Chippewa County
Planning & Zoning Committee
Special Meeting
February 23, 2026
Chippewa County Courthouse, Room 302
5:00 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Members of the Public Wishing to Be Heard

(Comments will be limited to 5 minutes per speaker.)

4. Consent Agenda

(Unless separation of an item is requested, all items will be adopted under one motion.)

Motion to approve.

Motion:	Approved
Result:	**(3 - 0)**
Mover:	Duane Shoebridge
Seconder:	Rocky Kempe
Ayes:	Jason Bergeron, Duane Shoebridge, Rocky Kempe
Nayes:	None
Absent:	David Kelly, Chuck Hull

1. Approve the Agenda

2. Approve the Minutes - None

3. Schedule Next Meeting Date - March 19, 2026 @ 5:00pm

5. Reports

None

6. Public Hearings - for Discussion and Action

1. Public Hearing on Chippewa County's Comprehensive Plan 2025-2045

   Chair Bergeron opened the public hearing:

   Pamela Guthman spoke on the comprehensive plan. She was hoping that ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) data could be acknowledged within the housing element in some fashion. Housing is aligned with the overall health of all individuals and we sometimes miss the connection. Maybe in the future, Chippewa County could consider the creation of an additional element the ties other elements such as housing together with health. Guthman discussed the importance of air quality within Chippewa County.

   Brian Guthman thanked the committee and the individuals who worked on the comprehensive plan.

   Chair Bergeron closed the public hearing.

7. Business Items

1. Resolution to Recommend Adoption of the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan

General discussion occurred on the comments raised by Guthman. Chris Straight, Senior Planner, West Central Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission (WCWRPC) suggested a paragraph could be added to the housing element that connects U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) information with ALICE data in a paragraph or two. Straight indicated that a health element could be added in the future if so desired, by adding a strategy in the implementation element or in the communities and facilities element. Straight could integrate air quality into the natural resources, showing that it needs to be protected. Straight would provide a letter addressing these points, along with the inserted language. The PZC was in favor of this approach.
Clary indicated that written comments were received from one individual. It appeared that the suggestions were in line with the process of adopting regulations for data centers. The committee felt that the plan adequately addressed the comments.

Motion to approve the resolution with the changes to the Comprehensive Plan as suggested.

Motion:	Approved
Result:	**(3 - 0)**
Mover:	Rocky Kempe
Seconder:	Duane Shoebridge
Ayes:	Jason Bergeron, Duane Shoebridge, Rocky Kempe
Nayes:	None
Absent:	David Kelly, Chuck Hull

8. Agenda Items for Future Consideration

9. Adjourn

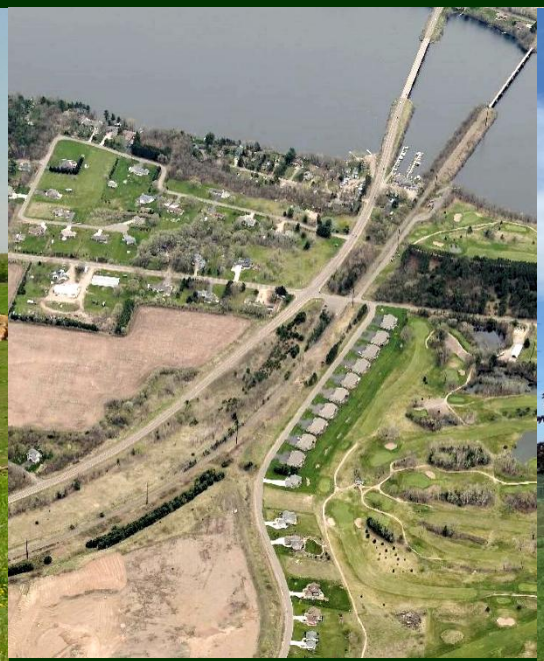





CHIPPEWA COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025-2045

Adopted Month XX, 2026


CHIPPEWA COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan
2025-2045

CHIPPEWACOUNTY
Est. 1848
WISCONSIN

prepared with assistance from
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

WCWRPC
coordinate. partner. advocate. serve.

Acknowledgements

The County recognizes and thanks the following community members for their participation and input in this plan update:

Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Committee

The Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Committee guided this plan update. Members of the Committee include:

Jason Bergeron, Chair
Duane Shoebridge, Vice-Chair
David Kelly
Rocky Kempe
Chuck Hull

Special thanks to the Chippewa County Planning & Zoning and Land Conservation and Forest Management staff for their assistance in this planning effort.

Plan Update Focus Groups

During 2025, community members and various stakeholder organizations were invited to participate in seven focus group meetings conducted during the process on the following topics:

Agriculture (2 meetings)
Economic Development
Housing
Land Use & Intergovernmental Cooperation (2 meetings)
Natural Resources

Thank you to those community members who contributed to the plan update through the focus groups or by providing comments on the draft plan. This plan also incorporates the goals, objectives, and recommendations of other community plans that also provided opportunities for public input, including local comprehensive plans and other Countywide plans such as the *Bike & Pedestrian Plan* and the *Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

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Chippewa County is a thriving and welcoming community that offers an exceptional quality of life for all residents.



1. INTRODUCTION

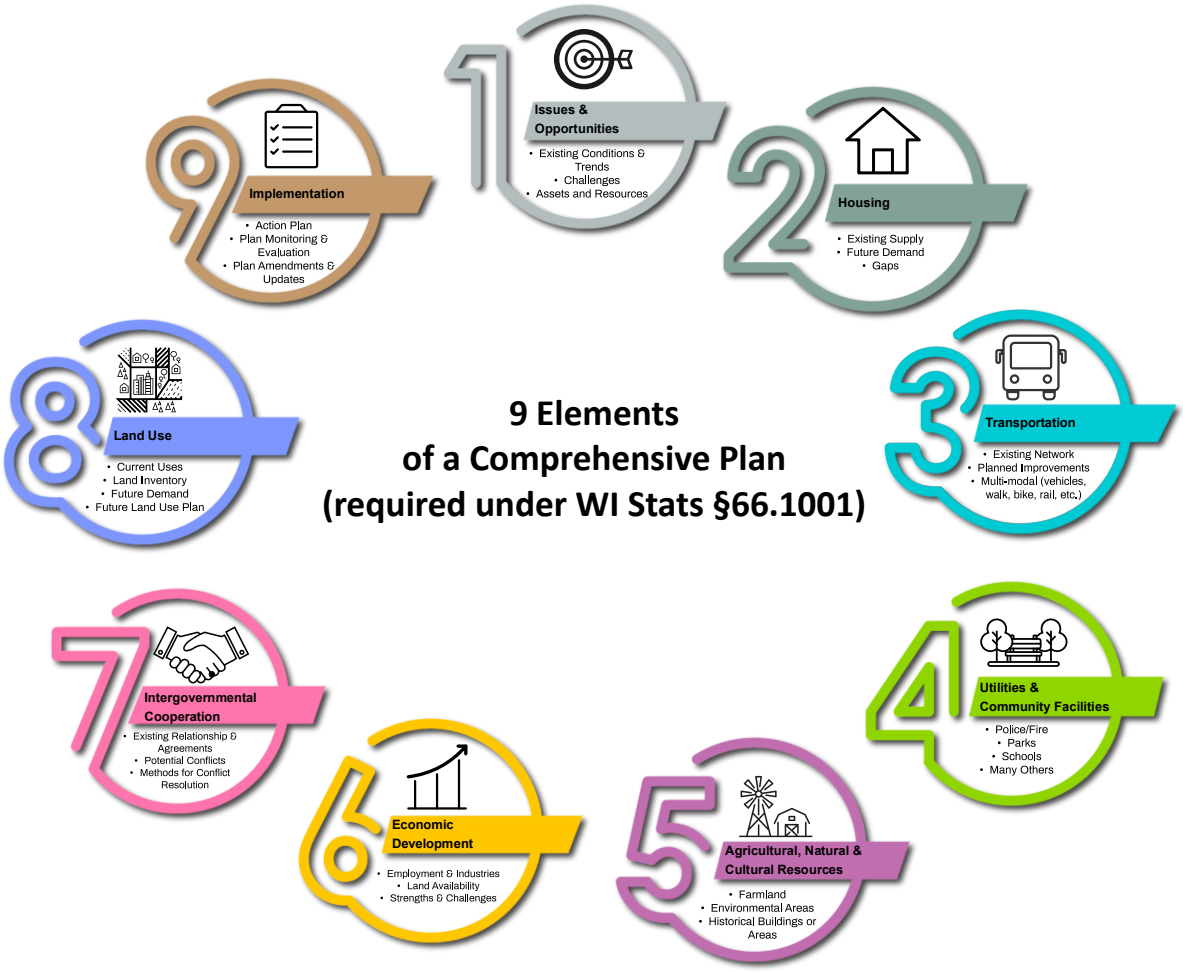
Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Plan Purpose, Authority & Scope

Planning is an orderly, open approach to determining local needs, setting goals and priorities, and developing a guide for action. The Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan serves as a long-term policy guide to help shape the County's growth, development, and preservation efforts over the coming decades.

In 1999, the WI State Legislature created a new framework for community planning in the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin Act 9, which created Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001. **This statute requires that Chippewa County's actions related to its zoning ordinances, subdivision (land division) ordinance, and any official mapping must be consistent with its comprehensive plan.** "Consistent with" means that these ordinances and any County decisions or actions during the implementation and enforcement of these ordinances shall further and not contradict the goals, objectives, and policies within this Comprehensive Plan.

The law provides additional guidance regarding what must be included in each comprehensive plan and how the plan should be developed. Each plan must incorporate 20-year land use projections and encourage public participation during the planning process. Additionally, each plan must address nine key elements as shown in the figure below. Most of these elements are chapters of this plan and the two words (chapter and element) are sometimes used interchangeably. The *Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan 2025 – 2045* update fully addresses the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001.



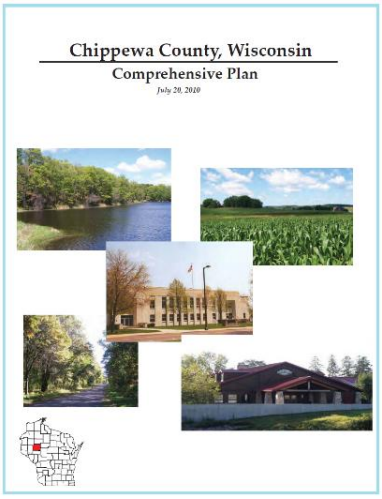
1. Introduction

1.2 Relationship to Farmland Preservation Planning

Wisconsin Statutes §91.10 requires that Chippewa County includes the Farmland Preservation Plan in this Comprehensive Plan and shall ensure that the Farmland Preservation Plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Farmland Preservation Plans (FPPs) are guiding documents that outline how a county or town wants to address farmland preservation and the agricultural economy. The FPP is not a regulatory document by itself, but does identify farmland preservation areas that may allow farmland owners to pursue tax credits at their discretion. A full update of the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan has been incorporated into the Agricultural Resources element of this Comprehensive Plan. The Agricultural Resources element fully addresses the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes §91 and Admin Code ATCP 49 as a certified Farmland Preservation Plan.

1.3 Relationship to Previous County Plans

This Comprehensive Plan is an update of the *Chippewa County, Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan*, which was adopted on July 20, 2010. The issues, goals, objectives, and policies from the 2010 Plan were reviewed and updated as part of this document. The maps, data, and a review of existing programs and plans were also updated. This plan is also a complete update and replacement of the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan, which was adopted in October 2015. Since both the Comprehensive Plan and Farmland Preservation Plan should be fully updated every 10 years, this document places both of these plans on a parallel schedule for the future. As will be later noted in the plan elements, various other County plans were considered during the planning process and integrated into the goals, objectives, policies, and strategies of this Comprehensive Plan when appropriate, but does not update or replace these other plans.



1.4 Plan Update Process & Public Involvement

The Chippewa County plan update was directed by the County Planning & Zoning Committee and coordinated by the Director of the County's Planning & Zoning Department, with facilitation support from the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC). The Director of the County's Land Conservation & Forest Management Department was also very actively involved during the project, in particular during the creation of the Agricultural Resources, Natural Resources, and Land Use elements. Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation provided significant support during the creation of the Economic Development element. The Chippewa County GIS Coordinator provided significant mapping support during project.

The planning process offered numerous opportunities for public input in accordance with the public participation requirements of Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001. The Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Committee, effectively the County's plan commission, served as the plan steering committee, which met eight times with WCWRPC beginning in January 2025 through January 2026 to guide the plan's creation. All County committee meetings were open to the public, properly noticed, and met the requirements of the Wisconsin Open Meeting's Law.

1. Introduction

In addition to the Planning & Zoning Committee meetings, key activities during the planning process included:

January 28, 2025 — **Wisconsin Towns Association-Chippewa Co Unit Presentation**

February 11, 2025 — **Adoption of Public Participation Procedures**
Following review and recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Committee, the County Board adopted public participation procedures as required by Wis. Stats. §66.1001. See Appendix 1 for these procedures.

March-May 2025 — **City, Village, & Town Surveys distributed & Local Comprehensive Plan review**
A survey was distributed to all local municipalities to obtain input on their issues, opportunities, trends, plans, and recommendations. The town survey included additional questions regarding status of land use controls, the draft existing land use map, and initial feedback regarding farmland preservation regulations. Current municipal comprehensive plans were also reviewed by WCWRPC during the planning process. Survey responses and comprehensive plan highlights have been integrated into each plan element and were used heavily in the creation of the draft goals, objectives, policies, and strategies, largely making this a "bottom-up" plan guided by the vision of Chippewa County's communities.

July 21, 2025 — **Chippewa County Agriculture Educators Meeting**

July-August 2025 — **Farmland Owner Survey**
This survey was used to guide Chapter 6. Agricultural Resources & Farmland Preservation Plan. Section 6.1 summarizes the survey while the full survey results are provided in Appendix 3.

August-December 2025 — **Focus Group Meetings**
The Planning & Zoning Committee identified five focus groups listed below to help guide the update of key elements (chapters) of the plans. The Committee then identified various stakeholder representatives that were invited to participate on each focus group. All meetings averaging 2-3 hours were facilitated by WCWRPC. The Agriculture and Land Use Focus Groups met twice. The Chippewa Economic Development Corporation invited additional participants for the Economic Development Focus Group and assisted with hosting the meeting. Highlights from the Focus Group meeting have been integrated into the In January 2026, draft chapters of plan were emailed to the Focus Group and comments were invited.

August 18	**Agriculture & Working Lands #1**
August 21	**Economic Development**
September 22	**Housing**
November 10	**Water & Natural Resources**
November 11	**Land Use & Intergovernmental #1**
December 9	**Agriculture & Working Lands #2**
December 10	**Land Use & Intergovernmental #2**

November-December 2025 — **Meetings with Zoned Towns**
WCWRPC requested meetings with all zoned towns. Meetings were conducted with each Town Board and/or Planning Commission in the Towns of Anson, Bloomer, Eagle Point, Hallie, Lafayette, and Wheaton; the Town of Woodmohr declined to schedule a meeting. These meetings focused primarily on land use and farmland preservation.

January 22, 2026 — **Planning & Zoning Committee Approves Public Hearing Draft**

January 23, 2026 — **Public Hearing Notice posted** – A copy of the notice is included in Appendix 1.

February 18, 2026 — **County Land Conservation & Forest Committee discussion on draft Farmland Preservation Plan**

February 23, 2026 — **Public Hearing**

February 23, 2026 — **County Planning & Zoning Committee approves resolution recommending plan adoption.**

March 10, 2026 — **County Board Adoption of Comprehensive Plan**

During the plan update, WCWRPC also met and corresponded with various County department staff and a number of additional committees (e.g., 911 Committee, LEPC) to obtain input into the plan and draft elements; some of these meetings also discussed the update of the County's *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan* that was being updated concurrently.

1.5 Plan Framework

The Comprehensive Plan contains 12 chapters that provide data, resources, and recommendations for the County over the next 20 years. While each plan element is unique, the framework of this plan addresses them in a consistent manner. With the exceptions of **Chapter 2: County Context** and **Chapter 12: Implementation**, each element has the following general structure:

1. **Key Issues & Opportunities** for the element are noted at the beginning of each plan element; these were identified through the data, community plans, and/or community perspectives.
2. A brief **introduction** to the element, which provides a general explanation and identifies the importance of the element to community development.
3. **Existing conditions** with background research and statistical data specific to that element and Chippewa County, which helped frame discussions on that element with the Planning & Zoning Committee, focus groups, and community at large. **Chapter 2: County Context** provides data and statistics for the County that will be referenced throughout the Plan, while highlights of the data will be provided in the chapter itself.
4. Summary of **key issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for the cities, villages, and towns** within the County adopted since 1/1/2015.
5. Summary of **related plans, programs, and partners** at the local, regional, State and/or federal levels that may impact implementation of the element. Local plans and programs will be listed in the chapter itself while non-local plans and programs will be identified in the appendices.
6. A **Community Perspective,** which highlights the results of public engagement efforts related to the element, including input from focus groups, surveys, and community meetings.
7. The **Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Strategies** for the element.
    a. Goals are overarching statements that describe a desired future or may portray Chippewa County in a new light. Most elements only include one, general goal statement.

About the Goals, Objectives, Policies, & Strategies (the GOPS)

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires most plan elements to include goals, objectives, and policies, but these are defined and determined locally. To assist with plan implementation, this comprehensive further distinguishes between policies (decision-making guidance) and strategies (recommended actions).

The goals and objectives are County-wide statements of a desired future. The policies and strategies are written from a Chippewa County government perspective, though there is not an expectation that the County will be responsible for leading or implementing all actions, as will be further noted in the various elements. It will require strong partnerships and intergovernmental cooperation to realize all plan goals.

The GOPS were formed by considering the County's 2010 Comprehensive Plan as well as the current comprehensive plans of the towns, villages, and cities in the County and other adopted County plans. The GOPS were then further fine-tuned based on Focus Group meetings, survey results, and County Committee input.

Chippewa County is a diverse county in its landscape, resources, socio-economics, and growth pressures. The County's Planning & Zoning Committee expressed that this Plan and its GOPS must be broad, general, and flexible enough to reflect Chippewa County as a whole, with a particular emphasis on the towns given the higher-level of County support and regulatory oversight in the unincorporated areas.

b. Objectives are a more specific list of sub-goals or aims that will help bring Chippewa County Goals to fruition.

c. Policies are decision-making guidance that do not have a final deliverable or foreseeable conclusion. For land use decisions in particular, consistency with the policies within this Comprehensive Plan are important as discussed on page 1.

d. Strategies are recommended actionable tasks with a clearly defined result or deliverable when possible.[1]

Implementation of this plan is more thoroughly explained in **Chapter 12: Implementation**, however, it is valuable to reiterate the following key implementation policies:

1. This is a plan for Chippewa County as a community, not a strategic plan for the County government. The County's government is not responsible for implementing all recommended strategies; strong partnerships are vital to achieving the plan goals.
2. This plan should be utilized and applied in its entirety. The elements of this plan do not exist in isolation from one another. For example, when contemplating an action that will impact land use and development in the County, that action must be considered for its compliance with all goals, objectives, policies, and strategies identified in this plan. This is discussed further in Chapter 12.
3. This plan is a guiding document that must be flexible, adaptable, and regularly updated throughout its useful life. It is the culmination of a year-long process to establish a 20-year vision for Chippewa County. The priorities, trends, and resources in place today may not be the same as those in the years to come. As the priorities and resources of the Count shift over time, the Plan should be updated to reflect those changes.
4. There are overlapping or repetitive aspects within the plan and some topics and actions do not fit perfectly within one of the elements. To reduce redundancy, some plan aspects (i.e., data, community input, goals/objectives, policies/strategies, programs) have been organized according to the most-applicable element rather than repeating in multiple chapters. Cross-references between elements have been included in some policy sections.
5. As a County-wide plan, obtaining a County consensus on specific, measurable targets for each objective would be very challenging and time-consuming, though the County and its partners may consider creating such quantifiable metrics for specific elements in the future. As an alternative, process-evaluation approach, plan implementation should be evaluated based on the consistency of decision-making with the plan's policies and tracking of the implementation of the recommended actions.

[1] State statutes do not make a distinction between policies and strategies. Strategies and policies in this plan both constitute policies as described under Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001. The main difference between policies and strategies in this plan lies in the ability to measure the completion or achievement, though some ongoing strategies/actions might be considered a policy and it can be challenging to differentiate between the two.



2. COUNTY CONTEXT

Chapter 2. County Context

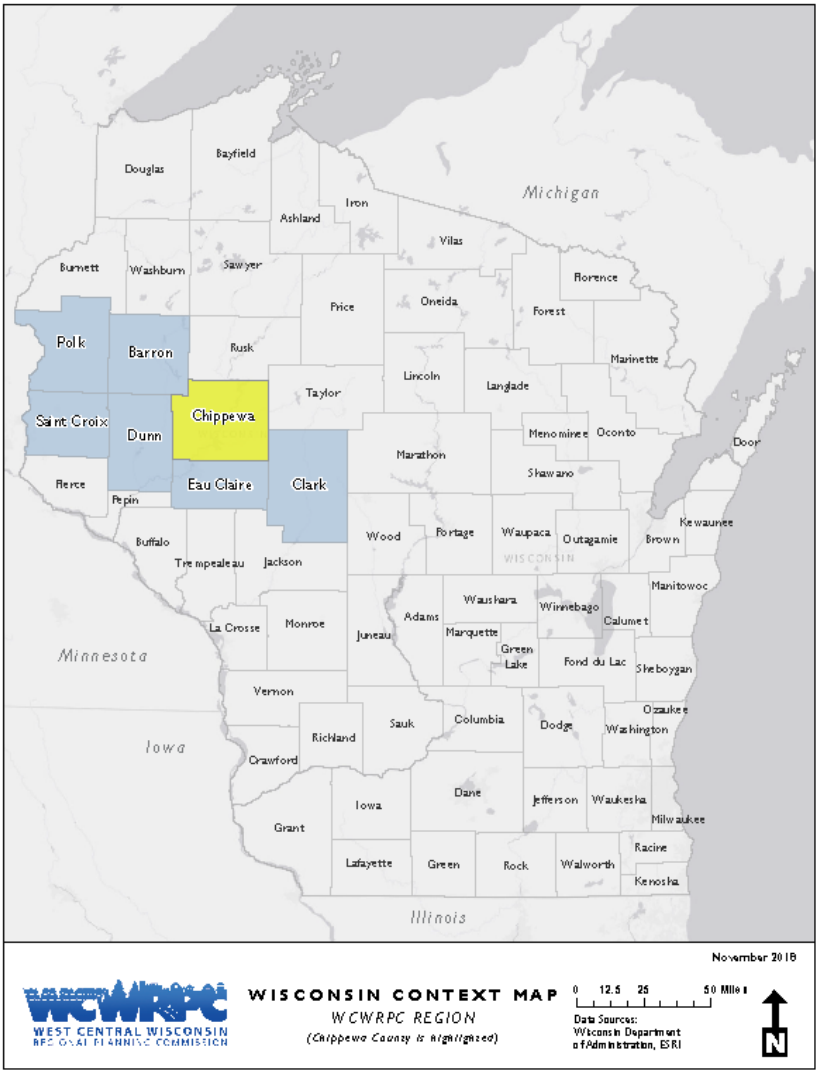
2.1 History

Chippewa County was formed from Crawford County in 1845 and the City of Chippewa Falls was made the County Seat. At the time, the County included about one-quarter of Wisconsin. The Historical & Cultural Resources element of this plan, **Chapter 8**, includes a brief description of Chippewa County's history.

2.2 Region & Study Area

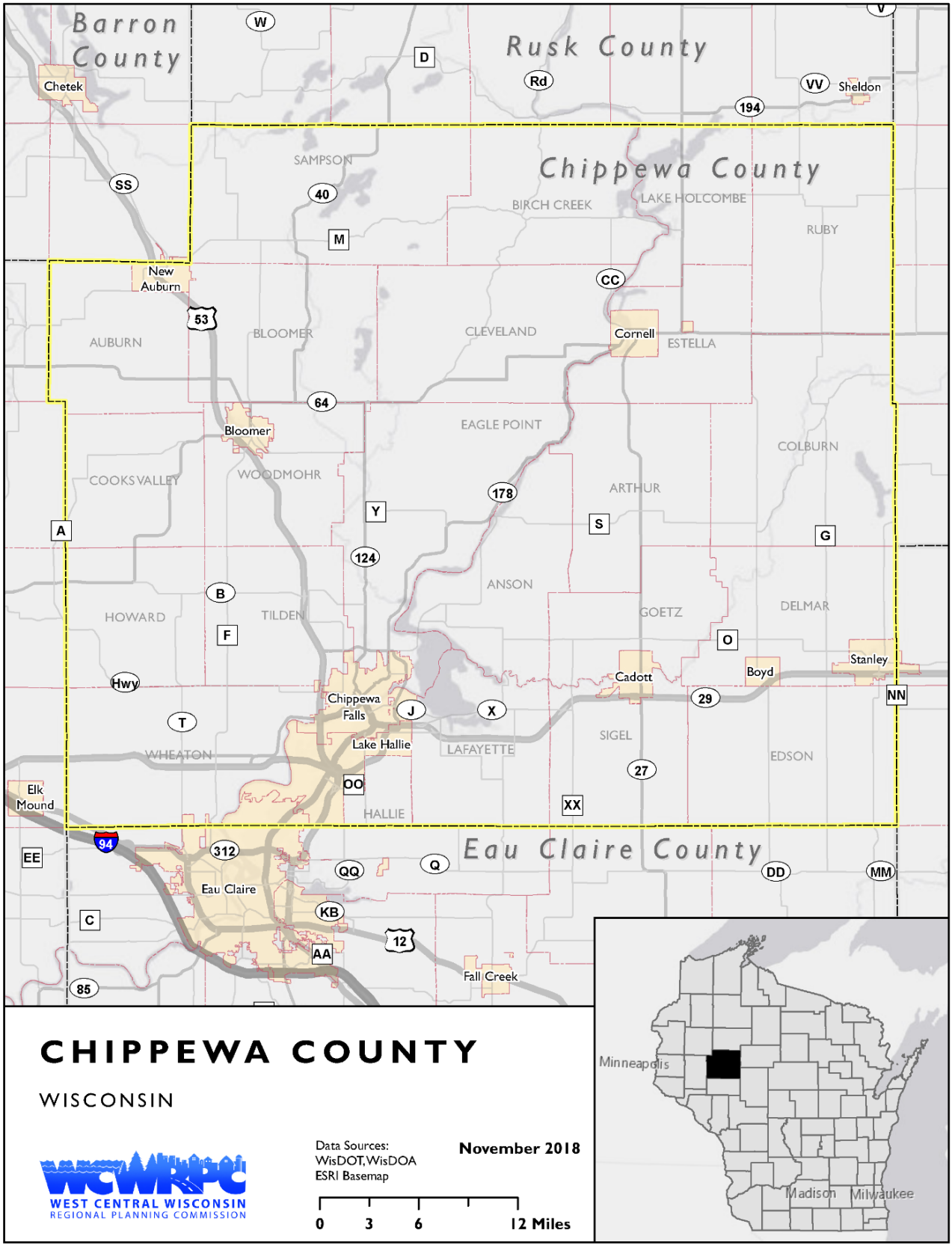
Chippewa County is located in west central Wisconsin. The County is bordered on the north by Barron and Rusk Counties, the west by Dunn County, the south by Eau Claire County, and the east by Clark and Taylor Counties, as shown on Figure 2-1. The County encompasses about 666,000 acres of land, and ranks 12th in land area among the 72 Wisconsin Counties. Within the County there are 23 unincorporated towns, four villages and five cities as shown on Figure 2-2. The County seat is the City of Chippewa Falls, which is located in the southern portion of the County.

Figure 2-1. Context Map



2. County Context

Figure 2-2. Chippewa County Location

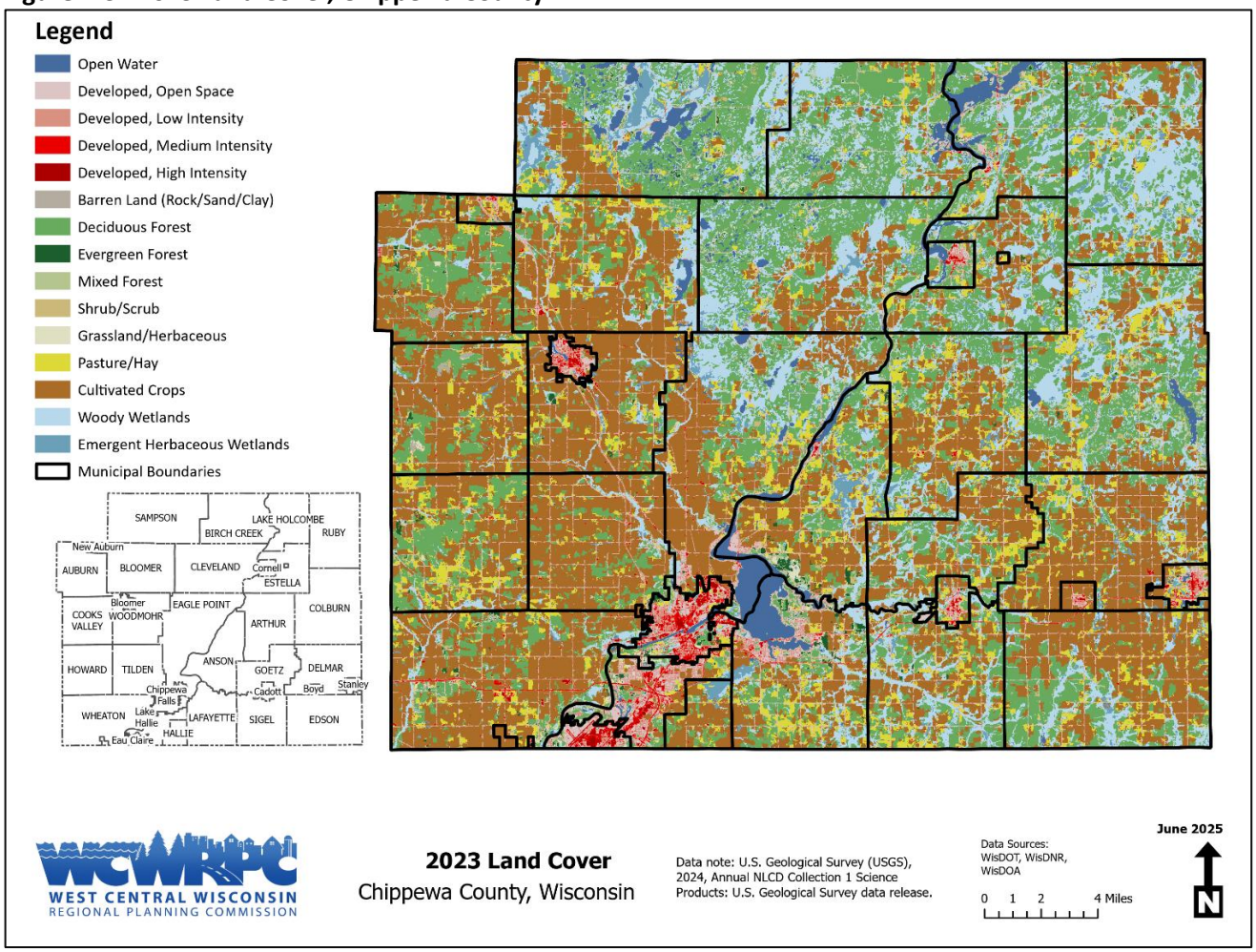


2.3 Chippewa County Characteristics & Trends

A. Land Cover

The land use within Chippewa County is predominately agricultural, with significant urbanized areas, and a recent increase in residential growth. Nearby major urban areas include the Chippewa-Eau Claire metropolitan area, which partially lies within the County, and the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area to the west. Figure 2-3 shows the land cover within the County. A more detailed analysis of land use trends and goals can be found in Chapter 11: Land Use.

Figure 2-3. 2023 Land Cover, Chippewa County



B. Transportation

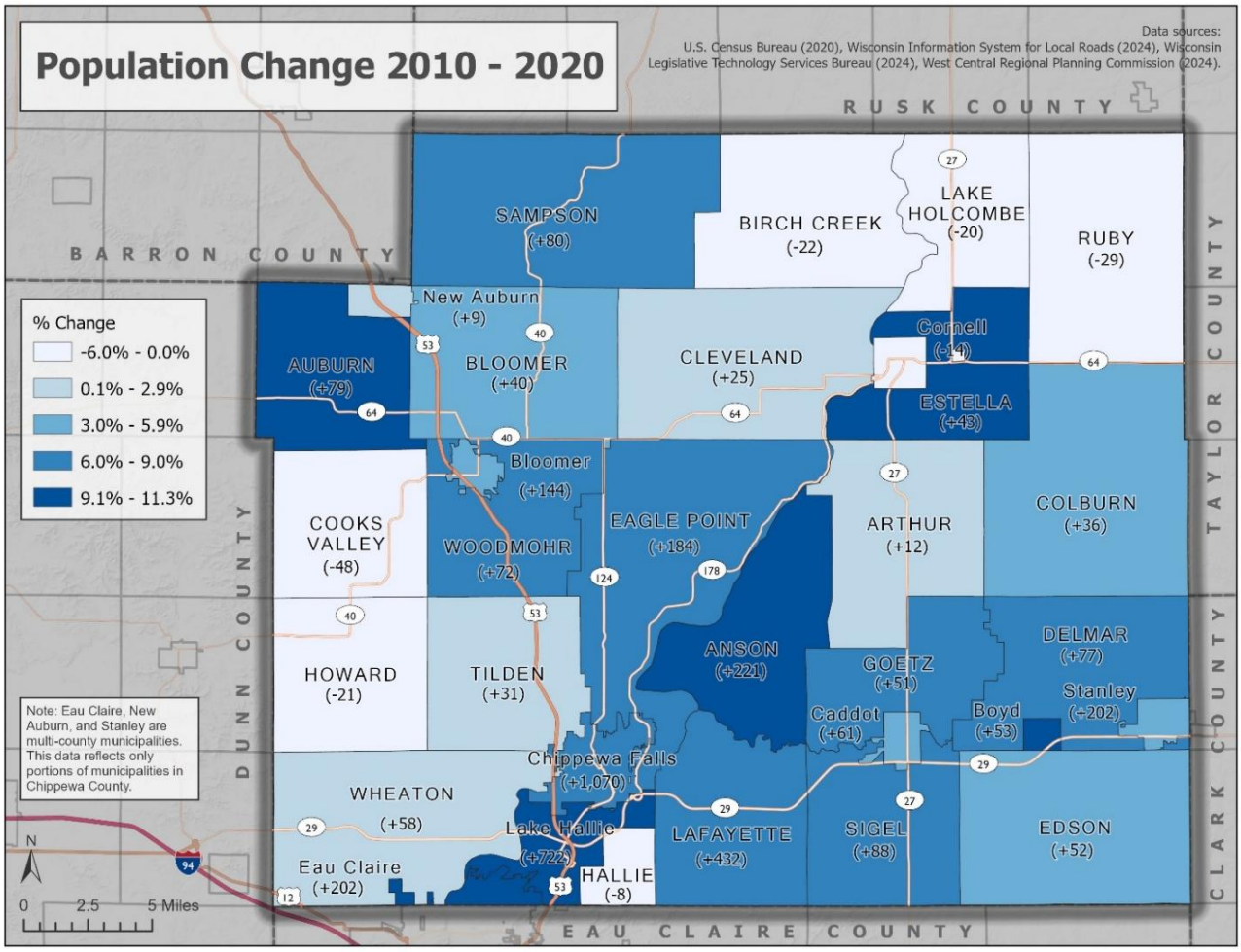
Major regional transportation corridors run through the County. State Highway 29 runs east and west connecting Green Bay to Minneapolis-St. Paul. Interstate 94, which runs west and southeast, is a five-to-ten-minute drive south of the County, and connects Minneapolis-St. Paul with Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago. State Highway 53 runs north and south and connects Duluth-Superior with Interstate 94. This infrastructure allows for the safe and efficient transportation of people, as well as goods and supplies for business needs. Chippewa County is also served by several rail transportation lines, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4: Transportation.

C. Population & Households

Population Trends & Projections

According to the U.S. Census, Chippewa County has experienced population growth since 1990, increasing 13% from 2000 to 2010. From 2010 to 2020 the County saw a 6% increase in population. As shown in Figure 2-4, communities near the Chippewa Falls urban area and along the Highway 29 corridor experienced higher rates of population growth when compared to towns in the northwest and western edge of the County.

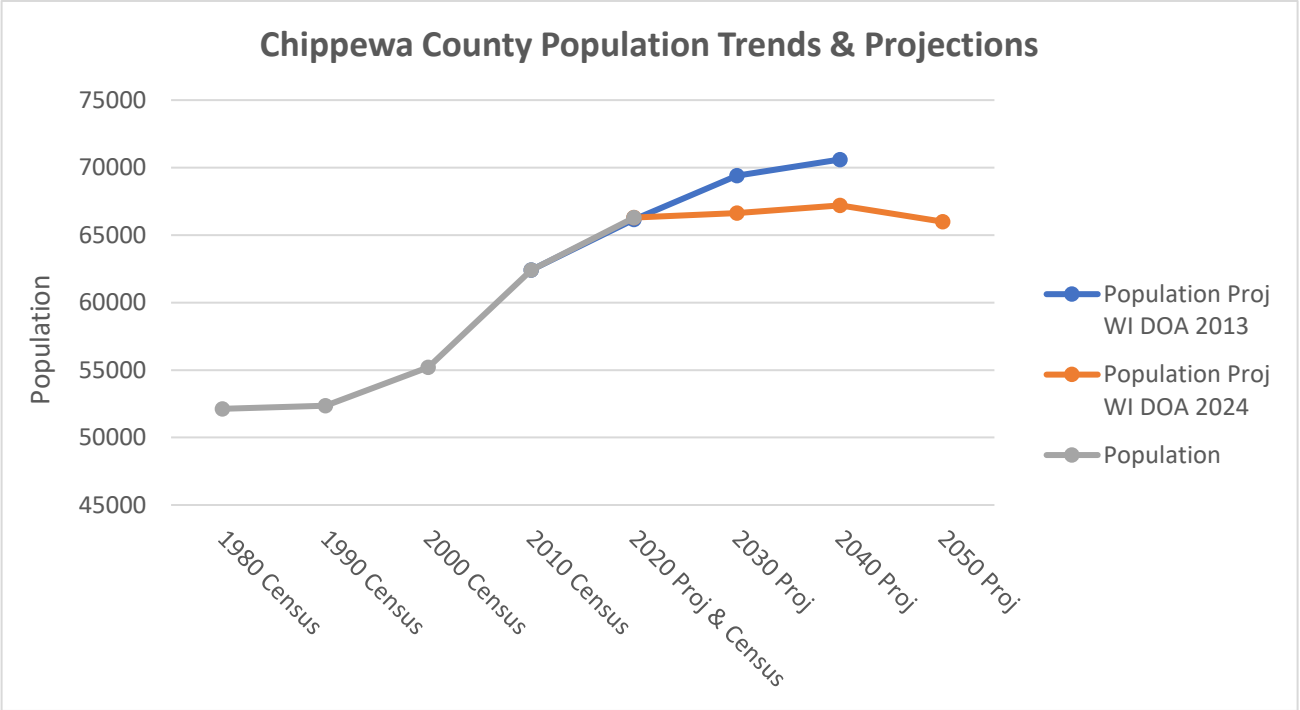
Figure 2-4. Population Change in Chippewa County, 2010-2020



As of January 1, 2024, Chippewa County had 67,801 residents according to the official State of Wisconsin population estimates, increasing 2.2% from the 2020 U.S. Census population. Figure 2-5 shows the County's population trends based on the decennial Census from 1980 to 2020.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) Demographic Services Center prepares the official State population projections every ten years following release of the decennial Census results. The latest official population projections, prepared by WDOA in 2024, anticipate that the County's population will continue to grow to 2040 at which point it will then start to decline. The rate of growth projected by WDOA in 2024 is lower than what was projected in 2013 following the 2010 Census. Figure 2-5 also shows the State's population projections for the County.

Figure 2-5. Population Trends & Projections



Population projections are based on past and current population trends and are not predictions, rather they extend past growth trends into the future, and their reliability depends on the continuation of these past growth trends. Projections should be considered as one of many tools used to help anticipate and predict future needs within the County. Population change may be impacted by physical conditions, environmental concerns, land use, zoning restrictions, taxation, annexation, and other political policies that influence business and personal location decisions.

The population and change in growth vary in communities throughout the County. As shown in Table 2-1, per the 2020 Decennial Census, approximately 54% of the County's population resided in the County's urban areas while 46% lived in the unincorporated Towns. The State projects that the population of the County's urban areas will decrease 3.6% (-1,286 persons) by 2050 while the County's Towns are projected to see a 3.2% increase in population (+979 persons), as shown in Table 2-2.


source: Chippewa County

2. County Context

Table 2-1. Historical & Current Population, 2000 to 2020 Chippewa County Communities

Municipality	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	2025 DOA Est	2000 - 2025 Net Change	2000 - 2025 % Change	2010 - 2025 Net Change	2010 - 2025 % Change
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	6,033,734	670,059	12.5%	346,748	6.1%
Chippewa County	55,195	62,415	66,297	68,414	13,219	23.9%	5,999	9.6%
Cities								
Bloomer	3,347	3,539	3,683	3,732	385	11.5%	193	5.5%
Chippewa Falls	12,925	13,661	14,731	15,292	2,367	18.3%	1,631	11.9%
Cornell	1,466	1,467	1,453	1,451	-15	-1.0%	-16	-1.1%
Eau Claire*	1,910	1,981	2,183	2,398	488	25.5%	417	21.0%
Stanley*	1,898	3,602	3,804	3,763	1,865	98.3%	161	4.5%
Villages								
Boyd	680	552	605	617	-63	-9.3%	65	11.8%
Cadott	1,345	1,437	1498	1,492	147	10.9%	55	3.8%
Lake Hallie	-	6,448	7170	7,512	--	--	1,064	16.5%
New Auburn*	547	528	537	550	3	0.5%	22	4.2%
Urban Areas Total	**24,118**	**33,215**	**35,664**	**36,807**	**12,689**	**52.6%**	**3,592**	**10.8%**
Towns								
Anson	1,881	2,076	2,297	2,376	495	26.3%	300	14.5%
Arthur	710	759	771	780	70	9.9%	21	2.8%
Auburn	580	697	776	796	216	37.2%	99	14.2%
Birch Creek	520	517	495	516	-4	-0.8%	-1	-0.2%
Bloomer	926	1,050	1090	1,099	173	18.7%	49	4.7%
Cleveland	900	864	889	893	-7	-0.8%	29	3.4%
Colburn	727	856	892	907	180	24.8%	51	6.0%
Cooks Valley	632	805	757	759	127	20.1%	-46	-5.7%
Delmar	941	936	1013	1,028	87	9.2%	92	9.8%
Eagle Point	3049	3,053	3,237	3,323	274	9.0%	270	8.8%
Edson	966	1,089	1141	1,149	183	18.9%	60	5.5%
Estella	469	433	476	479	10	2.1%	46	10.6%
Goetz	695	762	813	805	110	15.8%	43	5.6%
Hallie	4703	161	153	190	-4,513	-96.0%	29	18.0%
Howard	648	798	777	802	154	23.8%	4	0.5%
Lafayette	5199	5,765	6197	6,583	1,384	26.6%	818	14.2%
Lake Holcombe	1,010	1,031	1,011	1,023	13	1.3%	-8	-0.8%
Ruby	446	494	465	481	35	7.8%	-13	-2.6%
Sampson	816	892	972	1,008	192	23.5%	116	13.0%
Sigel	825	1,044	1132	1,186	361	43.8%	142	13.6%
Tilden	1,185	1,485	1,516	1,569	384	32.4%	84	5.7%
Wheaton	2,366	2,701	2,759	2,839	473	20.0%	138	5.1%
Woodmohr	883	932	1,004	1,016	133	15.1%	84	9.0%
Rural Areas Total	**31,077**	**29,200**	**30,633**	**31,607**	**530**	**1.7%**	**2,407**	**8.2%**

*Includes Chippewa County portion only

source: 2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Census, WI DOA 2025 Final Estimates

2. County Context

Table 2-2. Population Projections 2030 – 2050, Chippewa County Communities

Municipality	2020 Census	2030 Projection	2040 Projection	2050 Projection	2020 - 2050 Net Change	2020 - 2050 % Change
Wisconsin	5,893,718	5,890,915	5,841,620	5,710,120	-183,598	-3.1%
Chippewa County	66,297	66,630	67,200	65,990	-307	-0.5%
Cities						
Bloomer	3,683	3,658	3,649	3,548	-135	-3.7%
Chippewa Falls	14,731	14,290	13,935	13,260	-1,471	-10.0%
Cornell	1,453	1,339	1,239	1,117	-336	-23.1%
Eau Claire*	2,183	2,432	2,671	2,819	636	29.1%
Stanley*	3,804	3,643	3,510	3,298	-506	-13.3%
Villages						
Boyd	605	622	641	641	36	6.0%
Cadott	1,498	1,434	1,380	1,296	-202	-13.5%
Lake Hallie	7,170	7,490	7,815	7,908	738	10.3%
New Auburn*	537	524	514	491	-46	-8.6%
Urban Areas Total	**35,664**	**35,432**	**35,354**	**34,378**	**-1,286**	**-3.6%**
Towns						
Anson	2,297	2,392	2,489	2,512	215	9.4%
Arthur	771	759	752	726	-45	-5.8%
Auburn	776	804	833	838	62	8.0%
Birch Creek	495	491	489	475	-20	-4.0%
Bloomer	1,090	1,071	1,058	1,019	-71	-6.5%
Cleveland	889	863	842	801	-88	-9.9%
Colburn	892	886	885	861	-31	-3.5%
Cooks Valley	757	711	671	618	-139	-18.4%
Delmar	1,013	1,005	1,002	973	-40	-3.9%
Eagle Point	3,237	3,267	3,308	3,260	23	0.7%
Edson	1,141	1,139	1,142	1,116	-25	-2.2%
Estella	476	478	482	473	-3	-0.6%
Goetz	813	787	766	727	-86	-10.6%
Hallie	153	190	225	251	98	64.1%
Howard	777	778	782	766	-11	-1.4%
Lafayette	6,197	6,693	7,177	7,430	1,233	19.9%
Lake Holcombe	1,011	960	917	855	-156	-15.4%
Ruby	465	438	416	385	-80	-17.2%
Sampson	972	1,001	1,031	1,032	60	6.2%
Sigel	1,132	1,189	1,246	1,265	133	11.7%
Tilden	1,516	1,533	1,554	1,534	18	1.2%
Wheaton	2,759	2,771	2,793	2,741	-18	-0.7%
Woodmohr	1,004	992	986	954	-50	-5.0%
Rural Areas Total	**30,633**	**31,198**	**31,846**	**31,612**	**979**	**3.2%**

*Data is only for the Chippewa County portion; *source: 2020 Decennial Census, WI DOA 2024*

2. County Context

Household & Household Size Trends

Since 2000, Chippewa County has seen a 24% increase in households. Table 2-3 shows the change in households for communities within the County from 2000 to 2023.

Table 2-3. Household Change 2000 – 2023, Chippewa County Communities

Municipality	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Census	2023 Estimates	2000 - 2023 Net Change	2000 - 2023 % Change	2010 - 2023 Net Change	2010 - 2023 % Change
Wisconsin	2,084,544	2,279,768	2,428,361	2,446,028	361,484	17.3%	166,260	7.3%
Chippewa County	21,356	24,410	26,287	26,567	5,211	24.4%	2,157	8.8%
Cities								
Bloomer	1,424	1,562	1,654	1,500	76	5.3%	-62	-4.0%
Chippewa Falls	5,638	5,896	6,482	6,414	776	13.8%	518	8.8%
Cornell	607	607	633	556	-51	-8.4%	-51	-8.4%
Eau Claire*	670	732	825	660	-10	-1.5%	-72	-9.8%
Stanley*	817	928	889	1,060	243	29.7%	132	14.2%
Villages								
Boyd	274	237	247	237	-37	-13.5%	0	0.0%
Cadott	562	605	642	619	57	10.1%	14	2.3%
Lake Hallie	N/A	2,447	2,809	3,121	N/A	N/A	674	27.5%
New Auburn*	210	209	208	197	-13	-6.2%	-12	-5.7%
Towns								
Anson	709	841	953	1,057	348	49.1%	216	25.7%
Arthur	258	278	290	335	77	29.8%	57	20.5%
Auburn	202	254	272	284	82	40.6%	30	11.8%
Birch Creek	212	227	216	175	-37	-17.5%	-52	-22.9%
Bloomer	321	388	415	433	112	34.9%	45	11.6%
Cleveland	313	318	339	329	16	5.1%	11	3.5%
Colburn	262	329	330	345	83	31.7%	16	4.9%
Cooks Valley	214	273	268	341	127	59.3%	68	24.9%
Delmar	314	336	357	396	82	26.1%	60	17.9%
Eagle Point	978	1,211	1,284	1,366	388	39.7%	155	12.8%
Edson	309	376	382	364	55	17.8%	-12	-3.2%
Estella	167	167	176	181	14	8.4%	14	8.4%
Goetz	231	281	299	280	49	21.2%	-1	-0.4%
Hallie	1,690	60	60	60	-1,630	-96.4%	0	0.0%
Howard	235	292	302	377	142	60.4%	85	29.1%
Lafayette	1,980	2,273	2488	2,484	504	25.5%	211	9.3%
Lake Holcombe	413	464	466	464	51	12.3%	0	0.0%
Ruby	152	176	184	274	122	80.3%	98	55.7%
Sampson	330	364	404	446	116	35.2%	82	22.5%
Sigel	294	390	432	374	80	27.2%	-16	-4.1%
Tilden	399	546	565	548	149	37.3%	2	0.4%
Wheaton	852	1,001	1,049	1,003	151	17.7%	2	0.2%
Woodmohr	319	342	367	287	-32	-10.0%	-55	-16.1%

*Data is only for the Chippewa County portion

source: 2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Census, 2023 5-Year Estimates

While households in the County have increased, from 2000 to 2020 the average household size in the County decreased by 4.7% from 2.53 to 2.41 persons per household, which is lower than 2.60 nationwide. Nationwide it is expected that the average household size will continue to decrease with fewer people living in each housing unit.

Seasonal Population

The County's seasonal population has also increased over time. In 2000 the U.S. Census reported 694 seasonal or recreational units in the County; this count increased to 1,380 units in 2020, an 99% increase (685 units) over the 20-year period. The County's recreational features, which will be discussed throughout the plan, make it an attractive location for seasonal lodging.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) identifies 142 licensed Tourist Rooming Houses, which are establishments such as vacation homes, cabins and cottages that are rented out to tourists, within Chippewa County. The agency also reports there are 62 licensed campgrounds in the County. These other lodging facilities contribute to the seasonal population of the County.

Seasonal residents, both owners and renters, contribute expenditures on food and drink, recreation and equipment, construction and remodeling, and professional and other services. According to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, there was an estimated $127.4 million of direct visitor spending from seasonal residents in Chippewa County in 2024.

D. Population Characteristics

Age & Gender

It is important to analyze the distribution of population by age as certain age groups may require additional support or services. Seniors, for example, may be dependent on services due to health concerns or limited incomes. Housing needs also change as a person ages and progresses through the housing lifecycle (discussed more in **Chapter 3 Housing**).

The County experienced a change in age distribution from 2010 to 2020, as reflected by the data in Table 2-4. The percentage of individuals under the age of 5 has decreased while the percentage of people over the age of 65 has increased. This changing demographic distribution is a reflection of an aging population, specifically the aging of the Baby Boomer generation (those born 1946-1964).

Table 2-4. Population by Age 2010 & 2020, Chippewa County

	2010	2020	% Change
Under 5	4,117	3,521	-14.5%
5 to 19	11,983	12,593	5.1%
20 to 44	19,316	19,616	1.6%
45 to 64	18,064	17,923	-0.8%
65-84	7,630	11,099	45.5%
85+	1,305	1,545	18.4%
Total	62,415	66,297	6.2%

source: US Census Decennial 2010 & 2020

Table 2-5. Age of Population, Chippewa County Communities

Municipality	2010 Under 18	2023 Under 18	2010 to 2023 Under 18% Change	2010 65+	2023 65+	2010 to 2023 65+ % Change	Median Age 2010	Median Age 2023
Wisconsin	1,339,492	1,274,310	-4.9%	777,314	1,062,121	36.6%	38.5	40.1
Chippewa County	14,709	14,426	-1.9%	8,935	12,741	42.6%	40.1	41.7
Cities								
Bloomer	819	991	21.0%	674	702	4.2%	40.2	34.9
Chippewa Falls	3,123	2,880	-7.8%	2,235	2,892	29.4%	38.0	38.6
Cornell	328	292	-11.0%	327	252	-22.9%	44.0	38.3
Eau Claire*	558	499	-10.6%	211	352	66.8%	33.6	34.8
Stanley*	544	599	10.1%	430	550	27.9%	37.6	39.0
Villages								
Boyd	122	114	-6.6%	102	114	11.8%	40.7	42.9
Cadott	391	248	-36.6%	251	235	-6.4%	36.5	40.1
Lake Hallie	1,680	1,455	-13.4%	649	1,197	84.4%	35.3	42.8
New Auburn*	153	130	-15.0%	69	43	-37.7%	34.2	34.8
Towns								
Anson	443	485	9.5%	290	460	58.6%	45.2	49.8
Arthur	200	237	18.5%	84	130	54.8%	40.5	46.8
Auburn	176	255	44.9%	72	114	58.3%	39.5	35.0
Birch Creek	81	44	-45.7%	127	196	54.3%	53.3	63.1
Bloomer	271	256	-5.5%	123	173	40.7%	39.6	40.0
Cleveland	189	242	28.0%	96	167	74.0%	44.4	41.2
Colburn	206	230	11.7%	134	255	90.3%	43.8	44.3
Cooks Valley	239	259	8.4%	66	138	109.1%	35.0	38.3
Delmar	240	319	32.9%	111	153	37.8%	40.4	37.3
Eagle Point	654	600	-8.3%	476	986	107.1%	45.6	52.9
Edson	357	298	-16.5%	117	173	47.9%	34.4	34.4
Estella	100	141	41.0%	71	114	60.6%	43.9	43.5
Goetz	187	194	3.7%	89	151	69.7%	38.8	42.5
Hallie	36	20	-44.4%	22	55	150.0%	47.5	60.0
Howard	209	252	20.6%	98	200	104.1%	38.8	43.6
Lafayette	1,323	1,359	2.7%	794	1,119	40.9%	43.7	46.6
Lake Holcombe	169	170	0.6%	248	419	69.0%	52.1	57.2
Ruby	152	82	-46.1%	65	181	178.5%	35.0	60.0
Sampson	215	143	-33.5%	142	280	97.2%	44.2	54.3
Sigel	275	340	23.6%	124	152	22.6%	39.4	35.8
Tilden	381	346	-9.2%	195	252	29.2%	41.9	46.5
Wheaton	647	738	14.1%	334	376	12.6%	42.5	38.9
Woodmohr	241	208	-13.7%	109	160	46.8%	42.0	43.6

*Data is only for the Chippewa County portion

source: 2010 Decennial Census, 2023 5-Year Estimates

2. County Context

Race & Ethnicity

The population of Chippewa County is largely non-Hispanic White, constituting 92.5% of the population. Table 2-6 compares the racial and ethnic composition of Chippewa County to the State of Wisconsin; the County has a higher percentage of White alone residents compared to the State as a whole.

Table 2-6. Ethnic and Racial Make-up, 2023

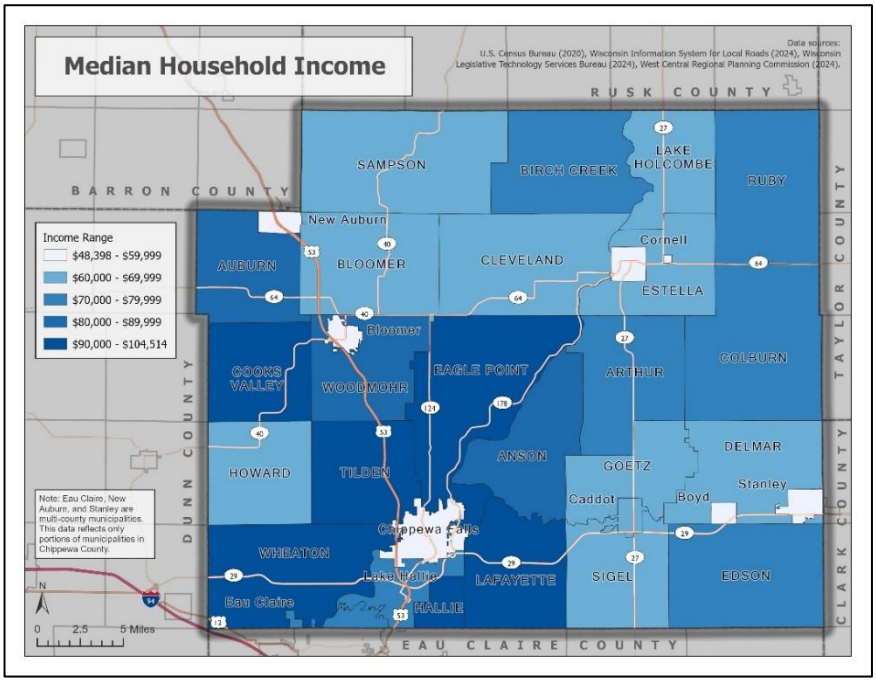
	Chippewa County		Wisconsin	
	#	%	#	%
Total Population	66,558	-	5,892,023	-
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	1,286	1.9%	457,687	7.8%
Not Hispanic or Latino	65,272	98.1%	5,434,336	92.2%
White alone	61,956	93.1%	4,791,680	81.3%
Black or African American	1,040	1.6%	361,890	6.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	323	0.5%	43,336	0.7%
Asian alone	974	1.5%	169,891	2.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	1	0.0%	2,229	0.0%
Some other race alone	225	0.3%	139,011	2.4%
Two or more races:	2,039	3.1%	383,986	6.5%

Source: 2023 5-Year ACS Estimates

Household Income

Median household income considers the combined income of all people living together in a single housing unit. It is estimated that in 2023, the County's median household income was $74,009, slightly lower than the State's median of $75,670. Younger and older households generally have lower incomes than those of working age. Households with a householder under 25 years had a median income of $54,500 while those age 65+ had a median income of $52,041. Incomes have been improving, but there is still a concern for some households. In 2023, it is estimated that 9.2% of residents & 5.8% of families were below the poverty level at some point during the previous 12 months.

Figure 2-6. Median Household Income, 2020



According to United Way[2], ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) refers to households that earn more than the Federal poverty level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). ALICE-classified households cannot always pay the bills, have little to no savings, and are forced to make tough choices, such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent. As of the 2023 Point-in-Time-Data, 10% of households in the County were in poverty while 21% of households in Chippewa County were ALICE.

E. Education

Table 2-7 below displays the educational attainment level of residents in Chippewa County that were age 25 and older in 2020. The educational attainment level of persons within an area is often an indicator of the overall income, job availability, and well-being of the community. Lower educational attainment levels can also be a hindrance to attracting certain types of businesses, typically those that require high technical skills and upper management types of positions.

Table 2-7. Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 & Older, 2023

Attainment Level	#	%
Less than 9th Grade	1,067	2.2%
9th Grade to 12 Grade, No Diploma	2,037	4.3%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	16,076	33.8%
Some College, No Degree	9,843	20.7%
Associate Degree	7,096	14.9%
Bachelor's Degree	8,349	17.5%
Graduate or Professional Degree	3,145	6.6%
TOTAL PERSONS 25 AND OVER	47,613	

Source: U.S. Census, 2019-2023 5-Year ACS Estimates

Based on American Community Survey data, educational attainment of County residents has been improving with 95.0 percent of residents over 25 years of age in 2021 (ACS 5-year estimates[3]) having at least attained a high school diploma as compared to 84.3 percent in 2000.

F. Economy

Employment by Industry

The State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) provides economic data and trends and prepares economic profiles for counties within the State. According to DWD's 2025 Chippewa County Profile[4], between 2018 and 2023, Chippewa County added 1,918 jobs (7.9%) with average employment levels at 26,347 jobs in 2023. During this five-year period, the fastest-growing industry was financial activities with a 21.2% increase while the information industry lost 81 jobs (-41.5%).

As shown in Table 2-8, the largest industry in 2023 was Trade, Transportation and Utilities, with over 6,000 jobs. The industry added over 1,000 jobs between 2018 and 2023. As noted in the County's Profile, "Within trade,

[2] United Way ALICE Wisconsin (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), www.unitedforalice.org/Wisconsin

[3] Many of the 2021 economic estimates are based on American Community Survey 5-year estimates which can have fairly significant margins of error.

[4] https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/wits_info/downloads/CP/chippewa_profile.pdf

transportation, and utilities, the subsector of warehousing and storage saw an increase of 591 jobs between 2018 and 2023, emphasizing Chippewa County's importance as a trade corridor between the Twin Cities and the rest of Wisconsin."

Table 2-8. Employment by Industry, Chippewa County[5]

	2023 Avg Monthly Employment	5-year Change	5-year % Change	% of Total Employment
Total, All Industries	26,347	1,918	7.9%	100.0%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	6,315	1,011	19.1%	24.0%
Manufacturing	5,656	293	5.5%	21.5%
Education and Health Services	5,098	159	3.2%	19.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,299	36	1.6%	8.7%
Construction	1,749	168	10.6%	6.6%
Public Administration	1,681	-32	-1.9%	6.4%
Professional and Business Services	1,613	231	16.7%	6.1%
Other Services	768	53	7.4%	2.9%
Financial Activities	640	112	21.2%	2.4%
Natural Resources and Mining	414	-32	-7.2%	1.6%
Information	114	-81	-41.5%	0.4%

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Labor Force & Employment

As shown in Figure 2-7 prepared by WI Department of Workforce Development, Chippewa County's labor force participation rate (LFPR), was 65% in 2023 and is closely aligned with the State's rate. Both the County and State LFPR have been steadily declining, reflecting the aging population exiting the labor market. Baby boomers, those born 1946-1964, the youngest who are now 61 years old, are retiring and contributing to this decline.

Unemployment in the County has remained low. In 2023 the County's monthly unemployment rate was 3.5%, compared to 3% statewide.

Figure 2-7. Labor Force Participation, Chippewa County

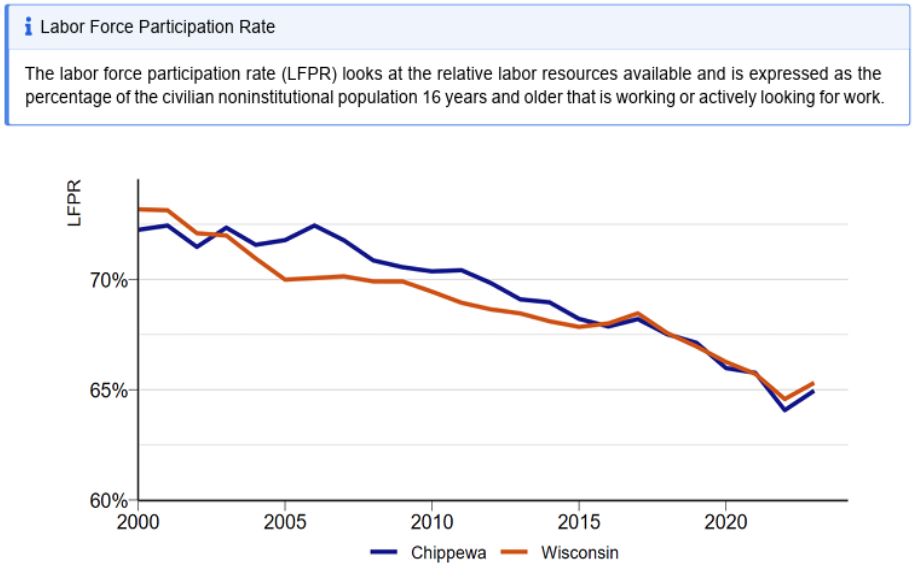


Figure 10: Source: WI Department of Workforce Development Office of Economic Advisors.

[5] WI DWD. *2025 Chippewa County Profile.* https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/wits_info/downloads/CP/chippewa_profile.pdf

Commuting Trends

There are many elements that factor into an individual's place of residence, including the person's job. According to the 2023 U.S. Census Longitudinal Survey, 11,411 people both lived and worked within Chippewa County. Approximately 59% of residents commute outside of Chippewa County for work. See Chapter 4: Transportation for additional details on commuting trends in Chippewa County.

2.4 Chippewa County Strategic Vision

The following mission and strategies vision was adopted by the County Board in January 2020 and reflects priority overall issues and opportunities of the County government.

Chippewa County's vision is a thriving and welcoming community that offers an exceptional quality of life for all residents

Our mission is to offer an exceptional quality of life for all who live, work and play in Chippewa County by supporting social and economic opportunities through a transparent, accountable, and fiscally responsible government

CHIPPEWACOUNTY Est. 1848 WISCONSIN

Effectively communicate information about programs, services, and resources to all residents and county employees

- Utilize technology to develop user friendly communication tools
- Identify residents and employees' preference for information dissemination and customize dissemination options
- Explore and use best practices for communicating information to rural communities
- Conduct face-to-face meetings with residents and county employees to listen to their concerns and clarify expectations

Develop additional sources of revenue and funding to meet emerging needs

- Study strategies for revenue generation from other counties and municipalities
- Enhance networking and educate state and federal officials about emerging needs
- Collaborate with other counties and municipalities to achieve cost savings through shared resources
- Partner with nonprofit organizations and private sector to address community needs

Improve access to mental health and drug treatment options

- Enhance educational outreach and educate community about available mental health service options
- Collaborate with communities and organizations and educate public about eliminating stigma associated with mental health
- Enhance networking and educate state and federal officials about emerging needs of Chippewa County
- Collaborate with service providers to integrate services and address issues from a whole person perspective
- Provide training for law enforcement to learn trauma informed strategies and resources

Maintain and proactively address threats to water quality

- Utilize baseline database from groundwater study and embrace cutting edge technology for monitoring water quality
- Collaborate with and encourage towns to adopt County's comprehensive zoning plan
- Coordinate with neighboring counties, DNR, and communities to develop mechanisms for protecting water quality

Support economic development in rural areas

- Improve and develop infrastructure to support the community and businesses
- Educate communities on economic development opportunities and resources
- Encourage retention of local talent in collaboration with communities
- Identify and promote recreational and tourism opportunities

Adopted by the County Board 01/14/2020 per Res. 05-20



3. HOUSING

Chapter 3. Housing

Key Housing Issues & Opportunities:

- Housing availability and affordability are critical housing concerns in the County.
- Low rental and owner vacancy rates, below the healthy standard, and strong demand have increased the costs of existing housing. The challenge is that new construction is not affordable to build as the cost of materials, labor, infrastructure, interest rates have all increased significantly.
- There is a lack of housing options for active seniors in the County.
- There is also a need for housing that is affordable for the workforce. 9 of the 10 top occupations in the County by job count had 2024 median annual earnings under $50,000. For a single-income earner households, this allows $1,250 for housing costs per month in order to avoid being housing cost-burdened. As of October 2025, the median rent in the County was $1,400.
- There are at-risk populations throughout the County who could use housing assistance. Those who have been evicted face difficulty finding housing and many end up couch surfing or homeless.
- Manufactured and modular homes present an opportunity for providing more affordable housing options, but there are challenges associated with these including lending challenges, public perception around alternative housing types, and zoning challenges.

Housing is an essential component to healthy and vibrant communities, and striving to provide safe and affordable housing is a common community goal. Many variables impact housing, and housing impacts many other elements in the Plan. During the update of this comprehensive plan, housing was frequently mentioned as it is important to community and economic development.

An analysis of the existing housing conditions will help the County to gain a better understanding of the changes that have occurred over time, and looking at projections will provide insight into future needs. This Chapter explores the current conditions of the County's housing and identifies policy guidance for future action to meet growth and the housing needs of Chippewa County residents.

3.1 Existing Conditions

A. General State of Housing

Like many counties in Wisconsin, residential construction in the County has been slow since the 2008 recession. While the County saw a 19% increase in housing units from 2000 to 2010, it only saw a 5.5% increase from 2010 to 2020. The 2023 ACS estimates that 68% of occupied units in the County are owner-occupied while 23% are renter-occupied, with 9% of the housing units not occupied – these units were not all available for sale or rent, rather the majority were used for seasonal or recreational use, were rented or owned but not occupied, or were otherwise vacant.

Table 3-1. Chippewa County Housing Characteristics, 2000 to 2023

Chippewa County	2000	2010	2020	2023 Estimates
Total Housing Units	22,821	27,185	28,688	29,017
Total Occupied Units	21,356	24,410	26,287	26,567
Owner-Occupied Units	16,160	18,203	19,374	19,823

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000, 2010 & 2020 Decennial, 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimate

3. Housing

Table 3-2 provides key housing characteristics for Chippewa County. Some key findings include:

- **Housing Supply:** The total number of housing units in the County increased 19.1% from 22,821 in 2000 to 27,185 in 2010. From 2010 to 2020 there was only a 5.5% increase, from 27,185 units in 2010 to 28,688 units in 2020. Housing construction in the County has not rebounded since the 2008 great recession. See Table 3-3 for housing unit data at the community level.
- **Age of Structures:** Per 2023 Census estimates, 19% of the County's housing structures were built in 1939 or earlier. Many older homes are also smaller. For instance, the U.S. Average size of a single-family home in 2022 was 2,522 square feet, nearly double the size in 1975.
- **Type of Structure:** It is estimated that 76% of housing units in the County are single-family detached homes.
- **Housing Mix:** In 2020 the overall housing mix in the County was 25% renter and 70% owner. The remaining 5% of the stock is seasonal and migrant housing.
- **Rental Units:** It is estimated that 39% of all renter-occupied units in the County are single-family units (attached or detached) while 15% are duplexes. 48% of renter-occupied units have 2 bedrooms; less than 2% of renter-occupied units are studios with no bedroom.
- **Rental Vacancy Rate:** The 2020 rental vacancy rate in the County was 4.7%. It is estimated that this has decreased, with a 2023 vacancy rate estimate of 1.6%.
- **Owner Units:** The 2023 estimates show that 92% of owner-occupied units are single-family detached units. 80% of owner-occupied units have 3 or more bedrooms.

Table 3-2. Housing Occupancy Characteristics, 2020

Chippewa County	2020 Census
Population	66,297
Population in Households	63,456
Population in Rental Units	15,331
Population in Owner Units	48,125
Population in Group Quarters	2,841
Households, excluding group quarters	26,287
Avg. Household Size	2.41
Renter Avg. Household Size	2.22
Owner Avg. Household Size	2.48
Housing Units	28,688
Rental Units	7,310
Owner Units	19,998
Other Seasonal & Migrant	1,380
Occupied Units	26,287
Renter-Occupied Units	6,913
Owner-Occupied Units	19,374
Vacant Units for Rent, excludes seasonal	344
2020 Rental Vacancy Rate	4.7%
Rental Vacancy Rate Standard[6]	5-7%
Vacant Units for Sale, excludes seasonal	157
2020 Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.8%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate Standard[7]	2-2.5%
% of Overcrowded Units – Renter Occup.	1.7%
% of Overcrowded Units – Owner Occup.	1.1%

Source: U.S. Census Decennial 2020

- **Owner Vacancy Rate:** The 2020 owner vacancy rate in the County was 0.8%, similar to the rental vacancy rate, the owner vacancy rate is estimated to have decreased with a 2023 estimate of 0.2%.

[6] Florida, Richard. 2018 July. *Vacancy: America's Other Housing Crisis*. Accessed at: https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/07/vacancy-americas-other-housing-crisis/565901/

[7] Ibid. For owner housing, Florida's vacancy rate standard was expanded by WCWRPC from 2% to 2%-2.5% in order to accommodate additional market flexibility given the County's relatively small population size.

Table 3-3. Housing Unit Counts

Municipality	2000	2010	2020	2023	2000 - 2023 Net Change	2000 - 2023 % Change	2010 - 2023 Net Change	2010 - 2023 % Change
Wisconsin	2,321,144	2,624,358	2,727,726	2,750,750	429,606	18.5%	126,392	4.8%
Chippewa County	22,821	27,185	28,688	29,017	6,196	27.2%	1,832	6.7%
Cities								
Bloomer	1,487	1,656	1,729	1,664	177	11.9%	8	0.5%
Chippewa Falls	5,905	6,304	6,772	6,765	860	14.6%	461	7.3%
Cornell	652	670	687	605	-47	-7.2%	-65	-9.7%
Eau Claire*	681	764	850	660	-21	-3.1%	-104	-13.6%
Stanley*	900	1,004	976	1,089	189	21.0%	85	8.5%
Villages								
Boyd	290	253	263	237	-53	-18.3%	-16	-6.3%
Cadott	581	649	655	658	77	13.3%	9	1.4%
Lake Hallie	N/A	2,554	2,904	3,209	N/A	N/A	655	25.6%
New Auburn*	216	227	230	204	-12	-5.6%	-23	-10.1%
Towns								
Anson	764	944	1,024	1,145	381	49.9%	201	21.3%
Arthur	275	311	328	379	104	37.8%	68	21.9%
Auburn	210	274	288	284	74	35.2%	10	3.6%
Birch Creek	389	429	399	438	49	12.6%	9	2.1%
Bloomer	335	456	465	479	144	43.0%	23	5.0%
Cleveland	339	412	411	381	42	12.4%	-31	-7.5%
Colburn	289	429	439	491	202	69.9%	62	14.5%
Cooks Valley	218	278	280	361	143	65.6%	83	29.9%
Delmar	328	367	374	415	87	26.5%	48	13.1%
Eagle Point	1,018	1,345	1,420	1,443	425	41.7%	98	7.3%
Edson	322	404	402	397	75	23.3%	-7	-1.7%
Estella	190	209	214	205	15	7.9%	-4	-1.9%
Goetz	235	294	310	295	60	25.5%	1	0.3%
Hallie	1,729	63	64	60	-1,669	-96.5%	-3	-4.8%
Howard	237	308	315	418	181	76.4%	110	35.7%
Lafayette	2,112	2,514	2,689	2,677	565	26.8%	163	6.5%
Lake Holcombe	548	714	746	662	114	20.8%	-52	-7.3%
Ruby	197	234	217	314	117	59.4%	80	34.2%
Sampson	449	724	747	811	362	80.6%	87	12.0%
Sigel	307	419	446	390	83	27.0%	-29	-6.9%
Tilden	413	564	576	548	135	32.7%	-16	-2.8%
Wheaton	874	1,050	1,083	1,041	167	19.1%	-9	-0.9%
Woodmohr	331	362	385	292	-39	-11.8%	-70	-19.3%

*Data is only for the Chippewa County portion

source: 2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Census and 2023 5-Year Estimates

By parcel count, residential housing is the primary land use within Chippewa County, although forest and agricultural land uses far exceed residential by acreage. Figure 11-1, Existing Land Use, within Chapter 11 of this plan shows the general distribution of residential parcels with improvements (e.g., single-family homes, duplexes, mobile homes) within the County's unincorporated Towns.

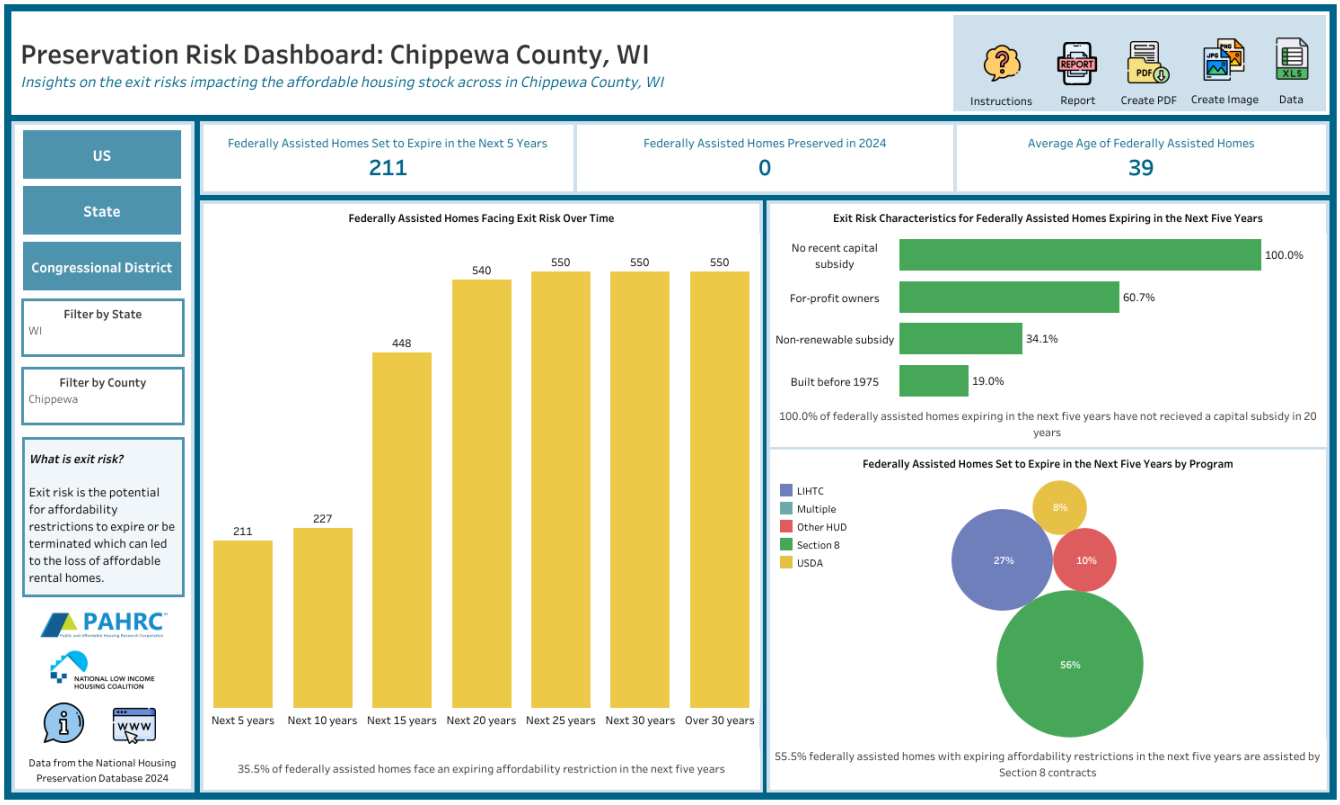
B. Subsidized Housing

Subsidized housing refers to housing that is rent- and income-restricted for a period of time to keep housing costs for low-to-moderate income households affordable, often in exchange for government subsidies such as tax credits. These units require qualifying incomes, typically less than 80% of the County median income and may include units set-aside for other income levels (for example, less than 30% or 50% of the County median income).

Per the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), there are 8 actively monitored residential projects with 243 total units (217 low income) in Chippewa County that were created using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. This program uses tax credits to encourage private developers to create affordable housing. Under this program properties are required to preserve affordability for 30 years in exchange for the tax credits. Six of these properties are located in Chippewa Falls while two are in Stanely. Six properties totaling 116 units have the potential to expire within the next 1-4 years. It is possible that these properties will begin charging market rate rents when their program obligations expire, which may make some of the rental units unaffordable for current renters.

The National Housing Preservation Database was created in 2011 in an effort to provide communities with the information they need to preserve stock of public and affordable housing[8]. The data come from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and include ten federally subsidized programs. According to the database, 35.5% of federally assisted homes in the County face an expiring affordability restriction in the next five years.

Figure 3-1. Housing Preservation Risk, Chippewa County



[8] National Housing Preservation Database (NHPD). https://preservationdatabase.org/about-the-database/

C. Assisted Living Facilities

Assisting living facilities, as defined by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services,[9] include three types of facilities that combine housing with services to help people remain as independent as possible. These facilities include:

- **Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) –** a facility with five or more adults who do not require care above intermediate level nursing care, but still receive not more than three hours of care per resident per week. The adults are residents of the facility and receive care, treatment, and services above the level of room and board.
- **Adult Family Home (AFH) –** a facility with three or four adults who reside and receive care, treatment, or service beyond room and board. The facility provides not more than seven hours of nursing care per resident per week.
- **Residential Care Apartment Complex (RCAC)** – a facility with five or more adults who reside in independent apartments (with kitchen, individual bathroom, sleeping, and living areas) that provides not more than 28 hours of supportive, personal, and nursing services per week per resident.

As of December 19, 2025, the County had the following Assisted Living Facilities[10]:

- CBRF – 15 facilities with capacity of 323
- AFH – 77 facilities with capacity of 297
- RCAC – 6 facilities with capacity of 243

Assisted Living Facilities are traditionally classified as rental units. As the 65+ age group continues to grow and age, these facilities will become more critical to serve the aging population.

D. Group Quarters

A group quarters facility is a "group living arrangement" that houses multiple, unrelated people, where occupants may not have privacy, or the facility houses an institution or service-receiving population. Included in this housing category are nursing homes, memory care, or other facilities described as having a number of beds rather than units, homeless shelter facilities, dormitories, correctional facilities, and other group housing facilities. The 2020 Decennial Census identified the Group Quarters population in Chippewa County as 2,841 with 71% being in correction facilities for adults and 16% in nursing facilities. These facilities are not considered a housing unit, rather they are a standalone category counted separately by the US Census.

College/University Housing

While the County is fortunate to have a Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) Chippewa Falls Campus, there is no formal campus or university housing in the County.

Nursing Homes

There are six licensed nursing home facilities in the County with a total of 284 beds. Nursing homes, similar to jails and dormitories, are classified as Group Quarters in the Census and are not considered a housing unit. As

[9] State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services. *Choosing an Assisted Living Facility.* *https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/guide/assisted-living.htm*

[10] Wisconsin Department of Health Services. https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/guide/afh.htm

the 65+ age group continues to grow and age, these facilities will become more critical to serve the aging population.

Correctional Facilities

In addition to the Chippewa County Jail, located in Chippewa Falls, the County is home to two State Correctional Institutions. The Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility (CVCTF), located in Chippewa Falls, is an all-male, minimum-security facility with 300 beds reserved for treatment. The Stanley Correctional Institution (SCI), located on the west side of the City of Stanley, is a medium-security institution for adult males with an operating capacity of 1,500.

E. Homelessness & Transitional Housing

Unfortunately, there is no single source of data that tells the whole story of homelessness in the County. Per the Institute for Community Alliances report, *The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin – 2024 Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Report,* seven counties (Polk, Barron, St. Croix, Dunn, Chippewa, Pierce, and Pepin) in West Central Wisconsin have 872 emergency shelter clients in 2024 compared to 784 clients in 2019 and 911 in 2017. The Point-in-Time Count, which is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night in January, estimates that there were 217 total homeless individuals in west central Wisconsin in 2024, down from 283 in 2014, but up from 186 in 2020.

An August 1, 2022, news article[11] reported that homeless in Chippewa County is getting worse, citing a report from the Chippewa County Council on Homelessness and Hunger. The mid-year report shows that the "average number of individuals who were seeking assistance with homelessness or related needs has increased by 16% compared to averages from 2021. On average, 260 people per month sought these services so far in 2022, which is up from 224 individuals monthly in 2021." As reported, within the first six months of 2021, 1,557 individuals sought homelessness services such as case management, rental assistance, eviction protection, or emergency shelter; the number of individuals who need such services but did not have their needs met also increased significantly from 59 in 2021 to 100 in 2022.

While there are organizations and agencies that provide outreach and support services to the unhoused, there has been no homeless shelter in the County since the Harmony House in Chippewa Falls closed in February 2014. There are two specific communities in the County dedicated to providing transitional housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.



source: thehubec.org

The Hub, located in the Village of Lake Hallie, has 14 units that house individuals in transition from dependent to independent living. Along with housing, they provide basic case management and help individuals with life skills, financial accountability, rental history, and a support system.

[11] August 1, 2022. WQOW. *Homelessness on the rise in Chippewa County*. https://tinyurl.com/zuuvad22

Located in Chippewa Falls, Hope Village has 11 tiny homes that are transitional housing units for homeless. During the Housing Focus Group, it was noted that there were approximately 50 households on the waitlist for these tiny homes. The organization also has affordable rental housing and is currently renovating 27 units in the former Indianhead Motel into more affordable housing mainly aimed at seniors.



Defining Affordable

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as housing that does not cost a household more than 30 percent of its household income. This affordability benchmark is not an underwriting standard; it does not address the ability to pay for housing. Households may choose to pay more to get the housing they need or want; however, according to HUD standards, people should have the choice of having decent and safe housing for no more than 30 percent of their household income. A lack of affordable housing has overriding impacts on population migration patterns, economic development, and the tax base.

While the individual financial situation of each household varies, a common analysis to affordability is based on the Federal affordability standard that households should not pay more than 30% of their income (before taxes) on housing costs, regardless of income. In other words, a household that is paying more than 30% of its income on housing costs is considered cost-burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.

F. Housing Costs & Affordability

Using the 30% standard set by HUD, a household is considered to be housing "**cost burdened"** if it spends more than 30% of its household income on housing costs. For a renter, costs include the rent, utilities, and renters insurance. For an owner, costs include mortgage (if applicable), utilities, homeowner insurance, and property taxes.

Rental Costs & Affordability

The Census estimates the 2023 median gross rent in the County was $963. An October 2025 report[12] from Realtor.com shows that rental prices continue to rise, with a median rent in the County of $1,400. The report also notes that "month-over-month rent prices have risen by 33.93%, signaling rising costs from renters and potential upside for landlords." At the time of the report, there were 16 rental listings available, suggesting renters may encounter tighter choices and competition for properties. For comparison, the median gross rent in 2000 was $446.

[12] *Chippewa County housing & rental market.* Realtor.com. October 2025. https://tinyurl.com/44us6ca2

3. Housing

It is estimated that in 2023, 53% of renter households in the County were spending 30% or more of their household income on housing costs, making them housing cost-burdened. Further, 30% of these cost-burdened renters were severely cost-burdened, spending more than 50% of their housing income on housing costs. Housing costs can be a challenge for income-constrained households, including seniors.

To explore the current supply of housing relative to the affordability, Table 3-4 shows the households income range and the number of rental housing units that fall within the corresponding affordable renter range. This approach assumes that a healthy rental market mix will have a supply of rental units at certain affordable price points that are near or equal to the number of households within the respective housing income ranges.

Table 3-4. Renter-Occupied Housing Affordability by Cost

Chippewa County Renter Housing Gap Analysis					
Household Income Ranges	**# of Renter Households**	**% of Renter Households**	**Affordable Renter Range**	**Number of Renter Units**	**Balance**
Less than $10,000	249	3%	$0-$199	392	143
$10,000 to $14,999	608	8%	$200-$299	100	-508
$15,000 to $24,999	841	11%	$300-$549	1,041	200
$25,000 to $34,999	892	12%	$550-749	2,047	1,155
$35,000 to $49,999	1,161	15%	$750-$999	1,645	484
$50,000 to $74,999	1,403	18%	$1,000-$1,499	1,114	-289
$75,000 to $99,999	584	8%	$1,500-$1,999	360	-224
$100,000 to $149,999	785	10%	$2,000-$2,999	24	-761
$150,000 or more	221	3%	$3,000 +	21	-200
Source: U.S. Census 2019-2023 ACS 5 Year Estimates and WCWRPC calculations					
NOTES: (i) The above price points are calculated based on affordable contract rent at 25% of household income, which is different than the commonly used 30% Federal standard for gross rent. The additional 5% in the Federal standards allows for the payment of all other housing costs. (ii) The above includes some rental units with zero cash rent. (iii) The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for household incomes and house values in ranges. To calculate the "Affordable Renter Range", the household income was divided by 12 (months) and multiplied by 0.25. This result did not yield household income ranges that aligned perfectly with the contract rent value ranges; these ranges were matched up as closely as possible.					

When considering Table 3-4, it is important to understand that the balance does not necessarily represent a rental market surplus or deficit. The balance is simply the difference between the number of households and the number of rental units within each income range or price point. The balance suggests how the County's existing rental units might be better distributed based on household income and monthly contract rent price points; the total number of units does not change. A negative balance suggests that households are paying more or less than their affordable price point (30% of their income) for their housing. These households may be interested in housing at their price point should it become available.

Table 3-4 provides the following insights:

- Chippewa County's largest concentration (55%) of rental housing is at the $550 - $999 price point and is being relied upon by many renters from other income ranges.
- While 13% of all rental households in the County have an income of less than $25,000, only 7% of the rental units fall within the corresponding rental affordability range. Many households with a low-income

are having to pay more for rent than they likely can afford. This places constraints on these households and suggests there may be a need for some additional rental units to meet the needs of lower-income households within the County. Furthermore, 357 rental units in the County were reported in the data as no cash rent, and are likely at risk for remaining this way over time.

- The balance is also negative for rental households making more than $50,000. While 44% (2,993) of rental households in the County are estimated to have an income of $50,000 or more, only 23% (1,519) rental units in the County are estimated to have rental values within the corresponding price range.
    - While the County may have some renter households that could potentially afford to pay more for their housing, the actual market rates are not solely based on income. Numerous factors influence rental rates and what an individual can afford, such as location, quality and characteristics of the rental units, local cost of living, property maintenance costs, and unit demand.
    - Many of these "higher-income" households may be interested in purchasing a home. These higher-income renters have income ranges whereby they could possibly afford to purchase a house but there may be a lack of houses available in their affordability range or lack of homes for sale with the characteristics they desire (e.g., size, style, location). In the interim, some of these households may be residing in rental housing below their price point as a cost-saving measure, possibly in anticipation of buying a home in the future.
    - It is important to recognize that the most recent available data is from 2019-2023. There has been new market-rate residential construction within the County, specifically in the City of Chippewa Falls. These new units may help fill the gap for the higher income renter households.

Owner Costs & Affordability

According to the 2023 5-year American Community Survey, the median home value in the County was estimated at $237,700. The WI Relators Association data shows that the 2024 median sale price in Chippewa County was $315,000; a 50.4% increase from 2020 when the median sale price was $209,450.

It is estimated in 2023 that 23% of all owner households were housing-cost burdened. Of these approximate 4,593 households, 1,277 (28%) were severely cost-burdened spending more than 50% of their household income on housing costs.

Similar to the rental affordability analysis, the balance in Table 3-5 provides the following insights:

- Most of the lowest-income households either have their home paid off or are paying more than their affordable price point for housing. About 9% of owner-occupied households have an income less than $25,000. However, there are 644 fewer units than households at this price point, suggesting that many of these lower-income owner households are cost-burdened or do not have a mortgage.
- The largest concentration of current owner housing supply in the County is in the $250,000 to $399,999 range, requiring a household income of more than $100,000 to avoid being housing cost-burdened. According to the estimates, there are 1,377 more homes in the County at this value than there are households in the corresponding affordability range.
- Like the rental analysis, there are some homeowners living in owner-occupied units that may be less than what they can afford. Some of these individuals may be interested in a higher-value unit, or a "move-up" home, but they may also be comfortable with the unit they are in or have obtained attractive financing that is challenging to give up through the sale and purchase of another home.

Table 3-5 shows the Chippewa County owner households by income range and the number of owner housing units that fall within that range. This approach assumes that a healthy homeownership market mix will have a supply of owner units at certain affordable cost ranges (or price points) that are near or equal to the number of households within the respective housing income ranges.

Again, Table 3-5 does not necessarily represent a home sales market surplus or deficit. The balance is simply the difference between the number of households and the number of owner units for each income range and affordable price point range. The balance suggests how the County's existing owner units might better be distributed based on household income and the corresponding affordability price points; the total number of units does not change. A negative balance suggests that households are paying more or less than their affordable price point (30% of their income) for their housing.

Table 3-5. Owner-Occupied Housing Affordability by Cost

Chippewa County Owner Housing Gap Analysis					
Household Income Ranges	**# of Owner Households**	**% of Owner Households**	**Affordable Owner Range**	**Number of Owner Units**	**Balance**
Less than $25,000	1,696	6%	$0-$59,999	1,052	-644
$25,000 to $34,999	1,235	4%	$60,000-$89,999	534	-701
$35,000 to $49,999	1,784	6%	$90,000-$124,999	1,239	-545
$50,000 to $74,999	3,573	12%	$125,000-$199,999	4,915	1,342
$75,000 to $99,999	3,152	11%	$200,000-$249,999	2,881	-271
$100,000 to $149,999	4,636	16%	$250,000-$399,999	6,013	1,377
$150,000 or more	3,747	13%	$400,000 +	3,189	-558
Source: U.S. Census 2019-2023 ACS 5 Year Estimates and WCWRPC calculations					
NOTES: (i) The above affordable price points are calculated based on 2.5 times the annual household income, which accounts for the financing of the home purchase over time at about 25% of the household income. This is less than the more commonly used 30% Federal affordability standard. The additional 5% in the Federal standard allows for the payment of all other housing costs, such as real estate taxes, insurance, and utilities. (ii) The U.S. Census Bureau provides data for household incomes and house values in ranges. To calculate the "Affordable Owner Range", the household income was multiplied by 2.5. The result did not yield household income ranges that aligned perfectly with the house value ranges; these ranges were matched up as closely as possible.					

G. Housing the Workforce

Housing is essential to having a thriving, quality workforce. Affordable and accessible housing enables workers to live near their jobs, reducing commute times, and encouraging a more engaged and productive workforce. Having housing opportunities that meet the needs of the workforce plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining talent, and ensures that businesses have a steady pool of employees. As the population of the County ages, it is critical that the County and its communities create and maintain an environment that welcomes younger populations to live and work.

There are many jobs that make up the workforce in Chippewa County. A thriving workforce contributes to the overall quality of life of a community. Without police, teachers, nurses, plumbers, salespersons, cashiers, child care workers, janitors, and many others, the services and quality of our communities would be negatively impacted. Table 3-6 shows the top ten occupations, by job count, reported in 2024 in the County along with the affordable monthly housing costs based on the median annual earnings of each job. While the data represents

the number of covered workers who worked during, or received pay for, the pay period that included the 12th day of the month, including part-time workers, it provides a good baseline for jobs and wages.

Table 3-6. Chippewa County Median Earnings for Top 10 Occupations, 2024

Occupation (5 digit SOC)	2024 Jobs (#)	2024 Median Hourly Earnings	2024 Median Annual Earnings	Monthly Affordable Housing Costs (at 30% income)
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	856	$15.39	$32,001.14	$800.03
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	816	$24.37	$50,689.89	$1,267.25
Retail Salespersons	746	$16.67	$34,683.34	$867.08
Cashiers	731	$14.33	$29,807.21	$745.18
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	657	$20.18	$41,969.63	$1,049.24
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	576	$20.06	$41,718.48	$1,042.96
Fast Food and Counter Workers	538	$12.75	$26,521.77	$663.04
Office Clerks, General	476	$20.20	$42,023.29	$1,050.58
Customer Service Representatives	434	$20.90	$43,465.44	$1,086.64
Stockers and Order Fillers	410	$15.79	$32,842.58	$821.06

source: Lightcast Q3 2025 Data Set; Occupational Employment Statistics, WI DWD, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

3.2 Housing Needs & Demand

Demographics (age, household size, etc.) and economics (household income) are two driving factors in housing needs and demand. Chapter 2, County Context, provides data on the County's historic population growth along with other demographic facts that influence housing needs and opportunities. Some key demographic trends in the County that influence housing needs include:

- The County is projected to grow in population out to 2040, and then start to decline, per WDOA.
- While households in the County have increased, the average household size in the County has decreased.
- The County's population is aging, with a higher percentage of the population being 65+ years of age.

A. Housing Demand

Housing projections are helpful in identifying housing program strategies as well as to estimate the amount of land that may be needed for future residential development. Additionally, as the number of households and new housing units grow, there is a resulting need for additional public facilities and services such as roads, sewer and water extensions, fire and police protection, schools, etc. The projected demand provides guidance based on recent trends and the best information available. No estimate, model, or projection is perfect. As previously noted, the community and partners have the ability to influence these projections based on other programming and policy decisions. Moreover, the housing market does not stop at governmental boundaries. A county's housing supply and demand is influenced by what is occurring around it. Further, many unanticipated social, economic, and policy factors in the larger region or nationally can also influence local growth, housing costs, and market demands.

Table 3-7 estimates existing and projected housing demand for Chippewa County, with the following assumptions:

- Total population was derived from the 2020 Decennial Census and uses the Wisconsin Department of Administration's 2024 population projections for the County's population out to 2050.
- Group Quarters population was projected using the 2020 Census percentage of 4.29% and then applying a rate of change to the group quarters population using a ratio from the State's 2013 projections. This methodology assumes the Group Quarters population will continue to increase to 4.57% in 2040 but then begin to decrease. Given the area's aging population, the demand for group quarters (nursing care) and rental units (downsizing, accessory dwelling units, assisted living) is expected to increase but then will likely start to decrease.
- Household size was prepared using 2020 Decennial Census household size for the County of 2.41 and WI DOA's household size projections from 2013 which project a household size of 2.28 in 2040.
- Accounts for the low vacancy rates in 2020 and attempts to maintain a healthy vacancy rate over the projection period by increasing additional rental units by 6% and owner units by 2.2%.
- The current owner-to-rental mix of occupied housing units (26% renter, 74% owner) is maintained throughout the projection period.
- The additional rental and owner units needed are in addition to the vacant units available for rent or sale in year 2020.
- **It is important to note that the housing demand projections in Table 3-7 do NOT account for any new residential units that have been added to the market within Chippewa County since 2020. The demand would need to be reduced to account for these new units.**

Table 3-7. Chippewa County Housing Demand Projections

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	Net Change
Total Population	66,297	66,464	66,630	66,915	67,200	66,595	65,990	-307
Total Households, excluding group quarters	26,287	26,833	27,217	27,662	28,128	27,917	27,693	1,406
Change in Total Households	---	546	384	445	466	-210	-225	--
Change in Rental Households (26% Rent)	---	63	100	116	121	-55	-58	287
Change in Owner Households (74% Own)	--	482	285	329	345	-156	-166	1,119
Additional Rental Units Needed*	22-168	67	106	123	128	0	0	446-592
Additional Owner Units Needed**	263-363	493	291	337	352	0	0	1,736-1,836
Total Additional Housing Units Needed	285-531	560	397	460	480	0	0	2,182-2,428
Population in Group Quarters	2,841	2,870	2,942	3,016	3,069	2,943	2,851	10
* In addition to the 344 rental units vacant in 2020; ** In addition to the 157 owner units vacant in 2020.								

Key findings from the 2020-2050 housing unit projections are:

- The projections suggest that between 2,182 and 2,428 additional housing units will be needed by 2040, given the projection increase in population and corresponding increase in total number of households.
- However, by 2040, the population and households in the County are projected to experience decline so no additional housing units are needed in these years. New housing units may be needed to replace deteriorating housing units that are beyond rehabilitation.

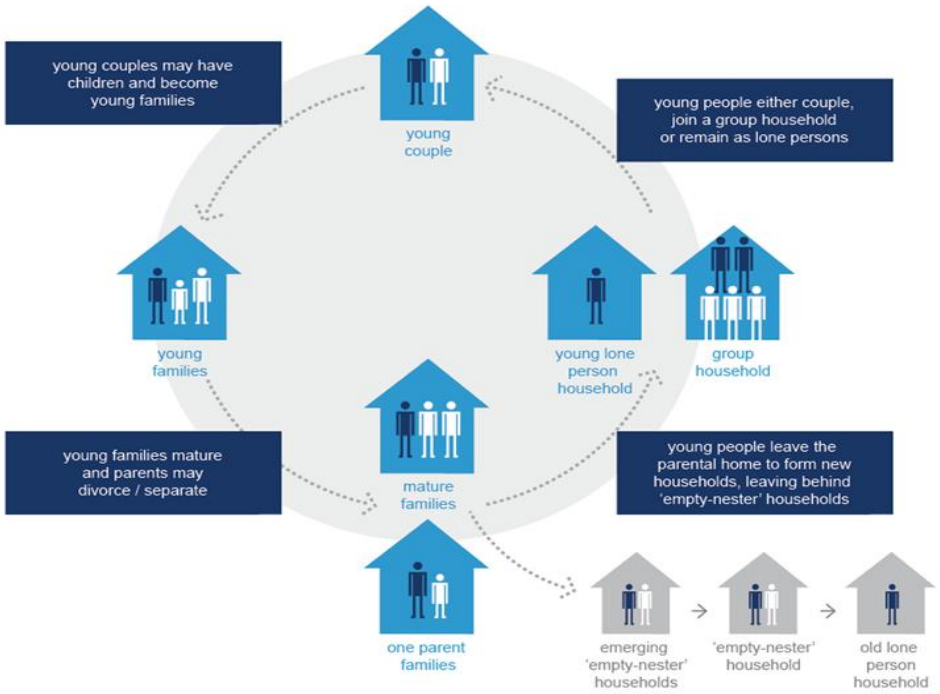
- About 20% of the new units needed would be for rental occupancy, while 80% would be for owner-occupancy. However, the exact mix is uncertain and can change over time based on factors such as incomes, lifestyle/market preferences, and the available housing supply.
- As shown in Table 3-7, the projections show a decrease in households by 2040. Many factors, both within and outside the County can influence these projections, including the housing and development policies of local communities. Given these projected decreases, it is important that the County's population and household trends be monitored carefully over the next decade. If the population and households decline, the potential exists to over-build the housing supply resulting in vacancy rates above the healthy rate standards.

It is important to remember that the numbers in these tables are not certainties and are simply provided to help show housing demand scenarios based on potential population and household growth projections.

B. Lifecycle Housing Stages

Inherent to many of the community discussions on housing was the fact that housing preferences and needs change over time as residents move through life and into the next "cycle." Understanding the lifecycle stages in Figure 3-2, while recognizing that not all individuals move through every stage, is important when analyzing a community's housing needs. The benefits to having a diverse housing base that allows an individual to move through all stages within a community, often called "aging in place", are significant in promoting neighborhood stability, a sense of belonging and responsibility for the community, and greater community pride.[13] This is also important given the County's aging population.

Figure 3-2. Lifecycle Housing Needs



Source: .id – the population experts, https://home.id.com.au/case-studies/nillumbik-shire/

[13] Mooney, J. Michael. Mooney LeSage Group. (October 1991). The Impact of Local Government Regulation on Development of Affordable Housing.

3.3 Housing in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared housing-related issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for the cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Weaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Summary of Town Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Broad Housing Need Across All Age Groups
- Affordability and Workforce Housing Gaps
- Aging in Place and Need for Senior-Friendly Housing
- Balancing Growth with Rural Character
- Preference for Single-Family Housing with Design Flexibility

Summary of Village & City Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Affordability Concerns
- Land Supply and Development Constraints
- Desire to Expand the Variety of Housing Types
- Need for Age-Inclusive Housing and Facilities
- Need for Infrastructure Expansion to Support New Housing
- Property Maintenance and Neighborhood Quality

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Goals & Objectives

- Expand Housing Diversity & Choice
- Ensure Affordable Housing
- Maintain & Rehabilitate Housing Stock
- Preserve Rural and Small-Town Character While Allowing for Growth
- Minimize Impacts of Residential Growth on Natural Resources
- Support Aging in Place & Senior Housing
- Maintain an Adequate Land Support for Future Housing Needs

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

Not surprisingly, the following top themes among comprehensive plan policies and strategies parallel the previous issues, goals, and objectives.

- Housing Affordability & Assistance
- Variety & Diversity of Housing Options
- Housing Quality, Design & Neighborhood Character
- Land Use, Zoning & Growth Management
- Demographic Responsiveness
- Partnership & Collaboration
- Sustainability & Infrastructure
- Community Engagement & Education

3.4 Housing Plans, Programs & Partners

The following identifies key housing-related plans and programs for Chippewa County. While some shared highlights are mentioned, this is not intended to offer a detailed description or analysis of all plans and a broader review of more general housing programs and partners can be found in Appendix X. However, it is important that these other plans and programs be considered when identifying Chippewa County's goals, objectives, and policies in order to further plan coordination and cost-effective services.

A. Housing Plans

In addition to the local municipal comprehensive plans, additional housing-related plans include those summarized below.

Chippewa County Community Health Assessment, 2024

Every three years a Community Health Assessment (CHA) is conducted in Chippewa County to identify the most important health issues that need to be addressed within the County. Data used to identify the top issues include: a local survey completed by people who live and/or work in Chippewa County, local data from State and national databases, conversations with County groups and individuals, and meeting with the Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) coalition. The lack of safe or affordable housing was ranked 6 on the list of 2024 health priorities.

As noted in the CHA, unsafe or unaffordable housing can cause increase illness from exposure to molds, lead, asbestos, etc., can cause general financial stress from spending more income towards housing, and can have workforce implications as people move out of the area from not finding a place to live.

28% of respondents to the Chippewa County Community Health Survey respondent that housing is very expensive throughout the County. 18% responded that having (or not having) safe and affordable housing affects all other parts of one's life, 15% identified there being a lack of housing stock in the area, and 14% responded that much of the available housing in the area is unsafe conditions.

Welcoming Wisconsin Home, A Statewide Action Plan for Homelessness, 2021-2023

The Wisconsin Interagency Council on Homelessness prepared this report to outline actions to reduce homelessness in Wisconsin, as homelessness continues to grow throughout the State. The report recommends addressing racial wealth gaps that were a result of lending practices and restrictive covenants in the 20th century, investing in affordable housing, programs, and services, improving housing access through counseling, repair assistance, and other strategies, stabilizing existing housing by growing jobs and other opportunities, using data to make decisions, using resources such as housing vouchers, and expanding partnerships between government programs and nonprofit agencies and working with surrounding states. These strategies are needed to address the severe statewide shortage of very low-income housing units across the State.

Wisconsin Realtors Association (WRA) Workforce Housing Report: Falling Behind, 2019

The association released a study in 2019 finding a lack of workforce housing units throughout the State of Wisconsin. The data presented includes a reduction in building permits for new residential construction, the rising cost of new home construction, and a decline in homeownership and overall affordability.

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan, 2025-2029

The Consolidated Housing Plan is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD in order for the State to secure a variety of funds. The Plan defined how the State, specifically the Department of Administration's Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) will distribute grant funds to local governments, public and private organizations, and businesses. As noted in the plan, "housing areas of special focus for this Plan include the promotion of residential rehabilitation, conversion and reconstruction, rental assistance, and assistance for people experiencing homelessness and homelessness prevention, with the priority given to households at the lowest income levels." The Plan also noted that funding projects that help support the infrastructure and public facilities of communities is another top priority.

B. Housing Programs & Partners

Chippewa County Housing Authority

The Chippewa County Housing Authority is a public housing authority that provide a variety of housing resources and services for low and moderate-income households. All of the programs are income-based with income limits varying based on program. The Housing Authority works to expand the supply of affordable housing, improve the quality of housing, expand homeownership for low-income families, provide support to assist homeowners in maintaining homeownership, and promote fair housing. It advances these goals through the following programs:

- Rental Assistance through Housing Choice Voucher and Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program
- Loans for existing Home Repairs through the CDBG Home Repair Program
- Loans for assistance with Homebuyer Downpayment Program
- Loans for assistance with Foreclosure Prevention
- Own and Manages Rental Properties

There have also been efforts to address homelessness. The Chippewa County Council on Homelessness and Hunger has met to identify opportunities for action on providing housing options for the unhoused. The group consists of a variety of local partners and housing advocates including:

- CDC outreach
- Housing Authority
- Family Support Center
- Hope Village
- Mission Coalition
- The HUB
- Klein Hall
- West Cap
- DHS
- Chippewa Falls School District
- United Way
- Workforce Resource
- UW Madison, Division of Extension
- Great Rivers 2-1-1
- Agnes Table
- Food Pantries Chippewa
- Feed My People
- Family Health Center

Other County and Local Partners / Programs

- City of Stanley and Village of New Auburn Housing Authorities
- West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency, Inc. (WestCAP)
- Hope Village, Chippewa Falls
- Family Support Center'
- L.E Phillips Career Development Center

In addition, some communities utilize financial incentives, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for mixed-use development as well as the Affordable Housing Extension to spur additional residential development.

State Partners / Programs

- Wisconsin Department of Administration
- Wisconsin Historic Home Tax Credits
- Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)
- Wisconsin Rural Development, Rural Housing Service
- Wisconsin Weatherization Assistance Programs
- Wisconsin Property Tax Deferred Loan Program
- Wisconsin Home Safety Act

Federal Partners / Programs

- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
    - Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA-RD)
    - Home Programs, Rural Development, Rural Housing Services,
- National Register of Historic Places

3.5 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the housing-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- One Town specifically commented that it wishes to remain rural with no housing developments.
- Another town noted that it has experienced an increased Amish population and has had difficulty getting correct information on Amish-owned housing units to Assessor.
- Aging population will require different housing types than standard single-family residential. Solution may be to encourage development of zero-entry homes so that elderly residents have more opportunities to remain in the Town well into their senior years.

The following are the housing-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by seven (7) of the County's cities and villages in May-July 2025:

- 4 of the 7 municipalities identified housing as one of the top needs to be addressed in the County's plan.
- Additional comments include:
    - Need for more housing at a variety of price points
    - Aging population requires additional senior or retirement housing options
    - Lack of land available for development
    - Lack of affordable housing
    - Cost of infrastructure is significant

B. Housing Focus Group

On September 22, 2025, a group of people interested in housing within the County gathered to discuss housing trends, needs, and opportunities. The focus group consisted of members representing the following organizations:

- Chippewa County
- Woods & Water Realty
- ADRC of Chippewa County
- Northwestern Bank
- Chippewa County Housing Authority
- Realtors Association of Northwestern Wisconsin
- Hope Village
- Town of Eagle Point
- West CAP
- Chippewa County EDC
- Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association
- Ashley Construction

Key comments from the Housing Focus Group include:

- **Housing for seniors - t**here is a lack of housing options in the County for active seniors (e.g., smaller single-family homes, twin homes, etc.). Hope Village has a search team that assists seniors living in the transitional tiny homes with finding more permanent housing. Finding that many of the affordable rental units in the County are not located on a ground floor, which poses a challenge for many seniors who are less mobile.
- **Housing for the workforce - t**here is a need for housing that is affordable for new employees. Many want to build equity through owning a home, but there isn't much available at a price point they can afford. Employers are having a challenging time recruiting employees due to the lack of housing options.
- **Housing for at-risk populations –** there is a need for additional housing to help those who have been evicted and fact difficulty finding housing. Many end up couch surfing or homeless as they have no housing options or resources.
- **Rising Costs** – new construction is not affordable (materials costs, labor costs, infrastructure costs, interest rates, approvals and permits, etc.).
- **Zoning, Permitting & Approvals** – discussion on the impact of zoning on residential development. It was suggested that the County identify areas where some gentle density (for example twin homes or fourplexes) could be added. It was also noted that County zoning does not allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or tiny homes under standard zoning, although it could possibly be accomplished through a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

  The group discussed the importance of the County and local governing bodies to make requirements more prescriptive to remove subjectivity from the development process. It's important to design the process to reduce the risk to the developer (while also ensuring a project fits the local needs and context). Related to this is the need to educate local officials and plan commission members on their job/scope of review to remove the subjectivity from the review process.

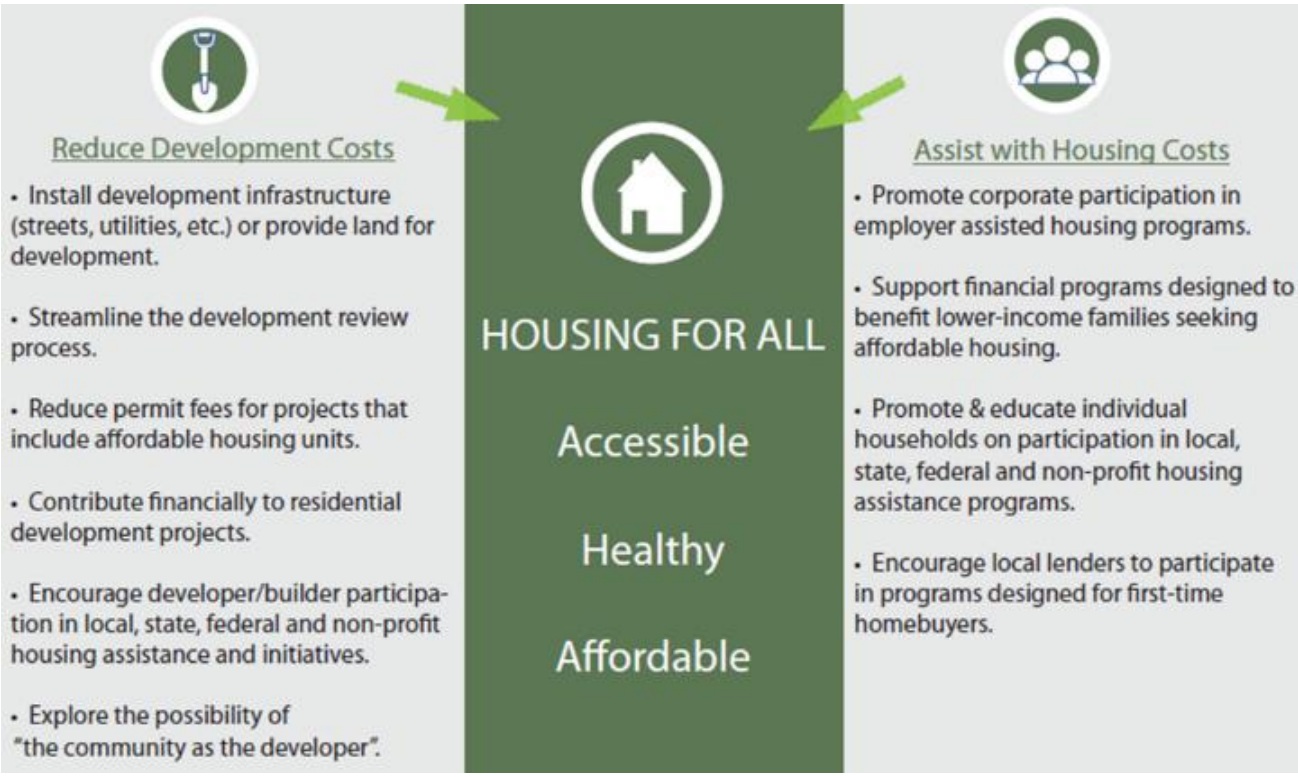
  It was noted by a builder that Chippewa County has been great at keeping permit fees low, which is important as processing/government regulation adds a significant amount to the cost of new housing construction.
- **Preserving Existing Housing Stock** – the Chippewa County Housing Regional CDBG Home Repair and Rehab program, which is a 10-county regional program, has funding available but lacks staff to process

applications. At the time of the focus group meeting, there were 115 on the waitlist throughout the region due to administrative challenges.

- **Housing Assistance Programs** – There is a waitlist for Section 8 program – higher rents require more of the program funding so there are less people served as the money is used at a faster rate.

  Hope Village has 11 tiny homes that are transitional housing units for homeless; at the time of the meeting there were approximately 50 households on the waitlist. The organization also has 10 rental units and are converting 27 former motel units in rental housing. The biggest challenge facing Hope Village is the management/administration/coordination of grants.

- **Affordability versus Tradition** – the group spent time discussing the need to educate people and help overcome fears associated with housing of different styles and price points. People are often stuck in tradition of a single-family home, but additional types of housing are needed in the County.



3.6 Housing Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

A high degree of collaboration will be required to achieve the following housing goal and objectives. Many of the policies and strategies will be undertaken by local partners and individual communities. Unless otherwise noted, it is not the expectation that Chippewa County government will be the lead entity on the recommended housing strategies.

Housing Goal

Chippewa County will have a variety of affordable, quality, and efficient housing choices that provide safe and healthy options to meet the needs of residents of all ages, incomes, and household types.

Objective 1: Expand housing choice throughout the County.
Provide a range of quality, affordable housing options (single-family, multi-family, duplexes, senior housing, affordable rentals, etc.) to meet the needs of all ages, incomes, and household types.

Objective 1 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Allow for and promote a balanced mix of housing types (single-family, duplexes, townhomes, and multi-family housing).
2. Encourage the development of "missing middle" housing types (e.g., Accessory Dwelling Units, 2-to 4-plexes, townhomes, condos).
3. Promote and support the development of mixed-income neighborhoods.
4. Support local zoning and land use regulations that allow flexible housing types and densities in suitable locations.
5. Support infill and redevelopment opportunities that increase housing choice throughout the County.
6. Educate and inform the public and elected officials about the definition and benefits of affordable housing, including its importance and role in supporting economic development, workforce stability, and overall quality of life.
7. Development decisions should be based upon prescriptive criteria and consistency with comprehensive plans.

