

# ***Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update***



***Adopted August 3, 2015***

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## **Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan Update**

Adoption Date: August 3, 2015

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **Issues and Opportunities**

### **2015 Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan Update Prologue**

A comprehensive plan is intended to be a living, dynamic document that sets an overall vision while maintaining flexibility to efficiently respond to opportunities and challenges all communities face. A comprehensive plan's vision is generally considered to be over a 20-year horizon; however, keeping the same plan unchanged for 20 years will lead to the document becoming irrelevant if it is not occasionally updated to reflect current realities for a community. The 2005 Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan recognized this need and included an implementation recommendation of reviewing and revising the comprehensive plan at a minimum of every 10 years to update background data, review the goals and objectives, and evaluate the overall implementation of the plan. It is this recommendation the 2015 Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan Update is intended to address.

As this is an update, much of the background data from the 2005 plan is still relevant and therefore is not changed. However, with regard to specific instances where additional and/or more recent data is available such as new census data, population projections, and existing land uses, the maps, graphs, and recommendations reflect the new data.

It is anticipated within another 10 years, consistent with the recommendation in the 2005 plan, this update will be supplanted by a new Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan. In the meantime, this comprehensive plan update provides the necessary bridge to ensure development decisions continue to be considered and acted upon in a manner consistent with the original vision in the 2005 plan, while addressing the issues and opportunities of 2014.

### **Introduction**

Following Native American settlement, Rockland was settled by European immigrants in the mid 1800's of mainly German, Dutch, and Irish heritage—farming families looking for a better life. The settlers found forested lands to build homes and when the land was cleared, the land produced abundant crops to feed their families.

The first homes built in Rockland were small, log homes lit by candles or kerosene lamps. As the settlers prospered, small businesses started in the area including: a saw mill, a feed mill, and some cheese factories. Rockland had five one-room schoolhouses until the 1960's when they were consolidated into the surrounding school districts. Rockland held its first annual town meeting in 1856, eight short years after Wisconsin achieved statehood.

Rockland is a town of about 22 square miles located in central Brown County. It is bounded by the City of De Pere and the Town of Ledgeview on the north, the Town of Glenmore on the east, the Town of Wrightstown on the south, and the picturesque Fox River on the west.

A unique feature of Rockland is the Niagara Escarpment (“the ledge”) as pictured above, which runs through the town from north to south. This natural



feature along with the river boundary creates beautiful home sites. Another feature of Rockland is the Fox River Trail which provides walking and bicycling opportunities.

The Town of Rockland today has a relatively dispersed developmental pattern. Large, single-family homes are predominant along the Fox River and in the rural subdivisions that have developed in the Town. Active farming operations dominate Rockland’s land use in the central, southern, and eastern portions of the Town. Large lots with single-family homes near the escarpment are rapidly being developed, endangering the natural characteristics of the ledge. Rockland’s location within Brown County is depicted in Figure 1-1.

## **Purpose and Intent**

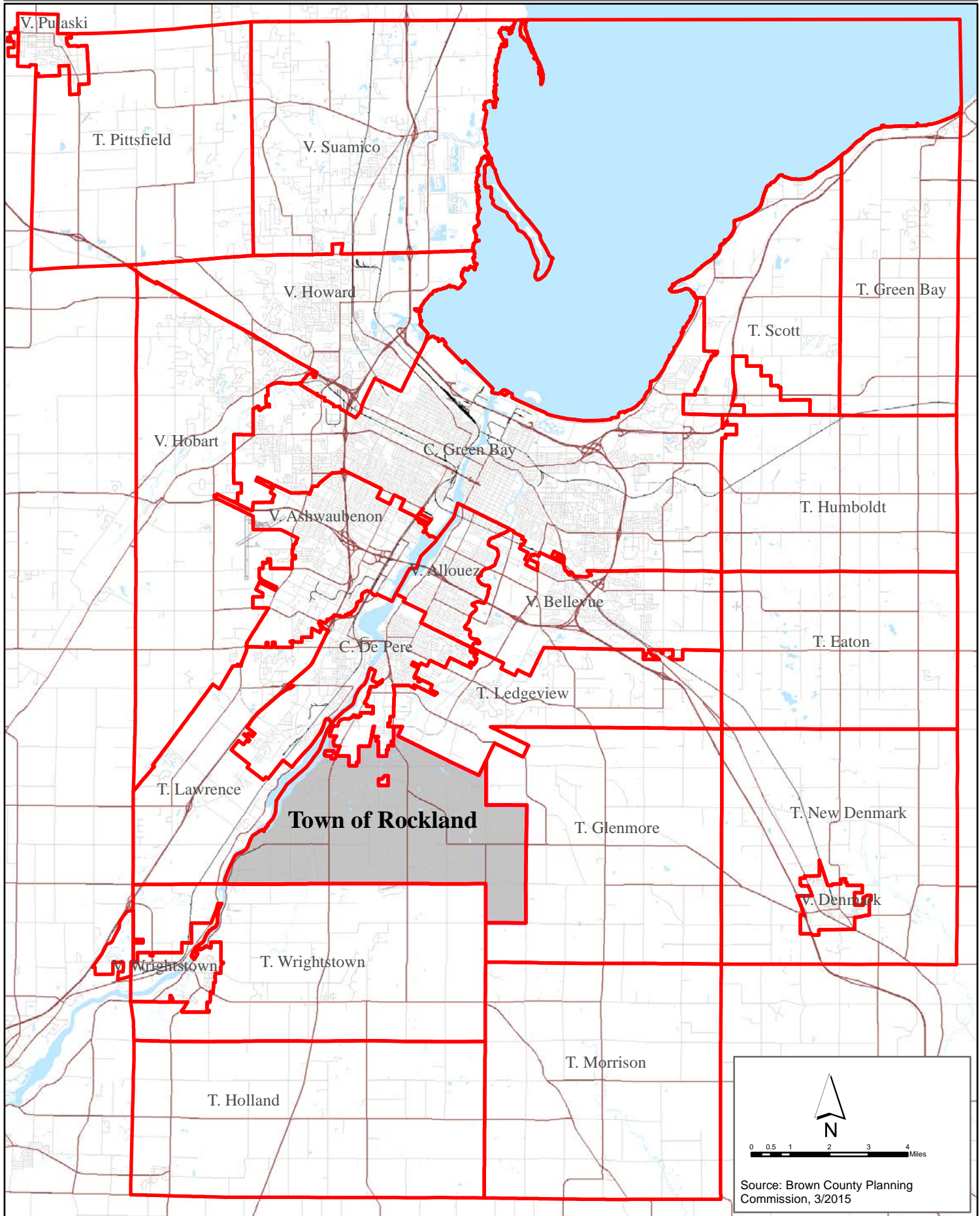
A comprehensive plan is an official public document adopted by ordinance by the local government that sets forth its major policies concerning the future physical development of the community. The primary purposes of this plan are to generate goals for attaining a desirable development pattern, devise strategies and recommendations the Town can follow to achieve its desired development pattern, and meet the requirements of the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law. It is intended that the recommendations reflect the 14 local comprehensive planning goals prescribed in state statute and listed in this section.

1. Promotion of the redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructures and public services and the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
2. Encouragement of neighborhood designs that support a range of transportation choices.
3. Protection of natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, lakes, woodlands, open spaces, and groundwater resources.
4. Protection of economically productive areas, including farmland and forests.
5. Encouragement of land uses, densities, and regulations that promote efficient development patterns and relatively low municipal, state governmental, and utility costs.





Figure 1-1  
**General Location**  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



6. Preservation of cultural, historic, and archeological sites.
7. Encouragement of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government.
8. Building of community identity by revitalizing main streets and enforcing design standards.
9. Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for individuals of all income levels throughout each community.
10. Providing adequate infrastructure and public services and an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.
11. Promoting the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities at the state, regional, and local levels.
12. Balancing individual property rights with community interests and goals.
13. Planning and development of land uses that create or preserve varied and unique urban and rural communities.
14. Providing an integrated, efficient, and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety and that meets the needs of all citizens, including transit-dependent and disabled citizens.

The Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan is adopted by ordinance and should be used by Town officials when revising and administering its zoning and other land-related ordinances. The plan should be the basis for siting future developments and should be a guiding vision so that there is a consistent policy to follow and a clear goal for the future for the residents of the Town of Rockland. The maps and graphics contained within this plan are general in nature and are based on the best information available and should not be utilized for detailed site planning.

## **Comprehensive Planning Process**

The most recent comprehensive plan for the Town of Rockland was adopted in 2005 and was in need of its 10-year update. The Brown County Planning Commission (BCPC) was contracted to provide professional planning assistance. Staff from BCPC prepared the background information and the recommendations of this plan based upon the consensus opinions of the town planning commission members, public input, 2004 town-wide visioning session, and the Comprehensive Planning Law.

This document is comprised of nine parts reflecting the requirements in the Comprehensive Planning Law: Issues and Opportunities; Housing; Transportation; Utilities and Community Facilities; Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources; Economic Development; Intergovernmental Cooperation; Land Use; and Implementation. Although all of these chapters have their own goals, objectives, and recommendations, the elements are all interrelated, and, therefore, the goals, objectives, and recommendations are also. This plan was developed with the interrelationships of the elements in mind.

The future land use plan contained within the Land Use Chapter of the comprehensive plan provides the vision of how the Town of Rockland could look 20 years from now. There are recommendations regarding the location, density, and design of future

development, and these recommendations are the cornerstone of the overall plan. The future land use plan is the composite of the goals, objectives, and recommendations contained in all of the chapters.

The final part of the plan involves implementing the recommendations. A comprehensive plan is only effective when it is actually used. This includes both using the plan on a routine basis when making policy and administrative decisions and when creating and revising municipal ordinances, such as the zoning ordinance, to control and guide development consistent with the plan.

This document is not the end of the planning process. For the Town of Rockland to succeed in achieving its vision for the future, planning must be a continual, ongoing exercise.

## **Community Goals and Objectives**

A major element of the comprehensive planning process is the identification of Rockland's goals and objectives. This identification is often difficult, as values held by citizens are highly elusive and complex. People vary widely in their choice of values and the degree to which they will accept or tolerate differing attitudes.

In order to identify the Town's priorities for community development, as well as key issues and concerns to be addressed, the Brown County Planning Commission facilitated a public visioning session on January 22, 2004, at the Rockland town hall that utilized the nominal group method. The results from the visioning session were then mailed to all Rockland residents and property owners to develop a ranking of the top issues within the Town. The Rockland Planning Commission updated the community priorities to account for items that were completed or no longer relevant and new issues or opportunities that have come to the forefront since 2004. The following list identifies the top issues resulting from the 2004 visioning session and survey, and 2015 planning commission update:

- Maintain the rural atmosphere of the Town by protecting Rockland's agricultural heritage.
- Encourage the development of dense conservation subdivisions with on-site utilities until public utilities become available.
- Maintain a reasonable Town tax rate.
- Ensure development does not adversely affect the safety and supply of drinking water and investigate the feasibility of developing a public drinking water supply.
- Maintain tax base and control development by developing a boundary agreement with De Pere and shared services agreements with all neighboring communities.
- Plan for the impacts of the Southern Bridge across the Fox River that connects Red Maple and Rockland Roads.
- Attract businesses and specifically agricultural-related businesses along STH 57 and CTH PP.
- Brand/market the Town of Rockland by building the Town's identity through signage and quality design requirements.
- Maintain quality sanitary sewage disposal options.

- Work with the adjoining property owners, surrounding communities, and Brown County to plan for the reconstruction of CTH ZZ.

The nominal group session, town-wide survey, input from the citizens advisory committee and planning commission, the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law, and sound planning principles formed the basis for the development of the goals and objectives of the plan.

Goals and objectives each have a distinct and different purpose within the planning process. Goals describe desired situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long-range. They represent an end to be sought; although, they may never actually be fully attained. Objectives describe more specific purposes, which should be sought in order to advance toward the achievement of the overall goals. The third part of the planning process – policies and programs – is discussed in each chapter specific to that comprehensive plan element.

The comprehensive plan and future development of the Town are based on the following goals and objectives.

### **Land Use Goal**

To manage the future growth and land uses within the Town to ensure orderly, balanced development that maintains Rockland's rural character.

#### **Objectives**

1. Identify, adopt, and implement planning tools and techniques that minimize the impact of development on Rockland's rural character.
2. Consider the provision of public sewer and water to focus development in certain areas of the Town.
3. Ensure that private property rights are protected by giving landowners and residents a voice in planning and development proposals.
4. Discourage strip commercial development in favor of clustering commercial activities at designated nodes along state and county highways.
5. Promote additional small-scale commercial and industrial developments that contribute to the Town's agricultural economy and provide goods or services for residents.
6. Balance individual development opportunities with maintaining the Town's rural character.
7. Ensure the compatibility of adjoining land uses for both existing and future development.
8. Coordinate the layout of new developments with the need for traffic circulation and pedestrian facilities.

### **Transportation Goal**

To develop a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system that serves all Rockland residents.

#### **Objectives**

1. Encourage residents to utilize the Fox River Trail as an alternative to driving to work or other activities.
2. Maximize street connectivity within and between subdivisions to distribute traffic evenly and maximize mobility and accessibility for all residents.
3. Maximize safety and accessibility at the Town's intersections.
4. Use Wisconsin's Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system to evaluate the condition of the Town's roads and prioritize them for maintenance.
5. Consider traffic calming techniques in existing residential areas where slower traffic is desired.
6. Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and Brown County to prepare for the land use and transportation impacts of the Southern Bridge.
7. Continue to work with the surrounding communities, Brown County, and WisDOT to plan the Southern Bridge, STH 32/57, and other highway corridors that affect the Town.
8. Encourage the construction of narrow streets to slow traffic through new residential neighborhoods, minimize construction and maintenance costs, and maximize safety for all residents.
9. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections to destinations (such as parks, schools, employment centers, and shopping areas) and between/within subdivisions.
10. Include bicycle facilities on all state, county, and applicable town roads.
11. Educate bicyclists on following the rules of the road for riding and stopping, particularly on the Fox-River State Trail.
12. Work with the adjoining property owners, surrounding communities, and Brown County to plan for the reconstruction of CTH ZZ.
13. Develop a long-range plan to reconstruct Town subdivision roads that don't meet existing standards.
14. Work with Brown County to apply for grants to help fund the development of the Town's multi-modal transportation system.

### **Economic Development Goal**

Broaden the tax base and strengthen the Town's economy and employment base through agricultural, commercial, and industrial activity.

#### **Objectives**

1. Encourage businesses and industries to promote environmentally-friendly practices, such as recycling, stormwater management, erosion control, and pollution controls.
2. Identify appropriate areas for additional industrial and commercial activities within the Town.
3. Promote agriculture-related business opportunities.
4. Utilize government programs to aid in the retention of existing and attraction or promotion of new industrial and commercial activities.
5. Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized, vacant, and brownfield areas.
6. Recognize farming as an important component of the local economy and encourage those farmers who wish to remain active in the Town.



7. Work with telecommunications companies to improve wireless communication and Internet capabilities in the Town.
8. Enhance the Town's economic development partnerships with agencies, such as Advance, Brown County Planning, Wisconsin Department of Administration, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.

### **Housing Goal**

Provide a variety of quality housing opportunities for all segments of the Town's population.

#### **Objectives**

1. Promote an adequate supply and mix of housing types for individuals of all life stages, physical abilities, and income levels.
2. Ensure residential development is up to a standard consistent with the Town of Rockland.
3. Develop and implement a property maintenance code for nuisance issues like junk cars and building dilapidation.
4. Identify programs to improve aging residential stock and assist first-time homebuyers.
5. Promote the concept of "visitable" home design in remodeling projects and universal design in new homes.

### **Utilities and Community Facilities Goal**

Promote a quality living environment through the timely provision and maintenance of recreation, utility, emergency, and other public facilities and services affecting the health, safety, and well-being of Rockland residents and businesses.

#### **Objectives**

1. Monitor the quality and quantity of groundwater in Rockland to ensure a safe drinking water supply.
2. Investigate the possibility of future public sewer and water service to the Town.
3. Continue to utilize and maintain quality onsite sewage disposal systems in the Town while evaluating future needs and opportunities.
4. Evaluate the need for additional public and emergency services as Rockland continues to grow.
5. Coordinate future parks and greenspace with adjoining communities and the recommendations in the Brown County Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan.
6. Maintain the Town's existing public facilities and replace aging/obsolete infrastructure and equipment in a timely fashion.
7. Develop a comprehensive stormwater management plan and informational pamphlet to address water quantity issues (such as flooding) and water quality issues (through the protection of wetlands and stream habitats).
8. Encourage the placement of electrical utility lines underground.
9. Ensure adequate levels of other services and facilities to meet the needs of a growing community.

### **Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources Goal**

Capitalize on the amenities offered by the Town's natural, cultural, and agricultural resources and integrate these features into future development to enhance the rural character of Rockland and the quality of life of its residents.

#### **Objectives**

1. Preserve wetlands, floodplains, and other environmental areas to link various parts of the Town and to serve as wildlife corridors, pedestrian trails, and stormwater management areas.
2. Enhance public accessibility to the waters of the Fox and East Rivers.
3. Recognize the Niagara Escarpment as a critical natural resource and identify tools to maintain it (as much as possible) in a natural state.
4. Encourage developments that enhance the relationship between the natural landscape and future development through the use of various subdivision design techniques.
5. Enhance the appearance and rural community identity of the Town through the use of commercial and industrial building design standards, landscaping, attractive signage, and other beautification techniques.
6. Identify and encourage the preservation of historic and scenic sites in the Town.
7. Identify the productive agricultural land in the Town and identify methods to encourage farming on this land.
8. Inform new residents that Rockland has active farming operations and sights, sounds, and smells that are associated with them.
9. Recognize the need for nonmetallic mineral resources while requiring quarries to be operated in an environmentally sensitive manner.
10. Encourage Town farmers to work with governmental agencies in implementing agricultural practices that lessen stormwater runoff and erosion.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal**

To work with the surrounding communities, De Pere and Wrightstown school districts, Brown County, and State of Wisconsin to cooperatively plan and develop the Town and region.

#### **Objectives**

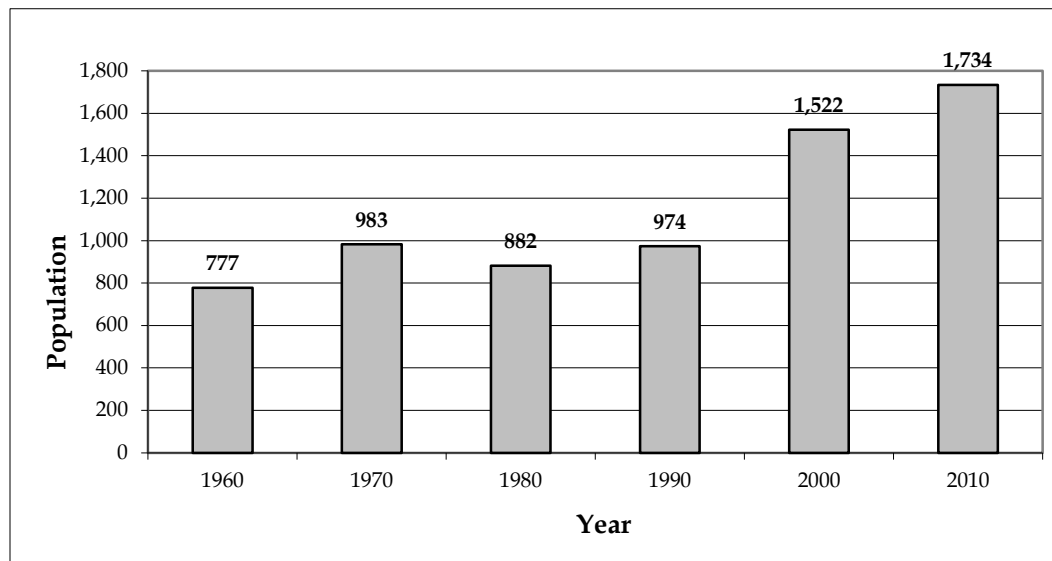
1. Continue to negotiate with the City of De Pere in developing a comprehensive boundary agreement.
2. Work with the De Pere and Wrightstown school districts to project future school-aged populations so that the districts can accurately plan for future facilities.
3. Coordinate with the surrounding communities regarding municipal services, land use decisions, and address other issues of mutual concern.
4. Continue working with the surrounding communities, Brown County, and WisDOT to plan the Southern Bridge, STH 32/57, and other highway corridors that serve the Town.

5. Identify existing and potential conflicts with the surrounding communities and work with the communities and Brown County Planning Commission to resolve these conflicts.
6. Continue to work with the surrounding communities and Brown County to develop an off-street trail system that serves the Town and region.
7. Identify potential partnerships with other local, county, state, and regional agencies, as well as with nonprofit and private enterprises.
8. Explore future opportunities to consolidate the provision of Town services with other communities.

## Demographic Trends

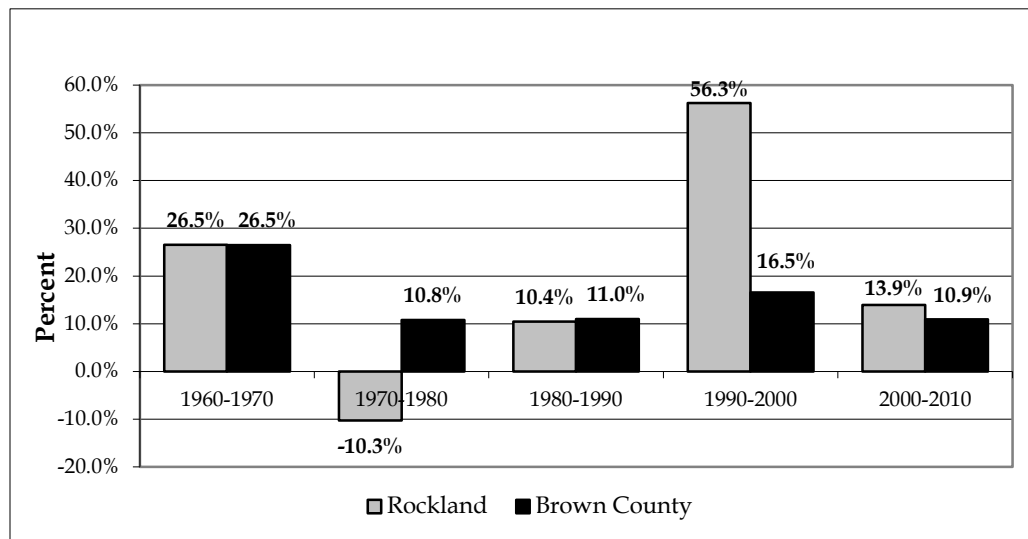
The Town of Rockland has grown from a population of 777 in 1960 to a population of 1,734 in 2010. This is an overall 50-year increase of 957 residents as depicted in Figure 1-2. Early in this 50-year period, the population fluctuated between increasing and decreasing residents. However, since 1980, the population trend in the Town of Rockland has been on the increase, with an additional 92 residents between 1980 and 1990, 548 residents between 1990 and 2000, and 212 residents between 2000 and 2010. Figure 1-3 shows the growth as a percentage compared to Brown County.

**Figure 1-2: Town of Rockland Historic Growth Trend, 1960-2010**



Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1960-2010 Decennial Census.

**Figure 1-3: Town of Rockland and Brown County Percent Population Growth, 1960-2010**

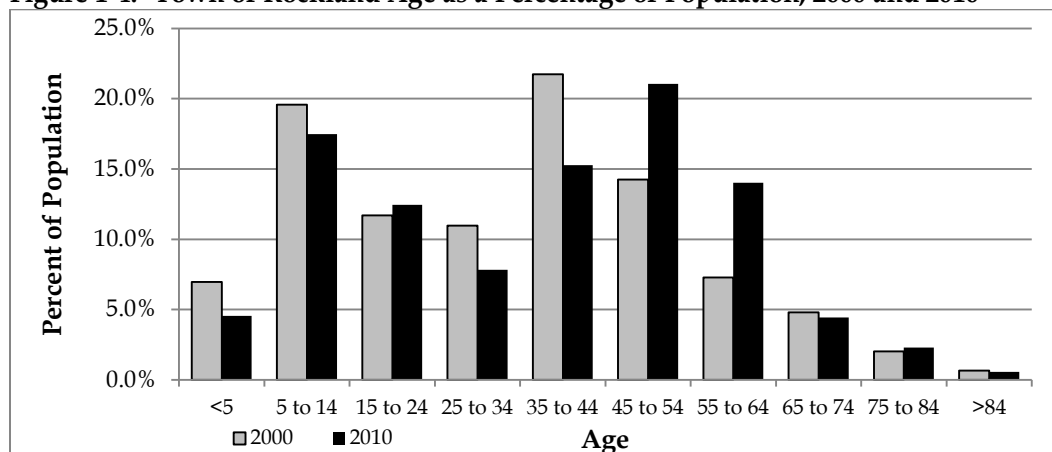


Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1960-2010 Decennial Census.

## Age Distribution

The age distribution chart (Figure 1-4) depicts the general aging of the population of the Town of Rockland. As of 2010, the largest age group in the Town is those residents aged 45-54. Ten years ago, it was the same group of people, but they were aged 35-44. It is also important to note the significant percentage increase in those residents in the next 2010 age group of 55-64. Conversely, the percentage of children (<5 and 5-14) has decreased. A general aging of the population follows state and national trends, as the largest population segment, the Baby Boomer generation, continues to age. In terms of planning, issues such as elderly care, alternative transportation, health care, and emergency response will become increasingly important.

**Figure 1-4: Town of Rockland Age as a Percentage of Population, 2000 and 2010**



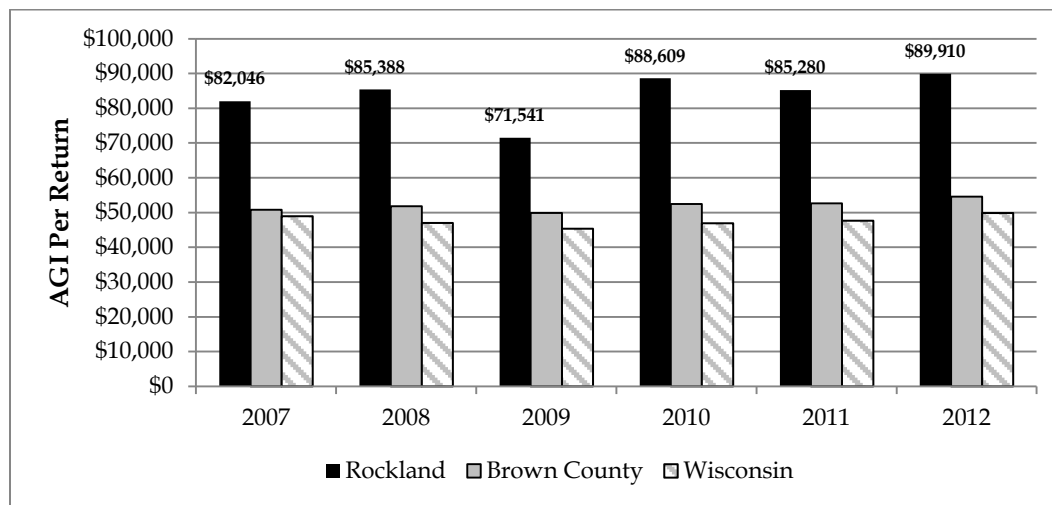
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census.

## Income Levels

According to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue-Division of Research and Analysis, the Town of Rockland's adjusted gross income (AGI) per tax return is significantly higher than both the county and state (Figure 1-5). The most recent year for which information is available lists the year 2012 AGI for the Town of Rockland at \$89,910, as compared to the 2012 AGI per return for Brown County and the State of Wisconsin at \$54,560 and \$49,990, respectively.

When reviewing this data it is important to note that Wisconsin adjusted gross income per return includes only income subject to tax and income of persons filing tax returns. Second, income per return is not necessarily indicative of income per household because tax filings do not correspond with households as several members of a single household may file individual tax returns, and the very high or very low (negative) income of a few tax filers can distort the total income and income per return of a given municipality and county.

**Figure 1-5: Adjusted Gross Income per Tax Return**

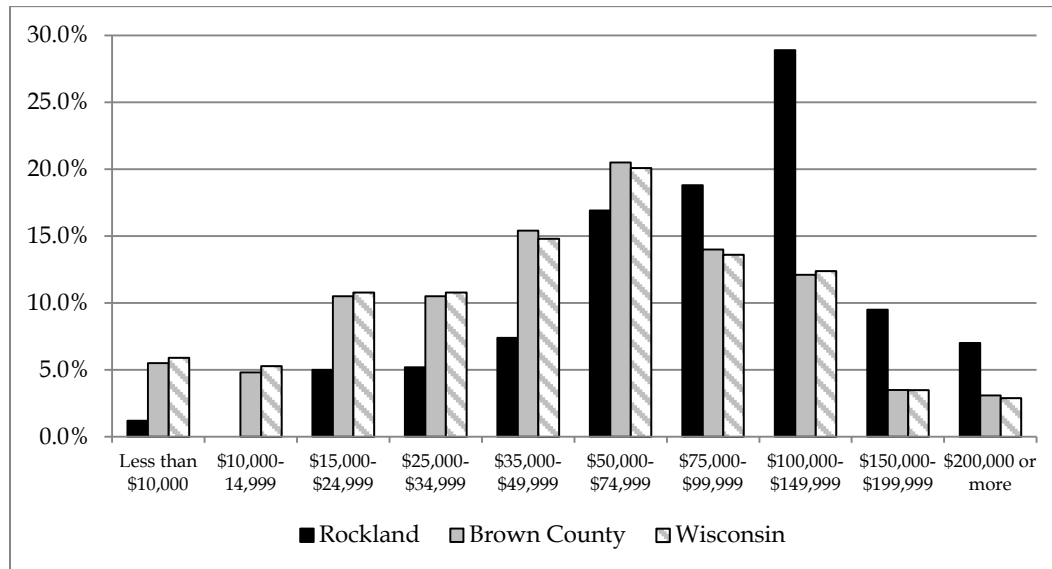


Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) per Filed Tax Return, 2007 – 2012.

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a rolling survey that samples a representative portion of the American people every year. Based upon the results of the survey, estimates for each community are prepared in one and five-year increments. The ACS provides ranges for income levels. Based on the results of the ACS, the largest percentage income group is those households with \$100,000 to \$149,999 in annual income. There are also significantly higher percentages of households with higher incomes in all income ranges from \$75,000 and higher, as compared to Brown County and the State of Wisconsin. According to the ACS, the median household income for the Town of Rockland is approximately \$90,694, consistent with the AGI per tax return. The household income percentages are displayed in Figure 1-6.



**Figure 1-6: Household Income**

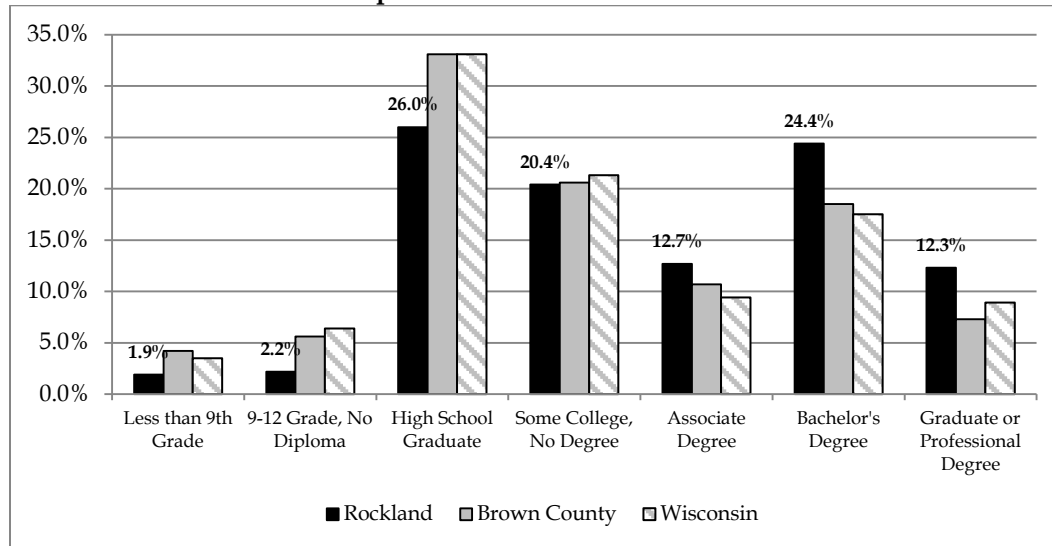


Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## Educational Levels

Educational levels of people 25 years and older in the Town of Rockland are unlike those typically found in other rural areas. Rockland's percentage of non-high school graduates and high school graduates is significantly lower than in Brown County and the State of Wisconsin. This is because secondary educational attainments were moderately higher than both Brown County and the State of Wisconsin. Overall, in associate degrees (12.7 percent), bachelor's degrees (24.4 percent) and graduate degrees (12.3 percent), Rockland was significantly higher than Brown County and the State of Wisconsin. Higher educational attainment is likely one of the drivers for the higher incomes also found in Rockland. The educational levels are displayed in Figure 1-7.

**Figure 1-7: Town of Rockland, Brown County, and State of Wisconsin Educational Attainment of People 25 Years and Older**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## Employment Characteristics

As displayed in Figure 1-8, 63.0 percent of the Town of Rockland population is employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations and sales and office occupations. These occupations correspond to the generally higher income ranges found in the Town as compared to Brown County and the State of Wisconsin as a whole.

**Figure 1-8: Town of Rockland Employment by Occupation**

Occupation	Number	Percent
Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations	340	37.6%
Sales and Office Occupations	230	25.4%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	124	13.7%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	106	11.7%
Service Occupations	104	11.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008 – 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## **Employment Forecast**

In October 2013, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development produced a long-term employment projection for the Bay Area Workforce Development Area which includes Brown, Door, Florence, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Menominee, Oconto, Shawano, and Sheboygan Counties. The profile identifies projected job increases or decreases by industry for the 10-year period between 2010 and 2020 and factors in macro-economic conditions experienced by the area through October 2013.

According to the profile, total employment is projected to increase by 52,752 (12.32 percent) by the year 2020. The Education and Health Services, including State and Local Government sector is projected to add 11,459 jobs over the 10-year period, which is the largest numeric growth for all industry sectors in the Bay Area. In terms of growth rate, the Construction/Mining/Natural Resources sector is expected to grow by 28.26 percent (4,970 jobs) over the same 10-year period. More specifically, the Health Care and Social Assistance, including State and Local Government subsector is projected to add another 9,813 jobs (20.70 percent). This is likely due to the general aging of the population generating increased demand for these types of services.

Manufacturing is projected to continue to have the largest number of jobs through 2020, with a total of 87,136 jobs. Education and Health Services, including State and Local Government is projected to be a close second with 86,007 jobs. Job growth and economic development strategies are discussed in much more detail in the Economic Development Chapter of this plan. Figure 1-9 displays total non-farm industry employment projections for the Bay Area Workforce Development Area.

**Figure 1-9: Industry Projections for Bay Area Workforce Development Area, 2010-2020**

Industry Title	Employment		Ten-Year Change	
	2010 Annual Employment	2020 Projected	Numeric	Percent
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>428,331</b>	<b>481,083</b>	<b>52,752</b>	<b>12.32%</b>
<b>Construction/Mining/Natural Resources</b>	<b>18,189</b>	<b>23,159</b>	<b>4,970</b>	<b>28.26%</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>82,329</b>	<b>87,136</b>	<b>4,807</b>	<b>5.84%</b>
<b>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	<b>74,502</b>	<b>81,018</b>	<b>6,516</b>	<b>8.75%</b>
Wholesale Trade	15,272	16,872	1,600	10.48%
Retail Trade	42,750	45,409	2,659	6.22%
Transportation and Warehousing	14,236	16,574	2,338	16.42%
<b>Information</b>	<b>5,105</b>	<b>5,503</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>7.80%</b>
<b>Financial Activities</b>	<b>23,010</b>	<b>26,489</b>	<b>3,479</b>	<b>15.12%</b>
Finance and Insurance	20,343	23,483	3,140	15.44%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,667	3,006	339	12.71%
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	<b>37,366</b>	<b>46,116</b>	<b>8,750</b>	<b>23.42%</b>
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11,256	14,120	2,864	25.44%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	7,338	8,306	968	13.19%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	18,772	23,690	4,918	26.20%
<b>Education and Health Services, including State and Local Government</b>	<b>74,548</b>	<b>86,007</b>	<b>11,459</b>	<b>15.37%</b>
Educational Services, including State and Local Government	27,149	28,795	1,646	6.06%
Health Care and Social Assistance, including State and Local Government	47,399	57,212	9,813	20.70%
Hospitals (including State and Local Government)	11,990	13,510	1,520	12.6%
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	<b>38,738</b>	<b>46,829</b>	<b>8,091</b>	<b>20.89%</b>
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,131	5,784	653	12.73%
Accommodation and Food Services	33,607	41,045	7,438	22.13
<b>Other Services (Except Government)</b>	<b>22,375</b>	<b>24,880</b>	<b>2,505</b>	<b>11.20</b>
<b>Government</b>	<b>23,108</b>	<b>23,185</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>0.33</b>
<b>Total Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers</b>	<b>29,061</b>	<b>30,761</b>	<b>1,700</b>	<b>5.85</b>

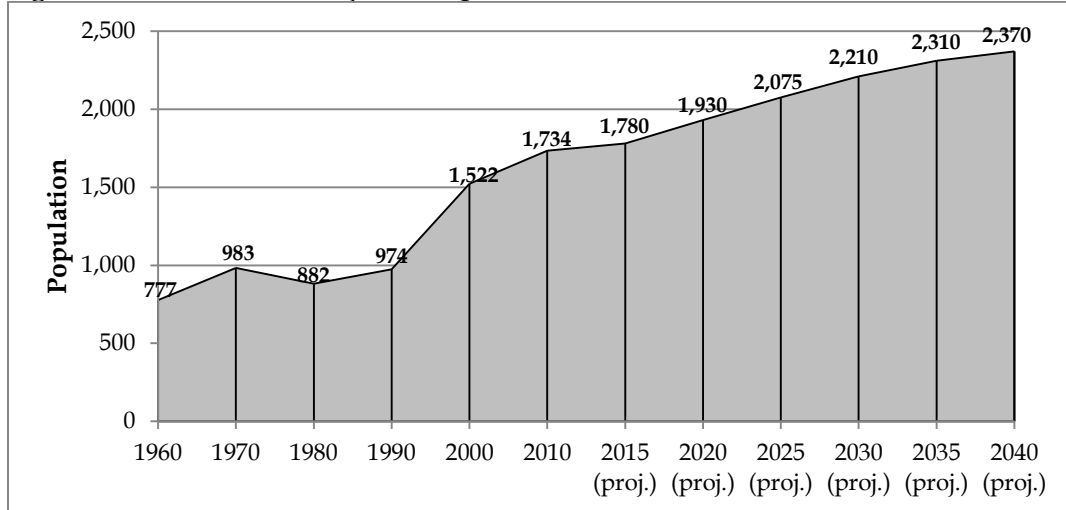
Source: Office of Economic Advisors, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, October 2013.

## Population and Housing Forecasts

In October 2013, the Wisconsin Department of Administration released new population projections for Wisconsin municipalities through 2040, which took into account the 2010 census and recent population growth trends. According to these projections, the Town of Rockland is forecasted to have slow population growth during the time period between 2010 and 2040, with a total projected population of 2,370 by 2040. This is a projected increase of only 636 residents during this 30-year period. The projected slow growth is

likely the result of very little new subdivision development in the Town of Rockland occurring over the past 10 years due to the 10-acre minimum lot size extraterritorial platting limitations placed on the Town by the City of De Pere and downturn in the new housing market during the late 2000s. The historic and projected population for the Town is displayed in Figure 1-10.

**Figure 1-10: Historic and Projected Population, Town of Rockland, 1960-2040**



Source: Wisconsin Dept. of Administration, 2013.

Based upon this information, a baseline projection of the housing units required for the 2035 design year of this comprehensive plan can be determined. According to the 2010 census, the Town of Rockland had an average household size of 3.14 people per household. Dividing this amount into the 2,310 people projected to live in the Town by 2035 yields a result of 736 total housing units required for the future population. Subtracting the 547 existing (2010) housing units results in a need for a minimum of 189 additional housing units in the Town by 2035, provided the persons per household average does not significantly change over time.

## Summary

Population and housing growth in the Town of Rockland has slowed significantly since the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. This is likely the result of a combination of extraterritorial land division controls implemented by the City of De Pere and the major downturn in the housing market during the mid to late 2000s. Although development has slowed, this has provided an opportunity for Town residents to enjoy the rural character of the Town that they either grew up with, or moved to Rockland to enjoy. The goals and objectives are reflective of the results of the town-wide visioning session, survey, citizens advisory committee, and 14 State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Goals.

The goals and objectives identified in the Issues and Opportunities Chapter are intended to guide the Town and create a community that is reflective of residents' desire to balance development with the Town's rural character. Objectives, such as utilizing



various development techniques to maintain the Town's rural character and agricultural community, identifying ways for pedestrians and bicyclists to get around, and enhancing the Town's natural features, are all concepts that will be further discussed with specific policy recommendations within the plan.

As the demographic trends indicate, the Town's population is aging more quickly than Brown County as a whole. As Rockland continues to grow, it will need to be cognizant of the increasing number of older residents in the community and make sure that future development patterns and styles take their needs into account, as well as the needs of the rest of the community. Future population and housing growth, limited though it may be, must be guided in a manner that meets the stated objectives in the comprehensive plan, including providing services to existing and future Town residents, while protecting the Town's natural, cultural, and agricultural resources.

## CHAPTER 2

### Land Use

As presented in the Issues and Opportunities Chapter, the Town of Rockland desires to maintain its rural character, while accommodating residential development. This section of the plan identifies the Town's existing land uses, and based on Rockland's identified goals and objectives, it provides recommendations for the Town to implement in order to attain its desired future land uses and patterns.

#### Existing Land Use

In order to plan for future land use and development in Rockland, it is necessary to consider existing land uses and development trends. A land use inventory, which classifies different types of land use activities, is an important means of identifying current conditions. In addition, by comparing land use inventories from previous years, various trends can be discerned that are helpful in establishing the plan for future land use. The Brown County Planning Commission conducts a countywide land use inventory every decade. Fieldwork for the most recent inventory was completed in October 2010 and updated in March 2014. Using this data, the various land use categories were broken down by acreage. Figure 2-1 compares the 2004 and 2014 land use composition of the Town, and Figure 2-2 identifies the location of the various 2014 land uses within the Town.

**Figure 2-1: Town of Rockland 2004 and 2014 Land Use Acreage**

Land Use	2004 Total Acres	2004 Percent of Total	2014 Total Acres	2014 Percent of Total
Single-Family	1,607.4	11.4%	1,975.8	14.4%
Two-Family	2.5	<0.1%	0.0	0.0%
Mobile Homes	2.8	<0.1%	0.0	0.0%
<b>Total Residential</b>	<b>1,612.7</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>1,975.8</b>	<b>14.4%</b>
Retail Sales	1.4	< 0.1%	2.7	<0.1%
Retail Services	11.0	0.1%	13.7	0.1%
<b>Total Commercial</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
Manufacturing	5.7	<0.1%	4.1	<0.1%
Extractive (Sand/Gravel Pits)	42.9	0.3%	44.9	0.3%
Storage	3.9	<0.1%	7.6	0.1%
<b>Total Industrial</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
Streets and Highways	523.0	3.7%	529.5	3.9%
Truck Terminals	1.8	<0.1%	1.8	<0.1%
<b>Total Transportation</b>	<b>524.8</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>531.3</b>	<b>3.9%</b>

Land Use	2004 Total Acres	2004 Percent of Total	2014 Total Acres	2014 Percent of Total
Generation/Processing of Communication/Utilities	0.2	<0.1%	1.0	<0.1%
Transmission of Communication/Utilities	167.7	1.2%	2.8 <sup>1</sup>	<0.1%
<b>Total Communication/Utilities</b>	<b>167.9</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>&lt;0.1%</b>
Administrative/Governmental Facilities	2.6	<0.1%	2.5	<0.1%
<b>Total Institutional/Governmental</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>&lt;0.1%</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>&lt;0.1%</b>
Trails	50.6	0.4%	49.8	0.4%
Archery/Gun/Skeet Ranges	28.9	0.2%	31.2	0.2%
<b>Total Recreational</b>	<b>79.5</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>81.0</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
Cropland/Pasture	8,807.0	62.5%	8,310.8	60.7%
Agricultural Buildings	371.4	2.6%	294.9	2.2%
<b>Total Agricultural</b>	<b>9,178.4</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>8,605.7</b>	<b>62.9%</b>
Water Features	14.7	0.1%	29.0	0.2%
Woodlands	1,559.9	11.1%	1,779.2	13.0%
Other Natural Areas	649.9	4.6%	602.3	4.4%
<b>Total Natural Areas</b>	<b>2,224.5</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>2,410.5</b>	<b>17.6%</b>
Land Under Residential Development	232.4	1.6%	17.5	0.1%
<b>Total Land Under Development</b>	<b>232.4</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>14,087.7</b>	<b>99.8%<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>13,701.1<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>100.0%</b>

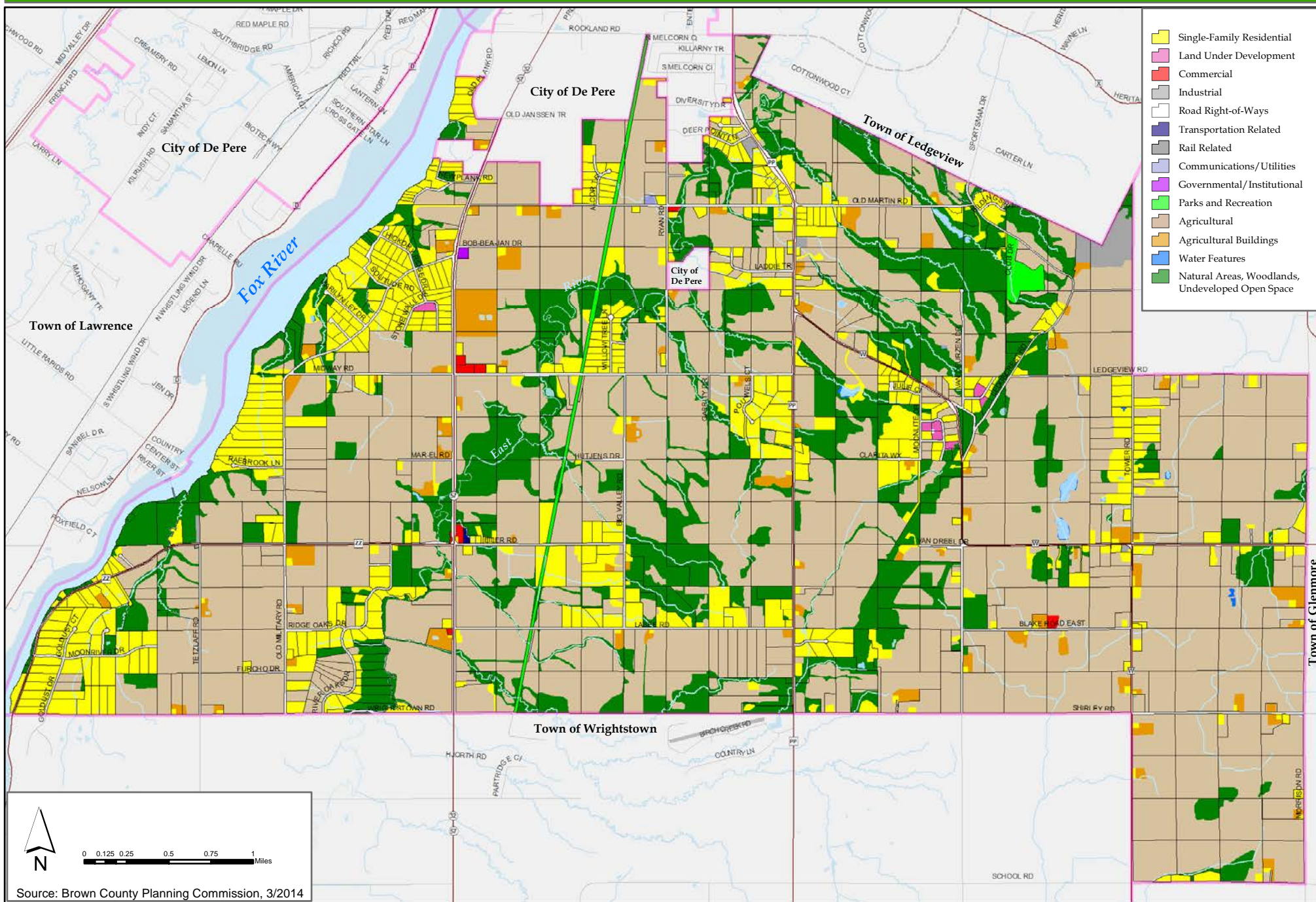
<sup>1</sup> Overhead power lines were not included in the 2014 land use inventory.

