

# TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK

## Comprehensive Plan

### Addendum - 2025



adopted:  
February 20, 2025



# **Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum – 2025**

**This Comprehensive Plan Addendum constitutes an amendment and update of the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan - 2021-2041*, adopted on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, as defined under Wis. Stats. §66.1001.**

**prepared by the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission**

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**adopted by the Town of Bridge Creek Town Board**

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**prepared with assistance from:**

Elizabeth Pettis, Town Clerk &  
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission



**TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK  
PLAN COMMISSION RESOLUTION 2025-01**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK PLAN COMMISSION TO ADOPT THE TOWN  
OF BRIDGE CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADDENDUM—2025**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission has determined that comprehensive planning is important to the general purpose of guiding, directing, and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the Town, and will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity, and the general welfare, as well as, efficiency and economy in the process of development; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission has prepared the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum—2025*, which amends and updates the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan—2021-2041* adopted in July 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission prepared the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum—2025* and the previously adopted *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan—2021-2041* pursuant to §66.1001 and §60.23(33) of the Wisconsin Statutes and these two documents, together, contain information, policies, maps, and other materials for the comprehensive plan elements required by §66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission, pursuant to § 66.1001(4)(b) of the Wisconsin Statutes, may recommend to the Town Board the adoption of a comprehensive plan by adoption of a resolution to that effect by a majority of the entire Plan Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, a properly noticed public hearing has been conducted by the Plan Commission on the proposed approval and adoption of the comprehensive plan, pursuant to § 66.1001(4)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission officially recommends adoption of the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum--2025*, as drafted in the *Public Hearing Draft* dated December 9, 2024, by the Town of Bridge Creek Town Board.


Adopted this 22nd day of January, 2025 by the Plan Commission of the Town of Bridge Creek.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Peuse, Town Plan Commission Chair

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth Pettis Town Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution #2025-01 was duly adopted by the Plan Commission at a legal meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth Pettis, Town Clerk

**TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK**  
**Eau Claire County, Wisconsin**

**ORDINANCE 2025-01**

**AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADDENDUM – 2025**

The Town Board of the Town of Bridge Creek, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin, does ordain as follows:

SECTION ONE: Pursuant to WI Statutes, Sections §66.1001 and §60.23(33), the Town of Bridge Creek is authorized to prepare, adopt, and amend a comprehensive plan as defined in WI Statute, Sec. §66.1001(1)(a) and §66.1001(2);

SECTION TWO: The Town Board of the Town of Bridge Creek, Wisconsin, has adopted and implemented written procedures designed to foster public participation in every state of the preparation of a comprehensive plan as required by WI Statute, Sec. §66.1001(4)(a), which includes a public hearing as required by WI Statute, Sec. §66.1001(4)(d);

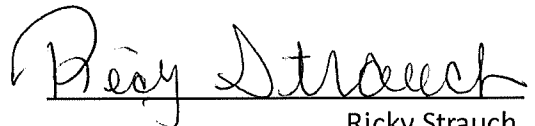
SECTION THREE: The Plan Commission of the Town of Bridge Creek, has prepared the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum—2025*, which amends and updates the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan—2021-2041* adopted in July 2021, and these two documents, together, contain information, policies, maps, and other materials for the comprehensive plan elements required by §66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

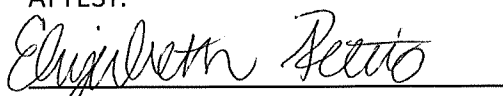
SECTION FOUR: Following a noticed public hearing, the Plan Commission of the Town of Bridge Creek, by a majority vote of the entire Plan Commission recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of a comprehensive plan amendment and update entitled “TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADDENDUM—2025”;

SECTION FIVE: The Town Board of the Town of Bridge Creek, Wisconsin, does, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the “TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADDENDUM—2025” pursuant to WI Statute, Sec. §66.1001(4)(c);

SECTION SIX: This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication as provided by law.

Dated this 20th day of February, 2025.

  
Ricky Strauch,  
Town Board Chair

ATTEST:  
  
Elizabeth Pettis,  
Town Clerk



# Table of Contents

1.	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
	A. Relationship to 2021 Comprehensive Plan.....	2
	B. Planning Authority & Scope .....	2
	C. Plan Consistency.....	3
2.	<b>Background Information .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	A. Population Trends & Projections .....	4
	B. Housing Trends & Projections .....	6
	C. Existing Plans, Programs, & Regulations.....	10
3.	<b>Transportation .....</b>	<b>12</b>
	A. Transportation Network Map .....	12
	B. Transportation Goal, Objectives, & Policies .....	13
	C. Transportation Strategies .....	14
4.	<b>Energy, Utilities &amp; Community Resources .....</b>	<b>16</b>
	A. Community Facilities Map .....	16
	B. Capacity & Needs of Town Programs & Services.....	17
	C. Energy, Utilities & Community Resources Goal, Objectives, & Policies.....	19
	D. Energy, Utilities, & Community Resources Strategies .....	20
5.	<b>Economic Development .....</b>	<b>22</b>
	A. Existing Commercial & Industrial Development Map.....	22
	B. Desired Businesses & Industries.....	23
	C. Designated Sites for Business & Industry .....	23
6.	<b>Intergovernmental Cooperation .....</b>	<b>24</b>
	A. Intergovernmental Relationships Map .....	24
	B. Existing & Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts.....	25
7.	<b>Land Use .....</b>	<b>26</b>
	A. Opportunities for Redevelopment .....	26
	B. Potential Land Use Conflicts .....	26
	C. 20-year Land Use Projections .....	27
	D. Utility/Facility Service Area Boundaries .....	28
	E. Existing Land Use .....	28
	F. Natural Limitations for Building Site Development .....	30
	G. Preferred Future Land Use & Related Policies.....	35
	H. Land Use Strategies .....	43
	<b>Appendix A: Summary of Plans &amp; Programs .....</b>	<b>44</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2024, the Town of Bridge Creek desired to review and amend its Comprehensive Plan to address certain components that were missing, most notably the lack of an existing and future land use map. The Town engaged West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) to facilitate this review. While this review focused primarily on components of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan that were missing, during discussions with WCWRPC the Town Plan Commission identified additional goals, objectives, policies, and parts of the Plan that required changes to better reflect existing conditions and the desired vision of the community.

Prior to commencement of the plan review process, the Town Board adopted public participation procedures on July 18, 2024.

The plan review and amendment process included three working meetings with the Town Plan Commission in October and November 2024 facilitated by WCWRPC, which resulted in this Comprehensive Plan Addendum.

This was followed by a statutorily required notifications and a public hearing prior to Town approval of the Comprehensive Plan Addendum.

All Plan Commission meetings were open to the public, properly noticed, included opportunities for public input, and met the requirements of the Wisconsin Open Meeting's Law.

RESOLUTION CP Amend - 24

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES FOR THE  
AMENDMENT OF THE TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS,** the Town of Bridge Creek has decided to amend its comprehensive plan under the authority and procedures of §62.23 (3) and §66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes; and

**WHEREAS,** §66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes, requires that the governing body of the local governmental unit adopt written procedures designed to foster public participation at every stage of comprehensive plan preparation, and that such written procedures provide for wide distribution of proposed, alternative or amended comprehensive elements, an opportunity for the public to submit written comments on the comprehensive plan, and a process for the local governing body to respond to such comments; and

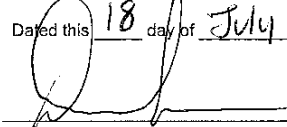
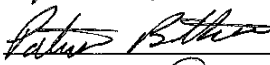

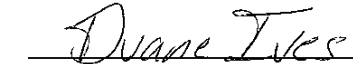
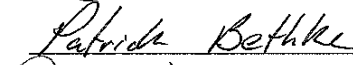

**WHEREAS,** the Town Board of the Town of Bridge Creek has designated a plan commission for the purposes defined in §62.23 (1), (2), (4) and (5), Wisconsin Statutes; and

**WHEREAS,** the agreement between the Town of Bridge Creek and the plan update facilitator, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, is consistent with and furthers the mechanisms identified within the *Public Participation Procedures for the Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Amendment* to foster public participation, ensure wide distribution of draft plan amendment materials, and provide opportunities for written comments on draft materials; and

**WHEREAS,** the Town of Bridge Creek believes that regular, meaningful public involvement in the plan amendment process is important to assure that the resulting plan meets the wishes and expectations of the public.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Town Board of the Town of Bridge Creek hereby ordain and resolve as follows: to approve the written procedures included in *Public Participation Procedures for the Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Amendment* as its public participation procedures meeting the requirements of §66.1001 (4) (a), Wisconsin Statutes.

Dated this 18 day of July, 2024.

 _____  _____  _____	 _____  _____  _____
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1-A. Relationship to 2021 Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan Addendum constitutes an amendment and update of the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan - 2021-2041*, adopted on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, as defined under Wis. Stats. §66.1001.

During the creation of this Comprehensive Plan Addendum, the Town of Bridge Creek Plan Commission reviewed the 2021 Plan to identify needed changes and updates to better reflect the trends, needs, and goals of the community. This Addendum supplements and in some cases replaces portions of the 2021 Plan with additional data, goals, objectives, policies, and maps.

Portions of the 2021 Plan that are not explicitly replaced within this Addendum were found by the Town Plan Commission to continue to reflect the goals, objectives, policies, and programs desired by the Town of Bridge Creek with respect to future land use development, transportation and facilities planning, and the protection of agricultural and other natural resources, and that there are no additional issues that must be addressed at this time.

Together, the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan - 2021-2041*, excluding those sections replaced by this Addendum, and the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum - 2025-2045* constitute a comprehensive plan update for the community. This update extends the statutory requirement for a 10-year update described in Wis. Stats. §66.1001(i) for ten years following the Town Board's adoption date of this Addendum. At its discretion, the Town may determine that an update to this plan is needed prior to 2035.

## 1-B. Planning Authority and Scope

Planning is an orderly, open approach to determining local needs, setting goals and priorities, and developing a guide for action. In 1999, the State Legislature created a new framework for community planning in the State of Wisconsin—1999 Wisconsin Act 9, which is currently codified as Wisconsin Statutes § 66.1001.

Beginning on January 1, 2010, if a local governmental unit enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, those ordinances shall be consistent with (i.e., furthers and not contradicts) the objectives, goals, and policies of that local governmental unit's comprehensive plan: official mapping, zoning, subdivision regulations, or shoreland/shoreland-wetland zoning. Under Statute, a conditional use permit that may be issued does not need to be consistent with the local government's comprehensive plan.

According to Wisconsin Statutes, the comprehensive plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the community which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order,

### **AB608, Wisconsin Act 233** **Clarification on the Consistency** **Requirement**

This bill was signed into law in April 2004. This law reduced the number of programs or actions with which a comprehensive plan must be consistent. Under the new legislation, the only actions that must be consistent with a comprehensive plan are official mapping, local subdivision regulation, and zoning ordinances, including zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands. The bill also reiterates that a regional planning commission's comprehensive plan is only advisory to a political subdivision (a city, village, town or county) and a political subdivision's comprehensive plan.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

convenience, prosperity, or the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

1999 Wisconsin Act 9, the State's comprehensive planning law, provides additional guidance regarding what must be included in each community plan and how the plan should be developed. Each plan must incorporate 20-year land use projections and encourage public participation during the planning process. Additionally, each plan must, at a minimum, address nine key elements:

- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) Issues & Opportunities                      | 6) Economic Development          |
| 2) Housing                                     | 7) Intergovernmental Cooperation |
| 3) Transportation                              | 8) Land Use                      |
| 4) Utilities & Community Facilities            | 9) Implementation                |
| 5) Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources |                                  |

*The Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan Addendum – 2025* when combined with the *Town of Bridge Creek Comprehensive Plan - 2021-2041* fully addresses the requirements of Wisconsin Statutes §66.1001.

## 1-C. Plan Consistency

Chapter 4.4 of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan document discusses plan consistency. Since this is an amendment and not a total replacement of the 2021 Plan, it is important that goals, objectives, policies, and strategies identified in this Addendum also be consistent with the 2021 Plan. If an inconsistency is discovered, the Town Plan Commission should evaluate based on the overall goals, objectives, and intent of the Plan with preference given to this more recent document and should determine whether a plan amendment or update is needed to remedy the inconsistency.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Chapter 5 of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan includes background information about the existing conditions facing the community. This section supplements Chapter 5 and other plan elements with additional data, maps, and program information.

### 2-A. Population Trends & Projections

Population trends influence all other plan elements, such as the demand for community services, economic development policy, and land use. Housing trends are directly related to the demands of the population and housing projections should be considered when creating the statutorily required land use projections, which were not completed as part of the 2021 Plan.

Chapter 5.1 of the 2021 Plan includes a discussion of population and demographic trends in the community. Due to timing, the 2021 Plan was unable to take advantage of the most recent 2020 Census numbers, which are reflected in the table using the decennial U.S. Census below:

**Town of Bridge Creek Population – 1980 to 2020**

	Population	% Change
1980	1,206	
1990	1,440	19.4%
2000	1,834	27.4%
2010	1,900	3.6%
2020	2,214	16.5%

The above table shows that while Town population growth slowed during the 2000s, it significantly increased again between 2010 to 2020. This has significant implications for projecting the Town's future population.

The 2021 Plan relied on the very outdated, official Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) population projections, which were last completed in 2013 based on trends through the 2010 Census. The State's projections are significantly lagging behind actual population growth in Bridge Creek. For example, in 2013 WDOA projected that the Town's population would be 1,960, which is over 10% lower than the actual 2020 population of 2,214.

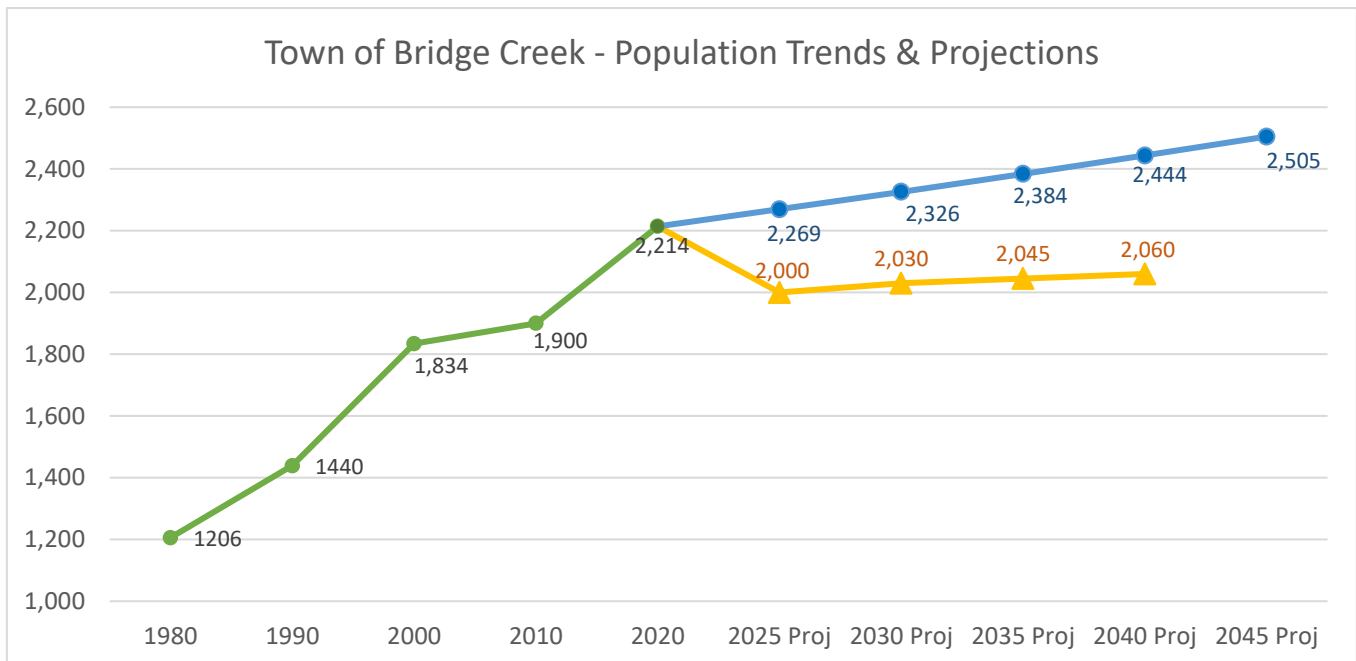
When considering population trends and growth, the Town Plan Commission discussed the following:

- From 2010 to 2020, the Town increased by 314 residents or an average 8.25% increase every 5 years. While much higher than the 2000's, it was still lower growth than the two decades prior to 2000.
- From 2010 to 2020, the Town only issued 18 residential building permits (may not have all been for new home construction), while it experienced a net loss of 3 housing units. Meanwhile, the Town lost a net 61 seasonal housing units; in 2020, only 139 seasonal/recreational housing units were remaining.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Recent population growth appears to have been largely the result of seasonal units converting to year-round use and increasing household sizes among some households.
- It is not unreasonable to assume that the large conversion of existing seasonal homes to year-round use will taper-off over time as the availability of such homes decreases.
- The Plan Commission recognized that housing and land costs may be contributing to slowed new housing construction. There are very limited opportunities to further subdividing working lands within the Town for productive farming, except for some specialty crops; as such, it is very unlikely that the Town will experience a significant in-migration of Plain Community families like in the decades prior to 2000.

Given the above factors, the Town Plan Commission agreed that revised population projections were needed and felt that 2.5% growth every five years was reasonable for the 20-year planning period. The table below shows the resulting Town of Bridge Creek population trends and projections.



**Green dots:**

**Yellow line/triangles:**

**Blue line/dots:**

**U.S. Census decennial population**

**WDOA Official Population Projections, 2013**

**Town of Bridge Creek Projections, based on 2.5% growth every 5 years**

It is anticipated that WDOA will update its official population projections in late 2024 or early 2025. Once these projections are available, the Plan Commission should compare the WDOA projections to those within the Comprehensive Plan to determine if the differences are significant enough to necessitate changes to the Plan.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 2-B. Housing Trends & Projections

Chapter 5.2 of the 2021 Plan includes a discussion of housing trends in the community. This section updates some of this information and includes housing projections driven by the population projections and discussion in the previous section. At the end of this sub-section is a map showing residential development within the Town of Bridge Creek as of January 1, 2024 based on tax assessment data.

The following are key housing/household statistics from or based on the 2020 U.S. Census for the Town:

Town of Bridge Creek	2020 Census
Population	2,214
Population in Households	2,214
Population in Rental Units	221
Population in Owner Units	1,993
Population in Group Quarters	0
Households, excluding group quarters	662
Avg. Household Size	3.34
Renter Avg. Household Size	2.10
Owner Avg. Household Size	3.58
Housing Units	829
Rental Units	112
Owner Units	578
Other Seasonal & Migrant	139
Occupied Units	662
Renter-Occupied Units	105
Owner-Occupied Units	557
Vacant Units for Rent, excludes seasonal	7
2020 Rental Vacancy Rate	6.3%
Rental Vacancy Rate Standard <sup>[1]</sup>	5-7%
Vacant Units for Sale, excludes seasonal	0
2020 Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate Standard <sup>[2]</sup>	2-2.5%
% of Overcrowded Units – Renter Occupied	2.9%
% of Overcrowded Units – Owner Occupied	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Decennial 2020, WCWRPC

Notes: [1] Florida, Richard. 2018 July. Vacancy: America's Other Housing Crisis.

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

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 2020 Census data shows:

- 84% of occupied housing units are owner-occupied, which is not unexpected for a rural town.
- The Town has a relatively high average household size among owner-occupied households. Nearly 8% of owner-occupied units would be considered overcrowded, which is also relatively high.
- About 17% of the housing units are for not full-time residences but are for seasonal or recreational use.
- At the time of the Census, the Town had no homes for sale, suggesting a very tight housing market. This is inconsistent with larger, regional trends that have contributed to higher housing costs.

From 2010 to 2020, the number of seasonal units decreased by one-third while the total number of housing units actually decreased. During this time period, 18 building permits were issued in the Town, though these may not have all been for new housing starts. As noted previously, recent population growth appears to have been largely the result of seasonal units converting to year-round use and increasing household sizes among some households.

2010 Housing Units: 832
2010 Vacant Units: 228
Seasonal/Rec Use: 206
2020 Housing Units: 829
2020 Vacant Units: 167
Seasonal/Rec Use: 139

The table below provides housing projections for the 20-year planning period to accommodate the previously projected population growth. The projections suggest that up to 125 new housing units are needed in the Town by 2045 to meet housing demand. In fact, given the Town's tight housing market, the table below suggests that 12-15 new housing units were needed in 2020 in order to have a healthier vacancy rate. Any new homes that came on the market in 2020 to date can be subtracted from this demand.

### Town of Bridge Creek Housing Projections, 2025-2045

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	Net Change
Total Population	2,214	2,269	2,326	2,384	2,444	2,505	291
Total Households, excluding group quarters	662	682	703	724	746	768	106
Change in Total Households	--	20	21	21	22	22	--
Change in Rental Households (16% Rent)	--	4	3	3	4	4	18
Change in Owner Households (84% Own)	--	16	18	18	18	18	88
Additional Rental Units Needed*	0-1	4	4	4	4	4	20 - 21
Additional Owner Units Needed**	12-14	16	18	18	19	19	102 - 104
Total Additional Housing Units Needed	12-15	20	22	22	23	23	122 - 125
Population in Group Quarters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

\* In addition to the 7 estimated rental units vacant in 2020.