Objective 1 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Work with housing developers to identify opportunities for incorporating a mix of housing types and price points into new residential neighborhoods. (ongoing)
2. Explore amending the County zoning ordinance to allow tiny homes developments and Accessory Dwelling Units under standard zoning to allow for development of smaller housing types in appropriate residential areas. (short-to-medium range)
3. Encourage and support grant applications for funding programs that increase housing supply and diversity. (ongoing)

4. Educate and inform the public and elected officials about the definition and benefits of affordable housing, including its importance and role in supporting economic development, workforce stability, and overall quality of life. (ongoing)
5. Prepare a data-driven housing needs assessment to identify and document the County's specific housing needs. (short-to-medium range)
6. Conduct outreach and education using local data, visuals, and resident experiences to illustrate the benefits of a variety of housing types and reduce fears associated with housing forms other than single-family homes. (ongoing)
7. Work to educate city, village, and town officials and plan commissioners on their job/scope of review to help streamline the development review process and maintain and objective review process. (ongoing)
8. Encourage local communities to utilize the Affordable Housing Extension for a Tax Increment District, where appropriate, to help Affordable Housing efforts. (ongoing)
9. Encourage local communities to analyze and evaluate their zoning ordinance and amend to allow for a variety of lot sizes, including smaller, less expensive lots, that can help reduce housing costs. (ongoing)

Objective 2: Maintain and improve the existing housing stock in the County.
Promote reinvestment in existing housing and neighborhoods through rehabilitation, maintenance, energy efficiency, and adaptive reuse.

Objective 2 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and reinvestment in existing housing to extend the life of the housing stock.
2. Support energy efficiency, weatherization, and other housing improvements that reduce housing costs and improve safety.
3. Promote adaptive reuse of underutilized or vacant buildings for residential purposes, where feasible.
4. Ensure proper enforcement of the County and local ordinances related to housing condition and property maintenance.
5. The County supports programs that maintain or rehabilitate the local housing stock, including those administered by the Chippewa County Housing Authority, such as the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Programs; the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program; the USDA Section 504 Home Repair Program; FHA Title I Property Improvement Loans; the Wisconsin Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP); and the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, including the HOME program, Section 108 loan program, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
6. The County encourages voluntary efforts by private homeowners to maintain, rehabilitate, update, or otherwise make improvements to their homes. Examples of dangerous and unhealthy conditions requiring remediation include lead paint, lead pipes, and radon gas.
7. The County encourages the development of energy efficient housing, such as the Focus on Energy program.

Objective 2 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Partner with local communities and other organizations to promote existing housing rehabilitation assistance and applicable funding programs. (ongoing)
2. Identify and promote opportunities to reuse vacant or underutilized buildings for housing in coordination with local communities. (ongoing)
3. Offer workshops and one-on-one counseling on home maintenance, financing for repairs, and landlord best practices to reduce deterioration and absentee-owner neglect. (ongoing)
4. Continue to promote and support the Chippewa County Housing Regional CDBG Home Repair & Rehab Program. Explore opportunities to increase Housing Authority staffing to process applications. (ongoing)

Objective 3: Plan for new housing that is compatible with community character and developed in a way that is economically efficient in terms of its location and relation to necessary services, facilities, and infrastructure.

Guide new residential development to appropriate locations with adequate public facilities and services, while minimizing impacts to environmentally sensitive areas and encouraging efficient use of existing infrastructure.

Objective 3 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Direct new residential development to cities, villages, and designated growth areas where public water, sewer, transportation, emergency services, and community facilities are available or planned.
2. Prioritize infill development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse within existing development areas.
3. Promote compact development patterns (e.g., cluster subdivisions or conservation design) that efficiently use land and public infrastructure.
4. Minimize impacts of new residential development on environmentally sensitive areas, farmland, and natural resources.
5. Discourage scattered low-density residential development in areas that would increase public service costs or fragment farmland or natural resources.
6. Consider the long-term public service and infrastructure costs when reviewing rezoning, land division, and residential development proposals.

Objective 3 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Encourage conservation subdivision design to preserve open space, protect environmental resources, and reduce infrastructure costs. (ongoing)
2. Identify areas where additional 'gentle density,' compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, could be added.[14] (ongoing)

[14] "Gentle density" is the approach of allowing modest, varied "missing middle" housing types (e.g., duplexes, town homes, small multi-plexes) into existing single-family neighborhoods without significantly changing the character of the neighborhood.

Objective 4: Support aging in place and special needs housing.
Encourage housing options that allow older adults, persons with disabilities, and residents with special needs, to live independently and safely through accessible design.

Objective 4 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Encourage and incentivize new residential developments to incorporate universal design standards (i.e., designs that are accessible by everyone) to accommodate aging residents and people with disabilities.
2. Support a range of housing types to meet the needs of older adults and allow residents to age in place.
3. When possible, guide senior housing to locations with access to health care and other community facilities and services.
4. Identify affordable rental properties designed for seniors and work to preserve these units.

Objective 4 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Work with ADRC to host a housing resource line and/or webpage that lists accessible units designed for seniors or disabled individuals. (ongoing)
2. Promote funding programs, including WHEDA's loan programs, to help incentivize the creation of new senior housing. (ongoing)
3. Form a County-level advisory team including ADRC, housing authority, nonprofits, communities, health providers, and developers to coordinate aging-in-place initiatives and monitor outcomes. (short-to-medium range)

Objective 5: Reduce housing insecurity and homelessness.
Support coordinated strategies that prevent and reduce housing insecurity and homelessness by expanding access to safe, stable, and affordable housing and supporting programs and partnerships that help provide access to supportive housing and services.

Objective 5 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Promote housing options, and types (e.g., modular homes, manufactured housing, tiny homes) that provide more affordable housing options.
2. Support local housing advocates and service providers in efforts to provide temporary or transitional housing.

Objective 5 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Collaborate with non-profit housing developers such as West CAP and local municipalities to pursue housing assistance resources which encourage the development, renovation, and maintenance of safe, healthy, energy-efficient, and affordable housing stock. (ongoing)
2. Work with local communities and housing service providers in the County to advocate to State and Federal agencies on housing needs and existing or proposed housing programs. (short range and ongoing)
3. Explore opportunities to support existing partners and consider options for assisting in the management/administration/coordination of grants. (ongoing)



4. TRANSPORTATION

Chapter 4. Transportation

Key Transportation Issues & Opportunities:

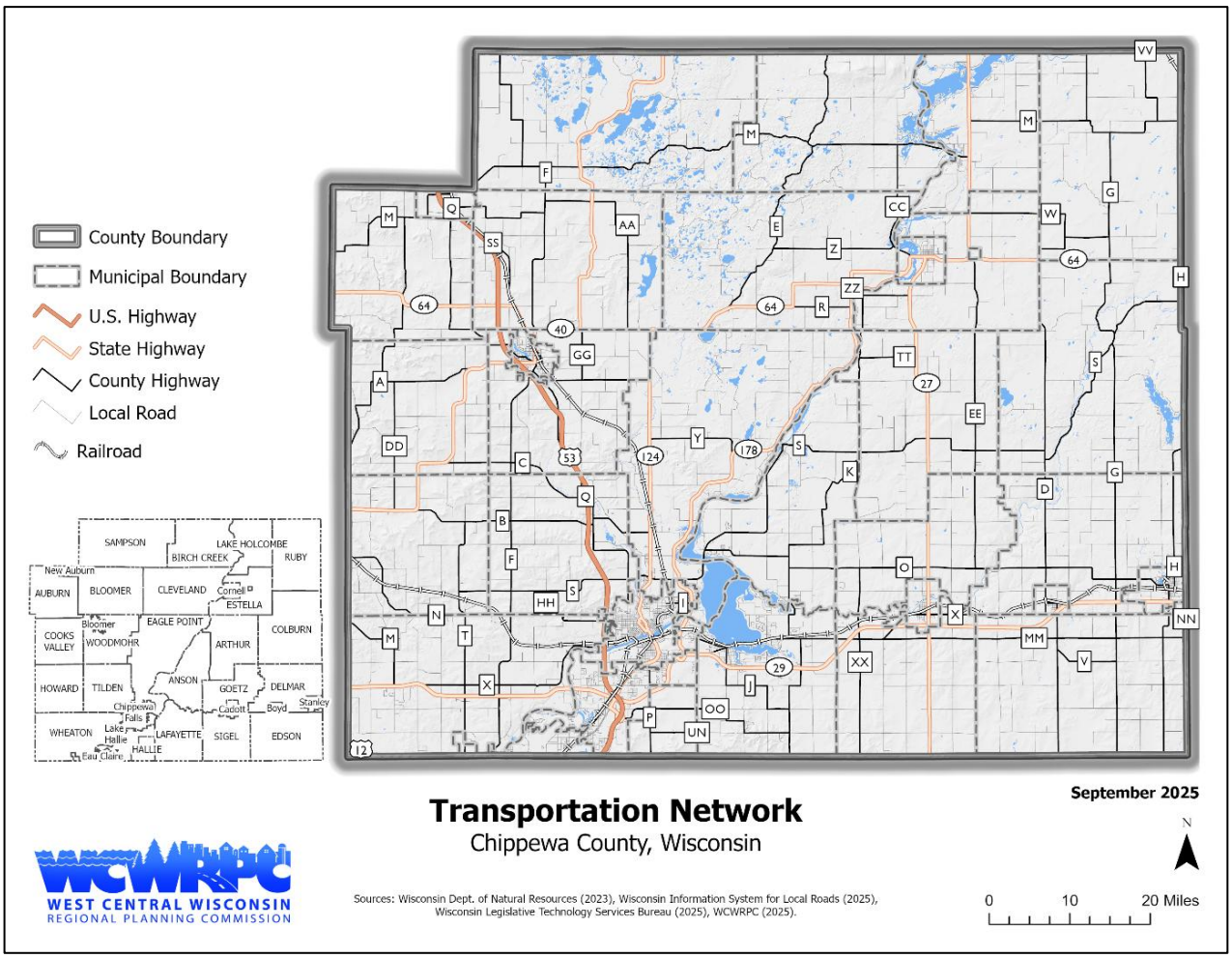
- The lack of funding and increasing costs for road and culvert maintenance is a significant challenge for Towns. Aging roads and the needs for street repairs is also a top issue in the County's urban areas.
- Large truck traffic, heavier loads, and heavier farm equipment are also a challenge due to road damage of some town roads.
- The County is tied in to the Chippewa Valley Trail network with the Old Abe State Trail, but opportunities exist to improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

4.1 Existing Conditions

A. Streets and Highways

Roadways exist to either provide access or mobility to its users. Access provides a way for people to get from their place of residency to a given location like work, school, or services, with multiple entry/exit points as a defining characteristic. Contrarily, mobility prioritizes traveling longer distances efficiently, often through higher speed limits.

Figure 4-1. Chippewa County Transportation Network



4. Transportation

Road Network

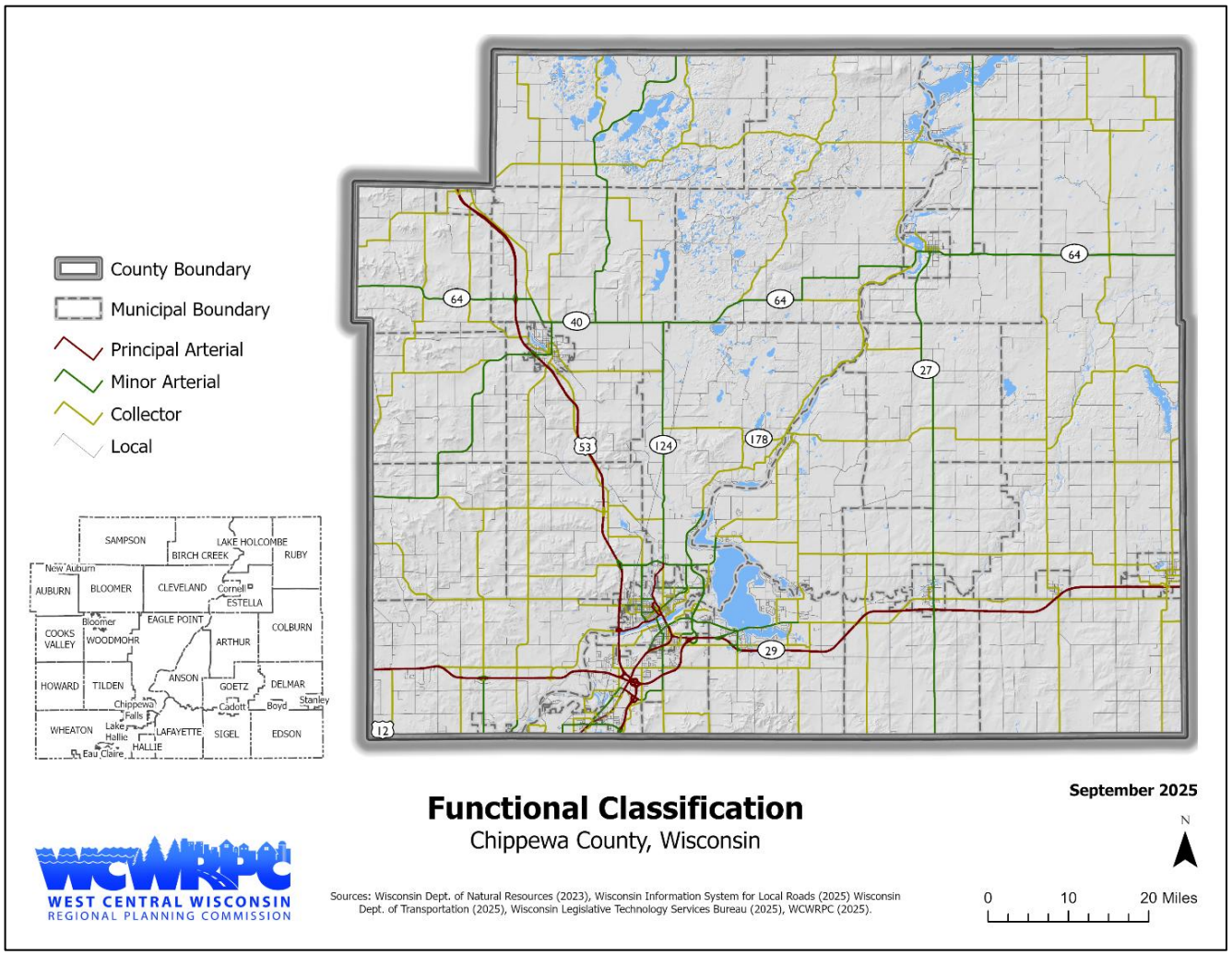
Chippewa County's road network is shown on Figure 4-1. The Chippewa County Highway Department maintains the fourth largest County Trunk system and fourth largest combined County and State Trunk System in Wisconsin. The Department employs approximately 75 full-time employees and hires up to nine seasonal employees each year. The following is a summary of the public road miles in Chippewa County:

County Trunk Highways:	996 lane miles
State Trunk Highways:	667 lane miles
Local Roads:	1,333 lane miles
County, City, and Town Bridges:	229

Functional Classification

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Functional Classification categorizes roads into three groups: Arterial, Collector, and Local based on their travel function. As shown in Figure 4-2, Functional Classification Map, arterials, and collectors are spread throughout the County, with the majority of road miles being local roads.

Figure 4-2. Chippewa County Functional Classification



Arterial roadways are at the highest level of the highway functional classification system. They provide a high level of mobility, have high speed limits, carry high traffic volumes, and allow for long-distance, uninterrupted travel. Rural Arterial roadways connect states, regions, and urban centers, may have multiple lanes, and provide limited access, such as at interchanges. Urban Arterials serve the major activity centers within the urban area and are their highest traffic volume corridors

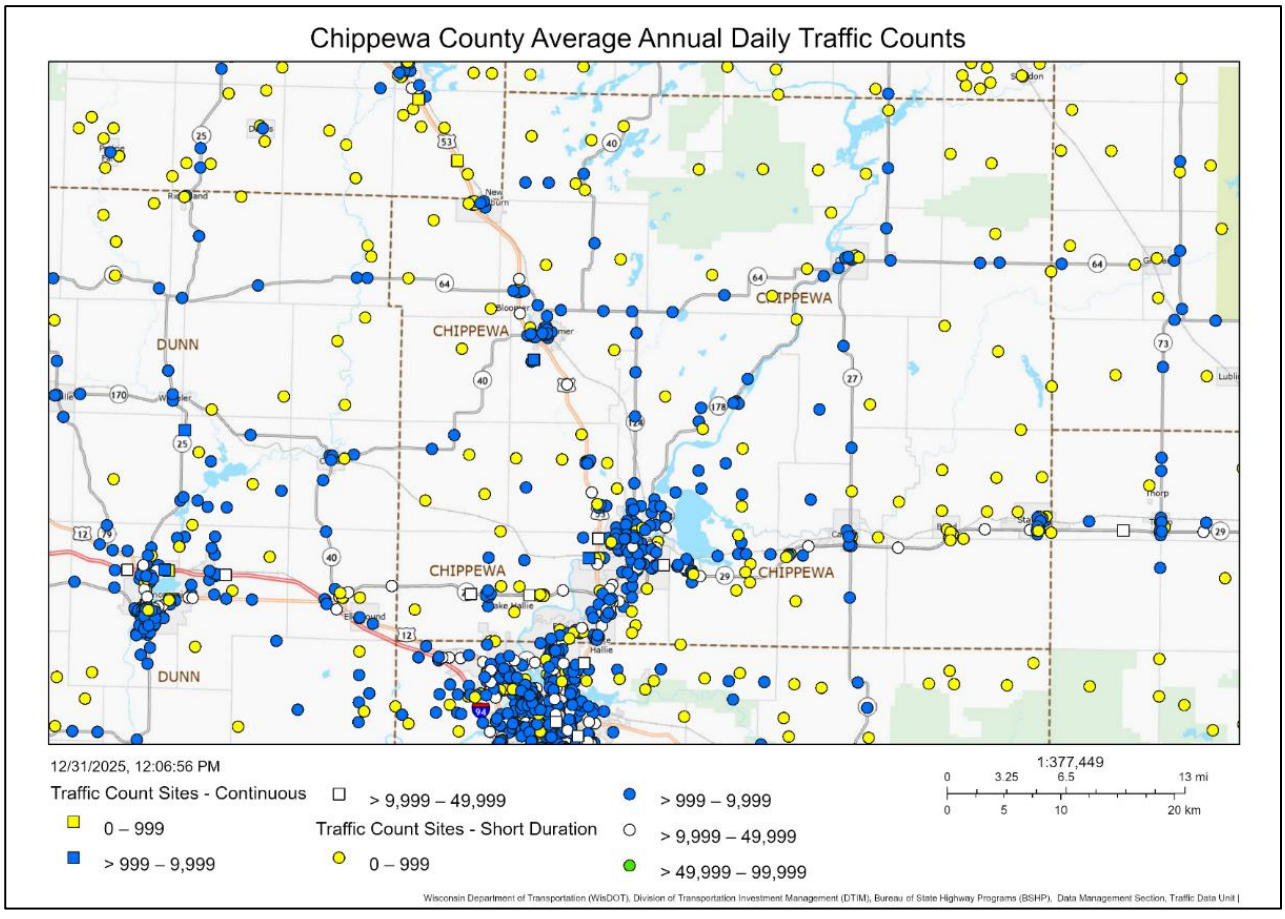
The primary role of Collectors is to collect and distribute traffic from Local Roads to Arterials. Within urban areas, Collectors provide circulation in residential neighborhoods, commercial, civic, and industrial areas. In rural areas, they link communities and agricultural areas not served by Arterials. Collectors carry more traffic and longer trips than local roads and provide more access to adjacent homes and businesses than Arterials.

Local Roads are at the bottom of the functional classification hierarchy, even though they comprise the largest percentage of all roadways in the State. Their role is to provide access to homes and businesses. They have low speed limits and offer limited mobility for through traffic.

Traffic Counts

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation provides Average Annual Daily Traffic (ADDT) counts for Wisconsin roads. These counts are crucial for planning, design, and maintenance, showing the estimated vehicles per day on a road segment. As shown in Figure 4-3. the highest average annual daily traffic counts occur in the Chippewa Falls and Lake Hallie urban area, which range from 15,000 to 29,500 daily vehicles on Highway 29 and 20,000 to 40,200 vehicles on Highway 53. Other than the urban area and Highways 53 and 29, no roadways in the County were identified as having a daily traffic volume exceeding 10,000 vehicles.

Figure 4-3. Chippewa County Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts



4. Transportation

While traffic volumes have been increasing throughout the County, the urban area has also been experiencing some of the County's greatest increases in average daily traffic counts. Traffic on Highway 53 south of Highway 29 has grown by over 25% (over 8,000 more vehicles daily) between 2008 to 2024. Highway 29 just east of Highway 178 also grew by 8,000 vehicles (+42%) during the same time period. Increases in average daily traffic has been much more modest for most other areas of Chippewa County.

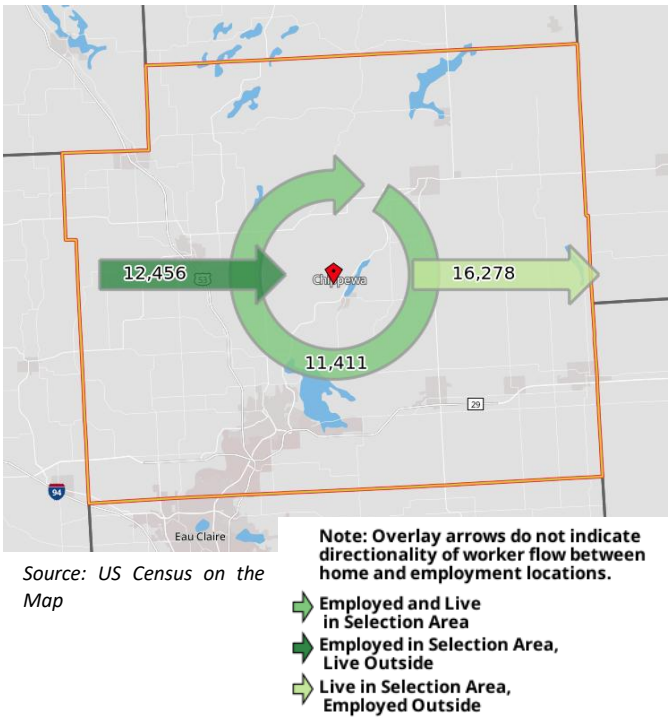
Commuting Trends

There are many elements that factor in an individual's place of residence, including the person's job. According to the 2023 U.S. Census Longitudinal Survey, 11,411 people both lived and worked within Chippewa County. At the same time, there was an outmigration of 16,278 residents to work outside of the County, and an in-migration of 12,456 individuals from other counites into Chippewa County.

Data from the 2023 ACS estimate that Chippewa County residents travel, on average, 22.9 minutes to work. Not surprising, over 29% of the residents leaving the County for work have a job in adjacent Eau Claire County.

For those commuting into Chippewa County, the top counites of residence, beyond County residents, include Eau Claire, Dunn, Barron, Clark, Rusk, St. Croix, and Trempealeau counties. An opportunity exists for the County and communities to capture those commuting in, to make Chippewa County their place of residence. Two major components of attracting those commuters is affordable housing and amenities/quality of life.

Figure 4-4. Inflow/Outflow Analysis in Chippewa County, 2023 Primary Job



Source: US Census on the Map

Truck Routes

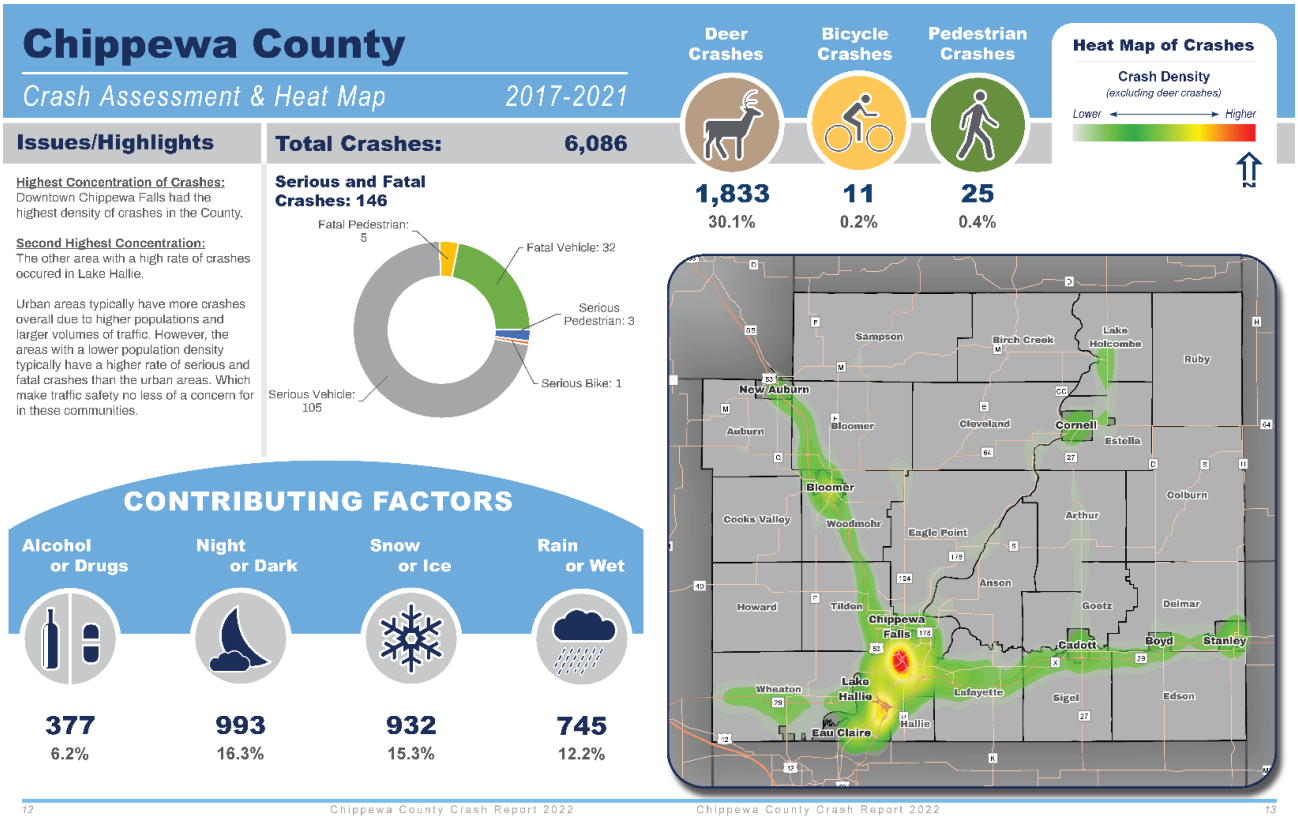
Truck routes are designed to accommodate semi-trucks and include roadside accommodations at rest areas for temporary parking. Long truck routes also often include private truck parking and fueling stations. US 53 and State Highways 27, 29, 40, 64, 124, and 178 have been designated as long truck routes by the Wisconsin DOT. County S between Highways 124 and 178, and between Highway 178 and 27, as well as County Y from Highways 124 to 178 are also designated truck routes.

Crash Data

Figure 4-5 summarizes key findings from the 2022 *Chippewa County Crash Report* prepared by West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC). Over the course of the five years, there were a total of 6,086 reported crashes; this equates to 3.3 crashes per day. Of those crashes, 146 resulted in at least one serious injury and/or fatality (29.2/year). The map shows the highest concentration of crashes in the County is located in downtown Chippewa Falls. As a whole, the highest concentrations of crashes in the County occurred in more urban communities and along major transportation corridors. The 2022 *Chippewa County Crash Report* has detailed reports for every town, city, and village in the County and can be found here.

In analyzing the most recent three years of available data (2023-2025), the County had a total of 3,485 crashes, which averages 3.2 crashes a day. Of these crashes, 127 resulted in at least one serious injury and/or fatality (42.3/year).

Figure 4-5. Chippewa County Crashes 2017-2021



Source: 2022 Chippewa County Crash Report

B. Other Transportation Modes

Public Transportation

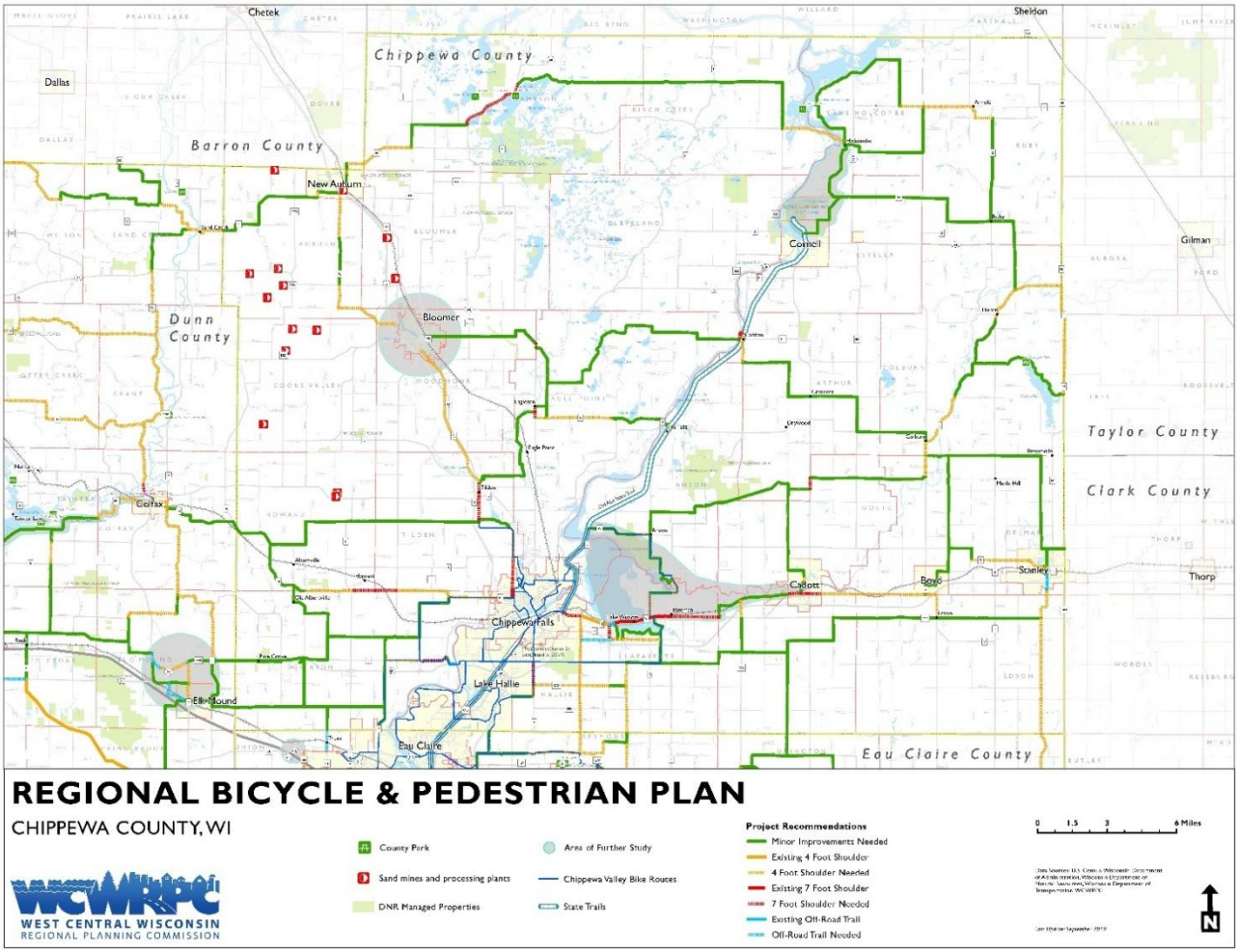
There are limited regional public transportation options in the County. The City of Chippewa Falls operates a shared ride taxi (SRT) program within the City limits. In 2024, the SRT program had a total of 44,000 total revenue passengers. This is down from 59,000 in 2019 and 56,000 in 2023. There was a significant drop during 2020, but the program rebounded in 2021 and 2022 but has since dropped in ridership again. Eau Claire Transit's northernmost stop is located at Melby Road. There is continued desire for a regional transit system inside the Chippewa Valley urban area that connects the entire urban area.

Compass IL, uses a pool of volunteer drivers throughout 29 counties, including Chippewa County. In 2024, a total of 5,635 trips were provided in Chippewa County. The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Chippewa County has a Transportation Coordinator who refers individuals to local contracted transportation providers that would meet their needs. The Chippewa County program is a donation-based program. The County's transportation services are for medical appointments, employment, and shopping purposes. Volunteer drivers are utilized for the Volunteer Caregiver Transportation Program, which serves all of Chippewa County. The program is available to transport seniors and people with disabilities on an as needed basis.

Bike and Pedestrian

The County is home to numerous opportunities for day-to-day and recreational bicycle and pedestrian travel. In 2019, the County adopted the Chippewa County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This document has a wide assortment of recommended strategies and infrastructure projects to make biking and walking safer and more accessible in Chippewa County. Figure 4-6 shows existing routes and proposed infrastructure projects.

Figure 4-6. Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Map, Chippewa County

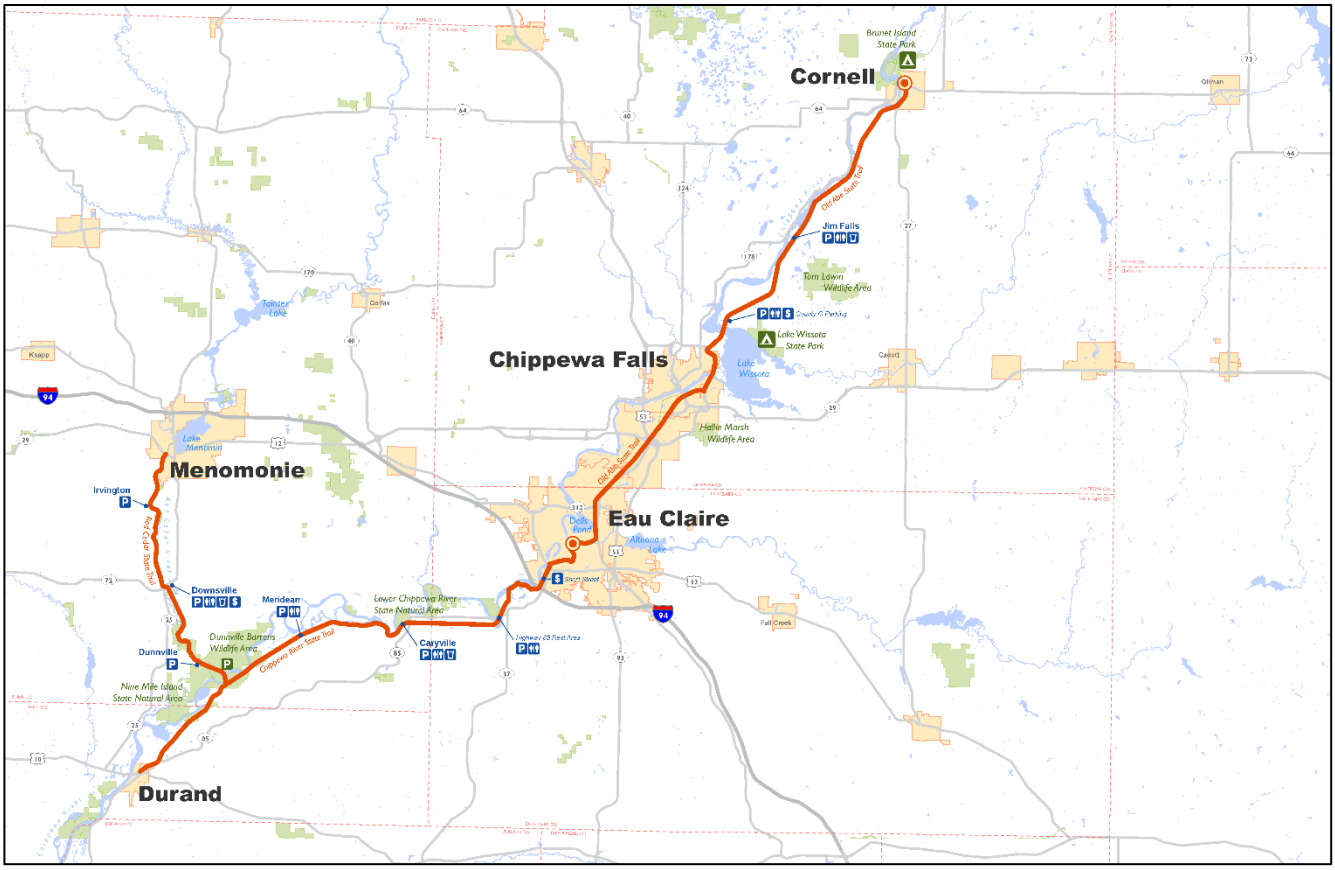


Source: 2019 Chippewa County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

The City of Chippewa Falls and Village of Lake Hallie both have adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian plans. Like the County plan, these plans have an assortment of strategies to make biking and walking safer and more accessible in the respective communities. In addition, several school districts (Bloomer, Chippewa Falls, New Auburn, and Stanley-Boyd) have Safe Routes to School plans which promote and create safer conditions for students to walk and bike to school.

The County is home to the Old Abe State Trail. The Old Abe State Trail starts at Phoenix Park in downtown Eau Claire, enters the southwestern portion of Chippewa County, travels through Lake Hallie and Chippewa Falls, and extends to Cornell. The trail is used for both daily commuting and recreational purposes.

Figure 4-7. Chippewa Valley State Trail Network



Air Transportation

Chippewa County has two publicly-owned airports, Chippewa Valley Regional Airport and Cornell Airport. Cornell Airport is a Basic Utility-A (BU-A) airport, designed to accommodate aircraft of less than12,500 pounds, with approach speeds of less than 121 knots and wingspans of less than 49 feet.

The Chippewa Valley Regional Airport (EAU), located within the city limits of Eau Claire, provides scheduled passenger and freight air transit. Current service from EAU is to Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) with United Airlines. Flights to and from EAU are conveniently timed to access domestic and international connections at ORD. EAU has also recently been partnering with Sun Country Airlines to provide nonstop seasonal flights to leisure destinations.

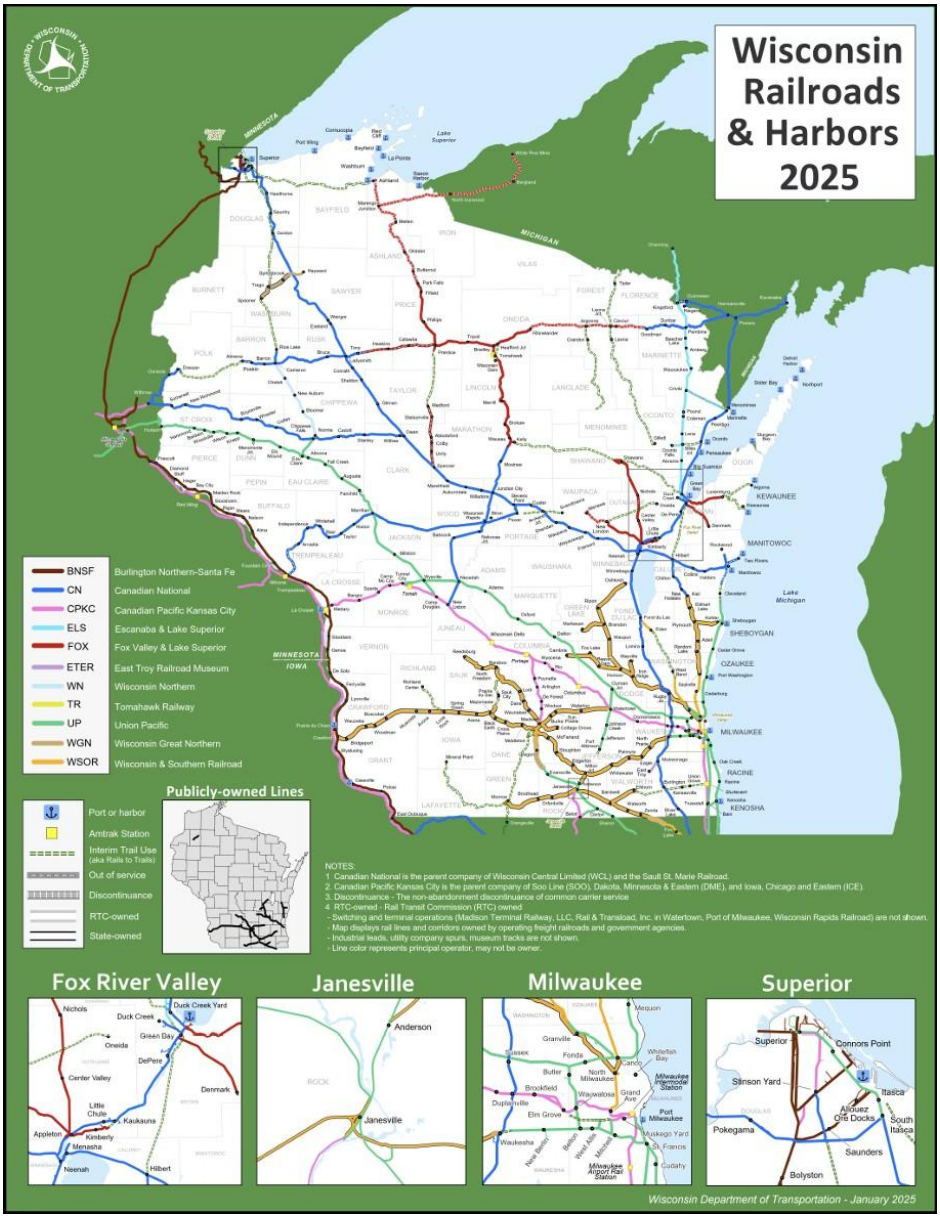
There has been increased corporate aviation use at EAU. Access to airports for private corporation aircraft is often viewed as a key locational attractant by economic development specialists. For instance, the Eau Claire based Menards corporation uses EAU to base their fleet of aircraft to serve their stores. Increased development of airport property to accommodate industrial and business uses, as a stimulus for growth in corporate aviation, is pursued by the Airport Commission. EAU has limited cargo activity.

Railroads

Freight and passenger rail service can be large community attributes in terms of economic markets, quality of life, and impact the desirability to live somewhere. Many industries prefer to have access to freight rail service. Chippewa County is served by three railroads: Union Pacific, Canadian National, and Escanaba & Lake Superior.

In 2023, outbound rail freight was 8.7 percent of all freight leaving the County, with a total of just under 800,000 tons. In contrast, there were 357,000 tons of rail freight entering the County, which was 13 percent of all total freight entering the County. In contrast, these tonnages were 5,400,000 tons of rail freight leaving the County and 490,000 tons of rail freight entering the County in 2017. Roughly seven times more tons of rail freight left the County in 2017 than in 2023. Almost all of this reduction is due to the loss of frac sand operations in the County during this period.

Figure 4-8. Wisconsin Railroads & Harbors 2025



Passenger rail service to the Chippewa Valley, connecting the region to the Twin Cities, Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago, continues to be explored. The nearest rail station to Chippewa County would be located in the City of Eau Claire.

Water Transportation

Chippewa County does not have any surface water transportation routes or related infrastructure, except for recreational travel. The nearest multi-modal ports are in Superior, Wisconsin (Lake Superior – 135 miles) and La Crosse, Wisconsin (Mississippi River – 100 miles).

ATVs / UTVs / Snowmobile

The Chippewa County Outdoor Recreation Plan discusses ATVs, UTVs, and snowmobile activity in the County. The County adopted an ordinance in 2024 opening all County highways with less than 750 vehicles a day to ATV/UTV traffic. This increased the percentage of County highways that allow ATV/UTV traffic from 6% to 70%. Many local jurisdictions have adopted ordinances allowing the use of ATV/UTVs on local streets with access to over 948 miles of County-wide trails. This helps facilitate access to the larger Chippewa and surrounding County trail networks. Chippewa County is officially a *Snowmobile Friendly Community*, with nearly 532 miles of snowmobile trails connecting all communities to the trail system. There are dozens of active snowmobile clubs, all of which are part of the Chippewa Valley Snowmobile Organization, Inc. The majority of ATV, UTV, and snowmobile activity in the County are for recreational purposes.

4.2 Transportation in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared transportation-related issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for the cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Wheaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Town Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Road Maintenance and Repair Needs; Deteriorating Conditions & Increasing Costs
- ATV/UTV Traffic Concerns
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Traffic Volume Increases Due to Residential Growth
- Right-of-Way and Safety Management

City & Village Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Road/Street Repair and Maintenance
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety & Connectivity
- Lack of Transportation Options for Seniors and Disabled Individuals
- Coordination for Future Street and Subdivision Connectivity
- Need for Interchange/Intersection Improvements

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Goals & Objectives

- Ensure a Safe and Efficient Transportation System
- The Transportation System Should Support Pedestrians, Bicycles, & Users
- Promote Accessibility and Connectivity
- Plan for Sustainable Maintenance and Improvements
- Encourage Development Along Key Transportation Routes
- Align Transportation Planning with Broader Community Goals

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

Not surprisingly, the following top themes among the town, village, and city comprehensive plan policies and strategies parallel the previous issues, goals, and objectives:

- Transportation Infrastructure Development and Maintenance
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Accessibility
- Safety and Traffic Management
- Economic Development and Connectivity
- Sustainability and Environmental Considerations
- Collaboration with Stakeholders
- Future Planning and Adaptability
- Cost-sharing and Financial Strategies
- Public Transit and Specialized Services

4.3 Other Transportation Plans, Programs, & Partners

The following briefly summarizes other key transportation-related plans, programs, and partners for Chippewa County. It is important that these plans and programs be considered when identifying Chippewa County's goals, objectives, and policies in order to further plan coordination and cost-effective services. **Appendix C** includes additional transportations plans, programs, and partners that may also be important to achieving Chippewa County's goals and objectives.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) Plans

WDOT has the following projects in design and scheduled for construction in Chippewa County as part of their six-year Transportation Improvement Program as of Summer 2025:

- USH 53 – County Highway "M" (Main Street) bridge, New Auburn
- USH 53 – 50th Avenue bridge, Town of Hallie
- USH 53 – STH 64 bridge, Town of Bloomer
- STH 27 – STH 9 to Johnson Road, Cadott to Cornell
- STH 29 – Chippewa River bridges, Town of Wheaton
- STH 29 – 160th St. bridge, Town of Lafayette
- STH 29 – CTH "X" bridge, Town of Lafayette
- STH 29 – CTH "X" bridge, Boyd
- STH 29 – 320th St to Koser Avenue, Town of Delmar
- STH 29 – I-94 to Stillson Creek, Town of Lafayette to County line
- STH 40 – STH 64 east to County line, Town of Bloomer to Town of Sampson
- STH 64 – Chippewa River bridge, Cornell
- STH 124 – CTH "OO" to Business 29, Lake Hallie to Chippewa Falls
- STH 124 – Duncan Creek Bridge, Chippewa Falls
- STH 124 – High Street to CTH "S", Chippewa Falls to Town of Eagle Point
- STH 124 – CTH "S" to STH 64, Town of Eagle Point to Towns of Bloomer & Woodmohr
- STH 178 – O'Neil Creek bridge, Town of Eagle Point
- STH 178 – Olson Dr. intersection, City of Chippewa Falls
- Other various bridges

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050

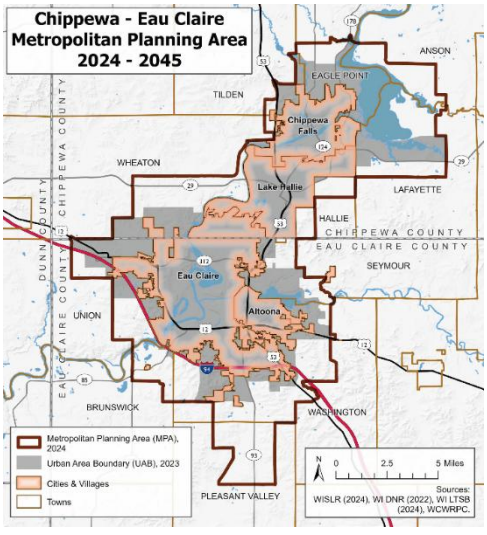
The State Rail plan adopted in 2023 recognizes the importance of the intermodal freight rail facility in Chippewa Falls owned by Canadian National Railway Company and forecasts that rail lines passing through the County will move 5 million to 20 million tons of freight in 2050. No passenger rail within the County is anticipated by 2050, with intercity passenger service provided by buses. However, the Plan does show passenger rail connecting Eau Claire to the Twin Cities and Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago. The plan also states that there are 82 at-grade rail crossings in Chippewa County. The 2022 *Wisconsin Highway-Railway Grade Crossing Safety Action Plan* identifies the 13th Avenue crossing in Bloomer as a priority.

Chippewa County Transportation Plans and Programs

Plan or Program	Description or Highlights
Chippewa County 5-Year Highway Plan	WCWRPC, through its MPO program, has created a Capital Improvements Plan Story Map with proposed road and other infrastructure improvements for Chippewa County, City of Chippewa Falls, and Village of Lake Hallie.
Routine Maintenance Agreement (RMA)	This agreement with the State of Wisconsin covers the Highway Department's performance of routine maintenance on State and Federal highways. For example, the State allocated $2,575,900 for Chippewa County's RMA in 2023 to maintain 667 lane miles of State/Federal highways.
Chippewa County Bike & Pedestrian Plan (2019)	This plan, including its map with recommended improvements, was previously described in sub-section 4.2.
County Highway Permits	• Driveway Installation Permits • Work in Right-of-Way Permits • Utility Permits • Over-sided Load Permits • White Arrow Board (WAB) Directional Sign Permits • Tourist-Oriented Directional Sign (TODS) Permits • Weight Limits and related Single-Trip Permits for Spring, Class B Highways, Implements of Husbandry, and 42 Posted Bridges

Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The MPO was formed in 1982 and is staffed by West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The MPO planning area (MPA) covers the City of Chippewa Falls, City of Eau Claire, Village of Lake Hallie, and portions of the Towns of Anson, Eagle Point, Hallie, Lafayette, Tilden, and Wheaton in Chippewa County. Each municipality and county in the MPA has a representative on the MPO's Policy Council, which approves certain MPO plans and actions.



The MPO is an important partner to achieving the transportation goal and objectives for southwestern Chippewa County. The MPO provides multi-model transportation and transit planning support, and has facilitated the creation of various studies and plans. The MPO also acts as a coordinating entity between the communities of the urban area and State and Federal funding sources.

Key MPO plans and programs include:

MPO Plan or Program	Description or Highlights
Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	Updated every 5 years, this 20-year plan evaluates conditions and makes recommendations to support the maintenance and development of the overall transportation system This plan is used to guide MPO efforts (i.e., the MPO's Unified Work Program) and support grant applications. Counties and municipalities are encouraged to consider the LRTP data in their respective plans and capital improvements programs. An update to the LRTP is underway and expected to be completed in early 2026.
Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	Updated every two years, the TIP identifies all programmed highway, transit, bicycle/pedestrian, and other transportation projects that may be implemented with federal funds. TIP projects that are regionally significant and/or represent identified priority needs are submitted for possible federal funding. The TIP is periodically amended as needed.
Surface Transportation Planning Grant (STPG)	Typically, Wisconsin DOT, invites municipalities to apply for STPG funding every two years for local transportation improvements. These funding requests are evaluated by the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Council based on criteria approved by the Policy Council.
Traffic Safety & Crash Reports	A 2022 Traffic Safety Report for the MPO area has been completed as well as Crash Reports for Chippewa County and all cities, villages, and towns in the County. Highlights of the County's crash report were provided previously in this plan element.
Chippewa Falls Shared-Ride Taxi	The MPO staffs the administration of this program through a contract with the City of Chippewa Falls.
Unified Work Program	This annual plan identifies work items for the MPO program, which is submitted to WDOT.

Addressing transportation safety has been a priority of the MPO, which will be conducting additional efforts in the future to advance the "Zero in Wisconsin" initiative goal of zero traffic fatalities through related education, enforcement, and engineering.

Chippewa & Eau Claire Counties Locally Developed Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan

Federal transportation law requires that projects selected for funding under Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) programs be "derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan" and that the plan be "developed and approved through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public." WCWRPC staff facilitated an update to the Chippewa-Eau Claire Counties joint plan in 20023, which included the recommendations identified in Table 4-1 .

Table 4-1. Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan Recommendations

Priority of Goal	Goal to support 5-year coordinated plan	Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline/ Deadline	Roadblocks to Implementation
1	Strive to increase transportation funding to create sustainable transportation services and develop/expand/continue current transportation services.	Apply for 85.21, 5310, and 5311 grants, and other funding appropriate funding programs to continue existing services and expand services as desired	ADRC, all providers	Annually	Funding availability
		Explore employer support to subsidize transportation services	Mobility Manager, County EDCs	2024	Staff time, willingness to participate
		Continue to partner with Eau Claire City Transit to provide paratransit services countywide	ADRC, ECT	Ongoing	None
		Continue contract with provider(s) for service hours beyond paratransit service hours, service on Sundays, and out of county service	ADRC, ECT	Ongoing	Provider price increases
2	Develop and improve access to information and increase awareness of transportation services. (marketing/educational outreach).	Continue advocacy efforts both locally and at the State level to communicate need for and value of coordinated transporation services	ADRC, ECT, providers, local government, public	Ongoing	None
		Continue partnerships to provide travel training and consumer education programs to improve consumer access to transportation services	All providers, ADRC	Ongoing	Funding, time, reaching potential riders
		Advocate/educate policy makers/ elected officials	Providers	Ongoing	Staff time
		Explore the possibility of establishing a stronger communication channel with New Freedom's transportation coordinators to better coordinate transportation services.	ADRC	2024	Funding, staff time, collaboration
		Produce public-facing educational and outreach materials to raise awareness of available services	ADRC, all providers	2024	Funding, staff time
3	Increase transportation options for the transportation disadvantaged.	Continue to inventory and evaluate transportation needs of various target populations to evaluate the effectiveness of existing transportation services	ADRC, MPO, providers	Ongoing	Time, funding, cooperation from private providers
		Continue the city bus travel training program	ECT, CIL, service agencies	Ongoing	None
		Participate in and improve regional service coordination	ADRC, partners, Mobilty Manager	Ongoing	Willingness to participate, staff time, funding
		Identify unmet needs and gaps in service	Providers, ADRC, consumers	Ongoing	
4	Maximize the efficiency of transportation services through collaboration and coordination.	Conduct ongoing evaluation of transportation service schedules to assure best balance between service availabilty and need	All providers, ADRC	Ongoing	Time, funding, willingness to cooperate and collaborate
		Develop strategic plan for county-wide and region-wide transportation services	ADRC, ECT, Chippewa Falls SRTS, local governments	2024	Willingness to participate, funding
		Continue support efforts to develop a transit connection between the cities of Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls	ADRC, ECT, Chippewa Falls SRTS, local governments	2024	Willingness to participate, funding

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plans

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement that promotes walking and biking to and from school. SRTS planning expenses are typically supported through Wisconsin's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Once a SRTS Plan is completed, TAP funding can be pursued for plan implementation activities. SRTS Plans have been developed for the following school districts in Chippewa County:

- Bloomer (2022)
- Chippewa Falls (2021)
- Eau Claire (2023)
- New Auburn (2016)
- Stanley-Boyd (2023)

SRTS programming in the County is supported by the West Central Wisconsin Safe Routes to School program, which is administered by the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC). The program

has three goals: (1) make walking and biking to school both safer and easier; (2) encourage and increase more students to walk and bike to school; and (3) continue to grow and show support regional SRTS efforts. The District SRTS Plans above include recommendations such as:

- Improving sidewalks, sidewalk connectivity, and traffic calming/safety measures (e.g., bump outs, crosswalk striping, signage), especially in areas nearest to schools.
- Slowing speeds and increasing speed enforcement near schools.
- Addressing major physical barriers to walking and cycling to school, such as busy streets/highways.
- Education and awareness activities to improve safety and increase the number of students who walk/bike to school.

Related to SRTS Plans, the City of Chippewa Falls (2019) and the Village of Lake Hallie (2024) have also adopted Bike & Ped Plans. These plans reflect the importance of providing safe, pedestrian- and bicycle-connectivity to these communities. Recommendations include education/outreach, bike amenities, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements, traffic-calming measures, and increased law enforcement for traffic near schools.

Other Transportation Plans and Programs

Most cities, villages, and towns maintain road plans or capital improvement plans (CIPs) that identify proposed street construction, maintenance, or other major improvements and funding sources for a 3- or 5-year planning period. Full, 5-year CIPs with major road equipment purchases are less common in the smaller communities.

Wisconsin DOT provides General Transportation Aid (GTA) payments to local municipalities on a quarterly basis for transportation-related expenditures such as plowing, salt/sand application, mowing, crack filling, chip sealing, and reconstruction. Aid amounts for municipalities are determined using two approaches, mileage aid and share of cost, with each municipality receiving aid under the approach that results in the greatest aid amount. GTA is calculated based on the information reported by each municipality in its Municipal Financial Report form. State transportation aid may also include:

- County & Municipal Aid (CMA), often referred to as Shared Revenue, has changed over time but have been frozen for over two decades.
- Utility aid may be provided in recognition of costs incurred to provide services to tax-exempt public utilities.
- Payments in Lieu of Taxes may be provided by Wisconsin DNR for WDNR tax-exempt property; a similar program exists for Federal lands.
- WDOT also administers a large number of grant programs to assist with transportation projects, such as the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP), Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP), Transit Assistance Programs, Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Program, and the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Appendix 5 includes a review of other potentially related transportation plans and programs.

4.4 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the transportation-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- Seven (7) of the towns identified "Road & Culvert Maintenance" among their top 3 priority challenges that should be addressed in this Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan update.
- A lack of funding and increasing costs for road maintenance is a significant challenge for many of the towns. One town expressed that their "budget is just enough to provide minimal preventative maintenance" while another stated that "any road improvement is not cost effective to the town, especially when engineering is required to be involved." A third town noted that "the cost of road maintenance and construction has increased dramatically in the past 5 years." It was stated that getting more State aids could be crucial and towns should consider 5-year road improvement plans to ensure they are taking full advantage of available grant funding.
- Large truck traffic, heavier loads, and heavier farm equipment are damaging some town roads.
- Many towns have opened all/most town roads to ATVs/UTVs. The primary challenge is that many County roads do not allow ATV/UTV traffic, which results in connectivity gaps or restricts access to businesses. Another town commented that it isn't clear which County roads are open to ATVs/UTVs.

  Note: In March 2024, the County Board approved an ordinance revision to open all County highways with less than 750 vehicles per day to ATV/UTV traffic. Cities and Villages were also allowed to choose if County highways would be opened within their municipal borders; County highways remain closed to ATV/UTV traffic within the Cities of Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls, along with the Village of Lake Hallie, due to traffic. About 70% of the County's highways (343 miles) are now open to ATV/UTV traffic.
- One town noted that "there is also a push for more bike lanes on County roads to connect the vast bicycle trails that our residents enjoy."
- Some towns have road maintenance/reconstruction agreements (e.g., plowing, crack sealing) with neighboring communities, most often for right-of-way that lies along shared municipal boundaries.

The following are the transportation-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by seven (7) of the County's cities and villages in May-July 2025:

- Like the towns, aging roads (and other infrastructure) and the need for street repairs is one of the top issues facing many of the cities and villages.
- Rising street construction costs has become a barrier for new development. Concerns expressed over the continued availability of grant assistance and the State-level revenue restrictions for municipalities, which make it harder for communities to maintain existing infrastructure.
- Pedestrian crossings and sidewalk connectivity are lacking in some communities or need improvements. Integrating sidewalks into new subdivisions continues is challenged by developers, while residents will often oppose reconstructing streets with sidewalks due to high special assessment costs.
- A number of cities and villages also noted the availability of trails for hiking, biking, and ATVs/UTVs. Grant funding is important to trail construction.

B. Steering Committee

Key comments from the Planning & Zoning Committee included:

- Remove passenger rail; not feasible. Continue to support freight rail.
- For trails & bike routes, refer to the County Bike & Ped Plan. Often viewed more as recreational rather than a mode of transportation; Mennonite community is one exception. Emphasis on accessibility to trails, route connectivity, and safety. Rural trails/routes have very different needs/characteristics compared to within the cities.
- Opportunities may exist to enhance the County Highway Corridor Preservation Program, but a plan strategy may not be necessary.
- Include a stronger emphasis on safety, which was lacking in the existing comprehensive plan.
- With the County's aging population, public transportation and ride share programming are growing in importance.

4.5 Transportation Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

Transportation Goal

Chippewa County will have a safe, efficient, and connected multi-modal transportation network that serves all residents, supports the economy, and enhances local quality of life.

Objective 1: Transportation infrastructure and services will be constructed, maintained, and enhanced in an efficient, economical manner.

Objective 1 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Maintaining existing County highways in the best, safest condition possible that the County can afford takes priority over the construction, expansion, or acceptance of new highways.
2. Overall, transportation planning and design in Chippewa County must be context-sensitive with solutions varying by community and setting.
3. Continue to make towns, cities, and villages aware of transportation funding opportunities.
4. Coordinate transportation improvements with public and private utilities and strive towards a "dig once" policy.
5. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation to efficiently address road maintenance challenges and increasing costs. The County will remain open to intergovernmental and mutual aid agreements with the State, local communities, and other counties for the reconstruction, maintenance, and improvement of the transportation infrastructure.
6. Financial support from developers, industry, or railroad owners may be needed for bridge or highway improvements to accommodate new or changing transportation infrastructure demands.

7. Continue to actively participate in and coordinate with the Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) for transportation planning and funding opportunities.
8. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation, at all levels, during transportation planning. Strongly encourage coordination between federal agencies, states, and county governments to achieve policy consistency and resolve conflicts including any projects with Federal or State funding.
9. Chippewa County will continue to maintain and utilize billing rates for personnel and equipment. Communities are encouraged to consider adoption of State equipment billing rates or another appropriate standard.

Objective 1 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Continue to maintain and implement the *Chippewa County 5-Year Highway Improvement Plan* with a goal of achieving and maintaining a 25-year replacement schedule. (ongoing)
2 Continue consistent monitoring and tracking of the County highway system (e.g., WISLR, PASER) to identify deficiencies and prioritize cost-effective improvements. The County will strive to maintain an average PASER rating of 6 for all County Roads (considering budgetary constraints) and establish and prioritize future road projects based on the applicable PASER scores, ADT data, and future land use plans and development. (ongoing)
3. Advocate for increased State and federal transportation aid, pursue available grant programs for roads, bridges, and multimodal projects, and explore cost-sharing agreements and intergovernmental partnerships to stretch limited local resources. Utilize the expertise of outside organizations (e.g., Wisconsin Towns Association, Wisconsin Counties Association, Wisconsin Office of Rural Prosperity, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, etc.) to monitor funding opportunities. (ongoing)
4. Collaborate with State of Wisconsin, law enforcement, towns, and adjacent counties to evaluate regulations/permitting, infrastructure limitations, and enforcement alternatives related to damages to Country and town roads, weight restrictions, and heavy vehicles. Stive for regulatory consistency between jurisdiction when possible. (short-range)
5. Explore the creation of a County- or Regional-level work group, perhaps with Wisconsin Towns Association and WCWRPC support, to help towns, villages, and cities identify funding opportunities (e.g., LRIP, ARIP, TAP, TEA) prepare grant applications, maintain long-range capital improvement plans, and implement transportation projects efficiently and effectively. (short-range)

Objective 2: Ensure a safe transportation system for all users.

Objective 2 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. All new construction of County roads will be based on current design and construction standards.
2. Keep truck traffic and related industries on identified truck routes.
3. Maintain and enhance acceptable rail service for new and existing users.
4. Bridges should be designed and maintained to accommodate anticipated traffic.
5. Increase awareness of transportation safety for all users (e.g., drivers, cyclists, pedestrians).

6. Plans should consider that on-road bicycling and pedestrian travel demands vary throughout the County, with travel between destinations (not purely recreation or exercise) being more common within incorporated areas and certain rural areas with Plain communities.
7. Support signage and wayfinding efforts that improve connectivity between major highways and other community destinations, such as parks, business parks, and downtowns, while being sensitive to preserving the rural character of Chippewa County as a whole.
8. Manage driveway access location and design to ensure traffic safety, provide adequate emergency vehicle access, and prevent damage to roadways and ditches.
9. Prioritize the safety of vulnerable road users, including children, older adults, and people with mobility challenges, when planning roadway infrastructure projects. Continue to balance recreational roadway use (e.g., biking, ATV/UTV) with public safety, compatibility with other users, and the financial feasibility of making related road/shoulder improvements.
10. Work with communities, partners, businesses, and landowners to identify safe routes for all modes of travel. The most direct route may not be recommended as a designated recreational route if a safer on-road or off-road alternative exists.

Objective 2 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Encourage and support improved safety at rail crossings by implementing rail-crossing improvements when recommended by the Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Railroads. (ongoing)
2. School districts and communities are encouraged to partner with West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to create, maintain, and implement Safe Routes to School Plans. (ongoing)
3. Collaborate with law enforcement and local communities to address locations with known crash and safety issues and prioritize such projects as part of the County Highway Improvement Plan. (ongoing)

Objective 3: Provide a transportation system that is accessible to all users while enhancing connectivity for different transportation modes.

Objective 3 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. As part of road and highway planning and improvements, expand and enhance access for various transportation modes (e.g., walking, biking, ATV/UTV, public transit) to meet diverse community needs if it can be safely improved at a reasonable cost.
2. Strive to connect recreational trails and routes and encourage continuity between County plans and related local and regional plans when planning and improving such transportation facilities.
3. Consider all transportation modes in land use and subdivision design, review and development and the creation/update of land use ordinances.
4. County highway design may vary by location based on the need and demand to accommodate bike and pedestrian travel using the *Chippewa County Bike & Pedestrian Plan* as a guide.

Objective 3 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Continue to enforce Chippewa County's ATV regulations within Section 58 of the Chippewa County Code of Ordinances and collaborate with the Chippewa Valley ATV Council to raise awareness of these rules and designated ATV/UTV routes. (ongoing)
2. Work with local communities and partners to implement and periodically update the *Chippewa County Bike & Pedestrian Plan.* (timelines vary)
3. Work with local communities and partners to implement and periodically update the *Chippewa & Eau Claire Counties Locally Developed Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan.* (timelines vary)
4. Related to #3 above, collaborate to increase public awareness of current public transit, paratransit, and ride share opportunities within Chippewa County, especially services available for seniors. (ongoing)

Objective 4: Align transportation planning in a manner that continues to support the economic, land use, and other goals of this comprehensive plan.

Objective 4 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Direct growth toward areas with established road infrastructure, ensuring that new development doesn't place undue strain on public resources. Guide and support community development near major transportation arterials and collectors.
2. The highways of the County will be built to standards needed to support the current demands of the trucking industry.
3. Freight rail service and passenger/freight air service at the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport will be maintained within Chippewa County.
4. Continue efforts to ensure that the transportation system can accommodate the changing needs and demands of the agricultural economy.
5. Encourage community involvement in transportation planning.
6. Implement those policies and strategies found in other comprehensive plan elements that support the Transportation goals and objectives.

Objective 4 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Continue to work with local communities to encourage Wisconsin Department of Transportation to allow for additional interchange access to freeways for developed or growth areas. (ongoing)
2. Encourage towns and the agricultural community to identify and prioritize roadways and associated bridges/culverts in need of improvement in order to support the agricultural economy, then pursue Agricultural Roads Improvement Program (ARIP) funding. Encourage State Legislators to continue funding the ARIP program. (ongoing)
3. Local communities and businesses should be actively involved during the improvement of highways within business districts and concentrated residential settings to explore opportunities to enhance the streetscape, provide traffic calming and safety strategies, improve multi-modal safety and connectivity, and implement strategies that reinforce a sense of place and place brand. (ongoing, as opportunities allow)

4. Transportation

4. Evaluate the need to incorporate design standards for commercial electric vehicle charging stations into the County Zoning Ordinance. (medium-to-long range)

Preparing for Electric Vehicles (EVs)

Infrastructure Types and Cost	Level 1 Charging Station	Level 2 Charging Station	DC Fast Charging Station
Voltage	120 V AC	208 - 240 V AC	400 V - 1000 V DC
Typical Power Output	1 kW	7 kW - 19 kW	50 – 350 kW
Estimated PHEV Charge Time from Empty	5 – 6 hours	1 - 2 hours	N/A
Estimated BEV Charge Time from Empty	40 – 50 hours	4 – 10 hours	20 min – 1 hour
Estimated Electric Range per hour of Charging	2 – 5 miles	10 – 20 miles	180 – 240 miles
Typical Locations	Home	Home, Workplace, and Public	Public
Cost per Charging Station (as of 2019)	$300 - $1,000	$700 - $1,800 (Residential) $2,793 - $3,127 (Commercial)	$28,401 - $140,000

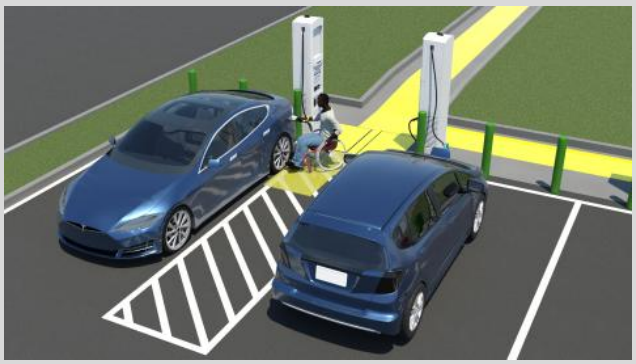
The table above is a modified version of one found in the U.S. Dept. of Transportation's Rural EV Toolkit, Ver. 2, May 2023.

Potential EV Standards for Zoning Ordinances and Site Planning

Terminology – Clearly define language for the types of infrastructure permitted, the types of uses permitted, and the approval process (if any) for Electronic Vehicle Infrastructure (EVI).

Use and User – Are charging stations a primary or accessory use on a site, which districts or areas allow for public uses and which can install charging stations as a private use? Are the stations accessible?

Location – Are public charging stations located close to other services given the charge times? Are the stations located in an area that will not discourage non-users from having access to parking or other uses on the site? Are the stations dispersed throughout the community or centralized in high-traffic / high-demand areas?



graphic from: https://www.access-

Safety – What are the minimum equipment requirements for the site, does the site require additional security measures (lighting, camera surveilance, etc), does the community have Building Code regulations for charging station installation?

Infrastructure Requirements – Is there adequate electrical / utility service to the charging station site? Who is responsible for upstream (substation) improvements to provide adequate service?

Cost Allocation – Who is paying for the charging service and how – the consumer or the owner of the charging station? Are third-party agreements / services needed to operate the facility (for public ownership)?

Maintenance Requirements – What are the minimum maintenance requirements, what is the permitting/approval/inspection process like, and who has authority to administer inspections/citations?



5. UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Chapter 5. Utilities and Community Facilities

Key Utilities & Community Facilities Issues & Opportunities:

- Overall, Chippewa County is growing, which will increase the demand for utilities and services.
- Some private septic systems are aging, and some public wastewater and water systems need improvements. Maintenance of these facilities is important for water quality.
- Many private wells have elevated nitrate levels.
- Increasing development and heavy rain events makes stormwater management more important than ever.
- Demand is outpacing supply for electric power.
- While broadband access is improving, gaps remain.
- Increasing costs, volunteer/staffing challenges, and a large rural service area are among the challenges for providing efficient law enforcement and emergency services.
- Hospital and emergency care in the County have been in flux.
- The top 5 health priorities for Chippewa County in 2024 were (1) alcohol misuse, (2) low-quality/lack of public transportation, (3) health care is difficult to access, (4) lack of access to child care or unaffordable child care, and (5) poor mental health.
- The County's aging population is increasing the demand for health care and other support services.



Utilities and community facilities provide the foundation on which a community is built and maintained. Utilities may include sanitary sewer, water systems, stormwater, as well as electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, and solid waste disposal. Not all utilities and community facilities are public-owned, and some may be jointly owned or operated by multiple units of government.

High quality utilities and community facilities help increase property values, stabilize taxes, and positively affect many aspects of quality of life in a community. They can also be used to guide growth, encourage development, or help establish community identity. Combined with roads, the construction, maintenance, and operation of public utilities and community facilities often constitute the largest proportion of a municipal budget.

5.1 Inventory of Existing Utilities & Community Facilities

Appendix 2 is an inventory of Chippewa County's current utilities and community facilities. Related needs are summarized in Section V of this chapter.

5.2 Utilities & Community Facilities in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared utilities & community facilities (U&CF) issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Weaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Town, Village, & City Issues & Opportunities

Infrastructure & Utility Challenges



- Increasing maintenance/operations costs and rising utility bills
- Need to improve municipal utilities and recreational facilities
- The need to improve and expand utilities and services to meet growing demands. Developers won't build without major public investments.
- For some municipalities, the lack of sewer or the capacity of utilities is a barrier.
- Poor cell phone coverage and lack of broadband in some areas
- Potential land use conflicts with infrastructure, such as proposed transmission lines.
- As development occurs, stormwater management is likely to become more of an issue.

Public Facilities & Services Needs

- Aging or lacking community facilities (e.g., community center, senior center, library, pool, town shop)
- Some facilities are energy inefficient.
- Public safety coverage. Rising calls and costs for emergency service and equipment.
- Lack of park dedication or improvement fees.
- Access to town yard waste site.
- Reserving land for future public uses.

Aging Population & Family Needs

- Facilities and community must allow for aging-in-place.
- Increasing need for senior care facilities.
- Declining school enrollment.
- Recreational facilities may not be accessible for seniors or disabled residents. Boat ramp use is exceeding capacity. Lack of "things to do" for young adults.
- Health care, AODA, and mental health challenges; do we have adequate resources?
- Volunteerism challenges. Lack of volunteers or more volunteer opportunities are needed.

Summary of Town, Village, & City Goals & Objectives

Most comprehensive plan goals and objectives fall within one of the following general goal statements:

- Provide Safe, Reliable, and Cost-Effective Services
- Infrastructure should enhance quality of life and the community's desired character
- Support Environmental Stewardship
- Ensure Facilities Meet Evolving Community Needs
- Promote Fiscal Responsibility in Development
- Foster Intergovernmental and Community Partnerships
- Improve Access to Health Care, Child care, and Community Amenities
- Expand Communication Infrastructure and Digital Access
- Develop Community-Oriented and People-Friendly Spaces

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

Given the different community sizes and services, there is large variation in local comprehensive plan policy and strategy recommendations making it difficult to summarize. Not surprisingly, the following top themes among comprehensive plan policies and strategies parallel the previous issues, goals, and objectives:

- Plan and Fund Infrastructure & Facility Improvements
- Expand and Maintain Parks & Recreational Facilities
- Enhance Emergency Services and Public Safety
- Foster Broadband and Telecommunications Access
- Promote Environmental Protection and Sustainability
- Collaborate Regionally on Shared Services

5.3 Key Utility & Community Facility Plans

This section identifies some of the key infrastructure plans most pertinent to Chippewa County as a whole or most common to local communities. Appendix 5 identifies some related programs that can assist in achieving the goal and objectives of this chapter. Other plan chapters, such as Transportation, Natural Resources, and Land Use, identifies additional related plans and ordinances.

County Plans

- **5-Year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) –** In addition to the County Highway plans mentioned in the Transportation chapter, the County Facilities Department maintains a 5-year CIP.
- **Emergency Operations Plan** – This County plan and related annexes identify emergency response procedures and responsibilities, including operation of the Emergency Operations Center. A related plan is the Integrated Preparedness Plan that identifies training strategies related to emergency preparedness and operations.
- **HazMat Planning** – The County's Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) reviews facility plans for facilities with hazardous materials under EPCRA rules and provides guidance to the County on emergency management.

5. Utilities & Community Facilities

- **Hazard Mitigation Plan** – The County is currently updating this plan to maintain grant eligibility for certain State and Federal mitigation grant programs with the LEPC as steering committee. Cities, villages, and public schools have been invited to participate.
- **Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plan (PHEP)** – Maintained by Public Health, this plan addresses 15 public health-related capabilities to advance emergency preparedness and response.
- **County Continuity of Government (COG) Plan** – A basic COG plan is in place for the County government to restore essential services from an interruption, but could be enhanced.
- **911 Emergency Communications –** This office maintains and executes procedures to support emergency services agencies and community members.
- **County EMS Study Group** – An ad hoc EMS Study Group has been formed to comprehensively evaluate EMS (first responder & ambulance) services and identify cost-effective improvements.
- **Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORPs)** – Recently updated, this plan identifies acquisition and improvement projects for County outdoor recreational facilities. Some cities, villages, and towns have created their own plans in the past. ORPs must be updated every 5 years to maintain local government eligibility for WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant funding.



- **Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)** – This plan was created by the Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership and identified needs related to dental health for all ages, alcohol and drug prevention education for youth, and fall prevention among senior citizens.
- **Aging Plan** – Chippewa County ADRC updated the County's 5-year Aging Plan in 2025 with a goal of empowering and advocating with/for individuals to help them secure needed services or benefits in order to promote their dignity, quality of life, and maximum independence.
- **Land Information Plan** – The County's Land Information Modernization Plan was updated in 2025 and identifies various priorities to maintain eligibility for Wisconsin Land Information Program funding.

Other City/Village/Town Plans

- **Comprehensive Plans** – All county and local comprehensive plans are required to have a utilities & community facilities element that identify short-term and long-term infrastructure needs.
- **CIP/Roads Plan** – Most cities, villages, and towns maintain a 5-year capital improvements plan (CIP), a roads plan, or some similar document prioritizing anticipated capital purchases and related financing/funding sources. The Chippewa-Eau Claire MPO has been assisting communities in the urban area with the creation of a web-based CIP that can be shared with community members.
- **Facility Plans, Wellhead Protection Plans, & Stormwater Management Plans** – Facility plans are required to be maintained for municipal wastewater treatment facilities, while a wellhead protection plan has been created for most municipal wells and a number of cities and villages have stormwater management plans for, at least, a portion of their community.
- **Emergency Operations Plans** – Most cities, villages, and towns have an emergency operation plan. Most lack a continuity of government plan, though the EOP may include continuity components.

Electric Utility Planning

During the planning effort, local electric providers have expressed the following regarding current and future electric and power needs:

- Local distribution systems are in good shape and efforts have been made to increase their resiliency; generation and transmission are the bigger issues and are what will hinder growth. Providers need to look carefully at where they are adding loads. Some areas may not be able to accommodate a data center due to lack of available power.
- Brownouts are a growing concern as power generation is being outpaced by demand. Energy needs to keep growing and changing as growth occurs; it takes years to bring new sources of generation and transmission online, so it is important to plan ahead.
- As power sources diversify (e.g., addition of solar or wind), more transmission lines are needed; a community can't be pro-renewable energy but against transmission lines.
- We can't survive on wind and solar alone. More base power is needed from coal, gas, & nuclear. Small, local power generation needs to be explored. Can a small modular reactor be located in the County?
- New transmission lines, substations, and heavy power users (e.g., data centers, solar/wind farms) will target unzoned towns where existing transmission lines exist.
- More public education based on practicality, reason, and facts is needed on the necessity of transmission lines and to ensure that local codes can accommodate substations and other power infrastructure.

5.4 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the community facilities & utilities-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- The top challenges to address were:
  - Aging population and health services needs
  - Declining school enrollments
  - Siting of solar and wind farms and high energy transmission lines
  - Fire & ambulance service costs
  - Stormwater management
  - Maintaining an effective recycling program
- Intergovernmental agreements are in place regarding fire & ambulance services. Cooperative purchasing was identified as an opportunity.
- Most cities and villages have sufficient wastewater and well capacity, though sewer/water lines and streets may need to be installed to accommodate new growth areas. The Village of Lake Hallie lacks sanitary sewer, which limits their development opportunities. Due to rising infrastructure costs, developers are less willing to install the infrastructure, so alternative financing tools are needed.

- Some cities and villages identified new facility needs, such as a new city hall/police department or library.
- Concerns expressed over recent health care facility closures and lack of AODA and mental health service; some recent progress. Child care wait lists are very long.

B. Steering Committee

Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Committee reviewed the Utilities & Community Facilities goals, objectives, and actions from the County's 2010 Comprehensive Plan and discussed related needs. Highlights from this discussion included:

- Emphasize the efficiency and quality of services.
- Facility planning and septic system maintenance are important to protecting water quality. High nitrates in many private wells and other growing threats such as pharmaceuticals. Water quality can largely be addressed in the Natural Resources element.
- Encourage clustered or smaller community shared septic systems for denser, unincorporated development areas.
- An EMS Study Group has been formed.
- Attracting volunteers is a major challenge for volunteer fire and EMS departments.
- Include outdoor recreation planning within this element, which is important to quality of life and tourism. Reference and support the County's Outdoor Recreation Plan.
- While broadband access is improving, needs still remain.
- The Health Care facilities in the County are changing. New services are being added to help fill the gaps from recent closures.
- Enrollment is down in many public schools, which is resulting in fiscal challenges.
- Much of the infrastructure and services in the County is not provided by the County governments; the recommendations within this plan may be relatively brief compared to a city plan.
- There are many relationships between infrastructure and other elements of this plan.



5.5 Utilities & Community Facilities Needs Assessment

This sections provides a brief assessment of utilities and facilities in Chippewa County as a whole. For infrastructure specific to communities, especially within cities and villages, please refer to their respective comprehensive plans.

Utility or Facility	Ongoing Needs	Short-Term Needs/Plans (1-5 years)	Long-Term Needs/Plans (5+ years)
County Facilities	Implement 5-year CIP for typical repair & maintenance	Additional security upgrades at Courthouse	Office remodel as needed in response to changing space needs.
Municipal Facilities	Some municipal buildings are aging or require improvements to accommodate growth or new technology. See individual city/village/town comprehensive plans.		
Sanitary Sewer	It is important to require compliance for the maintenance of private onsite septic systems (POWTS). Some POWTS are aging on smaller lots, which could make it a challenge for future system replacement. There is no specific tracking or known concentration of failing POWTS. See comprehensive plans of individual communities for needs related to municipal sanitary sewer systems.		
Water Supply	While groundwater quality is good overall, nitrates are a significant problem for private wells; see Natural Resources chapter for related strategies. See individual community comprehensive plans for needs related to municipal water supplies.		
Storm Sewer	Continued growth requires continued stormwater management and erosion control.		Increasing heavy rainfall events may require changes in minimum design capacity.
Solid Waste & Recycling	State funding support for recycling and Clean Sweep programs is not keeping pace with inflation.	Alternative funding support for recycling and Clean Sweep programs may be necessary.	
Law Enforcement	Continued challenges in recruiting staff.		
Fire & Other Emergency Services	Continued challenges in recruiting volunteers. Improve EMS (first responder & ambulance) services.	Aging equipment and rising equipment costs. Replacement of aging fire halls.	
Emergency Communications	WisComm grant secured for Comm Center improvements. The number of emergency channels available cannot support current levels of traffic; emergency responders need to agree to a single, shared protocol.	Funding needed for replacement of aging address signage.	Identify a back-up Comm Center outside the Chippewa Falls area.
Health Care & Social Services	The 2024 Community Health Assessment identifies the top health priorities for Chippewa County. Aging population increasing demands for health care and dementia care. Demand/need for AODA and mental health services is not being met locally. Meals on Wheels service is limited due lack of volunteers.		

5. Utilities & Community Facilities

Educational Facilities & Libraries	Enrollment is decreasing at some schools, which is resulting in challenges in maintaining service. The role of libraries is changing as the use of technology changes; facilities may need to adapt to these changes.		
Child Care	Anecdotally, the need for additional, affordable child care was expressed during the process and was a top five priority in the Community Health Assessment. Current licensed child care centers have a capacity of 1,624, with 212 spots only available to 5+. Based on the ratio of spots to children under five years (1 spot per 2.49 children), the County as whole is within the accepted standard range (1:3) and would not be considered a child care desert. However, this need may vary by community and affordability is also a concern.		
Telecommunications	Broadband access has been improving, but gaps remain. BEAD funding may address much of the remaining gap.		
Electric & Energy	Energy demand is outpacing supply. More electric generation facilities (e.g., biofuels, solar/wind, other) and transmission lines should be expected in the future. In 2025, the State established a Nuclear Power Summit Board to promote nuclear and fusion energy; this may increase demand for smaller generating facilities within the State.		
Cemeteries	No known capacity issues related to cemeteries; see individual community plans.	Increasing interest in green burials.	
Dams	Overall, high hazard dams are in good repair.	Dams and their associated plans should continue to be maintained to the extent required by law.	
Parks & Recreation	Projects are identified in County and local outdoor recreation plans (ORPs). Objective 5 and its policies were directly adapted from the County's ORP.	Update the County Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan	Continue to implement outdoor recreation plans.

The following are the priorities from Chippewa County Public Health's *2024 Community Health Assessment*. This assessment also includes an excellent inventory of resources and partners to help address these challenges.

1. **Alcohol misuse**
2. **Low-quality or lack of public transportation**
3. **Health care is difficult to access**
4. **Lack of access to childcare or unaffordable childcare**
5. **Poor mental health**
6. **Lack of safe or affordable housing**
7. **Substance misuse**
8. **Vaping and tobacco use**
9. **Lack of affordable or high-quality health insurance**
10. **Poor nutrition or unhealthy food**
11. **Lack of jobs that can support a family/myself**
12. **Healthy food is not affordable**
13. **Lack of affordable treatments for health conditions**
14. **Lack of physical activity**
15. **Environment or water pollution**
16. **Lack of access to digital resources**
17. **Not enough green space**
18. **Lack of accessibility for people with disabilities**
19. **Lack of community connectedness**
20. **Lack of higher education opportunities**
21. **Low-quality early education**
22. **Lack of adult education opportunities**
23. **Racism and discrimination**
24. **Limited emergency services nearby**
25. **Community is not safe**

TOP 2015 HEALTH PRIORITIES
Mental Health · Obesity · Alcohol Misuse
Drug Use · Healthy Nutrition

TOP 2018 HEALTH PRIORITIES
Mental Health · Alcohol Misuse · Drug Use
Obesity · Physical Activity

TOP 2021 HEALTH PRIORITIES
Mental health · Alcohol misuse
Chronic disease · Drug use · Obesity

5.6 Utilities & Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

Similar to the Housing chapter, a high degree of collaboration will be required to achieve the following goal and objectives. Many of the policies and strategies will be undertaken by local partners and individual communities. Unless otherwise noted, it is not expected that Chippewa County government will be the lead entity on the recommended utilities and community facility strategies. Objective 1 is essentially a sub-goal; the policies and strategies under Objective 1 can apply to multiple objectives within this chapter. All strategy recommendations in this chapter are ongoing and/or as needed, unless otherwise noted.

Utilities & Community Facilities Goal

Through cooperation and cost-effective planning, Chippewa County will continue to have quality community facilities and services that support the economy, community growth, and changing local needs while protecting natural resources and enhancing quality of life.

Objective 1: Governmental Services & Collaboration – Support communities and businesses through a transparent, accountable, and fiscally responsible government, equitable intergovernmental cooperation, and private-public partnerships.

Objective 1 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. The costs for municipal utilities and public services should be shared equitably.
2. The public should have opportunities to learn about and comment on governmental costs.
3. Intergovernmental agreements for the cost-sharing of services should be considered if efficiencies can be gained and/or effectiveness improved, but not with a loss of service quality.
4. Anticipated growth should be planned and phased to ensure adequate infrastructure and services. Direct more intensive development to areas where a full array of utilities, community facilities, and public services are available.
5. The County will continue to regularly evaluate the condition of public facilities and associated equipment to ensure that it will continue to meet County needs and provide a safe working environment.
6. The County or local communities may require developer agreements or fees to recoup the costs associated with processing, reviewing, or inspecting land use proposals and permits, including pass-through fees for consultants hired by the County to assist with technical reviews. The County can also assess impact fees to recoup the measurable capital costs necessary to support new developments (in accordance with State Statutes).

Objective 1 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Encourage communities and partners to work collaboratively to address the ongoing, short-range, and long-range needs previously identified in Section V of this chapter.

2. Utilize capital improvements planning to anticipate, prioritize, and leverage funding for future facilities, major equipment, and infrastructure.
3. As envisioned in the Intergovernmental Cooperation element (Chapter 10), encourage intergovernmental cooperation to explore joint service agreements with neighboring communities and Chippewa County where consolidating and coordinating services can result in future cost savings.

Objective 2: Infrastructure & Utilities – Maintain high-quality, affordable, and efficient infrastructure and utilities that meets current and future residential, commercial, and industrial needs while protecting natural resources.

Objective 2 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Private and public sewer and water systems shall be designed and maintained in accordance with regulations. Holding tanks may be allowed on a case-by-case basis as a system of last resort.
2. Affordable, reliable access to electrical power and energy is important to the County's growth.
3. Continue intergovernmental collaboration to manage and educate on stormwater and to reduce runoff. Communities are encouraged to create and maintain stormwater management plans for growth areas or developed areas with stormwater flooding concerns.
4. Construct and maintain utilities in a manner that are safe and secure, while striving not to detract from neighborhood character and the rural character within unincorporated towns.
5. It is important that all households and businesses have access to high-speed broadband.
6. Maintain a "dig-once policy." When street, water main, and sewer main projects are planned, contact local broadband service and telecommunications providers to identify opportunities for the installation of fiber optics, cable, or other telecommunications lines.
7. County facilities and operations should utilize energy-saving technologies and sustainable practices when practicable and efficiencies can be realized.
8. The County will actively participate in the planning and siting of any major transmission lines, power-generating facilities, telecommunications towers, and similar large-scale utilities to advocate for protection of the environment, land use compatibility, and consistency with this comprehensive plan. If such facilities are proposed, they should sited in a manner that mitigates adverse impacts to nearby uses. Underground placement and co-location (or corridor sharing) of new utilities is encouraged to protect community character. The County will advocate for the execution of joint development agreements with owners of proposed utilities.
9. Communities are encouraged to consider official mapping to plan for and designate right-of-way and land for future roads, public infrastructure, and parks, especially for growth areas.
10. Provide leadership for local governments to explore or extend joint service agreements with neighboring communities and Chippewa County where consolidating and coordinating services can result in future cost savings.
11. Implement those policies and strategies within the Natural Resources element (Chapter 7) related to surface water, groundwater, wellhead protection, and stormwater management.

12. Implement those policies and strategies within the Intergovernmental Cooperation element (Chapter 10) related to planning, coordination, joint purchasing, and sharing of public works and utilities.
13. Implement those policies and strategies within the Land Use element (Chapter 11) related to energy facilities and infrastructure.

Objective 2 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Collaborate with cities and villages to explore adaptive management and water quality trading to meet surface water quality phosphorus limits for wastewater facilities.
2. Increase monitoring of potentially failing septic systems.
3. When applications are submitted to the Public Service Commission for large energy projects, Chippewa County and its communities are encouraged to provide comments to the PSC on their concerns and the consistency of the project with comprehensive plans.
4. When available, make more extensive use of the Wisconsin Fund to upgrade failing onsite disposal systems on qualifying properties. Promote use of WDNR well abandonment grants.
5. Encourage the PSC to actively track implementation of awarded broadband expansion grant projects within the County to ensure compliance and identify any remaining broadband gaps.
6. Explore Telecommuter Forward! certification from the Public Service Commission signaling support and commitment to promoting the availability of telecommuting options. (short-to-medium range)
7. The Economic Development Corporation and electric providers are encouraged to form a study group to help increase public awareness, engage in local discussion, and review policy alternatives related to the future energy needs of the County. (short-to-medium range)
8. Encourage United Way of Chippewa Valley and/or other partners to expand digital equity and inclusion programming to Chippewa County. (medium-range)
9. Monitor increasing interest in green burials and explore the need for related regulations or licensing. (long-range)

Objective 3: Community Health & Education – Protect public health, build healthy communities, and provide quality educational and life-long learning opportunities.

Objective 3 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Support public health and human services programming that addresses changing community needs and encourages healthy lifestyles.
2. Ensure that County residents have convenient access to the health services that they need.
3. Community and neighborhood designs should be accessible for everyone and allow aging-in-place.
4. Support access to cost-effective, quality libraries, schools, and educational opportunities. Coordinate on related facility planning. Align educational programming with workforce needs as envisioned in the Economic Development element (Chapter 9).
5. Ensure that solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services protect public health and the environment. Communities are encouraged to consider joint bidding for garbage collection.

Objective 3 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Regularly review, update, and implement the strategy recommendations within the County's Aging Plan and Community Health Improvement Plan.
2. Continue to encourage and support proper waste management, recycling, and Clean Sweep programming. Encourage continued State funding support of recycling and Clean Sweep programs.
3. Continue caregivers support and community education efforts that allow seniors to stay in their homes or with family members longer.
4. Advocate for more Meals on Wheels support and explore incentivize volunteer participation.

Objective 4: Community Safety – Ensure the safety and resiliency of Chippewa County communities in an equitable, effective manner.

Objective 4 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Provide for quality law enforcement, ambulance, volunteer fire and first responder services to all residents and businesses, whether by the County or by local units of government.
2. Collaboration between the County, communities, businesses, and schools is vital to ensuring law enforcement and emergency services needs are met. Encourage coordinated planning, the execution of equitable mutual aid and cost-sharing, and multi-jurisdictional training.
3. Maintain or exceed minimum staffing, equipment, and training standards for emergency services and communications. Persons with an emergency response role as identified in County or local Emergency Operations Plans should have minimum training for those roles, including basic Incident Command System classes.
4. Coordination with State and Regional agencies, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOADs), ARES/RACES, and other partners is vital to a prepared and resilient Chippewa County.
5. Create innovative ways to engage existing subject matter experts and agency leaders in the creation of policies and procedures to ensure a grass-roots bottom-up approach to policymaking and procedure implementation.
6. Implement those policies and strategies within the Intergovernmental Cooperation element (Chapter 10) related to mutual aid, shared services, joint purchasing, and collaborative planning related to emergency services.
7. Budgeting for expected long-term improvements of County dams should be integrated into the County's capital improvements plan.
8. Discourage development in the hydraulic shadows (dam failure floodplains) of dams.

Objective 4 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Maintain and regularly update Chippewa County's *Emergency Operations Plan, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plan*, and *Hazard Mitigation Plan.* Implement the recommendations within these plans as needed and as resources allow.
2. Encourage communities to maintain and regularly exercise local emergency operations plans.

3. Enhance the County's Continuity of Government Plan with greater coordination between departments/resources and more effective asset management. Encourage municipalities to establish basic continuity plans.
4. Continue efforts to strengthen emergency communications coverage, interoperability, and coordination. Support the consistent use of MABAS and other mutually supported, agreed-upon communications protocols Countywide by all emergency response agencies and regularly exercise these systems.
5. Continue to work with WDNR and dam owners to ensure adequate maintenance and emergency planning for dams. Update and maintain the emergency action plans for County-owned dams to include dam failure analysis.
6. Continue efforts to support and expand public-safety GIS capabilities as a stand-alone feature and with NG911 implementation.

Objective 5: Outdoor Recreation – For the benefit of Chippewa County residents, visitors, and guests alike, and through collaboration and foresight, meet the varied and ever-changing recreation needs, interests, and experiences sought by all, while protecting, conserving, and enhancing the County's natural, historical, and cultural resources.

Objective 5 Policies (decision-making guidance)



1. Provide adequate, safe, and accessible facilities so that a quality recreation experience may be enjoyed by all.
2. Provide a planned system of parks and recreation areas that offer a diversity of recreational opportunities and anticipate changing demands.
3. Outdoor recreation activities should be compatible with natural, historical, and cultural resources and not degrade environmentally sensitive areas.
4. Collaborate with partners, stakeholders, and local units of government to enhance, share, and promote outdoor recreation activities and opportunities throughout Chippewa County.

Objective 5 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Chippewa County will continue to regularly update the County's *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, *Bike & Pedestrian Plan*, and *Comprehensive Forest Management Plan*, while encouraging coordination between these plans and State, regional, and local community recreational and trails planning. Continue to implement the recommendations in these plans and collaborate with partners to pursue related grant funding, such as WDNR's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund.
2. Encourage the development of a comprehensive County-wide trail plan that includes facilities for hikers, bikers, ATVs, as well as the disabled and elderly, and that ties together attractions and natural and cultural resources throughout the County, including the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. (medium-range)



6. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN

Chapter 6. Agricultural Resources & Farmland Preservation Plan

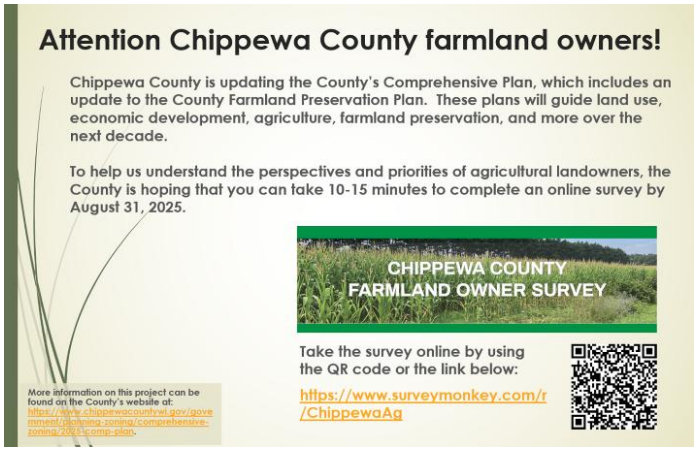
Key Agriculture Issues & Opportunities:

- Agriculture continues to be a very important part of Chippewa County's economy. About half of the County's land base is farmland with an additional 28% in forest.
- The number of farms and amount of actively farmed land in Chippewa County has decreased dramatically since 2002, albeit at a slower rate than statewide losses, while average farm size has been increasing. Dairy farm losses have been dramatic, though herd sizes have increased.
- While interest and use of conservation practices are increasing, prices are outpacing cost-sharing benefits.
- There is strong interest in and support of Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs) as a farmland preservation tool. Interest in creating a certified farmland preservation zoning district is weak, though there is interest in exploring a more moderate alternative zoning approach.
- A strong network of local partners is available to assist farmers and support the ag economy.

This Chapter serves as the Agricultural Resources element of the County's Comprehensive Plan as well as the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan. For details on farmland preservation plan requirements, see Section 6.8.

6.1 Chippewa County Farmland Owner Survey

In July 2025, a survey was mailed to landowners with agricultural-assessed parcels of 30+ acres. 1,483 surveys were mailed; the survey was also available electronically via SurveyMonkey. In total, 452 surveys were completed (381 by mail and 71 electronically). Key findings from this survey include:



- Majority (63%) of respondents have owned farmland in Chippewa County for 21+ years.
- 52% of respondents owned & farmed their land while 48% owned and rented to another farmer.
- Most of the farmland is in row crops, pasture/hay, and/or beef.
- In 10 years, most respondents expected their land to continue to be farmed. About 5% thought they may sell some or all of their land for non-agriculture purposes.
- The top 3 issues facing the Chippewa County agricultural community, as identified by respondents, are all economic factors (ability for farmers to remain financially solvent, prices for inputs, and volatility in farm markets, including import/export).

- Conservation and water quality are important to a strong majority of survey respondents. Many respondents are using conservation practices on their lands, and there was strong interest in agricultural enterprise areas, producer-led groups, cost-sharing, and learning more about conservation programs.
- 33% of respondents feel that access to cost-sharing for conservation is useful; 31% weren't certain the type of support they need. 20% need help navigating rules or applying for programs.
- When asked about challenges or needs related to agricultural infrastructure in the County, the highest identified needs were local roads and bridges to handle agricultural equipment (38%). 38% also responded that there were not any ag-infrastructure challenges in the County.
- Encroaching non-farm development was the #5 issues facing the agricultural community. Respondents suggest directing housing to infill 'islands' and near cities and villages with infrastructure.

Additional survey findings have been integrated into plan sections below, where appropriate, and the full survey results are provided in Appendix 3.

6.2 Agricultural Trends

Data for this section primarily comes from resources within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA). USDA sources include the Census of Agriculture, which is produced every 5 years, and annual data published through the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

A. Agricultural Land Uses and Specialties

Land Use

Table 6-1 provides a breakdown of land use by acreage between 2002 and 2022. Cropland accounted for 63.4% of land in farms in 2022, down slightly from 63.9% in 2002. Total acreage in agricultural use is also down by 9.39%. Similarly, the number of farms in the County has also declined by .

Table 6-1. Total Acreage by Land Use 2002-2022 – Chippewa County

	Acres 2002	Acres 2022	Change (2002-2022)	
			Number	Percent
Croplands	238,902	215,050	-23,852	-9.98
Harvested	193,797	195,681	1,884	0.97
Pastured	26,310	7,229	-19,081	-72.52
Other	18,795	12,140	-6,655	-35.41
Pasturelands	22,106	22,651	545	2.47
Woodlands	88,463	78,248	-10,215	-11.55
Other	24,632	23,020	-1,612	-6.54
Total	374,103	338,969	-35,134	-9.39

Source: USDA 2002 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

As shown in Table 6-2 the number of farms in the County decreased by around 20% from 2002-2022, with 335 farms ceasing operations over the 20-year period.

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

The character of farms has also changed in Chippewa County and the State of Wisconsin. As shown in Table 6-2, the number of farms and acreage of land being farmed have decreased in both the County and State; however, the average farm size increased in both. About half of the County's farm losses were dairy farms, which decreased from 564 to 171 from 2002 to 2020, even though dairy cattle increased by 13,021 head.

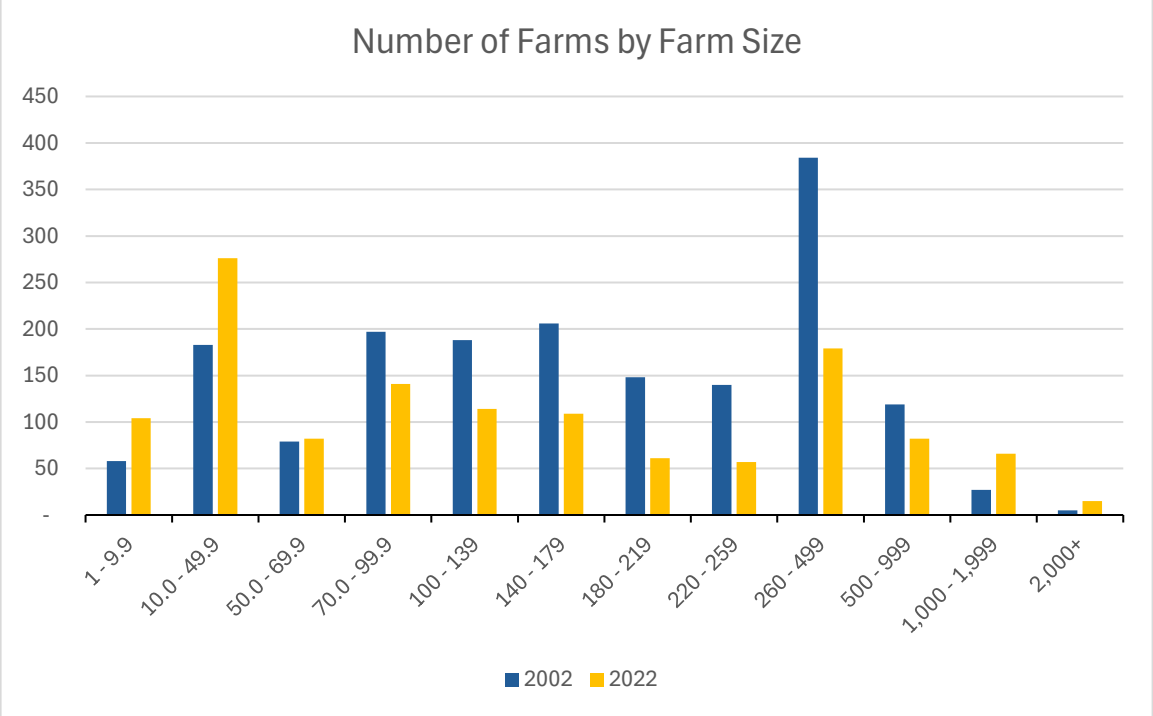
Table 6-2. Farm Operations Trends 2002-2022 – Chippewa County

	Region	2002	2022	% Change
Number of Farms	Chippewa County	1,621	1,286	-20.7%
	Wisconsin	77,131	58,521	-24.1%
Land in Farms (acres)	Chippewa County	374,103	338,969	-9.4%
	Wisconsin	15,741,552	13,784,678	-12.4%
Average Farm Size (acres)	Chippewa County	231	264	+14.3%
	Wisconsin	204	236	+15.7%
Median Farm Size (acres)	Chippewa County	160	113	-29.4%
	Wisconsin	112	85	-24.1%

Source: USDA 2002 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

Figure 6-1 identifies the number of operations by size in 2002 and 2022. In 2002, 11.9% of farmland acreage in the County was located on farms with 1,000 or more acres compared to 41.2% in 2022. Over the 20 years, the number of farms less than 70 acres grew by 23.2% (+87 farms) and the number of farms 1,000 acres or more grew by 138.2% (+47 farms). Without any new startup operations, one additional 2,000+ acre farm requires a decrease of roughly twenty 100–139-acre farms.

Figure 6-1. Number of Farms by Farm Size 2002-2022 – Chippewa County



Source: USDA 2002 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

Growth in industrial-scale farming is a national trend; however, the impact on the local economy and smaller-scale farms is a concern. USDA shows that, in 2022, 95% of farms were family-owned farms.[15] Identifying opportunities to support small-to-mid size farms would help keep the County's agricultural economy more varied while empowering local farmers (and families) to stay in operation.

Agricultural Specialties

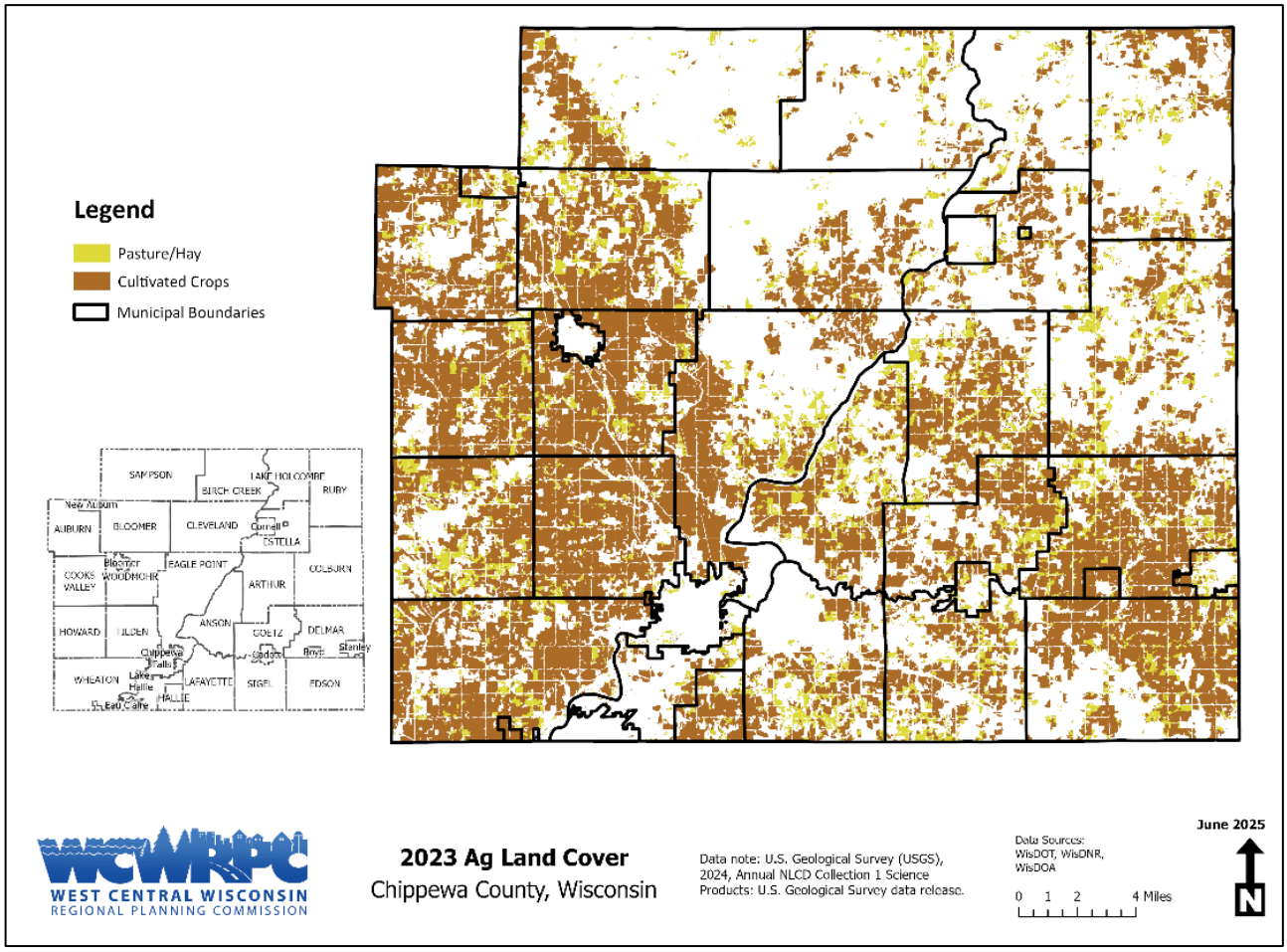
As will be later shown, the three main commodities produced in the County are milk, grains, and poultry/eggs. These items collectively accounted for 83% of agricultural sales in 2022. The County ranked among the top 10 Wisconsin counties in the sale of poultry/eggs, horses/ponies/mules/burros/donkey, nursey/greenhouse, and hogs/pigs. The County is also regionally known for specialty crops such as orchards, maple syrup, and honey.

B. Agricultural Resources

Available Land

As shown on Figure 6-2 below, farmland is the predominant land use in Chippewa County.

Figure 6-2. Agricultural Land Cover



[15] https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/2025/08-19-2025.php

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

Farmland in the County has been decreasing; Table 6-3 provides the total acreage for the County and State over each of the 5-year agricultural censuses from 2002 to 2022. In 2002, 56% of the County's land acreage was allocated to farming. As of 2022, the County had 338,969 acres of farmland, or 51% of the total land area. While farm acreage in Chippewa County has decreased, it has declined at a rate slower than the State average. Between 2002-2022, the County lost about 5% of its farmland acreage, while Wisconsin as a whole lost 12.4%.

Table 6-3. Total Farm Acreage 2002-2022

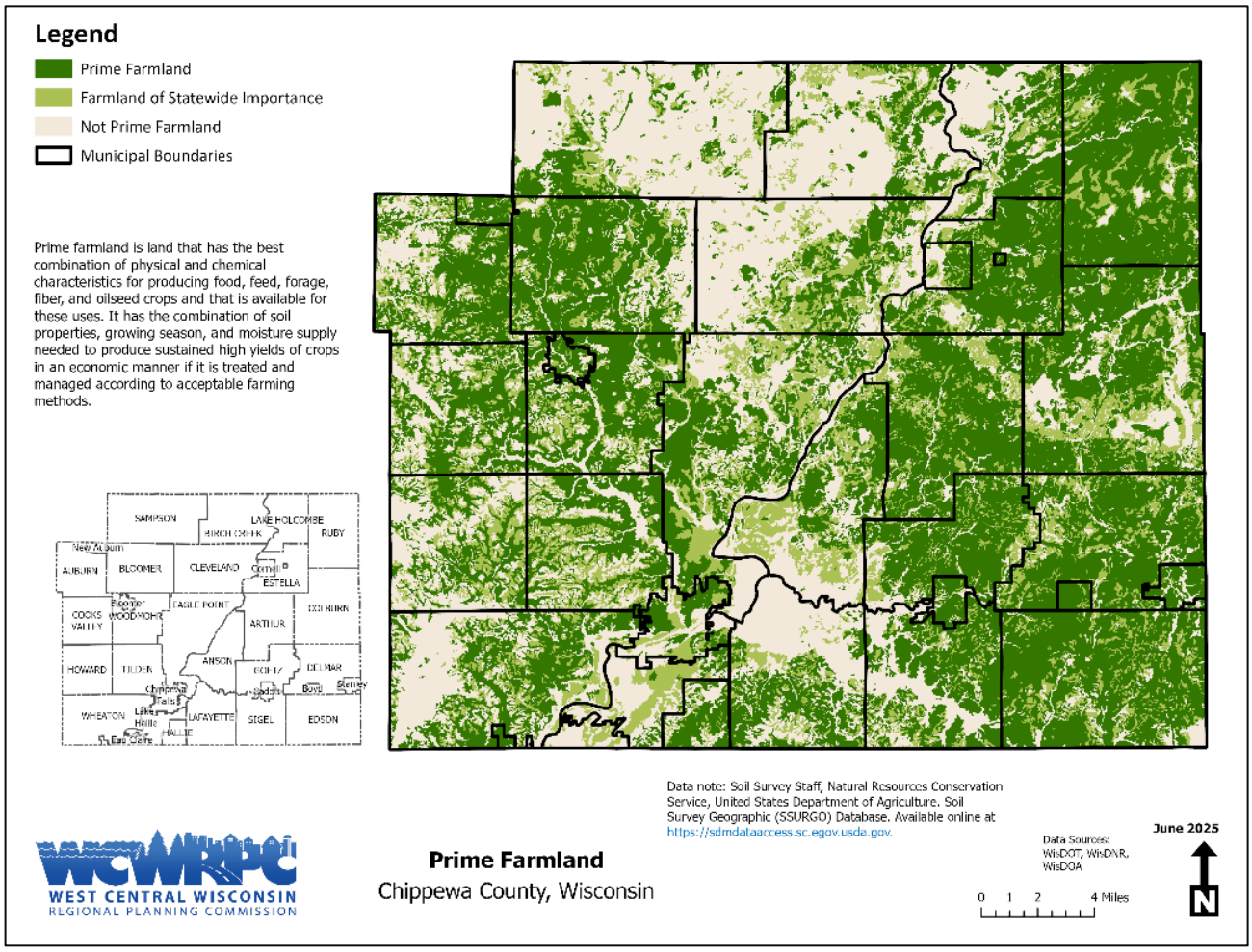
Region	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022
Chippewa County	374,103	353,491	384,621	356,176	338,969
Wisconsin	15,741,552	15,190,804	14,568,926	14,318,630	13,784,678

Source: USDA 2002 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

Soils and Water Resources

Figure 6-3 identifies soils in Chippewa County that are most suitable for the production of crops. A majority of the County holds soils considered prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. It is not surprising that there is a high correlation between the agricultural land cover in Figure 6-2 and the prime farmland soils in Figure 6-3.

Figure 6-3. Prime Farmland Soils



Surface and ground water is also available in large quantities throughout the County. Approximately 2.9% of the County is covered by water, and lakes and waterways from several areas feed groundwater systems. Chippewa County relies on its water resources for everyday living as well as its recreational economy. The abundance of water makes farming easier, but also requires diligent stewardship by landowners to preserve the quality of water sources.

C. Agricultural Sales & Production

Note: Agricultural sales data reporting has changed over time, making a 20-year analysis difficult. There is sufficient data between the last two Censuses of Agriculture to assess general trends in the market.

Overall, Chippewa County ranked 24th among Wisconsin's counties and 481st in the U.S. in the 2022 sale of agricultural commodities.



Agricultural sales in Chippewa County have increased 42.37% since 2017. Adjusting for inflation, overall sales have increased by roughly $9,470,317 in 5 years. Table 6-4 shows primary commodities continue to be dairy, grains, poultry (including eggs), and cattle and calves. These commodities are common throughout northern Wisconsin. Poultry and eggs sales have surpassed cattle, due in part to decrease in cattle inventory between 2017 and 2022. Grains are the County's primary crop commodity.

Table 6-4. Sales by Commodity 2017-2022 – Chippewa County

Commodity	2017	2022	% '17-'22
Milk from cows	92,029,000	114,464,000	24.38
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	70,045,000	104,955,000	49.84
Poultry and eggs	21,872,000	34,069,000	55.77
Cattle and calves	17,506,000	21,448,000	22.52
Other crops and hay	6,531,000	10,664,000	63.28
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes	338,000	1,075,000	218.05
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod	2,258,000	11,370,000	403.54
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	1,465,000	1,542,000	5.26
Sheep, goats, wool, mohaire, milk	965,000	1,053,000	9.12
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, donkeys	(D)	1,524,000	(D)
Other animals and animal products	434,000	(D)	(D)
Cultivated Christmas trees, short rotation woody crops	47,000	229,000	387.23
Aquaculture	(D)	-	(D)
Hogs and pigs	(D)	(D)	(D)
Total Sales	**215,337,000**	**306,567,000**	**42.37**

(D) = data withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

Inflation adjusted value of Total Sales in 2017 to 2022 dollars = $257,096,682.91

Source: 2017 / 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profiles

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

The 2022 Census of Agriculture estimates that Chippewa County's 1,286 farms sold $306,567,000 in agricultural products in 2002. Most of these commodities were shipped to processors. Less than 1% of commodity sales were represented by:

- 7.7% of farms sold food directly to consumers
- 2% of farms sold food directly to retail markets, institutions, etc.
- 2% of farms sold processed or value-added products

Total production has decreased in recent years. Table 6-5 and Table 6-6 provide inventory counts on various animal crop products, respectively. Most commodities declined in overall output between 2017 and 2022. Sales comparisons indicate a transitioning agricultural economy. Since 2002, crops have grown from 20% to 40% of all sales in Chippewa County.

