jobs in the village are in the manufacturing industry. While productivity and production have actually been increasing in the manufacturing industry recently, jobs have been decreasing nationwide. This trend is largely due to automation, and therefore has the effect of increasing the education and training needed for manufacturing jobs.

- Large Proportion of Workers Near Retirement – A large proportion of workers that are employed in the village are over 55, nearing the retirement age when labor force participation declines significantly. This will create massive job openings that will need to be filled, so the training needs of these jobs need to be considered for any economic development policy.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Redevelop and revitalize the central business district (CBD) of the Village of Spencer.

Objectives

- Investigate the potential of creating a downtown business improvement district (BID).

- Target village investments into the downtown area to revitalize the infrastructure within the CBD.

- Develop a downtown revitalization/redevelopment plan.

- Develop a façade improvement program for downtown businesses.

- Conduct a market study to determine what types of businesses are most suitable for the CBD.

- Develop a "shop Spencer" program to promote the CBD and downtown merchants.

- Develop a "branding" for the Spencer CBD to promote awareness of the importance of shopping locally.

- Redevelop brownfield sites.

- Meet the infrastructure needs of businesses.

Policies

- Support the revitalization of and reinvestment in the CBD.

- Enhance streetscaping and quality of life during road or utility projects.

Strategies/Actions

- Meet with downtown business owners to develop a vision for the future of the downtown.

- Develop a redevelopment plan to revitalize the CBD.

- Consider the creation of a redevelopment authority (RDA) or community development authority (CDA) to lead redevelopment and community development efforts.

- Work with UW-Extension to conduct a market study to determine what types of businesses would be best suited to the downtown area.

- Educate local businesses about the advantages and disadvantages of a BID, including examples.

- Work with interested stakeholders to investigate the feasibility, interest level, and long-term goals of a potential BID.

- Investigate other successful BIDs to learn best practices.

- List available business and industrial sites and buildings with WEDC and any other economic development search tools.

- Work with UW-Extension and downtown stakeholders to develop a façade improvement program.

- In concert with the chamber of commerce, MCDEVCO and downtown stakeholders, develop a "shop Spencer" program to encourage residents to shop in Spencer.

- Identify potential brownfields sites.

- Apply for DNR, WEDC and other potential funding to identify and clean up contaminants at brownfields sites.

Goal 2: Encourage industrial development.

Objectives

- Coordinate with MCDEVCO and WEDC to promote the Village of Spencer's industrial sites.

- Develop a marketing strategy and program to promote the industrial park and the village as a whole.

- Meet the infrastructure needs of businesses.

Policy

- Encourage industrial development in the village, in appropriate locations.

Strategies/Actions

- Invite MCDEVCO to provide the village board with regular updates on their efforts.

- Work with MCDEVCO to develop a marketing strategy for the village industrial park.

- Identify industries and businesses that would complement the industrial park.

- Develop a business retention and expansion visitation program with MCDEVCO to meet with existing businesses, identify their needs, and develop methods for the village to help them expand their businesses.

- Develop a marketing incentive policy for the village to cover when to participate or offer incentives to new developments.

- Continuously evaluate the available infrastructure, including transportation, broadband, electrical, and gas, and how it meets the needs of businesses.

Goal 3: Diversify the local economy.

Objectives

- Attract employers to the area that can take advantage of existing business products or services.

- Encourage desired businesses to develop in the downtown (retail pharmacy, restaurants, grocery, etc.).

Policy

- Work to diversify the local economic base.

Strategies and Actions

- Complete an economic development assessment and strategy that identifies the areas industries, strengths and weaknesses.

- Work to attract a catalyst or magnet that will draw other businesses to the area.

Goal 4: Ensure development codes protect the environment, quality of life, health safety and welfare of village residents while still promoting business development.

Objective

- Evaluate development codes for opportunities to reduce burdens on businesses that do not directly improve health, safety, or quality of life for residents or protect the environment.

Policy

- Strive to create a business friendly environment while protecting residents and the environment from impacts of pollution, noise, traffic and other negative externalities.

Strategies and Actions

- Evaluate home occupations that are allowed by the zoning code. Consider expanding the potential home occupations.

- Evaluate and revise the zoning ordinance to ensure an adequate mix of commercial and industrial uses is possible in the same district (e.g. a cabinet maker

that also sells cabinets on site, or allowing a retail store on the same site as a cheese manufacturing facility.)

Goal 5: Ensure the availability of a skilled and flexible workforce prepared to meet the needs of both existing and emerging industries and technologies.

Objectives

- Further examine the education gap between those who work in the village and those that live in the village but work elsewhere.

- Ensure village residents and workers have the skills needed to compete in a changing economy.

Policies

- Align workforce needs and business needs.

- Coordinate with appropriate organizations, such as the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Northcentral Technical College, and the Spencer School District.

Strategies/Actions

- Survey residents regarding local employment opportunities.

- Survey workers and business owners/human resource departments regarding employment opportunities, workforce issues and skills.

- Coordinate with the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to ensure workers and residents have the skills needed.

- Coordinate with Northcentral Technical College, the Spencer School District, and local employers to align education and skills with current and future employment needs.

Goal 6: Assist startups and business expansions in the village.

Objective

- Consider creating a "one-stop shop" in the village where potential business startups and existing businesses can go for information on zoning, available land, buildings, or redevelopment space, financial resources, and technical assistance.

Policies

- Assist businesses with the resources needed to be successful in the village.

- Keep the Village of Spencer Business Expansion Guide up to date and readily available.

Strategies/Actions

- Connect businesses with financial resources, including startup financing, angel investors, and expansion capital.

- Connect businesses with agencies and organizations that provide technical assistance to startups, such as the Small Business Development Center.

- Keep information on the village website up to date.

- Explore a pop-up shop program to help fill vacancies in the downtown.

Goal 7: Communicate with and assist local businesses with opportunities and challenges.

Objectives

- Communicate regularly with existing businesses to Learn the challenges, successes, and opportunities of local businesses.

- Communicate regularly with federal, state and local agencies to learn how they can assist the village and businesses in meeting their opportunities and challenges.

Policies

- Maintain communication with businesses, agencies, and economic development organizations.

- Assist businesses in meeting opportunities and challenges.

Strategies/Actions

- Regularly perform business retention and expansion visits with existing businesses.

- Survey existing businesses on opportunities and challenges.

- Maintain contact with state, federal and local agencies and economic development organizations for resources and assistance.

- Attend conferences and workshops put on by agencies and economic development organizations.

8. LAND USE

The Village of Spencer is located on the western border of Marathon County. It is bisected by STH 13, which functions as a primary route between the City of Marshfield and STH 29 to the north.

Recent Plans and Studies Related to Land Use

North Central Wisconsin Regional Livability Plan

Land use is one of four elements included in the Regional Livability Plan, adopted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2015. The Land Use Assessment Report, a component of the plan, looks in detail at the land uses through the 10-county region and identifies trends and issues facing land use. The Regional Livability Plan addresses two issues related to land use: housing density and farmland preservation. The two land use goals of the plan are as follows:

- Goal 9: Preserve and protect the region's landscape, environmental resources, and sensitive lands while encouraging healthy communities.

- Goal 10: Manage and reduce vacant land and structures.

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan

The purpose of the Farmland Preservation Plan is to guide and manage growth and development of land use in a manner that will preserve the rural character, protect the agricultural base and natural resources, and contribute to the safety, health, and prosperity of Marathon County's communities. The Farmland Preservation Plan identifies 15 year growth areas and farmland preservation areas for each town within the county. Farmland preservation areas are generally around prime farmland and existing productive agricultural areas. This plan forms the basis for farmland preservation tax credits.