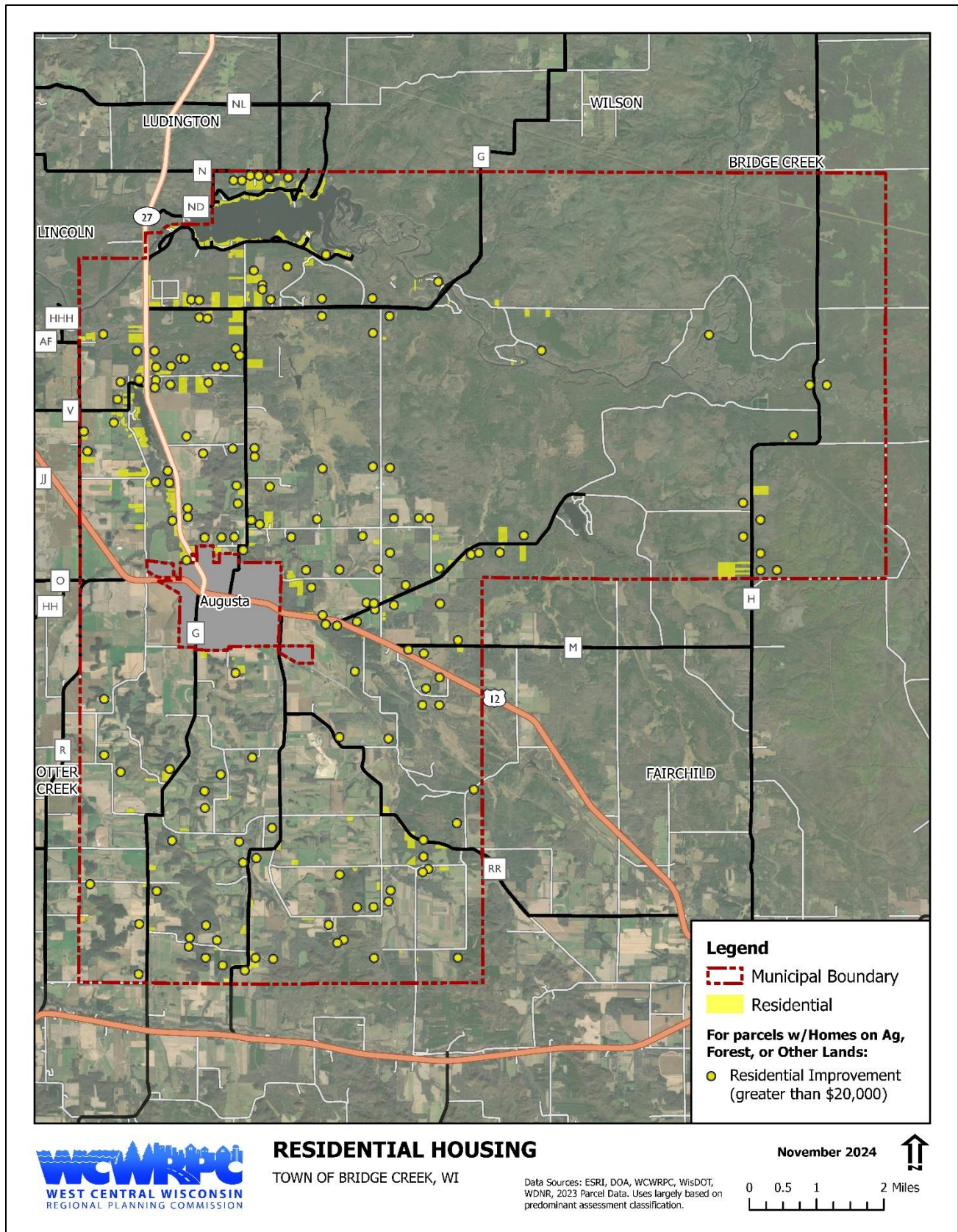
## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The housing projections assumed the following trends for the Town of Bridge Creek:

- The renter-to-owner mix would not change over time.
- A 2.75 persons/household size average was used. Should household sizes not decrease in size over time, the housing projections would be over-estimating the number of units needed.
- No new housing units are needed to reduce overcrowding.
- There will not be a significant change in policies or programming in order to attract or discourage new residential development. Governmental policies and the economy can influence such projections. For instance, a community may actively market and offer incentives (e.g., land, infrastructure, cash grants) to attract residential development.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Town of Bridge Creek Housing (Existing Residential) Map



## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 2-C. Existing Plans, Programs, and Regulations

Many of the nine required comprehensive planning elements under State law require communities to identify and consider plans and programs that may influence plan recommendations or can assist in the implementation of the plan. While the State statutes may require the identification of programs to assist in achieving the plan goals, the law does not require the community to create new programs or to adopt regulations. Instead, a community may identify resources available through other units of government (e.g., County, State) or partners.

Below is a list of key plans, programs, and regulations pertaining to the Town of Bridge Creek, which are also available online at the Town's website. **Appendix A** includes a summary of key plans and programs created or offered through other entities that may influence planning and plan implementation within the community.

#### **Town Plans, Programs, & Policies/Ordinances**

- 2021 Comprehensive Plan (*This addendum amends & updates the 2021 Plan.*)
- 5-Year Road Improvement Plan
- Town Building Notification Policy with description of proposed use
- Non-Metallic Mining Operators licensing ordinance
- Adult-Oriented Activity/Adult Establishment licensing & regulation ordinance
- Public Nuisances ordinance
- Driveways and Right-of-Way Use ordinances, including culvert policy
- Street/Road Construction Requirements for Subdivisions & CSMs
- Construction Stormwater Management ordinance
- ATV routes ("all town highways") & related rules, signage, etc.
- Joint Municipal Court with Augusta
- Special or Seasonal Weight Limits & Horseshoe rules
- Fair Housing Ordinance
- Other: trespass, liquor licensing, weight limits, sex offend residency, State traffic laws, & animal control, dog licensing, recycling rates

#### **Key County Plans & Policies/Ordinances that potentially apply to the Town**

- Comprehensive Plan
- Regional Housing Study
- Land & Water Conservation Plan
- Groundwater Protection planning & water testing efforts
- County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Hazard Mitigation Plan & Public Health Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Bike & Pedestrian Plan
- County Highway Plans & Permits
- Aging & Disability Resource Center/Paratransit Programming
- Building Permits, including UDC religious exemption waiver
- Land Division Ordinance
- Floodplain Zoning, including dam shadows
- Shoreland Regulations

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation
- Stormwater Management & Construction Erosion Control permitting
- Sanitary Ordinance and Well Permitting
- Animal Waste (Manure) Storage Ordinance

It should also be noted that:

- Lake Management Plans have been created for Lake Eau Claire and Coon Fork Lake, though the latter plan is very outdated. A 9-Key Element Plan addressing non-point source runoff to surface waters has been adopted for the larger Eau Claire River Watershed.
- A portion of the Town on Augusta's northeast side is included in the City's wellhead protection area.
- Portions of the Town fall within the 1.5 extraterritorial plat review jurisdictions for the cities of Augusta and Osseo; it is not known to what extent these powers are being enforced.
- A small portion of the Town falls within a Residential-Agricultural Zoning District under extraterritorial zoning administered by the City of Augusta:

### **R-A – Residential Agricultural District – Extraterritorial Zone**

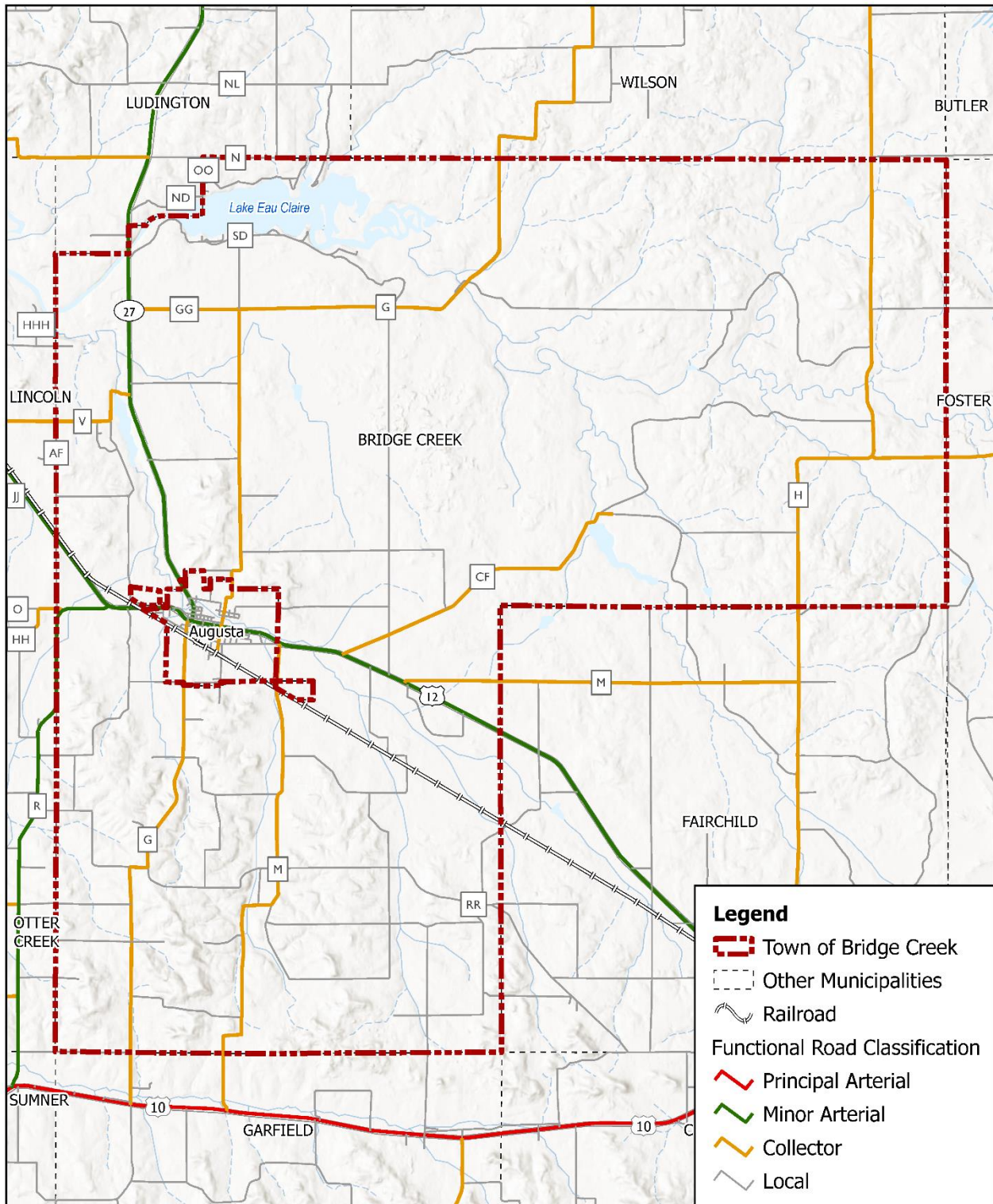
*The following zoning applies to:*

That portion of west one half (W½) of Section 34 lying south of Karow Road and Section 33 except the North one quarter (N¼) and those portions within the city of Augusta, all in Township 26 North, Range 6 West, Town of Bridge Creek, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin.



# 3. TRANSPORTATION

## 3-A. Transportation Network Map



### TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK, WI

Data Sources: ESRI, DOA, WCWRPC, WisDOT.

August 2024



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



# 3. TRANSPORTATION

## 3-B. Transportation Goal, Objectives, and Policies

This section replaces the Transportation Goal, Objective, and Policies found in Chapter 2.2.2 of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan in their entirety.

### TRANSPORTATION GOAL

Provide and maintain a safe and efficient transportation network for different and changing modes of transportation appropriate for our rural community.

#### Transportation Objectives:

1. Collaborate with other units of government to maintain a connected, efficient, sustainable, and safe transportation network through cooperative planning, mutual aid, and cost sharing.
2. Mitigate and prevent extraordinary and unexpected damage to Town roads.
3. Consider opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian transportation options and safe connectivity along roadways near concentrations of homes or where potential destinations exist.
4. Anticipate and accommodate future transportation infrastructure needs.

#### Policies:

1. When planning for new Town roads and road improvements, consider road design standards that enhance the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and horse-drawn vehicles, especially roadways near Lake Eau Claire, connections to the school and City of Augusta, and along designated bike routes.
2. Continue to explore and pursue grant funding to assist with Town road, culvert, and bridge, repair and maintenance. If a road segment in need of repair provides crucial service to agricultural producers, consider pursuing an Agricultural Road Improvement Program (ARIP) grant, if funding is available in the future.
3. Continue to contract with the Augusta Police Department or other law enforcement agency to enforce seasonal or special road bans.
4. Developers shall generally bear an equitable share of the costs for new road and transportation system development, improvements, and extensions.
5. Land use planning and development decisions should consider the capacity and structural integrity of the road network to support the proposed uses and anticipated traffic. Guide commercial and industrial uses to those roads with sufficient capacity, with a preference for road arterials and sited near county, state, and federal highways.
6. Roads and public right-of-way not be used for parking for homes and businesses. New or expanding commercial and industrial businesses should provide adequate off-road parking and turn-around space on site. Traffic studies, turn lanes, or other roadway improvements may be required at the developer's or landowner's expense to ensure roadway safety for such uses.
7. As the use of electric vehicles increases, the Town should consider and may encourage EV charging stations as part of site plan review for commercial, industrial, and public uses.

# 3. TRANSPORTATION

## 3-C. Transportation Strategies

The following replaces Chapter 4.7.2 within the Implementation Element of the 2021 Plan in its entirety.

1. **Maintain a 5-year Road Improvement Plan for road construction and maintenance.** The Town will continue its road and pavement evaluation program using the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) system. The road plan should be updated each year as part of the annual budgeting process.  
  
The regular assessment of road conditions allows the Town to monitor if the life of a roadway is deteriorating at an unanticipated or unexpected rate or if the roadway has otherwise been damaged. Documenting the extent and likely causes of such extraordinary deterioration or damage is important for educating Town residents, potential damage claims, and future road maintenance planning. *(Continual)*
2. **Educate Town landowners, businesses, and local loggers on road safety, Town road repair/maintenance costs, and actions to mitigate extraordinary damage to Town roads,** including discussions on: *(Short term, Continual)*
  - a. The importance of safety signage, lighting, and reflective materials for horse-drawn vehicles, UTVs/ATVs, bicyclists, and pedestrians utilizing public roadways.
  - b. Seasonal weight limits or special road bans.
  - b. Alternative types of carriage/wagon wheels and the Town's seasonal limits regarding type of horseshoes.
  - c. Town grading policies or practices on non-paved surfaces?
  - d. State laws that allow the Town to pursue damage claims due to "injury to highways" (e.g., Wis. Stats §86.02).
3. If unexpected or extraordinary road damage continues to occur, **consider creating a Town policy/ordinance and standard approach for the pursuit of damage claims.** The policy should consider that different statutes apply for damage caused by farm machinery (Wis. Stats §86.021) and damage caused by other sources (Wis. Stats §86.021). *(Short term)*
4. **Explore adoption of additional speed limits for ATVS, UTVs, minibikes, and similar vehicles** on Town roads. *(Short term)*
5. **Develop and promote transit service alternatives.** Collect information from Eau Claire County programs and private vendors that offer alternative transportation options for Town residents and make this information available at the Town Hall or on the Town website. Coordinate with other jurisdictions and service providers to provide alternative transit services, such as dial-a-ride and shuttles to medical and shopping services in Eau Claire, for Town residents. *(Mid term, Continual)*

### 3. TRANSPORTATION

#### Preparing for Electric Vehicles (EVs)

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

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

#### EV Standards in Local Regulations and Site Planning

Local regulations and site review criteria should address the following...

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

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

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

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

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

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

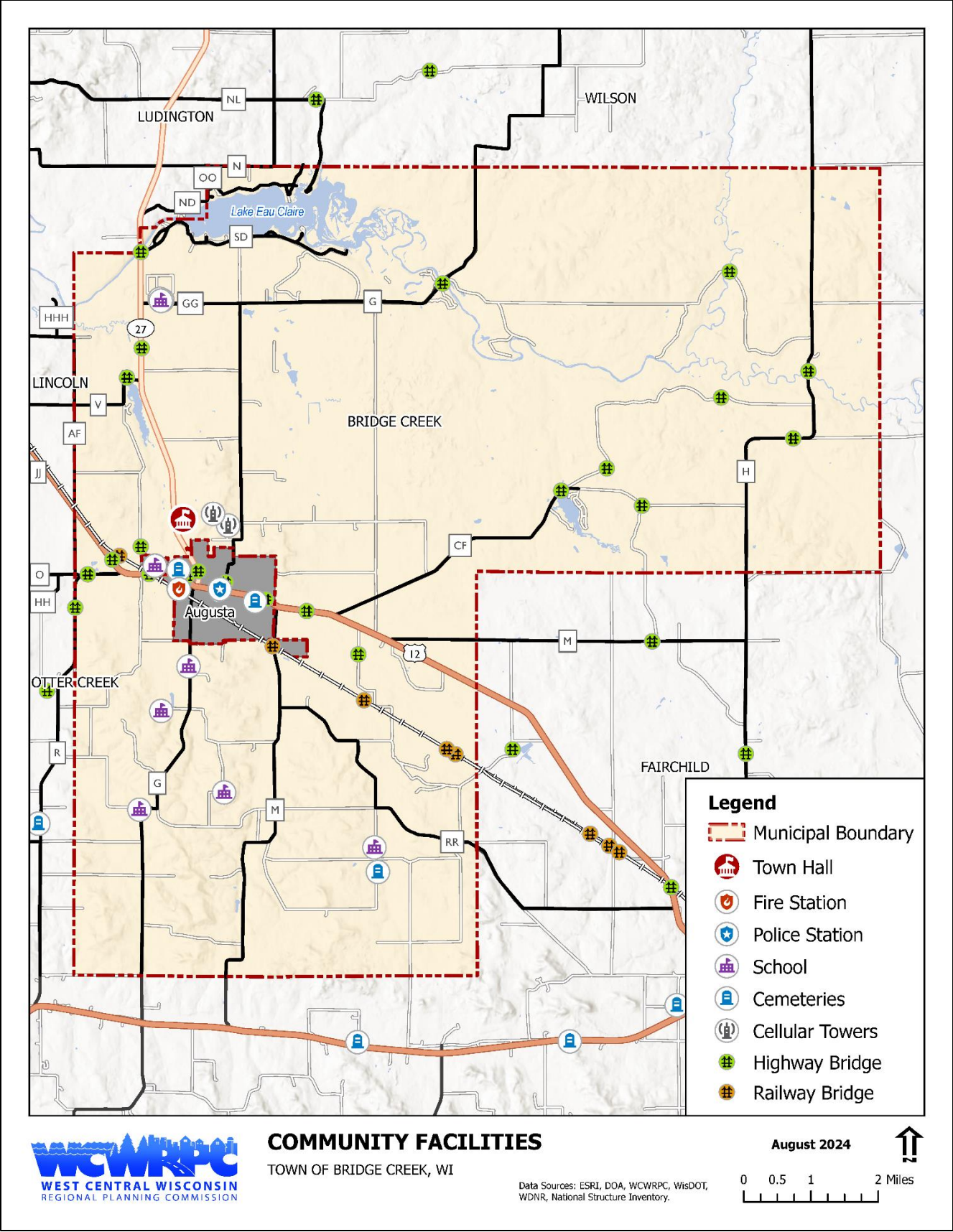
**Maintenance Requirements** – What are the minimum maintenance requirements, what is the permitting/approval/inspection process like, and who has authority to administer inspections/citations?



*graphic from: <https://www.access-board.gov/tad/ev/>*

# 4. ENERGY, UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## 4-A. Community Facilities Map





## 4. ENERGY, UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### 4-B. Capacity & Needs of Town Facilities and Services

Chapter 5.4 of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan provides a baseline inventory and assessment of utilities and community facilities for the Town of Bridge Creek. This section briefly provides an updated and expanded assessment of capacities and timetables for any needed expansion, rehabilitation, or new facilities or services to more fully meet statutory requirements.

