Comprehensive Plan
2015

Marquette County
Wisconsin

PUBLIC HEARING VERSION: December 2, 2015

Recommended by County Planning and Zoning Committee: December 2, 2015

Adopted by Marquette County Board: January 21, 2016

Page intentionally left blank

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MARQUETTE COUNTY BOARD

Bob Miller, Chair
Mary Walters, Vice Chair
Robert Goldsmith, Sr.
Karl Spath
Jim Sanders
Jan Banicki
Shirley Floeter
Gerald Hebert II
Robin Buchholz
Lyle Snyder
Gary Thalacker
Ken Borzick
Mike Raddatz
Jon Sheller
Frank Breitenbach
Kristen Skolarz
Al Gibeaut

MARQUETTE COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE

Mary P. Walters, Chair
Jan Banicki
Robert Goldsmith, Sr.
Jim Sanders
Karl Spath

FARMLAND PRESERVATION STEERING COMMITTEE

Robin Buchholz, Chair
Suzie Seehaver
Al Gibeaut
Karl Spath
Jim Sanders
Richard Gumz
Meagan Hoffman
Dan Breene
James Kruger

COUNTY STAFF

Thomas Onofrey, Zoning Administrator
Jerol Smart, Surveyor
Megan Stalker, Land Information Technician
Patrick Kilbey, Conservationist
Dustin Grant, Zoning Technician
Nora Beskow, Administrative Assistant

CONSULTANTS

MDRoffers Consulting
Project Management and Planning
www.mdroffers.com

Osterberg Planning
Plan Drafting/Meeting Facilitation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY 1
Background and Progress 2
Purpose of this Plan 3
MAP 1: JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES 5
Planning Process Overview 7
Plan Organization 7
Opportunities and Key Plan Themes 8
Plan Implementation 8
CHAPTER ONE: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES 1
A. Population Trends and Forecasts 2
FIGURE 1.1: HISTORIC POPULATION, 1960 - 2010 2
FIGURE 1.2: POPULATION TRENDS, 1970 - 2010 3
FIGURE 1.3: MUNICIPAL POPULATIONS AND PROJECTIONS, 2010-2040 3
FIGURE 1.4: POPULATION FORECASTS, 2010 - 2040 4
B. Demographic Trends and Forecasts 4
FIGURE 1.5: AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION, 2010 4
FIGURE 1.6: COUNTY AGE COHORT FORECASTS, 2010 TO 2040 5
C. County Assets and Initiatives 5
MAP 2: MARQUETTE COUNTY'S ASSETS AND INFLUENCES 9
CHAPTER TWO: NATURAL RESOURCES 1
A. Natural Resource Inventory 2
MAP 3: NATURAL AREAS 9
B. Natural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies 11
C. Natural Resource Programs and Recommendations 12
FIGURE 2.1: BENEFITS OF VEGETATIVE BUFFERS 14
FIGURE 2.2: PORTION OF AN EXAMPLE SITE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST 21
CHAPTER THREE: CULTURAL RESOURCES 1
A. Cultural Resource Inventory 2
B. Cultural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies 3
C. Cultural Resource Programs and Recommendations 4
CHAPTER FOUR: AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES 1
A. Agricultural Resource Inventory 2
FIGURE 4.1: FARM CHANGES IN MARQUETTE COUNTY, 1978 TO 2012 3
FIGURE 4.2: MARQUETTE COUNTY CHANGES IN CROP ACREAGE, 1992-2012 3
FIGURE 4.3: MARQUETTE COUNTY FARM SIZE TRENDS, 1992-2012 4
FIGURE 4.4: CHANGES IN MARKET VALUE, GOVERNMENT PAYMENTS, AND DIRECT SALES; MARQUETTE COUNTY, 1992-2012 6
FIGURE 4.5: AGRICULTURAL LAND SALES, 2011-2013 7
MAP 4: SOIL SUITABILITY FOR AGRICULTURE 9
B. Agricultural Resource Goal, Objectives and Policies 15
C. Agricultural Resource Programs and Recommendations 16
MAP 5A: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF BUFFALO 21
MAP 5B: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF CRYSTAL LAKE 23