Marathon County Comprehensive Plan

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

Current Land Use Plans and Regulations

Comprehensive Plan

The original comprehensive plan was completed in 2005, and was comprehensively updated in 2017.

Subdivision Ordinance

Spencer has a subdivision ordinance that regulates the division of land, the suitability of the site, requires protection of existing flora, condominium plats, among other provisions.

Zoning

The village has a zoning code that is locally enforced. The zoning code was originally adopted in 1993 and has been periodically amended over time. The zoning map was last updated in 2012.

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. Villages and cities are not required to adopt shoreland zoning, but shoreland/wetland zoning may still apply in some circumstances. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater. While the village is not required to adopt shoreland zoning, it helps protect sensitive natural resources from the adverse impacts of development and helps maintain good quality surface and groundwater, spawning grounds, fish and aquatic life.

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

The MFL was enacted in 1985 and requires at least 10 acres of contiguous forest land. Landowners may close to public access up to 320 acres of their forest lands set aside under MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners must choose a 25- or 50-year contract, so they are a good indicator of the amount of land that is intended to remain undeveloped for the near future. The landowner pays an acreage share amount as part

of their tax bill in lieu of taxes. If the land is withdrawn from MFL prior to the contract period it is subject to a withdrawal tax.

Currently there is no land enrolled in the FCL program and or MFL programs in the village.

Current Pattern of Land Use

The village is nearing full development, with some vacant land available for new development mostly concentrated on the southwest side of the village. Wetlands in the south and northwest of the village prevent development from occurring in those areas. The predominant land use is residential development. This is mostly single-family residential development, as about 80 percent of housing units are single-family, although there are multi-family units scattered throughout the village.

STH 13 runs diagonally through the village and is mostly lined with commercial uses. The downtown area is located around the intersection of STH 13 and CTH C/STH 98 and also mostly consists of commercial uses, with some residential included on second stories.

Railroad tracks also bisect the village, running parallel to STH 13. Most industrial development is located near the railroad line and/or STH 13.

Forested, open, and agricultural land is common near the borders of the village and in wetland areas. It is expected that these areas that are suitable for development will eventually be developed or placed into a more permanent protected status.

Existing Land Use

Table 8-1 describes the various land use categories. The acreage and proportion of land shown on Table 8-1 were determined from aerial photos and are not intended to be accurate to the parcel level. **Map 6** shows existing land use in the village. Most of the village land is currently being used as residential land, at over 20 percent. Agricultural land and woodlands are both high, at 19 percent and 17 percent, respectively. Commercial land uses four percent, industrial uses eight percent, and government/institutional uses just less than four percent.

Table 8-1: Existing Land Use, 2015

2015 Land Use	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Agriculture	Tilled agriculture, prime farmland, pasture, agricultural related structures, farm residences, limited scattered rural residential.	238	18.9%
Commercial	Retail stores, coffee shops, taverns, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, clinics, automobile dealerships, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company, business incubators, etc.	50	4.0%
Governmental / Institutional	Schools, churches, cemeteries, town halls, fire departments, community centers, etc.	46	3.6%
Industrial	Saw/paper/lumber mills, manufacturing facilities, industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers, mining operations, landfills, quarries, agricultural related processing facilities, maker spaces, etc.	103	8.2%
Open Lands	Open land in wooded areas, along streams, prairies and savannas, wetlands.	162	12.8%
Outdoor Recreation	Ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, parks, trails, campgrounds, shooting ranges.	10	0.8%
Residential	One family structures, multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, townhouses, subdivisions.	261	20.7%
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads.	169	13.4%
Water	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, and reservoirs.	4	0.3%
Woodlands	Forested land, tree nurseries, paper forests, forested wetlands, limited scattered rural residential.	218	17.3%
Total Land Area		1,261	

Source: Marathon County Land Use, 2015 Aerial Photo Interpretation by NCWRPC

Development Trends

Land Supply

The majority of the land within the boundaries of the Village of Spencer is already developed. There are approximately 238 acres of agriculture, 162 acres of open lands, and 218 acres of woodlands that remain undeveloped within the village boundaries. This sums to approximately 600 acres of land considered available for development, although a large portion of this land is undevelopable due to environmental constraints.

Land Values

Table 8-2 shows the change in assessed land values between 2008 and 2016 for various types of land use in the Village of Spencer. Between 2008 and 2016 the number of acres assessed as residential decreased by 70 acres. Annual Statement of Assessments between 2008 and 2014 show that the amount of land assessed as residential decreased between 2008 and 2013, then began increasing in 2014. At the same time, the amount of land in agriculture increased by 51 acres and the amount of land classified as undeveloped increased by

seven acres. The large decrease in residential, coupled with the large increase in agriculture and undeveloped land likely indicates a difference in how the land was assessed, rather than a change in the use of the land over that same period. Over this same time period, commercial land increased by 11 acres, manufacturing decreased by four acres, and the per acre value of every type of land has increased.

Land Demand

The Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographics Services Center projects that there will be an increase of approximately 90 households in the Village of Spencer between 2015 and 2040. If we assume that 90 new units will be needed to accommodate these households, and assume an average net density of 4 units per acre (approximately a 10,000 square foot average lot size), there would need to be approximately 22.5 acres of land available for residential development through 2040. Net density does not factor the land needed for public streets, sidewalks, or other non-residential land. This estimate would be lower for smaller lots and higher for larger lots.

Table 8-2: Change in Assessed Land Value (per acre) 2008 - 2016					
Land Classification	Characteristics in Spencer	2008	2016	Change 2008 - 2016	Percent Change 2008 - 2016
Residential	Parcel Count	777	796	19	2.4%
	Number of Acres	235	165	-70	-29.8%
	Land Only Value	$32,095	$58,717	26,622	82.9%
Commercial	Parcel Count	98	106	8	8.2%
	Number of Acres	133	144	11	8.3%
	Land Only Value	$11,408	$13,288	1,881	16.5%
Manufacturing	Parcel Count	16	17	1	0.0%
	Number of Acres	61	57	-4	0.0%
	Land Only Value	$9,254	$11,093	1,839	0.0%
Agriculture	Parcel Count	9	12	3	33.3%
	Number of Acres	157	208	51	32.5%
	Land Only Value	$166.88	$173.08	6	3.7%
Undeveloped	Parcel Count	9	11	2	22.2%
	Number of Acres	98	105	7	7.1%
	Land Only Value	$622.45	$598.10	-24	-3.9%
Total	Parcel Count	909	942	33	3.6%
	Number of Acres	684	679	-5	-0.7%
	Land Only Value	$14,197.66	$18,163.33	3,966	27.9%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessment

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue Statement of Assessments shows that land assessed as non-residential land has increased by 11 acres between 2008 and 2016. Using this rate of increase to project non-residential land demand into the future results in 35 acres needed for non-residential development between 2010 and 2040.

In summary, as shown on **Table 8-3**, approximately 22.5 acres of land will be needed for residential development and 35 acres of land will be needed for non-residential development between 2010 and 2040. Most of this development will likely take place on agricultural land that currently exists within the village or land immediately adjacent to the village that is annexed. There appears to be enough developable land within the village boundaries to satisfy the projected land needs over the next 20 years, if the land available is utilized efficiently.

Factors affecting Land Demand

Many zoning codes in use today were developed during periods of rapid growth, and local governments were struggling to control that growth so it doesn't overwhelm local services. In the years since, it has been realized that these zoning codes promoted sprawl, decreasing the land use efficiency and walkability of communities. Sometimes, simple amendments could increase the development potential of the land, and possibly reduce the amount of vacant land that is not being used for agriculture, woodlands or wildlife habitat.