Facility or Service	Current Capacity	Needs	Timetable
Town Hall & Maintenance Facilities	Facilities meet Town needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular building and equipment maintenance is ongoing.</li> <li>Equipment replacement will be needed over time and should be included in a Town capital budget or improvement plan.</li> </ul>	Per Town CIP
Sanitary Sewer & On-Site Wastewater Treatment	No municipal systems; private septic systems used. Village of Fairchild sewage ponds are located in Sec. 23. Landspreading or land application of sewage & septic waste occurs within the Town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued maintenance &amp; compliance for septic</li> <li>Landspreading of sewage and septic by-product solids must be performed in a manner that meets WDNR permit requirements; sites must be approved &amp; permitted by WDNR prior to application.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Stormwater Management	Good overall, though some over-the-road flooding since 1993 as documented in the County Hazard Mitigation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue with regular inspection of culverts &amp; ditches to clear blockages</li> <li>Enforce culvert sizing as part of new driveway permits</li> <li>As part of road re-construction in floodprone areas, consider culvert or ditch re-sizing though with consideration of downstream impacts.</li> <li>Continue to enforce stormwater management and erosion control requirements for new development.</li> </ul>	Ongoing  No specific projects noted
Water Supply	No municipal systems; private wells & septic systems used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued compliance with well siting &amp; setback rules.</li> <li>Encourage regular well testing</li> <li>Wellhead protection &amp; extraterritorial zoning applies for Augusta's wellhead</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Solid Waste & Recycling Facilities	Provided at Town Hall site. Sufficient capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A concrete slab and protective structure for the recycling center would be desirable in the future</li> </ul>	Short-to-Moderate term
Parks & Recreational Trails	Ample County Park and Forest Land recreational opportunities. All Town road and most county highways are open for ATV/UTV use. A mix of trails/routes are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County outdoor recreational needs identified in the County Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP)</li> </ul>	See County ORP



## 4. ENERGY, UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

	available for other recreational activities, including snowmobiling and horseback riding.		
Electric, Natural Gas, & Power	Electric provided by Eau Claire Energy Cooperative & Xcel Energy. Natural gas provided by Wisconsin Gas/WE Energies. No capacity issues identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town lacks a policy position or regulations for land use conflicts and loss of productive agricultural land due to large wind farms.</li> </ul>	Short-term
Telecommunications	<p>Provided by private companies. Adequate landline telephone available, though some gaps in cellular coverage.</p> <p>Broadband available has improved significantly over the past decade, though a few gaps remain according to Wisconsin PSC Broadband Maps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure processes are in place to provide for the permitting of telecommunications towers and use of public right-of-way for broadband expansion.</li> <li>Collaborate with ISPs &amp; County as necessary to encourage broadband availability for all residents and businesses.</li> </ul>	Short-term
Law Enforcement & Emergency Services	<p>Law enforcement provided by Augusta Police with support from Eau Claire County &amp; State Patrol. Town is served by Augusta- Bridge Creek Fire &amp; Rescue.</p> <p>No critical capacity issues noted, though maintaining volunteers for Fire &amp; Rescue has been a challenge at times.</p> <p>Ambulance/paramedic service is through Mayo Clinic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Town should continue to contract with Augusta for law enforcement services.</li> <li>Fire-fighting equipment replacement is expected to be needed in the near future.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short-to-Medium term</p>
Cemeteries	No cemeteries are maintained by the Town. No capacity issues noted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Eau Claire County to explore policies regarding green burials on private property.</li> <li>Permitting of new cemeteries should include long-term maintenance requirements.</li> </ul>	Short-term
Library	Available public library in Augusta and related and programming meets community needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical improvements &amp; equipment may be needed at the Library as the structure ages and due to changing public demands for library services</li> </ul>	Medium-to-Long term
Area Public Schools	<p>Generally, school enrollment has been decreasing, so facilities have adequate capacity.</p> <p>Significant recent improvements at the School including the addition of an Early Learning Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Even with decreasing enrollment, physical improvements &amp; equipment may be needed due to changing demands, technologies, and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>No issues requiring Town action were identified.</li> </ul>	--

The above references those facilities and services for which the Town of Bridge Creek may have an active role as a unit of government. The Town does not envision having an active role in the planning for most facilities and services provided by the private sector or nonprofits, such as private schools, health care, and day care.

## 4. ENERGY, UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### 4-C. Energy, Utilities & Community Resources Goal, Objectives, & Policies

The following replaces Chapter 2.3.2 within the 2021 Plan in its entirety.

#### UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL

Through collaboration with other units of government and community partners, Town residents and businesses will have access to safe, cost-effective utilities and services that are appropriate and scaled to the rural setting of the community, while supporting the other goals and objectives of this plan.

#### Objectives:

1. As a rural community and small-town government, the Town of Bridge Creek recognizes that utilities, community facilities, and services located within the Town will be limited and, for efficiency and effectiveness, will most often be provided through partnerships, non-profits, other units of government, or the private sector.
2. Foster community preparedness and resiliency from emergencies and disaster events.
3. The Town will maintain a good working relationship with surrounding communities, Eau Claire County, State of Wisconsin, and the Federal government to help reduce the costs of community facilities or services and share such costs in an equitable manner.

#### Policies:

1. Using Section 4-B as a guide, continue to anticipate, assess, and plan for facility capacities, program needs, and capital needs.
2. Collaborate with the Eau Claire County to ensure private septic systems, including privies, are appropriately sized, inspected at installation, and maintained as required by County and State rules.
3. Support efforts of internet service providers and other partners to provide high-speed broadband access to all households and businesses in the Town that desire such service.
4. Continue to contract with the City of Augusta Police Department or other law enforcement agency to enforce Town ordinance and traffic laws as well as for general public safety.
5. Continue to partner with the City of Augusta for fire and emergency medical services through Augusta-Bridge Creek Fire & Rescue. Explore grant funding to assist with equipment replacement costs (e.g., Assistance to Fire Fighters Grants, Forest Fire Protection Grants) and staffing/training needs (e.g., SAFER Grants).
6. Developers should pay the full cost of public infrastructure to serve their proposed development, except the Town may explore cost-sharing partnerships when proposed new development benefits the community and is consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.
7. For proposed solar and wind projects primarily generating power for offsite distribution, the Town will:
  - Consider innovative approaches that preserve prime farmland and align with the land use vision and goals of this comprehensive plan.
  - For projects less than 100MW, collaborate with Eau Claire County during conditional use permitting and zoning enforcement should the Town become zoned.
  - Encourage Joint Development Agreements (JDAs) with the Town that addresses key elements. (See guidance on next page)

## 4. ENERGY, UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### 4-D. Energy, Utilities & Community Resources Strategies

The following replaces Chapter 4.7.2 within the Implementation Element of the 2021 Plan in its entirety.

1. **Maintain a replacement/maintenance budget plan** for major road projects, major equipment purchases, and Town facility improvements. *(Continual)*
2. **Continue to support improvements for the Recycling Center**, so that it is maintained in a safe, efficient, and user-friendly manner. *(Continual)*
3. **Participate in future updates of the County's five-year Outdoor Recreation Plan.** If needs for future parks, natural areas, or outdoor recreation facilities are identified, work with the WDNR and the County to determine the most effective and efficient way to proceed with development. *(Continual)*
4. **Continue to provide information on the Town's website describing community services, land use regulations, permitting, nuisance rules, and required licenses. As needed, provide updates to Town landowners on regulations/ordinance or important services/programs.** Information may include explanations and contact information pertinent to the jurisdictions responsible for delivery of a variety of services, costs associated with services, and obligations of residents. *(Continual/As Needed)*
5. **Develop a welcome page for new residents at the Town website** that contains information about community services, program, and policies. This information should also be available in hardcopy form at the Town Hall and provided to residents upon request. *(Short term, Continual)*

## 4. ENERGY, UTILITIES & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### **Regulating Solar & Wind Energy Systems**

Political subdivisions in Wisconsin have limited authority to regulate solar and wind under WI Stats §66.0401. Under this Statute, municipalities may not place any restriction on the installation or use of solar and wind energy systems unless the restriction satisfies one of the following conditions:

- Serves to preserve or protect the public health or safety;
- Does not significantly increase system cost or decrease efficiency; or
- Allows for an alternative system of comparable costs and efficiency.

While WI Stats allows municipalities some local control for solar and wind projects less than 100MW; the WI Public Service Commission (PSC) reviews and approves large projects greater than 100MW without municipal review or approval. That said, municipalities often enter into a project development agreement with solar project developers; negotiations with the developer should take place as early in the project development process as possible, preferably before the WI PSC hearings begin. Joint development agreements typically address aspects of:

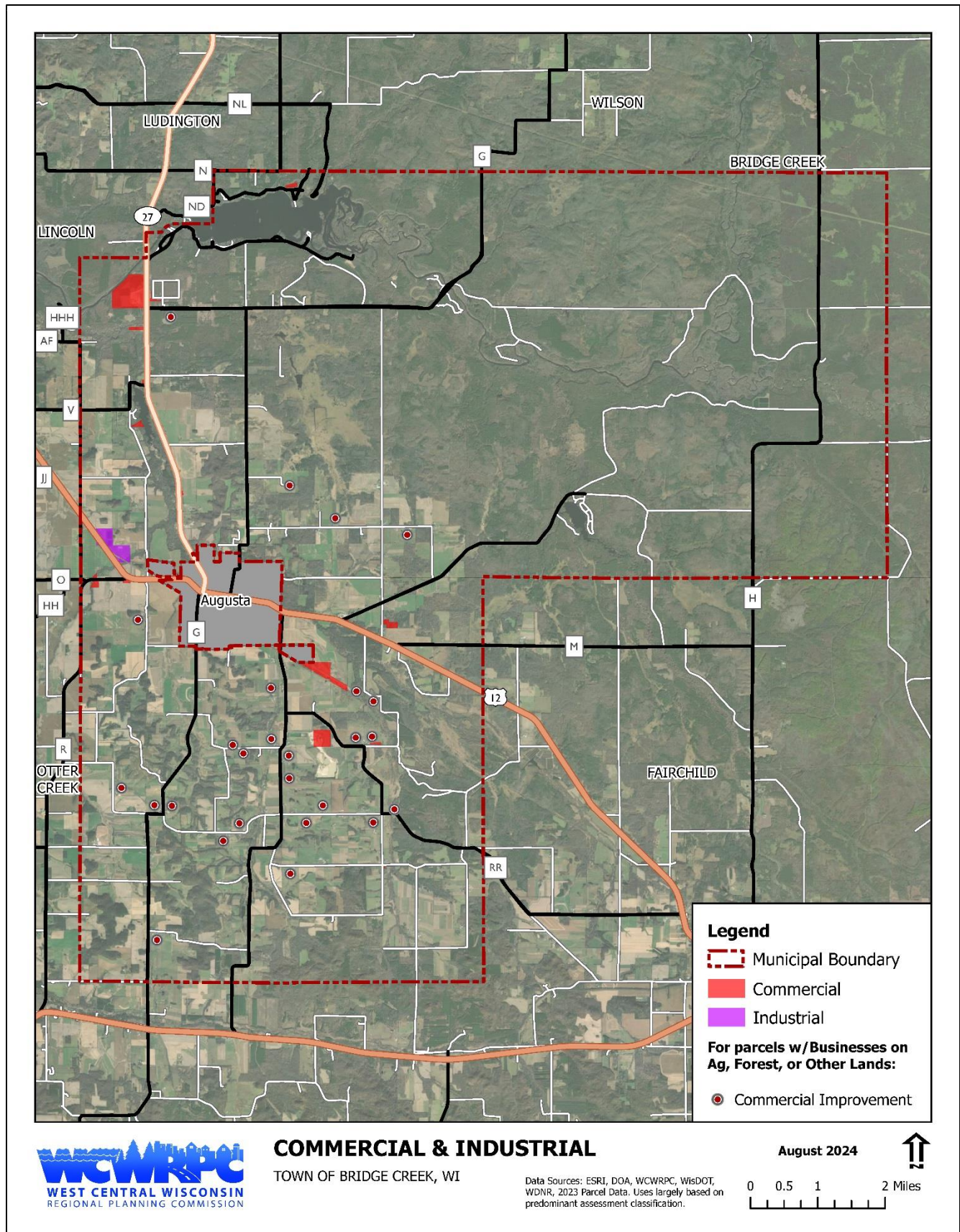
- Planning & construction
- Use of roads and road repair obligations
- Drainage repair obligations
- Allocation of Utility Shared Revenue Proceeds
- Decommissioning, including an Obligation to restore farmland
- Assurances
- Setbacks, equipment height, vegetation, and fencing

For perspective, most solar systems for a WI Home are less than 20KW (or .02MW). The St. Croix County Zoning Ordinance permits small solar collectors in all zoning districts. Large solar under 100MW is a conditional use in all zoning districts while those above 100MW are reviewed and approved by the WI PSC, not regulated by the County.



# 5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## 5-A. Existing Commercial & Industrial Development Map





## 5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 5-B. Desired Businesses and Industries

Foremost, the Town of Bridge Creek supports economic activities related to agriculture and forestry that are compatible with the community's rural character, can be supported with available infrastructure, and do not create land use conflicts. The Town feels that more intensive or larger businesses or industries are better suited for incorporated cities and villages, such as larger retail outlets, manufacturing/services that utilize large amounts of water or require special wastewater treatment, or large traffic-generating businesses.

Beyond agriculture and forestry, this Comprehensive Plan does not promote or encourage specific types of businesses or business investment. Compatible home-based businesses, smaller commercial/industrial enterprises, and other economic activities may be allowable within the Town if carefully planned and located with any potential negative impacts mitigated. Any proposed businesses and industries should be consistent with the overall vision of this Plan.

### 5-C. Designated Sites for Business and Industry

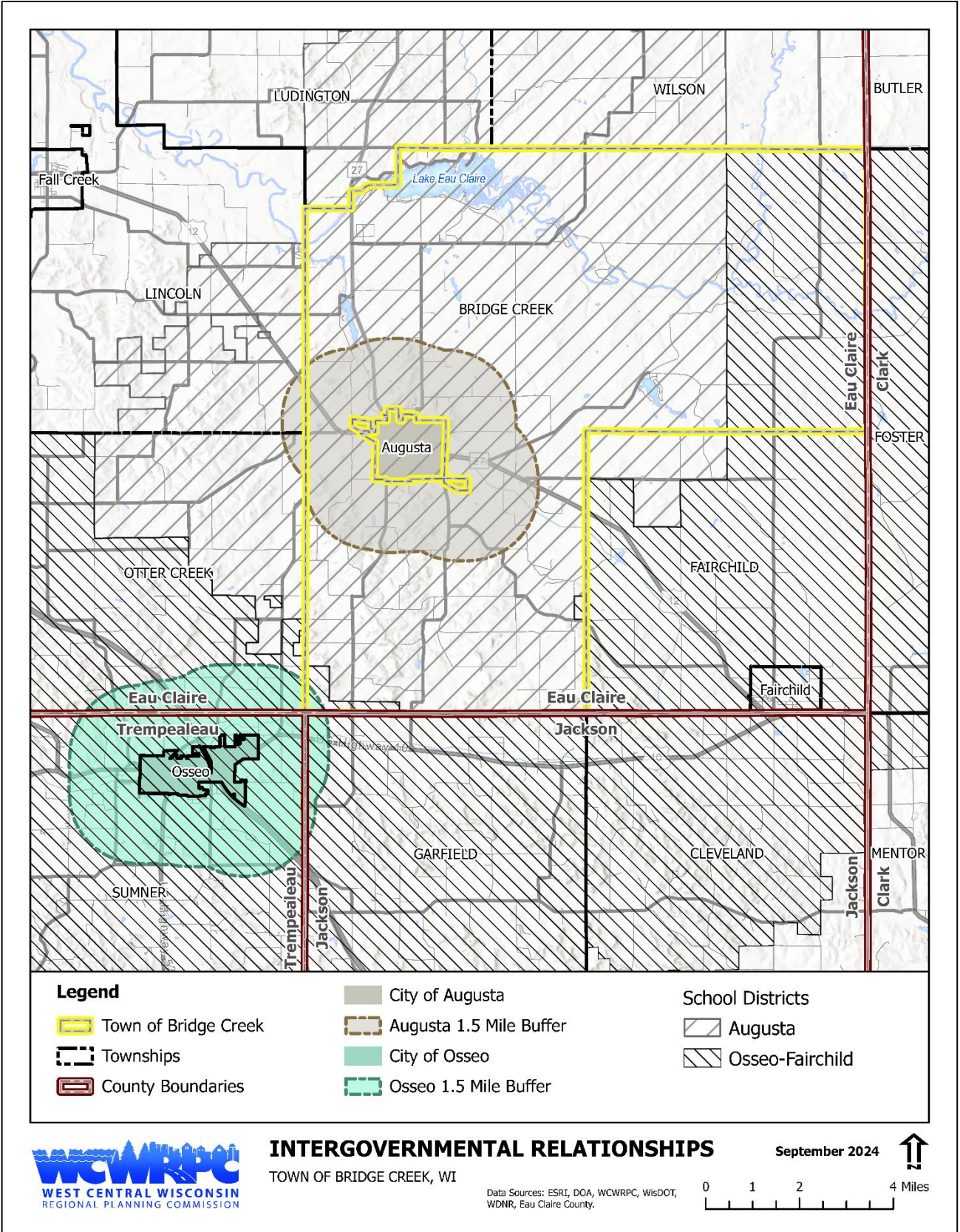
To meet State comprehensive planning requirements, the land use element will "designate an adequate number of sites" for the community's desired businesses and industries. As a rural, unincorporated town, land availability for economic development is generally not a barrier.

The Preferred Future Land Use Map within Section 7-G does identify general areas for potential future commercial and industrial development. Overall, proposed economic development projects and sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis considering factors, such as:

- The proposed development must be consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan, including the desired community design principles in Chapter 2.8.
- The proposed development should consider the site's natural limitations for building development must not encroach upon any environmentally sensitive areas to the extent protected by law (see Section 7-F).
- The proposed development should not degrade or pollute the natural environment, including air, noise, light, surface water, groundwater, and stormwater runoff.
- The proposed development must be compatible with adjacent land uses and should be discouraged from fragmenting productive agricultural and managed forest lands.
- The roadways serving the proposed development should be of sufficient design, condition, and capacity to serve the proposed development without causing road damage, safety concerns, or extraordinary road maintenance expenses to the Town.
- Sufficient law enforcement and emergency services must be available to support the proposed development or made available without increasing expenses to the Town.
- While low-impact home-based businesses may be allowable throughout much of the Town, subject to localized environmental conditions, other commercial and industrial development should occur in a manner that is consistent with the Commercial-Industrial area policies in Section 7-G of the plan. This includes encouraging such businesses to be located near the City of Augusta, near existing compatible businesses, or along collector & arterial highways.

# 9. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

## 6-A. Intergovernmental Relationships Map





## 6. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The map on the previous page does not include the small extraterritorial zoning area immediately to the northeast of the City of Augusta that it administered and enforced by the City primarily for wellhead protection purposes:

### **R-A – Residential Agricultural District – Extraterritorial Zone**

*The following zoning applies to:*

That portion of west one half (W½) of Section 34 lying south of Karow Road and Section 33 except the North one quarter (N¼) and those portions within the city of Augusta, all in Township 26 North, Range 6 West, Town of Bridge Creek, Eau Claire County, Wisconsin.

### **6-B. Existing & Potential Intergovernmental Conflicts**

Wisconsin comprehensive planning law requires communities to identify existing and potential conflicts as well as a process to resolve any conflicts. The Town of Bridge Creek has strong intergovernmental relationships as identified in Chapter 5.7 of the 2021 Plan. This includes the Town's desire to maintain its current law enforcement and fire & rescue relationships.

During the 2024 plan amendment/update process, no existing conflicts were identified and the Town did not have significant concerns regarding any potential conflicts. As such, the following list represents possible sources of intergovernmental conflicts for other rural towns that Bridge Creek may want to monitor for its own community.

Potential Conflicts		Process to Resolve
1)	Potential land use compatibility and planning concerns regarding properties adjacent to or near the City of Augusta boundary.	Continue to maintain an open, regular dialogue with the City of Augusta. If needed, establish annual or regular "check-in" meetings and re-evaluate any mutual aid/service agreements.
2)	Possible enforcement of extraterritorial plat review by Augusta (and possibly Osseo), which could result in confusion and/or conflicting land division standards.	Should Augusta begin to enforce extraterritorial plat review, encourage consistency with County land division standards to the extent reasonably possible and keep a map of the extraterritorial area available to help educate landowners and potential developers.
3)	Annexation for new industrial, residential, or commercial development.	Explore the potential use of cooperative boundary agreements and plans to develop solutions that benefit both jurisdictions.
4)	Disagreements may arise over shared services and cost-sharing, such as law enforcement, fire & rescue, and the library.	Maintain open, regular dialogue with County staff (e.g., Planning & Development, Land Conservation, Parks & Forest) regarding land use and regulatory enforcement in the Town as well as the management of County lands. Similar discussions should occur with WDNR if needed.
5)	Disagreements may arise over use conflicts, road use/damage, wildfire mitigation, and law enforcement on County Parks and WDNR lands.	
6)	Possible environmental impacts of the landspreading of municipal sewage by-product on Town lands.	As needed, discuss with WDNR the re-evaluation of landspreading permits and enforcement of related rules to confirm that applications are being performed correctly in accordance with approved plans.

