



Town of Marathon Comprehensive Plan 2017



Town of Marathon

Town Board

Keith Langenhahn - Chairperson
Bernie Dick
David Krautkramer

Plan Commission

Anton Wiesman, Jr. - Chairperson
Andrew Altenhofen
Mark Kolbe
Lloyd Krautkramer

Kelley Blume - Clerk

Adopted August 2017

Photo Credits: Jean Berns - Town Historian

Prepared by:
North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Background and Demographics - - - - -	-1
2	Natural Resources - - - - -	11
3	Housing- - - - -	17
4	Utilities and Community Facilities - - - - -	23
5	Transportation - - - - -	29
6	Cultural Resources - - - - -	35
7	Economic Development - - - - -	37
8	Land Use - - - - -	43
9	Intergovernmental Cooperation - - - - -	49
10	Implementation - - - - -	51

TABLE OF CONTENTS - MAPS

1	Location - - - - -	9
2	Natural Resources - - - - -	16
3	Utilities and Community Facilities - - - - -	28
4	Transportation - - - - -	33
5	Existing Land Use- - - - -	46
6	Future Land Use- - - - -	47

1. BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Marathon Comprehensive Plan identifies existing conditions in the Town as well as issues and concerns on a number of topics including future development, land use, transportation, housing, and economic development. Additionally this plan presents policies and actions to address those concerns and take future action. Public Input was sought at all stages of the planning process. This plan is intended to guide Town decision makers on a variety of issues over the next twenty years.

Background

The Town of Marathon is located in the south central portion of Marathon County, Wisconsin. The landscape of the Town is rural with over 80 percent of the total land area covered by cropland or forest. Major highways within the Town include CTH N, which provides major access to the Wausau area, and STH 107 providing north and south access. Roadway issues include limited access to I-29, and only one river crossing in the area of STH 107.

The Town has increased in total population by 14.8 percent since 1970, with a 3.4 percent decrease during the last decade. The total population for the Town was 1,048 in 2010 and 1,051 in 2015. The Town's economy relies primarily upon agriculture. In the coming years, it is predicted that the agricultural economy will continue to decline in the Town, as well as the State as a whole.

Housing growth from the 2000s added 43 homes to the total housing stock for a total of 415 units by 2010. Housing stock in the Town is virtually all single-family. Much of the new housing development has occurred on the eastern side of the Town. The Town has few public utilities. All development is on private wells and septic systems. Depending on zoning Marathon requires various minimum lot size for the installation of individual septic systems and wells, as outlined in the Marathon County zoning code.

The Town has good relationships with the surrounding communities, and shares fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), cemetery maintenance, and costs for road upkeep.

General Concerns

Local Development Control

- Maintain local control of development regulation
- Private property rights

Degree of Regulation

- Prefer minimal development regulation, but open to some regulation to protect prime farmland, rural character, natural resources and water quality
- Managed development preferred

Land Use and Development

Preserve Rural Character

- Rural settings (small farms dotting landscape)
- Low population density (1, 2 and 5 acre lots)
- Ample open space, woodlands, natural areas, etc.
- Small town living – familiar, friendly, safe
- Concentrate commercial and industrial development in cities or villages

Farm/Non-farm Conflicts

- Increased demand (from new residents) for higher level of service, paved roads, etc.
- Traffic conflicts between passenger vehicles and farm equipment
- Road paving and dust control – Costs? Benefits?
- Road damage from heavy farm equipment
- Increased complaints about farm smells, dust, noise

Urban Fringe Development

- Annexation - lack of control over where, when and what might develop
- Some support for cooperative boundary agreements to manage growth at urban edge
- Planned development preferred - but wary of over regulation

Identity and Appearance

- Lack of design/aesthetics control for commercial and industrial development (buildings, landscaping, signs)
- Cluttered appearance of major road corridors (signs, power lines, no landscaping)
- Improve housing maintenance in some neighborhoods
- Land use conflicts – i.e. old industrial adjacent to residential

Preservation and Protection of Resources

Preserve/Protect Natural Resources

- Preserve woodlands (highest ratings in previous survey responses), wetlands, rivers
- Protect/maintain natural character and scenic quality
- Maintain access to natural areas

Fiscal/Economic

Strong and Diverse Tax Base

- Loss of land, jobs and population due to annexation
- Loss of taxable land due to public purchase (e.g. County Forests)
- Redevelop under-utilized land, particularly along Rib River
- Maintain/foster diverse mix of land uses
- Competition for industrial development – particularly between urban and fringe areas

Farmland Preservation

- Loss of small/family farms to development or larger farms
- Mega farms [also concerns about environmental impacts]
- Decreasing number of active farms
- Conversion of farms to non-farm development
- Land value inflation (high taxes)

Infrastructure

Traffic and Transportation System

- Too many driveway openings on busy road corridors
- Lack of future street planning

Protect Water Supply

- Depletion or degradation due to high volume users (mega farms, new high school, industry)
- Limited access to water for wells in some areas (bedrock, etc.)

Sewer and Septic System Availability

- Poor soil drainage limits suitability for on-site waste treatment systems in some areas
- “SPS 383” opens more areas for on-site treatment systems
- Interest in looking at alternatives to centralized wastewater treatment

Cost Efficient Community Services

- Shared services generally good – fragmentation an issue in some areas
- Maintain and improve services w/o increasing taxes
- How/who will pay for increased services
- Lack of transit access in rural and fringe areas

Visioning

In 2005, during the creation of the first Marathon Comprehensive Plan, the Town Planning Commission created a vision for the community. That vision was reviewed as part of the update and is stated below:

20-Year Community Vision Statement

“The Town of Marathon is committed to the preservation of its agricultural heritage, protection of its boundaries, continuance of its present form of government, and maintenance of an adequate tax base in order to provide necessary services to its residents. Change and development must consider a balance of individual private property rights with the need to protect property values and the environment community wide.”

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

This document describes a variety of goals, objectives, and policies that the Town has identified to help it respond to a variety of issues and opportunities and achieve its vision. Definitions are provided below to clarify the purpose and intent of each category.

Definitions

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

1. Objective: An objective is a statement that describes a specific course of action to achieve a goal or address an issue.
 - a. Policy: A policy is a general course of action or rule of conduct to be followed to achieve community goals and objectives.

Demographics

This section is intended to describe the existing demographics of the Town of Marathon and identify the major demographic trends impacting Marathon over the next few decades. Both Marathon County and the State of Wisconsin are also listed for comparison as well as the surrounding communities.

The data in this section, as well as the chapter on housing mainly utilizes data from the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey, as well as the Wisconsin Department of Administration. With the exception several tables, data is provided mainly for 2000 and 2010, as well as 2014 from the U.S. Census Bureau. The U.S. Census and the American Community Survey are both produced by the U.S. Census Bureau; however the census is a count of the American population conducted every ten years while the American Community Survey is an estimate of the population released on a yearly basis.

The American Community Survey evolved from the “long form” that a random subset of the population used to receive with the census. In 2010, the U.S. Census

1. Background and Demographics

Bureau started releasing American Community Survey data for all populations on a yearly basis, including the Town of Marathon. However, small populations, such as Marathon, are often difficult to survey and the census is not perfect count of the population; producing data is not always completely accurate or consistent. As such, there are instances where the Census and the American Community Survey provide slightly different data for the year 2010. These examples are discussed for the readers throughout these sections.

Population and Households

Population growth has historically been slow in the township, as shown in [Table 1.1](#). From 1970 to 2010, the population increased by 130 persons, to 1,048. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) estimated the population to be 1,051, for a population change of 3 persons during the past five years.

During the past decade, the population decreased by 3.4 percent, from 1,058 in 2000 to 1,051 in 2010, according to the U.S. Census. During this same period, the populations in the townships of Cassels and Emmet increased by 8 and 11 percent. The Townships of Mosinee and Rib Mountain changed by 1.3 percent and negative 9.7 percent respectively.

The number of households continues to outpace the growth in population across the nation as shown in [Table 1.2](#). While the population decreased during the first decade of the new millennium in the Town of Marathon, the number of households increased 8.5 percent, from 365 households in 2000 to 396 in 2010. The number of households increase as the number of people per household continues to drop, due to an aging population, smaller families, the delay of family formation, and even divorce. In the town, the size of households decreased from 2.97 in 2000 to 2.65 in 2010. The county average household size was 2.49 and the state was 2.43.

In 2010, 321 households were family households, or 81.1 percent. The average family size was 2.96 persons. Of the 321 family households, 126 had related children under the age of 18 and 88.7 percent were married couple households.

Of the 75 nonfamily households, 63 were single person households. 23 of these single person households were comprised of individuals 65 years or older.

The population of Marathon County grew from 125,834 in 2000 to 134,063 in 2010, an increase of 6.5% compared to a 6.0% increase in the State and 9.7% in the U.S. The most recent estimates from the

Table 1.1 - Historical Population Change

Civil Division	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	1970 to 2010 % Change	2000-2010 % Change
Marathon	918	1,114	978	1,085	1,048	1,051	14.2%	-3.4%
Cassel	953	899	816	847	911	913	-4.4%	7.6%
Emmet	820	757	732	842	931	937	13.5%	10.6%
Mosinee	910	1,464	1,638	2,146	2,174	2,189	138.9%	1.3%
Rib Mountain	4,785	5,344	5,605	7,556	6,825	6,900	42.6%	-9.7%
County	97,457	111,270	115,400	125,834	134,063	135,341	37.6%	6.5%
State	4,417,821	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,753,324	28.7%	6.0%

Source: U.S. Census, WDOA

Table 1.2 - Historical Household Change

Civil Division	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	1970-2010 % Change	2000-2010 % Change
Marathon	211	269	296	365	396	87.7%	8.5%
Cassel	192	230	245	271	322	67.7%	18.8%
Emmet	187	206	220	269	324	73.3%	20.4%
Mosinee	257	483	538	760	814	216.7%	7.1%
Rib Mountain	1,329	1,744	1,900	2,697	2,650	99.4%	-1.7%
County	29,771	37,865	41,534	47,402	53,176	78.6%	12.2%
State	1,328,804	1,652,261	1,822,118	2,084,544	2,279,768	71.6%	9.4%

Source: U.S. Census, WDOA

WDOA show a county increase of .9 percent from 2010 to 2015. Population growth in Marathon County has been concentrated in the urbanized area surrounding Wausau.

Population Age

Figure 1.1 shows the population age distribution for Marathon Town in 2010. The distribution is particularly heavy for the four cohorts between the ages of 40 and 59. Comparatively, there are 10.7 percentage points more individuals in this category than in the county age distribution. At the same time, there are 6 percentage points fewer individuals between the ages of 20 and 39 years old compared to the county. Additionally, children between the ages of 0 and 14 years of age comprise 16.0 percent of population, which is 4.2 fewer percentage points than the county.

The median age in the Town was 45.0 in 2010, as shown in **Table 1.3**. This is 5.4 years higher than the county median and 6.8 years higher than the state median age. This reflects the concentration of the age cohorts between the ages of 40 and 59 and smaller numbers of children under the age of 15 years. From 2000 to 2010, the increase in median age outpaced the surrounding towns, county, and the state. However, from 2010 to 2014, the rise seems to have slowed in the Town, according to the American Community Survey.

Population Forecasts

Table 1.4 shows population projections completed by the WDOA, Demographic Services Center. The WDOA population projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statue 16.96. The WDOA projections are based on the historical population trends of individual communities; however more recent years carry a greater weight in the WDOA's projected populations.

The WDOA Demographic Services Center projected that in 2040 the population of the Town of Marathon would be 1,070. This would be an increase of 2.1 percent over the thirty year period. The Town is expected to peak in population in 2030 at 1,090 for the foreseeable future, which is also trend seen in other rural and urban communities in Wisconsin.

Nonetheless, the population growth has increased slower than expected when the projections were published in 2013. This is probably due to the sluggish recovery of the economy and more young adults delayed family formation in pursuit of educational opportunities and more secure financial circumstances. As a result, many communities in Wisconsin saw WDOA population estimates that fell short of the projections in 2015. For example, the Town was projected to have a population of 1,055 in 2015 while

Table 1.3 - Median Ages

Civil Division	2000	2010	2014	2000-2010 Net Change
Marathon	36.9	45	45.6	8.1
Cassel	34.7	39.7	41.9	5
Emmet	34.7	38.8	41.2	4.1
Mosinee	35.7	42	43.9	6.3
Rib Mountain	38	45.7	43.6	7.7
County	36.3	39.4	40.2	3.1
State	36	38.5	38.8	2.5

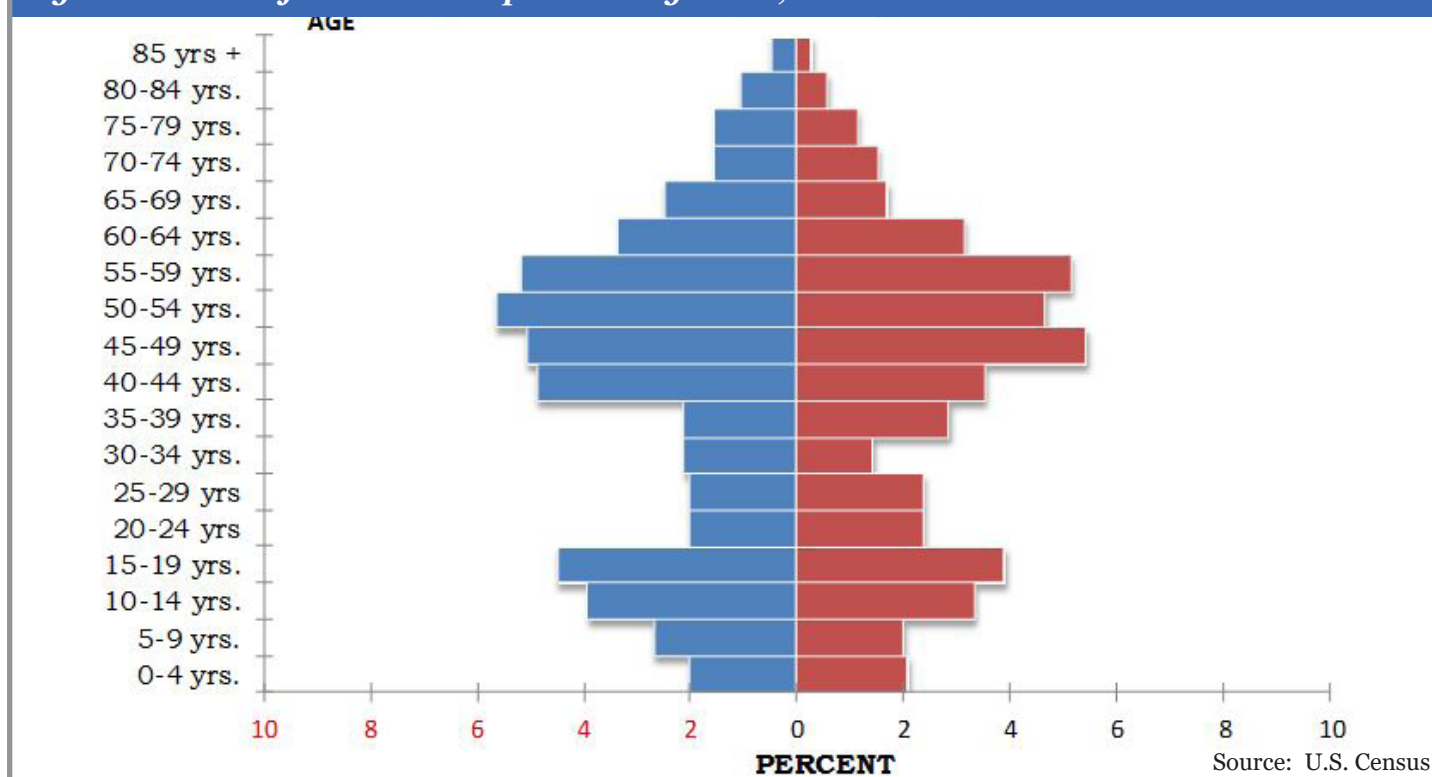
Source: U.S. Census

Table 1.4 - Population Projections

Civil Division	2010 Census	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2010-2040 % Change	2010-2040 Net Change
Marathon	1,048	1,055	1,075	1,085	1,090	1,085	1,070	2%	22
Cassel	911	920	950	975	990	1,000	1,000	10%	89
Emmet	1,302	1,310	1,375	1,435	1,485	1,505	1,495	15%	193
Mosinee	2,174	2,210	2,310	2,385	2,440	2,475	2,490	15%	316
Rib Mountain	6,825	6,895	7,055	7,145	7,190	7,165	70,80	4%	255
County	136,510	142,200	146,595	150,130	152,120	152,790	136,510	13%	17,677

Source: U.S. Census, WDOA

Figure 1 - Town of Marathon Population Pyramid, 2010



the WDOA population estimated the population to be 1,051 in 2015. The county population was estimated to be 135,341 in 2015, while it was projected to be 136,510.