Costs to run sewer and water in the village are high, and drainage issues affect the cost of development. Tax or utility incentives can reduce the burden for new development, but it is important to recognize that subsidizing new development merely shifts the costs of new development onto existing residents and businesses. In some cases the long term tax revenue provides a good return on investment for existing residents and businesses, but TIF has been overused and misused frequently in Wisconsin, resulting in districts that have remained open too long or that have

never seen the full tax increment returned. Developer funded tax increment financing (or "paygo" TIF) is one method of incentivizing new development, without the public risks of traditional tax increment financing.

Other ways to improve the development potential of the land are to reduce the regulatory burdens through the zoning and subdivision codes, such as allowing higher density development, smaller lot sizes, less parking, and smaller units. The older neighborhoods in Spencer would accommodate these zoning changes easily, and there are several other ways to do this for new developments without compromising the small town character of the village, including conservation subdivisions, traditional neighborhood development, and using planned unit developments (PUDs) to allow development at a higher density in exchange for higher design standards.

The smaller lot sizes typical of these developments may make them more affordable for buyers and renters, allow for more efficient public services, and reduce sprawl. These developments also increase the efficiency of land use by increasing density.

Excessive parking reduces walkability and reduces the cluster of destinations that makes traditional downtowns successful. If parking is replaced by destinations, downtowns become more attractive places to visit. Reducing parking requirements and redeveloping existing surface parking and other vacant lots can improve the viability of the downtown.

Future Land Use

The Village of Spencer Future Land Use map (**Map 7**) illustrates a potential future pattern of land uses. This map is not a projection of future land use, but a depiction of the best ways to use the land in the future based on environmental, transportation, economic, and utility/community facility factors discussed throughout the document. The map includes different land use categories to guide where new development should be encouraged to locate and where development should be discouraged. This map should be the basis

Table 8-3: Land Use Projections, 2020-2040

	Estimated Total Acreage Needed by Year						
	2010	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**	**2030**	**2035**	**2040**
Agricultural	157	154	151	147	144	141	138
Residential	165	168	171	175	178	181	184
Nonresidential	196	201	206	211	217	224	231

Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, 2015 NCWRPC Aerial Photo Interpretation, Wisconsin Department of Administration, NCWRPC Calculations

for village development codes, such as subdivision and zoning codes, as well as decisions and development approvals by the village. Land use categories and the number of acres within each category are provided in **Table 8-4.**

Map 7 shows most future residential development in contiguous areas to existing residential development in the village, concentrated mostly on the east and west sides of the village. Future commercial is concentrated in the downtown area and along the major highways, while future business and industrial is concentrated in the business and industrial parks, along the highway, and in areas of existing business and industrial development.

A traditional neighborhood development made up of affordable housing on a former industrial site in Seattle's High Point neighborhood.
Source: Brett VA, Flickr, licensed under Creative Commons

Map 7 also shows potential future road and multi-use trail corridors to assist the village in planning the right of way space needed in new developments. These are general corridors that may change based on a site level assessment of environmental conditions, specific development proposals, and landowner desires, but following these or similar general recommendations should improve connectivity and access for adjacent land uses in the future.

Map 7 shows potential future collector roads and roads that are important to maintain or improve connectivity in the village. Additional roads beyond those shown would likely be needed to accommodate development and fill out the local roads within each new development.

As the potential trail corridor is studied, it may be found that there are better routes than those depicted on Map 7, for example, a more scenic, lower stress route, or one that connects to more destinations. The

depiction on Map 7 is not intended to be followed rigidly if better route alternatives are found.

Redevelopment

There are many contaminated sites that may need a contamination identification and remediation in order to be redeveloped. Contamination can reach private wells, soil, groundwater, and surface water.

Pursuing funding opportunities from state agencies for redevelopment of contaminated sites can reduce the uncertainty that otherwise prevents contaminated properties from being redeveloped. Action by the village to evaluate contaminants or to begin remediating the property is often necessary before the private sector is willing to invest in redevelopment. While this may require some upfront investment from the community, property values around the redeveloped properties often increase, providing increased tax revenue. Redevelopment also reduces the conversion of land from agriculture and woodland uses.

The Wisconsin DNR tracks confirmed polluted sites through the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment. The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) only tracks reported contamination, so it is possible that other unreported contamination exists within Spencer, and there may be potential for the identification, remediation and redevelopment of contaminated properties.

There are about 40 contaminated sites identified within Spencer. The majority of these have been cleaned up and closed, but there are several historic spills that may or may not require action.

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. Additionally, although Map 7 shows parcel lines, the future land use categories are not expected to precisely follow parcel lines, but instead show general areas where certain land uses are appropriate. For example, the development of a single family residence or a multi-family building would both be appropriate in an area designated as residential. Zoning categories, on the other hand, are specific to each parcel.

Table 8-4: Future Land Use

Land Use Category	Description	Acres	% of Total Land Area
Agricultural Areas	Agriculture and related uses, farm residences, some limited rural oriented commercial or industrial uses.	16	1.2%
Commercial	Lower impact commercial uses such as retail stores, taverns, restaurants, business offices, motels/hotels, offices, telephone/gas company, gas stations.	59	4.7%
Governmental / Public / Institutional	Schools, churches, cemeteries, libraries, government buildings, National Guard, utility facilities.	61	4.9%
Business / Industrial	Business development, and light and heavy industrial development such as saw/paper/lumber mills, dairies, quarries, business and industrial parks, trucking operations, distribution centers, mining operations, truck stops, gas stations, farm coops, farm implement dealerships, automobile dealerships, offices.	182	14.4%
Open Lands / Woodlands	Undeveloped woodlands, open lands, wetlands,	290	23.0%
Outdoor Recreation	Public and private parks, trails, ball fields, golf courses, playgrounds, campgrounds, shooting ranges, etc.	10	0.8%
Residential	One family structures, farm residences, mobile homes, multiple family structures with three or more households, condos, duplexes, apartments.	466	37.0%
Transportation	Airports, highways, road right-of-ways, railroads, logging roads.	174	13.8%
Water	Open waters, such as lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, creeks, reservoirs, etc.	4	0.3%
Total Land Area		1,261	

Source: Future Land Use map

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

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

Issues

- Developable Land – There is enough undeveloped land available to accommodate projected future demand for new residential and non-residential development. Most of this land is located west of STH 13 and south of areas already developed. However, this land may not be available for development, depending on the land owner. There are two industrial parks with approximately 20 acres remaining.

- Small Town Character – The village recognizes that it functions as a bedroom community to the City of Marshfield and other larger cities in the vicinity. This "small town" character can be a significant factor in attracting new residents and businesses.

- Employment – Housing Mismatch – A significant number of people that work in the village commute in from outside, while a significant number of village residents commute out to other jobs. Investigating the reasons for this mismatch may allow the village to increase the number of people that both live and work in the village.

- Downtown Redevelopment - The retail base of the old downtown area is declining. While existing businesses are doing ok, it is difficult to start up a new business. The village believes the mix of downtown businesses may need to shift to more professional services (e.g., lawyers, insurance, etc.) and some limited medical services (e.g., dentist). The central business District (CBD) also continues to age and is in need of exterior repair.

- Brownfields – While many brownfields have been cleaned up and capped, there are numerous contaminated sites in the Village of Spencer that need to be cleaned up. Brownfield sites are potential tax revenue producing areas that are already served with village services, so public investment into cleaning them up and making them available for development generally provides a positive return on investment and increases the surrounding property values.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Identify future areas for development.

Objectives

- Target future industrial growth to areas contiguous with existing industrial development.