<sup>2</sup> Totals may not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

<sup>3</sup> Total acreage is less than in 2004 due to not including overhead power lines acreage and loss of acreage due to annexations from Rockland to De Pere.



Figure 2-2  
**2014 Land Use**  
 Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



### **Residential Land Uses**

Residential land uses in Rockland account for 1,975.8 acres, or 14.4 percent of the Town. There are an additional 17.5 acres (0.1 percent) of lands that are not farmed and are platted for residential development. All residential development in Rockland has private septic systems and wells, necessitating larger lot sizes. The homes in Rockland are almost entirely single-family structures located in rural subdivisions or along existing roads. The homes and rural subdivisions are dispersed in nature without any true pattern or focal point in the Town. The largest residential developments include the Moonriver Subdivision in the southwestern part of the Town, residential lots along the Fox River, and the River Oaks Subdivision, also in the southwestern part of the Town. Other smaller platted subdivisions include Wynding Wind Estates and Nickel Ledge Estates in the east-central portion of the Town.

### **Commercial Land Uses**

Commercial land uses are those that can typically be divided into retail and service-oriented businesses. Retail businesses may include grocery stores, furniture stores, or other similar uses where the patron is actually purchasing goods. Service-oriented commercial enterprises, such as accounting offices and dry cleaners, provide a service to a patron in exchange for payment.

Commercial uses in the Town occupy 16.4 acres of land, or 0.1 percent of the total area of Rockland. The lone concentration of commercial activities in Rockland is located at the intersection of STH 32/57 and Midway Road. There are also a few other individual commercial uses scattered around the Town. Rockland residents typically travel to the neighboring City of De Pere, Village of Wrightstown, or Green Bay/Fox Cities metro areas for the majority of their commercial activities.



### **Industrial Land Uses**

The large stone quarry in the far northeastern corner of the Town accounts for the vast majority of the industrial activity in Rockland, with a total of 44.9 acres. This compares to the total amount of industrial land in Rockland of 56.6 acres, or 0.4 percent of the total land area of the Town. Additional small industrial uses are scattered around Rockland and are also located in the De Pere Industrial Park to the north of the Town.

### **Communication/Utilities**

The only communication/utility uses in Rockland include an electric power substation on Old Martin Road and the Little Rapids Dam structure, which is technically part of



Rockland. In addition to the communication/utility structures on the ground, there are two high-voltage overhead power lines that traverse the Town. One runs in a general east to west orientation and the second runs in a general north to south orientation. Both run through the central part of the Town. An underground natural gas line runs east to west through the southern section of Rockland. The line has minimal impact on agricultural activities, but would impact the siting of future development. Total communication/utility land uses account for 3.8 acres of land, or less than 0.1 percent of the total area of Rockland.

#### **Institutional/Governmental Land Uses**

Institutional/governmental land uses total 2.5 acres, or less than 0.1 percent of land in Rockland. The only use within this category is the Rockland town hall located at the corner of STH 32/57 and Bob-Bea-Jan Road.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Uses**

The primary outdoor recreation use in Rockland is the Fox River State Trail, which traverses the Town in a north to south direction through the center of Rockland. The other outdoor recreation use in the Town is the De Pere Sportsmen's Club located in the far northeastern part of Rockland. Recreational land uses account for 81.0 acres, or 0.6 percent of the total area of the Town.

#### **Agricultural Land Uses**

Agriculture and agricultural-related activities constitute the majority of the land uses in Rockland, accounting for 8,605.7 acres, or 62.9 percent of the total area of the Town. This is a decrease of 572.7 acres, or 6.2 percent, since 2004. Agricultural land in Rockland is being lost through a combination of residential development and annexation. There are still large tracts of agricultural lands in Rockland; although, they are becoming increasingly fragmented due to residential development. The largest uninterrupted agricultural areas are in the far southeastern and south central part of the Town.

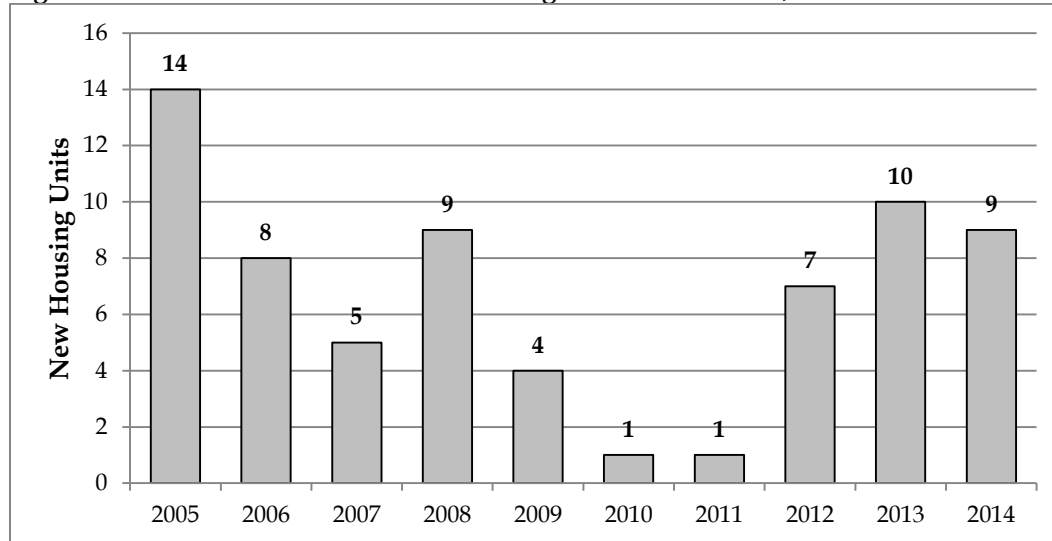
#### **Natural Areas**

Natural areas include woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, and other areas that are not farmed and are largely in a natural state. Approximately 2,410.5 acres, or 17.6 percent of the total land area, can be classified as natural areas. The natural areas in Rockland are primarily associated with the East River, Fox River, and their tributary streams. The natural areas along these streams are generally narrow in nature, with the exception of some larger wooded areas between the East River and the Niagara Escarpment. Additionally, the Niagara Escarpment is classified as a natural area due to its wooded nature. Even though natural areas account for only 17.6 percent of the Town, they are a critical element of the rural character desired by the Town's residents. Therefore, maintaining or improving the natural areas in Rockland would help to keep the Town's rural character intact.

## Land Use Trend Analysis

### Supply and Demand

Figure 2-3: Town of Rockland New Housing Unit Construction, 2005-2014



Source: Town of Rockland Building Permits, 2005-2014.

According to the Town of Rockland building permit files, between 2005 and 2014, a total of 68 new home building permits were approved with a high of 14 in 2005 and a low of one in 2010 and 2011. All 68 new construction permits were for single-family homes. As is evident in Figure 2-3, the number of new residential building permits declined sharply from 2009 – 2011, but has more recently rebounded to seven in 2012, ten in 2013, and 9 in 2014.

### Land Prices

Land prices are subject to increases and decreases as the supply and demand for developable land fluctuates. This was demonstrated in the early 2000s as prices for vacant, developable land in Brown County soared during the housing boom and subsequently deflated during the ensuing housing market crisis in the late 2000s and early 2010s. As the housing market continues to recover, so too have the values for vacant, developable land.

A review of real estate websites, including Trulia and Zillow revealed that prices for vacant lots in Rockland varied from a low of \$19,354/acre for a 3.87 acre lot in the Laddie Trail area to a high of \$38,633/acre for a 3.43 acre lot on Windchime Way. Additionally, Rockland has an extensive area of river frontage, which can demand very high prices. The one parcel of riverfront land listed on the two websites was for a vacant 8.5 acre parcel, which is listed for sale at \$495,000, or \$58,235/acre.

### **Opportunities for Redevelopment**

Within Rockland, over 38 percent of the homes were constructed prior to 1989 and could be in need of maintenance due to their age. Brown County administers the regional Community Development Block Grant – Housing program, which provides no-interest, deferred payment loans for low and moderate income homeowners. Should low and moderate income homeowners in Rockland need home repairs, they should contact the Brown County Planning Commission for additional information on the program.

## **Existing and Potential Land Use Conflicts**

### **Annexation**

Since the 2005 comprehensive plan, the Town of Rockland has experienced a number of annexations from the Town into the City of De Pere along Rockland Road. Without a boundary agreement in place, there will likely continue to be annexations as Town property owners petition the City of De Pere for annexation in order to develop their land with public sewer and water.

The University of Wisconsin–Extension Local Government Center Fact Sheet on annexations (<http://www.uwex.edu/lgc/program/pdf/fact4.pdf>) identifies the five types of annexations in Wisconsin. The types are listed in this section in order of frequency of use.

- Direct Annexation by Unanimous Approval.
- Direct Annexation.
- Annexation by Residents’ Referendum.
- Annexation of Owned Territory.
- Annexation on City or Village Initiative by Referendum and Court Order.

Annexations typically lead to bad relations between an incorporated municipality and a town because there is usually a “winner” and “loser” as a result of the annexation. When annexations are approved, the incorporated community usually ends up being the “winner” in gaining additional developable land, while the town is typically the “loser” since it loses land that it deemed to be its own. Unfortunately, lawsuits and hard feelings on both sides oftentimes result from this process. Therefore, it is critical in the interest of intergovernmental cooperation that the Town of Rockland and the City of De Pere negotiate in good faith to reach a mutually agreeable boundary agreement to avoid this situation and to create a more rational, efficient growth pattern for the City’s boundaries. Regardless of whether or not the City of De Pere wants to enter into boundary negotiations with the Town of Rockland at this time, Rockland and De Pere should meet on at least an annual basis to facilitate communication between both communities.

### **Agricultural and Residential Uses**

New residents to Rockland should recognize that they are moving into a rural community and will, therefore, need to deal with the sights, smells, and other activities that characterize active farming operations in the Town. As an increasing number of



residents move into Rockland, the potential for conflicts regarding agricultural and residential land uses will certainly increase. It is critical for the Town to inform new residents that there are active farms in Rockland, and they will have to deal with the potential inconveniences that they may cause.

### **Sand/Gravel Pits and Residential Uses**

A third area of potential conflict is between the existing active sand/gravel pit operations and future residential development. Active pits with a large amount of heavy truck traffic, blasting, and machinery operations are not typically compatible with residential development. Up to this point, conflicts have been kept to a minimum due to the distance between the active quarries and the homes in the Town. However, the Town should be aware of the existing quarries and ensure that new developments (if not kept from locating near the quarries) provide adequate buffers and notification to potential homeowners that there are active quarries located nearby.

### **General Land Use Compatibility**

Throughout the 20-year vision for this plan, Rockland should review new development proposals and keep potential impacts on the Town's rural character in mind. However, a mixture of uses (residential, commercial, recreational, etc.) within development proposals should also be considered if the potential mixed uses are of a design, scale, and use that would blend in well with the overall development and character of the Town. However, those uses that are noxious in nature or may have safety or other concerns for residents living nearby should remain separated from residential developments.

## **20-Year Projections in 5-Year Increments**

### **Past Land Use Trends**

The State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law requires communities to project their future land use needs for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural lands for a 20-year period in 5-year increments. In order to determine how much land the Town of Rockland will need to continue to grow at its current rate, the land use inventories for 2004 and 2014 were compared. Figure 2-4 identifies the changes in land uses over this 10-year period. As is evident from the chart, residential uses have increased substantially (23 percent) over the past decade. Although commercial uses increased 33.3 percent, in terms of acreage, this only accounts for an additional four acres of land, which is the same as the industrial land use increase. Following a long-term trend, agricultural land uses have continued to decrease in the Town of Rockland, although at a slower rate than was documented in 2004.

**Figure 2-4: Changes in Rockland Land Use, 2004–2014**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>2004 (Total Acres)</b>	<b>2014 (Total Acres)</b>	<b>Difference 2004-2014</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Residential	1,607 acres	1,976 acres	+369 acres	+23.0%
Commercial	12 acres	16 acres	+4 acres	+33.3%
Industrial	53 acres	57 acres	+4 acres	+7.5%
Agricultural	9,178 acres	8,606 acres	-572 acres	-6.2%

Source: Brown County Planning Commission, 2004 and 2014.

Based on the results of the 2003 visioning session, survey, and input from the citizens advisory committee (CAC), it is evident that maintaining a rural character, but not protecting farmland, is the primary goal of the community. In defining rural character, the Town of Rockland CAC identified it as “space between homes, elbow room, etc.”

### **Future Land Use Projections**

It is important to note that the following land use projection is developed under normal conditions. The City of De Pere requiring a minimum 10-acre lot size within its 3-mile extraterritorial land division review area in Rockland is a unique circumstance that will hopefully be resolved through intergovernmental discussion and agreements within the 20-year time period of this plan. Therefore, this projection, and the comprehensive plan in general, look to the future when such an impediment to Rockland’s growth is no longer in effect.

The following acreage analysis and projection is not intended to be a strict determination of exactly how much land will be needed for development in Rockland over the next 20 years. Rather, it is an estimate based on past trends and population projections to give the residents, Planning Commission, and Town Board an idea of what they are looking at in terms of future growth in Rockland. This information should be used by the Town Board to determine what kind of public services may be needed in Rockland over the next 20 years, as well as estimates of when additional public services will be needed.

Based on the population projections provided by the Wisconsin Department of Administration in the Issues and Opportunities chapter, the Town’s population is expected to increase by 530 people between 2015 and 2035, resulting in a 2035 population of 2,310 people. Therefore, Rockland will need an additional 189 housing units in the Town by 2025 to account for the anticipated population increase.

A review of approved subdivision plats from 2004 through 2014, resulted in only three subdivision plats being approved, for a total of 45 lots. The most recent subdivision plat was approved in 2006 and recorded in 2007 (River Oaks First Addition). It is likely that no more recent subdivision plats were approved in Rockland due to the City of De Pere maintaining the 10-acre minimum lot size requirement within its extraterritorial land division jurisdiction. A review of certified survey maps for the Town of Rockland yielded similar results of a few 10-acre or larger parcels being created over this same time period.

The Town of Rockland Zoning Ordinance was reviewed in order to determine approximate lot sizes that could be developed in Rockland under normal circumstances.

Typical residential lot sizes allowable in the ordinance vary from 40,000 square feet in the Rural Residential (RR-1) district, to two acres in the Estate Residential 2 (ER-2) district, and five acres in the Estate Residential 5 (ER-5) district. These three lot sizes were split evenly among the projected 189 additional housing units required to house the estimated increase in Rockland's population over the next 20 years. Splitting the projected 189 units into the three categories yielded a need for approximately 58 acres in RR-1, 126 acres in ER-2, and 315 acres in ER-5, for a total of 499 acres of new residential lands.

The previous projection assumes public sewer and water are not available to the Town of Rockland over the next 20 years. Should public sewer and water become available to the Town of Rockland, the Town's Residential Sewered District (RS-1) requires a minimum of 12,000 square feet, and provided the Town commits to publicly sewered development, taking the 189 projected housing units and applying them to the 12,000 square feet minimum results in 52 acres for new publicly sewered lots. This projection should only be used if/when Rockland attains public sewer service. Until that time, the unsewered assumption will be utilized.

Applying the current land use ratios to the 499 acres needed for residential development yields the need for another 4 acres of commercial lands and 14 acres of industrial lands during the 20-year planning period. However, the industrial acreage is likely inflated due to the large quarry in the Town's northeastern corner, and actual new industrial activity will likely be much lower. Therefore, based on the projections, Rockland would need an estimated total of 517 additional acres for residential, commercial, and industrial uses under normal circumstances.

Since new street rights-of-way will need to be included in most new developments, a review of the three most recently developed subdivision plats (Laddie Acres, Wynding Wind Estates, and River Oaks First Addition) was completed. Based on this review, an average of 14.0 percent of a subdivision plat area is typically dedicated to new streets. Therefore, after accounting for the new rights-of-way and applying a 10 percent market factor into the projection, the grand total of required land for Rockland is 649 acres.

**Figure 2-5: 5-Year Growth Increments for the Town of Rockland**

	Year				
Use	2014	2020	2025	2030	2035
<b>Residential</b>	1,994 acres	2,150	2,307	2,463	2,620
<b>Commercial</b>	16 acres	17	18	19	21
<b>Industrial</b>	57 acres	61	66	71	75
<b>Agricultural</b>	8,606 acres	8,426	8,263	8,101	7,939

Based on these projections, the estimated acreage requirements are broken down into 5-year increments, per the requirement of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law. Figure 2-5 identifies the tabular 5-year growth increment acreage projections for the Town of Rockland.

The projected development is significantly less than what was anticipated in the 2004 comprehensive plan. Considering the sharp decrease in development activity in Rockland following De Pere's implementation of its extraterritorial review authority and requirement for a 10-acre minimum lot size, it can be reasonably expected that actual residential, commercial, and industrial development will be much lower until such time this constraint is removed.

## **Future Land Use Recommendations**

Future development within the Town of Rockland is currently limited by the City of De Pere generally not permitting new land divisions less than 10 acres within its 3-mile extraterritorial land division review area. This chapter recognizes this fact; however, it is important for the Town to plan for future land uses. By planning now, the Town will be prepared should this limitation be removed at some point in the future. The following sections identify the various planned land uses in the Town and how they could develop over the next 20 years. The future land uses are identified in Figure 2-6.

### **Residential Development**

A large part of the rural character that Rockland residents enjoy is not seeing acres upon acres of homes from the town roads. Therefore, it is important for developers to take advantage of the existing natural features, terrain, and vegetation when laying out and designing new subdivisions in the Town to help screen the development from views along the town roads. Additionally, streets should follow the contours of the land in order to create a more curvilinear street pattern, while still maintaining connections for existing and future streets.

The Housing Chapter provided the requisite background data and recommendations based upon this background data. As discussed, the range of housing in the Town of Rockland is currently rather limited with primarily single-family detached homes on lots generally ranging from two to five acres being the norm. To address a growing and aging population, additional variety in housing types should be encouraged. Specific recommendations include:

- Development of accessory dwelling units on existing residential parcels.
- Mixing of residential types, including the provision of duplexes to provide a rental option to residents.
- Mixing of uses in residential developments, such as appropriately designed commercial, institutional, or recreational uses to allow residents to walk or bicycle to these land uses.
- Encourage reinvestment in the existing housing stock through the regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Housing rehabilitation program for low and moderate income homeowners, including the elderly.

- Work with residents and homebuilders to incorporate “visitable” concepts such as a no-step entrance, 36-inch minimum passageways, and a useable bathroom on the first floor in homes to allow elderly to age in place.
- Encourage master planned senior housing developments with a variety of housing types and amenities that capitalize on the rural setting and natural features of Rockland, provided adequate water and sewage disposal is available.
- Work with developers to utilize conservation subdivision design to encourage new residential development while still protecting critical environmental, historical, or agricultural features. Conservation subdivision design is discussed in more detail in the following section.

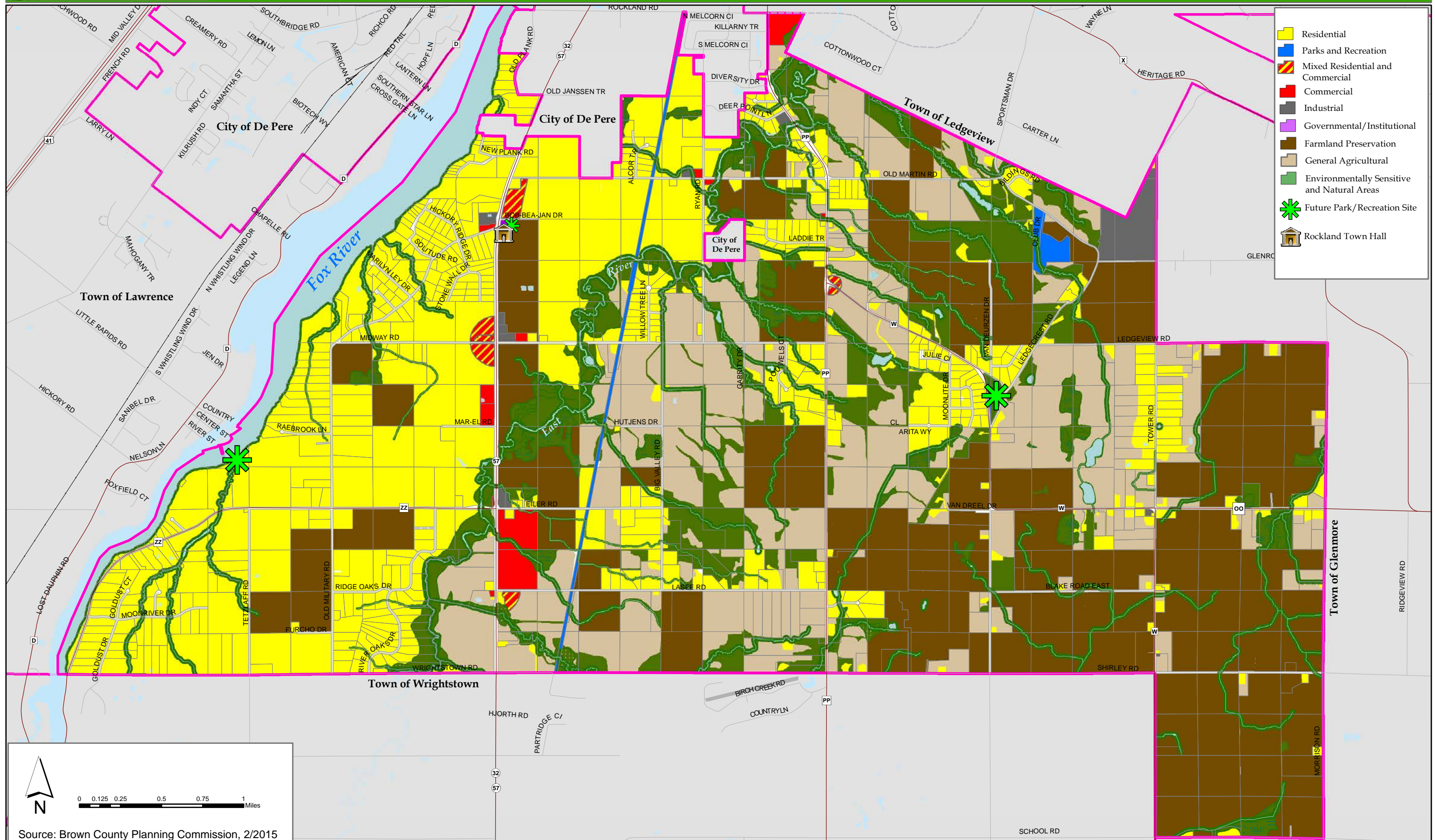
### **Conservation by Design Subdivisions**

Conservation by design development is a land subdivision method that focuses on maintaining open space and conserving significant natural and/or cultural features. This is accomplished by preserving a significant portion of a development site as undivided open space with the remaining land uses for the house lots and roads. A conservation subdivision provides the landowner with the same number of lots, or possibly more, than could be accomplished through a conventional subdivision. The open space is permanently preserved through conservation easements. However, it could be used for a variety of purposes, such as farming, orchards, tree farm, nursery, etc. It is up to the local community to determine what uses will be permitted in the preserved portion of the subdivision.



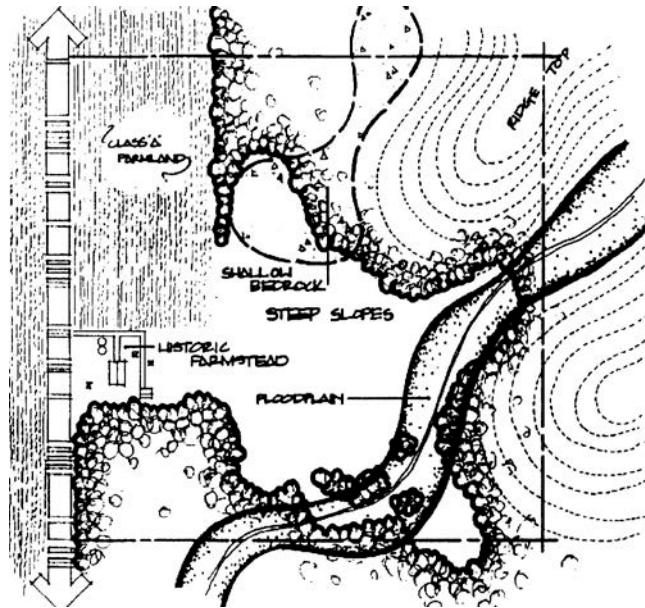


Figure 2-6  
**Future Land Use**  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin

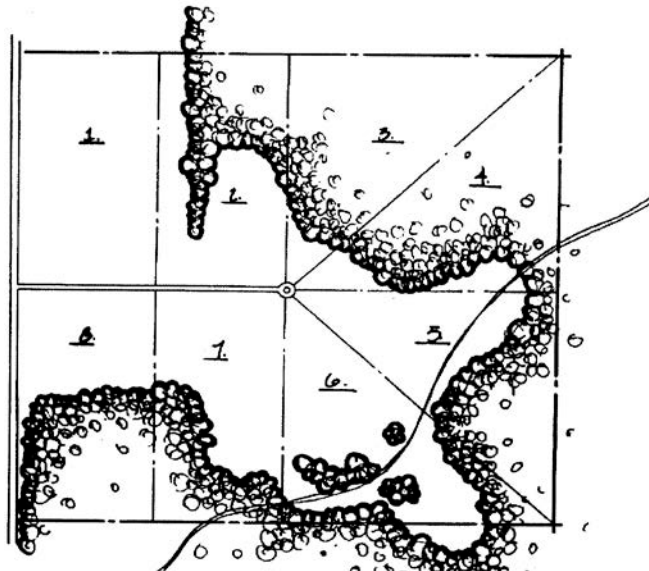


The conservation example in this section uses the same number of house lots from the conventional layout but completely alters the design by simply reducing the lot size and being sensitive to the environmental features in order to preserve farmland. The following sketches are from "A Model Ordinance for a Conservation Subdivision," prepared by the University of Wisconsin Extension.

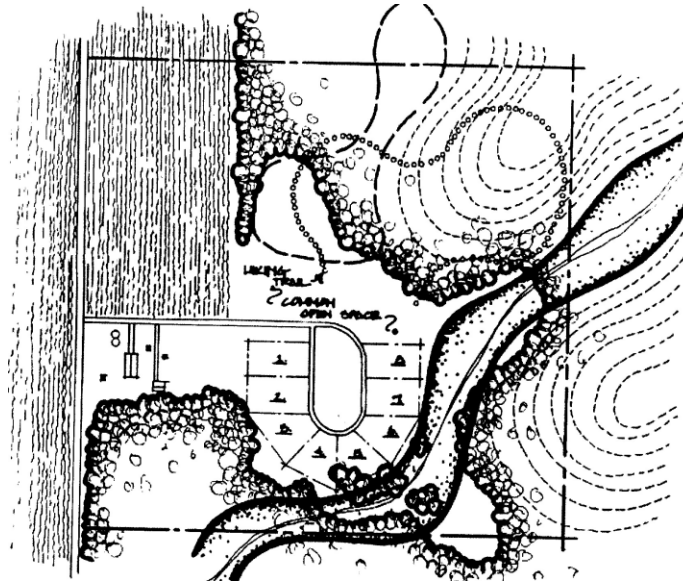
Step 1: Inventory and mapping of existing resources for a hypothetical 40-acre site.



Step 2: Development yield as permitted under existing ordinances (zoning, etc.) for the 40-acre site and assuming a 5-acre minimum lot size zoning standard. Eight lots would be permitted under this scenario.



Step 3: Concept map of the conservation subdivision showing the eight lots that would be permitted, plus the historic farmhouse that would be preserved, for a total of nine dwelling units.



The following are some observations from comparing the conventional subdivision to the conservation by design subdivision:

- Conventional layout - all parts of the tract are either house lots or roads.
- Conservation layout - close to half of the site is undivided open space or agricultural land that can be permanently preserved.
- Conventional layout - view from across the road to the trees and creek is disrupted, and houses can be seen in all parts of the development.
- Conservation layout - view from across the road to trees and creek is almost entirely preserved.
- Conventional layout - only four property owners have access to parts of the creek.
- Conservation layout - all property owners have access to the length of the creek.
- Conventional layout - no common space; each lot owner only has use of his own 5-acre parcel.
- Conservation layout - creates a number of common open space areas with a large area remaining for active agricultural use.



- Conventional layout – no pedestrianways unless sidewalks are included in the construction of the roads.
- Conservation layout – trail network can be completed and can link with neighboring subdivisions and/or regional trail or parkway network.
- Conventional layout – no area for neighborhood facilities.
- Conservation layout – central green area could include children’s play area, shelter, or other amenities.

To ensure that those farmers who wish to continue agricultural production in Rockland are able to do so for as long a time as they see fit, residential development should be designed in a way to minimize its impact on existing agricultural production. In order to decrease the fragmentation of farm fields by driveways, individual homes should (as much as possible) be located close to the road that provides frontage. Long driveways create divisions within a field and create a disincentive to continued farming of the land, in addition to creating difficulties for emergency vehicles. Additionally, when new individual residential lots are created, the parcel size should be as close to the minimum as possible to maintain larger blocks of agricultural land.

#### **Future Public Sewer and Water Development**

The large minimum size of the lots required by De Pere through its extraterritorial authority effectively currently precludes the development of a cost-effective Town sanitary or utility district. However, Rockland maintains a long-term interest in providing this service in the future to create an alternative development option for Rockland property owners who desire to develop their lands, but do not wish to annex to the City of De Pere. As NEW Water begins its planning process for future interceptor sewers, the Town of Rockland should continue to be actively involved in order to demonstrate interest and ensure that Rockland’s views regarding publicly-sewered development is taken into account.

Prior to the creation of a sanitary (or utility) district, Rockland will need to address financing, engineering, and planning of the sanitary district area. It is critical that the Town plan long-term by ensuring that privately sewer development today does not impede the logical, contiguous growth of public sanitary sewer lines in the future. Therefore, prior to embarking down the path of developing small lots that require public sewer, the Town of Rockland should commission a facilities study to determine the location, size, and projected expenses and revenues associated with creating and providing services to a new sanitary/utility district.

A detailed Master Development Plan for any area served by public sewer should be developed in order for the Town to work with residents and property owners to properly identify areas best suited for potential conservation by design subdivisions, address future sanitary sewerage collection and treatment needs, and lay out an efficient and orderly vehicle and pedestrian network to serve the future residents of this area. The plan should accommodate a range of housing and transportation choices for residents, as well as include a mix of commercial, institutional, and recreational land uses.

### **Subdivision and Street Connectivity**

A connected street pattern between and within developments helps to disburse vehicle traffic and creates better routes for pedestrians and bicyclists as a more efficient way to provide public services (snowplowing, bus routing, etc.). Therefore, Rockland should continue to require a well-connected street pattern as discussed in the Transportation chapter. Where there are environmental or developmental constraints to connecting streets, cul-de-sacs may be used, but their use should be limited to the aforementioned situations.

When development is again allowed in Rockland, it is imperative that the Town not review each proposed certified survey map or subdivision plat as a separate development. Rather, the Town should look at the surrounding parcels of land and envision how internal streets could be developed in the future to maximize the amount of connectivity between the proposed subdivision and future developments. Requiring developers to work with the surrounding property owners to create an Area Development Plan for future street connections is critical to ensure future connections among different subdivisions. This does not mean that the surrounding property owners have to develop or even have any intention of developing. However, in the event that they do decide to bring a proposal forward, there is a plan in place for internal street connections to the existing subdivision, thereby minimizing the pedestrian, bicyclist, and vehicle impacts on the existing town roads.

### **Southern Bypass and Bridge**

The Brown County Planning Commission is currently working with federal agencies, state agencies, local agencies and communities, and the public to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Interstate Access Justification Report (IAJR) for this project. The EIS process is currently in the alternatives analysis phase, and the draft EIS document that recommends a location for a new southern bridge and connecting arterial streets is expected to be completed soon.

As a result of annexations of property from Rockland to De Pere, the direct impacts of the future southern bridge will be more limited than anticipated in the past. However, indirect impacts will likely include additional traffic on STH 32/57 and CTH PP from vehicles either traveling to or from the southern bridge corridor. As traffic on these facilities increase, there will potentially be increased interest in these areas for new development.

In order to maintain the rural character of the Town that Rockland wants to protect and avoid potential negative traffic and bike/pedestrian impacts, commercial development along STH 32/57 and CTH PP leading to the southern bypass and bridge should be focused in nodes at major intersections, rather than in long strips. Specific locations where commercial development may be appropriate include the intersections of STH 32/57 with Bob-Bea-Jan Road, Midway Road, Eiler Road, and Lasee Road.

## **Parks and Open Spaces**

The only public lands Rockland contains are those associated with the Fox River State Trail. Through discussions with the Rockland CAC, it was noted that many people who utilize the trail currently park on the road shoulders near where the trail crosses various town roads. This has proven to be hazardous for trail users whose vision is blocked by the parked cars and cannot see oncoming traffic. Therefore, Rockland should coordinate with the Brown County Parks Management and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to develop a small off-street parking lot and trailhead at a minimum at one of the locations identified in the Transportation Chapter, including the intersection of Midway Road and the Fox River Trail, intersection of Lasee Road and the Fox River Trail, or coordinate with the Town of Wrightstown to develop one along the right-of-way of Wrightstown Road that runs parallel to the west side of the trail.

The Niagara Escarpment is a critical natural resource and habitat area, as identified in the Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources chapter of this comprehensive plan, and it is under increasing pressures for development, but also provides the Town with part of its identity. The Town of Rockland currently owns a 2.73 acre sliver of land along CTH W between Old Ledge Road and Ledgecrest Road which includes a small part of the Niagara escarpment ledge face. This section of the Niagara escarpment is relatively isolated because it is bound on all sides by roads and therefore has experienced minimal disturbance. Should the Town have an opportunity to purchase or otherwise obtain ownership of the adjacent 7.6 acre parcel of land; it would create an ideal conservancy area that would preserve a portion of the Niagara escarpment for future generations. The Town of Rockland should work with the local property owners, nonprofit groups, residents and public agencies to pursue purchase of this property to pair it with the current Town property and create a conservancy area.

Additionally, since the nearest local active park facilities (playground, ballfield, etc.) are in the Village of Wrightstown, City of De Pere, and Town of Ledgeview, Rockland should consider the development of a small active park adjacent to the Rockland town hall. A park in this location would help to create a sense of identity and place for the Town, in addition to providing a relatively low-cost service to residents. Equipment that should be considered includes (at a minimum) a small jungle gym, park bench, and trees. Additional amenities to consider at a later date would include a grill, picnic table, open-air shelter, and a small unlighted ball diamond.

As discussed in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter, there is currently very little public access to the Fox River in the Town of Rockland. The only public access point at this time is a 60' extension of the Wrightstown Road right-of-way to the Fox River. At a minimum, this public access point should be identified with signage and an informal chip/bark path to the shoreline be developed. Longer-term, consistent with the Brown County Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, a larger park facility should be developed in the



vicinity of the Little Rapids Lock and Dam complex. A park in this location would provide public access to the Fox River and could provide additional amenities such as camping for Fox River boaters, fishing, picnicking, and a portage site for kayakers and canoeists.

There are a number of grant programs available through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources that provide matching grants to local communities to purchase land or develop parks through the Stewardship program. If the Town utilizes volunteers and fund raisers to raise funds for development of a park or purchase of a conservancy area, the volunteers' labor and funds may be used to cover the local match to a Stewardship grant. The Implementation chapter describes the programs in detail.

### **Commercial and Industrial Development**

As discussed in the Southern Bypass and Bridge section, commercial development along STH 32/57 and CTH PP leading to the southern bypass and bridge should be focused in nodes at major intersections, rather than in long strips. Developing a commercial strip along STH 32/57 or CTH PP would not maintain the rural character of the Town. However, properly designed node commercial and/or industrial development could provide a source of locally available goods, services, and jobs within the Town. New industrial and commercial development should also be designed in a manner that creates a pleasing visual appearance, is approachable by bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles, and does not detract from the rural character of Rockland. This may include requiring new businesses to have monument-style signage, parking lot landscaping, downward directed lighting, and architecture consistent with a rural community. Specific locations where commercial development may be appropriate include the intersections of STH 32/57 with Bob-Bea-Jan Road, Midway Road, Eiler Road, and Lasee Road.

Northeast Asphalt owns three parcels of land in Rockland, totaling approximately 81 acres of land. Approximately 39 acres of the land is currently being actively quarried. It can be reasonably expected that the remaining 42 acres of land will be quarried during the 20-year period of this comprehensive plan.

The Future Land Use Map identifies the entirety of these parcels for future quarrying activity. This area is identified in order to provide notice to existing and future residents in this part of the Town of Rockland that quarrying can be expected to continue and will likely expand into these areas. Therefore, it is important that future residents understand that quarrying and the associated blasting, vibrations, dust, and truck traffic may impact them should they decide to live next to a quarry. It is also important for quarry operators to continue to operate the quarry in as neighborly and environmentally-sound means as possible, consistent with past practices and the Non-Metallic Mining Ordinance (Chapter 21) of the Town of Rockland Code of Ordinances.

### **Community Design Characteristics**

Businesses, public facilities, homes, and industries need to be designed in a way that is sensitive to the rural character of Rockland. This would include unobtrusive signage, landscaped parking lots, and ensuring that new homes are located with adequate space

between them to minimize their visual impact on the rural landscape that typifies the Town.

It is important for Rockland to incorporate those natural features of the Town into new developments in a way that does not preclude their preservation. This may include designing subdivisions in a manner that mitigates the impact new homes or businesses could have on the Town's rural character.

### **Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities**

Since the Town is so rural in nature, there are currently no areas of the Town that are developed at dense enough levels to qualify the nearby areas for "infill" development.

### **Natural Areas**

Natural resource features provide Rockland with a large part of its identity as a community. The Fox River, East River, Niagara Escarpment, and numerous streams and wetlands all contribute to the Town's rural feel and should be protected as much as possible. Features of the Town that are identified as environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), such as wetlands, floodways, and steep slopes, should not be developed and should be identified on subdivision plats or certified survey maps and included as part of the greenspace requirements of conservation subdivisions. These features should be included in the design of developments as integral amenities and maintained in common ownership, and they may be utilized in the design of stormwater management facilities.



The Niagara Escarpment is home to many endangered or threatened plants and animals along its length from northern Illinois through Brown County, Upper Michigan, Ontario, and the Niagara Falls. Therefore, whenever there is an opportunity to preserve a part of this very unique feature, Rockland should actively pursue it. There are a number of public and nonprofit agencies that could assist the Town in identifying funding resources and development design techniques that could help in preserving pieces of the escarpment.

There are a number of small tributaries to the Fox and East Rivers that have their headwaters in the Town of Rockland. Protecting the springs and wetlands that provide base flows to these headwaters is critically important in keeping the streams and the larger rivers they flow to healthy for fish populations. As these areas develop, using quality erosion control measures to keep construction site erosion from entering into these streams should be a priority for the Town. Therefore, Rockland should ensure that

all new developments prior to construction have an erosion control plan and measures in place.

Since vegetative buffers as narrow as 30 feet between row crops and a stream can remove up to 90 percent of the potential sediments that would otherwise run into the stream, Rockland should continue to support the Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department's efforts in implementing the Brown County Agriculture Shoreland Management Ordinance, which requires buffers on all 1,200 miles of intermittent and perennial streams in the County. The ordinance, adopted in 1991, requires the establishment of a vegetative buffer or equally effective erosion control practice within 20 feet of any perennial or intermittent stream identified on a USGS quadrangle map. Landowners are eligible for a grant to assist with installation and a cost-share for lands taken out of production, as funds are available. Once in place, the buffer is perpetual and is attached to the land deed. With the implementation of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Fox River, additional funding may be on the horizon to implement best practices within these waterways to reduce the levels of phosphorus entering the Fox River and Lower Green Bay. The Town of Rockland and its agricultural producers should continue to stay apprised of developments that may create opportunities for the implementation and cost share for vegetative buffers.

### **Agriculture**

Agriculture will continue to be a component of the Town of Rockland over the 20-year timeline of this plan. There are a number of large and small active farms located within the Town. The Town should continue to work with these landowners to ensure that the Town's development policies do not interfere with the continuing operation of the farms. To this end, development activities should be limited



within the identified farmland preservation areas of the Town to the activities and recommendations detailed in this plan and the Town's zoning ordinance.

The Town has adopted a map depicting the lands that are eligible to participate in the Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative, which provides a state income tax credit to qualified landowners. The Town undertook a comprehensive effort to work with its property owners to identify those areas of the Town that will likely remain in agricultural production over the next 15-20 years based on such factors as soil productivity, its comprehensive plan at the time, environmentally sensitive areas, likelihood the property will continue to be agricultural 15 years from now, and input from Town residents. The Town-identified areas were then incorporated into the Brown County Farmland Preservation Plan. Under state rules, if there are any conflicts between

the Future Land Use Map and the Intensive Agricultural Areas Map, the Intensive Agricultural Areas Map supersedes all other future land use classifications. The Farmland Preservation areas are depicted in Figure 2-7.

Specific requirements to participate in the program include:

- The subject properties are identified in the Brown County Farmland Preservation Plan and zoned for agriculture within a State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) certified agricultural zoning district.
- The person farming the properties makes at least \$6,000 a year or \$18,000 over a rolling three-year period in gross farm receipts (lease/rent payments may not be counted).
- The properties are in compliance with state soil and water conservation standards as certified by the Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department.
- All property taxes owed from previous years are paid.

In order to rezone lands from the certified agricultural zone (farmland preservation zoning district) to a non-certified zone, under Chapter 91 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, a “findings of fact” must first be made by the Town Board. The findings of fact must be made in writing, after the public hearing, as part of the official record and find in the affirmative the following requirements:

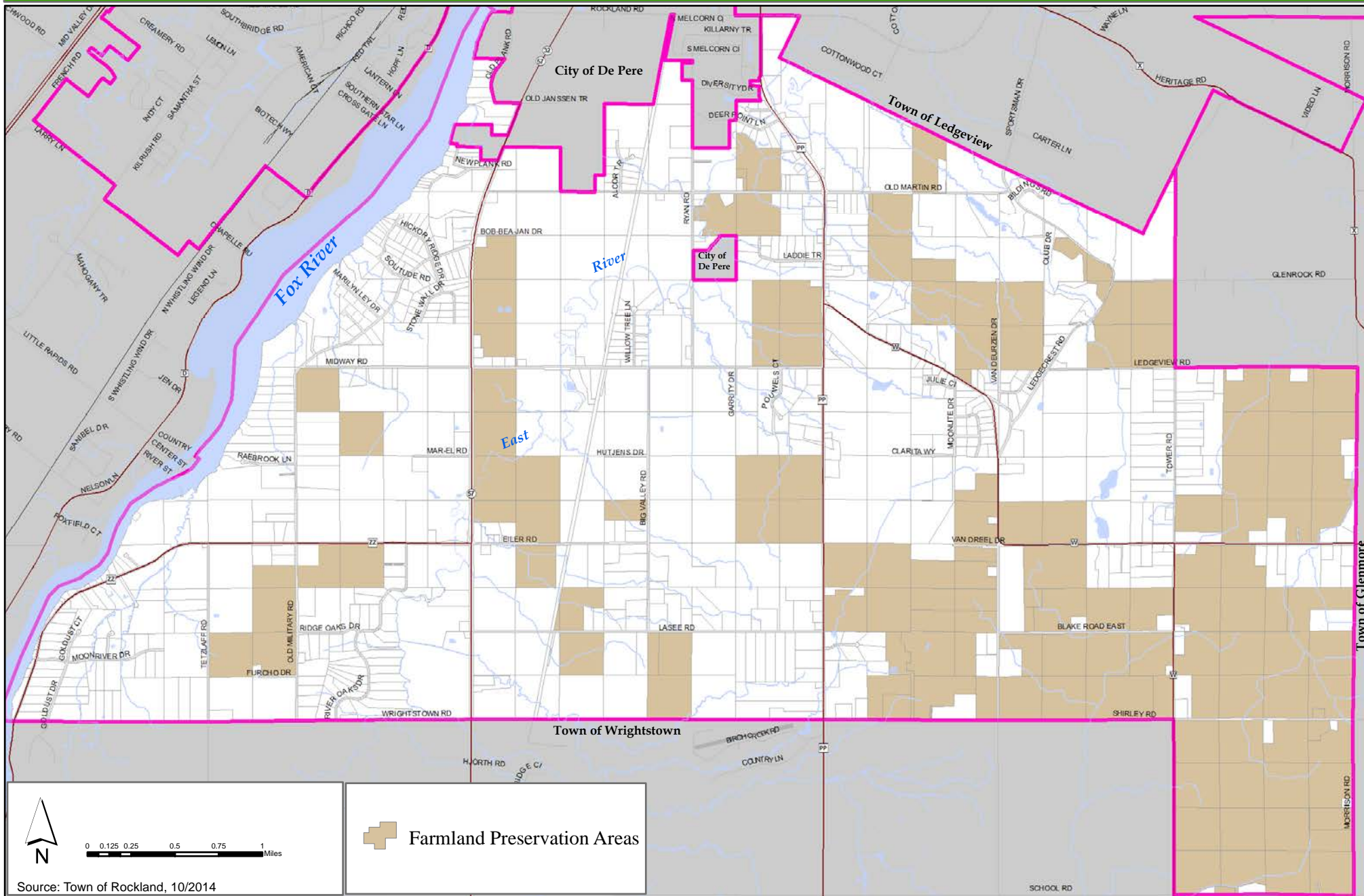
- The rezoned land is better suited for a use not allowed in the farmland preservation zoning district.
- The rezoning is consistent with the comprehensive plan adopted by the Town, which is in effect at the time of the rezoning.
- The rezoning is substantially consistent with the certified Brown County Farmland Preservation Plan in effect at the time.
- The rezoning will not substantially impair or limit current or future agricultural use of other protected farmland.
- Additionally, the Town must report all rezones out of a farmland preservation zoning district to DATCP by March 1 of the following year. Rezoning out of the identified intensive agricultural areas should only be done when the aforementioned bullet points are met, is consistent with the comprehensive plan of the Town of Rockland, or is part of a comprehensive rezoning of the Town.





Figure 2-6

# Farmland Preservation Areas Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin





As discussed in the Economic Development chapter, entrepreneurial agriculture provides opportunities for diversification within the agricultural market and growth in the tourism market. Smaller farms in the Town may be able to get involved in this niche market. Current trends indicate a strong interest from residents and tourists alike in local, sustainable foods and direct farm to grocery market or restaurant sales. Capitalizing on the Town's location within the Wisconsin Ledge American Viticultural Area (AVA), and partnering with local wineries and local food production operations could enhance agricultural and tourism-related revenues in the Town. The Town should strongly encourage small farms to undertake entrepreneurial agriculture and niche businesses to market and sell these products by reviewing its zoning ordinance to ensure it does not present barriers to these activities, but also that adequate community safeguards are in place for traffic, parking, lighting, signage, and hours of operation.

## Summary of Recommendations

### New Development

- When individual new homes are located within or adjacent to active agricultural operations, they should be situated in such a way that allows for easy access for emergency vehicles and minimizes impacts on agricultural lands.
- Support the development of master planned senior housing developments in the Town, provided they have adequate utilities and transportation for residents.
- Discourage as much as possible new residential development near active quarrying operations. If allowed to locate near existing quarries, the Town should provide notification to potential homeowners that there are active quarries nearby.
- Rockland should continue to be involved in discussions with NEW Water regarding interceptor sewer planning and the potential for growth in the Town.
- Should public sewer and water become available to Rockland, the Town should immediately begin a Master Development Plan and review its land use ordinances to ensure they continue to adequately address Town needs.
- Ensure that new commercial and/or industrial activities are located in nodes at the intersections along STH 32/57 and potentially CTH PP rather than in strips along the entire length.
- The Town of Rockland should work to acquire additional land around the Town Hall to accommodate future Town facilities.
- New businesses should be designed in such a way that does not detract from the rural character of Rockland. This may include the use of monument-style signage, parking lot landscaping, downward directed lighting, and rural architecture typologies.



- Streets should follow the contours of the land, which may produce a more curvilinear internal street pattern. However, they should be well-connected to existing and future streets in order to maintain accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.
- Ensure new developments have future street connections identified to neighboring properties through the development of Area Development Plans to maximize internal street connectivity unless there are environmental or developmental constraints.

### **Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation**

- Work with the WDNR and Brown County Parks Management to improve access and parking along the Fox River Trail. Potential trailheads and parking areas include where the trail crosses Midway Road, Lasee Road, and on the Town's southern boundary where the trail crosses Wrightstown Road.
- Ensure that existing and future public access points to the Fox River and any other navigable waterways are maintained and signed appropriately so that Town residents may access them.
- Work with private property owners, WDNR, and other public and nonprofit organizations to develop a conservancy area in the area bound by CTH W, Ledgecrest Road, and Old Ledge Road to preserve a segment of the Niagara Escarpment and pass on a legacy for future generations.
- Consider development of a small active park adjacent to the Rockland town hall through grant funding and volunteer labor and fund raising.
- Coordinate with Brown County Parks Management, and applicable state and federal agencies to develop a park along the Fox River in the vicinity of the Little Rapids dam.
- Incorporate the natural features of the Town as amenities within new developments to maintain Rockland's rural character.
- Incorporate headwater springs or wetlands into the green space requirements of conservation subdivisions if/when development occurs.