The 2003 WDOA Demographic Services Center projections of the population of the Town of Marathon were also higher than the actual observations. In 2010 the population was projected to be 1,127. The U.S. Census 2010 counted 1,048 people or 79 people less than expected. While the projections are normally conservative, the recessions of the first decade of the new millennium greatly slowed the population growth in many parts of the country.

Household Forecasts

Like population, household projections were completed in 5-year increments between 2010 and 2040, as shown in [Table 1.5](#). The number of households was

calculated by dividing the total population projection for each 5-year increment by the projected average persons per households.

Like the population projections, the WDOA household projections are recognized as Wisconsin's official population projections in accordance with Wisconsin Statue 16.96 and are based on the historical population trends of individual communities. Assuming a conservative rate of growth, the number of households is expected to increase by 33, or 8.3 percent between 2010 and 2040. This is lower than the surrounding towns and the county both in terms of percentage and net increase.

While the 2003 WDOA population projections were higher than what was actually observed for the year 2010, the projected number of households was 395, only one less than was counted in the 2010 U.S. Census.

Table 1.5 - Household Projections

Civil Division	2010 Census	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2010-2040 % Change	2010-2040 Net Change
Marathon	396	403	414	421	428	431	429	8.3%	33
Cassel	322	328	342	354	363	371	375	16.5%	53
Emmet	324	334	355	372	386	400	407	25.6%	83
Mosinee	814	836	881	918	948	973	988	21.4%	174
Rib Mountain	2,650	2,704	2,791	2,852	2,897	2,922	2,916	10.0%	266
County	53,176	54,657	57,394	59,611	61,524	62,958	63,730	19.8%	10,554

Source: U.S. Census, WDOA

This indicates that the projected average household size decreased faster than expected, as the number of households projected by dividing the projected population by the projected average household size.

Educational Attainment

According to 2010 American Community Survey, 95.0 percent of Town residents had a high school education or higher, as displayed in [Table 1.6](#). This compares to 88.4 percent for the County, and 89.1 percent for the State. These educational figures only include residents aged 25 years and older.

This was also a 9.2 percentage point increase from 2000. However, the percentage appears to be much smaller (91.8 percent) in 2014. This is most likely due to the small sample size of the Town, which can cause errors in survey estimates. Most likely the percentage of residents who have attained a high school degree or higher is between these two percentages.

Roughly 13.6 percent of residents had a Bachelor's degree or higher in 2010. This is more than seven percentage points lower than the county and 12.2 percentage points lower than the State with 20.8 percent and 25.8 percent respectively. Again, the number of residents with a Bachelor's degree increased significantly from 2010 to 2014, by 50 residents. Again, this is most likely due to an error with the American Community Survey's estimate of the population's

educational attainment and the number of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher is likely somewhere between 100 and 150.

Income and Poverty

The median household incomes for the Town, County, and State are displayed in [Table 1.7](#) adjusted for inflation in 2010 dollars. In 2010, the median household income in Marathon Town was \$69,931. This was significantly higher than both the county (\$53,471) and the state (\$51,598) and the gap has been widening since 2000.

Across the country, household incomes stagnated until 2015. While the county and the state median household incomes decreased during this time around 6.5 percent and 7.0 percent respectively, the median income in the Town increased by 7.8 percent, for a net increase of \$5,033 when adjusted for inflation.

However, from 2010 to 2014, incomes fell by 5.8 percent, when adjusted for inflation in 2014 dollars. From 2000 to 2014, incomes have only increased by 1.5 percent.

[Table 1.8](#) shows the per capita income for the Town, County, and State. It notes that the per capita income was \$26,624 in the Town in 2010. This was an increase of \$6,975 from 2000, when adjusted for inflation. In 2010, the per capita income was higher than the county

Table 1.6 - Educational Attainment, 25 Years and Older

Educational Attainment	Marathon		County	State
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	8	1.1%	5.3%	3.7%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	29	3.9%	6.3%	6.9%
High School Graduate	315	42.9%	37.8%	34.0%
Some College, No Degree	150	20.4%	19.0%	20.6%
Associates Degree	133	18.1%	10.8%	9.0%
Bachelor's Degree	68	9.3%	13.9%	17.1%
Graduate or Professional Degree	32	4.4%	6.9%	8.6%
% high school graduate or higher	698	95.0%	88.4%	89.4%
% bachelor's degree or higher	100	13.6%	20.8%	25.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 1.7 - Median Household Income

Civil Division	2000*	2010	% Change	Net Change
Marathon	\$64,898	\$69,931	7.8%	\$5,033
County	\$57,192	\$53,471	-6.5%	-\$3,721
State	\$55,452	\$51,598	-7.0%	-\$3,854

*Adjusted for 2010 Dollars. Source: U.S. Census

Table 1.8 - Per Capita Income

Civil Division	2000*	2010	% Change	Net Change
Marathon	\$23,940	\$30,915	29.1%	6,975
County	\$26,216	\$25,893	-1.2%	-323
State	\$26,935	\$26,624	-1.2%	-311

*Adjusted for 2010 Dollars. Source: U.S. Census

by more than \$5,000 and the state by \$4,921. In 2014, the Town per capita income was \$28,875, which had 29 dollars less in buying power than the per capita income in 2010.

In 2010, 6.9 percent of individuals were below the federal poverty line (FPL) in the Town, as noted in **Table 1.9**. This was a 2.2 percentage point increase from 2000. In the county, 8.7 percent of individuals were under the federal poverty line while 11.6 percent of individuals were in the state.

About 4.5 percent of families were under the federal poverty line. Of children under 18 years of age, 8.2 percent were under the line. 9.5 percent of individuals 65 years or older were in poverty.

Employment Characteristics

In 2010, there were 665 residents employed, mostly in the manufacturing industry. This was an increase of 11.3 percent from 2000 but number of employed residents fell to 590 in 2014. The unemployment rate was 3.1 percent while it was 6.5 percent for the county and 6.7 percent for the state. In 2014, the unemployment rate was 3.9 percent for the town. **Table 1.10** breaks down the number of employed by their industry sector.

The labor force participation rate was 78.9 percent in 2010. The labor force participation rate is the number of people who are employed or actively seeking work as a percentage of the number of people 16 years of age or older in the community. Labor force participation rates have been falling across the country as the Baby Boomers retire and leave the workforce and as the number of young adults delay entering the workforce to pursue educational opportunities increases. In 2014, the labor force participation rate had dropped to 72.2 percent. Nonetheless, the rate remains higher than the county at 70.2 percent and the state at 67.4 percent.

There were 406 full-time, year round workers with earnings in 2010. The mean earnings these workers were \$56,846. This was significantly more than the county at \$47,793 and the state at \$50,829. In the Town, the mean earnings for full-time, year round working male residents were \$69,638 while female full time, year round workers earned \$35,243.

Table 1.9 - Percentage of Individuals Below the Federal Poverty Line

Civil Division	2000	2010	2014
Marathon Town	4.70%	6.90%	7.20%
County	6.60%	8.70%	11.40%
State	8.70%	11.60%	13.30%

Source: U.S. Census

In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that no residents of the Town worked in the town. Roughly 97 percent of residents worked within the county. The City of Wausau was the largest importer of town workers, employing 23.5 percent of the labor force. The Village of Marathon City employed 14.6 of the town's labor force. The average commute time was 20.3 minutes.

Trends

- Total population has increased by 14.2 percent between 1970 and 2010. In the last decade, population has decreased by 3.4 percent, while households have increased by 8.5 percent.
- Median age for the Town was 45.6, which was much higher than the State overall, at 38.8 years. It is also a 8.1 year increase from 2000.
- 95.0 percent of Town residents had a high school education or higher in 2010. This compares to 88.4 percent for the County, and 89.1 percent for the State.
- The median household income was \$69,931 in 2010, a 7.8 percent increase from 2000, when adjusted for inflation. However incomes fell by 5.8 percent from 2010 to 2014, for an overall increase of 1.5 percent from 2000 to 2014. While this increase is small, most household incomes across the state and the country stagnated from 2000 to 2014.
- In 2000, there were 665 residents that were employed. In 2010, the largest employer was the manufacturing industry. The labor force participation rate was 78.9 percent while the unemployment rate was 3.1 percent.

Table 1.10 - Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector in Marathon

	Count	Share
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9	1.4%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0.2%
Utilities	1	0.2%
Construction	17	2.7%
Manufacturing	140	21.9%
Wholesale Trade	82	12.8%
Retail Trade	65	10.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	20	3.1%
Information	9	1.4%
Finance and Insurance	26	4.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4	0.6%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12	1.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	7	1.1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	24	3.8%
Educational Services	42	6.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	92	14.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	9	1.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	30	4.7%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	27	4.2%
Public Administration	22	3.4%

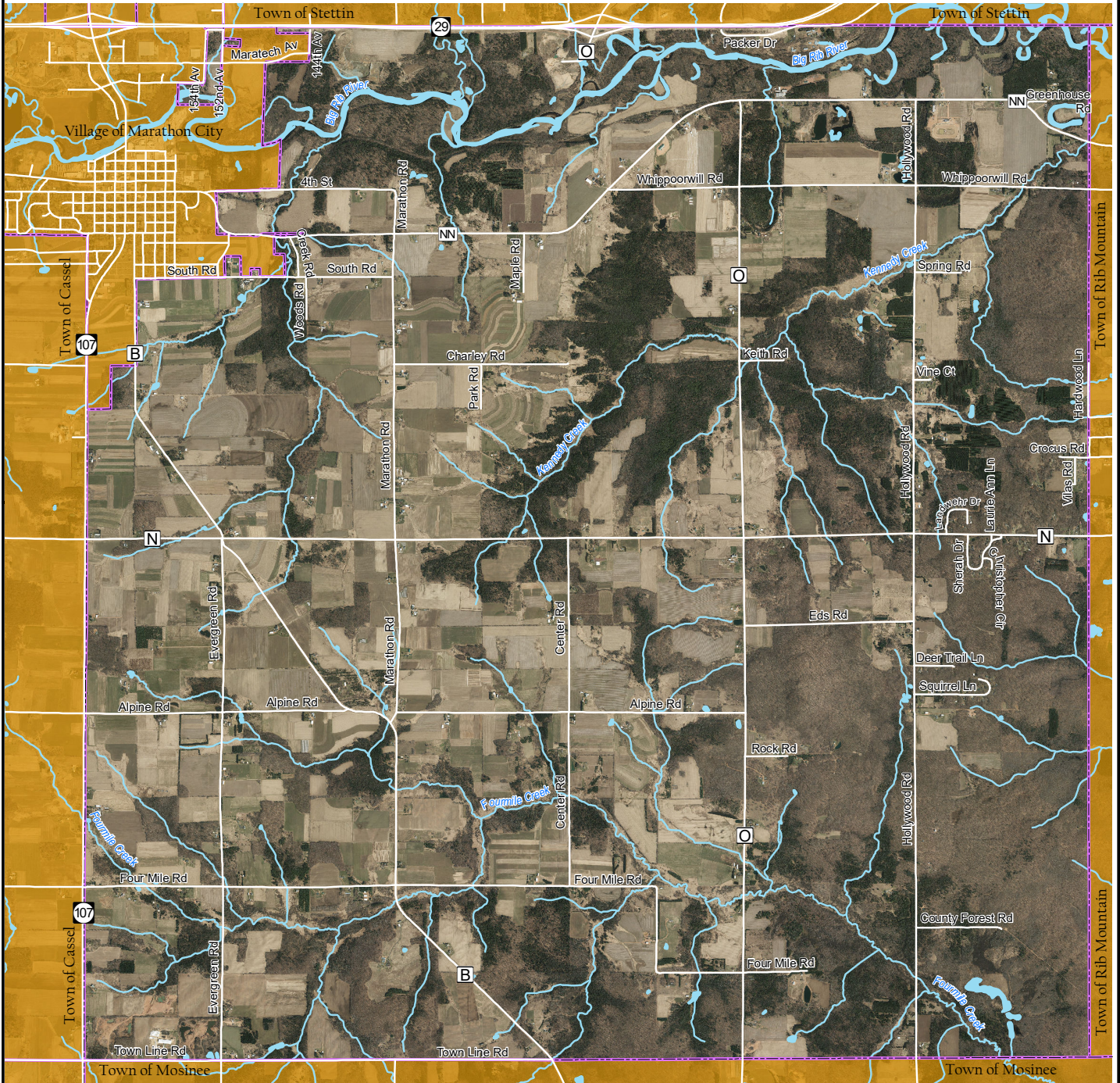
Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap



Map 1 Location

Town of Marathon

Marathon County, Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co

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



**North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission**

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

Page left intentionally blank.

2. NATURAL RESOURCES

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

Previous Plans and Studies

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

Marathon County Land and Water Resource Management Plan

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

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

Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan

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

Marathon County Forest Ten-Year Comprehensive Use Plan

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

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

Marathon County Groundwater Protection Guide

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

USGS Protecting Wisconsin's Groundwater Through Comprehensive Planning

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

Natural Resources

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

The Town of Marathon has a continental climate which experiences four distinct seasons with long, cold winters and short, warm summers. Winter temperatures average between 0 and 23 degrees Fahrenheit and summer temperatures average between 54 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Average annual rainfall is 32 inches and average annual snowfall is 60 inches.

A large area of wetland and floodplains surrounds

the Big Rib River, Kennedy Creek and the Fourmile Creek which flows through the Town. While this poses some constraints on development, the water features contributes to the natural character of the Town. See the Natural Resources Map.

Surface Water

Marathon County contains abundant water resources. Many have remained in a fairly pristine state and others are in need of focused efforts to improve water quality. Surface water resources help replenish the groundwater as part of the hydrologic cycle. Under natural conditions, the aquifers generally receive clean water from rainfall percolating through the overlying soils. However, contamination of groundwater reserves can result from runoff and pollution. Protection of these groundwater reserves is necessary to ensure adequate water to domestic, agricultural, and commercial uses. If groundwater is not protected, contamination could result, endangering the quality and supply of water in the Town.