Table 6-5. Livestock Inventories 2017-2022 – Chippewa County

Commodity	2017	2022	Change (2017 - 2022)	
			Number	Percent
Broilers and other meat-type chickens	8,773	7,633	-1,140	-12.99
Cattle and calves	60,551	51,039	-9,512	-15.71
Goats	2,384	2,192	-192	-8.05
Hogs and pigs	2,449	3,552	1,103	45.04
Horses and ponies	1,278	1,593	315	24.65
Layers	7,284	6,357	-927	-12.73
Pullets	2,193	1,345	-848	-38.67
Sheep and lambs	977	965	-12	-1.23
Turkeys	276,927	347,199	70,272	25.38

Source: 2017 / 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profiles

Table 6-6. Crop Inventories 2017-2022 – Chippewa County

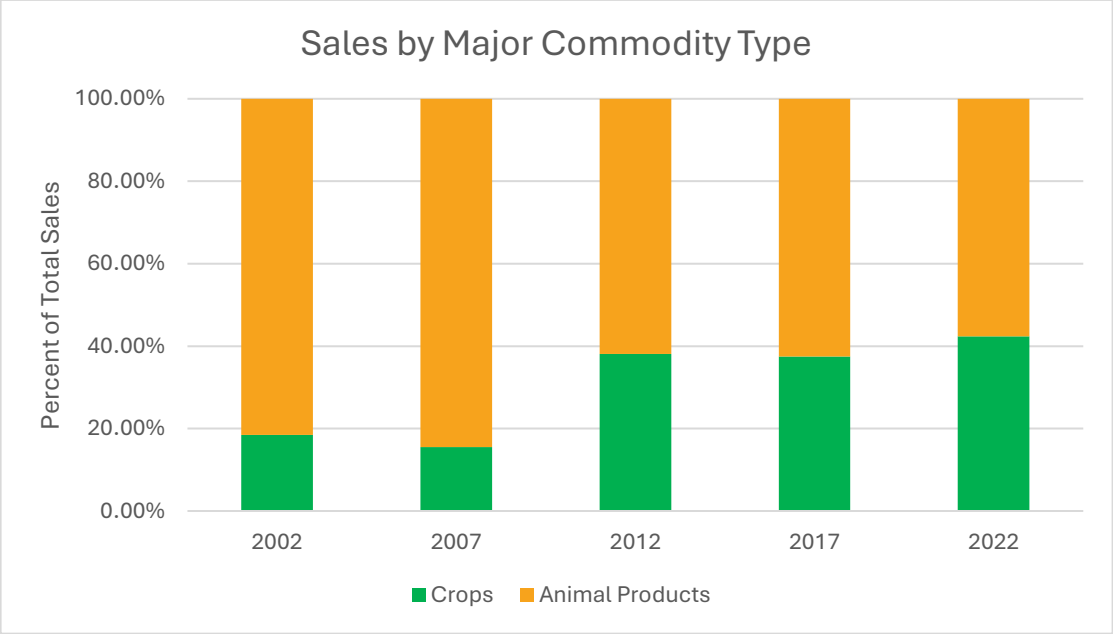
Commodity (unit of measurement)	2017	2022	Change (2017 - 2022)	
			Number	Percent
Barley (BU)	43,883	25,067	-18,816	-42.88
Corn, Grain (BU)	12,810,343	12,062,332	-748,011	-5.84
Corn, Silage (Tons)	283,483	265,329	-18,154	-6.40
Hay (Tons)	79,129	60,918	-18,211	-23.01
Haylage (Tons)	175,487	153,435	-22,052	-12.57
Maple Syrup (Gallons)	10,463	11,309	846	8.09
Oats (BU)	147,386	56,174	-91,212	-61.89
Rye (BU)	101,068	59,651	-41,417	-40.98
Soybeans (BU)	2,911,974	2,444,347	-467,627	-16.06

Source: USDA 2017 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

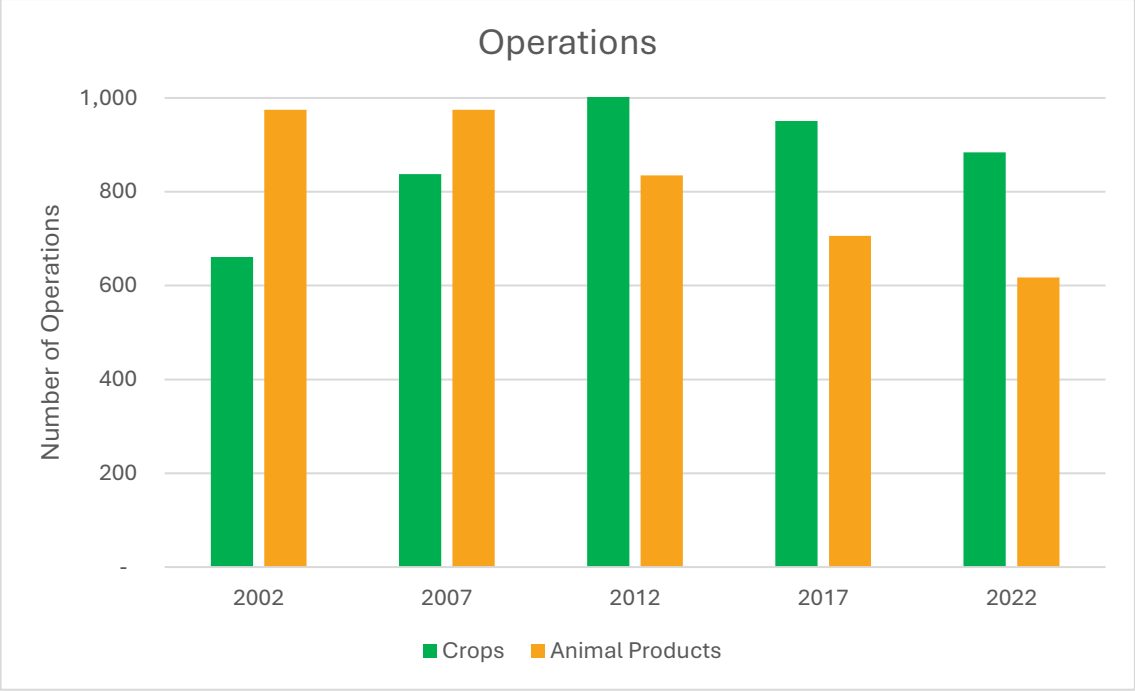
Figure 6-4 shows the percentage of sales for each commodity group from 2002-2022. Crops have remained a steady part of the overall sales since 2012 when it increased from 15% in 2007 to 38% in 2012. Figure 6-5 shows that the number of crop and animal farm operations (some farms have both) have been decreasing since 2012, with animal product operations decreasing at a faster rate.

Figure 6-4. Commodity Sales as a Percent of Total Ag Sales 2002-2022 – Chippewa County



Source: USDA 2002 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

Figure 6-5. Number of Farm Operations by Commodity Type 2002-2022 – Chippewa County



Source: USDA 2002 / 2022 Census of Agriculture https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

Chippewa County's farms support jobs and businesses throughout the local economy. For this plan update, Extension prepared an brief economic impact analysis of the contribution of agricultural production in Chippewa County, which is summarized in Table 6-7 below. In short, the primary farm production activities within Chippewa County in 2024 supported:

- 2,703 total jobs (full or part-time) and $116 million in labor income (salaries, wages, & proprietor income) within the County. This represents 7.1% of all jobs in Chippewa County.
- Total income (labor income + dividends, interest, rental or transfer payments) supported in Chippewa County was over $171 million.
- Total industry sales throughout Chippewa County's economy supported by farm production within the County was nearly $372 million.

Additional information on this economic analysis approach can be found at: https://aae.wisc.edu/contributions-of-agriculture/

Table 6-7. Economic Impacts of Farm Production Activities in Chippewa County, 2024

Farm Production Activity	Employment	Industry Sales (MM$)	Total Income (MM$)	Labor Income (MM$)
Oilseed farming	98	$29.38	$19.14	$7.61
Grain farming	243	$57.11	$12.28	$11.09
Vegetable and melon farming	15	$1.08	$0.72	$0.90
Fruit farming	30	$1.45	$1.40	$1.64
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	90	$11.13	$8.40	$5.42
All other crop farming	266	$9.18	$4.93	$3.26
Beef cattle ranching and farming, including related	650	$44.85	$20.30	$19.66
Dairy cattle and milk production	422	$96.50	$31.82	$21.26
Poultry and egg production	14	$11.53	$2.54	$1.20
Animal production, except cattle and poultry and eggs	172	$8.26	$7.94	$6.12
Support activities for agriculture and forestry	286	$17.27	$16.66	$16.37
Total	2,287	$287.75	$126.12	$94.54
Total Economic Contribution	2,703	$371.99	$171.48	$116.48
Economic Multiplier	1.182	1.293	1.36	1.232
Percent of County Total	7.10%	3.80%	4.00%	5.10%

Source: UW-Madison Extension Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics , 2024

D. Agricultural Enterprise Areas

There are three Agricultural Enterprise Areas in Chippewa County, as shown on Figure 6-6 below.

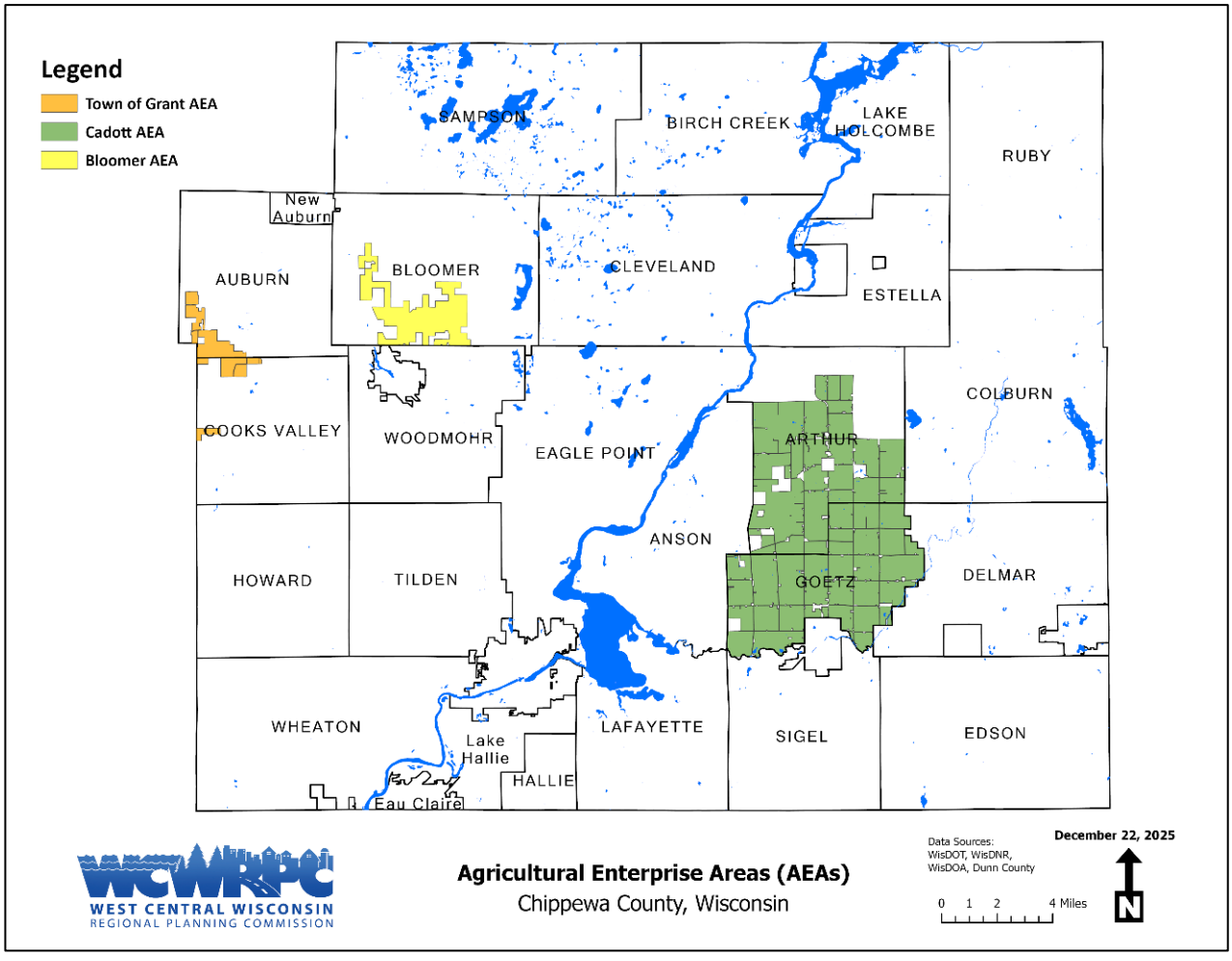
1. Bloomer Area AEA – 4,380 acres
2. Cadott Area AEA – 34,301 acres
3. Town of Grant AEA – While primarily located in Dunn County, a portion crosses over into Chippewa County into the Towns of Auburn and Cooks Valley.

Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)

AEAs are areas of productive agriculture that have received designation from the State of Wisconsin at the request of landowners and local governments. As a part of the State's Farmland Preservation Program, AEAs strive to support local farmland protection goals. Landowners within designated AEAs are eligible to enter into voluntary farmland preservation agreements and may be eligible for related tax credits.

During this plan update, there was strong interest among farmland-owner survey respondents in learning more about AEAs and associated tax credits. Anecdotally, it was suggested that there was also interest among farmers in expanding existing AEAs. Further, some towns view AEAs as the preferred farmland preservation approach given that participation by landowners is voluntary as opposed to regulation through farmland preservation zoning.

Figure 6.6. Agricultural Enterprise Areas

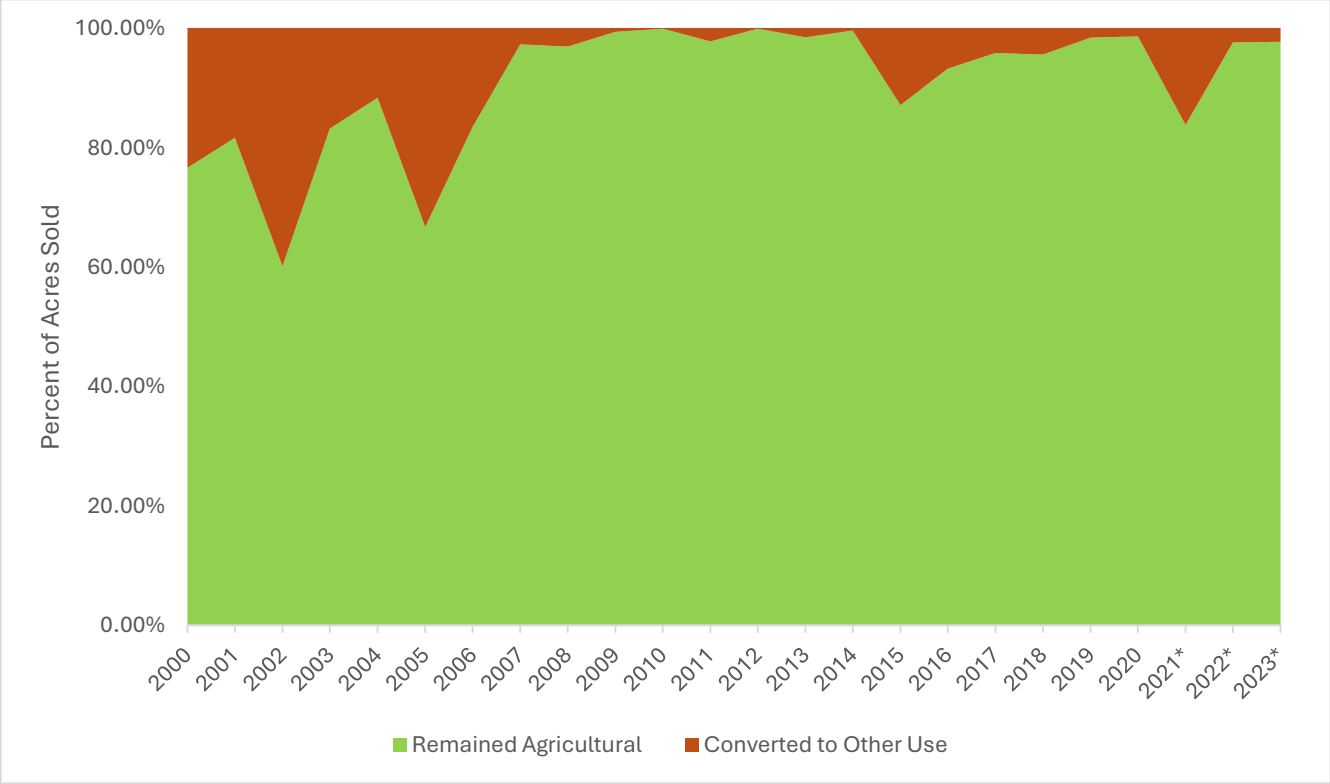


E. Agricultural Land Conversion

Figure 6-7 shows the use of Chippewa County farmland after it has been sold. Typically, agricultural land in the County stays agricultural after sale.

Between 2000 and 2020, 89% of agricultural acreage sold remained in agricultural use. 2000-2004 saw the greatest rates of conversion of agricultural land to other uses. Most recently, from 2015-2020, 96% of all land remained in agricultural use. Overall, sales of agricultural land have been increasing. 2,477 acres were sold on average between 2000 and 2014, increasing to 2,846 acres annually between 2015 and 2020. These trends are not surprising given the decreasing number of farms and increasing average farm sizes.

Figure 6-7. Percentage of Agricultural Sales by Post-Sale Use 2000-2023 – Chippewa County



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Wisconsin Field Office
https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Wisconsin/Publications/Land_Sales/index.php

Starting in 2021, USDA only provides county-level sales details for land without buildings and other improvements (prior years include both land with and without buildings and other improvements), so this data is not included in the above chart. 2021-2023 averaged about 1,200 acres sold per year with 93% remaining in agricultural production.

F. Future Agricultural Outlook

The Agriculture & Working Lands Focus Group anticipated that many of the previously noted trends will likely continue for Chippewa County, such as fewer full-time farms, increasing farm size, and increasing participation in conservation practices. A concern mentioned by some plan participants is the increasing number of large, concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in Wisconsin; Chippewa County only has three permitted concentrated animal feedlot operations with more than 1,000 animal units (2 dairy and 1 swine) as of 2025.

A July 2025 Wisconsin Bankers Association web article identified the following trends and concerns for the future of Wisconsin agriculture[16]:

- Economic headwinds and financial stress, including Inflationary pressures, higher interest rates, and volatile commodity prices. Rising prices of inputs have cut into the margins of strong milk and grain prices.
- Weather extremes are increasing while there is a growing focus on the adoption of conservation practices to build soil health and mitigate environmental risk.
- Generational transition is a challenge and opportunity. The article states "An estimated 60% of Wisconsin's farms are expected to change hands in the next 10–15 years. However, fewer than half have a formal succession plan."
- Technology (e.g., precision agriculture, robotics, data analytics) are improving efficiency and profitability, but require capital.

The above referenced article captures many of the key trends for Chippewa County noted by participants during this plan update.

G. Soil Health & Best Management Practices

Efforts to promote best management practice have gained traction. Table 6-8 lists the use of best management practices over the last two reporting periods of the Census of Agriculture. While acreage in conservation easements has declined, there has been an increase in the number of operations and acreage of conservation tillage as well as the use of cover crops. The reported acreage in conservation tillage or no till increased 29.2% and acreage in cover crops increased 31.3% from 2017 to 2022.

Table 6-8. Reported Best Management Practices 2017-2022 – Chippewa County

Best Management Practice	Operations		Acres	
	2017	2022	2017	2022
Conservation Easement	14	11	1,011	769
Conservation Tillage / No Till	353	367	75,600	97,668
Cover Crop Planted	206	208	30,287	39,767
Precision Agriculture	No Data	178	No Data	
Rotational or Management Intensive Grazing	136	130	No Data	

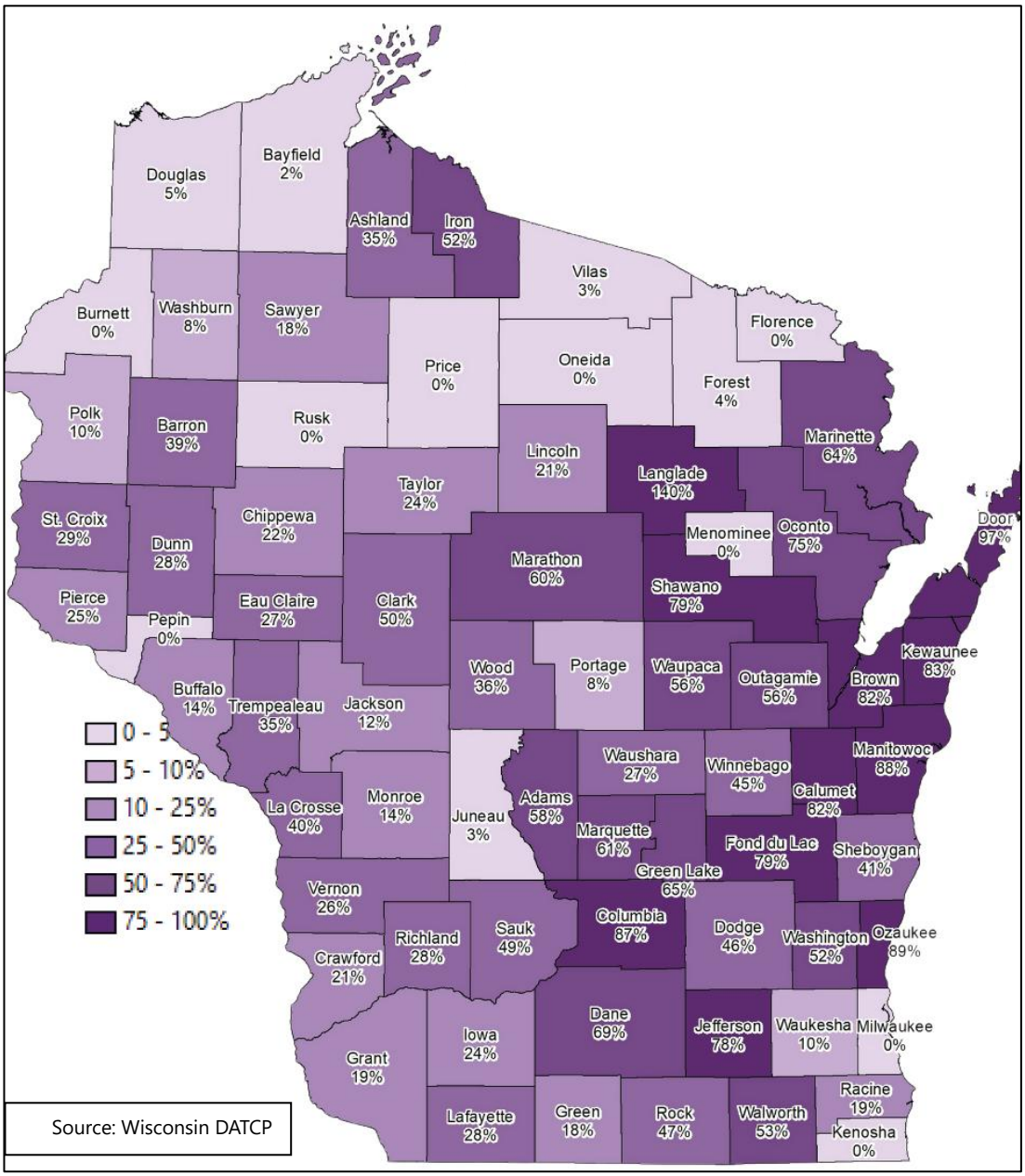
Source: 2017 / 2022 Census of Agriculture County Profiles

[16] Wisconsin Bankers Association website. https://www.wisbank.com/from-the-fields-navigating-the-future-of-wisconsin-agriculture-resilience-risk-opportunity/

Generally, many best management practices (BMPs) cannot be required unless cost-sharing is made available. The County's Land Conservation & Forest Management Department coordinates many of these cost-sharing opportunities. As shown on Figure 6.8, about 22% of cropland acres in Chippewa County were covered by a nutrient management plan (NMP) in 2024, representing about 24,576 acres. The Agriculture Focus Group expressed a number of concerns with this data:

- There are many farmers implementing nutrient management without certified NMPs.
- The related requirements keep changing and are getting too complicated, making it difficult to create a NMP without a contractor and making it hard to implement.
- Many NMPs are not being fully implemented.

Figure 6.8. Percent of Cropland Covered by Nutrient Management Plans, 2024

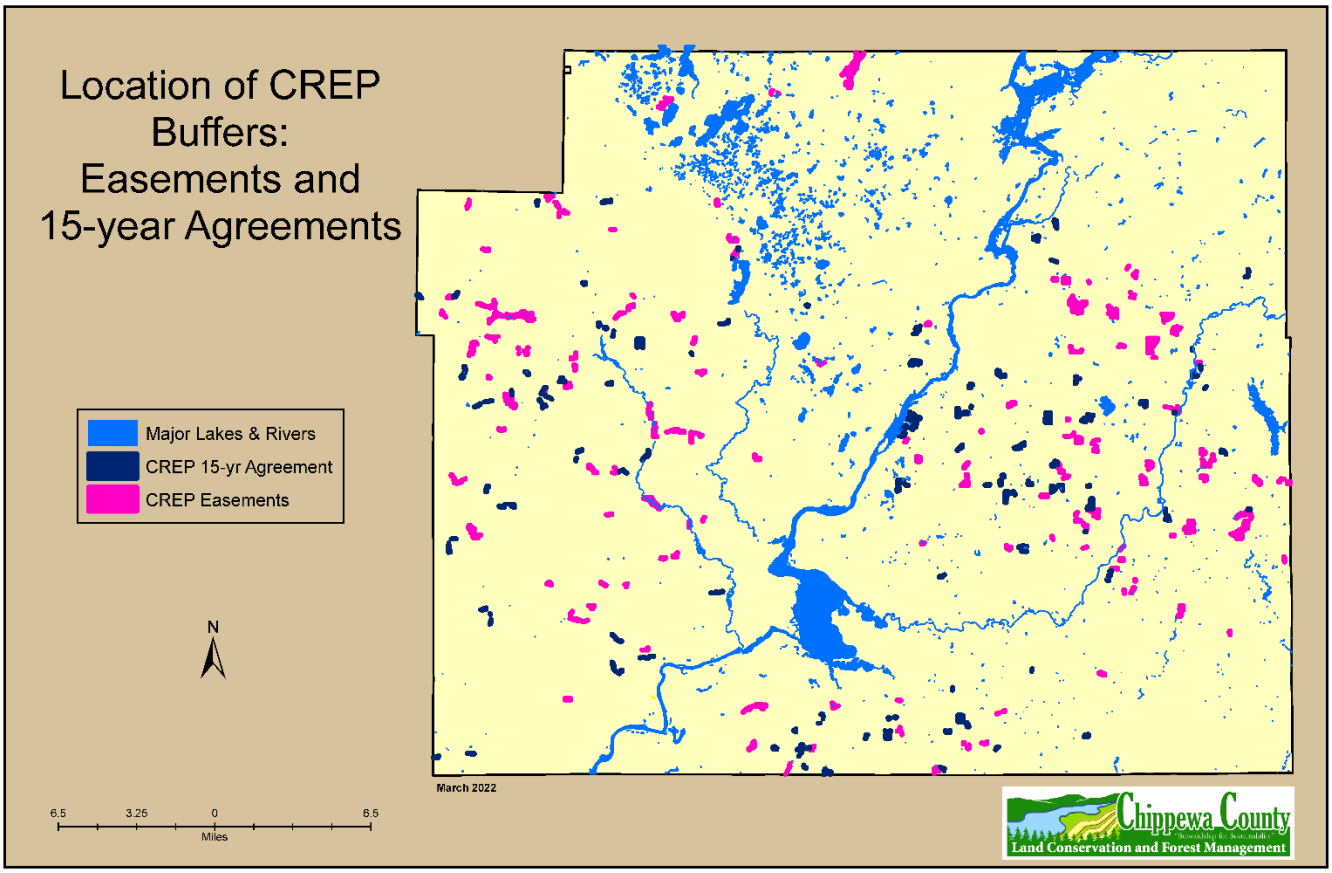


Among the farmland owner survey respondents:

- 61% of farmland owner survey respondents identified having used grassed waterways for more than 15 years, making it the most commonly used conservation practice in the County among respondents.
- Nutrient management planning (43%) and reduced or no-tillage (41%) were reported being used for 15+ years.
- 91% of respondents identified "reducing erosion and improving soil health on working lands" to be important.
- 84% identified protecting safe drinking water by supporting groundwater recharge and responsible land use as important.
- Having access to cost-sharing for conservation programs was the most useful type of support desired (33% of respondents). Over 20% of respondents desired more information on soil health, applying for conservation programs, helping navigating government rules, or wasn't certain what type of support they needed.

Chippewa County Land Conservation taps into various funding sources to make cost-sharing possible. This includes WDNR Surface Water Management Grants, ARPA Grant funding, and USDA's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CREP is one opportunity for landowners to voluntarily enroll agricultural lands into conservation practices, such as riparian buffers, filter strips, wetland restorations, waterways, and establishment of native grasslands. USDA makes annual rental payments for up to 15 years on enrolled acreage, in addition to an upfront, one-time signing incentive. The State of Wisconsin offers additional cost-sharing incentives. Lands enrolled in the CREP program as of March 2022 are shown in Figure 6.9.

Figure 6.9. CREP Participating Lands as of March 2022



In addition to the previous AEAs, Chippewa County has two farmer-led councils/producer-led watershed groups:

- The Chippewa Valley Producer-Led Watershed Group covers most of the County.
- The Red Cedar Conservation Farmers group covers a relatively small portion of western Chippewa County.

These are State-recognized organizations working with local collaborators to improve Wisconsin's soil and water quality by supporting and advancing producer-led solutions that increase on-the-ground practices and farmer participation in local watershed efforts. These groups are eligible to pursue DATCP Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grants to implement their locally defined initiatives.

6.3 Agricultural Infrastructure

State-certified farmland preservation plans are required to identify key infrastructure for agriculture, including key processing, storage, transportation, and supply facilities. While Section 6.3 focuses on the infrastructure within Chippewa County, Wisconsin's agricultural marketplace is global and it is likely that a substantial share of the commodities produced by area farmers leave the County for processing or use.

Processing Facilities

Of participants in the farmland owner survey, 15.4% (61 respondents) identified lack of local livestock processing facilities as one of the ag-infrastructure challenges.

DATCP maintains a list of specialty meat establishments and the following were listed for Chippewa County:

- Farm Market at SCF - Bloomer
- Inge's Custom Meats - Stanley
- Bob's Processing - Bloomer
- Bohemian Ovens Bakery s - Bloomer
- Jacobson's Market - Chippewa Falls
- JNE Meats - Chippewa Falls
- Lotts-A-Meat - Bloomer
- Shadick's Price Rite Foods - Bloomer

Three additional meat processing facilities were identified that were not included on DATCP's list:

- Derks Farms Beef - Boyd
- Ranch Brand Meat Company - Chippewa Falls
- Crescent Meats – Cadott

Chippewa County has a number of cheese and dairy operations of which the Associated Milk Producers Inc (AMPI) plant in Jim Falls is the largest. AMPI is the largest cheese cooperative in the U.S. and the Jim Falls plant processes over 1 million pounds of milk from area member farms.



The following businesses have DATCP Dairy Plant licenses:

- Klemish Creamery LLC – Town of Auburn
- Cow Caviar – Chippewa Falls
- Olson's Ice Cream – Chippewa Falls
- Yellowstone Cheese – Cadott

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

The following are additional dairy-related businesses identified during the planning process:

- New Auburn Cheese Company – New Auburn
- LaGrander's Hillside Dairy - Stanley
- Dylan's Dairy – Cornell

Chippewa County has 33 DATCP food processing license holders in Chippewa County, in addition to Feed My People Food Bank licensed in Eau Claire County but serves Chippewa County. Many of these are smaller businesses or cottage industries.

O'Neil Creek Winery - Bloomer
Main Street Café - Bloomer
From the Woods Gourmet Snacks - Bloomer
Pozarski Family Farm LLC - Boyd
Dahm's Sugar Bush - Boyd
Zach Irwin - Boyd
Roth Sugarbush Inc. -Cadott
Cedric Boettcher - Cadott
Irish Maple LLC - Cadott
Premium Waters Inc - Chippewa Falls
Premium Waters Inc. - Chippewa Falls
Amanda's Eggs - Chippewa Falls
Chippewa River Distillery and Brewery LLC - Chipp Falls
Lincoln County Reserve Chippewa Falls
Pete's Perfect Sauce - Chippewa Falls
Dixon's Autumn Harvest Winery LLC - Chippewa Falls
Water's Edge Cheese Curds - Chippewa Falls
Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company - Chippewa Falls
River Bend Winery & Distillery - Chippewa Falls
Leahs Canning Co., LLC - Chippewa Falls
OvenWorks Pizza - Chippewa Falls
Haas Brothers Foods, LLC - Chippewa Falls
Lincoln County Reserve LLC - Chippewa Falls
Ursula's Pretzel Bakery, LLC - Chippewa Falls
Gerald Ankney - Cornell
Wisconsin Veteran Farm LLC - Cornell
Putneys - Cornell
Flambeau Mountain Maple Syrup - Holcombe
Roger E. Hattamer - Holcombe
Dashing Duo LLC - Jim Falls
Archer Daniels Midland Co - Stanley
Folczyk Sugar Bush LLC - Stanley
Mason's Maple Syrup - Stanley
Let's Get Pickled- Stanley

Further, a substantial amount of processing for Chippewa County farmers occurs at facilities outside of the County. For example, the largest livestock commodity is turkeys, which are largely trucked to the Jennie-O plant in Barron for processing. This lack of a more complete inventory is not specific to food processing facilities; it could be an effective marketing tool to develop a centralized database of agricultural businesses to promote throughout the region.



Biomass Processing & Energy Facilities

Chippewa County has one biomass energy facility—Ace Ethanol in Stanley that converts corn fiber and residual starch in distillers grains to cellulosic ethanol. Boyceville in Dunn County also has an ethanol plant that receives some inputs from Chippewa County farmers. Stanley is also home to SERVODAY, which produces pellets for heating purposes from byproducts of lumber, corn, and other crops. The growth of a local Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone in the County is an initiative of the Chippewa Economic Development Corporation, which is discussed further in the Economic Development element (Chapter 9).

Grain Storage Facilities & Elevators



Of participants in the farmland owner survey, only 5.8% (23 respondents) identified shortage of grain storage or transload facilities as ag-infrastructure challenges in the County. There are a number of larger storage facilities in the County, including:

- Wheaton Grain Inc. – Chippewa Falls
- Rooney Grain, LLC – Chippewa Falls
- River Country Co-op – Chippewa Falls, Bloomer, & Boyd
- North Side Elevator – Stanley

Transportation Facilities & Network

Of participants in the farmland owner survey, 36.9% (146 respondents) identified the ability of local roads and bridges to handle agricultural equipment as an ag-infrastructure challenge in the County. This was the most commonly identified need. Increasing sizes of farming and logging equipment, weight limits, and road damage were mentioned a number of times by plan participants and during the town surveys.

Chapter 5. Transportation provides details on the County's transportation network, which primarily consists of State and County Highways along with local roads and railroads. Truck traffic to processing and ethanol plants (e.g., AMPI in Jim Falls, Ace Ethanol in Stanley, Big River Ethanol in Boyceville) were identified as agriculture trucking corridors. Chippewa County does have a number of truck-to-rail transload facilities in Chippewa Falls (CN Intermodal Terminal), New Auburn (B&L Transload), and Stanley (Rail & Transload Inc.) that could potentially support agricultural products.

Some of the grain facilities listed above provide grain hauling services for farmers. There are also commercial trucking companies of various sizes in the larger area that offer transportation services for grain and livestock. Wellner's Trucking, Wundrow Trucking, Mickelson's are DATCP-registered animal haulers in Chippewa County.

DATCP has issued Bulk Milk Tanker Grade A Permits to drivers for the following businesses/owners in the County:

- Justin Bernier – Chippewa Falls
- Joshua Brown – Chippewa Falls
- David Ciolkosz – Stanley
- Jeffery Ciolkosz - Boyd
- Herb Carlson & Sons, LLC – Stanley
- Jensen & Sons Trucking, LLC – Cadott
- Lemke Brothers Trucking, Inc. – Jim Falls
- Dale Marion – Boyd
- Mobile Ag Solutions – Chippewa Falls
- Nouveau Solutions LLC, Elk Mound

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

Equipment / Implement Facilities

Of participants in the farmland owner survey, 22% (87 respondents) identified access to local machinery repair, supply and parts businesses as an ag-infrastructure challenge in the County. This was the second highest identified need following local roads and bridges.

- Union Trailer & Power Equipment – Chippewa Falls/Lake Hallie
- North Country Tractor – Cadott
- Dachel's Tractor & Equipment – Cadott
- Chippewa Valley Equipment, Inc – Holcombe
- Tractor Central – Chippewa Falls
- VES – Artex – Chippewa Falls
- JK Dairy Equipment Sales – Chippewa Falls
- Chippewa Farm Service LLC – Chippewa Falls
- Lube Suppliers Store – Stanley

As noted previously, the use of custom or contract farming services, especially for the application of fertilizers, lime, etc., has been growing. Some of the farm supply stores also have some agricultural equipment or provide custom services.

Supply Facilities

Of participants in the farmland owner survey, 11.6% (46 respondents) identified access to needed inputs (e.g., seed, fertilizer, lime) as an ag-infrastructure challenge in the County. The following suppliers were identified in Chippewa County:

- Blain's Fam & Fleet – Lake Hallie
- Chippewa Valley Dairy Supply – Stanley
- Star Blends – Chippewa Falls & Lake Hallie
- Cadott Grain Service, LLC – Cadott
- CDR Farms, LCC – Bloomer
- Cloverleaf Farm Supply – Cadott
- River Country Co-op – Chippewa Falls, Bloomer, & Boyd
- Ed's Feed Service – Bloomer
- L Romanowski Corp – Stanley
- Mitchell Feeds, LLC – Bloomer
- SB&B Foods - Bloomer
- Wheaton Grain, Inc. – Chippewa Falls

Agriculture Cooperatives & Associations

The role of co-cops and associations can vary. Some are focused primarily on providing inputs or services, while others are more market focused. The following are some of the agricultural cooperatives and associations supporting Chippewa County farmers:

- Equity Chippewa Valley Livestock – Boyd
- WI Honey Cooperative – T Colburn
- River Country Cooperative – Chippewa Falls
- Farmers Union – Chippewa Falls
- Chippewa Co Holstein Breeders Association Coop – Chippewa Falls
- Chippewa Co Farm Bureau – Madison
- Chippewa Co Cooperative Dairy Herd Improvement Association – Chippewa Falls
- Chippewa Valley Beekeepers Association

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

Farmers/Local Agricultural Markets

The following are some of the Farmers Markets in Chippewa County during 2025:

- Cadott Farmer's Market
- Stacker City/Cornell Farmers Market
- Chippewa Falls Farmers Market
- Market on River - Chippewa Falls
- Monday Market at Chippewa Falls YMCA
- New Auburn Summer Farmer's Market
- Stanley Farmers Market

The are also many smaller direct "farm-to-table"/on-farm retailers and roadside stands located throughout Chippewa County, including at least four apple orchards and honey retailers, numerous maple syrup/sugar bushes, at least four meat providers, and a number of greenhouses. The County also has three wineries—Dixon's Autumn Harvest, River Bend Winery, and Wisconsin Veteran Farm LLC Winery. These operations, plus the previously mentioned cheese and ice cream dairies, are a vital component of Chippewa County's agri-tourism economy. The best source for such operations is the Agritourism page at the GoChippewaCounty website.

Veterinary Clinics

Veterinary clinics providing services for livestock are an important part of agricultural infrastructure. The following clinics are located in or near Chippewa County though the extent of their current services for livestock has not been confirmed:

- Dr. Reiter's Veterinary Clinic – Bloomer
- Dr. Vickis Veterinary Clinic – northeast of Bloomer
- Lang Veterinary Services – northeast of New Auburn
- Cornell Veterinary Clinic – Cornell
- Stanely Veterinary Services – Stanely
- Countryside Animal Services – north of Stanley
- Cadott Animal Clinic – Cadott
- Lake Wissota Animal Hospital – east of Chippewa Falls
- Chippewa Veterinary Clinic – Chippewa Falls

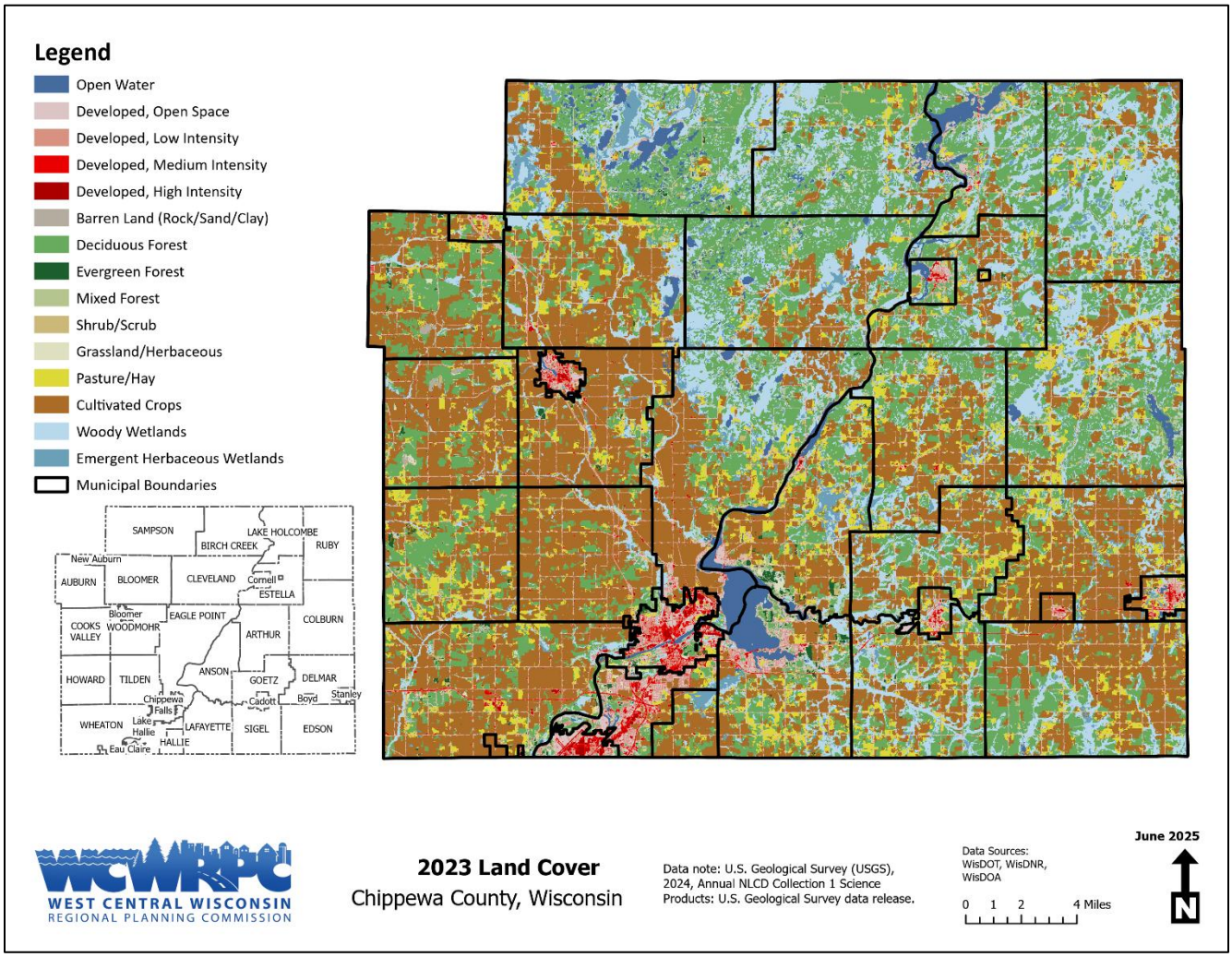


6.4 Forestry in Chippewa County

The forests of Chippewa County contribute to its natural beauty, provide wildlife habitat, support outdoor recreation, and are an important economic commodity. By State statute, agriculture includes forest management; the forests and farmlands are Chippewa County's working lands.

As shown on Figure 6-10, the forests of Chippewa County are most heavily concentrated in the northern and eastern portions of the County. About 28% acres of Chippewa County is forested, making it the second most common land cover in the County behind agriculture. The harvest value can vary greatly depending on timber type, quality, stand size, and market factors. In 2018, WDNR estimated that Chippewa County had 9,876,000 dry short tons of timberland biomass.

Figure 6-10. Chippewa County General Land Cover, 2023



The assessed forest and ag forest acreage decreased by 17.4% or 29,372 acres from 2013 to 2023; total acreage in 2013 was 168,470 acres and 139,098 acres in 2023. There is an additional 56,000 acres or so in County, State, and Federal forest and open space, including the 33,000-acre Chippewa Conty Forest.

As of 2025, there were 418 landowners with 28,341 acres in Chippewa County participating in the Managed Forest Law (MFL). MFL participants receive reduced property taxes for maintaining productive forest lands under a management plan for 20 years. MFL participation has been increasing in some towns as property taxes rise. And there were many MFL enrollments in the early 2000s; their 25-year expiration date is expiring, and many are re-enrolling. New State rules that cap MFL participation at a maximum of 320 acres per town per landowner will likely impact future acreages enrolled. There is also one Forest Crop Law participant remaining in the County; enrollment in the FCL program expired in 1986.



During the plan update, the Agriculture/Working Lands Focus Group discussed:

- Invasive and fragmentation are big threats to future timber production.
- It is valuable to educate landowners on woodland invasives and diseases (e.g., Oak Wilt), and how prevent and control them.
- MFL plans can manage productive forest lands to benefit wildlife.
- MFL participation helps to reduce forest fragmentation.
- MFL lands have recreational benefits, though not all are open to the public.
- MFL lands, given their management plans and maintaining open space, have water quality benefits.
- Pine plantations have limited ecological benefit, and many are aging; encourage reforestation with more diverse species.

6.5 Agriculture in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared agricultural-related issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for the cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Weaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Summary of Town, Village, & City Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Agriculture is an important part of the County's economy and heritage.
- Farmlands and forests are core to rural character, which towns generally desire to preserve. However, there is not a strong consensus over the use of zoning to enforce such preservation.
- Villages and cities recognize the importance of farmland preservation and, generally, encourage denser residential development on public utilities within their boundaries to support this goal. Agricultural lands within or in growth areas immediately adjacent to cities and villages tend to be planned as future development areas, subject to any development limitations or environmentally sensitive areas.
- Surface and groundwater concerns related to agricultural practices (e.g., phosphorus, nitrates) are discussed in some plans, which are more fully explored in the Natural Resources chapter of this plan.

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

Summary of Town, Village, & City Goals & Objectives

Overall, the agricultural goals and objectives from town and city/village comprehensive plans are similar:

Towns Goals and Objectives Summary

- Preserve and protect prime farmland, natural resources, and sensitive environmental features while maintaining the Towns' rural character and open space.
- Support agriculture as a viable business and lifestyle, including small market farms, agritourism, and the next generation of farmers.
- Protect water quality, air quality, groundwater, and surface waters through responsible land use and agricultural practices.
- Minimize land use conflicts and limit development in prime agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Work cooperatively with local, State, and federal partners to preserve natural, cultural, and historical resources and support long-term planning efforts.

City & Village Goals and Objectives Summary

- Support and strengthen the local agricultural community while preserving productive farmland and coordinating with farmers, businesses, FFA, and community growers.
- Balance private property rights with the long-term protection and responsible management of working agricultural lands.
- Minimize land use conflicts between agriculture and other development, while promoting urban food production and access to locally grown foods.
- Encourage efficient, cost-effective growth in planned areas with coordinated infrastructure to preserve surrounding farmland and regional agricultural viability.
- Explore strategic infrastructure and partnerships, such as a potential rail spur and intergovernmental coordination, to support agricultural production and distribution.

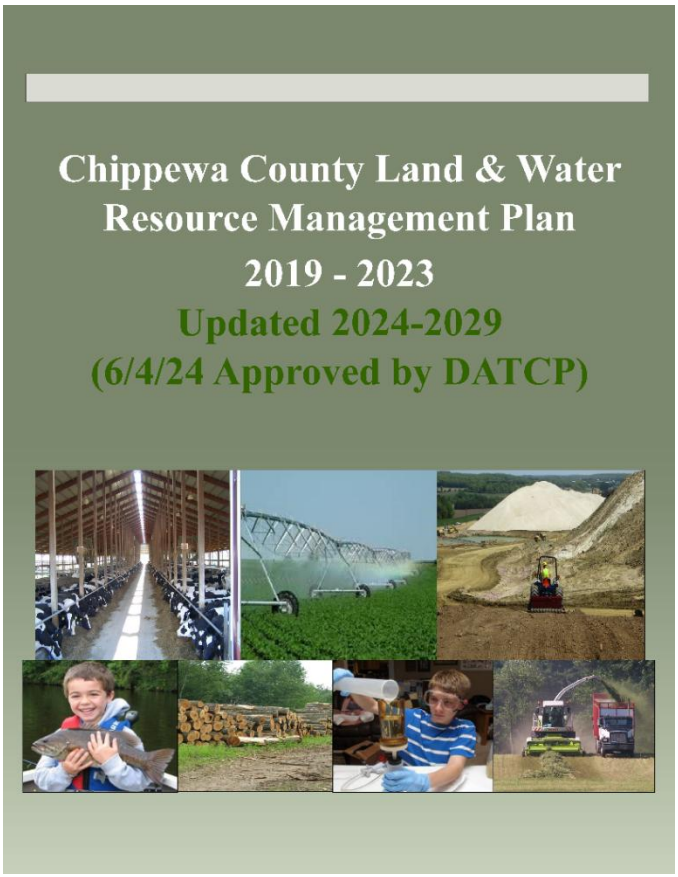
Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

- Protect and preserve natural resources, prime farmland, forestlands, wetlands, woodlands, and open space for current and future generations.
- Prioritize farmland preservation by guiding development away from prime agricultural soils, avoiding land fragmentation, and supporting right-to-farm protections.
- Promote agriculture as a viable industry through best management practices for soil health, nutrient management, erosion control, and protection of surface and groundwater.
- Maintain strong coordination with County, State, and regional agencies on land use regulation, farmland preservation, water quality protection, and invasive species control.
- Support local food systems and food access through farmers markets, urban agriculture, community gardens, and partnerships with institutions and producers.

6.6 Other Agricultural Plans & Programs

Key Agricultural Plans

Chippewa County adopted the current *Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan* in October 2015. The County's Farmland Preservation Plan is fully incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan update.



The *Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Management Plan*, approved by DATCP in June 2024, is the County's other primary agricultural planning document. While focused on resource conservation, the plan includes agricultural statistics and includes objectives and actions to actively support the economic viability and sustainability of existing agricultural operations, the local agricultural economy, and rural communities. Agricultural elements of this Resource Management Plan have been incorporated into the goal, objectives, policies, and strategies of this chapter.

It is important to note that farms are businesses. Arguably, the most important plans are those of each farmer for the management of their operations, inputs, nutrient application, risks/insurance, succession, etc., as well as the land use and rental agreements between farmers and farmland owners. University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension (Extension) has a farm business educational program working to support financially viable, healthy farm businesses essential to Wisconsin's agricultural economy.

Key Agricultural Programs

There are many partners and programs available to advance the goals and objectives of this plan. Most notably:

- The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department is the primary County government entity most closely working with farmers and farmland owners. The Department takes the lead in coordinating the implementation of the County's *Land & Water Resource Management Plan* and *Farmland Preservation Plan*. The Department pursues related grant funding to implement programs and provides cost-sharing support to farmer for conservation practices.
- Chippewa County has partnered with Dunn and Eau Claire Counties to support a Crops & Soils Educator and a Livestock Educator as part of the Extension Program to help area farmers meet their goals.
- Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have roles in supporting and regulating agriculture, such as the State's farmland preservation program (discussed elsewhere), manure management, and encouraging market expansion.
- The US Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) maintains an office in Chippewa Falls to connect farmers to Federal insurance, loan, and other support programs. The USDA Natural Resources

Conservation Service (NRCS) office is at the same location and provides conservation and soil science support to farmers and communities.

- Chippewa County has an active Agricultural Educators Group that includes representatives from most of the above programs that meets regularly to prioritize and coordinate initiatives. Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters are also established in all area high schools.
- River Country Resource Conservation & Development Council based in Eau Claire serves Chippewa County.
- Wisconsin Farm Bureau and Wisconsin Farmers Union are farmer advocacy and agriculture support organizations. Wisconsin Farmers Union is based in Chippewa Falls and recently opened the Market on River. There are also specialty organizations associated with certain commodities that are important partners, such as the Chippewa Valley Beekeepers Association and the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association.

As noted previously, three Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs) are located within Chippewa County. Economic partners, such as Chippewa Economic Development Corporation and Momentum West, are actively working to explore value-added and global market opportunities for locally produced agricultural commodities (see Chapter 9. Economic Development). Additional partners, programs, and plans that intersect between agricultural and natural resources can be found in Chapter 7. Natural Resources.

6.7 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the agricultural-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- 7 of the towns agreed that preserving productive farmland is a primary goal for their town. A number of towns have adopted minimum lot size regulations in support of this goal.
- 3 towns envisioned significant changes in the next 20 years, including the conversion of productive agricultural lands to residential and other uses.
- When asked to identify the top 3 priority challenges facing towns to address in the plan…
  - 3 towns prioritized the fragmentation of working agricultural or forest lands
  - 2 towns prioritized the loss of lands with high agricultural value
  - 3 towns prioritized the impacts of large-scale farming or large livestock operations
- 1 town expressed concerns over the potential loss of agricultural land to "large solar companies or other non-aesthetic uses of the land."
- Increasing size of farm equipment and potential road damage is a concern for multiple towns. ARIP grant funding has been pursued in some towns for road improvements.
- Agriculture is getting more commercialized and "seems to be pushing the little guy out." More resources are needed for the smaller, niche farmers.
- All respondents believed that agri-tourism and agricultural businesses should be allowed in their towns, perhaps with some limitations on location.

B. Zoned Town Meetings

Meetings occurred with the Towns of Anson, Bloomer, Eagle Point, Hallie, LaFayette, and Wheaton during the planning process to obtain input on farmland preservation and land use planning. Comments were consistent with the previous summaries from the Town surveys and comprehensive plans. Key takeaways were:

- While farmland preservation is a goal, preserving rural character and open space is equally important in some communities.
- There is strong support for encouraging the expansion of Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA) since participation is voluntary.
- Interest in adoption of a certified farmland preservation zoning district was low given the restrictions involved, though a couple of towns were open to additional discussion. There appeared to be stronger interest in keeping the current agricultural district, but exploring the creation of a new zoning district that encourages farmland preservation that is not as restrictive as the State-certified district.
- Towns appeared to be receptive to changes to the zoning ordinance text to create a new agricultural zoning district with the understanding that the current agricultural zoning district would not be significantly alternated and it would not change their own zoning maps without their approval.
- Additional meetings with the zoned towns and farmland owners are recommended if the County explores changes to its zoning ordinance to promote farmland preservation. Proposed changes and potential implications must be clear and concise.
- There is a probable need for additional and ongoing education on farmland preservation planning and related tax credits. This includes how such planning benefits the local agricultural economy as a whole and that these are income tax credits (not property tax credits) for farmland owners.

C. Agriculture & Working Lands Focus Group

Two meetings of the ad hoc Agriculture & Working Land Focus Group met during the planning process. These meetings were facilitated by WCWRPC with participants including:

- Chippewa County farmers
- Chippewa County Producer-Led Council
- Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department
- Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Department
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Livestock Facility staff
- University of Wisconsin Extension

Additional comments were received by River Country RC&D and WDNR Forestry staff. Comments from WDNR Forester were largely integrated into the previous forestry sub-section.

Comments from the Focus Group have been integrated throughout this Chapter as well as influenced other chapters of the plan. Regarding agricultural trends, comments included:

- More farms are being operated as a business, rather than a “way of life.”
- There was some disagreement with some of the Census and trends data presented, though this may be due to, in part, differences in definitions (e.g., what is a farm vs. assessed farmland).
- Much of the lost farmland may now be undeveloped as open space as part of scattered, large lot rural residential growth. Large minimum lot sizes conflict with farmland preservation goals.

- Row crops, precision agriculture, drones, equipment sizes, and custom operations will all continue to increase.
- Increasing fragmentation of farmland and forests decreases their economic potential.
- Average herd sizes are increasing; the data suggests sizes are lower than what the Focus Group expected.
- Increasing rental of farmland and absentee landowners. Short-term rental does not allow investment for efficiency, production, and conservation.
- Heavier and larger farm equipment is impacting roads and creating access challenges, in part due to fragmentation of lands.
- Decreasing enrollment in some farm programs.
- Increasing use of silage and decreasing hay/pasture has environmental impacts.
- Pollinator populations are decreasing. The County has many beekeepers.
- Decreasing understanding among communities, elected officials, and landowners about farm operations and sources of possible land use conflicts.

Some additional highlights include:

- Cost sharing for conservation practices may not be keeping pace with actual costs, decreasing the incentive to participate. Tax credits are important to encouraging conservation practices, but must emphasize the positive economic value.
- Nutrient management rules keep changing making it harder for farmers as previously described in this chapter. Many plans are not being fully implemented. Programs and support must be kept more simple; not larger programs with diminishing returns.
- Some best practices, such as reduced tillage, will continue to grow. Promote more pasturing and incentivize cover crops.
- The County and State have right-to-farm rules in place. The State rules protect against nuisance lawsuits while the Chippewa County zoning ordinance requires deed statements with a "right-to-farm"-style acknowledgement for proposed residential development in predominantly agricultural zoned areas.
- There is an increasing use of drag lines. Consider allowing burial of PVC in road rights-of-way.
- Encourage buying local.
- Outreach has been effective. Continue educational outreach, including during other community events to increase exposure.
- Coordination support is important for producer-led watershed groups.
- Allow farm-related businesses in rural areas if infrastructure can support and don't degrade the environment.



- There is not a strong consensus on the use of zoning for farmland preservation. The additional $2.50 per acre is not a sufficient incentive to encourage participation in farmland preservation zoning. There was stronger support for encouraging AEAs and participation in voluntary conservation agreements.

6.8 Farmland Preservation Planning

A. Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program

Wisconsin's Farmland Preservation Program helps farmers and local governments preserve farmland, protect soil and water, and minimize land use conflicts. The program also offers landowners that meet soil and water conservation standards the opportunity to become eligible to claim an income tax credit.

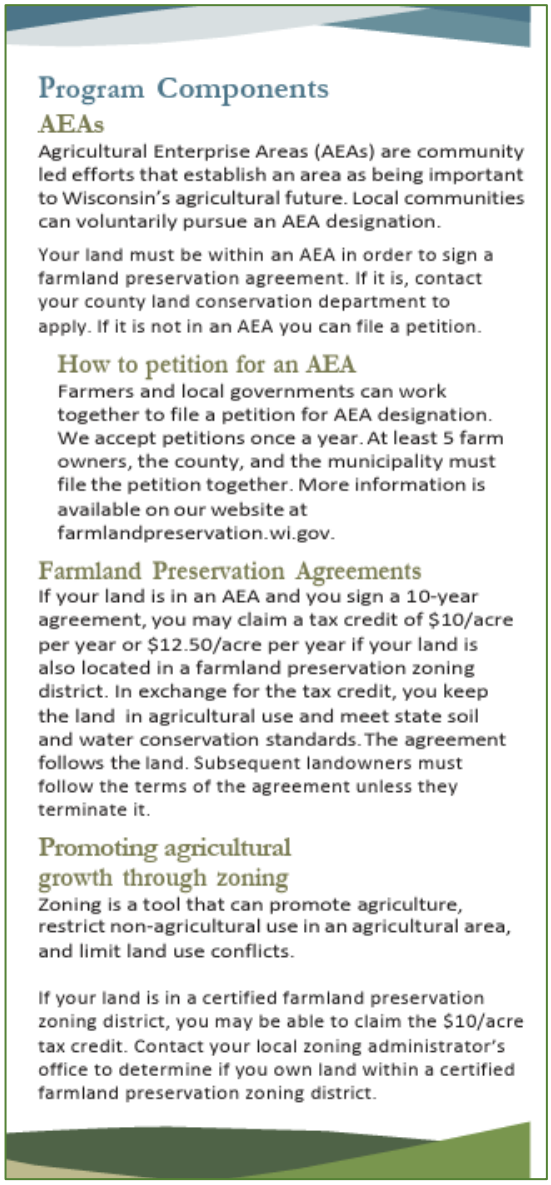
Farmland Preservation Plan

A county farmland preservation plan is a guiding policy document that outlines current conditions and future goals for agriculture within the county. It assesses agricultural trends and resources, and identifies areas expected to remain in agriculture for the next 15 years.

A certified farmland preservation plan is required before a county can:

- Create certified farmland preservation zoning districts
- Designate Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)
- Support farmland preservation agreements

Farmland preservation planning lays the policy and mapping foundation for conserving agricultural and working lands. It identifies priority agricultural areas and goals, supports coordination among local governments and landowners, and opens up participation in preservation techniques such as AEAs, farmland preservation zoning or agreements. It also unlocks the potential for participating landowners to be potentially eligible for State income tax credits in exchange for preserving lands and complying with conservation standards.



Program Components

AEAs

Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs) are community led efforts that establish an area as being important to Wisconsin's agricultural future. Local communities can voluntarily pursue an AEA designation.

Your land must be within an AEA in order to sign a farmland preservation agreement. If it is, contact your county land conservation department to apply. If it is not in an AEA you can file a petition.

How to petition for an AEA

Farmers and local governments can work together to file a petition for AEA designation. We accept petitions once a year. At least 5 farm owners, the county, and the municipality must file the petition together. More information is available on our website at farmlandpreservation.wi.gov.

Farmland Preservation Agreements

If your land is in an AEA and you sign a 10-year agreement, you may claim a tax credit of $10/acre per year or $12.50/acre per year if your land is also located in a farmland preservation zoning district. In exchange for the tax credit, you keep the land in agricultural use and meet state soil and water conservation standards. The agreement follows the land. Subsequent landowners must follow the terms of the agreement unless they terminate it.

Promoting agricultural growth through zoning

Zoning is a tool that can promote agriculture, restrict non-agricultural use in an agricultural area, and limit land use conflicts.

If your land is in a certified farmland preservation zoning district, you may be able to claim the $10/acre tax credit. Contact your local zoning administrator's office to determine if you own land within a certified farmland preservation zoning district.

Farmland Preservation Statutory Requirements

The State of Wisconsin and the Department of Agricultural, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) provides thorough guidance on the development of Farmland Preservation Plans, which is outlined in Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 91, Subchapter II and Wisconsin Administrative Code ATCP 49.

Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 91, Subchapter II

Chapter 91 of Wisconsin Statutes covers farmland preservation and establishes DATCP as the regulating agency. The Chapter contains 6 subchapters. Each of these subchapters is pertinent to farmland preservation activities, but subchapter II covers the process for preparing and certifying a farmland preservation plan. Section 91.10(1) identifies the components required within a plan, such as trends analyses, maps, goals, and strategies as they relate to preservation efforts and agricultural development. Sections 91.12-91.20 address the certification process and expiration of farmland preservation plans. This plan was prepared with the intention of attaining certification by DATCP.

Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter ATCP 49

DATCP has provided further specifications in farmland preservation planning, zoning, and agreements within the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Administrative Code Chapter ATCP 49 is organized similarly to Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 91. It contains subchapters relating to the various preservation activities, and Subchapter II covers farmland preservation planning. This subchapter requires the identification of the rationale behind the planning process.

Incorporation into Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan

Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 91 and Administrative Code ATCP 49 require that this Farmland Preservation Plan be consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan. As such, this chapter, with reference to other sections of this plan document, serves as both the County's Comprehensive Plan and Farmland Preservation Plan.

WI Farmland Preservation Plan Required Contents

DATCP's *Farmland Preservation Plan Certification Application* includes a checklist that specifies the requirement contents for a farmland preservation plan. The required items include:

1. Plan states the county's policy related to farmland preservation and agricultural development, including the development of enterprises related to farmland preservation and agricultural development, including the development of enterprises related to agriculture.
2. Identifies, describes, and documents other development trends, plans, or needs, that may affect farmland preservation and agricultural development in the county, including trends, plans, or needs related to population and economic growth, housing, transportation, utilities, communications, business development, community facilities and services, energy, waste management, municipal expansion, and environmental preservation. (See Section C – Development Trends, Plans or Needs References)
3. Identifies, describes, and documents all of the following:
    a. Agricultural uses of land in the county at the time that the farmland preservation plan is adopted, including key agricultural specialties, if any.
    b. Key agricultural resources, including available land, soil, and water resources.
    c. Key infrastructure for agriculture, including key processing, storage, transportation, and supply facilities.
    d. Significant trends in the county related to agricultural land use, agricultural production, enterprises related to agriculture, and the conversion of agricultural lands to other uses.
    e. Anticipated changes in the nature, scope, location, and focus of agricultural production, processing, supply, and distribution.
    f. Actions that the county will take to preserve farmland and promote agricultural development.
    g. Key land use issues related to preserving farmland and promoting agricultural development, and plans for addressing those issues.
    h. Policies, goals, strategies, and proposed actions to increase housing density in areas other than farmland preservation areas.
4. Designation of farmland preservation areas that:
    a. Clearly identify areas the county plans to preserve for agricultural use or agriculture-related uses (these may include undeveloped natural resource and open space areas but may not include any area that is planned for nonagricultural development within 15 years after the date on which the plan is adopted).
    b. Describes the rationale used to identify the farmland preservation areas and explains how the rationale was used to map plan areas.
    c. Includes maps that clearly delineates the farmland preservation areas

d. Clearly correlates the maps with plan text to describe the type of land uses planned for each farmland preservation area on a map.
e. Identifies programs and other actions that the county and local governments within the county may use to preserve the farmland preservation areas.

5. If the county has a comprehensive plan, the County must include the farmland preservation plan in its comprehensive plan and shall ensure the two plans are consistent.

The certification application also notes that the county may incorporate information contained in other parts of the comprehensive plan into the farmland preservation plan by reference. This Plan Chapter, when considering the references to other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, meet all the above requirements for the Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan.

B. Farmland Preservation History in Chippewa County

Chippewa County adopted the current *Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan* in October 2015. This comprehensive plan, and this chapter in particular, serves as an update to the County's 2015 farmland preservation plan. Sections 6.4 and 6.5 of this chapter identifies other pertinent agricultural-related plans programs for Chippewa County, including:

- Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan, July 2010
- Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Plan, June 2024
- Local Town Comprehensive Plans

As noted previously, three Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs) are located within Chippewa County. The County nor any town have adopted farmland preservation zoning.

C. Development Trends, Plans or Needs - References

As noted above, DATCP requires a Farmland Preservation Plan to identify, describe, and document a variety of development trends, plans or needs, that may affect farmland preservation and agricultural development in the County. These trends are largely detailed in other Chapters throughout this Plan; specific chapters to these items are referenced below.

Table 6-9. Development Trends, Plans or Needs – Chapter Reference Table

Required Farmland Preservation Plan Topic Area	Chapter Reference in this Comprehensive Plan
Population	Chapter 2 – County Context
Economic Growth	Chapter 9 – Economic Development
Housing	Chapter 3 – Housing
Transportation	Chapter 4 – Transportation
Utilities	Chapter 5 – Utilities & Community Facilities
Communications	Chapter 5 – Utilities & Community Facilities
Business Development	Chapter 9 – Economic Development
Community Facilities and Services	Chapter 5 – Utilities & Community Facilities
Energy	Chapter 5 – Utilities & Community Facilities
Waste Management	Chapter 5 – Utilities & Community Facilities

Municipal Expansion	Chapter 10 – Intergovernmental Cooperation
Environmental Preservation	Chapter 7 – Natural Resources
Town Farmland Preservation Area Maps	Appendix 4

D. County Farmland Preservation Areas

As detailed under Section A above, DATCP requires that a farmland preservation plan: a) designate farmland preservation areas that clearly identify areas the County plans to preserve for agricultural uses or agriculture-related uses, b) describes the rationale used to identify these areas and how the rationale was used to map plan areas, c) include maps that clearly delineate the farmland preservation areas, and d) correlates the maps with plan text to describe the type of land uses planned for each area on the map.

Farmland Preservation Mapping Rationale

The County reviewed the criteria used in the 2015 Farmland Preservation Plan, which was a result of extensive participation and consultation with the towns. After review, it was determined that the criteria used in the 2015 Plan continue to relevant and are generally solid criteria in which to base this plan update. Below is the mapping criteria used to identify the farmland preservation areas for Chippewa County:

1. Remove any parcel located within the municipal boundaries of an incorporated city or village.
2. Remove any parcel that is within a platted subdivision.
3. Remove any parcel that is public land owned by a government entity.
4. Remove any parcel that has an Assessor's Code that has 50% of the parcel area assessed as either residential or commercial or manufacturing, or combination thereof.
5. Remove any parcel that is less than 5.0 acres that is not assessed as agricultural.
6. For parcels under County or Town Zoning, remove any parcel that is not zoned agricultural or conservancy.
7. Remove any parcel that is identified on the Chippewa County Future Land Use Map (see Map X) that is mapped as manufacturing, industrial, commercial, or residential.

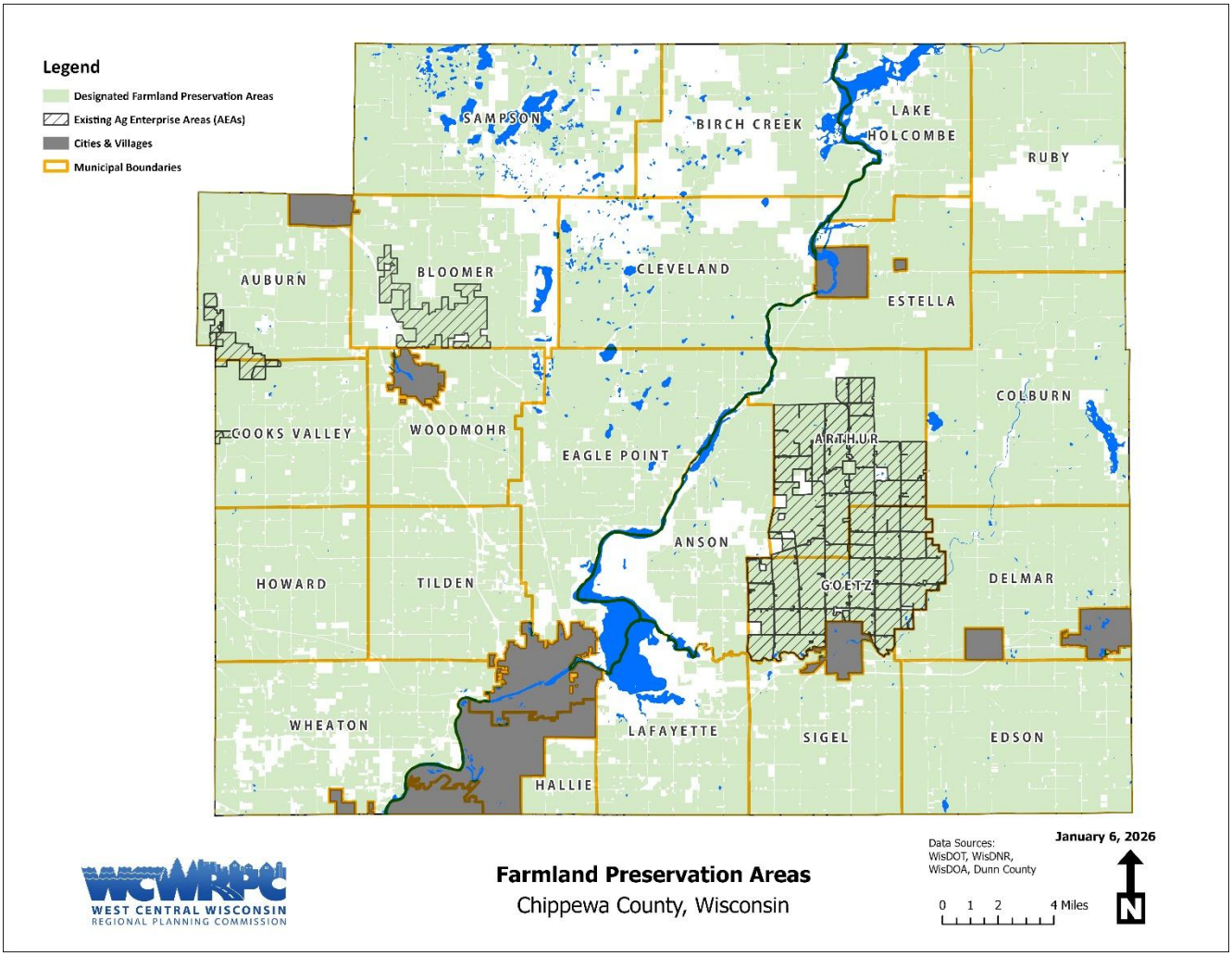
The resulting map coverage representing the collective sum of steps 1-7 above equals the base Farmland Preservation Area. This base Farmland Preservation Area was then adjusted to account for the existing Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA's), that have been established under WI Stats., Chapter 91:

1. Adjustment: Add back in **all** parcels that are included in the Cadott, Bloomer, and Dunn County/Cooks Valley AEA's that may have been eliminated under the 'cuts' 1-7 above. This will serve to maintain the integrity of the AEA maps that have been adopted.

Farmland Preservation Areas

Figure 6-11 shows the designated farmland preservation areas that are a result of the mapping methodology above. These are areas for which farming, forestry, and associated open spaces are desirable, and are planned primarily for agricultural use or agriculture-related activities.

Figure 6-11. Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Areas



Planned Land Uses for Farmland Preservation Areas

The Chippewa County Future Land Use Map (Figure 11.5) within Section 11.2 identifies the preferred future land uses within the unincorporated towns of Chippewa County. The Future Land Use Map was developed using a "bottom-up" approach based on the comprehensive plans of individual towns when available. As such, the future land use (FLU) classifications vary among the town maps. Most of the farmland preservation areas in Figure 6-11 are compatible with the planned land uses shown on the County FLU map:

- 8 towns lacked a comprehensive plan, so the majority of these towns, excluding County Forest and WDNR lands) are designated as "rural living" for which agriculture, forest, and open space are planned.
- For the remaining towns, the predominant, planned land uses for each town support agriculture, forest, and open space, using category names such as Rural Preservation, Agriculture, Ag & Forest Production,

Woods/Conservancy, Forest, and Production Agriculture. Uniquely, the predominant planned use in the Town of Cooks Valley is "Remains as Current Land Use"; agriculture is currently the predominant use in the Town.

A comparison of Figures 6-11 and 11.5 also reflects a high level of consistency for those areas that are not included as farmland preservation areas, much notably the County Forest & WDNR lands, existing or anticipated growth areas, rural hamlets, and cities and villages.

6.9 Agricultural Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

For the purposes of Farmland Preservation Planning, the following goal, objectives, and policies are the farmland preservation goals under Wis. Stats. § 91.

Agricultural Resources Goal

Protect and promote a strong, viable agricultural community in Chippewa County by encouraging the preservation of productive farmlands and forests, maintaining healthy soils and waters, and supporting efforts that strengthen the local agricultural economy.

Objective 1: Retain healthy soils and promote conservation practices.

Maintain or restore the capacity of the land to support productive forests and agricultural working lands to sustain food, fiber, and renewable energy production in a manner that protects the physical condition, biodiversity, ecology, and environmental functions of the landscape.

Objective 1 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Chippewa County government's efforts supporting this objective will be guided by the goals and objectives described within the *Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Management Plan*.
2. Continue to partner with farmers, farmland owners, forestry/logging businesses, agri-business, lake groups, and other support partners (e.g., WDNR, Extension, NRCS, FSA) to promote soil health best management practices and other land conservation initiatives that benefit farmers, water quality, healthy forests, and the environment. Soil quality should be managed to maintain the land's capacity to support sustained production.
3. Reclaim and revegetate surface mined lands and brownfields, reestablish native plant communities, or return to a productive agricultural use if feasible.



4. Increased education, planning, and public awareness are important given increasing extreme weather trends, long-term weather patterns, the spread of invasive species, and pollinator population declines.

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

Objective 1 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Through collaboration and engagement of the entire agricultural community, continue to implement and support the soil health and conservation strategies within the *Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Management Plan*. (ongoing) The following are some related strategies under this Plan:
   - Measure and monitor soil quality using soil organic matter, carbon content, moisture holding capacity, fertility, and current erosion rates.
   - Continued groundwater and surface water testing, modeling, and protections as summarized in the Natural Resources element strategies.
   - Identify and preserve working lands and limit their fragmentation, which has been incorporated into other policies and strategies of this comprehensive plan.
   - Provide ongoing agronomic and conservation technical support to assist landowners and producers to adopt and install agricultural best management practices to meet and exceed State agricultural performance standards.
   - To meet State and county program requirements for cost sharing, farmland preservation tax credits, etc., conduct NR 151 farm evaluations and provide technical services to all new and existing program participants. Conduct annual reporting and certification process to verify landowner compliance.

   To advance this strategy, the County will continue to work cooperatively with individual landowners, local municipalities, State and federal agencies, and nonprofit conservation organizations.
2. Continue to incentivize best management practices and increase awareness of the related economic benefits (e.g., lower input costs, less time on the tractor). Prioritize compliance with nutrient management planning, conversion of crop fields to pasture, and grassed waters/filter strips. (ongoing)
3. Provide model agricultural conservation rental agreements to farmland owners and educate on terms and conditions that are beneficial to the landowner and renter. Educate farmland owners on the importance of retaining fence lines as habitat and to help reduce runoff and erosion. (short-range)
4. Support Producer-Led Watershed groups to promote soil health best management practices and the resiliency of the agricultural economy. (short-to-medium range)
5. Collaborate with WDNR and forestry professionals to educate landowners on woodlot/forestry best management practices and Managed Forest Law tax credits. Encourage strong consideration of invasives, forestry BMPs, and pollinator habitat as part of forest management planning. (medium-range)

Objective 2: Preserve productive agricultural lands.

Engage in community-driven planning that guides growth in a manner that encourages the preservation of productive farmlands, discourages the fragmentation of working lands, accommodates responsible growth, and directs housing development away from farmland preservation areas.

Objective 2 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. The Agricultural Resources element of the County's Comprehensive Plan will continue to serve as the *Chippewa County Farmland Preservation Plan* and will be maintained to allow eligible landowners to pursue farmland preservation tax credits.

2. Agriculture in Chippewa County includes growing crops and forage; raising and pasturing livestock; forestry, logging, and silviculture; and other farming activities that produce agricultural products. Agri-tourism, agricultural businesses, food processing, and other activities that provide additional economic opportunities or support for farmers are likely compatible with agricultural zoning as long as they are carefully planned and they do not conflict with the overall farmland preservation objective.
3. Identify and preserve designated blocks of working lands in a voluntary program in cooperation with private landowners, which will help to maintain an adequate landmass to support agricultural and forestry operations that are production-oriented and that contribute to the County's economy.
5. A Right-to-Farm is recognized, especially in farmland preservation areas. Agricultural operations that follow generally accepted, legal farming practices and were established prior to surrounding non-agricultural development shall not be considered a nuisance due to typical farming byproducts such as noise, odors, dust, or visual impacts.
6. Guide new housing subdivisions and higher density residential development to planned growth areas as designated in community comprehensive plans and away from farmland preservation areas.
7. The level of commitment to the preservation of agricultural lands through zoning, land division ordinances, or other regulatory tools will continue to be primarily determined by the individual communities (towns, cities, and villages) in consultation with their landowners.
8. Implement those policies and strategies found in the Land Use and other chapters of this Comprehensive Plan that support the Agricultural Resources goal and this objective.

Objective 2 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Continue to implement Chippewa County's Right-to-Farm policy as part of the County's Zoning Ordinance. (ongoing)
2. Encourage the consideration of voluntary land conservation agreements developed with interested landowners located within the Farmland Preservation area. Continue to support landowners who are interested in creating, participating in, or expanding Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs). Strive to increase the participation rate in the exiting AEA's. (ongoing)
3. Manage the extent of fragmentation and urban development through the adoption and use of rural density standards and land division ordinances, as established by towns in cooperation with the County. Conduct additional education with towns regarding land division regulations. Strive to avoid minimum lot sizes for new residential development that conflict with farmland preservation and housing affordability goals. (ongoing)
4. Actively work with towns, villages, and cities to acknowledge the County's Farmland Preservation Plan (and its criteria) and to integrate the plan's criteria and recommendations into their respective comprehensive plans and land use decisions. (ongoing)
5. Work with zoned towns to further explore a possible new agricultural zoning district that advances County and local farmland preservation goals, but offers greater flexibility that a State-certified farmland preservation zoning district. (medium-range) As part of these discussions:
    - Explore the possible use of a more flexible minimum density standard rather than a minimum lot size.
    - Consider modifying the title and purpose of the existing agricultural district as a "rural living" district that may not be compatible with more intensive agricultural uses, such as large livestock facilities.

6. Consider the creation of cluster or Conservation Subdivision Regulations at the County and local municipality levels (medium-range).
7. Implement those strategies found in the Land Use element that support farmland preservation and guides future urban development to planned areas. (varies)

Objective 3: Maintain a Strong, Resilient Agricultural Economy

Chippewa County is home to a growing, diversified agricultural ecosystem that spans from on-farm production and support services to processing, distribution, and marketing of local products. The County benefits from a strong concentration of agricultural service and supply businesses that provide essential inputs to producers. Promote farming, forestry, agritourism, and related value-added businesses that complement rural character while supporting the agricultural economy.

Economic Outcomes:

Chippewa County continues to have a strong agricultural economy.

Strive to achieve the goals and objectives found in the Agricultural Resources chapter of this plan.

Economic Benchmarks: The rate at which farms are disappearing is decreased. Number of new farmers. Increased in agricultural value-added businesses and markets. Increased agritourism marketing and local direct sales.

Note: Objective 3 and its policies and strategies are identical to Objective 5 in Chapter 9: Economic Development. For this reason, the formatting of this objective is slightly different than the other objectives in this Chapter.

Objective 3 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Consider Agriculture During Decision-Making**. Farming and agricultural development is a vital part of Chippewa County's economy and the importance of farmers, food production, and forestry must be emphasized in local government decision-making.
2. **Support Sustainable Value-Added Agriculture and Agritourism.** Encourage the development of value-added agricultural enterprises, local processing capacity, and direct-to-consumer markets. Target industries and businesses that enhance Chippewa County's agricultural economy, provided they operate in a manner that protects the natural environment.
3. **Allow Farm-Based Businesses.** Agricultural-related businesses that do not result in land use conflicts or negatively impact natural resources should generally be allowed within agricultural zoning districts.
4. **Provide Resources and Technical Assistance.** Educational programming that assists existing and future farmers to improve farm profitability and to explore new commodities and markets are very important and must be supported. Offer training, guidance, and technical support to farmers and small businesses entering value-added markets. Continue to provide farm succession planning resources.
5. **Encourage Entrepreneurship in Agriculture.** Support programs that help producers develop business plans, navigate regulations, and access financing. Promote and support young farmers, local food producers, and buy local programs.
6. **Promote Job Creation and Small Business Growth.** Encourage value-added ventures that generate employment and strengthen the local economy.
7. **Attract Food Processing Enterprises.** Support food processors that add value to local commodities and expand economic opportunities.

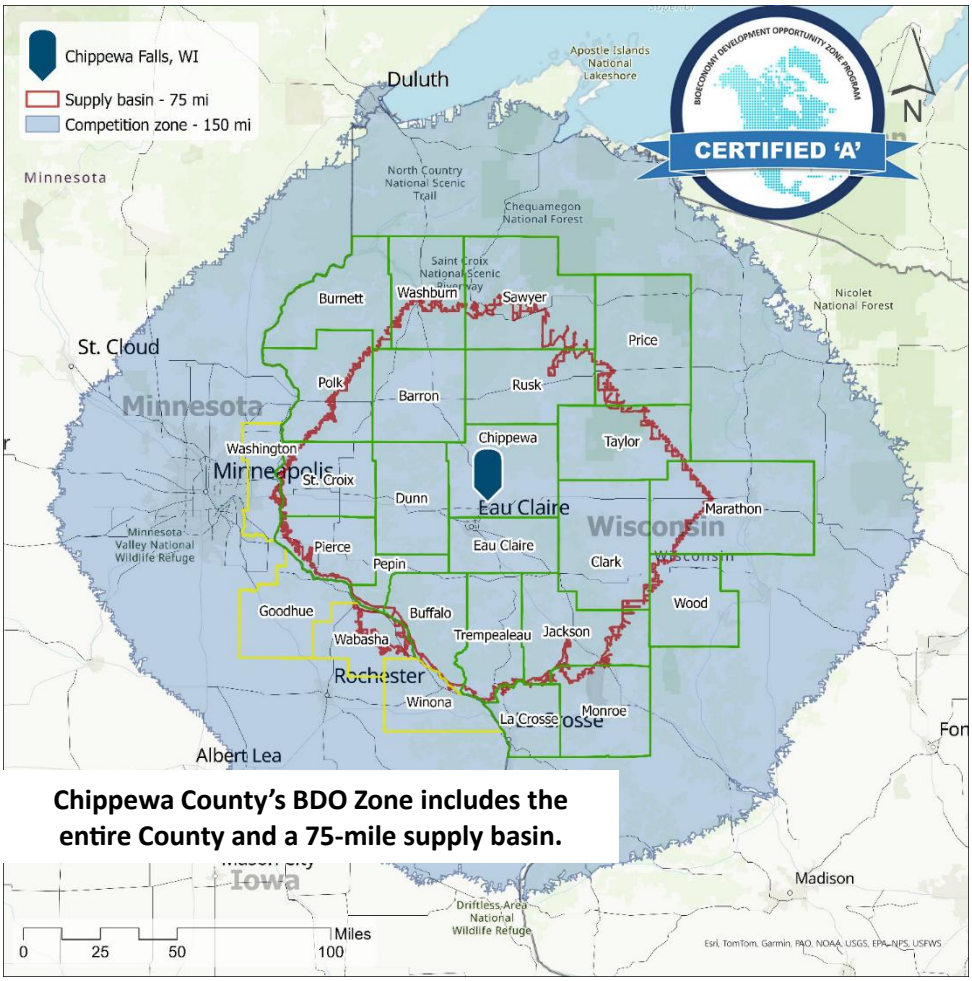
8. **Foster Collaboration Between Producers and Processors.** Encourage partnerships between farmers and processors to expand product lines, improve market reach, and create efficiencies.
9. **Identify and Support Necessary Infrastructure.** Improve and maintain the capacity of the roads and physical infrastructure of Chippewa County. Ensure the safe and efficient transportation of agricultural and forestry equipment and commodities, while using education and enforcement to mitigate road damage and conflicts when necessary. Ensure a strong broadband infrastructure that supports the future of farming, precision agriculture, and our rural communities. Preserve and build upon existing agri-business relationships that currently exist between farm producers, area agricultural processors, and local businesses that service the County's farmers, while encouraging services that will advance the agricultural economy. Recognize infrastructure needs—such as commercial kitchens, shared processing facilities, or cold storage—that enable small producers to scale operations.
10. **Access to Healthy Foods.** Collaborate with area health and social services agency to ensure that all residents have consistent physical and economic access to enough safe, nutritious food for a healthy, active life (food security).

Objective 3 Strategies (recommended actions)

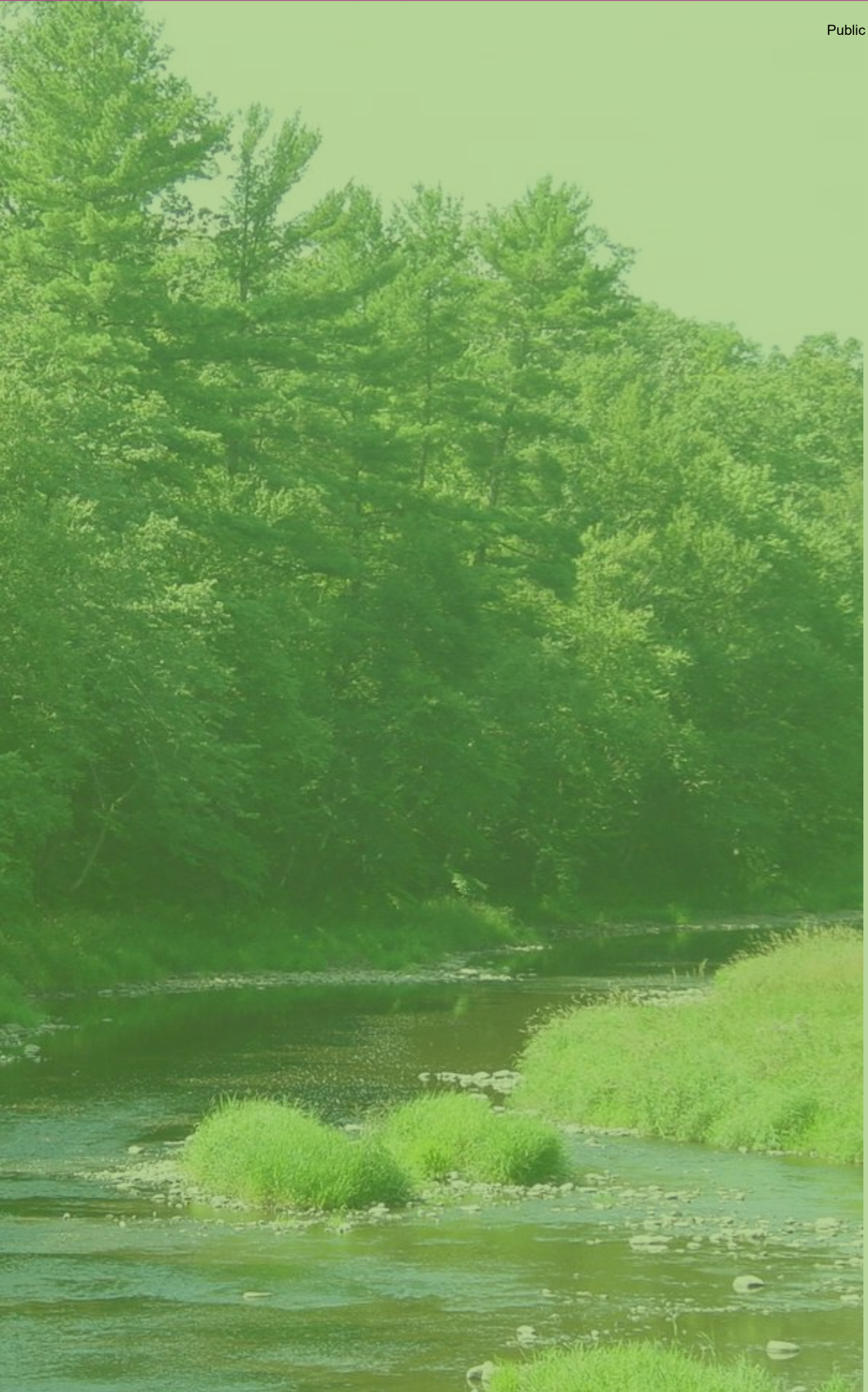
1. **Provide Technical Assistance, Training Programs, and Related Support.**
    - Actively explore and support initiatives that maintain existing family-owned operations and agri-businesses, establish local food-to-table markets, encourage farm-based renewed energy production, and encourage cooperative development and business ventures. (ongoing)
    - Collaborate with Extension and the Chippewa County Ag Educators Group to offer educational programming focusing on succession planning and overall farm profitability, including exploring new commodities and markets for agricultural products. (short-range, ongoing)
    - Support workshops, mentoring, and technical guidance for farmers and small business owners to help them navigate regulations, access financing, and scale production within Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) zones. (short-to-medium range)
2. **Promote Entrepreneurship Programs.** Facilitate programs that assist agricultural and forestry entrepreneurs with business planning, marketing, and regulatory compliance, ensuring alignment with County economic development goals. (ongoing)
3. **Leverage BDO Zones for Agribusiness Development.** Encourage value-added agriculture, forestry, and agritourism businesses to locate within Chippewa County's designated BDO zone to take advantage of infrastructure, utilities, and zoning incentives. (ongoing)
4. **Provide and Maintain Roadways for Agriculture.** Support road improvement and capital improvement planning by the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (at WCWRPC), the County Highway Department, and local units of government to improve and maintain roads and highways that provide safe, connectivity for agricultural purposes. Continue to work with local farmers and loggers to increase compliance with spring road bans as well as to secure ARIP and other grant funding to make needed improvements to support the agricultural economy. (ongoing)
5. **Engage State & Federal Officials.** Support efforts of area farmers to actively educate State & Federal elected representatives on the implications of policy on farm costs and challenges. Encourage more funding and options to incentivize farming, best management practices, and farmland preservation. (ongoing)

6. Agricultural Resources & FPP

6. **Foster Collaboration Between Producers and Processors.** Encourage partnerships between farmers, foresters, and processing facilities to diversify product lines, increase efficiency, expand market reach, and support a resilient, growing agricultural economy. (short-to-medium range)
7. **Attract and Support Food Processing and Value-Added Facilities.** Recruit and retain food processors, forestry product processors, and value-added agribusinesses in BDO zones to expand local commodity markets and support small producers. (medium-range)
8. **Develop Supporting Infrastructure.** Identify and invest in critical infrastructure in BDO zones—such as shared commercial kitchens, processing facilities, cold storage, and distribution hubs—to enable small producers and foresters to grow and scale. (medium-to-long range)
9. **Explore Emerging Technologies.** Develop and implement pilot project(s) to evaluate emerging technology that can be applied to optimize inputs, limit environmental concerns, and sustain crop production (irrigated and non-irrigated). (medium-to-long range)
10. **Support Public Education on Farming.** Pursue grant funding to conduct an educational initiative that increases public awareness of the importance of agriculture and the challenges facing farmers. Increase awareness of where food comes from and opportunities to buy locally produced agricultural products. Collaborate with schools and FFA groups to encourage high schoolers to consider conservation and farming careers. (medium-to-long range)



Chippewa County's BDO Zone includes the entire County and a 75-mile supply basin.



7. NATURAL RESOURCES

Chapter 7. Natural Resources

Key Natural Resource Issues & Opportunities:

- The natural resources, forests, and surface waters of Chippewa County support wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation/tourism, and quality of life. The County has a variety of public natural areas including the County Forest, one State Natural Wildlife Area, eleven State Natural Areas, and three State Parks.
- The 2024 *Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council Report to the Legislature* estimated that 13.5% of private wells in Chippewa County are over the 10 ppm nitrate standard. There is strong support for groundwater monitoring and protection among residents, and the County and many communities have wellhead protection ordinances in place to minimize the risk of contamination.
- The County has 125 stream miles and 454 acres of surface waters that are exceptional or outstanding, though many lakes and rivers are also impaired; the County is working with lake groups, landowners, and other partners to reduce sediment loads and nutrient loading from non-point sources and to promote best management practices that promote infiltration and manage runoff. Farmland conservation efforts (discussed in Chapter 6) are critical to maintaining healthy waters.
- While the "boom years" of sand mining appear to be in the past, continued reclamation and access to quarries for road and building construction are important.
- Aquatic and invasive species and plant/animal diseases are a growing concern.
- There are many partners and programs available to help achieve the goals and objectives of this chapter.

This chapter largely builds upon the *Chippewa County Land & Water Resources Management Plan* (LWRM Plan) last updated and approved by DATCP in June 2024. The LWRM Plan is the central guiding document for County Land Conservation & Forest Management programming. It was not the intent of this element to duplicate or supplant the 240-page LWRM Plan, which provides an in-depth evaluation of, and work plan for, the County's land and water resources. Rather, this chapter summarizes key findings from the LWRM Plan and incorporates priority policy and strategy recommendations. Please refer to the LWRM Plan for additional details regarding County conservation challenges, performance measures, and activities.

7.1 Existing Conditions

Chippewa County's natural resources are an important component of the County's environmental health, economy, and quality of life. The County's landscape is defined by a diverse mix of rivers and streams, lakes and wetlands, forests, agricultural lands (detailed in Chapter 6 – Agricultural Resources), groundwater resources, and wildlife habitat. These resources support working lands, outdoor recreation, tourism, and ecological functions that benefit residents and visitors of the County. This section documents the existing natural resource conditions within Chippewa County. Understanding these conditions provides the basis for identifying resource protection priorities, assessing development constraints, and informing policies and strategies that balance growth with conservation.

7. Natural Resources

A. Geology & Topography

Geology[17]

Chippewa County is divided between two Wisconsin geomorphic provinces. The Northern Highland is an ancient peneplain of complexly folded and faulted igneous and metamorphic rocks of Precambrian Age. The Central Plain is a mixed landscape of Upper Cambrian age. It overlaps the Precambrian rocks to the north and west. The bedrock is mostly sandstone but includes some siltstone and shale.

The main mineral resources in the County are outwash deposits of sand and gravel. The other mineral resources are peat, glacial clay, and crushed Precambrian Igneous or metamorphic rocks, such as traprock and quartzite. Some Upper Cambrian sandstone can be used locally for road fill. Metallic sulfides, particularly copper and iron, are disseminated in the Precambrian rocks. Bodies of ore could be in the rocks.

The surface geology of Chippewa County is primarily the result of glacial deposition over bedrock. The modern landscape was most strongly influenced by the glaciers that invaded the County from the West about 12,000 years ago. Since the last period of glacial activity, the landscape has been further sculpted by naturally occurring and man-induced erosion and drainage activity.

Soils[18]

There are 666,464 acres of soil in Chippewa County, or about 1,041 square miles. Approximately 63 percent of that soil is being used as farmland. Of that farmland, there are 4,477.31 acres of Class I soil, 241,393.98 acres of Class II soil, 150,548.13 acres of Class III soil, and 245,341.19 acres of Class IV-VIII soil. According to the soil survey completed by the USDA, Class I soil produces the highest yield, and Class IV-VIII soils are considered unsuitable for agricultural uses.

Topography

The topography of Chippewa County has two distinct areas. A well-defined recessional moraine extends southeast from New Auburn, in the northwest corner of the County, to Jim Falls on the Chippewa River. From Jim Falls, glacial deposits extend further southeast to Cadott, providing evidence of earlier glacial advances. Surface features of the moraines are characterized by hummocky topography, closed surface depressions, and numerous kettle hole lakes, bogs, and wetlands.

A gently rolling till plain, drained by the Fisher River and Yellow River watersheds, extends north and east of Cadott to the borders of Clark, Taylor, and Rusk County. Drainage patterns in these watersheds are poorly defined and reflect glacial processes. Many perched and groundwater contact wetlands are found in closed surface depressions and along drainage ways.

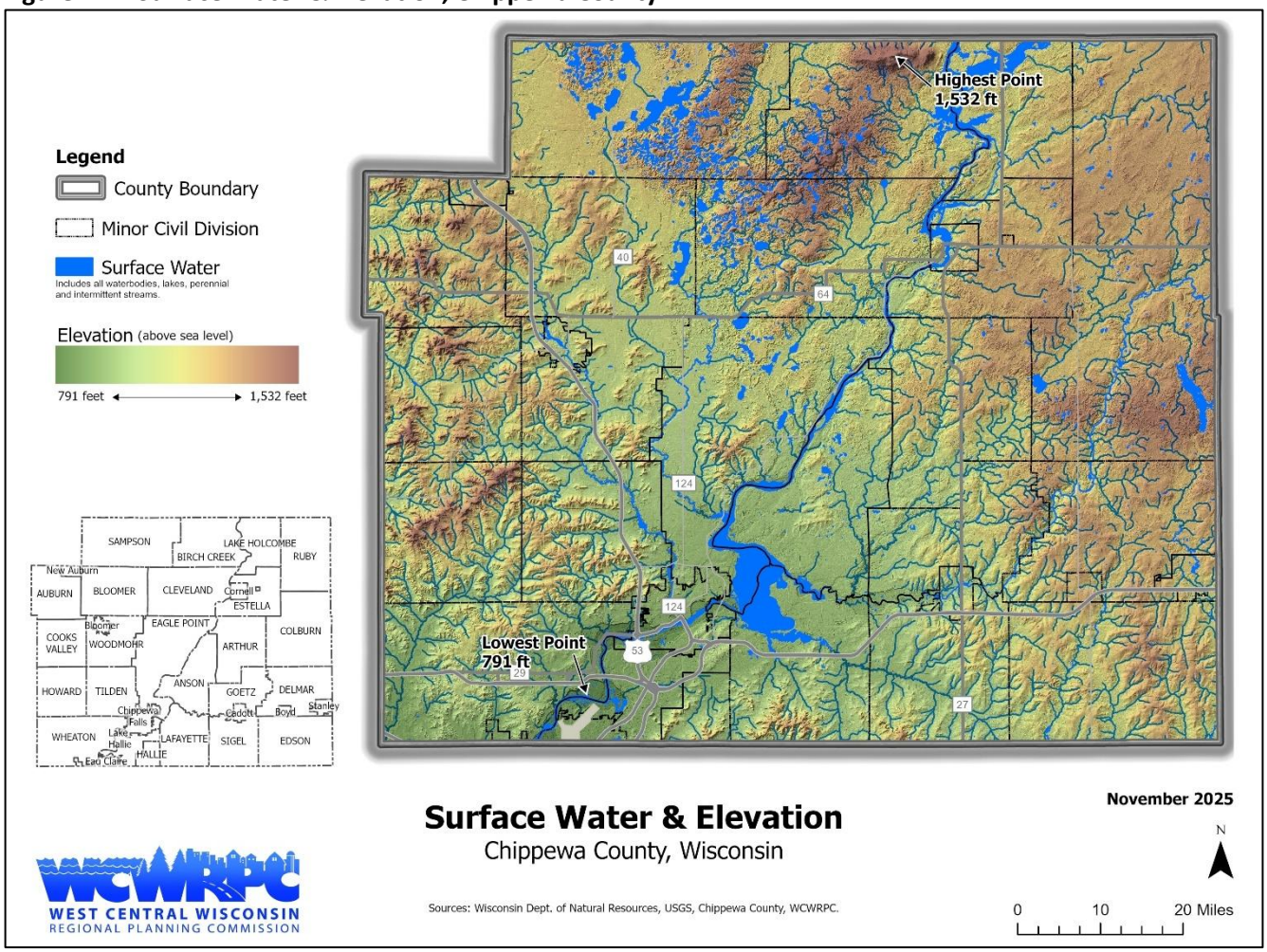
A broad, nearly level, outwash plain extends south from the recessional moraine to the Chippewa River. The area is drained by subbasins of the Duncan Creek, Fisher River, and Lower Yellow River watersheds. Drainage patterns are very poorly defined. Outwash deposits may extend 100 feet below the land surface and are underlain by Cambrian sandstone and Precambrian Granite.

Steeply rolling sandstone upland abuts the central outwash plain and extends west to the Dunn County border. The area is drained by Red Cedar, Muddy Creek, and Duncan Creek Watersheds. Drainage patterns are very well defined, with channelized intermittent streams often extending to the upper reaches of the landscape. As

[17] Bedrock geology information largely from: Brown, B.A. *Bedrock Geology of Wisconsin, West-Central Sheet*. 1988.
[18] Soils information largely from: U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service. *Chippewa County Soil Survey*.

shown on Figure 7-1, the elevation in the County ranges from a low point of 791 feet to a high point of 1,532 feet above sea level.

Figure 7-1. Surface Water & Elevation, Chippewa County



As can be seen in Figure 7-1, the north central part of Chippewa County is comprised of many glacial sediments formed by historic glacial activity. These underlying materials shape the County's soil, water resources, and landscape and contribute to the variations in land use and environmental conditions across the region.

Steep Slopes

*For delineating environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) in this plan, a **steep slope** is a contiguous area of natural or un-engineered slope that is 20% or greater.*

WDNR considers slopes of 12% to 20% to be steep and should not be encroached upon without erosion controls and/or other best practices, while the intensive land disturbance of slopes of 20% or greater should be avoided.

The *Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urban Sewer Service Area Plan* (SSA Plan) further defines steep slope ESAs as natural or un-engineered slope of 20% or greater that is at least 2,000 square feet total in size. Given that the goal of the SSA Plan is to protect water quality, it further divides steep slope into two classes with additional policy protections for Class A slopes:

> Class A Steep Slope ESA – A Class A steep slope is a contiguous area of steep slope ESA, including lands within 20 feet from the top and bottom of the steep slope, that are partially or wholly located within any of the aforementioned ESAs (e.g., surface waters, floodplains, wetlands); in such a case, the entire, contiguous area of steep slope ESA and its 20-foot buffer become part of the Class A steep slope ESA.
>
> Class B Steep Slope ESA - Any steep slope ESA not a Class A steep slope is a Class B steep slope. The 20-foot buffer area from the top and bottom of slope will be used in determining the class of the steep slopes, but a 20-foot buffer area does not become part of a Class B steep slope ESA.

Figure 7-8 later in this section maps the 20+% slopes in Chippewa County.

Metallic & Non-Metallic Mineral Resources

There are no metallic mining operations in Chippewa County. Chippewa County does have several non-metallic mining sites permitted under Chapter NR 135 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. With the closure of most silica sand bedrock mines, the remaining sites are primarily for the extraction of sand and gravel for use in road construction, concrete mix, and construction fill. Figure 7-2 shows the location of permitted non-metallic mines within the County meeting State NR-135 Reclamation Standards.

The Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department currently administers the Chippewa County Non-metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance under County Chapter 30, Environment. Ordinance standards address reclamation, surface water and wetland protection, groundwater protection, topsoil management, grading and slopes, maintenance, and a variety of other issues. Current and future mining or non-metallic mineral extraction operations must consult this ordinance for applicability.

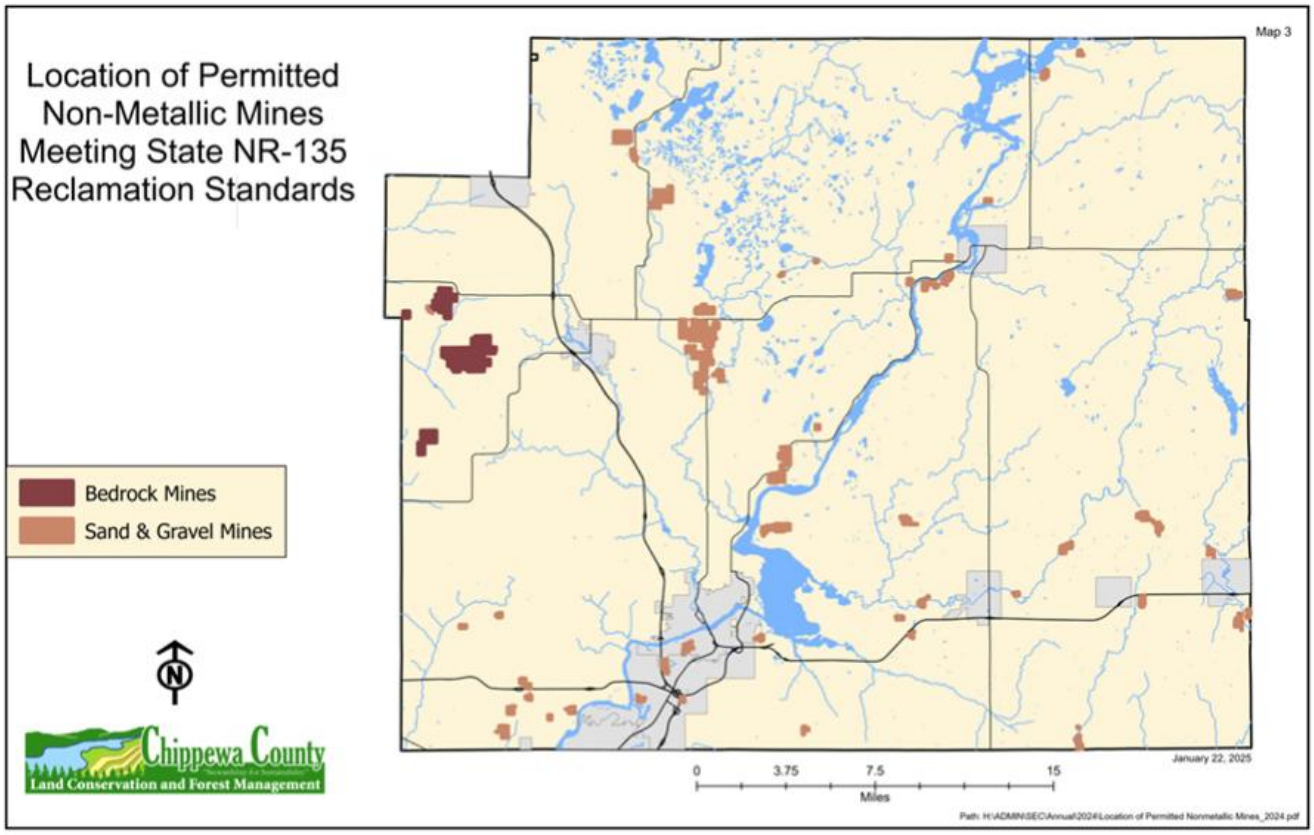
In 2022, the County developed a resource document, *A Guide to Developing Reclamation Plans for Nonmetallic Mining Sites in Chippewa County, WI*, to assist nonmetallic mine operators to develop reclamation plans for nonmetallic mining sites in the County, so that these plans would meet the requirements of NR 135. This State Administrative Code requires uniform reclamation standards in an effort to assure stable and productive post-mining conditions are achieved at all active nonmetallic mines in the State.

While Chippewa County was a center of activity for frac sand mining in the 2010s, the demand has dropped significantly and most of the silica sand operations have closed as a result. During the planning process, communities stressed the importance of enforcing reclamation requirements. These closed sites provide an opportunity. As noted in Chapter 6, the County is a Biofuel Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone, a designation that signals it is ready for bio-based manufacturing, and reclaimed sites may be available for farming high-starch grasses that can be used in ethanol production.



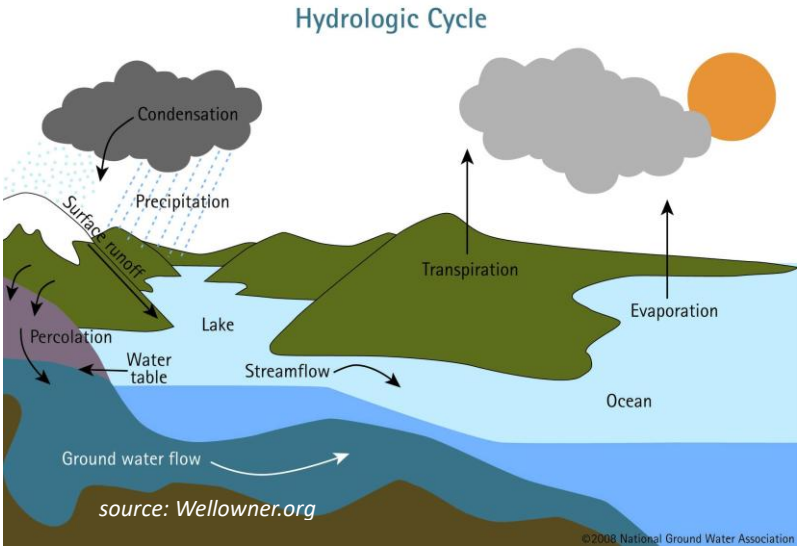
source: Wisconsin Public Radio News with credit to Steve Karnowski

Figure 7-2. Non-Metallic Mining in Chippewa County



B. Groundwater

Similar to surrounding counties, the source of nearly all potable water is groundwater. However, surface water can be a major source of groundwater recharge, and in the case of Chippewa County, a major factor in maintaining the County's natural and recreational values.



Groundwater is a limited resource, and both its quality and quantity are important factors. These factors are primarily influenced by local geology and local land use. Precipitation percolates through the soil and bedrock where it eventually reaches a saturated zoned known as an aquifer. It is from these aquifers that private wells are used to draw water. As noted in Appendix 2, the majority of rural residents (those within the unincorporated Towns) obtain their water through private wells.

7. Natural Resources

Groundwater Quantity

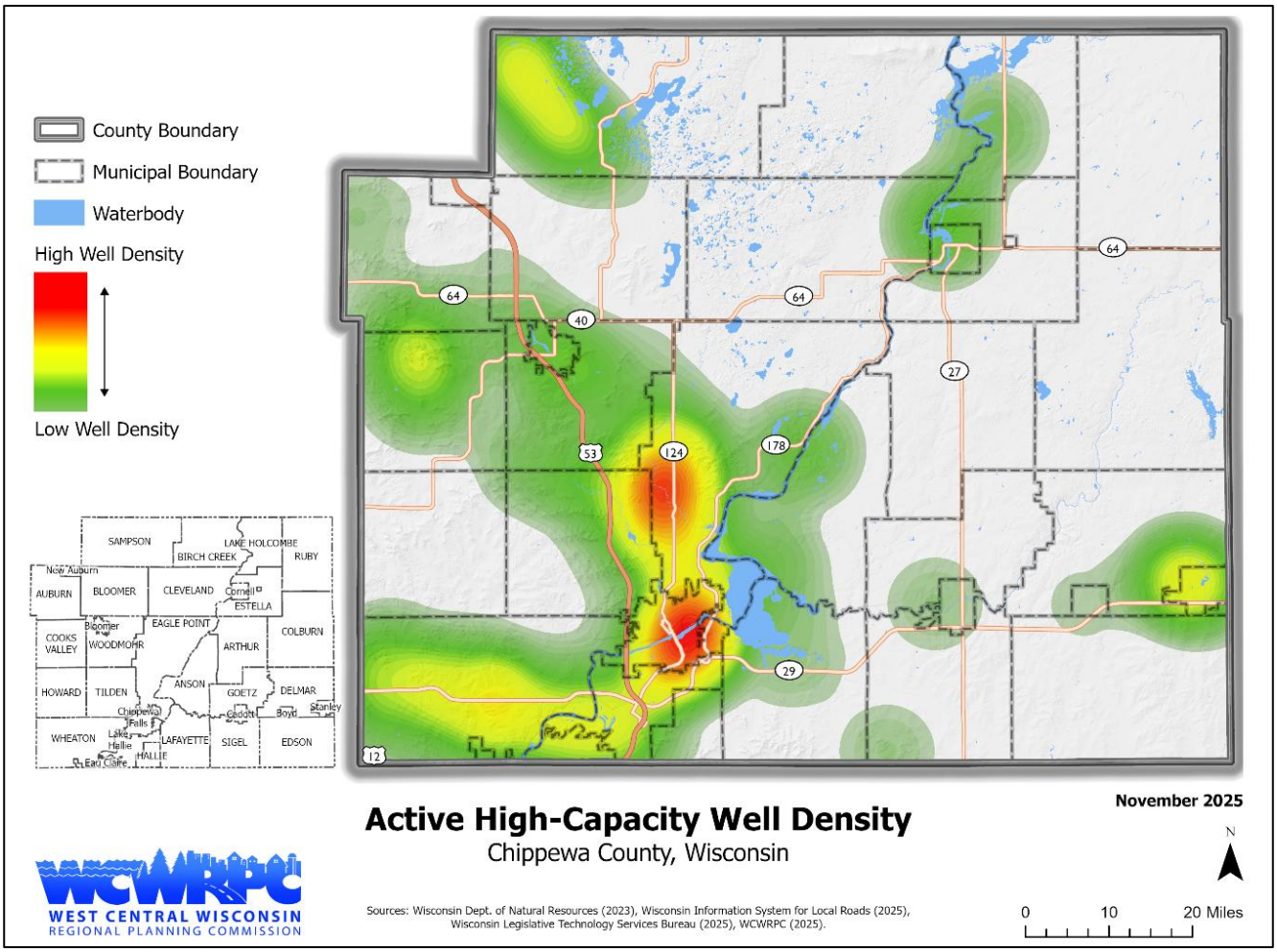
Groundwater in Chippewa County is generally abundant. However, the availability of groundwater at any specific location depends on the depth and permeability of aquifers, the hydrogeologic conditions of glacial and bedrock deposits, and the intensity of water use. Groundwater pumping, such as that for municipal wells or industrial and agricultural irrigation, can lower water levels in aquifers, and in certain conditions can reduce groundwater availability. As of 2024, there were 245 active, permitted high-capacity wells in Chippewa County; 37.6% were associated with agricultural irrigation while 15.5% were used for public utilities. Per the Wisconsin DNR's *2024 Water Withdrawal Report*[19], Chippewa County was the 15th highest groundwater user in the State.

What is a High-Capacity Well?

The Wisconsin DNR defines a high-capacity well as any well, or combination of wells on the same property, with the capacity to withdraw more than 100,000 gallons of water per day. It excludes residential and fire protection wells. WDNR approval is required for the construction and operation of these wells due to potential impacts on groundwater resources.

Figure 7-3 shows the general distribution and density of high-capacity wells within the County.