### **Agricultural Land Uses**

- Ensure that new residents recognize that there are active farms in Rockland, as well as the sights, sounds, and smells that are associated with them.
- Continue to work with Brown County and local property owners to ensure the Town's certified agricultural zone ordinance and map are substantially consistent with the Brown County Farmland Preservation Plan for purposes



of the State of Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program.

- Promote Rockland as an agricultural tourism destination for wine, dairy products, vegetables, fruit, and other direct farm to market products.
- Encourage entrepreneurial agriculture efforts in the Town as a means for small-scale farms to diversify their operations and continue in Rockland.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Transportation**

#### **Introduction**

Transportation networks are not static but rather they are dynamic systems that are continually changing based on the evolving needs of the community. This chapter of the plan discusses the existing transportation system and makes recommendations for the transportation system that will help the community achieve its goal of creating a more comprehensive multi-modal system. Developing a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system requires participation and cooperation from numerous entities and most importantly, it takes time. Because Town boards and commissions experience change over time, it is important that new decision makers are familiar with the goals and objectives presented in this document to help assist the community in developing a multi-modal transportation system over the next 20 years.

#### **Existing Transportation System**

##### **Land Use**

The Town of Rockland is situated on the edge of urban development yet the current land uses within the Town are predominately agricultural and low density residential. The Town recently updated its zoning code to include standards for urban residential development. The inclusion of an urban residential (sewered) district in the zoning code will allow for more compact development on smaller lots. This will create areas within Rockland that are more suited to motorized and non-motorized transportation options.

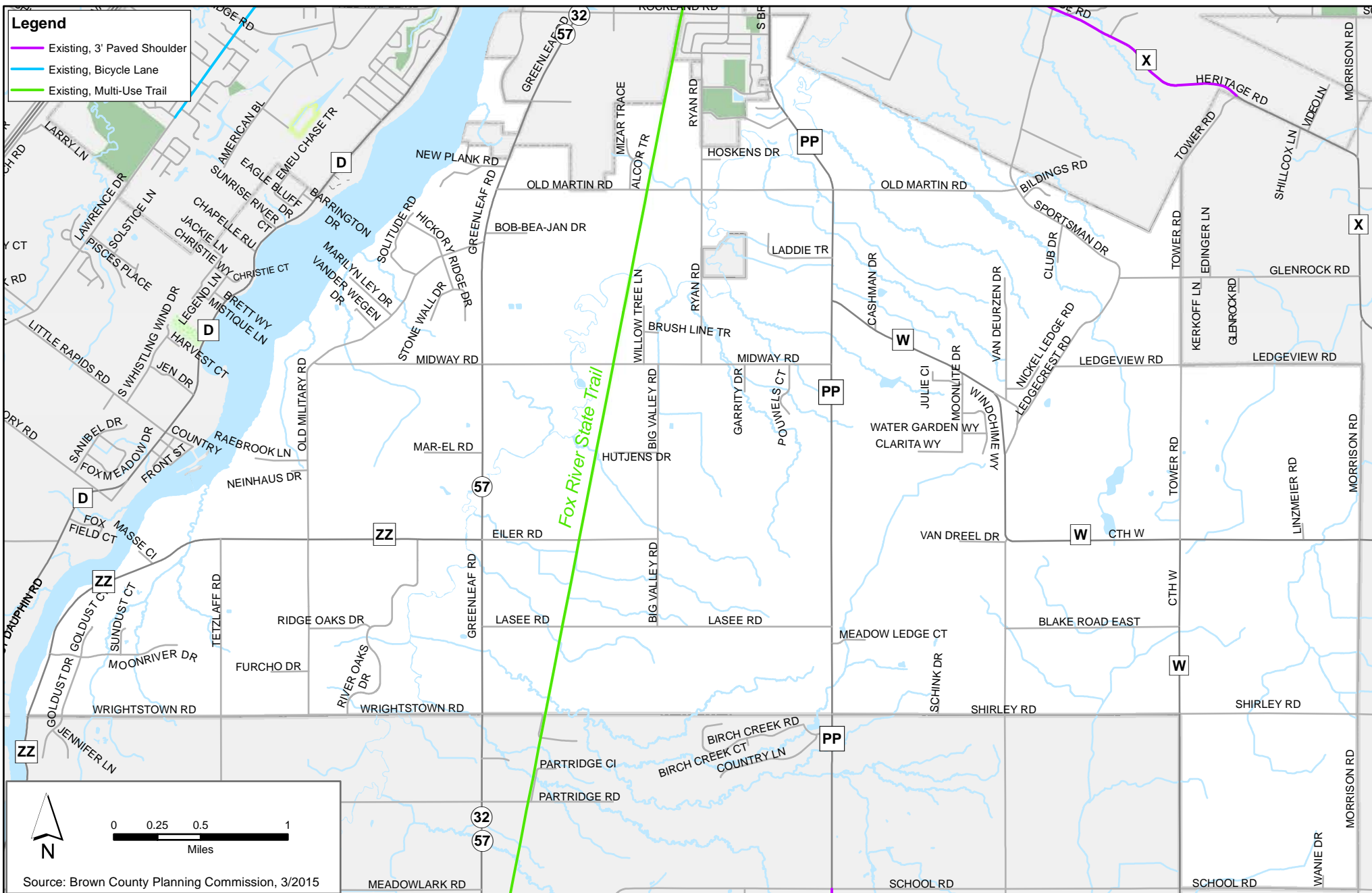
##### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

The Town of Rockland recently updated its code of ordinances to include provisions for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, consistent with the state bicycle plan and Brown County 2011 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The Town now requires all urban cross-section streets to include sidewalks as a part of the development agreement. In addition to requiring sidewalks for urban cross-section streets, the Town has also included a requirement for bicycle facilities to be provided on streets and/or through dedicated bicycle paths. While the code of ordinances includes general requirements for the inclusion of these facilities, other documents such as the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan can be consulted for more detailed information on these types of facilities.

The Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was adopted by the Brown County Planning Commission Board of Directors in 1998. An update to the plan was completed and adopted by the Brown County Planning Commission Board of Directors in 2011. The 2011 Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan recognizes the Fox River Trail as the main bicycle/pedestrian facility in Rockland and it recommends adding a signed bicycle route on Eiler Road from the Fox River Trail to Highway 32/57 and bicycle lanes for the entirety of CTH ZZ in Rockland.




Figure 3-1  
Bicycle Facilities  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



The Fox River Trail is the primary combined bicycle and pedestrian facility in Rockland. The trail is a 12 foot-wide multi-use trail that allows for a number of different uses. The northern portion of the trail from the City of De Pere south to Lasee Road is paved while the remainder of the trail to the south is crushed limestone. Having the majority of the trail paved within the Town makes it a very attractive route for transportation and recreational trips.

The following diagram describes the current facilities that can be found within the Town of Rockland. A definition is provided for reference as well as an image of the facility.

Facility Type	Definition	Diagram
Multi-Use Trail	A multi-use trail is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic, and can be either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. Multi-use trails include bicycle paths, rail-trails, or other facilities built for bicycle and pedestrian traffic.	

The Town's existing bicycle and pedestrian system is shown in Figure 3-1.

## **Transit**

### **Green Bay Metro Fixed Route Bus Service**

Rockland is not currently included in the Green Bay Metro service area, and it is unlikely that fixed route transit service will be extended to the Town within the 20-year planning period.

### **Green Bay Metro Paratransit Program for Individuals with Disabilities**

Specialized Metro paratransit transportation services for the elderly and disabled do not currently serve Rockland because the Town is not included in Metro's fixed route transit service area.

### **American Red Cross Northeast Wisconsin Chapter - Transportation Service for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities**

Red Cross provides transportation services to individuals 60 years of age and older and individuals with qualifying disabilities. The program offers door-to-door service and provides rides for medical, nutrition, employment, education, and social appointments. Transportation is provided in small buses, wheelchair-accessible vans, and automobiles. The Red Cross provides service Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Currently, the Red Cross provides service to the Town as far south as Old Plank Road.

## **Department of Veterans Administration and Disabled American Veterans Transportation Services for Veterans**

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) provides door to door medical transportation services to veterans to and from the Milo C. Huempfer Outpatient VA Clinic in Green Bay and the John H. Bradley Outpatient VA Clinic in Appleton. This service is provided Monday through Friday by appointment.

### **Streets and Highways**

Rockland contains one state highway, four county trunk highways, and several town roads. These roads and highways are the primary means of reaching the Town's residential, agricultural, and other destinations (see Figure 3-2 for the Town's road and highway system).

The current street pattern in Rockland provides a mixture of arterial, collector, and local streets. Rockland also contains several cul-de-sacs and other streets that do not provide convenient connections to surrounding local streets. This lack of street connectivity in Rockland forces motorists to use the arterial streets at some point during nearly every trip, and this concentration of traffic can create barriers to other transportation modes (such as walking and bicycling).

### **Functional Classification System**

A component of a street and highway system is the functional classification network. This network groups roads into classes according to the character of service they are intended to provide, ranging from a high degree of travel mobility to land access functions. The Town of Rockland is located in both the urban and rural portions of the Green Bay Urbanized Area, which means that the town contains highways that are included on the area's urban and rural functional classification systems. The urbanized area boundary and the functionally classified highways in Rockland are shown in Figure 3-3.

The functional classification categories are summarized below.

**Freeways:** Freeways are controlled-access highways that have no at-grade intersections or driveway connections. The Town of Rockland does not contain any freeways.

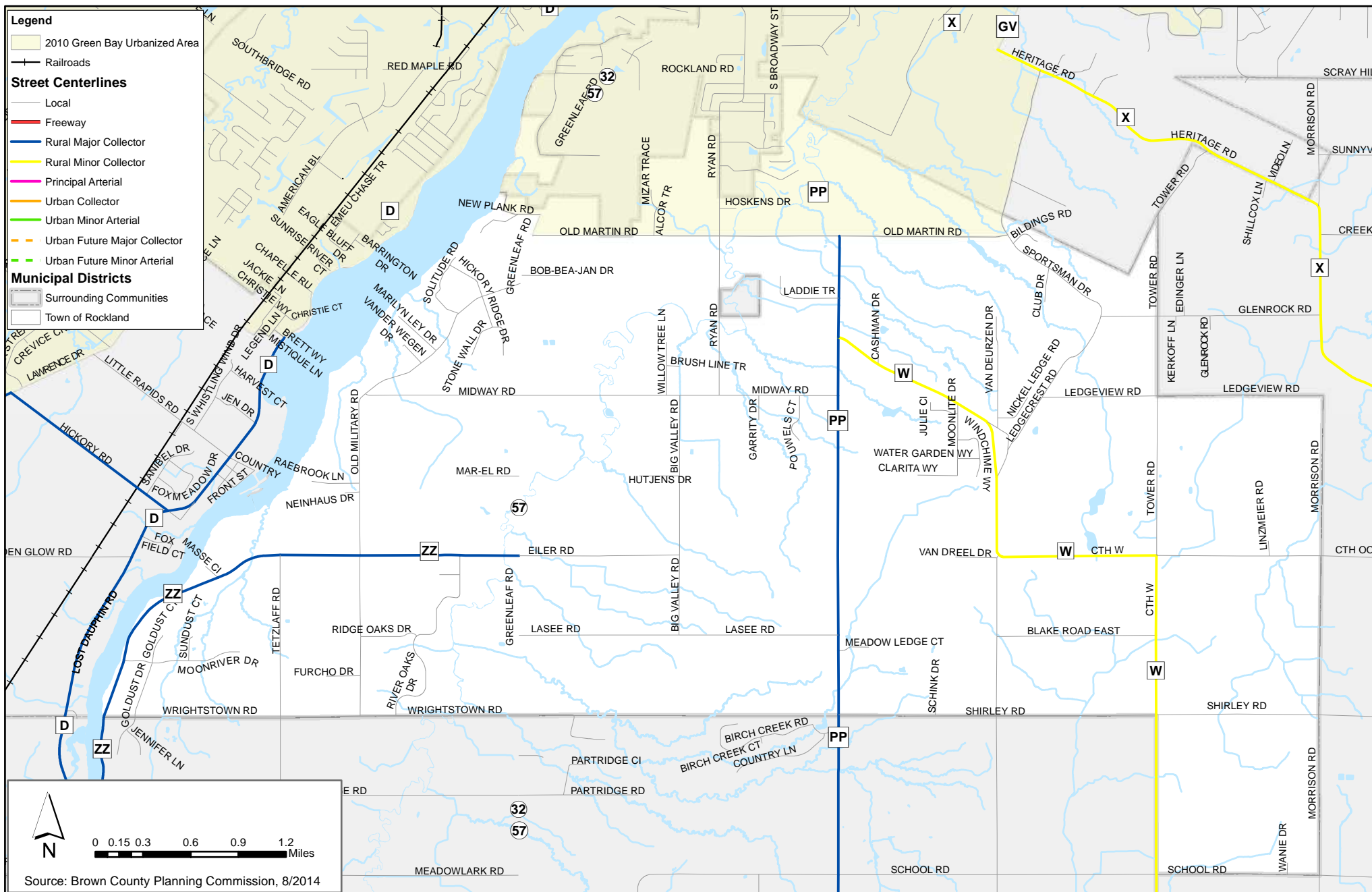
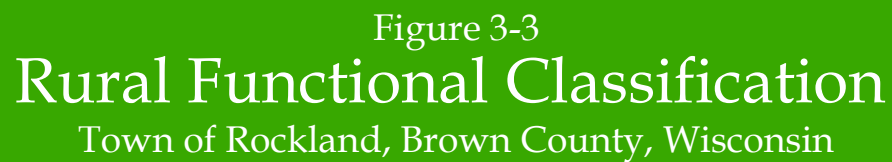
**Arterials:** Principal and minor arterials carry longer-distance vehicle trips between activity centers. These facilities are designed to provide a very high amount of mobility and very little access.

**Collectors:** Collectors link local streets with the arterial street system. These facilities collect traffic in local areas, serve as local through routes, and directly serve abutting land uses.

**Local:** Local road and streets are used for short trips. Their primary function is to provide access to abutting land uses, and traffic volumes and speeds are relatively low.







## Rustic Roads

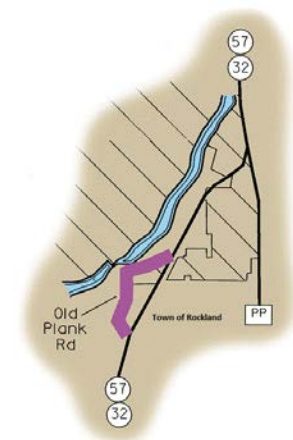
The Rustic Roads System in Wisconsin was created by the Wisconsin State Legislature in 1973 in an effort to help citizens and local units of government preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic and lightly traveled country roads for the enjoyment of bikers, hikers, and motorists.<sup>4</sup>

Old Plank Road is the only designated Rustic Road in the Town. The Rustic Road is characterized by ravines, large old trees, and a narrow road surface. The road is 1.3 miles in length and forms a loop west of STH 57. The road surface includes both paved and gravel portions. Old Plank Road dates back to Civil War times when it was used to carry supplies to the Fox River. A designated Rustic Road typically falls under the jurisdiction of the local community, which in this case is the Town.



The goals of the Rustic Roads Program include:

- To identify and preserve in a natural and essentially undisturbed condition certain designated roads having unusual or outstanding natural or cultural beauty.
- To produce a linear, park-like system for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian travel for quiet and leisurely enjoyment by local residents and the general public.
- To maintain and administer these roads to provide safe public travel while preserving the rustic and scenic qualities through use of appropriate maintenance and design standards and encouragement of zoning for land use compatibility, utility regulations, and billboard control.



## Other Modes of Transportation

### Rail Transportation

The Town of Rockland currently does not have a rail transportation system.

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<sup>4</sup> From Wisconsin DOT's Wisconsin's Rustic Roads (2003).



Figure 3-4  
**Port & Airport Facilities**  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



## **Air Transportation**

Austin Straubel International Airport is approximately six miles northwest of Rockland (see Figure 3-4 for the airport's location). Commercial service is currently provided by American Airlines, United Airlines, and Delta Airlines. Charter service is provided by Frontline Aviation and Priester Aviation. Austin Straubel International Airport is also a regional base of operations for the Transportation Security Administration serving the Northern half of Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Additionally, the Airport has a U.S. Customs office stationed within the main terminal for those who wish to enter or exit the United States. The Town's economy is not significantly affected by the airport at this time.

The Outagamie County Regional Airport is approximately 25 miles southwest of Rockland. Commercial service is currently provided by United Airlines, Delta Airlines, and Allegiant Airlines. The Town's economy is not significantly affected by the airport at this time.

## **Truck Transportation**

Although Rockland contains agricultural and a few active industrial and commercial land uses, the majority of the heavy truck traffic in the Town is attributable to trucks passing through on STH 32/57. There are various businesses, industries, and agricultural services within the Town that still rely on occasional truck trips to import and export goods. These trips typically occur on state and county highways, but trucks occasionally need to travel on town roads to reach their destinations.

## **Water Transportation**

The Town does not currently rely on the Port of Green Bay to import or export goods. The port's location is shown in Figure 3-4.

## **Future Transportation System**

The Town of Rockland has made a strong commitment to develop a multi-modal transportation network where all people have the ability to access places within and around the Town in a safe and efficient manner. While these efforts may not be immediately visible, over time Rockland will begin to develop a more comprehensive multi-modal transportation network. This section of the Transportation chapter identifies and recognizes the major aspects of Rockland's transportation system and recommends methods to continue developing them over the next 20 years to create a multi-modal transportation system that helps the Town in meeting the goals and objectives within this plan.

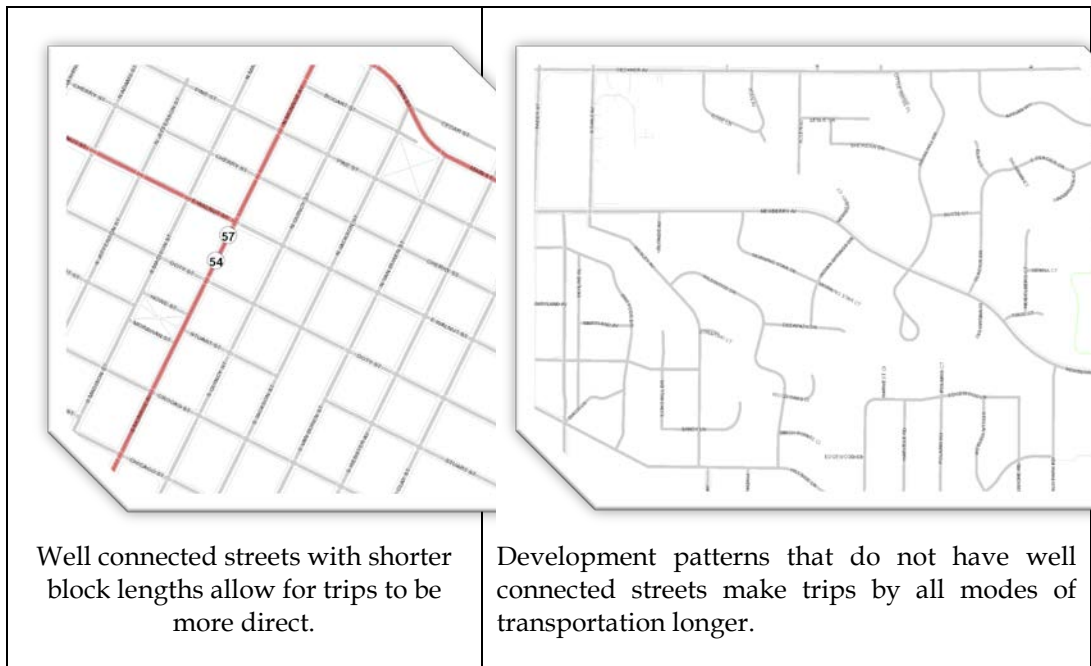
## Transportation Recommendations, Programs, and Policies

### Land Use

Future land use patterns help set the stage for future transportation facilities. While land use and transportation are individual components of a community, the complex and interactive relationship between the two can lead to decisions that have serious implications for how a community will look and function in the future.

### **Land Use and Street Patterns**

The Town of Rockland has a number of provisions/requirements built into both the subdivision ordinance and the zoning code to facilitate the development of a multi-modal transportation system that serves all Rockland residents. Land use and the transportation system play off of each other and an important tool in addressing street patterns is determining block lengths. The current code of ordinances has numerous provisions that support the development of multi-modal facilities; however, the current requirements for block lengths have a minimum requirement of 200 feet and a maximum of 1500 feet. For the Residential Sewered (RS-1) District a 1500 foot block length may deter walking trips. To help increase street connectivity and intersection frequency, the town should reduce the maximum allowable block length to help create a more compact street and sidewalk network to encourage walking trips.



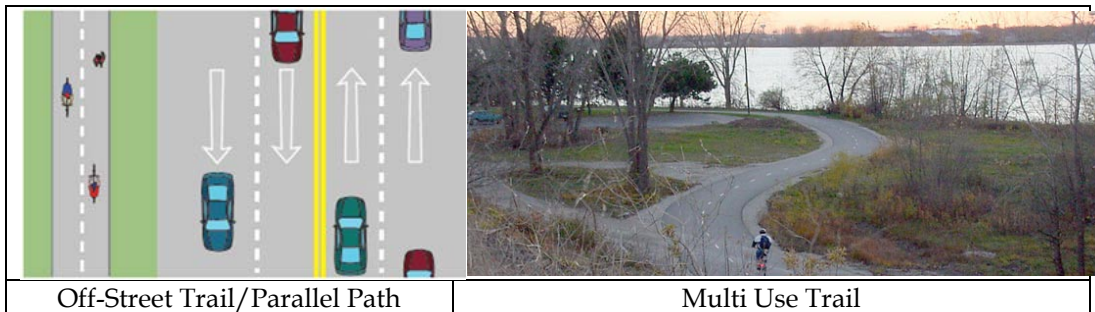
The Town has also included a requirement to construct sidewalks on all urban cross-section streets, which will enable residents to walk within their own neighborhoods on facilities that are separate from vehicular traffic. This creates a much safer scenario for

both the motorist and the pedestrian and it also creates additional opportunities for social interaction with neighbors. The last example to note is the inclusion of walkways and bikeways in the design of subdivision plats. These walkways and bikeways offer opportunities to link a variety of destinations together as well as to other facilities such as the Fox River Trail.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

#### **Develop a Pedestrian/Bicycle Trail System Plan**

With sidewalk installation policies in place, future development in the Town will have dedicated places for pedestrians to walk. The difficulty then becomes stitching together the new sidewalks to each other and to other pedestrian facilities such as multi-use trails. Multi-use trails and off street/parallel paths offer an opportunity to complement the future sidewalk network by allowing people to use the sidewalks within their neighborhoods to seamlessly connect to a multi-use trail system for longer trips.



When developing its pedestrian/bicycle trail plan, the town should assess the current development patterns including possible destinations, population density (where people are living), and current bicycle/pedestrian facilities (either formal or informal) to develop an off-street trail/parallel path network throughout the Town. Creating this plan would have many benefits, including developing a broad bicycle/pedestrian network that would help to connect current and future development. It will also enhance the town's ability to obtain grant funds to help pay for the proposed facilities.

As an element within a pedestrian/bicycle trail plan, the Town should identify areas where land will need to be purchased and cooperative agreements will need to be made with area utility companies to utilize utility easements. The town should also use the zoning and subdivision ordinances to dedicate land or easements for trails before approving development proposals. In addition to serving destinations within Rockland (especially the Town's rural areas and subdivisions), these efforts would enhance the Town's connections to the surrounding communities and improve intercommunity mobility.

#### **Bicycle Paths & Off-Street/Parallel Path Suitability Index**

Off-road bicycle facilities can be referred to as off-street or parallel paths. However, any path that is open for public use is also likely to be popular with walkers, joggers, in-line skaters, wheelchair users, and others. As a result, off-street/parallel paths have come to



be called multi-use trails. In either case, these facilities are typically 10 to 12 foot two-directional trails that are separated from the roadway and designed for the exclusive use of bicycle and other non-motorized transportation modes.

The purposes of bicycle paths/multi-use trails are as follows:

- To serve as significant generators of bicycle use, especially for less skilled bicyclists.
- To provide enjoyable recreational opportunities as well as desirable commuter routes.
- To provide system continuity and linkage in areas where no on-street facilities are available.

#### Sidepath Suitability

A method of estimating the relative safety of bicyclists on trails (or paths) that run parallel to streets was developed by the League of Illinois Bicyclists (LIB). This “Off-Street/Parallel Path Suitability Index” is designed to enable the Town of Rockland and other entities to rate the safety of existing parallel paths, determine if a new path would be an appropriate option, and identify methods for making existing or planned paths as safe as possible.

To assess the suitability of placing a path along a road segment, the following factors are considered:

- **Intersection traffic**, which considers vehicle volumes, vehicle speeds, the number of driveway and street intersections, and other conditions.
- **Path continuity**, which measures the impact of gaps (unpaved areas, etc.) that exist along the path.
- **Curb cuts**, which considers whether or not curb cuts exist at street and driveway crossings.
- **Pedestrian use**, which considers the level of pedestrian use and the conflicts that exist or could exist between walkers and bicyclists.
- **Crosswalks**, which measures the visibility of crosswalks at intersections.
- **Separation between intersections and sidepaths**, which considers the proximity of the path’s intersection and driveway crossings to the parallel road.

Each of these factors is assessed and scored, and the final score is used to determine the overall suitability of the path by comparing the score to the categories in the following table:



<b>Sidelpath Suitability</b>	<b>Points</b>
Most Suitable	0-7
Somewhat Suitable	8-9
Least Suitable	10-11
Not Suitable	12+

When the Town of Rockland begins the development of a pedestrian/bicycle trail plan, the Off-Street/Parallel Path Suitability Index can be a useful tool in determining where the future facilities should be located. The Sidelpath Suitability Algorithm and two examples of the algorithm in practice have been included as Appendix D.

### **The Fox River Trail**

The Fox River Trail passes through the Town of Rockland, providing recreational opportunities and transportation alternatives to local and non-local residents. The majority of the trail within the Town is paved from Lasee Road north into the City of Green Bay. It is expected that the trail will continue to be paved further south as funding becomes available.

To help improve safety and avoid conflicts between trail users and automobiles at intersections where the Fox River Trail crosses the Town's roads, the roads should have early warning signs and noticeable pedestrian/bicycle crossings to warn passing motorists. The Town should also work with the Brown County Parks Department to make sure that the signs on the trail are free and clear of vegetative growth so that both motorists and trail users have ample warning at these intersections.

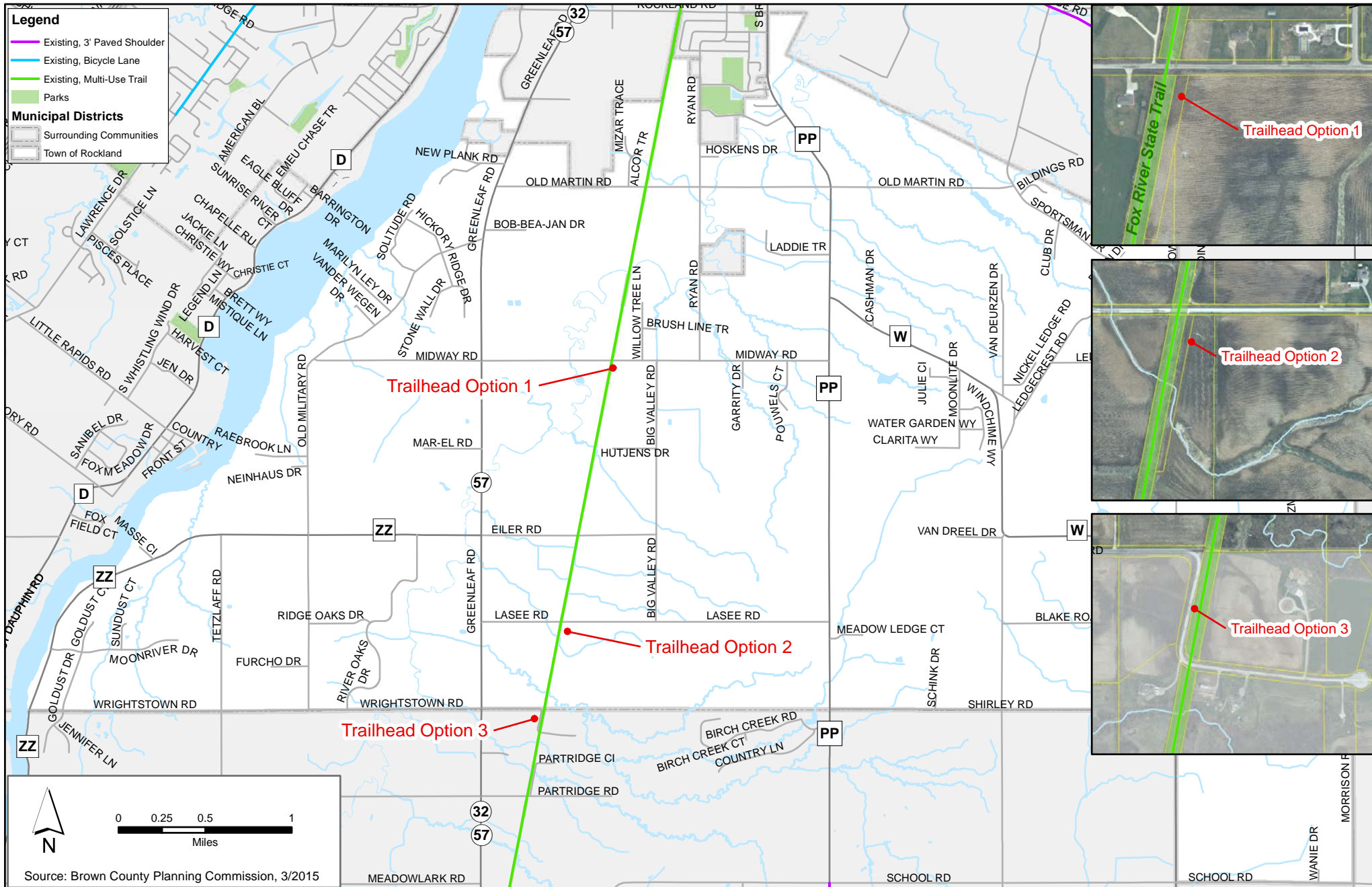
Parking is an issue along the Fox River Trail. Two locations have been identified along the Fox River Trail as potential trail heads which could include a small parking area. Both of these locations are under private ownership by the same owner and the county has been working with a trail advocacy group called the Friends of the Fox River Trail to try to acquire the properties.

- The first site is located at the southeast corner of Midway Road and the Fox River Trail. The parcel (ID# R-235-1) is approximately 60' wide by 830' long and is located immediately adjacent to the trail. It has direct access to Midway Road and has enough area to allow for a small parking lot.

A second location offers an almost identical scenario found at Midway Road only this location is at Lasee Road. The parcel is located at the southeast corner of Lasee Road and the Fox River Trail. It has direct access from Lasee Road and is located immediately adjacent to the Fox River Trail. This parcel (ID# R-319-1) is slightly larger measuring approximately 50' wide and 1015' long. It does appear that there would be enough room to develop a small parking area on this lot if the county were to acquire it in the future.



## Figure 3-5 Fox River Trailhead Options Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



- The intersection of Wrightstown Road and the Fox River Trail was identified by the Town as a potential third location for a trail head. This area however, is located on the border of the Town of Rockland and the Town of Wrightstown. If both Rockland and Wrightstown wish to identify a trail head at this location both communities should coordinate their efforts with Brown County Parks Management and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The potential trailhead locations are depicted in Figure 3-5.

### **Paving County Highway Shoulders**

The Town should work with the Brown County Public Works Department over the next 20 years to pave the county highway shoulders that coincide with the recommendations stated in the following section. When reconstructing county highways, it is recommended that a paved shoulder be added to each side of the road. The Brown County Public Works Department has a policy on paving shoulders on county highways. The current policy states that the county is responsible for 3' of pavement and anything in addition to the 3' will be at the community's expense. This would require each community that has planned improvements in the form of 5' paved shoulders on a county highway to pay for 2' of pavement on each side of the road. These facilities are important for the development of a bicycle network, but they also provide a place for motorists to park and swerve during emergencies. In addition, paving the shoulders will help to minimize shoulder maintenance costs. Should the Town of Rockland determine that 5' paved shoulders are desired on certain roads, Rockland should pursue state and federal grant opportunities to offset costs to the Town.

### **Develop an On-street Bicycle Network That Connects to the Fox River Trail**

A bicycle offers a fast and efficient way to travel long distances. Developing an on-street bicycle network would allow local residents to partake in both recreational trips and transportation trips throughout the Town of Rockland. The bicycle network will also provide connections to existing and proposed bicycle facilities in neighboring communities. The Town may not currently contain major destinations such as a school or a post office; however, the creation of an on-street bicycle network would provide an opportunity to connect residents to these types of facilities in nearby communities.

The Town has expressed interest in creating a bicycle network that would expand transportation options for people of all ages and abilities. The future on-street bicycle network should utilize the Fox River Trail as the backbone of the network. This future network of bicycle facilities may include a combination of different facility types to accommodate the current conditions and requirements for the proposed facilities throughout the Town.

Due to the current conditions on some of the following roads that have proposed improvements, it is important for the Town of Rockland to work cooperatively with agencies such as the County Public Works Department, WisDOT, Green Bay MPO, and the surrounding municipalities and adjoining property owners to plan and complete the following improvements.

**Note:** The following recommendations and justifications reference the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system that was developed by the UW-Transportation Information Center to track the surface condition of roadways. The roads are evaluated and rated on a scale of 1-10 with a 10 being the best score possible. PASER is further discussed in the Streets and Highways section of this chapter.

#### EAST/WEST BICYCLE FACILITIES

- Old Martin Road – Old Martin Road is a town road located on the north end of Rockland. The right-of-way width varies along this 3 mile section of road while current pavement width is approximately 20'. The PASER rating for Old Martin Road was 4 out of 10 (fair) as of 2013. A PASER rating of 4 indicates that structural improvement is required and therefore, this section of road should be considered for improvements in the near future. Old Martin Road acts as an east west connection between two of the most scenic features in Rockland, the Niagara Escarpment along Sportsman Drive to the east and the Fox River to the west. With the Fox River Trail located in the middle it makes for a convenient way to tour some of Rockland's best natural assets. For these reasons paved shoulders are recommended for the entire length of Old Martin Road when the road is improved.
- Midway Road – Midway Road has a pavement condition rating ranging between 4 and 5 which indicates that the road is in fair condition; however, it is likely that the road will be improved in the next 20 years. Midway Road connects the Fox River Trail users to the proposed facilities on CTH PP and Old Military Road. It will also provide residents an opportunity to access the Fox River Trail via a safe network of dedicated bicycle facilities. When this road is improved in the future it is recommended that the road include paved shoulders from Old Military Road to CTH PP.
- Lasee Road – Lasee Road provides a connection between the Fox River Trail and the proposed paved shoulders on CTH PP. Because the traffic volumes are low it is recommended that this section of road be signed as a bicycle route. Although not identified on the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, a bicycle route connection along Lasee Road from the Fox River Trail to STH 57 is also recommended.
- Eiler Road – This is a short road between the Fox River Trail and STH 57. Traffic volumes are low on this road; therefore, bicycling improvements in the form of a signed bicycle route will be sufficient. This recommendation is consistent with a recommendation in the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update in 2011. This will create an important link between the Fox River Trail and the proposed facilities on CTH ZZ.
- Shirley Road – Shirley Road is a narrow town road with about 20' of pavement. It is positioned on the town line between Rockland and the Town of Wrightstown. The road would connect two proposed bicycle facilities, CTH PP on the west end and CTH W at the east end. It is recommended that this road segment be signed as a bicycle route to create a connection between the two proposed facilities and to take advantage of the scenic views provided by the Niagara Escarpment.

- CTH ZZ – This proposed route takes advantage of one of the more scenic features found in the Town of Rockland. CTH ZZ provides a spectacular bicycling route as it skirts the east bank of the Fox River. It also acts as a direct connection to the Village of Wrightstown to the south. There are some challenges facing this stretch of road. Right-of-way varies along the corridor especially as the road gets closer to the Fox River. Parts of CTH ZZ are currently planned to be upgraded in the near future, including the bridge over the East River. The bridge is scheduled to be replaced in 2018 while the entire road from STH 32/57 to Tetzlaff Road in the Town of Wrightstown will be reconstructed in 2017. It is critical Brown County coordinate closely with the Town of Rockland and the adjoining property owners in designing accommodations for this route.
- Wrightstown Road – This road is very similar to both Lasee Road and Shirley Road in that it provides an east-west connection between the Fox River Trail and another proposed bicycle facility, CTH ZZ. Wrightstown Road is currently a town road with a pavement width around 20'. It is recommended that this road be signed as a bicycle route to provide a connection between the Fox River Trail and CTH ZZ.
- CTH OO – This section of road creates a connection between two proposed bicycle facilities, CTH W to the west and CTH X to the east (Town of Glenmore). The PASER rating for this section of road was a 6 which indicates that the road is in good condition. Because the pavement is in good condition this road will not likely be improved in the near future; however, it should still be considered for paved shoulders when improvements are due.

#### NORTH/SOUTH BICYCLE FACILITIES



- State Highway 32/57 – State highways offer opportunities to develop bicycle facilities that have direct connections between two destinations. State Highway 32/57 is very similar in character to State Highway 96 in southern Brown County where bicycle facilities have been provided in the form of 5' paved shoulders. WisDOT will be conducting a study of STH 32/57 in 2015 and the Town should work with WisDOT to pave the shoulders.
- Sportsman Drive & Ledgecrest Road – These two roads are located in the northeast corner of the town and take advantage of the Niagara Escarpment providing picturesque views of the surrounding countryside. Located just to the north, the Town of Ledgeview has recommended that bike lanes will be included on the portion of Sportsman Drive within its jurisdiction. Bicycle lanes or paved shoulders are not appropriate for Rockland's portion of the road, so it is recommended that this section of road be signed as a bicycle route to take advantage of the scenic nature of this road.
- CTH PP – Rockland's section of CTH PP stretches about 4.2 miles and has a pavement width of approximately 22'. The pavement is in fair condition with the entirety of CTH PP rated as a 5 in the PASER database. With 80' of right-of-way and a substantial road base it appears that it could accommodate a 5'-wide paved shoulder on both the north and southbound lanes. Located just east of the Fox River Trail CTH PP is one of the only continuous north/south roads in the town


and it offers a convenient alternative to access De Pere to the north and the Town of Wrightstown to the south. While the road is not likely to be reconstructed in the near future the town should plan for paved shoulders to be included in the roadway design when CTH PP is reconstructed.

- CTH W – CTH W is predominately a north-south road that traverses the Niagara Escarpment. The current road conditions include about 24' of pavement along a variable width right-of-way. The current PASER data shows that this entire road is rated as a 5 and it is therefore unlikely that the road will require any major improvements in the near future; however, the town should plan for paved shoulders in the new roadway design when it is time for the road to be reconstructed.
- Old Military Road – This road is an important piece of the bicycle network in the town. It is located in a part of the town that is more developed and it would provide convenient access to other proposed facilities for the residents that live in this part of town. The current road width is similar to other town roads with approximately 20' of pavement. It is recommended that this road become a signed bicycle route based on the low traffic volumes and the rural nature of this road.

The following is a detailed list of the types of bicycle facilities that are proposed for the expansion of the Town's bicycle and pedestrian network.

**Figure 3-6: Bicycle Facility Types**

Facility Type	Definition	Diagram
Bicycle Route	Bicycle routes are marked with signs that are intended to guide bicyclists onto or along particular roadways or paths between a starting location and an ending location.	
Paved Shoulders	Paved shoulders are an extension of the paved area of the roadway. This area is to the right of the white line that designates the driving lanes. A minimum of 4' is required to facilitate the designation of a rural bicycle facility, but 5' paved shoulders are recommended to maximize safety and comfort for bicyclists.	

Multi-Use Trail	A multi-use trail is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic, and can be either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way. Multi-use trails include bicycle paths, rail-trails or other facilities built for bicycle and pedestrian traffic.	
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The current and bicycle facilities proposed in the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan can be found in Figure 3-7.

### **Transit**

Since mass transit requires a dense commercial and residential development pattern and streets that frequently interconnect for the service to be attractive and efficient, the current land use and street patterns in Rockland make providing effective transit service very difficult. To make mass transit an attractive and economically-feasible transportation option, the Town would need to establish the population densities, pedestrian system, street network, and land use pattern that are necessary to efficiently support mass transit.

### **Specialized Transportation Services for the Elderly and Disabled**

The Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross provides transportation services in portions of Brown County to people with disabilities and to those who are 60 years of age or older. The service is available to qualifying individuals for employment, nutrition, and medical purposes. Rockland should work with the Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross to extend the transportation service area in the Town.

### **Streets and Highways**

#### **Overview**

While motor vehicles will likely continue to be the primary source of transportation for many people in Rockland, the current street network's rural nature could be improved to offer residents and visitors alike an opportunity to also experience Rockland by foot or by bike. To enhance everyone's ability to safely and efficiently navigate the Town's road system with and without personal vehicles, the Town needs to:

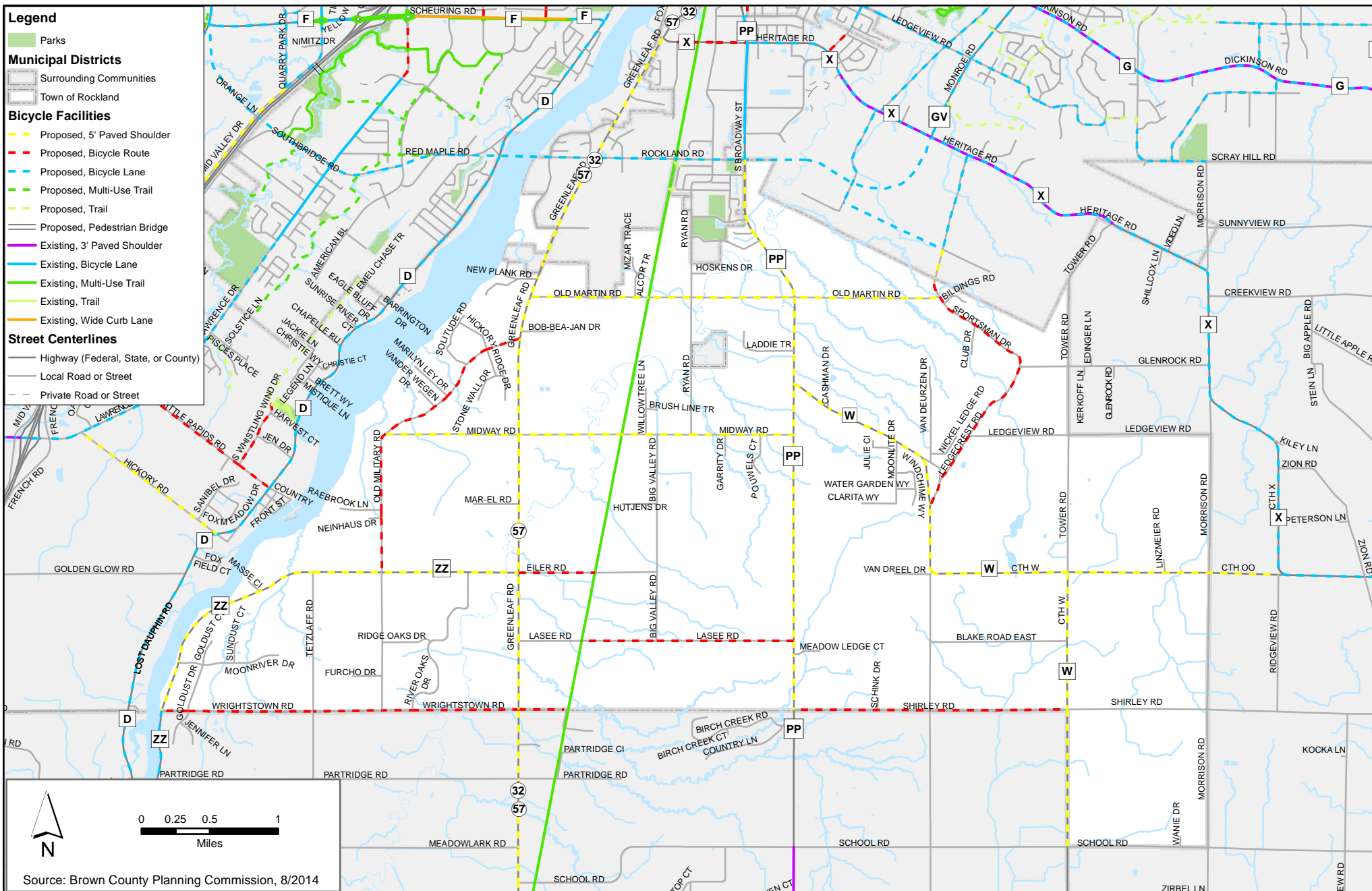
- Increase street connectivity and intersection frequency when possible.
- Minimize barriers to pedestrian and bicycle travel and encourage people to drive at appropriate speeds by installing traffic calming devices on existing streets.
- Improve accessibility and safety at intersections and other potential conflict points.

Methods of achieving these aims are addressed in this section.





# Figure 3-7 Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin





## **Official Mapping and Area Development Plans**

### Official Mapping

One of the tools available to communities to help them create efficient road systems is the state's official mapping statute (62.23(6)). This statute grants communities the power to identify the locations of their future roads.

It is the responsibility of the Town of Rockland Plan Commission to identify the need for future roads and to require the identification of roads prior to approving development proposals. This road planning may be done by the Town or required of developers as part of their developmental responsibility. To add roads to an Official Map, the process identified in the state statutes must be followed and the modifications to the Official Map must be approved by the Town Board.

The Town should identify existing "T" intersections where road extensions could occur in the future and show the potential extensions on its Official Map. This will enable the Town to require connections if/when the surrounding properties are developed.

### Area Development Plans

Area Development Plans (ADPs) are small versions of Official Maps. ADPs are done for specific areas of a community and are often used to ensure adequate access to land next to proposed subdivisions. ADPs are also often required to show how planned roads in a proposed subdivision will connect to a community's existing road system.

### Allow the Construction of Narrow Streets

Currently, the vast majority of the Town is rural and will most likely stay rural for the next 10-20 years. However, projects like the Southern Arterial, which is in close proximity to the Town, have the potential to spur new development along its route. The Town is prepared for this new development with the adoption of right-of-way width standards for urban cross-section roads. Right-of-way widths of this size are common in urban areas where the roads are designed to accommodate curb and gutter, medians, terrace areas, and sidewalks.

### Avoid Expanding Streets to Four or More Lanes

Although it is unlikely that most of the Town's roads would be considered for widening in the future, some two-lane county and state highways might be seen as candidates for widening as traffic levels rise over the next 20 years. A typical response to traffic congestion on two-lane streets throughout the United States is to widen the streets to four or more lanes to accommodate the traffic. This congestion reduction strategy tends to reduce motorized vehicle congestion, but it often has negative impacts as well. Some of these impacts include:

- Reduced safety, comfort, and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Reduced livability for people who live along and near the streets.

- High construction and maintenance costs.

Because the primary purpose of multi-lane streets is to move large volumes of traffic as efficiently as possible, streets with fewer lanes that can move traffic efficiently and are safe, accessible, attractive, and less expensive to build and maintain than their wider counterparts should be viewed as much more desirable alternatives for developing transportation systems that can be easily and safely used by people of all ages, physical abilities, and income levels. One way to move traffic efficiently while minimizing barriers to pedestrian and bicycle travel and encouraging people to drive at appropriate speeds is through the construction of a system of two-lane arterial boulevards or three-lane arterial streets that are complemented by:

- An interconnected collector and local street system.
- Minimal driveway access.
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Mixed land uses.
- Efficient traffic control techniques at intersections.

These types of arterial streets operate much more efficiently than standard two-lane streets because left-turning vehicles are removed from the flow of traffic. Two-lane boulevards and three-lane arterial streets can also operate more efficiently than many undivided four-lane arterial streets. This is because left turn pockets might not exist at some or many of an arterial street's intersections and few arterial corridor driveways are typically served by left turn lanes. This means that every time one motorist stops to make a left turn at an access point, every driver behind this person has to come to a complete stop until the left turn is completed. During periods when traffic is heavy and many people want to make left turns, the streets essentially function as two-lane facilities. These conditions do not only reduce the capacity of undivided four-lane streets, they can create surprises for drivers that occasionally result in rear-end crashes. However, a center turning lane and/or turning bays that allow people to exit the main circulation lanes when making left turns can allow vehicles to flow in a more constant and predictable manner.