Streams/Rivers

The Big Rib River, Artus Creek, Fourmile Creek and Kennedy Creek with their tributaries are within the Town of Marathon.

Watersheds

The Town of Marathon is geographically located in what the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has named the Central Wisconsin Basin, which is a subset of the entire Wisconsin River corridor located in Central Wisconsin. The Central Wisconsin Basin extends south from the Merrill Dam located on the Wisconsin River in Lincoln County to the Castle Rock Flowage Dam in Juneau and Adams Counties. The Central Wisconsin River Basin is comprised of 29 watersheds, including the Lower Big Rib River and the Mosinee Flowage watersheds, both of which are in the Town of Marathon. A watershed is an area of land that is drained by a waterway that flows to a lake, reservoir, or river. The watershed boundary line is defined as a topographic dividing line from which surface streams flow in two different directions. See the Natural Resources Map.

Floodplains

Floodplains are formally designated areas that experience flooding during a 100-year storm event. The floodplain consists of the “floodway” and the “flood fringe”. The “floodway” is defined as the channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel required to carry the regional

flood discharge. The “flood fringe” is defined as the portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway which is covered by floodwaters during the regional flood and is generally associated with standing water rather than rapidly flowing water.

Development can occur within the flood fringe with appropriate flood proofing or elevation measures. Such measures may provide some relief from flood insurance premiums. Within the floodway, only open uses that do not obstruct flood flow are allowed.

Floodplain areas are based on information compiled by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The floodplain includes the floodway and the flood fringe. Areas within the 100-year floodplain are located near the Big Rib River and the Fourmile Creek. See the Natural Resources map.

Wetlands

Some areas of wetlands are concentrated around the Big Rib River and the various other streams in the Town, see the Natural Resources map. Wetlands are defined as those areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface for a significant part of most years. Soils in wetland areas are usually saturated during the growing season within a few inches of the surface. The presence of wetlands in an area can limit the type of development that can occur.

Wetlands perform many indispensable roles in the proper function of the hydrologic cycle and local ecological systems. In a natural condition, wetlands control floodwater by moderating peak flows and acting as groundwater recharge sites. All wetlands have valuable water purification capabilities and make significant contributions to surface and groundwater quality. They act as settling areas for inflowing streams as well as functioning in the reduction of water nutrients through uptake of these compounds into plant tissues. Wetlands also have a buffering effect on water acidity or alkalinity, and are helpful in the elimination of harmful bacteria which may be found in surface or groundwater. They serve as breeding and nesting grounds for waterfowl and many other animals that depend on aquatic habitats. Wetlands also serve as important recreation, education, and aesthetic resources for communities.

Groundwater

Depth to groundwater is variable from shallow to deep. At current development, the quantity is ample for the area near the river. The remainder of the Town has a



Farms with a view of Rib Mountain

short supply of groundwater.

Soil Resources

Prime Farm Soils

The Marathon County Cropland Evaluation System (CES) establishes a basis from which one parcel of land can be compared to another by soil quality. It rates soils on their ability to produce food, feed, forage, and fiber crops. It is based upon the knowledge that soil properties affect yields. The system is non-biased, defensible, and can be consistently applied. Additional information on the Marathon County CES can be obtained from Marathon County.

Most (60 to 70%) of the Town has Class 1 or 2 prime farmland soils with blocks of Farmland Preservation Contracts. These class designations refer to the quality of soils for growing crops and are based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) classifications. Class 1 soils are the best soils in Marathon County for growing all crops. Class 2 soils are also very good agricultural soils, however, they may be prone to wetness and are therefore less desirable than Class 1 soils. It should be noted that not all prime farm soils are used for farming; some have been developed with residential or other uses. The “prime farm soils” designation simply indicates that these soils are

good productive farmland. See the County Farmland Preservation Plan.

Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are defined as slopes with gradients over 12 percent and there are some areas of steep slopes within the Town. See Map 2. Erosion is 2.0 – 3.0 tons/acre/year, which is similar to the average soil loss experienced by Marathon County as a whole and is not a major concern.

Non-Metallic Mining

Marathon County had 136 operating non-metallic mines as of 2015. These mines are important sources of locally used construction aggregate and also produce value added stone products (such as shingle aggregate, decorative stone, architectural stone, and railroad ballast) that are marketed regionally and nationally. Local non-metallic mines help to keep construction and infrastructure development costs low by minimizing the high transportation costs of these necessary materials.

The County has numerous abandoned and closed non-metallic mining sites. A non-metallic mining ordinance requires reclamation of mining sites to a purposeful and acceptable landscape appearance and use. The program is administered by the County Conservation,

Woodlands

Woodlands account for approximately 46 percent of total land area in the Town. The woodland areas are concentrated along the Big Rib River.

Wildlife Resources and Habitat

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

There is a significant amount of wildlife habitat in Marathon County. In addition to County parks and forest units, major wildlife habitat areas include: the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, the McMillan Marsh State Wildlife Management Area, and Rib Mountain State Park.

Endangered Species

The WDNR Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) has not identified any endangered, threatened, or special concern species within the Town at this time. A list of endangered species located throughout Marathon County is provided in the County's comprehensive plan, including the bald eagle.

Issues

- **Water Quality:** While water quality is generally very good, there are some concerns about impacts of future development on existing water resources. In the Town, Sections 11,10,15,14 are aquifer recharge areas and development in these areas should be limited to protect water quality.

Natural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Policies:

Goal 1: *Maintain good groundwater quality.*

1. Identify existing aquifers for depletion or overuse issues.
2. Encourage the limiting of uncontrolled runoff and other contamination issues that may affect groundwater.



Ladick Granite and Granite Hill Dairy

- a. Encourage appropriate measures to ensure good groundwater quality.
- b. Require sanitary permits for all dwellings.
- c. Report instances of possible groundwater contamination to the WDNR.
- d. Obtain educational materials from the Wisconsin Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater.

Goal 2: *Maintain good water quality in existing river and stream corridors.*

1. Discourage, by way of education, uncontrolled runoff, over use of fertilizers, and other waterway contaminants to surface water.
2. Monitor water quality reports from the State.
3. Discourage development in areas that will affect surface water resources through increased runoff, loss of vegetation, or improper landscaping especially along the Rib River.
 - a. Encourage landowners by education to enhance the vitality of local waterways within the township.
 - b. Make information on decreasing runoff, improving water quality available for private shoreland owners.
 - c. Encourage developers to maintain as much water frontage as possible in new developments.
 - d. Gather shoreland ordinances from other communities that are stricter than the state standards and review for possible local application, if necessary.

- e. Observe the Rib River Corridor Floodplain 150-foot set back building restriction to inhibit residential and commercial development.

Goal 3: *Protect wetland areas from the encroachment of development.*

1. Establish local guidelines for development located near wetland areas including type, use.
2. Establish local perimeters around wetland areas where development is discouraged.
 - a. Encourage developers to consult with WDNR officials before submitting development proposals.
 - b. Report instances of possible regulation infraction to the appropriate agency.
 - c. Discuss adopting local regulations that are at least as restrictive as current measures, but better suit area needs.
 - d. If necessary, gather examples of local shore land restrictions used in other communities and consider for possible local use.

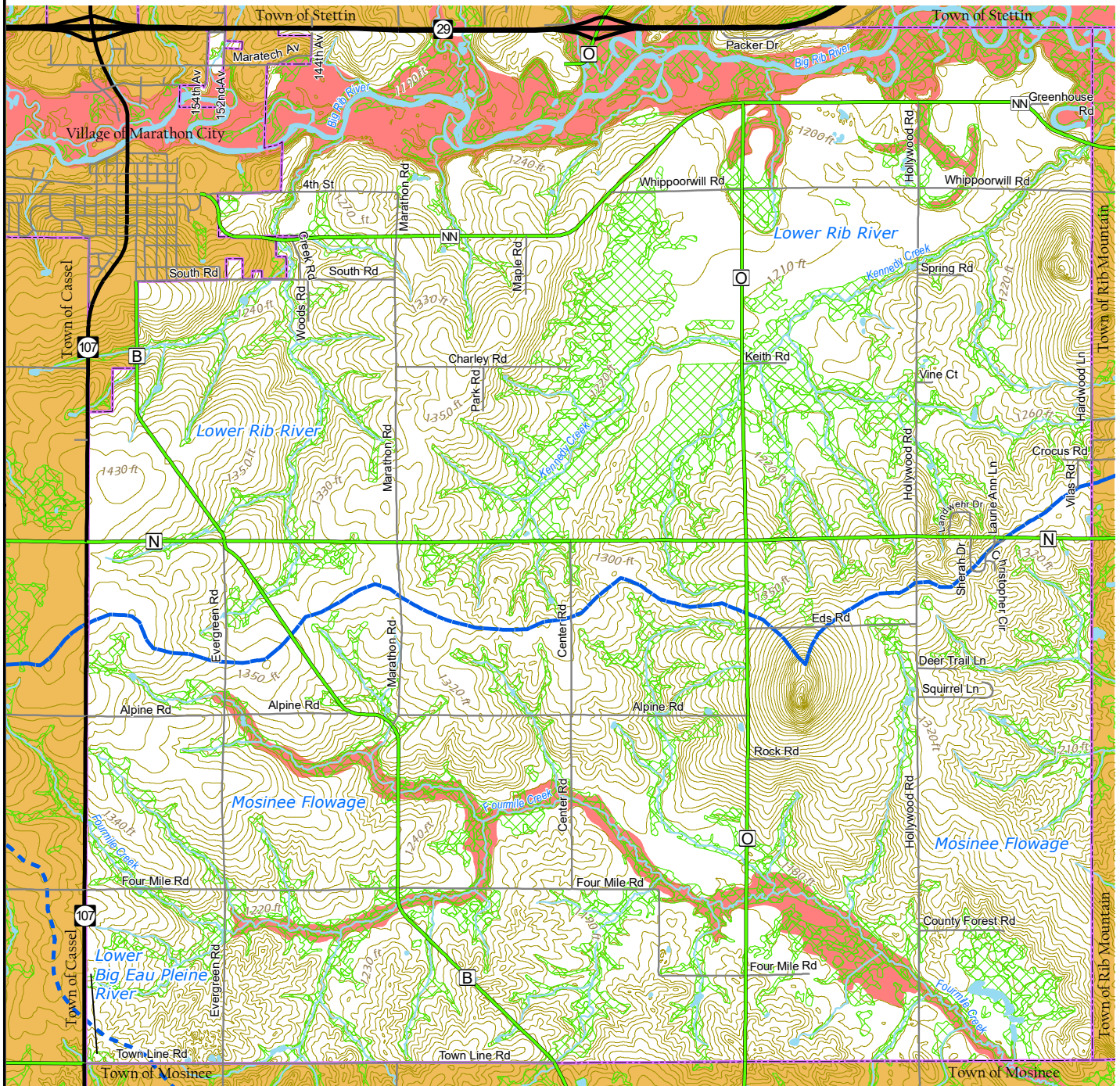
Goal 4: Preserve forestland.

1. Encourage private participation in programs, such as the Managed Forest Law, to preserve forests.
 - a. Make information available to property owners of state and local programs that preserve forestlands.
 - b. Have information available to owners of private forestland regarding preservation programs.
 - c. Encourage developers to maintain as much forestland as possible in new developments, promoting conservation subdivisions or other preservation techniques.

Legend

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

Map 2 Natural Resources Town of Marathon Marathon County, Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co,
FEMA

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



North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

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

3. HOUSING

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

Understanding dynamics in the market likely to affect housing development in the future provides a basis for the formulation of policy to coordinate transportation facilities with a sustainable pattern of residential development. The connection between home and work is a fundamental function of any transportation system. Understanding the factors affecting people's decisions on meeting their own housing needs provides a basis for how these home-work connections can be efficient, reinforce and strengthen community ties, foster economic development, and environmental sustainability.

Previous Plans and Studies

Wisconsin State Consolidated Housing Plan

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

Regional Livability Plan

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

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

Housing Inventory

Housing Type and Tenure

The 2010 Census showed that the Town of Marathon had 415 housing units. 396, or 95.4 percent, of these units are occupied as displayed in [Table 3.1](#). The Town had an average household size of 2.65 persons. 15.9% of all households were classified as being "1 person households". Approximately 23% of Town households had a householder 65 years or older. Roughly eight percent, or 31 units, of all occupied housing units were rental units.

Changes in Housing Stock

[Table 3.2](#) notes changes in the housing stock between 2000 and 2010 according to the American Community Survey. Note that while the U.S. Census counted 415 housing units in 2010, the American Community Survey estimated 418. Total housing units have increased by 43 units while the number of occupied housing units rose by 29. Vacancy rose from 2.4 percent in 2000 to 5.5 percent in 2010. The number of seasonal housing units increased by 11. The number of single family homes increased by 57, or 16 percent; while the number of multifamily housing decreased by one.

Housing Age

The age of a community's housing stock typically reflects several important factors including size, offered amenities, and overall maintenance costs. Age of the home often also reflects different regional and national trends in housing development. Housing predating the 1940s, for example, was typically smaller and built on

Table 3.1 - Housing Characteristics, 2010

Area	Marathon	County	Wisconsin
Total Housing Units	415	57,734	2,624,358
Total Occupied Housing Units	396	53,176	2,279,768
Owner Occupied Units	365	39,090	1,551,558
Renter Occupied Units	31	14,086	728,210
% Owner Occupied	92.2%	73.5%	68.1%
% 1 Person Households	15.9%	25.8%	28.2%
% With Householder 65 years or older	23.0%	24.4%	24.0%

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3.2 - Changes in Housing Stock

Characteristics	2000	2010	2014	2000-2010 Net Change	2000-2010 % Change
Total Housing Units	375	418	400	43	11%
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	366	395	397	29	8%
Vacancy %	2.4%	5.5%	0.8%	3.1%	129%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	336	347	353	11	3.3%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	30	48	44	18	60%
Owner Occupied Housing Units as % of Total	92.0%	87.8%	88.9%	-4%	-4%
Number of Homes for Seasonal/Rec Use	2	13	3	11	550%
Number of Single Family Homes	361	418	400	57	16%
*Detached	354	411	381	57	16%
**Attached	7	0	0	-7	-100%
Number of Duplexes	0	0	2	0	0%
Multi-Family Units 3-9 units	8	7	4	-1	-13%
Multi-Family Units 10+	0	0	0	0	0%
Mobile Homes	0	0	13	0	0%

Source: U.S. Census

smaller lots. In subsequent decades, both average lot and home sizes have increased. For example, average homes constructed in the later part of the previous century and the first decade of the millennium are typically much larger than housing built in previous decades. This can be seen in both the rural and more urban environments of Marathon County. Additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and attached garage space are among the amenities found in newer housing units.