MAP 5C: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF HARRIS 25
MAP 5D: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF MECAN 27
MAP 5E: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF MOUNDVILLE 29
MAP 5F: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF NESHKORO 31
MAP 5G: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF NEWTON 33
MAP 5H: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF OXFORD 35
MAP 5I: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF PACKWAUKEE 37
MAP 5J: PLANNED LAND USE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN MAP FOR THE TOWN OF WESTFIELD 39

CHAPTER FIVE: LAND USE 1
A. Existing Land Use 2
FIGURE 5.1: ESTIMATED EXISTING LAND USE TOTALS, 2014, MARQUETTE COUNTY 4
MAP 6: EXISTING LAND USE 5
FIGURE 5.2: NEW LOTS CREATED, MARQUETTE COUNTY TOWNS, 2003 - 2013 7
FIGURE 5.3: MARQUETTE COUNTY HOME SALES, 2007 - 2013 8
FIGURE 5.4: EQUALIZED LAND VALUES, 1990 - 2010 8
FIGURE 5.5: PROJECTED RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DEMAND 9
B. Land Use Goal, Objectives and Policies 10
MAP 7: PLANNED LAND USE 11
C. Land Use Programs and Recommendations 13
D. Opportunities for Redevelopment and Smart Growth Areas 29

CHAPTER SIX: TRANSPORTATION 1
A. Existing Transportation Facilities 2
B. Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies 7
C. Transportation Programs and Recommendations 8
FIGURE 6.1: RECOMMENDED SPACING BETWEEN DRIVEWAYS ALONG TOWN ROADS 12
MAP 8: EXISTING AND PLANNED TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES 17

CHAPTER SEVEN: UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES 1
A. Existing Utilities and Community Facilities 2
MAPS 9 AND 10: FIRE AND AMBULANCE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES 4
FIGURE 7.1: SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT, 2008-2014 5
B. Utilities and Community Facilities Goal, Objectives and Policies 8
C. Utilities and Community Facilities Programs and Recommendations 9
FIGURE 7.2: TIMETABLE TO IMPROVE OR ENHANCE COUNTY FACILITIES (MULTIPAGE FIGURE) 17

CHAPTER EIGHT: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT 1
A. Existing Housing Framework 2
FIGURE 8.1: MARQUETTE COUNTY HISTORIC AGE AND HOUSEHOLD TRENDS, 1970-2010 2
FIGURE 8.2: HOUSING BY TYPE, MARQUETTE COUNTY, 2000-2012 2
FIGURE 8.3: COMPARISON OF HOUSING STOCK CHARACTERISTICS, 2010 3
FIGURE 8.4: HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTIC COMPARISONS, 2010 3

FIGURE 8.5: HOUSEHOLD POPULATION AND SIZE PROJECTIONS, 2010-2040 4
FIGURE 8.6: AGE OF HOUSING IN MARQUETTE COUNTY 4
FIGURE 8.7: MARQUETTE COUNTY REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS, 2007-2013 5
B. Housing & Neighborhood Development Goal, Objectives and Policies 7
C. Housing & Neighborhood Development Programs and Recommendations 8
CHAPTER NINE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 1
A. Existing Economic Development Framework 2
FIGURE 9.1: MARQUETTE COUNTY LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS, 2009-2013, ESTIMATE 3
FIGURE 9.2: AVERAGE MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT, 2011 - 2014 4
FIGURE 9.3: COUNTY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 10
FIGURE 9.4: INTERSTATE 39 INTERCHANGE ANALYSIS 11
FIGURE 9.5: INTERSTATE 39 SEGMENT CHARACTER ANALYSIS 12
B. Economic Development Goal, Objectives and Policies 13
C. Economic Development Programs and Recommendations 14
CHAPTER TEN: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION 1
A. Existing Regional Framework 2
B. Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal, Objectives, Policies & Programs 4
C. Detailed Intergovernmental Cooperation Programs 6
D. Potential Conflicts and Processes to Resolve Them 7
FIGURE 10.1: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS 9
CHAPTER ELEVEN: IMPLEMENTATION 1
A. Plan Adoption 2
B. Implementation Recommendations 2
FIGURE 11.1: RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS 3
C. Plan Monitoring, Amendments, and Update 4
D. Consistency Among Plan Elements 6

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

MARQUETTE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A. BACKGROUND AND PROGRESS