Two-lane boulevards and three-lane arterial streets currently exist in many area communities, and these streets have minimized traffic congestion while maximizing safety, multimodal accessibility, and neighborhood compatibility. Therefore, when two-lane street expansions are found to be necessary to reduce congestions, the construction of two-lane boulevards or three-lane arterial streets should be the preferred expansion option unless studies demonstrate that more lanes are necessary.

#### Design Intersections to Maximize Safety and Accessibility

The Town should utilize street design techniques that reduce vehicle speeds, minimize the possibility of conflicts, and enhance traveler awareness to maximize pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist safety and accessibility at the Town's intersections. Techniques that should be used include roundabouts, warning signs, rumble strips prior to stop-controlled intersections, and other street design features.

## Roundabouts in Brown County

Roundabouts have made a significant impact on Wisconsin roadways. One of the more significant benefits documented by Brown County and WisDOT has been the decrease in serious crashes at intersections where roundabouts have been installed. Brown County and WisDOT also reported a significant reduction in total crashes. In addition to reducing congestion and increasing safety, roundabouts eliminate the hardware, maintenance, and electrical costs associated with traffic signals.

## Potential Roundabout Locations in Rockland

As the Town continues to develop, it should work with the Brown County Public Works Department and WisDOT to study the possibility of installing roundabouts at intersections on STH 32/57 where signals might also be considered in the future.

## Wisconsin's Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) System

An accurate assessment of Rockland's pavement maintenance and improvement needs is dependent on a good understanding of pavement conditions on Rockland's streets and highways. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation maintains the pavement ratings for state highways, and Brown County is responsible for assessing county highways. Rockland uses PASER to evaluate the current conditions of asphalt, and concrete roads on a scale of 1 to 10 and sealcoat and gravel roads on a scale of 1 to 5. The most recent PASER data were collected in 2013 and will be collected on a 2 year cycle. These data could provide the foundation to help the Town of Rockland develop a local road reconstruction prioritization plan in the future.

## Highways

### Southern Bridge and Connecting Arterial Streets

Following the adoption of the Brown County Year 2020 Land Use and Transportation Plan in 1996, the Brown County Planning Commission began working with WisDOT, Rockland, and other communities and agencies to study methods of handling existing and projected transportation demand in this part of the metropolitan area. The 1996 plan and the findings of subsequent plans, meetings, and studies, suggested that the addition of a Fox River bridge and connecting roadway segments in this area would be the most effective method of handling the demand that will be generated by the development planned for the area. However, the federal, state, and local agencies involved in these efforts also recognized the need to complete an environmental analysis before proceeding with a project that could affect the areas natural, social, and other characteristics.

The Brown County Planning Commission is currently working with federal agencies, state agencies, local agencies and communities, and the public to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Interstate Access Justification Report (IAJR) for this project. The EIS process is currently in the alternatives analysis phase, and the draft EIS document that recommends a location for a new southern bridge and connecting arterial streets is expected to be completed soon.

## **Other Modes of Transportation**

### **Rail Transportation**

#### Freight Rail

Rockland does not have a freight rail line that currently serves any destinations in the Town, and rail-oriented industries are not recommended to develop in the Town over the next 20 years.

#### Passenger Rail

The Green Bay Metropolitan Area does not currently have access to passenger rail service, but the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MRRI) report includes discussion of a high speed passenger rail line to be extended to Brown County from Milwaukee. Although this service is unlikely to be implemented any time soon, it would provide another means for Rockland residents to travel throughout the Midwest without using their personal vehicles.

### **Air Transportation**

Austin Straubel International Airport and Outagamie County Regional Airport will continue to provide air service to people traveling to and from Rockland. If Rockland decides to develop an economic development plan in the future, the Town should consider working with representatives of both airports to support the retention and, if possible, expansion of air carriers that offer passenger and freight service.

### **Truck Transportation**

Rockland roads experience a large number of heavy vehicles between commercial truck traffic and agricultural equipment. The Town does not currently have a formal system of truck routes because nearly all of the existing heavy truck trips occur on the county and state highways. Most of the state and county highways in Rockland are Class "A" highways, which set a maximum gross vehicle weight of 80,000 pounds. In Rockland, the only non-"A" highway is County PP. County PP is a Class "B" highway, which means that the weight allowance is restricted to 60 percent of the listed capacity weight of a Class "A" highway.

Wisconsin Act 377 made several changes to the way agricultural vehicles may operate on the public roadway. The most significant changes include updates to definitions, creating a new class of vehicles, increasing the weight limit for Implements of Husbandry (IoH) and Agricultural Commercial Motor Vehicle (Ag CMV), and creating a free agricultural vehicle permit to operate greater than the new legal weight and length limits. These changes went into effect April 24, 2014. The Town of Rockland requires Implements of Husbandry and Agricultural Commercial Motor Vehicles to obtain a permit from the Town (please see the Town of Rockland website – [www.townofrockland.org](http://www.townofrockland.org) for details) in order to exceed the 23,000 / 92,000 weight table.

## **Water Transportation**

Rockland does not currently utilize the Green Bay Port system as a means of a long-term economic development strategy. However, to ensure that Rockland's current and future interests are considered by Port of Green Bay representatives, the Town should participate in the port's plan implementation process. Participating in this process would enable the Town to inform the port planners of its intentions to utilize the port if an economic development strategy is developed.

## **Funding to Help Develop the Town's Transportation System**

To help the Town fund the development of its multi-modal transportation system, it should apply for transportation grants from various sources over the next several years. Some examples of these programs are identified in this section.

### **Urban and Rural Surface Transportation Programs**

The Urban and Rural Surface Transportation Programs (STPs) allocate federal funds to complete a variety of improvements to federal-aid-eligible roads and streets in urban and rural areas. The objective of the STP is to improve federal-aid-eligible highways and streets that are functionally classified as collector or higher (see Figure 3-4 for functionally classified roads). More information on STP funding can be found on the WisDOT web page by searching "Surface Transportation Program".

### **Transportation Alternatives Program**

The Town should apply for grants from Wisconsin's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which includes the former Transportation Enhancements and Safe Routes to School Programs, to help fund the development of the recommended bicycle and pedestrian system. The Town should consider applying for funds from Wisconsin's Stewardship Program to assist in funding the construction of the future off-street trail system. Information about the TAP can be obtained from the Brown County Planning Commission or WisDOT, and the Town can contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for information about the Stewardship Program.

### **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)**

The Town should apply for grants from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) administered by WisDOT to correct existing transportation safety problems. Other grant programs through WisDOT's Bureau of Transportation Safety should also be investigated by the Town to address safety issues.

## **CMAQ Program**

If Brown County is designated as an air quality non-attainment area in the future, the Town should seek funds from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program administered by WisDOT to implement projects that will improve the area's air quality.

## **Consistency With State and Regional Transportation Plans**

### **State and Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans**

The bicycle and pedestrian system recommendations in this plan are consistent with the goals of the Wisconsin and Brown County bicycle and pedestrian plans. Like the state and regional bicycle and pedestrian plans, many of the recommendations in this plan are designed to increase the number of people using these transportation modes and to ensure that walkers and bikers are able to travel safely throughout the area.

### **State and Regional Highway Plans**

Several aspects of the state and regional highway systems in this area were addressed throughout the chapter.

### **State and Regional Rail Plans**

The Rockland plan acknowledges the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MRRI) and recommends that Town residents use the passenger rail service as an alternative to their personal vehicles if it is extended to the area in the future.

### **State Airport Plan**

The current Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2020 as well as the Draft Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 recognize Austin Straubel International Airport as an important component of the state's airport system, and the Rockland plan recommends that the Town work with representatives of the airport over the next 20 years to support the retention and, if possible, expansion of air carriers that offer passenger and freight service.

### **Regional Waterway Plans**

The importance of Rockland's participation and cooperation with entities such as the Brown County Port and Resource Recovery Department for the implementation of the port plan is addressed in this chapter.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

This chapter recommends the following policies:

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

- The Town should continue to review its codes and ordinances occasionally to determine if they are effectively creating the intended type of land use patterns and transportation network to support those uses and encourage the development of a multi-modal transportation system.
- The Town should work with the Brown County Public Works Department in developing a paved shoulder system when reconstruction or maintenance occurs along county highways.
- To avoid conflicts at intersections where the Fox River Trail crosses the Town's roads, the roads should have early warning signs and noticeable pedestrian/bicycle crossings to warn passing motorists.
- The town should develop a Multi-Use Trail Plan to determine where off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be located.
- The town should work with Brown County to develop one of the three identified possible trailhead locations along the Fox River Trail where parking can be established to encourage people to use the trail.
- The town should coordinate with the County and State to develop an on-street bicycle network that connects people to surrounding communities and destinations within the town.

### **Transit**

- The growth and population density of the Town should be monitored over the long-range planning period to determine if a bus route should serve the Town in the future.
- The Town should work with the Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross to study the possibility of extending this service farther into the Town for the elderly and for people with disabilities.

### **Streets and Highways**

- To enable and encourage people to walk and bicycle to and within the Town, Rockland should require well-connected road patterns within areas of development that have frequent connections to the existing road system. These kinds of road patterns would also provide motorists several route options and avoid concentrating traffic on relatively few roads. However, if physical or environmental constraints prohibit road connections, the Town should allow the development of cul-de-sacs near the constraints.
- To move traffic efficiently, minimize barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists, and make the Town's thoroughfares more attractive, the Town (in cooperation with Brown County and WisDOT) should construct two-lane arterial boulevards or three-lane arterial streets that are complemented by an interconnected collector and local street system, mixed land uses, and efficient traffic control techniques at intersections.

- The Town should utilize street design techniques that reduce vehicle speeds, minimize the possibility of conflicts, and enhance traveler awareness to maximize pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist safety and accessibility at the Town's intersections. Techniques that should be used include roundabouts, warning signs, rumble strips prior to stop-controlled intersections, and other street design features.
- The Town should continue using the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system to evaluate the condition of the Town's roads and develop a local road reconstruction prioritization plan.
- The Town should monitor and coordinate with WisDOT and the Brown County Public Works Department to implement any and all recommendations to address the size and weight issues identified in the Implements of Husbandry study conducted by WisDOT.
- Work with WisDOT and Brown County to prepare for the land use and transportation impacts of the Southern Bridge.

### **Other Transportation Modes**

#### **Rail Transportation**

##### **Freight Rail**

- Since the Town is not planning to develop any rail-dependent commercial or industrial uses in the future, the development of rail services is not recommended.

##### **Passenger Rail**

- The Town should monitor the progress of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MRRI) and encourage residents to use it to travel throughout the Midwest.

#### **Air Transportation**

- If Rockland decides to develop an economic development plan in the future, the Town should consider working with representatives of the airport to support the retention and, if possible, expansion of air carriers that offer passenger and freight service.

#### **Water Transportation**

- To ensure that Rockland's current and future interests are considered by Port of Green Bay representatives, the Town should participate in the port's plan implementation process. Participating in this process would enable the Town to inform the port planners of its intentions to utilize the port if an economic development strategy is developed in the future.

### **Funding to Help Develop the Town's Transportation System**

- To help the Town fund the development of its multi-modal transportation system, it should apply for transportation grants from various sources over the next several years.



## CHAPTER 4

### Economic Development

Local governments play an increasingly critical role in promoting private sector economic development because economic strength is critical to the vitality of a community. Economic development is the process by which a community organizes and then applies its energies to the task of creating the type of business climate that will foster the retention and expansion of existing businesses, attract new businesses, and develop new business ventures.

The key to an economic development strategy is having a quality product/community to market. Factors that weigh in Rockland's favor include its natural setting, close proximity to the metropolitan area, and many acres of developable land. Rockland's mixture of desirable natural attributes, including the Niagara escarpment, Fox River, and Fox River State Trail and local food production also lends itself to tourism opportunities. The Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan is geared toward capitalizing on these attributes and promoting future development in Rockland that helps to create a community that is even more attractive to new residents, businesses, and visitors.

#### Labor Force Analysis

Figure 4-1 shows that the percentage of Town residents 16 years of age and older who are in the labor force is much higher than the percentage of people in the labor force in Brown County and Wisconsin, indicating that many of the households in Rockland likely have two incomes. Rockland's 2010 estimated unemployment rate of 2.4 percent is also significantly lower than Brown County's 4.9 percent and the State of Wisconsin's 5.1 percent.

**Figure 4-1: Employment Status by Percentage of Population 16 Years and Older**

Status	Town of Rockland	Brown County	Wisconsin
In the labor force	78.0%	70.8%	68.5%
Civilian labor force	78.0%	70.7%	68.4%
Employed	75.6%	65.8%	63.3%
Unemployed	2.4%	4.9%	5.1%
Armed Forces	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Not in the labor force	22.0%	29.2%	31.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

When compared to the state and the county, the Town of Rockland has a higher percentage of people employed within the manufacturing; construction; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; and wholesale trade industries than either the county or state. The Town is significantly lower in service industries (retail trade and finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing industry) which are likely due to relatively few service-oriented jobs being located within the community. (See Figure 4-2).

**Figure 4-2: Employed Civilian Population as a Percentage of People 16 Years and Above**

	<b>Town of Rockland</b>	<b>Brown County</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>
<b>INDUSTRY</b>			
Educational, health, and social services	21.5%	21.2%	22.9%
Manufacturing	19.0%	17.8%	18.4%
Retail trade	10.0%	11.2%	11.4%
Construction	8.8%	4.9%	5.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	8.4%	9.4%	8.5%
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	8.3%	6.7%	4.5%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	7.2%	7.2%	7.9%
Other services, except public administration	4.2%	4.4%	4.1%
Wholesale trade	4.0%	3.2%	2.8%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	3.9%	7.6%	6.3%
Public administration	2.8%	3.0%	3.6%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2.0%	1.6%	2.4%
Information	0.0%	1.8%	1.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

## **Economic Base Analysis**

The economic base of the Town of Rockland is intricately tied to that of the Green Bay Metropolitan Area in terms of employment and business opportunities. The vast majorities of Rockland residents work within the Green Bay Metropolitan Area and, therefore, depend on a sound economy throughout Brown County for their financial well-being. Key industry groups in the Green Bay Metropolitan Area include health care; paper and related products; insurance, financial services, and government offices; hospitality; food processing; and logistics (trucking, warehousing, and related services). Due to the Town's rural nature and a majority of the Town's residents likely working in the Green Bay Metropolitan Area, a Location Quotient Analysis to determine basic and non-basic sector employment was performed utilizing Brown County as the local level for analysis as compared to the United States.

Basic sector employment typically produces goods or services that are exported out of the local economy and into the larger national economy. These goods and services and, therefore, employment are thus less likely to be affected by a downturn in the local economy. Non-basic sector employment includes those industries that produce goods or services that are consumed at the local level or are not produced at a sufficient level to be exported out of the local market.

The Location Quotient Analysis compares the local economy (in this case Brown County) to the United States. This allows for identifying basic and non-basic sectors of the local economy. If the location quotient (LQ) is less than 1.0, all employment is considered non-basic, meaning that local industry is not meeting local demand for certain goods or service and may be more subject to downturns in the local economy. An LQ equal to 1.0 suggests that the local economy is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for given goods or service. However, the employment is still considered to be non-basic. An LQ of greater than 1.0 suggests that the local employment industry produces more goods and services than the local economy can consume and, therefore, these goods and services are exported to non-local areas and considered to be basic sector employment. The Location Quotient Analysis for Brown County is displayed in Figure 4-3.

**Figure 4-3: Employment by Industry Group, 2010; Brown County and the United States Location Quotient Analysis**

<b>Employment by Industry</b>	<b>Brown County</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Location Quotient</b>
Natural resources and mining	0.63%	1.69%	<b>0.37</b>
Construction	4.55%	5.17%	<b>0.88</b>
Manufacturing	18.98%	10.82%	<b>1.75</b>
Trade, transportation, and utilities	21.47%	23.00%	<b>0.93</b>
Information	1.54%	2.55%	<b>0.61</b>
Financial activities	8.94%	6.97%	<b>1.28</b>
Professional and business services	14.32%	15.74%	<b>0.91</b>
Education and health services	15.00%	17.57%	<b>0.85</b>
Leisure and hospitality	11.08%	12.25%	<b>0.91</b>
Other services	3.48%	4.10%	<b>0.85</b>
Unclassified	0.01%	0.14%	<b>0.05</b>
Total Employees	100.00%	100.00%	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Data, Location Quotient Calculator.

According to the LQ analysis, there are two general industries in Brown County that can be considered to be basic employment sectors: manufacturing and financial activities. Therefore, these industries are most likely exporting goods and services to other parts of the country and contributing to a more stable local economy. Industries such as natural resources/mining and information with an LQ significantly below 1.0, indicate that there may be demand within Brown County's local economy to support increases in these industry sectors.

Although there is ample room for growth in some of the industry fields, overall, Brown County's economy is rather diversified and provides a variety of employment opportunities and a generally stable economy for Town of Rockland and Brown County residents.

## **Economic Development Assessment and Recommendations**

While the Town of Rockland has extensive vacant land available for economic development, it also has limited infrastructure and services available to business and industry. Although these limitations are significant, they do not preclude the Town from attracting new businesses and promoting the expansion of existing businesses. It is important for the community to focus its attention on businesses that are not dependent on these services.

It is not realistic for the Town of Rockland to expect to recruit a large employer, such as a paper mill or corporate headquarters, due to the lack of utility services, limited access to transportation facilities, and a very limited market for customers and employees. However, there are many businesses that supply or provide services to these industries that do not have the need for extensive public services. A trucking business, for example, would be complementary to the key industries of the area but would not require extensive utility services.

Residents in the Town of Rockland largely must travel to the nearby Green Bay and Fox Valley Metropolitan Areas, or rural villages of Wrightstown and Denmark. The relatively small population and density in the Town currently limit the commercial market potential for Rockland. However, future population growth may improve the potential for increased retail and service activity. The Town should focus its efforts to encourage the location of local businesses that utilize locally-produced agricultural, viticulture, fruit, vegetable, and dairy products.

A recent trend in rural communities has been toward the development of cottage-type industries and at-home businesses that can operate from within residential dwellings. With advances in telecommunications, at-home businesses may become increasingly common. At-home businesses serve as a business incubator until the business expands to a point that requires a rezoning, if appropriate, or relocation to an area that is predominantly composed of business uses.

Land in the Town of Rockland contains resources for nonmetallic mining that has provided materials for the development and construction of roads and pavement throughout the region. The nonmetallic mining industry has worked to improve their operations so that they have been accepted within communities. The Town of Rockland can promote the success of these operations through adequate zoning restrictions that regulate facility locations and designs, hours of operation, erosion control, restrictions on routes for trucking, etc. State requirements for closure plans for quarry facilities require that financial resources are available for planned land uses after the active operations cease. Additionally, to prevent future land use conflicts and encourage nonmetallic mining, Rockland should strongly discourage the placement of new residential developments near active mining operations.

## **Strengths and Weaknesses for Attracting/Retaining Business and Industry**

It is necessary to look at the factors that influence the economic climate in the Town of Rockland. From a quality of life perspective, the Town has a quality housing stock that has maintained property values. The Town has a number of natural features across its landscape, including the Fox River, East River, and Niagara Escarpment, that all help to create the “rural feel” that Rockland residents cherish. Additionally, Rockland is located within quick commuting distance to quality education facilities, entertainment centers, medical facilities, and other various urban amenities.

Residents of Rockland have access to a high quality road network, including STH 32/57 and a number of county trunk highways. A bridge will eventually cross the Fox River, thereby creating a more convenient crossing point for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists in Rockland. The Town is not served by any rail lines; however, a former rail line is now the Fox River State Recreational Trail, which runs north to south through the Town.

The biggest impediment to economic development activity in the Town of Rockland is the lack of public sewer and water facilities. Larger businesses and industries require these utilities for wastewater treatment, various production processes, and fire suppression. Although public water and sewer is not currently available, other similarly sized towns in Brown County have in the past moved ahead with the installation of these public utilities. Rockland should evaluate the long-term potential to provide these services through partnerships with neighboring communities as a means to enhance economic development activity in the Town.

Economic development services to assist businesses with location or relocation are provided throughout Brown County by Advance, which is the economic development section of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce. Training services for businesses are provided by UW-Green Bay, St. Norbert College, Lawrence University, the UW-Extension services, and Northeastern Wisconsin and Fox Valley Technical Colleges. While none of the main buildings of these educational institutions are located in the Town of Rockland, all are within a 30-minute drive.

## **Economic Development Recommendations, Programs, and Policies**

### **Agriculture**

Agricultural production remains a large component of Rockland’s and Brown County’s overall economy and is one of the characteristics that make up the rural character of Rockland. Although Rockland is feeling the impacts of suburban development pressures, in 2015 there are still 46 property owners with 4,473 acres of land within the Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative (formerly Farmland Preservation Program). In order to participate and receive the Farmland Preservation Income Tax Credit, a participant must make over \$6,000 in gross farm receipts, have the land zoned for exclusive agricultural use, be up to date on all taxes, and practice agricultural shoreland and nutrient management.

According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Brown County's total market value of agricultural products sold was over \$253 million, with an average per farm of \$240,985. Utilizing the county average and applying it to the 46 Working Lands Initiative participants in Rockland yields a total market value of agricultural products sold of over \$11 million in 2007. Besides the economic benefit, agricultural production does not require the public services that are typically required by an industry with \$11 million in sales, and it helps to maintain the Town's rural character. Therefore, the Town of Rockland should support active farmers by discouraging new residential development near active farming operations due to the potential conflicts between the two uses.

### **Tourism**

Rockland's natural beauty associated with the Fox River, Niagara escarpment, and farm fields, recreational opportunities on the Fox River State Trail, and proximity to major metropolitan areas lends itself well to tourism potential. Specifically, the local, sustainable food movement provides an opportunity for the Town to capitalize on its locational advantages to bring tourists into the community.

Consumers spend a significant amount of money on groceries and at restaurants, and most of this food comes from distant locations. For example, a study by the University of Iowa noted that the typical tomato, can of corn, and loaf of bread travels 1,500 miles from field to plate. Coupled with changes in consumer awareness and demands, opportunities abound for local farmers to provide greater amounts of produce to local consumers. Additionally, the middleman processing, packaging, advertising, and distribution often account for 80 percent of the cost of food. By partnering and advertising with local food related businesses such as Scray's Cheese, Apple Valley Orchard, area wineries, and local restaurants, Rockland could draw local food tourists (or "foodies" as they are popularly known) to the area.

Furthermore, Rockland should capitalize on its location within the Wisconsin Ledge American Viticultural Area (AVA) to assist in its marketing efforts. Viniculture, or the science, production, and study of grapes for wine-making, has recently become a fast-growing niche in southern and eastern Brown County, including the Town of Rockland. In 2012, Brown County was included as part of the newly established Wisconsin Ledge AVA that encompasses approximately 3,800 square miles of east-central Wisconsin, from the tip of Door County, south through Ozaukee County, west through Dodge County, and then north through along the west shore of Lake Winnebago including Winnebago County and the Fox Valley. A designated AVA allows vintners to better describe the origin of their wines and allow consumers to identify the area from which a wine comes from that they may purchase. The designation provides national recognition to the legitimacy and quality of the wines produced from the area.

The Fox River provides multiple recreational opportunities for residents and tourists alike, from power boating, canoeing, kayaking to fishing, and birding among others. However, at this point in time, the only public access to the Fox River in the Town of Rockland is a 60' access point at the intersection of Wrightstown Road and CTH ZZ in the southernmost part of the Town. This access point is currently not marked as public access and is overgrown with thick, brushy vegetation and trees. In addition to providing signage or other public notice that this location provides public access to the

Fox River, the Town may want to evaluate additional locations for public access to the Fox River further north along the River.

### **Entrepreneurial Agriculture**

In addition to traditional agricultural activities, numerous untapped and underutilized opportunities exist in agriculture. Entrepreneurial agriculture, for instance, is a new way of thinking of farms as innovative small businesses. The Michigan Land Use Institute states that entrepreneurial agriculture does not seek to replace current large scale mass market agriculture but to complement it to find new opportunities, new markets, and to recognize the importance of local agriculture not only to the local economy but also to local lives and landscapes. Entrepreneurial agriculture is about adding value to products by providing local friendly service, by special processing, or by finding niches and new ways to market goods to consumers. It can be as simple as new ways of selling, labeling, processing, packaging, or creating a new perspective about raising crops.



Examples of entrepreneurial agriculture include:

- Direct marketing of agricultural products to consumers, such as local schools, farmers markets, and custom production for local restaurants.
- Niche marketing, such as ethnic foods, organic foods, and specialty farm products.
- Value added approaches to farming, such as fruit drying, jellies and jams, wine making, and agri-tourism.
- New grazing systems.
- Cooperatives marketing local free-range poultry, beef, or pork.
- Community supported agricultural operations where local consumers pay local farmers for a share of the following year's crops.
- Local marketing and/or direct delivery of all-natural products, such as grass-fed all-natural milk to local grocers and health food stores.
- Potential benefits associated with entrepreneurial agriculture and the flexibility behind the idea include:
  - Opportunities to create net returns of 40 to 50 percent compared to conventional agriculture's 15 to 20 percent.
  - Thinking and acting as a small business can keep small farms viable and provide another option to competing with the large-scale mass-market approach more typical of conventional agriculture.

- Small viable farms on the outskirts of communities can contribute more greenspace, fresh food, and local commerce to the community and the region.
- Creating a viable mix of large and small agricultural operations can contribute to the local community and region's farmland protection strategies.

Entrepreneurial agriculture is more appropriate now than ever before because of continuing shifts in consumer awareness and demands. For instance, farmers markets have increased in number from about 5,000 nationwide in 2005 to 8,144 in 2013, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA also reports direct sales of food products from farmers to individual consumers rose by nearly 50 percent between 2002 and 2007 and local food sales grew nationwide to \$4.8 billion in 2007 and nearly \$7 billion in 2012.



According to the Michigan Land Use Institute, for entrepreneurial agriculture to work, it requires close relationships between economic development professionals and the agricultural sector. It requires the involvement of local leaders to connect the small and mid-sized farms to the local economy and to bring business expertise and market knowledge to those farmers. It also requires state and federal cooperation in terms of working with and helping farmers understand regulations, particularly those pertaining to food inspection. Additionally, it requires the community to understand farmers and vice-versa so that communities can take advantage of the locations of local farms and for farmers to know local consumers' needs.

### **Future Business and Industrial Development**

Businesses and industries that wish to locate in Rockland and do not require public sewer and water should be located in nodes near the major intersections in the Town rather than as strip development along entire lengths of major roads, such as STH 32/57 or CTH PP. Traffic congestion, driveway access points, and loss of rural character all become problematic when concentrations of retail sales or service establishments are located in strips. Therefore, future businesses in Rockland should be located near major intersections and separated from other nodes of businesses by residential, agricultural, or other low-intensity uses. Businesses that should specifically be encouraged in Rockland are those that contribute to the success of the farming economy, such as farm implement sales and welding shops and direct farm to market sales operations, while other business types that should be encouraged are small retail shops that provide retail goods and/or services to the local residents of Rockland.



## **Industrial and Commercial Design Standards**

The Town can promote higher quality development and minimize the visual impact of commercial and industrial development on Rockland's rural landscape through the use of zoning conditions and design standards. Business site plans should include pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks or trails (where appropriate), parking (preferably behind the building), and parking lot landscaping standards, including landscaped islands within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt. Rockland's current Site Plan Review and Design Standards Ordinance (Chapter 20) provides a clear process and performance standards for new commercial, industrial, and multi-family developments.

## **Sensitivity to Natural Areas**

The East River, Fox River, Niagara Escarpment, agricultural activity, and numerous woodlands and wetlands all combine to help create the rural character that Town of Rockland residents treasure. Business development should be designed with consideration and integration of these natural features to help maintain the rural atmosphere of the Town. The natural areas properly integrated into business development can help to create potential trail linkages, provide wildlife corridors, and help to facilitate stormwater management.



Special care should also be taken to ensure that commercial and industrial activities are not located within environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) by placing the ESAs in a conservancy zoning district. These features should be included in the design of business developments as integral amenities and, if possible, maintained in common ownership.

## **Home Occupations**

Home occupations can fill a number of roles for economic development in the Town and should be encouraged as long as they remain consistent with the zoning ordinance requirements. If/when home occupations wish to expand, they should either request a zoning change to an appropriate zone (if compatible with surrounding land uses) or move to a site that is properly zoned for more intensive commercial or industrial uses.

## **Town, County, Regional, and State Economic Development Programs**

This section contains a brief explanation of local economic development actions and a description of various agencies and programs that could potentially help the Town and Town's businesses achieve their stated economic development goals and objectives. The

Implementation chapter contains a comprehensive listing and description of programs the Town may wish to utilize in achieving its economic development objectives.

### **Town**

Residents of the Town of Rockland rely heavily on the Green Bay Metropolitan Area and other nearby communities for many of their commercial needs. While commercial activity in the Town is minimal, it is critically important that residents in Rockland patronize the businesses that exist or new businesses that start up in the Town. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of available commercial services, reduced retail options, and vacant buildings.

Although the Town has no established incentive programs for economic development, it can continue to make positive planning and financial management decisions that can result in the community being an attractive place for people and businesses. The most important economic activity that Rockland can pursue is the creation of an environment that encourages entrepreneurs to engage in business activities.

As previously mentioned, agricultural activity is estimated to account for over \$11 million in products sold from Rockland farms. Because agriculture is such a large component of Rockland's economy, it should be encouraged to continue through Town policies that do not impede its continued viability. For the small-scale farms, entrepreneurial agricultural activities, such as truck farming, direct farm-to-market sales, and farm-based value-added manufacturing, should be actively encouraged as a means to maintain farming and the rural character in Rockland.

One economic development tool now available to Towns in the State of Wisconsin is the utilization of Tax Incremental Financing District, commonly called TIF or TID. Until 2003, this redevelopment tool was only available to cities and villages. The law allows a town to expend money or incur debt for projects related to agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, or tourism. The law also allows TIDs to be used for retail development that is limited to retail sale of products produced due to agriculture, forestry, or manufacturing project. The State Department of Revenue must approve any proposed TID project.

Generally, the type of uses that commonly occur within a TID include acquisition and demolition of blighted properties in commercial areas or industrial areas and extension of roads, sewer, storm sewer, and water mains to serve expected new agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, or tourism related development expected to locate in the tax increment district.

Once the TID is established, the aggregate equalized value of taxable property within the district is established. This is called the tax incremental base. All the taxing entities of the area (Town, school districts, county, technical school) continue to receive their share of the annual taxes generated by the tax incremental base of the district throughout the life of the TIF project. The municipality then installs the improvements to the TID. As development occurs, the property values within the district grow. Taxes paid on the increased value from the growth are called tax increments and are used to pay for the public improvements made to the district by the municipality. These moneys are put in a

separate TID fund to finance the public improvements made to the district. Expenditures for the project costs to the district must be made no later than five years after the district is started. The maximum life of a TID district is 16 years with options for extensions. If the value increases to the district are not enough to pay off the costs of the project within the life of the district, the municipality must incur the costs that still need to be paid. Taxing jurisdictions do not benefit from the value added increase in the district until the district project costs have been paid off and/or the life of the district is over. Once the life of the district has expired, the added value of the district is then apportioned out to all taxing districts similar to anywhere else in the Town.

Municipalities thinking about utilizing this economic development technique must carefully consider the benefits to the community, the potential pitfalls, and the likelihood of success of the district.

Businesses can use economic development loan programs, such as the Brown County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund administered through the Brown County Planning Commission and Advance, to obtain low-interest loans that will generate new employment opportunities and encourage expansion of the tax base. Through Brown County's partnership with Advance, the Town of Rockland also has access to development and grant information, their microloan program, and economic development marketing services.

## **Regional**

### **The New North**

The New North is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that promotes collaboration between the private and public sectors to promote Northeastern Wisconsin for increasing economic development. According to the New North website, their key initiatives include:

- Attract, develop, and retain diverse talent.
- Foster targeted industry clusters and new markets.
- Support an entrepreneurial climate and small businesses.
- Encourage educational attainment.
- Elevate sustainability as an economic driver.
- Promote the regional brand.

More information can be found at <http://www.thenewnorth.com>.

### **Wisconsin Public Service**

Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS) contributes a number of economic development services that Brown County communities should be aware of for their businesses. The WPS economic development webpage provides a number of programs and resources for communities interested in expanding economic development opportunities. More information about WPS economic development services may be found at:

<http://www.wisconsinpublicservice.com/business/economic.aspx>.

## **Brown County**

### **Brown County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**

Businesses can use economic development loan programs, such as the Brown County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund administered through Brown County and Advance to obtain low-interest loans that will generate new employment opportunities principally for persons of low and moderate incomes and encourage expansion of the tax base.

Program loans are available to eligible applicants for the following activities:

- Acquisition of land, buildings, and fixed equipment.
- Site preparation and the construction or reconstruction of buildings or the installation of fixed equipment.
- Clearance, demolition, or the removal of structures or the rehabilitation of buildings and other such improvements.
- The payment of assessments for sewer, water, street, and other public utilities if the provision of the facilities will directly create or retain jobs.
- Working capital (inventory and direct labor costs only).

Additional information on the Brown County Economic Development RLF may be found at: <http://www.co.brown.wi.us/planning> and clicking on the “Economic Development” link.

### **Advance**

Advance is the economic development division of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce committed to improving and diversifying the economy of Brown County. Advance provides confidential site selection assistance, in-depth statistical and demographic data, and administers a microloan program geared to small businesses and entrepreneurs. Additionally, Advance manages the Business & Manufacturing Center Incubator on the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) campus which provides support services (clerical, legal, accounting, mentoring, etc.) within a flexible space for business and non-profit start-ups. Information regarding Advance and the business incubator may be found at: <http://www.titletown.org/programs/economic-development>.



Advance offers the Advance Microloan Program, which is designed to provide loans from \$5,000 to \$100,000 to for-profit, start-up, newly established, and emerging businesses that are actively managed by its owners. Loans may be used for the purchase of machinery and equipment, inventory and working capital (including payroll), insurance premiums, legal, and accounting purposes. Applicants must have a business plan, be able to contribute a minimum of ten percent of the project cost, and have a minimum of two months of working capital in reserve. Additional information regarding the Advance

Microloan Program may be found at: <http://www.titletown.org/programs/economic-development/advance-microloan-program>.

Advance is also part of the Brown County Culinary Kitchen, which is a non-profit collaborative effort among NEW Curative Rehabilitation, The Farm Market Kitchen, and NWTC. The Brown County Culinary Kitchen provides a fully equipped, commercially-licensed, shared use kitchen for food-based business start-ups. Additional assistance includes classes, an on-site manager, technical assistance, business coaching, classroom space, and Internet access. Information regarding the Brown County Culinary Kitchen may be found at: <http://bcculinarykitchen.org/>.

### **State Economic Development Programs**

There are many state programs that communities can consider utilizing to meet their stated goals and objectives. While not an all-inclusive list, there are several programs listed on the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) website that Brown County communities should strongly consider and are addressed below. The WEDC Region 2 Account Manager should be contacted for additional information related to these programs.

Additionally, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) administers a number of loan programs, tax credit, and programs that support business investment and development. The WHEDA Community Relations Officer should be contacted for additional information related to these programs.

### **Wisconsin Equity Investment Fund**

The Wisconsin Equity Investment Fund (WEIF) is a program designed to spur direct equity investment into growing Wisconsin small businesses. WEIF is funded by the State Small Business Credit Initiative, administered by WHEDA, and currently leverages the private capital investment of Wisconsin-based investment managers. Additional information on WEIF may found at [www.wheda.com](http://www.wheda.com).

### **WHEDA Participation Lending Program**

The WHEDA Participation Lending Program (WPLP) pairs WHEDA with community lenders, banks, credit unions, community development financial institutions, and other entities that provide commercial loans to Wisconsin businesses. The program requires at least 50 percent participation from a participating lender with WHEDA's participation not to exceed \$2 million. Project eligible for financing of land, plant, or equipment include such projects as manufacturing, commercial real estate, national or regional headquarters facilities, facilities for the storage or distribution of manufactured goods, materials, components or equipment, and facilities for the retail sale of goods or services. Additional information on WPLP may be found at [www.wheda.com](http://www.wheda.com).

### **WHEDA Loan Guarantee Programs**

WHEDA Loan Guarantee Programs help reduce financial risk and exposure to small

business lenders and ensure that qualified Wisconsin small businesses have access to funding. Eligible uses of loan guarantees by small business owners include purchasing or improving land and buildings, purchasing inventory or machinery, and funding permanent or revolving working capital. Specific programs include:

- Contractors Loan Guarantee – Assist in the development / expansion of small businesses by providing the opportunity to enter into contracts with eligible organizations.
- Neighborhood Business Revitalization Guarantee – Stimulate economic development in redeveloping urban neighborhoods of communities with populations greater than 35,000, and stimulate economic development in other areas where the project will be catalytic and create jobs by bringing or expanding businesses into the area and developing or rehabilitating commercial real estate, including mixed-use properties, where a business occupies a portion of the building.
- Small Business Guarantee – Assist with the expansion or acquisition of an existing small business, assist in the start-up of a daycare business for adults or children, assist in the start-up of a small business located in a vacant storefront in the traditional downtown area of a community.
- Agribusiness Guarantee – Assist in the startup, acquisition, or expansion of a business that develops products using Wisconsin's raw agricultural commodities. Raw agricultural commodities refer to any agricultural, aquacultural, horticultural, viticultural, vegetable, poultry, and livestock products produced in Wisconsin, including milk and milk products, bees and honey products, timber and wood products, or any class, variety or utilization of the products in their natural state.

Additional information on all the loan guarantee programs may be found at [www.wheda.com](http://www.wheda.com).

### **University of Wisconsin-Extension**

The University of Wisconsin-Extension provides a number of resources and information related to agriculture and rural living. Information ranges from locations of nearest farmers markets to tips on saving for retirement. Additional information regarding the University of Wisconsin-Extension can be found at the following website: <http://www.uwex.edu/topics/Agriculture.cfm>.

### **Federal**

#### **U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD) maintains a number of programs geared toward rural areas of the country. Portions of Brown County outside of the Green Bay Metropolitan Area may be eligible for certain USDA-RD programs. The USDA-RD website should be reviewed for additional details at: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=rural-development>.

## Recommendations

The following is a summary of economic development recommendations for the Town of Rockland:

### **General Recommendations**

- Encourage farming as an economic activity by discouraging new residential development near active farms.
- Coordinate local food-based tourism efforts to promote Town-based dairy products, produce, vineyards, and wineries.
- Promote use of the Wisconsin Ledge American Viticultural Area in business and tourism marketing materials.
- Promote the Fox River, Niagara escarpment, and Fox River State Trail for their recreational tourism potential.
- Coordinate with Brown County to provide signage or other marking that there is a 60' wide public access point to the Fox River west of the Wrightstown Road / CTH ZZ intersection.
- Develop additional public access points or parks along the Fox River.
- Support efforts by local farmers in entrepreneurial agricultural through direct farm-to-market sales and farm-based value-added business activities, among others.
- Continue to permit home occupations as small business incubators as long as they are clearly secondary to the residential use.
- Implement a commercial and industrial site and building design standards ordinance to ensure that the development is consistent with the rural character of Rockland.
- Locate businesses in nodes near intersections rather than in long strips along main roads.
- Work with the City of De Pere to develop an agreement that includes a revenue sharing component for business and/or industrial development on land annexed from the Town.
- Coordinate with the City of De Pere in siting businesses that are part of a Green Bay/Fox Valley region business cluster or that fulfill employment needs in the area.
- Ensure that future residential development does not adversely impact active nonmetallic mining operations in Rockland.
- Business development should be designed with consideration of the sensitivity of the environmental features that this plan identifies along the Town's primary drainage corridors and Niagara Escarpment.
- Business site plans should include pedestrian access (where appropriate), parking (preferably behind the building), and parking lot landscaping standards, including landscaped islands within large parking lots that break up the expanse of asphalt.

- Contact the various economic development agencies for technical support and grant resources listed in this chapter when evaluating specific economic development projects.



## CHAPTER 5

### Housing

Homes in Rockland currently range from older homes associated with active or inactive small farming operations to newer large single-family homes. Homes are generally scattered throughout the Town on large lots with concentrations of homes in the vicinity of the Fox River as well as in a number of rural subdivisions generally in the western and central portions of the Town.

The Issues and Opportunities chapter of the plan contains the forecasts for new housing units within the Town of Rockland over the next 20 years based upon population projections from the Wisconsin Department of Administration. This chapter will build on these forecasts by identifying existing trends and characteristics of the housing market and providing recommendations on how to improve the existing housing stock and provide for the development of new and innovative housing practices.

#### Housing Characteristics

##### Age

Figure 5-1 shows that the majority of housing in Rockland is relatively new, with an estimated 62.0 percent of the units being built since 1990. Conversely, 38.0 percent of the housing units were constructed prior to 1989. As housing stock ages, it is necessary for local governments to ensure that the housing units remain in good condition through building and zoning code enforcement. In addition, Rockland should actively use its public nuisance ordinance to ensure the property upon which the house sits remains in an attractive, well-maintained state.

**Figure 5-1: Estimated Age of Housing Units in the Town of Rockland**

<b>Year Structure Was Built</b>	<b>Rockland</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Brown County</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>%</b>
2010 or later	28*	4.8%	337	0.3%	5,508	0.2%
2000-2009	124	21.6%	15,069	14.4%	325,514	12.4%
1990-1999	208	36.2%	17,405	16.6%	367,339	14.0%
1980-1989	65	11.3%	12,819	12.3%	256,478	9.9%
1970-1979	25	4.4%	17,638	16.9%	394,291	15.0%
1960-1969	25	4.4%	10,823	10.3%	258,318	9.9%
1950-1959	26	4.5%	11,398	10.9%	294,740	11.2%
1940-1949	8	1.4%	5,032	4.8%	160,207	6.1%
1939 or Earlier	66	11.5%	14,092	13.5%	558,006	21.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>100.1%**</b>	<b>104,613</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,620,401</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates.

\*ACS indicated 0 estimated homes in Rockland built in 2010 or later. Rockland building permit data was utilized to adjust this number to reflect actual homes constructed in 2010 or later.

\*\*Percent totals may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

## **Structures**

The Town of Rockland has a significantly higher estimated percentage of 1-unit detached structures (single-family homes) at 96.8 percent than either Brown County or the State of Wisconsin at 64.3 and 66.5 percent, respectively. The Town has a proportionately much smaller percentage of duplexes and currently has no multifamily units.

Rockland should monitor the demands of a growing and diversifying population to ensure that the Town's housing will continue to meet its needs. To support a more diversified housing stock, Rockland may want to consider the provision of public sewer and/or water as the population grows. Figure 5-2 identifies the total number of structures in Rockland and the number of units they contain.

**Figure 5-2: Estimated Units in Structure for Rockland, Brown County, and Wisconsin**

<b>Units in Structure</b>	<b>Rockland</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Brown County</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>%</b>
1-Unit Detached	564*	98.1%	67,226	64.3%	1,743,064	66.5%
1-Unit Attached	0	0.0%	5,281	5.0%	115,098	4.4%
2 Units	7	1.2%	8,368	8.0%	177,240	6.8%
3 or 4 Units	0	0.0%	3,369	3.2%	100,435	3.8%
5 to 9 Units	0	0.0%	7,636	7.3%	125,677	4.8%
10 to 19 Units	0	0.0%	4,785	4.6%	86,409	3.3%
20 or More Units	0	0.0%	6,383	6.1%	173,934	6.6%
Mobile Home	4	0.7%	1,562	1.5%	98,118	3.7%
Boat, RV, Van, Etc.	0	0.0%	3	0.0%	426	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>104,613</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,620,401</b>	<b>99.9%*</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

\*Rockland building permit data was utilized to adjust this number to reflect actual homes constructed in 2010 or later, consistent with Figure 5-1.

## **Occupancy**

The 2000 U.S. Census identified a total of 495 housing units within the Town of Rockland. This compares with an estimated 547 units in 2010, which is an increase of 52 units (10.5 percent) over the 10-year period. The breakdown of housing units into owner-occupied and renter-occupied shows that owner-occupied units accounted for 92.8 percent of the Town's dwelling units in 2000, and this percentage actually increased to 94.0 percent owner-occupied housing by 2010. The Town has a much higher percentage of owner-occupied housing units than either Brown County or the State of Wisconsin at 72.0 and 67.7 percent, respectively. However, this could change over the course of the next 20 years as the Town considers the provision of public sewer and water service that would help to accommodate more dense development. In the short term, small multifamily and scattered duplex units could be developed on septic systems and wells provided that they are adequately maintained and monitored. Figure 5-3 summarizes the housing occupancy changes that occurred between 2000 and 2010.

**Figure 5-3: Estimated Change in Housing Occupancy Characteristics in Rockland, 2000 and 2010.**

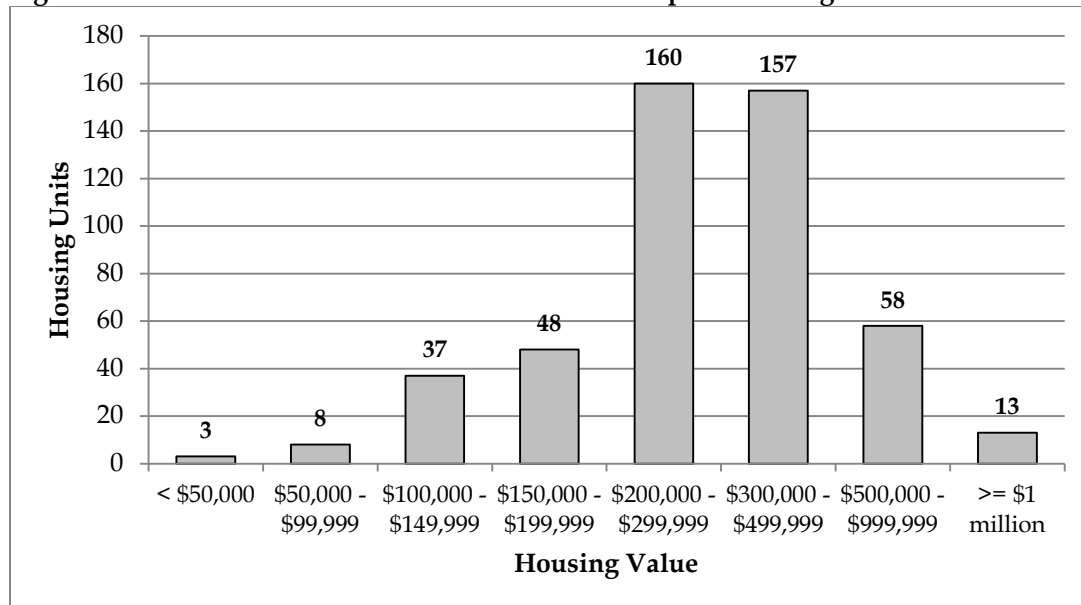
	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total	Increase or Decrease	Percent Change 2000 - 2010
Total Housing Units	495	100.0%	566	100.0%	52	10.5%
Occupied Housing Units	483	97.5%	534	94.3%	32	6.6%
Owner-Occupied	448	92.8%	503	94.2%	36	8.0%
Renter- Occupied	35	7.2%	31	5.8%	-4	-11.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

### **Value**

According to the 2000 census, the largest segment of the Town's owner-occupied homes is valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999 (33.1 percent), while 32.4 percent of the homes are valued between \$300,000 and \$499,999. When reviewing the median owner-occupied home value for Rockland (\$291,400) compared to that of Brown County (\$159,000) and the State of Wisconsin (\$169,000), it is apparent that the homes in Rockland contain significantly more value. Much of this difference may be due to the locational amenities the Town has to offer, such as proximity to the Metropolitan Green Bay Area, Fox River frontage, and Niagara escarpment views. (See Figure 5-4.)

**Figure 5-4: Estimated Town of Rockland Owner-Occupied Housing Values**



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

## **Housing Expenses**

### **Rent**

The 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS) identifies the median gross rent in the Town of Rockland as approximately \$900 per month. The ACS further identifies a total of 18 rental units with rent ranges generally \$750 - \$999 per month. This range is for the estimated 31 rental units in the Town, which is a rather small number accounting for the narrow range of rental costs.

The City of De Pere, located just to the north of the Town, contains over 3,200 rental units with a range of rental price points and currently helps to satisfy the majority of the demand for rental housing near Rockland. Should Rockland develop public sewer and water systems, the Town should encourage the development of additional multi-family housing to reduce the upward cost pressure on the existing rental units in the Town.

### **Mortgage**

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey, approximately 80 percent of the owner-occupied housing units in Rockland have a mortgage, with a median monthly mortgage cost of \$2,009. This is significantly higher than either the county or state, at \$1,417 and \$1,460 per month, respectively, and is likely indicative of the generally higher median value of homes in Rockland.