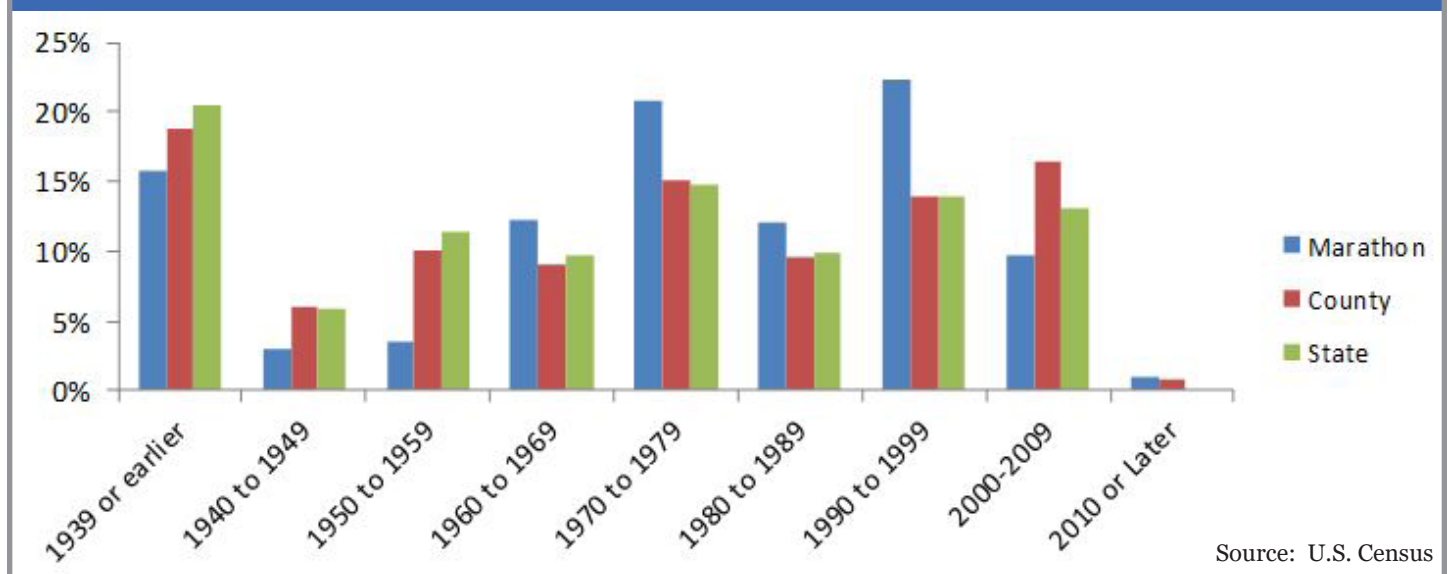
The above figure displays the percentages of the housing stock by the decade in which they were built. In the Town of Marathon, data shows that significant portions of the local housing stock were built prior to

1939 and in the 1970s. Recent housing growth from the 1990s made up approximately 22% of the total housing stock. That was higher than overall percentages for the County (14%). The Census reports that homes built in the 1990s made up 14% of the County's overall housing stock.

Housing Values

Median Value

Table 3.3 shows home value statistics for the community, County and State. These statistics only reflected the values of owner-own houses in the community. In 2000, the median home value was

Figure 3.1 - Housing Units by Year Built, 2014

Source: U.S. Census

\$110,700 and there was a \$14,900 gap in median house values between the Town and the County. In 2010, the median home value was \$187,700 and there was a \$48,200 gap between the Town and the County. This was also a 33.9 percent increase in home values when adjusted for inflation. In comparison, household incomes in the Town increased 7.8 percent during the same period.

Range of Values

Figure 3.2 and **Figure 3.3** show the distribution of housing values that existed in the Town and the County in 2010. Compared to overall percentages for Marathon County, the Town of Marathon had a range of housing values that were skewed to the left. In 2010, 4.7 percent of houses were valued at \$49,999 or less in the county. Zero percent were in this category in the Town. While 14.6 percent of county houses were valued at \$200,000 or more, in the Town 38.9% of the houses were valued at \$200,000 or more.

Monthly Housing Costs

Table 3.4 displays the monthly housing costs by tenure. The median monthly housing costs for home owners with a mortgage in the Town were higher than the county and the state in 2010. This is unsurprisingly, given that the median house value was higher than the county and the state. Monthly housing costs for those homeowners without a mortgage were similar to the County and slightly lower than the State.

Costs for renters were also similar to the County and lower than the State. The median contract rent is the rent that is asked by the landlord. The median gross rent includes other monthly costs, such as utilities.

Housing Affordability

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

Table 3.3 - Median House Value

Year	Town of Marathon	Marathon County	Wisconsin
2000	\$110,700	\$95,800	\$112,200
2010	\$187,700	\$139,500	\$169,000
2014	\$174,800	\$142,900	\$165,900

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 3.2 - Housing Values Marathon County



Source: U.S. Census

Figure 3.3 - Housing Values Town of Marathon



Source: U.S. Census

Table 3.4 - Median Monthly Housing Costs by Tenure, 2010

Civil Division	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied	
	With Mortgage	Without Mortgage	Contract Rent	Median Gross Rent
Marathon	\$1,513	\$456	\$516	\$640
County	\$1,281	\$458	\$524	\$639
Wisconsin	\$1,433	\$500	\$596	\$713

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3.5 - Cost Burdened Households, 2010

Civil Division	Owners w/ Mortgage	Owners w/o Mortgage	Renters	Overall
Marathon Town	21.6%	16.2%	0.1%	17.0%
County	28.3%	13.6%	36.9%	25.7%
State	33.9%	16.6%	47.0%	33.2%

Source: U.S. Census,

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that rental-housing costs not exceed 30% of the monthly income. Those households that are spending more than this on housing costs are considered to be cost burdened. HUD also indicates that mortgage lenders are more willing to make loans if the scheduled mortgage payment is less than 29% of the monthly household income. The percentage of households in the Town of Marathon that pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs, 17.0 percent, is less than that of the County (25.7%) and State (33.2%) among owner and renter-occupied households, see [Table 3.5](#).

Owners with a mortgage were more likely to be cost burdened in 2010 than renters in the Town. The percentage of renters that were cost burdened was remarkably low. Generally renters have lower incomes and are more likely to be cost burdened, as the averages in the county and the state showed. This may be a result of higher median incomes, comparatively low rents, or in error in the estimate due to the small number of renters in the Town.

Special Housing

Senior Housing

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

The senior housing needs in the South-Central region of Marathon County are met in several areas throughout the County. The Village of Edgar is home to the Eastside Apartments, and the Heide Apartments. The Eastside Apartments currently have a waiting list, indicating that there may be a need for adding additional senior

housing in this region. The Wausau region (including Mosinee, Wausau, Rothschild, Weston, and Schofield), as well as the Village of Stratford and the Village of Athens, all have senior housing options that help meet the senior housing needs of South-Central region of Marathon County. Private assisted living facilities have recently been built in the Village of Marathon.

Assistance Programs

Below is a listing of some of the major programs utilized. Each year new programs are available.

State Programs

Wisconsin Department of Administration

The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing (DOH), provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low and moderate income (LMI) households. These funds are primarily used for rehabilitation of housing units, homebuyer assistance, and small neighborhood public facility projects. CDBG dollars are flexible and responsive to local needs.

In addition to addressing LMI housing needs, CDBG can be used to leverage other programs or serve as a local match. The grant also can be used as an incentive to involve the private sector in local community development efforts or to respond to area needs. The CDBG program often serves as a catalyst for other community development projects.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), like HOME, aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. It provides an incentive for private entities to develop affordable housing. The credit reduces the federal taxes owed by an individual or corporation for an investment made in low-income rental housing. LIHTC provides funding for the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures. To qualify, a property must set aside a certain share of its units for low-income households.



Rural Farms and Farmhouses

Federal Programs

USDA-RD:

Section 502 Homeownership Direct Loan Program of the Rural Health Service (RHS) provides loans to help low-income households purchase and prepare sites or purchase, build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes.

Section 502 Mutual Self-Help Housing Loans are designed to help very-low-income households construct their own homes. Targeted families include those who cannot buy affordable housing through conventional means. Participating families perform approximately 65 percent of the construction under qualified supervision.

Section 504, the Very-Low-Income Housing Repair Program, provides loans and grants to low-income homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes. Improvements must make the homes more safe and sanitary or remove health or safety hazards.

Section 521 Rural Rental Assistance Program provides an additional subsidy for households with incomes too low to pay RHS-subsidized rents.

Section 533 Rural Housing Preservation Grants are designed to assist sponsoring organizations in the repair or rehabilitation of low-income or very-low-income housing. Assistance is available for landlords or members of a cooperative.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program finances land acquisition and site development associated with self-help housing for low-income families. Loans are made to the nonprofit sponsors of development projects and are interest-free. Portions of the loans are forgiven if promised units of housing are completed within a given period. These forgiven “grant conversion” funds may be used to subsidize future development projects.

HOME Investment Partnership Program aims to encourage the production and rehabilitation of affordable housing. HOME funds may be used for rental assistance, assistance to homebuyers, new construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition of rental housing.

Trends

- The 2010 Census showed that the Town of Marathon had 415 house units. 396 units were occupied. 365 of these units are owner-occupied.
- Between 2000 and 2010, total housing units have increased by 43 while the number of occupied housing units rose by 29. Vacancy rose from 2.4% to 5.5% during this same time.
- According the America Community Survey, there has been very little increase in the housing stock since 2010.
- 98.3 percent the community’s housing stock is classified as being single family homes.

Issues

- Clustering: The Town is experiencing a clustering of housing on the eastside. This is likely due to the closer proximity of the eastern side to the City of Wausau and surrounding communities where many residents work.

Housing Goals, Objectives, and Policies:

Goal 1: *Locate new residential development, if it is to occur, in appropriate areas.*

Objectives:

1. Discourage development in marginal or sensitive areas.
2. Attempt to guide new housing to locations where the extension of service provision will be easiest to deliver.

Goal 2: *To discourage development that significantly impacts agricultural lands.*

- a. Continue to encourage adherence to the existing exclusive agricultural zoning.
- b. Maintain a Plan Commission of well-informed residents.
- c. Observe comprehensive plan.
- d. Consider the extent of growth desired by the town.

Goal 3: *Discourage the proliferation of mobile homes*

1. Continue to enforce current zoning.
 - a. Discourage mobile home residences.
 - b. Maintain parameters for new housing within the Township according to current zoning requirements and the uniform dwelling code.

4. UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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

Previous Plans and Studies

Marathon County All Hazard Mitigation Plan

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

Utilities

Most unincorporated areas of Marathon County use private on-site waste disposal systems for sewage disposal and obtain potable water from private wells. The Town of Marathon does not provide public sewer or water service. All development is on private wells and septic systems. The Town, which has County zoning, requires a minimum lot size of 40,000 square foot for installation of individual septic systems and wells.

On-Site Waste Disposal Systems

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

Most unincorporated areas of Marathon County use private on-site waste disposal systems for sewage disposal and obtain potable water from private wells. The Town of Marathon does not provide public sewer

or water service. All development is on private wells and septic systems. The Town, which has County zoning, requires a minimum lot size of 2 acres for installation of individual septic systems and wells, depending on zoning district.

Types of Systems

Under SPS 383 standards, property owners have a wider array of system options than previously available. Septic tanks can be steel, concrete, fiberglass or plastic, but they all must now be equipped with a filter to prevent the movement of solids out into the soil absorption component. In addition, rock in drainfields may now be substituted with specifically engineered foam peanuts bound in mesh or plastic chambers.

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

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

Permit Requirements

The Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning, and Zoning reviews and issues permits for private sewage systems. Soil and site evaluations are required to determine if the proposed septic system is

suitable for the specific property and location before a permit will be issued. If deemed necessary, floodplain and/or wetland delineation may also be required prior to permit issuance. In addition, a maintenance agreement must be submitted prior to permit issuance. All septic tanks installed on or after July 1, 1980, are required to be pumped at least once every three years.

Water Supply

All development is served by water from private wells. The most common contaminants found in groundwater in Wisconsin are nitrate-nitrogen, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and pesticides. Given the widespread presence of agricultural land in the Town and the scattered development pattern with residences mixed with agricultural land, well contamination is a possibility.

Surface Water Management

Marathon County adopted a Land and Water Resource Management Plan in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes. The primary intent of this plan is to identify a vision for natural resource management in Marathon County and outline strategies to protect the quality and quantity of soil and water resources.

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

Electrical Utilities and Natural Gas

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

Telecommunication Facilities and Services

Telephone/Fiber Optics

Telephone Services are provided by Frontier.

Internet Service/ Television/Cable Providers

Charter Communications provides wireless access services to areas of the Town adjacent to the Village of Marathon City and along STH 29 at advertised download speeds of 100-1000 Mbps. Frontier North,

Inc. provides wireless access in most parts of the Town at advertised speeds of 6-10 Mbps. There are a number of fixed wireless providers and mobile wireless providers in the Town that vary in speed.

Charter Communications provides cable series to areas of the Town of Marathon that are adjacent to the Village of Marathon City and along STH 29.

Solid Waste Management

The Town contracts with a private company for waste management. Municipal, commercial and industrial waste is accepted at the Marathon County Landfill in Ringle. User fees collected at the landfill defray the cost of landfill operations.

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

Recycling

Recycling pick-up is provided by a private contractor on a monthly basis.

Community Facilities

This section describes the schools, libraries, and other community facilities for the Town of Marathon.

Schools

The Town of Marathon is served by the Marathon School District. The Marathon School District operates a K-8 elementary school and a high school. 695 students were enrolled in the district in the fall of 2015. There is also a K-8 parochial school in Marathon City, St. Mary's School.

The district has some students whose families speak Spanish as a first language. The district has been sending students to Abbotsford for English as a Second Language classes.

Post-Secondary Educational Facilities

- University of Wisconsin – Marathon County (UW-MC) - UW-MC, located in Wausau, offers lower level (freshman/sophomore) college classes, leading to a baccalaureate degree. Associate Degrees are offered in Arts & Sciences, and Bachelor's Degrees are offered in Business Administration, General Studies, and Nursing, through collaborative degree programs with UW Oshkosh and UW Stevens

Point. Enrollment in 2011 was approximately 1,366 students.

- Northcentral Technical College (NTC) - NTC, located in Wausau, offers 40 one- and two-year programs and certificates in business, technical, health and industrial fields. Approximately 17,000 full- and part-time students attended classes in the 2013-2014 school year.
- In addition to the public schools, the Wausau area has a private college. Rasmussen College, located in Wausau, offers bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, certificates and diplomas in fields like business, design, education, justice sciences, and nursing.

Libraries

Libraries promote lifelong learning, supporting populations not reached by traditional education including very young children and older adults. Libraries also increase access to computers and technology. The Town is served by the Marathon County Public Library system (MCPL). The system includes the Marathon City Branch Library, located on Third Street in Marathon City, in addition to seven other locations. The Marathon City Branch Library is located in a new 3,000 sq. ft. facility built in 2010. The MCPL is a member of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service.

Police

Police service is provided by the Marathon County Sheriff.

Fire

Fire protection service is provided by the South Area Fire District (SAFR). SAFR also provides EMS operations to entire Town. The South Area Fire District includes the Town of Rib Mountain, Village and Town of Weston, Village of Kronenwetter and Towns of Easton, Ringle, Guenther, and Stettin. Mutual aid agreements are in place with most of the surrounding communities.

E-911 Dispatch Service

The Marathon County Sheriff's Department Communications Division provides E-911 Dispatch for all Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies in Marathon County. The Communications Division services 84 user agencies and also provides alert paging support for the Emergency Management Office, District Attorney, and Medical Examiner's Office. The users are served by a microwave linked



Town Hall

repeater radio system, consisting of a control center at the Sheriff's Department and multiple radio tower sites spread throughout the County.

Hospitals

Two major hospitals serve the Town. Aspirus Hospital is located in the City of Wausau at 425 Pine Ridge Boulevard. Aspirus Hospital, formerly Wausau Hospital, is a 321-bed facility that is a multi-specialty regional health center serving a 12-county region in north central Wisconsin. Ministry Health Care St. Clare's Hospital is a 104-bed hospital and medical office complex located in the Village of Weston.