- Promote mixed use residential neighborhoods consisting of a wide range of housing options and types to accommodate all residents, as well as appropriate neighborhood level businesses and home occupations.

Policies

- Direct future industrial growth to areas contiguous with existing industrial sites.

- Direct future residential growth to areas contiguous with existing residential growth and neighborhood level commercial development.

- Avoid developing in sensitive environmental areas, including steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, and areas critical to groundwater recharge.

- Promote a wide range of housing options in new developments.

Strategies/Actions

- Assemble a committee to collect zoning ordinances from other communities and evaluate them for possible local use.

- Evaluate zoning code requirements, such as minimum lot sizes and minimum unit sizes, to ensure they do not create an unnecessary burden on property owners or hinder the development of a range of affordable housing options.

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance.

- Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance.

- Revise codes to allow and encourage a wider variety of subdivision and neighborhood designs, including pocket neighborhoods, townhouses and bungalow courts.

- Evaluate the future land use map annually to ensure it is meeting the village's needs.

Goal 2: Preserve and enhance the small town character of the Village of Spencer.

Objectives

- Identify and preserve those aspects of the Village of Spencer that contribute to the character of the community.

- Analyze and modify ordinances to promote and protect the small town character of the village.

Policies

- Preserve small town character.

- Preserve land for a multi-use trail through the community

Strategies/Actions

- Identify aspects of the village that contribute to the small town character of the community.

- Work with local organizations to maintain and enhance those identified resources.

- Analyze development codes to ensure they encourage the preservation and creation of small town character.

- Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance for subdivisions near sensitive environmental areas

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance for subdivisions with walkability potential.

- Revise codes to allow and encourage a wider variety of subdivision and neighborhood designs, including pocket neighborhoods, townhouses and bungalow courts.

Goal 3: Clean up and redevelop existing brownfields.

Objectives

- Work with the Wisconsin DNR and property owners to identify brownfield locations in the village.

- Identify and pursue funding sources for the identification and remediation of brownfield sites.

- Coordinate with developers and investors to promote re-investment in existing brownfield sites.

- Identify future uses for existing brownfield sites.

Policies

- Work with property owners to cleanup brownfield sites.

- Prioritize redevelopment over conversion of wooded or open land when possible.

Strategies/Actions

- Identify brownfields in the village.

- Meet with property owners to develop a strategy to cleanup brownfield sites.

- Work with the WDNR, property owners, and potential investors and developers to identify and secure funding for the cleanup of brownfields.

- Identify future uses for existing brownfield sites.

Goal 4: Address the costs of development and redevelopment.

Objectives

- Redevelop under-utilized or contaminated properties served by existing utilities

Policies

- Prioritize redevelopment over conversion of wooded or open land when possible.

- Use tax incentives sparingly for business attraction and retention.

Strategies/Actions

- Develop a policy to analyze when to offer investors incentives to locate in the village.

- Identify targeted industries that the village would like to attract to offset utility costs.

Goal 5: Provide a range of options for land use decision making and development in the Village of Spencer.

Objectives

- Continue to update and revise the zoning code as needed.

- Adopt or revise ordinances that increase the flexibility of development while enhancing the quality of life and environment of the village.

Policies

- Review zoning ordinances on a periodic basis to identify areas that need improvement.

- Direct future industrial growth to areas contiguous with existing industrial sites.

- Direct future residential growth to areas contiguous with existing residential or mixed-use growth.

- Avoid developing in sensitive environmental areas, including steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, and areas critical to groundwater recharge.

Strategies/Actions

- Consider reducing minimum lot sizes in the R-3 district and other districts that may benefit from smaller minimums.

- Evaluate zoning code requirements, such as minimum lot sizes and minimum unit sizes, to ensure they do not create an unnecessary burden on property owners or hinder the development of a range of affordable housing options.

- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance.

- Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance.

- Revise codes to allow and encourage a wider variety of subdivision and neighborhood designs, including pocket neighborhoods, townhouses and bungalow courts.

- Maintain the municipal code on the village website.

Map 6
Existing Generalized Land Use
Village of Spencer
Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Parcels
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Governmental / Institutional
- Industrial
- Open Lands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation
- Water
- Woodlands

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co,
2015 Air photo Interpretation

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

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Miles

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
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Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Parcels
- Agricultural Areas
- Commercial
- Governmental / Public / Institutional
- Business / Industrial
- Open Lands / Woodlands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation
- Water
- Proposed Trail Corridor
- Proposed Roads
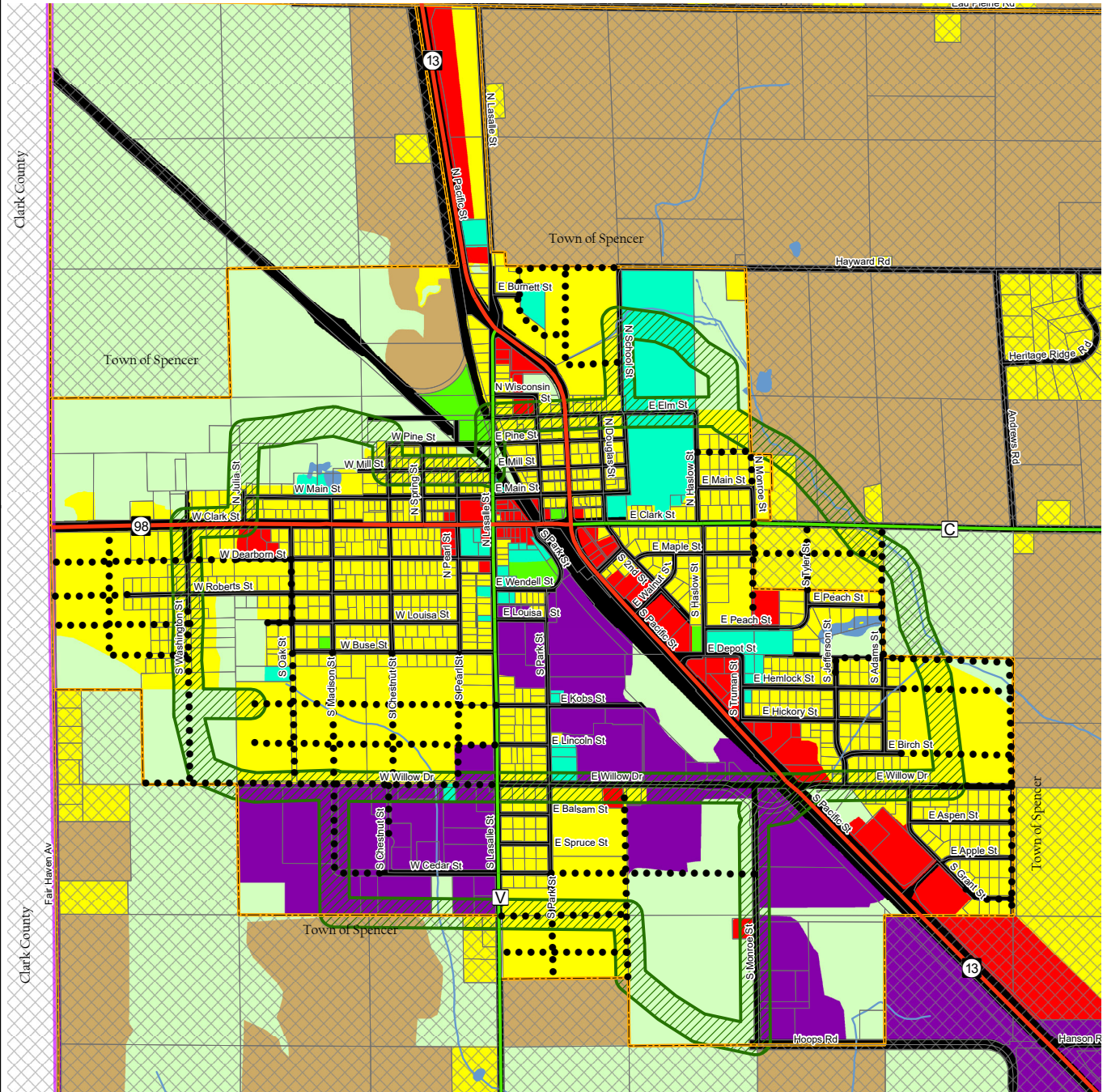
Map 7

Future Land Use

Village of Spencer

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co.