One metric to determine whether or not a mortgage is affordable, is from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which recommends that housing costs (mortgage, insurance, taxes, etc.) should not exceed 30 percent of household income. Homeowners paying 30 percent or more are considered to be overextended and in danger of mortgage default if any interruptions to income or unforeseen expenses occur. The ACS identifies 35.7 percent of Rockland homeowners as paying 30 percent or more of their household income for housing, which is more than Brown County (29.9 percent) and the State of Wisconsin (33.2 percent), respectively. The relatively high mortgage costs in Rockland is an issue that the Town will need to monitor over the course of this comprehensive plan, and if public utilities become available, diversifying the housing stock types and lot sizes would provide more options for people desiring to live in Rockland.

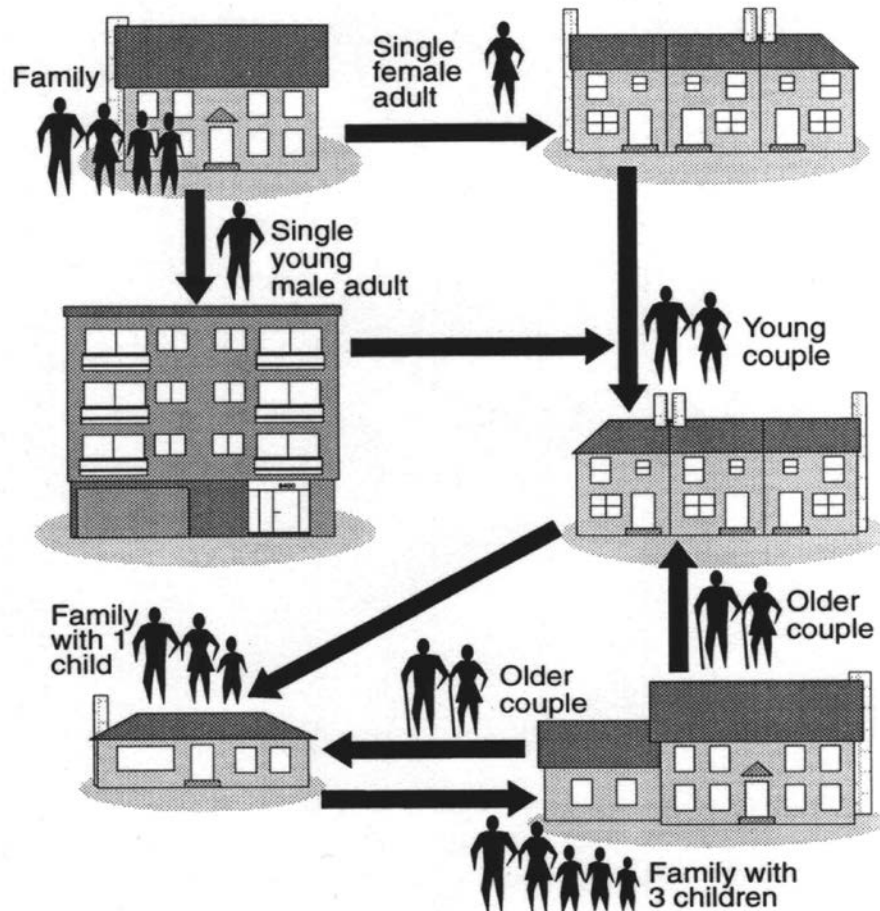
## **Range of Housing Choices**

The Town's residential development is very typical of many rural communities dealing with the initial impacts of increased development pressures and suburbanization where housing is typically single-family in nature and is being developed in stand-alone, large-lot subdivisions. As the Town continues to grow, it should encourage developers to consider more options for existing residents and new residents alike by encouraging the development of additional duplex units and possibly small group homes for the elderly.

While understanding that the lack of public services presently limits the range of housing choices that are and will be available within the Town, it is important to recognize that as people go through various stages in their life, their preferred housing type may change.

Although the Town may currently depend on neighboring communities to provide the complete range of housing for its residents, this section contains a series of recommendations the Town can implement to maintain its current housing stock and development pattern while somewhat increasing its range of housing choices. Figure 5-5 provides a representation of how a person's housing preferences might change over time.

**Figure 5-5: Change in Housing Preferences Over Time**



Source: Local Government Commission, 2003.

Should the Town successfully develop the full range of public services (sewer, water, emergency services, parks, etc.), Rockland should ensure its range of housing expands as well. A well-diversified housing stock allows the Town to withstand future changes in the housing market, as well as future changes in the demographics of the community.

### **Conservation by Design Developments**

In certain parts of Rockland there may be critical environmental, historical, or agricultural features that should be preserved, but the property owner wishes to develop his or her property. In situations such as these, conservation by design subdivisions could accomplish both goals. In terms of housing, the lots in conservation by design

subdivisions are smaller and clustered together to prevent damage to the feature(s) to be preserved, while still allowing at least the same number of lots that could be developed with a conventional subdivision design.

There are currently a number of conservation by design subdivisions in Brown County, primarily associated with waterways, wetlands, and the Niagara escarpment. All of these natural features are present in Rockland and a conservation subdivision approach to residential development could be used to help maintain the Town's rural character. In addition to natural



features, agricultural lands can be the feature protected by conservation subdivisions. As the protected agricultural lands in conservation subdivisions are generally smaller than those required for large-scale agriculture, smaller-scale agricultural activities such as truck farming, floriculture, viticulture, and similar agricultural uses are typical.

#### **Accessory Dwelling Units on a Residential Parcel**

As residents continue to age, there often comes a time when they might not wish to maintain a separate home but do not want or cannot afford to live in a retirement or elderly care home. An alternative would be to allow small, attached or detached accessory dwelling units on one residential parcel. These “granny flats,” or “backyard cottages” as they are sometimes called, allow the elderly to maintain their own independent living quarters for sleeping and washing while being able to easily interact with their extended family for meals and socializing in the principal residence.



These “granny flats,” or “backyard cottages” as they are sometimes called, allow the elderly to maintain their own independent living quarters for sleeping and washing while being able to easily interact with their extended family for meals and socializing in the principal residence.

#### **Mixing of Residential Types**

One of the components of traditional neighborhoods that should be considered in new residential developments in the Town is the inclusion and mixing of different housing types. Historically, housing types were mixed. However, more recently, housing types other than single-family detached homes have been grouped together, thereby concentrating these uses. Mixing the housing types avoids the concentration of large tracts of rental properties and their perceived negative impacts. Residents and landlords of rental units are more apt to better maintain their properties if they are mixed with owner-occupied housing.

It was noted earlier that 94 percent of Rockland's housing is in the form of single-family detached structures. As the population grows, the Town may wish to diversify its housing stock to account for a growing population and changes in general housing preferences. Duplexes are a different form of housing that provides options for renters to live in Rockland, yet can utilize a well and private on-site wastewater treatment system. Renters in Rockland would typically be residents who are not yet able to purchase their first home in the Town but still wish to live there and older residents who do not wish to maintain a single-family home or who want to cash out the equity built up in their home to use during retirement. Duplexes are particularly appropriate on corner lots in order to lessen the visual impact of side-by-side garage doors and to enhance the image of individual entries.

### **Mixed Uses in Residential Developments**

The majority of residential subdivisions developed over the past 50 years consist almost exclusively of single-family detached homes separated from any commercial, institutional, or even recreational uses. This results in residents of these subdivisions having to utilize a vehicle to travel to a store, school, or park instead of having the opportunity to walk or bike a relatively short distance to these land uses. The separation of uses and reliance on a vehicle is especially difficult for the elderly, mobility-impaired, children, and others who may not want to or cannot drive.

In order to encourage people to walk and bike, uses other than only single-family residential uses should be encouraged within new neighborhoods. For example, corner lots are very good locations for small neighborhood commercial uses and higher density residential developments, while recreational and institutional uses should be located in places that provide a focus point, gathering place, and identity for the neighborhood and its residents. In Rockland, neighborhood commercial uses may particularly pertain to small home-based businesses, which may act as a business incubator until the business is ready to move out into its own building or site.

In order for uses other than single-family detached homes to be palatable to surrounding property owners, the other uses need to be of a scale and design that blend in with the residential character of the neighborhood. In order to achieve the desired seamless integration of these uses into the neighborhoods, strict commercial design standards should be employed. The design standards would let the developer know ahead of time what standards the neighbors would expect for the building, and the neighbors would know that the development would meet their expectations, as well.

### **Senior Housing Development**

Considering the general aging of the population in the Town of Rockland and Brown County, there is a potential demand for senior housing in the Town. A master-planned senior housing development with a variety of housing types and amenities that takes into account the natural features of the Town would provide an alternative to Rockland citizens who are aging and don't wish to maintain their existing home, but still wish to live in Rockland and enjoy the rural character of the Town.

In order to develop such a concept, at present it would have to be developed on a large private on-site wastewater treatment system or other small, “package” type wastewater treatment system. In order for such a concept to succeed, the ownership, maintenance, and liability for the system would need to be identified prior to approval by the Town, County, and State. Furthermore, any senior housing development would need to include a means of transportation to surrounding communities for groceries, health care, and other necessities that could not be provided on site for those residents that either choose not to, or cannot drive themselves.



### **Reinvestment in Existing Housing Stock**

Although 60.7 percent of Rockland’s housing stock was constructed since 1990, this means that 39.3 percent of the housing stock was built prior to 1990 and is now at least 23 years old. Housing rehabilitation and maintenance is often thought of as an urban community issue. However, there are a number of older farmhouses in the Town that were built prior to 1939. Maintaining and rehabilitating these older farmhouses also preserves a link to Rockland’s agricultural history and heritage.

In 2013, the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department began to administer a community development block grant for housing in a 10-county region of Northeastern Wisconsin, including Brown County, but exclusive of any entitlement communities, such as the City of Green Bay that receives a direct allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Funds from Brown County’s program may be utilized to provide 0% interest, deferred payment loans to low- and moderate-income homeowners for housing repairs, including such projects as the replacement of private onsite wastewater treatment systems, wells, roofs, siding, windows, heating and ventilation, private utility laterals, electrical, plumbing, and lead paint and asbestos abatement. The loan payments are deferred until such time as the home is no longer the principal place of residence for the applicant, at which time the loan becomes payable in full. Repaid funds may then be re-loaned through a revolving loan program. Additional programs allowable under the terms of the program include rental unit rehabilitation and home purchase down payment and closing cost assistance. Rockland should advertise this program to homeowners in the Town to ensure potentially eligible residents are aware of this opportunity.

### **Educate Residents and Homebuilders Regarding “Visitability” Concepts**

As people age, their ability to move around their own home can become increasingly difficult. For a number of elderly and mobility-impaired residents, the simple presence of a single stair to enter a home could cause a great deal of difficulty. According to Green Bay-based Options for Independent Living, “visitability” applies to the construction of



new single-family homes to make them “visit-able” by people with physical or mobility disabilities. Typically, visitable homes have:

- One entrance with no steps.
- A minimum 36-inch clear passage through all the main floor doors and hallways.
- A useable bathroom on the main floor.

Although these improvements do not allow full accessibility, such as is promoted in universal design, they do allow (at a minimum) elderly and people with a mobility limitation the ability to visit a home or remain living in their home for a longer period of time.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

It is very important for the Town to continue to monitor its progress in meeting the goal and objectives of the plan’s Housing chapter. To attain the goal and objectives, the following recommendations were developed based on the input received from the 2003 town-wide visioning session, survey, citizens advisory committee meetings, State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law, and sound planning principles:

- Keep informed of housing affordability issues and the possible need for more varied housing types in Rockland as the population continues to grow, age, and diversify and public utilities become available.
- Continue to ensure that the Town’s housing stock remains in good condition through code enforcement and informing Town residents of housing rehabilitation programs.
- Begin to diversify the Town’s housing by encouraging the placement of duplexes on a few corner lots and consideration of multi-family development in new subdivision plats.
- New residential developments should allow for mixed uses as additions to the community that provide a place for housing and allow secondary uses (commercial, recreational, and institutional uses) that serve the Town and are in harmony with the Town’s rural character and scale.
- Promote the development of master-planned senior housing in the Town.
- Consider permitting accessory dwelling units on lots with an existing home.
- Promote universal design in new residential development and visitable design in existing residential remodeling projects. This meets the requirements of senior citizens, individuals with special needs, disabled veterans, and others with accessibility needs.
- Encourage conservation subdivisions to protect natural areas and/or agricultural lands.
- Encourage potentially eligible Rockland residents to take advantage of different housing rehabilitation and purchase programs offered through Brown County and the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA).



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **Utilities and Community Facilities**

#### **Introduction**

Decisions made about how public utilities, facilities, and services are provided greatly influence a community's land use patterns. These decisions can influence the type, density, and location of development the community will experience. What may sometimes be less obvious is that these decisions may also affect how fast the community grows and what the opportunities, benefits, and costs to the community will be.

Typically, the higher a level of utilities, facilities, and services a community provides, the greater the ability the community has to take advantage of diverse growth and development opportunities. In these situations, growth and change usually happen faster, a wider range and complexity of development occurs, and greater potential impacts (both benefits and costs) are experienced. Benefits are numerous and can include a higher tax base, a more diverse and stable local economy and more opportunities for everything from culture to recreation to entrepreneurialism to education. Costs can also be numerous and may include the loss or degradation of the natural, cultural, and agricultural aspects of the community, greater stresses between current and future land uses, and if the growth and development do not occur cost-effectively and efficiently, greater per capita costs for the provision and maintenance of the utilities, facilities, and services the community provides. Conversely, in general, the fewer the utilities, facilities, and services a community provides, the slower growth, development, and changes occur and the fewer its opportunities, issues, and conflicts. The key for the Town of Rockland is to balance these factors to continue to develop a community that meets residents' needs through cost-effective, efficient provision of utilities, community facilities, and governmental services.

As communities grow and mature, their needs for utilities, facilities, and services also grow and diversify. Examples include sanitary sewer, drinking water supply, parks, and stormwater management facilities. Many small rural communities do not need or provide such services, but at some point, if they continue to grow, such services become essential to the continued health, safety, and welfare of the community's residents. Federal and state rules (such as the Clean Water Act) often govern various aspects of the provision of such programs, as well.

Examples of other utilities, facilities, or services that smaller more rural communities may provide, usually via contract, include emergency services, such as police, fire, and/or rescue; solid waste collection and/or disposal; and recycling. Examples of utilities, facilities, or services that smaller communities may not directly provide to their community but often are involved and concerned with include telecommunications; power generation and transmission; cemeteries; healthcare; elderly care; childcare; libraries; museums; and schools.

Of particular importance to the Town of Rockland in regard to utilities, facilities, and services is maintenance of a reasonable tax rate, a safe and reliable supply of drinking

water, sound shared service agreements with neighboring communities, and quality sanitary sewage disposal options. These were among the top ranked issues raised during the visioning session held for the previous comprehensive plan.

Experiences from across the country have shown time and again that to provide high quality services, a community must continually maintain, upgrade, and reevaluate its utilities, facilities, and other services. Therefore Rockland should periodically evaluate its existing services to ensure their continued cost-effective provision consistent with the community's long-term goals, trends, and projections. Conversely, the Town should continually evaluate the elimination or restructuring of unnecessary or underperforming services or programs. The background information and recommendations within this chapter of the Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan are a step in that process, and this plan should be used to guide and direct, but not replace, detailed engineering studies, facility plans, and capital improvement programs.

## **Background**

In terms of utilities and community facilities, the Town of Rockland currently provides:

- A town hall that houses the administrative functions of the Town.
- A part-time appointed clerk.
- A part-time appointed zoning administrator/building inspector.
- A narrow conservancy area along CTH W.
- The Town of Rockland contracts with:
  - A private hauler for curbside solid waste and recycling collection.
  - The Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments for fire protection.
  - County Rescue Services for ambulance service and the Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments for first responder service.
  - A private assessor for tax assessment services.
  - Private providers arrange telecommunication, power, cemeteries, healthcare, care for the elderly, and childcare services within the Town.
- The Brown County Sheriff's Department provides police service to the Town, while the Brown County Library system provides library service to the Town.
- The Unified School District of De Pere serves the majority of the Town, while the Wrightstown School District serves the southwestern corner of the Town.

## **Inventory and Analysis**

This section of the chapter provides detailed information about the Town of Rockland's utilities, facilities, and other services and recommends actions to address identified

concerns or issues. These recommendations are also summarized at the end of this chapter.

### **Sanitary Sewer Service**

Sanitary sewer service is the collection of sewage (wastewater generated by residential, commercial, and industrial uses, process wastewater from farms and industries, leachate from landfills, etc.) through a collection system of gravity sewers, forcemains, lift stations, and interceptor sewers and subsequent treatment at a wastewater treatment plant. The treated effluent is then typically piped to a nearby lake, river, or stream. Currently, there is no public sanitary sewer service provided to property within the Town of Rockland municipal boundaries. Public sanitary sewer is, however, available to properties just north of Rockland in the City of De Pere and Town of Ledgeview through NEW Water (formerly Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District). Additionally, southwest of the Town of Rockland, the Village of Wrightstown provides public sanitary sewer service to properties within its municipal boundaries.

With the creation of the State of Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter NR 121 (Areawide Water Quality Management Plans) in 1979, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources established the formal guidelines under which the water quality management planning process would be conducted in Wisconsin to implement the federal Clean Water Act. That process included the identification of water quality non-attainment areas



(including Brown County) and the requirement that each non-attainment area develop a water quality management plan (under section 208 of the Clean Water Act), which includes the identification of “sewer service areas” within those areas and the identification of “major areas unsuitable for the installation of waste treatment systems because of physical or environmental constraints.”

The Brown County Sewage Plan is the water quality management plan within which the sewer service areas (SSAs) for Brown County are identified. In order to meet the requirements of NR 121, the Clean Water Act, and promote efficient, cost-effective provision of public sewer service over the next 20 years, each Brown County municipality that has a public sanitary sewer system is allocated a set number of acres for future sanitary sewer service. The location and extent of the sewer service areas are based upon local identification of future land use patterns, capacity of the tributary sewer lines and treatment plant, population projections, existing facility plans, and area wide water quality management plans.

The Brown County Sewage Plan is currently in the process of being updated, but preliminary maps were prepared by each local municipality that has publicly sewered development. Due to Rockland not having public sanitary sewer, acreages were not allocated for the Town, however, the City of De Pere has identified future sanitary sewer service areas in portions of Rockland, generally between the Fox River and CTH PP and north of Old Martin Road. In accordance with guidelines contained within the 2002 Brown County Sewage Plan, since this SSA is located outside of the city limits but is based upon the projected population growth of the City of De Pere, sanitary sewers cannot be extended into this area until such time as the area is annexed by the city, an intermunicipal boundary agreement is reached between the Town and the City, or a sanitary or utility district is created by the Town.

The City of De Pere currently imposes a minimum 10-acre lot size requirement on all new land divisions within the Town of Rockland through the City's extraterritorial plat review authority. The large minimum size of the lots required by De Pere effectively precludes the development of a cost-effective Town sanitary or utility district. However, Rockland maintains a long-term interest in providing this service in the future to create an alternative development option for Rockland property owners who desire to develop their lands, but do not wish to annex to the City of De Pere. As NEW Water begins its planning process for future interceptor sewers, the Town of Rockland should continue to be actively involved in order to demonstrate interest and ensure that Rockland's views regarding publicly-sewered development is taken into account.

Prior to the creation of a sanitary (or utility) district, Rockland will need to address financing, engineering, and planning of the sanitary district area. It is critical that the Town plan long-term by ensuring that privately sewered development today does not impede the logical, contiguous growth of public sanitary sewer lines in the future. Therefore, prior to embarking down the path of developing small lots that require public sewer, the Town of Rockland should commission a facilities study to determine the location, size, and projected expenses and revenues associated with creating and providing services to a new sanitary/utility district.

A detailed Master Development Plan for any area served by public sewer should be developed in order for the Town to work with residents and property owners to properly identify areas best suited for potential conservation by design subdivisions, address future sanitary sewerage collection and treatment needs, and lay out an efficient and orderly vehicle and pedestrian network to serve the future residents of this area. The plan should accommodate a range of housing and transportation choices for residents, as well as include a mix of commercial, institutional, and recreational land uses.

### **Onsite Sewage Disposal Systems**

Onsite sewage disposal systems are those that store, treat, or dispose of wastewater (or perform a combination of these functions) on the site at which the wastewater is generated. Onsite sewage disposal systems are used in those areas that are not served by public sanitary sewer systems. Typical examples of onsite systems include holding tanks, conventional septic systems, or pressure systems, all of which may be used by homeowners and small businesses in rural areas. Information provided in the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Soil Survey of Brown County, Wisconsin, indicates that

most of the soils within the Town of Rockland have severe limitations for conventional onsite sewage disposal systems. Below the ledge, slow permeability and seasonal perched water tables are the most common limiting factors, while above the ledge, thin soils atop fractured bedrock is a limiting factor. In these areas, pressure systems or holding tanks are the primary options available for onsite systems. Where soil and other limiting factors are not a factor, conventional systems may be used.

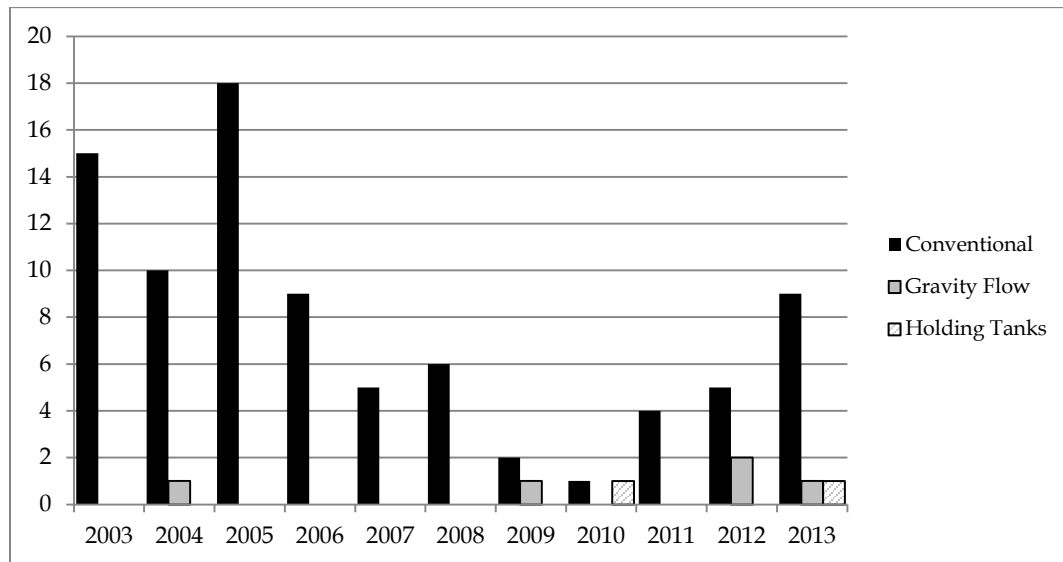
In 1969, Brown County created Chapter 11 (Brown County Private Sewage System Ordinance) of the Brown County Code pursuant to requirements of the Wisconsin State Statutes and the Wisconsin Administrative Code, which pertain to regulation of the construction, installation, and maintenance of plumbing in connection with all buildings in the state. Chapter 11 of the Brown County Code regulates the location, construction, installation, alteration, design, and use of all private onsite wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) within the County to protect the health of residents, to secure safety from disease and pestilence, to further the appropriate use and conservation of land and water resources, and to preserve and promote the beauty of Brown County and its communities. The Zoning division of the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department enforces the requirements associated with Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) administrative codes through Chapter 11 including mandatory maintenance requirements for newer systems and “time of sale” inspection requirements for older systems. Under the “time of sale” inspections, POWTS systems are required to be inspected at the time of sale of the home or division of land. Furthermore, the State of Wisconsin has mandated that all POWTS, regardless of when they were installed, must be on a maintenance program by the year 2019.



Since 2003, a total of 91 POWTS permits have been issued for new systems in the Town of Rockland. As depicted in Figure 6-1, the types of systems include 84 pressure (mound) systems, 5 gravity flow (conventional) systems, and 2 holding tank systems. The high number of pressure systems is likely due to heavy clay soils in the Town between the ledge and the Fox River and the relatively thin soils above the ledge. Additionally, soil limitations due to a high water table have become increasingly common as the groundwater table has risen due to many suburban municipalities now obtaining water from Lake Michigan instead of groundwater. Pressure systems mitigate the effects of these soil limitations by treating the effluent through layers of sand and gravel before it reaches the actual soils or groundwater.



**Figure 6-1: New Sanitary Permits Issued by POWTS System, 2003-2013**



With such a significant number of POWTS in the Town of Rockland, it is critically important that they continue to efficiently operate to properly treat the effluent. During extended severe cold snaps in winter, such as those experienced during 2013-2014, pressure systems are vulnerable to freezing if not used regularly and not adequately insulated by snow and/or dormant vegetation. According to the University of Minnesota, precautions to avoid frozen systems may include<sup>5</sup>:

- Avoiding compacting the soil and/or snow by not driving vehicles or equipment over the system.
- Placing a layer of mulch (8-12 inches of straw, leaves, hay, etc.) over the pipes, tank, and soil treatment system to provide extra insulation.
- Let the grass over the tank and soil treatment area grow longer in late summer/fall to provide extra insulation in winter.
- Regularly use the system by spacing out hot/warm water usage for dishwashing and laundry.
- Pumping out the tank first if a homeowner is going to be away for an extended period of time.

According to Chapter 11 of the Brown County Code of Ordinances, all holding tank pumpers who pump holding tanks in Brown County shall submit semi-annual pumping reports to the Brown County Zoning Administrator and the local municipalities on forms provided by the Brown County Zoning Office. The semi-annual reports contain the following information:

<sup>5</sup> University of Minnesota Onsite Sewage Treatment Program Website:  
<http://www.septic.umn.edu/factsheets/freezingproblems/>

- Date of servicing and total gallons pumped.
- User's/owner's name, address, telephone number.
- Location of holding tank in Brown County, including parcel number.
- Tank pumper name, address, and telephone number.
- Location where wastes were disposed.

Chapter 11 further requires a maintenance plan for all treatment tanks, including holding tanks, as listed:

- All new or replacement sewage systems installed after January 17, 1990, shall have the treatment tanks pumped by a licensed pumper within three years of the date of installation and at least once every three years thereafter or when the sludge level reaches one-third of the liquid capacity of the tank.
- At 3-year intervals after the installation of a private onsite wastewater treatment system (POWTS), the Brown County Zoning Office shall provide the owner with a certification form. The form shall be signed and accurately completed by either of the following: a licensed plumber, a licensed septic tank pumper, or a licensed septic tank inspector (POWTS inspector). The inspector must certify that the POWTS is in proper working condition and that the tank(s) was either recently pumped by a licensed pumper or that it was inspected and is less than one-third full of sludge or scum.
- All POWTS installed on or after July 1, 2000, shall be maintained and serviced in accordance with the approved maintenance plan on file with the Brown County Zoning Office, and by the year 2019, all POWTS must be on a maintenance plan.

The Town should ensure the long-term viability of private onsite sewage treatment systems through continued support of Brown County's private sewage system ordinance. The ordinance requires inspections of all existing onsite sanitary systems at the time of sale of an associated residence, building, or land. Rockland should also include periodic informational articles regarding proper care and maintenance of private sewage systems, such as the need to occasionally replace system filters, in the Town's newsletter.

### **Water Supply**

The Town of Rockland does not currently have a public water supply. Therefore, every home and business in the Town currently obtains potable (drinking) water from private wells. Wells in the Town of Rockland generally utilize one of three different aquifers. A few older wells use shallow gravel pockets in the glacial drift for small quantities of water for domestic uses. Most wells, however, utilize either the groundwater within the limestone rocks of the Senneppe Group or within the deeper sandstone aquifer. A review of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources residential potable well logs within the East River Watershed of Brown County (including the Town of Rockland) yielded a well depth range of 26 feet to 900 feet, with an average of 264 feet to the bottom of the well.

As stated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, all drinking water, no matter the source, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some

contaminants. Contaminants may include microbes, such as viruses and bacteria; inorganics, such as salts and metals; pesticides or herbicides; organic chemicals, such as petroleum byproducts; and radioactive substances. The presence of such contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk, however the concentration of such contaminants is the driver of concern.

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 charged the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with promulgating drinking water standards to protect public health. These standards, known as “maximum contaminant levels” (MCLs), now cover approximately 52 substances. Primary MCL standards are designed to protect public health and include standards for organic and inorganic chemicals, microorganisms and bacteria, and turbidity. Secondary MCL standards are designed to protect public welfare and include color, odor, and taste. The Wisconsin DNR has promulgated state MCLs based on the federal MCLs whether its source is groundwater or surface water. These standards apply to all public water supply system, and although they technically do not apply to individual or nonpublic water supply systems they provide guidance in determining if a well may be contaminated.

According to the University of Wisconsin-Extension, groundwater pollutants in rural parts of Wisconsin may include nitrogen from fertilizers, animal wastes, septic systems, and other bio-solids. Nitrogen and its more mobile form of nitrate may lead to severe health issues in infants and has possible links to birth defects, miscarriages, and various cancers. A second common groundwater pollutant found in wells is coliform bacteria, which generally do not cause illness by itself, but rather indicate a pathway may exist for more dangerous viruses and bacteria, such as e. coli, to enter the well. A review of the UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education Private Wells Groundwater Quality online mapping application indicated no known instances of MCL exceedances for Nitrogen/Nitrate, but did indicate a number of exceedances for bacteria across the Town of Rockland, ranging from 5-20% of wells tested<sup>6</sup>.

Considering that between 5 to 20% of wells tested in Rockland indicated a presence of coliform bacteria, wells should likely be tested at a minimum of once a year, or immediately if there is a change in water taste, smell, or color. Groundwater sampling kits for bacteria may be obtained from the Brown County Health Department for a nominal fee. In addition to testing for bacteria, homeowners with infants and small children should have their wells tested for nitrogen/nitrates due to the potential negative health effects from this pollutant.

In order to ensure that Town residents understand the necessary maintenance and testing associated with a private drinking water supply, the Town should provide educational materials, such as the WDNR publication, “You and Your Well,” to new residents and informational articles and resources in the Town’s newsletter. One technique to minimize the chances for contamination of a private well is to grade the soil around the wellhead in a manner that surface water runs away from the wellhead, rather than pooling around it. Water that pools around a wellhead may follow the well casing

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<sup>6</sup> UW-Extension Center for Watershed Science and Education [http://gissrv2.uwsp.edu/cnr/gwc/pw\\_web/](http://gissrv2.uwsp.edu/cnr/gwc/pw_web/) accessed 8/7/2014.

through the layers of soil, gravel, and bedrock to the groundwater, thereby causing contamination.

Consistent with the concerns expressed at the visioning session regarding a safe and reliable supply of drinking water and quality sanitary sewage disposal options, it is recommended that the Town consider undertaking a Groundwater Management Plan. This plan would identify potential local contaminant sources, inventory local geological factors that could affect the groundwater (such as the karst features associated with the Niagara Escarpment), and identify best management practices for the Town to ensure a safe groundwater supply for its residents. This study could be done in conjunction with a study to determine whether large-scale livestock facilities should be permitted near the Niagara Escarpment due to their potential impact on the groundwater.

Should the Town of Rockland determine that it is cost-effective to provide public sanitary sewer service to certain parts of Rockland; the Town should concurrently develop a public water system. Concurrency is recommended to avoid situations where a street is torn up twice for two different lines. The Town should consider creating its own public water utility or begin discussions with existing public water providers at a future time if/when public sewer becomes available.

### **Solid Waste and Recyclable Disposal**

Solid waste collection and disposal are other examples of traditional infrastructure provided by many urban and rural communities to protect the health, welfare, and safety of their citizens. The benefits of recycling are numerous and include saving natural resources, saving energy, reducing the need for landfill space, reducing pollution, reducing local solid waste management costs, and creating jobs and businesses.

Prior to the 1970s, solid waste from Brown County's communities and businesses was put in unregulated garbage dumps or burned in unregulated incinerators. In 1976, Brown County built the East Landfill, the first engineered landfill in Wisconsin, and shortly thereafter, Brown County built the West Landfill, the second engineered landfill in Wisconsin. These landfills were an environmentally- and economically-sound alternative to previous methods of solid waste disposal. Brown County is now part of a three-county agreement with Winnebago and Outagamie Counties for solid waste and recycling services to take advantage of economies of scale in terms of landfill space and selling recyclables.

The Town of Rockland currently contracts with a private hauler for curbside garbage and recycling disposal. Larger items and household hazardous wastes must be disposed of at the Brown County Materials Recycling Facility and the Brown County Household Hazardous Waste Facility, both located in the Village of Ashwaubenon. Large, bulk items may be disposed of for a fee at the former west landfill, where the refuse is collected at the transfer station and is then transported to an active landfill. The Town of Rockland also sponsors an annual e-cycling event for used electronics and a personal document shredding event. New homeowners in Rockland should contact the Town to find out who is the currently contracted private garbage and recyclable materials hauler and the dates for the e-cycling and personal paper shredding events.

As the Town continues to grow, it should consider working with neighboring communities to jointly contract for garbage and recycling disposal in order to take advantage of potential lower rates for larger population bases.

### **Stormwater Management**

In 1987, the federal government passed an amendment to the Clean Water Act that included several regulations relating to stormwater management and nonpoint source pollution control. The programs created by this legislation are administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are targeted to control nonpoint source pollution from municipal, industrial, and construction site runoff. Due to revisions to the federal programs in 1999 and corresponding changes to Wisconsin Administrative Codes, these federal programs apply to all communities, including the Town of Rockland, for most construction sites one acre or larger in size.



Brown County, under its subdivision ordinance, also requires the preparation of an erosion control and stormwater management plan for all subdivision plats created in the Town. The erosion control and stormwater management standards contained within the subdivision ordinance closely match similar state standards.

As stated in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' model stormwater runoff ordinance, uncontrolled stormwater runoff from land development activity has a significant impact upon water resources and the health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Uncontrolled stormwater runoff may:

- Degrade physical stream habitat by increasing stream bank erosion, increasing streambed scour, diminishing groundwater recharge, and diminishing stream base flows.
- Diminish the capacity of lakes and streams to support fish, aquatic life, recreational, and water supply uses by increasing loadings of nutrients and other urban pollutants.
- Alter wetland communities by changing wetland hydrology and by increasing pollutant loads.
- Reduce the quality of groundwater by increasing pollutant loads.



- Threaten public health, safety, property, and general welfare by overtaxing storm sewers, ditches, and other minor drainage facilities.
- Threaten public health, safety, property, and general welfare by increasing major flood peaks and volumes.
- Undermine floodplain management efforts by increasing the incidence and levels of flooding.
- Diminish the public enjoyment of natural resources.

As urban development increases, so do these risks. Research indicates that many of these concerns become evident when impervious surfaces (rooftops, roads, parking lots, etc.) within a watershed reach 10 percent. A typical medium-density residential subdivision typically contains about 35 to 45 percent impervious surfaces. Therefore, such adverse impacts can occur long before the majority of a watershed becomes developed.

The Town of Rockland's current stormwater system is an informal system comprised of a conveyance system consisting of swales, roadside ditches, culverts, channels, and a storage system consisting of wetlands and wetland remnants. This system transports stormwater runoff from developed lands to the Fox, East, and Branch Rivers. Although there are currently no formal storm sewers or detention ponds within Rockland, the Town's Code of Ordinances; Section 19-01.08(G) states that the Town has the option to own and maintain stormwater facilities when constructed, however the costs to maintain the facility will be assessed to the tributary property owners.

To protect water quality within the Town, to address potential flooding concerns, and to minimize adverse impacts upon the resource features that provide natural stormwater management functions, it is recommended that the Town of Rockland prepare and implement a stormwater management plan. A comprehensive stormwater management plan would identify potential trouble spots with regard to existing culverts and ditch grades that may be causing stormwater to back up into yards, fields, and wetlands and would identify areas where a larger culvert size may be required. It is often common for these plans to recommend the creation of an erosion control and stormwater management ordinance for the community. A stormwater management ordinance would set forth those standards that development activities must follow regarding erosion control and stormwater management for both the short-term (during construction) and the long-term (after construction).

In the meantime, it is recommended that the Town work closely with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Brown County to ensure that the current erosion control and stormwater management requirements of these agencies are met. It is also recommended that the Town work closely with its residents and developers to identify and properly address any unique erosion control or stormwater management concerns within the Town.

### **Parks and Recreation**

The presence of outdoor recreation and open space adds to a community's quality of life by enhancing the attractiveness of and fostering a sense of civic pride in the community. Furthermore, the provision of an adequate supply of areas, facilities, and activities to

accommodate the public's open space and recreational needs has been demonstrated to promote the general health, welfare, and safety of the community and its citizens.

### **Recreational Trails**

Although the Town does not currently provide any active park, open space, or outdoor recreation facilities, the Fox River State Recreational Trail, a 14-mile state-owned and county-maintained trail located along the former Wisconsin Central Limited railroad corridor, does extend through the Town. It is located east of the Fox River and extends from downtown Green Bay through the Village of Allouez, the City of De Pere, and the Towns of Rockland and Wrightstown to just north of the Village of Hilbert in Calumet County.



The 12-foot-wide trail consists of a paved portion extending from the City of Green Bay through the City of De Pere to Lasee Road in Rockland, and a crushed limestone surface from Lasee Road to the south. The Town of Rockland would like to see the trail paved through the Town to Greenleaf.

The portion of the trail from the City of Green Bay through most of the City of De Pere is located along the shoreline of the Fox River and passes through downtown De Pere and residential neighborhoods. From the southern portion of the City of De Pere, it leaves the shoreline and continues southward through farmlands. Permitted uses include walking and hiking, while biking and inline skating require a daily or yearly permit for trail users 16 years or older.

There is concern regarding the lack of availability of off-street parking for trail users in the Town of Rockland. Therefore, the Town should work with the WDNR and Brown County Park Department to develop trailheads with off-street parking along the trail, potentially at the trail's intersection with Midway Road and Lasee Road, where there is excess former rail right-of-way at both intersections and/or at the trail's intersection with Wrightstown Road. A trailhead and off-street parking at Wrightstown Road would also require coordination with the Town of Wrightstown. Additionally, as bicycling continues to increase in popularity, it is important that bicyclists follow the rules of the trail, including coming to a complete stop on the trail at cross roads to prevent crashes with vehicles.

The East River Trail is also located north of the Town of Rockland in the Village of Allouez, the City of De Pere, and the Town of Ledgeview. It currently extends to just north of CTH X. A long-term vision is to expand the East River Trail southward to Rockland Road and then westward along Rockland Road to the Fox River Trail. Completion of this effort will result in the establishment of a connected loop trail system from the Fox River to the East River.



## Parks and Recreation Areas

The Fox River forms the entire western boundary of the Town of Rockland, but public access to the river is limited to the southernmost boundary of the Town. The public access at the intersection of CTH ZZ and Wrightstown Road is only a 60 foot wide extension of the Wrightstown Road right-of-way to the river, is overgrown with brush, and is not identified as a public access site. The remaining 4.7 miles of shoreline in the Town of Rockland are not accessible to the public. According to Section 236.16(3) of the Wisconsin State Statutes, all subdivisions abutting a navigable lake or stream shall provide public access at least 60 feet wide to the low watermark of the body of water. The statutes additionally require that these public access points be no more than one-half mile apart, unless agreed upon by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Wisconsin Department of Administration.

In Rockland, this would apply primarily to new subdivisions along the Fox River and East River. However, as stated in the statutes, all navigable lakes or streams are required to have these public access points at least every one-half mile. Since there still are a number of undeveloped areas along the Fox River in Rockland and there is currently minimal public access, it is critical that the Town work with private developers, Brown County, and the appropriate state agencies to ensure that future public access points are at a minimum dedicated as specified in the statutes. Once dedicated, the Town should ensure that the public is aware of the public access points through appropriate signage and possible construction of a path to the shoreline. The public access points, once in place, should not be vacated regardless of the amount of usage they actually receive.

Considering the length of Fox River frontage the Town of Rockland has, there should be some thought to the development of an active park along the river beyond the minimum 60' public access requirement in the subdivision statutes. A river front park would help create a connection to, and appreciation for, the Fox River for Town residents who



do not currently live on the river. The Brown County Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan 2008-2013 also identifies a need for a future park site, *"A future park, possibly a linear park, along the east shore of the Fox River. The site is not specific to one point, but should be in the area of the Town of Rockland"*.<sup>7</sup> One potential location for such a park would be in the vicinity of the Little Rapids (aka Little Kaukauna) lock and dam. The area around the dam is currently undeveloped and would capitalize on the reopening of the Fox River lock system between Green Bay and Lake Winnebago. A park in this location could potentially offer camping for boaters on the Fox River, fishing, and picnicking

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<sup>7</sup> Brown County Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2008-2013, p. 120 .  
<http://www.co.brown.wi.us/i/f/export/file/Brown%20County%20Park%20&%20Recreation%20Plan-%20FINAL%20COPY.pdf>

opportunities, as well as a put-in/take out site for kayakers and canoeists. Photo courtesy of Bing Maps.

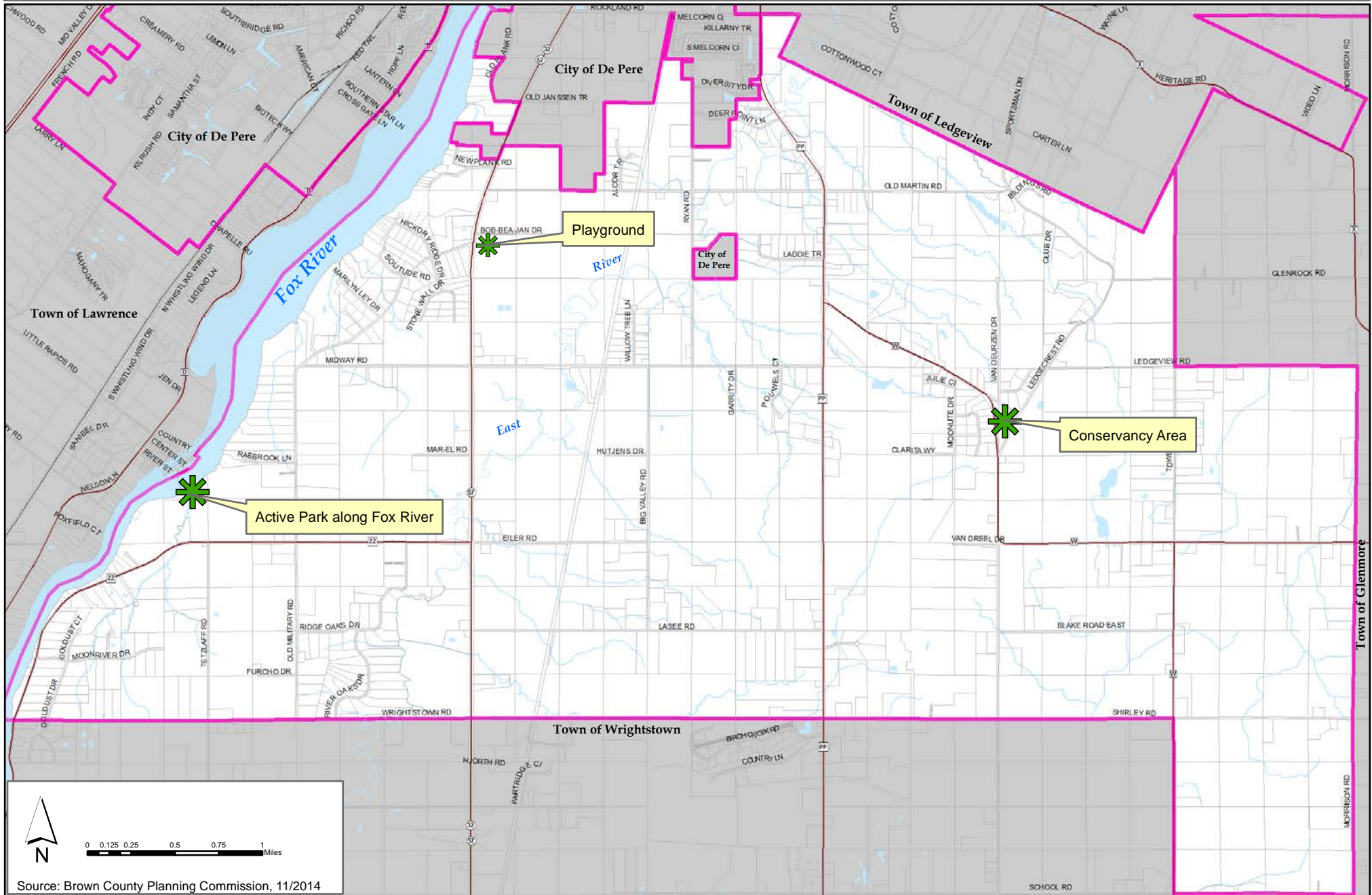
The Town of Rockland currently owns a 2.73 acre sliver of land along CTH W between Old Ledge Road and Ledgecrest Road which includes a small part of the Niagara escarpment ledge face. This section of the Niagara escarpment is relatively isolated because it is bound on all sides by roads and therefore has experienced minimal disturbance. Should the Town have an opportunity to purchase or otherwise obtain ownership of the adjacent 7.6 acre parcel of land; it would create an ideal conservancy area that would preserve a portion of the Niagara escarpment for future generations. The Town of Rockland should work with the local property owners, nonprofit groups, residents and public agencies to pursue purchase of this property to pair it with the current Town property and create a conservancy area. Photos courtesy of Bing Maps.

To partake of the benefits provided by park, recreation, and open space sites, to coordinate with the similar activities already underway by adjacent communities, to provide future recreational services in an efficient and effective manner, and to establish eligibility for state and federal recreational grants, most communities identify planning principles and guidelines as an integral element of recreation and open space efforts. That process is typically formalized in a park and open space plan. To adequately determine the park and recreation needs of the community and to meet such needs in as efficient and cost-effective manner as possible, such a plan should be prepared and updated whenever population or growth trends change, or at a minimum of every five years to maintain eligibility for the State of Wisconsin Stewardship Grant Program. Such plans should also be coordinated with natural and cultural resource protection and preservation efforts of the community. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Town of Rockland undertake a park, outdoor recreation, and open space plan.





# Figure 6-2 Proposed Park and Recreation Facilities Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



### **Telecommunication**

Telecommunications have become an increasingly important component of a community's infrastructure. Residents are expecting access to high speed Internet portals for such activities as streaming television, downloading data, and video phone calls. Businesses demand continuous, uninterrupted high-speed access to meet today's demands for running a successful enterprise. Private telecommunications companies provide these services to Rockland residents and businesses, and it is anticipated that this service will continue to meet the demands of the Town.

### **Power Generation**

Electricity is provided in the Town of Rockland by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS), and natural gas is also provided by WPS. Natural gas, however, is only available in certain parts of the Town of Rockland. Fuel oil, propane, and wood are used in other parts of the Town for heat.

It is anticipated that this service will continue to be provided by the private sector and will continue to meet the demands of the Town.

### **Cemeteries**

There are no cemeteries within the Town of Rockland; although, there are cemeteries in nearby communities, including the City of De Pere and the Towns of Glenmore and Wrightstown.

### **Healthcare**

The Town of Rockland relies upon private healthcare providers located in the Green Bay and Fox Cities metropolitan areas for hospital care. In addition to the full-service in patient hospitals in both metro areas, clinics are located nearby in the City of De Pere, Town of Ledgeview, and Villages of Wrightstown and Denmark. Public health services are provided to the citizens of the Town by the Brown County Health Department.

While additional demands in the future for hospitals and medical clinics should continue to be addressed primarily by the private sector, the Town should encourage such uses within its own community when properly designed and located.

### **Elderly Care**

The Town of Rockland primarily relies upon private elderly care providers located in the Green Bay and Fox Valley metropolitan areas. Additional services are provided to the citizens of the Town, as well as to the rest of Brown County, by the Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). There are no nursing homes/community-based residential facilities located in the Town. Additional demands in the future should continue to be addressed by the private sector, and the Town should encourage such uses within its own community when properly designed and located.



### **Childcare**

The Town of Rockland primarily relies upon private childcare/daycare providers located in the Green Bay and Fox Cities Metropolitan Areas, as well as the nearby Villages of Wrightstown and Denmark. According to the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families website, there are no childcare facilities located in the Town of Rockland. Additional demands in the future should continue to be addressed by the private sector, and the Town should encourage such uses within its own community when properly designed and located.

### **Emergency Services**

Emergency services are vital to the welfare and safety of the community and are equally important to both residents and businesses. The level of this service varies greatly from community to community, based in part upon its physical size, availability of public water for fire hydrants, and population level. It is common that the level of this service changes as the community grows. Furthermore, sound shared service agreements with neighboring communities was one of the most important issues raised at the visioning session held for this comprehensive plan.