In 2016, a telemedicine service, Astia Health, was established in Marathon County. Astia is able to come to any home or business in Marathon County in their Mobile Medical Unit vehicle, MMU that is equipped to handle many different urgent care services and connect patients with a doctor via video chat. They're primarily used for urgent care, but patients can schedule doctor's appointments too.

Additionally, Ministry (Asension) Saint Joseph's Hospital and Marshfield Clinic, located in the City of Marshfield, provide regional medical services to north central Wisconsin. Though further than Wausau and Weston, these facilities also serve the Town.

North Central Health Care (NCHC)

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

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

NCHC operates a nursing home (Mount View Care Center) that offers skilled nursing services at the main campus in Wausau. This facility has a licensed capacity of 320 and serves persons requiring either short term or long term skilled nursing care because of complex physical needs, psychiatric and neurological diseases, dementia or behavior problems

Many Town residents rely upon local clinics including facilities in Marathon, Edgar, and Mosinee.

Child Care

There was one regulated child care provider in the Town, but several others in the Village of Marathon City, listed with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. The Young-Star program is Wisconsin's child care quality rating and improvement system. It also provides an online site tool to help families find child care services.

Parks & Recreation

Local Parks, Trails and Open Space

There are no local parks maintained by the Town and there are no Marathon County parks located in the Town.

County or State Parks, Forest and Trails

Area County and State facilities include:

- Nine Mile Forest Unit is known as a recreation area with many miles of hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country ski trails. Skiing is promoted with a ski chalet and over 25 kilometers of one-way loops. The forest is open to hunting and snowmobiling. Nine Mile has 4,755 acres of mixed uplands, marshes, and water impoundments.
- Sunny Vale Park is located in a narrow strip of the Town of Stettin and the City of Wausau south of STH 29 at 72nd Avenue. Also known as "Manmade" Park, Sunny Vale is a popular 299-acre park with facilities for swimming in Manmade Lake, picnicking, fishing, and model airplane flying.

Sunny Vale Softball Complex is a 71-acre facility managed by the Wausau Area Softball Association through a contract with Marathon County. The complex has six lighted softball diamonds, each with a dugout, bleachers, and scoreboards.

- Big Eau Pleine Park, located in the Town of Green Valley, is also accessible. It is a 1,450-acre County park located on a peninsula surrounded by the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir. The park has an extensive trail system and two active recreation areas. Big Eau Pleine facilities include campgrounds, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, shelters, boat launches, swimming beaches, and play equipment.
- Rib Mountain State Park is located within the Town of Rib Mountain. The park's main feature is Rib Mountain, which at 1,924 feet above sea level is one of the highest elevations in the State of Wisconsin. The park surrounds the mountain and has the following facilities: a picnic area with 65 tables, a camping area with 31 developed sites, 3 hiking trails, a nature trail, and a private downhill skiing area.
- Doepke Recreation Area is located in and operated by the Town of Rib Mountain. This 38 acre park has a great view of the Rib Mountain hill. It contains over 22 acres of woodlands/wetlands, a little league baseball diamond, a rentable shelter, and multiple four season recreation opportunities.

Park System Needs

The Town feels it has adequate access to parks and open space, including the Four Mile Creek area.

Issues

There were no significant issues identified.



525 Race Track

Utilities and Community Facilities Goals, Objectives, and Policies:

Goal 1: *Attempt to maintain a sufficient supply of potable water.*

1. To discourage concentrated development in areas with limited water availability.
 - a. The Town will work to protect existing groundwater resources.
 - b. Work with experts from Marathon County Health and Zoning Departments and other groups to increase drinking water quality awareness.
 - c. Ensure adequate water resources exist as part of the recommendation process for development proposals.

Goal 2: *Maintain current provision of services.*

1. Perform annual budget allocations to fund public services.
2. Continue to find methods of cost sharing, such as equipment sharing, with surrounding municipalities to increase the efficiency by which services are provided.
 - a. Continue to provide sufficient services as desired by a majority of local residents.
 - b. Perform annual review of service provision costs.
 - c. Communicate with surrounding communities the willingness to share costs.

Goal 3: *Provide effective public safety services.*

1. Work with Marathon County and surrounding municipalities to continue to provide effective police, fire, and EMS services.
 - a. Contract with appropriate entities to provide sufficient emergency service delivery.
 - b. Participate in long-term facilities and equipment planning with service-providing entities.
 - c. Annually review contracts with service providers and evaluate delivery of services.
 - d. Participate in recruitment efforts, especially concerning fire and emergency response, with providing agencies.

Goal 4: *Support and maintain existing community facilities.*

Objectives:

1. Maintain the Town Hall as a seat of local government and community meeting hall.
 - a. Continue to provide a local meeting hall that is available for local gatherings, both public and private, that are determined to be appropriate.
 - b. Ensure adequate condition of Town Hall by performing periodic review.
 - c. Make repairs and improvements to existing facilities on a timely basis.
 - d. Appropriately budget for planned improvements incrementally over time.
 - e. Conduct public listening sessions with the community when plans for a new community facility are being discussed.

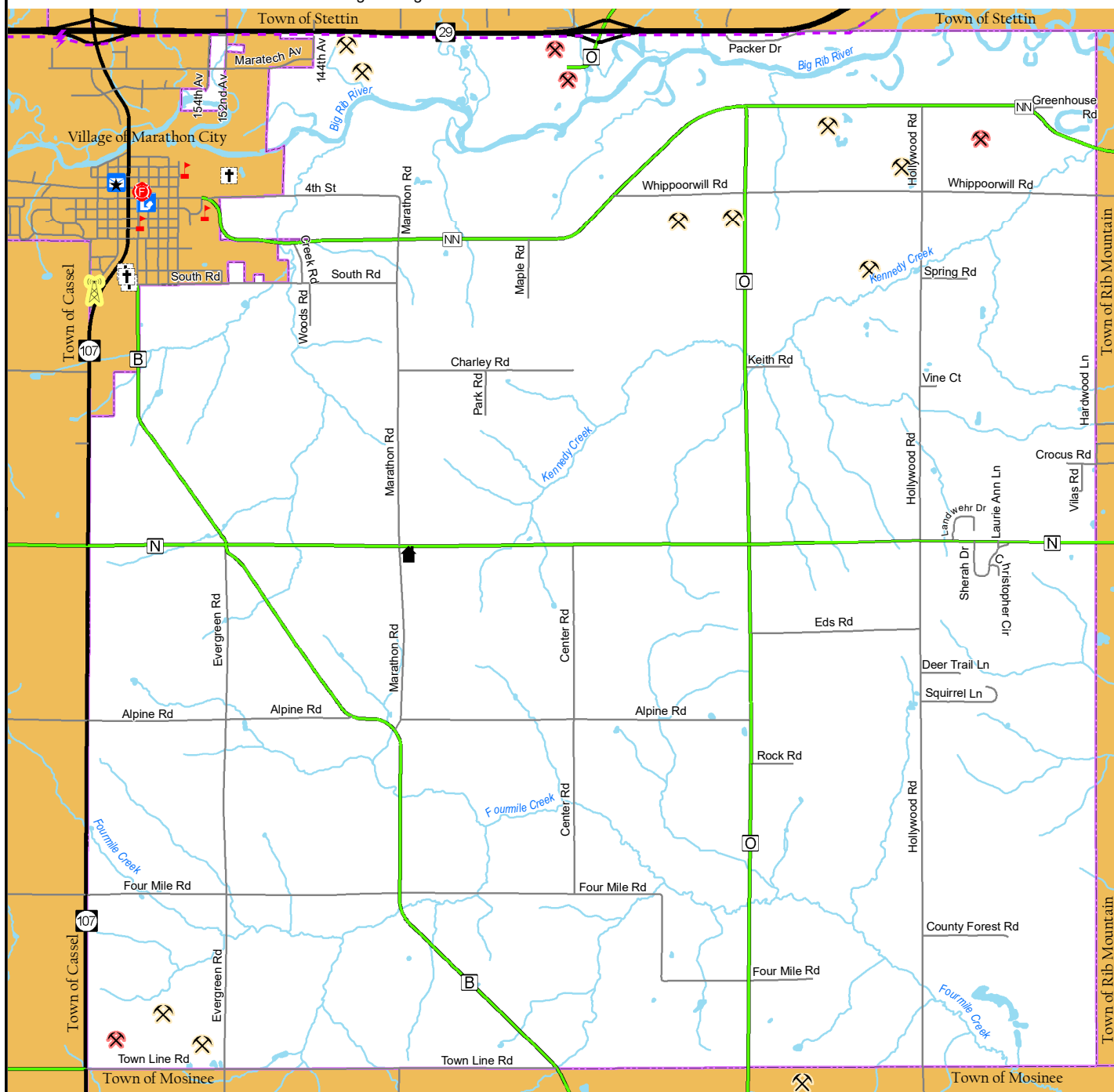
Goal 5: *Support State and Marathon County park system.*

1. Encourage maintenance of local Marathon County parks.
 - a. Encourage appropriate development of public spaces throughout the region.
 - b. Encourage proper maintenance and upkeep of the existing County and State park system.
 - c. Communicate desires for recreational facilities and uses to the appropriate entities.

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Water
- Abandoned Non-Metallic Mines
- Cemeteries
- Fire Station
- Library
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Police Department
- Post Office
- Schools
- Town Halls
- High Voltage Powerline
- Substations
- Celltower

Map 3 Utilities & Community Facilities Town of Marathon Marathon County, Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co

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



**North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission**

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

5. TRANSPORTATION

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

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

The Town is served by several State and County trunk highways, which serve as the main thoroughfares of the transportation system in Marathon County. The Town is located adjacent to two Wisconsin's state highways. STH 29 located along the northern edge of the Town, serves as the major east/west transportation corridor through the region. STH 107 runs through the west side of the Town serves as a north/south corridor through the area. Both provide direct access into the Town and STH 29 serves as an entry gateway. CTH NN, CTH N, CTH B, and CTH O also provide access throughout the Town.

Existing Transportation Planning Efforts

Transportation planning in Marathon County is coordinated between the Marathon County Department of Conservation, Planning and Zoning (CPZ) staff and the Wausau Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); the body designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation to be responsible for transportation planning in the metropolitan area. Marathon County provides staff for the Wausau Area MPO.

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

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

Regional Livability Plan

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

issues.

- **Modes of Transportation to Work** – The region's workforce is extremely dependent on the automobile. In 2012, over 80 percent of the region's workforce drove alone to work on a daily basis. Another 10 percent carpooled, leaving less than 10 percent for the non-automobile methods such as walking, biking, and using transit. The average commute time in the central sub-region, which includes Marathon County, was 18.7 minutes.
- **Age of Drivers in the Region** – The region is seeing a change in the number of licensed drivers by age groups. Between 2004 and 2013, the region saw a 20 percent decrease in the number of drivers age 17 and age 19. During the same years, the region also had a 20 percent increase in drivers over age 65. These changes mean communities will have a need for multimodal options for the younger ages and options to increase safety as drivers age.
- **Transportation Maintenance Cost** – It is expensive to maintain the transportation infrastructure in the region. The current reliance on fuel tax and registration fees is inadequate, unstable, and may soon be outmoded. The inability to fund improvements and maintenance on transportation infrastructure will impact the ability to transport goods and provide safe, reliable, and efficient roads.

Connections 2030

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

State Trunk Highway 29 Corridor Land Use Review (1997)

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

Marathon County Functional / Jurisdictional Highway Classification Study (1998)

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

Road Network

Functional Classification of Roads/ Jurisdiction

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

The functional classifications are generally defined as:

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

Jurisdiction

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

Jurisdiction refers to governmental ownership, not necessarily responsibility. For example, some State



Alpine Rd

owned roads are maintained by local jurisdictions. Additionally, the designation of a public road as a “Federal-aid highway” does not alter its ownership or jurisdiction as a State or local road, only that its service value and importance have made that road eligible for Federal-aid construction and rehabilitation funds.

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

In some cases, local municipalities are responsible for conducting routine maintenance and minor repairs on State and Federal highways within their jurisdictional boundaries. In return, the State generally provides financing to those jurisdictions. However, major repairs and reconstruction are generally still the responsibility of the State Department of Transportation. Roadway jurisdictions (i.e. U.S., State, and County highways) are indicated in Figure 5-1.

Major Road Facilities

Following is a brief description of the major road facilities located in the Town. Functional classification, jurisdiction, and Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), when available, are summarized for all major roads.

Road access to Wausau is encumbered because of only one access to STH 29. Other east-west routes are CTH NN and CTH N. However, there are currently bottlenecks where CTH N and CTH NN intersect I-39.

CTH B is becoming a major truck route between Village of Marathon and I-39. Other CTHs have been experiencing increased traffic in recent years, most notably CTH N, CTH NN and CTH O.

The Town has approximately 57.72 miles of roads. The majority of these roads, 35.58 miles, are under the jurisdiction of the Township.

Land Use and Transportation

Land Use and Development

The Town is primarily residential and agricultural with no expectation that this will change. There is some potential for commercial/industrial along some of the state and county highways.

STH 29 Access

The Town has an agreement with the County to prohibit direct access to STH 29, part of an effort to improve safety by eliminating at-grade intersections as the highway is upgraded to freeway status.

Access Management

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

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

Other Transportation Modes

River Crossing

Historically, another river crossing was planned by extending CTH O north to STH 29. Given the new plans for the interchange at STH 29 and I-39 around Menards, the Town has been told the CTH O crossing will not occur.

Pedestrian

Pedestrian transportation is limited to road shoulders. There are no sidewalks in the Town. Routes tied to the Village would be useful. Wider paved shoulders can improve the safety of rural roads that may see both pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Bicycle

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan for the Non-Urbanized Area of Marathon County, Wisconsin, 1996 identified recommended bicycle routes in Marathon County. These recommended routes were based on traffic counts and condition of pavement. Formal action has not occurred to adopt these as designated bicycle routes. CTHs NN and B were identified as suggested routes in the Marathon County Bicycle Plan.

Transit

There is no general transit service in Marathon. Elderly, needy, and disabled transit service is provided throughout the County through North Central Health Care (NCHC). The service include semi-fixed routes that are scheduled, and demand services available with a 48-hour notice. Information and services are available by calling 848-4555.

Rail

There is no rail access to the Town.

Airports

There are two primary airports in the area:

The Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) is a joint venture of Marathon and Portage Counties. It is the only airport within Marathon County or neighboring counties that provides scheduled air passenger services. The CWA is located east of Mosinee and accessible via I-39. The terminal has been modernized and highway access reconstructed to be more convenient.

The Wausau Downtown Airport provides aviation service for the area and is fully equipped to receive large corporate jets, charters, and privately owned aircraft. Air charter, flight instruction, aircraft rental, as well as aviation line services such as refueling are available.

Issues

- **Funding:** Determining, prioritizing, and funding road maintenance and road improvements are an on-going challenge.
- **River Crossings:** There is only one crossing over the Rib River in the area and that is provided on STH 107 in the Village of Marathon City. While there have been discussions about creating another river crossing, plans for a crossing on CTH O have been cancelled.
- **STH 29 Access:** In the Town, the Rib River flows along the south side of STH 29 and creates a barrier to access to the highway. As such, access to STH 29 is limited to the interchange in the Village of Marathon City. While STH 29 is the primary route to the Wausau metro area, CTH NN and N are also major east-west routes through the Town.
- **Truck Routes:** CTH B is becoming a major truck route between the Village of Marathon City and I-39. County roads N, NN, and R are also experiencing increased traffic. The trucks are loud and travel at great rates of speed causing safety concerns.