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

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9. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

This chapter describes existing mechanisms that the Village of Spencer 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 Village of Spencer 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

Fire and Emergency Response

There is a volunteer fire department that also provides emergency medical technician (EMT) services to the four surrounding towns.

Cooperative Practices

Surrounding Towns

The village should cooperate with the surrounding towns regarding extraterritorial subdivision and zoning regulation. These tools exist so the cities and villages can influence development that may be annexed eventually or that may affect development patterns and transportation near the village. An extraterritorial subdivision review and zoning code can also provide some continuity to adjacent development and set expectations for developers within the extraterritorial jurisdiction. The extraterritorial jurisdiction extends 1.5 miles from the village boundary.

The village has an agreement to jointly operate the Marshfield municipal court with the City of Marshfield. The governing board is made up of two members from the village and five members from the city.

School District

The Spencer school district provides elementary, junior and high school facilities utilized by surrounding towns. As a large user of land in the village, the school district also has a large impact on land use in the village. The village and the school district should collaborate closely on any land use decisions.

Regional Agencies

The North Wisconsin Central Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) provides planning and mapping assistance and creates regional level plans.

Marathon County

The county provides several services to the village including 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of county highways, and planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation.

State and Federal Cooperation

The village has little direct contact with state or federal agencies. However state agencies regulate 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.

The federal government provides grant and program funding that is distributed through the state, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDGB), HUD programs, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and others. The federal government also requires certain protections such as the Clean Water Act that are implemented through federal and state agencies such as the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the Wisconsin DNR.

Issues

- County Response Time – Located on the western edge of the county, the long distance between the village and county facilities results in long response time for law enforcement and other services.

Goal, Objectives and Policy

Goal 1: Maintain and enhance ongoing relationships with surrounding governments.

Objectives

- Hold meetings on a regular basis with surrounding towns, cities, and villages to discuss issues of mutual interest.

- Work with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department and the City of Marshfield to provide effective police service.

- Negotiate mutual aid agreements with the City of Marshfield and other communities for police protection.

- Coordinate with the City of Marshfield, State of Wisconsin, and Town of Spencer to promote the improvement of STH 13.

- Maintain and enhance existing relationships between municipal employees in different governments.

Policies

- Enhance existing governmental relationships.

- Support the improvement of STH 13 from Spencer to Marshfield.

Strategies/Actions

- Develop and adopt an official map to reserve areas where future roads may be needed.

- Work with other regional governments to develop a regular meeting to discuss issues of regional concern (i.e. quarterly meetings held in a Council of Governments (COG) format).

- Meet on a regular basis with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department and the City of Marshfield Police Department to ensure police protection needs are met.

- Encourage the development of mutual aid agreements with the surrounding communities.

Goal 2: Ensure annexations proceed in an orderly manner.

Objectives

- Work with the surrounding towns to identify long term growth plans for both the village and the town.

- Discuss the development of boundary agreements with the surrounding towns.

- Actively work to prevent large-scale annexations from surrounding towns.

Policies

- Coordinate with the surrounding towns to minimize the impact of annexations.

- Support the creation of a cooperative boundary agreement between the Village of Spencer and Town of Spencer.

Strategies/Actions

- Meet with the Towns of Spencer and Brighton to develop a long-term growth plan.

- Investigate the development of a cooperative boundary agreement.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

The primary reason a community prepares a comprehensive plan is to establish a framework to guide and influence decisions regarding management of growth and regulation of development, to protect and maintain the health, safety and welfare of the community, 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 village 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. The Village Board officially adopts these regulatory and land use control measures as ordinances (or as revisions to the existing ordinances).

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 health, safety or welfare, including both the natural and built environment. The zoning ordinance also controls the scale and form of development, which heavily influences how people will interact with their environment and their neighbors.

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

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 is also discussed in the land use section.

Many communities have or are considering changing their zoning districts from a use based code to a form based code. A form based code primarily regulates the scale and form of development rather than the specific uses. This often provides more flexibility to developers and better achieves a more walkable and efficient land use pattern. Uses that are truly incompatible with each other, such as heavy industrial and residential, are still separated.

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.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

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

- Public buildings (i.e., fire and police stations)

- Park and trail acquisition and development

- Roads and highways (maintenance and new construction/paving)

- Utility system construction/expansion, treatment plants, water towers, wells, etc.

- Joint school and other community development projects

- Fire and police protection equipment

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

Preparing a CIP is normally a joint responsibility between the village board, plan commission, staff, and citizen commissions. The preparation of a capital improvement program may vary from community to community depending on local preferences, the local form of government and available staff. The proposed capital improvement plan should be reviewed in light of the priorities outlined in the comprehensive plan.

Purchase of Development Rights

Purchase of development rights programs provide a way to financially compensate willing landowners for not developing their land. When buying development rights, the community obtains a legal easement, sometimes referred to as a conservation easement, that (usually) permanently restricts development on the land. The landowner, however, still owns the land and can use or sell it for purposes specified in the easement, such as farming, timber production, or hunting.

Since PDR programs are flexible, program administrators can customize purchases of development rights to meet the objectives of both landowners and communities. For example, an easement designed to preserve agricultural resources might allow the landowner to build an additional home or two as long as their placement does not limit the property's long-term agricultural potential.[1]

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of development rights programs enable landowners within valuable agricultural, natural and cultural resource areas to be financially compensated for choosing not to develop some or all of their lands. These landowners are given an option under municipal zoning to legally sever the "development rights" from their land and sell these rights to another landowner or a real estate developer for use at another location. The land from which the development rights have been purchased is permanently protected through a conservation easement or other appropriate form of restrictive covenant, and the development value of the land where the transferred development rights are applied is enhanced by allowing for new or special uses, greater density or intensity, or other regulatory flexibility that zoning without the TDR option would not have permitted.[2]

Brownfield Redevelopment

Pursuing funding from state agencies for redevelopment of contaminated sites can reduce the uncertainty that otherwise prevents contaminated properties from being redeveloped. Action by the village to evaluate contaminants or begin remediating the property is often necessary before the private sector is willing to invest in redevelopment. While this may require some upfront investment from the community, property values around the redeveloped properties often increase and it reduces the conversion of land from agriculture and woodland uses and improves the cost efficiency of public infrastructure, reducing the tax rate on property owners.

1   Definition source: Gayle Miller & Douglas Krieger. Purchase of Development Rights: Preserving Farmland and Open Space. PlannersWeb. Plannersweb.com
2   Definition source: John Theilacker. Pennsylvania Land Trust. Conservationtools.org

Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments

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

Plan Use, Monitoring and Evaluation

The adopted plan should be used as a tool by Spencer 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 Spencer. 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 Village 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 Spencer comprehensive plan may be amended at any time by the village 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.

As noted above, proposed amendments must be reviewed by the Plan Commission prior to final action and adoption by the Village Board. The public should be notified of proposed plan changes and allowed an opportunity for review and comment. For major amendments, the village 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.