The Brown County Sheriff's Department provides police service and routine patrol service to the entire Town. This is the same service that the Sheriff's Department provides to all municipalities within the County that do not have their own police department. The Town of Rockland should periodically review this service to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the Town. As the Town grows in the future, additional protection and/or a higher level of service may be necessary.

The Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments provide fire service to the Town. The Greenleaf Volunteer Fire Department serves the western half of the Town of Rockland (west of CTH PP), while the Morrison Volunteer Fire Department serves the eastern half of the Town of Rockland (east of CTH PP). The Greenleaf Volunteer Fire Department is located in the unincorporated community of Greenleaf, approximately three miles south of the Town of Rockland's southernmost border. The Morrison Volunteer Fire Department is located approximately four miles away in the unincorporated community of Morrison.

As the Town's population continues to grow, Rockland should continue to monitor the response times for service. Should response time become an issue, the Town should consider coordinating with both volunteer fire departments in developing a fire department substation near the center of the Town to improve response times. A substation in this area would allow volunteers from Rockland to access firefighting equipment much more quickly and to improve initial response times. Rockland should ensure that mutual aid agreements with neighboring fire departments remain in effect in the event of a large fire or other event.

Rescue service is provided by contract with County Rescue Services; however, local first responders affiliated with the volunteer fire departments also serve the Town and provide initial stabilization and treatment until the County Rescue ambulance arrives. It

is recommended that the Town of Rockland periodically review this service to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the Town.

### **Libraries**

Town of Rockland residents generally utilize three of nine branches of the public not-for-profit Brown County Library system to meet its library needs. Of the nine libraries that make up the Brown County Library system, the Kress Family Branch Library is located within the City of De Pere. The Kress Family Branch, located on the east side of the Fox River in downtown De Pere, was completed and opened to the public in July 2003. It is 24,000 square feet in size and includes special reading rooms, a community fireplace, a view of the Fox River, a children's area, and an outdoor reading porch and terraced garden. Smaller Brown County branch libraries typically utilized by Town of Rockland residents include the ones located in the Village of Wrightstown and Village of Denmark, as well as the Bookmobile which visits various locations in southern Brown County. The Brown County Library system provides a local history and genealogy department, various adult programs, digital music and e-reader downloads, and numerous children's programs. All of these services are available to Town residents.

The Town of Rockland views the library system as critical to the educational and entertainment needs of its young people and residents. Maintenance of library buildings and other library services should be addressed to ensure the facilities continue to serve Rockland residents over the course of the 20-year planning period.

### **Schools**

The Town of Rockland is located within two separate school districts. The Unified School District of De Pere encompasses all but the southwestern portion of the Town, which is within the Wrightstown Community School District. Neither of these school districts have any schools within the Town.

#### **Unified School District of De Pere**

The Unified School District of De Pere encompasses an area approximately 60 square miles in size and includes most of the Town of Rockland, as well as the City of De Pere east of the Fox River, the majority of the Town of Ledgeview, and portions of the Village of Bellevue and the Towns of Glenmore, Morrison, and Wrightstown. The school district provides a comprehensive pre-K-12 educational program with three elementary schools (K-4 schools), one intermediate school (5-6), one middle school (7-8), and one high school (9-12). Pre-kindergarten programs are held in partnership with five private child daycare centers. The public schools within the district include:

- Dickinson Elementary School. This facility is located immediately west of De Pere High School at the northeast corner of Merrill Street and South Washington Street in the east-central portion of the City of De Pere. It currently houses kindergarten through grade 4 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of 455 students and a capacity of about 550 students. The facility encompasses about 30 acres, of which the school building and parking lots encompass about six acres of the site, and the remainder is comprised of outdoor recreational facilities.

- Heritage Elementary School. This facility is located at the northwest corner of Swan Road and Heritage Road in the western portion of the Town of Ledgeview adjacent to the City of De Pere. It currently houses kindergarten through grade 4 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of 447 students and a capacity of about 600 students. The facility encompasses about 23 acres, of which the school building and parking lots encompass about ten acres of the site, and the remainder is comprised of outdoor recreational facilities.
- Susie C. Altmayer Elementary School. This facility is located on Ryan Road in far southeastern De Pere. It currently houses kindergarten through grade 4 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of about 453 students and a capacity of approximately 600 students. Altmayer Elementary School was constructed in 2007 and is the newest of the De Pere elementary schools. The school encompasses approximately two acres of the 24 acre site. Parking lots, playgrounds and related accessory uses total just under another six acres, leaving approximately 16 acres available for future use east of the existing site.
- Foxview Intermediate School. This facility is located at the southwest corner of Merrill Street and Broadway Street in the central portion of the City of De Pere. It currently houses grades 5 and 6 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of 583 students and a capacity of about 600 students. The facility encompasses about six acres, of which the school building and parking lots encompass about four acres of the site, and the remainder is comprised of outdoor recreational facilities.
- De Pere Middle School. This facility is located immediately southeast of the high school west of Swan Road in the western portion of the Town of Ledgeview, adjacent to the City of De Pere. It currently houses grades 7 and 8 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of 641 students and a capacity of about 650 students. The facility encompasses about 28 acres, of which the school building and parking lots encompass about 14 acres of the site, and the remainder is comprised of outdoor recreational facilities.
- De Pere High School. This facility is located between Chicago Street and Merrill Street west of Swan Road on the east side of the City of De Pere. It currently houses grades 9 through 12 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of 1,331 students and a capacity of about 1,400 students. The facility encompasses about 38 acres, of which the school building and parking lots encompass about 12 acres of the site, and the remainder is comprised of outdoor recreational facilities.

In total, the district has a K-12 2014-2015 enrollment of 3,910 students, which is an increase of 660 students from the enrollment of 3,250 students identified in the 2004 Rockland Comprehensive Plan. To accommodate the expected continued strong growth in student population, the Unified School District of De Pere owns an additional approximately 16 acres of land immediately south of Altmayer Elementary for future facilities. Although these lands are located within the City of De Pere, it can be reasonably expected that residential growth pressures will follow school placement and/or expansion. Considering these facilities are located in very close proximity to the Town of Rockland, Rockland may also experience residential growth pressures in this area. The Town of Rockland should work closely with the Unified School District of De Pere to keep them informed of growth trends within the community, including new

subdivision plats so that they may adequately plan for future facility and transportation needs.

### **Wrightstown Community School District**

The far southwestern corner of the Town is within the Wrightstown Community School District. In addition to the Village of Wrightstown, the Wrightstown Community School District encompasses all or parts of the Towns of Brillion, Buchanan, Holland, Kaukauna, Lawrence, Morrison, Rockland, and Wrightstown. The school district provides a comprehensive pre K-12 educational program. The public schools include:

- Wrightstown Elementary School. This facility is located east of STH 96 between School Street and Fair Street, adjacent to Wrightstown Middle School. It encompasses approximately 10 acres and currently houses kindergarten through grade 4 with a 2014-2015 enrollment of 473 students
- Wrightstown Middle School. This facility is located northwest of the intersection of STH 96 and School Street. It was constructed in 1964 and was remodeled in 2000. It encompasses about 25 acres and currently houses grades 5 through 8 with an enrollment of 399 students.
- Wrightstown High School. This facility is located southwest of the intersection STH 96 and Shanty Road. It was constructed in 2000, is designed to accommodate 500 students, and can be expanded to 750 students. It encompasses approximately 50 acres and houses grades 9 through 12 with an enrollment of 455 students.

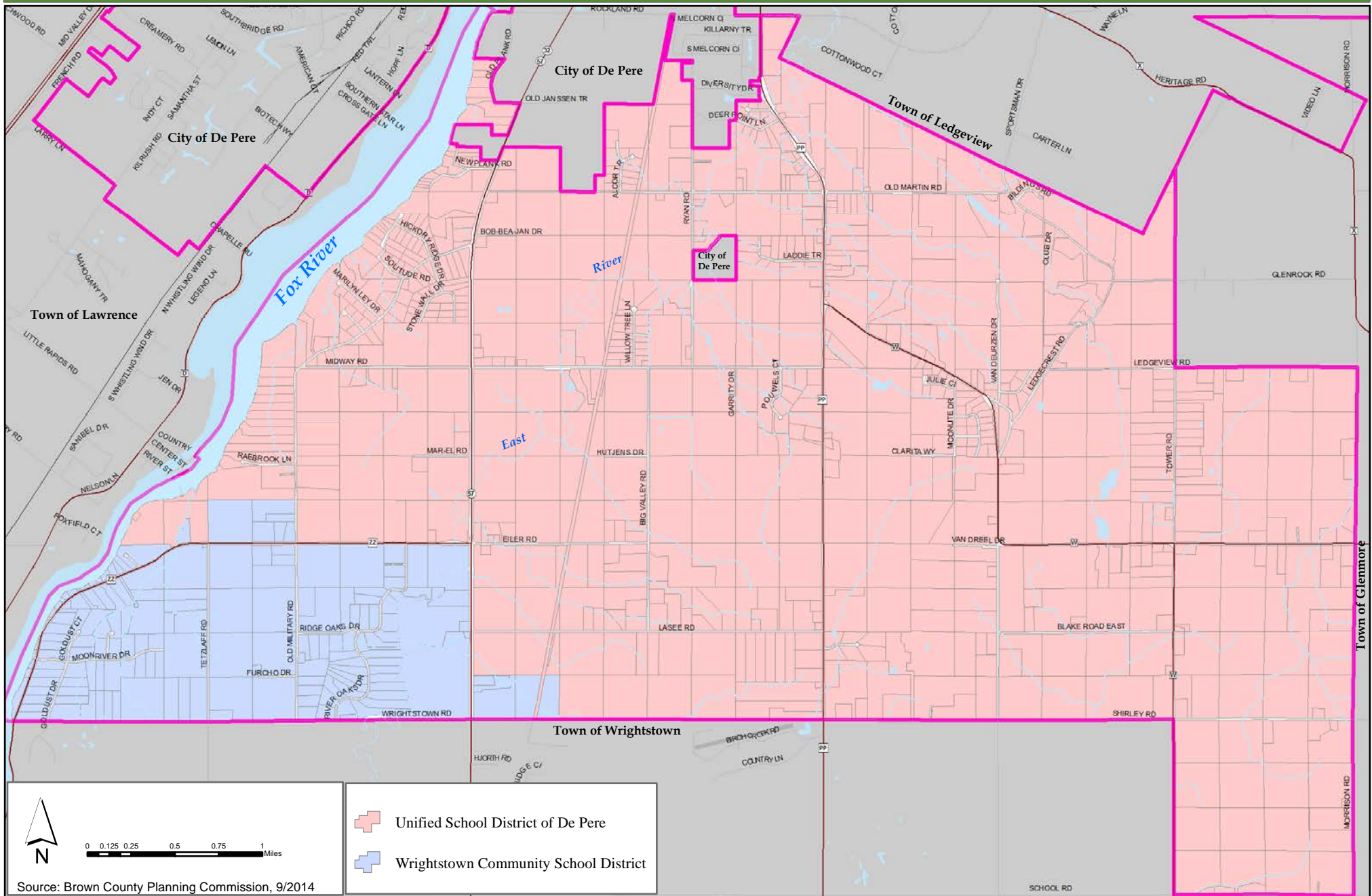
In 2010, the school district commissioned a study by the University of Wisconsin – Madison Applied Population Laboratory to project future school district enrollment. The study utilized historical enrollment data, birth trends and projections, housing starts data, and population trends to develop the enrollment projections. The study found that district enrollment has increased from 946 students in 2000-2001 to 1,281 students in 2009-2010, which is an increase of 35 percent, or 4 percent, annually. The study indicates that enrollment will likely continue to increase in the short-term, particularly in the middle and high school. The district may experience decreased enrollment in the elementary grades if birth rates and kindergarten enrollment continue to decline, however, the impacts of in-migration could reverse this trend.

In order to assist the Wrightstown Community School District with their planning, the Town of Rockland should notify the district if/when new subdivision plats are reviewed and approved within the portion of the Town in the district. Figure 6-3 depicts the school district boundaries in the Town of Rockland.





Figure 6-3  
**School Districts**  
 Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



### **Post Office**

Full service post offices are located in Greenleaf, Wrightstown, Denmark, and the west side of De Pere all of which are utilized by Rockland residents. It is anticipated that the current level of service will continue to meet the needs of the Town.

### **Government**

The Rockland town hall is located at the intersection of STH 32/57 and Bob-Bea-Jan Road in the northwestern portion of the Town. It contains an office for Town business and a large meeting room for various Town committee and board meetings, and other community-use functions. The Town employs a part-time appointed clerk position to handle the day-to-day operations and record keeping requirements of Town business and a part-time zoning administrator/building inspector. The Town Board should monitor the time demands and responsibilities required by the clerk position to determine if/when it warrants becoming a full-time position in the future.

The town hall building is situated in the center of an approximately 2.5 acre parcel of land. After adding the highway, road, and yard setbacks, a minimal amount of land is left for future expansion, if needed. The Town should consider purchasing additional land adjacent to the town hall in the event future land is required.

### **Policies and Programs**

There are many approaches the Town of Rockland can take to achieve the utilities and community facilities goal and objectives listed in this plan's Issues and Opportunities chapter. They range from specific one-time actions to broad ongoing programs. A summary of those actions and programs as they pertain to the Utilities and Community Facilities chapter of this plan is provided in this section.

In addition, while not specifically addressed within this plan, it is generally understood that the Town should review its administrative practices to ensure their compatibility with the policies, programs, and actions set forth in this plan. Examples of this would include the employment of an adequate number of staff to carry out the programs recommended in this plan, the provision of continuing professional and technical education to Town staff, and the division of department and individual staff duties to ensure an efficient operation.

Important and commonly raised issues during the visioning session pertaining to this chapter include:

- Maintenance of a reasonable tax rate.
- Maintenance of a safe and reliable supply of drinking water.
- Maintenance of sound shared services agreements with neighboring communities.
- Maintenance of quality sanitary sewage disposal options.

A summary of this chapter's policies and programs is provided.

### **Sanitary Sewer Service**

- Participate in the interceptor sewer planning effort with NEW Water.
- Commission an engineering facilities study to determine detailed cost estimates, service area, and overall feasibility of establishing a sanitary or utility district.
- Create a detailed Master Development Plan to determine the best location for a sanitary or utility district to be located and to ensure properly planned development patterns.

### **Onsite Sewage Disposal**

- Continue to support Brown County's private onsite wastewater treatment systems ordinance that requires inspections of all existing onsite sanitary systems at the time of sale of the associated property and the ordinance's mandatory 3-year maintenance program.
- Provide information to Town residents through Rockland's newsletter regarding proper care and maintenance of private onsite wastewater treatment systems.

### **Water Supply**

- Prepare a Groundwater Management Study to determine whether or not there are areas of the Town that are at severe risk for groundwater contamination.
- Encourage continual testing of private wells to ensure their long-term viability and safety.
- Provide information to Town residents through the Town's newsletter regarding the availability and benefits of testing private wells, and proper grading of the area around the wellhead to avoid the ponding of rain water or snow melt.
- If public sanitary sewer service is provided to Rockland, develop a public water system concurrently to capitalize on the efficiencies gained from developing them at the same time.

### **Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling**

- Consider working with adjoining communities to determine if there are savings in jointly contracting for solid waste disposal and recycling services.
- The Town should periodically study solid waste disposal and recycling services to ensure that they continue to meet the Town's needs.

### **Stormwater Management**

- The Town of Rockland should prepare and implement a stormwater management plan for the Town.
- The Town should work closely with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Brown County to ensure that existing stormwater management and erosion control requirements are met.

### **Parks and Recreation**

- Prepare and implement a park, outdoor recreation, and open space plan to ensure eligibility for WDNR Stewardship grant funds.
- Work with the private property owners, Brown County Planning, and other public and nonprofit agencies to develop a public conservancy area in the area bounded by CTH W, Ledgecrest Road, and Old Ledge Road.
- Work with the WDNR and Brown County Park Department to pave the Fox River State Trail to Greenleaf and develop off-street trailheads and parking lots at Midway Road, Lasee Road and/or Wrightstown Road.
- Ensure that as subdivisions along the Fox River and East River are proposed, they meet the statutory requirements for public access to navigable waterways at least every one-half mile. These public access points should not be vacated regardless of the amount of public usage they actually receive.
- Initiate discussions with WDNR, Brown County, private property owner, and neighbors regarding the potential for the development of a park along the Little Rapids Lock and Dam portion of the Fox River.

### **Telecommunications**

- Continue to enforce the Town's Telecommunications, Antennas, and Towers Ordinance.
- The Town should ensure that adequate easements and design standards for telecommunication facilities are utilized.

### **Elderly Care**

- Encourage the development of elderly care facilities in the Town to address an aging population.

### **Emergency Services**

- Monitor the response times for emergency and fire calls for both the Morrison and Greenleaf Volunteer Fire Departments and, if a need is determined, work with them to develop a fire department substation in Rockland to better serve the Town.
- The Town should periodically study its police, fire, and rescue services to ensure that their contracts and intergovernmental agreements continue to provide the appropriate level of service.

### **Schools**

- Inform the Unified School District of De Pere and the Wrightstown School District of any new subdivision platting activity in their respective areas of the Town.

- The Town should work closely with its neighboring school districts and communities to address the future needs of the school districts in the most cost-effective and timely manner possible.

#### **Government**

- Monitor the increasing demands on existing Town staff to determine if additional capacity is needed.
- Consider the purchase of additional land adjacent to the Town Hall for future town use.



## CHAPTER 7

### Natural, Cultural, and Agricultural Resources

Town of Rockland residents identified “Maintaining the rural/country feel of the Town as it develops” as the top ranked issue at the Town’s visioning session and in the survey. Large tracts of agricultural lands, the Niagara Escarpment, Fox River, wetlands, woodlands, and East River floodway all help to create the rural/country feel of the Town that its residents wish to maintain. As development pressures increase in the Town, it will be necessary for Rockland to identify and work to preserve those features of the Town that kept long-time residents in Rockland and brought new residents to Rockland. This chapter will examine ways to build upon these resources to establish and promote community identity, while at the same time preserving the land and the rural way of life the residents enjoy.

#### Inventory and Analysis

##### Soils

Soil is one of the major building blocks of the environment. It is the interface between what lies above the ground and what lies underneath. The relationship between soil and agriculture is obvious. However, the relationships between soil and other land uses, while almost as important, are often less apparent. In Brown County as elsewhere in North America, little attention is given to soils in regard to the location and type of future development. Among the reasons for this is the complacency by many that modern engineering technology can overcome any problems associated with soils. While this is true, the financial and environmental costs associated with overcoming soil limitations can often be prohibitive.



Soils in the Town of Rockland include Oshkosh, Kewaunee, Allendale, Manawa, and Bellevue silt loams, silty clay loams, and fine sandy loams. These soils range from being somewhat poorly drained to well-drained on lacustrine and glacial plains, on complex slopes, in floodplains, and along drainageways. Erosion, wetness, and flooding are the main hazards with these soils. However, the soils are generally well suited to the crops commonly grown in Brown County. Slopes are generally 0 to 6 percent with areas along the Niagara Escarpment and Fox River reaching 30 percent slopes. With regard to residential development, soil types should be reviewed when identifying potential sites for new homes. Figure 7-1 identifies soil limitations for dwellings with basements. These areas are typically located in very wet areas, along stream corridors, are with very shallow bedrock, and where there are very steep slopes. Although a certain area may be



identified on the map as having slight or severe limitations, it is important to note that each potential building site is unique and may or may not have limitations on a specific site.

### **Productive Agricultural Lands**

The 2012 Brown County Farmland Preservation Plan identifies Brown County's farmlands as irreplaceable resources that are necessary to the continued well-being of the Town of Rockland's and the County's economy. The plan further states that the protection of these farmlands and orderly rural and urban growth are deemed to be in the broad public interest.

Based on the 2014 Rockland land use inventory update, the Town of Rockland has approximately 8,606 acres of land devoted to agriculture. This equates to approximately 62.9% percent of the total land area of the Town. There has been a 573-acre decrease in agricultural lands within the Town since 2004 due to the conversion of agricultural lands to rural residential use and annexation of agricultural lands to the City of De Pere. The town's productive agricultural lands are located outside of existing stream corridors, wetlands, and the escarpment face. Rockland's existing productive agricultural lands are summarized in Figure 7-2.

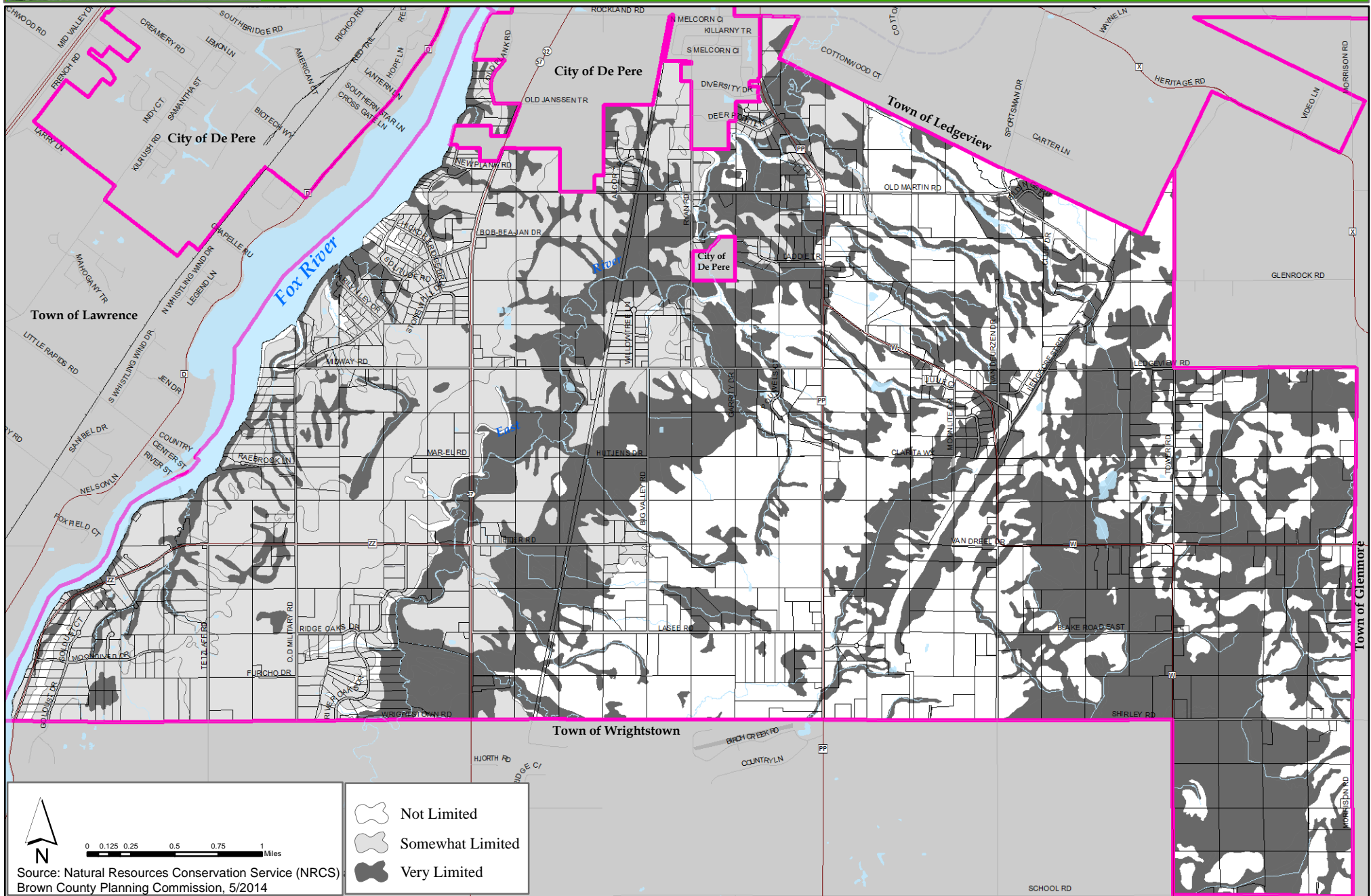
As stated in the Economic Development chapter, agriculture is a major component of the economy of the Town and County. Agriculture also provides many of the residents of the Town with a large portion of the rural character that they wish to preserve. Since agriculture is such a large part of the economy and character of Rockland, the Town should encourage those agricultural producers who wish to continue farming by minimizing the impacts of residential development on active farming operations and informing new residents of Rockland that farms and their associated sights, sounds, and smells are active in the Town.

### **Existing Regulations and Laws Affecting Livestock Facilities**

Because of the changing farm climate, municipalities in Brown County are seeing the creation of more large dairy farms. Many communities are thinking about enacting local requirements to regulate this type of farm operation. Before a community determines a need to enact local regulations to regulate large animal farms, it is important for a municipality to have knowledge of and understand the existing county and state regulations presently in place that regulates this type of farm.



# Figure 7-1 Soil Limitations for Dwellings with Basements Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



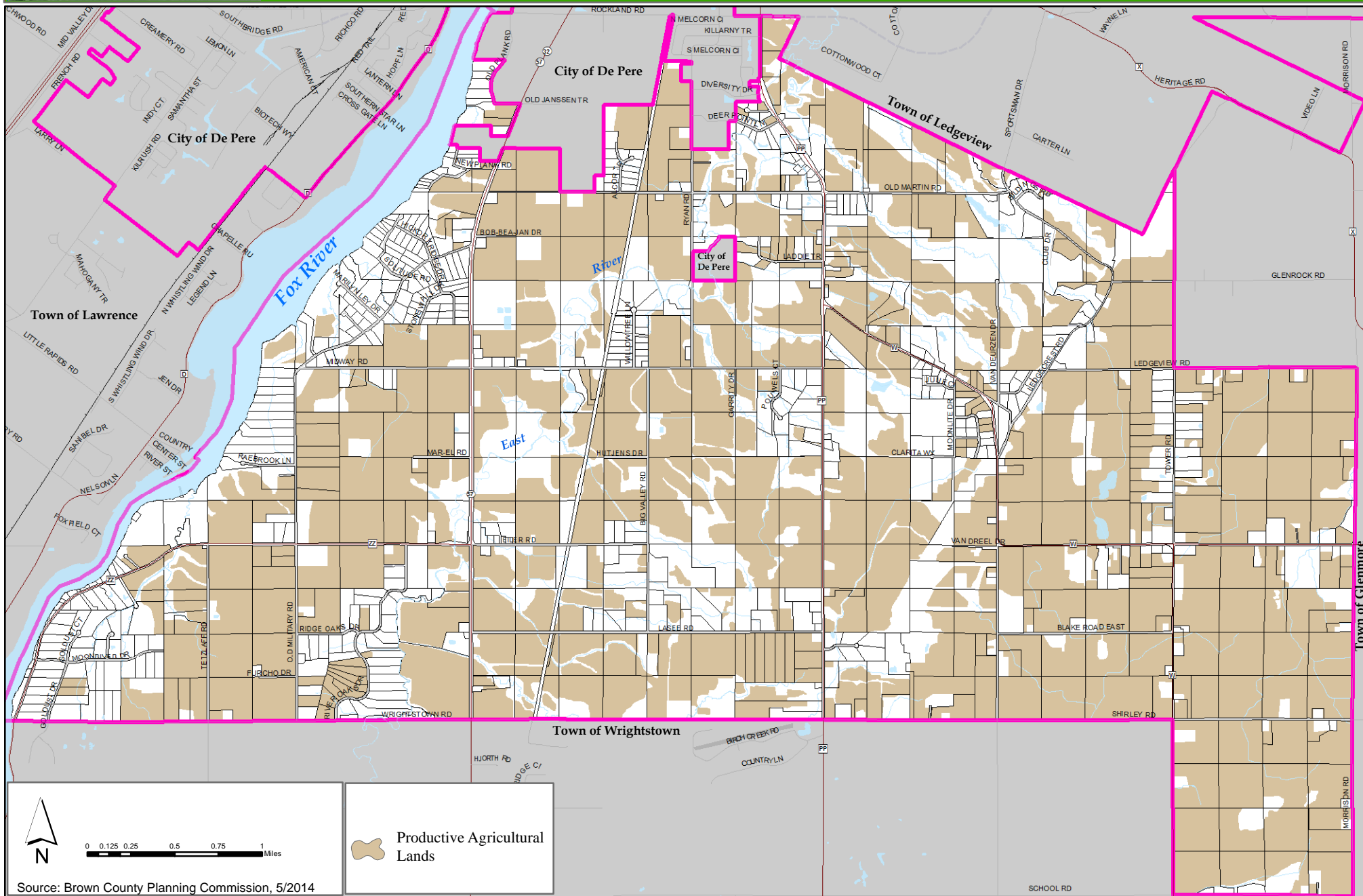
Brown County administers an Animal Waste Management Ordinance. This ordinance regulates the installation and design of animal waste storage facilities and animal feedlots so as to protect the health and safety of residents and the environment. Permits must be received from Brown County for animal feedlots that exceed 500 animal units, for construction of any animal waste storage facility, or for any animal feedlot that has received a notice of discharge under Wisconsin statutes. Animal waste facility and animal feedlot plans need to provide provisions for adequate drainage and control of runoff to prevent pollution of surface water and groundwater. Permits for the abovementioned uses require separation and setbacks from adjacent properties, from lakes and streams, and vertical separation from groundwater. The ordinance prohibits overflow of manure storage facilities, unconfined manure stacking adjacent to water bodies, direct runoff to water bodies, and prohibits unlimited livestock access to waters of the state where high concentrations of animals prevent adequate sod cover maintenance.

The State of Wisconsin through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulates manure management for all farms that have 1,000 or more animal units. A concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) permit must be received from the DNR for farms exceeding 1,000 animal units. Once the permit is issued, the farm operators must comply with the terms of the permit by following approved construction specifications and manure spreading plans, conducting a monitoring and inspection program, and providing annual reports. The purpose of the implementation of the permit requirements is to ensure that no discharge of pollutants to navigable waters or groundwater occurs. Operators must also submit an application for permit renewal every five years and notify the DNR of any proposed construction or management changes.

The State of Wisconsin enacted the Livestock Facility Siting Law (93.90 Wis. Stats.) and administrative rule (ATCP 51) to establish state standards and procedures local governments must use if they choose to require conditional use or other permits for siting new and expanded livestock operations. The statute limits the exclusion of livestock facilities from agricultural zoning districts. ATCP 51 is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and identifies best management practices and siting criteria for the siting of livestock facilities that exceed 500 animal units or exceed a conditional use permit level set by the local unit of government prior to July 19, 2003, within areas zoned agricultural. In order for local units of government to regulate the siting of livestock operations within agricultural zones, the local unit of government is required to adopt the state standards in ATCP 51. Any application for a new livestock operation or expansion of an existing facility must be approved if the site meets the state standards. The local unit of government may deny a permit only if the site is located in a zoning district that is not zoned agricultural. Furthermore, a local unit of government may only apply more stringent requirements than state standards if it bases the requirements on scientific findings that show a more stringent requirement is needed to protect public health and safety. To date, Rockland has not adopted the state Livestock Siting Standards due to the local administrative oversight required, and permits already required through the Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.



# Figure 7-2 Productive Agricultural Lands Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



## Surface Water

Within the State of Wisconsin, waterways are generally governed as a component of the State's Public Trust Doctrine, as described in Article IX Section 1 of the Wisconsin Constitution and interpreted over time by Wisconsin courts and the state Attorney General's office. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the public trust doctrine declares that all navigable waters are "common highways and forever free", and are held in trust by the WDNR for the public<sup>8</sup>. As a result of subsequent citizen action and court decisions, the public interest, once primarily interpreted to protect public rights to transportation on navigable waters, has been broadened to include protected public rights to water quality and quantity, recreational activities, and scenic beauty<sup>9</sup>.

Wisconsin's Public Trust Doctrine requires the state to intervene to protect public rights in the commercial or recreational use of navigable waters. The WDNR, as the state agent charged with this responsibility, can do so through permitting requirements for water projects, through court action to stop nuisances in navigable waters, and through statutes authorizing local zoning ordinances that limit development along navigable waterways.<sup>10</sup> The court has ruled WDNR staff, when they review projects that could impact Wisconsin lakes and rivers, must consider the cumulative impacts of individual projects in their decisions. In the 1966 Wisconsin Supreme Court Case, *Hixon V. PSC*, the justices wrote in their opinion the following: "A little fill here and there may seem to be nothing to become excited about. But one fill, though comparatively inconsequential, may lead to another, and another, and before long a great body may be eaten away until it may no longer exist. Our navigable waters are a precious natural heritage, once gone, they disappear forever."<sup>11</sup>

Surface water is one of the most important natural resources available in a community. Lakes, rivers, and streams offer enjoyment, peace, and solitude. Surface waters provide recreational and tourism opportunities to anglers, boaters, hunters, water skiers, swimmers, sailors, and casual observers alike. Surface waters provide an end source for drainage after heavy rains, provide habitat for countless plants, fish, and animals, are a source of drinking water for many communities, and are a source of process water for industry and agriculture. Lands immediately adjacent to such waters have an abundance of cultural and archeological significance because they were often the location of Native American and early European settlements. For all these reasons and more, surface waters are typically the most important natural resource a community contains.

Because of this importance, numerous federal, state, and local laws and regulations have been created to protect surface waters. They range from the commerce clause of the United States Constitution to county floodland zoning regulations. The most heavily regulated waters are those that are determined to be natural and "navigable."

Figure 7-3 identifies the surface water resources within the Town of Rockland. Drainage within the Town consists of the Fox and East Rivers, along with their associated

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<sup>8</sup> <http://dnr.wi.gov/waterways/shoreland/doctrine.htm>

<sup>9</sup> Quick, John. 1994. *The Public Trust Doctrine in Wisconsin*. *Wisconsin Environmental Law Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

<sup>10</sup> <http://dnr.wi.gov/waterways/shoreland/doctrine.htm>

<sup>11</sup> Quick, John. 1994. *The Public Trust Doctrine in Wisconsin*. *Wisconsin Environmental Law Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1.

tributaries. There are other smaller, intermittent streams in the eastern part of the Town tributary to either the Branch River or Bower Creek. Many of the streams are dry in the summer, and stormwater runoff provides the basis for much of the water within the streams. Since much of the base flow is from stormwater runoff, the streams tend to be muddy due to erosion of the banks of the streams, and bottom materials of the streams are generally composed of muck or silt.

The protection and preservation of the Town's surface waters should be one of its highest natural resources priorities. Doing so will help establish these waters as a benefit of and attraction to the community and will address many of the objectives of this plan and many of the important issues raised by the public during the visioning process.

### **Fox River**

The Fox River is the largest river in northeastern Wisconsin. It is a navigable river that extends 155 miles from its headwaters in southern Green Lake County in east-central Wisconsin to the Bay of Green Bay. Its basin drains over 2,700 square miles of east-central and northeastern Wisconsin. In Brown County, it extends 19 miles from the Village of Wrightstown, along the western border of the Town of Rockland, to its downstream end at the Bay of Green Bay and drains about 311 square miles, almost half of the County.



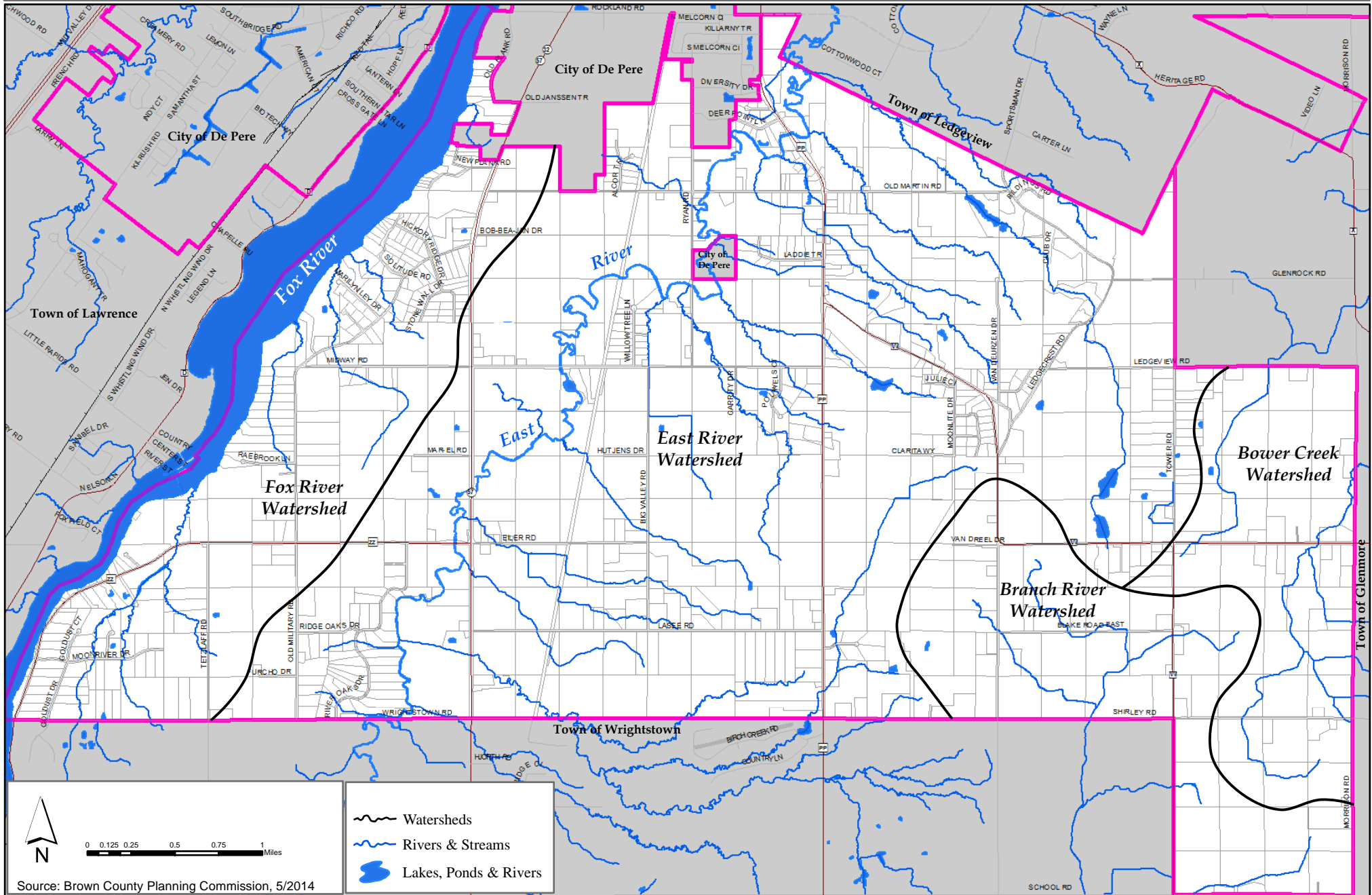
The Fox River is historically significant. For centuries Native Americans occupied the banks of the river and used it as a source of food and drinking water, as well as for recreation, transportation, and crop irrigation. The Fox River also served as the route into the interior of the state for European explorers and was the location of many early European settlements. As such, many historical, cultural, and archeological sites are located adjacent to it.

By the 1940s, however, pollution in the river had increased to the point that its fisheries were severely damaged and its scenic and recreational values were lost. As a result of the passage and implementation of the Clean Water Act in the early 1970s and more recently improvements to the management of urban stormwater runoff, the Fox River's water quality has improved substantially, which in turn has resulted in recovering fish populations, increased recreational use, and increased interest in residential development along its shores.





Figure 7-3  
Surface Water Features and Watersheds  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin





Although significant progress has been made in improving the water quality of the Lower Fox River (defined as the length of the Fox River from the Lake Winnebago outlet through the lower Bay of Green Bay), it is listed on the federal “303(d)” impaired waters list due to excessive total phosphorus (TP) and total suspended solids loadings (TSS) from non-point sources. Excessive TP and TSS loadings cause low dissolved oxygen levels, degraded habitat, and poor water quality. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, non-point source pollutants may include:

- Excess fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides from agricultural lands and residential areas;
- Oil, grease, and toxic chemicals from urban runoff (streets, parking lots, roofs) and energy production;
- Sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop and forest lands, and eroding stream banks;
- Bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes, and faulty septic systems<sup>12</sup>.

On May 18, 2012, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved the Total Maximum Daily Load report (TMDL) for the Lower Fox River. A TMDL is required under the Clean Water Act for all 303(d) impaired waters. According to the TMDL, 63.0 percent of the sources of total phosphorus and 97.6 percent of the total suspended solids within the Lower Fox River Basin are from non-point sources, such as residential yards, streets, parking lots, farm fields, and barnyards. Proper management of Brown County’s shoreland zones and environmentally sensitive areas will be a critical component of reducing total phosphorus and total suspended solids to attain the goals identified in the TMDL.

Lower Fox River TMDL restoration goals include<sup>13</sup>:

- *Reduce excess algal growth.* Aesthetic reasons aside, reducing blue-green algae will reduce the risks associated with algal toxins to recreational users of the river and bay. In addition, a decrease in algal cover will also increase light penetration into deeper waters of the bay.
- *Increase water clarity in Lower Green Bay.* Achieving an average Secchi depth measurement of at least 1.14 meters will allow photosynthesis to occur at deeper levels in the bay, as well as improve conditions for recreational activities such as swimming.
- *Increase growth of beneficial submerged aquatic vegetation in Lower Green Bay.* This will help reduce the re-suspension of sediment particles from the bottom of the bay up into the water column, which will increase water clarity.
- *Increase dissolved oxygen levels.* This will better support aquatic life in the tributary streams and main stem of the Lower Fox River.
- *Restore degraded habitat.* This will better support aquatic life.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.epa.gov/owow/NPS/qa.html>

<sup>13</sup> *Total Maximum Daily Load and Watershed Management Plan for Total Phosphorus and Total Suspended Solids in the Lower Fox River Basin and Lower Green Bay*, December 2011. Cadmus Group. Page 3, [http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/wqs/303d/foxrivertmdl/Lower\\_Fox\\_River\\_Final\\_TMDL\\_Report\\_20111222.pdf](http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/wqs/303d/foxrivertmdl/Lower_Fox_River_Final_TMDL_Report_20111222.pdf)

During the early spring snowmelt period or immediately following spring and summer rain storms, the effect of nonpoint sources of pollution becomes very apparent in the Fox River. The water turns dark brown, loaded with suspended solids which carry excess nutrients and other pollutants from a multitude of nonpoint sources. The solids are carried



into the lower bay and as the water flow slows, the solids drop out of the water column and are deposited in the lower bay. The photo documenting a Fox River sediment plume was taken in April 2011 and is included in the Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department 2011 Annual Report and 2012 Work Plan<sup>14</sup>.

A significant part of Rockland's identity is defined by the Fox River along the western boundary of the Town. Improving the quality of the water of the Fox River through proper shoreland management along the river and tributaries such as the East River will ensure the surface water quality of the bay and river does not degrade, but rather continues to improve. The health of the Fox River, Bay of Green Bay, and other rivers, creeks, and streams tributary to them have a profound impact on the regional economy.

Although much work remains to be done in the area of non-point source pollution, since the advent of the Clean Water Act, the waters of the Fox River have improved to the point where it is now a world-class walleye fishery, hosting anglers from throughout the United States during the spring spawning run. The Bay of Green Bay is now a well-known location for trophy-sized northern pike, muskellunge, and smallmouth bass. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, sport fishing provides \$2.75 billion in economic impact per year in the State of Wisconsin<sup>15</sup>. By continuing to improve the water quality of the Fox River, Rockland can capture its share of this economic resource.

### **East River**

The East River drains a 74-square-mile watershed and reaches into Calumet and Manitowoc Counties and terminating at its confluence with the Fox River near downtown Green Bay. The East River flows from the southwest to the northeast through the center of the Town of Rockland. The water quality of the East River is considered degraded due to low dissolved oxygen levels and high turbidity related to suspended solids from streambank erosion and agricultural and stormwater runoff.

### **Watersheds**

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<sup>14</sup> Brown County Land and Water Conservation Department 2011 Annual Report and 2012 Work Plan [http://www.co.brown.wi.us/i\\_brown/d/land\\_water\\_conservation/2011\\_annual\\_report\\_2012\\_annual\\_work\\_plan.pdf](http://www.co.brown.wi.us/i_brown/d/land_water_conservation/2011_annual_report_2012_annual_work_plan.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources: [http://dnr.wi.gov/news/mediakits/mk\\_fish.asp](http://dnr.wi.gov/news/mediakits/mk_fish.asp).

A watershed is an area of land where all of the water on it and under it drains to the same place. Within this area of land, all living things are linked by the common waterway. Four watersheds are located in the Town of Rockland. They are the Fox River Watershed, East River Watershed, Bower Creek Watershed, and the Branch River Watershed.

The East River Watershed is the area comprised of the drainage area of all the tributaries to the East River and is the largest watershed in the Town. Only a rather narrow strip of land along the Town's western boundary drains directly to the Fox River Watershed. The Bower Creek Watershed drains a small portion of the eastern part of the Town, while the Branch River Watershed drains the extreme southeastern corner of the Town. The watersheds are depicted on Figure 7-3.

### **Floodplains**

Floodplains are natural extensions of waterways. All surface waters possess them; although, the size of the floodplain can vary greatly. They store floodwaters, reduce flood peaks and velocities, and reduce sedimentation. They also provide habitat and serve as filters for pollution.

Like surface waters, the importance of floodplains is also recognized and is regulated by federal, state, county, and local government. The State of Wisconsin mandates floodplain zoning for all communities under Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 117. For regulatory, insurance, and planning purposes, the 100-year recurrence interval flood hazard area (also referred to as the regional flood) is most often used. This is the land that has a 1 percent chance of being flooded in any given year. Although all lakes, rivers, streams, and drainageways have floodplains, only major streams and rivers are generally mapped. Based on the flood study completed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and adopted by Brown County in 2009, the only mapped floodplain areas include the East River and a few of its tributaries and the Fox River. The East River floodplain extends broadly on either side of the East River, as a result of the relatively flat topography of the part of Rockland. In addition, flood studies may have been completed by local engineering firms for several waterways and/or landowners as part of development projects or road, bridge, or culvert crossings, so additional floodplain information may be available for portions of streams or small tributaries. The Town's 100-year floodplains are shown in Figure 7-4.

Figure 7-5 presents a diagram of a floodplain and identifies its constituent parts, including both the floodway and flood fringe.