Figure 7-3. Active High-Capacity Wells, Chippewa County



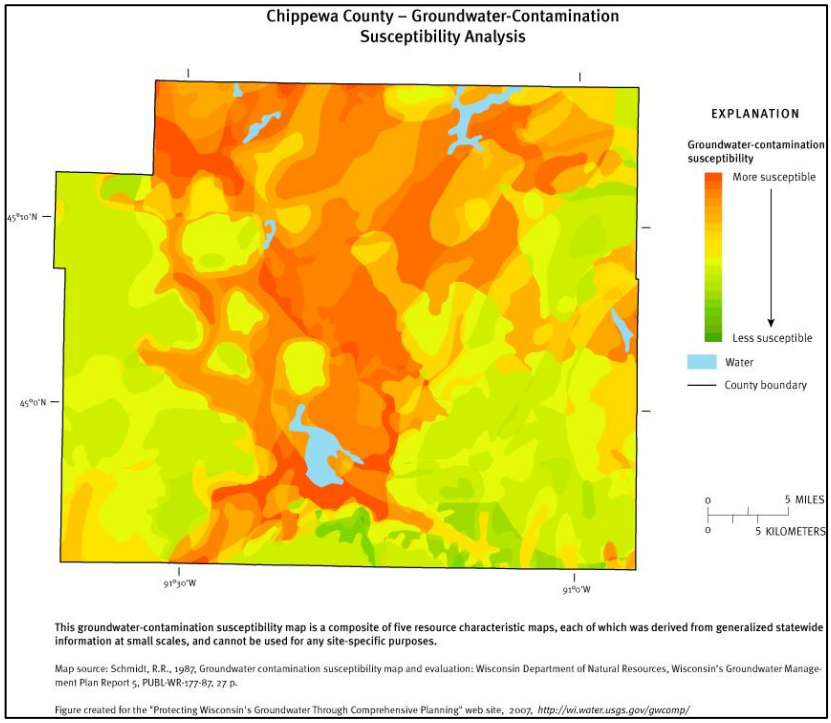
[19] Wisconsin DNR. *2024 Water Withdrawal Report.* https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/sites/default/files/topic/WaterUse/WithdrawalReport/2024.pdf

While groundwater quantity was not identified as a concern in the County, there could be groundwater supply challenges in local communities with municipal water systems should one or more additional large water user be proposed.

Groundwater Quality

Groundwater **quality** is a greater concern than quantity in Chippewa County. Groundwater contamination is most likely to occur where fractured bedrock is near the ground surface, or where only a thin layer of soil separates the ground surface from the water table. Figure 7-4 shows the contamination risk for groundwater in Chippewa County. The susceptibility varies due to the presence of permeable glacial deposits, sandy soils, shallow depth to groundwater in some areas, and extensive reliance on private wells. Areas with these conditions, particularly in outwash plains and along river and stream corridors, are more susceptible to contamination from surface activities such as agricultural practices, on-site wastewater treatment systems, and land development.

Figure 7-4. Groundwater Contamination Susceptibility Analysis



Some Potential Sources of Groundwater Contamination

- Chemical storage
- Landspreading of animal, sewage, and industrial waste
- Road salt usage and storage
- Animal feedlots
- Use and spillage of fertilizers and pesticides
- Accidental spills
- Septic tanks and drainfields
- Underground storage tanks
- Underground pipelines and sewers
- Landfills
- Mines, pits, and quarries

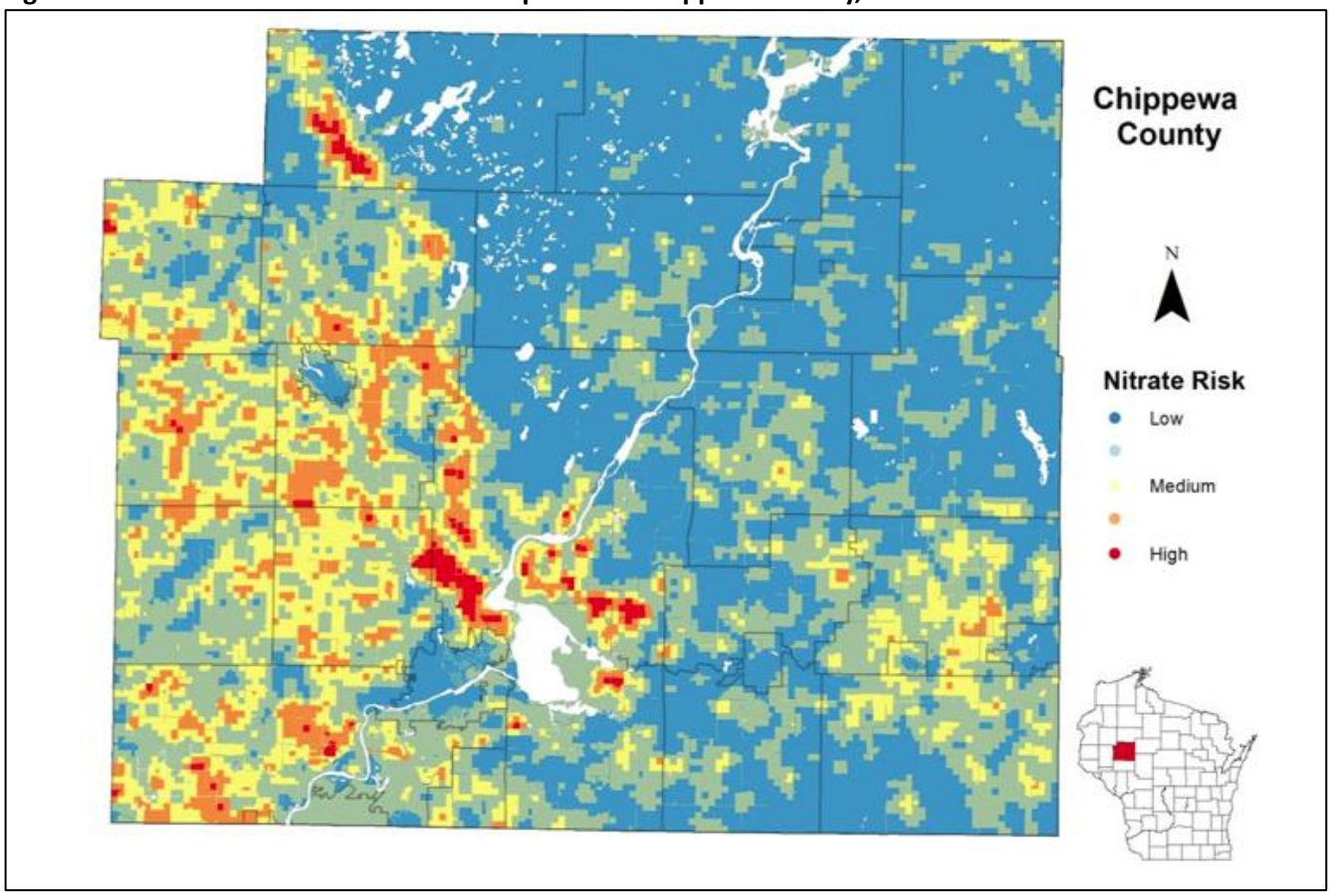
Groundwater contamination is most likely to occur where fractured bedrock is near the ground surface, in sandy soils, or where only a thin layer of soil separates the ground surface from the water table. A 2024 *Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council Report to the Legislature*[20] identifies nitrate contamination as a serious problem in Wisconsin's groundwater. The report estimates that 13.5% of private wells in Chippewa County are over the 10 ppm nitrate standard.

Chippewa County has been a national leader in gathering information on well water quality. Major well water sampling efforts have been conducted in 1985, 2007, and 2016. Since 2019, Chippewa County has been working

[20] *Wisconsin Groundwater Coordinating Council Report to the Legislature*. Fiscal Year 2024. https://widnr.widen.net/view/pdf/c5e61bs1x6/DG_GCC_Report_2024.pdf

with the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point and University of Wisconsin - Madison, Division of Extension to evaluate water quality on a more routine basis. A 2022 groundwater sampling report[21], conducted by UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education, included a nitrate risk assessment of land parcels in Chippewa County. Figure 7-5 shows the nitrate risk for lands within the County as presented within the report.

Figure 7-5. Nitrate risk assessment of land parcels in Chippewa County, 2022



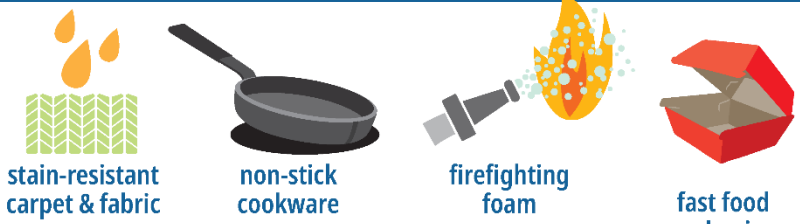
Other noted groundwater concerns during the planning effort include chloride, bacteria (coliform, E. Coli), VOCs from National Presto, Pharmaceuticals, PFAs, septic system maintenance, landspreading, and manure management with increasing livestock herd sizes. In collaboration with UW-Stevens Point, Chippewa County maintains a Well Water Monitoring Project dashboard that is available online to explore well water test results for a variety of pollutants.

During community planning efforts, there has been increasing concern expressed over water contamination threats due to pharmaceuticals and Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). As of Fall 2025, PFAs have not been detected above the WI DHS hazard index in any municipal water systems, except the Eau Claire Well Field (known as the Eau Claire Water Treatment Facility) in the City of Eau Claire is under an open investigation due to PFAs levels. The City of Eau Claire is continuing to provide safe drinking water with half of its groundwater wells in service, and plans have been created to construct a PFAs water treatment facility. An investigation of PFAs contamination at the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in Eau Claire is also ongoing and actionable PFAs levels have been detected at Better Brite Plating in Chippewa Falls.

[21] Masarik, Johnson, Lefebvre, & Nitka. UW Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Excellence. *Chippewa County Nitrate Occurrence and Source Investigation.* 2023.

What are PFAS?

PFAS are a group of human-made chemicals used for decades in numerous products.



Products that **may contain PFAS**.

What is Wisconsin Doing About It?



establishing PFAS health standards for drinking water, groundwater and surface water



soil & water testing



researching fish & wildlife



listening & feedback sessions



state collaboration

Additional efforts include a **PFAS Action Committee** (WisPAC) and a **PFAS Technical Advisory Group.**

Why Should I Care?

PFAS persist in the environment and the human body for long periods of time. Recent findings indicate that exposure to certain PFAS may have harmful health effects in people.



certain types of cancers



thyroid & heart issues



developmental delays



infertility & low birth weight

What You Can Do...



Test Your Water
dnr.wi.gov/u/?q=177



Check State Fish Advisories
dnr.wi.gov/u/?q=176



Learn More About PFAS Health Risks
dnr.wi.gov/u/?q=175

Visit **dnr.wi.gov**, search **PFAS**.

RR-114b-E

Groundwater Recharge & Wellhead Protection

Groundwater recharge areas *are places where precipitation infiltrates the ground and replenishes the water table.* ***Wellhead protection areas*** *are the surface and subsurface areas surrounding a water well or wellfield, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such well or wellfield.* ***Groundwater protection areas*** *encompass both of the above and are source water protection areas for public water supplies.*

Groundwater recharge maintains the quantity of water in an aquifer. The natural process of recharge can be altered by land use and development. Impervious surfaces that prevent precipitation from soaking into the ground, such as buildings and pavement, affect the rate of recharge and quantity of available groundwater.

It is recognized that:

- Recharge and protection areas for wells are important to protecting the drinking water supply. Wellheads and well fields are protected by a mix of State law, local regulations, and local planning (e.g., well setback, wellhead protection planning/zoning).
- The regulation and protection of groundwater recharge and wellhead protection areas are the responsibility of State and local regulatory bodies. Local jurisdictions can have different rules regarding allowable development within wellhead/groundwater protection areas and some areas.



source: City of Sacred Heart MN

One tool used to protect drinking water sources is wellhead protection. The goal of wellhead protection is to prevent potential contaminants from reaching the wells that supply municipal water systems. This is accomplished by monitoring and controlling potential pollution sources within the land area that recharges those wells. Wellhead protection planning is administered by the WDNR as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the 1986 amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Wellhead planning and protection is encouraged for all communities but is required when any new municipal well is proposed, as required by State administrative code for all new public water supply wells constructed after May 1, 1992.

Chippewa County Groundwater Protection Regulations

Chippewa County, through its Planning & Zoning Department, issues permits for, and inspects new, replacement, reconstructed, or rehabilitated private wells in the County, which is enforced through the County's Private Water Systems and Wells regulations. The County also encourages and supports regular sampling of private water systems, conduct follow-up on bacteriologically unsafe water tests, requires upgrading of all noncomplying water systems, and urges the proper abandonment of unused wells.

Reflecting the County's strong commitment to protecting public water supplies, Chippewa County has adopted Countywide wellhead protection regulations, which use an overlay zoning districts to regulate land uses within the 30-day and 5-year zones of contribution (recharge areas) for municipal water supplies as well as requiring

certain separation or setback distances. Further, the County has also adopted regulations officially directing the County Land Conservation Department to establish and maintain the Chippewa County Groundwater Inventory as an information source to be applied and maintained to support soil and water conservation, and groundwater management efforts in Chippewa County.

In addition to these County regulations, local communities within the County have also established their own wellhead protections. Table 7-1 identifies the municipal water system wellhead protection status.

Table 7-1. Municipal Water System Wellhead Protection

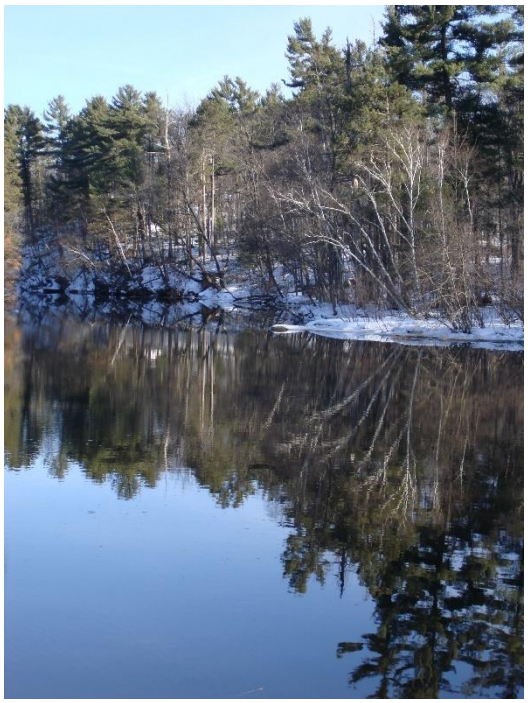
System Name / Owner	Wellhead Protection Plan	Wellhead Protection Ordinance
Bloomer Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Boyd Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Cadott Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Chippewa Falls Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Cornell Waterworks	No	No
Village of Lake Hallie Waterworks	Yes	Yes
New Auburn Waterworks	No	No
Stanely Waterworks	Yes	Yes

source: 2010 Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan, online search of municipal websites

C. Surface Water

Surface Waters and Watersheds

*A **Surface Water** is a natural or artificial named or unnamed lake or naturally flowing stream as defined by NR 103.02, Wisconsin Administrative Code. Surface waters include all springs, stream headwaters, streams, lakes, and waterfalls, regardless of navigability, shown in the WDNR Surface Water Data Viewer.*



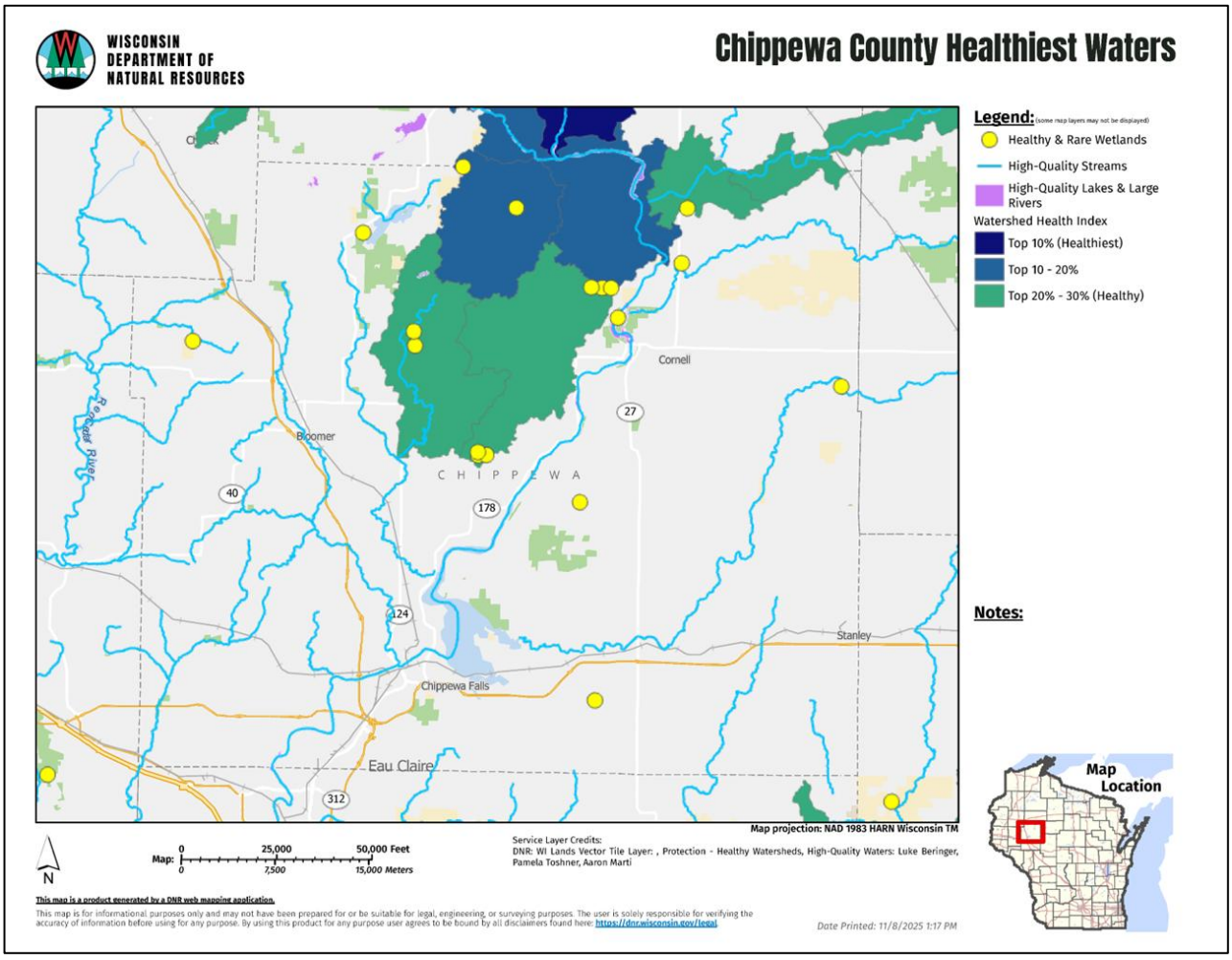
Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, intermittent waterways, and natural drainage ways make up the surface waters of Chippewa County. These resources are all water bodies, standing still or flowing, navigable and intermittent, including natural drainage ways that collect and channel overland rainwater or snowmelt runoff. Natural drainage ways are characterized by intermittent streams, threads, rills, gullies, and dry washes that periodically contribute water to first-order streams. There are also many artificial drainage ways where the natural drainage ways have been altered by human activity. All of these features have the ability to transport sediment and pollutants, and are affected by their watersheds, the land that surrounds them.

7. Natural Resources

Chippewa County lies primarily within the Chippewa River Basin. Major watersheds within or partially within the County include: Chippewa River, Lower Chippewa River, Duncan Creek, Yellow River, Hay River (partial), and Eau Claire River (partial). The Chippewa River and its reservoirs (Lake Wissota, Holcombe Flowage, Cornell Flowage) are the County's most significant surface water features, roughly bisecting the County from north to south. Chippewa County has a total surface water area of 21,037 acres consisting of 19,335 acres of lakes and 1,702 acres of rivers and streams. The County also has 81 miles of trout streams. A number of dams on the Chippewa River maintain reservoirs for hydro-electric power generation. The rivers and lakes of Chippewa County are important recreational resources and have attracted significant shoreland development in many areas. Figure 7-7 shows the County's trout streams and HUC 10-level watersheds or drainage basins.

While great emphasis is often placed on improving polluted waters, it is important to protect healthy waters. Only about 2% of the County's surface waters (454 acres) and 125 stream miles have been designated by WDNR as exceptional or outstanding waters (OERW) that provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat (including trout streams), have good water quality and are not significantly impacted by human activities. In addition, WDNR recently evaluated all surface waters in the State with the goal of identifying the healthiest watersheds and high-quality waters, suggesting that these watersheds and waters should not only be celebrated, but prioritized for protection. Figure 7-6 shows the WDNR-identified healthiest waters in Chippewa County.

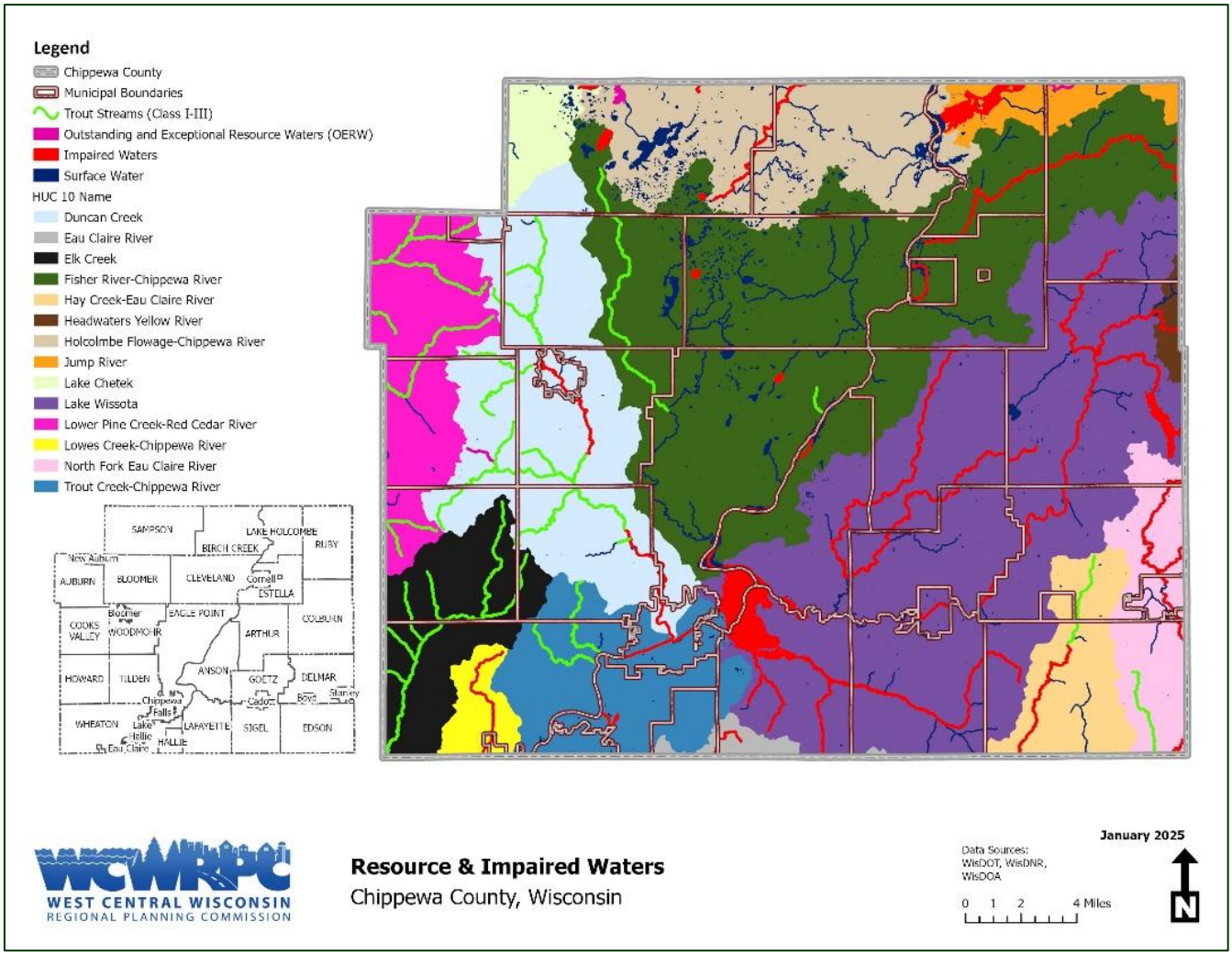
Figure 7-6. High-Quality Watersheds and Waters in Chippewa County



7. Natural Resources

But many surface waters, including various locations on the Chippewa River, have been deemed impaired by WDNR due to pollutant levels (e.g., phosphorus, polychlorobiphenyls, mercury, sedimentation). Impaired waters that do not meet established water quality standards or pollutant limits are added to the 303(d) list as required by Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act. Figure 7-7 shows the impaired waters of Chippewa County as well as the trout and other OERW streams.

Figure 7-7. Resource & Impaired Waters, Chippewa County



The Chippewa River is one of the largest rivers in Wisconsin and bisects the County. The river is generally in good condition; however, within the City of Chippewa Falls, a stretch of the river was 303d listed as impaired in 2002 for fish consumption due to Mercury and PCBs. The Mercury advisory was removed in 2006 and WDNR has proposed to delist for the PCBs based on continued testing. Other rivers listed on the impaired waters list include: Big Drywood Creek, Duncan Creek, Frederick Creek, Hay Creek, Little Drywood Creek, Otter Creek, Paint Creek, Sevenmile Creek, and Stillson Creek. These streams are mainly contaminated with phosphorus.

Duncan Creek, below Lake Como at Bloomer, is a warm-water fishery. The lower segment of Duncan Creek, including the portion within Chippewa Falls, is an impaired water due to high phosphorus levels (i.e., excessive

nutrients). A small dam on Duncan Creek creates the 39-acre Glen Loch Flowage, which is a popular recreational amenity within the community.

Shorelands

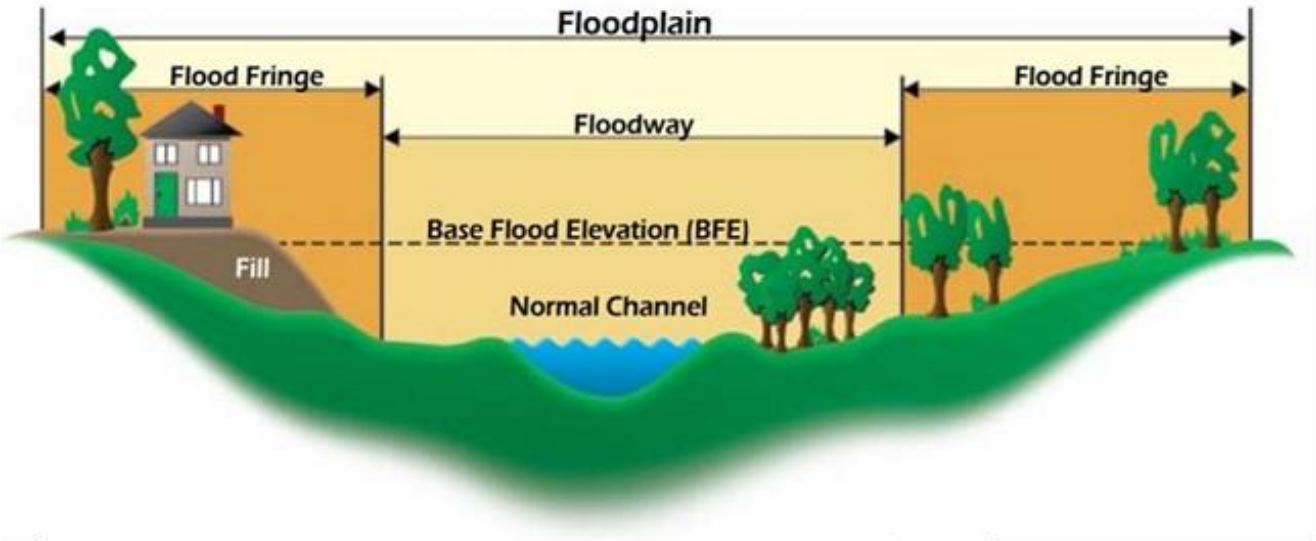
*As required by the State, **shoreland**s are defined as:*

- *all land within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a lake, pond, or flowage; or*
- *all land within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a river or stream or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever is greater*.

Shorelands provide valuable habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals and vegetation, and also act as buffers and thus serve to protect water quality. However, shorelands are also considered prime residential building areas because of their scenic beauty. Recognizing this conflict, and in order to maintain the environmental, recreational, and economical quality of our water resources, the State of Wisconsin requires counties to adopt and enforce a shoreland ordinance. Each County must meet or exceed the minimum State standards for shoreland protection. The identified shoreland areas are based on the standards as defined in the *Chippewa County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance*, which regulates the shorelands in the unincorporated towns.

Floodplains & Flooding

*The 100-Year **floodplain** is area (floodway and flood fringe) that has been or may be covered by flood water during a regional flood event having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year as defined by NR 116.03, Wisconsin Administrative Code.*



Elements of a Floodplain.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

A floodplain is typically an area of relatively flat land on either side of a water body covered by water during a regional (100-year) flood event. It contains layers of sediments deposited by the river or lake during floods and encompasses both the floodway and flood fringe. The floodway is the main channel of the river and the adjoining land, which are required to carry the main flow of a 100-year flood event; intensive land disturbances within the

floodway should be avoided. The flood fringe is that part of the floodplain outside the floodway, which plays a water storage role during a flood event, but water depth and velocity is generally much lower than compared with the floodway; some development may be allowed in the flood fringe if carefully planned and elevated sufficiently above the Base Flood Elevation with dryland access. Floodplains play an important role in filtering stormwater before it reaches surface water and by removing pollutants and debris from inland river waters during a flood event. Floodplains also offer important water storage areas during flood events to help reduce the impacts of flooding downstream.

Figure 7-8 also shows the 100-year floodplains of Chippewa County as identified on the current digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (D-FIRMS). However, there has been great concern over the accuracy of the floodplain boundaries on these D-FIRM maps, especially in rural areas where the boundaries have not been engineered. To address these shortcomings, WDNR has secured FEMA RiskMap grant funding and is currently in the processing of updating the County's D-FRIM maps.

The *Chippewa County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan*, which is currently being updated, assesses the County's flood history and vulnerabilities, as well as evaluates current flood management capacity and includes recommendations to mitigate future flooding. While the County is no longer experiencing the devastating floods of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, localized flooding damage continues to be a concern and development within the 100-year floodplain does exist. Flash flooding and overland flooding events are also a growing concern as development and extreme rain events increase, which can result in flood damage in areas not experiencing flooding in the past.

Wetlands

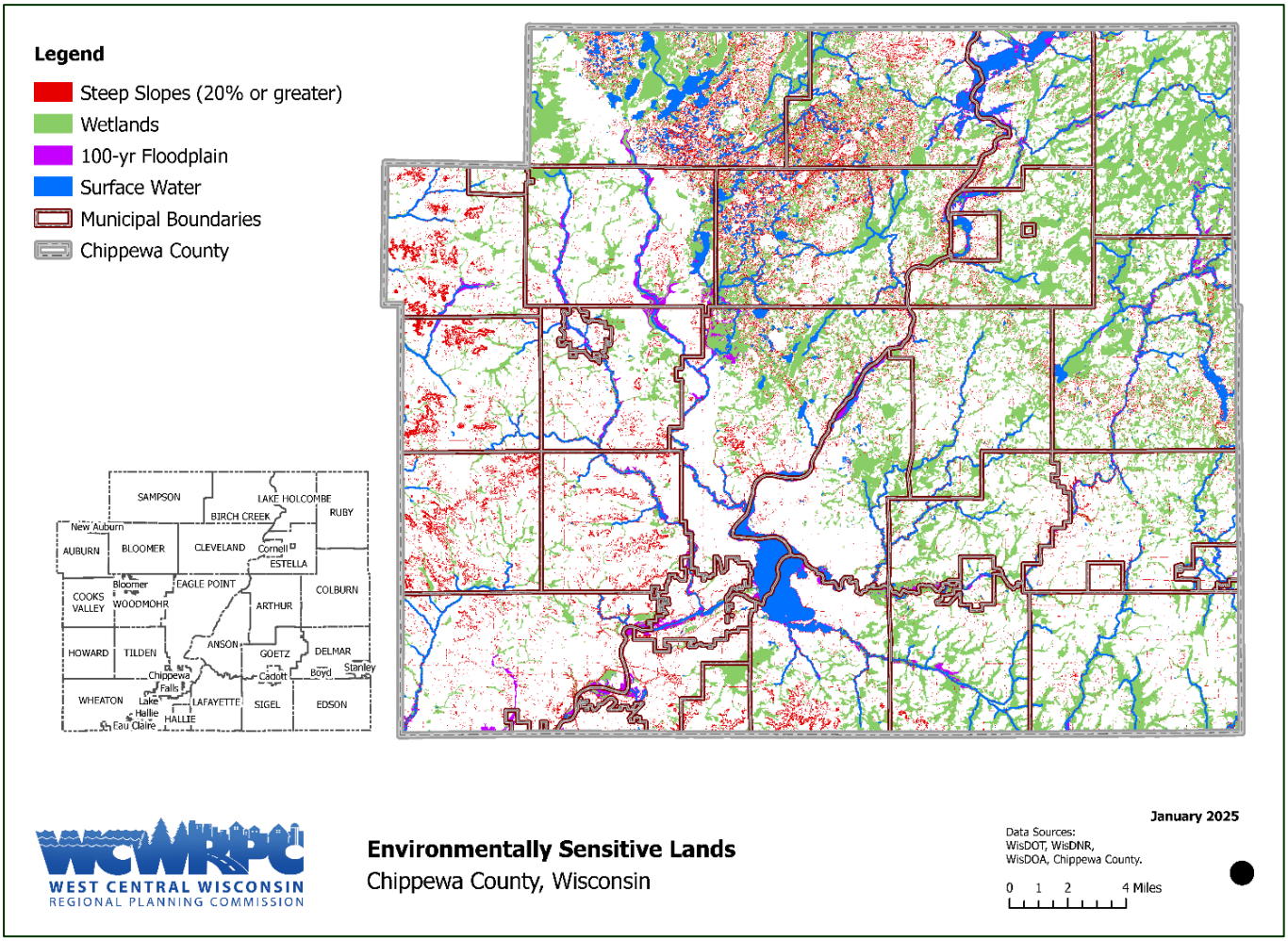
*A **wetland** is any area in which water is at, near, or above the surface long enough to support hydrophytic vegetation or water-loving plants and which has soils indicative of wet conditions as defined by NR 103, Wisconsin Administrative Code.*

Wetlands may be seasonal or permanent and are sometimes referred to as swamps, marshes, or bogs. Wetlands may or may not be mapped as part of the Wisconsin Wetlands Inventory. However, wetland-indicator soils (i.e., potential hydric or poorly drainage soils or areas of high water table) may suggest that a wetland is present and additional site analysis (e.g., wetland delineation) may be recommended.

Wetland areas serve as groundwater recharge zones, as water storage areas during flooding events, and also as a habitat for a variety of plants and animals. Wetlands act like a sieve, filtering out silts before they can enter streams and lakes. Particular attention must be given wetlands within shorelands due to potential surface water impacts from disturbance. Activities such as flooding, draining, ditching, excavating, and building are all regulated in wetlands.

Chippewa County's delineated wetlands are shown on Figure 7-8. Wetlands less than five acres in size are generally not mapped as part of the Wisconsin Wetlands Inventory.

Figure 7-8. Environmentally Sensitive Lands, Chippewa County



D. Climate & Weather

The climate of Chippewa County is classified as mid-latitude continental. Warm, humid summers and cold snowy winters are the main characteristics. Many factors, such as location, topography, vegetation, and water bodies can influence climate, but the following climate data collected at Bloomer offers a general description of the County's climate overall.

In Bloomer, the average monthly temperature ranged from 12.4ºF in January to 70.5ºF in July from 1991-2020. Most precipitation occurs as rain with annual monthly precipitation ranging between 0.94 inches in January to 4.51 inches in June. The average annual snowfall was 41.8 inches, over 86 percent occurring during the months of December through March. Chippewa County is susceptible to a range of natural hazards, including flooding. A description of these hazards, along with historical trends and current risks, are described in the Chippewa County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.

There is clear evidence that Wisconsin's weather patterns are changing regardless of the potential causes, which was a concern expressed by multiple communities and stakeholders during the update of the County's Natural

Hazard Mitigation Plan. To evaluate these changes and explore their impacts on our State, the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) was formed as a collaborative effort of the University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The following are key takeaways from the WICCI 2021 Assessment Report:

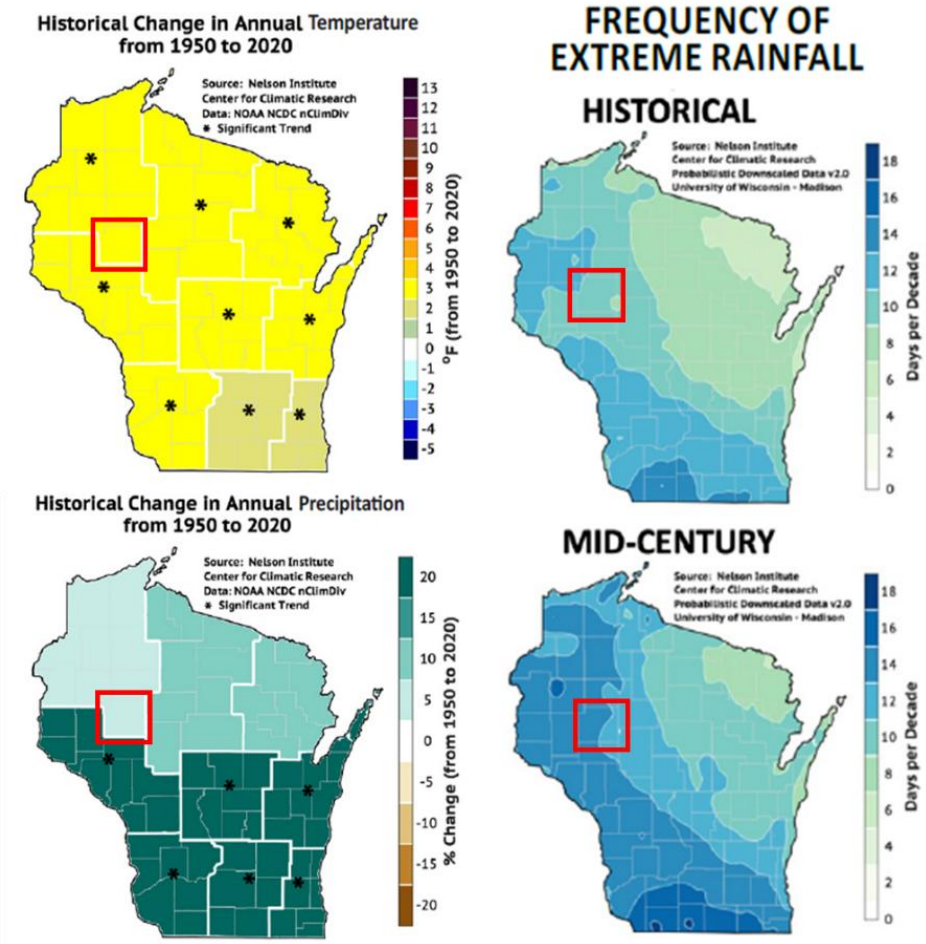
- Wisconsin's average daily temperature has become three degrees Fahrenheit warmer since the 1950's.
- The last two decades have been the warmest on record, and the past decade has been the wettest.
- Wisconsin has become wetter – average precipitation has increased 17 percent (about 5 inches) since 1950.
- Warming is happening fastest in the winter and at night.
- Southern Wisconsin has experienced the highest increase in precipitation.
- Very extreme precipitation events will increase in the future.
- Extreme events are already causing immense impacts across Wisconsin, and the frequency of those events will generally increase.

These findings are consistent with trends for Chippewa County.

Figure 7-9 includes maps from the 2021 Assessment Report indicating State longer-term weather trends for Wisconsin with Chippewa County outlined.

Temperatures and annual precipitation have increased at a rate higher than the State average. As a result, the County must anticipate increased extreme precipitation events annually, as well as greater severity within individual events.

Figure 7-9. Selected Maps from the 2021 WICCI Report



E. Other Natural Resources

Air Quality

Chippewa County has no major air quality issues, though smoke from Canadian wildfires has resulted in air quality health warnings in recent years. Chippewa County is considered an attainment area that meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards as defined in the Clean Air Act.

Forests

Woodlands provide habitat for wildlife, natural resource base for wood-based industries, resources for the agricultural communities, areas for recreational activities, and scenic beauty, as well as a rural character. Without managed development in these areas, woodlands will become fragmented, which will diminish their ability to provide the resources and activities residents are accustomed to.

Forestry and logging in Chippewa County as an agricultural practice was previously described in Section 6.2, including a brief description of the existing forest lands in the County and participation in the Managed Forest Law program. Further, Chapter 6 largely covers forest-related programs, policies, and plan recommendations given that forestry is considered an agricultural practice by State law.

Chapter 6 also notes that assessed forest and ag forest acreage decreased by 17.4% from 2013 to 2023, with a total acreage of 139,098 acres in 2023. There is roughly an additional 56,000 acres in County, State, and Federal forest and open space, including the 34,500-acre Chippewa County Forest.



The Chippewa County Forest is composed of 46 forest management compartments ranging in size from 275 acres to nearly 2,295 acres. Within the County Forest Blocking Boundary, approximately 72 percent of the land is County-owned with most of the remaining 28 percent in private holdings. The County Forest not only provides logging revenues and outdoor recreation, but provides an important ecological function while benefiting surface and groundwater. In fact, approximately 84 named and 235 unnamed lakes have all or portions of their shoreline within the County Forest Blocking Boundary. The *Chippewa County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan* guides the management of the County Forest.

Chippewa County is committed to promoting forest management techniques to benefit wildlife, forest products, recreation, water quality, aesthetics, and the environment. Sustainable forestry practices are encouraged to ensure forests and regeneration that will meet future needs. The County employs economically, environmentally, and socially responsible forestry practices, and encourages private landowners to do the same. The County works extensively with the DNR to protect forests from pests, diseases, wildfire, and other damage.

Recently, there has been an increase in demand for all-terrain vehicles trails through forested land. There is also a potential for conflict when forest lands are being harvested with residential units nearby. Managing these potential land-use conflicts is important to protecting and keeping forest land viable. For more specific

information on Chippewa County Forest land-use and management techniques, see the Chippewa County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2021-2035.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service identifies the following federally-listed Endangered, Threatened, and Proposed species in Chippewa County:

- Gray Wolf – endangered
- Northern Long-Eared Bat – endangered
- Little brown bat – under review
- Karner Blue Butterfly – endangered
- Monarch Butterfly – proposed threatened
- Rusty patched bumble bee - endangered
- Higgins eye (pearlymussel) – endangered
- Sheepnose Mussel – endangered
- Spectaclecase (mussel) – endangered

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) lists species as "endangered" when the continued existence of that species as a viable component of the State's wild animals or wild plants is determined to be in jeopardy on the basis of scientific evidence. "Threatened" species are listed when it appears likely, based on scientific evidence, that the species may become endangered within the foreseeable future. The WDNR also lists species of "special concern" of which some problem of abundance or distribution is suspected but not yet proved; the intent of this classification is to focus attention on certain species before becoming endangered or threatened. The WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) identified 43 total animal species, 17 plant species, and 45 communities or locations within the inventory that are due to rarity or special concern. The following are WDNR-identified endangered or threatened species in Chippewa County:

- Yellow Rail (bird)
- Wood Turtle (turtle)
- Ellipse (mussel)
- Red-shouldered Hawk (bird)
- Blue Sucker (fish)
- Dwarf Milkweed (plant)
- Shore Sedge (plant)
- Little Brown Bat (mammal)
- Cerulean Warbler (bird)
- Big Brown Bat (mammal)
- Upper Sandpiper (Bird)
- Extra-striped Snaketail (dragonfly)
- Loggerhead Shrike (bird)
- Purple Wartyback (mussel)
- Regal Fritillary (butterfly)
- Spectaclecase (mussel)

The WDNR carefully monitors the level of detail provided regarding the locations of threatened and endangered species. Identifying specific locations of species in the County that are threatened or endangered is currently not provided by the WDNR and some sensitive species or locations may not be publicly shared.



Wildlife Habitat and State Natural Areas

Chippewa County contains a network of wildlife habitats and protected natural areas, including State Natural Areas, State Wildlife Areas, County Forest, and State parks that protect wetlands, forests, lakes, rivers, grasslands, and glacial landforms. Together, these areas provide habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species, while also supporting outdoor recreation and tourism.



The Tom Lawin Wildlife Area, a 2,282-acre property located 2 miles southeast of Jim Falls in Central Chippewa County, is the only State Wildlife Area within the County. The property consists of a diverse mixture of grasslands, wetlands, and forested habitat. The site provides prime habitat for waterfowl, pheasants, deer turkey, furbearers, and other grassland-dependent birds. Since the DNR purchased the property in 1991, several acres of wetlands and grasslands have been restored. The State's overall objective is to establish a 4,520-acre wildlife area on the site.

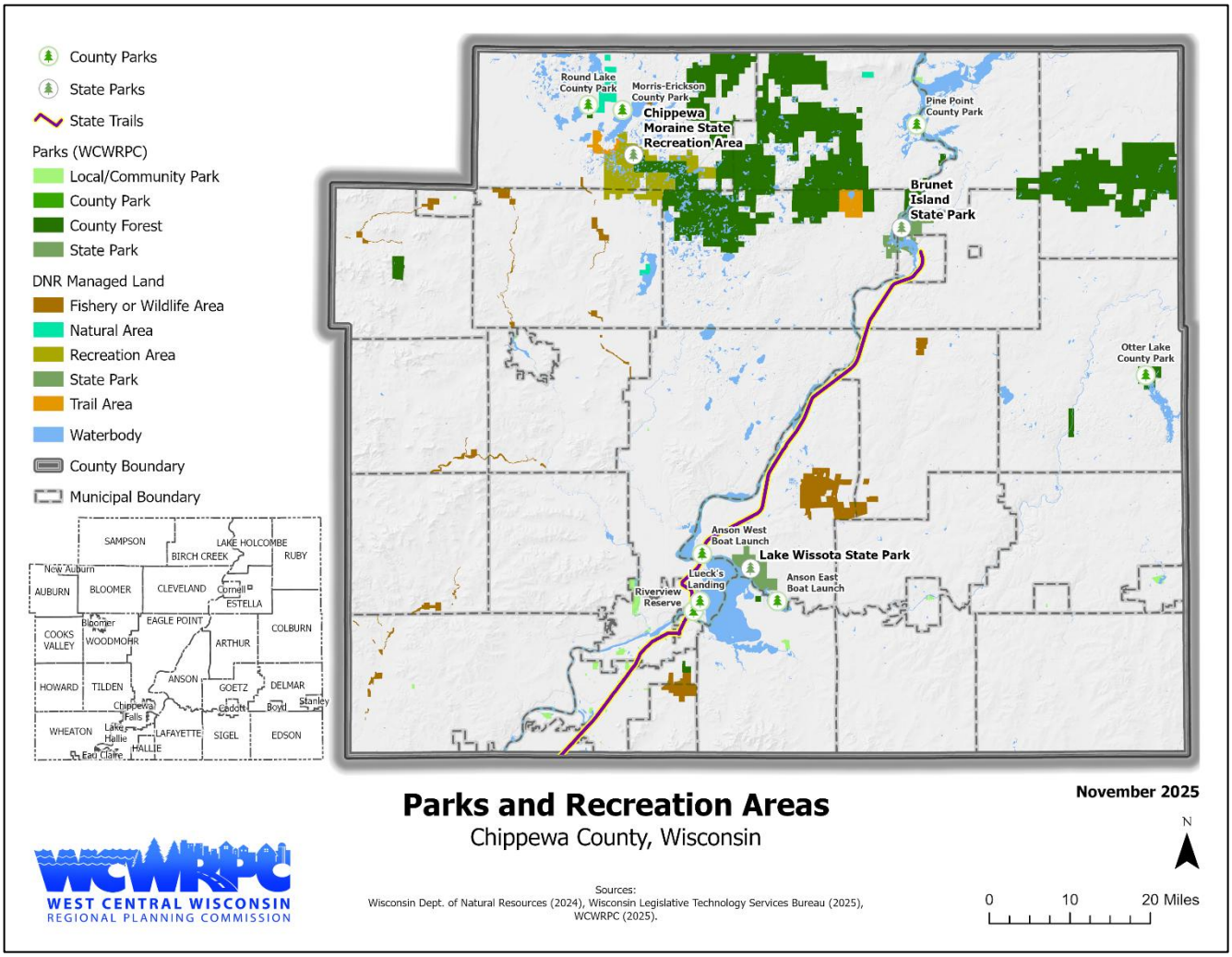
The County's 11 State Natural Areas include:

- **Chippewa Moraine Lakes** – a collection of nine separate natural lake sites in northern Chippewa County with glacial moraine terrain.
- **Deer Fly Swamp** – a high-quality white pine swamp in a perched, shallow depression occupying the headwaters of Fish Pole Lake within the Chippewa County Forest.
- **Dorothy Lake –** a 5.2-acre soft water seepage lake within the Chippewa County Forest.
- **Jean Brunet Woods** – located along the Chippewa and Fisher Rivers within Brunet Island State Park, the Jean Brunet forest features a northern mesic forest approaching old-growth status.
- **Lawin Sedge Meadow –** features an expansive open sedge meadow and is located southeast of Jim Falls and the Chippewa River.
- **Marsh Miller Cedars** – features extensive wetland communities along the west side of Marsh Miller Lake; this natural area is only accessible by water.
- **North of North Shattuck Lake –** located within the Chippewa Morain State Recreation Area, this site offers a southern dry-mesic forest of red and white oaks, red maple, big-tooth aspen, and basswood.
- **Ohmart Wetlands** – this site lies within the Chippewa Moraine glacial landscape and supports an extensive wetland complex or marsh and forested wetlands with scattered upland stands of northern white cedar.
- **Plagge Woods –** this is an old-growth northern mesic forest dominated by sugar maples, basswood, and red and white oak. The forest has a wide range of tree size classes, some more than 30 inches in diameter at breast height.
- **Tealey Creek Cedars** – located in the Chippewa County Forest, this site occupies a low terrace along the lower end of Tealey Creek and supports high value forest of high-quality white cedar-black ash swamps.
- **Town Line Lake and Woods** – located within the Chippewa Moraine State Recreation Areas, this lake and woods feature a large, second-growth block of medium-aged, dry-mesic forest in an areas dotted

with kettle lakes and wetlands. Town Line Lake is a 48-acre soft-water seepage lake with an intermittent outlet to the O'Neil Creek drainage system.

The County is also fortunate to have an expansive County Forest as well as several County and State Park Facilities that provide wildlife habitat and tourism opportunities. While not designated as State Natural Areas, there are three State Parks within the County: Lake Wissota State Park, Brunet Island State Park, and the Chippewa Moraine State Recreation Area. Appendix 2 provides additional details on the park and recreation facilities within the County.

Figure 7-10. Park and Recreation Areas in Chippewa County



Environmental Corridors

An environmental corridor is a linear, continuous feature on the landscape, existing or restored, that is maintained with one or more of the following purposes: (1) provide for high quality wildlife habitat and/or the movement of wildlife; (2) provide greenspace and open space; and (3) protect water quality, sensitive lands, and other areas that require protection from disturbances and development. Such corridors may also serve as recreational links, such as through non-motorized trail systems. Communities throughout the County have

connected areas of open space, although there are none that have been identified as being managed as environmental corridors or for wildlife habitat as a primary goal.

Intergovernmental coordination is extremely important when addressing natural resources. Natural resources cross administrative boundaries and connecting environmental corridors between communities can have very positive ecological benefits. In addition, changes to a natural resource in one location, such as stormwater runoff, groundwater pollution, or air quality, can have a range of impacts in nearby communities.

Invasives Species & Diseases

Most aquatic and terrestrial invasive species are spread due to the introduction and actions of humans, and this threat is growing. Invasive species disrupt natural communities and ecological processes. They can destroy habitat, drive out/kill native species, and be vectors for the introduction of diseases. Over 40 percent of the species on the Federal Threatened or Endangered species lists are at risk primarily because of invasive species. Many invasives lack a native predator, which allows them to aggressively invade, spread, and dominate natural areas and waterways. Furthermore, some invasives can cause health problems, such as Wild Parsnip that burns skin or animal species that spread disease.

Historically, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) have received the greatest attention in Chippewa County due to the many lakes. The following AIS have been documented in the waters of the County: Eurasian Water-Milfoil, Hybrid Water-milfoil, Curly Leaf Pondweed, Knotweed Species, Reed Canary Grass, Yellow Iris, Chinese Mystery Snails, Banded Mystery Snails, Purple Loosestrife, and Rusty Crayfish.

There is growing attention in the region to the terrestrial invasive species threats. Buckthorn is very serious threat to the forests of Chippewa County due to its ability to outcompete native tree growth and form large, dense thickets with little habitat, recreational, or timber value. Japanese Knotweed is another growth threat; its roots have the ability to damage pavement and penetrate building foundations. Wild Parsnip has become widespread along highway corridors, choking out native plants and having the potential to cause serious burns/boils to exposed skin. These are just three of a growing list of such threats, which also includes: Exotic Bush Honeysuckle, Spotted Knapweed, Oriental Bittersweet, Leafy Spurge, Purple Loosestrife, Wild Chervil, and Garlic Mustard. Forest management efforts are commended to help combat the spread and effects of plant invasives and diseases, such as Oak Wilt, Dutch Elm Disease, and Emerald Ash Borer. To date, Chippewa County is not a quarantine county for the Spongy Moth.

Chippewa County has had at least one positive test for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) among the wild deer herd. Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a fatal, infectious nervous system disease that affects the deer family. The Center for Disease Control recommends against consuming venison from CWD-positive animals. While CWD prevalence is much greater in southern Wisconsin, WDNR's 2025 CWD Surveillance Plan identifies Chippewa County as a priority county for additional sampling needed.

Chippewa County Land Conservation partners with Beaver Creek Reserve and lake groups through the Lake Monitoring & Protection Network to AIS through volunteer training, the Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol Program, WDNR Clean Boats, Clean Waters grant funding to support volunteer boat inspectors, and related educational efforts. In addition, Beaver Creek Reserve has also completed point intercept and transect surveys for Lake Wissota, and conducted research for freshwater mussel populations. The Lower Chippewa Invasives Partnership (LCIP)

in collaboration with Beaver Creek Reserve have been working to mitigate terrestrial and aquatic invasive species in the region, though LCIP has been less active in recent years.

7.2 Natural Resources in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared natural resource-related issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for the cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Weaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Summary of Town Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Concern over groundwater and surface water quality
- Broad support for preserving green space and natural areas
- Concerns about development impacts and land use conflicts
- Desire for managing development, recreation, and agricultural practices for the protection of natural resources

Summary of Village & City Comprehensive Plan Issues & Opportunities

- Water Quality Concerns: groundwater, surface water, and growing concerns about PFAS contamination
- Flooding and stormwater management
- Desire to preserve open space and natural areas
- Interest in balancing environmental protection with appropriate use and access
- Natural resources and outdoor recreation as important to quality of life and economic vitality

Summary of Town, Village, & City Goals & Objectives

- Protect and Preserve Natural Resources.
- Protect and Improve Groundwater and Surface Water.
- Guide Growth and Development to Avoid Encroachment on and Impacts to Natural Resource Lands.
- Preserve Prime Farmland and Promote Farming Practices that Protect Water Quality and Environmentally Sensitive Areas.
- Maintain or Improve Air Quality to Protect Public Health and Environmental Quality.
- Protect and Expand Lands that Support Wildlife and Natural Habitats.
- Increase Public Awareness of Natural Resources and Their Importance.
- Leverage Natural Resources, Parks, and Recreation to Support Tourism and Economic Development.

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

- Protect Groundwater and Drinking Water Supplies
- Regulate, Maintain, and Educate on Septic and Wastewater Systems
- Limit Development in Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Improve Stormwater Management and Reduce Runoff
- Promote Agricultural Best Management Practices and Soil Health
- Preserve Natural Resources, Open Space, and Habitat
- Educate Residents and Encourage Stewardship
- Strengthen Intergovernmental Coordination and Partnerships

7.3 Natural Resource Plans & Programs

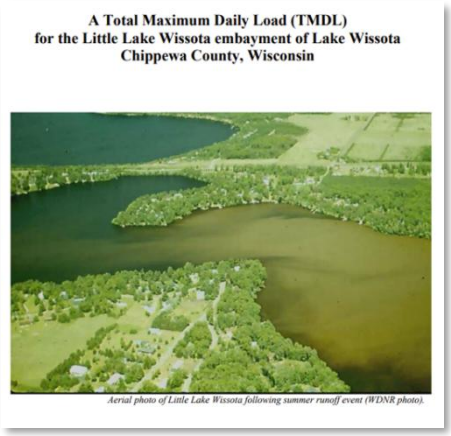
As noted previously, the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department is the lead County entity working to coordinate and support the protection of the County's natural resources under the guidance of the County's *Land & Water Resource Management Plan* and the County *Comprehensive Forest Management Plan*. County Land Conservation collaborates with many partners and utilizes many programs in its efforts. This section highlights some of these though no such list of these partners and programs could be complete. Some of the many partners working hard on conservation efforts in Chippewa County are recognized in the graphic below.



Chippewa County Lake Groups

- Axhandle Lake Association
- Bloomer Community Lake Association
- Island Chain of Lakes Association, Inc.
- Lake Hallie Lake Association
- Lake Holcombe Improvement Association, Inc.
- Lake Wissota Improvement & Protection Association
- Lower Long Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District
- Otter Lake Booster Club, Inc.
- Pine Lake Association
- Round Lake Protection Association, Inc.

7. Natural Resources



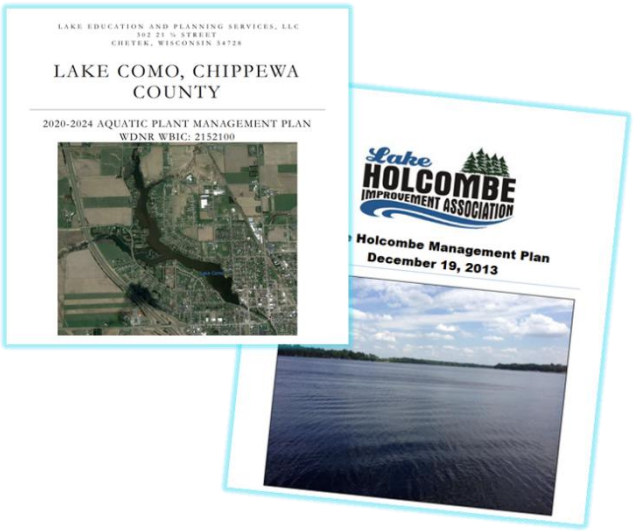
Surface Water Plans

There is one **Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)** limit within Chippewa County for the Little Lake Wissota embayment of Lake Wissota. A TMDL is the calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody so that the waterbody will meet and continue to meet water quality standards for that particular pollutant. A TMDL determines a pollutant reduction target and allocates load reductions necessary to the source(s) of the pollutant. The Little Lake Wissota TMDL Plan, completed in 2010, establishes a Phosphorus limit. Additional data collection and monitoring for a possible TMDL had previously commenced for Otter Lake and Moon Bay of Lake Wissota, but haven't been completed to date.

There are four related **9-Key Element (9KE) Plans** that cover the following watersheds in Chippewa County:

- Lower Yellow & Moon Bay of Lake Wissota
- Little Lake Wissota
- Eau Claire River (9KE Plan update in progress)
- Red Cedar River

9KE Plans are watershed plans based on EPA's planning framework that bring community partners together to address non-point source pollution or runoff. For Chippewa County, phosphorus and soil erosion (sedimentation) are the primary focus of these plans, with a strong emphasis on promoting soil health best management practices among farmers and farmland owners. Having and maintaining a 9KE Plan provides greater opportunity to secure Federal Section 319 dollars for projects recommended in the plan.



Some water bodies in the County also have management plans, typically coordinated and sponsored by lake districts or associations utilizing WDNR surface water grant funding. These plans are created to improve or protect a surface water and its ecosystem as a whole, but may also include recommendations related to the use of that water. Most commonly, a lake management plan is created by a lake group or municipality that meets the guidelines under NR 191.45, which serves as a prerequisite for funding under NR 193. The scope and content of such plans will vary by water body, and may incorporate additional studies and sub-plans (e.g., aquatic invasive species, aquatic plant management plan, shoreland/woody habitat assessment, water quality & macro-invertebrate studies). WDNR grant funding is also used by lake organizations and units of government to implement the water protection and rehabilitation efforts identified in management plans. No single, complete list of such plans currently exists, though creating a regional watershed and lake plan inventory and a surface water informational clearinghouse is a goal of West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC).

Groundwater Plans & Programming



Chippewa County does not have a Countywide groundwater plan, though groundwater protection is a major component of the *Land & Water Resource Management Plan.* As discussed previously, Chippewa County has adopted Countywide wellhead protection regulations and is a State leader in groundwater monitoring through its County Groundwater Inventory Program working in collaboration with UW-Stevens Point. Through the County Conservation Department, groundwater initiatives include:

- Rural Well & Drinking Water Testing, which has had an emphasis on nitrates, but recent testing capacity for bacterial contaminants has recently increased.
- Well Monitoring Data & Groundwater Inventory, including collaborating with UW-Stevens Point to analyze groundwater quality and make data available through a Chippewa County Well Monitoring Dashboard.
- Groundwater Flow Modeling for western Chippewa County
- Educating elected officials and community members on protecting groundwater quality and the importance of regular well testing.
- Water Refill Stations in the towns of Anson, Auburn, Lafayette, and Wheaton are offered due to the elevated nitrate levels, especially in south-western Chippewa County. During the planning process, one town suggested that there may be opportunities to further increase public awareness of these stations.

County Natural Resource & Conservation Regulations

Most of the key County natural resource regulations have been noted previously in this chapter. The following sections of the County Code of Ordinances have strong relationships to natural resources conservation:

- Stormwater Management (Chapter 12)
- County Forest Lands (Chapter 16)
- Environment, including Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation & Wellhead Protection (Chapter 30)
- Floodplain (Chapter 32)
- Environmental Health & Sanitation (Chapter 34-5)
- Land Division (Chapter 38)
- Parks (Chapter 50)
- Shoreland Zoning (Chapter 55)
- Waste Treatment and Disposal and Sanitation (Chapter 62)
- Zoning (Chapter 70)
- Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 80)

Local municipalities have additional regulations and, in some cases, the more restrictive standards may apply.

Chippewa County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

The County's Hazard Mitigation Plan includes those natural hazards of significant risk to Chippewa County, which includes flooding and wildlife. More information on this plan is included in the Utilities & Community Facilities Chapter given its relationship to emergency Management.

7. Natural Resources



State, County, & Community Outdoor Recreation Plans

Chippewa County's natural beauty, forests, waters, flora/fauna, and natural public lands support many outdoor recreational opportunities and the tourism economy.

Outdoor recreation plans are pre-requisites for WDNR grant funding to acquire conservation lands and to improve outdoor recreational facilities. More information on these plans can be found in the Utilities & Community Facilities Chapter of this plan.

Sewer Service Area Planning & Environmentally Sensitive Areas

As part of the urban area, part of southwestern Chippewa County is under the *Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urban Sewer Service Area Plan* (SSA Plan), which is currently being updated. The SSA Plan is a water quality plan driven by Section 208 of the Federal Clean Water Act and NR 110 & NR 121 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. The SSA Plan is used by local, State, & Federal agencies when considering municipal wastewater facility plans, permitting for sewer extensions (208 reviews), and certain, related grant applications. As a water quality plan, the SSA Plan emphasizes the protection of certain environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) that are carefully defined within the plan:

- Surface waters
- Wetlands
- 100-year floodplains, especially the floodway
- 20+% steep slopes, especially near surface waters

Municipal sanitary sewer cannot be extended to an area unless it is located within the SSA boundary identified in the SSA Plan. The SSA boundary is the area presently served and anticipated (or likely) to be served by municipal sanitary sewer by the end of the SSA Plan's 20-year planning horizon. The current SSA boundary delineates areas with a potential for future sewered development by 2025, but does not determine or guarantee that these lands will be developed, sewered, or annexed. The current boundary is nearly 18 years old and a much needed update to the existing SSA Plan is underway. Chippewa County Land & Water Conservation Department has been participating in this plan update process.

To help protect water quality, intensive land disturbances for proposed sewered growth should not occur until conformance with the SSA Plan has been determined by WDNR or the SSA Plan is amended. **Further, no intensive land disturbances within the sewer service area boundary, regardless if sewered, should encroach upon these ESAs as defined within the SSA Plan without a SSA Plan amendment, subject to the plan's policies.** While WDNR has ultimate decision-making authority over the SSA Plan, the plan is locally administered by West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) with the Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Council serving as a water quality advisory committee to the WDNR.

Appendix 5 includes some additional natural resources grant programs that may be important in achieving the goals and objectives of this chapter.

7.4 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the natural resource-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025 along with city and village respondents:

- 2 of 11 Towns identified "groundwater quality/nitrates" as one of the top 3 priority challenges to address in the Plan. Also a desire to collaborate with Towns to encourage well testing.
- 1 of 11 Towns identified "surface water quality" as one of the top 3 priority challenges to address.
- One Town specifically suggested that the County should "encourage the incorporation of development practices that are designed to protect open space, minimize soil disturbance, protect existing trees, manage stormwater, and have development blend in with the environment. Consider the use of conservation subdivisions where possible to preserve natural areas and agricultural land."
- Some Towns are concerned over the impact that additional development has on surface water quality.
- Maintaining groundwater protection/quality is of critical importance to many of the cities and villages. Some communities, specifically the City of Eau Claire, noted that is working to address issues with PFAS.
- Communities with dams closely monitor the risk of dam failure which would cause significant flooding.
- One urban community identified a natural resource challenge as "WDNR wetlands being unusable for development or expensive restrictions for recreational purposes."

B. Natural Resources – Water Focus Group

Natural Resources-Water Focus Group participants included:

- Lake Wissota Association
- Chippewa Valley Ruffed Grouse Society
- Chippewa County Land Conservancy
- UW-Madison Extension – Natural Resources
- Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Department
- Chippewa County Highway Department
- Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department
- Mathy Construction
- Wisconsin Dept of Natural Resources
- UW-Madison Extension Groundwater

Comments from the Focus Group have largely been integrated throughout this chapter, including the goal, objectives, policies, and strategies. Highlights from this discussion include:

- While nitrates in groundwater is a top priority, there are other groundwater threats. The County now has access to a laboratory for easier well testing for bacteria.
- Continued compliance with private septic system (POWTS) and holding tank pumping must be a priority in light of increasing costs; more landowner education on groundwater threats from POWTS is needed. No large concentrations of failing POWTS known, but some older systems on smaller lots. Increasing landspreading, including from industrial and full POWTS sources, but land availability for landspreading is decreasing. Who is tracking and monitoring landspreading?

7. Natural Resources

- Continue to monitor and work with Rain to Rivers to address chloride levels in groundwater and surface waters due to road salt.
- "Kudos" to Chippewa County for its groundwater programming and wellhead protection ordinance. An option to explore is expanding the wellhead ordinance to all public/community wells, not just municipal wells. Could also requiring drinking water test results as part of land division ordinance; Portage County has something similar.
- The Lake Wissota Stewardship Project is a great model of private-public-nonprofit partnering to address water quality.
- The Lake Wissota Association just completed an extensive aquatic study of the Lake. The good news was that no new invasive aquatic plants were found. The bad news is that there were fewer native plant sites in the Lake.
- Beaver Creek Reserve is a great partner in addressing AIS challenges.
- Encourage private efforts to protect wetlands. Concerns expressed over the amount of unauthorized activities occurring in wetlands.
- Encourage open space, forests, and managed pasture. Promote more grazing; Sauk County hired a grazing specialist to assist with grazing plans.
- Strive to minimize impervious surface to decrease runoff and replenish groundwater.
- Some counties are creating separate groundwater plans. Set goals to keep a percentage of watershed in open space or high infiltration uses.
- Chippewa County's groundwater may be targeted in the future for water bottling, data centers, etc. Are adequate policies and procedures in place?
- Air quality is generally good. Dark sky practices should be encouraged.
- Encourage forest management for habitat, such as Ruffed Grouse.
- Growing concerns with aquatic and terrestrial invasive species.
- Sand and gravel is needed for roads and construction. It is important to maintain local sources. Identify locations of good quality gravel and explore ways to protect it for the future. Encourage municipalities to include construction sand/gravel as a resource.
- Encourage more pollinator habitat planting, including on public lands excluding road rights of way.



7.5 Natural Resources Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

The Natural Resources goal and objectives, as well as many of the policies and strategies, were adapted from the *Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Management Plan*, which was updated in 2024. This ensures a high degree of coordination and consistency between these plans. Given the overlapping relationships between the objectives (e.g., one policy or strategy can address multiple objectives), the policies and strategies are not organized by objective.

Natural Resources Goal

Protect, restore, and responsibly manage Chippewa County's land, water, and natural resources to maintain ecological health, support agricultural and forestry productivity, and ensure a clean and resilient environment for future generations.

Objective 1. Sustain Productive and Healthy Landscapes.

Maintain the ecological function, biodiversity, and productive capacity of the landscape through good soil health, supporting agricultural and forestry uses, limiting fragmentation of resources, and ensuring a responsible balance that provides for outdoor recreation and economic growth while protecting natural resources.

Objective 2. Protect and Improve Water Resources.

Manage surface and groundwater to reduce contamination, maintain natural hydrologic functions, and restore shoreland and wetland ecosystems through best management practices and water conservation measures.

Objective 3. Conserve and Restore Sensitive and Degraded Areas.

Protect areas of high environmental value—such as wetlands, shorelands, and habitats for rare species—through restoration, conservation planning, and mitigation strategies than maintain ecological and hydrologic functions.

Objective 4. Promote Environmental Stewardship and Collaboration.

Coordinate land and water resource planning among municipalities, agencies, and landowners; use monitoring and data-driven approaches to guide conservation, control invasive species, promote native pollinator habitat, and achieve County and local natural resource goals.

Natural Resource Policies (decision-making guidance)

Water-Related Policies

1. The protection of groundwater and surface water quality and quantity is a top priority of Chippewa County and threats to these resources should be proactively addressed. Coordinate with neighboring counties, WDNR, and communities to promote land use practices and develop mechanisms for protecting water quality. Continue to maintain awareness of increasing demands and disputes over groundwater availability and quality.
2. Surface water outreach, planning, strategies, and land conservation efforts should prioritize surface waters and watersheds that are high quality or have impairments for which there are landowners, lake groups, communities, or other partners who are interested in actively participating in conservation.

3. Chippewa County landowners with private wells should be aware of the importance of regular testing, threats to their water supply, and related risks related to private septic system maintenance. The County will continue to provide opportunities to make testing affordable and convenient.
4. Utilize baseline data from groundwater studies and embrace cutting-edge technology for monitoring water quality.
5. The County will continue to enforce regulations related to the maintenance/compliance of private septic systems, landspreading, and well setbacks. The wellhead protection/zone of influence for public water supplies should be protected.
6. The natural condition of shorelands and aquatic habitat shall be maintained, improved, or restored.
7. Wetland protection and restoration is essential given their important role in filtering water, flood storage, recharging groundwater, reducing runoff to surface waters, and providing habitats.
8. Encourage and advance basin-wide management approaches and planning for flowages.

Other Natural Resources Policies

1. Chippewa County's natural resources and rural setting are core to its identity, quality of life, and economy. While the natural resources and open spaces of Chippewa County should be managed for environmental needs, including watershed protection, protection and maintenance of biotic diversity, these same resources must also be managed and provide for sociological needs, including offering access to clean surface waters, furnishing raw materials for wood-using industries, and providing recreational and tourism opportunities.



2. Collaborating with partners and communities to incentivize the protection of natural resources is preferred over regulations, though it is important that rules be enforced.
3. Manage, conserve, and protect the County Forest and its natural resources on a sustainable basis for present and future generations.
4. Chippewa County has excellent air quality that should be preserved and efforts should be made to mitigate potential sources of light pollution. Continue to enforce the County's commercial lighting regulations within its Zoning Ordinance.
5. Sand and gravel quarries are important natural resources for construction and roadways. Continue to require implementation of reclamation plans and support reclamation in accordance with State standards.
6. Encourage the preservation and planting of native, pollinator species as part of grant-funded projects (e.g., Healthy Lakes shoreland projects), as part of land restoration effects, and on public lands, but outside of road rights-of-way.
7. Increase awareness of the invasive species and pests that degrade the ecological function and economic value of our waters, forests, and environment. Encourage early detection and reporting by the public. Cities and villages are encouraged to consider the creation of urban forestry programs, diversify the urban forest canopy, and proactively address pest management.

8. Long-range weather patterns have the potential to increase flooding, drought, pests, disease, and invasive species while degrading water quality habitat. Incorporate resilience and adaptation into County land use decision making, conservation efforts, and mitigation plans, while diversifying species and exploring green infrastructure opportunities.
9. Encourage collaboration between communities, conservation groups, and other partners, which is essential to achieving the Natural Resources goal and objectives.
10. Implement those policies and strategies that support the Natural Resources goal and objectives found in other elements of this plan. In particular, implement those policies and strategies found within Objective 1 of the Agricultural Resources element of this plan pertaining to maintaining healthy soils and promoting conservation practices.

Natural Resources Strategies (recommended actions)

Groundwater-Specific Strategies

1. Continue the Chippewa Groundwater Inventory, including testing & monitoring for nitrates and other key contamination sources. Work to link with surface water hydrology. Maintain the Chippewa County well permitting and groundwater inventory GIS database. (ongoing)
2. Support use of the USGS ModFlow Groundwater Model to evaluate high-capacity wells in western Chippewa County. (ongoing)
3. Continue monitoring elevations in aquifers for municipal water supplies and rural residential areas. Institute conservation programs. (ongoing)
4. Continue Chippewa County's Rural Water & Drinking Water Testing Program. Promote additional and regular private well/groundwater testing for bacteria now that the County has its own lab. (ongoing, short-range)
5. Continue to maintain and increase awareness of Chippewa County's Water Refill Stations. (ongoing)
6. Inventory the status of wellhead protection programs. (short-range)
7. Identify priority areas for 1-2 small watershed projects to restore natural hydrology & improve recharge. (medium-range)
8. Continue to enforce the County Groundwater Protection Ordinance. Explore expanding the Ordinance to include other public drinking water sources and not just municipal wells. Encourage efficient irrigation and water reuse. (ongoing; medium-range)
9. Explore amending the County's land division ordinance to require drinking water testing prior to approval of a residential land division. If water quality concerns are found, consider requiring that concerns are documented as part of the CSM or plat so prospective purchasers are aware. (medium-range)
10. Partner on a research project to document pollutant loads from private, onsite septic systems and alternative technologies for rural development areas. (medium-to-long range)
11. Considering bringing the County's groundwater data, programming, and collaborative efforts together to create a County-level groundwater plan and/or collaborate with adjacent counties to explore the creation of watershed-level groundwater plans. (long-range)

Surface Water-Specific Strategies

1. Continue to collaborate with landowners, communities, Rain-to-Rivers, and other partners to promote urban/development, agricultural, and forestry best management practices to promote infiltration, management stormwater runoff, and reduce peak flooding events.[22] (ongoing)
2. Maintain existing lake- and watershed-based partnerships and encourage additional collaboration. Continue to strongly encourage and support lake management and watershed/9-Key Element planning efforts and the implementation of these plans. Establish watershed-level goals related to land use and best management practices. Provide County support to WDNR Surface Water Grant projects as resources and priorities allow. Celebrate success stories and offer recognition programs. (ongoing)
3. The County will continue to enforce its Shoreland Ordinance and Floodplain Ordinance. (ongoing)
4. As recommended in the *Chippewa County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan*, the County and its communities should:
    - Continue to enforce County floodplain regulations to: discourage future floodplain development and the storage of hazardous materials in floodplains; require dry land access for structures; limit development in dam shadows; and maintain natural flood storage areas. (ongoing)
    - Continue to monitor, study, and address flooding hotspots. Pursue hazard mitigation grant funding to acquire, relocate, or floodproof structures and properties with a flood history, most at risk of flood damage, without dryland access, and/or following a flood event in which significant damage occurs if the landowner agrees to participate. (ongoing & as needed)
    - Once floodplain maps are updated, engage in an educational effort to increase public and elected officials' knowledge of flood risks and any map changes, including awareness that typical homeowner's insurance does not cover flood damage, that many structures outside the 100-year floodplain are vulnerable to flooding, and the importance of well testing following flood events. Especially target those municipalities with the greatest assessed improvements in or near floodplain areas. (medium-range)
    - When new governmental construction, subdivision development, and non-flood mitigation projects (e.g., safe rooms) are being planned, integrate low-impact solutions, if possible, to control stormwater runoff and mitigate flooding. Continue to expand public and community educational efforts and partnerships regarding alternatives to mitigate stormwater and flash flooding run-off, while promoting low-impact development such as rain gardens, permeable pavement systems, bioswales, road salt management, etc. For floodprone areas with a history of flash flooding that are outside the 100-year floodplain, encourage setbacks for new structures. (ongoing)
    - Continue working with WDNR and dam owners to ensure adequate emergency planning and maintenance of high hazard dams as well as requiring compliance and any needed repair of privately owned dams. Strive to complete GIS mapping of hydraulic shadows for all large and high hazard dams. Discourage development in the hydraulic shadows (dam failure floodplains) of dams. (ongoing)
    - Within intensive fire protection areas, continue to educate residents and local officials in the mitigation of wildfire risks, with an emphasis on enforcement of burning regulations/burning permits, defensible spaces around homes, and emergency vehicle access on driveways and private roads. Increase resident awareness of burning restrictions, warning signage, and permit contacts. Outreach should especially target areas of highest risk as well as the Amish community. (ongoing)
5. The County will continue to enforce its Stormwater Management Ordinance and administer joint stormwater management programming for urban area and conduct stormwater plan reviews in towns

[22] Also see the agricultural and forestry nonpoint source pollution programming recommended in the Agricultural Resources element of this plan.

under WDNR agreement. Explore opportunities to improve consistency and reduce duplication with WDNR related to permitting. (ongoing)

6. Collaborate with lake groups, sporting clubs, and shoreland owners to inventory, monitor, and control aquatic invasive species. (ongoing)
7. Advocate for State rules that will help local communities and lake organizations better manage lake use challenges. (ongoing).
8. Establish a more structured communications approach with lake group and other surface water partners. Work collaboratively to address shared water quality and lake use challenges. Survey lake groups to assess interest in the formation of a County-level stakeholder group, conducting an annual lake conference, etc. (short-to-medium range).
9. Create and maintain a County-based lake water quality program to monitor changes. (medium-range)



10. Update flowage plans for flowages within the County Forest. (medium-range)

Other Natural Resources Strategies

1. Continue to implement, regularly evaluate, and update the *Chippewa County Land & Water Resource Management Plan* and the *Chippewa County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan*. (ongoing; varies by plan)
2. Continue to educate landowners and local communities on the identification of invasive species and the tools to control them. (ongoing)
3. Continue to collaborate with WDNR and WCWRPC during sewer service area (SSA) planning for the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire urban area to help protect water quality and, subject to SSA Plan policies, avoid encroachment upon environmentally sensitive areas by intensive land disturbances. (ongoing)
4. Collaborate with the Chippewa County Land Conservancy and other conservation partners to educate communities and landowners on opportunities to permanently protect healthy forests and sensitive natural areas. (ongoing)
5. Continue to collaborate with Rain-to-Rivers, WCWRPC, and WDOT to educate County Highway, town, village, and city roads/public works offices on road salt management to reduce chloride levels in surface and groundwater. (ongoing)
6. As suggested in the Land Use element, explore the need for additional policies for heavy groundwater using industries. Evaluate the effectiveness of the natural resources policies and procedures within County's zoning ordinance and regulations in light of new or expanding land uses that could impact groundwater, surface waters, and other resources (e.g., data centers, water bottling). (short-range)
7. Evaluate County regulations to encourage stormwater management and low-impact development approaches that reduce impervious surfaces and runoff, especially for large developments and areas near surfaces waters and wetlands. (short-range)

8. Work with WDNR, Extension, and forestry partners to encourage forest landowners to create basic forest management plans. Provide a plan template and materials on best practices, invasives, and disease (e.g., Buckthorn, Oak Wilt), enhancing wildlife habitat, and available resources, including area professional foresters. Consider offering periodic workshops if landowners are interested. (short-to-medium range)
9. Partner with Extension, area beekeepers, and other local conservation partners to increase public awareness of decreasing pollinator and bee populations, the importance of these species, and how landowners and farmers can help. Explore interest in the creation of a pollinator "guardian" group/advocacy team to pursue grant funding through the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin or other sources to support local education and habitat restoration initiatives. (short-to-medium range)
10. Collaborate with and encourage towns to adopt the County's comprehensive zoning plan as a tool to help proactively address threats to water quality. (short-to-medium range)
11. Identify potential sources of good quality gravel within the County and encourage towns to consider these sources as part of land use planning so that gravel may continue to be locally available and affordable in the future. (medium-to-long range)
13. Identify shared metrics as part of Land & Water Resources Management Planning that communities and groups can access and use for informed decision-making. Such efforts may be completed at the watershed level and/or involve multiple counties. (medium-to-long range)





8. HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Chapter 8. Historical & Cultural Resources

Key Historical & Cultural Resources Issues & Opportunities:

- Local history and the County's rural character with its natural beauty are valued cultural resources that are core to community identify and enhance quality of life. In community surveys, a majority of respondents believed that protecting historical resources is important.
- Historic preservation and cultural activities are primarily coordinated at the community level by local organizations. The County has four historical societies, a genealogy group, and at least six museums.
- Chippewa County has 223 sites of the State and National Registers of Historic Places that can potentially take advantage of tax credits.
- The Chippewa County Historical Society has installed over 50 markers at sites of historical significance.
- There are no Certified Local Governments in the County with approved historic preservation programs.
- Downtowns are important community gathering places with a concentration of historic buildings often core to the community's identity.
- Many historical places, especially within the downtown, need renovation.
- Numerous museums exist to attract visitors and heritage tourism is a growing part of the economy.
- Events and other cultural activities, such as Rock Fest, Summer Jam, the Northern Wisconsin State Fair, Oktoberfest, the Hyde Center for Performing Arts, and many community festivals, contribute to a strong tourism economy and quality of life.

Due to how State Statutes are written, historical and cultural resources are often combined in the same chapter of a comprehensive plan with agricultural and natural resources, relegating the topic to a lesser priority. In addition, the discussion of history and culture is typically given less significance since it is perceived as not being as concrete as elements like Housing and Transportation.

This element is important in that it nurtures a sense-of-place, contributes to quality of life, provides an important context for planning, and fosters civic pride, all of which are vital to creating a vibrant and prosperous community. Given this topic's importance to many members of the community, the Historical and Cultural Resources element is an individual chapter of this plan update.

8.1 Existing Conditions / Historical & Cultural Resources

A. Historical Resources

Louis Hennepin and his companions were the first Europeans to traverse the Chippewa County area. They journeyed up the Chippewa River in 1680. The first permanent settlement in the area was established in 1822, when a sawmill was built along the Chippewa River. Soon after that date, the valley of the Chippewa River became an important lumber region. White pine was abundant in the virgin forests. In 1837, the largest sawmill in the world was built in Chippewa Falls.

The Chippewa County area was at one point part of the territory of Michigan. In 1836, the territory of Wisconsin was established. It had three counties; Crawford, Milwaukee, and Brown. In 1845, Chippewa County was formed from Crawford County. Chippewa Falls was declared the County seat. Chippewa County originally included about one-fourth of Wisconsin. Following 1845, numerous counties were detached from

8. Historical & Cultural Resources

the original County. Chippewa County derives its name from the Native American word "Ojibwe," the name of a Native American tribe.

When the first French explorers and European fur traders arrived in the Chippewa Valley in the late 1600s, the Chippewa County area was inhabited by the Ojibwe. Chippewa Falls became a summer place between Indians from Northern Wisconsin and fur traders during the 1700s and a fur trading post was established in 1797. The first settlers (De Marie family) arrived in Chippewa Falls in 1833 soon followed by the first dam and sawmill built by Jean Brunet. With logging and trade, Chippewa Falls quickly grew and was identified as the County seat when Chippewa County was formed in 1853.



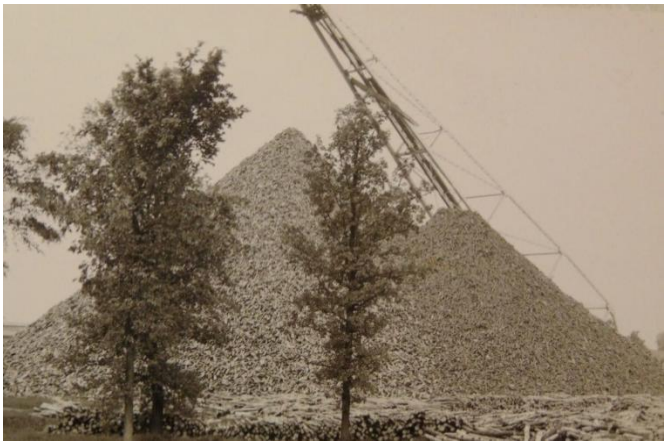
Waves of German, Norwegian, and Irish immigrants quickly followed the logging and lumber boom of the 1850s-1880s. French Canadians, Scandinavians, and Germans tended to populate the logging camps. As the 19th Century ended, the lumber mills and logging camps gave way to agriculture on the fertile "cut-over" land, where early crops included tobacco, sugar beets, and vegetables. Additional immigrant groups were attracted to the open land and built churches, schools, and social halls that reflected their heritage. Dairying became the predominant farm activity by the turn of the century. Since then, Chippewa County has become one of the cheese-making centers of the nation. By 1915, the lumber camps and mills of the pinery were gone, though forestry and wood products continue to be an important part of the County's agricultural and industrial economy. Today, the Pioneer Norwegian Log Home (moved from Cornell to Chippewa Falls), the Bohemian Hall near Cadott, and related historical markers still commemorate this immigrant legacy. In the 20th Century, during the 1970s and 1980s, a wave of Hmong refugees would arrive in Chippewa County and contribute to local agriculture, business, and community life, as did the immigrants of the past.

With the European immigration, breweries came into being, including the Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company, founded in 1867. Over time, manufacturing and industry further diversified the economy. The Chippewa Shoe Manufacturing Company, for example, was established in 1901 and became an important manufacturer of military boots; and this building still stands today. Mason Shoe Manufacturing would also manufacture footwear from 1904 to 2003 in Chippewa Falls. National Presto Industries was founded in 1905. More recently, Cray Research, Inc. was established in 1972 and continues to be a global leader in supercomputers. And AMPI operates one of the largest cheese cooperatives in the United States at its Jim Falls location. These industries are parts of the County's long-standing tradition of internationally known manufacturing and technological innovation, which can be further explored at the Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry and Technology.

Described as the "lifeblood" of the County, the Chippewa River and its dams and bridges first facilitated the movement of logs, people, and goods. Later, railroads would connect the County's towns and villages to

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regional and national markets. A bit later, when automobiles became affordable, a system of roads and highways was constructed to move people and goods throughout the region. The cities and villages of southern Chippewa County were connected by the Yellowstone Trail, which connected Massachusetts to Washington.



The 175-tall pulpwood stacker in Cornell (pictured right) exemplifies many aspects of the County's history. Built in 1912, the stacker moved large quantities of wood that were floated down the Chippewa River for Cornell Wood Products Company that produced paper products, cardboard, and wallboard. Although operations ceased in 1972, the stacker remains as an impressive vestige of the logging industry, the role of the Chippewa River, and the County's history of technological innovation.

Military service has always been a source of pride within Chippewa County, and honor rolls and memorials commemorate the sacrifice of its sons and daughters. Bits of this history are still memorialized beyond the County's borders. During the Civil War, Jim Falls provided the Union with its most famous mascot – Old Abe, a bald eagle. And after the Armistice ending World War I, a Chippewa County man was the first U.S. soldier to set foot on German soil.

Historical Locations

As a vestige of this history, Chippewa County has many remaining sites of historical value and interest. As shown in Table 8-1, the County has thirteen (13) records on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, which includes 223 different buildings and pulpwood stacker in Cornell.

Table 8-1. Registered Historical Places in Chippewa County

Community	Name	Address	Type
Chippewa Falls	Chippewa Shoe Manufacturing Co.	28 W. River St.	Building
Chippewa Falls	Bridge Street Commercial Historic District	Bridge St., from Columbia St. to Spring St.	District, including 33 buildings in downtown Chippewa Falls
Chippewa Falls	Hotel Chippewa	16-18 N. Bay St.	Building
Chippewa Falls	West Hill Residential Historic District	Boundary: Coleman St. (N), Superior St. (NE), Central St. (SE), Governor St. (SW), Dover St. (NW)	District, including 139 buildings, primarily single- and multi-family dwellings built between 1870-1958
Chippewa Falls	McDonell High School	3 S. High St.	Building
Chippewa Falls	Notre Dame Church & Goldsmith Memorial Chapel	117 Allen St.	Building
Chippewa Falls	Cook-Rutledge House	505 W. Grand Ave.	Building
Chippewa Falls	Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridge	Spring St.	Bridge
Chippewa Falls	Sheeley House	236 W. River St.	Building

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Stanley	D.R. Moon Memorial Library	E. Fourth Avenue	Building
Stanley	L.I. Roe House	410 N. Franklin St.	Building
Arthur	Z.C.B.J. Hall	State Highway 27, 7 mi. north of Cadott	Building
Cornell	Cornell Pulpwood Stacker	Cornell Mill Yard Park	Logging Equipment

Sites on the National and State Registers of Historic Places were deemed to be historic places worthy of preservation and significant to Wisconsin's heritage. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service and the State Register by the Wisconsin Historical Society. Placement on the Registers not only denotes a property's historical importance, but enables landowners to tap into certain tax credits and, sometimes, certain grant funds. There is often confusion over the Federal or State requirements or limitations for listed buildings. There is no requirement for private landowners to restore or preserve a listed property, though properties are eligible to use the State's Historic Building Code, which may facilitate rehabilitation. If a property is utilizing any Federal or State funding or assistance, including the tax credits, the proposed project is reviewed to ensure that the historic values of the property are taken into consideration. Most of these buildings are privately owned; there is not a requirement that a historic home must allow public access. Just because a building is old, does not mean it is of historical or architectural significance.

Additionally, the Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) lists 1,409 places and objects within Chippewa County, of which 1,147 are located in the City of Chippewa Falls. The AHI is an inventory of historic buildings, structures, and objects throughout Wisconsin that were deemed to have been of historical, cultural, or architectural significance and has been compiled from a wide variety of sources. The inclusion of a property on the AHI conveys no special status, benefits, or protections.



The Chippewa County Historical Society established a Historic Marker Committee in 1973 and have installed 57 markers at locations of historical significance throughout the County. The State of Wisconsin has installed six additional Official Historical Markers:

- #14 Old Abe the War Eagle
- #222 Nations First Cooperative Generating System
- #278 Cobban Bridge
- #330 Northern Wisconsin Center
- #427 Northern Wisconsin State Fair
- #429 Cornell Pulpwood Stacker

The Wisconsin Registered Landmarks of the Wisconsin Council of Local History (now defunct) installed the following additional historical markers in Cadott:

- The Gravesite of Lansing A. Wilcox, who was Wisconsin's last surviving Civil War veteran
- Cadotte Trading Post Site

The Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce has created a Historic Sites webpage with photos and brief summaries of over 50 historical sites throughout the County.

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Museums & History Organizations

Communities and organizations within the County are committed to historic preservation of structures as well as research resources including, but not limited to:



- Chippewa County Historical Society & the Chippewa Area History Center
- Chippewa County Genealogical Society
- Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry & Technology
- Bloomer Historical Society Museum
- Cadott Area Historical Society & Baker School Museum
- Stanley Area Historical Society & Museum
- Cook-Rutledge Mansion
- Irvine Park Historic Area with the Sunny Valley School House Museum

Each May, the Chippewa County Historical Society hosts The Past Passed Here, which is a reenactor event that shares how people in the Chippewa Valley lived in the late 1700s and early 1800s.

B. Cultural Resources

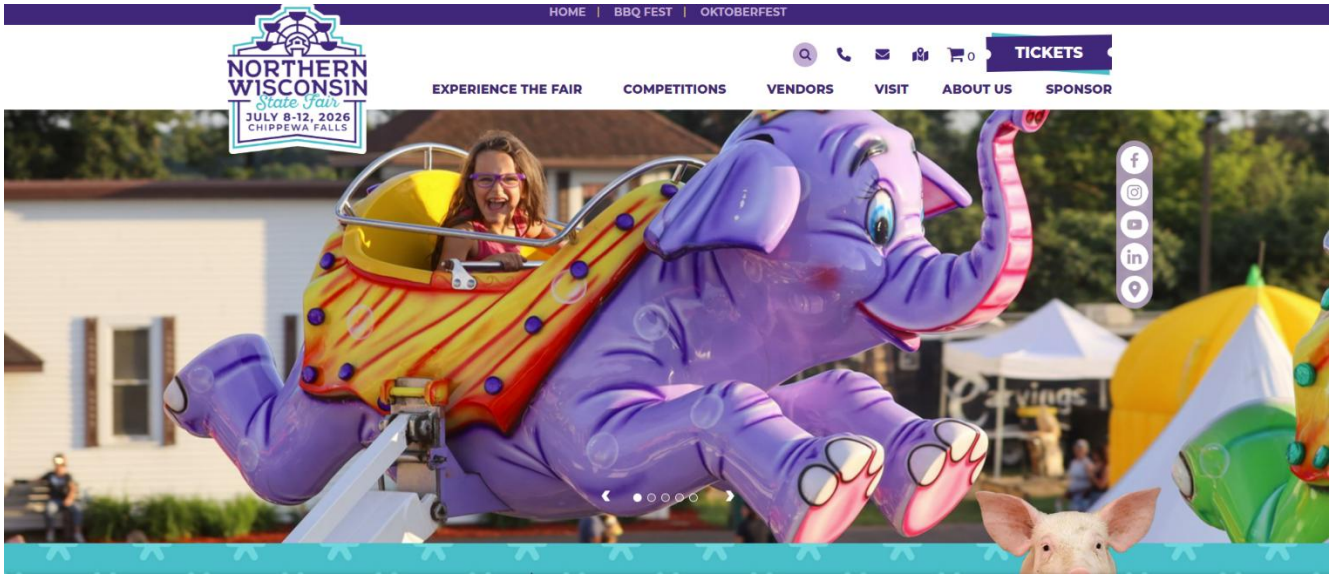
The culture of Chippewa County is grounded in its past, its overall rural landscape, and a strong sense of community. Cultural resources are located throughout the County and include school events, festivals, theaters, and the arts. Examples include:

- Arts – Heyde Center for the Areas, School programming
- History/Heritage Tourism – previously noted in Historical Resources
- Recreational Resources – Parks & outdoor recreational facilities identified in the County and local comprehensive outdoor recreation plans, Ice Age Scenic Trail & Obey Interpretive Center, Lake Wissota, and the Chippewa River
- Downtowns - The traditional commercial core of cities and villages are often core to the community's culture and sense-of-place, offering a community gathering place with amenities, features, public art, and attractions that reflect the community as a whole. Local chambers, business clubs/owners, and the Chippewa Falls Main Street Program are key partners in championing these resources.
- Events – Northern Wisconsin State Fair, Oktoberfest, Rock, local community festivals, School sporting events, special events hosted by community groups, lake organizations, rod & gun clubs, etc.
- Agritourism – Chippewa County is destination for its array of locally produced dairy and farm products, including ice cream/creameries, cheese, orchards, wineries, greenhouses, syrup makers, meat processors, and farm markets.
- Other Cultural Resources – Jacob Leinenkugel Brewery, Irvine Park Zoo, local artist & art galleries, churches, community/social clubs, senior centers/groups, youth organizations/scouting groups, local lake or conservation groups, various seasonal events and arts/craft shows.

8. Historical & Cultural Resources

Cultural resources can also cross County boundaries. For example, the Valley Art Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Chippewa Falls that is working to promote visual art and artists in larger Chippewa Valley. Chippewa Valley Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire both have a strong presence in Chippewa County that supports local artists and culture.

An example of where culture and the rural landscape intersects is 13.1 miles of County Road "E" in the Town of Cleveland, which transverses County Forest lands and a part of the Ice Age National Scientific Reserve has been designated as Rustic Road 6. Rustic roads are lightly traveled local access roads with outstanding natural features and/or open space along its route.



8.2 Historical & Cultural Resources in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

No municipality in Chippewa County is known to have a specific Historic Preservation Plan, though cultural resources is a required element under State comprehensive planning law. For most unincorporated towns, historical and cultural resources is not a large part of their comprehensive plans.

Town, Village, & City Issues & Opportunities

- Downtowns are a traditional community gathering place with historic buildings.
- Nice, older homes add to community character.
- The County has fantastic venues, events, and destinations.
- Fairgrounds is strong with recent renovation/construction projects and is expanding its market.
- Need to create a bridge to younger population and new residents so that they are welcomed, engaged, and active members of the community.
- Chippewa County has a long history of internationally recognized manufacturing, starting with the world's largest sawmill in the late 1800s to shoes, fire trucks, and supercomputers. The pulpwood stacker in Cornell was the only one of its kind in the world.

- Increasing competition among events for visitors.
- Many organizations are struggling to get new volunteers.
- Some cultural sites/events are struggling to attract new visitors or participants.
- An important tool to keep and foster community identity.
- New development can lack community or an identity. Balance affordable housing with a sense of place; "don't just build cheap housing…build neighborhoods."

Summary of Town, Village, & City Goals, Objectives, & Recommendations

The historical & cultural resources goals, objectives, and recommendations of the community comprehensive plans can largely be summarized into four primary categories:

1. Preserve and Document Local History
2. Promote Cultural Diversity and Community Engagement
3. Enhance Cultural and Historical Destinations
4. Protect Natural and Rural Character

The goals, objectives, policies, and strategies in Section V of this plan were largely adapted directly from the cultural resources elements of the city, village, and town comprehensive plans.

8.3 Historical & Cultural Resources Plans, Programs & Partners



As a unit of government, Chippewa County does not have a plan or program specifically addressing historical or cultural resources. Such planning and programming occur at the community level and/or is championed by a local partner, such as those organizations identified in the previous cultural resources section.

A list of museum and historical organizations in Chippewa County was provided previously. The following four organizations are local affiliates of the Wisconsin State Historical Society: Stanley Area Historical Society, Bloomer Historical Society, Cadott Area Historical Society, and Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry and Technology. This plan does not attempt to create a comprehensive list of partners involved in the many cultural resources identified previously; no such list would be complete. Local communities, chambers of commerce, and Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation partner with these resources to promote the County as a tourism destination and a great place to live. As noted previously, the Chippewa Falls Chamber of Commerce is supporting heritage tourism Countywide through their website.

Except for the previously described history organizations and events, no specific historical or cultural resources plans or programs were identified during the planning process. The Chippewa County Historical Society's historical marker program described previously is the closest the County has to a formal landmark

committee. Except for the City of Eau Claire, there are no Certified Local Governments (CLGs) with a Historical Preservation Commission in Chippewa County that is enforcing a historic preservation ordinance. Area CLG's include the cities of Eau Claire, Menomonie, and Neillsville as well as La Crosse County. CLG's are eligible to apply for Wisconsin Historic Preservation Fund Subgrants from the federal Historic Preservation Fund allocation to the State, to be used for eligible CLG activities and have the ability to formally comment on National Register of Historic Places nominations within its municipal boundaries before they are sent to the State Historic Preservation Review Board. The City of Chippewa Falls has a Historic Preservation Code, though the City's comprehensive plan suggests that the purpose and effectiveness of this code should be re-evaluated.

8.4 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

There were no questions or comments related to historical or cultural resources in the city, village, and town government surveys distributed as part of this comprehensive plan update.

Some local comprehensive plans included community surveys with historical or cultural resources questions. Here are a few recent examples:

- A 2019 survey of Town of Wheaton residents yielded than only 3% choose "historical significance" as one of their top four reasons they choose to live in the town. While only 38% felt that it was essential or very important to protect "historical resources & cultural sites", an additional 49% believed it was important. In contrast, protecting "rural character" was essential or very important to 71% of respondents.
- A 2023 survey for the City of Chippewa Falls yielded that 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that preserving and celebrating our community's history is important to our quality of life. There was slightly less agreement (77%) on this point among residents less than age 35.
- A 2021 survey for the Town of Lake Holcombe found that 67% of respondents felt it was essential or important for the Town to plan for and protect "historic and cultural sites". 58% of respondents identified "small town atmosphere & rural character" among their top 3 reasons that choose to live or own property in the town.

The above examples support the importance that community members place on historical and cultural resources.

B. Steering Committee

While the Comprehensive Plan update steering committee recognized the importance of history and culture to the County, its communities, and the local economy, there was a consensus that the County government will continue to have a limited role in directly planning for or advancing the related goal and objectives. Sense of place and community character are often core to a community's culture, and this perspective varies by community.

8. Historical & Cultural Resources

8.5 Historical & Cultural Resources Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

Historical & Cultural Resources Goal

Preserve, respect, and celebrate the history and diversity of Chippewa County while offering vibrant places that strengthen identity, support a strong tourism economy, and enhance quality of life.

Objective 1: Preserve, Document, and Share Local History
Increase awareness of the importance of local history and culture and encourage the preservation of historic sites, structures, and archaeological sites.

Objective 1 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Cultural and historical preservation and programming in Chippewa County will continue to be largely defined and driven by local communities and, especially, the various non-profit and other partners within those communities.
2. Consider the protection and preservation of sites on the State and Federal registers of historic sites during the planning for public works projects and the review of development projects.
3. Historical, cultural, and archaeological considerations will be considered as part of into development review and land use planning to minimize impacts on these resources.
4. Landowners are encouraged to protect and document historical, cultural, and archaeological resources on their property through voluntary preservation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse.
5. Allow for the adaptive reuse of historic structures, including barns, silos, and other rural landmarks, that contribute to the County's character and heritage.

Objective 1 Strategies (recommended actions)



1. At their discretion, local historical societies, museums, community groups, and property owners will take the lead in documenting, preserving, and celebrating historic and cultural assets in their communities. (ongoing)

   The following strategies are examples of actions communities, organizations, and residents might undertake:

   a. Expand local history displays and collections by collecting historic photos, artifacts, and stories; and by developing displays at municipal buildings, local museums, and other community locations.

   b. Document local history by working with community partners to record resident oral interviews, preserve recollections of community life, and update inventories of cultural and historic resources.

c. Recognize and preserve open space, historical landmarks, historic structures, and the community's rural character as a reflection of the community's past and the importance to quality of life in the future.

d. Work with the Wisconsin State Historical Society to add historical sites to the Wisconsin Architectural & Historical Inventory (AHI), create a community historic preservation plan or code, and/or consider becoming a Certified Local Government.

e. Educate landowners and elected officials about historic preservation tax credits and common misconceptions.

Objective 2: Promote Cultural Diversity
Respect, celebrate, and be welcoming to diverse cultures.

Objective 2 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Diverse cultures will be respected, celebrated, and welcomed.

Objective 2 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Actively invite and welcome new residents to their communities as part of community webpages and marketing endeavors to help meet workforce demands. (ongoing)
2. Encourage initiatives that actively engage new residents so that they are welcomed as part of the community, including making them aware of County/local services, unique regulations, volunteer opportunities, and opportunities to share their culture and experiences as part of community events. (ongoing)

Objective 3: Enhance Heritage and Cultural Programming and Tourism
Enhance the quality of life, community identity, and economy through cultural programming and heritage tourism.

Objective 3 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. At their discretion, civic organizations will take the lead in developing cultural programming and heritage tourism as well as working with communities to develop a strong sense of place and community gathering places.
2. Encourage downtowns and neighborhoods to have a strong sense of place[23].

[23] A neighborhood or location has a strong sense of place if its character and functions (activities, comfort & image, connectivity, sociability) create positive perceptions and experiences for persons living, working within, and visiting that location. This sense of place should be built upon a defined or desired community/place brand and other goals for the location, and be reinforced through placemaking actions. Sense of place is subjective and must be defined by the persons living within and using the place.

8. Historical & Cultural Resources

Objective 3 Strategies (recommended actions)

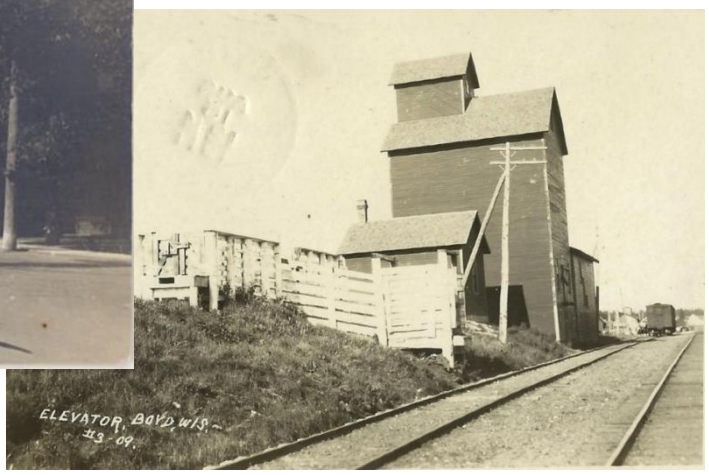
1. Communities are encouraged to consider programming, place branding, placemaking activities to reinforce community identity and promote heritage tourism (ongoing), such as:
   a. Work with Chambers, the Main Street program, and partners to develop a shared brand and marketing strategy that reflects local culture, guides placemaking, and enhances tourism.
   b. Conduct a placemaking workshop to identify activities, amenities, and the community or downtown brand.
   c. Design, program, and placemake downtowns, parks, and neighborhoods to foster a positive sense-of-place that is inviting and accessible to everyone, brings people together, and is visually attractive. Enhance public spaces through amenities such as art, benches, flower baskets, flags, lighting, events/programming, wayfinding signage, and pedestrian/bike improvements.
   d. Support family events, festivals, dairy-heritage celebrations, art events, and intergenerational programming that strengthen community identity and social connection.
   e. Encourage preservation in new development, integrate historic features into project design when preservation isn't possible, and add distinctive signage and wayfinding that highlight cultural and historic identity.

Objective 4: Protect Natural and Rural Character
Encourage the protection of natural and agricultural resources, given their importance to the cultural heritage of the County as a whole.

Objective 4 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. The recognition and preservation of scenic landscapes and viewsheds that contribute to the County's rural and cultural identity should be encouraged.
2. Implement the policies and strategies recommended in the Agricultural Resources, Natural Resources, and Land Use elements of this plan.







9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 9. Economic Development

Key Economic Development Issues & Opportunities:

- Slowing population growth has labor force and service implications. Workforce availability is an ongoing concern, along with housing and child care access for attracting/retaining workers.
- Most industrial/business parks lack sufficient land to attract a large industry. The County has a limited list of certified, shovel-ready industrial sites.
- The County's manufacturing economy offers industry clusters (and their supply chains) that can be targeted for growth, including global trade and onshoring opportunities related to these clusters.
- The County has great natural amenities, a strong tourist economy, and a successful economic development corporation.
- Maintain a pro-business environment and collaboration are critical to growing existing businesses, attracting new business investment, and achieving the goal and objectives of this element.

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law (Wis. Stats. §66.1001) requires that the economic development element (chapter) includes a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion, of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in Chippewa County, including an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the County.

This plan chapter focuses on the economy and economic development in Chippewa County as a whole, realizing that trends, programs, goals, and priorities can differ among the County's communities. The County's economic development plan should reflect the values of the community and must be carefully linked to the goals, objectives, and strategies of the other plan chapters. Through planning, the County can anticipate economic change and guide development to the best of its abilities to achieve its economic goal and objectives.

More than most comprehensive plan elements, the local economy and economic development are also influenced by regional, State, national, and global factors. The economy is a complex system, always in flux, often occurring in cycles or periods of growth, prosperity, and expansion followed by periods of decline, contraction, or recession. There is no reliable methodology of predicting such cycles. Predicting the short-term and long-term economic future of any community is difficult. And economic forces and labor pools do not stop at County or other governmental boundaries, offering opportunities for communities to work collaboratively for mutual benefit. To this end, the support of the Chippewa Economic Development Corporation was critical to the update of this plan chapter, including helping to coordinate and host the Economic Development Focus Group meeting.



9. Economic Development

9.1 Economic Conditions, Strengths, Weaknesses, & Opportunities

A. Economic Conditions

Demographic Overview and Commuting Patterns

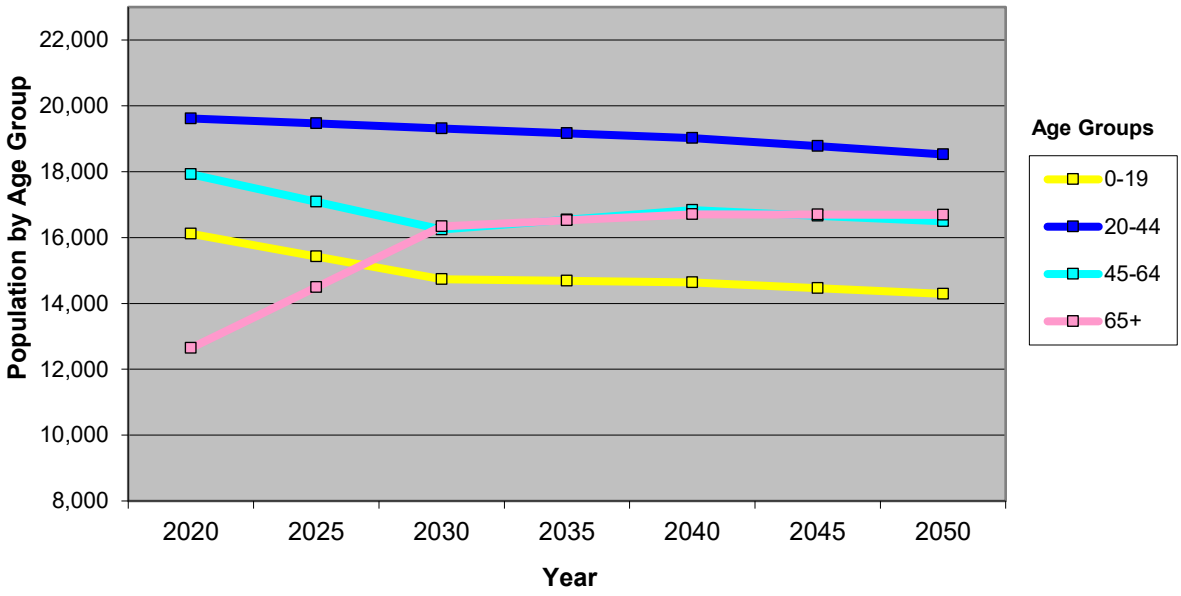
Demographic trends, including population changes and educational attainment, are important factors in economic development. Population data can help show the existing and potential labor force that may fill the jobs located in the County. Data on educational attainment provides insight into the general skill level of the County's population and commuting patterns show where employees are living, whether in the County or outside. It is estimated that 59% of County residents commute outside of Chippewa County for employment. For more details on commuting patterns see **Chapter 4 Transportation.**

Population Growth and Age

According to the 2020 Census, Chippewa County had a population of 66,297. As detailed in Chapter 2 County Context, between 2000 and 2010 the County saw a 13.1% increase (+7,220 persons) while only saw a 6.2% increase (+3,882 persons) from 2010 to 2020. While the State's population projections project the County to increase in population out to 2040 (see Table 2-2 in Chapter 2 County Context), the population is expected to decline after 2040. The State Projects that the County will experience a .5% decline in population (-307 persons) from 2020 to 2050.

While the County's population is projected to grow, it is also expected to age. In looking at detailed age projections prepared by the State of Wisconsin DOA, and shown in Figure 9-1, the population of the 20-64 age groups (generally considered the labor force) is expected to decrease 6.7% from 37,539 persons in 2020 to 35,015 persons in 2050. Meanwhile, the youngest age group of 0-19 is also projected to also decline while the 65+ age group is expected to grow by 32% from 2020 to 2050.

Figure 9-1. Population by Age Projections, Chippewa County, 2020 to 2050



source: Wisconsin Dept of Administration, 2024 projections

9. Economic Development

These demographic trends are not unique to Chippewa County rather they are seen across the State of Wisconsin and nationwide. As the Baby Boomer generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) age, and eventually exit the population, the birth rates nationwide are lower and not keeping pace to backfill the population.



Educational Attainment

Education is important to consider in economic development as "it prepares the next generation for the labor force"[24]. The school districts of Chippewa County are discussed in Chapter 5 Utilities and Community Facilities.

The WI Department of Workforce Development (DWD) reported, using data from WI Department of Public Instruction, that as of the 2023-24 school year, 3,120 students in Chippewa County were enrolled in grades 9-12. This number includes public, private, and home-based schools, but also may include some students in neighboring counties as some school district borders cross county boundaries.

DWD also reports that among students in grades 11-12, 54.2% were enrolled as concentrators in career and technical education (CTE) during the 2022-2023 school year, higher than the 44.3% statewide. The career pathway with the largest number of participants was agriculture, food, and natural resources followed by health sciences. As noted by DWD, "this highlights the interesting mix of workforce needs and opportunities in Chippewa County – a rural county that also has close access to Eau Claire County's hospital and educational systems."[25]

Post high-school, DWD reports that 43.3% of high school graduates from 2022-23 school year went on to enroll in a postsecondary institution; this percentage is consistent with the State's 43.6%. There is also participation in the youth apprenticeship program, which prepares individuals for the workforce through hands-on experience.

Income

Data on income helps provide information on purchasing power of residents within the County. Table 9-1 shows median household income, and poverty rates from 2000-2020 for Chippewa County and the State of Wisconsin.

Table 9-1. County-State Income Comparison

Median Income (dollars)	2000	2010	2020
Chippewa County	$39,596	$48,672	$61,215
Wisconsin	$43,791	$51,598	$63,293
Percent Individuals Below Poverty	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**
Chippewa County	8.2%	10.7%	9.9%
Wisconsin	8.7%	11.6%	11.0%

Source: US Census, 2000 Decennial, 2006-2010 ACS 5-Year Estimate, and 2016-2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate

[24] WI DWD. *Chippewa County 2025 Workforce Profile.* https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/wits_info/downloads/CP/chippewa_profile.pdf

[25] WI DWD. *Chippewa County 2025 Workforce Profile.* https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/wits_info/downloads/CP/chippewa_profile.pdf

9. Economic Development

While Chippewa County's median household income remains lower than the State of Wisconsin as a whole, it also has a lower percentage of individuals in poverty.

Occupations and Wages

Table 9-2 identifies the top occupations by total jobs in Chippewa County in 2024, highlighting the employment base and associated earnings across key areas of the County's economy.

Table 9-2. Top Occupations by Job Count, Chippewa County 2024

Occupation (5-digit SOC)	2024 Jobs (#)	2024 Median Hourly Earnings	2024 Median Annual Earnings
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	856	$15.39	$32,001.14
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	816	$24.37	$50,689.89
Retail Salespersons	746	$16.67	$34,683.34
Cashiers	731	$14.33	$29,807.21
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	657	$20.18	$41,969.63
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	576	$20.06	$41,718.48
Fast Food and Counter Workers	538	$12.75	$26,521.77
Office Clerks, General	476	$20.20	$42,023.29
Customer Service Representatives	434	$20.90	$43,465.44
Stockers and Order Fillers	410	$15.79	$32,842.58

source: Lightcast Q3 2025 Data Set; Occupational Employment Statistics, WI DWD, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Many of the County's largest occupations are concentrated in health care, transportation, retail trade, manufacturing, and customer service. The median hourly and annual earnings vary, with several of these high-employment occupations offering wages below the County's estimated 2024 median household income of $68,003 (per the 2024 1-year ACS). These occupations illustrate the importance of service, logistics, and production jobs to Chippewa County's workforce. It's important to recognize these occupations in discussions on workforce development, housing affordability, and economic resilience, all which are important to maintaining a strong economy.

While not specific to Chippewa County, there is potential impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the economy. The Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence produced an AI Exposure Index for various occupations in the State. Table 9-3 shows these findings, as provided by WI DWD.

As noted by WI DWD in the *Chippewa County 2025 Workforce Profile*, "In the West Central Workforce Development Area (WDA), which includes Barron, Chippewa Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties, the largest occupation is cashiers, accounting for 3.2% of the area's employment. This occupation has an artificial intelligence exposure index of 0.89." It also notes that given the emerging nature of AI and its limited current adoption across industries, the long-term impacts on occupations and the economy remain uncertain.

The Wisconsin Center for Manufacturing & Productivity's *2025 Wisconsin Manufacturing Report* found that attracting and keeping qualified workers continue to be the top manufacturers' concerns. Workforce challenges are pushing Wisconsin manufacturers to lean into new technology and processes to drive productivity, including using AI and automation. While a growing majority of manufacturers regard AI as an important technology, many struggle to find a way to start with the technology or obtain an acceptable return on their investment.

Table 9-3. AI Exposure to Occupations

Occupation	Employment	% of Total Employment	AI Exposure Index
Cashiers	6,300	3.2%	0.89
Fast Food and Counter Workers	5,290	2.7%	-1.00
Retail Salespersons	4,930	2.5%	0.40
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	4,640	2.3%	-0.78
Registered Nurses	4,310	2.2%	0.04
Stockers and Order Fillers	4,050	2.0%	-0.05
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,030	2.0%	-0.09
Customer Service Representatives	3,340	1.7%	0.75
Office Clerks, General	3,270	1.6%	1.00
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2,630	1.3%	-1.27

Source: Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence.