### 7-A. Opportunities for Redevelopment

During the planning process, no immediate opportunities for redevelopment were identified for residential, commercial, or industrial use. The Town does have two non-metallic mining sites with reclamation plans; once these sites are closed, reclamation will occur in accordance with the plans. These sites may offer opportunities for residential, recreational, or other economic development purposes. The Town has no environmentally contaminated sites suitable for re-use for other commercial or industrial purposes. Wisconsin WDNR has not reported any water samples with detected Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) within the Town; no PFAs have been detected in the City of Augusta municipal water system.<sup>1</sup>

### 7-B. Potential Land Use Conflicts

The Town of Bridge Creek recognizes the importance of the Right to Farm, while protecting the investment of landowners from land use conflict. The following primary, potential land use conflicts were identified during the 2024 plan amendment/update process:

- Loss and fragmentation of productive agricultural and forest lands and wildlife corridors due to development.
- Impacts of commercial and manufacturing operations, including those concerns identified in Section 5-C.
- Uses that create large areas of impervious surface that produce stormwater runoff.
- The potential for development, agricultural practices, and septic systems to degrade surface or ground water quality and the natural environment. This includes increased nitrate levels in groundwater and increased nutrient/phosphorus levels in surface water.
- Nuisance concerns from short-term rental properties.
- Impacts of large livestock facilities and large wind farms.

The Town Plan Commission also noted that the existing 100-year floodplain maps and standard stormwater management engineering assumptions did not consider current climate data and trends (e.g., more frequent, heavier rainfall events).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/PFAS/DataViewer>

## 7-C. 20-Year Land Use Projections

Chapter 5.8 of the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan includes a description of existing land use, land demand, and land prices, with a particular emphasis on agricultural lands, which constitutes over half of all assessed lands within the Town in 2019.

Wisconsin's comprehensive planning law requires that plans include land use projections for a 20-year planning period in 5-year increments. The following table includes 2020 land use acreage based on assessment data and future projections for the Town:

**Recent & Projected Land Use Demand (acres), Town of Bridge Creek, 2015-2045**

Year	Population	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Agricultural & Forest, excluding County, State, & Exempt lands
2015 (actual)		1,534	127	330	26,256
2020 (actual)	2,214	1,557	192	265	26,267
2024 (actual)		2,259	403	76	24,875
2025	2,269 (+55)	2,323 (+20 units)	413		24,801 (-74 acres)
2030	2,326 (+57)	2,393 (+22 units)	423	86	24,711 (-90 acres)
2035	2,384 (+58)	2,463 (+22 units)	433		24,631 (-80 acres)
2040	2,444 (+60)	2,538 (+23 units)	443	96	24,536 (-95 acres)
2045	2,505 (+61)	2,612 (+23 units)	453		24,452 (-84 acres)
2024-2045 Difference		+353	+50	+20	-423

The above projections were based on the following assumptions:

- **Population** growth uses the population projections in Section 2-A.
- **Residential** growth uses the housing unit projections in Section 2-B, but excludes the 12-15 housing units needed as of 2020 since some of these units may have been accounted for due to recent development. The needed housing units are then multiplied by the average parcel size of assessed residential land in the Town in 2024, which was 3.2 acres (or 2,259 acres/700 parcels). Note: If new housing growth in the Town continues to lag behind demand (as was the case in 2020), then the residential projections will not be reached.
- **Commercial and Industrial** projections for the Town of Bridge Creek are challenging. The assessed acreages in these categories changed dramatically between 2015 to 2024 and appear to have been influenced by some industrial acreage being re-assessed as commercial in recent years. Longer-term, such growth has been slow overall, though the Plan Commission suggests a significant increase in small commercial enterprises in recent years. For projection purposes, this Plan assumes an increase of 10 commercial acres every 5 years and 10 industrial acres every 10 years.
- **Agricultural & Forest** acreage projections are combined given that these acreages are often in flux in addition to the Agricultural Forest tax assessment classification. Between 2015-2024 this acreage decreased by about 154 acres/year; it appears that a large portion of these acres were likely re-assessed as residential. For projection purposes, the Ag & Forest acreages are decreased by the increased



residential, commercial, and industrial acreage for the same time period. While this is a significantly lower rate of loss compared to 2015-2024, it might be achievable if the Town can attain the farmland and forestland preservation goals and objectives set-forth in this Plan. County, State, and Exempt Forest lands are excluded since these acreages are not projected to significantly changed during the planning period.

It is also important to note that the Town conducted a re-assessment between 2020 and 2024, resulting in some very significant differences between the 2020 and 2024 actual assessment numbers. All of the pre-2025 land use change reflected in the table did not occur within that four-year, 2020-2024 period.

### **7-D. Utility/Facility Service Area Boundaries**

For land use planning purposes, the Town has no utility or facility service area boundaries related to the facilities and services discussed in Section 4, with the exception of the City of Augusta's wellhead protection area, which is discussed further in Section 6.

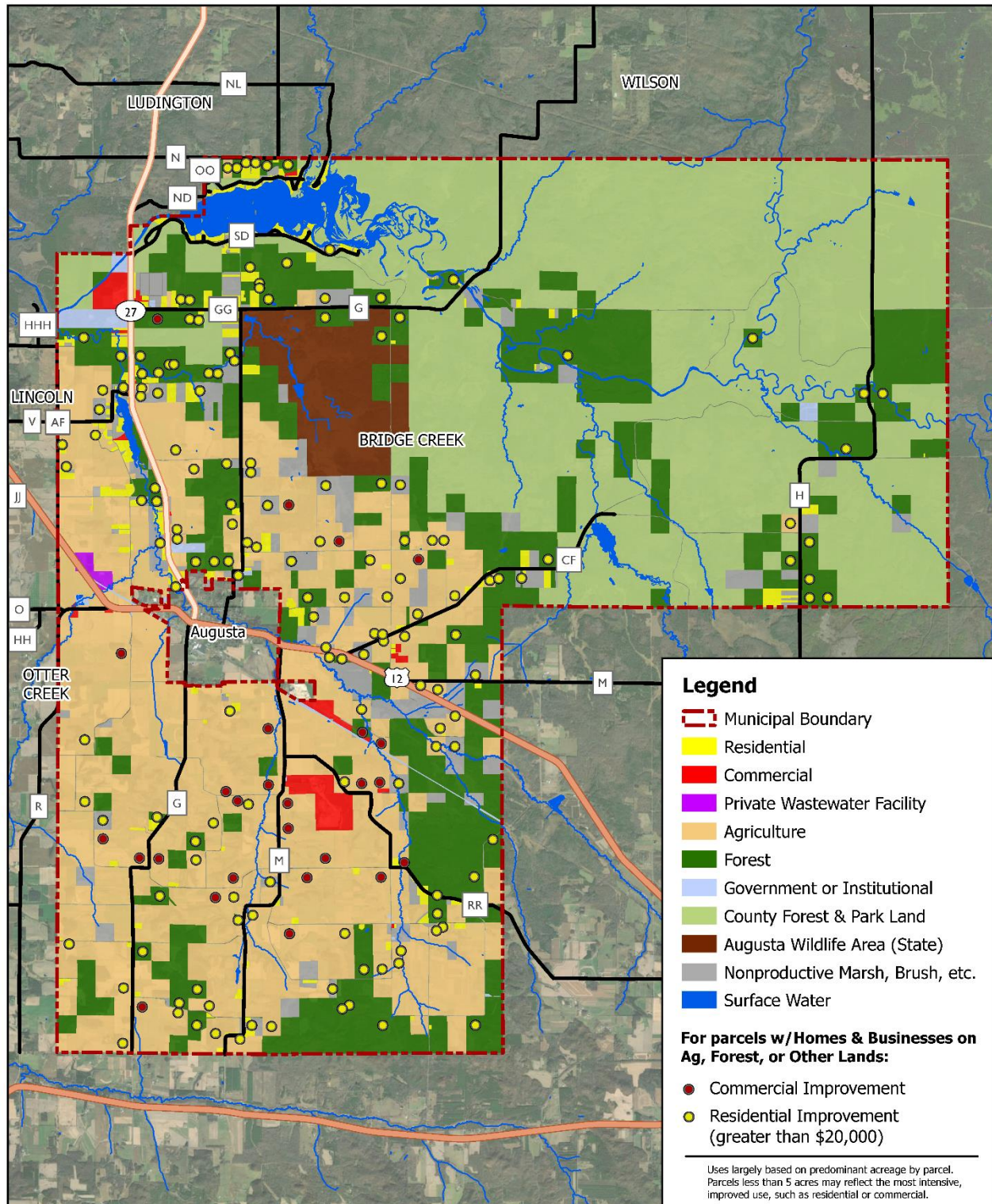
### **7-E. Existing Land Use**

The map on the following page represents the Existing Land Use for the Town of Bridge Creek as of January 1, 2024. The map is largely based on assessed land use. Land uses for parcels less than 5 acres are based on the most intensive, improved assessed use (e.g., Commercial is more "intensive" than Residential). Land use for parcels greater than 5 acres is based on the predominant acreage. For these larger Ag, Forest, and Other lands, those parcels with commercial and residential improvements greater than \$20,000 in value are also signified with a dot.

This map shows how the County Forest and Augusta Wildlife Area dominate the northeastern portion of the Town, while agriculture and some forested areas dominate the south. Residential clusters exist near the Dells area and around Lake Eau Claire. Also notable is the number of scattered commercial sites around the Town.

# 7. LAND USE

## Town of Bridge Creek Existing Land Use Map, 2024



### EXISTING LAND USE

TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK, WI

Data Sources:  
ESRI, DOA, WCWRPC, WisDOT,  
WDNR, 2023 Parcel Data.

November 2024



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

### 7-F. Natural Limitations for Building Site Development

A number of physical factors potentially limit or restrict building development with the Town. Chapter 5.5 of the Town's 2021 Plan discusses natural areas, surface water resources, depth to groundwater limitations, and environmentally sensitive areas, though not all of these are mapped. Further as shown on the Existing Land Use Map, the Town has large areas of County Forest and other public lands that are expected to continue to be largely undeveloped. The primary natural limitations to development can be organized into two categories: (1) soil-based limitations, including groundwater, and (2) environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs). This sub-section, in addition to Chapter 5.5 of the 2021 Plan, also addresses Wis. Stats. §66.1001 requirements to consider various environmental features as part of the Agricultural, Natural, & Cultural Resources element of the plan.

#### Soil-based Development Limitations

As shown on the map series on the following page, National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil data suggests that large areas of the Town have development limitations due to soil conditions.

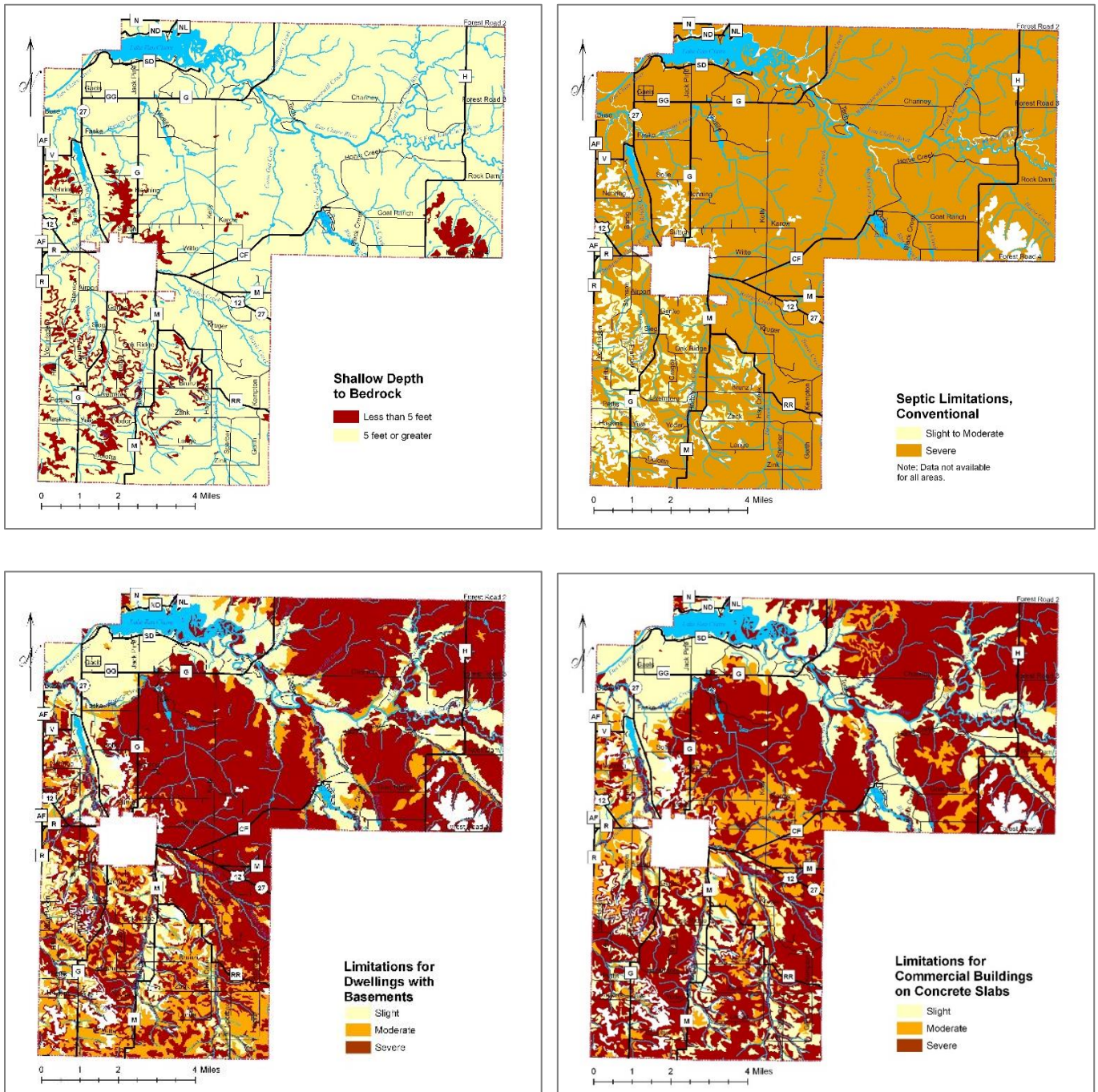
- **Depth to Bedrock.** Some scattered areas of the Town have a depth to bedrock of five feet or less based on soil borings and observations during soil mapping, which could pose a challenge or expense to new development or other excavation.
- **Depth to Groundwater.** As shown on Figure 5.25 in the 2021 Plan, large areas of the Town, especially the County Forest area, has a seasonal high groundwater table.
- **Septic System Limitations.** This map suggests that most of the Town has severe limitations for conventional septic tank absorption fields. Septic tank absorption fields are areas in which effluent from a septic tank is distributed into the soil through subsurface tiles or perforated pipe. Only that part of the soil between 24 and 60 inches is evaluated. The rating is based on the soil properties that affect absorption of the effluent, construction and maintenance of the system, and public health. Factors considered include permeability, depth to wet soils, ponding, stones/boulders, depth to bedrock, excessive slope, and flooding. Soils underlain by loose sand and gravel or fractured bedrock at a depth of less than four feet below the distribution lines may not allow adequate filtration of effluent and poses groundwater contamination concerns. Mound systems, holding systems, pretreatment, and municipal wastewater treatment are a few ways to mitigate or overcome some limitations.
- **Dwellings with Basements.** Most of the Town has moderate-to-severe limitations for the construction of dwellings with basements based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs. Basements are further assumed to have a foundation of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of about seven feet.
- **Small Commercial.** Likewise, most of the Town has moderate-to-severe limitations for small commercial buildings less than three stories high and do not have basements. The foundation is assumed to consist of spread footings of reinforced concrete built on undisturbed soil at a depth of two feet or at the depth of maximum frost penetration, whichever is deeper. The ratings are based on the soil properties that affect the capacity of the soil to support a load without movement and on the properties that affect excavation and construction costs.

Generally, many of the areas of the Town with the greatest soil-related development limitations are public lands for which development is not anticipated. For the remainder of the Town, these maps serve as a reminder that development challenges do exist and in certain areas special action may be necessary to prevent undesired environmental impacts and for the benefit of the landowner.



## 7. LAND USE

### Soil-Based Development Limitations Maps



For the above, the limitations are considered slight if soil properties and site features are generally favorable and limitations are minor and easily overcome. Moderate limitations exist if soil properties or site conditions are not favorable and special planning, design, or maintenance is needed to overcome or minimize the limitations. Severe limitations indicate that there are soil properties or site features so unfavorable or so difficult to overcome that special design, significant increases in construction costs, and possibly increased maintenance are required.

## Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs)

This sub-section replaces the National Resource Protection (NRP) land use classification discussion on page 3-2 of the Town’s 2021 Comprehensive Plan.

An Environmentally Sensitive Area (or ESA) is an area or feature that benefits the greater public good and is worth protecting, maintaining, enhancing, or restoring due to fragile nature and/or its long-term environmental benefit for present and future generations.

For the Town of Bridge Creek, these ESAs are parts of the landscape generally associated with surface waters and surface water quality that should be protected from intensive development. In addition, these ESAs often provide important fish and wildlife habitat as well as outdoor recreation opportunities.

The following are Environmentally Sensitive Areas for purposes of this plan:

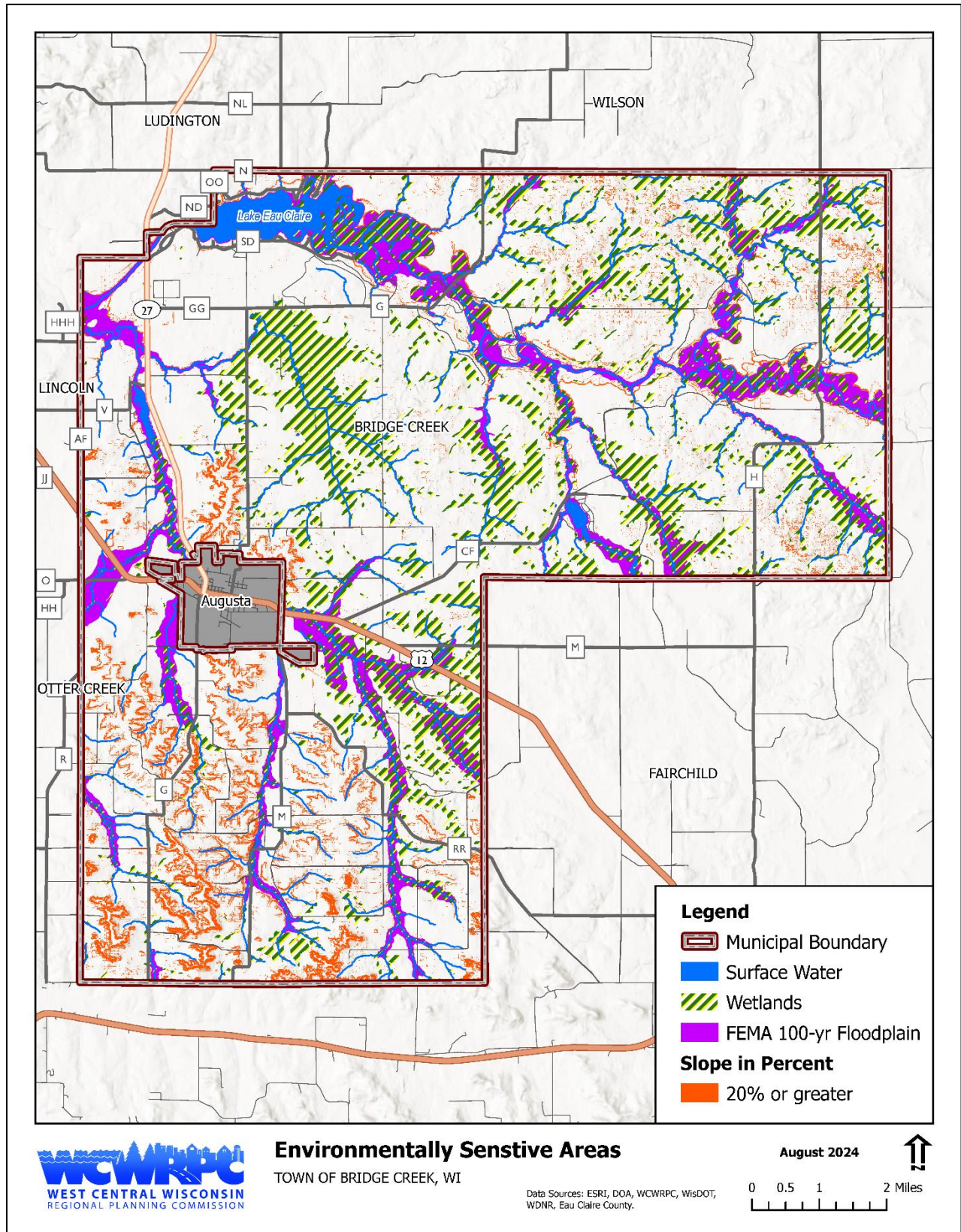
ESA	ESA Guidance
<b>Surface Waters</b>	All surface waters, regardless of navigability, as shown in the WDNR Surface Water Data Viewer.
<b>100-Year Floodplain</b>	Including the floodway and flood fringe as delineated on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps subject to any approved revisions, amendments, or map updates/modernization. Eau Claire County enforces Floodplain Zoning within the Town. Inaccuracies with the FEMA floodplain maps exist in some areas of the County and Wisconsin DNR working to secure FEMA funding to review and, where needed, correct the maps.
<b>Wetlands</b>	As identified on WDNR Wetland Inventory. If wetland-indicator soils exist, a certified wetland delineation may be required and any areas identified as wetlands become a Wetland ESA.
<b>Steep Slopes</b>	Areas of 20% or greater in slope that are natural or unengineered. Erosion and runoff from steep slopes are currently protected, in part, through construction site erosion control permitting.
<b>Shorelands</b>	Areas within Eau Claire County’s Shoreland Overlay District (1,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable lakes, ponds or flowages; or within 300 feet of the ordinary high water mark of navigable rivers or streams, or to the landward side of the floodplain, whichever distance is greater.)