Figure 7-4  
**FEMA Floodplains**  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin

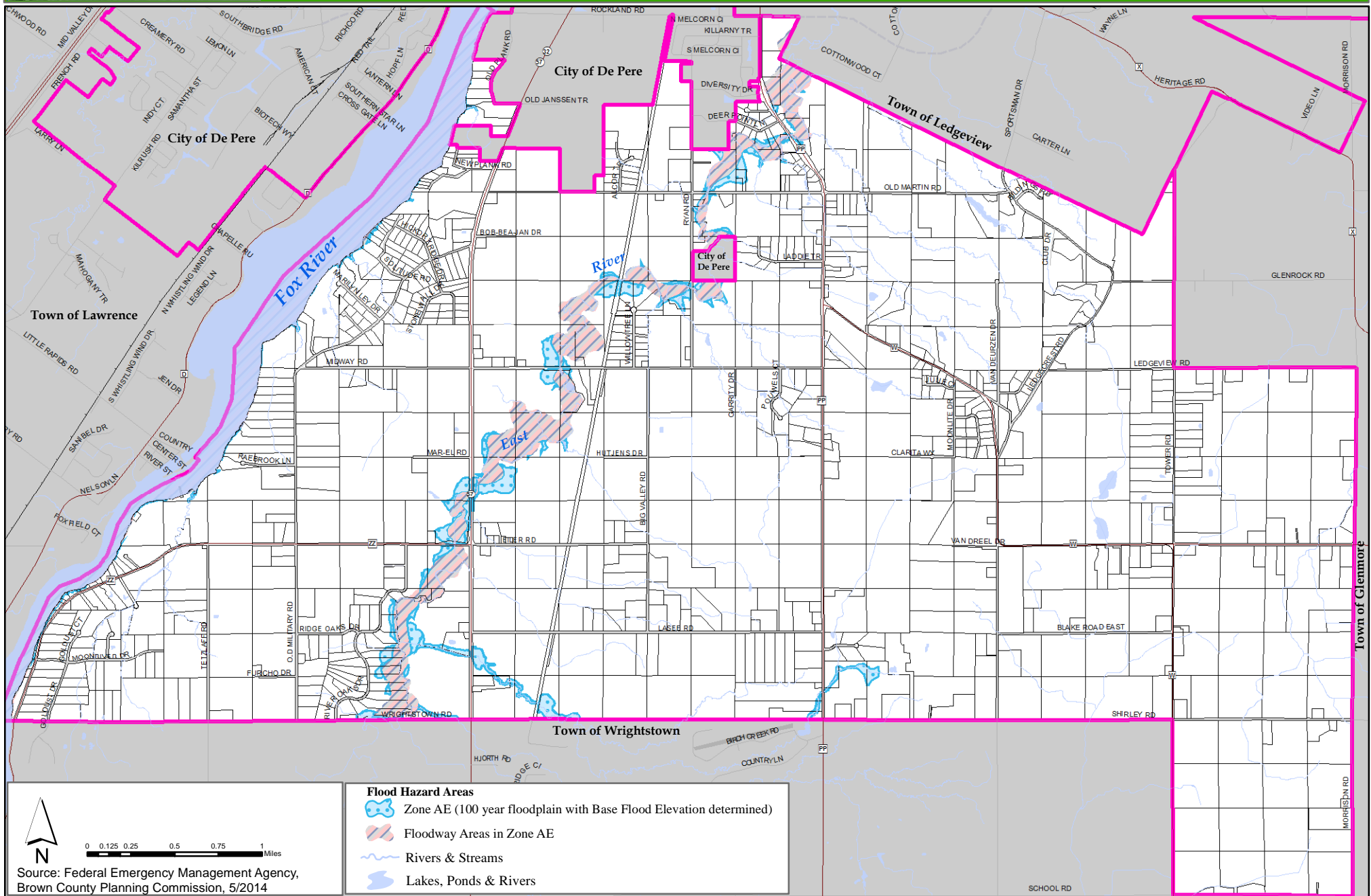
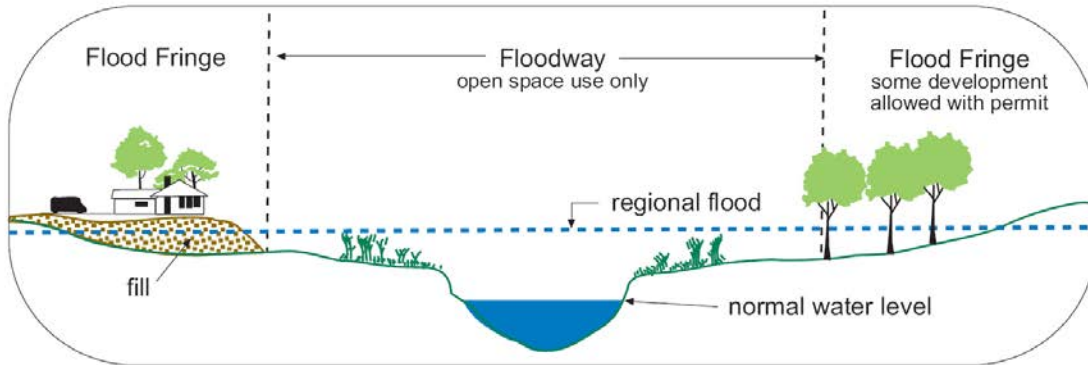


Figure 7-5

## Floodlands and Floodplain Zoning



### Definitions

**Floodplain** - That land which has been or may be covered by floodwater during the regional flood. The floodplain includes the floodway and flood fringe areas.

**Floodway** - The channel of a river or stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel required to carry the regional flood discharge. The floodway is the most dangerous of the floodplain. It is associated with moving water.

**Flood Fringe** - The portion of the floodplain outside of the floodway, which is covered by floodwater during the regional flood. It is associated with standing water rather than flowing water.

**Regional Flood** - That area where large floods are known to have occurred in Wisconsin, or which may be expected to occur, at a frequency of one percent during any given year. Also referred to as the 100-year floodplain or 100-year recurrence interval flood hazard area.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

There are several threats to floodplains and the resource values that they represent:

- **Filling**, which might diminish the flood storage capacity of the floodplain. This could have the effect of raising the flood elevation or increasing flow velocities to the detriment of upstream or downstream properties.
- **Grading**, which can degrade the resource functions of floodplains, such as filtering pollutants or providing habitat.
- **Impediments**, which include encroachment of buildings or undersized culverts and bridge openings. These manmade and natural impediments affect the size and proper functioning of floodplains and pose potential hazards to adjacent residents and passersby.
- **Impervious surfaces**, which can increase the velocity of the flood flows, increase the number of pollutants, reduce the amount of natural wildlife habitat, and limit the amount of infiltration of stormwater into the ground.

Due to the importance of floodplains for environmental, regulatory, and insurance purposes, it is recommended that flood studies be undertaken for all rivers and streams where development is proposed. Such flood studies should map both the floodway and the flood fringe portions of the 100-year recurrence interval flood hazard area, should be based upon full development of the drainage basin, and should be reviewed and approved by Brown County under the Brown County Floodplain Ordinance (Chapter 23), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and FEMA. If detailed flood studies are not undertaken and/or do not take into consideration the effects of future development of the watershed, future flooding events may be more extensive and cause greater property damage.

### **Shorelands and Stream Corridors**

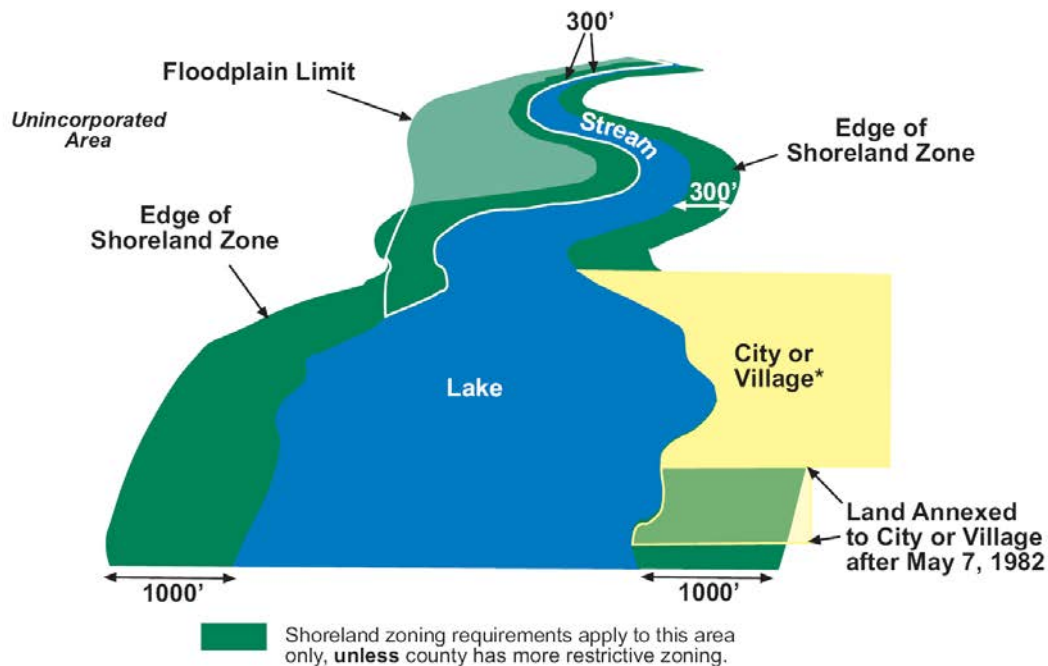
Shorelands are the interface between land and water. In its natural condition, shorelands are comprised of thick and diverse vegetation that protect lakes, rivers, and streams. If these areas are developed, this vegetation is lost, and fish, wildlife, and water quality are damaged.

Like floodlands, the importance of shorelands is recognized and is regulated by state and local government. Wisconsin mandates shoreland zoning for all unincorporated communities under Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 115. Figure 7-6 presents a diagram of the state-mandated minimum shoreland zoning requirements. Shoreland zoning is primarily intended to control the intensity of development near and to create a buffer around lakes, rivers, and streams. The buffer is intended to remain an undeveloped strip of land that protects the water from the physical, chemical, hydrological, and visual impacts of nearby development. The Brown County Zoning Department is the agency that typically enforces these standards with oversight provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.



Figure 7-6

## Shorelands and Shoreland Zoning



\*Cities and villages are required to zone wetlands within the shoreland.

### Definitions

**Shoreland Zone** - The shoreland zone is located within 1,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) of a "navigable" lake, pond, or flowage or within 300 feet of the OHWM of a "navigable" stream or river or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

**Ordinary High Water Mark** - The ordinary high water mark is the boundary between upland and lake or riverbed. It is the point on the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the water is so continuous as to leave a distinct mark either by erosion, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, or other easily recognized characteristics.

**Navigable** - Generally, a waterway is navigable if it has a bed and banks and can float a canoe at some time each year - even if only during spring floods. Even small intermittent streams that are seasonally dry may meet the test of navigability. Navigable lakes and streams are public waterways protected by law for all citizens.

**Unincorporated Areas** - Lands lying outside of incorporated cities or villages.



These restrictions do not apply to non-navigable waters. However, all lakes, rivers, and streams, no matter how small, should be assumed to be navigable until determined otherwise by the DNR.

As shorelands are closely related to floodplains, so are the threats to the resource values shorelands represent. In addition, research being conducted by the DNR and others indicates that current state-mandated shoreland zoning standards might not be adequate to properly protect water quality and shoreland ecosystems.

Under current regulatory requirements, the 75 feet closest to navigable waters are off limits to development; although, development could occur within the remainder of the shoreland area with receipt of appropriate permits and approvals, and agricultural activities could continue within the shoreland area.

Based upon the importance of the Town's shorelands and their relationship to surface water, the Town should encourage protection of the shoreland area whenever possible. In this regard, the Town should take full advantage of federal, state, and county funding and other assistance in the establishment of stream buffers. The Town should also consider conservancy zoning where appropriate if the Town determines that it has the capability to administer and enforce such a zoning classification.

### **Wetlands**

Wetlands are characterized by water at or near the ground level, by soils exhibiting physical or chemical characteristics of waterlogging, or by the presence of wetland-adapted vegetation. Wetlands are significant natural resources that have several important functions. They enhance water quality by absorbing excess nutrients within the roots, stems, and leaves of plants and by slowing the flow of water to let suspended pollutants settle out. Wetlands help regulate storm runoff, which minimizes floods and periods of low flow.

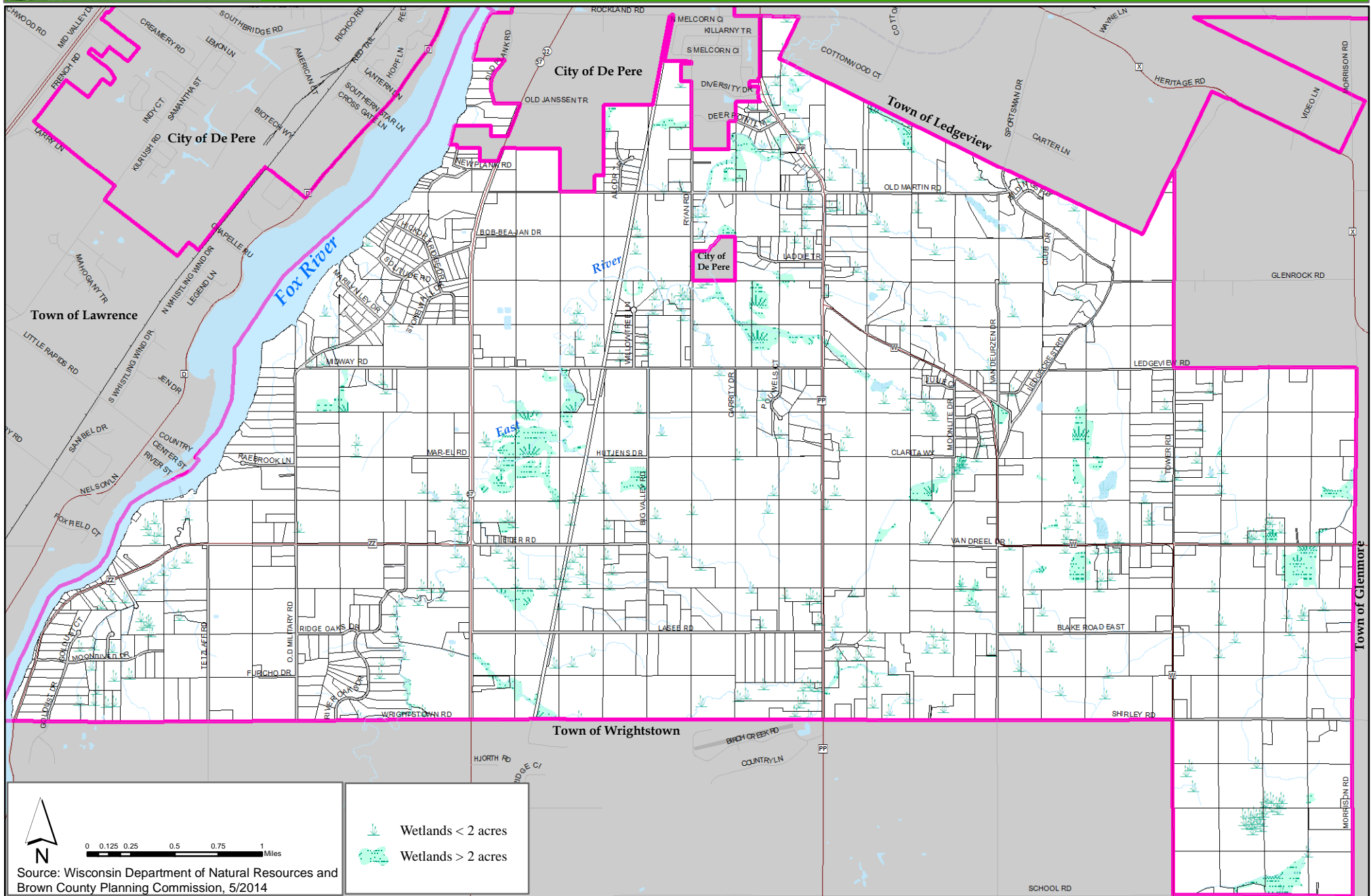


They also provide essential habitat for many types of wildlife and offer recreational, educational, and aesthetic opportunities to the community.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wetlands Inventory Map identifies numerous wetlands throughout the Town. Wetlands that are less than two acres in size are identified with a symbol on the map. The WDNR digital wetlands inventory identifies approximately 424 acres of wetlands within the Town. The identified wetlands are located primarily along the East River and intermittent streams that flow from west of the escarpment to the East River. Other more isolated wetlands are scattered throughout the Town. Figure 7-7 depicts the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources identified wetlands in the Town of Rockland.



Figure 7-7  
**WDNR Wetlands**  
 Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



The primary threat to wetlands is filling. Although an array of federal, state, and local regulations help protect them, wetlands (especially smaller ones) are still lost to road construction and other development activities. The draining of wetlands can also occur through tilling and rerouting of surface water. Even if wetlands are not directly filled, drained, or developed, they still can be impacted by adjacent uses. Siltation from erosion or pollutants entering via stormwater runoff can destroy the wetland. Previously healthy and diverse wetlands can be severely degraded to the point at which only the hardiest plants like cattails can survive. Invasive plant species, such as phragmites and purple loosestrife can also have a significant negative effect on wetlands by overrunning the native wetlands species and creating monocultures of unusable wetland habitat.

Under current regulatory requirements, all wetlands are off limits to development unless appropriate permits and approvals are obtained. In addition, under certain situations, agricultural activities may be regulated within wetlands. In the Town of Rockland, and all other unincorporated parts of Brown County, wetlands within the shoreland zone of navigable waterways, as identified on the Wisconsin Wetland Inventory maps are zoned by Brown County through the Brown County Shoreland and Wetlands Ordinance (Chapter 22 of the Brown County Code of Ordinances). Wetlands within this zone are generally unavailable for development unless a wetlands zoning map amendment is reviewed and approved by Brown County and the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. In order to have a viable case for a rezoning, a property owner would need to hire a certified wetland delineator to identify the wetland boundaries and then document that the proposed development activity would not take place within the identified wetland.

Wetlands are also regulated through the Brown County Land Division Ordinance (Chapter 21) of the Brown County Code. Chapter 21 regulates wetlands as part of the land division process, and generally requires wetland delineations be performed as part of the county review process. In addition to the wetland itself, Chapter 21 requires a 35' environmentally sensitive area (ESA) setback from the wetland boundary to ensure the ecological functions of the wetland remain intact. Within the wetland ESA setback, no filling, cutting, grading, or development may occur. The wetland and ESA setbacks are identified on the recorded land division map to make future owners of the parcel aware of the building limitations on the site. In addition to the Brown County requirements, potential developers and land owners should be aware that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also regulate activity in wetlands.

### **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

Environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) are defined by the Brown County Planning Commission as "portions of the landscape consisting of valuable natural resource features that should be protected from intensive development." Identification and protection of ESAs are required by both state and county regulations under Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 121 and the Brown County Sewage Plan, as well as the Brown County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance. ESAs include lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, floodways, and other locally designated significant and unique natural resource features. ESAs also include a setback or buffer from the natural feature, as well as areas of steep slopes (slopes 20 percent or greater) when located within or adjacent to any of the surface water/wetland features previously noted (see Figure 7-8 for ESAs in

the Town of Rockland). Within portions of the county without sewer service area, regulation of ESAs occurs during the review and approval of all land divisions that are regulated by the Brown County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance (Chapter 21 of the Brown County Code of Ordinances). Landowners within the Town with water-related natural resource features on their property are encouraged to contact the Brown County Planning Commission for information about regulations involving ESAs when considering splitting off land for land sale. The Town zoning administrator should also contact the Brown County Planning Commission about enforcement and regulation of ESAs that appear on subdivision plats and certified survey maps.

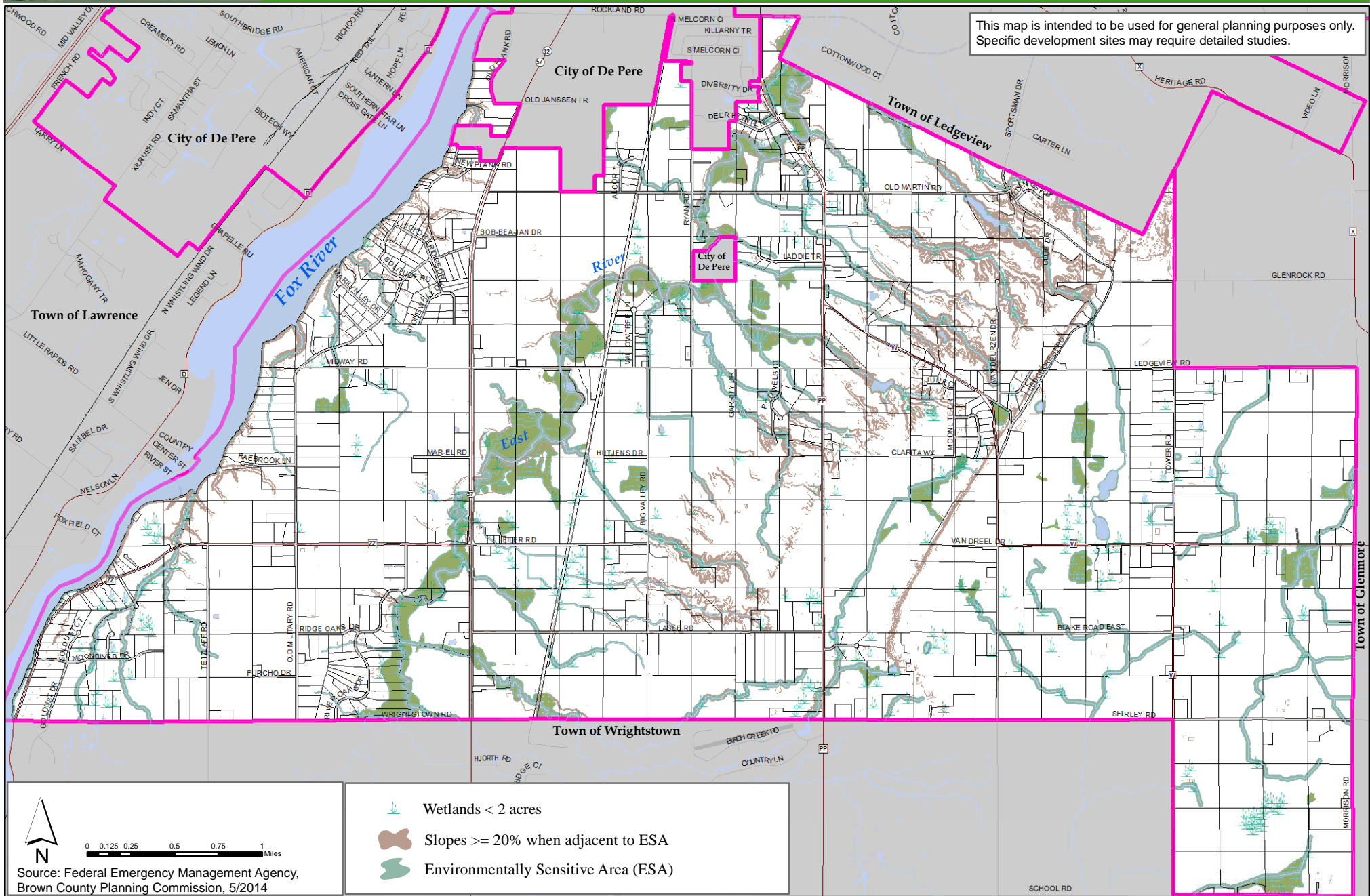
Development and associated filling, excavation, grading, and clearing are generally prohibited within ESAs. Farming and landscaping are allowed within ESAs and certain non-intensive uses, such as public utilities and public recreation, are often allowed within these areas. Research and experience indicate that the potential exists for significant adverse surface water quality impacts if these areas are developed, such as increased levels of nutrients, sedimentation, and resultant algae blooms. Additionally, development in these areas often leads to surface or ground water infiltration in basements.

Threats to ESAs are similar to those of floodplains and shorelands. The quality and effectiveness of ESAs can be severely reduced should adjacent development change drainage patterns or native vegetation be removed from the lands within or immediately adjacent to the ESAs. Such disturbances may also introduce invasive plant species to the ESAs, which results in loss of native vegetation, diversity, and wildlife habitat. In conjunction with proper erosion control and stormwater management practices, protection of the ESAs provide numerous benefits, including:

- Recharge of groundwater.
- Maintenance of surface water and groundwater quality.
- Attenuation of flood flows and stages.
- Maintenance of base flows of streams and watercourses.
- Reduction of soil erosion.
- Abatement of air pollution.
- Abatement of noise pollution.
- Favorable modification of micro-climates.
- Facilitation of the movement of wildlife and provision of game and non-game wildlife habitat.
- Facilitation of the dispersal of plant seeds.
- Protection of plant and animal diversity.
- Protection of rare, threatened, and endangered species.



Figure 7-8  
**Environmentally Sensitive Areas**  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



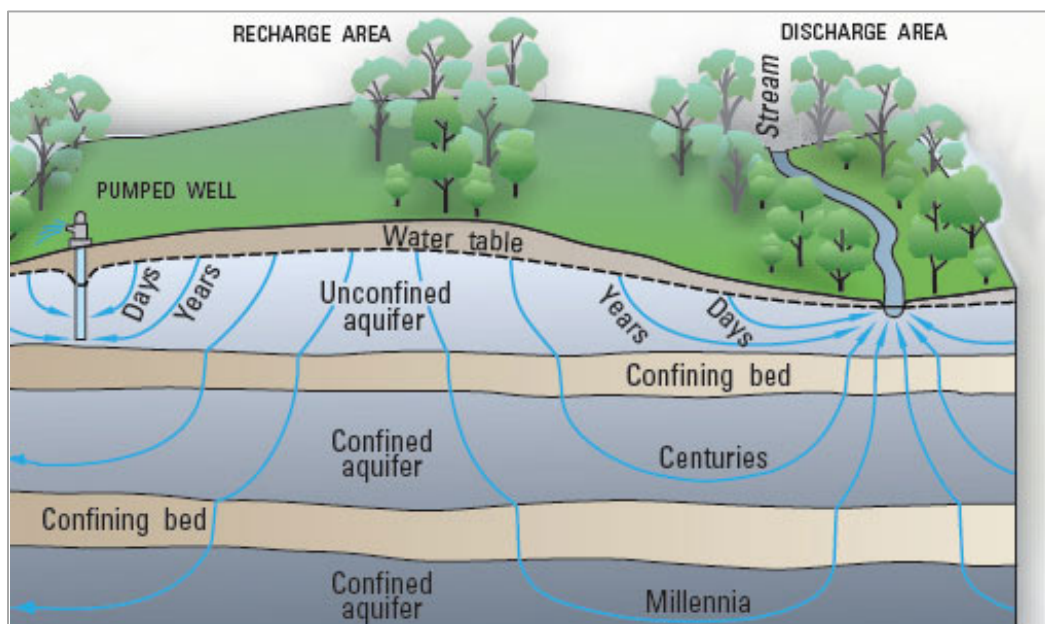


In addition to regulation of ESAs by Brown County, components of ESAs, including floodways/floodplains, wetlands, and navigable waterways are regulated by various other governmental agencies, including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In order to assist local municipalities with protection of ESAs and to coordinate efforts among the agencies, Brown County produced large-scale Shoreland Zone / ESA maps for each Brown County community through a Wisconsin Coastal Management Grant in 2012. These maps are available online and should be utilized by the Town's zoning administrator and building inspector to assist in making determinations as whether a proposed development would impact an ESA or require a shoreland zone permit from the Brown County Zoning Office. The maps are located on the Brown County Zoning Office website under the "Shorelands, Wetlands, and Floodplains" link.

### **Groundwater**

Groundwater begins as precipitation (rain or snow) that falls upon the land (see Figure 7-9). Precipitation may run off into lakes, rivers, streams, or wetlands, evaporate back into the atmosphere, or be absorbed by plants. Groundwater results from the precipitation that soaks into the ground past plant roots and down into the subsurface soil and rock. A layer of soil or rock that is capable of storing groundwater and yielding it to wells is called an aquifer. There can be a number of aquifers within an area, one above another. The top of the aquifer closest to the ground's surface is called the water table. It is the area below which all the openings between soil and rock particles are saturated with water. Like surface water, groundwater moves from high areas to low areas. It discharges at those places where the water table intersects the land's surface, such as in lakes, streams, and wetlands.

**Figure 7-9: Groundwater Diagram**



Source: United States Geological Survey

Groundwater is currently the only source of the Town of Rockland's drinking water. Drinking water for individual homes is drawn from the groundwater through private wells that vary in depth depending on location, soil characteristics, and depth to bedrock. In addition to providing a source of drinking water, groundwater provides base flows for some of the streams within the Town.

Since groundwater is currently the Town's only source of potable water, it is critically important that groundwater be protected. The greatest threats to groundwater are contamination and overuse, with contamination being the primary threat. As with many rural, agricultural communities, the most common sources of contamination include naturally occurring metals such as arsenic, pathogens such as bacteria or viruses, and pesticides or fertilizers. Pathogens typically enter groundwater from sources associated with either agricultural activity or failing private onsite wastewater treatment systems. The areas of the Town on top of Niagara escarpment are particularly susceptible to groundwater contamination due to the many deep fractures in the limestone bedrock that lie just below the surface. These fractures can provide direct conduits for contaminants to enter the groundwater. In addition to fractured bedrock, improperly sealed and abandoned wells also provide conduits to the Town's groundwater. Deep wells with proper casings and when wells are abandoned, properly sealing them, are the primary means to prevent creating or drinking contaminated groundwater.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recommends testing private wells for coliform bacteria at least once a year or immediately any time there is a change in how the water looks, tastes, or smells. Even if the groundwater looks, tastes, and smells fine, there is a chance it may have harmful bacteria or viruses. Considering the number of people that move to Rockland from communities with public water supplies, the Town should provide new residents with information related to private well maintenance and testing, such as in the WDNR document "You and Your Well" which can be found on the WDNR website under the "Groundwater" link.

### **Woodlands**

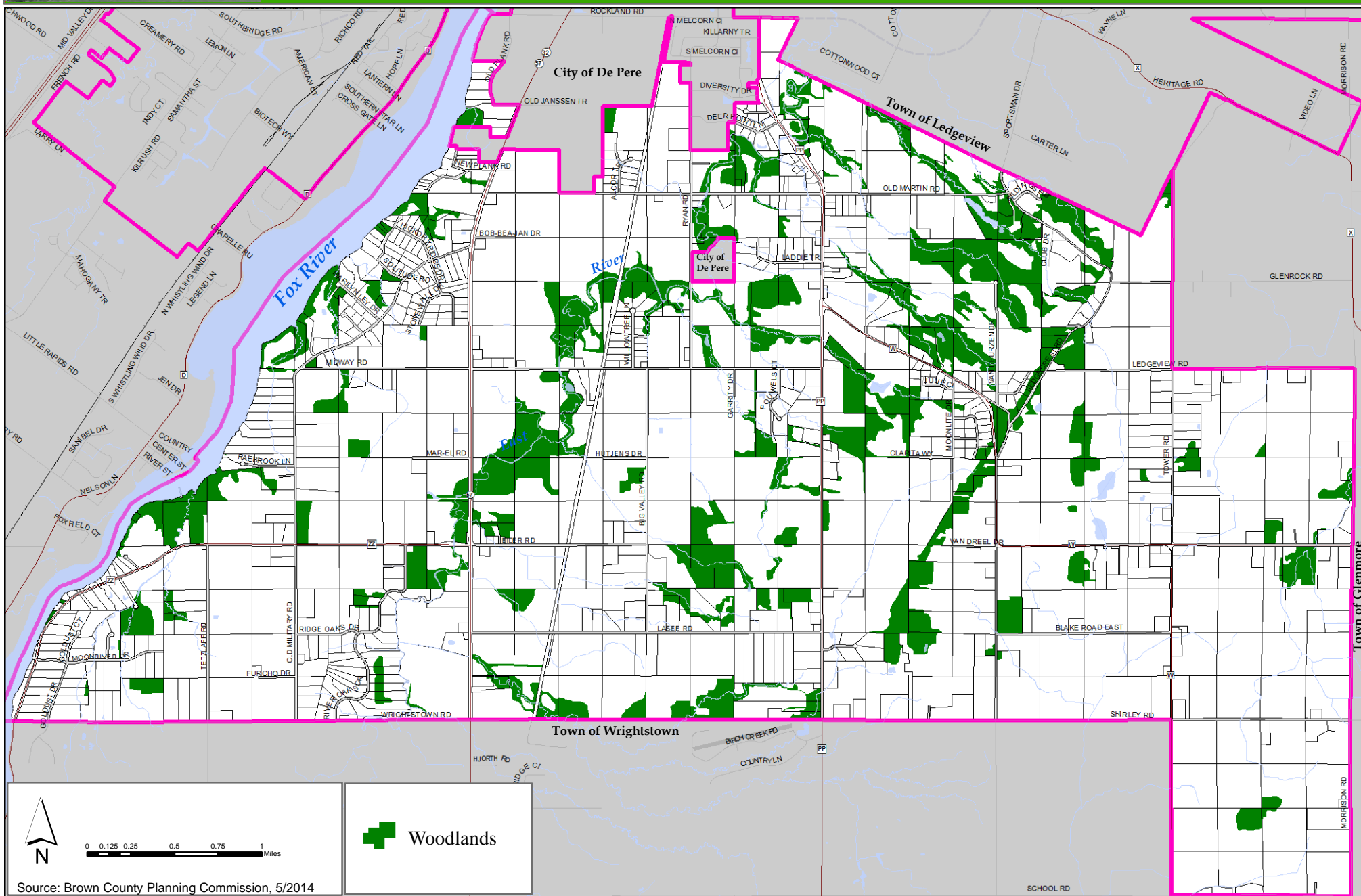
Even with the large agricultural uses in the Town, there are a number of contiguous large blocks of woodlands in Rockland. These woodlands are primarily located between the Niagara Escarpment and the East River and are typically associated with small intermittent streams that drain to the East River, or are directly associated with the escarpment. The Town's woodlands from the 2014 Brown County Land Use inventory are shown in Figure 7-10.

Development is the primary threat to Rockland's remaining woodlands. Although many of the remaining woodlands are located within the East River floodplain or associated with wetlands areas, there are other areas, such as in proximity of the De Pere Sportsmen's Club, that are located in uplands. Since these areas are prized as settings for residential subdivisions, they are often targeted for development. Intensive development, especially if improperly planned, can destroy the scenic and natural values of the woodland resource and can disrupt the blocks and corridors necessary to provide refuge and passage for wildlife. Loss of these woodlands may also degrade the rural character and views of the Town.





Figure 7-10  
**Woodlands**  
Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



Other threats to the woodlands of Rockland include improper management (such as the over harvesting or under harvesting of trees), haphazard utility and road construction and maintenance, and the introduction of exotic species and disease. If development is going to occur in a wooded area, such development concepts as conservation by design subdivisions are much preferred to conventional subdivision development for preserving as large a block of the woodlands as possible.

### **Wildlife Habitat**

Since much of the land in Rockland is actively being farmed, the most critical wildlife habitats within the Town are contained in its woodlands and wetlands. Tracts of woodlands or wetland-type vegetation offer areas for wildlife movement, and when connected by stream corridors through ESA designations, wildlife habitat corridors are created. Although federal, state, and county regulations generally preclude development in surface-water related wildlife habitats (floodplains, wetlands, streams), these areas are still impacted by development around their edges by regional issues, such as stormwater runoff, and by potential invasion of exotic species. Protection of the wooded areas and wetland areas of the Town is vitally important in providing wildlife habitat. Common wild game birds and mammals found in the Town include duck, geese, woodcock, pheasant, ruffed grouse, cottontail rabbit, fox and gray squirrel, muskrat, mink, raccoon, skunk, opossum, woodchuck, red fox, and whitetail deer.

Preservation of wildlife habitat is another benefit from protecting surface waters, floodplains, shorelands, wetlands, and woodlands. It is assumed for purposes of this report that should these areas be adequately protected and preserved, so would its wildlife habitat functions.

### **Threatened and Endangered Species**

An endangered species is one whose continued existence is in jeopardy and may become extinct. A threatened species is one that is likely, within the foreseeable future, to become endangered. The Bureau of Endangered Resources within the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources monitors endangered and threatened species and maintains the state's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI). This program maintains data on the general locations and status of rare species in Wisconsin by township/range. The locations are purposefully vague to prevent the disturbance of threatened or endangered resources. According to the NHI, endangered or threatened species found or potentially found in Rockland include:

- Cherrystone Drop Snail (threatened).
- Midwest Pleistocene Vertigo Snail (endangered).

In addition to the listed threatened or endangered species, there are a number of other species of flora and fauna that are considered to be of "special concern" that may be listed as threatened or endangered in the future, including the Bald Eagle, a migratory bird concentration site, and two additional species of snails.

The primary threats to these species are the loss of wetlands and diminishing habitat along the Niagara Escarpment due to development and other factors. Federal and state

regulations discourage and sometimes prohibit development where such species are located. Since the Niagara Escarpment is such a critical habitat for a number of endangered, threatened, or special concern species throughout Brown County, protection of the escarpment ledge when possible should be of primary importance to the Town of Rockland.

### **Scenic Resources and Topography**

The topography in the Town of Rockland is very diverse, ranging from the Fox River to the flat broad floodplain of the East River to the steep change in elevation associated with the Niagara Escarpment. The Niagara Escarpment, or “ledge,” is a geologic formation that underlies the eastern portion of the Town, running in a northeast to southwest direction. The escarpment is the result of years of geologic activity and erosion forces on the rock layers that underlay the Town’s land surface. Niagara dolomite, which is much harder than the surrounding rock, did not completely succumb to nature’s eroding forces, and as a result, the dolomite rock that formed the ledge stands much higher than the surrounding land surfaces of today. As a result of the scenic views from the top of the escarpment face, the escarpment has proven to be a very desirable site for residential development, resulting in increased fragmentation of the critical wildlife habitat corridor that exists along the ledge.

The Niagara Escarpment is under increasing stress from competing interests, including residential development, nonmetallic mining operations, and conservation interests. As Rockland continues to feel increasing development pressures, the competing interests for the ledge will also intensify. It is critical that the Town recognizes the escarpment as a very unique natural resource in the State of Wisconsin and works with developers, nonmetallic mining operators, and conservation groups to minimize the negative impacts of development on the ledge and works to preserve it whenever possible.

Other than the escarpment, Rockland has fairly level topography. The elevation ranges from approximately 580 feet above sea level in the western part of the Town along the Fox River to 960 feet at the highest point located in the southwestern part of Rockland. The difference in elevation between the two highest points in Rockland is only 380 feet. However, the escarpment provides the most visible change in elevation as it abruptly rises up to 100 feet in some areas of the Town.

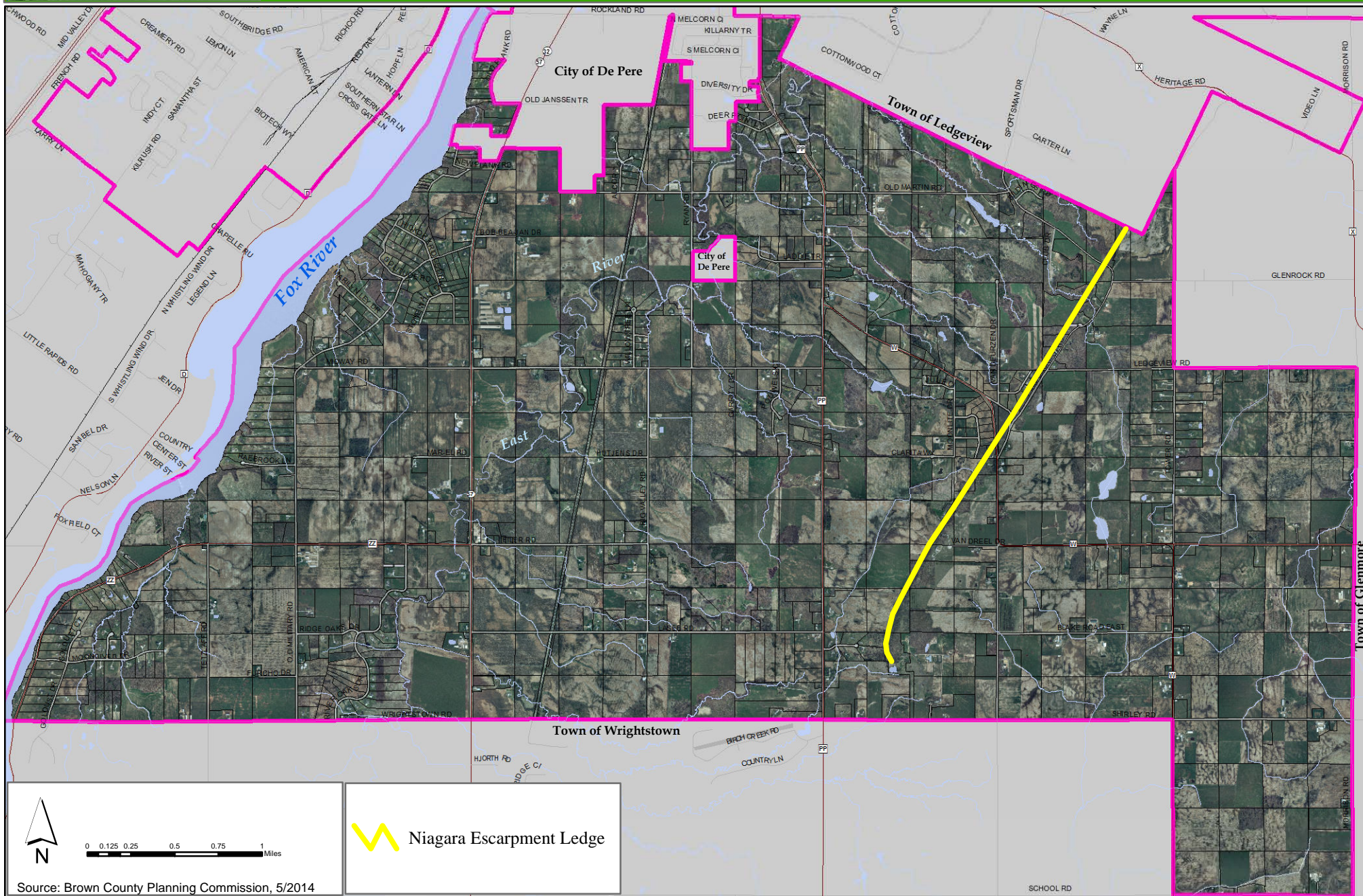
New development proposed for areas along the escarpment should be designed to minimize visual impact on the ledge. Therefore, every effort should be made to preserve the existing trees and vegetation that make the ledge a very scenic area and help contribute to the rural feel of the Town. This could be accomplished through the use of very large lots to minimize the density of homes on the ledge, utilization of conservation easements, public purchase, purchase of development rights, overlay zoning district, or alternative subdivision design techniques. Figure 7-11 provides a generalized location of the Niagara Escarpment ledge face.





# Figure 7-11 Generalized Niagara Escarpment Ledge

Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



Niagara Escarpment Ledge

Source: Brown County Planning Commission, 5/2014

SCHOOL RD

## **Mineral Resources**

While there are currently no active metallic mines in Wisconsin, nonmetallic mining is a widespread activity in Wisconsin, as well as in Brown County. In Wisconsin, there are an estimated 2,000 mines that provide aggregate for construction; sand, gravel, and crushed stone for road building, and limestone for agricultural lime and manufacturing applications. Recently the western part of the State has experienced strong growth in silica sand quarries for use in the fracking process for oil production. In Brown County, there are a number of active quarries that mine dolomite, sandstone, limestone, or crushed stone (sand or gravel). The Niagara Escarpment, which extends through Brown County, contains some of the state's highest quality aggregate materials. Most commonly mined from the portion of the escarpment in Brown County is dimension limestone that is used primarily for landscaping.

The State of Wisconsin first passed a nonmetallic mining law in 1994. The law requires that all nonmetallic mining operations be registered. To be registered, the nonmetallic mineral deposit must be delineated by a professional geologist or registered engineer and certified to be economically viable. Additionally, if the land is zoned, the existing zoning at the time of registration must have allowed mining as a permitted use or as a conditional use. The state law further specifies that the registration lasts for ten years and could be renewed for an additional ten years. However, after 20 years, the full registration process must be undertaken once again. In addition, the law states that local zoning officials can deny the mining only if they can prove that the mineral deposit is not marketable or that the zoning at the time of the registration prohibits mining.

Wisconsin passed a second nonmetallic mining law in 2000, the Wisconsin State Statute Section 295.13(1) and Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 135. The state statute and administrative code require that all counties in the state adopt an ordinance in 2001 (consistent with the model ordinance prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources) to establish a reclamation program capable of ensuring compliance with uniform state reclamation standards. The administrative code also allows cities, villages, and towns to adopt such an ordinance and administer the program within their own jurisdiction at any time. However, the administrative code further states that the county ordinance will apply to every city, village, or town within the county until such time as the city, village, or town adopts and administers an ordinance itself.

Brown County adopted its Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance in 2001. Most communities in Brown County, including the Town of Rockland, opted not to adopt and enforce their own mining reclamation ordinance but rather to allow Brown County to adopt an ordinance having jurisdiction within the communities.

Wisconsin's nonmetallic mining reclamation program requires that nonmetallic mining operators prepare a reclamation plan to state standards. These standards deal with topsoil salvage and storage, surface and groundwater protection, reclamation during mining to minimize the amount of land exposed to wind and water erosion, revegetation, site grading, erosion control, and a final land use consistent with local zoning requirements.



There is one active dolomite quarry within the Town of Rockland in the far northeastern corner of the Town. Because of the presence of this high quality mineral resource in the Town of Rockland and because of the potential for both significant positive economic impacts and negative environmental and land use impacts, relevant Town ordinances should be continually reviewed to ensure they adequately address issues along the escarpment, such as truck traffic, blasting, and endangered plant and animal resources.

It is also important for the Town to recognize that new residential uses are not typically compatible with active quarrying operations. Therefore, the Town should use caution when considering approval of new residential developments near active quarries.

### **Historic Buildings**

The Wisconsin Architecture & History Inventory (AHI) is an official inventory maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) for tracking historically significant structures, sites, or objects. These structures collectively display Wisconsin's unique culture and history and, therefore, should be noted and protected/preserved when feasible.

There are 23 records listed in the AHI for the Town of Rockland, with the Little Kaukauna Lock and Dam Historic District also being listed on the National Historic Register. Of the remaining 22 records, no additional sites are listed on the state or national historic register. AHI listed structures are generally scattered throughout the town and include such buildings as a former school, and other various commercial and agricultural buildings.

Considering the Little Kaukauna Lock and Dam District is registered on the National Register of Historic Places, it may be of interest to historic tourists. Rehabilitation of the former lock tender house into a hostel or similar type rest stop for boaters, kayakers, and others interested in the history of the Fox River should be encouraged by the town. Both the State of Wisconsin and federal government provide an income tax credit up to 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating a structure listed on the National Register.

### **Archeological Resources**

Archeological sites provide a window to the past. They provide information and insight as to the culture, activities, and beliefs of the previous residents of the Town of Rockland. Current state law gives protection to all human burial sites, in addition to a number of programs and restrictions relating to other archeological sites.

In 2004, The Neville Public Museum provided an inventory and report detailing the archeological sites in the Town of Rockland. The following information is from that report, compiled by Janet M. Speth of the Neville Public Museum of Brown County.

An inventory completed by the Neville Public Museum of Brown County indicates that Rockland has had only one archeological survey completed, which was completed in conjunction with work along STH 32/57. Due to the survey being completed as part of the road project, the survey was limited to a narrow strip of the new right-of-way for the highway. Most other communities in Brown County have had a number of surveys as a result of highway or utility projects.

Probably as a result of there being only one archeological survey completed in Rockland, there are only five recorded archeological sites in the Town. Two sites lie between the East River and the top of the Niagara Escarpment. Three sites are located along the Fox River, which include two village sites and a mound group. The mound group is located on private property and includes at least one conical mound and possibly a linear mound dating to the Late Woodland Period (AD 600 to AD 1200). However, it has been dug into at some point in the past. The two village sites have never been excavated, and collections of artifacts from these sites are stored at the Neville Public Museum of Brown County. The stone artifacts from these sites represent almost every period from Early Archaic (about 7000 BC) to late prehistoric (possibly AD 1500).

The archeological survey completed in conjunction with the STH 32/57 project resulted in four artifacts being recovered from the base of the Niagara Escarpment. They may date to the Early Woodland Period (about 500 BC). The second site at the base of the escarpment is known from private collectors. Artifacts recovered from this site include copper and stone axes and are stored at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Based on the presence of copper tools at the site, a date of 4000-1500 BC is possible.

The number of archeological sites within the Town of Rockland is undoubtedly higher than the five that are listed. Small campsites may occur along and atop the escarpment, and larger sites may be present along the Fox River. Rock overhangs and caves along the escarpment may also be the sites of prehistoric burials.

Developing these sites before they can be catalogued and studied is the threat to this resource. However, knowledge about archeological sites is typically kept confidential to prevent collectors from damaging them. Therefore, when developing in areas of the Town along the Niagara Escarpment, Fox River, or East River floodplain, builders should be aware that they may encounter archeological artifacts, and if so, officials of the Neville Public Museum should be notified.

## **Recommended Policies, Programs, and Actions**

There are many avenues the Town of Rockland can take to achieve the natural, cultural, and agricultural resources goal and objectives listed in the plan's Issues and Opportunities chapter. They range from specific one-time actions to broad ongoing programs. These recommendations are addressed in this section.

### **Farmland Preservation**

Although Rockland is experiencing a transition from a primarily agricultural community to one that is increasingly residential in nature, it still has a number of active farming operations. Agriculture provides a large part of the rural feel that Town residents wish to maintain. Therefore, Rockland should encourage agricultural activity in the Town for as long as possible.



## Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements

Some communities have had success with the purchase of agricultural conservation easements, also known as the purchase of development rights. This farmland preservation tool benefits the farmer, as well as the community. The farmer can benefit financially on the development potential of the land while still keeping it in production and maintaining all other rights to the land, including the right to live on the land, to continue to farm the land, and to exclude trespassers. The farmer may enjoy reduced income taxes and estate taxes. The monies received for the easement can be used for farm improvements, thus making the farm more productive and economically palatable to the community. In addition, the community will enjoy all of the environmental, aesthetic, and economic benefits of farming while preserving a large area of productive farmland.

While this tool is an effective one for preserving farmland, it is expensive, and not all municipalities can afford its cost. The Town can explore many different options for funding this program, including an increase in building permit fees or property taxes. Rockland also could explore the many potential state or federal grant programs that could assist the Town in funding these efforts. One of these programs is the Farmland Preservation Program sponsored by the USDA. This program helps state, tribal, or local government entities purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural use. If the land qualifies, the USDA has provided up to 50 percent of the cost of purchasing the easement. To qualify, farmland must:



- Be part of a pending offer from a state, tribe, or local farmland preservation program.
- Be privately owned.
- Have a conservation plan.
- Be large enough to sustain agricultural production.
- Be accessible to markets for what the land produces.
- Have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services.
- Have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production.

The Town of Dunn in Dane County has been very successful in preserving its agricultural land using purchase of development rights. Dunn has received multiple Farmland Preservation Program grants to help with its efforts, allowing them to preserve over 1,700 acres of valuable farmland.