Source: WI Department of Workforce Development

Labor and Employment Status

While the percentage of Chippewa County residents who participated in the labor force was stable around 69% in 2000 and 2010, the labor force participation rate decreased in 2020 to just under 64%. Table 9-4 below shows the population in the County labor force from 2000 to 2020 and the unemployment rate for the 20-year period. The data show that the County experienced a high unemployment rate during the great recession but has decreased significantly since.

Table 9-4. Employment Status Chippewa County

Employment Status	2000	%	2010	%	2020	%
Population 16 years and over	42,499	-	48,564	-	51,511	-
In labor force	28,970	68.2%	33,488	69.0%	32,872	63.8%
Civilian labor force	28,935	99.9%	33,452	99.9%	32,822	99.8%
Employed	27,582	95.3%	31,120	93.0%	31,956	97.4%
Unemployed	1,353	4.7%	2,332	7.0%	866	2.6%
Armed Forces	35	0.1%	36	0.1%	50	0.2%
Not in labor force	13,529	31.8%	15,076	31.0%	18,639	36.2%
Unemployment Rate	-	3.2%	-	7.0%	-	2.6%

Source: US Census, 2000 Decennial, 2006-2010 ACS 5-Year Estimate, and 2016-2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate

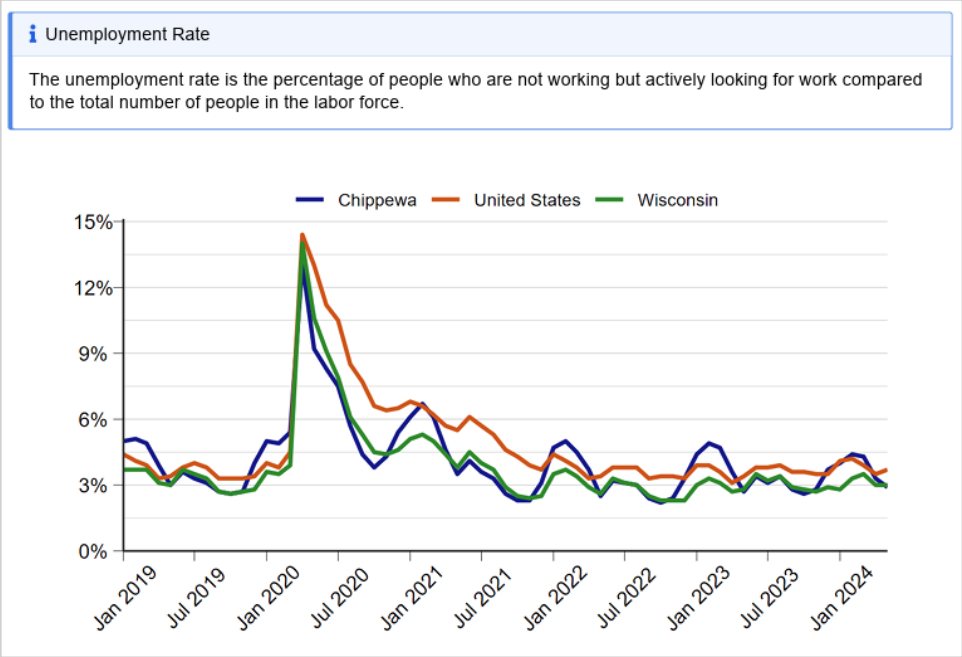
According to the WI DWD, Chippewa County's monthly average unemployment rate in 2023 was 3.5%, compared to the State's rate of 3.0%. The County ranked 47th in terms of the rate of unemployment in 2023. As WI DWD notes, "with unemployment rates being around historical lows since the pandemic, it's common to hear the term "tight labor market," meaning there are more job openings than workers to fill the positions. While a tight labor market is usually considered good for job seekers, it can make it difficult for employers to maintain and grow their business."[26] Figure 9-2 shows the unemployment rate in Chippewa County from January 2019 to January 2024; the spike in Jan 2020 is during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[26] WI DWD. *Chippewa County 2025 Workforce Profile.* https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy/wits_info/downloads/CP/chippewa_profile.pdf

9. Economic Development

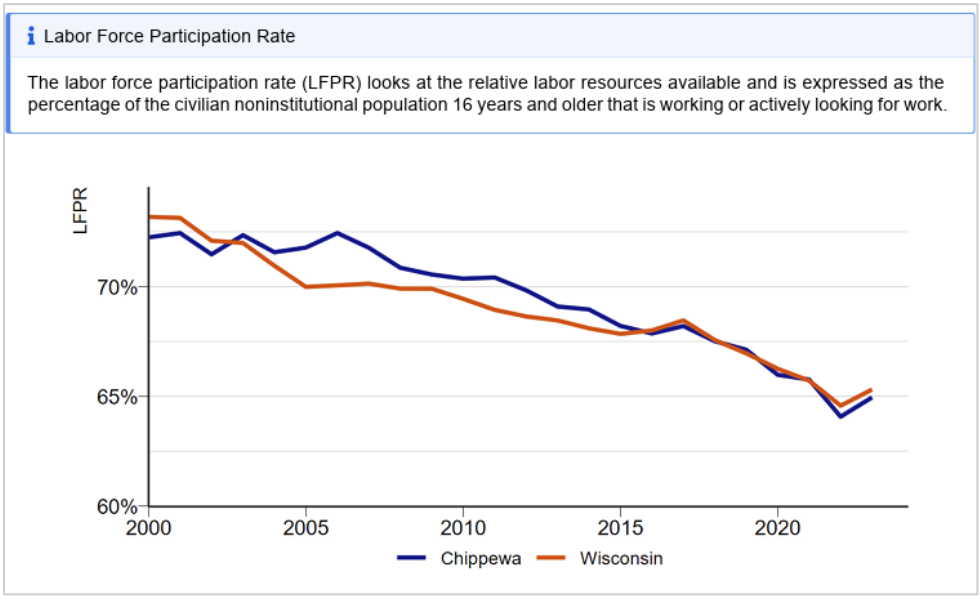
As mentioned, the labor force participation rate, the percentage of the working-age population that is either employed or actively looking for work, has been steadily declining throughout the past few years, as is reflected in the data in Figure 9-3. According to WI DWD, the County's labor force participation rate was 65.0% in 2023, ranking 31st in the State. This downward trend is not unique to Chippewa County, but rather reflects the trends associated with an aging population exiting the labor market. As mentioned previously, Baby Boomers (those born 1946-1964), in particular, are retiring in large numbers and contributing to this decline.

Figure 9-2. Unemployment Rate, Chippewa County 2019-2024



Source: WI Department of Workforce Development

Figure 9-3. Labor Force Participation Rate, Chippewa County, 2000 – 2024



Source: WI Department of Workforce Development

9. Economic Development

Major Employers

Chippewa County is fortunate to have many companies of varying sizes that contribute to the economy. Table 9-5 identifies the largest employers within the County as identified by the Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation. Per the data, there is one company with 1,000 – 4,999 employees, four with 250-499 employees and nineteen companies with 100-249 employees.

Table 9-5. Top Employers in Chippewa County, 2025

Employer	Website	Industry Type	Employees
TTM Technologies Inc	www.ttm.com	Printed & Etched Circuits-Mfrs	1,000-4,999
HPE	www.hpe.com	Computers-System Designers & Consultants	250-499
Stanley Correction Institute		State Govt-Correctional Institutions	250-499
Chippewa Falls Area Unified Schl Dist		Education	250-499
Mason Co Inc	www.masoncompaniesinc.com	Shoes-Retail	250-499
National Presto Industries Inc	www.gopresto.com	Appliances-Household-Major-Manufacturers	100-249
Great Northern Corp	www.greatnortherncorp.com	Software/Application/Platform Publishing	100-249
Mayo Clinic Health Syst		Hospitals	100-249
W S Darley & Co	www.darley.com	Fluid Power Pumps & Motors (mfrs)	100-249
A1 Excavating Inc	www.a1excavating.com	Excavating Contractors	100-249
Walmart Supercenter	www.walmart.com	Department Stores	100-249
Nordson Extrusion Dies Ind LLC	www.nordson.com	Special Dies/Tools Fxtrs/Ind Molds (mfr)	100-249
Blain's Farm-Fleet Tires-Auto		Farm Supplies (whls)	100-249
Chippewa River Industries		Packaging Service	100-249
ITW Deltar Fasteners	www.itw.com	Bolts Nuts Screws Rivets/Washers (mfrs)	100-249
PMI	www.pmillc.com	Metal Manufacturing (mfrs)	100-249
Chippewa Falls YMCA		Youth Organizations & Centers	100-249
GVS Filtration Inc.	www.gvs.com	Air Purification & Filtration Equipment (mfrs)	100-249
Wisconsin Veterans Home		Long Term Care Facility	100-249
Northern Wisconsin Ctr		Government Offices-State	100-249
Cadott Junior-Senior High Sch		Schools	100-249
Lpi Inc	www.lpi-inc.com	Overhead Traveling Cranes Hoists (mfrs)	100-249
Cadrex	www.cadrex.com	Advanced Manufacturing (mfrs)	100-249
Fleet Farm Distribution	www.fleetfarm.com	Warehouse Logistics	100-249

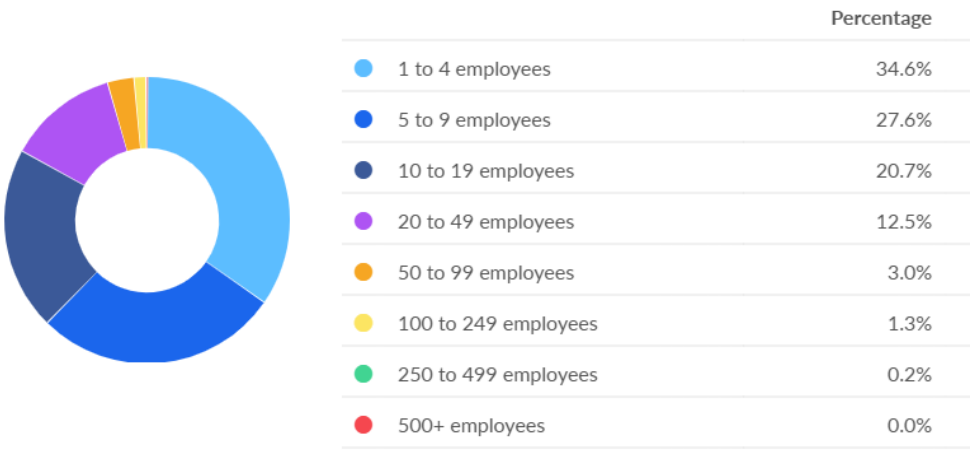
Source: Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation

Table source: Chippewa County Economic Profile, WCWRPC

Small Businesses

Figure 9-4 below shows that over half of businesses in the County have fewer than 10 employees, and this data likely excludes most sole proprietorships that function without Federal unemployment insurance.

Figure 9-4. Chippewa County Businesses by Size (2024)



source: Lightcast via WCWRPC

9. Economic Development

The small business sector plays a key role in Chippewa County's economy and community character. Most small businesses are locally owned. These businesses contribute significantly to the local employment, provide essential goods and services, and help define the identity of the County's cities, villages, and rural communities. Many of these businesses are found in the downtowns of the County's cities and villages, along highway corridors, in industrial parks, and within rural areas where home-based businesses and farm-related enterprises are common. And many of these business owners are community leaders and value supporting local organizations and other local businesses. However, smaller businesses have a higher failure rate and may require specialized support to be successful, mature, and grow.

Industry Composition & Performance

Table 9-6 summarizes employment by major industry sector in Chippewa County, comparing jobs levels in 2010 and 2024 to illustrate long-term trends and shifts in the County's economy. Consistent with other data shared earlier, the manufacturing, retail, and health care/social assistance industries continue to remain strong in the County.

Table 9-6. Industry Performance within Chippewa County, 2010 and 2024

NAICS Code	Description	2010 Jobs	2024 Jobs	2010-2024 Job Change	Compet-itive Effect	2024 Employment Concentration	2024 Payrolled Businesses
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	53	795	297	275	2.28	53
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	2	18	Insf. Data	10	0.17	2
22	Utilities	4	55	(30)	(37)	0.53	4
23	Construction	231	2,305	620	21	1.32	231
31-33	Manufacturing	128	5,808	716	161	2.57	128
42	Wholesale Trade	86	1,004	462	406	0.93	86
44-45	Retail Trade	200	3,593	246	41	1.29	200
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	113	1,765	736	54	1.34	113
51	Information	16	143	(163)	(190)	0.27	16
52	Finance and Insurance	83	582	10	(83)	0.48	83
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	38	227	103	72	0.43	38
54	Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	108	796	202	(38)	0.38	108
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	17	216	45	(24)	0.48	17
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	71	866	491	410	0.49	71
61	Educational Services (non-public)	13	513	345	305	0.67	13
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	387	3,521	609	(386)	0.87	387
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	29	525	171	52	0.96	29
72	Accommodation and Food Services	176	2,174	437	(38)	0.87	176

81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	116	1,405	131	50	0.94	116
90	Government	95	3,789	145	56	0.87	95
99	Unclassified Industry	0	0	Insf. Data	(4)	0.00	0
	Total	**1,963**	**30,099**	**5,581**	**1,112**		**1,963**

Source: Lightcast Q4 2025 Data Set, January 2026

Industry Projections

According to projections prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, West Central Wisconsin's workforce projects strong growth, with the region expected to add over 20,000 jobs by 2032. As shown in Table 9-7, all industry classes, with the exception of Information, are expected to see some level of growth during this ten-year period. Educational and health services, trade and transportation, and manufacturing continuing have been, and are projected to continue, to be strong employment industries in the region.

Table 9-7. Industry Employment Projections, West Central WI

	Estimated Employment*		
	2022	**2032**	**% Change**
Total, All Nonfarm Industries	**221,430**	**242,223**	**9.4**
Mining/Natural Resources	4,346	4,710	8.4
Manufacturing	37,331	39,901	6.9
Construction	8,800	10,035	14.0
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	43,355	47,310	9.1
Information	1,208	1,075	- 11.0
Financial Activities (finance/insurance/real estate/rental and leasing)	7,507	8,543	13.8
Professional and Business Services (professional/management/remediation)	15,034	16,906	12.5
Educational and Health Services (including State/Local Government)	48,084	52,353	8.9
Leisure and Hospitality	19,920	22,684	13.9
Other Services (except Government)	8,597	9,498	10.5
Government	11,585	11,636	0.4
Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers (all jobs)	15,663	17,572	12.2

(1) Employment is a count of jobs rather than people, and includes all part- and full-time jobs.
Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, December 2024

Industry Clusters

Industry cluster data helps a community understand its economic diversity and industry strengths. This can help a community identify economic development strategies (e.g., targeted business recruitment, workforce development programs, target supply chains, collaboration, land use implications).

For this brief analysis, cluster performance is determined by the following metrics:

- **Earnings**: How important is it that industries have high earnings per worker.
- **Growth:** How important is it that industries have high overall job growth?
- **Regional Competitiveness**: How important is it that regional growth exceeds the national average job growth for an industry?

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- **Regional Specialization**: How important is it that regional job concentration is higher than the national average job concentration for an industry?
- **Gross Regional Product (GRP):** How important is it that industries make a high contribution to overall gross regional product?

According to Lightcast, an economic data source utilized by WCWRPC, the following industries are top clusters in Chippewa County if all of the previous metrics are considered equal:

- State Government Services
- Institutional Furniture Manufacturing
- Upstream Chemical Products
- Plastics Manufacturing
- Electronic Computer Manufacturing
- Local Government Services
- Industrial Mold Manufacturing
- Paper and Packaging
- Animal & Crop Production

Included for reference in Table 9-6 in the Industry Composition section are competitive effect and location quotient numbers. Competitive effect is used as part of shift-share analysis to show the number of jobs gained or lost that cannot be explained by national growth or overall changes in an industry; these numbers attempt to isolate region-specific trends. Employment Concentration, also called Location quotient (L.Q.), is a "snapshot in time" of how concentrated or clustered each industry is within the area. In the case of manufacturing, Chippewa County has 2.57 times more jobs compared to the national average.

Comparing the list of top identified clusters in the County to the industry performance data in Table 9-6, one can see that both manufacturing and agriculture are prime industry concentrations within the County.

Downtowns/Central Business Districts

Downtowns present a key economic opportunity and challenge in economic development. Historically, downtowns were the center of economic activity and the heart of the community – an area where people would gather and shop. Downtowns include a mix of land uses and public spaces with commercial, services, and institutions often dominating. The characteristics and form of downtowns are also unique compared to the rest of the community, with concentrated buildings, shallower setbacks, and interesting historical architecture that is core to the community's identity and sense of place.



As our local economies have changed, many area downtowns have struggled to remain vibrant.

- Fewer small farms, commuter trends, "big box" retail stores, eCommerce, and highway bypasses have dramatically changed the demand for local storefronts and services.
- Many downtowns have more historic commercial property than the local market can support resulting in vacant storefronts and deteriorating structures.

- The costs to renovate older, brick commercial buildings is often an obstacle to property owners.
- The fabric and façade wall of some downtowns are being disrupted by vacant storefronts and conversion of first floor spaces to residential or other non-commercial uses, which degrades the downtown's function and economic potential.

Downtown Vertical Mixed Use



The majority of downtown buildings should be mixed use, with ground-floor retail and service uses and upper-floor office and residential uses. This combination optimizes parking facilities and keeps downtowns in use 24 hours a day. Source: Gould Evans Associates

source: Walker, Philip. "Downtown Planning for Smaller and Midsized Communities." American Planning Association, 2009.

Downtowns need to adapt to their changing roles. And while these trends present challenges, the future for most downtowns is bright.

- More downtowns are developing a unique position, niche, or brand, especially compared to other business districts in their trade area. This often includes less general retail and catering more to a visitor market.
- Downtowns continue to be a place to share and celebrate identity and local history (e.g., historic districts, design guidelines, placemaking, "festivalization")
- The geographic extent of a downtown may need to be re-defined and prioritized. Revitalization efforts could focus on a smaller, core downtown area with vertical-mixed uses (and a unified façade wall when possible), while allowing housing and a broader mix of uses at the core downtown's periphery.
- There is a resurgence in the role of downtowns as community gathering places, in part due to walkability and social experiences valued by both Millennials and Seniors. To this end, downtowns are excellent candidates for placemaking and walkability enhancements.
- Many downtowns are becoming more organized, frequently with grassroots leadership.

Within Chippewa County, downtowns or central business areas are still present in many of the urban areas (cities and villages) of the County, along with the rural hamlet of Jim Falls. Many of these communities have analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of their downtowns as part of their local comprehensive plans. The City of Stanely, for example, prepared a *City of Stanley Downtown Subplan* as part of its 2020 Comprehensive Plan update. And the City of Chippewa Falls included a separate downtown element or chapter of their comprehensive plan.

Main Street & Downtown Revitalization Support

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) administers two downtown programs – the Wisconsin Main Street Program and the Connect Communities Program – to help bring a community's downtown vision to life.



Source: Main Street America

The **Main Street Program** is centered around Main Street America's "Main Street Approach", which offers "community-based revitalization initiatives with a practical, adaptable framework for downtown transformation that is easily tailored to local conditions."[1] There are four main strategy areas that work together in the Main Street Approach: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. WEDC's **Connect Communities** program is sometimes referred to as "Main Street-lite," since it focuses on connecting a community with resources to assist with downtown revitalization but is less structured than the Main Street approach. Chippewa Falls has the only Main Street program in the County; there are no cities and villages participating in the Connect Communities program.

WEDC recently created a new **Vibrant Spaces Grant** designed to assist communities in creating vibrant and engaging spaces that make it easier to recruit and retain residents, sustain a robust labor force, and enhance local quality of life. This is a placemaking grant program to enhance and create public gathering places in walkable business areas, which is primarily downtown areas for most communities.

These programs can be very complimentary with other financial assistance and resources, such as the Regional Business Fund's business façade loan program, business improvement districts, tax incremental financing, safe-routes-to-school projects, and historic tax credits. In 2023, WCWRPC conducted a series of Downtown Building Renovation Workshops structured around a Community Readiness Assessment that includes resources, regulatory instruments, and other tools that can help communities achieve downtown revitalization goals.

9. Economic Development

Industrial/Business Parks and Shovel-Ready Sites

Chippewa County has ten industrial/business parks that are principally managed by each respective village or city and marketed with the assistance of Chippewa Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

Table 9-8. Chippewa County Business/Industrial Parks

Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation

Inventory of Chippewa County's Business/Industrial Parks

www.chippewa-wi.com

Property	Location	STAR*	Certified	Incentives	Available Acres	Municipal Water	Municipal Sewer	Natural Gas	Electric Service	State Highway Access	Commercial Airport Distance	Rail Service to Community	Rail Service in Park	Zoning
Bloomer Ironhorse Industrial Park	Bloomer	Yes		TID	50	Yes	Yes	Yes	Xcel	Hwy 53	20 miles	PR	Yes	Light Ind
Boyd Industrial Park	Boyd	Yes			25	Yes	Yes	Yes	Xcel	Hwy 29	35 miles	CN	No	Light Ind
Cornell Airport Industrial Park	Cornell	Yes			80	Yes	Yes	Yes	CVEC	Hwy 64	30 miles	No	No	Light Ind
Lake Wissota Business Park	Chippewa Falls	Yes	Xcel, WEDC	TID, OZ	44	Yes	Yes	Yes	Xcel	Hwy 53 & Hwy 29	7 miles	CN, UP, PR	Yes	Light Ind
New Auburn	New Auburn				80+	Yes	No	Yes	Xcel, Cooperatives	Hwy 53	25 miles	PR	Yes	Light Ind
Stanley West Industrial Park	Stanley	Yes		TID	150	Yes	Yes	Yes	Xcel, Cooperatives	Hwy 29	30 miles	CN	No	Light Ind, Comm

Definitions:
STAR = Sites That Are Ready
CERTIFIED = Certified by Xcel Energy & Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
Railroads: CN, PR - Progressive Rail, UP = Union Pacific
Incentives = TID (Tax Increment District), OZ = Opportunity Zone Area)
Properties under 15 acres or large parcels sold by private individuals not included.
Chippewa County has a total of 428.5 prime industrial space land product with only 1 area that can satisfy a 75=acre+ project.

As of December 2025, Chippewa EDC has also identified four Certified Shovel-Ready Sites:

- 45 acres in the Lake Wissota Business Park
- 145.9 acres in the Gateway Northwest Business Park.
- 79.1 acres in the Gateway Northwest Business Park
- 150 acres in the Stanley West Industrial Park

Information on these sites is publicly available online through the GIS-based site selection tool at the EDC's website. Eight buildings are also currently listed through the online tool. Chippewa County's Certified Shovel-Ready Sites label means that all of the due diligence has been done on the site such as planning, zoning, surveys, title work, environmental studies, soil analysis, and public infrastructure engineering and has been approved by State of Wisconsin and Xcel Energy as shovel-ready certified.

9. Economic Development

In 2019, Chippewa Economic Development Corporation coordinated the completion of a *Chippewa County Business Park Feasibility Study.* The Study included a robust analysis recommending the following industries be targeted for growth and attraction in Chippewa County, through their prioritization may change based on location and further analysis:

Target Industry	Subsectors of Focus
Food Processing	• Animal Food Manufacturing (NAICS 3111) • Dairy Product Manufacturing (NAICS 3115) • Baked Goods Manufacturing (NAICS 3118) • Other Food Manufacturing (NAICS 3119) • Maybe: Beverage Processing (NAICS 3121)
Advanced Manufacturing	• Industrial Machinery Manufacturing (NAICS 3331 and 3332) • Computer Manufacturing (NAICS 3341) • Motor Vehicle Body and Trailer Manufacturing (NAICS 3362) • Medical Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing (NAICS 3391) • Maybe: Chemicals and Plastics Manufacturing (NAICS 326 and 326)
Transportation and Warehousing	• Wholesale Trade (NAICS 423-424) • General Freight Trucking (NAICS 4841) • Specialized Freight Trucking (NAICS 48423) • Warehousing and Storage (NAICS 49311)
Professional Services (Offices)	• Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (NAICS 54)

The Feasibility Study further found that there is an ongoing and continued demand for industrial land within Chippewa County with growth anticipated within the target industries. The Study did note that community support for industrial development within Chippewa County varies widely and there may an opportunity to increase the alignment of stakeholders in the County to offer more clear guidelines on what kinds of developments would be welcomed and where; more partnership building may be required. This study also yielded some useful guidance as it relates to design of new business parks:

- **Size of Site:** The feasibility study states that there is a trend towards companies requesting larger sites. It is also reported that there is a lack of large "ready" sites in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The report notes that "this indicates that having a shovel-ready site of over 200 acres could be a competitive advantage in this region".
- **Infrastructure Capacity (transportation access, water, sewer, fiber, etc.):** Sites with infrastructure in place have a competitive advantage over those that require infrastructure improvements.

- **Ownership Status:** Municipal control over the land area is an advantage to site selectors of businesses looking to locate in a community.

Other important siting factors include required approvals, financing incentives, and labor force availability.

Agriculture

Agriculture plays a foundational role in Chippewa County's economy, landscape, and community identity. As detailed in **Chapter 6, Agricultural**, the County's farmland supports a diverse mix of crop and livestock operations. While a significant contributor to the County's economy, agriculture is often underrepresented in economic data due to sole proprietorships and reporting by farmers working locally who do reside in the County. And as discussed in Chapter 6, beyond direct employment and farm income, agriculture supports a wide network of related industries such as agribusiness services, transportation, equipment sales, ag-inputs, and food production.

Chippewa Economic Development Corporation, recognizing the opportunities of agriculture, partners with EcoStrat for innovation and growth through the Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) Zone initiative. The initiative, which unlocks the region's abundance agricultural biomass potential, is focused on "fostering the expansion of biobased industries that contribute to both the economy and the environment.[27] The Chippewa County BDO zone includes all of the County and a supply basin extending 75-miles from Chippewa Falls. EcoStrat has given Chippewa County's BDO zone an "A" rating, reflecting that it is well positioned for providing inputs, such as corn stover, though supply chains are not yet well developed.



source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2024

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

Tourism is an important part of Chippewa County's economy. In 2024, Chippewa County ranked 30th among 72 Wisconsin counties for traveler spending. It is estimated that travelers spent $127.4 million in Chippewa County in 2024, an increase of 27% from 2019 ($100.4 million). These expenditures generated approximately $47.6 million dollars in employee wages; supported 1,440 full-time equivalent jobs; and amounted to an estimated $11.6 million in State and local tax revenues.

Core to tourism in Chippewa County is its many natural, agricultural, and cultural assets. The County's lakes, extensive County Forest lands, and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail draw visitors year-round for outdoor recreation such as boating, fishing, biking, hiking, hunting, and snowmobiling, supporting local businesses and seasonal employment. Complementing these natural amenities is the County's successful agritourism economy that consists of a variety of wineries, apple orchards, and cheese production. Pondview Lavender Farm, located outside of Chippewa Falls, is a prime example of the unique agritourism businesses within the County. Established in June 2024, the farm has 4 acres of naturally grown lavender and features u-picks, seasonal events, and a gift shop with locally handcrafted lavender goods.

[27] *Time to Grow with the BDO Zone.* https://chippewa-wi.com/the-bdo-zone/

Heritage tourism is also an asset for Chippewa County as explored within the Historical & Cultural Resource chapter of this plan. Nationally, heritage tourism has been growing 4%-5% annually with forecasted annual revenues of about $162 billion by 2030. The 51-70 age bracket leads this tourism market, leveraging retirement freedom and higher disposable income for in-depth heritage exploration.

B. Economic Strengths and Weaknesses

The following economic strengths and weaknesses were adapted from two primary sources:

- The Economic Development Focus Group's August 2025 review and update of the strengths and weaknesses from the County's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, and
- Issues and opportunities identified in city, village, and town comprehensive plans and Summer 2025 surveys.

It is notable that many of these strengths and weaknesses are related to other plan chapters, such as housing, transportation, utilities, and land use.

Strengths

- Geography & Setting – Chippewa County is located between several major metropolitan markets. The County has a beautiful natural setting with abundant natural resources, water, and productive farmlands. With the relatively low price of land, "hobby farming" and having a home in the country still close to places of employment are commodities. Quality of life is growing in its importance for attracting talent and business investment.
- Education & Training – Chippewa County employees have good access to secondary education and training facilities. Many employers are willing to train employees on the job if workers have some core skills.
- Manufacturing Industry – Chippewa County has a very strong manufacturing and agricultural base that can be utilized to attract companies and industries to the area. Build on these existing clusters.
- Tourism – Chippewa County is a popular tourist destination with recreational water opportunities, major festivals, snowmobile & cross-country ski trails, museums, historic downtowns, and many agritourism opportunities.
- Infrastructure – Chippewa County has strong highway and rail freight connectivity to urban areas and markets. Strong power grid, but demand may be outpacing supply longer term. Significant broadband improvements. Six business parks; three with certified shovel-ready sites.
- Funding – Chippewa County and area communities have effectively used tax incremental financing and other available funding sources to attract and retain area businesses. New economic growth is important to communities and schools given State revenue constraints on local governments.
- Partnerships – Strong partnerships exist upon which to address shared economic development goals. Maintain an entrepreneurial-friendly ecosystem that supports economic investment by private and public sectors. Strong Economic Development Corporation.
- Attitudes – Community members are hardworking. Communities are business-minded. Personalized customer service by many small town, locally owned businesses.

9. Economic Development

Weaknesses

- Workforce Age – Increasing age of Chippewa County's population & workforce. As a population tends to age, more individuals will begin to drop out of workforce due to retirement, though other factors (e.g., increasing costs, telework options) are incentivizing workers not to retire.
- Lack of Shovel-Ready Sites – Site size demands for business/industrial park sites is increasing; many communities lack land with adequate infrastructure to accommodate this growth. Costs of new building and land are not affordable for many small businesses.
- Farm Economy – Many small farmers are struggling, and the agricultural economy is undergoing significant change. While farmland preservation is often stated as a local goal, there are not strong, local commitments in many towns to preserve farmlands through zoning.
- Infrastructure Capacity - Economic development is going elsewhere due to water and utility capacity. Need to re-assess and address. Energy demands increasing while neighborhoods/communities often oppose solar/wind farms, generating facilities, or transmission lines.
- Downtowns – The historic business districts were built for a very different era and market. While Chippewa Fall's downtown is relatively vibrant overall, most downtowns have deteriorating/vacant buildings or are struggling to remain vibrant places.
- Housing & Child Care - Affordable housing and child care are all key barriers to economic growth. It is a challenge to get workers to move to communities outside the urban area.
- Transportation – Most products will need to be shipped significant distances to get to major markets. Some communities within the County have limited access to four-lane highways. Improved connectivity of recreational trails and routes is needed.
- Regulations & Land Use Conflicts – Overuse of or uncertainty with conditional use permitting, including opposition from neighbors, can stifle economic development and innovation; permits shouldn't require 3-6 months. Some codes take an outdated approach and don't allow the mixing of compatible uses. Some towns expressed concerns that more consistent enforcement of existing codes were needed.
- Limited Funding – There are limited funding sources for communities and the County to use in attracting new businesses to the area. Chippewa Valley Innovation Center recently closed.



9. Economic Development

C. Desired Businesses & Industries

Generally, current city and village comprehensive plans suggest that most economic development would be welcomed that does not sacrifice community character, have significant negative environmental impacts, or add a disproportionate level of City services per taxes gained. A diversified mix of many smaller and some large businesses and industry, with good-paying jobs, is often desired in order to have a healthy, resilient local economy. Some plans do specify certain business types that community members felt were most needed, though these vary by community. In some cases, plans suggest that certain types of businesses should be avoided (e.g., generate noxious odors, heavy water users).

Town comprehensive plans are less likely to identify specific desired businesses. Generally, the towns desire to remain largely rural in nature with agriculture, forestry, and recreation being the dominant businesses with scattered, compatible home-based businesses and agritourism. Some more intensive, likely unsewered, businesses and industry may be envisioned in rural hamlets (unincorporated villages), close to cities and villages, or near major highway intersections.

With the above in mind, the Economic Development Focus Group identified the following desired businesses and industries for Chippewa County:

- Build upon existing clusters and their supply chains, while targeting value-added products.
- Emphasize the businesses and industries of the future, not the past, such as advanced manufacturing, bio-manufacturing, medical devices, software development, and state-of-the-art substrates.
- Support reshoring opportunities and foreign investment, especially those that support existing clusters and supply chains.
- Energy and bio-mass production.
- Agri-business, agritourism, and manufacturing of value-added agricultural products.
- Health care and related services.

D. Designated Sites for Business & Industry

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires that the plan designate an adequate number of sites for the desired businesses and industries. The Land Use chapter (Chapter 11) includes an evaluation of County-level land use trends, forecasts future land demands, and makes general policy and strategy recommendations on infill, redevelopment, and where business and industry may be best sited. The future land use map in Chapter 11 also suggests where such businesses and industry might be best located within the unincorporated towns based on current town comprehensive plans. However, many town plans also suggest that more intensive commercial or industrial development would be best located nearest to or within the cities and villages where adequate infrastructure and services can be provided while maintaining much of the town in agriculture, forestry, and open space. As noted previously, some cities and villages have stated that they lack adequate land within their community to accommodate anticipated economic growth. Communities are also encouraged to utilize Chippewa EDC's Certified Shovel-Ready Sites program to assist with marketing their designated sites once prepared for development.

Overall, as a County-level plan, proposed economic development projects and sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and each individual community is encouraged to consider designating economic development

sites to accommodate their desired businesses and industries as part of their comprehensive plans and respective future land use maps. Foremost, the proposed projects should be consistent with each community's vision. A proposed project should examine the impacts on infrastructure, services, and the environment. Further, the scale, scope, and impacts of a proposed project should be examined to ensure it fits with the character and nature of its surroundings.

E. Opportunities for the Use of Environmentally Contaminated Sites

During this plan update, no specific, large-scale locations or brownfield projects in Chippewa County were identified as an environmentally contaminated site that was planned for future commercial or industrial use. Some individual community comprehensive plans identified 2-3 contaminated sites for which clean-up was proposed, underway, or recently completed, but their re-use was typically not restricted to commercial or industrial activities, and no major brownfield initiatives were proposed.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) identifies 24 contaminated sites throughout Chippewa County that have an open status, which are listed below. An open status indicates that the site is in need of clean-up, or that clean-up is underway. An additional 104 sites previously had spills, but are officially closed with continuing obligations.

Contaminated Site Types

- Environmental Repair Program Sites (ERP)
- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST)
- Abandoned Container (AC)
- No Action Require (NAR)
- General Property
- Spills

Table 9-9. Open BRRTS Sites in Chippewa County

BRRTS Activity Number	Activity Name	Address	Municipality	Activity Type	Start Date
02-09-000040	CHICAGO & NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD	CTH S	ANSON TN	ERP	1/1/1980
02-09-594826	DRESELS LF	CTH K	ANSON TN	ERP	11/9/2023
02-09-594202	SUPERIOR SILICA SANDS SETTLING PONDS	WEST OF 3991 STH 64	AUBURN TN	ERP	2/22/2024
02-09-547277	BLOOMER FRMRS UNION COOP-BLOOMER	16779 98TH ST	BLOOMER	ERP	6/10/1997
08-09-555455	KWIK TRIP PARKING LOT	1625 WOODARD RD	BLOOMER	AC	11/12/2002
02-09-529458	BLOOMER COOP FEEDS	8555 190TH AVE	BLOOMER	ERP	7/20/2004
03-09-190303	DJ CADOTT	110 CHIPPEWA ST	CADOTT	LUST	6/18/1998
02-09-000010	CHIPPEWA FALLS LF	2736 NELSON RD	CHIPPEWA FALLS	ERP	9/15/1977
02-09-000015	BETTER BRITE PLATING	420 PALMER ST	CHIPPEWA FALLS	ERP	10/30/1988
03-09-000923	CENEX TANK FARM	2137 N PRAIRIE VIEW RD	CHIPPEWA FALLS	LUST	12/16/1992
02-09-213903	CHIEFTAIN OIL CO-FORMER BULK OIL STATION	2 N BRIDGE ST	CHIPPEWA FALLS	ERP	2/15/1999
02-09-596628	MASON COMPANIES INC	SE CORNER PALMER & WILLIAMS ST	CHIPPEWA FALLS	ERP	4/7/2025
02-09-598067	CHIPPEWA SAND CO (FMR) PROCESS WATER PONDS	NE OF CTH DD AND CTH A	COOKS VALLEY TN	ERP	8/21/2025
03-09-589639	CORNELL EXPRESS	425 S 3RD ST	CORNELL	LUST	5/2/2022
02-09-000267	NATIONAL PRESTO (SF NPL)	3925 N HASTINGS WAY	EAU CLAIRE	ERP	1/1/1980
02-09-588115	CHIPPEWA VALLEY AIRPORT PFAS	3800 STARR AVE	EAU CLAIRE	ERP	8/5/2021
02-09-000066	HALLIE TN LF #1771 HALOGENATED ORGANICS	110TH ST	HALLIE	ERP	9/13/1985
02-09-000338	HALLIE TN LF #2807	117TH ST	HALLIE	ERP	12/5/1985
02-09-000248	A E SCHNEIDER & SONS SALVAGE	292 HAGEN RD	LAKE HALLIE VIL	ERP	7/23/1991
03-09-589288	LEYLAS PLACE	30887 STH 27	LAKE HOLCOMBE	LUST	2/24/2022
08-09-555459	NEW AUBURN SALVAGE	CTH SS NORTH OF CTH M	NEW AUBURN	AC	7/3/2002
03-09-591839	BRIDGE STOP	330 W MAIN ST	NEW AUBURN	LUST	4/3/2023
03-09-560833	DON SMITH SALES FMR	101 4TH AVE	STANLEY	LUST	6/12/2013
03-09-595834	COMMERCIAL PROPERTY	401 E MAPLE ST	STANLEY	LUST	11/19/2024
02-09-000316	WHEATON TN	20TH ST	WHEATON TN	ERP	1/1/1980

Of the 24 sites, sixteen are ERP sites that have contaminated soil and/or groundwater, including industrial dumping or spills needing long-term investigation, buried containers of hazardous substances, and closed landfills that have caused contamination. This can include petroleum contamination from above-ground storage tanks. Seven of the sites contained leaky underground storage tanks (LUSTs). LUSTs typically have contaminated soil and/or groundwater with petroleum, which includes toxic or cancer-causing substances. The two remaining sites were for an abandoned container.

There is one Superfund National Priority List (NPL) site in Chippewa County. Superfund NPL sites pose the greatest risks to humans or the environment and/or require the EPA to take a more active role during long-term response and clean-up. The National Presto Industries site, which was listed in 1986, lies almost entirely within the City of Eau Claire in Chippewa County and is a Superfund NPL location. Per the EPA, the site will require long-term groundwater treatment, soil vapor extraction, groundwater monitoring, and cap maintenance. The most recent 5-year review of the site, completed in 2022, concluded that the cleanup being done on the site is protecting people and the environment.

9.2 Economic Development in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared economic development-related issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Wheaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Summary of Issues & Opportunities

- Lack of Key Infrastructure for Development
- Limited Financial Resources for Development
- Competition and Location Challenges
- Workforce Concerns
- Housing Shortages
- Limited Land Available, especially in cities & villages
- Development Readiness & Marketing
- Difficulty Attracting and Retaining Businesses, especially in downtowns

Summary of Plan Goals & Objectives

- Diversified, Resilient, and Growing Economy
- Retain & Support Existing Businesses, While Attracting New Businesses
- Vibrant, Safe, & Inviting Downtowns
- Economic Development is Compatible with the Neighborhood & Does Not Degrade the Environment
- Available Infrastructure to Support Economic Development Goals
- Strong, Local Workforce for Current & Future Economy
- Affordable Housing & Quality of Life to Attract & Retain Workers

Summary of Plan Recommendations

- Provide Resources and Support for All Facets of Economic Development
- Encourage Partnerships to Achieve Shared Goals

- Provide Needed Infrastructure, Expand Business Parks, and Market Shovel-Ready Sites
- Promote Local Businesses
- Support Agriculture and Agritourism
- Maintain Transparent and Efficient Permitting Processes
- Revitalize Downtowns and Encourage Tourism
- Utilize Tax Incremental Financing

9.3 Economic Development Plans, Programs & Partners

This Comprehensive Plan chapter (the Economic Development element) represents Chippewa County's primary economic development plan. This plan chapter is also utilized by the Chippewa Economic Development Corporation as a strategic guide for work planning. The following are some additional key economic development plans, programs, and partners unique to Chippewa County, though Chippewa County communities actively engage and rely on a wide range of other programs and partners.

Chippewa County Strategic Vision

The following rural economic development statement is one of five priority focus areas adopted by Chippewa County Board of Directors within the strategic visioning document:

Support economic development in rural areas

- **Improve and develop infrastructure to support the community businesses.**
- **Educate communities on economic development opportunities and resources.**
- **Encourage retention of local talent in collaboration with communities.**
- **Identify and promote recreational and tourism opportunities.**

City, Village, & Town Comprehensive Plans

State statutes require that all comprehensive plans include an economic development element, which typically serve as the community's primary economic development strategy. Some comprehensive plans, such as the Chippewa Falls and Stanley plans, may have a separate section or sub-section focused on their downtown. Current community comprehensive plans were considered during the update of this economic development chapter as summarized previously.

Chippewa Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

The Chippewa EDC is the County's primary economic development program and is a fundamental, crucial partner to the Chippewa County government and local communities in achieving shared economic development goals.

Chippewa EDC is the County's only full-time professionally staffed economic development organization and takes the primary lead role on economic development efforts in the County. The EDC's mission is to ignite and sustain economic growth in the Chippewa Valley by cultivating a vibrant business environment. Through partnerships, strategic initiatives, and a focus on fostering innovation, the EDC takes a hand-on approach to supporting businesses, empowering talent, and driving new investments. Business retention and expansion, helping entrepreneurs, attracting business investment, workforce development/talent initiatives and advocating for policies that strengthen the community's economic future are core program areas of Chippewa EDC.

9. Economic Development

Local Chambers of Commerce & Main Street Organizations

The following local organizations actively promote local businesses and/or tourism within their communities:

- Bloomer Chamber of Commerce
- Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce
- Chippewa Falls Main Street Program
- Stanley Chamber of Commerce

No Chippewa County communities are actively participating in Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation's Connect Communities program, which provides networking, training, and other tools to help support local revitalization initiatives.

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)

As of 2024, there were 1,400 active TIF districts in Wisconsin and over 70% of cities and villages have at least one TIF district. TIF is arguably the strongest economic development tool statutorily available to local governments in Wisconsin. TIF can be used to finance infrastructure, building repairs, remediation, and developer incentives for industrial, mixed use, blighted/conservation, or contaminated areas. This financing is made possible by temporarily redirecting property tax revenues created by new taxable development within the TIF district. Due to this commitment of potential tax revenue, TIF requires a partnership of the overlying taxing jurisdictions for the TIF district and the approval of Joint Review Board. The Chippewa County government is represented on all Joint Review Boards for existing and proposed TIF Districts in the County. Table 9-10 summarizes the eighteen TIF Districts in Chippewa County as of January 1, 2025.

Table 9-10. Tax Increment Financing Districts, Chippewa County, as of 1/1/25

City/Village	TID #	TID Type	Base Year	Max. Normal Life	Life Extended
CADOTT	4	Industrial	2013	9/16/2033	
CADOTT	5	Mixed-Use	2019	6/17/2039	
LAKE HALLIE	1	Industrial	2003	9/18/2026	4/21/2025
LAKE HALLIE	2	Industrial	2003	9/18/2026	4/21/2025
NEW AUBURN	1	Mixed-Use	2008	5/22/2028	5/22/2031
BLOOMER	4	Mixed-Use- Distressed	2005	8/10/2025	8/10/2035
CHIPPEWA FALLS	7	Blighted	2001	3/20/2028	3/20/2031
CHIPPEWA FALLS	8	Blighted	2002	7/16/2029	
CHIPPEWA FALLS	10	Industrial	2005	5/3/2025	11/18/2030
CHIPPEWA FALLS	11	Industrial	2008	9/2/2028	11/18/2030
CHIPPEWA FALLS	12	Blighted	2012	5/1/2039	
CHIPPEWA FALLS	13	Blighted	2015	4/7/2042	
CHIPPEWA FALLS	14	Industrial	2015	7/28/2035	
CHIPPEWA FALLS	15	Mixed-Use	2018	7/17/2038	
CHIPPEWA FALLS	16	Mixed-Use	2022	7/19/2042	
EAU CLAIRE	9	Industrial	2008	9/9/2028	
EAU CLAIRE	15	Mixed-Use	2022	7/12/2042	
STANLEY	3	Industrial -Distressed	2001	9/27/2024	9/27/2034

Due limitations in State rules, there are less than 20 Town TIF districts in Wisconsin. For most towns, a TIF district can only be created if it benefits limited types of agricultural, ag/wood manufacturing, forestry, and tourism activities.

9. Economic Development

Momentum West Wisconsin (Momentum West)

Momentum West is a regional economic development organization serving Barron, Clark, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce, Pepin, Rusk, and St. Croix counties with a mission is to develop partnerships and leverage the resources in West Wisconsin to market the region and grow the economy.

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) & Regional Business Fund, Inc.

On a multi-county level, the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission supports economic and community development within Chippewa County. The Commission is designated as the economic development district by the Economic Development Administration for the region, produces an annual, regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. The 2025 CEDS was considered when updating this comprehensive plan, which has six goals related to:

- Business & Worker Attraction
- Workforce Training
- Quality of Place
- Infrastructure
- Energy & Innovation
- Business Support & Development

The Commission provides Chippewa County and its communities with a variety of other assistance related to economic development, including data and studies, industrial site analyses, placemaking initiatives, grantwriting, and support related to housing, broadband, and other infrastructure.

All communities in Chippewa County are covered by a regional business revolving loan fund as low-interest gap financing. Created and staffed by WCWRPC, the Regional Business Fund, Inc. (RBF) offers low-interest loan funds to businesses that expand within the region; diversify the economy; add new technology; revitalize buildings in the region's downtowns; create or retain quality jobs; and leverage private capital investment in the region. All cities and villages, except Lake Hallie, have approved downtown-area maps for participation in the RBF's Downtown Façade Loan Program, which allows eligible property owners access to a low-interest loan for façade improvements. The following table summarizes RBF's Consolidated Loans (the primary revolving loan fund) from 2007-August 2025 that have been issued for businesses within Chippewa County, and does not include any additional or specialized loans administered by WCWRPC (e.g., EDA RLF, EDA CARES, Cap Cat, and/or TEF).

Table 9-11. RBF Consolidated Loans, Chippewa County

Chippewa County - RBF, Inc. Consolidated Loans (2007-August 31, 2025)	
Total # Businesses	144
# Start-ups	69
# Loans	148
Total $ Amount Awarded	$7,665,578
# Pre-loan Jobs	503
# Jobs Created	538
Private $ Leveraged	$67,197,716

9. Economic Development

WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

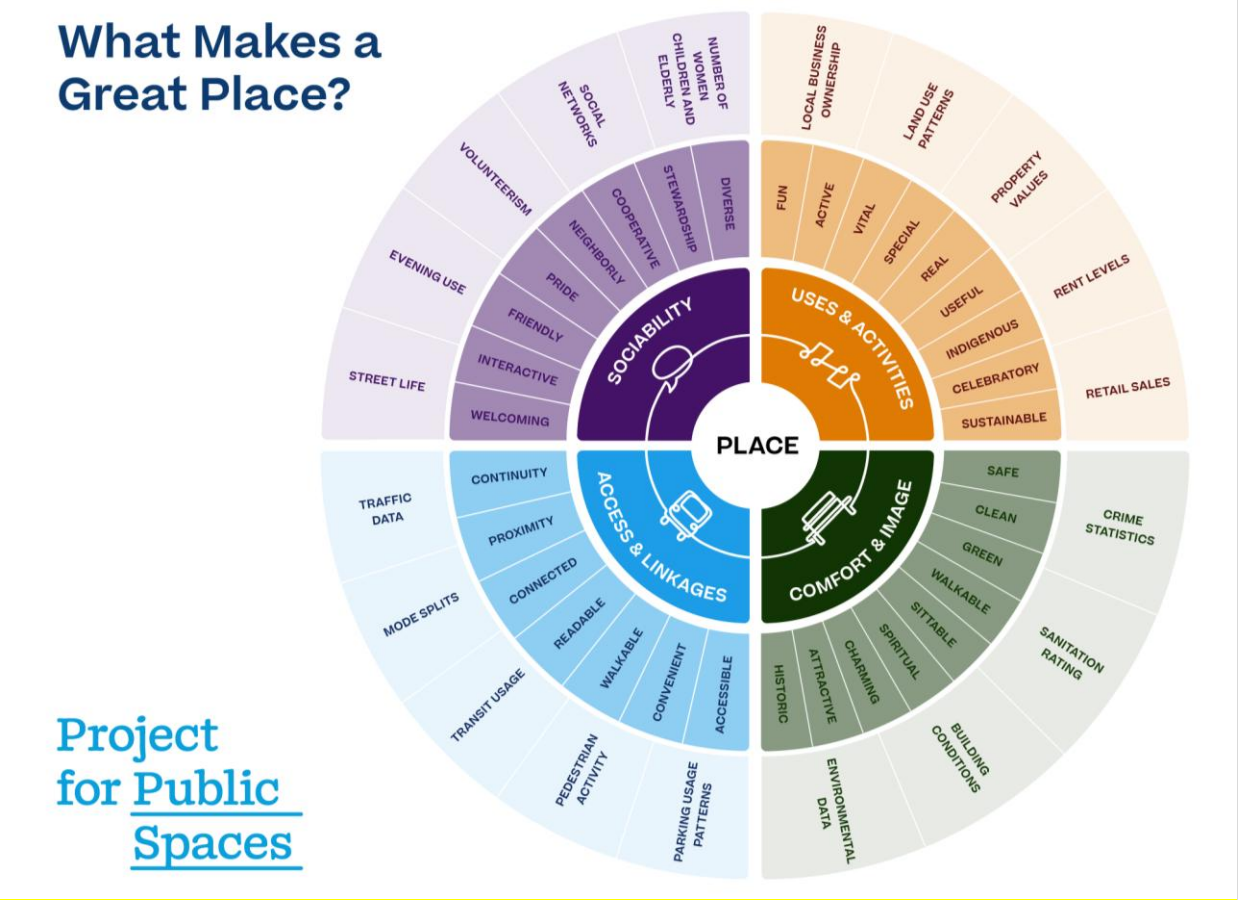
Placemaking is turning a neighborhood, downtown, or community from a place you can't wait to get through to one you never want to leave. Placemaking capitalizes on local assets, inspirations, and potential (as defined by those who live, work, and play in a particular place) to create and manage good public spaces. The result is a common vision and strategy, beginning with small-scale doable improvements that can immediately bring benefits to public spaces and the people who use them.

Placemaking is about improving the quality of life of residents. People choose to live in, shop in, and invest in places that offer attractive amenities, social and business networks, and opportunities for a vibrant, thriving lifestyle.

FOUR KEY ATTRIBUTES OF A SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC PLACE

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) has identified four key attributes that successful places have in common:

1. **Access & Linkages** – They are accessible and have connections to other places.
2. **Uses & Activities** – People use the space and are engaged in activities there.
3. **Comfort & Image** – The space is comfortable and has a good image.
4. **Sociability** – It is a sociable place – one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit.



Educational Institutions and Utilities

Public school districts, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and UW-Eau Claire, as well as the University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension Program, are all important economic development partners, in particular on issues related to workforce development, training, and data analysis. Utilities, including Xcel Energy and Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative as well as communications providers, are also important partners in ensuring that the County has the infrastructure need for the future economy.

Other Plans, Programs, & Partners

While no such list would be exhaustive, **Appendix D** includes additional economic development plans and programs that have been considered during the update of this comprehensive plan and can be used to help achieve the County's economic development goals and objectives.

9.4 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the economic development-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in Summer 2025:

- Siting of solar and wind farms and data centers, and large livestock facilities were among the top concerns for some towns.
- Managing stormwater water and the environmental impacts of proposed growth is important.
- Loss of farmland is a threat to the agricultural economy and the nature of farming/agriculture is changing. (see the Agricultural Resources chapter)
- Most towns felt that agricultural businesses and farm-based tourism should be allowed anywhere in their community, while manufacturing, commercial, and other more intensive economic activities should be limited in where they locate.
- Consistency and timeliness in the enforcement of codes is important.
- The development of niche businesses related to tourism, recreation, and/or agriculture output (cheese, produce, meats, etc.) are generally supported.

Highlights from the seven city and village surveys from Summer 2025 include:

- Comprehensive plans and future land use maps identified likely commercial and industrial growth areas. Some cites/villages lack available land to support anticipated commercial/industrial growth and/or plan to grow their business parks.
- Lack of housing/a tight housing market and child care availability impact the economy. More land needed to accommodate housing.
- Aging population will need services but also creates a workforce challenge.
- Need livable wages.
- Provide a high quality of life and desired amenities is important to attracting businesses and workforce.
- Downtown revitalization needs and lack of certain retail (e.g., local grocery store).
- Infrastructure improvements needed to support future growth (e.g., well or wastewater facility capacity or extensions); developers are less willing to help with infrastructure costs.
- State restrictions on revenue and municipalities.

- Promote buying local, utilize tax incremental financing and the Regional Business Fund, and continuing to work with partners to pursue and leverage resources.
- Work with adjacent communities to address shared goals and related growth challenges.

B. Economic Development Focus Group

The Economic Development Focus Group, which met on August 21, 2025, included a diverse range of public- and private-sector partners and had the largest attendance of all focus group meetings. Focus group attendees represented the following organizations:

- Chippewa County EDC
- SEH
- Mosaic/Home Technologies
- Alliance Plastics
- CVE Corp
- Stanley Chamber of Commerce
- Pillar Bank
- Town of Lafayette
- Chippewa Valley Technical College
- Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District
- Xcel Energy
- Citizens Connected

This Focus Group discussed key sections of this Economic Development chapter, which were previously discussed (e.g., strengths & weaknesses, desired businesses & industry, redevelopment opportunities, related plans, programs, & partners). Additional important themes identified by the Focus Group often touch upon those identified by the local municipalities and include:

- This Economic Development chapter of the comprehensive plan is the "big picture" economic development strategy for Chippewa County; Chippewa EDC efforts "start here."
- Supporting and diversifying existing economic clusters is an important strategy, especially for clusters in growing technology and industries. See the previously description of "desired businesses."
- The economy is regional and growth benefits everyone. Avoid competition/"don't poach," but work cooperatively to take advantage of clusters .
- Chippewa Valley Innovation Center "ran its course" as an incubator space; encourage accelerator approaches.
- Most business/industrial parks lack sufficient land to attract a large industry. 5 acres has little value. Average lot size is around 75-100 acres per business. Funding is tight, so there isn't strong local interest in constructing spec buildings.
- Value-added agricultural businesses are an important economic opportunity that can help support local farmers.
- Farmland preservation is sometimes provided as a reason to deny economic growth, but there does not seem to be a true commitment to preserving farmland.
- Housing, child care, the County's outdoor recreation opportunities, and other aspects of quality of life are important to attracting workforce.
- Many employers can provide on-the-job training if workers have basic skills and/or a desire to work.
- Communities must "roll out the red carpet" to attract business investment.
- Target foreign investment and reshoring.
- See the previous list of economic strengths and weaknesses.

9. Economic Development

9.5 Economic Development Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

The following goal, objectives, policies, and strategies (GOPS) were developed from consolidating elements from the County's 2010 Comprehensive Plan and the adopted comprehensive plans of towns, villages, and cities. These were then further refined based on the input from the Economic Development Focus Group and community survey feedback. While this chapter focuses specifically on economic development, related policies in other plan elements—such as Housing and Land Use—also support these goals and are not duplicated here.

This chapter is organized differently from most other plan elements. Because Objective 1 functions as a foundational sub-goal, strategies not specific to Objectives 2–7 are included under Objective 1. In addition, this chapter uniquely includes recommended outcomes and benchmarks for each objective, largely drawn from the County's 2010 Comprehensive Plan, then reviewed and updated by the Chippewa Economic Development Corporation.

Economic Development Goal

Through innovation, strong workforce development, and collaboration, build and sustain a diverse, vibrant, and resilient economy across Chippewa County that provides livable wages, supports the success and growth of local businesses, attracts new investment, encourages innovation, promotes tourism, and preserves quality of life within a business-friendly environment.

Objective 1: Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR)

Strengthen business retention and drive sustainable, future-focused economic growth by fostering a supportive environment in which existing businesses can thrive and expand. Encourage entrepreneurship, innovation, and the development of cutting-edge industries while attracting new investment to Chippewa County. Prioritize the success and growth of local businesses—the backbone of job creation—ensuring they continue to operate competitively and contribute to a resilient and prosperous county economy.

Economic Outcomes:

An increase in the number of new business start-ups/over time, the number of "survivors" after 1-5 years, and the number of jobs.

Economic development stakeholders, policymakers, and investors will be more aware of the County and the critical role it serves in future prosperity.

Strong collaboration between communities rather than competition. Increased awareness of success stories.

Economic Benchmarks: Increase the amount of private-sector investment, number and growth of businesses, and the number of direct and indirect jobs created (also see Objective 3). In particular, evaluate this investment and business/job growth for the desired industry clusters. Progress towards Objective 1 can also be evaluated by: # of positive references from clients, # of media stories, # of web site hits, # of meetings between municipalities and their businesses, # of clients utilizing revolving loan funds, favorable client evaluations of business seminars and workshops, # of qualified inquiries handled, # of prospects generated, # of requests for info processed, # of leads generated at trade shows, and increase in the # of new customers for local businesses.

Objective 1 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Chippewa County's economy is diverse and the economic development goals of individual communities can vary. It is also important to recognize economic relationships
2. Foster partnerships between businesses, economic development stakeholders, local communities, and other partners to realize mutual economic benefits for functional economic and market areas, while avoiding economic poaching and unhealthy competition that weakens the overall economy.
3. Promote and encourage purchasing from locally owned businesses.
4. Create a culture of creativity with entrepreneurship mentoring and support. Attend or participate in cultural activities with entrepreneurs and other members supporting the creative class.
5. Business retention and growing existing businesses (e.g., economic gardening) is an economic priority.
6. Build upon and grow Chippewa County's industry clusters while fostering supply chain resilience.
7. Business accelerator support should be prioritized over an incubator approach with physical, rental space.
8. Market Chippewa County as a logistic destination for new ventures.
9. Creativity, collaboration, and strategic planning are vital to growing the local economy.
10. Stay proactive in understanding economic shifts and trends. Champion investment in technology, clean energy, and emerging industries that drive sustainable growth.



11. Continue to encourage coordination between this Chippewa County economic development plan and the WCWRPC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Economic Development District.
12. The economy is dynamic and is influenced by many factors. It is important to be nimble; economic priorities and opportunities will change over time. It is important to regularly review the Economic Development objectives, policies, and strategies, and update and amend as necessary.

Objective 1 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. **Chippewa Economic Development Corporation (EDC)** will serve as the lead entity in coordinating and advancing the strategies outlined in this chapter, with support from Chippewa County, local communities, business leaders, and regional and State partners. Continue to support and strengthen Chippewa EDC's core programs—including Helping Entrepreneurs, Business Expansion and Retention (BEAR), Site Selection, and Workforce/Talent initiatives. (Ongoing)

   Key actions include:

   - Identifying and addressing barriers to business start-ups and the expansion of existing firms through initiatives such as the HATCH Business Idea Pitch Competition, BEAR Pitch events, Lunch & Learns, and customized technical assistance.

- Proactively identifying businesses with expansion potential and conducting confidential, one-on-one meetings with company decision-makers to support growth and job creation.
- Maintaining confidential engagement with primary industry businesses to assess needs, identify opportunities, and encourage reinvestment and employment growth.
- Providing a platform for dialogue on economic development issues and fostering connections among businesses within shared industry ecosystems to encourage collaboration and long-term competitiveness.
- Leveraging the Chippewa County Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone (BDO Zone) to attract clean energy and advanced manufacturing investments.

2. **Strengthen Partnerships.** Collaborate with Chippewa EDC, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC), Momentum West, and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to: (ongoing)
   - Attract business investment aligned with Chippewa County's industry clusters and the Industrial Park Study's targeted industries, including supply chain growth and onshoring opportunities.
   - Expand connections to global trade and export opportunities.
   - Educate communities and businesses on available economic development tools, programs, and resources.
   - Pursue and promote State and Federal initiatives that support regional economic growth, such as technology zones and targeted tax credit programs.
3. **Support Strategic Use of Development Financing Tools.** Continue to support and educate on the use of tax incremental financing to support infrastructure and cash grants when necessary to incentivize development as envisioned in project plans. (ongoing)
4. **Advance Industry Cluster Development.** Convene periodic events that bring together businesses and supply chain partners within key industry clusters. Encourage cooperation to share resources, support workforce initiatives, explore new markets, and strengthen cluster-based economic activity. (short-range)
5. **Align Local and County Economic Development Strategies.** Encourage communities to consider the policies and strategies in this plan and develop or update their own, prescriptive economic development strategies with clearly defined priorities and actions. (short-range)
6. **Monitor Progress and Adapt Strategies.** In collaboration with Chippewa EDC, regularly evaluate progress towards economic development objectives and adjust policies or strategies as needed to respond to changing conditions. (short-range, then ongoing)
7. **Explore Enhanced Trade and Logistics Capacity.** Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a local inland port authority or similar quasi-governmental entity to strengthen connections to global markets and generate revenue for local economic development initiatives. (medium-range)
8. **Establish Shared Metrics and Accountability.** Foster regional collaboration to develop shared socio-economic benchmarks and key performance indicators (KPIs) for Chippewa County. Use these metrics to guide data-driven planning, track progress over time, and inform future county and local comprehensive plans with measurable objectives and outcomes. (medium-to-long range)

9. Economic Development

Objective 2: Strengthen Critical Infrastructure and Development Readiness

Improve housing availability, child care, transportation, utilities, and fiber broadband access to ensure communities are competitive for business attraction and expansion while maintaining a pro-business environment through stakeholder engagement, strategic communication, balanced regulation, and collaboration.

Economic Outcomes:

Communities have identified and actively market available sites for business development.

Business/industrial parks offer ample room with adequate infrastructure to attract and grow businesses.

Establish and solidify a relationship with existing business expansion decision makers to enhance the reputation that Chippewa County is a great place to raise a family and a business.

Strive to achieve the housing, child care, and infrastructure goals and objectives found in other chapters of this plan.

Economic Benchmarks: # of certified shovel-ready sites are increased. # of business visited, # of CEO/decision makers visited, and # of attendees at connecting events.

Objective 2 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Support Development-Ready Sites.** Promote the development and marketing of shovel-ready industrial and business parks, with a long-term goal of 500+ acres served by necessary infrastructure.
2. **Strategically Utilize County-Owned Properties.** Utilize county-owned vacant or underutilized properties, i.e., foreclosed properties, for economic development or redevelopment purposes prior to offering such properties for public sale, where appropriate.
3. **Enhance Transportation and Logistics Connectivity.** Improve multimodal transportation connectivity and wayfinding consistent with the Transportation chapter, and leverage foreign trade zones to strengthen regional freight efficiency, logistics competitiveness, and access to global markets.
4. **Reinforce a Pro-Business Identity.** Use gateway signage and wayfinding to communicate Chippewa County's pro-business image while directing residents and visitors to downtowns, employment centers, and tourism destinations.
5. **Plan for Energy Infrastructure Needs.** Recognize that growing energy demand poses a risk to economic growth and implement the policies and strategies in the Utilities and Community Facilities chapter related to energy education, planning, and infrastructure investment.
6. **Ensure Infrastructure and Services Support Growth and Quality of Life.** Implement Utilities and Community Facilities policies and strategies to ensure adequate utilities, services, infrastructure, and recreational opportunities to support economic growth, attract workforce, and maintain a high quality of life. Priorities include:
    - Addressing water and wastewater capacity constraints in communities experiencing growth pressure.
    - Improving access to affordable, high-quality childcare and health care services to reduce workforce barriers.
7. **Address Workforce Housing Needs.** Collaborate with major employers and financial institutions to advance Housing chapter policies that expand and diversify workforce housing options across Chippewa County.

9. Economic Development

Objective 2 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. **Align Infrastructure Investment with Economic Goals.** Integrate economic development infrastructure needs into local capital improvement plans and continue pursuing grants and tax incremental financing to support targeted growth areas. (ongoing)

2. **Develop and Market Certified Shovel-Ready Sites.** Work with Chippewa EDC to identify, certify, and actively market shovel-ready sites to prospective employers and investors. (ongoing)



3. **Promote Economic Development Success Stories.** Highlight local successes, infrastructure investments, and replicable models through coordinated media outreach, websites, and press releases to reinforce Chippewa County's competitive position. (ongoing)

4. **Engage State and Federal Partners.** Maintain regular communication with State and Federal elected officials to share local economic challenges, policy priorities, and business recruitment efforts. (ongoing)

5. **Leverage County-Owned Properties for Economic Development.** Develop and implement a process for identifying, preparing, and marketing county-owned vacant or underutilized properties, i.e., foreclosed properties, for economic development or redevelopment opportunities prior to public sale. Coordinate with the Chippewa Economic Development Corporation and local municipalities to align opportunities with broader economic development goals. (short-to-medium range)

6. **Build Local Economic Development Capacity.** Support training and team-building programs for elected and appointed officials, boards and commissions, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders to strengthen local capacity and foster a collaborative, pro-business environment. elected and appointed officials, board and commission members, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders regarding their role in building and nurturing a pro-business environment. Strengthen community capacity to address economic challenges locally, while fostering cooperation. (medium-range)

9. Economic Development

Objective 3: Develop a Skilled Workforce and Attract Needed Talent.
Chippewa County will have a strong, local workforce. Create pathways to high-quality, future-ready jobs and offer the workforce needed to grow local businesses, support emerging industries, and ensure the long-term economic resilience of Chippewa County.

Economic Outcomes:

Training programs are offered that are aligned with the needed workforce skills.

Talent attraction initiatives.

Strong partnership initiatives with educational institutions.

Economic Benchmarks: Educational completions. Number of new jobs created each year and number of secondary jobs created each year, and the salaries (wages and benefits) for these jobs. Number of businesses participating in the Chippewa Valley career days and similar school/business events.

Objective 3 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Strengthen Population Growth and Retention.** Support policies and initiatives that attract and retain residents to enhance Chippewa County's long-term economic vitality by expanding the labor force, supporting business growth, and strengthening the tax base that funds schools and public services. Recognize that residents who work outside the county still contribute income and spending power to the local economy.
2. **Emphasize Workforce Development in Good-Paying Occupations.** Prioritize workforce development efforts that align with good-paying, in-demand occupations, particularly as housing costs and other living expenses continue to outpace income growth
3. **Expand Education-Industry Partnerships.** Encourage collaboration among K–12 schools, Chippewa Valley Technical College, UW–Eau Claire, and employers to align curriculum, training programs, and credentials with current and future workforce needs.
4. **Promote Quality of Life as a Talent and Investment Asset.** Use coordinated branding and marketing to highlight Chippewa County's natural beauty, housing and land opportunities, recreational amenities, and overall quality of life as key factors in attracting and retaining residents and business investment.



5. **Prioritize Talent Retention and Inclusive Workforce Participation.** Focus on retaining existing talent and expanding access to employment opportunities for underutilized labor pools, including individuals reentering the workforce, to strengthen workforce participation and economic inclusion.
6. **Leverage Retiree Skills and Experience.** Recognize retirees as a valuable workforce and community resource by supporting mentoring opportunities and workforce re-training pathways for part-time, flexible, or transitional employment.

9. Economic Development

Objective 3 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. **Support Youth Workforce Development Programs.** Continue supporting programs such as Schools2Skills and STEAM initiatives that prepare and retain local youth for Chippewa County's jobs of the future. (ongoing)
2. **Connect Employers with Students and Job Seekers.** Host and support events that bring together local businesses, students, and potential workers to strengthen career awareness, recruitment, and retention. Host events that bring local businesses, students, and potential workers together. (ongoing)
3. **Pursue Funding for Workforce and Talent Initiatives**. Collaborate with regional partners to secure grant funding and other resources to support workforce training, talent retention, and targeted talent attraction initiatives. Collaborate with partners to secure grant funding for workforce training and talent attraction initiatives. (ongoing)

Objective 4: Revitalize and Maintain Vibrant Downtowns

Develop, revitalize, and maintain vibrant, safe, and inviting historic business districts that support a mix of uses—retail, services, housing, arts, and civic functions— while serving as central gathering places that foster community pride and economic vitality.

Economic Outcomes:

Maintaining a vibrant core downtown area.

Marketing/ branding and placemaking efforts are occurring downtown.

Revitalization efforts are initiated and supported by downtown business owners and community member.

Economic Benchmarks: Downtown building vacancy rates, use of Regional Business Fund façade and other loans, avoiding the conversion rate of downtown buildings (first floor) to non-commercial uses, number of downtown events. Downtown and streetscape investment. Increased downtown visitor traffic and retail sales.

Objective 4 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Foster Strategic Partnerships.** Partner with Chambers, Main Street organizations, business leaders, and community organizations to achieve downtown revitalization and tourism objectives.
2. **Promote Placemaking, Branding, and Marketing.** Revitalize downtowns through placemaking, place branding, and coordinated marketing strategies that strengthen community identity and attract visitors.
3. **Preserve Historic Character and Address Aging Buildings.** Proactively maintain and improve the physical condition of aging downtown buildings while preserving historic character.
4. **Support Downtown Function and Land Use Priorities.** Encourage communities to evaluate, redefine, and prioritize the function, form, and geographic extent of their downtowns. Support land use policies that maintain a unified commercial core while allowing housing and a broader mix of uses at the periphery.
5. **Guide Mixed-Use Development.** Maintain a vibrant commercial core with retail and services on the first floor of storefronts, while guiding residential uses to the second floor (vertical mixed use) or to the periphery of the downtown core.

6. **Integrate Downtown and Economic Development Objectives.** Coordinate downtown revitalization strategies with other economic development objectives to support entrepreneurs, businesses, and tourism promotion.

Objective 4 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. **Promote Revolving Loan Funds.** Continue promoting programs such as the Regional Business Fund façade loan program to assist downtown building improvements. (ongoing)
2. **Leverage Financial Tools for Revitalization.** Continue to support the use of tax incremental financing, brownfield grant funding, WEDC Idle Sites Redevelopment Program, and other such financial resources to support downtown revitalization and blight removal efforts. (ongoing)
3. **Provide Workshops and Training.** Offer training for downtown revitalization, branding, and placemaking. Assess community readiness for addressing aging buildings and identify appropriate regulatory, financial, and assistance programs. Reference WCWRPC's 2023 Downtown Buildings workshop guide. Support workshops and training for downtown revitalization, branding, and placemaking. (short-to-medium range)
4. **Encourage Downtown Planning.** Support the creation of downtown strategic or revitalization plans, perhaps as part of local comprehensive plans or participation in WEDC's Connect Communities program. (medium-range)

Objective 5: Maintain a Strong, Resilient Agricultural Economy

Chippewa County is home to a growing, diversified agricultural ecosystem that spans from on-farm production and support services to processing, distribution, and marketing of local products. The County benefits from a strong concentration of agricultural service and supply businesses that provide essential inputs to producers. Promote farming, forestry, agritourism, and related value-added businesses that complement rural character while supporting the agricultural economy.

Economic Outcomes:

Chippewa County continues to have a strong agricultural economy.

Strive to achieve the goals and objectives found in the Agricultural Resources chapter of this plan.

Economic Benchmarks: The rate at which farms are disappearing is decreased. Number of new farmers. Increased in agricultural value-added businesses and markets. Increased agritourism marketing and local direct sales.

Note: Objective 5 and its policies and strategies are identical to Objective 3 in Chapter 6: Agricultural Resources and Farmland Preservation Plan

Objective 5 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Continue to Support Farming During Decision-Making**. Farming and agricultural development is a vital part of Chippewa County's economy and the importance of farmers, food production, and forestry must be emphasized in local government decision-making.
2. **Support Sustainable Value-Added Agriculture and Agritourism.** Encourage the development of value-added agricultural enterprises, local processing capacity, and direct-to-consumer markets. Target industries

and businesses that enhance Chippewa County's agricultural economy, provided they operate in a manner that protects the natural environment.

3. **Allow Farm-Based Businesses.** Agricultural-related businesses that do not result in land use conflicts or negatively impact natural resources should generally be allowed within agricultural zoning districts.
4. **Provide Resources and Technical Assistance.** Educational programming that assists existing and future farmers to improve farm profitability and to explore new commodities and markets are very important and must be supported. Offer training, guidance, and technical support to farmers and small businesses entering value-added markets. Continue to provide farm succession planning resources.
5. **Encourage Entrepreneurship in Agriculture.** Support programs that help producers develop business plans, navigate regulations, and access financing. Promote and support young farmers, local food producers, and buy local programs.
6. **Promote Job Creation and Small Business Growth.** Encourage value-added ventures that generate employment and strengthen the local economy.
7. **Attract Food Processing Enterprises.** Support food processors that add value to local commodities and expand economic opportunities.
8. **Foster Collaboration Between Producers and Processors.** Encourage partnerships between farmers and processors to expand product lines, improve market reach, and create efficiencies.
9. **Identify and Support Necessary Infrastructure.** Improve and maintain the capacity of the roads and physical infrastructure of Chippewa County. Ensure the safe and efficient transportation of agricultural and forestry equipment and commodities, while using education and enforcement to mitigate road damage and conflicts when necessary. Ensure a strong broadband infrastructure that supports the future of farming, precision agriculture, and our rural communities. Preserve and build upon existing agri-business relationships that currently exist between farm producers, area agricultural processors, and local businesses that service the County's farmers, while encouraging services that will advance the agricultural economy. Recognize infrastructure needs—such as commercial kitchens, shared processing facilities, or cold storage—that enable small producers to scale operations.
10. **Access to Healthy Foods.** Collaborate with area health and social services agency to ensure that all residents have consistent physical and economic access to enough safe, nutritious food for a healthy, active life (food security).

Objective 5 Strategies (recommended actions)

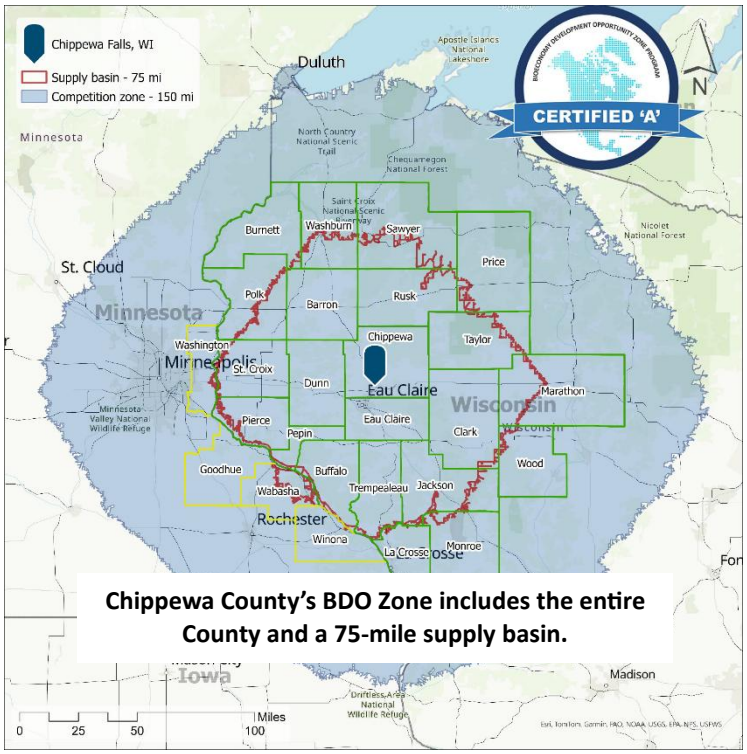
1. **Provide Technical Assistance, Training Programs, and Related Support.**
    - Actively explore and support initiatives that maintain existing family-owned operations and agri-businesses, establish local food-to-table markets, encourage farm-based renewed energy production, and encourage cooperative development and business ventures. (ongoing)
    - Collaborate with Extension and the Chippewa County Ag Educators Group to offer educational programming focusing on succession planning and overall farm profitability, including exploring new commodities and markets for agricultural products. (short-range, ongoing)
    - Support workshops, mentoring, and technical guidance for farmers and small business owners to help them navigate regulations, access financing, and scale production within Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) zones. (short-to-medium range)

9. Economic Development

2. **Promote Entrepreneurship Programs.** Facilitate programs that assist agricultural and forestry entrepreneurs with business planning, marketing, and regulatory compliance, ensuring alignment with County economic development goals. (ongoing)

3. **Leverage BDO Zones for Agribusiness Development.** Encourage value-added agriculture, forestry, and agritourism businesses to locate within Chippewa County's designated BDO zone to take advantage of infrastructure, utilities, and zoning incentives. (ongoing)

4. **Provide and Maintain Roadways for Agriculture.** Support road improvement and capital improvement planning by the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (at WCWRPC), the County Highway Department, and local units of government to improve and maintain roads and highways that provide safe, connectivity for agricultural purposes. Continue to work with local farmers and loggers to increase compliance with spring road bans as well as to secure ARIP and other grant funding to make needed improvements to support the agricultural economy. (ongoing)



Chippewa County's BDO Zone includes the entire County and a 75-mile supply basin.

5. **Engage State & Federal Officials.** Support efforts of area farmers to actively educate State & Federal elected representatives on the implications of policy on farm costs and challenges. Encourage more funding and options to incentivize farming, best management practices, and farmland preservation. (ongoing)

6. **Foster Collaboration Between Producers and Processors.** Encourage partnerships between farmers, foresters, and processing facilities to diversify product lines, increase efficiency, expand market reach, and support a resilient, growing agricultural economy. (short-to-medium range)

7. **Attract and Support Food Processing and Value-Added Facilities.** Recruit and retain food processors, forestry product processors, and value-added agribusinesses in BDO zones to expand local commodity markets and support small producers. (medium-range)

8. **Develop Supporting Infrastructure.** Identify and invest in critical infrastructure in BDO zones—such as shared commercial kitchens, processing facilities, cold storage, and distribution hubs—to enable small producers and foresters to grow and scale. (medium-to-long range)

9. **Explore Emerging Technologies.** Develop and implement pilot project(s) to evaluate emerging technology that can be applied to optimize inputs, limit environmental concerns, and sustain crop production (irrigated and non-irrigated). (medium-to-long range)

10. **Support Public Education on Farming.** Pursue grant funding to conduct an educational initiative that increases public awareness of the importance of agriculture and the challenges facing farmers. Increase awareness of where food comes from and opportunities to buy locally produced agricultural products. Collaborate with schools and FFA groups to encourage high schoolers to consider conservation and farming careers. (medium-to-long range)

9. Economic Development

Objective 6: Continue to Expand Tourism and the Recreation Economy

Leverage Chippewa County's natural amenities, recreational assets, and rich history to enhance quality of life for residents while strengthening tourism and recreation, positioning the County as a premier destination for visitors and outdoor enthusiasts.

Economic Outcomes:

As the number of visitors to Chippewa County increases, so does the positive economic impacts.

Assist in identifying funding sources, in addition to Chippewa County, to increase tourism efforts.

Strive to achieve the goals and objectives related to outdoor recreation, natural resources, and heritage tourism found in other chapters of this plan.

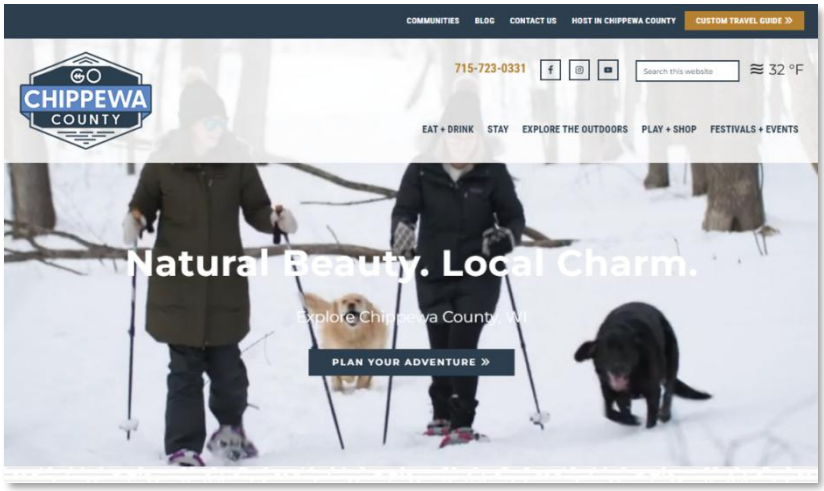
Economic Benchmarks: Increase tourists to and visitor spending in the County. Increase the # of Chambers of Commerce requests, # of guides printed, and # of related website hits. Increase the # of participants in tourism efforts and funding dollars.

Objective 6 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Promote Chippewa County as a Tourism Destination.** Continue to promote Chippewa County and its communities as attractive destinations for visitors, events, and recreational tourism.
2. **Support Heritage and Event Tourism.** Implement those policies and strategies in the Historical & Cultural Resource chapter that support the County's growing heritage and event tourist economy.
3. **Enhance Outdoor Recreation and Natural Amenities.** Implement those policies and strategies in the Utilities & Communities Facilities and Natural Resources chapters of this plan that support outdoor recreation, conservation, and the natural amenities critical to the tourism economy.

Objective 6 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. **Coordinate Tourism Marketing and Funding Efforts.** Collaborate with Chambers of Commerce, local communities, and partner organizations to market tourism opportunities, coordinate tourism initiatives, and pursue tourism grants and revenue-sharing opportunities. (ongoing)
2. **Support Events and Year-Round Programming.** Work collaboratively to maintain, expand, and create events and programming that attract visitors to Chippewa County throughout the year. (ongoing)
3. **Advance Regional Tourism Planning.** Explore the development of regional outdoor recreation and heritage tourism plans to strengthen coordination, investment, and long-term tourism growth. (medium-to-long range)



9. Economic Development

Objective 7: Encourage Planned and Sustainable Economic Development

Chippewa County will maintain a pro-business environment, while planning economic growth in a manner aligned with community values that minimizes land-use conflicts, protects the natural environment, and grows the tax base.

Economic Outcomes:

Develop a reputation as a county that is "easy to navigate" in the site selection and development process.

Land use permits are reviewed and approved in a timely, fair, and consistent manner.

Land use conflicts are mitigated and natural resources, especially surface and groundwater, are protected.

Strive to achieve the Land Use and Natural Resources goals and objectives of this plan.

Economic Benchmarks: County and municipalities review comprehensive plans, land use ordinances, and permitting processes for greater efficiency and avoiding redundancy. Times required for permit approvals. Number of policy recommendations approved. New growth does not negatively impact water and the environment.

Objective 7 Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. **Maintain a Competitive Business Climate.** Balance taxes, regulations, and quality-of-life considerations to support business attraction, retention, and expansion.
2. **Foster an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.** Support the growth of Chippewa County's entrepreneurial ecosystem by promoting innovative, locally based businesses and facilitating access to resources through the Chippewa Economic Development Corporation and other local partners.
3. **Strengthen CEDC's Role in Economic Development Policy.** Establish and reinforce Chippewa Economic Development Corporation as the primary resource for economic development policy guidance and recommendations during county and local government decision-making.
4. **Support Sustainable and Green Development Practices.** Encourage sustainable development approaches, including green business parks, green technologies, and low-impact development and stormwater management practices.
5. **Improve Regulatory Coordination and Customer Service.** Enhance intergovernmental collaboration and engagement with business leaders to improve land use regulatory coordination, predictability, and customer service.
6. **Protect Natural Resources and Minimize Land Use Conflicts.** Implement relevant policies and strategies from the Natural Resources and Land Use chapters that protect the natural environment and mitigate land use conflicts.

Objective 7 Strategies (recommended actions)

1. **Improve Regulatory Coordination and Customer Service**. Conduct regular intergovernmental meetings among regulatory entities to improve coordination of permitting processes, clarify timelines, streamline reviews, and reduce duplication. Enhance access to land use information and regulations through a centralized "one-stop" resource for businesses. (short-range)

9. Economic Development

2. **Connect Entrepreneurs to Resources and Support.** Work with the Chippewa EDC to connect entrepreneurs to business opportunities, mentorship programs, specialized training, and access to financing and technical assistance, strengthening startup success and sustainable business growth. (short-to-medium range)
3. **Support Boundary Agreements and Utility Expansion.** Encourage cities, villages, and towns to explore boundary agreements that will allow for the strategic expansion of public utilities and the growth of business and industrial parks. (short-to-medium range)
4. **Increase Zoning Certainty and Flexibility.** Encourage updates to zoning ordinances to provide greater specificity in conditional use permitting for commercial and industrial development, while allowing flexibility for mixing compatible uses based on form, function, and potential impacts. (short-to-medium range)
5. **Promote Compatible Design Standards.** Where appropriate, encourage communities to explore minimum design and landscaping standards for commercial and industrial development to reduce land use conflicts and ensure growth aligns with desired community character. (timelines vary)





10. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Chapter 10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Key Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues & Opportunities:

- Chippewa County's government has many existing intergovernmental relationships and agreements, some of which would fall under intergovernmental cooperation agreements defined under Wisconsin §66.0301. The County has a particularly strong relationship to the unincorporated towns for land use planning and regulations, stormwater management, parks and forestry, and emergency management. Many additional County services are provided to all municipalities, including land conservation, public heath, social/human services, and transportation.
- Chippewa County' government is not a party to any cooperative boundary plan as defined under Wisconsin §66.0307, and it is unlikely they will be a party in the future.
- Chippewa County's government is an active member of West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) under as defined under Wisconsin §66.0309.
- Intergovernmental collaboration, mutual aid, and shared services are crucial to providing efficient, effective services, especially in light of municipal revenue and cost trends.
- There is an increasing need for cooperative planning for growth, land use compatibility, and public services, especially adjacent to or near the periphery of cities and villages. Proactive cooperative boundary agreements are encouraged in growth areas where there is a potential for intergovernmental conflicts or additional environmental protections are desire due to growth.
- Natural resources cross municipal boundaries. Intergovernmental cooperation is key to protecting water quality and the environment.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Law requires the inclusion of an intergovernmental cooperation element to analyze relationships, promote joint planning and decision-making, and resolve conflicts. Perhaps more than any other comprehensive plan chapter, this element is largely written from the Chippewa County government perspective and the relationships between the County and other local governmental units.

10.1 Existing Conditions

A. Existing Intergovernmental Agreements, Plans & Relationships

The number of existing intergovernmental plans, agreements, and relationships involving Chippewa County is fairly extensive. Chippewa County strives to maintain a cooperative relationship with all adjacent municipalities and partners. In general, Chippewa County has not seen a lot of disputes and confrontation in regards to land-use or planning issues from the local communities in the County. More conflict occurs between local municipalities, particularly in cases where growing incorporated communities are adjacent to unincorporated communities. County departments do a good job of staying involved, and keeping local jurisdictions involved, in matters that could potentially affect them. Other indirect relationships exist with other governmental partners, such as lake districts, educational institutions, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and numerous State agencies/departments. Enhancing the relationship of Chippewa County with all adjoining and overlapping jurisdictions can and will advance dialogue and actions necessary to ready the County for future changes in land use and growth pressures.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Overview of County Department Intergovernmental Relationships

Many County intergovernmental agreements and relationships involve emergency services, land use regulations, on-site sanitary systems, and wells that are provided through the County to unincorporated areas. Chippewa County also operates and maintains many miles of roads throughout the County and provides other important environmental, health, and social services. Examples of existing contracts held between Chippewa County and local, State, or other County Governments are as follows:

- Department of Administration has a contract with the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport.
- Department of Human Services has a contract with Clark County Social Services and CRI – Lutheran Social Services
- Department of Information Technology has an agreement with the City of Chippewa Falls IT Department.
- Chippewa County participates in the Chippewa Falls Urban Area Stormwater Management Plan, along with the Village of Lake Hallie, City of Chippewa Falls, and adjacent towns. The Land Conservation Department has stormwater management agreements with the Towns of Anson, Eagle Point, and Lafayette and the Village of Lake Hallie, and a recycling agreement with the City of Cornell and Chippewa Falls and the Village of New Auburn.
- Planning and Zoning Department has a comprehensive land use administration and enforcement agreement with the Village of Lake Hallie. The Department collaborates with six towns to enforce zoning regulations.
- The Sheriff's Department has several agreements including a boarding prisoner's agreement with Eau Claire and Trempealeau County, an armored vehicle agreement with Eau Claire County and a joint services agreement for a Tactical Team merger with the City of Chippewa Falls. The Department also recently executed an agreement with the Town of Lafayette to assist with code enforcement.



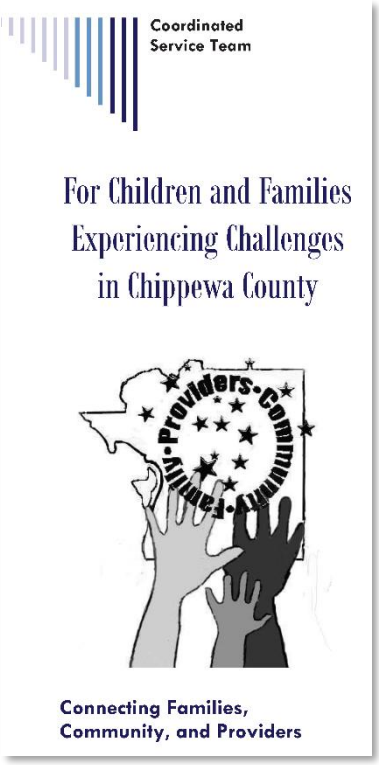
- Extension has a WNEP County Coordinator and a Cooperative Wildlife Damage Management Program agreement with area municipalities.
- Emergency Management Department has a Hazardous Materials Response Agreement with area municipalities.
- Forest and Parks Department has a Chippewa County Snowmobile Maintenance Agreement.
- Human Services Department has several agreements including a Trempealeau County Health Care contract, Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement with Mississippi Valley Health Services, Workforce Resources FSET and W2 Child Care.
- Public Health Department has an agreement with the Chippewa Falls School district for services provided.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

The following summarizes key intergovernmental relationships by County department, though no such list would be complete and the list is always changing as programs and needs change, and when new opportunities arise. For more information regarding any of these agreements or relationships contact the respective department.

Chippewa County Human Services

This department provides assistance, information, and programming for disadvantaged individuals throughout the County. They offer and coordinate mental health and alcohol and other drug addictions (AODA) counseling services, economic support, children, and family services (employment programs, long-term and short-term care facilities, community re-entry programs, etc.), and programs for persons with developmental disabilities. This department also manages the County Aging & Disability Resource Center. Many of these programs coordinate closely with school districts and local communities.



Chippewa County Public Health

This department collaborates with local communities and health care providers to track, plan for and address needs related to community health, environmental health, and nutrition. This includes licensing and inspections for restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts, pools, campgrounds, and tattoo and piercing establishments in Chippewa County. Public Health and Human Services work closely with various State and regional programs in carrying out their respective missions.

Chippewa County Planning and Zoning Department

The Chippewa County Planning and Zoning Department regulates many land-use decisions in local communities throughout the County. The County land division and floodplain ordinances are enforced in all unincorporated towns. The County shoreland zoning ordinance is enforced around all surface waters throughout the County unless the local jurisdiction has a more restrictive ordinance. As discussed in the Land Use element, several towns throughout the County following Chippewa County Zoning, which this department administers and enforces. The Planning and Zoning Department also regulates private on-site septic and well systems.

Chippewa County Highway Department

The Chippewa County Highway Department is responsible for coordinating maintenance activities on both the State and County Trunk Highway Systems. This department also coordinates construction and bridge plans on their road system. The Highway Department issues and reviews many driveway permits, roadway use permits, and utility permits for communities throughout Chippewa County.

Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management

Guided by the Countywide *Land & Water Resource Management Plan* and in collaboration with Wisconsin DNR and Wisconsin DATCP, the Chippewa County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department manages land and water resources, and collaborates with landowners, farmers, and lake groups/districts to promote best practices and improve water quality, including the creation of multi-jurisdictional watershed and lake management plans. They also keep information on the natural environment, including any environmental preservation areas, data on soil conditions, pollution control, farmland preservation, and animal waste/water quality, among other things. This department also manages the County recycling program, and works with communities to establish recycling pick-up or drop-off services for residents. The Department coordinates well testing efforts in the County and also works with four towns to maintain water refill stations. Together with the Facilities and Parks Department, Land Conservation conducts planning for and maintains trails and outdoor recreation facilities throughout the County. Also coordinates with Rain to Rivers and represents the County on sanitary sewer water quality management planning (sewer service area planning) for the urban area.

Chippewa County Emergency Management

County Emergency Management maintains records and coordinates planning throughout the County about hazardous materials, disaster mitigation, and emergency preparedness and response. This office also support Countywide radio

communications and addressing. A large portion of the office's funding is Federal passed through Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and the office works closely with WEM in carrying out its mission.

Chippewa County Land Records
The Chippewa County Land Records Department files and records land record information pertaining to land corners, maps of survey and information related to land parcels. This department also maintains the Public Land Survey System and determines the geodetic positions of locations for survey and mapping projects. This department also provides GIS mapping support to local governments.

Chippewa County Veteran Services
The Veteran Services office provides assistance to the men and women of Chippewa County who served in the U.S. Armed forces and their dependents, including connecting them to federal, State, and local benefits. The

Chippewa County Sheriff's Department
The Chippewa County Sheriff Department provides police protection and emergency response for the unincorporated communities throughout the County. They also patrol the County Highway system through incorporated communities, and will assist other law enforcement departments upon request and availability. This department also oversees the administration of the County jail, which houses inmates and criminals. The County's Emergency Communications Center is also located in this office and works closely with local emergency responders throughout the County. A statewide mutual aid agreement exists for law enforcement and the Department works closely with the State on emergency communications interoperability.

Governmental Partners

In addition to the towns, villages, and cities of Chippewa County, the County's government collaborates with a very large list of governmental partners, including neighboring counties. The County has agreements and funding contracts with numerous State entities as previously noted. Appendix X includes an extension list of Federal, State, Regional, and Local plans and programs and governmental partners organized by plan element.

Lake Districts
Chippewa County, primarily through its Land Conservation & Forest Management Department, collaborates with lake districts, WDNR, Extension, WCWRPC, and other partners on water quality and lake management endeavors.

Educational Institutions
Students in Chippewa County attend public school in several school districts throughout the County, as seen in the Issues and Opportunities Element, and the Utility and Community Facilities Element. Chippewa Valley Technical College is also a taxing jurisdiction in Chippewa County. Chippewa County's direct relationship with these school districts and CVTC is largely limited to public health, social services, and emergency management, but it is important that Chippewa County take into account the location of resources when planning for land-use changes, transportation improvements, and services.

WCWRPC and Urban Area Planning
Chippewa County and the local municipalities throughout the County are part of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) and the County Board designates three individuals to serve on the Commission. WCWRPC is also the region's Federal Economic Development District and administers the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning and is the urban water quality management local planning entity for the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urbanized Area. More information about WCWRPC can be found in Appendix X and other plan elements.

State and Federal Agencies
The various chapters of this comprehensive plan reference various State and Federal agencies and programs that are important to achieving the goals of this plan. Key programs are noted in Appendix 5.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

B. Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law requires that this plan identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit (Chippewa County) and other governmental units as well as the processes to resolve such conflicts. During the planning process, two general areas of potential intergovernmental conflicts were identified for which the Chippewa County government may be involved:

Potential Conflict #1: Growth, land use compatibility, and unregulated land uses, especially adjacent to or near the periphery of cities and villages.

- The possible future annexation and/or provision of utilities to anticipated growth areas.
- Growth pressures and town regulations (and their positions on land use regulations) vary across the County.
- Overlap of extraterritorial plat review authority in the southwestern portion of the County.
- Note: Chippewa County plays no direct role in annexation, cooperative boundary agreements, and most service agreements between its cities, villages, and towns. However, the County sometimes helps to facilitate such conversations.

Process to Resolve Conflict #1:

- County policies should continue to balance the diverse needs and desires of its towns. The County defers to its towns to determine their preferred future land uses and the mapping of zoning districts.
- Maintain regular communications between Town, City, and Village officials and County Planning & Zoning staff.
- Encourage the sharing of plans with adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions as well as the exchange of comments on draft plans. Strive for plan compatibility.
- Continue to enforce subdivision plat review and encourage urban development densities within anticipated residential growth areas.
- Actively participate in sewer service area plan (SSA Plan) updates and encourage consistency between the SSA Plan and County/local comprehensive plans.
- Encourage the City of Eau Claire, City of Chippewa Falls, and Village of Lake Hallie to meet, preferably including adjacent towns, to proactively address those areas where exterritorial plat review jurisdiction potentially overlap.
- Encourage the sharing of land use/development plans and the creation of cooperative boundary agreements between cities, villages, and towns for anticipated growth areas. Provide a model MOU to help foster commitments towards beginning such processes.

Potential Conflict #2: Disagreements, liabilities, cost-sharing conflicts, and other challenges regarding the provision of emergency services, emergency communications, recycling/waste management, and other public infrastructure.

- Sustainability of emergency services is an ongoing challenge due to increasing call numbers, decreased volunteerism, response times, and costs.
- Public sewer or water may be extended beyond the municipality with such services to a sanitary district or other areas in an adjacent community to support higher-density growth, but such agreements are rare.

Process to Resolve Conflict #2:

- The County will maintain and foster regular communications with and between communities, including between the respective staff providing services in order to foster positive relationships.
- The County should continue to take a lead coordinating and advisory role on emergency management and related services. Continue to coordinate the regular meetings of the Local Emergency Planning Committee, the 911 Policy & Procedures Work Group, the EMS Work Group, and Fire Department Chiefs Association to strive towards a consensus and commitment to cost-effective and shared emergency services practices.
- Encourage the creation of committees/work groups to explore service challenges and funding alternatives, such as the newly created ad hoc EMS Committee. Provide advisory recommendations as needed. Consider State Innovation Grant opportunities for the potential transfer of services.
- Establish, amend, or encourage mutual aid or other service agreements as needed. Strive to ensure costs are being shared fairly among all beneficiaries.
- The provision of public utilities to an adjacent community could be addressed as part of a cooperative boundary agreement.
- Use joint bidding/purchasing, equipment sharing, and collaboration to maximize resources and leverage grant funding.

10.2 Intergovernmental Cooperation in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

Current city, village, and town comprehensive plans had similar intergovernmental cooperation goals, objectives, policies, and strategies overall, though the perspectives on the issues may vary. The following highlights the most common themes among the plans.

Town, Village, & City Issues & Opportunities

The previous subsection (10.1 B.) identifies the greatest intergovernmental issues and opportunities facing Chippewa County:

- Land use conflicts and growth management between near city/village boundaries, including annexation and tax revenue implications.
- Costs, staffing, and other challenges related to the provision and maintenance of services, including emergency services (fire, EMS, law enforcement), emergency communications, recycling/waste management, shared roadways, stormwater management, and other public infrastructure

As opportunities, Chippewa County's units of government have positive relationships overall and, as noted in subsection 10.1. A, many intergovernmental partnerships exist that can be strengthened. These partnerships can be built upon to explore new service agreements and mutual aid as well as cooperatively plan for land use and growth.

Summary of City, Village, & Town Goals & Objectives

- Strengthen intergovernmental cooperation; maintain and expand mutually beneficial relationships.
- Ensure efficient, equitable, and cost-effective services.

- Enhance communication and foster open dialogue between units of government
- Protect community assets and natural resources
- Plan together for growth and land use compatibility
- Protect/grow the community's tax base
- Improve transportation and infrastructure coordination

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

Plans recommended maintaining communication and strengthening intergovernmental cooperation to:

- Encourage collaborative planning and the coordination of land use controls to manage growth, including exploring cooperative boundary agreements
- Enter into agreements to share services, maintain infrastructure, and reduce costs
- Coordinate and support cost-effective emergency services and law enforcement
- Continue to work together to protect natural resources, manage/reduce stormwater, improve outdoor recreation opportunities, enhance transportation safety and connectivity, and to promote economic development

10.3 Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs

In addition to the previously noted partners, Appendix 5 summarizes the following intergovernmental tools and programs are pertinent to this Chapter:

- Wisconsin Counties Association & League of Wisconsin Municipalities
- Annexation
- Extraterritorial Zoning
- Extraterritorial Plat Review
- Wisconsin Office of Land Information Services-Municipal Boundary Review
- Extension Local Government Center
- Wisconsin Statutory Intergovernmental Agreements

The table below from the Wisconsin Department of Administration compares the three types of boundary agreements in Wisconsin.

Distinguishing Between Wisconsin Boundary Agreement Statutes

	s. 66.0225, Stats	s. 66.0301, Stats	s 66.0307, Stats
Common name	stipulations and orders	general agreements	cooperative boundary agreements
Statute expressly authorizes Boundary changes	yes	yes	yes
Typically used to	settle annexation lawsuits	contract for joint municipal services	resolve boundary, land use, and service issues
Statute ever tested by judicial review	no	no	no
Eligible for tax revenue sharing under s. 66.0305, Stats.	yes	yes	yes
Eligible for tax increment financing using s. 66.1105, Stats.	no	no	yes
Agreement subject to state agency review	no	no	yes
Agreement binding on the parties	yes	yes	yes
Annexation permitted during agreement development	yes	yes	no
Statutory standards for planning and development issues	no	no	yes comprehensive plan
Coordination with state agencies, and neighboring communities	no	no	yes
Public hearings required	no	yes	yes
Referendum process	yes binding	yes binding	yes non-binding
Who votes	affected electors	affected electors	all electors
Limits	parcel(s) in litigation	10 years, renewable	no time limit,but must last at least 10 years

A relatively new intergovernmental tool in Wisconsin is the Innovation Grant program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. This grant program can help support the study and implementation of a transfer of certain services/duties to another county, municipality, tribe, nonprofit organization, or private entity.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

10.4 Community Perspective

A. Town/City/Village Surveys

The following are the intergovernmental-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- Continue to collaborate to provide emergency services.
- Explore/continue equipment sharing and road maintenance agreements.
- Maintain solid waste/recycling, parks, and stormwater management agreements with County.
- Cities need to work with towns to cost share and execute agreements as an alternative to annexation.

The following are the intergovernmental-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- There are gaps in certain social and health services, such as AODA, mental health, and child care.
- Emergency services needs, including staffing, is a challenge.
- Some communities noted that they are growing and have very limited land within their boundaries. More land was needed for housing and business development. Annexation was anticipated in the future.
- Work together to create jobs and address housing and workforce needs. Support school districts and CVTC presence.
- Continue to work with overlying taxing jurisdictions to utilize tax incremental financing.
- Explore boundary agreements and utility sharing.

B. Intergovernmental Focus Group

For the plan update, a combined, ad hoc Land Use & Intergovernmental Focus Group was formed that met twice during the planning process. Open communication and intergovernmental coordination in planning and service delivery was highly valued by participants. Focus Group discussion was integrated into Sections 10.1 (B) and 10.5.

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

10.5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal, Objectives, Policies & Strategies

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal

Promote and maintain strong, transparent, and mutually beneficial intergovernmental relationships with and among the towns, cities, and villages of Chippewa County, as well as with other units of government to enhance service delivery, foster collaboration, resolve conflicts, and support coordinated planning and development.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Objectives

1. **Foster Positive Relationships & Goodwill**
   Foster trust and understanding between the County, local governments, school districts, and other public and private organizations through regular, open dialogue and joint initiatives that proactively address potential conflicts while encouraging resident participation in decision-making.
2. **Promote Efficient & Cost-Effectiveness**
   Pursue shared services, joint purchasing, and cooperative agreements that reduce costs, improve efficiency, enhance public and emergency services delivery, and support the Utilities and Community Facilities goal and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.
3. **Promote a Healthy, Resilient Community**
   Collaborate with local communities and partners to ensure Chippewa County continues to be a healthy, resilient community offering an exceptional quality of life with diverse housing opportunities, a strong physical infrastructure, and a vibrant economy.
4. **Support Collaborative Land Use Planning and Natural Resource Management**
   Coordinate with towns, villages, cities, and other agencies to protect water quality and environmentally sensitive areas, promote farmland preservation, avoid land-use conflicts, and encourage intergovernmental agreements that manage growth, annexation, and boundary issues constructively, while achieving the Land Use goal and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Policies (decision-making guidance)

1. Trust, communication, and cooperation between all units of government are crucial to achieving the goals and objectives of the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan and addressing potential conflicts.
2. Chippewa County government will work to foster dialogue and cooperative planning between towns and cities/villages on land use and growth issues, but does not become directly involved in proposed annexations.
3. Collaborative planning between cities/villages and towns is preferred over more reactive annexation requests.

4. Mutual aid, shared services, and joint purchasing should be pursued as a cost-effective alternative when mutually beneficial to all parties and communities involved.
5. Road improvement, public works, and utilities projects should be coordinated and jointly planned when possible to save public costs overall and avoid disruption to businesses.
6. Continue collaboration to encourage the safe connectivity of streets and recreational trails/routes, including through the creation of shared official maps.
7. Watersheds, groundwater aquifers, natural habitats, and the natural resources of Chippewa County cross political boundaries necessitating cooperation in their protection. Support planning strategies and identify solutions based on such natural systems when possible.
8. Units of government should work collaboratively to educate, engage, and actively involved the public in addressing the challenges facing Chippewa County and exploring innovative solutions to achieve shared goals.
9. Chippewa County will continue to collaborate with Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and State/Federal partners to achieve the goals and objectives of this plan.
10. Implement the policies and recommendations requiring intergovernmental cooperation found in the Utilities & Community Facilities element and other elements of this Comprehensive Plan.

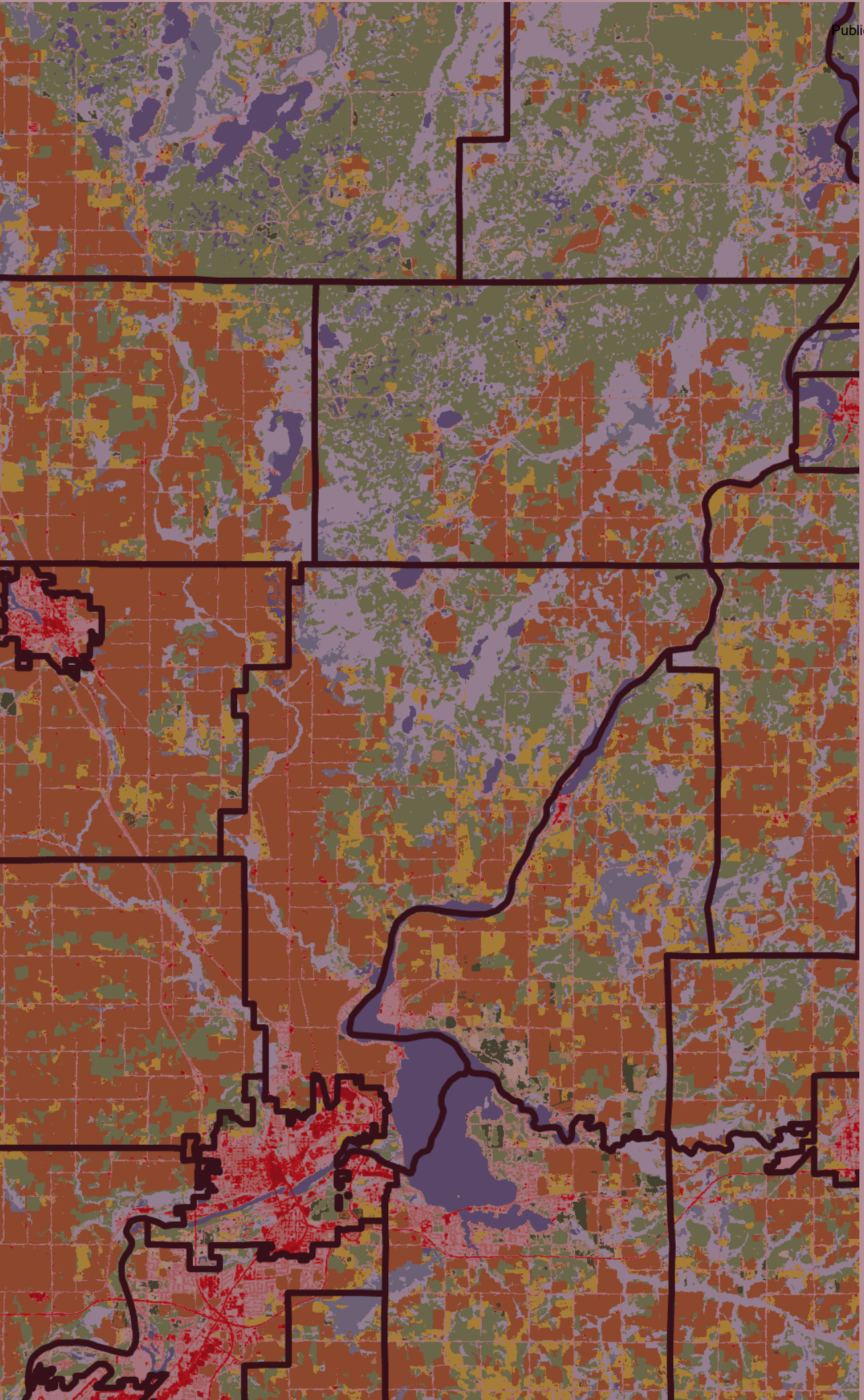
Intergovernmental Cooperation Strategies (recommended actions)

1. Proactively address the previously identified potential intergovernmental conflicts in Section I B. of this chapter using the recommended processes to resolve. (varies)
2. Continue and encourage regular intergovernmental meetings, including meetings between cities/villages and the towns. (ongoing)
3. Support the efforts of the ad hoc EMS study committee to address the challenges facing emergency medical services in the County. Establish similar work groups as needed in the future. (ongoing)
4. Continue to explore joint purchasing opportunities. As opportunities arise, pursue Wisconsin Department of Revenue Innovation Grant funding to study or implement the transfer/sharing of services for improved cost-effectiveness and sustainability. (ongoing)
5. Maintain, regularly re-evaluate, and formalize if necessary mutual aid agreements regarding emergency services, emergency communications, public works-related support, and other private/nonprofit-public agreements to improve response and community resiliency. (ongoing)
6. Collaborate with Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation and communities in the planning and marketing of business/industrial parks. (ongoing)
7. When County or State highway improvements are proposed for developed areas, including unincorporated hamlets, work collaboratively with cities, village, towns, and schools to consider placemaking and streetscaping opportunities to improve pedestrian and bike safety, streetscaping, placemaking, and wayfinding. (ongoing)
8. Encourage collaboration in addressing volunteer needs for local fire & EMS department. Explore multi-jurisdictional a volunteerism initiative to assist with shared demands; (short-to-medium range)

10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

9. Work with cities, villages, and towns to heighten awareness of extra-territorial plat (ETP) review authority, encourage consistency between overlapping land division regulations and permitting processes where possible, and clarify authority in areas where the ETP areas of cities/village overlap. (medium-range)
10. Encourage cooperative boundary agreements, potentially including the sharing of services and/or revenue. (short-to-long range)





11. LAND USE

Chapter 11. Land Use

Key Land Use Issues & Opportunities:

- Land use change and growth pressures vary throughout Chippewa County. Some towns have seen an increase in agricultural acreage while some of the towns with the highest residential growth are not located closest to the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire urban area. As such, the County needs to be flexible in its land use regulatory approach.
- Overall, the County is losing assessed agricultural and forest lands. While much of this is converted to residential use, an even greater portion appears to remain undeveloped.
- There are dramatic differences in population and housing densities between cities, villages, and towns.
- Most towns are unzoned and many lack comprehensive plans.
- As expressed in the Intergovernmental Cooperation element, growth pressures can create city/village/town conflicts. No cooperative boundary planning has been completed.
- There are increasing town concerns about potential land use conflicts and environmental impacts from solar/wind farms, data centers, battery storage facilities, high voltage transmission lines, and large livestock facilities.

The use of land is a critical factor in guiding the future growth of any county or community, whether it is rural, urban, or suburban. Good land-use planning analyzes current conditions and trends, and provides a way in which both the public and private sectors can make informed decisions. Individual decisions and actions are coordinated so that needed infrastructure and services are available and resulting development is complementary.

For Chippewa County and its communities, land-use planning provides an opportunity to avoid conflicts, conserve valued resources, coordinate services efficiently, and protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the community. For the private sector, land-use planning provides a formal direction, so that investment decisions can be confidently made. For the general public, land-use planning can be used to maintain those community features that residents like and value most, while helping to protect property values.

11.1 Existing Conditions

A. Existing Land Use

Table 11-1 summarizes the types and acreages of existing land uses within Chippewa County, as of January 1, 2025, and corresponds with Figure 11-1, Chippewa County Existing Land Use Map. Data was provided by Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Department, prepared based on the following:

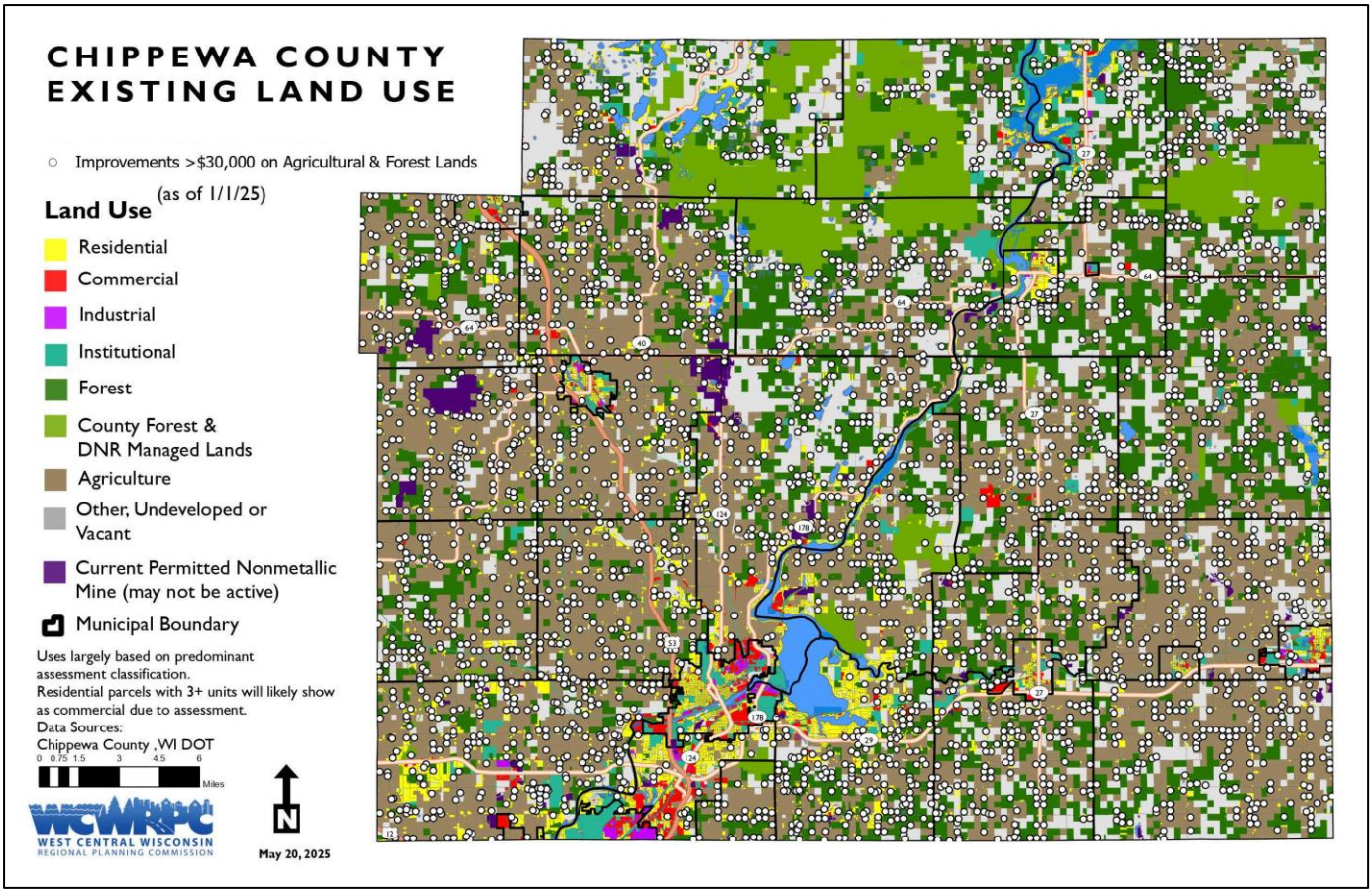
- Existing use was determined on a parcel-by-parcel basis.
- The existing land uses within the County are based on the predominant assessed land use by parcel.
- Parcels identified as agricultural or forest, with improvements of $30,000 or greater, were also identified.
- Road and other right-of-way are typically not included in the Institutional land use acreage.