The following criteria should be considered when reviewing plan amendments and updates:

- The change is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the Spencer Comprehensive Plan.

- The change does not create an adverse impact on public facilities and services that cannot be mitigated.

- Development resulting from the change does not create an undue impact on surrounding properties. Such development should be consistent with the physical character of the surrounding neighborhood or would upgrade and improve its viability.

- The change allows a more viable transition to the planned uses on adjacent properties than the current land use.

- The change does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural environment including trees, slopes and groundwater, or the impact could be mitigated by improvements on the site or in the same vicinity.

- There is a change in village actions or neighborhood characteristics that would justify a change.

- The change corrects an error made in the original plan.

- There is a community or regional need identified in the comprehensive plan for the proposed land use or service.

- The change does not adversely impact any landmarks or other historically significant structures or properties unless mitigated through relocation, commemoration or dedication.

Consistency Among Plan Chapters

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the implementation chapter describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since Spencer completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan elements. Where deemed appropriate, goals, objectives, and actions have been repeated under all applicable elements to ensure they do not get "lost".

This comprehensive plan also references previous and concurrent related planning efforts (e.g, LRTP, Groundwater Study) to ensure they are considered in planning decisions in conjunction with the recommendations of this plan. Summary descriptions of recent and concurrent planning efforts are provided throughout this plan. Recommendations from other plans have been summarized and incorporated in this plan as deemed appropriate, to foster coordination and consistency between plans. Some related plans, such as the Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan, are incorporated by reference in this plan and are essentially considered appendices of this plan even though they are separate documents.

Action Plan

Table 10-1 provides a list of the major actions listed in each previous chapter to complete in order to fulfill the goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan. The table includes short, mid, and long-term prioritization of the actions described in each of the plan elements to assist the local government in prioritizing the implementation of the plan. This table is not intended to be a rigid action plan, but a guide to assist with implementation. As the plan is implemented, better courses of action may become apparent.

Table 10-1 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting and project assignment. 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 citizens of Spencer, committees, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

- Immediate = As soon as possible

- Short-term = 1-4 years

- Mid-term = 5-9 years

- Long-term = 10+ years

- Ongoing = Activities to continue indefinitely

Table 10-1: Implementation Plan Actions

Action	Priority
Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Actions	**Priority**
Work with Marathon County and private property owners to encourage participation in the Managed Forest Law.	Ongoing
Work with the WDNR to develop a tree management plan and identify funding for implementation.	Short-Term
Develop an action plan for the eventuality of Emerald Ash Borer and other diseases impacting tree health in the village.	Immediate
Amend the zoning code to allow conservation subdivisions.	Short-Term
Encourage conservation easements/purchase of development rights on forested land.	Mid-Term
Work with Marathon County and the WDNR to identify areas critical to maintaining the village's groundwater supply.	Long-Term
Review and update village ordinances to ensure that hazardous development is prohibited from identified locations important to the groundwater supply.	Long-Term
Update zoning and subdivision codes to require stormwater BMPs be integrated into new developments.	Short-Term
Upgrade public stormwater infrastructure to improve water quality.	Ongoing
Coordinate with the state and county Historical Societies, and the Spencer Area Historical Society to identify historic resources.	Short-Term
Meet with property owners and stakeholders to develop a plan to preserve and enhance existing historic sites and structures.	Mid-Term
Help interested property owners obtain information on their property if they feel it is historically significant.	Ongoing
Celebrate historic local sites with a pamphlet or other materials for dissemination.	Mid-Term
Consider forming a historic preservation committee to deal with historic preservation issues.	Short-Term
Seek out and approach property owners/businesses and artists to create murals in the downtown/central business district.	Short-Term
Explore public art programs available to the village.	Mid-Term
Approach artists about art opportunities on public property.	Ongoing
Housing Actions	**Priority**
Use zoning to accommodate both multifamily and single family housing in appropriate areas, such as near the downtown.	Immediate
Identify sites for future senior housing facilities, hotel units, and other multi-unit housing.	Short-Term
Develop a village policy to aid the development of future senior- and multi-family housing facilities.	Immediate
Work with owners of existing multi-unit housing (including hotels) to improve or expand facilities.	Immediate
Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance based on model ordinances.	Short-Term

Evaluate the zoning code to ensure minimum lot sizes, minimum unit sizes, and other requirements do not unnecessarily hinder the development of a range of housing or affordable housing.	Short-Term
Adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance to allow for greater variety of housing options near environmentally sensitive areas.	Short-Term
Work with the Marathon County Housing Authority to develop changes or modifications to the existing housing program to encourage greater participation.	Mid-Term
Develop a strategy to notify the public about the availability of the CDBG housing funds.	Mid-Term
Utilities and Community Facilities Actions	**Priority**
Enforce the wellhead protection plan and wellhead protection ordinances.	Ongoing
Investigate the potential for a storm water utility.	Short-Term
Implement recommendations from the recently completed stormwater study.	Short-Term
Investigate the feasibility and benefit of using green infrastructure, and incorporate green infrastructure into park and public space designs where feasible, including streets.	Short-Term
Meet with representatives from the Marshfield Clinic system and MCDEVCO to encourage the development of a local medical facility in the village.	Immediate
Meet on an as needed basis to ensure that the fire, EMS, and police services continue to receive the needed support to fulfill their duties.	Ongoing
Meet with the Family Resource Center and Spencer Kids Group leaders to develop a plan for the continuation of their efforts.	Immediate
Work with Marathon County, MCDEVCO, and local stakeholders to identify and secure private funding support to continue the efforts of the Spencer Kids Group.	Short-Term
Include the Spencer School District in all discussions and ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance the Family Resource Center, the Spencer Kids Group, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.	Ongoing
Invite the Center directors to meet with the Village Board and Chamber of Commerce on a regular basis to maintain and enhance cooperation and communication efforts between the village and the Center.	Ongoing
Work with LuCille Tack Center directors and advocates to identify and develop additional funding sources for the Center.	Long-Term
Ensure applicable people are trained in NIMS standards.	Short-Term
Develop a comprehensive emergency action plan.	Short-Term
Budget for and complete a long-term park and recreation plan for the village.	Immediate
Work with local stakeholders and community groups to develop the comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.	Immediate
Utilize the comprehensive outdoor recreation plan as a basis for applications to the Wisconsin DNR for funding assistance.	Short-Term
Investigate requiring future developments to set aside land or a fee-in-lieu for the incorporation of park and open space to provide space for future residents.	Short-Term
Develop a multi-use trail plan or integrate multi-use trails into the CORP to prioritize trail segments and improve the competitiveness for grant funding.	Immediate
Work with the county and other local governments to develop a plan for a regional multi-use trail system.	Short-Term
Assign maintenance and beautification of public areas to one of the standing committees of the village board.	Mid-Term