For implementation of this Comprehensive Plan, ESAs are vital to the region’s ecosystem and are key ingredients of the rural character and image of the Town of Bridge Creek, and thus **development in areas designated as an ESA shall be severely limited to the extent allowed by law.** Additional policies related to the ESAs can be found later in this Land Use section.

The map on the following page shows the ESAs within the Town, except for shoreland areas which should be considered on a case-by-case basis. These ESAs should be treated as an “overlay” land use classification when considering the land use decisions and the Preferred Future Land Use Map and given preference to the underlying base classification. Most ESA areas within Bridge Creek are currently undeveloped and the Town should continue strive to limit future encroachment by intensive land disturbances upon these sensitive areas to the extent allowed by law and unless best management practices are used.



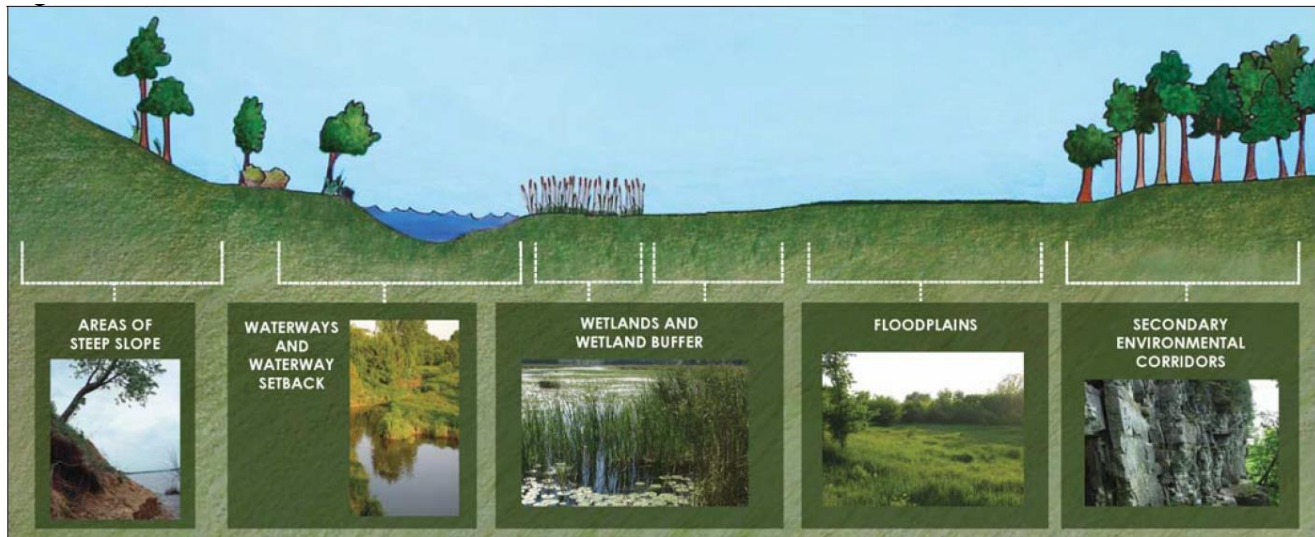
## Environmentally Sensitive Areas Map, excluding shorelands



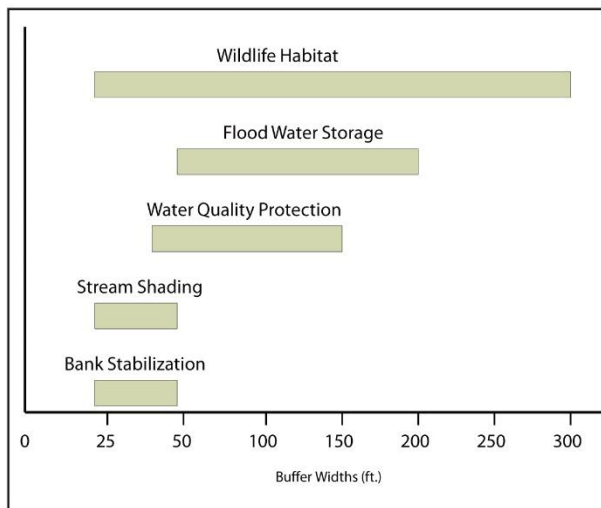
## Wildlife Corridors

During the 2024 amendment/update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan, the Plan Commission expressed a desire to encourage the preservation and connection of wildlife corridors. A wildlife corridor is a linear, continuous feature on the landscape, existing or restored, that is maintained with purpose of providing high quality wildlife habitat and the movement of wildlife. More generally, environmental corridors may also: (1) offer linked recreational opportunities, (2) provide greenspace and open space; and/or (3) protect water quality, sensitive lands, scenic resources, historical/cultural features, and other areas that require protection from disturbances and development.

### Elements of an Environmental Corridor



Source: Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission. 2012.



While minimum widths are not included in the environmental corridor definition, this chart shows the relationship between widths and the potential benefit or function to the environment. As illustrated here, the buffer width (in the above case from surface waters) will vary based on the desired benefits for people, wildlife, and the environment.

Given the large areas of undeveloped public lands within the Town, combined with the floodplain, shoreland, and wetland areas, the Town of Bridge Creek has significant existing wildlife corridors that have at least some level of protection. Establishing or protecting additional corridors on private land is challenging and can be costly, though such connections might be considered as part of site plan review and subdivision planning.



### 7-G. Preferred Future Land Use & Related Policies

The Preferred Future Land Uses described in this section is intended to be a general guide for development and a basis for applying the goals, objectives, and strategies in this Comprehensive Plan. As a decision-making tool, it is important that it be regarded as general in nature and should not be used for site-specific decisions. It is for this reason that only general locations for various land uses are shown on the map. The map is long-range and will need to be reevaluated periodically to ensure that it remains consistent with changing trends and conditions. The Town should utilize this map when acting on land use decisions. Zoning, land division, and official mapping decisions must be consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Preferred Future Land Use Map**

The map on the following page represents the general, preferred development vision for the Town of Bridge Creek over the next 20 years (2025-2045). The Preferred Future Land Use Map (or future land use map) has been developed based on the existing and future land use assumptions, a review of demographic and background data, trends in land use over the past several years, the efficient provision of services, and the community's desires for future development as reflected by the vision, goals, and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan (i.e., the 2021 Plan and this Addendum combined). The Town does not assume that all areas depicted on the future land use map will develop as envisioned during the next 20 years.

The future land use map is also generalized and some existing land uses differ from the preferred land uses. While the Town should strive towards consistency between preferred and actual land uses, there is not an expectation that all such existing "non-conforming" uses will be changed during the planning period for greater consistency. In short, some differences between the future land use plan map and actual land uses will exist, though the plan and land uses may still be deemed consistent.

#### **Future Land Use Classifications & Related Policies**

**This sub-section replaces Chapter 3.3 in the Town's 2021 Comprehensive Plan in its entirety**

The following land use classifications are descriptions used to define areas within the Town that are desired to generally be of consistent character, use, and identity as shown on the Preferred Future Land Use Plan Map:

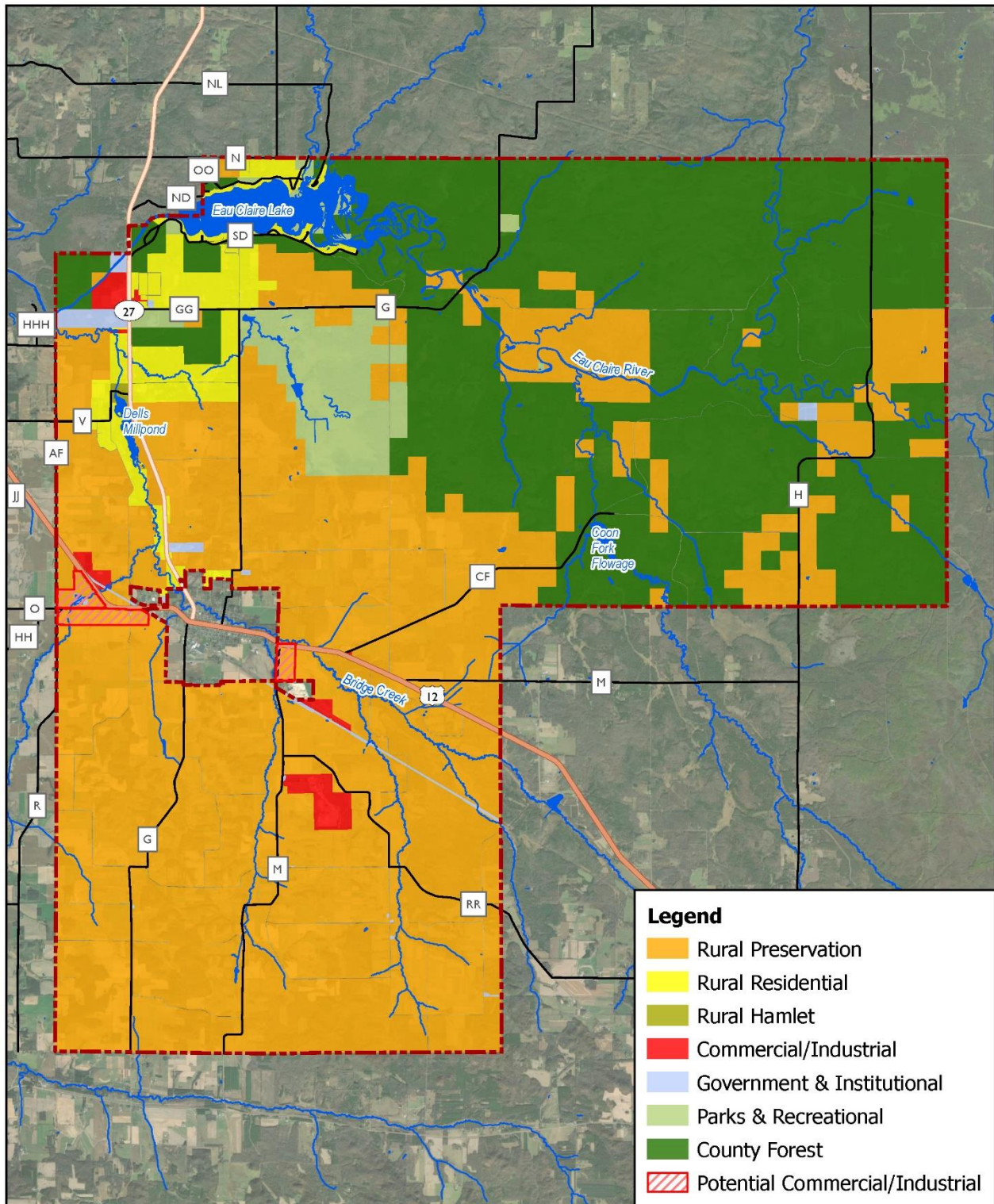
- Rural Preservation
- Rural Residential
- Rural Hamlet
- Commercial/Industrial
- Government & Institutional
- Parks & Recreational, including the Augusta State Wildlife Area
- County Forest

These are not zoning districts. The compatibility of uses, form, and context within each classified area are emphasized. A mix of uses in a single category are often appropriate, if not desired, offering greater flexibility to address site conditions, market demand, and community goals. Yet, it is still important to evaluate proposed development, infill, and adaptive reuse projects to prevent use conflicts, ensure compatibility with public infrastructure, and for harmony with the surrounding environment.

While not strictly a land use, the previously described Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) should be "laid on top of" the Preferred Future Land Use Map and considered when making land use decisions. For some areas, the ESAs will limit development and may take precedent over the preferred land uses shown on the future land use map.

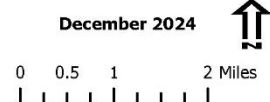
# 7. LAND USE

## Town of Bridge Creek Preferred Future Land Use Map



**FUTURE LAND USE**  
TOWN OF BRIDGE CREEK, WI

Data Sources:  
ESRI, DOA, WCWRPC, WisDOT,  
WDNR, 2023 Parcel Data.



## 7. LAND USE

Each future land use classification, with some related policy guidance, is further described below:

### **RURAL PRESERVATION**

**Description:** The Rural Preservation area is vital to the region's agricultural and forestry economy and are key ingredients of the rural character and image of the Town of Bridge Creek. The primary intent of these rural lands is to preserve productive agricultural lands in the long-term, protect existing farm & forestry operations from encroachment by incompatible uses, promote further investments in farming, maintain farmer eligibility for incentive programs, and to preserve wildlife habitat and open spaces. In other words, to preserve the rural character of these areas.

#### **Non-Conforming Uses**

Existing land uses that are not consistent with the Preferred Future Land Use Map and classifications are allowable and are effectively "grand-fathered" in. Such uses may be allowed to be expanded depending on circumstances. However, if the use is discontinued for 12 months or more, then the property should conform with the description, intent, and policies for that area.

This designation includes farmland, scattered open lands, woodlots, agricultural-related uses, home occupations and home-based businesses<sup>2</sup>, and limited, low-density single-family residential development subject to certain requirements. Compatible agricultural-related businesses include activities such as greenhouses, markets for ag products primarily produced on the premises, agri-tourism, and equine stables. Any low-density residential developments shall be located in order to minimize the fragmentation of productive agricultural or forest land and to minimize any disruption to existing uses.

#### **Policies:**

1. Farming, forestry, and other agriculture uses shall be established as the primary land uses within these areas. Uses that are incompatible with farming, forestry, and agriculture shall be discouraged or prohibited.
2. Agricultural-related businesses, agri-tourism, home occupations, home-based businesses, cottage industries, family day care facilities, utilities, recreation, campgrounds, small quarries, reclaimed mineral extraction sites, religious, and government uses may be compatible subject to applicable rules and conditions. Though associated with agriculture and forestry, the Town prefers those businesses similar to the following be located within the Commercial/Industrial area: commercial sawmills, lumberyards, agricultural equipment dealerships, wineries, and trucking/transload facilities.
3. The preferred gross housing density will generally range from one (1) unit per five (5) acres up to one (1) unit per 35 acres, with a preference to preserving and not fragmenting prime farmland (Capability Class 1,2 and 3), productive forest lands, and wildlife corridors.
4. Residential subdivisions shall be prohibited within Rural Preservation areas, and additional non-farm residential development is discouraged. Individual lots may be considered for non-farm residential use and shall only be authorized if they are consistent with the following policies:

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<sup>2</sup> **Home occupations, home-based businesses and cottage industries** are small, primarily service businesses that are secondary to the residential use of the property; the owner and operator of the business resides on the same lot. Cottage industries may be slightly larger and may include services and/or retail (e.g., vehicle repair, contractor businesses, woodworking shop, firewood sales, bakery, antique shop). For purposes of this plan, the definitions and standards within Chapter 18.46 of the Eau Claire County Zoning Ordinance should be used to define home occupations, home-based businesses, and cottage industries. This definition includes limits and guidance on the size, number of employees, hours of operation, and types of businesses.



## 7. LAND USE

- a) Non-farm development shall only be allowed if it will not interfere with, will not disrupt, or will not be incompatible with farming or agricultural use, and will not take significant tracts of land suitable for cultivation or other agricultural use out of production permanently.
  - b) Any new non-farm landowners in this area should be made aware of the Town's "Right-to-Farm" policy position through mailings/newsletters, a posting in a public place, or other similar actions. The Town rescinds Policy #2 on page 2-7 and Strategy 4.7.4 - #2 on page 4-9 of the 2021 Plan requiring signature and recording of "Right-to-Farm" disclosure statements, with the potential exception if the Town should participate in County zoning in the future and such disclosures are required for a specific zoning district. In the future, the Town may reconsider this policy and reinstate the policies requiring "Right-to-Farm" disclosure statements as contemplated on page 3-3 of the 2021 Plan.
  - c) Non-farm residential development shall be directed to land that is marginal for agricultural productivity. No more than 20% of any proposed lot should not contain Class I, II, or III soils, unless it can be demonstrated that areas so classified are for some reason not suitable for farming. In addition, it is the preference of the Town that new non-farm residential lots that are approved in accord with these policies be located adjacent to or near existing non-farm development.
- 5. Large livestock operations (500+ animal units) are only suitable within the Rural Preservation area and must be carefully sited to prevent land use conflict. Roads serving such facilities must be capable of handling anticipated traffic, truck size/weight, etc. The Town recognizes that the Rural Preservation area may contain larger livestock operations and manure storage facilities; landspreading of manure and septic waste may also occur. The Town will collaborate with Eau Claire County and Wisconsin DNR by encouraging nutrient management planning, making landowners aware of County manure management permitting, and by reporting any potential manure spills or improper landspreading.
  - 6. Rural Preservation areas could potentially represent prime candidates for "sending areas" under a countywide Transfer of Development Rights program, purchase of development rights, agricultural enterprise areas, or other land conservation programs.
  - 7. Should the Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, the following Eau Claire County Zoning Districts will be considered for approval within Rural Preservation areas: A-P Agricultural Preservation District, A-1 & A-2 Agricultural-Residential District, A-3 Agricultural District, A-R Floating Agricultural-Residential District (if reinstated), A-CR Agricultural-Conservation Residential District, F-1 Forestry Exclusive District, and the F-2 Forestry Limited District. Nonmetallic mining operations (e.g., small quarries) less than 10 acres may also be appropriate for some of these areas. The Town may also need to work with Eau Claire County to clarify definitions of some activities (e.g., commercial sawmill) for consistency between this Plan and the County Zoning Ordinance.

### **RURAL RESIDENTIAL**

**Description:** The primary intent of this classification is to identify areas suitable for future non-farm residential development, though adjacent agricultural activities may still occur. Rural Residential areas include lands that are delineated as existing residential properties or vacant platted areas. In addition, some undeveloped land has been designated for Rural Residential development where subdivision expansion is most likely to occur. These potential growth areas tend to be adjacent to existing rural subdivisions, located within or adjacent to areas with concentrations of residential development, nearest to the City of Augusta or community destinations such as the school, or located where local roads exist to efficiently and economically serve the area.

### **Policies:**

1. The preferred housing density will vary, but will generally range from one (1) unit per two (2) acres up to one (1) unit per 10 acres, with a preference for the smaller lot sizes within this range in order to preserve farmland and open space.
2. Well-designed, larger subdivisions may be allowed. Cluster development or conservation subdivisions are encouraged. To incentivize such design, planned unit development (PUD) approaches may be used to offer development flexibility and/or additional housing density.
3. Home occupations and home-based businesses may be appropriate for some of these areas, but not cottage industries.
4. While short-term rental property (e.g., AirBnBs) is generally compatible with this area, occupancy should be limited (e.g., no additional campers) and nuisance ordinances should be enforced regarding noise, trespass, etc. Continue to collaborate with the County on licensing and registration of such properties.
5. Should the Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, the following Eau Claire County Zoning Districts will be considered for approval within Rural Residential areas: RH Rural Homes District and the R-L Residential Large Lot District. The Town supports PUD-Planned Unit Development using conservation subdivision design within these areas as well.

### **RURAL HAMLET**

**Description:** The primary intent of this classification is to identify areas suitable for a broader range of commercial, institutional, recreational, and residential uses, but not including uses that require extensive public services. Rural hamlets are clusters of nonagricultural development centered near an unincorporated village, town hall or rural school, and often include one or more older subdivision plats. Rural hamlets typically include one or more retail businesses located at the crossroads of two or more County or State highways. In addition, these areas typically include pre-existing higher density residential developments. The existing land use pattern and transportation infrastructure make these areas suitable for mixed-use neighborhoods with higher density residential development than what is permitted under the Rural Residential classification.

### **Policies:**

1. Within the RH classification, limit new development to a maximum gross density of two (2) residential dwelling units per acre held in single ownership.
2. Cluster development and conservation subdivisions are highly encouraged. Lots within a conservation subdivision shall not exceed five (5) acres per unit, with the exception of the remaining farmstead. Minimum lot sizes shall be 20,000 square feet. Lower lot sizes may be granted for lots served by public or group sanitary & water utilities. Additional bonus lots resulting in a gross density exceeding one (1) unit per acre may be granted per the requirements of a conservation subdivision ordinance. A minimum of 40% of the gross acreage of the parent parcel shall be placed under a permanent conservation easement. To the extent possible, land placed under conservation easements should be contiguous to other open spaces, sensitive natural areas, or agricultural areas in order to provide larger corridors of open space.
3. The Town may require the use of public or group septic systems to support proposed development within this area.
4. Home occupations and home-based businesses may be appropriate for this area, but not cottage industries.