Transportation Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Goal 1: *Maintain roadway access throughout the Township.*

1. Communicate to WDOT desire for an additional river crossing over the Rib River at County Highway O.
 - a. Attempt to provide efficient transportation throughout the Township.
 - b. Communicate with county and state transportation agencies on a regular basis.
 - c. Request plans for road development from all other agencies well in advance.
 - d. Participate in state transportation improvement discussions, especially concerning STH 29 and STH107.

Goal 2: *Maintain Town roads.*

1. Continue the annual road budgeting process so that maintenance and improvements can be programmed and adequately funded.
 - a. Continue to maintain and update current transportation facilities.
 - b. Perform biennial roadway evaluation.
 - c. Explore using free online software through WDOT to streamline funding allocations for repair.
 - d. Discuss roadway condition and determine in-need areas at annual and other Town Board meetings.

Goal 3: *Improve traffic safety within the Town.*

1. Explore decreasing speed limits along dangerous roadways.
 - a. Attempt to provide a safe transportation system within the Township.
 - b. Perform regular roadway evaluations.
 - c. Work with Marathon County to decrease speeding, and explore changing posted speeds on select roadways.
 - d. Discuss speeding concerns and determine areas to focus enforcement efforts at the annual and other town meetings.

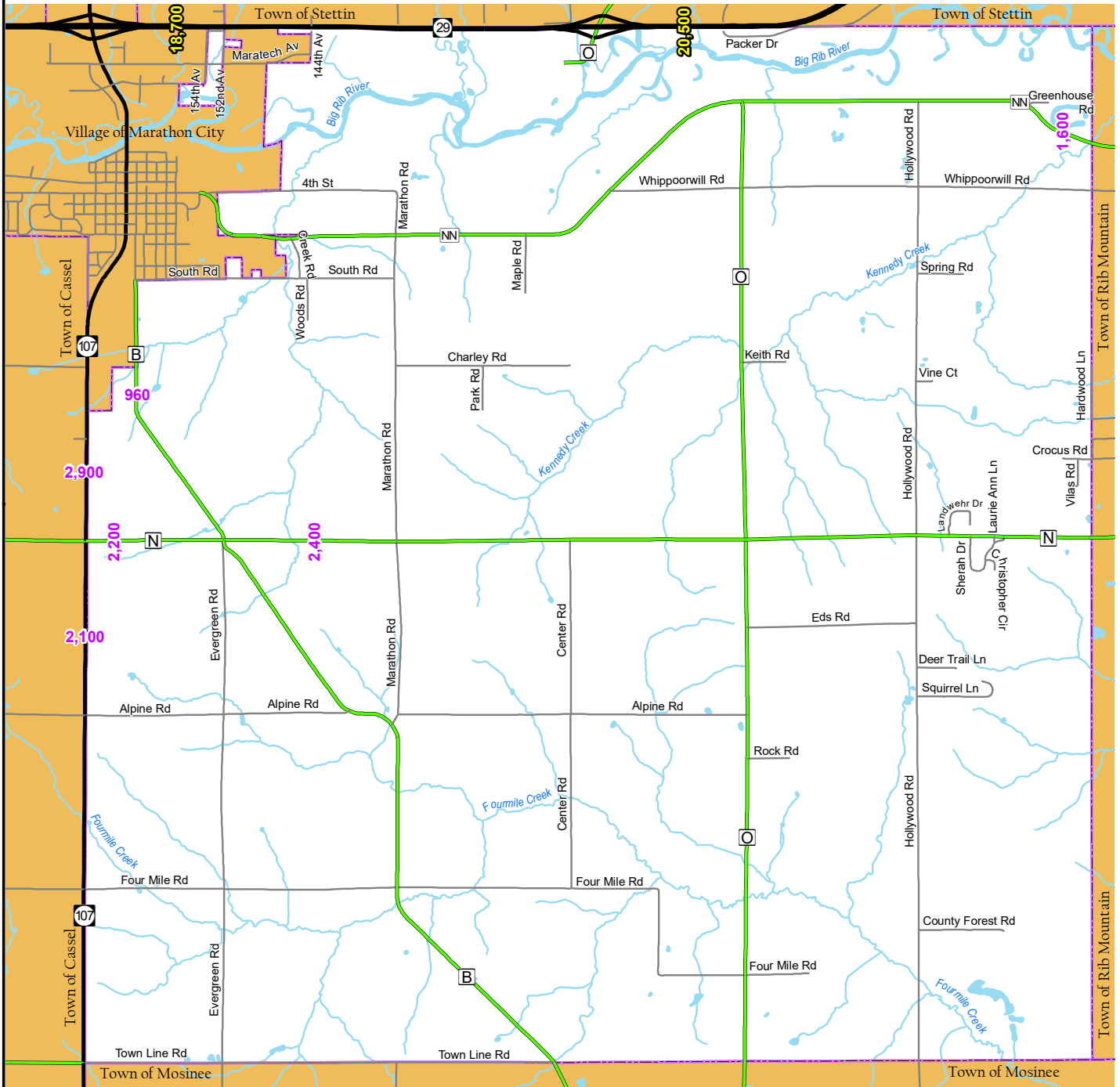
Transportation

Town of Marathon

Marathon County, Wisconsin

Legend

- Minor Civil Divisions
- US Highway
- State Highways
- County Highways
- Local Roads
- Water
- 500 Average Daily Traffic Count, 2013
- 500 Average Daily Traffic Count, 2010



0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

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

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



North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

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

Page left intentionally blank.

6. CULTURAL RESOURCES

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

Brief History of Town of Marathon

The Town of Marathon and its main settlement, Marathon City, were among the earliest settled communities in Marathon County. A group of mill workers in Pittsburgh, known as the Pittsburgh German Homestead Society, banded together in 1856 to purchase land in Wisconsin. Armed with deposits of \$100 per worker, representatives arrived in Stevens Point and purchased 3,000 acres in what later became the Towns of Marathon and Cassel. The settlers followed in 1857 and took steamboats from Stevens Point to Mosinee, then continued their journey with American Indian guides to Marathon.

The site of Marathon City, platted as a village in 1858, was heavily forested. The new residents attempted to build a saw mill and dam the Rib River at Marathon City, but the river's swift current prevented any success. However, Henry Fricke, who came to Marathon City in 1870, built a successful grist mill and saw mill that became the industrial center for the Village and fostered its growth. This business evolved into the Menzner Sawmill and Lumberyard, still in business in Marathon City. When lumbering declined as the primary economic activity, Marathon City became a service center for surrounding farmers.

The Town of Marathon was in the heart of the German settlement of Marathon County. Although Marathon was settled by Germans who had previously lived in Pittsburgh, other Germans in the north central section of the County hailed from Pomerania, West Prussia and Brandenburg. In addition to the Town of Marathon, the German settlement was concentrated in Cassel, Maine, Berlin, Wien, Wausau, Stettin, Rib Falls and Hamburg. Approximately 75% of population in the County was of German parentage in the late nineteenth century. As late as 1905, 36 of 41 townships in the County were still predominantly populated by



Farm

persons of German descent. In 2010, 64.6 percent of Marathon Town residents reported their first ancestry as German.

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

The Town does have a local historic preservation commission. Although, there are no properties in Marathon listed on the NRHP.

The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains the Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) that identifies any properties that may have been surveyed in the past; the Inventory does not convey special status and may not be current. The inventory may be reviewed at www.wisconsinhistory.org/ahi/index.html. There are 6 historic properties, ranging from barns, houses to smokehouses, in the Town of Marathon that has been previously surveyed and included in the AHI.

Cemeteries, Burial Mounds, Other Burials

Wisconsin Statute 157.70 provides for the protection of all human burial sites, including all marked and unmarked burials and cemeteries. There are currently 133 cemeteries and burial areas identified in Marathon County, and it is likely that other unmarked cemeteries and burials may be present. Suspected burial mounds or unmarked burials must be reported to the State Burial Sites Preservation Office. If human remains are uncovered during excavation, all work must cease pending review of the Burial Sites Preservation Office. All cemeteries and burials in Marathon County should be catalogued under Wis. Stat. 157.70 to provide maximum protection of these sites. **Table 6.1** displays local cemeteries.

Table 6.1 - Known Cemeteries

Cemetery Name	Location	Section
St. Anthony Catholic/ Capuchine Ord.	NE of Marathon City	5
St. Matthew Lutheran	Co. B., Marathon City, next to St. Mary Cemeteries	7
Towns/Potter Field	Marathon City	7
St. Mary Catholic	Co. B., Marathon City, next to St. Matthew Cemeteries	7

Source: www.rootsweb.com

Issues

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

Cultural Resources Goals, Objectives, and Policies

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

1. Work with local historical societies, like the County Historical Society, to identify historic resources so they may be considered in future planning.
 - a. Preserve historically significant structures and locales if they are determined to be significant.
 - b. Contact the Marathon County Historical Society for tips on how to inventory significant structures.

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

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

County Economic Environment

Originally, the Marathon County economy was based on forest resources and diversified agriculture. Increased population and infrastructure – railroads, roads and dams for power enabled the area to evolve beyond simple agricultural and logging operations. Resources that once left the area unprocessed were now transformed into finished products in the County, providing employment opportunities and adding value in forest products and agricultural processing. A number of related manufacturing operations grew

up in the area, some based on forest products and agricultural products, others supplying the existing industries with fabricated metal products. As these industries progressed, so did industries such as transportation, communications, public utilities, government, trade, finance, insurance and real estate. The County now enjoys a well-diversified economy.

Key Economic Sectors

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

In 2016, there were 70,780 jobs in Marathon County and had a Gross Regional Production of 6.97 billion in 2014. **Table 7.1** shows a select number of industries by employment in Marathon County in 2011 and 2016. In 2016, the Manufacturing Industry (NAICS 31) was the largest employment sector with 16,505 workers. Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62) and Retail Trade (NAICS 44) were second and third with 9,707 and 9,050 workers respectively.

Table 7.1 - Jobs by Industry, Marathon County 2016

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

Source: EMSI

In terms of job growth, Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (NAICS 21) was the fastest growing industry with a growth rate 304 percent, adding 76 jobs. The Management of Companies and Enterprises industry (NAICS 55) was second, employing an additional 609 workers, an 85 percent increase. The third fastest industry was Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (NAICS 53) increasing 43 percent, or 142 workers. The Manufacturing (1,741 jobs), Health Care and Social Assistance (1,618 jobs), and Retail Trade (796 jobs) Industries added the most jobs overall. Construction came in fourth, adding 716 jobs.

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

Six industries lost jobs from 2011 to 2016. Finance and Insurance (NAICS 52) lost 346 jobs, decreasing 7 percent. Other Services (NAICS 81) decreased its employment by 14 percent, or 269 jobs. Accommodation and Food Services (NAICS 72) shrank by 134 jobs while Information (NAICS 51) lost 85 jobs. Transportation and Warehousing (NAICS 48) and Educational Services (NAICS 61) lost 29 and 23 jobs respectively.

In 2014, Marathon County generated 10.8 billion dollars in export revenue. Export revenue is money received in the region through foreign and external domestic sources. Manufacturing was the highest export industry accounting for over five billion dollars, or 47 percent of total export revenue. Finance and Insurance was the second highest export industry accounting for over 1.2 billion dollars, or 11 percent of total export revenue. Health Care and Social Assistance was the third highest export accounting for over \$834 million. The ability to export goods and services is essential to the county's economy as it introduces new money to the economy, rather than simply circulating money that is already in the region. This influx of new revenue is redistributed throughout the economy at local restaurants, suppliers, and retailers.

Job Growth

Between 2011 and 2016, Marathon County added 5,840 jobs, an increase of 9 percent. The State of Wisconsin experienced a job growth of 8.8 percent and the nation which increased 10.3 percent. Based on National Growth Effect (7,264), an Industry Mix Effect (-1,413),

and the Competitive Effect (158) the region would expect to add 5,851 jobs in this industry over the next ten year time period based on a shift share analysis.

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

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

Agricultural Economy

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

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

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

- The average age of the current agricultural owner/operator is nearly 53.6; a large number are nearing retirement.
- The low entry rate into agriculture reflects the high capital investment and low profit margins. Furthermore, there are fewer farm operators who are reporting farming as their primary occupation.
- The number of dairy farms decreased by nearly 16 percent between 2007 and 2012. This continues a decade's long trend.
- Local milk production is not sufficient to reliably meet the demand of local dairy processors.

- Ample open space, woodlands, and natural areas, which adds to the small town living environment sought after by existing/future businesses and their employees.
- A strong base economy made up of a variety of businesses including leaders in papermaking, lumber, insurance, and dairy products.
- Strong support for economic development from the community and economic development organizations

Weaknesses

- The agricultural economy is declining.
- Access limitations along highways and frontage roads.
- Lack of design/aesthetics control for commercial and industrial development.
- Competition for industrial development – particularly between urban and fringe areas.

Marathon County Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Strengths

- Many acres of land zone Exclusive Agriculture, which strengthens the retention of the agricultural industry.

Table 7.2 - Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector, 2010

Industry	Count	Share
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%
Utilities	0	0.0%
Construction	3	2.6%
Manufacturing	47	41.2%
Wholesale Trade	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	0	0.0%
Transportation and Warehousing	5	4.4%
Information	0	0.0%
Finance and Insurance	0	0.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0	0.0%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	0	0.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0.0%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	0	0.0%
Educational Services	0	0.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	0	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	26	22.8%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	33	28.9%
Public Administration		0.0%

Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap

Local Economic Environment

In 2010, there were an estimated 114 jobs, see [Table 7.2](#), including both primary and secondary jobs, but not QCEW employees. By 2014, this estimate fell to 74. 41.2 percent were employed in the manufacturing industry in 2010, but this decreased to 23.0 percent in 2014. 57.9 percent were making \$1,250 per month or less.

Figure 7.1 displays the location of jobs in the Township according the U.S. Census Bureau in 2010. **Figure 7.2** displays the location of jobs in the Township five years later.