Develop a long-range plan for the beautification of public spaces.	Mid-Term
Contact community organizations, residents, property owners and businesses to increase support and participation in improvement efforts.	Long-Term
Survey businesses on the potential for creating a business improvement district in areas that would benefit from public improvements. Clearly identify the benefits and costs of a BID to local businesses.	Short-Term
Hold information sessions on the creation of a BID for businesses and residents.	Short-Term
Transportation Actions	**Priority**
Work with stakeholders owners to develop a long-range plan for the revitalization/ redevelopment of Spencer's downtown.	Short-Term
Develop a strategy to involve the whole village in the process.	Short-Term
Through the CIP, budget for upgraded facilities on downtown streets.	Mid-Term
Identify and utilize resources, such as CDBG funds, TIF, general funds, the Main Street program, MCDEVCO, UW-Extension, DNR Brownfields, WEDC, and others to help revitalize the CBD.	Ongoing
Work with Marathon County, WisDOT, the railroad, and other appropriate entities to mitigate the issues caused by longer and/or more frequent trains travelling through the village.	Immediate
Add caution signage near sidewalks and roads with angled railroad crossings.	Mid-Term
Ensure sidewalks and roads have additional pavement as needed to allow perpendicular crossings of railroad tracks.	Mid-Term
Work with private entities to investigate the feasibility of providing transportation to Marshfield.	Short-Term
Investigate the feasibility of providing public transportation to Marshfield.	Short-Term
Identify local residents to participate in volunteer programs for transportation of senior citizens.	Short-Term
Investigate methods of transportation used in other communities, such as providing public funding to reduce taxi fares.	Short-Term
Maintain a brochure on transportation options at the Village Office and on the village website.	Short-Term
Work with WisDOT and WDNR to identify right of way to build walkways, multi-use trails, and on-street bicycle accommodations where needed.	Mid-Term
Develop a budget for the construction and maintenance of walkways, multi-use trails, and on-street bicycle accommodations.	Short-Term
Pursue a multi-use trail on the railroad right of way if the use of the railroad is ever discontinued or abandoned.	Long-Term
Develop pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along any roads that serve as collectors or arterials.	Long-Term
Repeal the prohibition on riding a bicycle on the street when there is a "usable path" adjacent to the roadway in Chapter 186, Section 186-5.	Short-Term
Repeal the prohibition on riding two abreast on village streets.	Short-Term
Change the wording in Chapter 186, Section 186-5, B (1) from "as near as possible" to "as near as practicable" to match Wisconsin state statutes and improve the safety of bicyclists.	Short-Term

Repeal the prohibition on entering and leaving a bicycle lane in Section 186-5 J (2) to allow bicyclists preparing for a left turn to leave the bicycle lane.	Short-Term
Consider allowing bicyclists on sidewalks in some sections of the village where conflicts with pedestrians are less frequent and there are minimal driveway or street crossings of the sidewalk.	Short-Term
Create multi-use trail and sidewalk connections between dead ends and other poorly connected areas of the village where new roads are not feasible or desirable in the near future.	Mid-Term
Ensure sidewalks and roads have additional pavement as needed to allow perpendicular crossings of railroad tracks.	Mid-Term
Develop a plan for economically maintaining streets that are not scheduled for paving in the near future.	Short-Term
Update ordinances to require street construction and dedication to village standards in new developments.	Short-Term
Update ordinances to require the reservation of right of way to connect village streets to future subdivisions.	Short-Term
Consider adopting an official map to reserve right of way for future village streets.	Short-Term
Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians when road projects occur by providing appropriate infrastructure based on the volume, speed of traffic, and destinations.	Ongoing
Explore public and private on demand transportation options to assist seniors and others without access to a motor vehicle.	Ongoing
Change parking spots to dedicated drop-off zones as AVs increase in use.	Long-Term
Update intersection designs to safely and efficiently accommodate all modes of transportation, possibly including dedicated space for AVs, standard automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians.	Long-Term
Consider the location of EV charging stations in the village.	Mid-Term
Consider how parking demand will likely be lower as new development occurs and as roads are resurfaced or reconstructed.	Long-Term
Consider relaxing or reducing parking requirements in the village zoning code.	Short-Term
Economic Development Actions	**Priority**
Meet with downtown business owners to develop a vision for the future of the downtown.	Short-Term
Develop a redevelopment plan to revitalize the CBD.	Short-Term
Consider the creation of a Redevelopment Authority (RDA) or Community Development Authority (CDA) to lead redevelopment and community development efforts.	Immediate
Work with UW-Extension to conduct a market study to determine what types of businesses would be best suited to the downtown area.	Short-Term
Educate local businesses about the advantages and disadvantages of a BID, including examples.	Immediate
Work with interested stakeholders to investigate the feasibility, interest level, and long-term goals of a potential BID.	Short-Term
Investigate other successful BIDs to learn best practices.	Short-Term
List available business and industrial sites and buildings with WEDC and any other economic development search tools.	Short-Term
Work with UW-Extension and downtown stakeholders to develop a façade improvement program.	Mid-Term

In concert with the chamber of commerce, MCDEVCO and downtown stakeholders, develop a "shop Spencer" program to encourage residents to shop in Spencer.	Mid-Term
Identify potential brownfields sites.	Short-Term
Apply for DNR, WEDC and other potential funding to identify and clean up contaminants at brownfield sites.	Mid-Term
Invite MCDEVCO to provide the village board with regular updates on their efforts.	Ongoing
Work with MCDEVCO to develop a marketing strategy for the village industrial park.	Mid-Term
Identify industries and businesses that would complement the industrial park.	Mid-Term
Develop a business retention and expansion visitation program with MCDEVCO to meet with existing businesses, identify their needs, and develop methods for the village to help them expand their businesses.	Short-Term
Develop a marketing incentive policy for the village to cover when to participate or offer incentives to new developments.	Short-Term
Continuously evaluate the available infrastructure, including transportation, broadband, electrical, and gas, and how it meets the needs of businesses.	Ongoing
Complete an economic development assessment and strategy that identifies the areas industries, strengths and weaknesses.	Short-Term
Work to attract a catalyst or magnet that will draw other businesses to the area.	Ongoing
Evaluate home occupations that are allowed by the zoning code. Consider expanding the potential home occupations.	Short-Term
Evaluate and revise the zoning ordinance to ensure an adequate mix of commercial and industrial uses is possible in the same district (e.g. a cabinet maker that also sells cabinets on site, or allowing a retail store on the same site as a cheese manufacturing facility.)	Mid-Term
Survey residents regarding local employment opportunities.	Short-Term
Survey workers and business owners/human resource departments regarding employment opportunities, workforce issues and skills.	Short-Term
Coordinate with the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to ensure workers and residents have the skills needed.	Short-Term
Coordinate with Northcentral Technical College, the Spencer School District, and local employers to align education and skills with current and future employment needs.	Mid-Term
Connect businesses with financial resources, including startup financing, angel investors, and expansion capital.	Ongoing
Connect businesses with agencies and organizations that provide technical assistance to startups, such as the Small Business Development Center.	Ongoing
Keep information on the village website up to date.	Ongoing
Explore a pop-up shop program to help fill vacancies in the downtown.	Short-Term
Regularly perform business retention and expansion visits with existing businesses.	Ongoing
Survey existing businesses on opportunities and challenges.	Short-Term
Maintain contact with state, federal and local agencies and economic development organizations for resources and assistance.	Ongoing
Attend conferences and workshops put on by agencies and economic development organizations.	Ongoing
Land Use Actions	**Priority**
Assemble a committee to collect zoning ordinances from other communities and evaluate them for possible local use.	Short-Term