## 7. LAND USE

5. Should the Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, the following Eau Claire County Zoning Districts will be considered for approval within Rural Hamlet areas: R-L Residential Large Lot District, C-1 Commercial Neighborhood District, C-2 Commercial General District, C-3 Commercial Highway District, and the I-L Light Industrial District. PUD-Planned Unit Development may also be appropriate for these areas.
6. The Town does not intend to require an amendment to the Preferred Future Land Use Map if and when it determines that land with the RH classification is appropriate for more intensive development. However, following such a determination, the rezoning of said land shall be required to accommodate the proposed development. As part of annual or decennial updates to this Plan, the Preferred Future Land Use Map should be updated to reflect any expanded or new Rural Hamlet areas.
7. Proposals for more intensive business developments<sup>3</sup> will require an amendment to the Preferred Future Land Use Map to either Rural Commercial or Industrial status prior to approving a zoning map amendment (rezoning) petition.

### **COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL**

**Description:** The primary intent of this classification is to identify areas suitable for planned commercial and industrial development. There are some existing scattered commercial/industrial uses throughout the Town and these areas are expected to stay in commercial use. Given the rural character of the community and previously discussed development limitations, the best uses will be those that are compatible with and/or serve the Town's rural nature. Desired commercial and industrial uses should also be those that serve community needs or those that provide employment and serve the larger region.

#### **Policies:**

1. Commercial and industrial development shall be encouraged to locate near the City of Augusta, existing business developments, or along collector & arterial roadways capable of supporting the traffic. Development of commercial and industrial uses in these areas should be limited to those uses that are compatible with existing or planned commercial and industrial development.
2. Commercial and industrial uses should only be sited on roads capable of supporting the anticipated traffic, including sufficient off-street parking and turn-arounds. These uses should not create multi-modal traffic safety concerns or cause unusual levels of damage to road surfaces.
3. Commercial and industrial uses should not degrade the natural environment or result in community impacts as described in Section 5-C.
4. Reclaimed areas of non-metallic mining sites not currently or proposed for commercial use, storage, extraction, etc. and not proposed for other commercial or residential use, may be treated as Rural Preservation areas under this plan even if identified as Commercial/Industrial use on the Preferred Future Land Use Map. Such circumstances shall be considered consistent with the Preferred Future Land Use Map and do not require a Plan amendment. When such land use changes are permanently made, the Preferred Future Land Use Map should be revised to reflect the Rural Preservation use as part of the Town's next Comprehensive Plan update.
5. The County or local community might require the use of public sanitary systems (particularly when located in an area where such service is available) or group/alternative on-site wastewater treatment

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<sup>3</sup> The uses allowed in the following County Zoning districts can be used as a guide to help identify what are more intensive business developments: C-3 Highway Business, I-1 Non-sewered Industrial, or I-2 Sewered Industrial.

## 7. LAND USE

facilities (particularly for businesses with high wastewater/water demands). Responsibility for long-term maintenance of these systems shall be determined prior to approval.

6. Should the Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, the following Eau Claire County Zoning Districts will be considered for approval within Commercial/Industrial areas: C-1 Commercial Neighborhood District, C-2 Commercial General District, C-3 Commercial Highway District, I-L Light Industrial District. When rezoning is requested, only that portion of land necessary for the contemplated use shall be rezoned and the Town may request that a larger parcel be subdivided for the proposed use. Nonmetallic mining operations (small quarries) less than 10 acres may also be appropriate for some of these areas. PUD-Planned Unit Development may also be appropriate for these areas.
7. **Potential Commercial/Industrial Growth Area** – Consistent with Policy #1, the Preferred Future Land Use Map identifies certain areas near the City of Augusta and/or along major highways where the Town desires to direct proposed Commercial/Industrial uses. These areas effectively have two Preferred Future Land Use classifications—the underlying base classification (e.g., Rural Preservation) and the Commercial/Industrial classification. Within these areas, the description and policies of the underlying base classification shall apply, though the Town would also support proposed Commercial/Industrial uses consistent with the description and policies in this subsection. Land use changes from the underlying base classification to Commercial/Industrial uses are consistent with the Preferred Future Land Use Map and do not require a Plan amendment. If such a change is made, the Preferred Future Land Use Map should be revised to only reflect the Commercial/Industrial use as part of the Town’s next Comprehensive Plan update. Note: Should the Town of Bridge Creek become zoned in the future, the land use change will likely require a zoning map amendment (i.e., rezoning).

### **GOVERNMENT & INSTITUTIONAL**

**Description:** The primary intent of this classification is to identify areas suitable for governmental (public) or institutional development. As mapped, this designation may include religious institutions, cemeteries, school facilities, and property owned by the Town, County, or State, excluding uses that fall within the Park & Recreational or County Forest classification. There are some existing government/public & institutional sites within the Town and these areas are expected to remain unchanged. New government & institutional sites have not been identified in this plan.

#### **Policies:**

1. Depending on scale, governmental and institutional uses can typically be sited in a manner that is compatible with most other, non-conservation land uses and may be appropriate for all other future land use areas.
2. Should Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, applications for the development of government/public & institutional uses shall be approved as conditional uses under the regulations of the Eau Claire County Zoning Code. If rezoning is requested, only that portion of land necessary for the contemplated use shall be rezoned.
3. The Town does not intend to require an amendment to the Future Land Use Map if and when a proposed public or institutional use is approved. As part of annual or decennial updates to this Plan, the Preferred Future Land Use Map should be updated to reflect any expanded or new Government & Institutional areas

### **PARKS & RECREATIONAL**

**Description:** The primary intent of this classification is to identify areas of existing public parks and outdoor recreational uses and areas suitable for such uses. Every effort should be made to ensure that the development of properties adjacent to park and recreational sites is compatible with these properties. Many outdoor recreation uses can be very compatible with the previously identified Environmentally Sensitive Areas. A privately owned park or recreational area owned by a non-profit organization may be included in these areas if public access is not restricted in some manner. Other privately owned parks or recreational areas, including campgrounds, golf courses, theme parks, and certain cultural sites where a fee or membership is involved, are considered commercial activities under this plan.

#### **Policies:**

1. Continue to protect significant natural resources and recreational lands identified in priority setting documents, such as the Eau Claire County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the Eau Claire County Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Lake Eau Claire Management Plan, Coon Fork Management Plan, and the Eau Claire River Watershed Plan.
2. An amendment to the Preferred Future Land Use Map before a public park or recreational use is approved is not required. However, the Preferred Future Land Use Map should be updated as part of any update to this Plan to show this new use.
3. Should the Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, public park and outdoor recreational uses might be approved either as a permitted or conditional use in all zoning districts.

### **COUNTY FOREST**

**Description:** These areas are owned by Eau Claire County and are managed for timber production, recreation, wildlife habitat, nature resource protections, and wildfire mitigation under the direction of the *County Forest Land Use Management Plan*. Overall, the County Forest is maintained in a relatively natural state and preserves the natural character of land along the Eau Claire River. It is not envisioned that the existing uses and activities within the County Forest area would significantly change within the planning period, though some structures and infrastructure may be constructed or improved by the County to support the primary uses previously described including compatible public recreation activities.

#### **Policies:**

1. The Town of Bridge Creek will continue to collaborate with Eau Claire County so that land use plans and proposed development continues to mutually support the goals of this Comprehensive Plan and the Eau Claire County Forest Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
2. Should the Town of Bridge Creek contemplate participating in County zoning in the future, the following Eau Claire County Zoning Districts will be considered for approval within the County Forest areas: F-1 Forestry Exclusive and F 2 Forestry Limited, with preference to the latter.



### 7-H. Land Use Strategies

The following replaces Chapter 4.7.7 within the Implementation Element of the 2021 Plan in its entirety.

1. **The Town of Bridge Creek shall explore a mix of land-use regulatory tools to achieve the goals and objectives of its Comprehensive Plan.** As part of this planning process, the Town Plan Commission contemplated a range of licensing and permitting options (e.g. licensing, nuisance/impact ordinances, land division ordinance, zoning) but this Plan does recommend a specific mix of regulations be implemented beyond those policies already adopted. When applying such tools and considering land use changes or development proposals, apply the description and policies for the applicable land use classification area as described in Section 7-G. (Short-term)
2. **Evaluate the potential adoption of a large livestock facility siting ordinance** for new or expanding livestock facilities with 500 or more total animal units so that State standards apply. If the livestock facility owner does not own sufficient land to implement a 590 Nutrient Management Plan, the applicant should be required to provide signed landspreading contracts providing spreading rights; permits should automatically terminate upon the expiration of such contracts unless alternative contracts consistent with the 590 Nutrient Management Plan have been secured. The Town may also limit the storage period of animal manure. If general zoning is applied to the Town in the future, large livestock facilities should only be sited within areas with agricultural zoning. (Short-term)
3. If potential land use conflicts with short-term rental properties persist, **the Town will consider adopting a Short-Term Rental Properties licensing ordinance** in the future for such facilities, with a possible Room Tax to assist with permitting, enforcement, road maintenance, etc. The Town may consider additional residency or property management requirements as part of the licensing ordinance. (Medium-to-Long term or as needed)
4. **Consider adoption of design guidelines or standards to regulate the character of new development.** Until such design guidance is promulgated by ordinance, the community design principles in Chapter 2.8 of the 2021 Plan will be used for guidance and as an expression of the community's desired vision. (Medium-to-Long term)
5. **The Town should review the Comprehensive Plan annually as described in Chapter 4.7.9. Amendments to the Preferred Future Land Use Map should be considered on a case-by-case basis** based on petitions from a landowner(s) or as determined by the Plan Commission and/or Town Board. The Preferred Future Land Use Plan Map is intended to be a general guide for development and a basis for applying the goals, objectives, policies, and strategies in this Comprehensive Plan. The Map is intended to reflect the Town's long-range vision for the community but will need to be reevaluated periodically to ensure that it remains consistent with changing trends and conditions. The Town does not assume that all areas depicted for potential development on the Preferred Future Land Use Map will develop during the next 20 years. Chapter 3.5 of the 2021 Plan identifies criteria for the consideration of Map amendments. Chapter 4.3 of the 2021 Plan describes the plan amendment procedures. (Continual)

## **Appendix A: Summary of Plans & Programs**

Section 2-C identifies the existing plans and programs most pertinent to the Town of Bridge Creek. The plans and programs within this appendix were also considered when identifying the policies and strategies within this plan update.

This appendix may also be helpful as Bridge Creek implements the recommendations within this comprehensive plan and continues to plan for its future. This summary is not comprehensive or exhaustive. Instead, the Town is encouraged to reach out to the State, regional, county, and other partners identified in Appendix A to explore how such plans and programs may support the Town in its efforts to achieve the goals and objectives within this plan.

## HOUSING PLANS & PROGRAMS

While comprehensive plans must describe those programs which are available to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and projected demand, it is not assumed that the Town is responsible for managing and providing these programs. In fact, there are a wide variety of available programs for residents at a variety of geographic and jurisdictional levels, with the most commonly used and available programs summarized here.

### Federal Housing Programs

#### Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD is the federal agency with primary responsibility for housing programs and community development. HUD is the main repository of resources for housing programs in Wisconsin. HUD provides funding for state developed programs through HOME and other initiatives. It also funds the Continuum of Care Program, and provides Section 8 vouchers, which assist low-income families in finding affordable housing. The Wisconsin HUD office is located in Milwaukee and can be contacted at (414) 297-3214.

#### Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

HOME is a federal housing program to support the provision of low-cost housing. A variety of affordable housing activities may be supported by federal HOME awards including down payment assistance to homebuyers, rental rehabilitation, weatherization-related repairs, accessibility improvements and rental housing development.

The HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD) program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) through its Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR). These programs provide funds to eligible housing organizations for development of affordable rental housing.

The HOME Owner-Occupied Housing Loan program is administered by the DEHCR through the Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program (HHR).

### State Housing Programs

#### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Housing Program

The Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for housing, administered by the DEHCR, provides grants to general purpose units of local government for housing programs which principally benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) households. The CDBG program is a federally funded program through HUD. CDBG funds can be used for various housing and neighborhood revitalization activities including housing rehabilitation, acquisition, relocation, demolition of dilapidated structures, and handicap accessibility improvements. For more information on these programs, visit DEHCR's Community Development Programs webpage.

#### Historic Home Owner's Tax Credits

A 25 percent Wisconsin investment tax credit is available for people who rehabilitate historic, non-income-producing personal residences, and who apply for and receive project approval before beginning physical work on their projects. This program is administered by the Wisconsin Historical Society's State Historic Preservation Office.

#### Homeless Programs

The DEHCR administers programs specifically designed to help homeless people:

- State Shelter Subsidy Grant (SSSG) Program: provides up to one-half of an emergency homeless shelter's program operating budget. Eligible applicants are a county or municipal governing body or agency, an Indian Tribal government, a community action agency, or other private not-for-profit or non-profit organization.
- Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA): This federal program is designed to provide eligible applicants with resources and incentives to devise long-term comprehensive strategies for meeting the housing needs of persons with AIDS or related diseases. Funds are distributed through a competitive process.

- HUD Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program: Funds may be used for outreach to unsheltered individuals and families; emergency shelter, including shelter operations and renovations; homelessness prevention, including rental assistance; rapid re-housing, including rental assistance, rental arrears, application fees, security deposits, and utility payments; and database costs. In addition, up to 7.5% of grants may be used for program administration.
- Interest Bearing Real Estate Trust Account Program (IBRETA): Real estate brokers establish interest bearing real estate trust accounts for the deposit of all down payments, earnest money deposits and other trust funds received by the broker and related to the conveyance of real estate. Interest is remitted to the WDOA. Proceeds augment existing homeless programs.

#### Home Safety Act

A Wisconsin law requires the state's Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) be enforced in all municipalities. This includes the necessity to have new construction inspected for compliance with the UDC, the statewide building code for one- and two-family dwellings built since June 1, 1980. The Home Safety Act (2003 WI Act 90) signed into law by Governor Doyle on December 3, 2003 includes important changes to the enabling statutes for the UDC. The changes were effective as of December 18, 2003.

#### Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI)

Local sponsors compete for state grants annually to reduce the housing costs of low-income renters or home buyers. Eligible applicants include local units of government, American Indian tribes or bands in Wisconsin, housing authorities and non-profit housing organizations. Eligible activities are emergency rental aid, home buying down payment assistance, homeless prevention efforts, and related housing initiatives. The HCRI is administered by the Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources.

#### Property Tax Deferred Loan Program (PTDL)

This state program provides loans to low- and moderate-income elderly homeowners to help pay local property taxes so that the elderly can afford to stay in their homes. To be eligible, individuals must be at least 65 years old with a spouse that is at least 60 years old, unless one is disabled.

#### Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources

The Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources provides housing policy and assistance programs to households. It offers state-funded housing grants or loans through local organizations, coordinates its housing programs with those of other state and local housing agencies, helps develop state housing plans and policies, and provides training and technical assistance. The Division channels federal housing funds to local authorities and organizations and administers federal funds for the homeless.

#### Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority serves Wisconsin residents and communities by working with others to provide creative financing resources and information to stimulate and preserve affordable housing, small business and agribusiness.

#### Wisconsin Weatherization Assistance Programs

The Department of Administration-Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources provides weatherization assistance for units occupied by low-income persons. This service is provided through the three community action programs operating in the region. It is also notable that many residential properties which are being sold for conversion to rental units also have to meet state-minimum energy conservation standards at the time of ownership transfer.

### **Regional Housing Programs**

#### Regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program

The Regional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Housing Program for West Central Wisconsin (inclusive of Polk County) is administered by the Chippewa County Housing Authority. The funds are used to assist Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) homeowners in bringing their homes up to safe and sanitary conditions through the provision of no-interest, deferred payment loans. A separate program component provides homebuyers with no-interest, deferred payment loans for closing costs and downpayments. Repayment is



made at the point that the homeowner no longer occupies the property. Grant funding can also be used for housing acquisition, reconstruction and demolition. Although not currently used in this way, other eligible uses include small neighborhood public facility projects, assistance to developers creating low- and moderate-income rental units, and conversion of buildings into LMI housing. The program is a revolving loan fund with repaid loans being relent to eligible LMI households. New funds for the program are secured through a competitive application process with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA). Visit [www.chippewacountywi.gov/community/housing-authority/home-repair](http://www.chippewacountywi.gov/community/housing-authority/home-repair) for more information.

#### Habitat for Humanity

The goal of this program is to eliminate inadequate housing and poverty housing throughout the world. Local affiliates, including dozens in Wisconsin, are responsible for raising funds, recruiting volunteers, identifying project sites, and constructing owner-occupied housing for the benefit of participating low-income families. Visit [habitat.org](http://habitat.org).

#### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)

The Regional Planning Commission offers technical housing assistance with respect to housing related grants and funding and grant writing. WCWRPC should be contacted for further information. Visit its website at [wcwrpc.org](http://wcwrpc.org).

#### Wisconsin Fresh Start Program

The Fresh Start Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to agencies that would like to establish programs based on the Operation Fresh Start, Inc. service model. The purpose of the program is to provide at-risk young people with education, employment skills, and career direction leading to economic self-sufficiency. This is accomplished through opportunities for meaningful service in the young people's communities by helping to meet the housing needs of low-income individuals and families. The program is designed to provide on-site housing construction and rehabilitation work experience, off-site academic classes, and supportive services for young people, primarily for ages 16-24.

### **County and Local Housing Programs**

#### Eau Claire County Housing Authority

The Eau Claire County Housing Authority is a public housing authority that provides housing resources and services for low and moderate income (LMI) households on a countywide basis.

#### Eau Claire Tenant Landlord Resource Center

The ECTLRC provides information and services to tenants and landlords to resolve disputes and prevent evictions when possible. Visit <https://ectlrc.org/> for more information.

#### Wisconsin Energy Assistance Program

The Wisconsin Energy Assistance Program, administered by Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources for Eau Claire County, assists low-income households with purchasing furnaces when the family's existing furnace is a health hazard or beyond repair. The Division should be contacted for more information.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANS & PROGRAMS**

### **State Plans**

#### Wisconsin Statewide Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan (Connect 2050)

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has a statewide long-range transportation plan through the year 2050, called Connect 2050. The plan addresses all forms of transportation—highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit – and ways to make the individual modes work better as an integrated transportation system. The overall goal of the planning process is to identify a series of policies to aid transportation decision-makers when evaluating programs and projects. The plan is available through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's website.

### Access Management

WisDOT employs three types of access control authorized by state statutes. A short summary of the state statutes follows, but it should be noted that the actual content of the statutes is significantly more detailed, and many special conditions and provisions are not included in this text. The type of access control that is imposed on various highway road segments influences how that segment is managed.

- Wis. Stats. 84.09 (purchase access control) – WisDOT acquires land by gift, devise, purchase or condemnation to establish, extend, or improve transportation facilities.
- Wis. Stats. 84.25 (administrative access control) – WisDOT designates some rural portions of the state trunk highway system as controlled-access highways where studies show that the potential exists for traffic volumes to exceed 2,000 vehicles per 24-hour day.
- Wis. Stats. 84.295 (freeway and expressway access control) – WisDOT designates highways with greater than 4,000 vehicles per day as freeways or expressways when it is determined that the volume and character of traffic warrants the construction or acquisition of right-of-way to accommodate a four-lane highway.

### Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050 and Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

Nine Midwestern states, including Wisconsin, worked together on plans for linking the Midwest into a national passenger rail network, adopting a plan in 2000. Funding was acquired for the implementation of the leg between Milwaukee and Madison, and for the next phase of study, corridor selection, between Milwaukee and Minneapolis. In 2010, Wisconsin abandoned the project, returning the implementation funds to the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) and discontinuing participation in the corridor selection study. MnDOT continued the corridor study without Wisconsin's cooperation, eventually recommending a route through La Crosse over routes through Eau Claire that would have more closely served the Town of Bridge Creek. While environmental study continues on the La Crosse route, the Eau Claire corridor is still shown in local, regional, and state (Minnesota and Wisconsin) transportation plans.

### Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan – 2020

This is the state's major plan for developing and integrating bicycles into the transportation system. It was adopted by WisDOT in 1998 and looked at creating a system of bikeways using suitable routes along County and state highways. An update to the Bicycle Transportation Plan is currently underway within the Active Transportation Plan 2050.

### State Recreational Trails Network Plan

This plan was adopted in 2001 and updated in 2003 by WDNR as an amendment to the Wisconsin State Trail Strategic Plan to identify a network of trail corridors throughout the state consisting of more than 4,000 miles of trails known as the Trail Interstate System. An update to the Trails Network Plan is currently underway.

### Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) developed the Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020 to provide a long-range vision addressing Wisconsin pedestrian needs. The Pedestrian Plan provides a basic description of existing and emerging pedestrian needs over the next 20 years, with a set of recommendations to meet those needs. WisDOT's efforts ensure that this plan complements both existing and future long-range transportation plans. An update to the Bicycle Transportation Plan is currently underway within the Active Transportation Plan 2050.

## **Regional and Local Plans**

Eau Claire County and the Town of Bridge Creek consider applicable State, regional, and local transportation plans in the development of their own respective transportation plans. Both entities submit Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) plans to WisDOT in order to receive LRIP funding. The Town of Bridge Creek manages its local transportation improvements through its annual roads evaluation and planning.