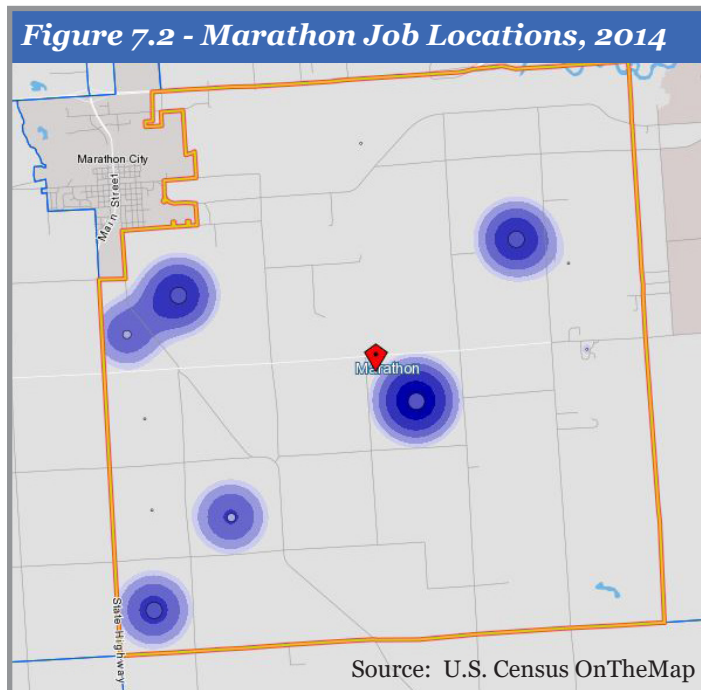
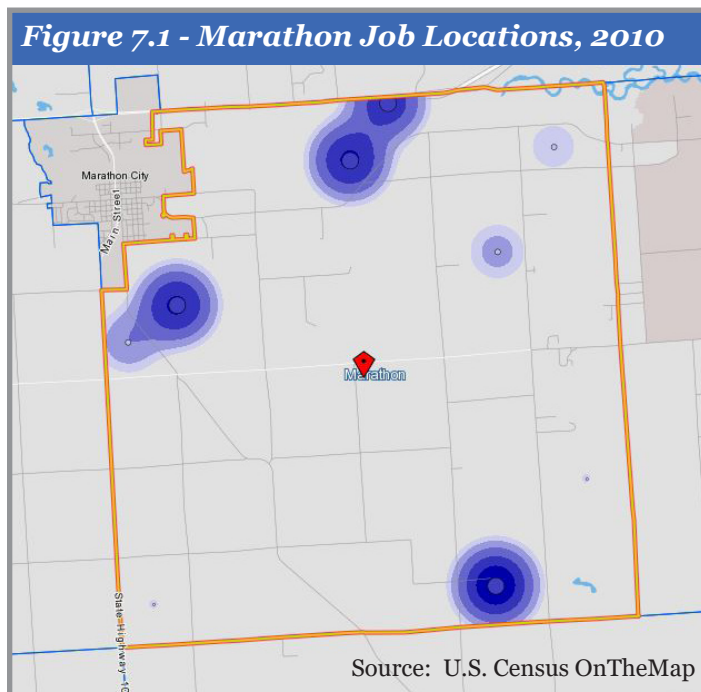
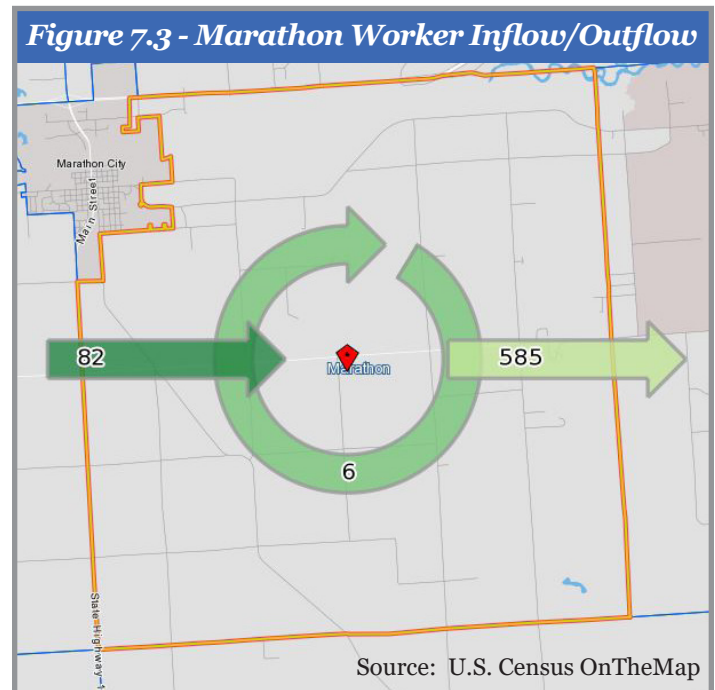


Figure 7.3 shows worker inflow and outflow. The figure indicates that 11 residents both work and live in the township. 628 residents leave the area to work, while 103 commute into the town to work. 10.5 percent of the imported workforce, or 12 workers, came from the Village of Marathon City, more than any other municipality. Edgar sent 10 workers, while the City of Wausau sent 9. 50.0 percent of commuters to Marathon drive less than 10 miles, while 7.9 percent drive a distance greater than 50 miles.

Issues

- **Limiting Business Sites:** There is a possibility of attracting some businesses to CTH N and STH 107 intersection. Overall, residents would like to limit where business develops.



Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies

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

- 1.** Encourage the development of niche markets for agricultural products (e.g. organic/hydroponic).
- 2.** Encourage secondary business development, such as outdoor markets or canneries, around the agricultural economy.
- 3.** Promote working with Marathon County and other agencies such as the UW-Extension, to explore regional approaches to aiding the agricultural economy.
 - a.* Encourage efforts to increase research and learning in the area of strengthening the long-term viability of agriculture within the region.
 - b.* Encourage agricultural operators in the Town of Marathon to participate in regional programs aimed at improving the agricultural economy.
 - c.* Review ordinances to ensure that they allow secondary agricultural businesses within the Town of Marathon.

Goal 2: *Limit sporadic development of commercial sites.*

- 1.** Identify preferred areas where commercial development should locate especially near STH 107 and CTH NN.
- 2.** Discourage development of commercial land in marginal or sensitive areas, or on active farmland.
 - a.* Limit the areas where commercial development can locate.
 - b.* Attempt to work with surrounding communities to develop growth areas where commercial development is encouraged.
 - c.* Hold public meetings, if necessary, to determine the best sites to develop commercial growth areas.
 - d.* Determine proper buffers between potential commercially used lands and residential or agricultural land.
 - e.* Direct development interests to higher-traffic areas, and to areas with business-supporting infrastructure.

Goal 3: *To maintain access to local goods and services.*

- 1.** Support local commercial corridors with neighboring municipalities.
- 2.** Work with neighboring municipalities to develop a long term, area strategy to promote local goods and services.
 - a.* Attempt to work with the Village Marathon City in strengthening commercial and service development within the area.
 - b.* Work with surrounding communities to develop a mutually beneficial “regional” business plan that allows each community to attract the commercial development they desire.
 - c.* Encourage residents to patronize local establishments for goods and services.

Page left intentionally blank.

8. LAND USE

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

Current Pattern of Land Use

The predominant land uses for the Town consist primarily of agricultural lands, woodlands, and scattered single-family homes that may include farmsteads. Four areas are designated as a quarrying site. There are few areas classified as commercial uses. **Table 8.1** illustrates the existing pattern of land uses in the Town.

Land Use Regulations

Zoning

Marathon County regulates zoning within the Town of Marathon's borders.

Shoreland Zoning

Shoreland, shoreland wetlands, and floodplain regulations are applicable in all geographic areas of the County. Wisconsin law mandates Counties to adopt and administer a zoning ordinance that regulates land use in shoreland/wetland and floodplain areas for the entire area of the County outside of villages and cities. The shoreland/wetland and floodplain area covered under this zoning is the area that lies within 1,000 feet of a lake and within 300 feet of a navigable stream or to the landward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

Related Programs

Farmland Preservation Program

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



Agriculture Land Use

Table 8.1 - Existing Land Use, 2015

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	7,098	34.0%
Commercial	33.0	0.2%
Governmental	3	0.01%
Industrial	107	0.5%
Open Lands	2,325	11.1%
Outdoor Recreation	561	2.7%
Quarry	143	0.7%
Residential	762	3.7%
Transportation	538	2.5%
Water	204	0.9%
Woodlands	9,109	43.6%
Total Acres	20,884	100.0%

Source: NCWRPC GIS

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

In Wisconsin, over 2.5 million acres are enrolled under the FCL and the MFL programs. Land set aside under the FCL required at least 40 acres in one quarter-quarter section and the MFL requires at least 20 acres (as of October 2016) of contiguous forest land. Landowners may close to the public up to 320 acres of their forest lands set aside under the MFL. The remaining program acres must be open to public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing and cross-country skiing. Landowners choose a 25 or 50 year contract and pay an Acreage Share Amount as part of their tax bill in lieu of taxes.

Development Trends

A general preference has been expressed to cluster commercial and industrial development and minimize scattered rural residential development. As such, new subdivisions and development should be encouraged to locate near the Village of Marathon City or other areas that have available sewer service.

Future Land Use

Consistency between Land Use and Zoning

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

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

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



Cattle

Issues

- **Preservation of Natural Environment:** The Town is interested in retaining the rural atmosphere and controlling growth to minimize impacts on the natural environment. The Rib River corridor has been identified as an area that may need to be protected from development.
- **Farmland Preservation:** With changes in the farm economy and a local decrease in active farming, farms are increasingly being bought for development of single-family homes. Preserving farming is a concern, however the farm economy is subject to national and global economic trends. However, local communities can take steps to encourage preservation of prime farm soils and direct development to areas where impacts on active farming can be minimized. Exclusive agriculture zoning is one of the primary tools to protect prime farmland from development.

Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Policies:

Goal 1: *Preserve prime agricultural lands.*

1. To discourage conversion of active farmland to rural residential lots.
2. Explore programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, that seeks to preserve farmland.
3. To maintain exclusive agricultural zoning.
4. To explore adopting regulations that restrict the size of agricultural operations, including maximum herd numbers.
 - a. The Town will support the preservation of agricultural lands.
 - b. Explore working with Marathon County, or local communities to host a workshop on agricultural preservation.
 - c. Express concerns about large mega-farm operations to members of the County Board, local legislators, and other individuals.
 - d. Take steps to further strengthen Exclusive-Ag zoning to discourage development of subdivisions, and protect landowners from public utility assessments.

Goal 2: *Encourage clustering of land uses.*

1. To consider possible preferred areas for residential development.
2. To consider possible areas for commercial and industrial development.
 - a. A. The Town supports the clustering of similar land uses, subject to the local Zoning Board recommendations.
 - b. B. To separate incompatible land uses.
 - c. D. To encourage barriers between potentially conflicting land uses with open spaces, forests, or other barriers.
 - d. E. Maintain a Zoning Board composed of well-informed members.

Goal 3: *Encourage preservation of the rural landscape.*

1. To discourage conversion of active farmland to rural residential lots located next to the roadway.
 - a. A. Marathon will maintain a rural landscape.
 - b. B. Adopt a resolution to proclaim the long-term rural desires of the Town.
 - c. C. Encourage county and state assistance in developing programs to retain rural heritage.

Legend

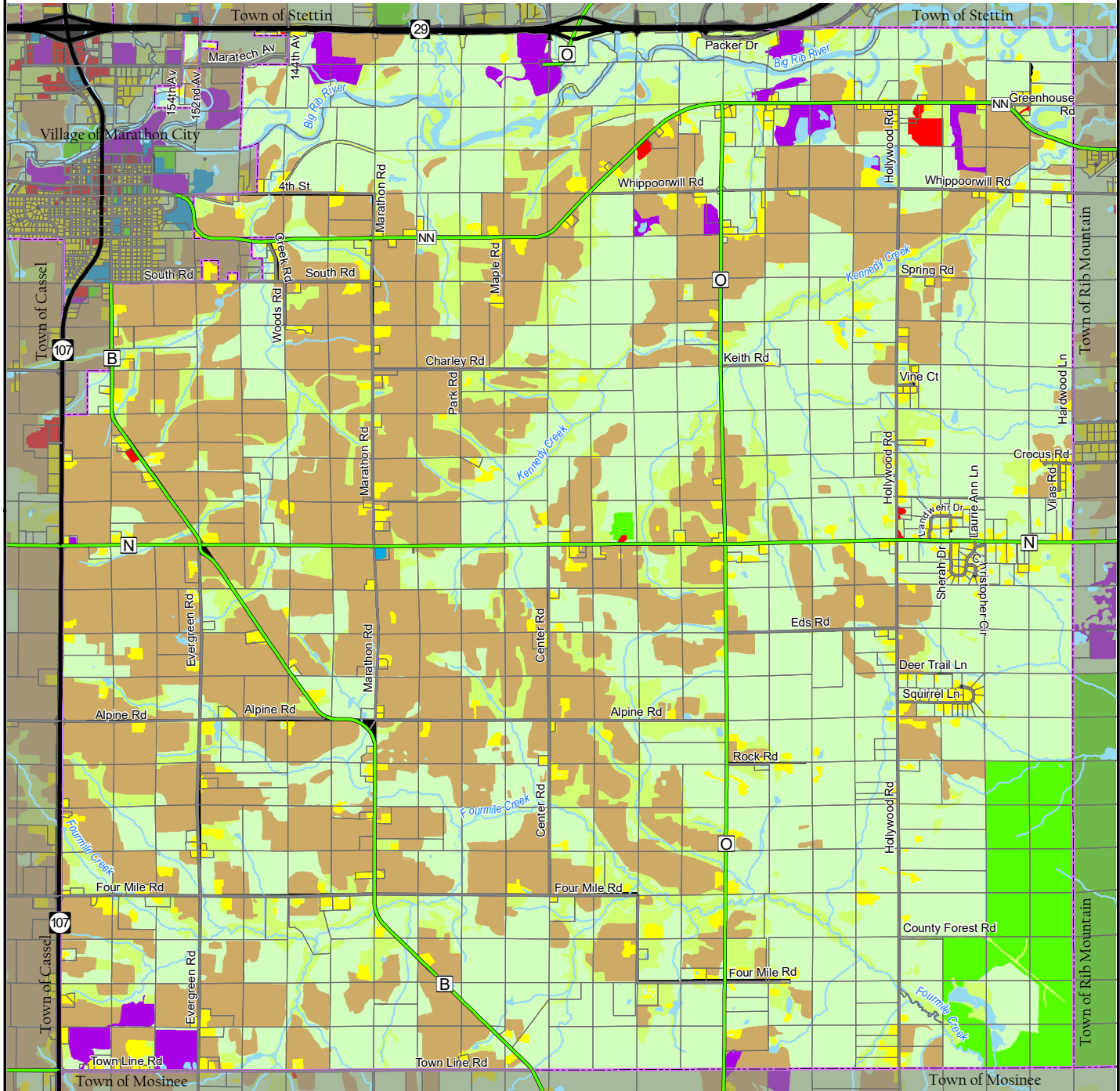
Minor Civil Divisions	Agriculture	Outdoor Recreation
US Highway	Commercial	Residential
State Highways	Governmental / Institutional	Transportation
County Highways	Industrial	Water
Local Roads	Open Lands	Woodlands
Parcels		

Map 5

Existing Generalized Land Use

Town of Marathon

Marathon County, Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co
2015 Airphoto Interpretation