11. Land Use

Table 11-1. Existing Land Use Acreages based on Assessed Predominant Use, January 1, 2025

Municipality	Agriculture Acres	Commercial Acres	Forest Acres	Institutional Acres	Manufacturing Acres	Residential Acres	Undeveloped, Vacant, Other Acres	# of Ag Parcels with Improvements > $30,000	# of Forest Parcels with Improvements > $30,000
Cities									
Bloomer	214	177	6	462	85	509	60	0	1
Chippewa Falls	190	1,420	0	2,404	327	1,401	478	2	0
Cornell	202	105	426	488	53	660	279	6	7
Eau Claire*	221	393	0	1,060	489	344	43	0	0
Stanley*	365	336	45	692	87	370	340	7	0
City Totals	1,192	2,431	477	5,106	1,041	3,284	1,200	15	8
Villages									
Boyd	819	32	4	94	3	99	22	7	0
Cadott	754	343	59	279	10	289	229	2	0
Lake Hallie	1,140	1,269	751	1,441	174	2,323	854	14	14
New Auburn*	956	126	183	324	1	99	219	12	6
Village Totals	956	126	183	324	1	99	219	12	6
Towns									
Anson	10,253	206	3,953	4,147	12	1,514	3,566	74	37
Arthur	13,225	310	6,612	984	0	426	5,309	109	25
Auburn	12,765	164	5,825	343	0	763	2,675	99	41
Birch Creek	3,620	79	6,421	1,390	0	502	16,842	34	33
Bloomer	17,180	191	6,723	1,705	11	887	3,206	120	59
Cleveland	7,917	29	10,978	9,282	4	511	6,467	66	91
Colburn	16,411	44	15,803	1,182	0	604	7,373	118	63
Cooks Valley	15,850	204	3,040	270	0	508	1,648	111	24
Delmar	19,492	26	1,569	264	2	452	4,768	134	10
Eagle Point	16,271	649	9,345	939	66	2,262	8,811	112	67
Edson	20,608	2	6,142	113	3	660	6,221	160	25
Estella	5,860	70	8,436	1,280	0	230	4,068	42	34
Goetz	10,378	58	5,011	80	1	555	2,581	69	35
Hallie	2,864	32	884	443	0	190	233	23	5
Howard	14,946	13	4,664	478	0	581	1,772	104	36
Lafayette	8,166	347	6,169	972	15	3,368	2,267	86	89
Lake Holcombe	1,999	292	6,350	3,202	49	1,057	5,343	26	47
Ruby	9,826	2	9,301	232	0	171	14,254	91	73
Sampson	7,613	126	7,641	5,002	4	1,667	18,660	67	67
Sigel	10,240	22	7,214	534	3	632	3,722	93	61
Tilden	16,528	41	2,907	706	2	1,271	972	114	30
Wheaton	21,020	246	4,154	1,525	93	3,423	2,806	186	52
Woodmohr	16,901	276	1,570	596	9	882	1,644	114	9
Town Totals	279,933	3,429	140,712	35,669	274	23,116	125,208	2,152	1,013
County Totals	282,081	5,986	141,372	41,099	1,316	26,499	126,627	2,179	1,027

Figure 11 – 1. Existing Land Use Map, Chippewa County, 2025



It is important to keep in mind that this information reflects predominant assessed use or the land use with the most acres on a single parcel according to tax assessment records. In reality, land use in the County is much more diverse with a single parcel often having multiple assessed uses.

The existing land use table and map show that agriculture is the County's predominant assessed use, representing 44.6% of all acreage shown. Forest is the next highest predominant use with 22.2% of all acreage closely followed by undeveloped/vacant/other at 20%. However, much of the County & WDNR lands are assessed institutional in Table 11-1 and not included in the forest or undeveloped acreage.

As shown in Figure 11-1, these predominant uses are not distributed evenly throughout the County:

- Over 98% of the predominant agricultural lands are in the unincorporated towns.
- There are greater concentrations of forest and County/WDNR-managed lands in the north half of Chippewa County, which are largely assessed Institutional but are a mix of forest and undeveloped lands.
- About 55% of the commercial acreage and 82% of the manufacturing/industrial acreage is concentrated in the cities and villages. A large portion of the commercial acreage in the unincorporated towns is associated with non-operating nonmetallic mining sites.
- Towns had between 28 (Hallie) to 238 (Wheaton) improvements of greater than $30,000 on agricultural or forest lands. The median count for towns was 140 such improvements.

11. Land Use

It is important to note that "other" assessed uses are predominantly farm-related buildings, including farm residences, so not all areas shown in gray on Figure 11-1 are undeveloped. This data also is based on acreage and does not reflect the most "intensive" land use in terms of potential development and impacts. For instance, a 20-acre parcel with 18 acres of agriculture is included as 20 acres of agriculture in the table and on the map, even if it has 2 acres of residential and/or commercial assessed uses. To recognize this fact, a dot was added on Figure 11-1 for each parcel that is predominantly in agricultural or forest assessed use for which there was more than $30,000 in assessed improvements; these are primarily residential homes, farmsteads, and farm buildings assessed as residential or other. During the planning effort, the Natural Resources Focus Group pointed out that most of these dots outside the cities and villages also represented a private well and on-site septic system.

Table 11-2 provides population and housing density data based on the land area within Chippewa County. These densities vary greatly by municipality.

- Chippewa County had a 2025 population density of 67.8 persons per square mile.
  - Town average was 32.9 persons per square mile.
  - Village average was 451.4 persons per square mile.
  - City average was 1,014.7 persons per square mile.
- Chippewa County had a 2023 housing density of 28.8 housing units per square mile.
  - Town average was 14.5 housing units per square mile.
  - Village average was 191.2 housing units per square mile.
  - City average was 410.8 housing units per square mile.





Table 11-2. Population & Housing Density, Chippewa County

Municipality	2025 Population	2023 Housing Units	2025 Land Area Square Miles	People per Square Mile	Housing Units per Square Mile
Chippewa County	68,414	29,017	1,008.42	67.84	28.77
Cities					
Bloomer	3,732	1,664	2.91	1,282.47	571.82
Chippewa Falls	15,292	6,765	11.37	1,344.94	594.99
Cornell	1,451	605	3.79	382.85	159.63
Eau Claire*	2,398	660	4.39	546.24	150.34
Stanley*	3,763	1,089	3.79	992.88	287.34
Villages					
Boyd	617	237	1.85	333.51	128.11
Cadott	1,492	658	3.40	438.82	193.53
Lake Hallie	7,512	3,209	14.13	531.63	227.11
New Auburn*	550	204	3.15	174.60	64.76
Towns					
Anson	2,376	1,145	37.27	63.75	30.72
Arthur	780	379	42.82	18.22	8.85
Auburn	796	284	35.75	22.27	7.94
Birch Creek	516	438	44.30	11.65	9.89
Bloomer	1,099	479	47.14	23.31	10.16
Cleveland	893	381	54.08	16.51	7.05
Colburn	907	491	64.76	14.01	7.58
Cooks Valley	759	361	34.27	22.15	10.53
Delmar	1,028	415	42.43	24.23	9.78
Eagle Point	3,323	1,443	61.02	54.46	23.65
Edson	1,149	397	53.89	21.32	7.37
Estella	479	205	31.50	15.21	6.51
Goetz	805	295	29.73	27.08	9.92
Hallie	190	60	7.44	25.54	8.06
Howard	802	418	35.83	22.38	11.67
Lafayette	6,583	2,677	34.51	190.76	77.57
Lake Holcombe	1,023	662	26.61	38.44	24.88
Ruby	481	314	53.46	9.00	5.87
Sampson	1,008	811	62.54	16.12	12.97
Sigel	1,186	390	35.72	33.20	10.92
Tilden	1,569	548	35.64	44.02	15.38
Wheaton	2,839	1,041	53.94	52.63	19.30
Woodmohr	1,016	292	34.99	29.04	8.35

*Data is only for the Chippewa County portion

source: WI DOA Population Estimates, 2019-2023 5-Year ACS Estimates, 2025 Census Tiger File

B. Supply, Demand, and Price Trends of Land

Many factors influence land supply and demand within Chippewa County, including:

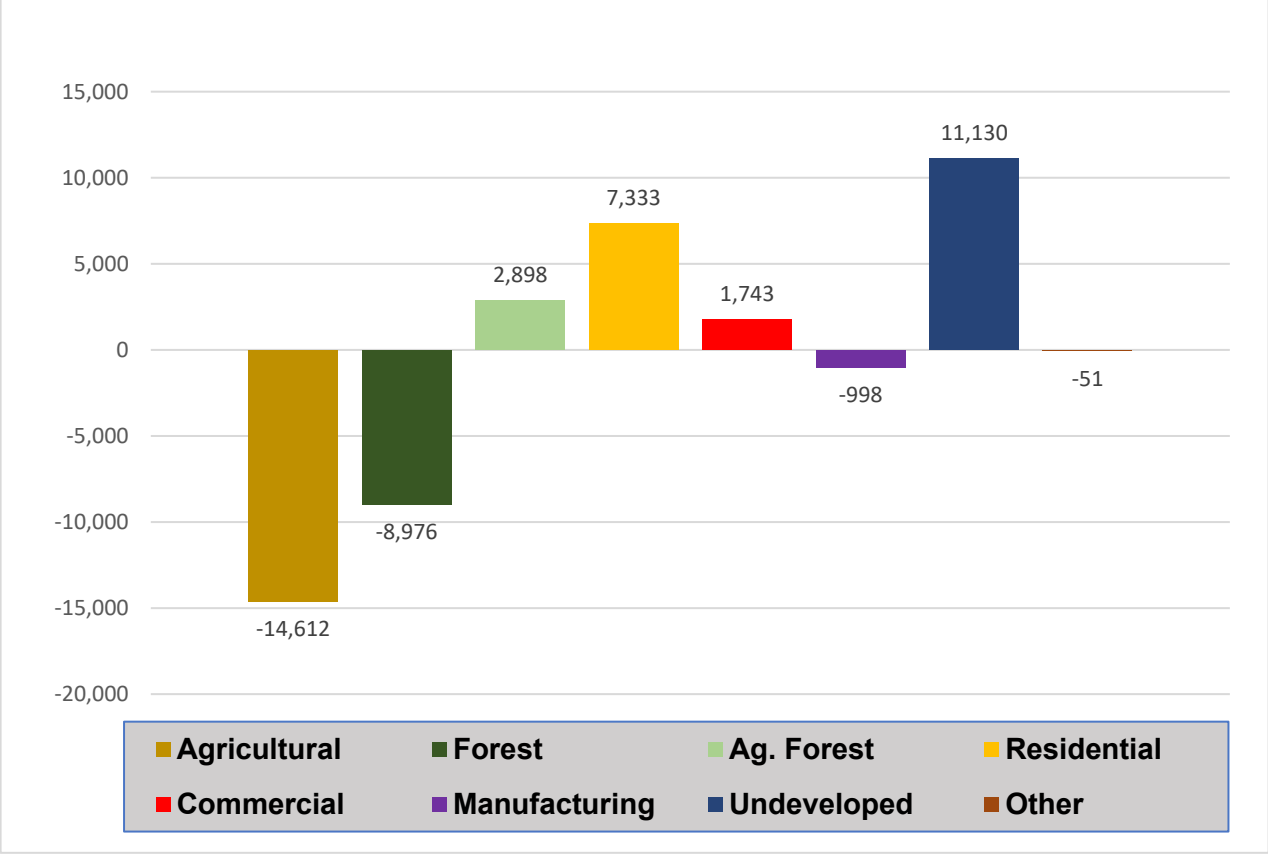
- Demographic Trends – As discussed in **Chapter 2**, the County is continuing to grow, which increases the demand for residential land and services for this population. However, many heads of household are younger or older with fixed or more moderate household incomes, which is reflected in smaller lot sizes and a relatively high renter population. Further, commuting times have been increasing, demonstrating that the workforce is willing to travel further between their home, place of employment, retailers, and entertainment. Given such mobility, the quality of life offered in a community becomes an increasingly important factor when determining where a household chooses to live.
- Economic Trends – Since the late 1980s, the value of and price paid for land within the region has seen a steady increase. This increase is not expected to slow, except for variations related to the national economy, such as interest rates. As the agricultural economy has changed over the past 75 years and the number of family farms significantly decreased, the economic functions of our communities have also changed, especially impacting historic downtowns. As a result, the types of services available in small communities have changed, with retail often increasingly replaced by larger chain stores (e.g., Menards, Walmart) in larger communities. Increasing commuter-sheds and the emergence of e-Commerce have also impacted these economic trends. The Economic Development Focus Group noted that land prices in rural Chippewa County are relatively lower than larger urban areas; land in the County will be attractive to households desiring a larger lot in the country or small hobby farm.
- Housing Costs – In recent years, shortages in construction supplies and workers, combined with other market and financial factors, have contributed to higher construction costs and home prices. Fewer new homes were being added to the market. And more households were choosing to rent or to renovate their homes rather than buying a new home.
- Public Infrastructure – Public infrastructure, especially transportation and water and sewer utilities network, contributes to the overall development pattern of the County as the network provides access to buildable land. Infrastructure improvements can drive new growth.
- Proximity & Quality of Life – Chippewa Falls and the Village of Lake Hallie are part of the larger Eau Claire metropolitan area, which continues to grow. Homebuyers desiring larger lots may be inclined to look outside cities and villages to surrounding towns due to a lower cost per acre. The Economic Development Focus Group also noted that many people have been desiring to live closer to the urban area and be close to various services, retail, etc., and will sometimes commute to jobs in other parts of the County. As noted in other chapters, Chippewa County has beautiful scenery, many natural amenities, and a range of outdoor recreational opportunities that contribute to its quality of life and make it an attractive place to live. While much of the private shorelands along lakes have been developed, pressure to develop/redevelop along lakes and rivers will likely continue.
- Local Government Action – As noted in the Housing and Economic Development elements, the municipalities of Chippewa County can influence growth through their plans, policies, and actions. Overall, Chippewa County and its communities have been pro-business and supportive of responsible growth, though opportunities to improve permitting processes may exist. Cities and villages have supported growth through the provision of public infrastructure and incentives, including the use of tools such as tax incremental financing. Most towns in Chippewa County are unzoned with limited land use controls.

11. Land Use

Two indicators of a dynamic economy and potentially changing land use patterns are land sales and prices. These two indicators show a demand to convert undeveloped or under-developed land to more intensive uses such as residential, commercial, or industrial. In turn, additional community services may be needed to support this change.

Figure 11-2 and Table 11-3 summarize assessed land use changes in Chippewa County from 2013 to 2023. It is important to recognize that while agriculture and forest uses have been decreasing, not all of this acreage is being improved. Undeveloped lands have experienced the greatest acreage gains.

Figure 11-2. Changes in Land Use Acreage by Assessed Use, 2013 & 2023



source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessments

Residential parcels had the highest values per acre, which increased by $500-$600 per year on average over the ten-year period. The losses in manufacturing acreage and value are likely due to the closure of sand mines. Conversely, mine parcels that are sitting vacant but not reclaimed contributed to the increase in commercial acreage. Commercial acreage also saw a dramatic increase in improvement values per acre during the period.

It is important to note that these land values per acre are based on assessment data and not necessarily sale prices. As a farmland preservation strategy, State law requires agricultural land to be assessed at its use value rather than market value. There was 29,286 acres of predominantly assessed agricultural lands in the County

sold from 2021-2025. Acres sold ranged from 3,623 to 7,424 per year. Average sales prices per acre of these lands was $1,012.44 and ranged from $662.69 to $1,435.03 per year.[28]

Table 11-3. Parcels and Land Values by Assessed Land Use, 2013 & 2023

	Agricultural	Forest	Ag. Forest	Undeveloped	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Other	Total
2013									
# Parcels	12,225	4,247	4,344	9,442	26,006	2,382	220	1,822	60,688
# Improved	--	--	--	--	22,525	1,803	149	1,806	26,283
Acres	287,869	84,878	60,298	76,473	29,306	6,119	2,498	4,092	551,533
Land Value per Acre	$ 172	$ 1,686	$ 886	$ 487	$ 26,189	$ 22,523	$ 9,173	$ 4,255	$ 2,228
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	--	--	--	--	$ 111,460	$ 255,574	$ 1,175,689	$ 96,054	$ 126,321
2023									
# Parcels	12,490	3,937	4,498	9,931	27,989	2,488	180	1,750	63,263
# Improved	--	--	--	--	24,956	2,006	153	1,749	28,864
Acres	273,257	75,902	63,196	87,603	36,639	7,862	1,500	4,041	550,000
Land Value per Acre	$207	$2,248	$1,182	$525	$32,077	$23,995	$13,662	$5,627	$3,191
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	--	--	--	--	$ 184,662	$ 447,563	$ 1,121,496	$ 133,377	$ 204,792
Difference									
# Parcels	265	-310	154	489	1,983	106	-40	-72	2,575
# Improved	-	-	-	-	2,431	203	4	-57	2,581
Acres	-14,612	-8,976	2,898	11,130	7,333	1,743	-998	-51	-1,533
Land Value per Acre	$ 34	$ 562	$ 295	$ 38	$ 5,888	$ 1,472	$ 4,489	$ 1,372	$ 962
Improv. Value per Imp. Parcel	-	-	-	-	$ 73,202	$ 191,989	$ (54,193)	$ 37,323	$ 78,471

source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Statement of Assessments

Tables 11-4 and 11-5 break out agriculture, residential, commercial, and manufacturing assessed use changes by municipality. Figures 11-3 and 11-4 show that some areas of the County have been gaining agricultural land while some of the towns with the highest residential growth are not located closest to the Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire urban area.

[28] Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Real Estate Transfer Return data

Table 11-4. Agriculture & Residential Acreage & Assessed Acreage & Improvement Changes by Municipality, 2013-2023

Municipality	2013					2023					Changes 2013-2023				
	# Parc Ag	# Ac Ag	# Parc Res	# Imp Parc Res	# Ac Res	# Parc Ag	# Ac Ag	# Parc Res	# Imp Parc Res	# Ac Res	# Parc Ag	# Ac Ag	# Parc Res	# Imp Parc Res	# Ac Res
Cities															
Bloomer	33	138	1,507	1,329	104	35	185	1,581	1,455	546	2	47	74	126	442
Chippewa Falls	10	161	4,478	4,069	437	19	192	4,574	4,295	892	9	31	96	226	455
Cornell	13	146	631	569	519	16	181	633	576	767	3	35	2	7	248
Eau Claire*	2	170	743	637	0	3	237	921	790	320	1	67	178	153	320
Stanley*	19	299	822	738	336	37	329	835	767	308	18	30	13	29	-28
Villages															
Boyd	36	785	279	235	20	37	771	290	240	27	1	-14	11	5	7
Cadott	32	722	509	457	197	36	716	515	468	199	4	-6	6	11	2
Lake Hallie	120	1,304	2,879	2,302	2,504	118	1,152	3,149	2,596	2,674	-2	-152	270	294	170
New Auburn*	43	897	208	180	126	46	868	212	188	142	3	-29	4	8	16
Towns															
Anson	465	11,379	1,116	921	1,391	471	9,827	1,239	1,082	1,854	6	-1,552	123	161	463
Arthur	520	12,411	256	244	584	532	12,228	266	257	627	12	-183	10	13	43
Auburn	558	12,293	287	233	902	571	12,099	320	277	1,112	13	-194	33	44	210
Birch Creek	214	4,441	489	429	435	282	3,884	557	504	710	68	-557	68	75	275
Bloomer	777	18,704	377	330	749	729	15,901	447	416	1,195	-48	-2,803	70	86	446
Cleveland	394	7,084	475	428	830	405	7,290	509	463	983	11	206	34	35	153
Colburn	701	16,097	507	363	1,166	721	16,453	536	402	1,227	20	356	29	39	61
Cooks Valley	584	14,737	230	212	626	594	14,633	253	238	744	10	-104	23	26	118
Delmar	696	19,367	236	234	555	708	19,104	265	262	654	12	-263	29	28	99
Eagle Point	724	16,594	1,592	1,349	2,161	742	15,698	1,733	1,487	2,835	18	-896	141	138	674
Edson	847	23,711	276	266	678	819	19,527	341	334	867	-28	-4,184	65	68	189
Estella	304	5,295	222	211	429	308	5,432	229	218	457	4	137	7	7	28
Goetz	434	10,955	229	208	580	446	10,845	270	247	651	12	-110	41	39	71
Hallie	110	2,579	49	47	183	114	2,662	55	54	207	4	83	6	7	24
Howard	587	13,992	246	225	785	598	13,901	287	267	901	11	-91	41	42	116
Lafayette	406	8,152	2,771	2,380	3,608	422	7,652	3,055	2,748	4,079	16	-500	284	368	471
Lake Holcombe	135	2,672	1,081	792	912	142	2,116	1,107	898	1,582	7	-556	26	106	670
Ruby	412	9,957	191	172	344	422	9,940	211	201	379	10	-17	20	29	35
Sampson	392	9,207	887	774	1,367	379	8,471	976	849	2,003	-13	-736	89	75	636
Sigel	499	10,342	384	314	747	502	10,034	450	375	956	3	-308	66	61	209
Tilden	653	16,154	574	516	1,366	672	15,621	623	567	1,572	19	-533	49	51	206
Wheaton	876	20,993	1,124	1,032	3,657	921	19,727	1,169	1,083	4,038	45	-1,266	45	51	381
Woodmohr	629	16,071	351	329	1,008	643	15,581	381	352	1,131	14	-490	30	23	123

Table 11-5. Commercial & Manufacturing Assessed Acreage & Improvement Changes by Municipality, 2013-2023

Municipality	2013						2023						Changes 2013-2023					
	# Parc Comm	# Imp Parc Comm	# Ac Comm	# Parc Manuf	# Imp Parc Manuf	# Ac Manuf	# Parc Comm	# Imp Parc Comm	# Ac Comm	# Parc Manuf	# Imp Parc Manuf	# Ac Manuf	# Parc Comm	# Imp Parc Comm	# Ac Comm	# Parc Manuf	# Imp Parc Manuf	# Ac Manuf
Cities																		
Bloomer	224	177	105	29	21	77	218	186	189	22	18	85	-6	9	84	-7	-3	8
Chippewa Falls	561	487	984	54	43	378	629	571	1,395	53	46	325	68	84	411	-1	3	-53
Cornell	95	84	113	15	13	79	98	88	116	11	9	52	3	4	3	-4	-4	-27
Eau Claire*	157	69	0	26	21	467	92	76	77	27	22	475	-65	7	77	1	1	8
Stanley*	178	127	247	17	13	102	186	139	349	13	10	89	8	12	102	-4	-3	-13
Villages																		
Boyd	50	38	26	1	1	3	50	40	29	1	1	3	0	2	3	0	0	0
Cadott	108	78	336	4	4	12	112	83	346	4	4	9	4	5	10	0	0	-3
Lake Hallie	373	240	1,365	12	9	148	374	260	1,299	16	14	169	1	20	-66	4	5	21
New Auburn*	23	18	16	5	2	39	34	25	125	1	1	1	11	7	109	-4	-1	-38
Towns																		
Anson	36	28	221	7	2	12	39	29	213	5	2	12	3	1	-8	-2	0	0
Arthur	22	21	313	0	0	0	28	24	329	0	0	0	6	3	16	0	0	0
Auburn	5	4	8	5	0	159	13	6	180	0	0	0	8	2	172	-5	0	-159
Birch Creek	12	11	84	0	0	0	14	12	80	0	0	0	2	1	-4	0	0	0
Bloomer	27	20	137	1	1	4	25	20	184	2	2	14	-2	0	47	1	1	10
Cleveland	9	8	43	1	1	5	9	8	43	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colburn	9	9	33	0	0	0	11	10	44	0	0	0	2	1	11	0	0	0
Cooks Valley	9	7	50	12	0	385	13	6	207	0	0	0	4	-1	157	-12	0	-385
Delmar	10	7	30	1	1	1	11	7	28	1	1	2	1	0	-2	0	0	1
Eagle Point	91	68	519	12	7	188	101	76	704	8	8	68	10	8	185	-4	1	-120
Edson	5	5	16	1	1	3	6	4	20	1	1	3	1	-1	4	0	0	0
Estella	11	9	35	0	0	0	14	11	57	0	0	0	3	2	22	0	0	0
Goetz	16	9	95	1	1	1	14	8	81	1	1	1	-2	-1	-14	0	0	0
Hallie	1	1	30	0	0	0	2	1	38	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	0	0
Howard	10	7	20	4	0	156	10	6	19	0	0	0	0	-1	-1	-4	0	-156
Lafayette	141	113	391	1	1	11	131	110	371	3	3	15	-10	-3	-20	2	2	4
Lake Holcombe	54	42	193	2	2	49	71	60	322	2	2	54	17	18	129	0	0	5
Ruby	3	3	15	0	0	0	5	4	14	0	0	0	2	1	-1	0	0	0
Sampson	25	24	124	1	1	5	37	33	209	1	1	5	12	9	85	0	0	0
Sigel	14	14	36	0	0	0	20	17	53	1	1	3	6	3	17	1	1	3
Tilden	23	19	81	1	1	6	22	18	78	1	1	2	-1	-1	-3	0	0	-4
Wheaton	51	37	293	3	2	99	65	48	369	4	3	96	14	11	76	1	1	-3
Woodmohr	29	19	160	4	1	109	34	20	294	1	1	12	5	1	134	-3	0	-97

Figure 11-3. Change in Agriculture Assessed Acreage, 2013 - 2023

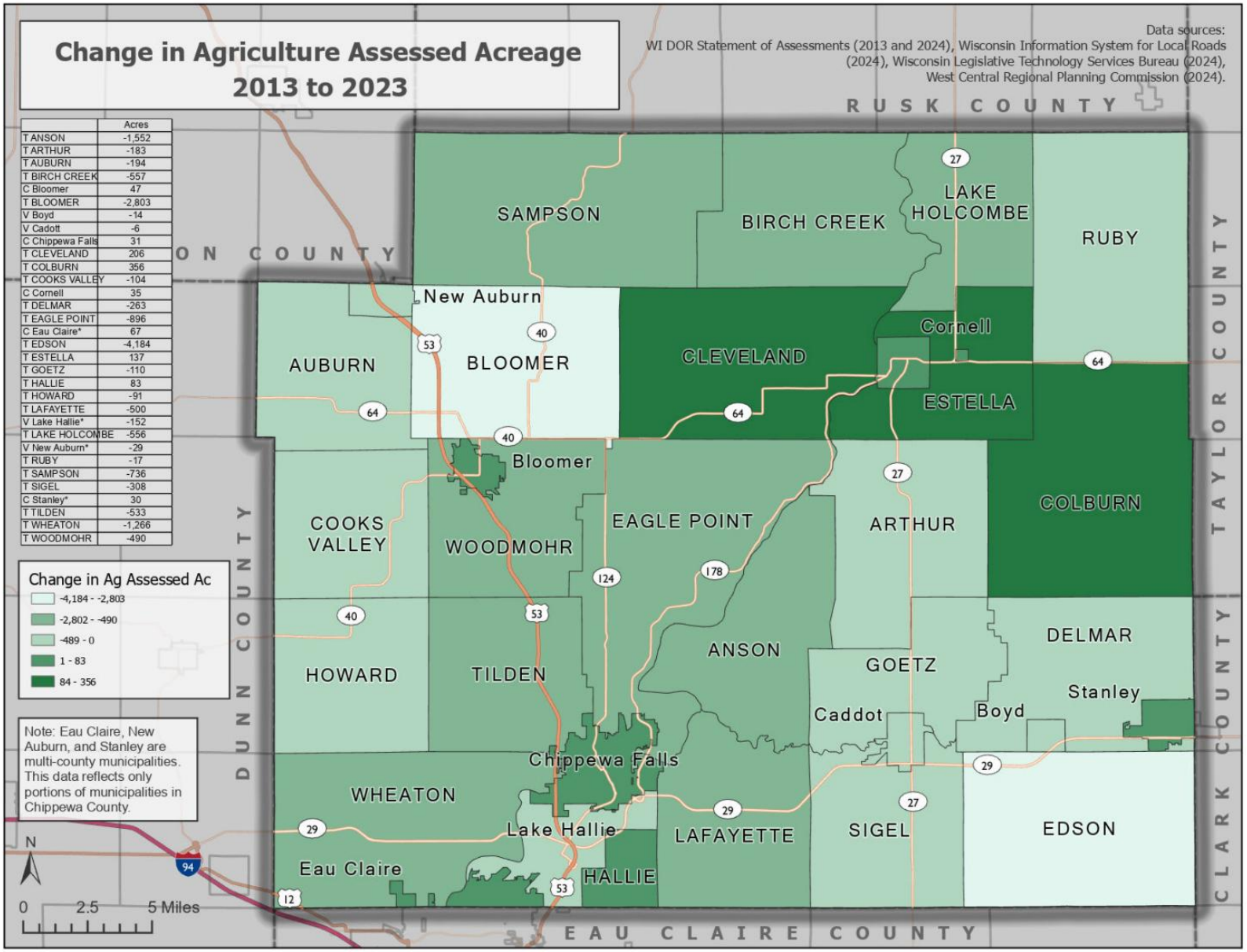
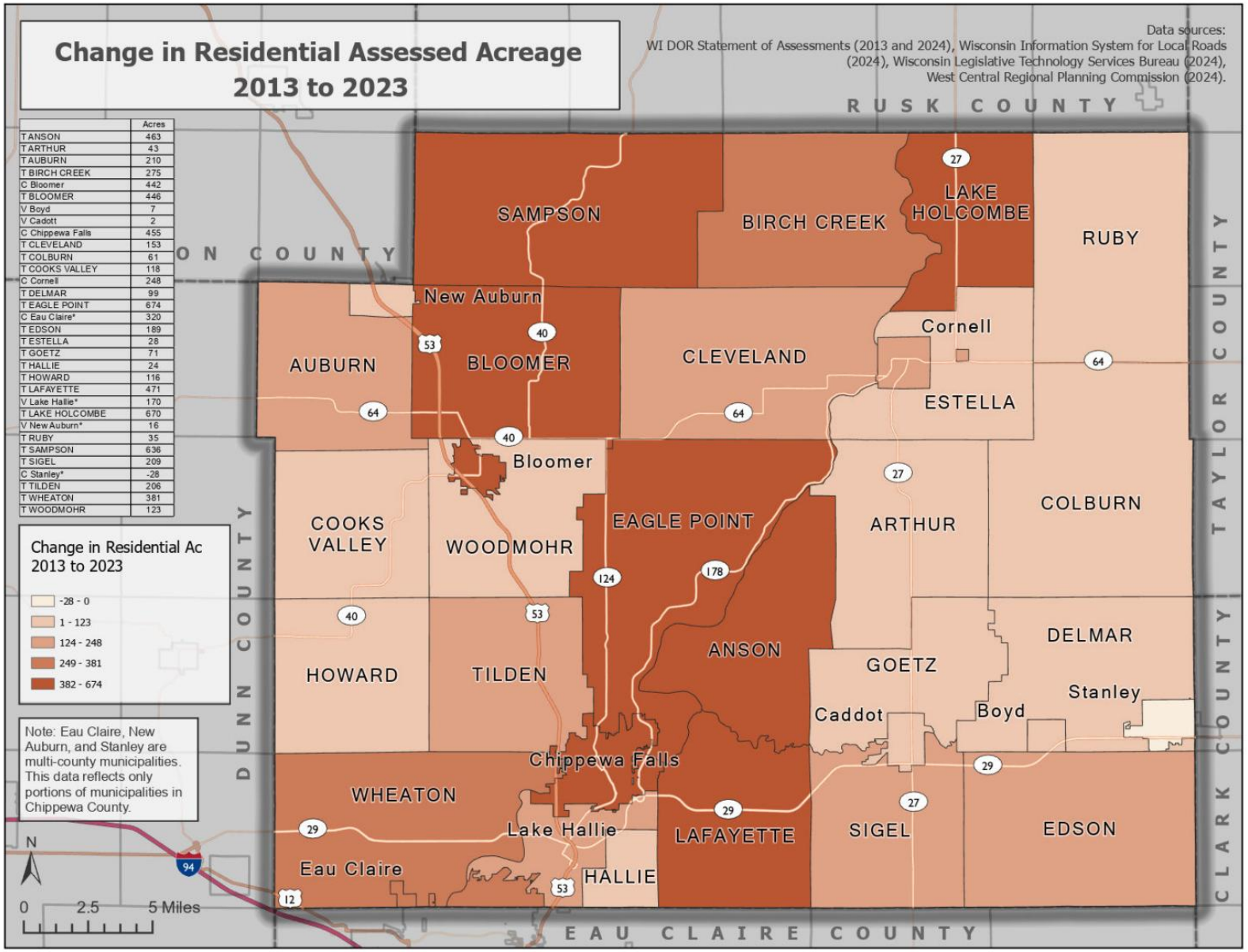


Figure 11-4. Change in Residential Assessed Acreage, 2013 - 2023



C. Opportunities for Infill or Redevelopment

Generally, most opportunities for infill or redevelopment are associated with the incorporated cities and villages, and are identified in their respective comprehensive plans. Directing growth to infill and redevelopment to incorporated areas with sewer, water, and other services is efficient while supporting the farmland and rural character preservation goals of this plan.

No specific, large-scale opportunities for infill or redevelopment within the unincorporated towns were identified during the planning process. Platted, undeveloped residential properties are scattered throughout the County, and towns with comprehensive plans strive to guide development to these areas. Most town comprehensive plans do not identify specific sites for redevelopment. One exception is the Town of Anson plan identifies a former lumber yard in downtown Jim Falls.

11.2 Demand & Preferred Future Land Use

A. Projected Land Use Demand

Land Use Demand Projections

In accordance with State planning law, comprehensive plans must include 20-year land use projections in five-year increments. As such, this plan has a 2046 planning horizon. Future land use activities and their resulting change to the landscape over the next 20-year period are difficult to predict. Changes in the local or national economy, natural disasters, and overall change in year-round residents are some of the factors that can influence how land use activities may change in the future.

Table 11-6 provides projections for the total acreage that will be utilized by residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and forest/open space land uses through the year 2050 for Chippewa County Towns.

Table 11-6. Chippewa County Town Land Use Projections

Use Type	2010 Acres	2020 Acres	#10-20 Acres	Ratio Ac/Person Change	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Residential	23,164	27,521	4,357	3.04	28,380	29,239	30,224	31,209	30,853	30,498
Commercial	2,833	3,487	654	0.46	3,616	3,745	3,893	4,041	3,987	3,934
Industrial	500	926	426	0.30	1,010	1,094	1,190	1,287	1,252	1,217
Agricultural & Other	292,026	282,779	-9,247	-6.45	281,689	280,599	279,352	278,105	278,105	278,105
Forest / Open Space	217,455	217,637	182	0.13	217,655	217,673	217,691	217,709	217,727	217,745
Population	29,200	30,633	1,433	---	30,916	31,198	31,522	31,846	31,729	31,612

source: WI DOA Line Summaries Statement of Assessments, WI DOA Population Projections 2024

These projections are based on population and land-use growth trends between 2010 and 2020. The comparison of residential, commercial, industrial, and forest/open space land-use acreage to the increase in population over the time period sets the foundation for these projections. For example, for every one person increase in net population from 2010 to 2020, there was a 3.04 increase in assessed residential acres within the County's towns. The net change for commercial (+.46) and industrial (+.30) in the towns was much smaller, as is expected in the

rural parts of the County. The change in these developed & forest land uses is then used to project a reduction in agricultural acreage.

New development can be accommodated through in a variety of ways:

- Additional development on an existing development site
- Redevelopment of an existing developed site to a new use
- Development of an existing vacant or undeveloped site
- Development of current agricultural or forest lands

It must be remembered that some areas within the County have development limitations, such as wetlands, steep slopes, and 100-year floodplains. The environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) map (Figure 7-8 in Chapter 7) should be considered as an overlay of the future land use map. Encroachment on ESAs should be avoided if possible, and development in some areas may require study prior to approval of special mitigation action to prevent or mitigate undesired impacts.

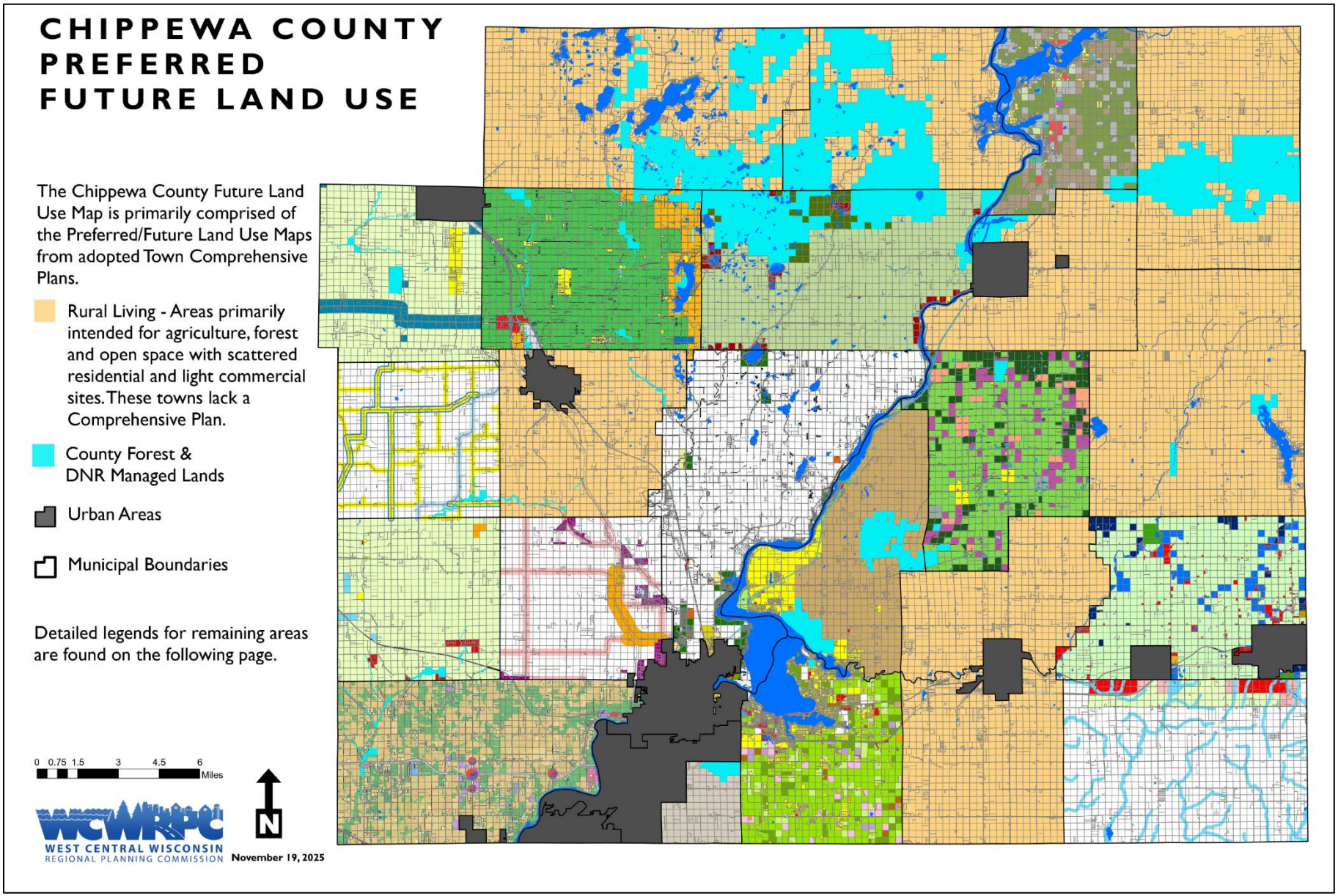
Land use projections were not prepared for the cities and villages in large part due to concerns among some cities and villages with the Wisconsin DOA population projections prepared in 2024. Overall, WDOA projects that the cities will decrease 1,812 in total population from 2020 to 2050, which is in conflict with projections and goals found in some Chippewa County local comprehensive plans. These communities expect and are planning to grow but most identify the lack of land available for residential and industrial growth as a key issue. Given these challenges, local city and village comprehensive plans should be consulted for their land use demand projections.

B. Preferred Future Land Use

Similar to the approach used in the 2010 Plan, the County decided to continue to utilize a “bottom-up” design to the future land use map, meaning that it defers to the local towns for land use decisions. The following approach was used to create the future land use map in Figure 11-5:

- Unzoned towns without a comprehensive plan were designated “Rural Living.” Without a town-specific future land use map or zoning, the future use of property in these towns is not being guided or regulated. This also recognizes that the general land uses in these towns is unlikely to change dramatically during the planning period.
- For towns with a comprehensive plan, the future land use map and the land use categories reflected in each town plan are incorporated into Figure 11-4 and the County’s comprehensive plan by reference.
- County Forest and WDNR Managed Lands are overlaid on top of other areas. It is envisioned that these areas will continue to be owned and maintained for public benefit.
- Land uses for cities and villages are not shown given that Chippewa County has very limited land use planning or regulatory authority within incorporated areas. The future land use plan maps from respective comprehensive plans for cities and villages should be referenced if necessary.

Figure 11-5. Future Land Use Map for Chippewa County Towns



Chippewa County Preferred Future Land Use Map Legend

The Chippewa County Future Land Use Map is primarily comprised of the Preferred/Future Land Use Maps from adopted Town Comprehensive Plans. Please see each respective Town plan for a description of each land use category and what the classification means for each of the following Towns:

Town of Anson



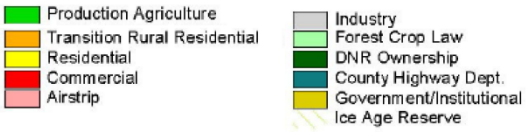
Town of Arthur



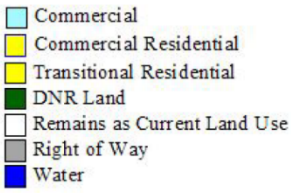
Town of Auburn



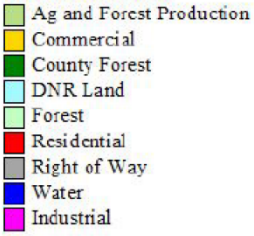
Town of Bloomer



Town of Cooks Valley



Town of Cleveland



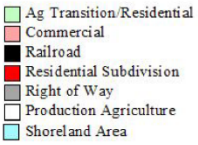
Town of Delmar



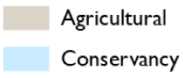
Town of Eagle Point



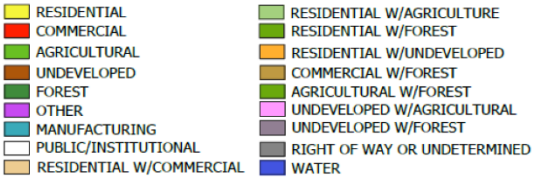
Town of Edson



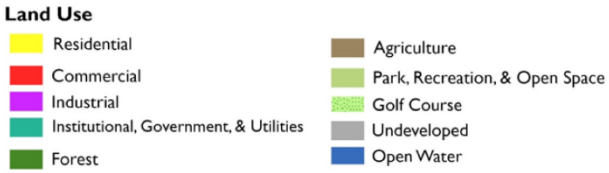
Town of Hallie



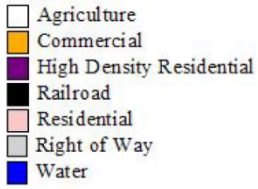
Town of Lafayette



Town of Lake Holcombe



Town of Tilden



Town of Wheaton



11.3 Land Use in Current Municipal Comprehensive Plans

The following are highlights of shared land use-related issues, goals, and recommendations from current comprehensive plans for cities, villages, and towns in Chippewa County adopted since 1/1/2015, which includes plans for the Towns of Anson, Cooks Valley, Lafayette, Lake Holcombe, and Wheaton, the Villages of Lake Hallie and New Auburn, and the Cities of Chippewa Falls and Stanley.

Town, Village, & City Issues & Opportunities

- Managing Growth While Preserving Community Character: growth must be carefully managed to avoid losing rural character, sense of place, and community identity.
- Farmland, Green Space, and Natural Resource Protection: strong support for preserving productive agricultural land, green space, lakes, rivers, and natural areas.
- Balancing Development with Fiscal Sustainability: equity in infrastructure and service costs.
- Land Use Conflicts and Compatibility: focus on reducing land use conflicts through appropriate siting of uses such as campgrounds, large livestock facilities, retail development, and business parks.
- Housing Supply, Diversity, and Density: meeting housing demand while increasing density, encouraging infill, and supporting aging in place.
- Sense of Place and Quality of Life: quality of life, access to natural and recreational assets, and maintaining a strong sense of place are widely valued.
- Economic Development and Growth Opportunities: expanding business parks, supporting retail development, and promoting recreation and tourism are viewed as important drivers of economic vitality.
- Infrastructure capacity and service provision: infrastructure limitations and costs are major considerations in growth planning.
- Zoning and Regulations: need to update zoning ordinance to align with comprehensive plans, improve administrative capacity, and provide flexibility for desired development.

Summary of Town, Village, & City Goals & Objectives

- Promote a well-balanced, compatible mix of land uses that supports community needs while maintaining a high quality of life.
- Preserve and protect natural resources, environmentally sensitive areas, and open spaces.
- Maintain rural character and preserve productive agricultural lands while accommodating reasonable growth.
- Accommodate growth in a responsible, economically efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner.
- Provide safe, attractive, and diverse housing opportunities that support strong neighborhoods and community identity.
- Strengthen the local economy and tax base while ensuring development aligns with community and environmental values.
- Provide accessible, high-quality public facilities, parks, and recreational opportunities.
- Preserve and enhance unique community character, identity, and sense of place.
- Encourage coordinated planning and consistent land use decision-making.

11. Land Use

Summary of Town, Village, & City Plan Recommendations

- Limit development in wetlands, floodplains, shorelands, steep slopes, and groundwater recharge areas.
- Encourage compact, clustered, and conservation-oriented development.
- Promote infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse.
- Ensure new development is compatible with surrounding land uses in scale, intensity, design, and function and with community character.
- Coordinate land use with infrastructure and public services.
- Strengthen intergovernmental coordination for planning of future growth areas.
- Manage residential density and housing diversity.
- Guide commercial and industrial development strategically to designated areas and existing clusters.
- Maintain and enforce local ordinances.
- Balance economic development with community values.

Conservation Development

Several town comprehensive plans, including the 2010 County Comprehensive Plan, encourage the use of conservation subdivision design or conservation development. Cluster and conservation development techniques attempt to concentrate buildings on specific areas of a site to allow remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, natural resources protection, farmland, or other uses. Development standards are typically incorporated into a zoning or subdivision ordinance and may be required or encouraged through the use of a 'density bonus.'

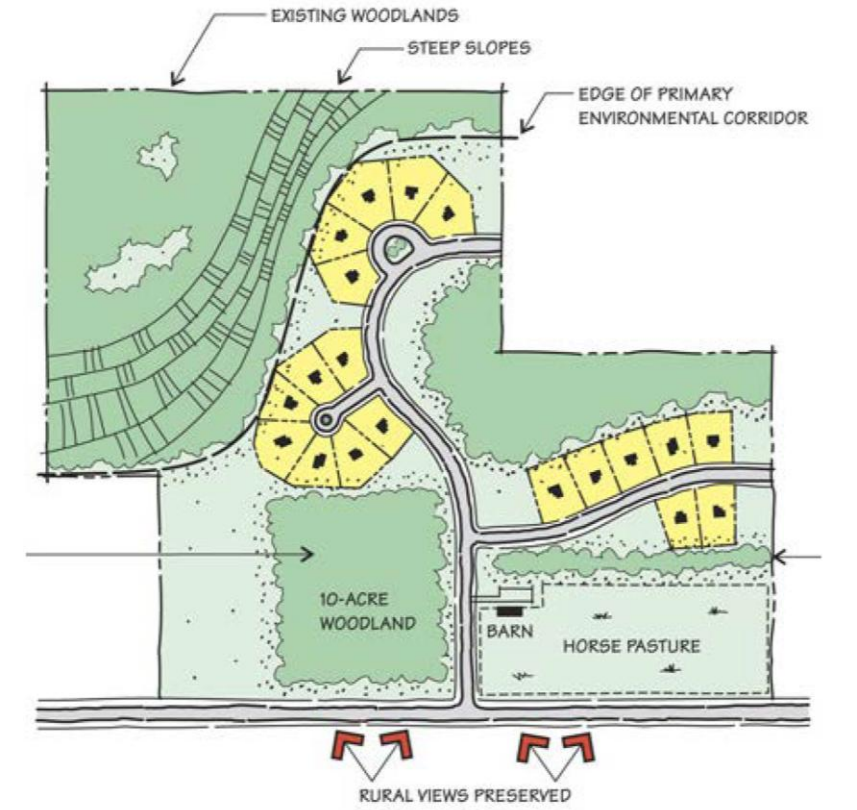


Image: Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Though outdated in terms of State law and case law, the *Plan Commission Handbook,* second edition 2012, created by UW-Stevens Point Center for Land Use Education remains a great tool for understanding different land use tools, such as conservation development, and the role of Plan Commissioners. Parts of this Handbook may be helpful in outreach to town officials.

11.4 Land Use Plans, Programs & Partners

Comprehensive plans and the related County Farmland Preservation Plan represent the primary land use planning tools in Chippewa County. The land use-related policies and strategies of these plans are implemented by the County and local governments through various land use controls.

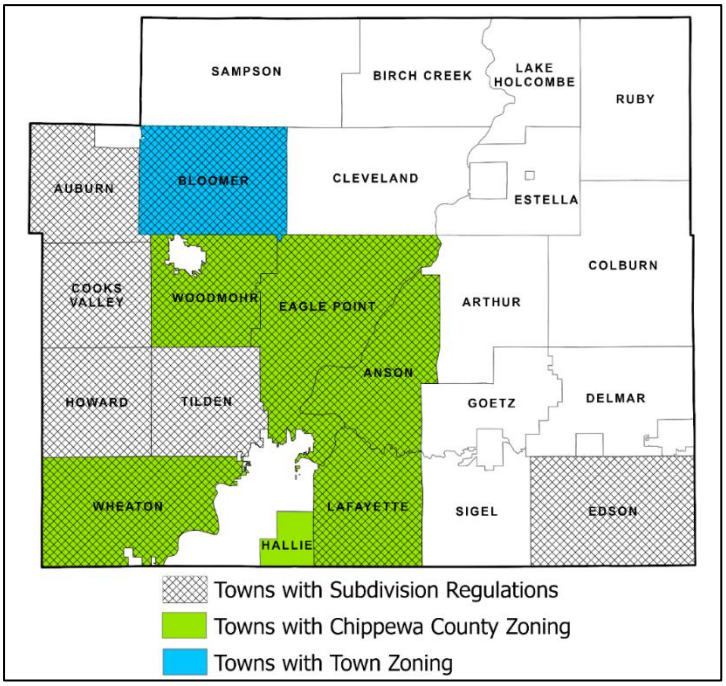
County Government Land Use Controls

Chippewa County, through its Planning & Zoning Department, administers the following primary land use controls:

- Zoning Ordinance covering six unincorporated towns shown in Figure 11-6.
- Subdivision Ordinance covering all unincorporated towns.
- Floodplain, Shoreland, and Wellhead Protection ordinances.

The County has not adopted an official mapping ordinance, but does have additional programs and policies to protect public health, safety, and the environment that have been highlighted in other chapters of this plan.

Figure 11-6. Land Use Controls w/in Towns



City, Village, and Town Land Use Controls

The cities and villages have a range of land use controls that vary significantly by community. Given that Chippewa County government has very limited land use planning and regulatory role within the cities and villages, a complete inventory of city and village land use plans and controls is not included here. However, it is important to note the following potential city/village actions that could impact adjacent towns, which were discussed in Chapter 10: Intergovernmental Cooperation:

- By State statute, cities and villages have extra-territorial plat review authority for the regulation of land divisions within 1.5 miles for their boundary; for Chippewa Falls this review authority is 3 miles.
- Cities/villages and towns may collaborate to implement extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) within the 1.5- or 3-mile jurisdiction areas. There is no ETZ currently being enforced in Chippewa County.
- Cities/villages and towns may collaborate to execute a cooperative boundary agreement that plans for growth and services. There are no such agreements currently executed in Chippewa County.

In addition to the County ordinances, Table 11-7 summarizes the primary land use plans and regulatory controls for the unincorporated areas of Chippewa County as reported by the towns in 2025. Only the Town of Bloomer has adopted town zoning. Twelve towns reported that they have adopted their own land division regulations.

Table 11-7. Status of Town Comprehensive Plans and Land Use Controls

Town	Most Recent Comprehensive Plan	Zoning Status	Town Subdivision Ordinance	Additional land use policies or regulations enforced by the Town
Anson	6/2/2025	County Zoning	yes	Minimum lot size: Residential is 1 acre Agriculture is 1.5 acres
Arthur	12/7/2009			
Auburn	11/18/2009	No zoning	yes	
Birch Creek				
Bloomer	9/13/2021	Town Zoning	yes	
Cleveland	8/19/2019	None	yes	Land division ordinance Access/driveway ordinance
Colburn			no	
Cooks Valley	1/13/2020		yes	
Delmar	11/9/2009			
Eagle Point	2/20/2017	County Zoning	yes	
Edson	10/6/2009		yes	50’ setback from building
Estella				
Goetz				
Hallie		County Zoning		
Howard	10/6/2009		yes	
Lafayette	12/20/2021	County Zoning	yes	
Lake Holcombe	3/25/2024			
Ruby				
Sampson				
Sigel				
Tilden	12/8/2009		yes	
Wheaton	5/11/2021	County Zoning	yes	
Woodmohr	12/17/2009	County Zoning	yes	

11.5 Community Perspective

A. City/Village Town Surveys & Town Meetings

The following are the land use-related highlights from the municipal surveys completed by eleven (11) of the County's towns in May-July 2025:

- Only 3 of the 11 towns in the County expect their town to change significantly over the next 20 years, with these towns anticipating the conversion of agricultural land to residential development.
- For 7 unzoned towns who responded to the survey: 4 stated that they had considered County zoning. "Resident opposition" was given as the most common reason not participating in zoning.
- When asked where new residential subdivisions should be allowed in Chippewa County, 7 of the 11 towns responded that they should be primarily in communities where public sewer and water are available as well as allowed next to communities where sewer and water could be extended. 5 of the 11 believe they should be located near existing residential subdivisions while 4 of the towns believe that residential subdivisions should be allowed anywhere in the County, with or without sewer and water services.
- One town specifically noted it would like to "accommodate inevitable growth in a responsible manner," with the desire to encourage the incorporation of development practices that are designed to protect open space such as conservation subdivisions.
- While 7 towns support agricultural entertainment and farm-based tourism as well as agricultural businesses (farms) locating anywhere in the town, they prefer to limit most other uses to certain locations within the town.
- Responding towns identified a few existing land use conflicts, including: noise from Amish saw mills, fertilizer runoff, disagreements over lot sizes, data center opposition, and campgrounds. Five of the 11 towns did not identify any land use conflicts.
- 7 towns believe that County enforcement of land use regulations has been consistent and effective. 3 other towns were concerned with enforcement, noting that the County has been slow to respond to violations within the town and does not address zoning violations.

During the planning process, WCWRPC offered to meet with all zoned towns and any town considering zoning—meetings occurred with the Towns of Anson, Bloomer, Eagle Point, Hallie, Lafayette, and Wheaton. Overall, town comments were similar to the survey results above. Growth pressures, potential conflicts with cities/villages, water quality, code enforcement, and concerns with uses such as solar/wind farms and data centers were the most commonly noted challenges. Preserving farmland, open space, and rural character are shared goals. There was significant skepticism with State certified farmland preservation zoning and the general preference was to encourage the use of AEAs. Some towns were open to discussing a new agricultural zoning district to help protect farmland and none seemed to object to modifying the County Zoning Ordinance to accommodate such a district as long as they have the option not to modify their town's zoning map to include the new district. Further discussion with towns to explore such alternatives in detail was encouraged.

As noted in other plan chapters, the city and village surveys identified the need for more housing to support the economy. Most cities and villages anticipated more residential and commercial growth, and some also anticipate growing their industrial/business parks. As noted in the intergovernmental cooperation chapter, some have expressed that they lack available land within their municipal boundary to accommodate anticipated growth.

B. Land Use – Intergovernmental Focus Group

The Land Use – Intergovernmental Focus Group met twice during the planning effort. Participants included representation from:

- Town Board & Plan Commission representatives
- City representative
- Construction Company
- Realtors Association of Northwestern Wisconsin
- County Planning & Zoning Department
- County Planning & Zoning Committee
- County Land Conservation & Forest Management Department

As noted in Chapter 10, the Focus Group identified potential intergovernmental conflicts, processes to resolve these conflicts, and discussed intergovernmental cooperation goal, objectives, policies, and strategy; related comments are not repeated here.

Other land use-related highlights from the Focus Group discussions included:

- The County is very diverse in terms of land use, growth, and perspectives. It is important for the County to continue educating towns on the benefits of zoning and openly collaborate to provide a flexible mix of land use controls.
- Some Focus Group participants were opposed to certified farmland preservation zoning. Larger minimum lot sizes can conflict with farmland preservation goals. Consider a new agricultural zoning district based on residential density rather than minimum lot size.
- There was some discussion on accessory dwelling units and short-term rentals near lakes. Not a great concern in most areas at this time, but interest is rising. Town of Lafayette adopted a licensing ordinance for short-term rentals.
- Construction costs are rising, making it a challenge for housing developers. Public assistance with infrastructure is often needed to help keep new homes more affordable.
- State Legislature has decreased local control over many land uses. Need the Legislature to address some growing uses such as data centers.
- Towns are encouraged to maintain comprehensive plans and identify areas that are prime for development.
- Zoning regulations should have more generalized zoning districts allowing a mix of compatible uses within a zoning district; land use decisions should be based more on form and mitigating potential impacts rather than strictly defined land uses.



Regulating Energy-Related Land Uses

Energy infrastructure, including solar energy systems, electric transmission lines, substations, and battery energy storage systems, is an increasingly important land use consideration. Energy facilities can have long-term impacts on land use patterns, rural character, infrastructure capacity, and natural resources. Related to these systems are data centers, cryptocurrency mining, and other energy-intensive land uses that consume large amounts of electricity. It is important that these land uses be acknowledged and policy be established to help guide where these uses may be appropriate in the County.

Important land use considerations include:

- Compatibility with surrounding land uses
- Impacts on prime farmland and agricultural operations
- Site access, fencing, setbacks, and visual screening
- Public safety access and controls
- Emergency response planning & training
- Stormwater management
- Decommissioning and site restoration at end of use

Some counties and communities have enacted temporary moratoria on land uses to allow time to evaluate potential impacts of specific land uses and to prepare studies, plans, and/or implementation tools to address the identified impacts. Wisconsin Statutes 66.1002 outlines the standards and process for enacting a development moratoria.

Regulating Solar & Wind Energy Systems

Type of Land Use: Solar and wind energy systems convert sunlight and wind into electricity. These systems range from small home installations to large utility-scale projects, utilizing photovoltaic (PV) panels for solar and turbines for wind, feeding power to homes or to the electric grid.



WI Statutes & Regulatory Options: Political subdivisions in Wisconsin have limited authority to regulate solar and wind under WI Stats §66.0401. Under this Statute, municipalities may not place any restriction on the installation or use of solar and wind energy systems unless the restriction satisfies one of the following conditions:

- Serves to preserve or protect the public health or safety;
- Does not significantly increase system cost or decrease efficiency; or
- Allows for an alternative system of comparable costs and efficiency.

While WI Statutes allows some local control and the use of zoning regulations for solar and wind projects less than 100MW, the WI Public Service Commission (PSC) reviews and approves large projects greater than 100MW. A political subdivision may establish a permitting or licensing ordinance regulating solar and wind energy systems of any size if it satisfies one of the previous listed conditions, such as to preserve or protect the public health or safety.

A county and communities can also enter into a joint development agreement (referred to as JDA) with solar project developers; negotiations with the developer should take place as early in the project development process as possible, preferably before the WI PSC hearings begin. Joint development agreements typically address aspects of:

- Planning & construction
- Use of roads and road repair obligations
- Safety standards and training costs
- Drainage and stormwater
- Allocation of utility shared revenue proceeds
- Obligation to restore farmland
- Assurances
- Setbacks, equipment height vegetation, and fencing

A county or community can require a JDA for energy systems less than 100 MW and can encourage a JDA for those systems of 100MW or greater. Counties in west central Wisconsin have executed JDA's for solar projects; these may serve as examples for other counties and communities.

Additional Resources:

- Wisconsin Counties. *Regulating Alternative Energy Systems. What Can a County Do?* June 2022.
- Wisconsin Counties. *Country Regulation of Solar Energy Systems. Legal Overview and the BESS Trend*. January 2025.
- UW-Extension. *Solar Energy System Development: Development and Regulatory Considerations for Wisconsin Local Units of Government*. December 2024.

Regulating Transmission Lines

Type of Land Use: Transmission lines are high-voltage infrastructure that move large amounts of electricity long distances from power plants to substations. These lines serve as the main transport of the electrical grid, while lower voltage lines (distribution lines) deliver electricity to a site. There is a direct relationship between power generation facilities, such as wind and solar farms and the high voltage transmission infrastructure needed to add the power to the grid.



WI Statutes & Regulatory Options: Transmission lines are primarily regulated by the PSC, which approves siting and design of these lines. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) issues necessary environmental permits while the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is involved in interstate transmission.

The PSC encourages public participation as part of the application and review process. For projects with public hearings, individuals, communities, and organizations may submit testimony.

Additional Resources:

- PSC of Wisconsin. *Transmission Line Review Process*. https://tinyurl.com/mdxnx4w

Regulating Battery Energy Storage Systems

Type of Land Use: Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) collect generated energy and then stores that energy for future use. A BESS is comprised of batteries, inverters, transformers, and auxiliary systems.



WI Statutes & Regulatory Options: Wisconsin does not currently have a dedicated State statute defining or regulating standalone energy storage systems. Local zoning and permitting (e.g., licensing ordinance, nuisance ordinance, performance ordinance) are often used to govern the installation and safety associated with BESS.

Local regulations may wish to address the following:

- Agricultural land mitigation
- Thermal Runaway Risk Assessment
- Safety standards and training costs
- Setback requirements
- Decommissioning and Environmental Review
- Noise/Vibrations
- Inspections/Enforcement

Additional Resources:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Battery Energy Storage Systems: Main Considerations for Safe Installation and Incident Response*. https://tinyurl.com/4jwyx5z4
- American Planning Association – Zoning Practice. *Battery Energy Storage Systems*. March 2024

Ordinance Examples:

- Town of Forest: https://townofforest.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/BESS_Ordinance.pdf
- Kenosha County: https://www.kenoshacountywi.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/27133?file-

Regulating Data Centers / Cryptocurrency Mining Operations

Type of Land Use: A data center is a facility that houses computer servers and their network connections. Data centers can be developed as stand-alone buildings or as part of a complex that may include other uses. There are several types of data centers that provide different services. Understanding the type of data center provides context when reviewing a specific development proposal.



Communities must evaluate the positive and negative impacts of data centers, making sure to minimize conflicts. Some of the commonly referred to benefits and challenges with data centers include:

Benefits of Data Centers	Challenges of Data Centers
Substantial property tax revenue	Water consumption
Limited traffic generation	Electric consumption
High-salary jobs created	May produce noise
No impact to school district	Limited job creation per square foot of building space
Provides critical infrastructure	Loss of agricultural land
	Compatibility with surrounding uses

source: City of Cumberland, Pennsylvania. Planning for Data Centers. http://tinyurl.com/4fwxvr9b

WI Statutes & Regulatory Options: Wisconsin does not currently have a statewide statute that specifically regulates data centers' energy use, siting, or impacts, although recent legislation has been introduced that would impose regulations and address concerns about rising electric bills and environmental impacts. Data centers, along with BESS, are getting a lot of attention in Wisconsin and some State rules may change. At the present time, data centers can be regulated through zoning ordinance and other permitting (e.g., licensing ordinance, nuisance ordinance, performance ordinance).

Additional Resources:

- Regulatory Example: The City of Menomonie amended the municipal Zoning Ordinance to address Data Centers. It specifically:
  - Amended the definition of "Warehousing" to eliminate data centers.
  - Defined "Data Center".
  - Created a new "Data Center Industrial District (I-4)".
- City of Cumberland, Pennsylvania. Planning for Data Centers. https://tinyurl.com/4fwxvr9b

WCWRPC
WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Note: the web links referenced throughout the document are active as of January 14, 2026, but cannot be guaranteed to remain active over time.

11.6 Land Use Goal, Objectives, Policies, & Strategies

Wisconsin Statutes § 66.1001 requires that if a local governmental unit engages in any of the following actions: zoning, subdivision regulation, official mapping, or shoreland/wetland zoning, those actions shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan. In this case, the local governmental unit is Chippewa County and the associated actions are primarily administered through the County's Planning & Zoning Department. As such, while all municipalities are encouraged to consider and support the goal, objectives, and policies of this subsection, the following are guidance for Chippewa County government in particular.

Since a single policy or strategy will often address both land use objectives, the policies and strategies are not organized by objective within this section.

Land Use Goal

Promote an orderly, economically efficient, and environmentally sustainable pattern of land use that preserves natural resources, productive agricultural lands, and rural character while supporting compatible development, economic vitality, and an exceptional quality of life in Chippewa County.

Land Use Objectives

1. **Preserve rural character, productive agricultural lands, and natural resources.**
   - Land use and development should be managed, located, and designed in ways that protect natural resources, conservancy areas, water quality, and environmentally sensitive areas as envisioned in the Natural Resources element.
   - Promote land use practices and community design that increase awareness of natural resources and enhance long-term environmental stewardship.
   - Support the preservation of productive agricultural and forest lands and reduce the fragmentation of these working lands as envisioned in the Agricultural Resources element.
   - Strive to maintain open spaces, access to outdoor recreational opportunities, and the rural character in the unincorporated towns outside of planned growth/development areas.

2. **Carefully plan, guide, and accommodate new growth.**
   - Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
   - Guide new residential subdivisions and urban development to planned growth areas where cost-effective services and infrastructure can be provided.
   - Guide commercial and industrial development to appropriate areas with supportive infrastructure without negatively affecting environmental quality or nearby land uses.
   - Land use and properties should be planned, located, and maintained in a manner that minimizes land use conflicts and does not decrease the value of neighboring land uses, while ensuring safe, healthy, and attractive communities.

Policies (decision-making guidance)

In collaboration with local communities, the following policies will guide Chippewa County during land-use decision making:

General Land Use Policies



1. A healthy living environment shall be maintained for all residents. The surface waters, groundwater, and environmentally sensitive areas of Chippewa County shall be protected and not degraded by development or land use as envisioned within the Natural Resources element.
2. Land use decisions will be made in a fair, consistent, and open manner. Uphold the principle of not taking private property rights without due process of law.
3. Plan for a sufficient supply of developable land for a range of different uses, in areas, types, and densities consistent with local town wishes and service requirements.
4. County regulations must be flexibly created and administered due to the diverse landscape, growth trends, and community goals of Chippewa County. Coordinate regulations and incentives to meet plan goals.
5. County zoning rules and decisions should emphasize the compatibility of potential uses and allow compatible mixed uses while avoiding and minimizing potential land use conflicts.
6. Land division and zoning rules should accommodate changing housing demands and increasing costs, while providing for attractive residential neighborhoods.
7. Land division, zoning map amendments, and official mapping decisions by Chippewa County will be consistent with, and not conflict with, this Comprehensive Plan.
8. Utility-scale energy generation (solar & wind farms) are discouraged from being sited on prime agricultural lands or near residential development areas. Small-scale solar or wind projects providing energy to the same location may be beneficial and allowed.
9. Many other elements of this Comprehensive Plan include goals and objectives related to land use, such as natural resources protection, farmland preservation, and economic development goals. Implement those policies and strategies found in other elements of this Comprehensive Plan related to land use.

Land Use Collaboration & Education Policies

10. The cities, villages, and towns of Chippewa County are encouraged to create and maintain comprehensive plans that will be used to guide their land use decision making. Towns have the primary responsibility of interpreting their comprehensive plans and determining whether a proposed land use decision is consistent with their respective plans. To this end, town future land use maps are incorporated into the County's future land use map, and the County defers to the towns in determining consistency with this map and their plans.
11. During the review of proposed land divisions and zoning map amendments (rezonings), encourage towns to consider comprehensive plan consistency and potential consultation with town plan commissions.

12. Collaborate with towns to ensure consistent enforcement of County regulations, while also helping towns to explore local ordinances and tools to achieve their land use goals.
13. Dependent on the goals of the towns, coordinate regulations and incentives to direct development away from areas that are in active agricultural use, areas with historically productive farmland, or areas that contain prime soils for farming.
14. Guide new housing subdivisions and higher density residential development to planned growth areas as designated in community comprehensive plans and away from farmland preservation areas. Cities, villages, and towns are encouraged to work cooperatively to guide future urban development to areas within incorporated municipalities or in designated urban service areas where development and associated public services have been planned in a responsible, cooperative manner. Encourage conservation design neighborhoods and other compact use patterns that preserve open space for rural residential development in appropriate areas and where consistent with local requirements.
15. Engage towns when considering any potential changes in land use policies and provide clear, concise explanations of potential impacts.
16. Work to demonstrate the value of County zoning and how it can help protect property values and quality of life. Encourage more towns to consider County zoning. Protect property values by avoiding visual pollution caused by poor design or management of land, buildings, and structures.
17. Continue to educate the general public on what comprehensive planning is and is not, along with the consequences of land use decisions.

Strategies (recommended actions)

In collaboration with local communities, Chippewa County will pursue the following recommended actions to achieve the Land Use goal and objectives:

1. Conduct regular meetings with town boards and/or plan commissions, especially those under County zoning. (ongoing)
2. Periodically review the need for County ordinances and other land use tools, including discussing the effectiveness of existing regulations with stakeholders and ensuring consistency with current State and Federal rules. (ongoing)
3. Collaborate with Extension and WCWRPC to help increase local community awareness and consideration of comprehensive planning, the role of local plan commissions, and the advantages/disadvantages of various land use tools, such as zoning, minimum lot size requirements, and conservation subdivision design. (ongoing)
4. Encourage towns to consider adoption of a licensing ordinance for solar and wind projects less than 100 MW that primarily generate power for offsite distribution. (short-range) To the extent possible and as needed (ongoing):
    - Encourage all utility-scale solar and wind projects to collaborate with towns to execute joint development agreements addressing planning, road use, stormwater, setbacks, security, assurances, etc.
    - Continue to collaborate with zoned towns during conditional use permitting and zoning enforcement to guide such uses to suitable areas that protect the environment, preserve prime farmlands, and minimize use conflicts to the extent reasonably possible.

5. Review and, as needed, modify that County's zoning ordinance or consider a County licensing ordinance so that data centers, crypto-currency mining operations, battery energy storage systems, electric vehicle charging stations, biofuel processing facilities, and other such newer industries and potential land uses are sufficiently considered. (short-range)
    - If necessary, explore the use of moratoria to allow such regulatory review and creation.
    - Consider factors such as terminology, siting, safety/security, infrastructure, and potential permit conditions).
    - Encourage and/or require the execution of joint development agreements between the County and developer, potentially including local municipalities as parties to the agreement.
6. Provide information to towns along existing or planned high-voltage electric transmission lines or near large substations to consider adoption of licensing ordinances for solar and wind projects, data centers, battery energy storage systems, etc. (short-to-medium range)
7. Work with zoned towns to further explore a possible new agricultural zoning district that advances County and local farmland preservation goals, but offers greater flexibility than a State-certified farmland preservation zoning district. (medium-range) As part of these discussions:
    - Explore the possible use of a more flexible minimum density standard rather than a minimum lot size.
    - Consider modifying the title and purpose of the existing agricultural district as a "rural living" district that may not be compatible with more intensive agricultural uses, such as large livestock facilities.
8. Engage in discussions with towns regarding the potential adoption of a Countywide large livestock facility siting/licensing ordinance requiring enforcement of State Facility Siting rules. Potentially require a nutrient management plan as part of applications. (medium-to-long range)
9. Continue to monitor demand and trends in short-term rental properties and accessory dwelling units. If necessary, the County may consider regulatory changes to control such uses in the future. (long-range)





12. IMPLEMENTATION

Chapter 12. Implementation

To achieve the community's vision, this Comprehensive Plan must be put into action. This section provides direction for implementing the plan and describes how the elements of the plan are integrated and consistent. This section also describes an evaluation approach to measure progress towards achieving all aspects of the Comprehensive Plan and monitors progress in the context of local change. The Comprehensive Plan is also a living document that considers and allows for change in the community. As such, this section ends with a description of the process for future plan amendments and updates. And unlike other required comprehensive planning elements, the implementation element is not statutorily required to include goals, objectives, or policies, but, instead, supports the previous plan elements.

12.1 Action Plan

This is a Countywide comprehensive plan for Chippewa County as a community. As such, the plan was created with significant participation from community members, businesses, service organizations, communities, and other stakeholders and incorporated the comprehensive plans of local communities. It is not proposed or expected that the County government is responsible for implementing all strategies recommended in the previous plan elements. Efforts were made throughout the Plan to distinguish such responsibilities when possible. And the County recognizes that the goals and objectives of this plan cannot be achieved without collaboration and support from the community and other partners.

A. Policies vs. Strategies

Within each of the previous plan elements, the recommendations to achieve the goals and objectives are separated into:

Policies - Decision-making guidance that do not have a final deliverable or foreseeable conclusion.

Strategies - Actionable tasks with a clearly defined result or deliverable. The strategies are specific actions related to the respective plan element, including any recommended studies, ordinance changes, partnership agreements, education/outreach, and programming. For example, any zoning or land division ordinance changes needed to implement this plan are addressed in the land use strategies in **Chapter 11**.

B. Sequence of Implementation

As decision-making guidance, all policies in the previous elements are ongoing or continuing. Following each strategy is a recommended timeline for their completion, with the implementation period commencing with the adoption of the comprehensive plan:

Ongoing: This strategy is currently ongoing and should be continued.

Short-Range: Years 0 - 5

Medium-Range: Years 6 – 10

Long-Range: Years 10+

The recommended timelines are suggestions to assist in programming, prioritization, and the evaluation of plan progress. In some cases, a strategy may span multiple time periods. And the implementation sequence is subject to change based on resources, changing community priorities, new opportunities etc.

C. Required Due Diligence

Our world is dynamic and ever changing in many different ways (e.g., demographics, regulations, resources, natural environment, economic, issues, opportunities). Prior to implementation, the County will consider and reassess each action item to further determine if each is in the best interest of the County and its communities. Changing conditions may necessitate an addition or modification to the recommended policies and strategies. It is anticipated that towns, villages, cities, and other stakeholders will perform similar due diligence.

12.2 Plan Integration and Consistency

During the planning process, great effort was made to consider and be consistent with town, village, and city comprehensive plans when available. However, this plan is advisory to Chippewa County's towns, villages, and cities; there is no statutory requirement that the local comprehensive plans of these communities must be consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan. This plan also incorporates by reference other adopted County plans, such as the Land & Water Resource Management Plan, and some goals, objectives, policies, and strategies are shared between plans.

This Comprehensive Plan should be used and applied as a whole. Should the County find that a specific circumstance or proposal is possibly inconsistent with one or more parts of the Comprehensive Plan, but also consistent with one or more other parts, then the County should use its best judgment to evaluate the circumstance(s) against the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan as a whole.

Wisconsin Statute §66.1001 also requires that if the County enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, the ordinance must be consistent with and furthers (not contradicts) the objectives, goals, and policies within this comprehensive plan:

- Official maps
- Subdivision ordinance
- Zoning ordinance, except for conditional use permits
- Shoreland/wetland zoning ordinance

If any provision of this Comprehensive Plan is found to be invalid or unconstitutional, or if the application of this Comprehensive Plan to any person or circumstances is found to be invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality will not affect the other provisions or applications of this Comprehensive Plan, which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application.

In the future, when the County is requested to comment on proposed changes to other local government or area plans, the comprehensive plan can provide important guidance to officials and other stakeholders. And any future Comprehensive Plan amendments by the County should first be evaluated for consistency with the overall Comprehensive Plan.

12.3 Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Plan monitoring encourages implementation of this plan, tracks progress, and promotes consistency in decision-making. Any plan is subject to the passage of time, which increases the likelihood its policies and strategies will become outdated or obsolete. The Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Committee is responsible for monitoring changing conditions and plan implementation to evaluate whether a plan amendment or update is needed.

The County Planning & Zoning Committee may direct the Planning & Zoning Department to conduct a periodic evaluation of the plan. Questions to consider that may necessitate an evaluation include:

(a) Any significant new trends or community changes occurred since the plan's creation or previous evaluation?

(b) Have any issues or proposals arose that conflict with the plan?

(c) Have law changes occurred (including State or Federal rule changes) that necessitate a plan change, especially to the policies?

(d) Are there decisions being made that potentially conflict with the plan policies (decision-making guidance) or could benefit from additional guidance within the plan?

(e) What is the progress on implementation of the recommended strategies (action items)?

It is recommended that any plan reviews by the Planning & Zoning Committee occur as part of a public meeting and the public be given the opportunity to comment. The Planning & Zoning Committee will review the evaluation findings and may recommend a plan amendment or update to the County Board.

As noted in Section I. Introduction, obtaining a County consensus on specific, measurable targets for each objective within a Countywide plan would be very challenging and time-consuming. The County and its partners are encouraged to consider creating such quantifiable metrics for specific elements of the plan in the future. As an alternative, the above questions take a flexible, process-evaluation approach that evaluates plan implementation based on the consistency of decision-making with the plan's policies and tracking of the implementation of the recommended actions.

12.4 Plan Amendments and Updates

Plan monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing process and may lead to the realization that the Comprehensive Plan requires an amendment or updating. However, frequent plan amendments and updates should be avoided.

A. Plan Amendments

Plan amendments are minor changes or additions to maps or text within this plan as deemed necessary and appropriate. Plan amendments occur without needing to update all data, maps, service descriptions, etc., as long as the Comprehensive Plan remains internally consistent. The County Planning & Zoning Committee must be given sufficient opportunity to make a recommendation to the County Board on proposed amendments prior to the County Board decision. Plan amendments are typically triggered by County Board request or by the previously described plan monitoring/evaluation. However, a community member or landowner may also petition the County for a plan amendment.

Prior to a plan amendment, including a Preferred Future Land Use Map amendment, the County shall consider the following criteria:

- A proposed project should be evaluated for consistency with the *Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan* as a whole as well as other pertinent community plans.
- The position of impacted town(s) and other communities should be actively sought and considered.
- A proposed project should not contradict the objectives, goals, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan as whole, or else additional plan changes may be necessary.
- There should be a clear public need for the proposed change or that unanticipated circumstances have resulted in a need for the change.
- The proposed change is likely to have a positive fiscal and/or quality of life impact on the community.
- The proposed change will not create an unreasonable burden on the community to provide and fund services and public facilities.
- The proposed change should also not result in substantial adverse impacts to the community, nearby properties, or the character of the area.

The County may require the petitioner(s) to prepare reports, impact studies, fiscal analyses, or fund other studies prior to a decision on amending the Comprehensive Plan.

B. Plan Updates

Plan updates are typically a more substantial re-write of the text involving major revisions to multiple or all of plan sections, including updating of plan goals, data, tables, services, and maps. A plan amendment can be completed in a matter of months compared to a plan update, which can require a year or more.

A plan update is initiated by the County. The plan will be updated at least every 10 years as required by State law, unless a more frequent update is deemed necessary by the County Board. The County Planning & Zoning Committee is responsible for facilitating the plan update, working within any general guidelines provided by the County Board, though work groups, town meetings, and other processes may be used to guide the plan update.

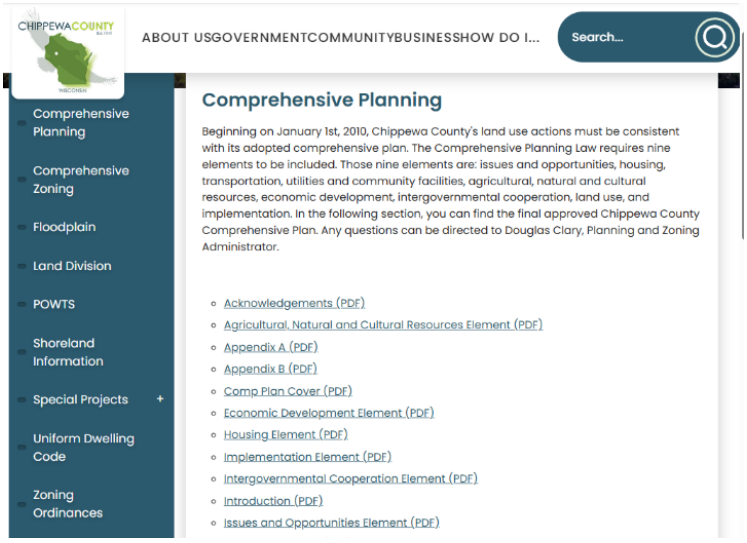
Statutorily, plan amendments and plan updates have the same minimum public participation and adoption requirements, though updates often involve greater opportunities of public input at the discretion of the community. Plan amendments and public shall follow the noticing, public hearing, and approval process described in Wis Stats. §66.1001.

12.5 Additional Implementation Recommendations

While this Implementation element supports the previous plan elements and does not have separate goals, objectives, or policies, the following are some general implementation recommendations for the City that were identified during the planning process.

A. Public Participation & Engagement

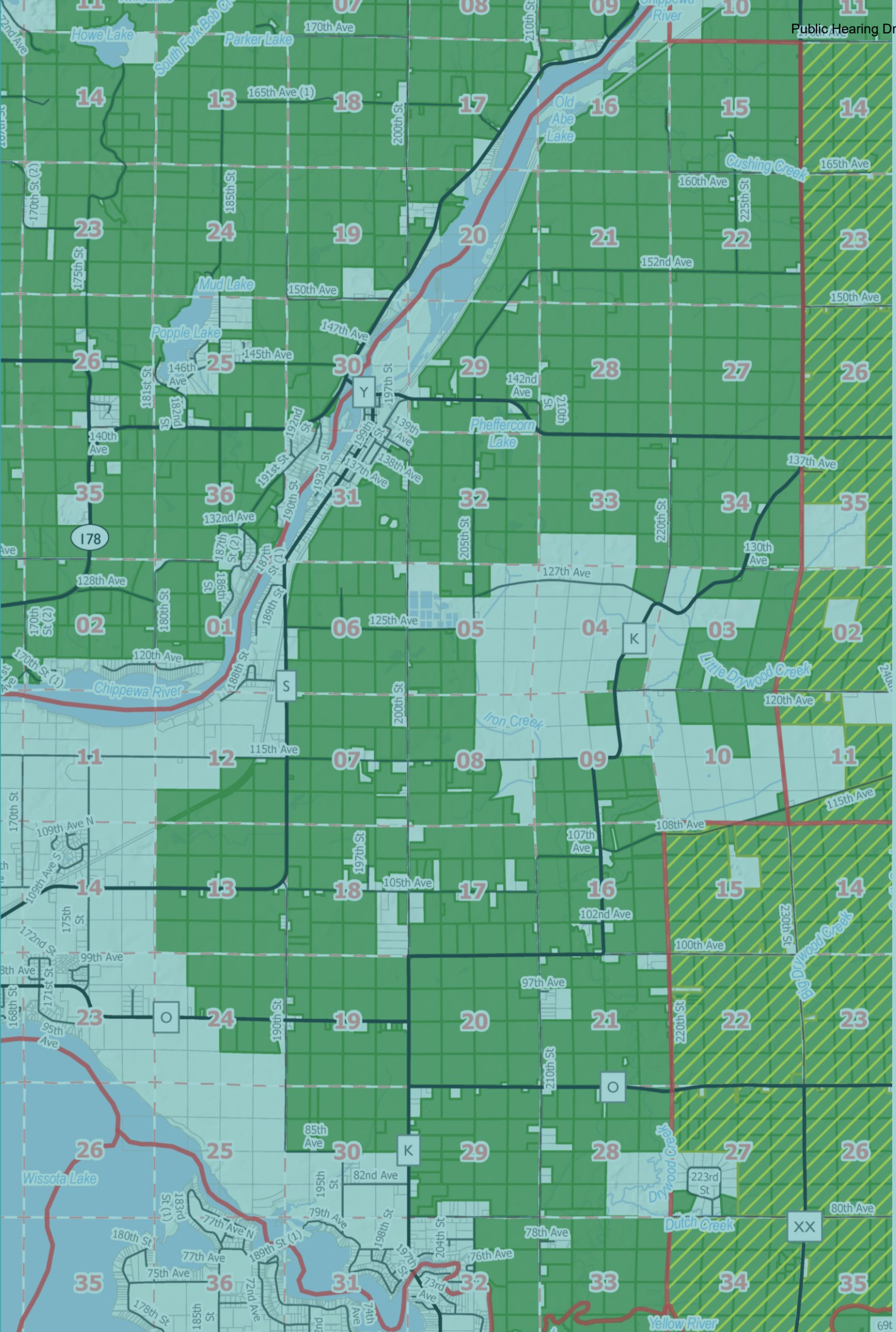
As expressed in its strategic mission statement, Chippewa County values effective communications, public participation, and transparency in community planning, decision-making, and programming. This participation is founded on keeping the community informed, open governance, and inclusiveness. **The following County ongoing policies are recommended:**



- The updated Comprehensive Plan and other community plans will continue to be available to the public at the County's website.
- Continue to utilize technology and other information dissemination options to keep residents and County employees informed on programs, services, resources, and matters of importance.
- Continue to utilize local media to keep residents informed and actively involved in County planning and activities.
- Continue to keep County staff and elected officials informed and in compliance with open meetings and open records rules.
- The County will continue to collaborate with its towns, villages, and cities to increase community awareness and guide decision-making, planning, and the consideration of new policies or regulations as recommended throughout this comprehensive plan.

B. Partnerships & Collaboration

Chippewa County is blessed with many active community organizations, supportive businesses, and other strong partners. The County recognizes that the goals and objectives of this plan cannot be achieved without the engagement and support of these partners. These partners are not listed here since it would be a challenge to ensure the list is comprehensive and every partner is included, though many partners are noted throughout the various elements of this plan.


Howe Lake
Parker Lake
South Fork Bob Creek
170th Ave
165th Ave (1)
Old Abe Lake
Chippewa River
Cushing Creek
165th Ave
160th Ave
152nd Ave
150th Ave
Mud Lake
Popple Lake
147th Ave
145th Ave
146th Ave
142nd Ave
Pheffercorn Lake
139th Ave
138th Ave
137th Ave
140th Ave
132nd Ave
178
128th Ave
127th Ave
130th Ave
125th Ave
120th Ave
Chippewa River
Little Drywood Creek
Iron Creek
115th Ave
108th Ave
107th Ave
105th Ave
102nd Ave
100th Ave
99th Ave
97th Ave
95th Ave
Wissota Lake
85th Ave
82nd Ave
79th Ave
77th Ave N
77th Ave
75th Ave
73rd Ave
76th Ave
78th Ave
80th Ave
Dutch Creek
Drywood Creek
Big Drywood Creek
223rd St
Yellow River
170th St (2)
185th St
175th St
181st St
182nd St
192nd St
191st St
193rd St
190th St
187th St (2)
187th St (1)
186th St
180th St
189th St
188th St
200th St
197th St
210th St
205th St
220th St
225th St
230th St
109th Ave N
109th Ave S
172nd St
171st St
168th St
189th St (1)
198th St
204th St
178th St
185th St
Y
S
K
O
XX

APPENDICES

Appendix 1
Public Participation Plan, Flyer, & Hearing Notice

STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION
Resolution No. 06 - 25

RES. 06-25: RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES FOR THE UPDATE OF THE CHIPPEWA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - DOUG CLARY

The Chippewa County Board of Supervisors has designated the Planning & Zoning Committee as the county planning and zoning agency, pursuant to §59.69(2), Wis. Stats. The county planning and zoning agency may direct the preparation or update of a county development plan (i.e. a comprehensive plan) for the physical development of the unincorporated territory within the county pursuant to §59.69(3) Wis. Stats.

The Planning & Zoning Committee has decided to update its comprehensive plan pursuant to the authority and procedures set out in §59.69(2) and (3), and §66.1001, of the Wisconsin Statutes. As part of the update, §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats., requires the governing body of the local governmental unit to adopt written procedures designed to describe the methods the governing body of a local governmental unit will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a comprehensive plan to owners of property. The goal of these procedures is to foster public participation at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, provide an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and to set out a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments.

To assist with the development of the comprehensive plan, the Department of Planning & Zoning has contracted with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) to assist and facilitate the update. Attached to this resolution, is the *Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update,* which is being proposed to foster public participation, ensure wide distribution of draft plan materials, and provide opportunities for written comments on draft plan materials. Passage of this resolution will approve the *Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update* to establish the procedures that Chippewa County will follow to meet the mandates of §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats., for public participation in the process to update the Comprehensive Plan.

Resolution No. 06 - 25

RES. 06-25: RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES FOR THE UPDATE OF THE CHIPPEWA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - DOUG CLARY

WHEREAS, Chippewa County has decided to update its comprehensive plan pursuant to the authority and procedures set out in §59.69(2) and (3), and §66.1001, of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats., requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation; and

WHEREAS, such written procedures shall provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments; and

WHEREAS, the Chippewa County Board of Supervisors has designated the Planning & Zoning Committee as the county planning and zoning agency pursuant to §59.62(2), Wis. Stats., and such county planning and zoning agency may direct the preparation of a county development plan (comprehensive plan) for the physical development of the unincorporated territory within the county, pursuant to §59.69(3), Wis. Stats.; and

WHEREAS, to assist with and facilitate the update to the comprehensive plan, the County has contracted with the West Central Regional Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the attached agreement between Chippewa County and the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, is consistent with and furthers the mandates of §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats., to foster public participation, ensure wide distribution of draft plan materials, and provide opportunities for written comments on draft plan materials; and

WHEREAS, Chippewa County believes that regular, meaningful public involvement in the plan update development process is important to assure that the resulting plan meets the wishes and expectations of the public; and

WHEREAS, the attached *Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update* has been developed to ensure compliance with the mandates of §66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats.;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chippewa County Board of Supervisors does hereby approve the attached *Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update* as its public participation procedures to meet the requirements of

§66.1001(4)(a), Wis. Stats.

Forwarded to the County Board by the Planning & Zoning Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to Chippewa County by passage of this resolution.

01/23/2025	**Planning & Zoning Committee**
RESULT:	**FORWARD TO COUNTY BOARD [UNANIMOUS]** **Next: 2/11/2025 6:00 PM**
MOVER:	David Kelly, District 14
SECONDER:	Rocky Kempe, District 16
AYES:	Jason Bergeron, David Kelly, Rocky Kempe
ABSENT:	Duane Shoebridge
EXCUSED:	Chuck Hull

Approved as to Form:

Todd A. Pauls
Todd A. Pauls, Corporation Counsel 1/8/2025

Lori Zwiefelhofer
Lori Zwiefelhofer, Finance Director 1/8/2025

Randy B. Scholz
Randy B. Scholz, County Administrator 1/8/2025

Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update

INTRODUCTION

§66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes, requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation, including open discussion, communication programs, information services and public meetings for which advance notice has been provided, at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, and that such written procedures provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments.

The Chippewa County Board of Supervisors recognizes the need for an open and active public participation process to foster a strong community commitment to the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to guide the community's future growth and development. To ensure that the public has an opportunity to be involved in every stage of the update of the Comprehensive Plan, the County identifies the following actions to promote an active public involvement process that provides complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and supports early and continuing involvement of the public in developing the plan.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

- The County has designated the Planning and Zoning Committee as the planning and zoning agency pursuant to Wis. Stat. §59.69(2).
- All meetings of the Planning and Zoning Committee and County Board are open to the public and are officially posted to notify the public as required by law. A period for public comment is provided.
- To obtain additional public input, the plan update process will include:
  - A web-based community opinion survey
  - Mailed survey to farmland owners with 30+ acres in unincorporated areas of the County
  - Presentation and discussion at a Chippewa County District Quarterly Towns Association Meeting
  - Meetings with zoned towns
  - Focus group meetings on topics such as housing, water, economic development, agriculture, land use regulations, etc. (7 such meetings are anticipated)
  - A required public hearing prior to plan adoption
- The governmental units of adjacent or overlapping jurisdiction will be notified of the county's undertaking of the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and their input sought on interjurisdictional issues concerning land use, municipal boundaries and service provision.
- The County Board will receive periodic reports from the Planning and Zoning Committee during the preparation of the plan and will have the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the Plan's direction.
- A draft copy of the Comprehensive Plan will be available at the Chippewa County Building/Courthouse and the City of Chippewa Falls Public Library during regular hours for the public to review and to submit written comments. A copy of the draft plan will also be available for review on the County's website.
- A Public Hearing will be conducted on the recommended Comprehensive Plan prior to the Planning and Zoning Committee recommendation by resolution and the County Board enacting the plan by ordinance. The Public Hearing will be preceded by Class 1 notice under Chapter 985, Wisconsin Statutes, published at least 30 days before the hearing is held. Additional notice will be provided pursuant to §66.1001 (4) (e), Wisconsin Statutes. The public is invited to comment during the Public Hearing and submit written comments as part of the notice.
- At least 30 days before the Public Hearing is held, the County shall also provide written notice of the draft Comprehensive Plan's availability and the Public Hearing notice to all parties described in §66.1001 (4) (e), Wisconsin Statutes.
- The County Board will consider and respond to written comments regarding the plan before enacting it by ordinance.
- The adopted comprehensive plan will be distributed in hardcopy or digital form to:

Attachment: Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update (06 - 25 : Resolution to Approve the

1. Every governmental body that is located in whole or in part within the boundaries of the local governmental unit.
2. The clerk of every local governmental unit that is adjacent to the local governmental unit that is the subject of the plan as well as the clerks of the cities, villages, and towns within Chippewa County.
3. The Wisconsin Department of Administration on behalf of the Wisconsin Land Board
5. The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.
6. The City of Chippewa Falls Public Library.

- The Chippewa County Planning and Zoning Committee, with County Board approval, may implement additional public participation activities as deemed appropriate, practicable, and needed.

Attachment: Public Participation Procedures for the Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update (06 - 25 : Resolution to Approve the

Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan Update

Over the next 18 months, Chippewa County, with assistance from the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC), will be updating its Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is a roadmap for the future of the County and serves as a guide for decision making about growth, development, and the overall well-being of the community over the next 20 years.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a document to guide the physical, social, and economic development of a county or community. The plan provides an inventory on existing conditions, sets a vision for the future, identifies issues or barriers to achieving the vision, sets goals and priorities, and develops a guide for action. The 9 required elements of the Plan include:

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

The plan will be a countywide plan but will emphasize the rural unincorporated Towns. Existing County and community plans will be reviewed and incorporated. While consistency with other plans is a goal, it is not required. The Comprehensive Plan is a vision; it is not regulation nor does it require the County or its communities to create any new programs.

Incorporating Farmland Preservation Planning

The Agricultural element of the Comprehensive Plan will also serve as an update to the County's Farmland Preservation Plan. To participate in the State's program, Chippewa County has maintained a farmland preservation plan; the purpose of the plan is to protect agricultural land uses within the County, promote incentives for preserving farmland, and to plan for future agricultural needs. The plan update will address Wisconsin's farmland preservation planning requirements in WI Stats. §91.1, including:

- Identify, assess, and map agricultural preservation areas countywide.
- Document the county's agricultural trends and resources.
- Establish goals and policies related to farmland preservation and the development of enterprises related to agriculture.
- Create strategies to preserve farmland.



WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

CHIPPEWA COUNTY WISCONSIN

January 23, 2025

Why is Chippewa County updating its Comprehensive Plan?

Chippewa County's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2010; the plan needs to be updated to address current conditions and priorities of the County. Wisconsin law also requires that a Comprehensive Plan be updated once every 10 years. The current County Comprehensive Plan is available on the County's website at https://www.chippewacountywi.gov/government/planning-zoning/comprehensive-planning.

State law requires counties and communities to carry out long-range planning to inform future development decisions and requires certain actions, such as zoning, land divisions, and official mapping, to be consistent with the plan. Comprehensive planning can help communities identify critical issues, obtain public input, focus resources, realize efficiencies, and prevent conflict. A plan becomes a guide to decision-making which encourages consistency, while helps to avoid arbitrary and uninformed decisions. It can also be used to support and secure grant funding for projects.

What is the timeline for the project?

The plan update process is expected to kickoff in January 2025 and take approximately 18 months to complete.

What is the process for updating the Plan?

The Chippewa County Planning & Zoning Committee (P&Z) will guide the plan update, with seven Committee meetings expected. All Committee meetings will be noticed and are open to the public. Focus Groups will also be used to provide direction on a specific topic. Additional public input opportunities include:

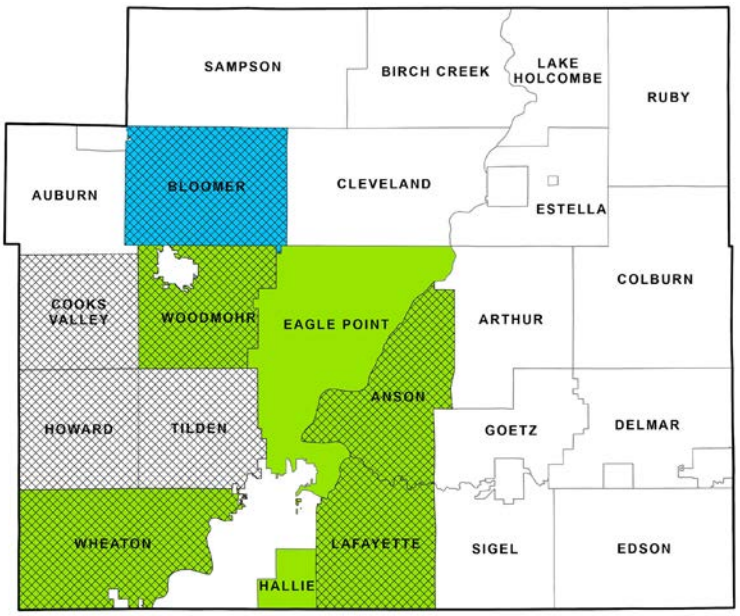
- Chippewa County Quarterly Towns Association Mtg.
- Online Community Survey
- Mailed Farmland Owner Survey
- Meetings with zoned towns
- Public Hearing

Want more information?

Please contact:

Doug Clary, Planning Director, Chippewa County
dclary@chippewacountywi.gov
(715) 726-7941

Please check the Chippewa County website for meeting notices.

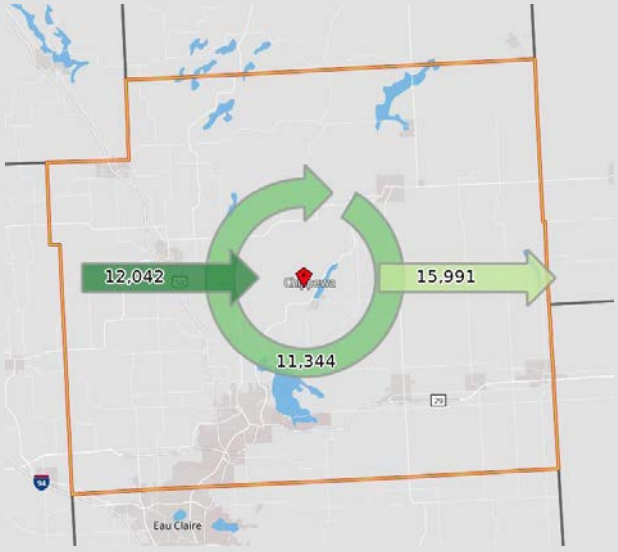


(Some towns may have additional land use or mininmum lot size standards.)

Population, Economic & Housing Characteristics, 2000 to 2020				
	2000 Census	2020 Census	# Change	% Change
Population	55,195	66,297	11,102	20.1%
Median Age	37.6	41.7	4	10.9%
# of Households	21,356	26,287	4,931	23.1%
Average Household Size	2.53	2.41	-0.12	-4.6%
% of One Person Households	24.7%	27.6%	1,978	-
% of Households with Individuals Under 18 Years	35.5%	27.9%	-227	-
Total Housing Units	22,821	28,688	5,867	25.7%
Seasonal or Migrant	694	1,380	686	98.8%
Total Vacant Units	1,465	2,401	936	63.9%
	2000 Census	2019-2023 ACS	# Change	% Change
Median Household Income	$39,536	$74,009	$34,473	87.2%
Median Owner Income	$45,196	$87,069	$41,873	92.6%
Median Renter Income	$24,388	$45,903	$21,515	88.2%
Median Home Value	$88,100	$237,700	$149,600	169.8%
Median Gross Rent	$446	$963	$517	115.9%
% Owners Cost-Burdened	14.9%	17.8%	-	-
% Renters Cost-Burdened	30.5%	43.3%	-	-
Median # of Rooms	5.5	6.0	0.5	9.09%
Structures 50 Years or Older (pre 1950 & 1970)	8,066	10,970	2,904	36.0%
% of Structures 50 Years or Older	35.3%	37.8%	2.5%	-
Single Family Units	17,570	23,414	5,844	33.3%
Multi-Family Units (2+ units)	3,811	4,305	494	13.0%
Mobile Homes	1,436	1,294	-142	-9.9%

- Total population has increased 20% over the last 20 years, with some communities exerpiencing a loss.
- The County's population is aging. The median age increased 4.0 years from 2000 to 2020.
- While the County's median household income is increasing, it has not kept pace with increasing home values and housing rent over the past 20 years.
- About 8.3% of County residents live below the poverty level. Further, according to the United Way, 21% of households in the County are living paycheck to paycheck and are struggling to pay for housing costs, food, child care, and other basic expenses.

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts, 2022 Primary Job



- *42% of Chippewa County residents who are employed have a primary job inside Chippewa County while 58% leave the County for work.*
- *49% of the Chippewa County workforce is comprised of Chippewa County residents, while 21% commutes in from Eau Claire County; 4% from Dunn County and 3% from Barron County.*

source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

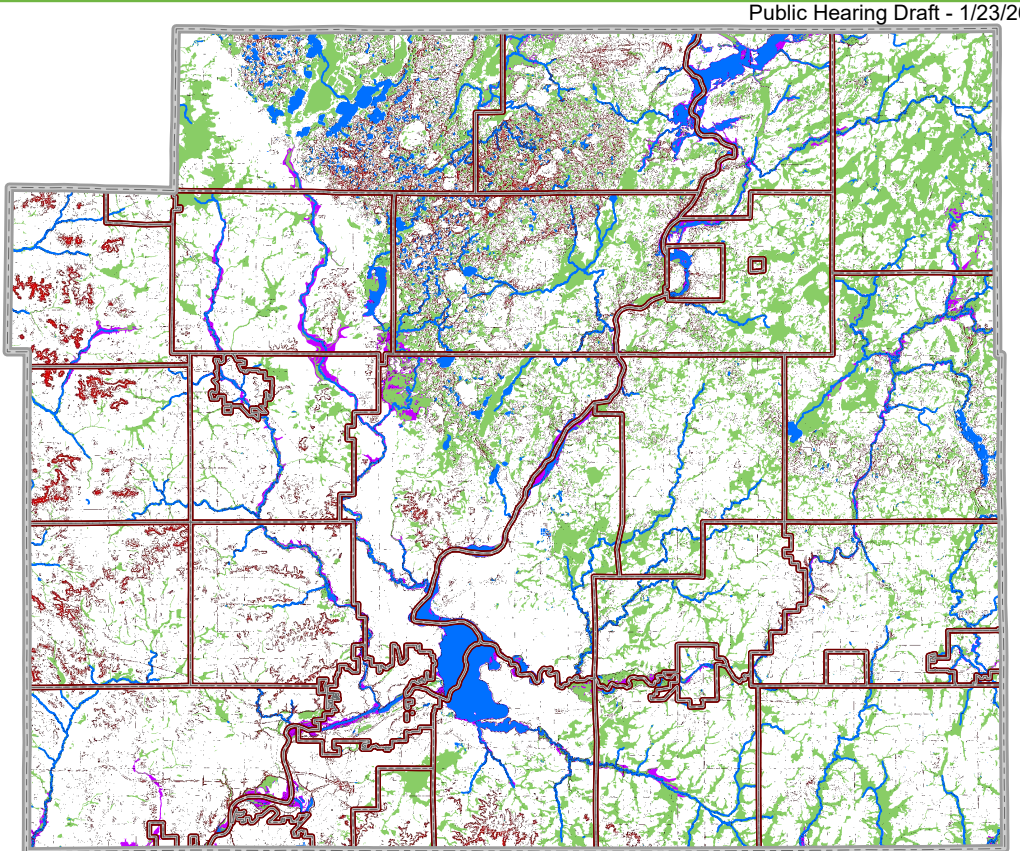
Industry Description	2023 Jobs	2023 Payrolled Business Locations
Manufacturing	5,832	123
Government	3,762	94
Retail Trade	3,741	200
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,415	351
Construction	2,244	215
Accommodation and Food Services	2,035	161
Transportation and Warehousing	1,896	104
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,349	113
Wholesale Trade	874	79
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	843	69
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	824	101
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	778	53
Finance and Insurance	590	84
Educational Services	524	13
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	437	27
Management of Companies and Enterprises	205	14
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	190	34
Information	125	15
Utilities	61	4
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	14	3
Unclassified Industry	0	0

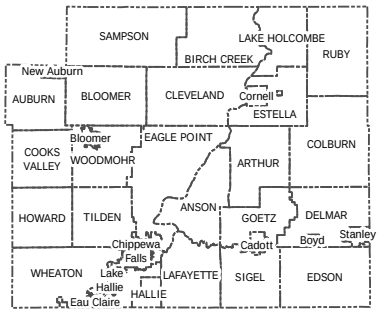
source: 2024.4 – QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed

Chippewa County's economy is diverse. The County's employment share is higher than county averages nationally in capital/resource-intensive jobs (e.g., manufacturing), distribution, research & technology, and agriculture/natural resources industries.

Legend

- Steep Slopes (20% or greater)
- Wetlands
- 100-yr Floodplain
- Surface Water
- Municipal Boundaries
- Chippewa County





WCWRPC
WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Environmentally Sensitive Lands

Chippewa County, Wisconsin

January 2025

Data Sources:
WisDOT, WisDNR,
WisDOA, Chippewa County.

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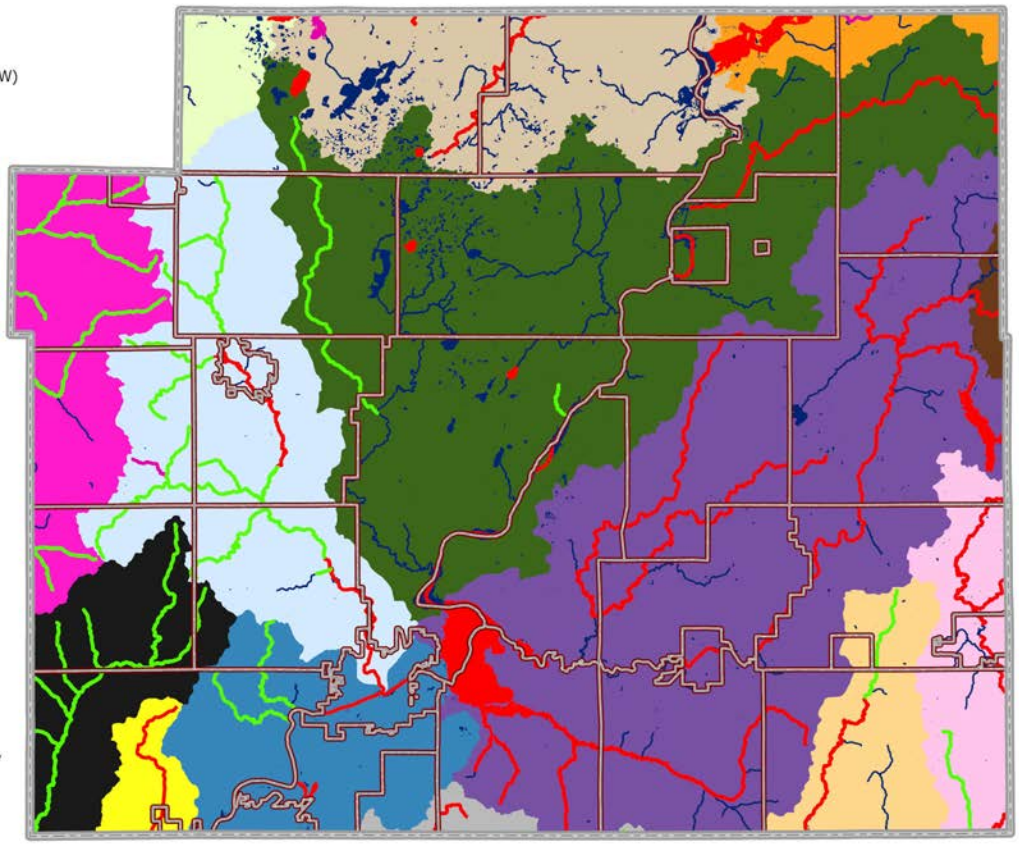
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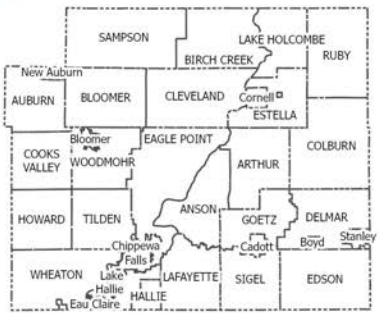
Legend

- Chippewa County
- Municipal Boundaries
- Trout Streams (Class I-III)
- Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters (OERW)
- Impaired Waters
- Surface Water

HUC 10 Name

- Duncan Creek
- Eau Claire River
- Elk Creek
- Fisher River-Chippewa River
- Hay Creek-Eau Claire River
- Headwaters Yellow River
- Holcolmbe Flowage-Chippewa River
- Jump River
- Lake Chetek
- Lake Wissota
- Lower Pine Creek-Red Cedar River
- Lowes Creek-Chippewa River
- North Fork Eau Claire River
- Trout Creek-Chippewa River





WCWRPC
WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Resource & Impaired Waters

Chippewa County, Wisconsin

January 2025

Data Sources:
WisDOT, WisDNR,
WisDOA

0 1 2 4 Miles

N

INSERT FINAL
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Appendix 2
Utilities & Community Facilities Inventory

Public Hearing Draft - 1/23/26

Appendix 2: Utilities & Community Facilities Inventory

This Appendix details existing conditions of utilities and community facilities within Chippewa County. The locations of many key public community facilities are identified on Figure A2-1 and Figure A2-.

Administrative Facilities and Services

County Facilities

Table A2-1 provides a brief list of the primary county government facilities in Chippewa County. The need for future facilities will be driven by demand for services and resources available to meet those demands.

Table A2-1. Chippewa County Government Facilities

County Facility	Location	Primary Function / Services	Capacity
Chippewa County Courthouse	711 N. Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls	County administrative offices and most County departments are housed here. Also location of County Board meetings and where court hearings are held.	
Sheriff's Dept. / Emergency Mgt.	32 E. Spruce Street, Chippewa Falls	Sheriff's Department & Emergency Management offices and operations	
Chippewa County Jail	50 E. Spruce Street, Chippewa Falls	County jail facility housing inmates.	In 2002, a large addition was completed that raised the capacity of the jail to 199 inmates. Today's jail is about 60,000 square feet on three floors.
Chippewa County Maintenance Shop	109 E. Spruce Street, Chippewa Falls	Support facility for the Facilities and Highway Departments.	
Chippewa County Highway Dept.	801 E. Grand Ave, Chippewa Falls	Road maintenance, engineering, fleet, and administrative offices.	Highway Dept. employs around 75 full-time personnel.

Chippewa County also manages many County Parks; details on park facilities are detailed later in this section.



Municipal Facilities

Within Chippewa County, each town, village and city has a facility used for official municipal business. Local communities may have additional community facility buildings such as municipal shops, recycling or yard waste centers, streets buildings, etc.

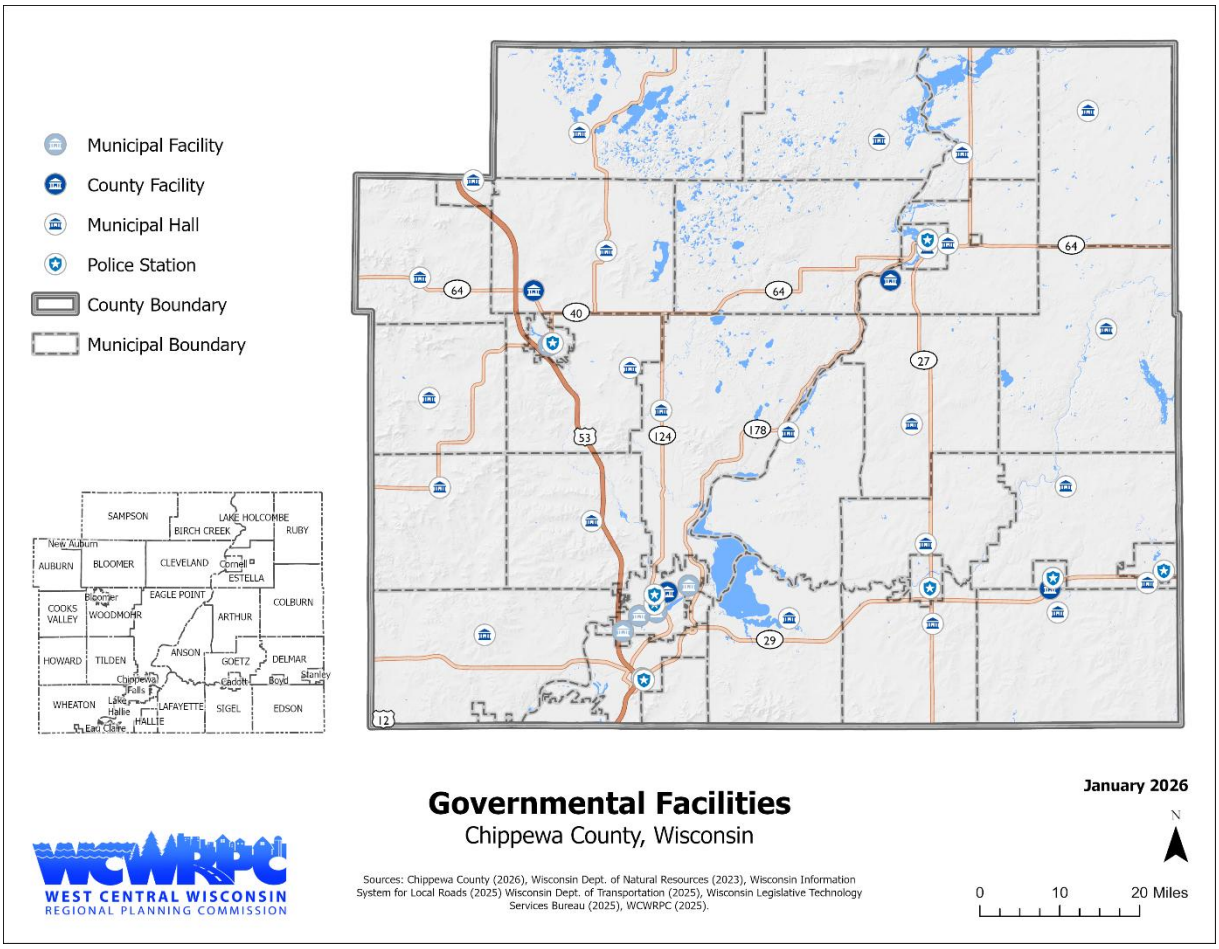
Table A2-2. Municipal Facilities in Chippewa County

Government Facility/Town Hall	Address (or Known Location)
Bloomer City Hall	1503 Main Street, Bloomer, WI 54724
Chippewa Falls City Hall	30 W Central St, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Cornell City Hall	222 Main St, Cornell, WI 54732
Stanley City Hall	353 S Broadway St, Stanley, WI 54768
Boyd Village Hall	705 E Murray Street, Boyd, WI 54726
Village of Cadott Office	110 Central Street, Cadott, WI 54727
Lake Hallie Village Hall	13136 30th Avenue, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
New Auburn Village Hall	130 E Elm Street, New Auburn, WI 54757
Anson Town Hall	13836 County Hwy S, Jim Falls, WI 54748
Arthur Town Hall	25091 County Hwy S, Cadott, WI 54727
Auburn Town Hall	3826 State Hwy 64, Bloomer, WI 54724
Birch Creek Town Hall	26755 240th Street, Holcombe, WI 54745
Bloomer Town Hall	21281 State Hwy 40, Bloomer, WI 54724
Cleveland Town Hall	20470 State Hwy 64, Cornell, WI 54732
Colburn Town Hall	18476 County Hwy S North, Stanley, WI 54768
Cooks Valley Town Hall	15751 40th Street, Bloomer, WI 54724
Delmar Town Hall	11528 320th Street, Boyd, WI 54726
Eagle Point Town Hall	14802 State Highway 124, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Edson Town Hall	31595 County Hwy MM, Boyd, WI 54726
Estella Town Hall	22111 270th Street, Cornell, WI 54732
Goetz Town Hall	8985 257th Street, Cadott, WI 54727
Hallie Town Office	13034 30th Ave, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Howard Town Hall	4052 County Road B, Colfax, WI 54730
Lafayette Town Hall	5765 197th Street, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Lake Holcombe Town Hall	26179 275th Street, Holcombe, WI 54745
Ruby Town Hall	33150 280th Street, Sheldon, WI 54766
Sampson Town Hall	10770 270th Avenue, New Auburn, WI 54757
Sigel Town Hall	5511 State Hwy 27, Cadott, WI 54727
Tilden Town Hall	10790 100th Ave, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Wheaton Town Hall	4975 County Hwy T, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Woodmohr Town Hall	16738 125th Street, Bloomer, WI 54724






Figure A2-1. Governmental Facilities, Chippewa County



Sanitary Sewer & Wastewater Treatment

There are 7 municipal wastewater treatment system facilities in the County as identified in Table A2-3. The Town of Lake Holcombe has a sanitary district that serves portions of the Town. The facilities require State of Wisconsin municipal wastewater permits for the proper treatment of wastewater and ultimate discharge of treated water to either surface or ground water. For more information on these facilities, please refer to local plans and/or contact the community's public works department.