## State Programs

### Adopt-A-Highway Program

The Adopt-A-Highway Program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT). The program was initiated to allow groups to volunteer and support the state's antilitter program in a more direct way. Each qualified group takes responsibility for litter control on a segment of state highway. The group picks up litter on a segment at least three times per year between April 1 and November 1. Groups do not work in dangerous areas like medians, bridges, or steep slopes. In addition, a sign announcing a group's litter control sponsorship can be installed. The state Adopt-A-Highway coordinator should be contacted for further information. Applications and forms are available through the WDOT website.

### Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)

WISLR is an internet-accessible system that helps local governments and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) manage local road data to improve decision-making, and to meet state statute requirements. With Geographic Information System technology, WISLR combines local road data with interactive mapping functionality. WISLR provides a system for local governments to report local road information (such as width, surface type, surface year, shoulder, curb, road category, functional classification, and pavement condition ratings) to WisDOT. Local governments can use WISLR to organize, analyze, update, and edit their data.

### Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) Program

The Transportation Economic Assistance program provides 50% state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor, and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state. Grants of up to \$1 million are available for transportation improvements that are essential for an economic development project. It must be scheduled to begin within three years, have the local government's endorsement, and benefit the public. For more information about this program, contact: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Investment Management, phone (608) 266-3488.

### Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources does provide funding to local governments for trails, paths, routes, and other infrastructure for alternative modes of transportation, such as biking, walking/hiking, boating, and ATVs. Though these programs often have a recreational focus, such facilities can many times be an important component of a community's transportation strategy.

### Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources (DEHCR)

DEHCR is a division within the Wisconsin Department of Administration. It administers many of the federal HUD Community Development Block Grant programs at the state level. This funding includes the CDBG-Public Facilities program for infrastructure and building projects which may include streets and specialized transportation projects.

### Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Transportation programming efforts in Wisconsin are largely coordinated or funded through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), including the distribution of federal transportation assistance dollars. Many of these key assistance programs for county and local governments are listed below.

- **General Transportation Aids (GTA)** return about 30% of all state-collected transportation revenues to local governments for road construction, maintenance, and other related costs
- **Local Roads (LRIP) and Local Bridge Improvement Programs** assist local governments in improving seriously deteriorating roads and bridges.
- **Surface Transportation Program (STP)** uses allocated federal funds for the improvement of federal-aid-eligible local (STP-L), rural (STP-R), and urban (STP-U) roads and streets.



- **Connecting Highway Aids** are available to municipalities for roadways connecting to the State Trunk Highway system, in particular if increased traffic is experienced.
- **Rural (RTAP) and State Urban Mass Transit Assistance** allocate federal funds to support capital, operating, and training expenses for public transportation services.
- **County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance** funds provide counties with financial assistance to provide transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Capital funds through the **Section 5310 Program** are also available for non-profits and local governments. A related WisDOT-administered program is **New Freedom**, which provides Federal Transit Administration funds to private and public entities for programs which assist individuals with disabilities to overcome transportation-related barriers so they may get to work.
- **Wisconsin Employment Transportation Assistance Program (WETAP)** provides start-up and development grant funding for projects which connect low-income workers with jobs through enhanced local transportation services. WETAP includes federal **Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)** Program funding and related requirements.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** funds projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives (e.g., bicycling, pedestrian), landscaping/streetscaping, and the preservation of historic transportation structures.
- **Safe Routes to School Program** is a federal program administered by WisDOT aimed at helping communities to make it safer for children to walk and bike to and from school and to encourage them to do so. In addition to planning grants, implementation of education, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation programs and projects are also eligible under the program.
- **Airport Improvement Program** combines a variety of resources to fund improvements for the state's public-use airports which are primarily municipally owned. Additional program and regulatory support is also available through the Federal Aviation Administration.
- **Freight Rail Programs** for the preservation of existing rail service through rail acquisition and rehabilitation, and for the improvement of rail infrastructure.

Each year, WisDOT updates a four-year **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program** of all highway and transit projects that propose to use federal funds. WisDOT also has a variety of specialty assistance programs, such as Flood Damage Aids, Rustic Roads, County Forest Road Aids, and the Adopt-A-Highway Program. Data for local roads is managed by WisDOT through the Internet-accessible **Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)**.

## Regional and Local Programs

### Eau Claire County Highway Departments

The County Highway Department has responsibilities regarding the maintenance and repair of county highways.

### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWPRC)

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission offers highway, rail and airport planning services as well as access control planning, pavement management plans, thoroughfare plans, traffic and parking studies, and pedestrian/bicycle trail planning guidance. Contact WCWPRC for further information.

### Eau Claire County Aging & Disability Resource Center

The Eau Claire County ADRC provides transportation resources for residents that meet certain qualifications. Rides for medical appointments are available. Rides for shopping, business, or social needs may be available, but are based on funding availability. Contact the ADRC for additional information and eligibility requirements.



## UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLANS & PROGRAMS

### Assistance to Firefighting Grant Program

This program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The program assists rural, urban, and suburban fire departments to increase the effectiveness of firefighting operations, expand firefighting health and safety programs, purchase new equipment, and invest in EMS programs. For information regarding the grant contact FEMA Grant Program staff at 1-866-274-0960. For the most current information regarding grant awards and any other USFA projects, visit [fema.gov/](https://www.fema.gov/).

### Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund)

Funds are available to assist local communities acquire and develop public outdoor recreation areas as per s. 23.09 (20), Wis. Stats. Counties, towns, cities, villages, and Indian Tribes with an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan are eligible to apply. The program is offered by the WDNR, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance. There is a 50% local match required. Awards are granted on a competitive basis. Acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas are eligible projects. Priority is given to the acquisition of land where a scarcity of outdoor recreation land exists.

### Eau Claire County Outdoor Recreation Plan

Eau Claire County Forest & Parks Department manages the County Park and outdoor recreation facilities within the Town using the guidance of its Outdoor Recreation Plan last updated in 2022. This plan enables the County to pursue WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant funding for recreational improvements and the acquisition of conservation lands.

### Brownfields Initiative

The Brownfields Initiative provides grants to persons, businesses, local development organizations, and municipalities for environmental remediation activities for brownfield sites where the owner is unknown, cannot be located, or cannot meet the cleanup costs. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information.

### Clean Water Fund Program

Funds are available to protect water quality by correcting existing wastewater treatment and urban storm water problems and preventing future problems as per s. 281.58 and 281.59, Wis. Stats. Cities, towns, villages, counties, town sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and federally-recognized tribal governments are eligible to apply. Eligible projects include construction of treatment works, sewer systems, interceptors, and urban stormwater runoff treatment systems. Projects that are necessary to prevent violation of discharge permits, meet new or changed discharge limits, or correct water quality or human health problems in unsewered areas may receive priority for funding. Low interest loans are available for planning, design, and construction of wastewater treatment projects and urban storm water runoff projects approved by the Department. The program is offered by the WDNR.

### WEDC Brownfield Grants Program and Idle Sites Redevelopment Program

The Brownfield Grant and Brownfield Site Assessment Grant are designed to assist communities with assessing or remediating the environmental contamination of an abandoned, idle, or underused industrial or commercial facility or site in a blighted area, or one that qualifies as blighted. Critical to obtaining a grant is a redevelopment plan that describes how the property will be reused for commercial or industrial development that results in jobs and private investment in the community.

The Idle Sites Redevelopment program is in place for redevelopment plans of large idle, abandoned, or underutilized sites. These sites will need to have been in this condition for at least 5 years. Eligible activities include rehabilitation, demolition, remediation, or infrastructure improvements. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation should be contacted for further information on these programs.

### Community Development Block Grant for Public Facilities (CDBG-PF)

The Wisconsin CDBG Public Facilities Program is designed to assist economically distressed, smaller communities with public facility improvements. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, publicly-owned utility system improvements, streets, sidewalks, and community centers. Federal grant funds are available

annually. The maximum grant for any single applicant is \$1,000,000. Grants are only available up to the amount that is adequately justified and documented with engineering or vendor estimates. For more information on this program contact the Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources.

#### Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED)

The CDBG Public Facilities for Economic Development Program helps underwrite the cost of municipal infrastructure necessary for business development that retains or creates employment opportunities. Eligible activities are improvements to public facilities such as water systems, sewerage systems, and roads that are owned by a general or special purpose unit of government, and which will principally benefit businesses, and which as a result will induce businesses to create jobs and invest in the community. The Wisconsin Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources should be contacted for further information.

#### Household and Agricultural Hazardous Waste Collection Grant (Clean Sweep)

Funds are available to municipalities to create and operate local “clean sweep” programs for the collection and disposal of hazardous waste. Any type of program for the collection and disposal of hazardous wastes, including permanent collection programs, is eligible. The program is offered from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Eau Claire County, which currently coordinates county-wide clean sweep events, can also be contacted for further information.

#### Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)

TIF can help a municipality undertake a public project to stimulate beneficial development or redevelopment that would not otherwise occur. It is a mechanism for financing local economic development projects in underdeveloped and blighted areas. Taxes generated by the increased property values pay for land acquisition or needed public works. Town governments in Wisconsin have a more limited authority to establish certain types of TIF districts compared to cities and villages. The Town of Bridge Creek has not utilized TIF to date.

## **AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS**

There are many agricultural, forestry, and natural resource conservation programs which area residents and communities can access, and a variety of related programs. The following is a description of some of the natural and cultural resources programs that may be of particular interest to the Town and its residents, though this list is far from comprehensive. The County Land Conservation Department, the County UW-Extension Office, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the local NRCS and Farm Services Agency are excellent resources for additional information.

### **Agricultural & Forestry Programs**

#### U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is tasked with implementing Federal farm conservation programs to improve the economic stability of the agricultural industry, maintain a steady price range of agricultural commodities, and help farmers adjust to changes in demand. These goals are achieved through a range of farm commodity, credit, conservation, loan, and disaster programs, including Federal Crop Insurance. Also part of the USDA is the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), which was formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service. The NRCS provides data, maps, technical expertise, and training in soils, conservation techniques, ecological sciences, and other such activities. The USDA has service centers located in each county in the region, which include the FSA and NRCS offices. Local USDA staff typically work very closely with local UW-Extension Agriculture Agents and county conservation staff to assist farmers and municipalities in their respective counties.

#### Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program Wis. Stats. §91

The Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program was established in 1977 to assist local government efforts to preserve agricultural resources. The Program was updated in 2009 as part of the Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative. Eligible farmland owners receive state income tax credits. The amount of the credit varies and new credit rates went into effect in tax year 2023. The largest credit of \$12.50 is available to landowners in an area zoned for farmland preservation and in an agricultural enterprise area (AEA) with a farmland preservation

agreement signed after July 1, 2009, or in an area zoned for farmland preservation and with a farmland preservation agreement modified after July 1, 2009.

#### Farmland Preservation Planning & Agricultural Enterprise Areas

Eau Claire County has one Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA), the Golden Triangle AEA, which includes part of the Town of Bridge Creek. AEAs are community-led efforts establishing designated areas important to Wisconsin's agricultural future. More specifically, an AEA is an area of productive agriculture that has received designation from the state at the request of landowners and local governments.

As of Fall 2024, Eau Claire County is updating its farmland preservation plan. The plan will identify and update the County's Agricultural Preservation Areas, thus allowing participating farmers whose property lies within Eau Claire County's certified Agricultural Preservation (A-P) zoning district or within the Golden Triangle Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) to claim state tax credits on their annual tax returns.

#### Farmland Use Value Assessment (1995 Wisconsin Act 27; Wis. Stats. §70.32(2r) & 73.03(49))

With the passage of the State 1995-1997 Budget Act, the standard for assessing agricultural land in Wisconsin changed from market value to use value. With taxation of land based on the income that could be generated from the land's rental for agricultural use, rather than development potential, the program helps Wisconsin farmers to maintain current farming practices, rather than succumbing to development due to economic pressures. Only land devoted primarily to agricultural use qualifies. For reference, undeveloped land (e.g., bog, marsh, lowland brush, wetlands) is assessed at 50% of its full value.

#### Livestock Facility Siting Ordinances Wis. Stats. §93.90 & ATCP 51

The role of local governments in the regulation of the site of new and expanded livestock operations changed significantly in 2006 with the adoption of Wisconsin Statutes §93.90 and Administrative Rule ATCP 51. Effective May 1, 2006, local ordinances which require permits for livestock facilities must follow state rules. The siting standards only apply to new and expanding livestock facilities in areas that require local permits, and then only (in most communities) if they will have 500 animal units (AU) or more and expand by at least 20%.

No such facility siting rules currently apply for the Town of Bridge Creek, which is unzoned. Eau Claire County continues to enforce similar rules for zoned towns that were created prior to the passage of the Livestock Facility Siting law. For most communities with zoning, the new Statute limits the exclusion of livestock facilities from agricultural zoning districts, unless another ag district exists where operations of all sizes are allowed and the exclusion is for public health and safety based on scientific findings of fact. However, such facilities can be treated as a conditional use. Appeals of local permit decisions are taken to the State Livestock Facility Siting Review Board. The changes in state rules for livestock facility siting do not impact a local government's ability to enforce shoreland-wetland zoning, erosion controls, stormwater management requirement, manure storage ordinances, and road regulations.

#### Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The purpose of EQIP is to provide technical and financial help to landowners for conservation practices that protect soil and water quality. Nutrient management and prescribed grazing are eligible for cost-sharing statewide. Assistance for other practices is available in selected priority areas. Approved projects are based on environmental value. Contracts are used. Payment rates are reviewed and set each fiscal year. Public access is not required. Contact one of the local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Center, Farm Service Agency, or Rural Development offices. The County Land and Water Conservation Department may also be able to assist.

#### Targeted Runoff Management Grants

Wisconsin DNR's Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) Grant Program offers competitive grants for local governments for the control of non-point source pollution. Grants from the TRM Program reimburse costs for agricultural or urban runoff management practices. Eau Claire County Land Conservation has used these funds in the past to promote and support agricultural best practices within the County and Town.

#### University of Wisconsin-Extension

UW-Extension offices provide a variety of educational and support programming in the areas of agribusiness, land use and soil management. To assist farmers and local governments, a UW-Extension Agricultural Agent is located in each county in the region with county support.

#### Forest Land Tax Programs Wis. Stats. §70 & 77

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources manages two forestry tax laws that provide tax incentives to encourage proper management of private forest lands for forest crop production, while recognizing a variety of other objectives. The Forest Crop Law (FCL) program allows landowners to pay taxes on timber only after harvesting or when the contract is terminated, though enrollment in this program was closed in 1986. The Managed Forest Law (MFL) program replaces the FCL and the now-defunct Woodland Tax Law Program. The Woodland Tax Law program expired in 2000, and there are no active contracts under this program in Wisconsin.

The Managed Forest Law (Wisconsin Statutes §77.80) was enacted in 1985 and offers flexibility for private owners of 10 or more acres of contiguous woodlands who enroll in the program. Under the MFL program, landowners have the option to choose either a 25- or 50-year order period; and the annual tax varies depending on whether the land to open or closed to public access (certain restrictions apply). Enrollees are obligated to submit and follow a forest management plan, submit a harvest report, and permit inspections, in exchange for technical support, tax benefits, and good woodlot management. Participants in the MFL program are automatically eligible for American Tree Farm System group certification which provides certain marketplace benefits.

#### Eau Claire County Forest Management Plan

Eau Claire County is currently in the process of updating its 15-year forest management plan. The statutory purposes of this plan is to: “provide the basis for a permanent program of county forests and to enable and encourage the planned development and management of the County Forests for optimum production of forest products together with recreational opportunities, wildlife, watershed protection and stabilization of stream flow, giving full recognition to the concept of multiple use to assure maximum public benefits; to protect the public rights, interests and investments in such lands; and to compensate the counties for the public uses, benefits and privileges these lands provide; all in a manner which will provide a reasonable revenue to the towns in which such lands lie.”

### **Other Natural Resources Programs**

#### Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR)

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources develops, maintains, implements, and enforces a wide variety of programs, plans, and permitting for west central Wisconsin. WisDNR is perhaps most visible to the region’s residents through its management of state parks, trails, and other recreational or natural areas, as well as permitting for hunting, fishing, trapping, and burning. WisDNR also provides educational programs and training to residents and teachers/instructors in hunting, ecology, outdoor skills, safety, and regulatory compliance. Training and assistance are also available to governments and businesses in regulatory compliance, grant programs, etc. And WisDNR scientists and managers are working to address potential conflicts and threats to wildlife and recreational opportunities, such as invasive species.

But local governments often have more contact with WisDNR officials on planning, permitting, grants, and regulatory issues, such as stormwater planning, financial assistance for outdoor recreation or environmental remediation, or permitting as it relates to utilities, mining, burning, wetlands, and water discharges. More information and contact information for WisDNR programs and plans can be found at their website.

#### WisDNR Division of Water and Watershed Management

The Division of Water promotes the balanced use of Wisconsin's waters to protect, maintain and enhance them in full partnership with the public. Communities with municipal water supplies also interact with the Division of Water through water quality testing and reporting and wellhead protection. WisDNR has the authority to issue permits affecting navigable waters of the state. These permits include bulkhead line ordinance establishment, bridge or culvert placement, dam construction, stream realignment, retaining wall



construction, water diversion and pond construction. The Bureau of Watershed Management administers programs on dam safety, floodplain mapping and management, impaired waters, shoreland management, runoff management, the priority watershed program, and a variety of water-related permits. The Bureau also conducts basin planning or “water quality management planning” for the state, of which local sewer service area plans are part. Beginning in 1999, the water quality management program worked with state lands and fisheries programs to develop integrated basic plans statewide.

#### 2003 Wisconsin Act 307 – Notification to Nonmetallic Resource Owners

This Act amends portions of the Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law to increase communication and notification of local planning with owners of nonmetallic mineral sites. Public participation procedures must now include written procedures describing the methods the local government will use to distribute proposed, alternative, or amended elements of a plan to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property, which may extract nonmetallic mineral resources on the property. This is only required if the comprehensive plan changes the allowable use or intensity of use of the given property. 2003 Wisconsin Act 307 also added provisions to the Comprehensive Planning Law detailing that prior to a public hearing written notice shall be provided to property owners or operators with an interest in nonmetallic mineral resources.

#### Non-Point Pollution Abatement Program

Funds and technical assistance are available to improve water quality by limiting or ending sources of non-point source (run-off) water pollution by providing financial and technical assistance to landowners, land operators, municipalities, and other governmental units. Governmental units located within designated priority watersheds, or whose jurisdiction include priority lakes, are eligible to apply. Efforts are focused statewide in critical watersheds and lakes where non-point source related water quality problems are most severe and control is most feasible. Rural landowners or land operators, whose properties lie within selected priority watersheds or include a priority lake, can contact their county land conservation department to receive an explanation of the program and to sign up for cost sharing of best management practices. Cost sharing is capped at 50% as of 2023. Non-rural landowners and land operators can contact their municipal government offices. Contact the WDNR West Central Region Community Financial Assistance Specialist for further information.

#### Surface Water Grants

Cost-sharing grants are available for water protection or restoration planning and projects through the Department of Natural Resources. Sub-categories of these grants include projects to manage or prevent Aquatic Invasive Species or to implement shoreland/riparian projects (e.g., Healthy Lakes & Rivers). A comprehensive list of these grants can be found on the WDNR's Surface Water Grant Program website. The Regional Environmental Grant Specialist can also assist with identifying grants and determining eligibility. Eau Claire County, Lake Eau Claire organizations, and Eau Claire River Watershed partners have all utilized these grant funds in the past for planning, education, and projects for the benefit of the surface waters and fisheries in the Town. Eau Claire County has also made special grant funding available for similar projects during recent years.

#### Stewardship Grants for Non-profit Conservation Organizations

Funds are available for the acquisition of land or easements for conservation purposes, and restoration of wildlife habitat. Non-profit conservation organizations are eligible to apply. Priorities include acquisition of wildlife habitat, acquisition of lands with special scientific or ecological value, rare and endangered habitats and species, acquisition of stream corridors, acquisition of land for state trails including the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail, and restoration of wetlands and grasslands. Eligible types of projects include fee simple and easement acquisitions and habitat restoration projects. Contact the WDNR for further information.

#### Brownfield Remediation/Redevelopment

Programs under the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation provide funding for acquisition, remediation, and redevelopment of designated “brownfield” sites. Contact the WDNR or WEDC for further information.

## HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES PLANS & PROGRAMS

### Historic Building Code

Wisconsin Statute 101.121 *et seq.* addresses the Wisconsin Historic Building Code, which facilitates the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures. Once historic building owners obtain permission to use the Historic Building Code, they may use it in lieu of any other state, county, or municipal code. The code is designed to help owners maintain the historic appearances of their buildings and allow them to use original materials and construction techniques that may no longer be permitted under present day building codes. To qualify to use the code, property owners must own buildings that fall under the code's definition of a historic building. Buildings listed in, nominated to, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or State Register of Historic Places qualify as historic under the code. The code may also be applied to properties located in National Register and State Register historic districts. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services administers the Historic Building Code and can be contacted for further information.