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



North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

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

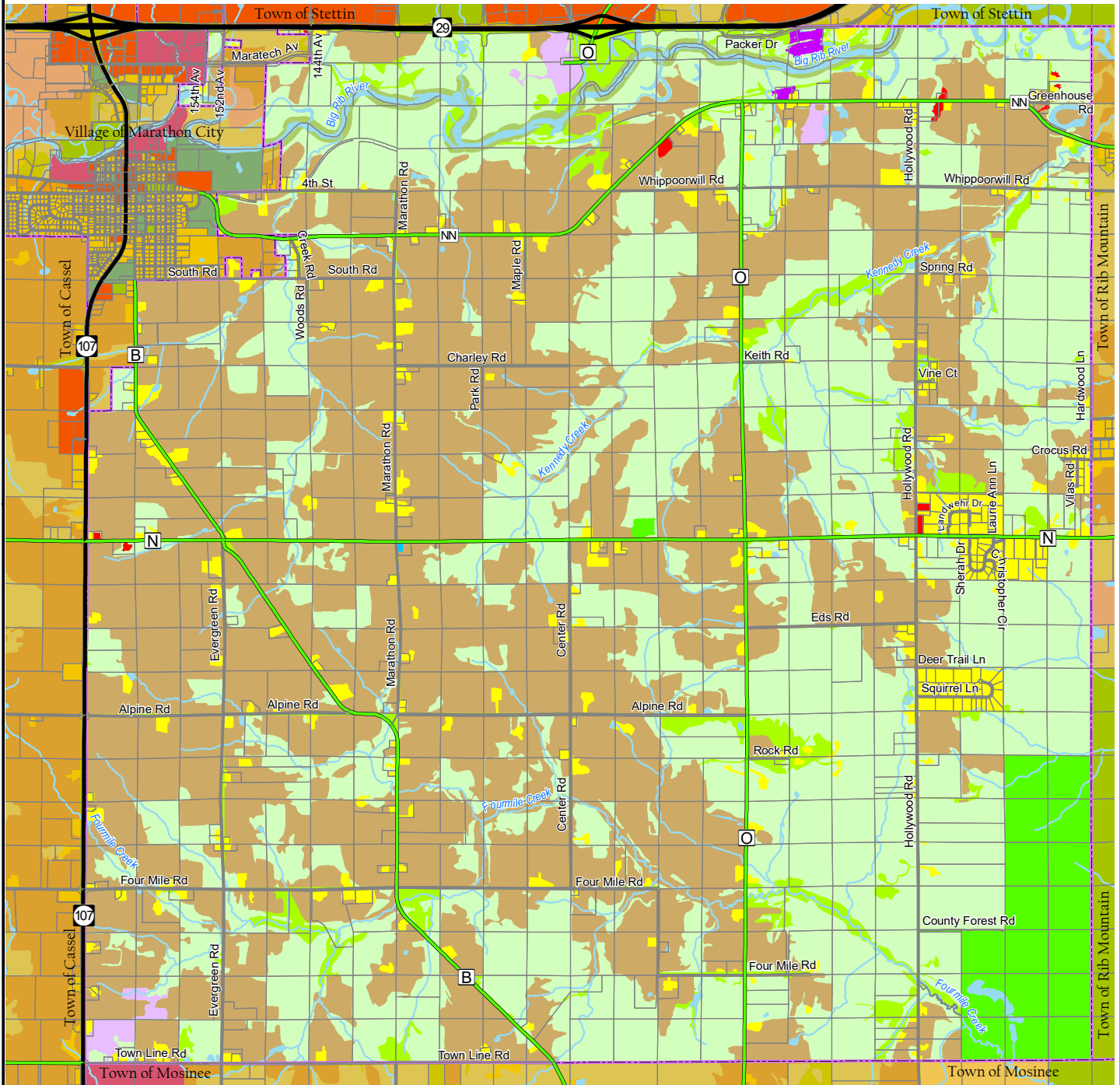
Legend

Minor Civil Divisions	Agriculture	Woodlands
US Highway	Agricultural/Residential	Public/Quasi-Public
State Highways	Commercial	Quarry
County Highways	Industrial	Outdoor Recreation
Local Roads	Multi-Family Residential	River Corridor
Parcels	Single Family Residential	Water
	Open Lands	

Map 6

Future Land Use Plan

Town of Marathon
Marathon County, Wisconsin



0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Source: WI DNR, NCWRPC, Marathon Co

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



North Central
Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission

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

Page left intentionally blank.

9. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

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

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

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

Local and Regional Level Cooperation

Shared Services

Ambulance, 1st Responder, and Fire protection are shared services.

Cooperative Practices

Surrounding Towns

The Town has road maintenance agreements with 3 other municipalities. The Town shares the cemetery with 3 other municipalities.

Marathon County

The County provides several services to the Town including: law enforcement through the Sheriff's Department, 911 dispatch service, access permits, maintenance and improvement of County Highways,

planning and permitting oversight regarding shoreland, wetland and floodplain regulation, private sewage system regulation, and animal waste and manure management. The County provides oversight on compliance with County soil and water conservation policy for the Farmland Preservation Program. The County also owns property in the southeast portion of the Town. The Town also participates in Marathon County general zoning and County Shoreland zoning.

Regional Agencies

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

State and Federal Level Cooperation

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

Existing or Potential Conflicts

Annexation

The Village of Marathon City is located on the northwest boundary of the Town and it is likely there will be annexations in the near future. In Wisconsin, neither incorporated municipalities nor towns can initiate annexation. The process is driven by individual property owners (or developers) who petition for annexation into a city to receive sewer and water service. While towns often view annexation as a means to take their territory, cities and villages view annexations as a means to provide a more logical pattern of development and efficient provision of services.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goals, Objectives, and Policies:

Goal 1: *Maintain appropriate tax base to provide sufficient service levels.*

- 1.** Work with the Village of Marathon City and City of Wausau to prevent large annexations that would negatively affect the tax base of the township.
- 2.** Develop boundary agreements with the Village of Marathon City and City of Wausau to determine the extent of future growth into the township.
- 3.** Analyze future developments for their impact on the community's tax base in relation to the services that they would require.
 - a.* The Town of Marathon will work to maintain sufficient tax base to continue to provide necessary services to its residents.
 - b.* Stress with the Village of Marathon City displays the importance of communicating annexation plans and requests.
 - c.* Attempt to develop boundary agreements with the surrounding communities to help maintain current town boundaries.
 - d.* Analyze new housing developments for their impact of service provision and infrastructure development.

Goal 2: *Maintain relationship with Marathon County board and committees.*

- 1.** To attend regular meetings of County boards and committees where local issues are discussed.
- 2.** To ensure that the Marathon County Forestry, Recreation and Zoning Committee abide by Town recommendations before granting permits.
 - a.* The Town of Marathon will engage in regular communication with Marathon County board and committees.
 - b.* Encourage County board and committees to uphold Town of Marathon recommendations.
 - c.* Provide all governing bodies with regular updates, or meeting minutes, from official Town or Marathon meetings when requested.
 - d.* Provide County board and committees with local ordinances that may affect County decision-making.

10. IMPLEMENTATION

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

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

Implementation Tools

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

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

Zoning Ordinance and Map

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

incompatible uses and by maintaining standards that ensure development will not negatively impact the community's character or environment.

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

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

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

Subdivision (Land Division) Ordinance

Subdivision regulations serve as an important function by ensuring the orderly development of unplatted and/or undeveloped land. These regulations may set forth reasonable regulations for lot sizes, road access, street design, public utilities, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and other improvements necessary to ensure that new development will be an asset. The Board makes the final decisions on the content of the subdivision ordinance. These decisions are preceded by public hearings and recommendations of the plan commission.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

This is an ongoing financial planning program that allows local communities to plan ahead for capital expenditures and minimize unplanned expenses. A CIP prioritizes expenditures in a way that can influence where and when development or redevelopment occurs, and can be a powerful tool in implementing the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Annual Operating Budget

The Town prepares a budget each year. It is a statement of the prioritization and allocation of financial resources to achieve certain objectives over a specific time period. The budget is based on the needs of city residents, priorities set by the town board, and the related work plans identified by each department. The budget and the services provided by that budget are instrumental in achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

Plan Adoption, Monitoring, and Amendments

While this comprehensive plan is intended to provide a long-term framework to guide development and public spending decisions, it must also respond to the continuous stream of changes that occur in the community and/or region that may not have been foreseen when the plan was initially adopted. It is appropriate that some elements of the plan are rarely amended while others are subject to updating on a more regular basis. Plan maps should also be updated periodically. In general, key maps, such as the future land use map, should be reviewed annually to make sure they are still current.

Plan Adoption

The first step in implementing this plan involves adoption of the plan by local officials. The formal review and adoption process involves plan review by the Plan Commission (or other planning committee) who must adopt the plan by resolution of majority vote. The Plan Commission recommendation is forwarded to the Town Board who must adopt the plan by ordinance (of majority vote). A public hearing is required to allow public comment on the ordinance prior to Board final action to adopt the plan. Adoption formalizes the plan document as the framework to guide local development decisions over the next 20 years. The adopted plan should also be recognized as a tool for communicating the community's land use policy and goals and objectives regarding coordination of growth and development.

Plan Use, Monitoring and Evaluation

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

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

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

Plan Amendments

The Marathon Comprehensive Plan may be amended at any time by the Town Board following the same process described above for initial Plan adoption, regardless of how minor the proposed amendment or change. Amendments may be appropriate throughout the lifecycle of the plan, particularly if new issues emerge or trends change. These amendments will typically consist of minor changes to the plan text or maps. Large-scale changes or frequent amendments to meet individual development proposals should be avoided or the plan loses integrity. A list of criteria to determine the merits of proposed amendments is included in Table 10.1.

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

Plan Updates

According to the State comprehensive planning law, comprehensive plans must be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to the more routine amendments described above, plan updates often involve re-writing of whole sections of the plan document and significant changes to supporting maps. A plan update should include a thorough examination of the community's goals and objectives based on an analysis of current growth trends and major changes that have occurred since the plan was initially adopted or last amended. Plan updates must be formally adopted following the same procedure described above for initial plan adoption. See Table 10.1.

Consistency among Plan Elements

The State of Wisconsin planning legislation requires that the Implementation Element describe how each of the required elements will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the plan. Since Marathon completed all planning elements simultaneously, no known inconsistencies exist. It is noted that some overlap naturally exists between the nine plan elements.

Action Plan

The table below provides a detailed list of major actions to complete in order to implement this comprehensive plan. It compiles the major short, mid, and long-term priorities described in each of the nine plan elements. It also identifies the parties that will play key roles in implementing the actions.

Table 10.2 is intended to be used by local officials in setting priorities for capital budgeting and project assignment. It is expected that this table will be reviewed annually and revised, as necessary, to respond to changing priorities, financial limitations, and other unforeseen events. It should be noted that many of the actions require considerable cooperation with others, including the citizens of Marathon, committees, and other local/county/state agencies.

Priority ranking is defined as follows:

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

Table 10.1: Criteria to Consider When Reviewing Plan Changes

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

Source: Town of Marathon

Table 10.2: Implementation Actions

Natural Resources Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Report instances of possible groundwater contamination to the WDNR.	Town Board	Immediate
Obtain educational materials from the Wisconsin Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater.	Town Board	Short-Term
Have available for owners of private shoreland information on decreasing runoff, improving water quality.	Town Board	Short-Term
Observe the Rib River Corridor Floodplain 150-foot set back	Plan Commission Town Board	Immediate
Have information available to owners of private forestland regarding preservation programs.	Town Board	Short-Term
Encourage developers to maintain as much forestland as possible in new developments.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Land Use Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Acquire pamphlets and other informational materials on agricultural preservation tools.	Town Board	Short-Term
Express concerns about large mega-farm operations	Town Board	Immediate
Take steps to further strengthen Exclusive-Ag zoning	Town Board	Short-Term
Maintain a Plan Commission composed of well-informed members.	Town Board	Immediate
Adopt a resolution to proclaim the long-term rural desires of the Town.	Town Board	Immediate
Encourage county and state assistance in developing programs to retain rural heritage.	Town Board	Immediate
Transportation Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Communicate with county and state transportation agencies on a regular basis.	Town Board	Ongoing
Participate in state transportation improvement discussions, especially concerning STH 29 and STH107.	Town Board	Immediate
Perform biennial roadway evaluation.	Town Board	Ongoing
Explore using free online software through WDOT to streamline funding allocations for repair.	Town Board	Short-Term
Discuss roadway condition and determine in-need areas at annual and other Town Board meetings.	Town Board	Short-Term
Discuss speeding concerns and determine areas to focus enforcement efforts at the annual and other town meetings.	Town Board County Sheriff	Immediate
Utilities Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Increase drinking water quality awareness.	Town Board	Immediate
Ensure adequate water resources exist as part of the recommendation process for development proposals.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Perform annual review of service provision costs.	Town Board	Ongoing
Communicate with surrounding communities the willingness to share costs.	Town Board	Immediate
Participate in long-term facilities and equipment planning with service-providing entities.	Town Board	Immediate
Annually review contracts with service providers and evaluate delivery of services.	Town Board	Ongoing
Participate in recruitment efforts, especially concerning fire and emergency response, with providing agencies.	Town Board	Immediate

Table 10.2: Implementation Actions, Cont.

Ensure adequate condition of Town Hall by performing periodic review.	Town Board	Ongoing
Make repairs and improvements to existing facilities on a timely basis.	Town Board	Ongoing
Appropriately budget for planned improvements incrementally over time.	Town Board	Immediate
Conduct public listening sessions with the community when plans for a new community facility are being discussed.	Town Board	Immediate
Housing Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Maintain a Plan Commission of well-informed members.	Town Board	Immediate
Observe land use plan.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Consider the extent of growth desired by the township.	Town Board	Ongoing
Observe current zoning requirements and the uniform dwelling code	Town Board Plan Commission	Ongoing
Cultural Resources Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Contact the Marathon County Historical Society for tips on how to inventory significant structures.	Town Board	Short-Term
Economic Development Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Participate in regional programs aimed at improving the agricultural economy.	Town Board	Immediate
Review ordinances to ensure that they allow secondary agricultural businesses within the Town of Marathon.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Attempt to work with surrounding communities to develop growth areas where commercial development is encouraged.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Hold public meetings, if necessary, to determine the best sites to develop commercial growth areas.	Town Board Plan Commission	Short-Term
Determine proper buffers between potential commercially used lands and residential or agricultural land.	Plan Commission	Immediate
Direct development interests to higher-traffic areas, and to areas with business-supporting infrastructure.	Plan Commission	Immediate
To attempt to work with surrounding communities to develop a mutually beneficial “regional” business plan that allows each community to attract the commercial development they desire.	Town Board	Short-Term
Encourage residents to patronize local establishments for goods and services.	Town Board	Immediate
Intergovernmental Cooperation Actions	Who is responsible?	Priority
Stress with the Village of Marathon City and City of Wausau the importance of communicating annexation plans and requests with the Town.	Town Board Plan Commission	Ongoing
Attempt to develop boundary agreements with the surrounding communities to help maintain current town boundaries.	Town Board Plan Commission	Immediate
Analyze new housing developments for their impact of service provision and infrastructure development.	Plan Commission	Short-Term
Provide all governing bodies with regular updates, or meeting minutes, from official Town or Marathon meetings when requested.	Town Board	Immediate
Provide County board and committees with local ordinances that may affect County decision-making.	Town Board	Immediate

Source: Town of Marathon

APPENDIX A: ADOPTION RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCE

Plan Commission Resolution

Resolution # 001

Town of Marathon, Marathon County, Wisconsin

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

Adoption of the Town Comprehensive Plan.

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

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

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

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

Adopted this 17th day of July, 2017.

Anton Ekstrand
Chairman Town of Marathon
Zoning & Planning Committee

Mark Keller
[Signature]

Attest:

Andrew Steuber
Secretary Town of Marathon
Zoning and planning Commission

ORDINANCE FOR PLAN ADOPTION

ORDINANCE # 2017-1

Town of Marathon, Marathon County, Wisconsin

SECTION I – TITLE

The title of this ordinance is the Town of Marathon Comprehensive Plan Ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is for the Town to lawfully adopt a comprehensive plan.

SECTION II – AUTHORITY

The town board of the Town of Marathon has authority under its village powers under s. 60.22, Wis. stats., its power to appoint a town plan commission under ss. 60.62 (4) and 62.23 (1), Wis. stats., and under s. 66.1001 (4), Wis. stats., to adopt this ordinance.

SECTION III – ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

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

SECTION IV – TOWN PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

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

SECTION V – PUBLIC HEARING

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

SECTION VI – ADOPTION OF TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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

SECTION VII – SEVERABILITY

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

SECTION VIII – EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance is effective on publication or posting. The town clerk shall properly post or publish this ordinance as required under s. 60.80, Wis. stats.

Adopted this 17th day of August 2017.

[Signatures of town board]

Keith Langenhahn
Bernie Dick
David Krautwaser

Attest: *Kelly S Blume*

[Signature of town clerk]



Town of Marathon Comprehensive Plan 2017