Table A2-3. Permitted Municipal Wastewater Treatment Systems in Chippewa County

Permittee Name	Permittee Type	Receiving Water-body Discharge	Annual Average Design Flow	Permit Expiration
Bloomer WWTF	Municipal	Duncan Creek located in the Duncan Creek Watershed	.611 MGD	March 31, 2028
Boyd WWTF	Municipal	Groundwaters of the Black and Hay Creeks Watershed	.0923 MGD	June 30, 2028
Cadott WWTF	Municipal	Yellow River	.167 MGD	September 30, 2029

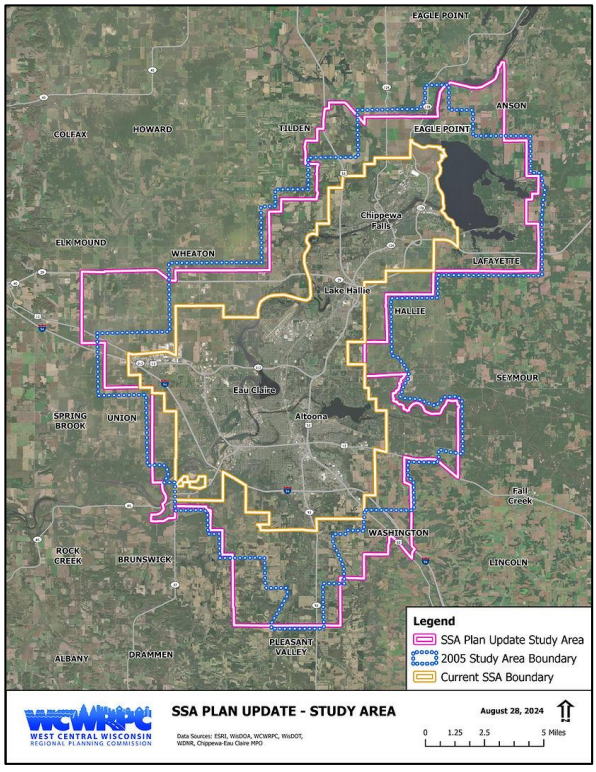
Permittee Name	Permittee Type	Receiving Water-body Discharge	Annual Average Design Flow	Permit Expiration
Chippewa Falls WWTF	Municipal	Chippewa River in the Duncan Creek Watershed	4.5 MGD	September 30, 2025
Cornell WWTF	Municipal	Chippewa River in the McCann Creek and Fisher River Watershed	.395 MGD	December 31, 2029
Lake Holcombe Sanitary District #1 WWTF	Municipal	Lake Holcombe	.07 MGD	December 31, 2029
New Auburn WWTF	Municipal	Groundwaters of the Duncan Creek Watershed	.063 MGD	March 31, 2028
Stanley WWTF	Municipal	Wolf River in the North Fork Eau Claire River Watershed	.789 MGD	June 30, 2030

source: WDNR, Water Quality – Permits on the Web Lookup

The Village of Lake Hallie is unique in that it does not have a municipal sanitary sewer system. While the Village has experienced urban growth, development is served by individual Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS). In addition to the individual POWTS throughout the Village, there is a municipally owned and maintained cluster septic system to serve sites along Commercial Boulevard. The system was designed in 2009/2010; the Village constructed the system with the goal of attracting more commercial users to the corridor. The full system design includes 3 treatment trains and 6 dispersion fields; there are currently 2 treatment trains and 4 dispersion zones constructed.

Chippewa-Eau Claire Sewer Service Area

Portions of the County, specifically the City of Chippewa Falls, Village of Lake Hallie, and portions of Towns surrounding these municipalities, are within the *Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urban Sewer Service Area* (SSA). The SSA Plan is a water quality plan driven by Section 208 of the Federal Clean Water Act and NR 110 & NR 121 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. The SSA Plan is used by local, State, & Federal agencies when considering municipal wastewater facility plans, permitting for sewer extensions (208 reviews), and certain, related grant applications. As a water quality plan, the SSA Plan emphasizes the protection of certain environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) that are carefully defined within the plan. To help protect water quality (& these ESAs), intensive land disturbances for sewer extensions and areas to be served by an extension should not occur until conformance with the SSA Plan has been determined by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) or the SSA Plan is amended.



Municipal sanitary sewer cannot be extended to an area unless it is located within the SSA boundary identified in the SSA Plan. The SSA boundary is the area presently served and

anticipated (or likely) to be served by municipal sanitary sewer by the end of the SSA Plan's 20-year planning horizon. The current SSA boundary delineates areas with a potential for future sewered development by 2025, but does not determine or guarantee that these lands will be developed, sewered, or annexed. Having been adopted in 2006-2007, the current boundary is nearly 18 years old and is in the process of being updated, with an updated plan anticipated for adoption by spring 2026.

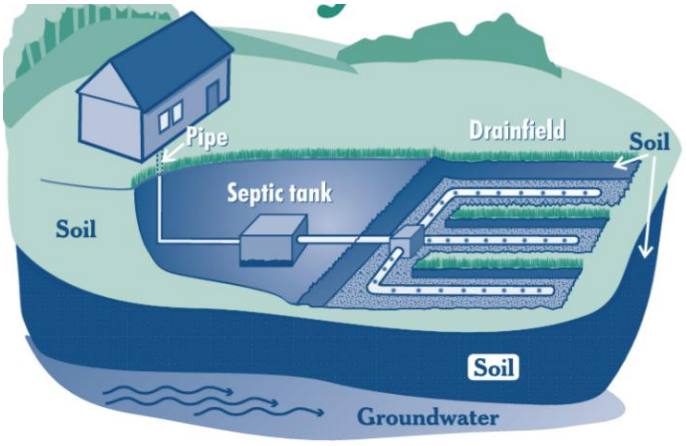
While WDNR has ultimate decision-making authority over the SSA Plan, the plan is locally administered by West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) with the Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Council serving as a water quality advisory committee to the WDNR. Local communities within the sewer service area have the responsibility to review proposed development projects for SSA Plan conformance, especially in instances where a sewer extension (and conformance letter) is not required.

Private On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)

In most of the unincorporated areas, residents utilize on-site septic systems to treat wastewater. Septic systems are wastewater treatment systems that collect, treat, and dispose of wastewater that is produced by homes or businesses. Wastewater is treated on-site, rather than collected and transported to a community-wide wastewater treatment plant.

A septic system consists of two main parts – a septic tank and a soil absorption system, which is more commonly called a drainfield, leachfield, or disposal field. The system is connected with pipes and a sewer pipe connects the home or business to the system, as shown in the diagram in Figure A2-2.

Figure A2-2. POWTS System Diagram



source: US Environmental Protection Agency

The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services Division of Industry Services regulates the siting, design, installation, and inspection of more private on-site sewage treatment systems in the state. Chippewa County regulates on-site sewage treatment systems through its Private Sewage System Ordinance, which is administered county-wide. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote and protect public health, safety, and the environment by assuring the proper siting, design, installation, inspection, and management of private sewage systems. All structures or premises in the county that are permanently or intermittently intended for human habitation or occupancy, which are not served by a public sewer and have running water plumbed into the structure, are required to have a system for holding or treatment and dispersal of sewage and wastewater. Holding tanks are a method of last resort.

Since 1985, Chippewa County has required mandatory maintenance or pumping of tanks for all private sewage systems. Proper maintenance and use of a private sewage systems can help increase its life expectancy.

Water Supply

Chippewa County residents receive their water from groundwater sources. These sources include drilled, dug, or screened wells, including those with or without gravel packs.



Residents in the County's Towns rely on private wells to obtain their water; these wells utilize groundwater for the water source. The County requires that all new wells be permitted and tracks the location of new private wells. In general, private wells are not nearly as deep as municipal wells and are therefore more susceptible to contamination. As discussed in more detail in **Chapter 7 Natural Resources**, the County has monitored, and continues to monitor, groundwater quality throughout the County.

In an effort to provide safe drinking water to County citizens, the County installed a water refill station in the Town of Anson, Auburn, Lafayette, and Wheaton. The County will provide a gallon water jug (one per household) for use by residents at the refill stations.

As listed in Table A2-4, all incorporated communities in Chippewa County provide municipal water service. Per data from WDNR, there are currently 11 municipal or community water systems within the County.

Table A2-4. Municipal / Community Water Systems, Chippewa County

System Name / Owner	Type	Location	# Water Meters	Storage Capacity (Gallons)	# of Wells
Bloomer Waterworks	Municipal	City of Bloomer	1,510	N/A	4
Boyd Waterworks	Municipal	Village of Boyd	285	100,000	2
Cadott Waterworks	Municipal	Village of Cadott	632	250,000	3
Chippewa Falls Waterworks	Municipal	City of Chippewa Falls	5,240	2,250,000	9
Cornell Waterworks	Municipal	City of Cornell	624	300,000	2
Village of Lake Hallie Waterworks	Municipal	Village of Lake Hallie	753	433,000	5
New Auburn Waterworks	Municipal	Village of New Auburn	193	50,000	2
Stanely Waterworks	Municipal	City of Stanley	882	250,000	8
System Name / Owner	**Type**	**Location**	**# Service Connects**	**Storage Capacity**	**# of Wells**
Duncan Prairie MHC	Other Community	Near Bloomer	35	N/A	1
Hoffmanns Wissota Court	Other Community	Mobile Home Park Nearar Chippewa Falls	36	N/A	1
Lafayette Court	Other Community	Near Chippewa Falls	27	N/A	1

source: WDNR Drinking Water System Portal

For more information on these municipal and community water systems, please refer to local plans and/or contact the community's public works department.

Communities that provide water service through municipal wells must follow Chippewa County's wellhead protection plan, which regulates land use near wellheads to minimize the opportunity for water contamination. This applies to all municipal wells, and determines permitted, conditional, and prohibited uses within distances from municipal wells. By not allowing particular uses in close proximity to municipal wells, the County is protecting the water sources that serve large populations. All new wells are required to have a wellhead protection plan; each community can have its own wellhead protection ordinance to further safeguard its public drinking water wells from contamination.

Table A2-5. Municipal Water System Wellhead Protection

System Name / Owner	Wellhead Protection Plan	Wellhead Protection Ordinance
Bloomer Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Boyd Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Cadott Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Chippewa Falls Waterworks	Yes	Yes
Cornell Waterworks	No	No
Village of Lake Hallie Waterworks	Yes	Yes
New Auburn Waterworks	No	No
Stanely Waterworks	Yes	Yes

source: 2010 Chippewa County Comprehensive Plan, online search of municipal websites



source: City of Sacred Heart MN

Stormwater Management

Stormwater runoff is all the rain, or snow, that runs off roads, buildings, lawns, streets, construction sites, or any other impermeable surfaces. These areas do not allow for water to infiltrate into the ground which causes the water to travel over contaminated surfaces. The moving water collects these pollutants as it moves over contaminated surfaces. Due to pollutants picked up along the way, stormwater can pollute the local streams, rivers, and lakes, ultimately harming fish and wildlife and killing native vegetation.

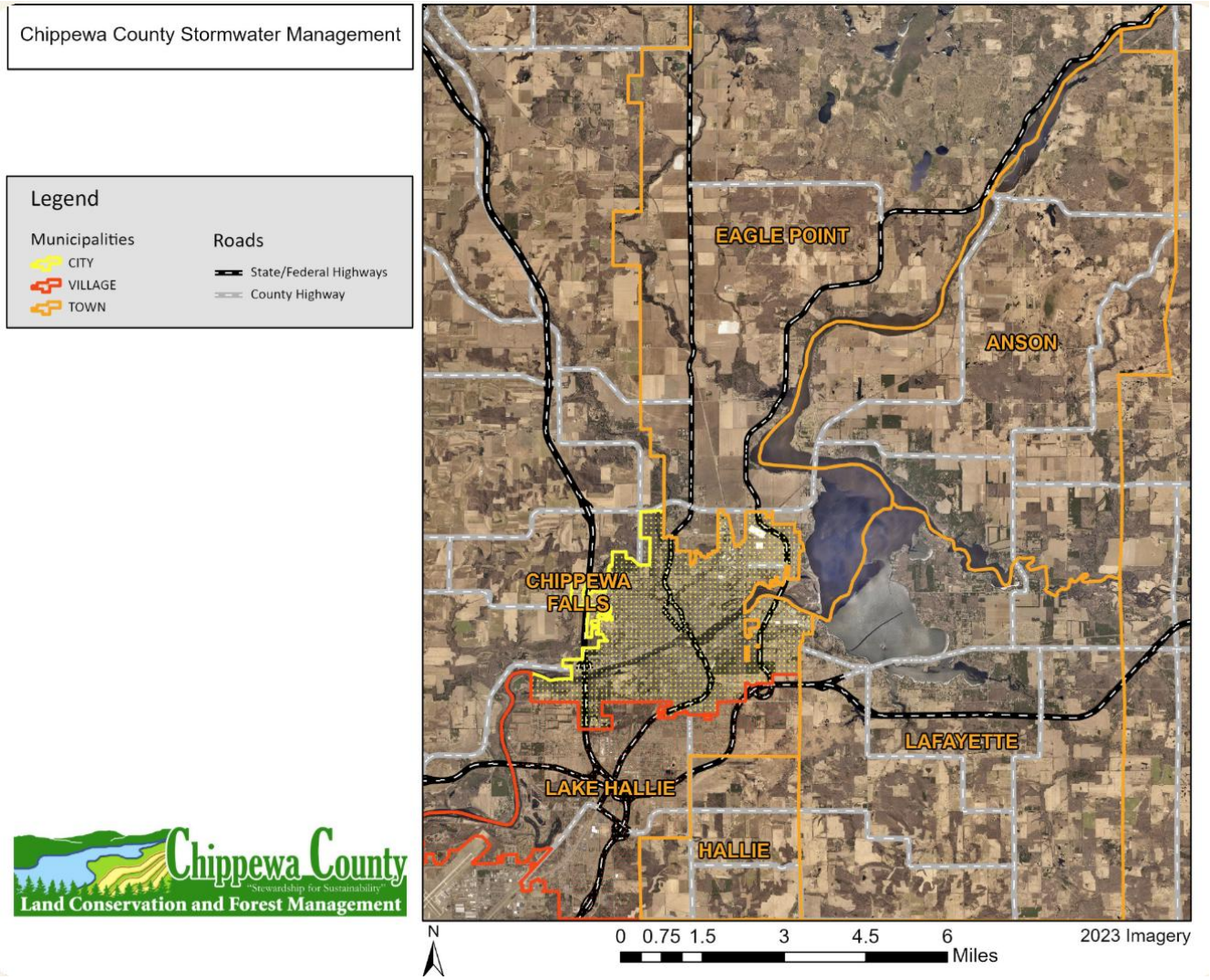
Most of Chippewa County uses ditches and culverts to route and manage stormwater. The urban areas utilize curb and gutter systems as part of a dedicated storm sewer system.

There are a variety of techniques or best management practices for management stormwater quality and the rate of runoff, including the use of stormwater ponds and rain gardens. In an attempt to protect the County's water sources, Chippewa County, the Towns of Anson, Eagle Point, and Lafayette, along with the Village of



Lake Hallie, have collaborated to establish a stormwater management plan for the area[1]. A variety of ponds and gardens are maintained in the Area.

Figure A2-3. Chippewa Urban Area Stormwater Management Planning Area



The City of Chippewa Falls has a stormwater utility, in which the City may charge a fee in order to support stormwater infrastructure and management. The City, along with the Village of Lake Hallie, participate in the Rain to Rivers of Western Wisconsin for stormwater runoff and erosion-related educational efforts, which enable the communities to meet municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) permit requirements.

[1] *Stormwater Facility Management in Chippewa County.* https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3299e76b4ae24bed820b293afc260263

Solid Waste & Recycling

Chippewa County's Land Conservation & Forest Management Department manages recycling and solid waste management programs for the County.

Solid waste, or garbage disposal, is handled differently by each individual local community in the County. Some Chippewa County communities offer street-side waste collection, in other community's property owners must contract individually for solid waste collection service.

Per the County's 2024 Recycling Report[2], all Chippewa County municipalities have developed and now manage a recycling collection program. Each municipality arranges for and pays to transport their municipalities' recyclable to processors. The municipalities have either developed a drop-off program at a local recycling center or have negotiated contracts with haulers to provide a curbside recycling program. Figure A2-4, from the *2024 Recycling Report*, shows the type of municipal recycling program established in each Chippewa County municipality.

Figure A2-4. Chippewa County Municipal Recycling Programs

Table 1 – Type of Municipal Recycling Program			
Municipality	**Curbside Program**	**Drop-off Program**	**Independent RU's**
Anson	GFL		
Arthur		GFL	
Birch Creek		GFL	
Bloomer Area		Markets recyclables	
Boyd	Waste Management		
Cadott	GFL		
Chippewa Falls	GFL		
Cleveland		GFL	
Colburn		GFL	
Cooks Valley		Right Away Disposal - GFL	
Cornell			GFL
Delmar			GFL
Eagle Point		Waste Management	
Edson		GFL	
Estella		GFL	
Goetz		GFL	
Hallie Area		GFL	
Howard		GFL	
Lafayette		Waste Management	
Lake Holcombe		GFL	
New Auburn			Waste Management
Ruby		GFL	
Sigel		GFL	
Stanley	GFL		
Tilden		Waste Management	
Wheaton		GFL	
Total	5	18	3

source: Chippewa County 2024 Recycling Annual Report

[2] *Chippewa County 2024 Recycling Annual Report.*
https://www.chippewacountywi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1262/2024-Recycling-Annual-Report-PDF

In 2024, Chippewa County met the standards of NR544 requiring a minimum of 93.32 pounds per person. Chippewa County collected 109.16 pounds per person[3].

Emergency and Protective Services

Law Enforcement

There are several law enforcement departments that serve Chippewa County and its communities, as shown in Table A2-6. At the state level, the State Patrol primarily monitors and enforces traffic regulations on the State Highways throughout Chippewa County. Incorporated communities throughout the County primarily rely on local law enforcement departments. The Towns in Chippewa County rely on the Chippewa County's Sheriff's Department for law enforcement protection.

Table A2-6. Law Enforcement in Chippewa County

Agency	Address
City of Bloomer Police Department	1200 15th Ave, Bloomer
Village of Boyd Police Department	705 Murray St, Boyd
Village of Cadott Police Department	110 N Central St, Cadott
City of Chippewa Falls Police Department	210 Island St, Chippewa Falls
City of Cornell Police Department	221 Main St, Cornell
Village of Lake Hallie Police Department	13141 County Highway OO, Chippewa Falls
Village of New Auburn Police Department	130 E Elm St, New Auburn
City of Stanley Police Department	353 S Broadway St, Stanley
City of Eau Claire Police Department	721 Oxford Ave, Eau Claire
Chippewa County Sheriff's Department	32 East Spruce Street, Chippewa Falls
Wisconsin DNR Law Enforcement	101 S Webster St, Madison
Wisconsin State Patrol	5005 STH 53, Eau Claire

source: Wisconsin Law Enforcement Directory

Chippewa County Emergency Management provides additional support to the County's emergency response providers and local governments through operations planning, training, coordination, crisis response, and recovery. In addition to local and Countywide emergency operation plans, the Chippewa County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, adopted in 2020 with a scheduled 2026 update, identified proactive strategies and mitigation mazards for potential natural hazard events.

[3] *Ibid.*

Fire Services

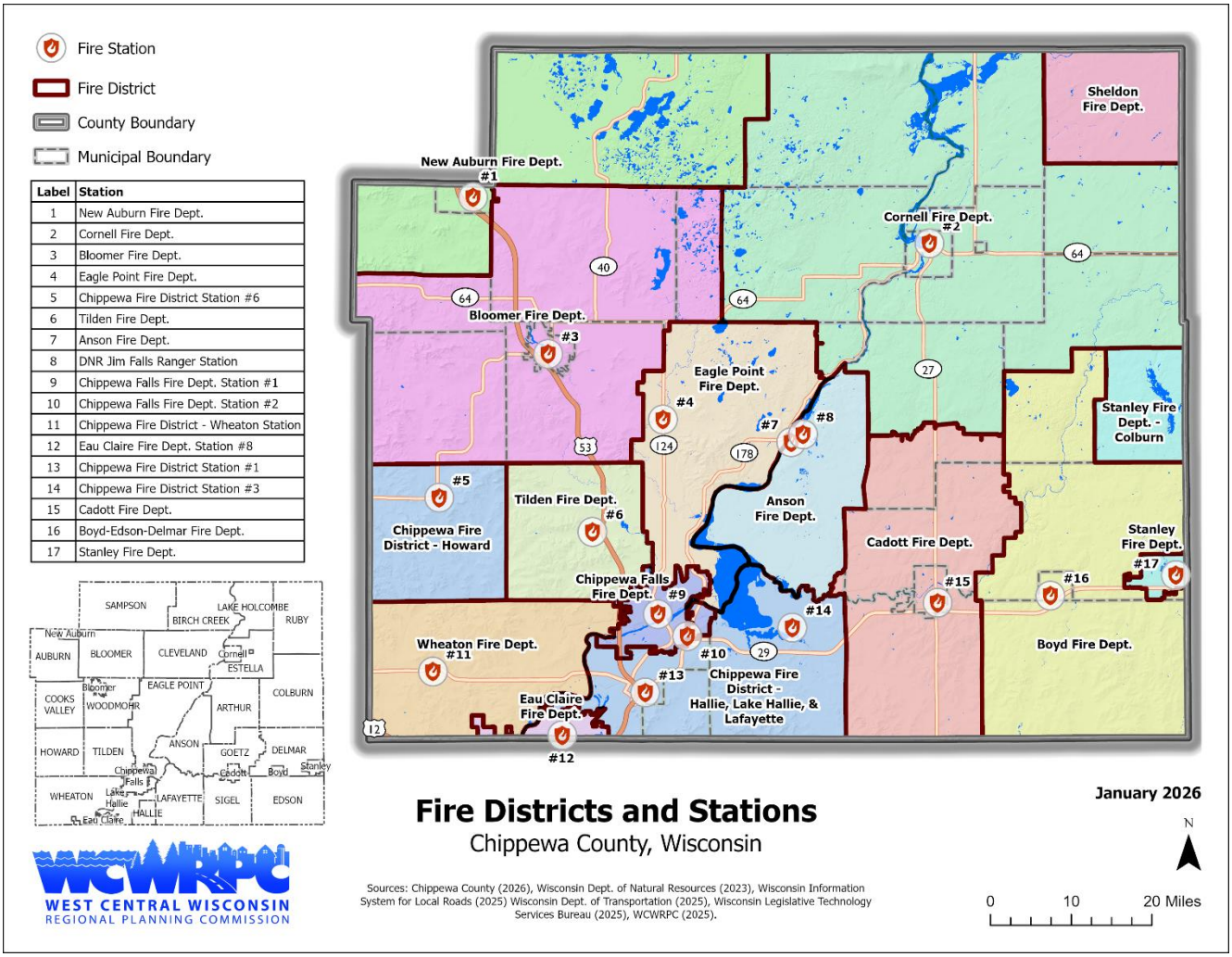
Fire protection within Chippewa County is handled by 14 fire districts as listed in Table A2-7 and shown on Figure A2-5. Wildfires are typically handled by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Much of the dispatch services for fire departments are handled by Chippewa County.

Table A2-7. Fire Departments in Chippewa County

Fire Department	Coverage Area	Address
Chippewa Fire District	Towns of Hallie, Howard, Lafayette, and Village of Lake Hallie.	3 stations: Hallie Station 1, Lafayette Station 3, and Howard Station 6
Anson Volunteer Fire Department	Town of Anson and parts of Town of Eagle Point	13830 County Highway S South, Jim Falls
Boyd-Edson-Delmar Rural Fire Department	Village of Boyd, Towns of Edson, Delmar, Wilson and Colburn for fire & EMS. Also provides EMS for City of Stanley.	100 S Oshkosh St, Boyd
Bloomer Fire Department	City of Bloomer, Town of Bloomer, Town of Cooks Valley, Town of Woodmohr, ½ of Town of Auburn, and a small part of Town of Cleveland	1631 Oak Street, Bloomer
New Auburn Fire Department	Village of New Auburn and surrounding Towns	410 South Old 53 Street, New Auburn
Tilden Volunteer Fire Department		10790 100th Ave, Tilden
Chippewa Falls Fire and Emergency Services	City of Chippewa Falls	Station 1 – 1301 Chippewa Crossing Blvd, Chippewa Falls Station 2 – 211 Bay Street, Chippewa Falls
Cadott Area Fire and Rescue	Village of Cadott	436 Hartford St, Cadott
Stanley Area Fire Department	City of Stanley	239 E 1st Ave, Stanley
Cornell Area Fire Department	City of Cornell, Towns of Arthur, Birch Creek, Cleveland, Colburn, Eagle Point, Estella, Lake Holcombe, and Ruby	100 Osborne St, Cornell



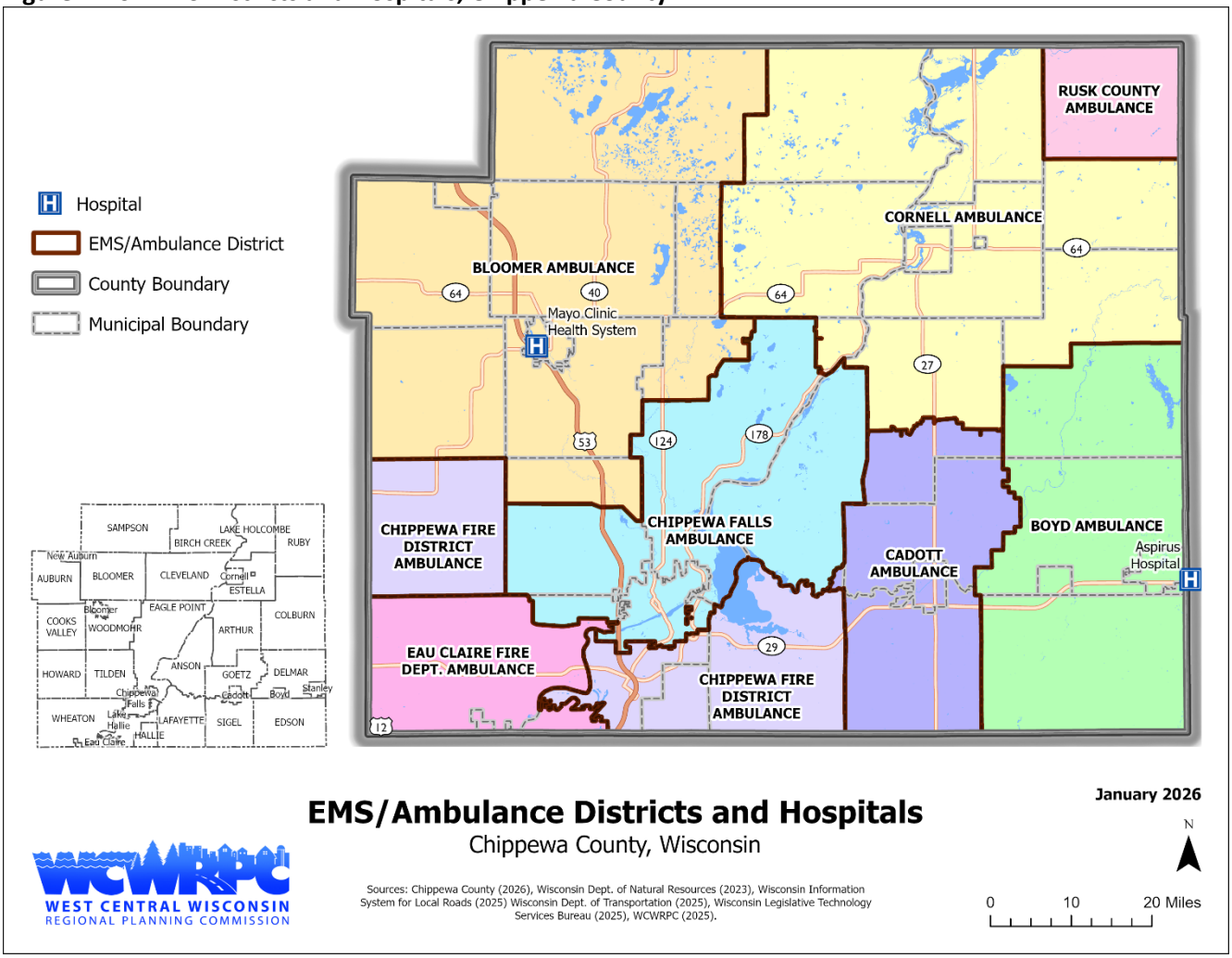
Figure A2-5. Fire Districts and Fire Halls, Chippewa County



Ambulance

Figure A2-6 shows the 9 EMS Districts within the County, along with the location of the two existing hospitals. These ambulance services typically operate under county 911 dispatch and may be staffed by a combination of paid staff and volunteers. Many smaller volunteer fire/first-responder units also support EMS and may provide initial care before an ambulance arrives.

Figure A2-6. EMS Districts and Hospitals, Chippewa County



9-1-1 Emergency Communications

Chippewa County has a single emergency dispatch for the entire county with an enhanced 9-1-1 system.

Health Care Facilities

Identified medical clinics within the County include:

- Mayo Clinic Health Systems, Chippewa Falls
- Marshfield Clinic, Lake Hallie
- Oakleaf Clinics, Chippewa Falls
- Chippewa Valley VA Clinic, Chippewa Falls
- Marshfield Clinic, Chippewa Falls
- Sunrise Health Clinic, Chippewa Falls
- Althea Medical Group, Lake Hallie
- Achieve Health, Chippewa Falls
- ReforMedicine, Lake Hallie
- Marshfield Clinic Cornell (Rural Health Clinic)
- Marshfield Clinic Bloomer (Rural Health Clinic)
- Aspirus Stanley Clinic (Rural Health Clinic)

Rural Health Clinic: a federally certified primary care clinic in a rural, medically underserved area that provides outpatient services, often delivered by a Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant, aiming to increase access to care with enhanced Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement, requiring core services like diagnostic, labs, and emergency first-response.

Key aspects include location in shortage areas, staffing by non-physician providers for at least half their open hours, and agreements with hospitals for necessary services.

The 2024 closing of St. Joseph's Hospital in Chippewa Falls in 2024 left hospitals in the County, as shown in Table A2-8. These two hospitals have a total capacity of 49 beds.

Table A2-8. Hospital Facilities in Chippewa County

Location	Facility Name	Approximate Capacity
Bloomer	Mayo Clinic Health System	25
Stanley	Aspirus Stanley Hospital	24

source: Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Hospitals Provider Directory December 19, 2025

The closing of St. Joseph's Hospital, which was accompanied by the closing of Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire, had a significant impact on regional healthcare. This sparked significant planning for healthcare; two new hospital facilities are now being planned in Chippewa County.

Chippewa Valley Health Cooperative purchased the former St. Joseph's hospital building and is reopening it as the Chippewa Valley Cooperative Hospital, serving as a temporary facility until a new hospital is constructed in Lake Hallie.



source: https://chippewavalleyhealthcooperative.org/hospital/

Aspirus Health has received approvals for a new 35,000 square foot Aspirus Chippewa Falls Hospital and Clinic, which will include an emergency department with 10 treatment rooms, 10 inpatient beds, an on-site clinic with 12 treatment rooms, and several other medical services. The hospital is currently under construction with an estimated completion date of September 2026.



source: https://www.aspirus.org/chippewafalls

Social Services

Chippewa County offers a variety of social services designed to support residents across all stages of life. Some of the specific social service-related departments include:

- **Chippewa County Department of Human Services** provides programs for children and families, behavioral health, economic support, and protective services, helping individuals and households meet basic needs.
- **Chippewa County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADCR)** serves as a central point of contact and assistance for older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers. The department helps individuals identify options, benefits, and available resources.
- **Chippewa County Public Health** focuses on promoting community health through disease prevention, health education, maternal and child health programs, and environmental health.

In addition to the County services, local municipalities also offer spaces and services for the community, with many designed to serve seniors. These include:

- Chippewa Falls Area Senior Center
- Bloomer Senior Civic Center
- Cornell Senior Citizens Center

These centers offer opportunities for seniors to learn, stay active, obtain resources, and connect with others.



Educational Facilities

Chippewa County residents are served be a variety of educational facilities from elementary through post-secondary levels. Overall, municipalities in the County have a limited role in the planning and functions of educational facilities, primarily relying on the educational institution itself for planning and operations.

Public Schools

Public education for grades K-12 is available for all Wisconsin residents. As shown in Figure A2-7, 13 school districts cover portions of Chippewa County, although some of the districts are largely located in neighboring counties. School district boundaries are determined by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

Figure A2-7. Schools and School District Boundaries, Chippewa County

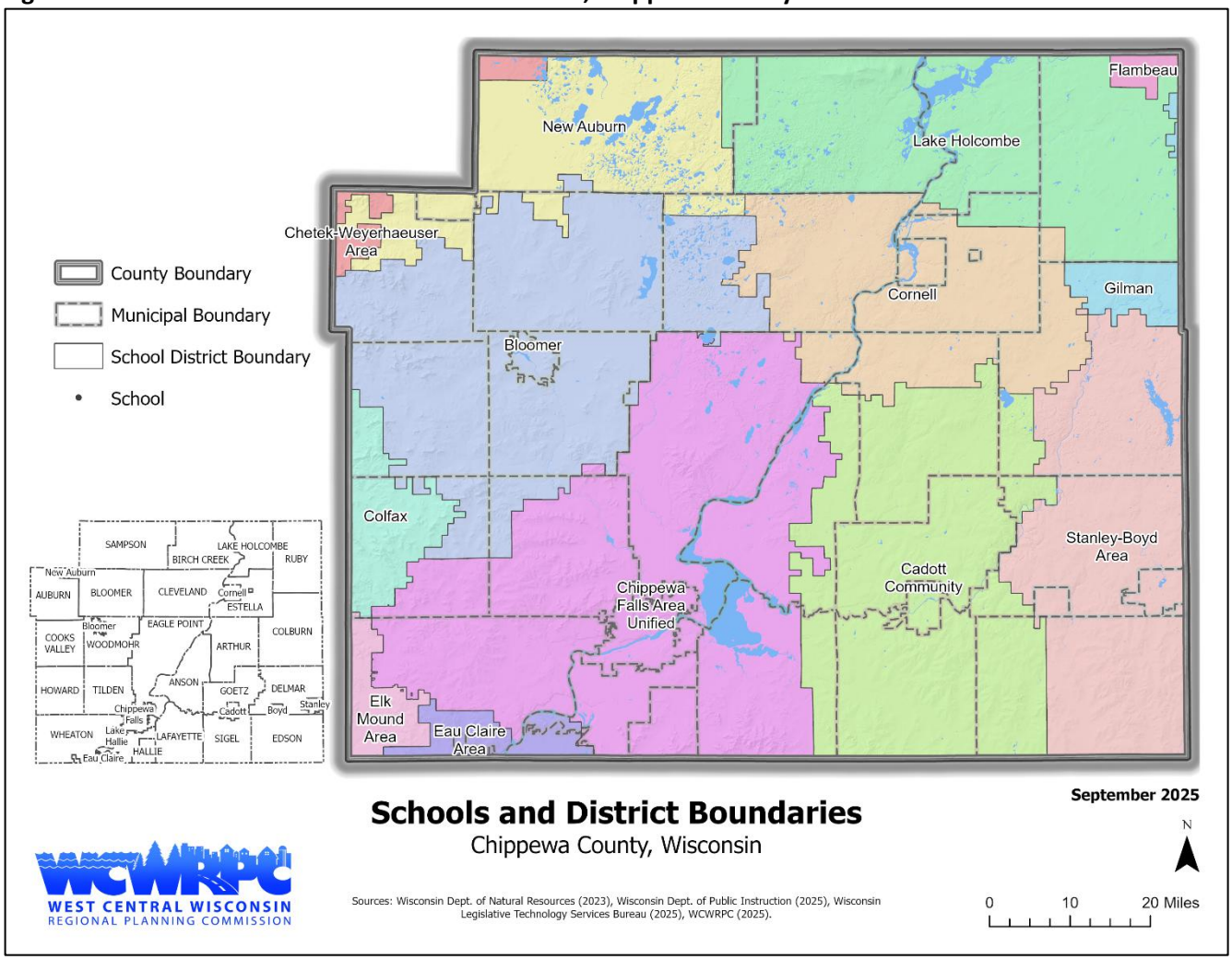


Table A2-9 shows the enrollment trends for the seven school districts covering most of the County. When comparing the 2010-2011 school year enrollment numbers to those of the recent 2024-2025 school year, five of the seven school districts experienced decline in enrollment.

Table A2-9. Chippewa County School District Enrollment

School District	2010-2011 Enrollment	2024-2025 Enrollment	# Change
Chippewa Falls Area Unified	5,028	4,574	-454
Cadott Community	907	800	-107
Stanley-Boyd Area	985	1,069	84
Bloomer	1,129	1,285	156
Cornell	450	392	-58
Lake Holcombe	375	244	-131
New Auburn	327	280	-47

source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Private Schools

There are several private school options in the County, including:

- Liberty Christian School – Chippewa Falls
- McDonnell Central Catholic High School – Chippewa Falls
- Notre Dame Middle School – Chippewa Falls
- St. Charles Borromeo Preschool and Primary School – Chippewa Falls
- Holy Ghost Elementary School – Chippewa Falls
- St. Paul Elementary School – Bloomer
- Christ Lutheran School – Chippewa Falls
- Faith Christian Academy – Stanley
- St. Joseph School – Boyc
- St. Peter Catholic Grade School – Tilden
- Sunny Meadow School – New Auburn
- St. Paul Lutheran School – Bloomer
- Venture Academy – Lake Hallie

While enrollment data is collected by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction on a voluntary basis, the data is not available for all schools. Beyond regulatory land development approvals, the County and local communities typically do not participate in the planning and function of these private schools.

Post-Secondary Education

Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) has a campus in Chippewa Falls that serves as a major education center for training and workforce development. The College offers technical diplomas, associate degrees, and certificates. UW-Eau Claire in Eau Claire and UW-Stout in Menomonie are also nearby and offer four-year degrees.



Libraries

There are five public libraries within Chippewa County.

- G.E. Bleskacek Family Memorial Library – Bloomer
- Cornell City Library – Cornell
- Chippewa Falls Public Library – Chippewas Falls
- Cadott Community Library – Cadott
- D.R. Moon Memorial Library - Stanley

These public libraries in Chippewa County are members of the IFLS (Indianhead Federated Library System) cooperative, which allows shared catalog access and interlibrary loans among many Wisconsin libraries.

Childcare

Childcare facilities are an important community asset to many individuals. As the County looks to increase its workforce, having available childcare is a need. As of January 2025, there are 47 licensed childcare facilities located in Chippewa County, as detailed in the table below. Many of these facilities are family facilities, meaning they have a capacity of eight children or less. However, above half are group facilities, which allow for nine or more children. The status depends on the size of the facility and the staffing available during the hours of operation.

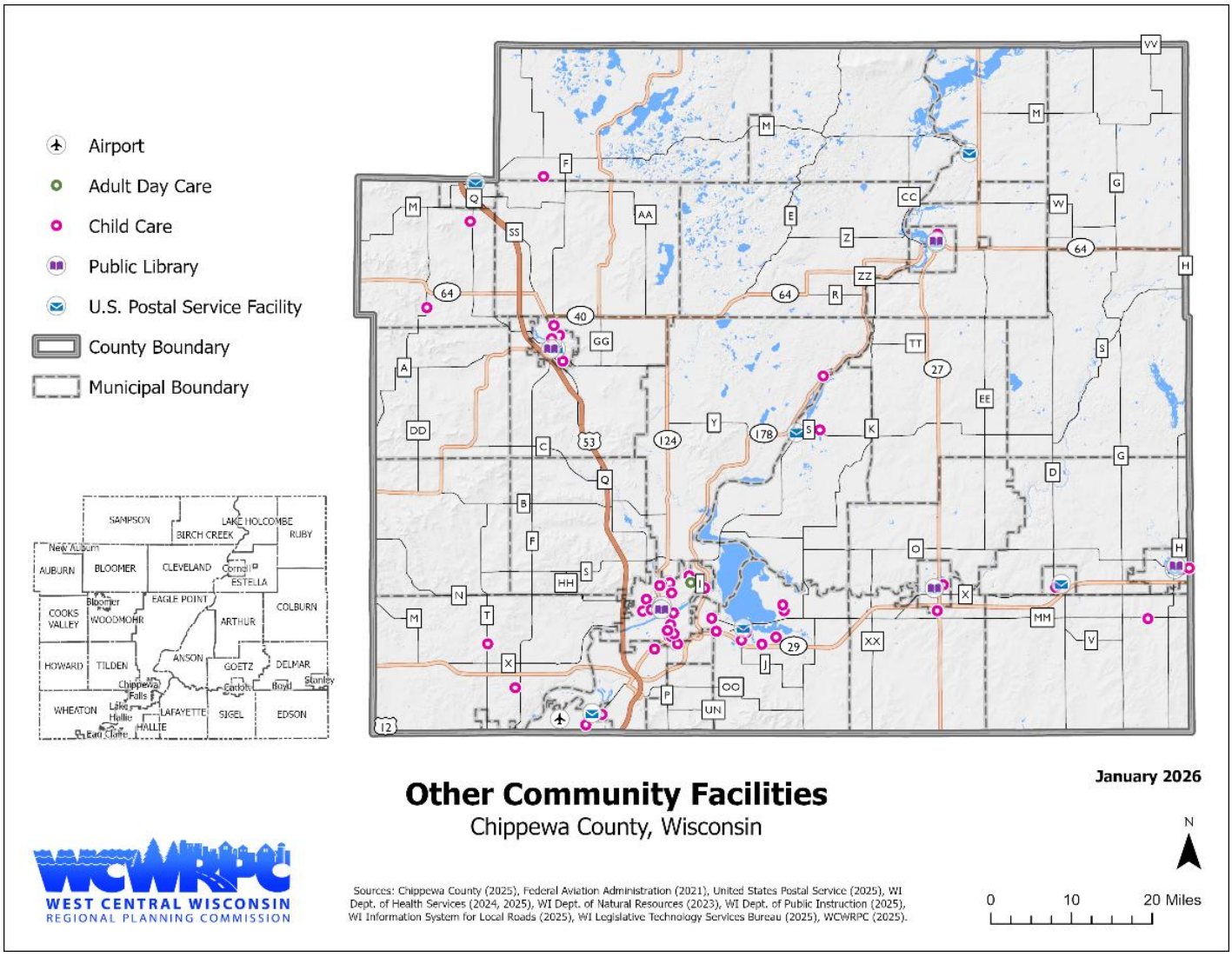
Table A2-10. Licensed Childcare Facilities in Chippewa County

Facility Name	Capacity
Baker's Shire Daycare	8
Building Blocks Family Daycare	8
Butterfly Kisses Family Childcare	8
Carol Brenner's Childcare	8
Cindy's Childcare	8
Deb's ABC's and 123s CC	8
Forest Friends Family In home	8
Healthy Sprouts Family Childcare	8
Heather's Family Child Care Center	8
Kerrie's Country Daycare	8
Kristy's Kid Care	8
Lady Bug Land Child Care Center	8
Learning 4 Life LLC	8
Lisa's Day Care	8
Little Minds In-Home Childcare	8
Little Rascals Day Care	8
Megz Play Place	8
Piglets Playpen	8
Pine and Meadow Nursery	6
The Little Ducklings Day Care	7
Beautiful Horizons Child Care Center	60
CESA, 11 Cadott Head Start	17
Chippewa Falls CESA 11 Head Start	74
Chippewa Falls YMCA School-Age	80

Facility Name	Capacity
Chippewa Valley YMCA – Hillcrest ASP	35
Circle of Friends Early Learn Center	50
Country Kids Child Care and Preschool	50
Faith Christian Preschool	20
Firehouse Friends Childcare Center	18
Kids First Childcare	30
Kids USA Learning Center Inc	175
Little Explorers Early Learning Com	48
Little Sprouts Childcare Center	37
Milestones Child Care Center LLC	135
One Two Three Look at Me Learn CTR	21
Precious Care Center and Preschool	50
Rainbow Kidz II	24
Rainbow Kidz Inc.	47
Rhymes-N-Rainbows Site 1	50
Rhymes-N-Rainbows Site 2	50
Spots and Stripes ELC	76
Stanley-Boyd Head Start	17
St. John's Lutheran Preschool	20
Tiny Tree Academy	49
YMCA Early Learning Community	162
YMCA Halmstad After School Program	36
YMCA-Southview Afterschool Program	36
Total Childcare Capacity	1,624

source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

Figure A2-8. Community Facilities, Chippewa County



Communications and Power Facilities

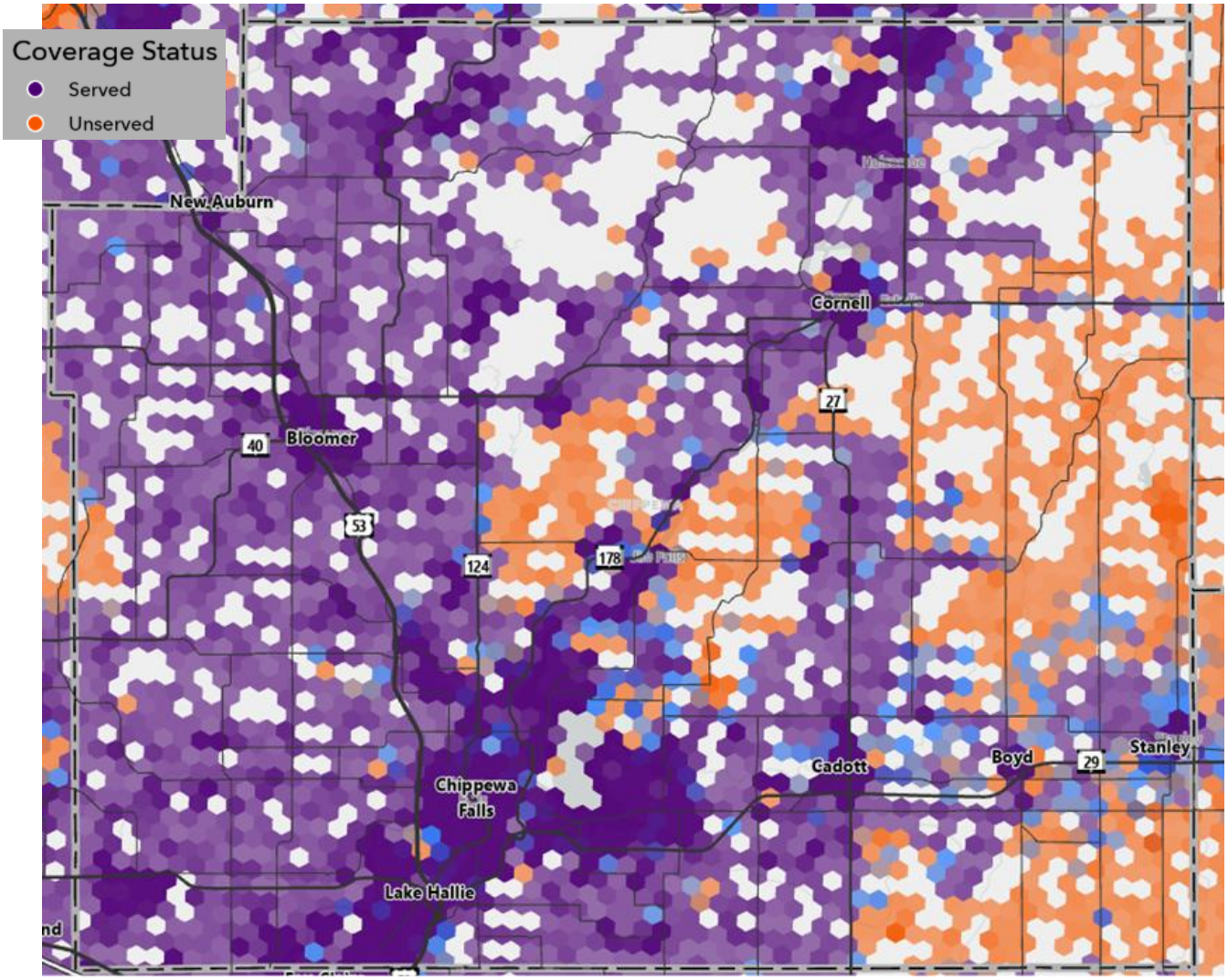
Chippewa County has electrical service by different providers. Chippewa Valley Electric Company and Northern States Power Company cover a large portion of the County. Portions of the County are also served by Jump River Electric Cooperative, Clark Electric Cooperative, and Dunn Energy Cooperative. Bloomer, Cadott and Cornell have their own municipal utilities – Bloomer Electric Utility, Cadott Light & Water Municipal Utility, and Cornell Municipal Water & Electric Utility – each serving their respective communities. The Wisconsin Public Service Commission provides detailed interactive maps showing the electric service territories within the State.

Portions of the County are served with natural gas. Wisconsin gas provides service to the Town of Anson and areas east along Highway 29 as well as the Cornell and Bloomer areas. Norther States Power Company provides natural gas service to the City of Chippewa Falls, Village of Lake Hallie, and Towns in the southwest part of the County. The Holcombe area and much of the northern part of the County lacks natural gas service.

Telecommunications plays an increasingly important role in supporting public safety, education, economic development, healthcare, and overall quality of life. Internet connectivity (upload/download speeds) is measured in megabits per second (Mbps). While the more populated areas of the County have access to high-speed internet, some of the rural areas experience limited broadband coverage.

As shown in Figure A2-9, a snapshot from the Wisconsin PSC's Broadband Map, the south and west portions of Chippewa County generally have broadband coverage, while areas north of Chippewa Falls and the eastern area of the County are unserved. Served is defined as having access to 100/20 Mbps service from a technology other than satellite.

Figure A2-8. Broadband Availability



Federal Broadband Equity, Access, & Deployment (BEAD) grant funding was recently approved to extend broadband access to 1,734 locations within Chippewa County. Under recently modified Federal rules, 91.5% of these locations would be served by Space-X satellite. The remaining locations would be offered fiber. Access must be provided within a four-year period.

Cemeteries

Chippewa County has several cemeteries located across the County. No changes to the listing in the 2010 County Plan or capacity concerns were identified throughout this plan update.



Figure A2-9. Cemeteries, Chippewa County

Location	Cemetery Name
Town of Anson	Copp Cemetery
Town of Arthur	Bohemian National Cemetery
	Pine Grove Cemetery
Town of Auburn	Auburn Cemetery
	New Auburn Cemetery
	Springbrook Cemetery
Town of Birch Creek	Birch Creek Cemetery
Town of Bloomer/City of Bloomer	Bloomer City Cemetery
	Duncan Creek Cemetery
	Marquardt Cemetery
	Pleasant Valley Cemetery
	Rufledt Cemetery
	North St. Paul Catholic Cemetery
	St. Catherine Catholic Cemetery
	St. Paul South Catholic Cemetery
Village of Cadott/Town of Sigel	Brooklawn Cemetery
City of Chippewa Falls	Calvary Cemetery
	Forest Hill Cemetery
	Home Park Cemetery
	Hope Catholic Cemetery
Town of Cleveland/City of Cornell	Cleveland Hillside Cemetery
	Cornell Cemetery
Town of Colburn	Walker-Jackson Cemetery
	Yellow River Cemetery
Town of Cooks Valley	Cooks Valley Cemetery
Town of Delmar	Evergreen Cemetery
	Walker-Jackson Cemetery
Town of Eagle Point	Eagleton Cemetery
	O'Neill Creek Cemetery
Town of Edson	St. Joseph Cemetery
	St. Peter Cemetery
	Union Cemetery
Town of Estella	Estella Union Cemetery
Town of Goetz	Big Drywood Lutheran Cemetery
	Goetz Cemetery
	Union Cemetery
Town of Hallie/Village of Lake Hallie	Prarie View Cemetery
Town of Lake Holcombe	Holcombe Cemetery
	St. Joseph Cemetery
Town of Lafayette	Bateman Cemetery
	St. Rose Cemetery
Town of Ruby	Arnold Cemetery
Town of Sampson	Swanson Cemetery
	Tillinghast Cemetery
	Twin Lakes Cemetery
City of Stanley	Eastside Cemetery
	Oakland Cemetery
	St. Mary's Cemetery
Town of Tilden	County "Q" Cemetery
	Emmanuel Evangelical Cemetery
	St. Peter Cemetery
	Tilden Emmanual Cemetery
	Tilden Lutheran Cemetery
	Tilden Methodist Cemetery
Town of Wheaton	McCombs Cemetery
	Rummery Cemetery
Town of Woodmohr	North St. Paul Catholic Cemetery
	Scandinavian Prairie Cemetery

Source: West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Chippewa County USGENWEB, and the Chippewa County Geneology website.

Dams

As of October 2025, Chippewa County had 49 dams in the WDNR dam database. Of the 49 dams, 28 were classified as small or were unclassified while 21 were classified as large. The dams of Chippewa County are shown in Figure A2-10, along with their Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources hazard ratings. Dam hazard ratings are assigned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources based on the potential for loss of life or property damage should the dam fail. Of the four high hazard dams, two are owned by Xcel Energy and are used for hydro-electric production; these dams are regulated by FERC. The City of Bloomer's high-hazard Bloomer Mill Dam is in good repair though requires an update to its spillway analysis. The City of Chippewa Falls's Glen Loch Dam has had recent improvements and is in good repair. The County's *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020-2025*, which is in the process of being updated in 2026, provides additional detail on the various dams within the county along with associated risks and potential mitigation measures.

Chippewa County owns and maintains fifteen dams, all of which have a low or unrated hazard rating; see Table A2-11 for a listing of the Chippewa County owned dams. Eight of these dams are large and have an Inspection, Operation, and Maintenance (IOM) Plan, but resources are not available for a dam failure analysis. While the County has an active inspection program for its dams, these structures are aging and improvements should be planned for.

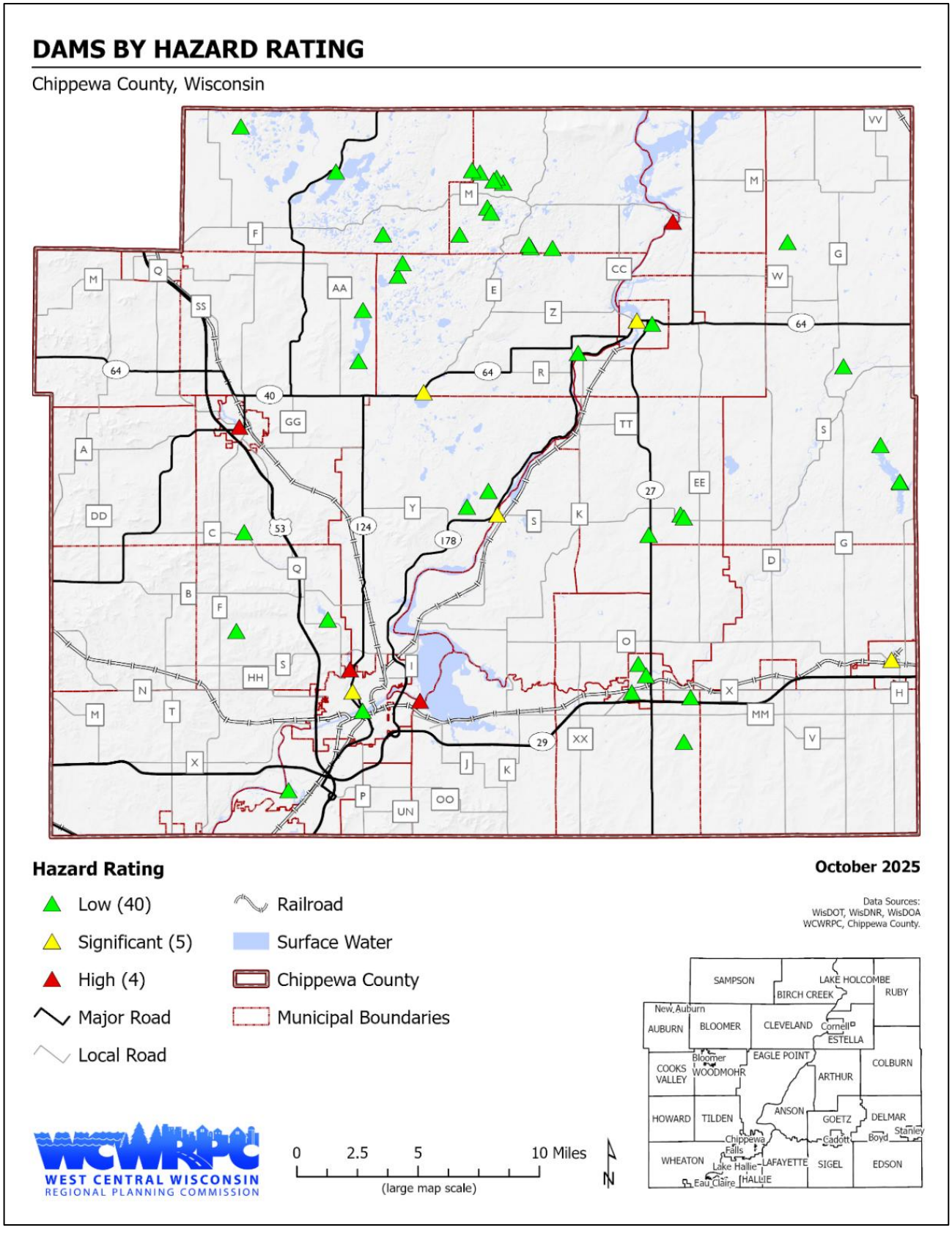
Table A2-11. Chippewa County owned dams

Dam Official Name	Dam Size	Hazard Rating	Owner Name
County Forest Crop Land 2	Small	Low	Chippewa County
Willow Creek Flowage No. 3	Large	Low	Chippewa County
Conley	Large	Low	Chippewa County
County Forest Crop Land 1	Small	Low	Chippewa County
County Forest Crop Land 4	Small	Low	Chippewa County
County Forest Crop Land 5	Small	Low	Chippewa County
Long Lake	Small	Low	Chippewa County
Pickeral Lake	Small	Low	Chippewa County
County Forest Crop Land 6	Large	Low	Chippewa County
O'Neil Flowage 2	Large	Low	Chippewa County
O'Neil Flowage 1	Large	Low	Chippewa County
County Forest Crop Land 3	Small	Low	Chippewa County
Willow Creek Flowage No. 1	Large	Low	Chippewa County
Willow Creek Flowage No. 2	Large	Low	Chippewa County
Otter Lake	Large	Low	Chippewa County

source: WI Department of Natural Resources Dam Database, Oct 2025

Development and population growth in Chippewa County has been generally highest in those towns with significant surface waters. There continues to be development pressure along the shorelines of the County, including above and below dams. The County's *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020*-2025 notes that overall, **the potential of a damage-producing failure of a high-hazard dam in Chippewa County is considered very low**, though the potential for damage and injury is high (and potentially catastrophic) should failure of one of these larger dams occur. Chippewa County and its municipalities continue to work with the WDNR to ensure proper maintenance of the dam facilities in the County and mitigate the potential vulnerabilities should failure occur.

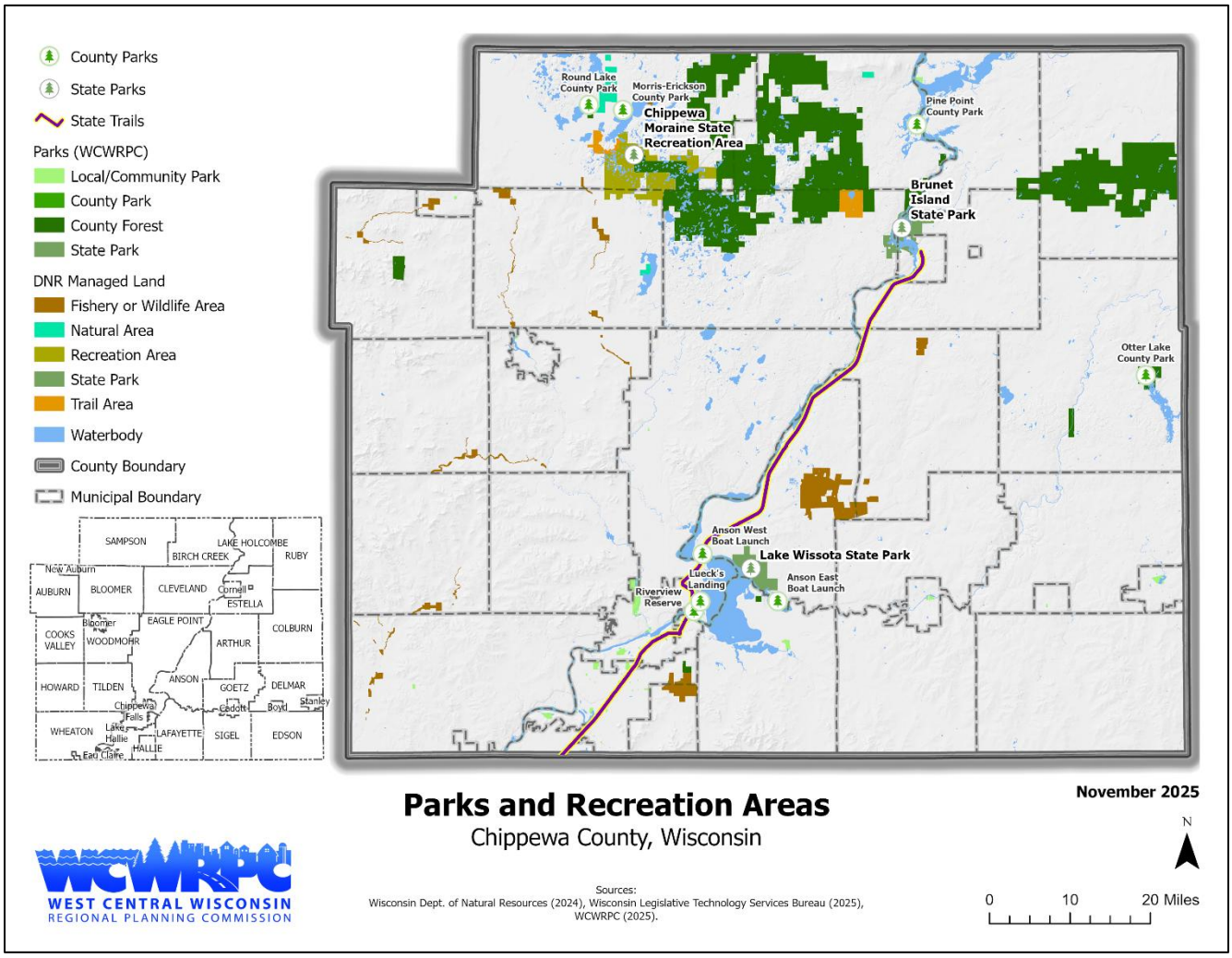
Figure A2-10. Dams by Hazard Rating, Chippewa County



Parks & Recreation Facilities

The *Chippewa County Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2024-2029* (the ORP) is incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan by reference and is not duplicated within this document. The County adopted the updated comprehensive outdoor recreation plan in November 2023. The ORP assesses the existing parks and recreation system in the County, identifies recreation needs and capacity based upon public input and recreation standards, sets forth goals and objectives to be used as guidelines in formulating recreation plans, and establishes recommendations for improving the recreation system for a 5-year planning period (2024-2029). The adoption of the Outdoor Recreation Plan also makes the County eligible for certain Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) grant funding (e.g., Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund) for outdoor recreation improvements. As described within the ORP inventory and shown on Figure A2-11 below, Chippewa County offers over 234 acres of developed parkland available for outdoor recreation activities. There is an additional 36,654 acres of County Forest lands that provide a range of year-round recreation access. The ORP includes detailed descriptions and recommended strategies with timelines for the parks and recreational facilities owned by the County.

Figure A2-11 Chippewa County Parks & Outdoor Recreational Facilities



Many local communities within the county also have their own community-specific outdoor recreation plan to guide improvements to park and recreation facilities.

Appendix 3
Farmland Owner Survey Results



July 22, 2025

Dear Agricultural Landowner,

Chippewa County, in collaboration with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, is updating the County's Comprehensive Plan, which includes an update to the County's Farmland Preservation Plan. These plans will guide land use, economic development, agriculture, farmland preservation, and more over the next decade. More information on the project can be found on the County's website at https://www.chippewacountywi.gov/government/planning-zoning/comprehensive-zoning/2025-comp-plan.

According to the county's real estate records, we have identified you as a landowner of an agricultural assessed parcel of 30 acres or more in Chippewa County. In an effort to understand the perspectives and priorities of agricultural landowners, we are hoping that you can take 10-15 minutes to complete the survey.

- Please submit a single survey for all of your agricultural property ownership.
- You may complete the enclosed paper survey and return using the enclosed envelope **OR** you can complete the survey online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ChippewaAg. **Completing the survey online is the preferred method as it will save on data entry time.**

TAKE THE SURVEY ONLINE!

- All results will be kept confidential.
- Please skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable or that you don't know how to answer.

Please complete the survey by August 31, 2025.

Thank you for helping to shape the future of Chippewa County!

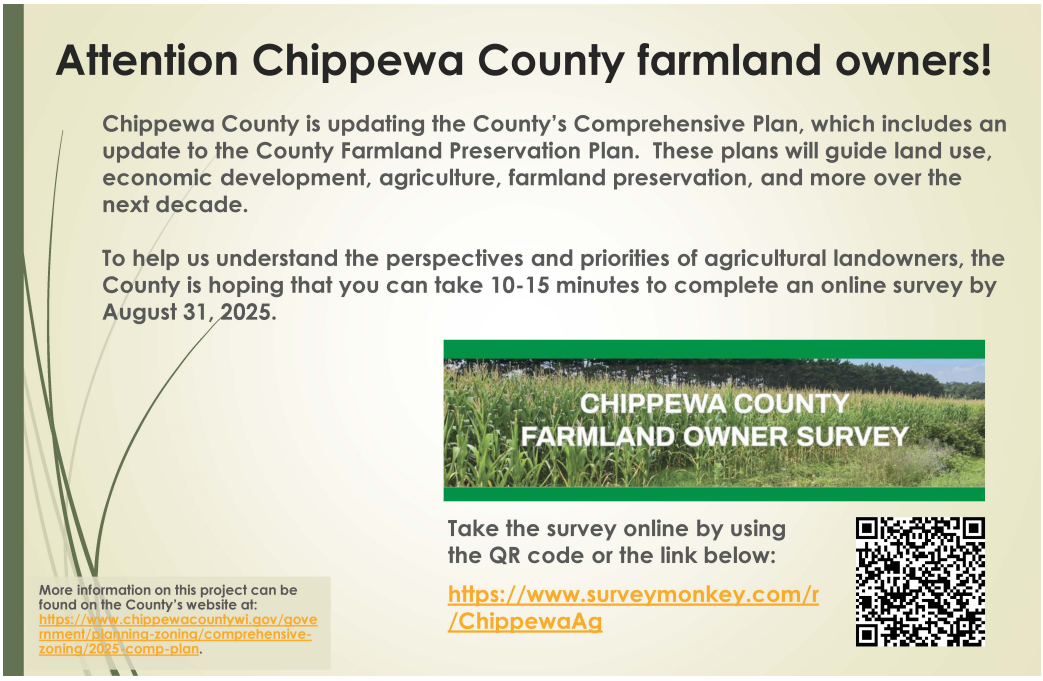
If you have any questions or need an alternative way to complete this survey, please contact me.

Thank you,

Douglas Clary

Douglas Clary, Director
Chippewa County Planning & Zoning
DClary@chippewacountywi.gov
(715) 726-7941





SURVEY RESULTS

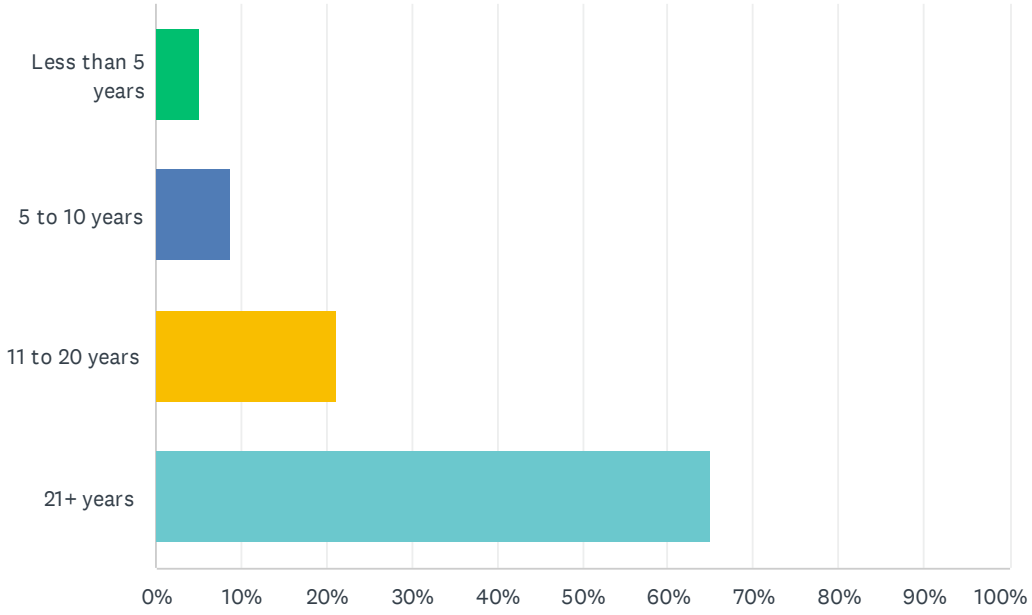
Q1 In which community(s) do you own farmland? (select all that apply)

Answered: 380 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Town of Edson	10.26%	39
Town of Wheaton	8.68%	33
Town of Cooks Valley	8.16%	31
Town of Delmar	8.16%	31
Town of Howard	6.84%	26
Town of Bloomer	6.58%	25
Town of Colburn	5.53%	21
Town of Lafayette	5.53%	21
Town of Woodmohr	5.53%	21
Town of Auburn	5.26%	20
Town of Anson	4.74%	18
Town of Arthur	4.74%	18
Town of Eagle Point	4.74%	18
Town of Tilden	4.47%	17
Town of Goetz	4.21%	16
Town of Sigel	3.95%	15
Town of Ruby	3.68%	14
Town of Cleveland	2.37%	9
Town of Hallie	2.11%	8
Town of Sampson	2.11%	8
Town of Birch Creek	1.84%	7
Town of Estella	1.58%	6
Village of Lake Hallie	1.58%	6
Village of Boyd	1.05%	4
Village of New Auburn	1.05%	4
Village of Cadott	0.53%	2
City of Stanley	0.53%	2
Town of Lake Holcombe	0.26%	1
City of Bloomer	0.26%	1
City of Chippewa Falls	0.26%	1
City of Eau Claire	0.26%	1
Total Respondents: 380		

Q2 How long have you owned farmland in Chippewa County?

Answered: 369 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 5 years	5.15%	19
5 to 10 years	8.67%	32
11 to 20 years	21.14%	78
21+ years	65.04%	240
TOTAL		369

Q3 What type(s) of agricultural products have been produced for sale on your farmland in the last 3 years? Select the applicable response for each product grown on your land.

Answered: 355 Skipped: 26

	FOR SALE	FOR PERSONAL USE	BOTH	TOTAL
Row crop (e.g. corn, beans, wheat)	64.15% 170	9.43% 25	26.42% 70	265
Pasture / hay / sileage (used on the farm or for sale)	32.31% 63	33.85% 66	33.85% 66	195
Beef	28.97% 42	13.10% 19	57.93% 84	145
Dairy products	58.23% 46	3.80% 3	37.97% 30	79
Chickens / other poultry / eggs	1.85% 1	55.56% 30	42.59% 23	54
Logging / timber	53.85% 28	21.15% 11	25.00% 13	52
Value-added products (e.g., honey, cheese, maple syrup, canned goods, wool, soap, etc.)	28.95% 11	34.21% 13	36.84% 14	38
Other livestock	34.38% 11	28.13% 9	37.50% 12	32
Specialty crop (e.g. lettuce, carrots, flowers)	13.79% 4	48.28% 14	37.93% 11	29
Pork	8.33% 2	45.83% 11	45.83% 11	24
Agritourism (e.g. pumpkin patches, corn mazes, farm tours, winery, etc.)	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5
Other silviculture (e.g. tree farm, nursery)	0.00% 0	50.00% 1	50.00% 1	2

Q4 Roughly, how many total acres of farmland in Chippewa County do you: (select one response per row)

Answered: 374 Skipped: 7

	NONE	1 TO 9 ACRES	10 TO 49 ACRES	50 TO 179 ACRES	180 TO 499 ACRES	500+ ACRES	TOTAL
Own & Farm yourself (you or a family member)	4.35% 11	1.98% 5	11.46% 29	39.13% 99	32.81% 83	10.28% 26	253
Own & Rent to another Farmer	10.00% 24	0.83% 2	18.33% 44	55.42% 133	13.33% 32	2.08% 5	240

Note: Some respondents misunderstood the instructions for Question 4 and did not complete both rows. To compensate, the following table restates the percentage responses to Question 4 with the "None" responses removed.

	1 to 9 acres	10 to 49 acres	50 to 179 acres	180 to 499 acres	500+ acres	Total
Own & Farm yourself	5 2.1%	29 12.0%	99 40.9%	83 34.3%	26 10.7%	242 100%
Own & Rent to another Farmer	2 0.9%	44 20.4%	133 61.6%	32 14.8%	5 2.3%	216 100%
All Responses	7 1.5%	73 15.9%	232 50.7%	115 25.1%	31 6.8%	458 100%

Q5 What would you consider to be the most likely outcome for your farm or farmland in the next ten years? (select all that apply)

Answered: 377 Skipped: 4

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I will continue to farm or rent the farmland for agricultural use.	74.27%	280
A family member will continue the farm operation.	28.91%	109
Sell my land to a farmer.	5.04%	19
Sell all or part of the land for conservation.	0.80%	3
Rent or sell all or part of the land for non-agricultural purposes.	2.39%	9
Sell most or all of the land for future residential or commercial development.	1.86%	7
I don't know.	11.41%	43
Other (please specify)	3.45%	13
Total Respondents: 377		

Q6 Which of the following issues facing the Chippewa County agricultural community are of most concern to you?

(select up to 6 issues)

Answered: 381 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ability for farmers to remain financially solvent	36.48%	139
Volatility in farm markets, including import/export costs	32.55%	124
Prices for inputs, including hay/feed	32.55%	124
Decreasing number of farms	32.28%	123
Encroaching non-farm development	29.13%	111
Groundwater / drinking water quality	27.30%	104
State/Federal rules and regulations	25.98%	99
Local/County rules and regulations	22.83%	87
Extreme weather events (drought, flooding, etc.)	20.47%	78
Availability of farmland for purchase or rent	15.75%	60
Other (please specify)	13.65%	52
Surface water quality (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands)	11.29%	43
Use conflicts/loss of farmland due to solar or wind farms	10.76%	41
Wildlife damage	9.97%	38
Reduction in the farm workforce	9.71%	37
Pollinator population decline	9.19%	35
Succession planning	6.30%	24
None of the above	5.77%	22
Land availability for manure spreading	4.46%	17
Access to broadband	3.67%	14
Access to mental health services	2.62%	10
Access to information on local conservation programs	2.62%	10
Access to financial planning	1.05%	4
Total Respondents: 381		

Q7 For the farmlands that you own in Chippewa County, please indicate how many years each conservation practice has been used.

(select one response per row)

Answered: 353 Skipped: 28

	NOT USED	LESS THAN 5 YEARS	6-15 YEARS	MORE THAN 15 YEARS	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Grass waterways	11.78% 37	5.41% 17	12.42% 39	62.74% 197	7.64% 24	314
Reduced- or no-tillage	13.40% 41	11.11% 34	25.49% 78	40.85% 125	9.15% 28	306
Nutrient management planning	25.61% 73	4.21% 12	11.58% 33	43.16% 123	15.44% 44	285
Using cover crops	30.07% 83	16.30% 45	18.48% 51	23.91% 66	11.23% 31	276
Keeping livestock from entering surface waters	39.37% 100	2.76% 7	8.27% 21	38.19% 97	11.42% 29	254
Contour strip farming	62.65% 156	0.80% 2	0.80% 2	24.90% 62	10.84% 27	249
Rotational grazing	61.04% 152	3.61% 9	7.23% 18	18.47% 46	9.64% 24	249
Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	38.66% 92	4.62% 11	5.46% 13	18.91% 45	32.35% 77	238
Vegetated buffers along streams and lakes	49.79% 118	4.64% 11	4.64% 11	28.69% 68	12.24% 29	237
Organic Farming	77.97% 184	1.69% 4	3.81% 9	5.93% 14	10.59% 25	236
Conservation planting of marginal land	52.14% 122	6.84% 16	5.56% 13	17.95% 42	17.52% 41	234
Feedlot runoff management	61.21% 142	1.29% 3	5.17% 12	18.53% 43	13.79% 32	232
Feedlot storage and leachate management	61.74% 142	0.00% 0	3.48% 8	16.96% 39	17.83% 41	230

Q8 When thinking about land use, conservation, and water quality in Chippewa County, how important are the following to you? (select one response per row)

Answered: 371 Skipped: 10

	IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	UNIMPORTANT	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Reducing erosion and improving soil health on working lands.	91.14% 329	5.82% 21	0.28% 1	2.77% 10	361
Protecting safe drinking water by supporting groundwater recharge and responsible land use.	83.62% 296	11.30% 40	0.85% 3	4.24% 15	354
Buffering streams and rivers to reduce runoff and improve surface water quality.	76.84% 272	15.25% 54	3.11% 11	4.80% 17	354
Protecting the visual quality of the rural landscape.	70.34% 249	20.34% 72	5.65% 20	3.67% 13	354
Helping landowners develop conservation plans tailored to their operation.	49.71% 171	31.40% 108	8.43% 29	10.47% 36	344
Supporting habitat corridors for wildlife.	47.95% 164	34.21% 117	14.62% 50	3.22% 11	342
Educating landowners about irrigation practices to help prevent groundwater overuse and conflicts.	48.37% 163	34.12% 115	8.31% 28	9.20% 31	337
Promoting voluntary, incentive-based nutrient management systems.	40.18% 135	38.39% 129	7.74% 26	13.69% 46	336
Supporting pasture-based and rotational grazing systems.	37.39% 126	40.65% 137	13.65% 46	8.31% 28	337

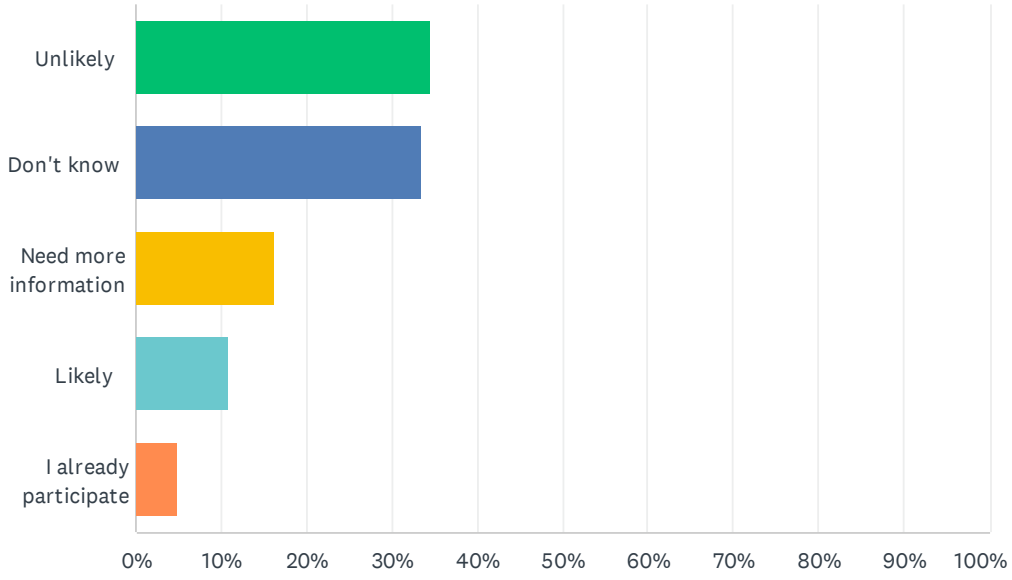
Q9 What types of support would be most useful to you as a farmland owner? (check all that apply)

Answered: 345 Skipped: 36

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Access to financial cost-share programs for conservation practices.	32.75%	113
I'm not sure what support I need right now.	31.01%	107
Information on sustainable soil health or crop production techniques.	26.67%	92
Help applying for land use or conservation programs.	22.90%	79
Help with navigating government rules or regulations.	20.29%	70
Technical assistance for woodland management or agroforestry.	18.84%	65
Peer-to-peer learning (hearing from other farmers/landowners).	17.39%	60
Help with long-term succession planning for the farm operation.	15.94%	55
Livestock and animal health support.	15.07%	52
Resources for beekeeping, maple syrup production, or other specialty ag operations.	12.17%	42
Market development or local food system support.	11.59%	40
On-site technical assistance for installing or maintaining conservation practices.	10.72%	37
One-on-one support for creating a conservation or nutrient management plan.	10.43%	36
Other (please specify)	7.54%	26
Total Respondents: 345		

Q10 A Farmer-Led Council (i.e. producer-led watershed group) is a group of at least 5 agricultural producers, each of who operates an eligible farm in one watershed. The group collaborates with partners to pursue state grant funding for water quality projects such as on-farm demonstration and research projects, education and outreach efforts, and cost share programs.How likely are you to participate in an effort that uses FARMER-LED COUNCILS for informing decisions that impact how water quality is managed in Chippewa County?

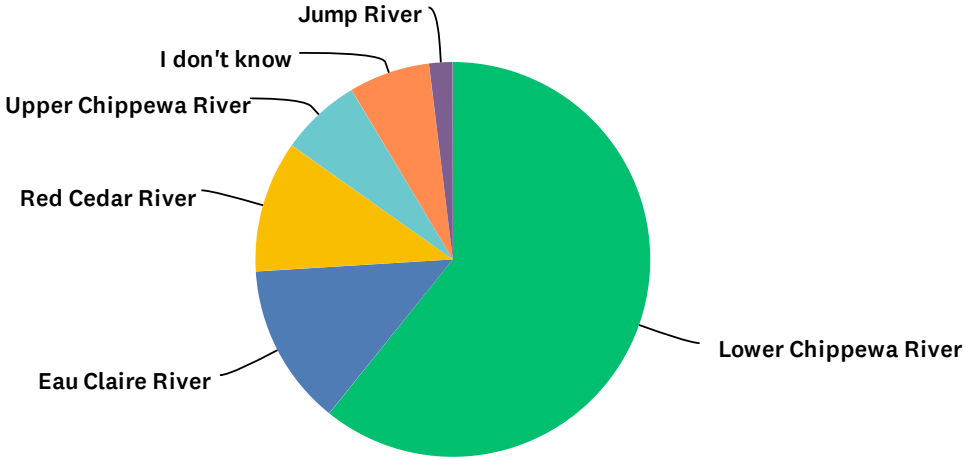
Answered: 365 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Unlikely	34.52%	126
Don't know	33.42%	122
Need more information	16.16%	59
Likely	10.96%	40
I already participate	4.93%	18
TOTAL		365

Q11 The map below shows the watersheds in Chippewa County. In which watershed is most of your Chippewa County agricultural land located in?

Answered: 362 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Lower Chippewa River	60.77%	220
Eau Claire River	13.26%	48
Red Cedar River	10.77%	39
Upper Chippewa River	6.63%	24
I don't know	6.63%	24
Jump River	1.93%	7
TOTAL		362

Q12 Please indicate your use or interest in the following programs: (select one response per row)

Answered: 323 Skipped: 58

	I CURRENTLY USE THIS PROGRAM.	I'M INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE.	I DON'T USE, AND I'M NOT INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE.	TOTAL
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	15.94% 44	26.81% 74	57.25% 158	276
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	11.72% 32	27.47% 75	60.81% 166	273
Managed Forest Law (MFL)	9.12% 25	23.36% 64	67.52% 185	274
Farmland Preservation Agreement	8.06% 22	36.63% 100	55.31% 151	273
Farmland Preservation Tax Credits	7.04% 20	42.96% 122	50.00% 142	284
Nutrient Management Farmer Education	6.30% 16	28.35% 72	65.35% 166	254
Chippewa County Cost Share Assistance	5.62% 15	34.83% 93	59.55% 159	267
Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA)	2.85% 7	28.05% 69	69.11% 170	246
Farmer Angel Network	0.80% 2	23.11% 58	76.10% 191	251

Q13 Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

Answered: 361 Skipped: 20

	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Good farming results from placing equal importance on the management of both the agricultural and natural areas of my farm.	80.91% 284	13.39% 47	1.42% 5	4.27% 15	351
A successful farmer is someone who continuously evaluates the environmental impact of their farm and adopts new approaches to protect the environment.	77.87% 271	14.94% 52	3.16% 11	4.02% 14	348
As a result of modern agricultural practices, farmers must exert more effort now to protect the environment than was necessary in the past.	63.51% 221	20.69% 72	8.05% 28	7.76% 27	348
Good farming requires using all available acreage as efficiently as possible to maximize yields.	58.03% 206	24.51% 87	14.93% 53	2.54% 9	355
Programs to protect soil and water resources should emphasize approaches that primarily benefit agricultural production.	36.31% 126	32.28% 112	22.48% 78	8.93% 31	347
To protect the rural landscape, farmers must move away from conventional agricultural practices to approaches that more closely mimic natural processes.	25.79% 90	40.97% 143	21.49% 75	11.75% 41	349
Modifications to a farm that increase production, such as the removal of grasslands, fence rows, or grass field buffers, have limited impacts on the environment.	11.71% 41	28.86% 101	50.57% 177	8.86% 31	350
The primary role of farms is the production of food and related agricultural products; the protection of the environment is separate from this purpose.	9.77% 34	21.84% 76	60.92% 212	7.47% 26	348

Q14 What challenges or needs do you face related to agricultural infrastructure in Chippewa County? (select all that apply)

Answered: 337 Skipped: 44

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Shortage of grain storage or transload facilities	5.93%	20
Other (please specify)	8.61%	29
Access to needed inputs (e.g. seed, fertilizer, lime)	11.87%	40
Lack of local livestock processing facilities	13.95%	47
Few options for direct farm marketing - locations & facilities	14.54%	49
Access to local machinery repair, supply, and parts businesses	23.44%	79
Local roads and bridges to handle agricultural equipment	37.69%	127
None of the above	37.98%	128
Total Respondents: 337		

Q15 Chippewa County's Agriculture (AG) zoning district currently has a minimum lot size of 1.5 acres. While this offers flexibility for development, it potentially conflicts with farmland preservation goals by offering few limitations on the amount of residential and business development in productive farmland areas. Further, the lack of a farmland preservation zoning district (with a substantially larger minimum lot size) means that farmland owners are not eligible for certain State tax creditsTo what extent do you agree with the following statements? (select one response per row)

Answered: 361 Skipped: 20

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Zoning should be used to help preserve productive agricultural lands.	31.46% 112	33.15% 118	16.01% 57	5.90% 21	3.93% 14	9.55% 34	356
The County should increase the minimum lot size for its Agriculture (AG) zoning district.	15.25% 54	13.56% 48	31.92% 113	13.84% 49	9.04% 32	16.38% 58	354
The County should create a new Farmland Preservation (FP) zoning district, with a larger minimum lot size, for incorporating in the Zoning Ordinance.	15.06% 53	12.50% 44	27.84% 98	13.35% 47	9.38% 33	21.88% 77	352

Other Survey Comments

1.) No more new houses being built on farmland! And Gravel pits! I would like to see that the crop farmers would have to put a hay crop in for 5 years to build the soil back up. I know this will never happen!!

2.) Town of Howard is 40 acres all it does is burn up or move farmland

3.) My neighbor just tiled 120 acres 2 years ago and the drain was put right deliberately on the fence line that should be illegal, now my property is flooded, help me if you can.

I do follow what FSA tells me. When a neighbor can tile his property and ruin your property and its value.

I can't afford a lawyer, but what my neighbor did has to be illegal. When something like that is done you should have permission from our neighbor.

4.) The larger lot sizes, the faster land is taken out of production minimizing lot should to 1.0 ac, instead of lots size, the use of zoning works better 1 lot/160-acre min. large lot zoning is a disaster everywhere it's been targeted

5.) Minimum lot size does not protect farmland; you are just dividing a field into bigger chunks which is still removing the farmland from Ag use. For residential use 1.5 acres is still a large property. Smaller parcels take less out of the field.

6.) Ground water management needs to be monitored

7.) Now we have large government-run farms like the communist countries have. I am afraid of the government.

The government used to help farmers but not control them and fine them If they don't do things there way. Like they do today.

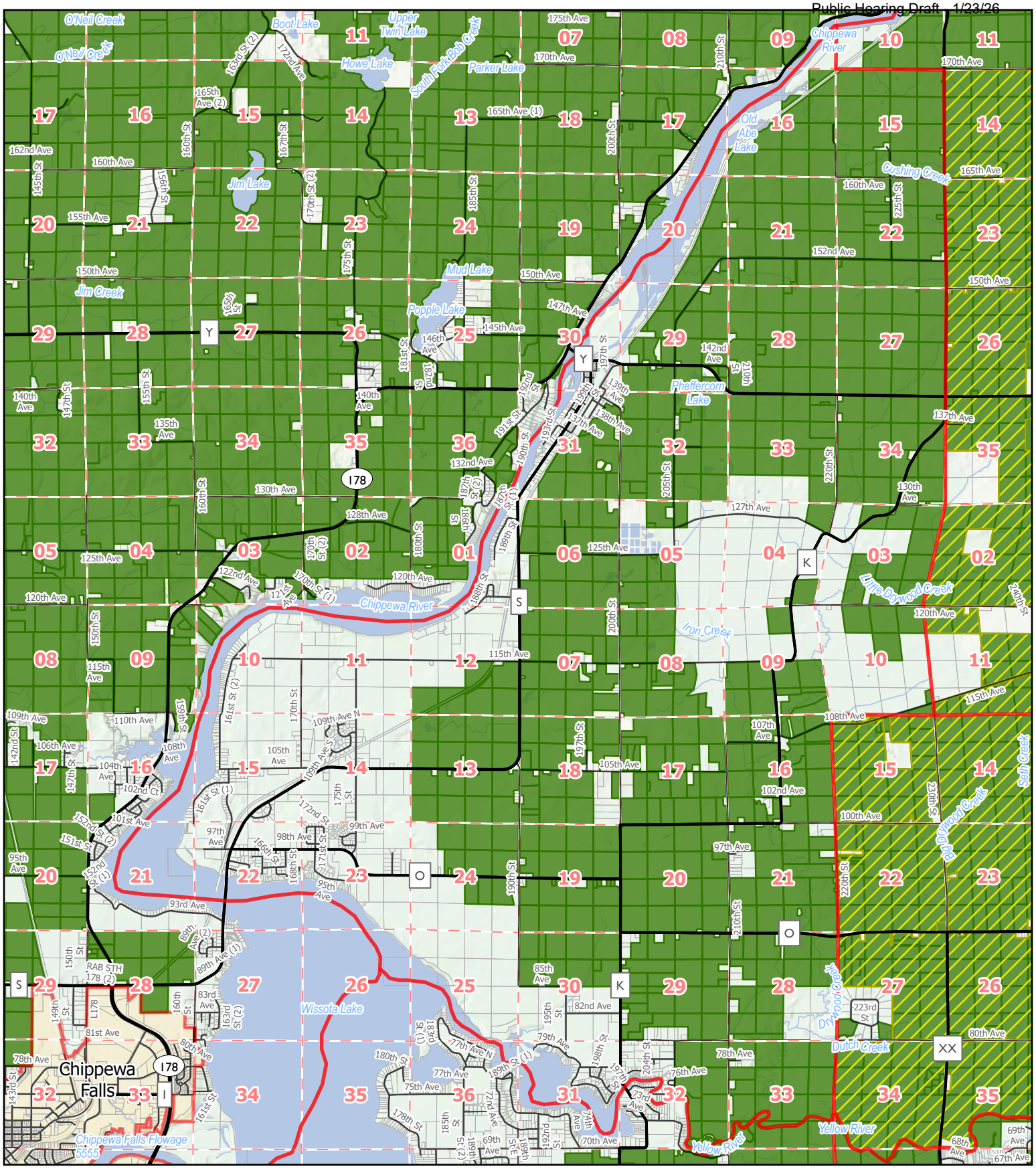
More and more rules and regulations make farming not fun so discourages my children to be farmers.

8.) A larger lot could take more land and of production if farmers are able to make money farming it is hard to buy their land.

9.) No hog farms-factory farms! Follow EC county, town of Seymore model, it works!

10.) It's very interesting that large wetlands are taxed higher than both pasture and crop land. But the owner cannot get any revenue back from these acres. They protect the water for all but one carries the burden.

Appendix 4
Town Farmland Preservation Area Maps



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Anson

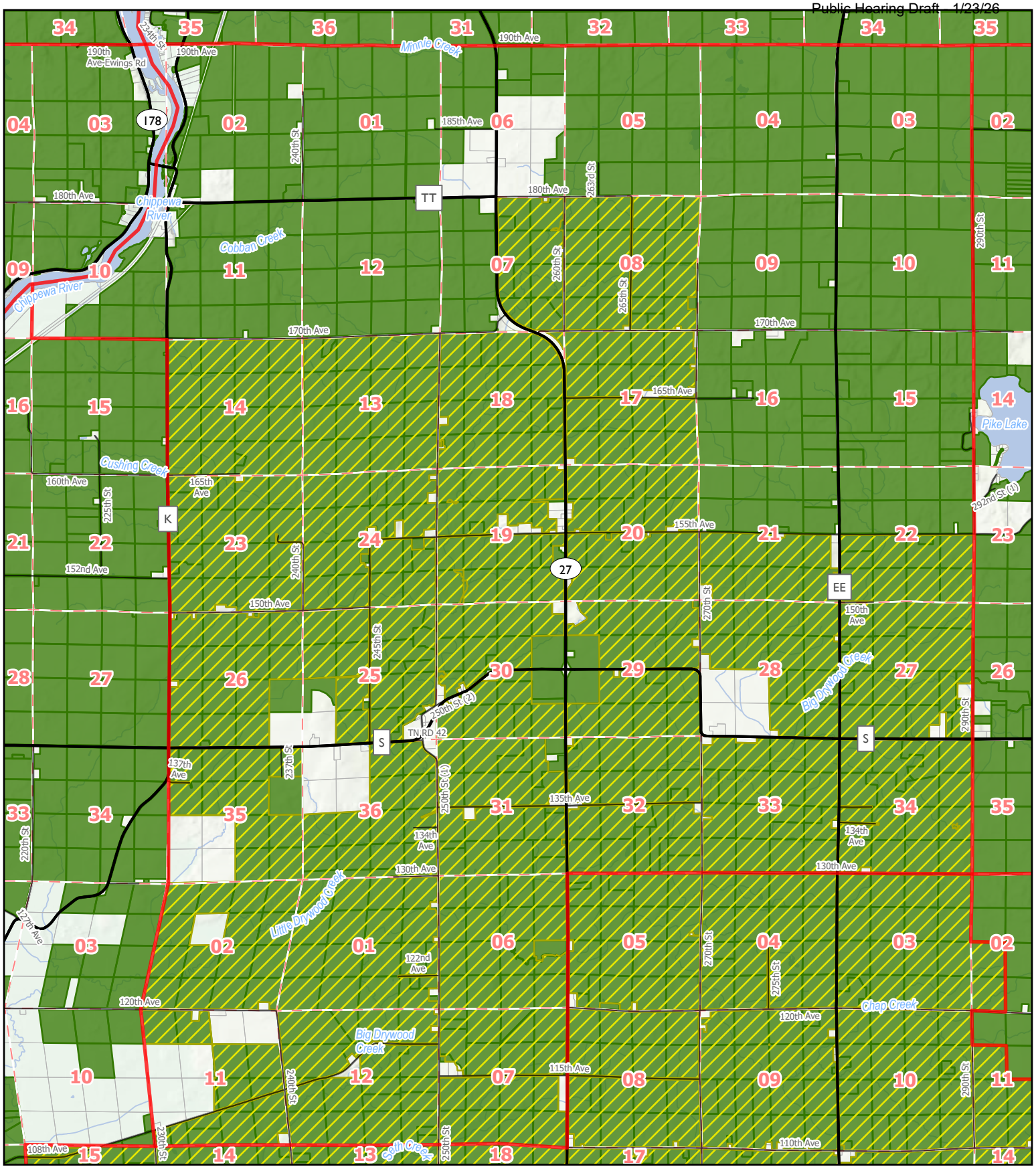
Chippewa County, WI

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

- Farmland Preservation Areas
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- Agricultural Enterprise Area
- Surface Water
- Town Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Section Lines
- Cities & Villages
- Major Road
- Local Road

Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Arthur

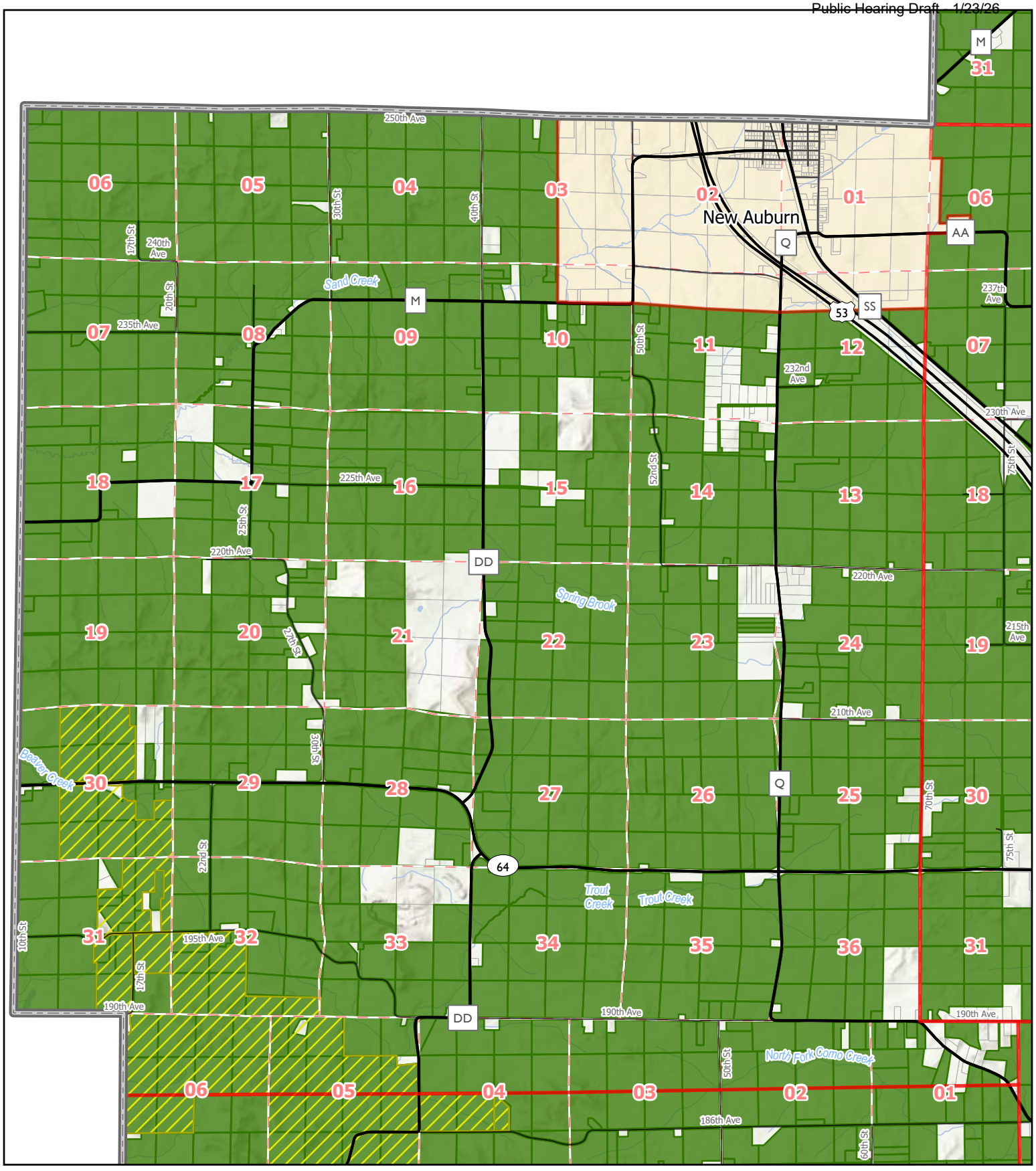
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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Auburn

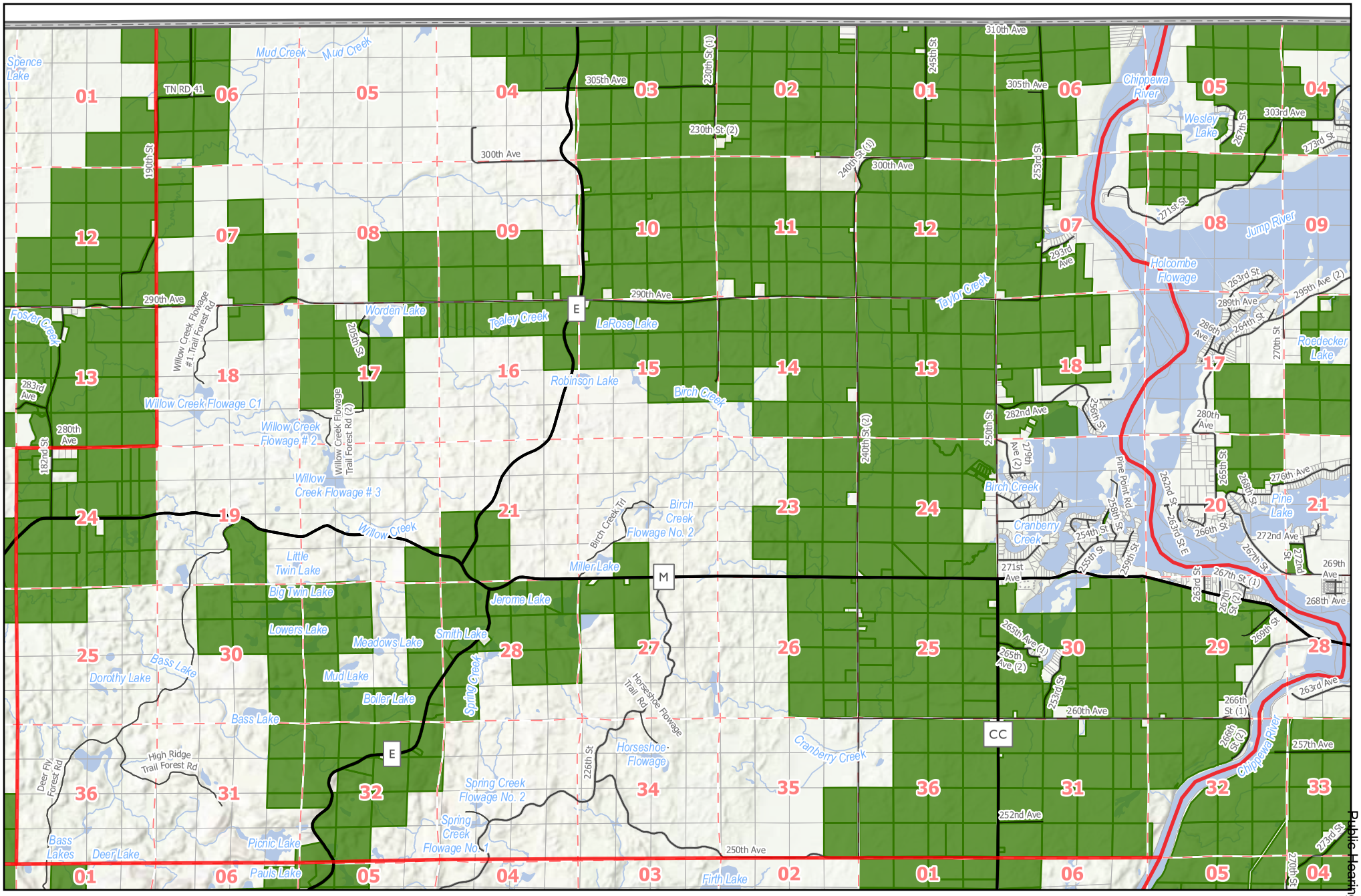
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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Birch Creek

Chippewa County, WI

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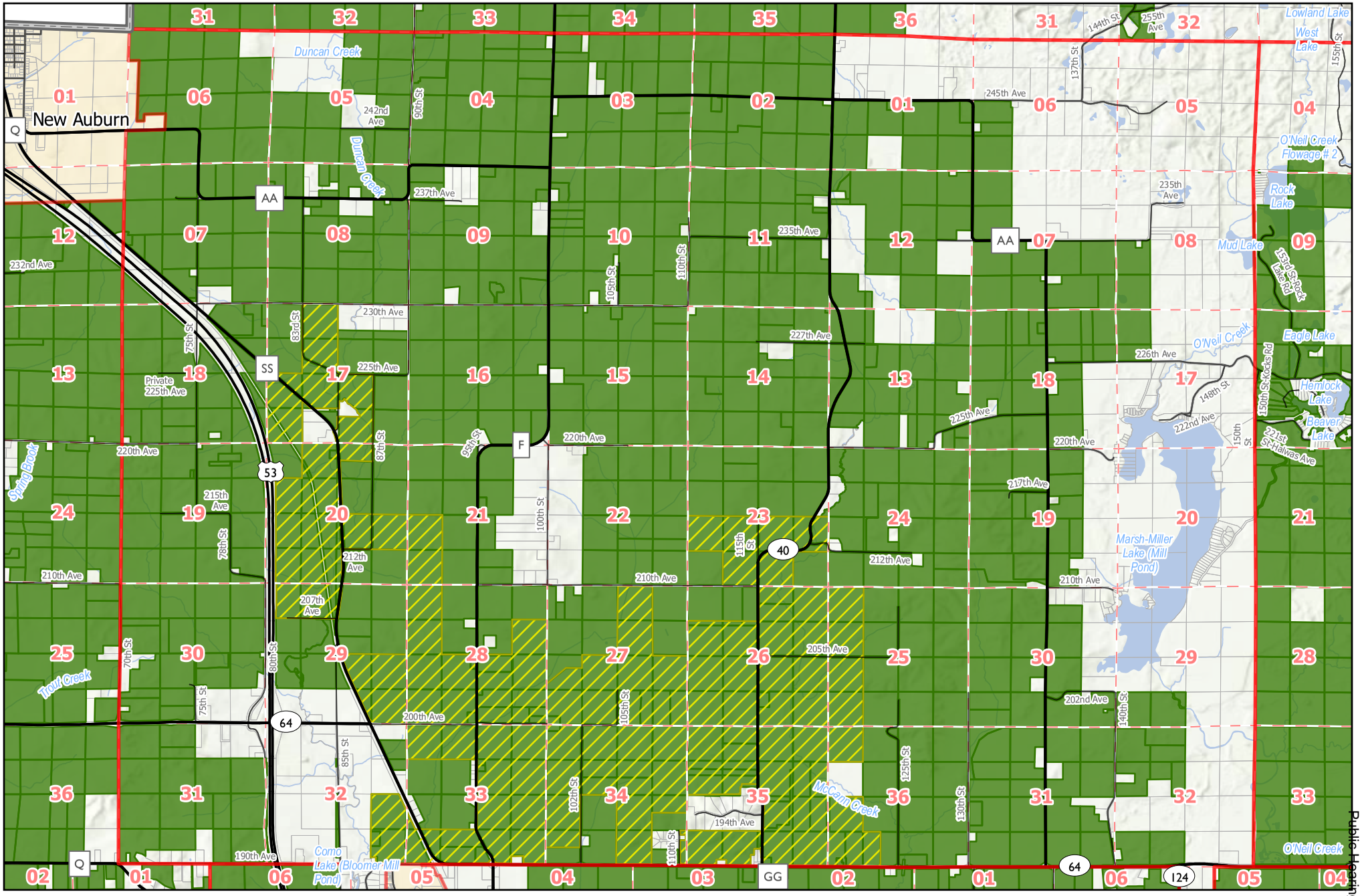
January 2026

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1 Miles

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Bloomer

Chippewa County, WI

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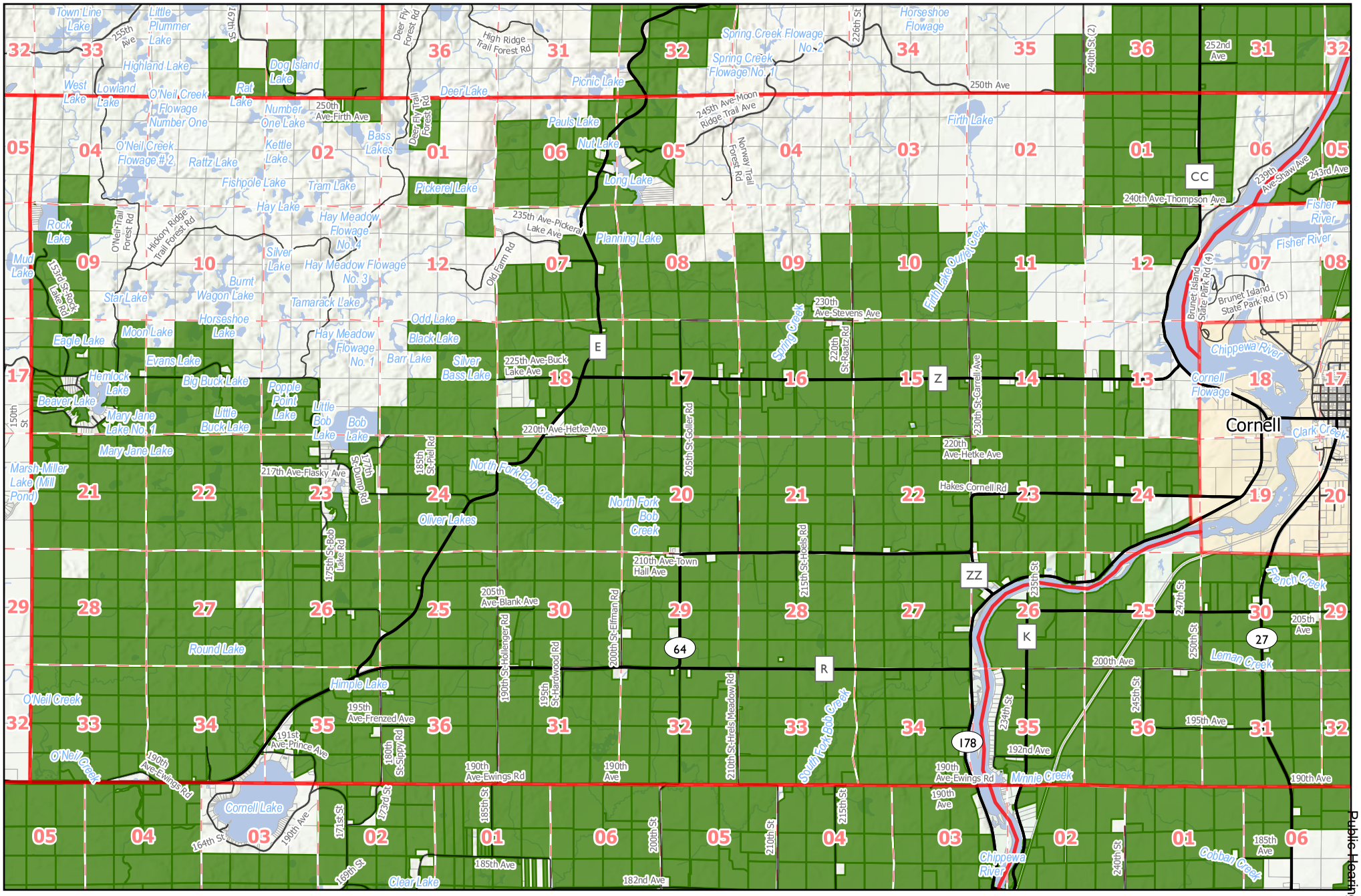
January 2026

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Cleveland

Chippewa County, WI

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

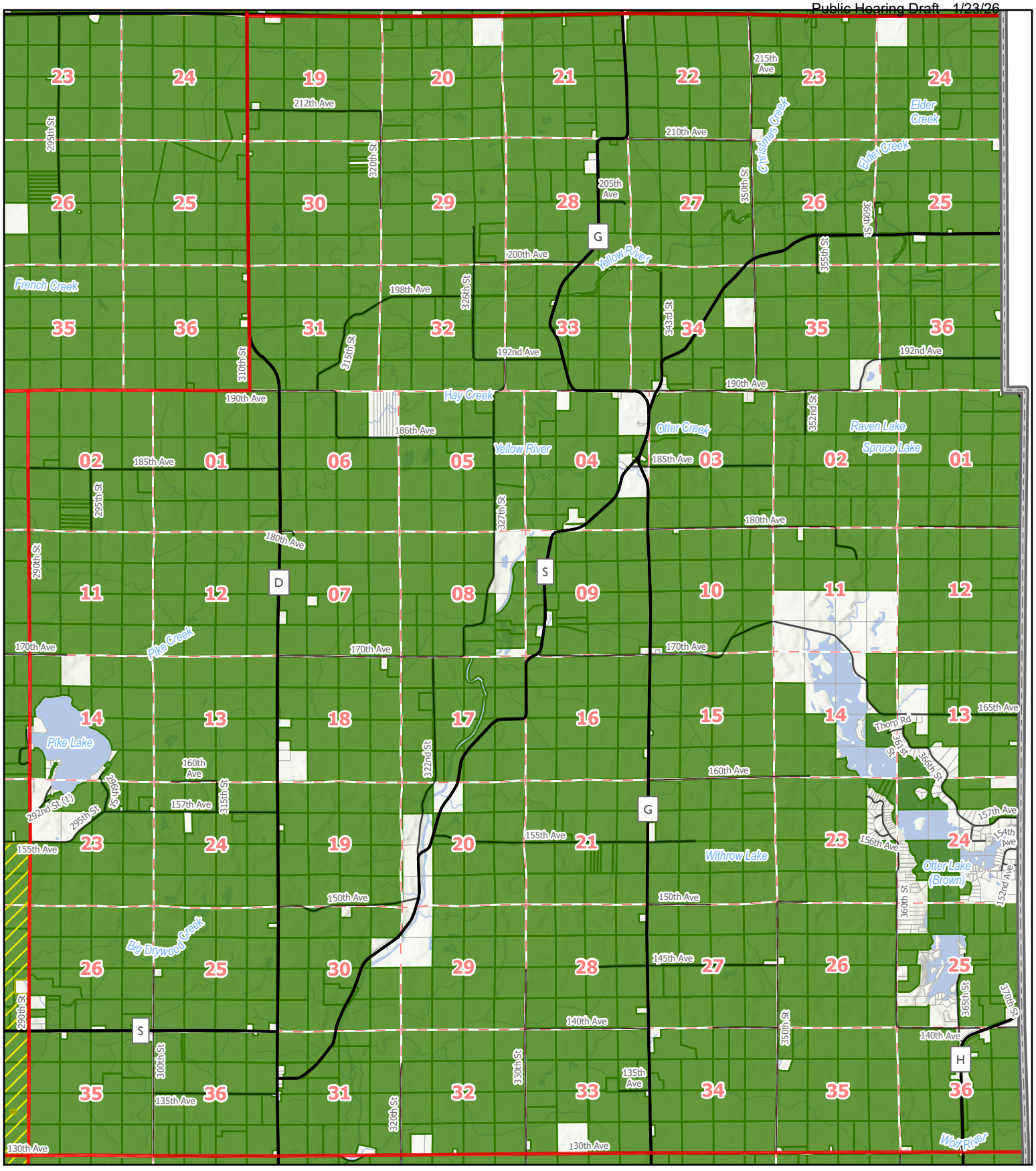
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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Colburn