### Wisconsin Historical Preservation Tax Credits

One of the benefits of owning a historic property in Wisconsin is the ability to participate in federal and state income tax incentives programs for rehabilitation of historic properties. There are currently three programs available to owners of properties that are either listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the state or national registers of historic places. The three programs are:

- 1 Federal 20% Historic Rehabilitation Credit. Additional information and tax credit programs are available through the National Park Service.
- 2 Wisconsin 5% Supplement to Federal Historic Rehabilitation Credit.
- 3 Wisconsin 25% Historic Rehabilitation Credit. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Division of Historic Preservation should be contacted for further information.

### Wisconsin Historical Society

The Society is the federally-designated State Historic Preservation Office. The Society provides a range of resources for information concerning state or federal laws and regulations, information on grassroots strategies for preserving and protecting historic properties, or information on how you may protect and preserve your own historic property.

### Wisconsin's Historical Markers Program

Wisconsin's State Historical Markers program has been interpreting both important small incidents and monumental events that form the State's past. Placed on the very site where significant events occurred, markers evoke an immediacy of the past that no history book can provide. The Society's Division of Historic Preservation administers the Wisconsin Historical Markers Program. Applications are required for all official State of Wisconsin historical markers and plaques. Applications are available at [www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15267](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS15267).

### National Historic Landmarks Program

National Historic Landmark status is the highest level of national designation. These are properties of exceptional value to the nation that retain a high degree of architectural and historical integrity. The purpose of the National Historic Landmarks Program is to identify and designate these properties and to encourage their long-range preservation. Nomination preparers should consult the Division of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service before proceeding with a National Historic Landmark nomination.

### National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Services Fund

Grants from this fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation are designed to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects. These grants help stimulate public discussion, enable local groups to gain the technical expertise needed for particular projects, and encourage financial participation by the private sector. PSF award applicants must be a non-profit organization or public agency capable of matching the grant amount dollar-for-dollar. Funding is available up to \$5,000.

#### Public Humanities Program, Wisconsin Humanities Council

The Wisconsin Humanities Council (WHC) provides funding from \$500 to \$10,000 for public humanities programs. The WHC accepts proposals for projects that enhance appreciation of the importance of particular historic buildings or that increase public awareness of the importance of particular buildings or decorative art works in Wisconsin. More information can be found at [wisconsinhumanities.org](http://wisconsinhumanities.org).

#### Jeffris Heartland Fund

The Jeffris Family Foundation provides grants between \$5,000 to \$50,000 for historic preservation projects. Additional information can be found at [jeffrisfoundation.org/](http://jeffrisfoundation.org/).

#### Certified Local Government Program

Local units of government that have enacted historic preservation ordinances may consider being certified to participate in the state and federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The CLG program provides special grants to fund planning and educational activities. The Division of Historic Preservation at the Wisconsin Historical Society administers the CLG program. Wisconsin has 40 Certified Local Governments. For more information about the Certified Local Government please visit the Society's Web site at [wisconsinhistory.org/](http://wisconsinhistory.org/) or the National Park Service's Web site at [nps.gov/nr/](http://nps.gov/nr/).

#### Local Organizations

A wide variety of local organizations are involved in promoting cultural or historical resources, which are important partners in related planning and programming. Key local partners and programs are discussed in the Historic and Cultural Resources element.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS & PROGRAMS**

There are many organizations, programs, grants, and services available to assist with economic development planning and activities. A number of the programs related to infrastructure development were previously discussed in the Utilities and Community Facilities element. The following are some commonly referred to economic development plans and programs.

#### U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides financial assistance to help distressed communities overcome barriers that inhibit the growth of their local economies. EDA provides assistance for public works projects, planning, research and technical assistance, grants, and education. The WCWRPC is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration. It is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. For more information, see [wcwrpc.org](http://wcwrpc.org).

#### USDA, Wisconsin Rural Development Programs

The Wisconsin Rural Development Program has many services that are available to rural communities and their residents. Available programs and services include: community development programs, business and community programs, rural housing and utilities services, and community facility programs. For more information visit the Wisconsin Rural Development web site at [rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html](http://rurdev.usda.gov/wi/index.html).

#### Wisconsin Economic Development Association

WEDA is a statewide association of 410+ member organizations whose primary objective is to increase the effectiveness of individuals involved in the practice of economic development in Wisconsin by encouraging cooperation, exchange of information and promotion of professional skills. With a proactive Council and involved membership support, we will continue to advance the professionalism of Wisconsin's economic development efforts. For more information see [weda.org/](http://weda.org/).

#### Wisconsin Department of Administration

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (WDOA) has several grant programs and services available to communities or businesses within communities. The federally funded Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG) program can be used for housing, economic development, and public facility improvements. The following programs are available:

- CDBG Public Facility (PF) program for infrastructure and buildings benefitting the public
- CDBG Economic Development (ED) funding for business expansions, employee training and business infrastructure
- CDBG Public Facility-Economic Development (PF-ED) funding for public infrastructure necessary for business expansions

For more information, see [energyandhousing.wi.gov/Pages/CommunityResources.aspx](http://energyandhousing.wi.gov/Pages/CommunityResources.aspx).

#### Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) nurtures business growth and job creation in Wisconsin by providing resources, technical support, and financial assistance to companies, partners and the communities they serve. For more information, see [inwisconsin.com/](http://inwisconsin.com/).



One program within WEDC is the Main Street Program. The Main Street Program helps communities revitalize their downtown areas. The National Main Street Center and state staff offer a comprehensive range of professional services that follow a four-point approach: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. More information on the Wisconsin Main Street Program can be found at: [inwisconsin.com/mainstreet/](http://inwisconsin.com/mainstreet/).

#### Wisconsin Department of Tourism

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism has four primary grant programs and provides technical assistance and support to promote tourism and to maintain a strong tourism industry in Wisconsin. The grant programs include the Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Program for tourism marketing, the Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Program for sporting events, the Tourist Information Center (TIC) Program, and the Meetings Mean Business Program to support conventions. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for further information at: [industry.travelwisconsin.com/](http://industry.travelwisconsin.com/).

#### Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Program

The Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Program provides partnership funding to help non-profit organizations promote tourism and to maintain a strong tourism industry in Wisconsin. JEM is based on state statutes and administrative rules that govern its administration, and permit the department to conduct a matching grant program with local non-profit organizations on a cooperative basis. The program offers Wisconsin's tourism communities a variety of options to assist in the development of marketing initiatives. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Tourism for further information.

#### Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) is a state agency charged with building and strengthening Wisconsin's workforce in the 21st century and beyond. The Department's primary responsibilities include providing job services, training, and employment assistance to people looking for work, at the same time as it works with employers on finding the necessary workers to fill current job openings.

Under the DWD umbrella, a wide variety of employment programs can be found which include securing jobs for the disabled, assisting former welfare recipients as they make a transition into work, promoting 72 job centers, linking youth with the jobs of tomorrow, protecting and enforcing worker's rights, processing unemployment claims, and ensuring workers compensation claims are paid in accordance with the law. There are six divisions within the Department which is headed by a Secretary appointed by the Governor. For further information visit the website at [dwd.wisconsin.gov](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov).



The Office of Economic Advisors (OEA), within DWD, researches the relationships between labor markets and other economic and demographic factors. OEA economists and analysts serve in regions throughout Wisconsin. Staff works closely with partners to provide timely analysis of labor market data and economic trends.

Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP) – Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

The LAMP is a federal program created by the 2018 Farm Bill and under the supervision of the USDA-RD. Several funding programs have been established under the LAMP umbrella. One such program is the VAPG program, which provides funding to projects that have the potential to bolster agricultural profits or productivity. Projects may include new production or marketing techniques, alternative crops or enterprises, new value-added products, or new market research. U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development should be contacted for further information.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) provides many avenues for business owners to work with the agency in growing and sustaining Wisconsin's economy. The Office of Business Support and Sustainability is the agency's one-stop shop for business assistance. The office's mission is to work across programs to create the business climate that yields better environmental and economic performance. Some of the programs administered through the WDNR are:

- ◆ Remediation & Redevelopment (RR) Program: The WDNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program oversees the investigation and cleanup of environmental contamination and the redevelopment of contaminated properties. WDNR provide a comprehensive, streamlined program that consolidates state and federal cleanups into one program (e.g., hazardous waste cleanup, underground storage tank investigation & cleanup, spill response, state-funded cleanups and brownfields).
- ◆ Business sector support: Sector development specialists are WDNR staff who work with specific industrial or commercial sectors. They serve as the first point of contact for those businesses, providing coordinated technical and compliance assistance across all DNR divisions and programs. Sector development specialists work to improve environmental and economic performance by clarifying requirements, facilitating flexible approaches to requirements and enabling practices that improve profitability and market performance.
- ◆ Improved environmental and economic performance is pursued through various strategies including pollution prevention, waste minimization, energy efficiency, supply chain management, green chemistry, market development and many others. The sector specialists will also work with a business or sector to address trends important to business retention and market development related to environmental performance.
- ◆ Green Tier: Green Tier assists green business ventures. WDNR assists businesses with credible, creative ways to enable businesses to be a powerful, sustainable force for environmental good and enhance productivity, cut costs and strengthen the health of culture and community.
- ◆ DNR SwitchBoard: The WDNR SwitchBoard is for people who need to securely login and access forms and reporting systems which are usually related to a specific company or municipality.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

The following economic programs are offered by WHEDA.

- ◆ Credit Relief Outreach Program: CROP features 90% guarantees on loans of up to \$30,000 made by local lenders. Interest rates are competitive, and payment is not due until March 31 of the following year. CROP can be used for feed, seed, fertilizer, pesticides, land rent, custom hire, animal feed, UCC filing fees, crop insurance, feeder animals, tillage services, equipment rental or repair, or utilities for commodity production. You cannot use CROP for property taxes, farm house utilities, existing loans, capital improvements, CROP loan interest, accounting services, or revolving lines of credit.
- ◆ Farm Assistance Reinvestment Management grants: FARM is for the producer who wants to expand or modernize an existing operation. FARM gives you access to credit by guaranteeing a loan made by your local lender. You can purchase agricultural assets including machinery, equipment, facilities, land, and

livestock. You can also make improvements to farm facilities and land for agricultural purposes. FARM cannot be used for a farm residence, existing loans, maintenance, or other working capital needs that are eligible under CROP.

- ♦ **Small Business Guarantee:** A guarantee is a pledge of support on a bank loan. WHEDA will guarantee a portion of a loan made to you by your local lender. A WHEDA Small Business Guarantee can be used to expand or acquire a small business. It can also be used to start a day care business, including one owned by a cooperative or non-profit. The guarantee can be used for most of your financing needs, including working capital and refinancing of business notes and credit card debt.

#### Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) administers the Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) program which provides 50 percent state grants to governing bodies, private businesses, and consortiums for road, rail, harbor and airport projects that help attract employers to Wisconsin, or encourage business and industry to remain and expand in the state. For more information, see [dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.htm](http://dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/tea.htm).

#### Momentum West

Momentum West is a regional economic development organization serving Barron, Clark, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce, Pepin, Rusk, and St. Croix counties. The mission of Momentum West is to develop partnerships and leverage the resources in West Wisconsin to market the region and grow the economy. For more information, see [momentumwest.org/index.cfm](http://momentumwest.org/index.cfm).

#### West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

On a multi-county level, the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission conducts economic development and project development. The Commission is designated as an economic development district by the Economic Development Administration and produces an annual, regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and is required to undertake economic development planning and project identification for all seven counties of the region. The Commission provides local economic strategies, industrial site analyses, economic development financing, county economic and population profiles, EMSI Analyst information, and community and industrial park profiles. In addition WCWRPC can assist communities with placemaking initiatives, Tax Incremental Financing (TIF), grant coordination, writing and administration. For more information, please see [wcwrpc.org](http://wcwrpc.org).

#### Regional Business Fund, Inc.

Most\* communities in Eau Claire County are covered by a business revolving loan fund. The Regional Business Fund, Inc. offers low-interest loan funds to businesses that expand within the region; diversify the economy; add new technology; revitalize buildings in the region's downtowns; create or retain quality jobs; and leverage private capital investment in the region. Visit [www.rbfinc.org](http://www.rbfinc.org) for more information.

*\* As the City of Eau Claire is an entitlement community, businesses within the City are not eligible for any Consolidated Fund programs but may qualify for other RBF, Inc. programs.*

#### Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corporation

The Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corporation supports all economic growth in Eau Claire County and the region. The goal of the corporation is to strengthen local businesses, support the local talent pool, recruit new businesses, and support local entrepreneurs. Visit [www.eauclaire-wi.com/](http://www.eauclaire-wi.com/) for more information.

#### Extension Eau Claire County, University of Wisconsin

The University of Wisconsin-Extension has an office in Altoona. Extension develops practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research. County-based Extension educators are University of Wisconsin faculty and staff who are experts in agriculture and agribusiness, community and economic development, natural resources, family living, nutrition, 4-H, and youth development.

Extension county-based faculty and staff live and work with the people they serve in communities across the state. Extension specialists work on UW System campuses where they access current research and knowledge. Visit [www.eauclaire.extension.wisc.edu/](http://www.eauclaire.extension.wisc.edu/) for more information.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The following general intergovernmental plans and programs are available to the Town, in addition to those plans and programs mentioned in other sub-sections of this element.

### Wisconsin Towns Association

The Wisconsin Towns Association is a statewide not-profit association. The Association provides an information library, legal information related for Wisconsin towns, and educational opportunities for members.

### Annexation

Wisconsin Statute, 66.021, Annexation of territory, provides three petition methods by which annexation may occur. Annexation involves the transfer of one or more tax parcels from a town to a City or Village. Cities and villages cannot annex property without the consent of landowners as required by the following petition procedures:

1. Unanimous Approval - A petition is signed by all of the electors residing in the territory and the owners of all of the real property included within the petition.
2. Notice of intent to circulate petition (direct petition for annexation) - The petition must be signed by a majority of electors in the territory and the owners of one-half of the real property either in value or in land area. If no electors reside in the territory, then only the landowners need sign the petition.

Annexation by referendum - A petition requesting a referendum election on the question of annexation may be filed with the City or Village when signed by at least 20 percent of the electors in the territory.

### Extraterritorial Zoning

Wisconsin Statute, 62.23(7a) allows a City or Village to participate with towns in the zoning of lands outside their incorporate boundaries. For the City of Augusta, the extraterritorial area would encompass 1.5 miles. The steps for exercising this power are identified in the Statutes and include working with the Town to create a joint extraterritorial zoning committee with three City and three town members to create the extraterritorial zoning plan. A majority of the joint committee members must approve the zoning plan recommendations.

### Extraterritorial Subdivision Review

Wisconsin Statute, 236.10 allows a City or Village to exercise its extraterritorial plat review authority in the same geographic area as defined within the extraterritorial zoning statute. However, extraterritorial zoning requires town approval of the zoning ordinance, while extraterritorial plat approval applies automatically if the City or Village adopts a subdivision ordinance or official map. The town does not approve the subdivision ordinance for the City or Village. The City or Village may waive its extraterritorial plat approval authority if it does not wish to use it.

The purpose of extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction is to help cities influence the development pattern of areas outside their boundaries that will likely be annexed to the City or Village. This helps cities protect land use near its boundaries from conflicting uses outside its limits. Overlapping authority by the City and Village is prohibited. This situation is handled by drawing a line of equal distance from the boundaries of the City and Village so that not more than one ordinance will apply.

### Office of Land Information Services, Municipal Boundary Review

Municipal Boundary Review regulates the transition of unincorporated areas to City or Village status through municipal annexation, incorporation, consolidation, or by joint City-Village-town activities involving cooperative boundary plans and agreements. Such agreements may change territorial boundaries and may provide for the sharing of municipal services. Staff members are available upon request to meet with local officials and citizens to discuss annexation, incorporation, consolidation, and cooperative boundary plans. Contact the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Office of Land Information Services for further information.

### UW-Extension Local Government Center

The mission of the Local Government Center is to provide focus, coordination, and leadership to UW System educational programs for local government, and to expand the research and knowledge base for local government education. The Center conducts and coordinates educational programming in general local government, local government finance, growth management, and community planning and design. Additional programs are under

development. The Center supports the programming of county-based Extension faculty. A variety of resources regarding intergovernmental cooperation are available through the Local Government Center. For further information visit its website at [localgovernment.extension.wisc.edu/](http://localgovernment.extension.wisc.edu/)

#### Wisconsin Intergovernmental Statute Agreements

The following statutes in Wisconsin promote and allow for intergovernmental cooperation:

##### *66.0301 - Intergovernmental Cooperation*

Wisconsin Statute, 66.0301 permits local agreements between the state, cities, villages, towns, counties, regional planning commissions, certain special districts, including school districts, public library systems, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, sanitary districts, farm drainage districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and sewer utility districts, Indian tribes or bands, and others. Intergovernmental agreements prepared in accordance with s. 66.0301, formerly s. 66.30, are the most common form of agreement and have been used by communities for years, often in the context of sharing public services such as police, fire, or rescue. This type of agreement can also be used to provide for revenue sharing, determine future land use within a subject area, and to set temporary municipal boundaries. However, the statute does not require planning as a component of any agreement and boundary changes have to be accomplished through the normal annexation process.

##### *66.0307 - Boundary changes pursuant to approved cooperative plan*

Under Section 66.0307, Wisconsin Statutes, combinations of municipalities may prepare cooperative boundary plans or agreements. Each City, Village, or Town that intends to participate in the preparation of a cooperative plan must adopt a resolution authorizing its participation in the planning process.

Cooperative boundary plans or agreements involve decisions regarding the maintenance or change of municipal boundaries for a period of 10 years or more. The cooperative plan must include: a plan for the physical development of the territory covered by the plan. It must also include; a schedule for changes to the boundary; plans for the delivery of services; an evaluation of environmental features and a description of any adverse environmental consequences that may result from the implementation of the plan; and it must address the need for safe and affordable housing. The participating communities must hold a public hearing prior to its adoption. Once adopted, the plan must be submitted for state approval. Upon approval, the cooperative plan has the force and effect of a contract.

##### *66.0309 Creation, Organization, Powers and Duties of Regional Planning Commissions*

Wisconsin Statute 66.0309 permits local governments to petition the governor to create a regional planning commission (RPC). If local support for a commission is unanimous, the governor may create it by executive order. The governor may also create a commission if local governments representing over 50% of the population or assessed valuation of the proposed region consent to the creation. Either local governments or the governor appoints commission members. State Statutes require the RPC to perform three major functions:

- Make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the region.
- If requested by a local unit, report recommendations to that local unit on the location of, or acquisition of, land for any of the items or facilities that are included in the adopted regional master plan.
- Make an annual report of its activities to the legislative bodies of the local governmental units within the region.

RPCs are also authorized to perform several other functions, however, by law, they serve a strictly advisory role. Eau Claire County is a member of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.



## LAND USE PLANS & PROGRAMS

The following are some general land use plans and programs. Land use implementation tools are addressed in the Implementation element.

### West Central Wisconsin Comprehensive Plan

As required by State Statute, West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission adopted a regional comprehensive plan in September 9, 2010. This advisory document includes all of the nine elements required under State comprehensive planning statutes, plus an additional energy and sustainability element. While consistency between regional, county, and local planning is encouraged, it is not required.

### Eau Claire County Comprehensive Plan

Eau Claire County updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2020. This Plan guides land use and programming decisions for the County government. While consistency between regional, county, and local planning is encouraged, it is not required. The Town considered the County's plan and its future land use map when amending/updating its comprehensive plan in 2024-2025.

### **Additional Land Use Programs**

#### *AB608, Wisconsin Act 233 – Clarification of Smart Growth Law*

This bill was signed into law in April 2004. This new law reduces the number of programs or actions with which a comprehensive plan must be consistent. Under the new legislation, the only actions which must be consistent with a comprehensive plan are official mapping, local subdivision regulation, and zoning ordinances, including zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands. The bill also reiterates that an RPC's comprehensive plan is only advisory in its applicability to a political subdivision (a City, Village, Town or County), and a political subdivision's comprehensive plan.

#### *Wisconsin Land Information Program*

The Wisconsin Land Information Program is a voluntary, statewide program that provides financial support to local governments for land records modernization efforts. All 72 Wisconsin counties voluntarily participate in the Program. The Wisconsin Land Information Council oversees the Program's policies. The Council's statutory authority includes preparing guidelines to coordinate the modernization of land records and land information systems; implementing a grant program for local governmental units; approval of countywide plans for land records modernization; serving as the clearinghouse for access to land information; and providing technical assistance and advice to state agencies and local governmental units with land information responsibilities.

#### *Division of Intergovernmental Relations, Wisconsin Department of Administration*

The Division of Intergovernmental Relations provides staff support to the Wisconsin Land Council, and it administers the Wisconsin Land Information Program in conjunction with the Wisconsin Land Information Council. It also houses Plat Review and Municipal Boundary Review, both of which have statutory authority for approval of specific land use related requests, and the GIS Services, dedicated to the efficient use of geographic information systems. For further information about the division visit its web-site via the WDOA web-site at: [www.doa.wi.gov](http://www.doa.wi.gov).

#### *UW-Extension Center for Land Use Education*

The Center for Land Use Education uses a team-based approach to accomplish its dual missions in campus based undergraduate and graduate education and Extension outreach teaching related to: land use planning, plan and ordinance administration, project impact and regional trends analysis, and public involvement in local land use policy development. For more information on the Center for Land Use Education visit its web-site at [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/).