Evaluate zoning code requirements, such as minimum lot sizes and minimum unit sizes, to ensure they do not create an unnecessary burden on property owners or hinder the development of a range of affordable housing options.	Short-Term
Revise codes to allow and encourage a wider variety of subdivision and neighborhood designs, including pocket neighborhoods, townhouses and bungalow courts.	Short-Term
Evaluate the future land use map annually to ensure it is meeting the village's needs.	Ongoing
Identify aspects of the village that contribute to the small town character of the community.	Short-Term
Work with local organizations to maintain and enhance those identified resources.	Long-Term
Analyze development codes to ensure they encourage the preservation and creation of small town character.	Short-Term
Adopt a Conservation Subdivision ordinance for subdivisions near sensitive environmental areas	Short-Term
Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance for subdivisions with walkability potential.	Short-Term
Revise codes to allow and encourage a wider variety of subdivision and neighborhood designs, including pocket neighborhoods, townhouses and bungalow courts.	Short-Term
Identify brownfields in the village.	Short-Term
Meet with property owners to develop a strategy to cleanup brownfield sites.	Short-Term
Work with the WDNR, property owners, and potential investors and developers to identify and secure funding for the cleanup of brownfields.	Mid-Term
Identify future uses for existing brownfield sites.	Mid-Term
Develop a policy to analyze when to offer investors incentives to locate in the village.	Short-Term
Identify targeted industries that the village would like to attract to offset utility costs.	Mid-Term
Identify methods to offset the costs of high utility rates on new investors.	Mid-Term
Consider reducing minimum lot sizes in the R-3 district and other districts that may benefit from smaller minimums.	Short-Term
Evaluate zoning code requirements, such as minimum lot sizes and minimum unit sizes, to ensure they do not create an unnecessary burden on property owners or hinder the development of a range of affordable housing options.	Short-Term
Maintain the municipal code on the village website.	Ongoing
Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions	**Priority**
Develop and adopt an official map to reserve areas where future roads may be needed.	Short-Term
Work with other regional governments to develop a regular meeting to discuss issues of regional concern	Long-Term
Meet on a regular basis with the Marathon County Sheriff's Department and the City of Marshfield Police Department to ensure police protection needs are met.	Ongoing
Encourage the development of mutual aid agreements with the surrounding communities.	Immediate
Meet with the Towns of Spencer and Brighton to develop a long-term growth plan.	Mid-Term
Investigate the development of a cooperative boundary agreement	Mid-Term

VILLAGE OF SPENCER COMPRHENSIVE
PLAN 2017 RESOLUTION

Village of Spencer
Marathon County, Wisconsin

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

Adoption of the Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan 2017.

The Village of Spencer Plan Commission, by this resolution, further resolves and orders as follows:
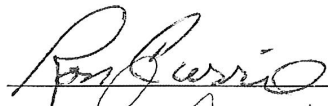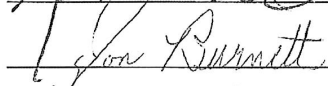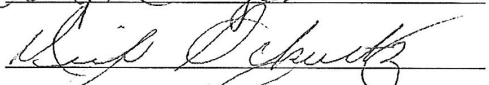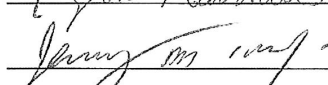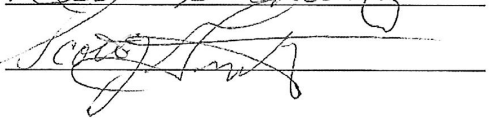
All maps and other materials noted and attached as exhibits to the Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan are incorporated into and made a part of the Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan.

The vote of the village plan commission in regard to this resolution shall be recorded by the clerk of the village plan commission in the official minutes of the Village of Spencer Plan Commission.
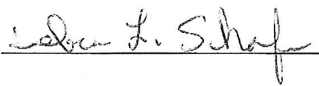
The Village clerk shall properly post or publish this resolution as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats.

Adopted this 2nd day of August 2017.

Plan Commission Members

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____

Attest:

Village of Spencer Deputy Clerk _____ Date _8-2-17_____

VILLAGE OF SPENCER

MARATHON COUNTY, WISCONSIN

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE VILLAGE OF SPENCER

CHAPTER 480 ZONING,

ARTICLE I INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS,

CREATING SECTION 480-7-1 ENTITLED

"ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN"

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Spencer, Marathon County, Wisconsin, do ordain as follows:

<u>Section 1:</u>   CHAPTER 480 ZONING, ARTICLE I INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS, SECTION 408-7-1 ENTITLED "ADOPTION OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN" of the Code of the Village of Spencer is hereby created to provide as follows:

Sec. 408-7-1 – Adoption of Comprehensive Plan

1. The title of the comprehensive plan shall be "Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan 2017."

2. The Board of Trustees of the Village of Spencer, by this ordinance, adopted on proper notice with a quorum and vote by a majority of the Board of Trustees members-elect, provides the authority for the Village of Spencer to amend its comprehensive plan under ss 66.1001(4), Wis. Stats., and provides the authority for the Board of Trustees to order its publication.

3. The Board of Trustees of the Village of Spencer has adopted written procedures designed to foster public participation in every state of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by ss 66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats.

4. The Village of Spencer, has held at least one public hearing on this ordinance, with notice in compliance with the requirements of ss 66.1001(4)(d), Wis. Stats.

5. The Plan Commission of the Village of Spencer, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Board of Trustees the adoption of the Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan, which contains all of the elements specified in ss 66.1001(2), Wis. Stats.

6. The Board of Trustees of the Village of Spencer, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopts the document entitled "Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan 2017" as the amended comprehensive plan for the Village and incorporates it into this Code as if fully set forth herein pursuant to ss 66.1001(4)(c), Wis. Stats.

Section 2:   If any provision of this Ordinance is invalid or unconstitutional or if the application of this Ordinance to any person or circumstances is found invalid or unconstitutional by a Court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the
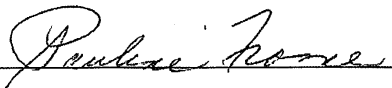
provision or application of this Ordinance which can given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provisions or applications.

Section 3: All Ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.
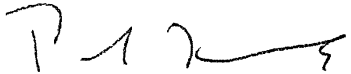
Section 4: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its date of passage and notice to the public as required by law.

Adopted this _13_ day of _November_, 2017.

VILLAGE OF SPENCER

By:_____

Pauline Frome, President

ATTEST:

By:_____

Paul Hensch, Administrator-Clerk-Treasurer

Adopted: 11-13-17

Noticed: 11-22-17

Village of Spencer
Public Participation Plan (PPP)

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

I.   Plan Development:

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

The public participation plan will incorporate the following:

1.   All meetings for the planning process will be posted and open to the public.

2.   Plan related materials will be available at the Village Hall for review by the public.

3.   The draft plan and maps will be available on a website for review by the public.

4.   A public hearing will be held to solicit comment from the public.

5.   The Comprehensive Plan will be distributed as outlined in state statute.

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

II.   Implementation, Evaluation & Update:

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

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

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

Resolution 2016-5
Resolution for the Adoption of a
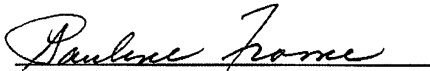**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)**

THE VILLAGE OF SPENCER DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the Village is updating its Comprehensive Plan as outlined in Wisconsin Statutes; and
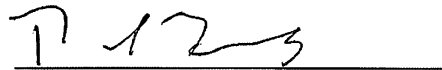
WHEREAS, public participation is critical for the development of a plan; and

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

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

_____
President

_____
Clerk

APPENDIX C: STATE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS

State Comprehensive Planning Goals

Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001 requires that the goals, objectives, policies, and programs of local governmental units be consistent with the fourteen planning goals in the State planning legislation, which include:

1. Promote the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

2. Encourage neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.

3. Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes and woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.

4. Protect economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.

5. Encourage land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state government, and utility costs.

6. Preserve cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

7. Encourage coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.

8. Build community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.

9. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels throughout each community.

10. Provide adequate infrastructure and public services and a supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

11. Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.

12. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.

13. Plan and develop land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.

14. Provide an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that provides mobility, convenience, and safety, which meets the needs of all citizens including transit-dependent and disabled.

Village of Spencer Comprehensive Plan 2017