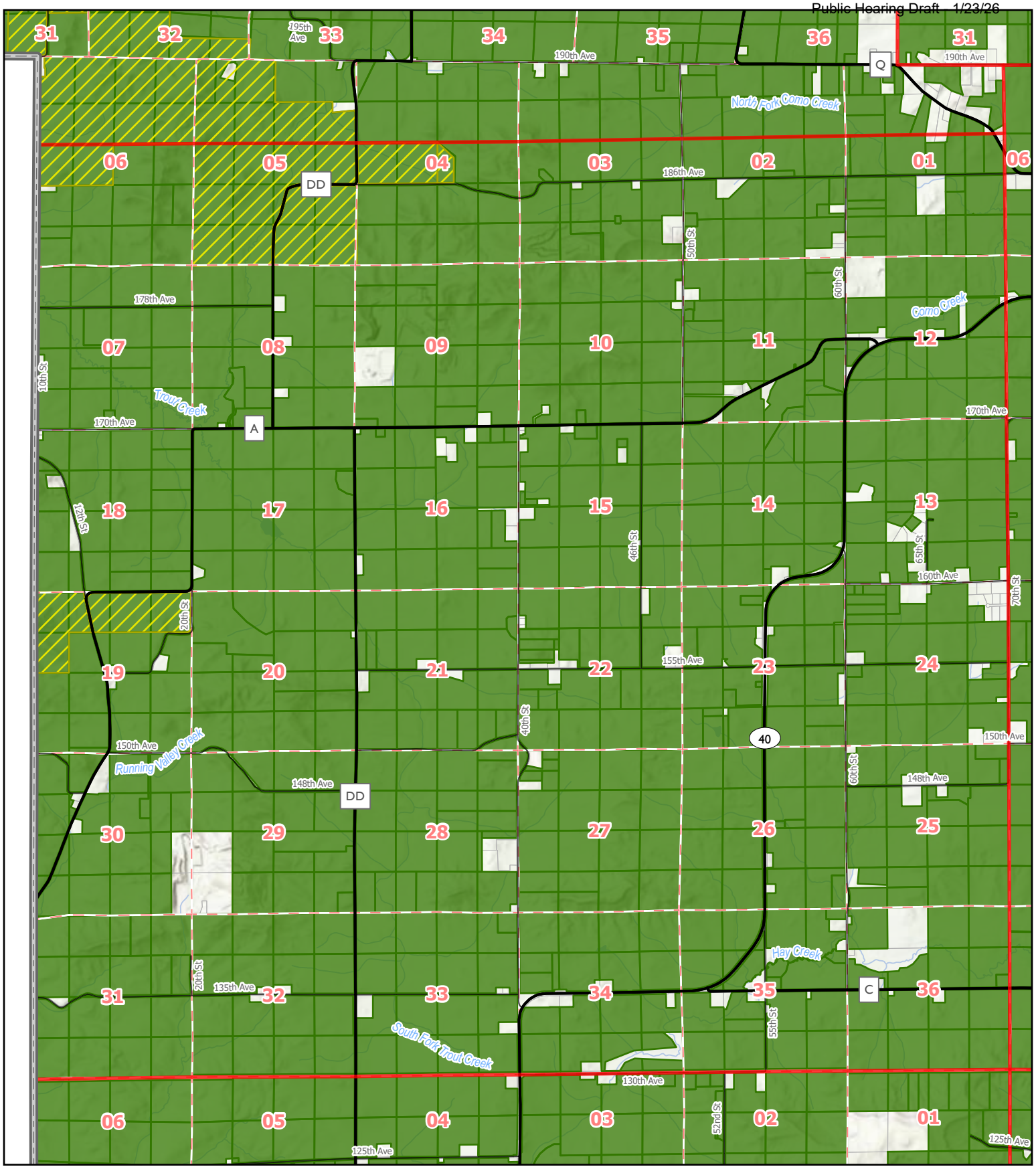
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January 2026

Town of Cooks Valley

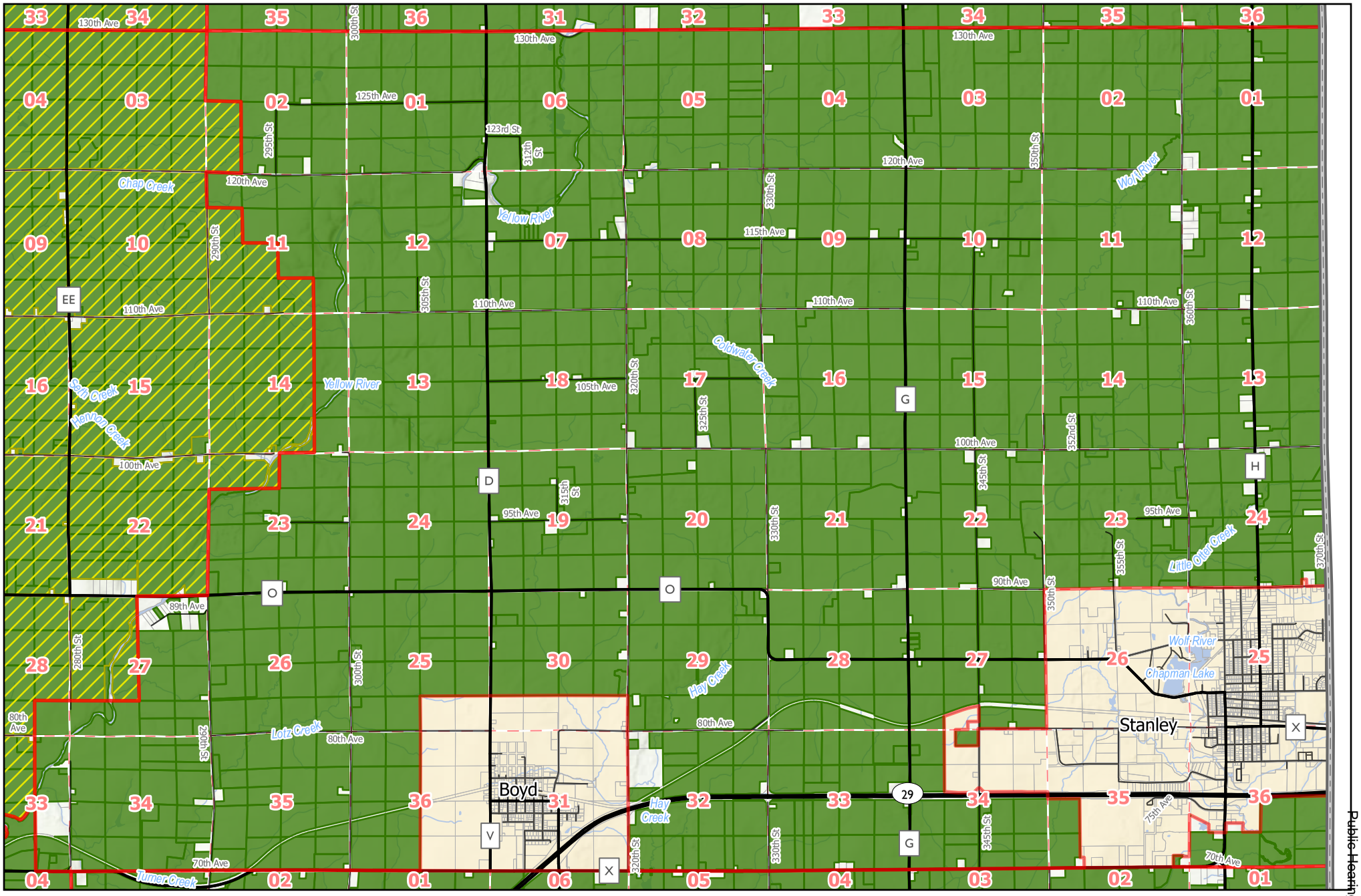
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1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Delmar

Chippewa County, WI

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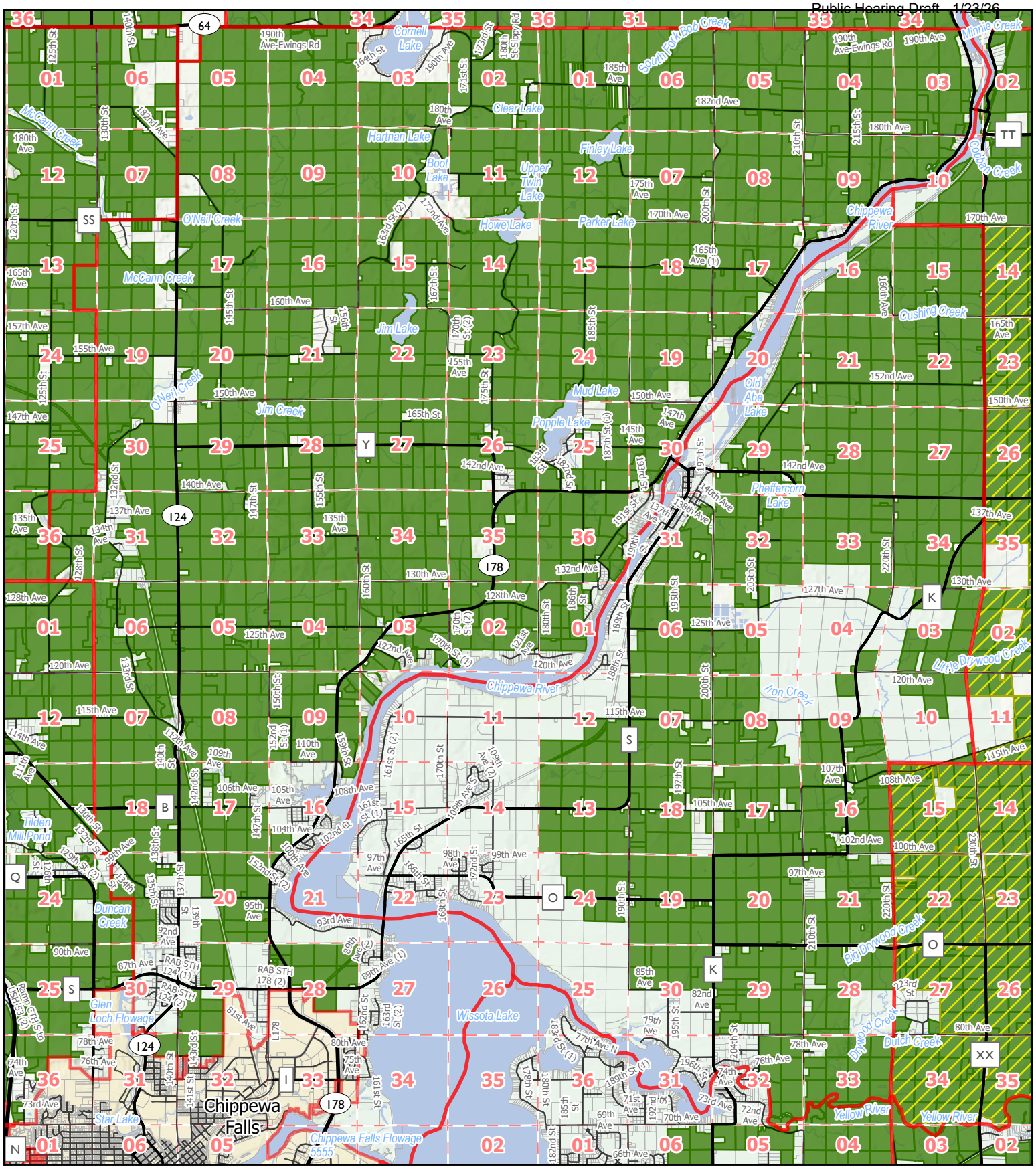
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1 Miles

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Eagle Point

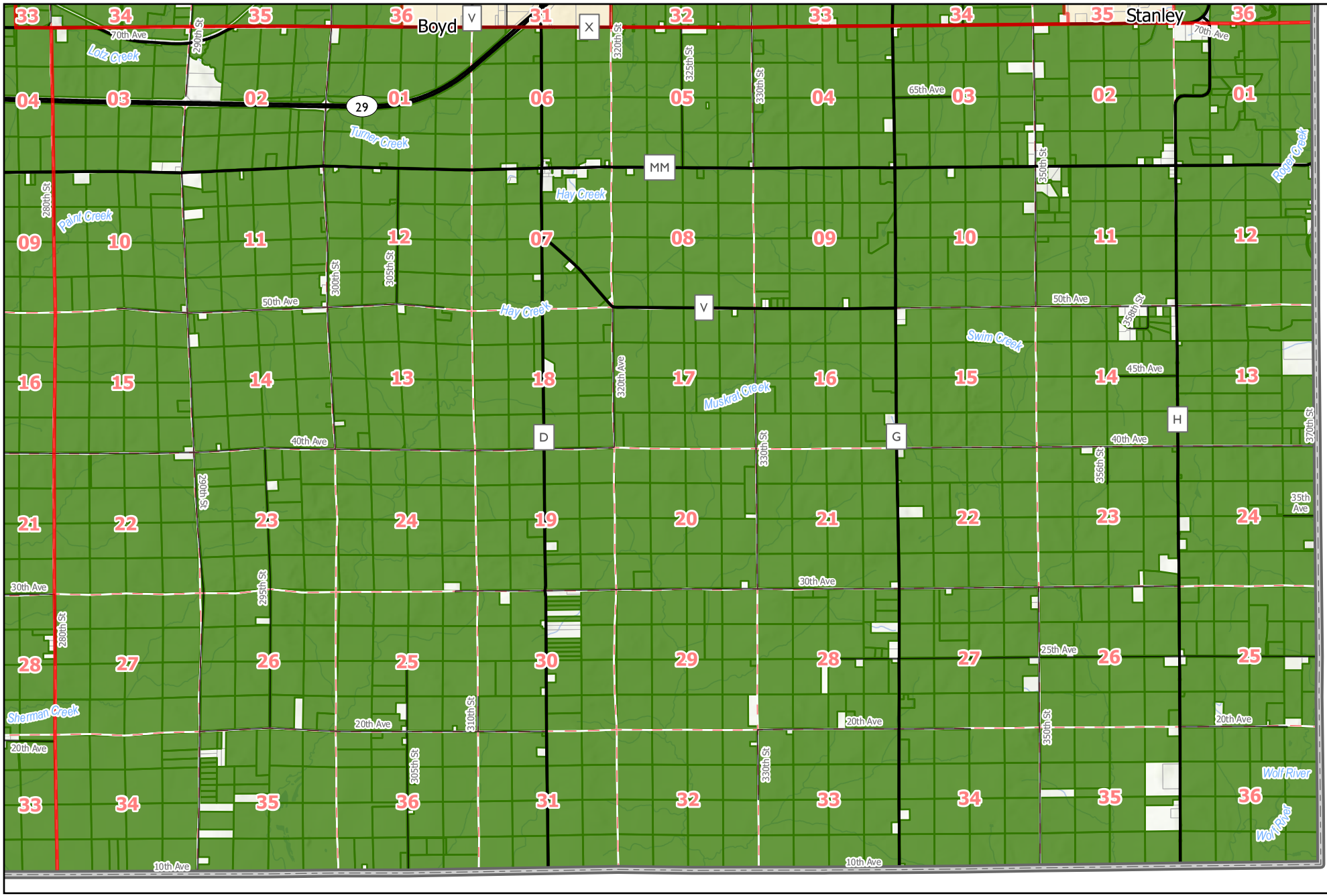
Chippewa County, WI

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Edson

Chippewa County, WI

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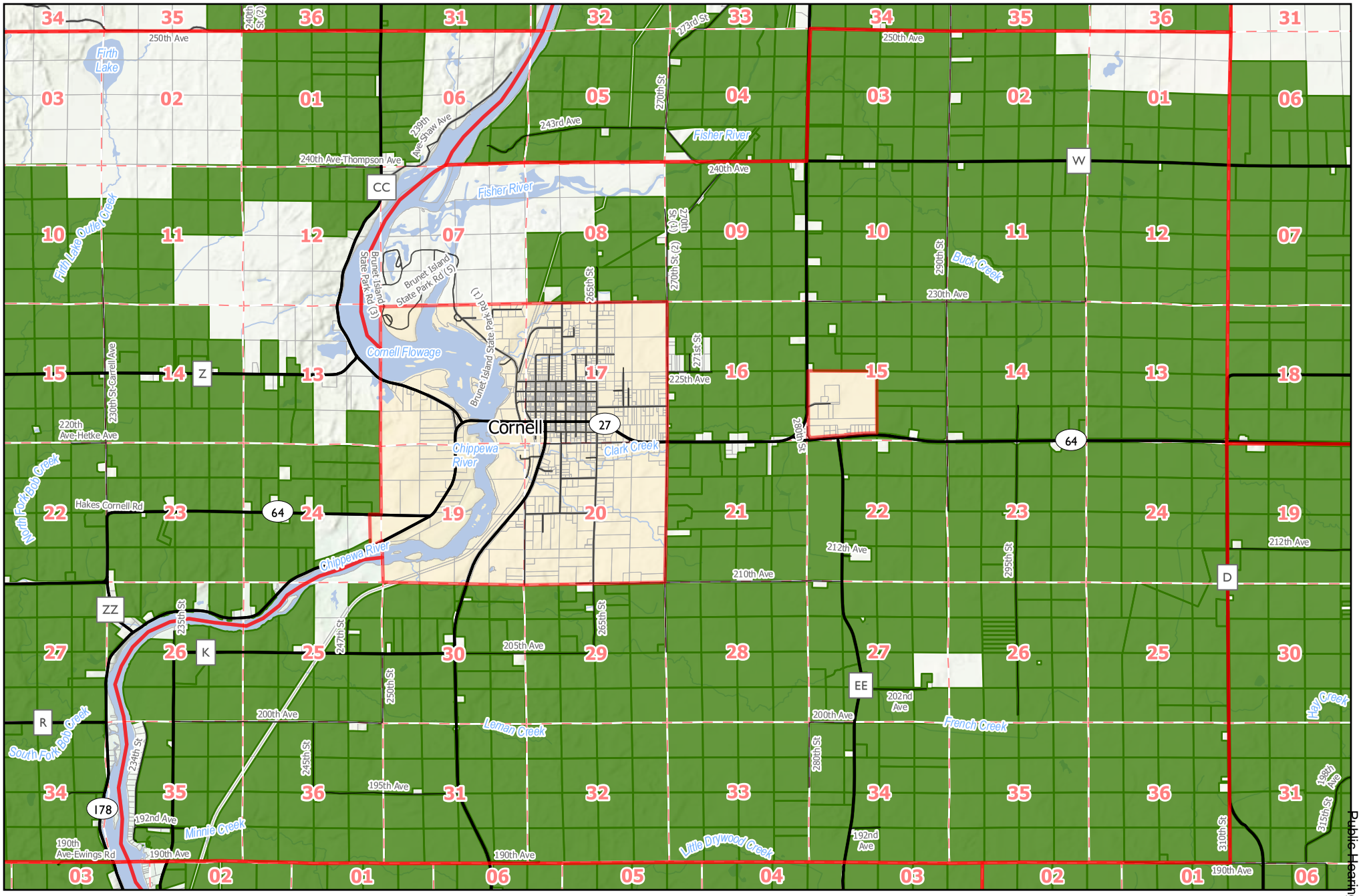
January 2026

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1 Miles

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Estella

Chippewa County, WI

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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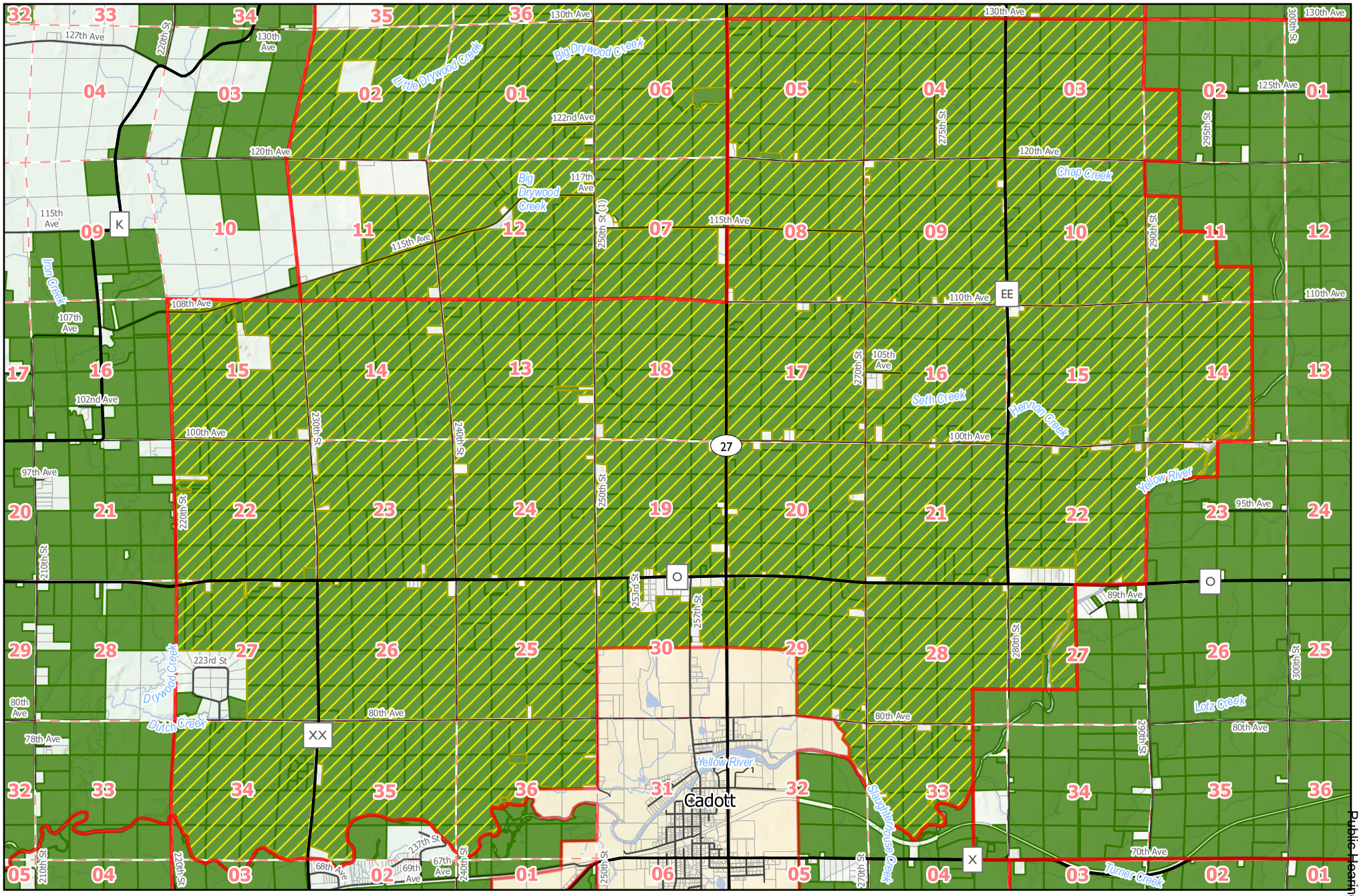
January 2026

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Goetz

Chippewa County, WI

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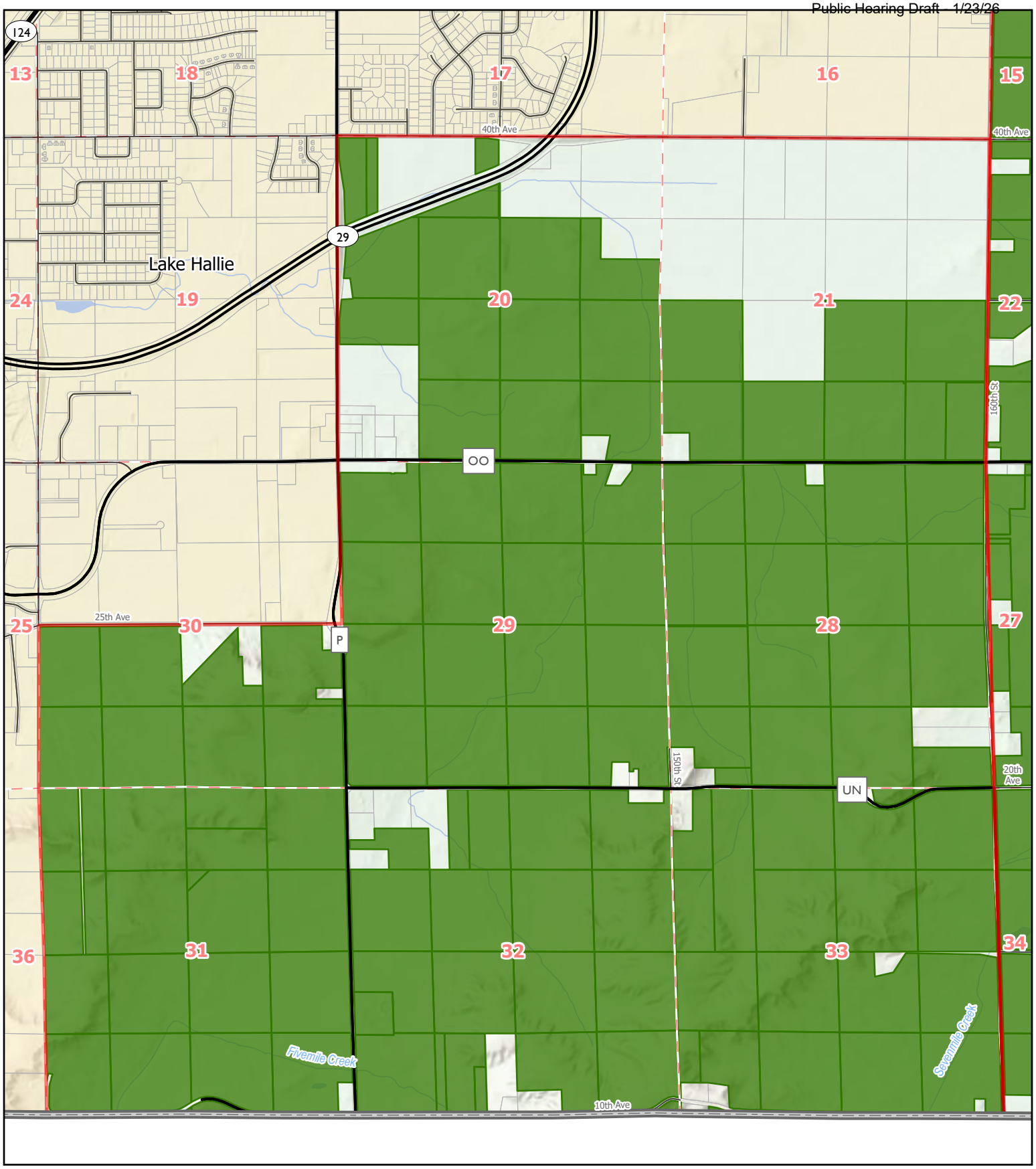
January 2026

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FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Hallie

Chippewa County, WI

WCWRPC
WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

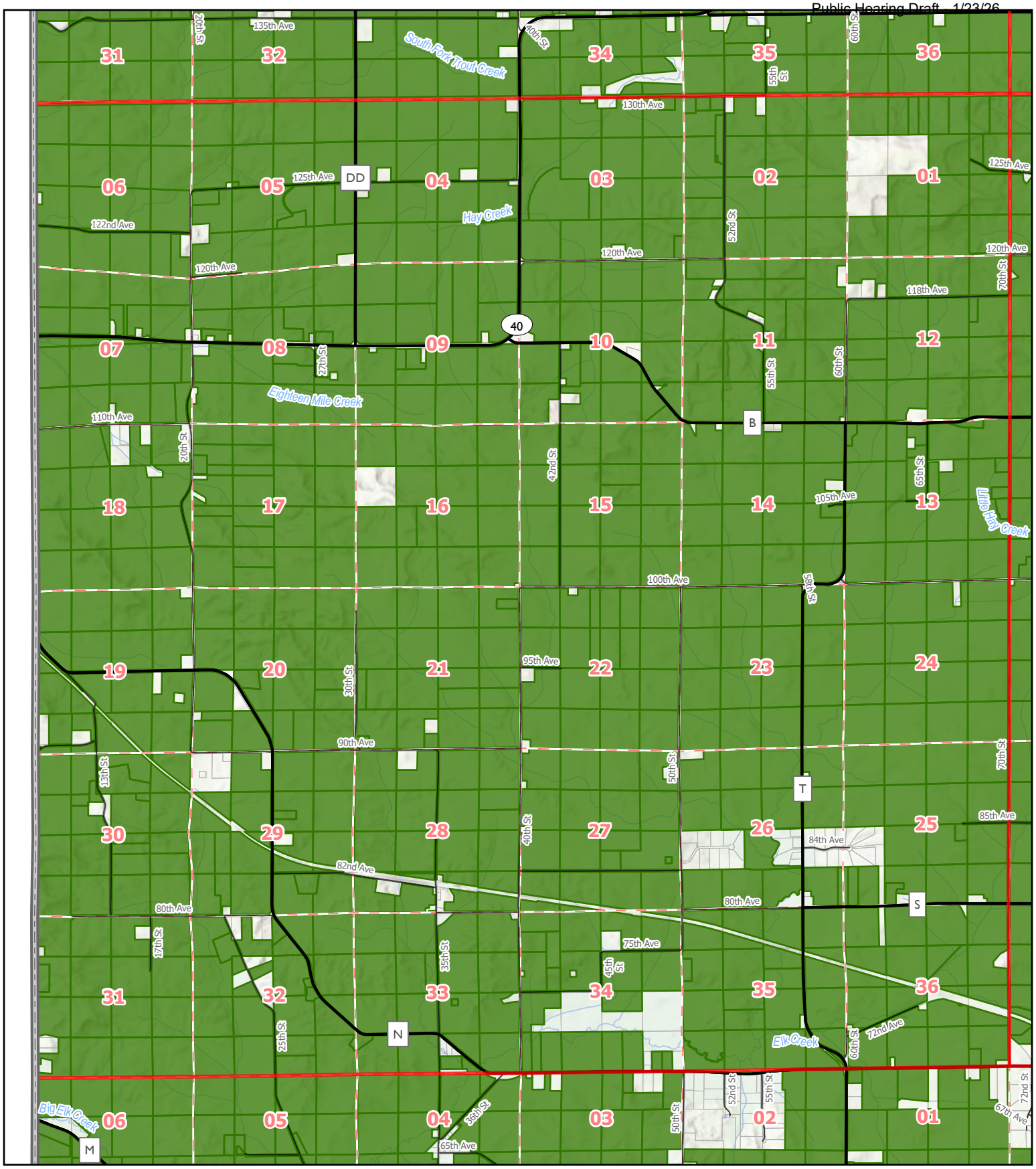
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Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Howard

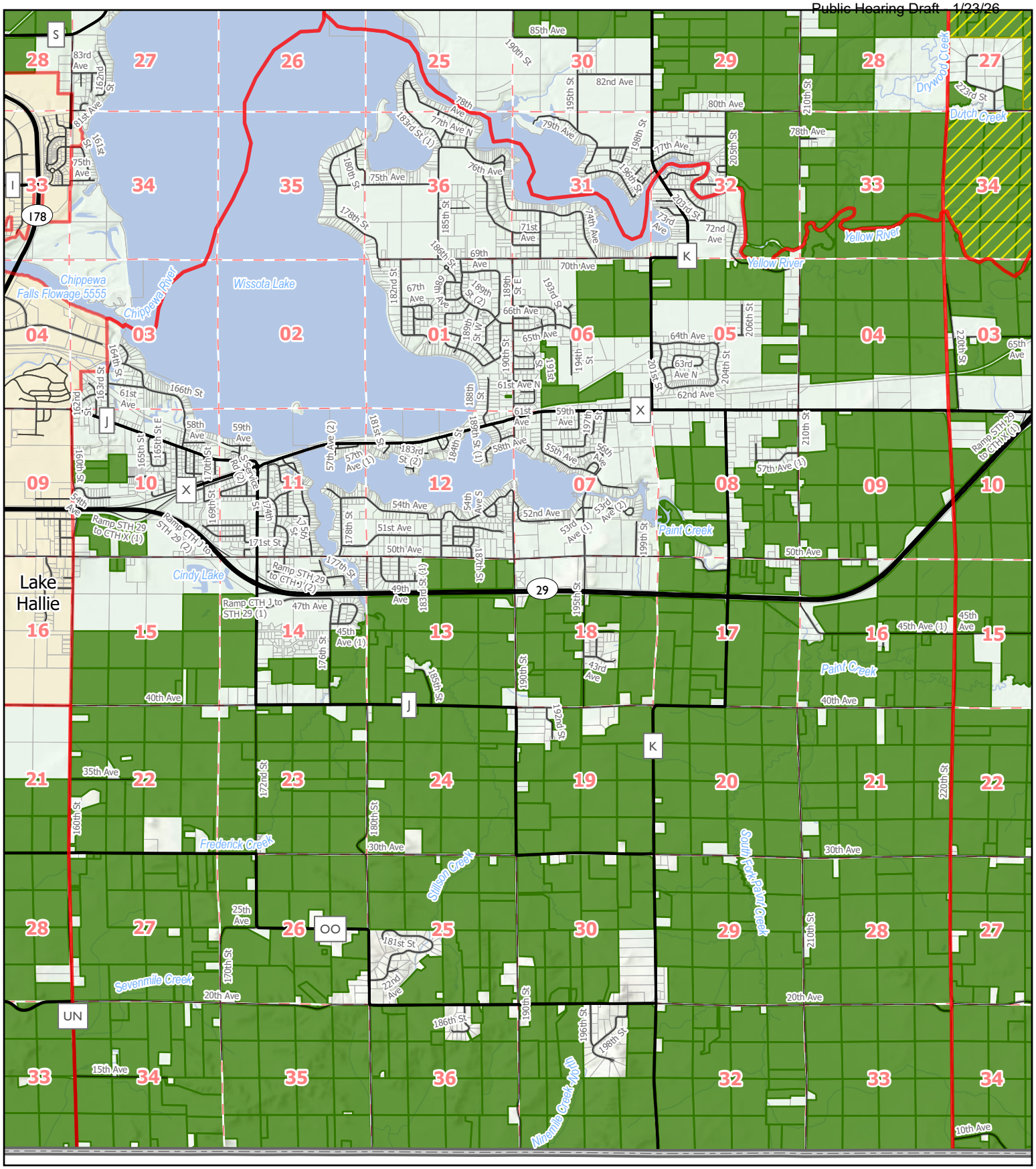
Chippewa County, WI

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1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Lafayette

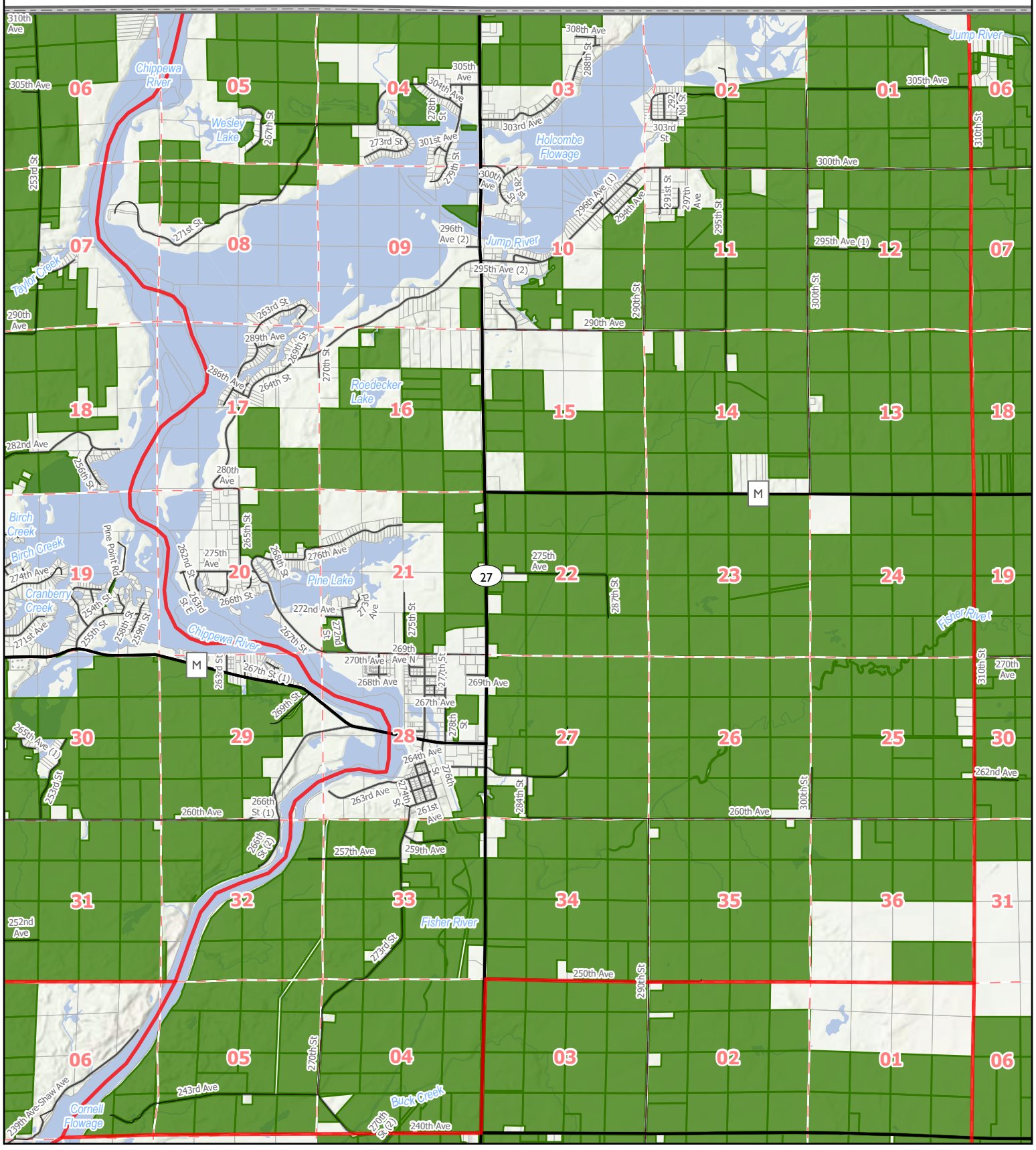
Chippewa County, WI

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Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Lake Holcombe

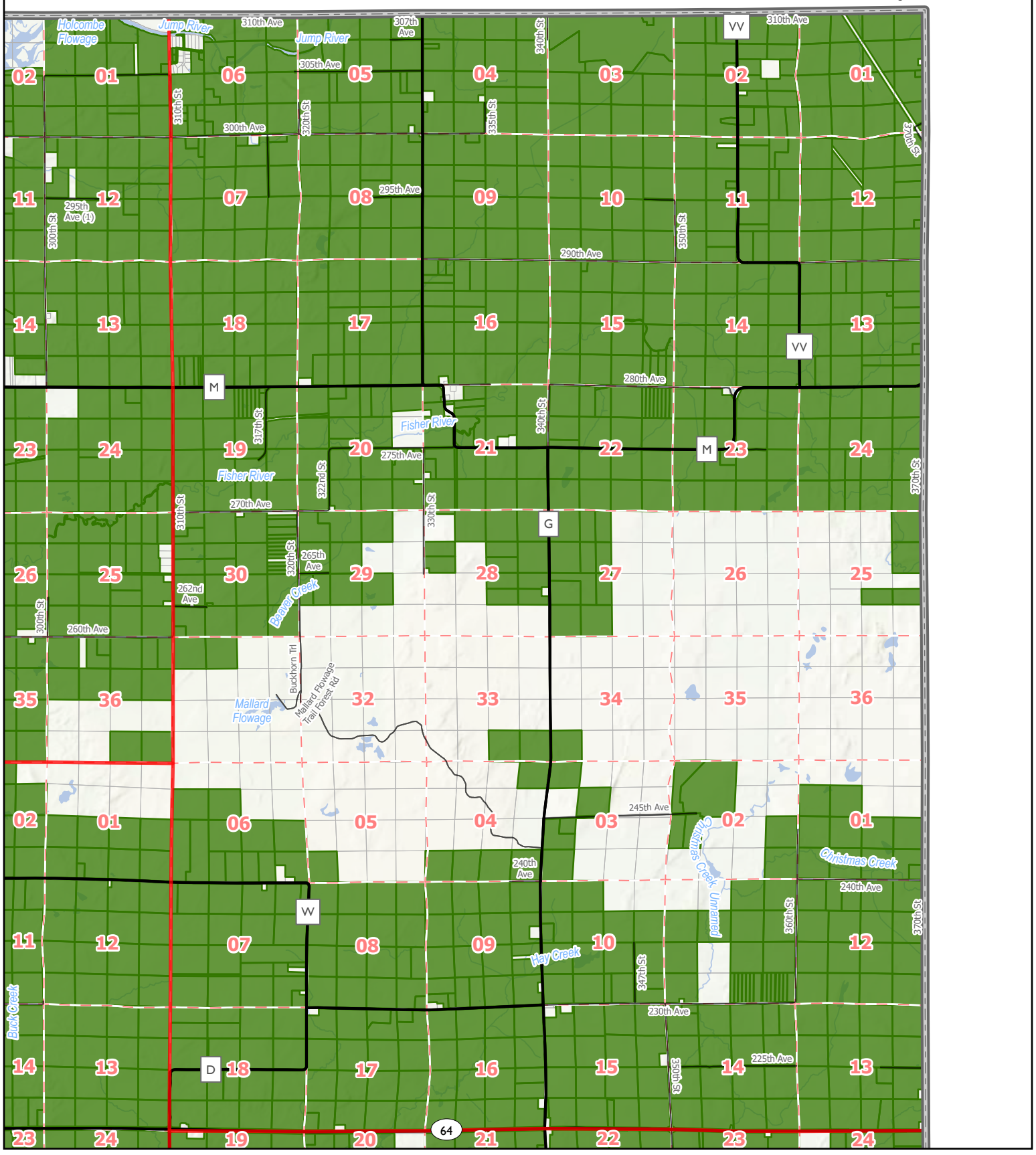
Chippewa County, WI

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

- Farmland Preservation Areas
- Areas Not Recommended for Preservation
- Agricultural Enterprise Area
- Surface Water
- Town Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Section Lines
- Cities & Villages
- Major Road
- Local Road

Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Ruby

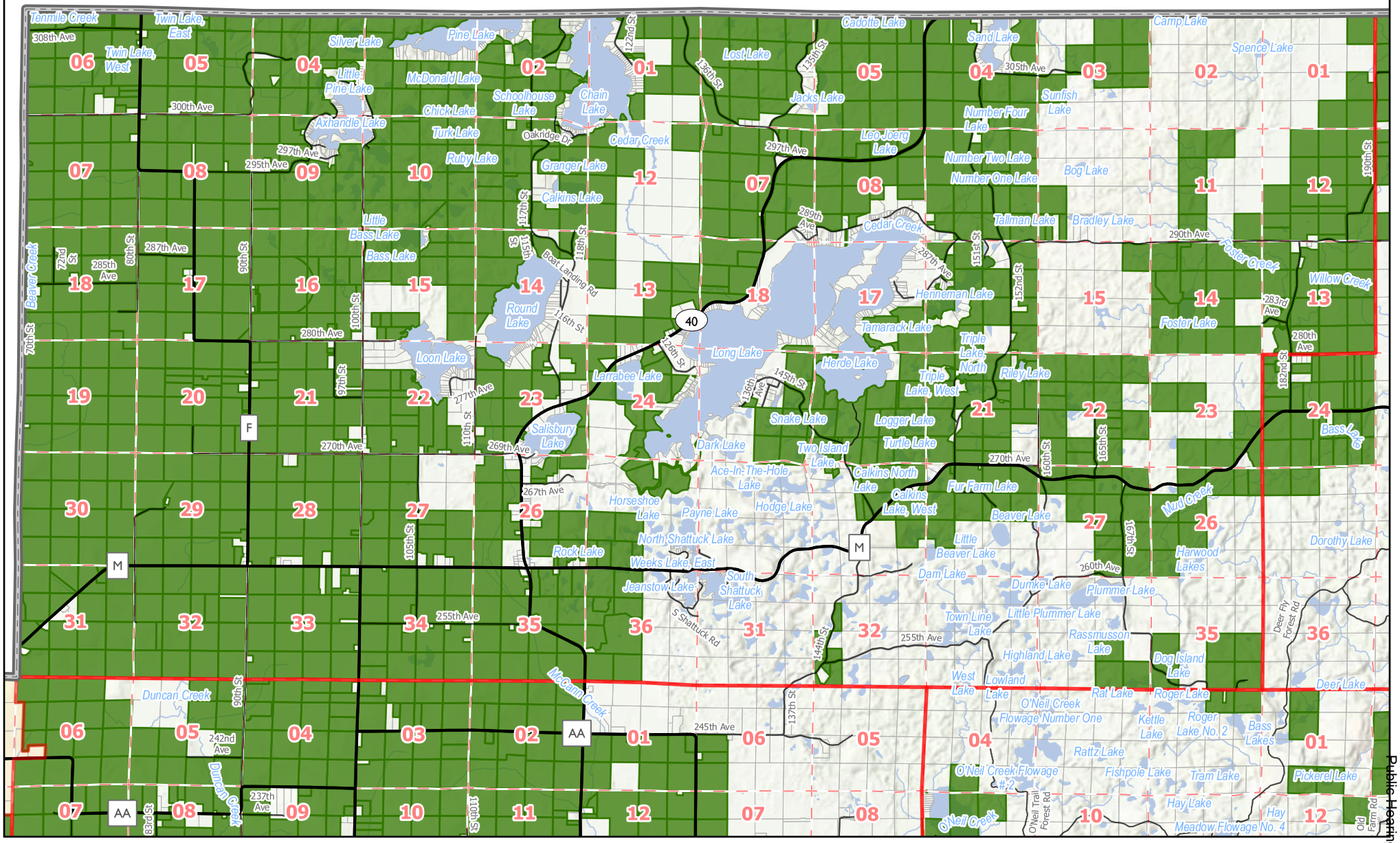
Chippewa County, WI

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Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Sampson

Chippewa County, WI

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

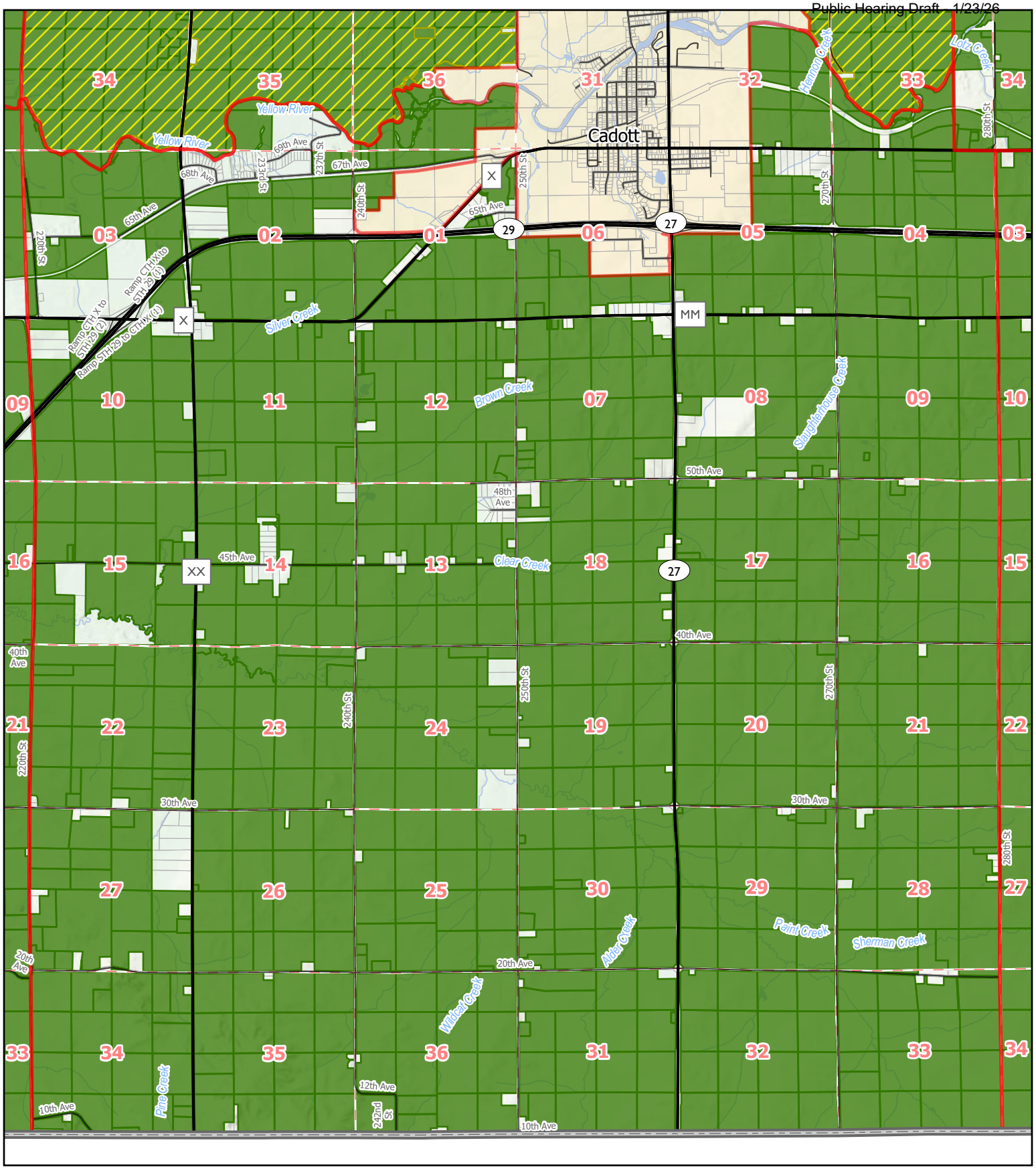
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Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles

January 2026

Public Hearing Draft - 1/23/26



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Sigel

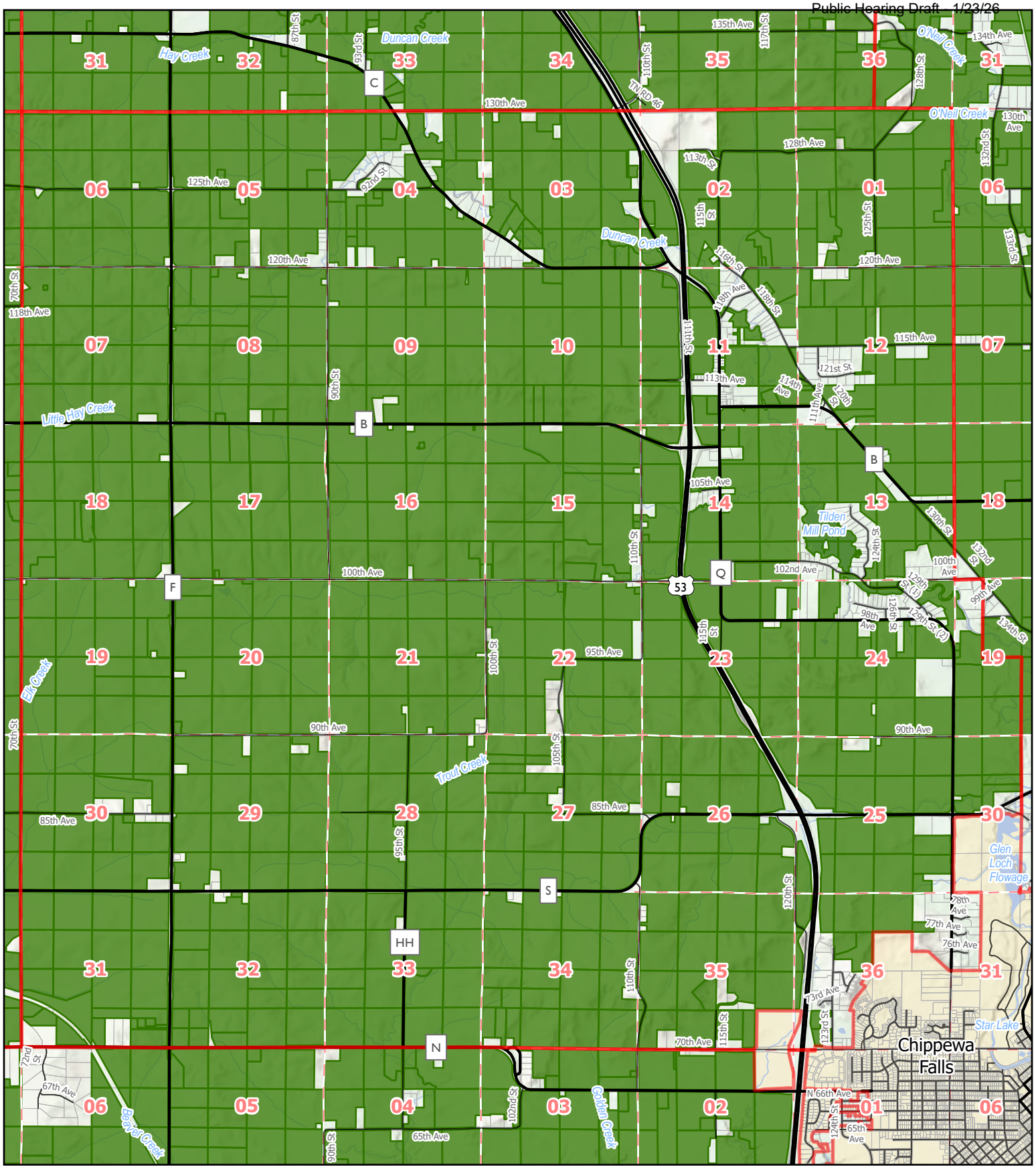
Chippewa County, WI

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Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Tilden

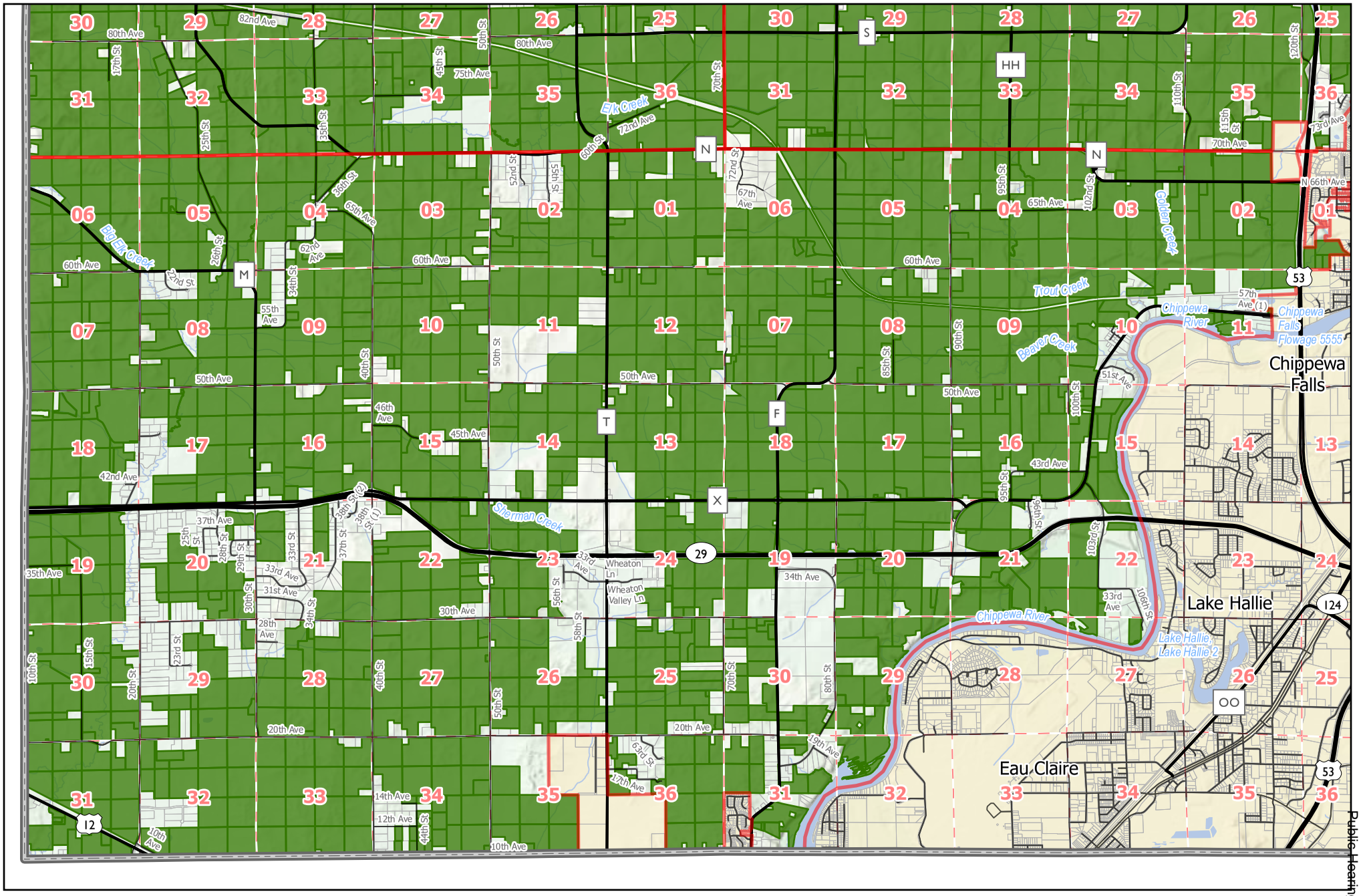
Chippewa County, WI

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- Major Road
- Local Road

Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

Town of Wheaton

Chippewa County, WI

WCWRPC
WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

- Farmland Preservation Areas
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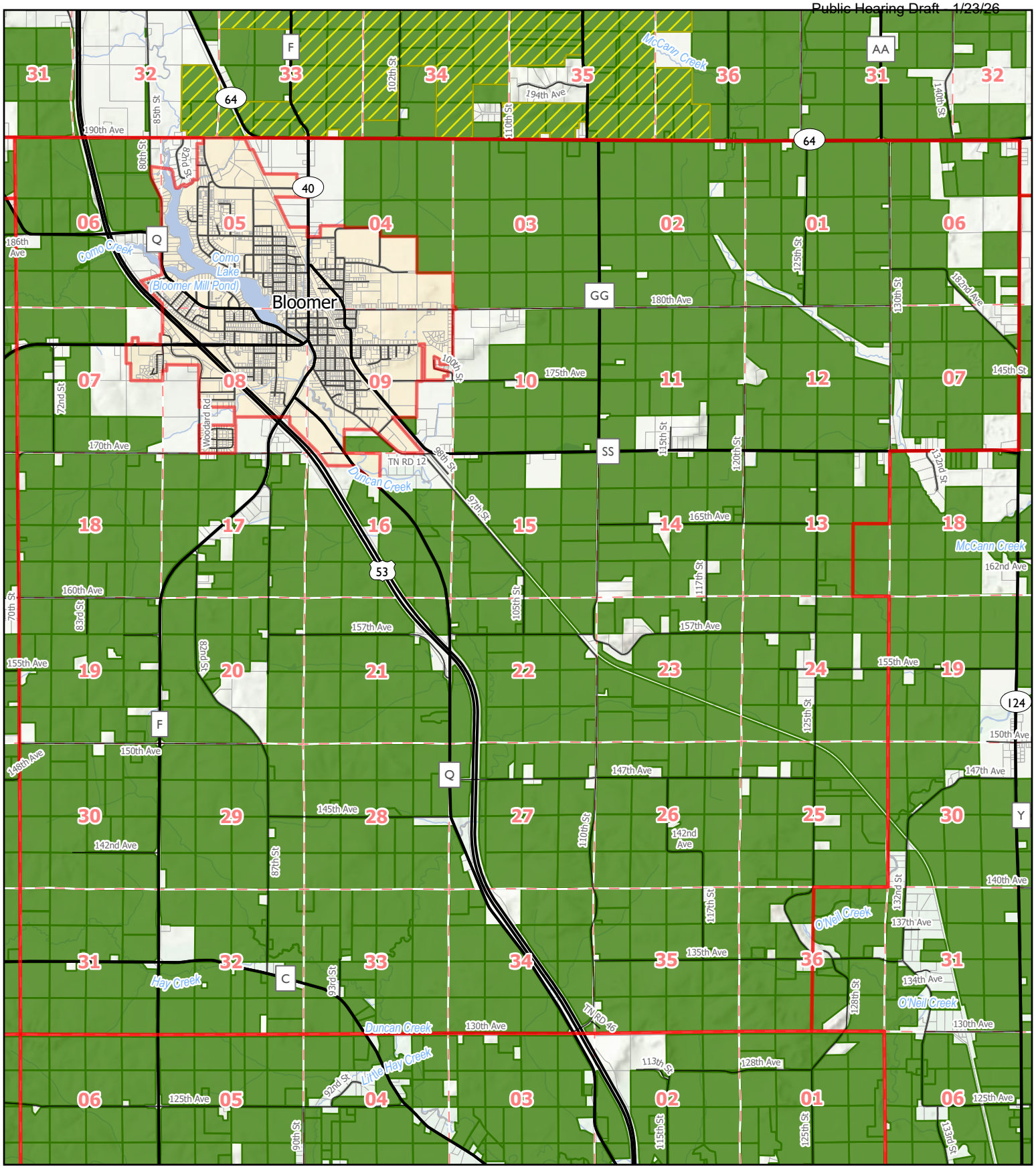
Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

January 2026

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Public Hearing Draft - 1/23/26



FARMLAND PRESERVATION MAP

January 2026

Town of Woodmohr

Chippewa County, WI

WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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Sources: Chippewa County, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DOA, Wisconsin DOT, WCWRPC.

1 Miles

Appendix 5
Plans & Programs

Appendix 5: Plans and Programs

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law requires that most plan elements (chapters) identify applicable plans and programs that can guide and assist the local governmental unit in achieving the plan's goals and objectives. The following plans and programs are the most commonly used and available to the County and its communities in the implementation of its comprehensive plan. However, this list is far from exhaustive and will change over time as modifications are made and new rules, resources, grant programs, and partners become available. Further, many of the most important plans, programs, and partners are identified in the respective chapters of the main Comprehensive Plan text.

HOUSING PLANS & PROGRAMS

While comprehensive plans must describe those programs which are available to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and projected demand, it is not assumed that the County is responsible for managing and providing these programs. In fact, there are a wide variety of available programs for residents at a variety of geographic and jurisdictional levels, with the most commonly used and available programs summarized here.

Federal Housing Programs

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
HUD is the federal agency with primary responsibility for housing programs and community development. HUD is the main repository of resources for housing programs in Wisconsin. HUD provides funding for state developed programs through HOME and other initiatives. It also funds the Continuum of Care Program, and provides Section 8 vouchers, which assist low-income families in finding affordable housing.

Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)
HOME is a federal housing program to support the provision of low-cost housing. A variety of affordable housing activities may be supported by federal HOME awards including down payment assistance to homebuyers, rental rehabilitation, weatherization-related repairs, accessibility improvements and rental housing development. The HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD) program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) through its Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR). These programs provide funds to eligible housing organizations for development of affordable rental housing. The HOME Owner-Occupied Housing Loan program is administered by the DEHCR through the Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program (HHR).

State Housing Programs

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Housing Program
The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for housing, administered by the DEHCR, provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) households. The CDBG program is a federally funded program through HUD. CDBG funds can be used for various housing and neighborhood revitalization activities including housing rehabilitation, acquisition, relocation, demolition of dilapidated structures, and handicap accessibility improvements. For more information on these programs, visit DEHCR's Community Development Programs webpage.

Historic Home Owner's Tax Credits
A 25 percent Wisconsin investment tax credit is available for people who rehabilitate historic, non-income-producing personal residences, and who apply for and receive project approval before beginning physical work on their projects. This program is administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society's State Historic Preservation Office.

Homeless Programs

Wisconsin Department of Administration's Division of Energy, Housing & Community Resources administers programs specifically designed to help homeless people:

- State Shelter Subsidy Grant (SSSG) Program: provides up to one-half of an emergency homeless shelter's program operating budget. Eligible applicants are a county or municipal governing body or agency, an Indian Tribal government, a community action agency, or other private not-for-profit or non-profit organization.
- Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA): This federal program is designed to provide eligible applicants with resources and incentives to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of persons with AIDS or related diseases. Funds are distributed through a competitive process.
- HUD Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program: Funds may be used for outreach to unsheltered individuals and families; emergency shelter, including shelter operations and renovations; homelessness prevention, including rental assistance; rapid re-housing, including rental assistance, rental arrears, application fees, security deposits, and utility payments; and database costs. In addition, up to 7.5% of grants may be used for program administration.
- Interest Bearing Real Estate Trust Account Program (IBRETA): Real estate brokers establish interest bearing real estate trust accounts for the deposit of all down payments, earnest money deposits and other trust funds received by the broker and related to the conveyance of real estate. Interest is remitted to the WDOA. Proceeds augment existing homeless programs.

Home Safety Act

A Wisconsin law requires the state's Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) be enforced in all municipalities. This includes the necessity to have new construction inspected for compliance with the UDC, the statewide building code for one- and two-family dwellings built since June 1, 1980. The Home Safety Act (2003 WI Act 90) signed into law by Governor Doyle on December 3, 2003, includes important changes to the enabling statutes for the UDC. The changes were effective as of December 18, 2003.

Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)

Local sponsors compete for state grants annually to reduce the housing costs of low-income renters or home buyers. Eligible applicants include local units of government, American Indian tribes or bands in Wisconsin, housing authorities and non-profit housing organizations. Eligible activities are emergency rental aid, home buying down payment assistance, homeless prevention efforts, and related housing initiatives. The HCRI is administered by the Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources.

Property Tax Deferred Loan Program (PTDL)

This state program provides loans to low- and moderate-income elderly homeowners to help pay local property taxes so that the elderly can afford to stay in their homes. To be eligible, individuals must be at least 65 years old with a spouse that is at least 60 years old, unless one is disabled.

Wisconsin Weatherization Assistance Programs

The Department of Administration-Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources provides weatherization assistance for units occupied by low-income persons. This service is provided through the three community action programs operating in the region. It is also notable that many residential properties which are being sold for conversion to rental units also have to meet state-minimum energy conservation standards at the time of ownership transfer.

Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources

The Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources provides housing policy and assistance programs to households. It offers state-funded housing grants or loans through local organizations, coordinates its housing programs with those of other state and local housing agencies, helps develop state housing plans and policies, and provides training and technical assistance. The Division channels federal housing funds to local authorities and organizations and administers federal funds for the homeless.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)
The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business, and agribusiness. WHEDA administers a low-income housing tax credit program and loan programs.

Regional Housing Programs

Regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program
The Regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program for West Central Wisconsin (inclusive of Chippewa County) is administered by the Chippewa County Housing Authority. The funds are used to assist Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) homeowners in bringing their homes up to safe and sanitary conditions through the provision of no-interest, deferred payment loans. A separate program component provides homebuyers with no-interest, deferred payment loans for closing costs and downpayments. Repayment is made at the point that the homeowner no longer occupies the property. Grant funding can also be used for housing acquisition, reconstruction and demolition. Although not currently used in this way, other eligible uses include small neighborhood public facility projects, assistance to developers creating low- and moderate-income rental units, and conversion of buildings into LMI housing. The program is a revolving loan fund with repaid loans being relent to eligible LMI households. New funds for the program are secured through a competitive application process with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA).

Habitat for Humanity
The goal of this program is to eliminate inadequate housing and poverty housing throughout the world. Local affiliates, including dozens in Wisconsin, are responsible for raising funds, recruiting volunteers, identifying project sites, and constructing owner-occupied housing for the benefit of participating low-income families. Visit habitat.org.

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)
The Regional Planning Commission offers technical housing assistance with respect to housing related grants and funding and grant writing, and has also assisted a number of counties and communities with housing studies. WCWRPC should be contacted for further information.

County and Local Housing Programs

Chippewa County Housing Authority
The Chippewa County Housing Authority is a public housing authority that provides housing resources and services for low and moderate income (LMI) households on a countywide basis. Through the use of funding from CDBG and a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), the CCHA offers assistance to LMI homeowners and landlords for repairs and down payment or closing costs.

Wisconsin Energy Assistance Program
The Wisconsin Energy Assistance Program, administered by Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources for Chippewa County, assists low-income households with purchasing furnaces when the family's existing furnace is a health hazard or beyond repair. The Division should be contacted for more information.

TRANSPORTATION PLANS & PROGRAMS

State Plans

Wisconsin Statewide Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan (Connect 2050)
The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a statewide long-range transportation plan through the year 2050, called Connect 2050. The plan addresses all forms of transportation—highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit – and ways to make the individual modes work better as an integrated transportation system. The overall goal of the planning process is to identify a series of policies to aid transportation decision-makers when evaluating programs and projects. The plan is available through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's website.

Access Management
WisDOT employs three types of access control authorized by state statutes. A short summary of the state statutes follows, but it should be noted that the actual content of the statutes is significantly more detailed, and many special conditions and provisions are not included in this text. The type of access control that is imposed on various highway road segments influences how that segment is managed.

- Wis. Stats. 84.09 (purchase access control) – WisDOT acquires land by gift, devise, purchase or condemnation to establish, extend, or improve transportation facilities.
- Wis. Stats. 84.25 (administrative access control) – WisDOT designates some rural portions of the state trunk highway system as controlled-access highways where studies show that the potential exists for traffic volumes to exceed 2,000 vehicles per 24-hour day.
- Wis. Stats. 84.295 (freeway and expressway access control) – WisDOT designates highways with greater than 4,000 vehicles per day as freeways or expressways when it is determined that the volume and character of traffic warrants the construction or acquisition of right-of-way to accommodate a four-lane highway.

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050 and Midwest Regional Rail Initiative
Nine Midwestern states, including Wisconsin, worked together on plans for linking the Midwest into a national passenger rail network, adopting a plan in 2000. Funding was acquired for the implementation of the leg between Milwaukee and Madison, and for the next phase of study, corridor selection, between Milwaukee and Minneapolis. In 2010, Wisconsin abandoned the project, returning the implementation funds to the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) and discontinuing participation in the corridor selection study. MnDOT continued the corridor study without Wisconsin's cooperation, eventually recommending a route through La Crosse over routes through Eau Claire that would have more closely served Chippewa Falls. While environmental study continues on the La Crosse route, the Eau Claire corridor is still shown in local, regional, and state (Minnesota and Wisconsin) transportation plans.

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030
Airports, aviation and aviation-related industries play a significant role in the economic success of Wisconsin communities. The Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 (SASP 2030) provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system of public-use airports adequate to meet current and future aviation needs of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan – 2020
This is the state's major plan for developing and integrating bicycles into the transportation system. It was adopted by WisDOT in 1998 and looked at creating a system of bikeways using suitable routes along County and state highways. An update to the Bicycle Transportation Plan is currently underway within the Active Transportation Plan 2050.

State Recreational Trails Network Plan
This plan was adopted in 2001 and updated in 2003 by WDNR as an amendment to the Wisconsin State Trail Strategic Plan to identify a network of trial corridors throughout the state consisting of more than 4,000 miles of trails known as the Trail Interstate System. An update to the Trails Network Plan is currently underway.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020
The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) developed the Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 to provide a long-range vision addressing Wisconsin pedestrian needs. The Pedestrian Plan provides a basic description of existing and emerging pedestrian needs over the next 20 years, with a set of recommendations to meet those needs. WisDOT's efforts ensure that this plan complements both existing and future long-range transportation plans. An update to the Bicycle Transportation Plan is underway within the Active Transportation Plan 2050.

Regional and Local Plans

Chippewa County considers applicable State, regional, and local transportation plans in the development of their own respective transportation plans. Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) plans are submitted to WisDOT in order to receive LRIP funding. The County manages its local transportation improvements through its *Chippewa County 5-Year Highway Improvement Plan.* The key regional and local plans are noted in the Transportation chapter.

State Programs

Adopt-A-Highway Program

The Adopt-A-Highway Program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT). The program was initiated to allow groups to volunteer and support the state's antilitter program in a more direct way. Each qualified group takes responsibility for litter control on a segment of state highway. The group picks up litter on a segment at least three times per year between April 1 and November 1. Groups do not work in dangerous areas like medians, bridges, or steep slopes. In addition, a sign announcing a group's litter control sponsorship can be installed. The state Adopt-A-Highway coordinator should be contacted for further information. Applications and forms are available through the WDOT website.

Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)

WISLR is an internet-accessible system that helps local governments and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) manage local road data to improve decision-making, and to meet state statute requirements. With Geographic Information System technology, WISLR combines local road data with interactive mapping functionality. WISLR provides a system for local governments to report local road information (such as width, surface type, surface year, shoulder, curb, road category, functional classification, and pavement condition ratings) to WisDOT. Local governments can use WISLR to organize, analyze, update, and edit their data.

Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Program

The Transportation Economic Assistance program provides 50% state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor, and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state. Grants of up to $1 million are available for transportation improvements that are essential for an economic development project. It must be scheduled to begin within three years, have the local government's endorsement, and benefit the public. For more information about this program, contact: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Investment Management, phone (608) 266-3488.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources does provide funding to local governments for trails, paths, routes, and other infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation, such as biking, walking/hiking, boating, and ATVs. Though these programs often have a recreational focus, such facilities can many times be an important component of a community's transportation strategy.

Community Development Block Grant-Public Facilities (CDBG-PF)

Administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, communities meeting a low-to-moderate income threshold are eligible to apply for CDBG-PF grants for infrastructure and building projects, which may include streets and specialized transportation projects.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Transportation programming efforts in Wisconsin are largely coordinated or funded through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), including the distribution of federal transportation assistance dollars. Many of these key assistance programs for county and local governments are listed below.

- **General Transportation Aids (GTA)** return about 30% of all state-collected transportation revenues to local governments for road construction, maintenance, and other related costs
- **Local Roads (LRIP) and Local Bridge Improvement Programs** assist local governments in improving seriously deteriorating roads and bridges.

- **Surface Transportation Program (STP)** uses allocated federal funds for the improvement of federal-aid-eligible local (STP-L), rural (STP-R), and urban (STP-U) roads and streets.
- **Connecting Highway Aids** are available to municipalities for roadways connecting to the State Trunk Highway system, in particular if increased traffic is experienced.
- **Rural (RTAP) and State Urban Mass Transit Assistance** allocate federal funds to support capital, operating, and training expenses for public transportation services.
- **County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance** funds provide counties with financial assistance to provide transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Capital funds through the **Section 5310 Program** are also available for non-profits and local governments. A related WisDOT-administered program is **New Freedom**, which provides Federal Transit Administration funds to private and public entities for programs which assist individuals with disabilities to overcome transportation-related barriers so they may get to work.
- **Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)** provides start-up and development grant funding for projects which connect low-income workers with jobs through enhanced local transportation services. WETAP includes federal **Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)** Program funding and related requirements.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** funds projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives (e.g., bicycling, pedestrian), landscaping/streetscaping, and the preservation of historic transportation structures.
- **Safe Routes to School Program** is a federal program administered by WisDOT aimed at helping communities to make it safer for children to walk and bike to and from school and to encourage them to do so. In addition to planning grants, implementation of education, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation programs and projects are also eligible under the program.
- **Airport Improvement Program** combines a variety of resources to fund improvements for the state's public-use airports which are primarily municipally owned. Additional program and regulatory support are also available through the Federal Aviation Administration.
- **Freight Rail Programs** for the preservation of existing rail service through rail acquisition and rehabilitation, and for the improvement of rail infrastructure.

Each year, WisDOT updates a four-year **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program** for all highway and transit projects that propose to use federal funds. WisDOT also has a variety of specialty assistance programs, such as Flood Damage Aids, Rustic Roads, County Forest Road Aids, and the Adopt-A-Highway Program. Data for local roads is managed by WisDOT through the Internet-accessible **Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)**. For further information, contact the WDOT at (715) 836-2891.

Regional, County, and Local Programs

Chippewa County Highway Department

The County Highway Department has responsibilities regarding the maintenance and repair of county highways as noted in the Transportation chapter.

Public Works Departments/Road "Crews"

Most cities, villages, and towns have either a public works/streets department or road staff. Capacity and responsibilities vary, with larger departments providing maintenance and repair of street, alleys, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street signs, street lights, storm sewers, culverts, drainage areas, etc. Larger repair projects are often contracted.

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWPRC)

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission offers highway, rail and airport planning services as well as access control planning, pavement management plans, thoroughfare plans, traffic and parking studies, and pedestrian/bicycle trail planning guidance. Contact WCWRPC for further information.

Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Administered by WCWRPC, the MPO conducts comprehensive urban transportation planning for the Eau Claire Urbanized area thereby satisfying the conditions necessary for the receipt of federal transportation funding for capital, operating, and planning assistance. The MPO also assists the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in the development of the urbanized area's sewer service area plan and acts in an advisory role to the Department in matters concerning the implementation of the plan.

Chippewa County Aging & Disability Resource Center
The Chippewa County ADRC provides transportation resources for residents that meet certain qualifications. Rides for medical appointments are available. Rides for shopping, business, or social needs may be available, but are based on funding availability. Contact the ADRC for additional information and eligibility requirements.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLANS & PROGRAMS

Due to the diversity of services covered by this plan element (e.g., infrastructure, health care, emergency services, education, recreation, telecommunications), the list of related plans and programs would be lengthy. The main plan text highlights key related plans and programs, while some County plans, such as the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Community Health Improvement Plan incorporate their own lists of related programs and resources. West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is available to assist communities in exploring grant opportunities. This section highlights a few of the most commonly used programs and tools.

Assistance to Firefighting Grant Program
This program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The program assists rural, urban, and suburban fire departments to increase the effectiveness of firefighting operations, expand firefighting health and safety programs, purchase new equipment, and invest in EMS programs. For the most current information regarding grant awards and any other USFA projects, visit fema.gov/.

Brownfields Initiative
The Brownfields Initiative provides grants to persons, businesses, local development organizations, and municipalities for environmental remediation activities for brownfield sites where the owner is unknown, cannot be located, or cannot meet the cleanup costs. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program
Administered through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, funds are available to assist local communities acquire and develop public outdoor recreation areas as per s. 23.09 (20), Wis. Stats. Counties, towns, cities, villages, and Indian Tribes with an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan are eligible to apply. There is a 50% local match required. Awards are granted on a competitive basis. Acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas are eligible projects as well as urban green space, urban rivers, and recreational trails projects.

Clean Water Fund Program
Funds are available to protect water quality by correcting existing wastewater treatment and urban storm water problems and preventing future problems as per s. 281.58 and 281.59, Wis. Stats. Cities, towns, villages, counties, town sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and tribal governments are eligible to apply. Eligible projects include construction of treatment works, sewer systems, interceptors, and urban stormwater runoff treatment systems. Projects that are necessary to prevent violation of discharge permits, meet new or changed discharge limits, or correct water quality or human health problems in unsewered areas may receive priority for funding. Low interest loans are available for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment projects and urban storm water runoff projects approved by the Department. The program is offered by the WDNR.

WEDC Brownfield Grants Program and Idle Sites Redevelopment Program
The Brownfield Grant and Brownfield Site Assessment Grant are designed to assist communities with assessing or remediating the environmental contamination of an abandoned, idle, or underused industrial or commercial facility or site in a blighted area, or one that qualifies as blighted. Critical to obtaining a grant is a redevelopment

plan that describes how the property will be reused for commercial or industrial development that results in jobs and private investment in the community.

The Idle Sites Redevelopment program is in place for redevelopment plans of large idle, abandoned, or underutilized sites. These sites will need to have been in this condition for at least 5 years. Eligible activities include rehabilitation, demolition, remediation, or infrastructure improvements. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information on these programs.

Community Development Block Grant for Public Facilities (CDBG-PF)
The Wisconsin CDBG Public Facilities Program is designed to assist economically distressed, smaller communities with public facility improvements. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to utility system improvements, streets, sidewalks, and community centers. Federal grant funds are available annually. The maximum grant for any single applicant is $1,000,000. Grants are only available up to the amount that is adequately justified and documented with engineering or vendor estimates. For more information on this program contact the Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources.

Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED)
The CDBG Public Facilities for Economic Development Program helps underwrite the cost of municipal infrastructure necessary for business development that retains or creates employment opportunities. Eligible activities are improvements to public facilities such as water systems, sewerage systems, and roads that are owned by a general or special purpose unit of government, and which will principally benefit businesses, and which as a result will induce businesses to create jobs and invest in the community. The Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources should be contacted for further information.

Household and Agricultural Hazardous Waste Collection Grant (Clean Sweep)
Funds are available to municipalities to create and operate local “clean sweep” programs for the collection and disposal of hazardous waste. Any type of program for the collection and disposal of hazardous wastes, including permanent collection programs, is eligible. The program is offered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Chippewa County, which currently coordinates a county-wide clean sweep, can also be contacted for further information.

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)
TIF can help a municipality undertake a public project to stimulate beneficial development or redevelopment that would not otherwise occur. It is a mechanism for financing local economic development projects in underdeveloped and blighted areas. Taxes generated by the increased property values pay for land acquisition or needed public works. A summary of current TIF districts is included in the Economic Development element.

Utility Accommodation Policy
The purpose of a Utility Accommodation Policy is to prescribe the policies and procedures that shall be met by any utility whose facility currently occupies, or will occupy in the future, any highway right-of-way or bridge over which a county or local government has jurisdiction. The Policy applies to all public and private utilities as defined in 96.01(B) (9) and (15). It also applies to all existing utility facilities retained, relocated, replaced, or altered, and to new utility facilities installed within public right-of-way.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS

The Chippewa County Land & Water Conservation Department, the County’s Extension Agricultural Agents, and the local NRCS and Farm Services Agency are excellent resources for additional information.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
The USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is tasked with implementing Federal farm conservation programs to improve the economic stability of the agricultural industry, maintain a steady price range of agricultural commodities, and help farmers adjust to changes in demand. These goals are achieved through a range of farm commodity, credit, conservation, loan, and disaster programs, including Federal Crop Insurance. Also part of the USDA is the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), which was formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service. The NRCS provides data, maps, technical expertise, and training in soils, conservation

techniques, ecological sciences, and other such activities. The USDA has service centers located in each county in the region, which include the FSA and NRCS offices. Local USDA staff work closely with local UW-Extension Agriculture Agents and county conservation staff to assist farmers and municipalities in their respective counties.

Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program Wis. Stats. §91
The Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program was established in 1977 to assist local government efforts to preserve agricultural resources. The Program was updated in 2009 as part of the Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative. Eligible farmland owners receive state income tax credits. The amount of the credit varies and new credit rates went into effect in tax year 2023. The largest credit of $12.50 is available to landowners in an area zoned for farmland preservation and in an agricultural enterprise area (AEA) with a farmland preservation agreement signed after July 1, 2009, or in an area zoned for farmland preservation and with a farmland preservation agreement modified after July 1, 2009.

Farmland Preservation Planning & Agricultural Enterprise Areas
These programs are discussed in the Agricultural Resources chapter.

Farmland Use Value Assessment (1995 Wisconsin Act 27; Wis. Stats. §70.32(2r) & 73.03(49)
With the passage of the State 1995-1997 Budget Act, the standard for assessing agricultural land in Wisconsin changed from market value to use value. With taxation of land based on the income that could be generated from the land's rental for agricultural use, rather than development potential, the program helps Wisconsin farmers to maintain current farming practices, rather than succumbing to development due to economic pressures. Only land devoted primarily to agricultural use qualifies. For reference, undeveloped land (e.g., bog, marsh, lowland brush, wetlands) is assessed at 50% of its full value.

Livestock Facility Siting Ordinances Wis. Stats. §93.90 & ATCP 51
The role of local governments in the regulation of the site of new and expanded livestock operations changed significantly in 2006 with the adoption of Wisconsin Statutes §93.90 and Administrative Rule ATCP 51. Effective May 1, 2006, local ordinances which require permits for livestock facilities must follow state rules. The siting standards only apply to new and expanding livestock facilities in areas that require local permits, and then only (in most communities) if they will have 500 animal units (AU) or more and expand by at least 20%.

Chippewa County has not adopted such a siting ordinance but does regulate manure management. For most communities with zoning, the new Statute limits the exclusion of livestock facilities from agricultural zoning districts, unless another ag district exists where operations of all sizes are allowed and the exclusion is for public health and safety based on scientific findings of fact. However, such facilities can be treated as a conditional use. Appeals of local permit decisions are taken to the State Livestock Facility Siting Review Board. The changes in state rules for livestock facility siting do not impact a local government's ability to enforce shoreland-wetland zoning, erosion controls, stormwater management requirement, manure storage ordinances, and road regulations.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
The purpose of EQIP is to provide technical and financial help to landowners for conservation practices that protect soil and water quality. Nutrient management and prescribed grazing are eligible for cost-sharing statewide. Assistance for other practices is available in selected priority areas. Approved projects are based on environmental value. Contracts are used. Payment rates are reviewed and set each fiscal year. Public access is not required. Contact one of the local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Center, Farm Service Agency, or Rural Development offices. The County Land and Water Conservation Department may also be able to assist.

Targeted Runoff Management Grants
Wisconsin DNR's Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Grant Program offers competitive grants for local governments for the control of non-point source pollution. Grants from the TRM Program reimburse costs for agricultural or urban runoff management practices.

University of Wisconsin-Extension

UW-Extension offices provide a variety of educational and support programming in the areas of agribusiness, land use, soil management, and natural resources, including local Livestock and Crop educators and a regional Natural Resources educator.

Forest Land Tax Programs Wis. Stats. §70 & 77
The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources manages two forestry tax laws that provide tax incentives to encourage proper management of private forest lands for forest crop production, while recognizing a variety of other objectives. The Forest Crop Law (FCL) program allows landowners to pay taxes on timber only after harvesting or when the contract is terminated, though enrollment in this program was closed in 1986. The Managed Forest Law (MFL) program replaces the FCL and the now-defunct Woodland Tax Law Program. The Woodland Tax Law program expired in 2000, and there are no active contracts under this program in Wisconsin.

The Managed Forest Law (Wisconsin Statutes §77.80) was enacted in 1985 and offers flexibility for private owners of 10 or more acres of contiguous woodlands who enroll in the program. Under the MFL program, landowners have the option to choose either a 25- or 50-year order period; and the annual tax varies depending on whether the land to open or closed to public access (certain restrictions apply). Enrollees are obligated to submit and follow a forest management plan, submit a harvest report, and permit inspections, in exchange for technical support, tax benefits, and good woodlot management. Participants in the MFL program are automatically eligible for American Tree Farm System group certification which provides certain marketplace benefits.

Chippewa County Comprehensive Forest Management Plan
Chippewa County maintains a 15-year management plan for the County Forest. The statutory purposes of this plan is to: “provide the basis for a permanent program of county forests and to enable and encourage the planned development and management of the County Forests for optimum production of forest products together with recreational opportunities, wildlife, watershed protection and stabilization of stream flow, giving full recognition to the concept of multiple use to assure maximum public benefits; to protect the public rights, interests and investments in such lands; and to compensate the counties for the public uses, benefits and privileges these lands provide; all in a manner which will provide a reasonable revenue to the towns in which such lands lie.”

NATURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS

There are many natural resource and conservation programs that area residents, lake groups, and communities can access. Again, the Natural Resources chapter highlights many of the key programs and partners. The following is a description of some of the natural resources programs that may be helpful in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, though this list is far from comprehensive. The Chippewa County Land & Water Conservation Department, Extension’s Natural Resources Educator, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources are excellent resources for additional information.

2003 Wisconsin Act 307 – Notification to Nonmetallic Resource Owners
This Act amends portions of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law to increase communication and notification of local planning with owners of nonmetallic mineral sites. Public participation procedures must now include written procedures describing the methods the local government will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a plan to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property, which may extract nonmetallic mineral resources on the property. This is only required if the comprehensive plan changes the allowable use or intensity of use of the given property. 2003 Wisconsin Act 307 also added provisions to the Comprehensive Planning Law detailing that prior to a public hearing written notice shall be provided to property owners or operators with an interest in nonmetallic mineral resources.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
The purpose of EQIP is to provide technical and financial help to landowners for conservation practices that protect soil and water quality. Nutrient management and prescribed grazing are eligible for cost-sharing statewide. Assistance for other practices is available in selected priority areas. Approved projects are based on environmental value. Contracts are used. Payment rates are reviewed and set each fiscal year. Public access is not required. Contact one of the local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Center, Farm Service Agency, or Rural Development offices. The County Land and Water Conservation Department may also be able to assist.

Non-Point Pollution Abatement Program
Funds and technical assistance are available to improve water quality by limiting or ending sources of non-point source (run-off) water pollution by providing financial and technical assistance to landowners, land operators, municipalities, and other governmental units. Governmental units located within designated priority watersheds, or whose jurisdiction includes priority lakes, are eligible to apply. Efforts are focused statewide in critical watersheds and lakes where non-point source related water quality problems are most severe and control is most feasible. Rural landowners or land operators, whose properties lie within selected priority watersheds or include a priority lake, can contact their county land conservation department to receive an explanation of the program and to sign up for cost sharing of best management practices. Cost sharing is capped at 50% as of 2023. Non-rural landowners and land operators can contact their municipal government offices. Contact the WDNR West Central Region Community Financial Assistance Specialist for further information.

Surface Water Grants
Cost-sharing grants are available for water protection or restoration projects through the Department of Natural Resources. A comprehensive list of grants can be found on the WDNR's Surface Water Grant Program website. The Regional Environmental Grant Specialist can also assist with identifying grants and determining eligibility.

Stewardship Grants for Non-profit Conservation Organizations
Funds are available for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes, and restoration of wildlife habitat. Non-profit conservation organizations are eligible to apply. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail, and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. Contact the WDNR for further information.

Brownfield Remediation/Redevelopment
Programs under the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation provide funding for acquisition, remediation, and redevelopment of designated "brownfield" sites. Contact the WDNR or WEDC for further information.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS

Historic Building Code
Wisconsin Statute 101.121 *et seq.* addresses the Wisconsin Historic Building Code, which facilitates the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures. Once historic building owners obtain permission to use the Historic Building Code, they may use it in lieu of any other state, county, or municipal code. The code is designed to help owners maintain the historic appearance of their buildings and allow them to use original materials and construction techniques that may no longer be permitted under present day building codes. To qualify to use the code, property owners must own buildings that fall under the code's definition of a historic building. Buildings listed in, nominated to, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or State Register of Historic Places qualify as historic under the code. The code may also be applied to properties located in National Register and State Register historic districts. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services administers the Historic Building Code and can be contacted for further information. By State Statute, if a city or village has one or more properties on the National or State Register of Historic Places, it must enact a historic preservation ordinance. A city or village may also establish a landmarks commission to designate historic or archaeological landmarks and establish historic districts.

Wisconsin's Main Street Program
The Main Street Program helps communities revitalize their downtown areas. The National Main Street Center and state staff offer a comprehensive range of professional services that follow a four-point approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. More information on the Wisconsin Main Street Program can be found at: wedc.org/programs-and-resources/main-street.

Federal & Wisconsin Historical Preservation Tax Credits
One of the benefits of owning an income-producing historic property in Wisconsin is the ability to participate in federal and state income tax incentives programs for significant rehabilitation of certified historic properties.

Wisconsin Historical Society
The Society is the federally-designated State Historic Preservation Office. The Society provides a range of resources for information concerning state or federal laws and regulations, information on grassroots strategies for preserving and protecting historic properties, or information on how you may protect and preserve your own historic property. Nonprofit organizations are not eligible for these tax credits in most cases. Owner-occupied historic homes are eligible for a 25 percent tax credit under a separate Historic Homeowners Tax Credit.

Wisconsin's Historical Markers Program
Wisconsin's State Historical Markers program has been interpreting both important small incidents and monumental events that form the State's past. Placed on the very site where significant events occurred, markers evoke an immediacy of the past that no history book can provide. The Society's Division of Historic Preservation administers the Wisconsin Historical Markers Program. Applications are required for all official State of Wisconsin historical markers and plaques. Applications are available at wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15267.

National Historic Landmarks Program
National Historic Landmark status is the highest level of national designation. These are properties of exceptional value to the nation that retain a high degree of architectural and historical integrity. The purpose of the National Historic Landmarks Program is to identify and designate these properties and to encourage their long-range preservation. Nomination preparers should consult the Division of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service before proceeding with a National Historic Landmark nomination.

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Services Fund
Grants from this fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation are designed to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects. These grants help stimulate public discussion, enable local groups to gain the technical expertise needed for particular projects, and encourage financial participation by the private sector. PSF award applicants must be a non-profit organization or public agency capable of matching the grant amount dollar-for-dollar. Funding is available up to $5,000.

Public Humanities Program, Wisconsin Humanities Council
The Wisconsin Humanities Council (WHC) provides funding from $500 to $10,000 for public humanities programs. The WHC accepts proposals for projects that enhance appreciation of the importance of particular historic buildings or that increase public awareness of the importance of particular buildings or decorative art works in Wisconsin. More information can be found at wisconsinhumanities.org.

Jeffris Heartland Fund
The Jeffris Family Foundation provides grants between $5,000 to $50,000 for historic preservation projects. Additional information can be found at jeffrisfoundation.org/.

Certified Local Government Program
Local units of government that have enacted historic preservation ordinances may consider being certified to participate in the state and federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The CLG program provides special grants to fund planning and educational activities. The Division of Historic Preservation at the Wisconsin Historical Society administers the CLG program. Wisconsin has 40 Certified Local Governments. For more information about the Certified Local Government please visit the Society's Web site at wisconsinhistory.org/ or the National Park Service's Web site at nps.gov/nr/.

Local Organizations
A wide variety of local organizations are involved in promoting cultural or historical resources, which are important partners in related planning and programming. Key local partners and programs are discussed in the Historical and Cultural Resources element.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS & PROGRAMS

There are many organizations, programs, grants, and services available to assist with economic development planning and activities. A number of the programs related to infrastructure development were previously discussed in the Utilities and Community Facilities element. The following are some additional commonly referred to economic development plans and programs. Chippewa Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), and West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) are excellent resources for more information on available economic development plans and programs. Key programs and partners are discussed in the Economic Development chapter.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)
The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides financial assistance to help distressed communities overcome barriers that inhibit the growth of their local economies. EDA provides assistance for public works projects, planning, research and technical assistance, grants, and education. The WCWRPC is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration. It is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. For more information, see wcwrpc.org.

USDA, Wisconsin Rural Development Programs
The Wisconsin Rural Development Program has many services that are available to rural communities and their residents. Available programs and services include community development programs, business and community programs, rural housing and utilities services, and community facility programs. For more information visit the Wisconsin Rural Development web site at rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html.

Wisconsin Economic Development Association
WEDA is a statewide association of 410+ member organizations whose primary objective is to increase the effectiveness of individuals involved in the practice of economic development in Wisconsin by encouraging cooperation, exchange of information and promotion of professional skills. With a proactive Council and involved membership support, we will continue to advance the professionalism of Wisconsin's economic development efforts. For more information see weda.org/.

Wisconsin Department of Administration
The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) has several grant programs and services available to communities or businesses within communities. The federally funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for housing, economic development, and public facility improvements. The following programs are available:

- CDBG Public Facility (PF) program for infrastructure and buildings benefitting the public
- CDBG Economic Development (ED) funding for business expansions, employee training and business infrastructure
- CDBG Public Facility-Economic Development (PF-ED) funding for public infrastructure necessary for business expansions

For more information, see energyandhousing.wi.gov/Pages/CommunityResources.aspx.

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) nurtures business growth and job creation in Wisconsin by providing resources, technical support, and financial assistance to companies, partners and the communities they serve. Economic development programs administered by WEDC include:

- The Main Street Program helps communities revitalize their downtown areas. The National Main Street Center and state staff offer a comprehensive range of professional services that follow a four-point approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.
- The Connect Communities program also focuses on downtowns with WEDC providing operational and technical resources.

- The Community Development Investment Grant Program provides financial incentives for shovel-ready projects with significant, measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values, and/or leveraged investment with emphasis on, but not limited to, downtown community-driven efforts. These funds can be used for a variety of building and infrastructure projects and includes the Vibrant Spaces grant sub-program.
- Brownfield Site Assessment Grants for conducting initial environmental assessment and demolition activities on an eligible abandoned, idle, or underutilized industrial or commercial site.
- A Certified Sites Program to assist with marketing of industrial properties.
- Fabrication Laboratories (FabLab) grants to help students prepare for the manufacturing jobs of the future and to promote entrepreneurship.
- Vibrant Spaces is a newer WEDC grant program designed to support community placemaking enhancements for gathering places.

Wisconsin Department of Tourism

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism has four primary grant programs and provides technical assistance and support to promote tourism and to maintain a strong tourism industry in Wisconsin. The grant programs include the Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Program for tourism marketing, the Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Program for sporting events, the Tourist Information Center (TIC) Program, and the Meetings Mean Business Program to support conventions. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for further information at: industry.travelwisconsin.com/.

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is a state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce in the 21st century and beyond. The Department's primary responsibilities include providing job services, training, and employment assistance to people looking for work, at the same time as it works with employers on finding the necessary workers to fill current job openings.

Under the DWD umbrella, a wide variety of employment programs can be found which include securing jobs for the disabled, assisting former welfare recipients as they make a transition into work, promoting 72 job centers, linking youth with the jobs of tomorrow, protecting and enforcing worker's rights, processing unemployment claims, and ensuring workers compensation claims are paid in accordance with the law. There are six divisions within the Department which is headed by a Secretary appointed by the Governor. For further information visit the website at dwd.wisconsin.gov.

The Office of Economic Advisors (OEA), within DWD, researches the relationships between labor markets and other economic and demographic factors. OEA economists and analysts serve in regions throughout Wisconsin. Staff works closely with partners to provide timely analysis of labor market data and economic trends.

Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP) – Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

The LAMP is a federal program created by the 2018 Farm Bill and under the supervision of the USDA-RD. Several funding programs have been established under the LAMP umbrella. One such program is the VAPG program, which provides funding to projects that have the potential to bolster agricultural profits or productivity. Projects may include new production or marketing techniques, alternative crops or enterprises, new value-added products, or new market research. U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development should be contacted for further information.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) provides many avenues for business owners to work with the agency in growing and sustaining Wisconsin's economy. The Office of Business Support and Sustainability is the agency's one-stop shop for business assistance. The office's mission is to work across programs to create a business climate that yields better environmental and economic performance. Some of the programs administered through the WDNR are:

- Remediation & Redevelopment (RR) Program: The WDNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program oversees the investigation and cleanup of environmental contamination and the redevelopment of contaminated properties. WDNR provides a comprehensive, streamlined program that consolidates state and federal cleanups into one program (e.g., hazardous waste cleanup, underground storage tank investigation & cleanup, spill response, state-funded cleanups and brownfields).
- Business sector support: Sector development specialists are WDNR staff who work with specific industrial or commercial sectors. They serve as the first point of contact for those businesses, providing coordinated technical and compliance assistance across all DNR divisions and programs. Sector development specialists work to improve environmental and economic performance by clarifying requirements, facilitating flexible approaches to requirements and enabling practices that improve profitability and market performance.
- Improved environmental and economic performance is pursued through various strategies including pollution prevention, waste minimization, energy efficiency, supply chain management, green chemistry, market development and many others. The sector specialists will also work with a business or sector to address trends important to business retention and market development related to environmental performance.
- Green Tier: Green Tier assists green business ventures. WDNR assists businesses with credible, creative ways to enable businesses to be a powerful, sustainable force for environmental good and enhance productivity, cut costs and strengthen the health of culture and community.
- DNR SwitchBoard: The WDNR SwitchBoard is for people who need to securely login and access forms and reporting systems which are usually related to a specific company or municipality.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

The following economic programs are offered by WHEDA.

- Credit Relief Outreach Program: CROP features 90% guarantees on loans of up to $30,000 made by local lenders. Interest rates are competitive, and payment is not due until March 31 of the following year. CROP can be used for feed, seed, fertilizer, pesticides, land rent, custom hire, animal feed, UCC filing fees, crop insurance, feeder animals, tillage services, equipment rental or repair, or utilities for commodity production. You cannot use CROP for property taxes, farm house utilities, existing loans, capital improvements, CROP loan interest, accounting services, or revolving lines of credit.
- Farm Assistance Reinvestment Management grants: FARM is for the producer who wants to expand or modernize an existing operation. FARM gives you access to credit by guaranteeing a loan made by your local lender. You can purchase agricultural assets including machinery, equipment, facilities, land, and livestock. You can also make improvements to farm facilities and land for agricultural purposes. FARM cannot be used for a farm residence, existing loans, maintenance, or other working capital needs that are eligible under CROP.
- Small Business Guarantee: A guarantee is a pledge of support on a bank loan. WHEDA will guarantee a portion of a loan made to you by your local lender. A WHEDA Small Business Guarantee can be used to expand or acquire a small business. It can also be used to start a day care business, including one owned by a cooperative or non-profit. The guarantee can be used for most of your financing needs, including working capital and refinancing of business notes and credit card debt.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) administers the Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) program which provides 50 percent state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state. For more information, see dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.htm.

Momentum West Wisconsin
Momentum West Wisconsin is a regional economic development organization serving Barron, Clark, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce, Pepin, Rusk, and St. Croix counties. The mission of Momentum West is to develop partnerships and leverage the resources in West Wisconsin to market the region and grow the economy. For more information, see momentumwest.org/index.cfm.

West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
On a multi-county level, the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission conducts economic development and project development. The Commission is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration and produces an annual, regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. The Commission provides local economic strategies, industrial site analyses, economic development financing, county economic and population profiles, EMSI Analyst information, and community and industrial park profiles. In addition WCWRPC can assist communities with placemaking initiatives, Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), grant coordination, writing and administration. For more information, please see wcwrpc.org.

Regional Business Fund, Inc.
All communities in Chippewa County are covered by a business revolving loan fund. The Regional Business Fund, Inc. offers low-interest loan funds to businesses that expand within the region; diversify the economy; add new technology; revitalize buildings in the region's downtowns; create or retain quality jobs; and leverage private capital investment in the region. Visit www.rbfinc.org for more information.

Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation
Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation supports all economic growth in Chippewa County and the region. The CCEDC is working with development partners to maintain and growth existing companies and facilitate new ideas for businesses of every kind.

Extension Chippewa County, University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension
University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension has an office in Chippewa Falls. Extension develops practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research. County-based Extension educators are University of Wisconsin faculty and staff who are experts in agriculture and agribusiness, community and economic development, natural resources, family living, nutrition, 4-H, and youth development. One program within Extension is the First Impressions program, which helps communities learn about existing strengths and weaknesses through the eyes of first-time visitors.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION PLANS & PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA)
WCA collaborates with and supports Wisconsin's 72 counties, offering lobbying, insurance programs, education, research, grant development and consulting services.

League of Wisconsin Municipalities
The League of Wisconsin Municipalities is a not-profit association of municipalities. First established in 1898, the League acts as an information clearinghouse, lobbying organization, and legal resource for Wisconsin municipalities. Its membership consists of 378 villages and all of the 190 cities in the state. Chippewa County cities and villages participate in the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

Office of Land Information Services, Municipal Boundary Review
Municipal Boundary Review regulates the transition of unincorporated areas to city or village status through municipal annexation, incorporation, consolidation, or by joint city-village-town activities involving cooperative boundary plans and agreements. Such agreements may change territorial boundaries and may provide for the sharing of municipal services. Staff members are available upon request to meet with local officials and citizens

to discuss annexation, incorporation, consolidation, and cooperative boundary plans. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Office of Land Information Services for further information.

UW-Extension Local Government Center
The mission of the Local Government Center is to provide focus, coordination, and leadership to UW System educational programs for local government, and to expand the research and knowledge base for local government education. The Center conducts and coordinates educational programming in general local government, local government finance, growth management, and community planning and design. Additional programs are under development. The Center supports the programming of county-based Extension faculty. A variety of resources regarding intergovernmental cooperation are available through the Local Government Center. For further information visit its website at localgovernment.extension.wisc.edu/

Wisconsin Innovation Grants
As noted in the main text, this newer grant program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue provides funding support to explore or implement the transfer of certain public services to another unit of government or a private entity.

Intergovernmental Tools

Annexation
Wisconsin Statute, 66.021, Annexation of territory, provides three petition methods by which annexation may occur. Annexation involves the transfer of one or more tax parcels from a town to a city or village. Cities and villages cannot annex property without the consent of landowners as required by the following petition procedures:

1. Unanimous Approval - A petition is signed by all of the electors residing in the territory and the owners of all of the real property included within the petition.
2. Notice of intent to circulate petition (direct petition for annexation) - The petition must be signed by a majority of electors in the territory and the owners of one-half of the real property either in value or in land area. If no electors reside in the territory, then only the landowners need to sign the petition.

Annexation by referendum - A petition requesting a referendum election on the question of annexation may be filed with the city or village when signed by at least 20 percent of the electors in the territory.

Extraterritorial Zoning
Wisconsin Statute, 62.23(7a) allows a city or village to participate with towns in the zoning of lands outside their incorporate boundaries. For the City of Chippewa Falls and City of Eau Claire, the extraterritorial area would encompass 3 miles while the extraterritorial areas for other cities and villages extends 1.5 miles. The steps for exercising this power are identified in the Statutes and include working with the town to create a joint extraterritorial zoning committee with three city and three town members to create the extraterritorial zoning plan. A majority of the joint committee members must approve the zoning plan recommendations.

Extraterritorial Plat Review
Wisconsin Statute, 236.10 allows a city or village to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority in the same geographic area as defined within the extraterritorial zoning statute. However, extraterritorial zoning requires town approval of the zoning ordinance, while extraterritorial plat approval applies automatically if the city or village adopts a subdivision ordinance or official map. The town does not approve the subdivision ordinance for the city or village. The city or village may waive its extraterritorial plat approval authority if it does not wish to use it.

The purpose of extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction is to help cities influence the development pattern of areas outside their boundaries that will likely be annexed to the city or village. This helps cities protect land use near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits. Overlapping authority by the city and village is prohibited. This situation is handled by drawing a line of equal distance from the boundaries of the city and village so that no more than one ordinance will apply.

Wisconsin Statutory Intergovernmental Agreements
The following statutes in Wisconsin promote and allow for intergovernmental cooperation:

66.0301 - Intergovernmental Cooperation
Wisconsin Statute, 66.0301 permits local agreements between the state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, certain special districts, including school districts, public library systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, and others. Intergovernmental agreements prepared in accordance with s. 66.0301, formerly s. 66.30, are the most common form of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement and boundary changes have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process.

66.0307 - Boundary changes pursuant to approved cooperative plan
Under Section 66.0307, Wisconsin Statutes, combinations of municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Each city, village, or town that intends to participate in the preparation of a cooperative plan must adopt a resolution authorizing its participation in the planning process.

Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include: a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan. It must also include; a schedule for changes to the boundary; plans for the delivery of services; an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan; and it must address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption. Once adopted, the plan must be submitted for state approval. Upon approval, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract.

66.0309 Creation, Organization, Powers and Duties of Regional Planning Commissions
Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 permits local governments to petition the governor to create a regional planning commission (RPC). If local support for a commission is unanimous, the governor may create it by executive order. The governor may also create a commission if local governments representing over 50% of the population or assessed valuation of the proposed region consent to the creation. Either local governments or the governor appoints commission members.
State Statutes require the RPC to perform three major functions:

- Make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the region.
- If requested by a local unit, report recommendations to that local unit on the location of, or acquisition of, land for any of the items or facilities that are included in the adopted regional master plan.
- Make an annual report of its activities to the legislative bodies of the local governmental units within the region.

RPCs are also authorized to perform several other functions, however, by law, they serve a strictly advisory role. Chippewa Counties is a member of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

LAND USE PLANS & PROGRAMS

The following are some general land use plans and programs.

Wisconsin Land Information Program
The Wisconsin Land Information Program is a voluntary, statewide program that provides financial support to local governments for land records modernization efforts. All 72 Wisconsin counties voluntarily participate in the Program. The Wisconsin Land Information Council oversees the Program's policies. The Council's statutory authority includes preparing guidelines to coordinate the modernization of land records and land information systems; implementing a grant program for local governmental units; approval of countywide plans for land

records modernization; serving as the clearinghouse for access to land information; and providing technical assistance and advice to state agencies and local governmental units with land information responsibilities.

Division of Intergovernmental Relations, Wisconsin Department of Administration
The Division of Intergovernmental Relations provides staff support to the Wisconsin Land Council, and it administers the Wisconsin Land Information Program in conjunction with the Wisconsin Land Information Council. It also houses Plat Review and Municipal Boundary Review, both of which have statutory authority for approval of specific land use related requests, and the GIS Services, dedicated to the efficient use of geographic information systems. For further information about the division visit its web-site via the WDOA web-site at: www.doa.wi.gov.

UW-Madison Extension Center for Land Use Education
Primarily based at UW-Stevens Point, the Center for Land Use Education provides outreach teaching related to: land use planning, plan and ordinance administration, community planning roles, project impact and regional trends analysis, and public involvement in local land use policy development. For more information on the Center for Land Use Education visit its web-site at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/.

West Central Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan
As required by State Statute, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission adopted a regional comprehensive plan on September 9, 2010. This advisory document includes all of the nine elements required under State comprehensive planning statutes, plus an additional energy and sustainability element. The plan includes land use trends for the region.

City, Village, & Town Comprehensive Plans
This plan update reviewed and incorporated issues, data, goals, and strategies from the current comprehensive plan as deemed appropriate by the County.

Land Use Tools

A range of land use tools and variations of tools were explored during the update of the Land Use chapter. The following includes some of the most common tools. For more information on

County Zoning Ordinances *Wis. Stats. §59.69*
Any county board may, by ordinance, establish and regulate districts within the county, but outside of incorporated villages and cities, to promote public health, safety and general welfare. All counties in west central Wisconsin, except Clark County, have adopted a traditional zoning ordinance, though many towns do not participate in county zoning. Clark County has a Forestry and Recreation Zoning Ordinance that regulates land use and requires land use permits for construction within the Clark County Forest and nearby private parcels in the towns of Butler, Mead, North and South Foster, Seif, Hewett, Mentor, Dewhurst, Levis, Washburn, and Sherwood.

City and Village Zoning Ordinances *Wis. Stats. §62.23 & 61.35*
A city council or village board may regulate and restrict by ordinance the size of buildings and other structures; the percentage of a lot that may be occupied; the size of yards, courts and other open spaces; the density of population; and the location and use of buildings, structures and land.

Town Zoning Ordinances *Wis. Stats. §60.61*
Towns which have been granted village powers under Wisconsin Statutes §60.10(2)(c) are authorized to adopt zoning ordinances under Wisconsin Statutes §61.35—the same enabling statute for city and village zoning authorities—with county board approval. Towns may exercise these powers regardless of county zoning.

In counties where there is no general county zoning in force under Wisconsin Statutes §59.97, towns are authorized to adopt zoning ordinances under certain circumstances. The Town of Bloomer is the only Chippewa County town with town zoning. Towns may also adopt ordinances to protect ground and surface waters, access for sunlight for solar collectors and wind for wind energy systems, and burial sites.

County Shoreland Zoning *Wis. Stats. §59.692*
Each county is required to zone by ordinance all shorelands in its unincorporated areas. Ordinances enacted under the enabling statute supersede all provisions of ordinances enacted under Wisconsin Statutes §59.69 that

relate to shorelands. Town approval is not required. Shorelands include areas within 1,000 feet of a lake or 300 feet of a navigable stream. Shoreland zoning ordinances may be more restrictive than minimum state standards, but not less. Counties may permit only certain uses in wetlands of five acres or more within the shoreland zone.

City and Village Shoreland/Wetland Zoning *Wis. Stats. §61.351 & 62.231*

Cities and villages are required to zone by ordinance all unfilled wetlands of five acres or more which are shown on WisDNR's final wetland inventory maps located within shorelands and within the incorporated area. Ordinances adopted under Wisconsin Statutes §62.23 or §61.35 may be more restrictive than wetland protection ordinances, but not less restrictive.

Floodplain Ordinances *Wis. Stats. §87.30 & NR116*

Counties, cities, and villages are required to adopt reasonable and effective floodplain zoning ordinances within one year after hydraulic and engineering data adequate to formulate the ordinance becomes available. In July 2003, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources released a revised *Model Floodplain Ordinance* which included a number of changes for clarification and consistency with FEMA policies and recent court rulings. All seven counties in the region have adopted a floodplain ordinance which applies to all unincorporated areas in their respective county. However, not all local floodplain ordinances in the region have been updated for consistency with the new model.

Extraterritorial Zoning *Wis. Stats. §61.35, 62.23, & 62.23(7a)*

A city or village with a plan commission and a zoning ordinance may exercise extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of a first-, second-, or third-class city extends three miles beyond its corporate limits. The jurisdiction of a fourth-class city or village extends one and a half miles beyond the limit. Extraterritorial zoning requires the formation of a joint extraterritorial committee evenly comprised of members of the municipality and the town(s) involved to develop the district plan and regulations. Table VIII-A does not identify those towns represented on an extraterritorial zoning committee.

Subdivision Regulations *Wis. Stats. §236.45 & 236.46*

County planning agencies are authorized to prepare plans in the form of ordinances for the future platting of lands outside of incorporated areas, or for the future location, of streets or highways or parkways, and the extension or widening of existing streets or highways. It is also not uncommon for subdivision regulations to include fees for park land acquisition and initial improvements in lieu of a land dedication as part of plat approval process, as long as the fee bears a rational and proportionate relationship to the need for the improvement. A county may adopt subdivision plats without the approval of affected towns. All seven counties in west central Wisconsin have adopted subdivision regulations. Local governments may also adopt their own subdivision ordinances if they are more restrictive than their county ordinance.

Extraterritorial Plat Review *Wis. Stats. §236.02(5) & 236.10*

Extraterritorial plat review is sometimes confused with extraterritorial zoning, though these plan implementation tools are enacted and enforced quite differently. Cities and villages that have adopted a subdivision ordinance or official map can exercise extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction for three miles beyond the corporate limits of a first, second or third class city and one and a half miles beyond the limits of a fourth class city or village. Extraterritorial plat authority can be enacted without the approval of the county or adjacent unincorporated areas.

Conservation Design Policies

Conservation design is a subdivision development in a rural setting that is characterized by compact lots and common open space, and where the natural features of the land are maintained to the greatest extent possible. The housing and other development is typically clustered with all residential lots abutting a common open space to the extent possible. Common open space is permanently set aside for public or private use with restrictions on its use and development. It may or may not be held in common ownership by those owning dwellings in that conservation design subdivision. The conservation design process may require specialized planning and engineering assistance in order to lay out the subdivision plat in a manner which best preserves conservation areas. Common open spaces are typically protected in perpetuity by conservation easements *(see next subsection*). Many conservation design ordinances provide a density bonus to subdivision plats which are created with conservation design techniques.

Conservation Easements, PDRs, and TDRs

With these tools, a landowner donates or sells the rights to develop his or her land to a local government, or to an organization such as a land trust. The development rights are protected by a conservation easement which is placed on the land to permanently limit future development of the property, though current activities (e.g., forestry, agriculture) or public use (e.g., recreation) may still be allowed.

While the purchase of development rights (PDRs) is the voluntary sale or donation of development rights, the transfer of development rights (TDRs) is incentive based. In TDRs, the local government establishes sending areas to be conserved and receiving areas where development is encouraged. Density bonuses to allow additional building space or units are often provided with TDRs and other conservation design policies to encourage the permanent protection of agricultural lands, open spaces, and other areas of particular value to the community.

To the knowledge of WCWRPC, no PDR programs in west central Wisconsin currently exist; and only the Town of Troy in St. Croix County has established a TDR program. Conservation easements, on the other hand, are fairly widely used as part of a larger conservation design policy, or more commonly involve individual landowners and a land trust without local government involvement.

Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinances *Wis. Stats. §66.1027*

Wisconsin Statutes define traditional neighborhood development to mean a "compact, mixed use neighborhood where residential, commercial and civic building are within close proximity to each other." Such ordinances promote development which harkens back to the more efficient design of older neighborhoods and small towns to reduce infrastructure costs, encourage a sense of community, and decrease the development of land overall. These ordinances can vary greatly in content and scope to include a variety of uses (e.g., residential, commercial), modes of transportation, and design standards (e.g., setbacks, signage, design, lot sizes). In some communities, such an ordinance can be an overlay district as part of a larger zoning ordinance. For reference, UW-Extension has prepared "A Model Ordinance for a Traditional Neighborhood Development."

Manufactured/Mobile Home Park Standards *Wis. Stats. §66.0435*

A license from a city, town, or village is required to operate and maintain a mobile home park community consisting of three or more manufactured or mobile homes. Cities, villages, and towns may establish and enforce by ordinance reasonable standards and regulations for such communities, including limiting the number of units and licenses in accordance with state statute. The provisions of town ordinances with respect to the establishment and operation of a home park/community only apply if they are more restrictive than any applicable county zoning ordinance provisions.

Development Impact Ordinances and Fees *Wis. Stats. §66.0617*

The State law regarding impact fees has changed significantly over the last decade. Cities, villages, and towns can impose development impact fees. To collect such fees, a community must adopt an ordinance and prepare a public facilities assessment report detailing the costs of services to be offset by fees. Local governments must show a direct correlation between the development and the increased costs of services, infrastructure development, and maintenance it requires. State laws include additional requirements and limitations regarding impact fees, such as eligible costs, acceptance of public facilities, and timelines for fee collection and use.

Nuisance & Licensing Ordinances *Wis. Stats. §60.61, 61.34(1), 62.11(5), et. al.*

Wisconsin cities, villages, and towns have the authority to regulate a wide variety of nuisances and uses for the protection of the public health, safety, and general welfare. Towns may need to enact village powers when exercising certain police powers. These regulations are often part of a larger zoning or subdivision ordinance, but may also be stand-alone regulations, if approached carefully. Nuisance ordinances can range from outdoor burning to animal control, just to name a few. Regulations regarding commercial junk yards and abandoned vehicles are common in many communities for environmental, public safety, and aesthetic reasons *(Wis. Stats. §84.31, 175.25, 342.40)*. Related are performance-based ordinances, which are less common and can be more challenging to administer, but they regulate measurable impacts (e.g., light, noise, water quality). An alternative approach is licensing ordinances that regulate the siting (not location) and operation of a specific use to mitigate impacts to roads, nearby uses, or the environment. These types of ordinances may be limited in scope and effect by State Statute.