### **Creation of Parks or Conservancy Areas**

Future parks not located to serve a specific population should, if possible, include or be adjacent to natural resource features, such as the Niagara Escarpment, Fox River, Fox River State Recreational Trail or other woodlands, wetlands, stream corridors, and scenic, historic, or archaeological sites to help preserve or enhance the rural feel of the Town. This allows greater public accessibility to natural and cultural resources and potentially enhances their protection through buffering and public ownership. It can also allow for connectivity of parks through natural resource corridors. Future parks and recreational facilities should also be coordinated with adjoining communities, as well as Brown County, to allow for potential regional trails, to avoid redundant or competing facilities, and to foster cooperation and efficiency. There is a more extensive discussion of future park facilities in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter of this comprehensive plan.

### **Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

The protection of environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs) keep intensive development out of stream corridors, water quality is improved, wildlife habitat is maintained, recreational opportunities are presented, and scenic values are preserved. As discussed in the environmentally sensitive area section of this chapter, ESAs generally follow stream corridors and include a 75' setback, the identified floodway of the stream and any adjacent wetlands and steep slopes. ESAs remain mostly undeveloped and serve as vital wildlife corridors, preserve natural beauty, provide stormwater management areas, and link ecologically important parts of the Town together.

### **Create Vegetated Buffer Strips along Waterways**

Through implementation of Chapter 10 of the Brown County Code of Ordinances (Agricultural Shoreland Management) the Brown County Land Conservation Department has been working with rural landowners to provide a cost-share for the installation of vegetated buffer strips along waterways that flow through agricultural areas. Historically, many of these waterways were plowed through and created direct vectors for fine sediments and nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen to enter the



surface water system downstream. Increased levels of phosphorus and nitrogen can lead to harmful algal blooms, decreased dissolved oxygen levels, and increased stress on forage and sport fish in downstream waterways. The vegetated buffer strips, typically consisting of native grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs, help to filter out suspended solids, nutrients (including phosphorus and nitrogen), fertilizers, and pesticides prior to reaching the actual waterway in the center of the buffer. Additionally, as the buffer

strips mature, they create increasingly important wildlife habitat and travel corridors for songbirds, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians.

### **Niagara Escarpment Overlay Zoning**

In order to protect the most well-known attribute of the Town of Rockland, the town may want to consider the development of an overlay zoning district for the Niagara escarpment. The overlay zone may limit the density of residential development allowable, provide for minimum setbacks from the ledge face, or limit the clearing of vegetation. Providing additional protection to the Niagara escarpment would protect the threatened or endangered species living along the ecologically sensitive area as well as preserve the natural beauty of the ledge for future generations.

### **Promotion of Flexible Development Practices**

Alternative development approaches, such as conservation subdivisions, offer benefits to agricultural and natural resources. New subdivisions can be designed to preserve natural drainage patterns, reduce fragmentation of wildlife habitat, and limit the amount of impervious surfaces, such as roads. By clustering development on a site, large blocks of environmentally sensitive areas or even prime farmland can be left as preserved open space.

Developers and Town officials should promote a harmonious relationship between the natural landscape and built environment and strive to encourage preservation of natural areas within newly developed areas. Conservation subdivisions with common open space and other alternative development methods to maintain natural resource features should be encouraged for developments that contain such features. Allowing reduced lot sizes, smaller setbacks, and/or narrower streets in exchange for preservation of natural resources should also be considered.

There are a number of other alternative zoning techniques that can allow some development within the Town while still retaining the rural atmosphere that the Town residents want. Alternatives, such as maximum lot sizes and encouraging development on nonproductive agricultural lands, are options available to the Town.

### **Education and Citizen Participation**

Spreading knowledge of the importance of the Town's natural resources and ways to maintain them is an essential implementation tool. For example, educating property owners along creeks about nonpoint source pollution and providing tips on landscaping and buffering to prevent this pollution can help to achieve improved water quality. Periodic pamphlets or newsletters could be mailed to Rockland residents to provide information on such topics as tree trimming tips and other issues relating to natural resource protection. Water resource educational materials are available from the WDNR.

## Summary of Recommendations

- If an adequate funding source could be found, a purchase of agricultural conservation easement (PACE) program could be a means to permanently protect tracts of agricultural lands from development in the Town.
- When siting locations for parks or conservancy areas, co-locate them in areas with unique or sensitive natural resource features, such as the Niagara escarpment, Fox River, or East River.
- Establish additional public access points and/or parks along the Fox River.
- The Town should provide new residents with information related to private well maintenance and testing, such as in the WDNR document “You and Your Well” which can be found on the WDNR website under the “Groundwater” link.
- Promote the use of flexible development techniques such as conservation subdivisions to minimize the visual impact of development on the Town’s rural vistas.
- The Town of Rockland should encourage and support the efforts of the Brown County Land Conservation Department and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to protect the soil resources of the Town. This would include support of agricultural best management practices as conservation tillage, crop rotation, and control of livestock access to streams.
- The Town should encourage and support the efforts of the Brown County Land Conservation Department and others regarding installation of stream buffers. This is likely the single most effective means to protect and even improve the water quality of the Town’s rivers and small streams.
- Evaluate the need for an overlay zoning district on the Niagara escarpment to minimize the visual impact of residential development on top of the escarpment.
- The Town should require flood studies prior to land division or development adjacent to its rivers and small streams when such studies do not exist.
- Utilize the online ESA/shoreland zoning maps to ensure appropriate permits are obtained when development may occur in these areas.
- Ensure that the various competing interests for the Niagara Escarpment recognize its sensitivity and uniqueness in the state.
- Promote the rehabilitation of the former Little Kaukauna lock tender house into a hostel or similar type rest stop for boaters, kayakers, and others interested in the history of the Fox River.
- Rockland should work with the WDNR, private landowners, Niagara Escarpment Resource Network, and other public or nonprofit agencies to preserve parts of the escarpment whenever possible.
- Recognize the economic importance of nonmetallic mineral resources in the Town while ensuring that negative externalities associated with the quarrying (blasting, truck traffic, etc.) are minimized.

- Strongly discourage new residential development near active quarrying operations.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Cooperation between neighboring and overlapping units of government is one of the primary goals of the Wisconsin Smart Growth Law and is a very important aspect of the Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan. As Rockland develops over the next 20 years, it is important for the Town to work with the school districts, surrounding communities, Brown County, the state, and other units of government. Working cooperatively is especially important since many issues, such as transportation improvements and stormwater runoff do not recognize municipal boundaries.

The purpose of the Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter is to analyze the existing relationships the Town has with other units of government and identify means of working cooperatively toward the goal and objectives identified in the Issues and Opportunities chapter of the plan.

#### **Analysis of Governmental Relationships**

##### **Unified School District of De Pere and Wrightstown Community School District**

The Town of Rockland is primarily located within the Unified School District of De Pere with a portion of the southwestern part of the Town located within the Wrightstown Community School District. As discussed in the Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter, neither school district anticipates a need for additional schools in the near term. If at some point in the future, additional school facilities are needed, they should be placed in a location that allows for students to easily walk or bicycle to school as a means to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

The relatively limited amount of residential development projected to occur in the Town of Rockland over the next 20 years should not have a significant impact on either school district. However, Rockland should continue to maintain open lines of communication with the two school districts in order to address any anticipated major changes in land uses or transportation improvements/construction that could impact the districts plans or bus routes. Figure 8-1 identifies the school districts in Rockland.

#### **Adjacent Communities**

##### **City of De Pere**

The City of De Pere is generally located at the northern boundary of the Town of Rockland, and includes a 32-acre island of City-owned land on Ryan Road, south of Old Martin Road. The City of De Pere currently limits land divisions in the Town of Rockland to those that are 10 acres or larger through the City's extraterritorial plat review authority. The City's extraterritorial review area extends for three miles from its boundaries, and therefore includes all of the Town of Rockland, except for the far southwestern corner of the Town which is within the Village of Wrightstown's review area and the far southeastern part of the Town, which is outside any review jurisdiction.

Through the use of its extraterritorial plat review authority, the City of De Pere has effectively precluded residential subdivision development in the Town of Rockland. This action has exacerbated the hard feelings between the two communities.

For both communities to be able to reach their development goals, De Pere and Rockland should restart discussions regarding a comprehensive boundary agreement that encourages efficient, logical growth for De Pere and long-term stability for Rockland. Even if a boundary agreement cannot be reached, the two communities should meet at least once a year to discuss other opportunities for cooperation or issues that could be resolved. Opportunities for cooperation in the near future should focus on appropriate development and access points along the southern bypass in coordination with the Brown County Works Department and Brown County Planning Commission.

Even if the two communities are not able to reach a boundary agreement in the near future, it is critical that they continue to meet in order to keep the lines of communication between them open. Development in Rockland will continue to impact the City of De Pere, and future annexations and development in De Pere will continue to impact the Town of Rockland. Therefore, both communities must work together in order to minimize the negative impacts and accentuate the positive impacts that development could have on each other.

#### **Town of Ledgeview**

The Town of Ledgeview and Town of Rockland share a border along the northeastern part of the Town of Rockland. The Ledgeview Administrator indicated that there are no pressing intergovernmental issues between the two communities that need to be worked out. However, Ledgeview is interested in continued coordination with Rockland on the proposed southern bridge, joint road/sign maintenance, and joint service provisions that could benefit both communities.

#### **Town of Glenmore**

Rockland and the Town of Glenmore have not had to address issues in the past that affect both communities, and representatives from both towns do not believe that many issues of mutual concern will arise during the 20-year planning period. However, the communities should still periodically meet to discuss various issues and consider developing joint service agreements if the arrangements will provide an equivalent or higher level of service at a reasonable cost.

#### **Town of Wrightstown**

The Town of Rockland shares its southern border with the Town of Wrightstown, and although both communities are towns and, therefore, annexation is not an issue, there are other issues that both communities should be aware of over the next 20 years. During this period, Rockland and Wrightstown should continue to contact each other to discuss existing and potential land use impacts near their border and other issues that could arise during the planning period. This is particularly important when discussing potential development along STH 32/57 because that highway will continue to serve as the primary north/south route through both communities.



Both towns have an opportunity to capitalize on the popularity of the Fox River Trail that runs roughly parallel to STH 32/57. There has been discussion from Rockland regarding the need for additional trailheads for off-street parking for trail users. One of the potential areas discussed is near the intersection of the trail with Wrightstown Road, which forms the border between both communities. Should Rockland and Wrightstown decide that this is a priority, they should jointly work with the WDNR and Brown County Parks Management to develop a trailhead with parking in this location.

## **Other Entities**

### **Volunteer Fire Departments**

The Town of Rockland is served by the Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments. The Town should continue to maintain an open line of communication with both departments to ensure adequate response times and equipment. Figure 8-1 depicts the fire department service areas in the Town of Rockland.

### **Brown County**

The four Brown County departments that currently have the most significant presence in the Town are the Brown County Public Works Department, the Brown County Sheriff's Department, Brown County Parks Management, and the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department.

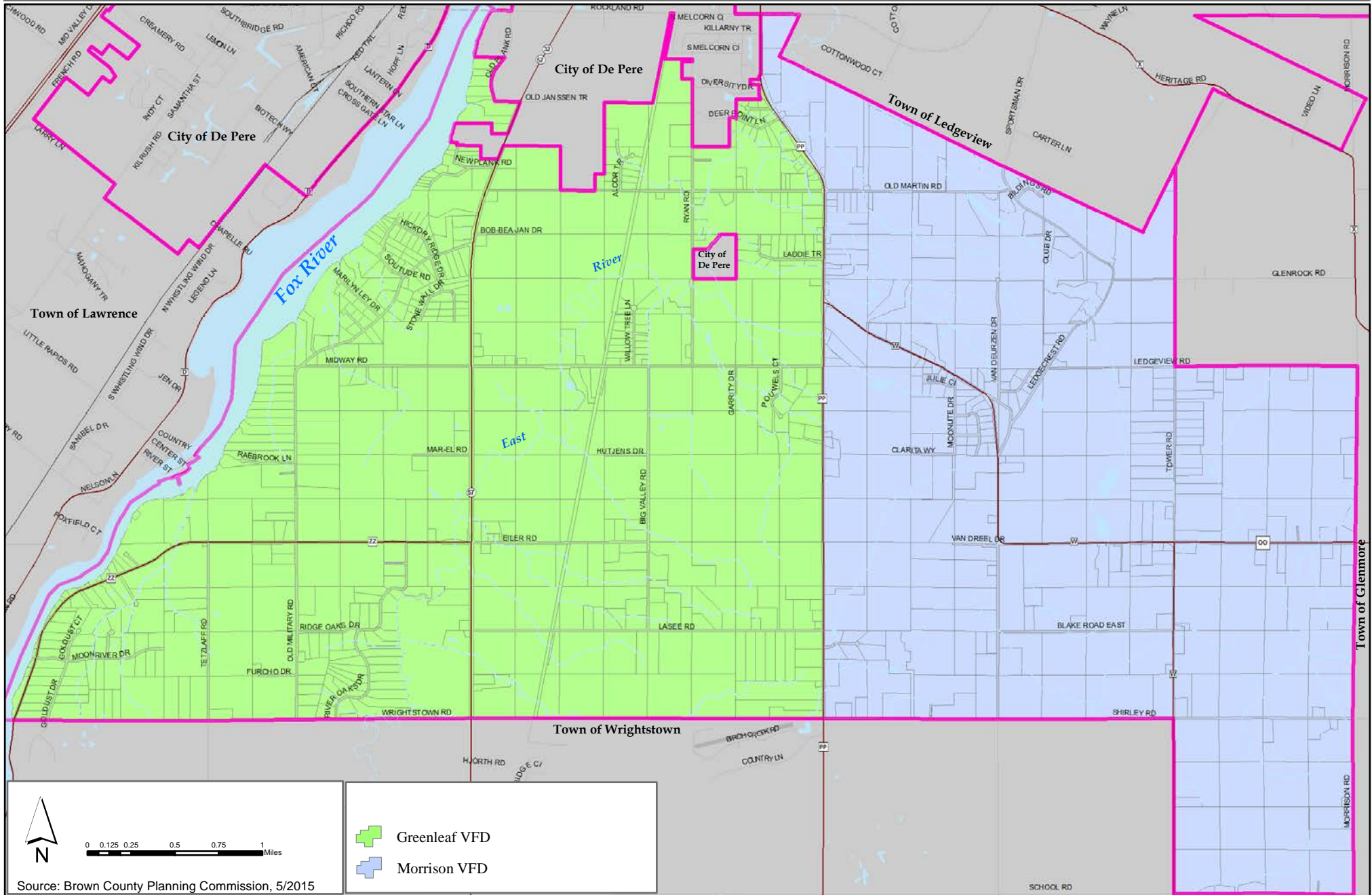
### **Public Works**

The Brown County Public Works Department has responsibility for the four county highways in the Town of Rockland (CTH W, CTH X, CTH PP, and CTH ZZ), and provides winter snowplowing service on Town roads. CTH ZZ on the southwestern end of the Town was recently closed due to structural deficiencies with the road. CTH ZZ is built very close to the Fox River and erosion from the Fox River has washed away parts of the road base. The Brown County Public Works Department is planning on shifting CTH ZZ to the east, further away from the river to alleviate this issue in the future. It is important that the Public Works Department convey to Town residents, school districts and the Town of Wrightstown when CTH ZZ will be closed for reconstruction. As county highways are reconstructed, Rockland should coordinate with the Public Works Department to ensure bike lanes are included, consistent with the Transportation Chapter and the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Except for a small area in the far northern part of Rockland, the Town's preferred Southern Bridge location, where Rockland Road extends west across the Fox River to Red Maple Road, will not directly impact much of the Town. However, indirect impacts associated with increased traffic on connecting roads to the southern bridge corridor could impact the Town through increased demand for commercial and/or industrial development, particularly along STH 32/57 and CTH PP. The Town will need to coordinate with the Brown County Public Works Department to review driveway access permits from CTH PP to new development that may result from the southern bridge and subsequent street connections.



# Figure 8-1 Volunteer Fire Department Service Areas Town of Rockland, Brown County, Wisconsin



### **Sheriff's Department**

The Brown County Sheriff's Department provides police and patrol service to Rockland, and this service is expected to be adequate in the future. However, if the Town believes that additional service is necessary, it should consider contracting with the Brown County Sheriff's Department for additional coverage.

### **Brown County Planning and Land Services Department**

The Town of Rockland has historically worked with the Brown County Planning and Land Services Department for various land use related issues such as zoning, comprehensive planning, and updating other miscellaneous ordinances. Additionally, the Planning and Land Services Department enforces the Brown County Land Division and Subdivision Ordinance, Floodplains Ordinance, and Shorelands and Wetlands Ordinance within the Town to ensure adequate protection for environmentally sensitive areas. It is critical to maintain open lines of communication and coordination between the department, the Town of Rockland, and property owners in the Town.

### **Brown County Parks Management**

As discussed in the comprehensive plan's Utilities and Community Facilities chapter and the Brown County Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan, a need exists for a new park along the Fox River in the Town of Rockland, due to the lack of public access along this stretch of the river. The Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter proposes the park be located in proximity to the Little Rapids Lock and Dam. The proposed park can only become a reality through the cooperation of the current property owner(s), Town of Rockland, Brown County, and other state/federal agencies. The Town and County should work jointly with applicable state/federal agencies to apply for grants to help offset the potential purchase price of the land and maintenance expenses for a park in this location.

In addition, Brown County Parks Management should be contacted regarding the potential for a Fox River Trail parking lot trailhead on Wrightstown Road. This should be done in coordination with the Town of Wrightstown and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

### **State of Wisconsin**

#### **Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)**

The only highway in the Town of Rockland that falls under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is STH 32/57, which runs north to south through the western part of the Town. STH 32/57 was last resurfaced in 2007, and WisDOT is in process of preparing a preservation access and management study for the highway from De Pere to Greenleaf, which includes the portion through Rockland. The study purpose is to analyze existing and future access along the STH 32/57 corridor by reviewing future land use plans and expected increased traffic on the highway, including the impacts from the proposed southern bridge. The study will emphasize an analysis of existing/proposed access points, intersection improvements, and multi-modal

transportation accommodations. The Town of Rockland should be closely involved with the study as it progresses to ensure the proposed improvements match with Town plans, including the Town's preferred Rockland/Red Maple southern bridge location and the provision of bicycle facilities on the highway.

### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) purchased the railroad right-of-way through the center of Rockland that became the Fox River State Trail. The WDNR also provides grants and information that could be used to protect some of the fragile natural features located along the Niagara Escarpment, development of a new park along the Fox River, or a new Fox River Trail parking lot trailhead at Wrightstown Road. The WDNR should be contacted early in the process if Rockland determines it wishes to pursue grant funds, particularly when a project is proposed for the escarpment, Fox River, or Fox River Trail.

## **Intergovernmental Cooperation Tools**

A guide produced by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, "Intergovernmental Cooperation, A Guide to Preparing the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a Local Comprehensive Plan<sup>16</sup>," identifies a number of tools that the Town of Rockland has at its disposal to improve intergovernmental cooperation. The document groups the many cooperation tools into four general categories. The categories are:

1. Cooperating with Services.
2. Cooperating with Regulations.
3. Cooperating by Shared Revenue.
4. Cooperating with Boundaries.

Although not all of the tools identified in the sections are applicable to the Town of Rockland, the guide describes a number of options that the Town could utilize to promote intergovernmental cooperation with neighboring communities and potentially generate cost savings for each participant. Cooperation and efficiencies gained with neighboring communities and overlapping jurisdictions has become increasingly important as municipalities continue to deal with very constrained budgets.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

### **School Districts**

If at some point in the future, additional school facilities are needed by either the Unified School District of De Pere or Wrightstown Community School District, they should be placed in a location that allows for students to easily walk or bicycle to school as a means

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<sup>16</sup> A Guide to Preparing the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element of a Local Comprehensive Plan, Wisconsin Department of Administration, June, 2002.  
<http://www.doa.state.wi.us/documents/DIR/Comprehensive%20Planning/Element-Guides/Intergovernmental-Cooperation.pdf>

to encourage a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, Rockland should continue to maintain open lines of communication with the two school districts in order to address any anticipated major changes in land uses or transportation facilities that could impact either district.

### **City of De Pere**

The City of De Pere and Town of Rockland should continue to attempt to develop a boundary agreement that encourages efficient growth for De Pere and long-term stability for Rockland. If a boundary agreement cannot be reached, the two communities should continue to meet at least once a year to discuss other opportunities for cooperation or issues that could be resolved. Opportunities for cooperation in the near future should focus on appropriate development and access points along the southern bypass in coordination with the Brown County Works Department and Brown County Planning Commission.

### **Town of Ledgeview**

Both Towns should continue to maintain open lines of communication through yearly meetings regarding potential development along the southern bypass, development on or near each other's borders, opportunities regarding joint road/sign maintenance, and the provision of municipal services.

### **Town of Glenmore**

Glenmore and Rockland should periodically meet to discuss various issues and consider developing joint service agreements if the arrangements will provide an equivalent or higher level of service at a reasonable cost.

### **Town of Wrightstown**

Rockland and Wrightstown should meet as necessary to discuss existing and potential land use impacts near their border and other issues that could arise during the planning period. The communities should also discuss working with Brown County and the WDNR to develop a trailhead with off-street parking on Wrightstown Road and consider developing service agreements in the future if the arrangements will provide an equivalent or higher level of service at a reasonable cost.

### **Greenleaf and Morrison Volunteer Fire Departments**

The Town should maintain open lines of communication with both departments to ensure Rockland continues to be adequately served.

### **Brown County**

#### **Public Works Department**

The Brown County Public Works Department will need to convey to Town residents, school districts and the Town of Wrightstown when CTH ZZ will be closed for

reconstruction in order to minimize disruption. Additionally, as county highways are reconstructed, Rockland should coordinate with the Public Works Department to ensure bike lanes are included, consistent with the Transportation Chapter and the Brown County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

With regard to the future southern bridge at the Town's preferred Rockland Road/ Red Maple Road location, the Town should coordinate with the Brown County Public Works Department to ensure appropriate driveway access point locations from CTH PP to developments that may result from the southern bridge and connections.

#### **Brown County Sheriff's Department**

If Rockland believes that additional police service is necessary in the future, it should consider contracting with the Brown County Sheriff's Department to provide supplemental police coverage.

#### **Brown County Parks Management**

The Town and County should work jointly with applicable state/federal agencies to apply for grants to help offset the potential purchase price of the land and maintenance expenses for a park along the Fox River in the vicinity of the Little Rapids Lock and Dam.

#### **State of Wisconsin**

##### **Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

The Town of Rockland should be closely involved with the STH 32/57 corridor study as it progresses to ensure proposed highway improvements and future access points reflect Town plans, including the provision of bicycle facilities.

##### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

The Town should utilize the WDNR as a resource when considering grant applications for a possible conservancy area along the Niagara Escarpment or a new park along the Fox River. The WDNR should also be consulted when considering appropriate locations for developing off-street parking and trailhead locations along the Fox River Trail.

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **Implementation**

The completion of this comprehensive plan update should be celebrated as a significant milestone in providing guidance for the future of the Town of Rockland. However, the key to the success of a comprehensive plan is its implementation. There are several land use regulatory tools, as well as administrative mechanisms and techniques that can be utilized as implementation tools for the plan. While the Implementation Chapter does not include all of the recommendations of the comprehensive plan, it does summarize the various implementation tools and related action steps toward its implementation the Town of Rockland has at its disposal. The following matrices identify the primary action steps for the Town to take in order to implement this comprehensive plan with a high, medium, or low priority identified for each action step. It should be noted that even though an action step may be identified as “medium” or “low,” the fact it is identified as an action step at all indicates it is still a very important component in implementing this comprehensive plan; however, there may not be a pressing need to address the issue immediately.

As noted previously, adoption of a comprehensive plan is a significant milestone. However, Wisconsin Statute 66.1001 requires that ordinances used to implement the plan, including zoning, land division, official map, and shoreland zoning are consistent with the direction in the comprehensive plan. Therefore, following adoption, these ordinances should be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure consistency between the plan and the ordinances to implement it.

#### **Land Use**

##### **Zoning Ordinance**

Zoning is the most common regulatory device used by municipalities to implement plan recommendations. The major components of zoning include a written zoning ordinance and a zoning district map. The zoning ordinance includes specific language for the administration of the regulations. Included in the text are definitions, district use requirements, administrative procedures, sign and parking regulations, and other elements. The companion zoning district map defines the legal boundaries of each specified zoning district of the zoning ordinance.

It is important to note that the Future Land Use Map does not take the place of the Town’s official zoning map. Instead, the Future Land Use Map is to be utilized as a reference when reviewing proposed rezoning applications to ensure consistency between rezoning actions and the comprehensive plan. In addition to the Future Land Use Map, the Planning Commission and Town Board should utilize the plan’s goals, objectives, and recommendations to formulate a sound basis for zoning decisions. Identifying the rationale for the decision based on the comprehensive plan provides for much more defensible position, should the decision be challenged.



**Action Steps:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Responsible Party/Dept.</b>	<b>Other Partners/Resources</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>High</b>	When the Town considers future rezoning, conditional use, or variance requests, it is important that the various comprehensive plan goals, objectives, and recommendations are considered and used as a guide in the rezoning determination process. Whenever a decision is reached either approving or disapproving rezoning requests, the specific goals, objectives, policies, or other comprehensive plan concepts that the decisions are based upon should be noted as part of the record.	Town Planning Commission, Town Board	Zoning Administrator, Board of Appeals	Ongoing
<b>Medium</b>	Document how any approved rezonings out of the certified farmland preservation zone meets the rezoning criteria set forth in Section 91.48 Wis. Stats.	Zoning Administrator, Town Planning Commission	Town Board, Brown County Planning, DATCP	Ongoing
<b>Medium</b>	Provide to DATCP and Brown County by March 1 every year, a report documenting the rezonings out of the certified farmland preservation zone.	Zoning Administrator,	Brown County Planning, DATCP	Ongoing

## Land Division Ordinance

Land division regulations govern the process by which lots are created out of larger tracts of land. These regulations seek to ensure that the land divisions appropriately relate to the geography of the site and existing and future public facilities. New land divisions must also be consistent with the community vision as outlined by the comprehensive plan. The Town of Rockland is covered under the Town of Rockland Subdivision and Platting Regulations under Chapter 19 of the Town Code of Ordinances and Brown County Chapter 21 of the Brown County Code of Ordinances. The Town reviews all land divisions that create new parcels of 40 acres or smaller in size, while Brown County reviews all land divisions that new create parcels of 10 acres or smaller in size.

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
High	The Town should review the comprehensive plan components and recommendations and use them as a guide in the review process when considering land divisions. Whenever a decision is reached either approving or disapproving land division requests, the specific goals, objectives, policies, or other comprehensive plan concepts that the decisions are based upon should be noted as part of the record.	Town Planning Commission, Town Board	Zoning Administrator, Brown County Planning	Ongoing
Low	Review the Town's land division ordinance to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the Town of Rockland	Town Planning Commission	Zoning Administrator, Town Engineer	2019

## Official Map

An Official Map is a regulatory tool utilized by a community to project and record future municipal improvements. It is commonly used to identify existing streets and planned improvements, but an Official Map can also be utilized to identify planned school sites, recreation areas, and municipal facilities. Once an area is identified on an Official Map, no building permit for a use other than the proposed use on the Official Map may be

issued for that site unless the map is amended. The Town of Rockland does not currently have an adopted official map, although an official map would be useful if the Town decides to identify future east-west collector streets connections.

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
Medium	Develop an official map to identify future road connections.	Town Board, Town Planning Commission	Town Engineer	2017

### Capital Improvements Program

Another important device for comprehensive plan implementation is the development of a Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The program is designed to annually schedule public works projects within a specified period of time, which usually encompasses a period of five to ten years. A CIP that is consistent with the comprehensive plan will provide a monitoring tool to ensure that public works projects are located and scheduled with thorough consideration of each of the plan's chapter recommendations.

#### Action Steps:

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
Low	Based on the comprehensive plan's recommendations, the Town should create a CIP to identify the priorities and schedules for public works projects, such as road construction and maintenance, culvert and bridge maintenance, and other capital improvements.	Town Board	Town Treasurer, Town Engineer	2016

### Building and Housing Codes

A building code is a set of regulations that describes standards for the construction of new buildings or the remodeling of existing buildings. A housing code defines standards for how a dwelling unit is to be used and maintained after it is built.

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
<b>Medium</b>	Provide information to Town residents regarding Brown County's housing rehabilitation loan program for low and moderate income households.	Town Clerk	Brown County Planning Commission	2015
<b>Low</b>	Contact Green Bay-based Options for Independent Living to obtain information regarding visitability improvements to new homes and provide the information to builders and developers.	Building Inspector		2015
<b>Low</b>	Review the comprehensive plan to identify opportunities to use the enforcement of the building code as a mechanism to implement the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.	Building Inspector	Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services	2016

## Outdoor Recreation Facilities

The comprehensive plan identifies three primary recreation improvements in the Town of Rockland. Specific improvements include the development of a small playground at the Town Hall, an expansion of the Town-owned conservancy area in the area surrounded by Ledgecrest Road, CTH W, and Old Ledge Road, the development of a riverfront park in the vicinity of the Little Rapids Lock and Dam complex.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides matching grants through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program to help fund park purchase or development, provided the proposed project is identified in a locally adopted park and recreation plan. A park and recreation plan must be updated at least once every five years for a community to be eligible to apply for Stewardship funds. In addition the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program may also consider providing matching funds for the purchase of lands along the escarpment or Fox River.

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
<b>Medium</b>	Develop a comprehensive park and outdoor recreation plan to provide eligibility to the Town for Stewardship grants.	Town Board, Town Planning Commission	Brown County Planning, local service groups	2016
<b>Medium</b>	Develop a trailhead with parking lot at one of the three listed locations in the comprehensive plan	Town Board, Town Planning Commission	Brown County Parks Management, WDNR	2017
<b>Low</b>	Coordinate with the WDNR, property owners, and other nonprofit agencies to create a conservancy area in the area surrounded by Ledgecrest Road, CTH W, and Old Ledge Road.	Town Board, Town Planning Commission	Brown County Planning, local service groups, WDNR, and other state and federal agencies	2018
<b>Low</b>	Coordinate with the WDNR, property owners, and other non-profit agencies to purchase and develop a riverfront park near Little Rapids Lock and Dam	Town Board, Town Planning Commission	Brown County Planning, local service groups, WDNR, and other state and federal agencies	2020

## Erosion and Stormwater Control Ordinances

Communities can adopt erosion and stormwater control ordinances to control the impact of development on runoff, groundwater recharge, and overall water quality. The ordinance should include standards for compliance and guidelines to assist developers in choosing appropriate stormwater management techniques.

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
<b>Medium</b>	Develop and adopt a stormwater management and erosion control ordinance.	Town Board	Town Engineer	2016
<b>Low</b>	Keep abreast of proposed changes to state and federal laws pertaining to stormwater management.	Town Engineer	Town Board	Ongoing

### Intergovernmental Cooperation

Intergovernmental cooperation is a hallmark of the comprehensive planning law. The planning process developed the base contacts for communication among the many different governmental agencies and bodies that have an interest in the future of Rockland. It is necessary for the Town to continue to maintain those contacts and keep everyone apprised of information pertinent to each stakeholder.

Priority	Action Step	Responsible Party/Dept.	Other Partners/Resources	Timeframe
<b>High</b>	Meet with the City of De Pere to discuss ongoing boundary issues.	Town Board	Town Attorney	2015
<b>High</b>	Stay informed and involved regarding interceptor sewer planning with NEW Water	Town Board	Town Engineer	2015
<b>Medium</b>	Continue to maintain open lines of communication with surrounding communities to discuss issues or opportunities of common concern.	Town Board		Ongoing

<b>Low</b>	Stay informed of current events at the county, region, and state levels that may impact the Town.	Town Board	Brown County Planning, Brown County Towns Association, and Wisconsin Towns Association	Ongoing
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## Comprehensive Plan

With adoption of this comprehensive plan update, the Town will continue to meet the requirements of Section 66.1001 Wis. Stats. which requires all communities that have zoning, land division, official map, or shoreland zoning regulations to have a comprehensive plan in place that is updated at least every 10 years. The comprehensive plan is to be used as a reference when contemplating difficult decisions, as well as a vision of what Rockland can be. In order for the plan to continue to be useful, the plan should be amended and updated at a minimum in accordance with the following matrix.

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Responsible Party/Dept.</b>	<b>Other Partners/Resources</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Medium</b>	Set aside one Planning Commission meeting per year to review the comprehensive plan.	Town Planning Commission	Zoning Administrator	2015
<b>Low</b>	Update the comprehensive plan as warranted and completely revise it at least once every 10 years.	Town Planning Commission	Town Board, Brown County Planning	2025

Some of the recommendations in the plan may be implemented with the help of various sources of funds besides local property taxes. There are a number of grant programs administered by local, state, and federal agencies, including the Brown County Planning Commission, Wisconsin Department of Administration, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and Wisconsin Department of Transportation. At the federal level, the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Agriculture–Rural Development, and the (U.S.) Department of Commerce–Economic Development Agency all provide sources of funding.

Typically, the grant programs require a local match. However, the local match may include a combination of local tax dollars, in-kind services, and/or private donations.



Each grant program has its own set of guidelines regarding eligible projects, as well as financing mechanisms, and should be reviewed before applying.

In addition to the following sampling of programs, the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration maintains the Wisconsin Catalog of Community Assistance (WCCA), which provides a comprehensive list of state aid programs. The WCCA can be found at <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/dhir/documents/wcca.pdf>. Identified on the following pages are a number of programs that may be particularly applicable to the Town of Rockland. However, this is just a sample, and a comprehensive list can be found with the link to the Wisconsin Catalog of Community Assistance.

### **Brown County Planning Commission**

#### **Brown County Revolving Loan Fund**

The Brown County Planning Commission in partnership with Advance administer the Brown County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund Program for businesses seeking reduced interest loans for a business startup or expansion that will result in job creation or retention opportunities in Brown County. Additional information regarding the revolving loan fund may be found at the Brown County Planning Commission website under the “economic development” link.

#### **Northeastern Wisconsin CDBG-Housing Consortium**

Starting in 2013, the Brown County Planning Commission will be the lead agency administering the Community Development Block Grant – Housing program for a 10-county region of Northeastern Wisconsin counties. The program provides 0% deferred payment loans (until sale/refinancing) of the property to low- and moderate-income persons for improvements to owner-occupied housing. Such improvements can include private onsite wastewater treatment systems, window replacement, insulation, lead abatement, roof replacement, and other typical home improvements. Although the program is spread out over 10 counties, there will be dedicated funding for projects within Brown County.

### **Wisconsin Department of Administration**

The Wisconsin Department of Administration has historically provided funding for the writing or updating of comprehensive plans every 10 years. However, the program has not been funded for the past several years. This does not mean that the program will not be funded in the future. Rockland should keep track of this funding opportunity should it become available again in the future.

### **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation**

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) has a broad range of financial assistance programs to help communities undertake economic development. WEDC maintains a network of area development managers to offer customized services throughout Wisconsin.

WEDC-administered programs include:

- **Brownfields Initiative** – Provides grants to individuals, businesses, local development organizations, and municipalities for environmental remediation activities for brownfield sites where the owner is unknown, cannot be located, or cannot meet the cleanup costs.
- **Community-Based Economic Development Program (CBED)** – Designed to promote local business development in economically distressed areas. The program awards grants to community-based organizations for development and business assistance projects and to municipalities for economic development planning. The program helps community-based organizations plan, build, and create business and technology-based incubators, and it can also capitalize an incubator tenant revolving loan program.
- **CDBG-Blight Elimination and Brownfield Redevelopment Program** – Can help small communities obtain money for environmental assessments and remediate brownfields.
- **CDBG-Emergency Grant Program** – Can help small communities repair or replace infrastructure that has suffered damages as a result of catastrophic events.
- **CDBG-Public Facilities (CDBG-PF)** – Helps eligible local governments upgrade community facilities, infrastructure, and utilities for the benefit of low-moderate income residents.
- **CDBG-Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED)** – Offers grants to communities to provide infrastructure for a particular economic development project.
- **CDBG-Economic Development (CDBG-ED)** – Provides grants to communities to loan to businesses for startup, retention, and expansion projects based on the number of jobs created or retained.
- **Community Development Zone Program** – A tax benefit initiative designed to encourage private investment and job creation in economically distressed areas. The program offers tax credits for creating new, full-time jobs, hiring disadvantaged workers, and undertaking environmental remediation. Tax credits can be taken only on income generated by business activity in the zone.

Additional information on any of the above listed programs can be found at <http://wedc.org/community-development>, the assigned WEDC Area Development Manager, or Brown County Planning Commission.

#### **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources offers a number of grant programs that can be used to provide additional recreational opportunities to residents of the Town of Rockland. The Town should contact the Northeast Region office of the WDNR to determine eligibility and availability if the Town decides to pursue any of the grant programs listed below.

### **Stewardship – Aid for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)**

The ADLP program funds are available to acquire land, rights in land, and develop public outdoor recreation areas for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes. Funds are allocated on a DNR regional basis so applicants compete only against other applicants located in their region.

### **Stewardship – Urban Rivers**

Funds are available to acquire land, rights in land, or develop shoreline enhancements on or adjacent to rivers that flow through urban or urbanizing areas in order to preserve or restore urban rivers or riverfronts for the purposes of economic revitalization and nature-based outdoor recreation activities. Funds are allocated statewide so applicants compete against other applicants statewide in the project selection process.

### **Stewardship – Urban Greenspace**

Funds are available to acquire lands to provide natural space within or near urban areas, protect scenic or ecological features, and provide land for nature-based outdoor recreation, including noncommercial gardening. Funds are allocated statewide so applicants compete against other applicants statewide in the project selection process.

### **Acquisition of Development Rights**

Funds are available to acquire development rights (easements) in areas where restrictions on residential, industrial, or commercial development would enhance nature-based outdoor recreation.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON)**

LAWCON is a federal program administered through the WDNR. However, projects funded under LAWCON are not restricted to nature-based outdoor recreation projects as the Stewardship program funds are. Eligible projects include:

- Land acquisition.
- Development of recreational facilities.
- See eligibility list for ADLP program for additional eligible projects.

### **Recreational Trails Act (RTA)**

RTA is also a federal program administered through the WDNR. RTA funds may only be used on trails which have been identified in or which further a specific goal of a local, county, or state trail plan included or referenced in a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan required by the federal LAWCON program. Eligible projects in order of priority are maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, construction of new trails (with certain restrictions on federal lands), and acquisition of easements or property for trails.

Additional information regarding community assistance programs can be found at the following WDNR Bureau of Community Financial Assistance (CFA) website at <http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/>.

### **Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

In addition to the Local Road Aids Program, which the Town already partakes in, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has additional programs to help fund transportation activities in the Town.

- **Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP)** - Assists local governments in improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and city and village streets. As a reimbursement program, LRIP pays up to 50 percent of total eligible costs, with local governments providing the balance.
- **Surface Transportation Program-Rural (STP-R)** - Allocates federal funds to complete a variety of improvements to rural highways eligible for federal aid (primarily county highways classified higher than rural minor collector).
- **Flood Damage Aids** - Assist local governments with improving or replacing roads and roadway structures that have sustained major damage from flooding. The program helps defray the costs of repairing major flood damage to any public highway, street, alley, or bridge not located on the State Trunk Highway System.
- **Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)** - Ongoing effort that provides WisDOT and local governments convenient and secure access to comprehensive geographic information system data on Wisconsin's road network. Local units of government and counties are required to submit pavement ratings to WisDOT on a biennial basis.

Additional information regarding grant programs and other resources administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation can be found at the Programs for Local Governments web page at <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/localgov/index.htm>.

## **Comprehensive Plan Review and Update**

Planning is not static. It is a continuous, ongoing process that is subject to change. It is also at the mercy of many forces over which a municipality has very little or no control (economic conditions, weather, birth rates, etc.). Therefore, if the Town's comprehensive plan is to remain a useful document, the plan should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects the conditions present at the time and any changes and developments that may have occurred over the last year.

### **Action Steps:**

1. The public will be notified and provided an opportunity to comment on proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan. The Town will consider neighborhood opinion in evaluating how a proposed amendment would meet the amendment criteria. Options for soliciting public opinion could include direct mail survey forms, neighborhood meetings, and open house meetings.

2. Criteria should be adhered to when considering amendments to the comprehensive plan. Amendments shall be approved only if they are determined to be in the public interest, and this determination should be based on a review of all applicable principles from the following:
  - a. How the proposal is more consistent with applicable policies of the comprehensive plan than the existing designation.
  - b. How the proposal is more consistent with each of the following objectives than the existing designation. Consistency is not required where the objective is clearly not applicable to the type of proposal involved.
    - Encourage the development of distinct neighborhoods served by commercial nodes, and discourage strip commercial development.
    - Provide uses that are consistent with the rural character of the Town.
    - Create development that is compatible and integrated with surrounding uses in terms of scale, orientation, pedestrian enhancements, and landscaping.
    - Conserve or enhance significant natural and historical features.
    - Provide adequate transportation, waste disposal, or other public services.
    - Provide significant economic development opportunities and broadening of the Town's economy.
    - Provide for the formation and enhancement of neighborhoods.
  - c. Changes shall also demonstrate that a substantial change in circumstances has occurred since the original designation.
  - d. Scope of Review. The review and evaluation of proposed comprehensive plan map changes shall consider both the likely and possible future use of the site and associated impacts.
  - e. Cumulative Impacts. The review of individual comprehensive plan map or policy amendments shall also consider the cumulative transportation, land supply, and environmental impacts of other plan amendments proposed within the same annual cycle.
3. The Town of Rockland Planning Commission may prepare a brief annual report. This report should summarize how the comprehensive plan was used to direct major spending, regulatory, and construction decisions; how development has or has not coincided with the recommendations of the plan; and how community circumstances have changed which have necessitated recommendations for appropriate comprehensive plan amendments by the Town Board.
4. The Town should consult annually with other governmental agencies and neighboring communities to get their input regarding how their community activities relate to the recommendations of the comprehensive plan.
5. The Town should complete a formal review of the entire comprehensive plan at least once every five years. Based on this review, revisions should be made to sections of the

plan determined to be out of date and sections that are not serving their intended purpose.

At least once every 10 years, the plan should be reviewed and updated using a formal process that may include a full citizens advisory committee in addition to the Town Planning Commission.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Town of Rockland Citizens Participation Plan**

#### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF ROCKLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

The Town of Rockland Comprehensive Plan Update process will include several public participation components. These components are summarized below:

##### Rockland Planning Commission

The Rockland Planning Commission will serve as the primary steering committee for the comprehensive plan update. The planning commission will review data and other materials for inclusion into the updated comprehensive plan. All comprehensive plan update agenda items will be discussed during their regular meetings, unless otherwise publicly noticed. All meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend.

##### Public Open House Meeting

When the draft plan update has been compiled, at least one public open house meeting will be held to present the key updated sections and findings of the plan. Meeting participants will also have the opportunity to discuss the recommendations with planning staff and planning commission members and to suggest modifications to be considered during the statutory review period.

##### Service Group Meetings

Upon request, Brown County will present the process and findings of the comprehensive plan update to Rockland-area service groups.

##### Town of Rockland Website

All draft chapters will be placed on the Town of Rockland website for public review.

##### Other Locations for Draft Chapters

Additional draft chapters will be available upon request from the Brown County Planning Commission. Please call (920) 448-6480.



### Public Hearing

Following the open house meeting and a recommendation of approval from the Rockland Planning Commission, a public hearing will be held at the Town Hall to receive additional input on the comprehensive plan update.

### Adjacent Governmental Jurisdictions

Neighboring governmental jurisdictions will receive via mail or email, all agendas and minutes of the planning commission meetings, when the comprehensive plan is on the agenda.

### Town Board Meeting for Adoption

Following the public hearing, the draft plan update and feedback from the public hearing will be presented to the Town Board for action at a regular Town Board meeting.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **TOWN OF ROCKLAND PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION**



**APPENDIX C**  
**ROCKLAND TOWN BOARD ADOPTION ORDINANCE**



## APPENDIX D

### SIDEPATH SUITABILITY INDEX

The following algorithm rates the suitability of a sidepath/parallel path as a bicycle facility (A sidepath is a trail parallel to, but separated from, a roadway). In addition to rating existing sidepath/parallel paths, it can be used to plan safety improvements for new or existing sidepath/parallel paths. At present, no other nationally accepted suitability index exists. This algorithm was developed using design issues described in the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities.

The factors considered are: intersection traffic, continuity, curb cuts, pedestrian use, crosswalks, and path/road separation at intersections. For a particular segment, add the following terms:

1) Intersection Traffic Score. The volume and speed of motor vehicular traffic – especially turning traffic – directly affect the risk of collision. Determine the intersection traffic score X from the following:

$$X = [R + (2 \cdot A) + (4 \cdot B)] \cdot [M \cdot (\text{Spd} \cdot \text{Vol})];$$

Where:

R = Number of residential intersections (driveways) on the segment,

A = Number of minor commercial intersections and streets (<1000 ADT),

B = Number of major commercial intersections and streets (>1000 ADT),

M = Length of segment in miles

Spd = Posted speed limit for the parallel street: 0-30 mph = 1, 35-40 mph = 2, 45+ mph = 3.

Vol = Traffic volume factor, parallel street: <2,000 ADT = 1; 2,000-10,000 = 2; >10,000 = 3.

Add the following number of points for the intersection traffic score X.

X	Points
0	0
1-40	1
41-80	2
81-120	3
121-160	4
161-200	5
201-240	6
>240	7

2) Continuity. Discontinuities (major gaps, or sidepath ends) may force cyclists to ride through grass, etc., and enter the roadway awkwardly. Cyclists will often avoid sidepaths with these gaps. Add 4 points if major discontinuities exist.

3) Curb cuts. Uncut curbs compromise cyclist movement and attention at intersections. Add 3 points if any intersections are lacking curb cuts.

4) Pedestrian use. Sidewalks and sidepaths are used by both bicyclists and pedestrians. Insufficient width increases user conflict. (However, extra width encourages higher cyclist speeds – which become a problem at incorrectly-designed intersections.) Add points according to the following chart:

Low (rare) ped use	Medium (sometimes) ped use	High (often) ped use
$\leq 5'$ - 1 point	$\leq 5'$ - 2 points	$\leq 5'$ - 4 points
$> 5'$ - 0 points	6-7' - 1 point	6-7' - 2 points
	$\geq 8'$ - 0 points	$\geq 8'$ - 1 point

5) Crosswalks. Visible crosswalks can help make motorists more aware of non-motorized traffic. Sometimes two parallel painted stripes are sufficient. At busier intersections, “ladder” or “zebra” crosswalks and other techniques enhance visibility. Add 2 points if there are no crosswalks. Add 1 point if there are some crosswalk markings, but more visibility is warranted for that intersection type. Add 0 points for appropriately marked crossings. Take the worst-case crossing for the segment.

6) Intersection sidepath/road separation. AASHTO recommends that sidepaths be brought closer to the parallel road at intersections, so motorists more easily see and consider bicyclists during their approaches. The vehicular stop line should be in back of the sidepath crossing – cyclists must not weave through stopped traffic when crossing. Add 5 points if the crossing goes through stopped traffic. Add 3 points if the crossing is not brought “close enough” to the parallel road. Add 1 point when the crossing is brought close to the road. (Paved shoulders and bike lane crossings – 0 points.) Again, take the worst-case crossing for the segment.

Add together all the points for the suitability score.

\*Algorithm provided by the League of Illinois Bicyclists

**Example 1:** *A street segment with very few access points that has curb cuts and highly visible crosswalks at intersections. The sidepath crosswalks are close to the parallel street at the crossings, and pedestrian use of the path is moderate.*

After completing an analysis, this segment’s suitability rating was found to be 4, which falls within the Most Suitable category. This result suggests that a path along this segment that includes the features summarized in Example 1 would be acceptable.

**Example 2:** *A street segment that intersects often with commercial driveways and streets. This segment has curb cuts and highly visible crosswalks at street intersections. The sidepath*



*crosswalks are close to the parallel street at the street intersections, but the driveway crossings are not close to the parallel street. Pedestrian use of the path is moderate here as well.*

After completing an analysis, this segment's suitability rating was found to be 11, which falls within the Least Suitable category. This result suggests that a path along this segment that includes the features summarized in Example 2 would not be as safe as on-street bicycle lanes because of the relatively high number of street and driveway crossings and the possibility that drivers will not see oncoming bikers because the drivers will tend to look for gaps in traffic instead of bicyclists on the path.

In situations where parallel multi-use paths are found to fall within the Not Suitable or Least Suitable categories, communities should strongly consider adding on-street bicycle lanes and sidewalks instead of the paths. Communities should also consider choosing on-street lanes and sidewalks over multi-use paths in situations where the parallel paths fall within the Somewhat Suitable category. However, if communities still want to build paths when undesirable conditions exist, they should try to maximize the paths' suitability by minimizing the number of conflict points and making the paths as visible as possible to drivers.