Marquette County adopted the original *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* in 2005. In the 10 years since adoption, the County has advanced and completed a number of initiatives from that 2005 *Plan*. Major accomplishments include:

- *Creation of the Marquette County Tourism Commission/Tourism and Visitors Bureau.* Through the 2005 comprehensive planning process, participants identified tourism as a key component of the County's economy, and the County suggested that a group should be created to promote area tourism activities. The subsequent creation these two groups, which developed www.travelmarquettecounty.com and a tourism newsletter and magazine, has been integral in providing information about County amenities. This program is partially funded through a room tax, managed by the Tourism Commission.
- *Increased County Efficiency.* In 2005 Marquette County analyzed County space, facility, and equipment needs. This analysis enabled the County to prioritize capital spending across departments. To date, almost all of facility projects identified in 2005 have been completed, including building, structure, systems, and energy improvements to the Highway Department's Montello, Westfield, and Neshkoro shops; construction of new buildings for the County's Health and Human Services Departments; designation and construction of an information technology center; and several park and recreation improvements.

- *Zoning Code Amendments.* Through the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan*, the County advised several amendments to its zoning code to improve development options and quality. In 2008, Marquette County amended the code to allow for a wider range of commercial and industrial uses, accommodate clustered residential development, and establish site design standards for non-residential land uses.
- *Full Implementation of Private Sanitary System Maintenance Program.* Improving water quality was a key directive of the 2005 *Plan*. Recognizing the correlation between malfunctioning septic systems and water quality, the Marquette County Zoning Department established a program to ensure that all septic systems within the County are on a regular maintenance program, ensuring that systems are not releasing untreated waste into ground or surface water.

This 2015 update to the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* establishes a new work program and set of objectives for the County, while furthering the vision set forth in the original *Plan*. It is the County's sincere hope that implementation of the updated *Comprehensive Plan* will be at least as successful as what was accomplished in the 10 year period since 2005 *Plan* adoption.

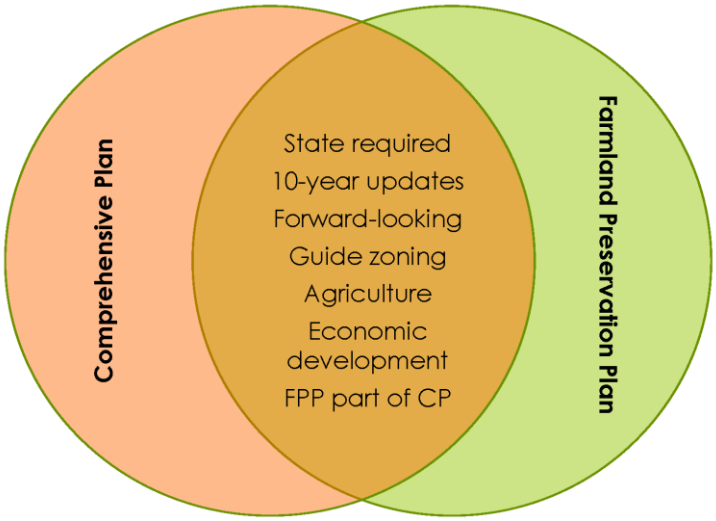
B. PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The purpose of the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* is to help guide decision-making by:

- Identifying areas appropriate for development and preservation over the next 20 years.
- Recommending types of land uses for specific areas in the County, guided by participating towns, villages, and the City. Local planned land use maps were brought together to form Marquette County's planned land use map, presented on the following page and in Chapter Five: Land Use.
- Identifying needed transportation and community facilities to serve future land uses.
- Setting forth detailed strategies to grow Marquette County's economy and increase quality of life.
- Providing detailed strategies to implement recommendations.

This *Plan* was prepared under the **State of Wisconsin's comprehensive planning legislation contained in Section 66.1001 of Wisconsin Statutes.** This *Plan* meets all statutory requirements of the State law. In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes, all zoning and subdivision ordinances and land use decisions undertaken by the County have to be consistent with this *Plan*, as it may be amended over time

This *Comprehensive Plan* also contains **an update to the 1982 Marquette County Farmland Preservation Plan, under Chapter 91 of Wisconsin Statutes.** The farmland preservation component is intended to guide the County's actions to preserve agricultural land and activity, particularly within those towns that chose to designate "farmland preservation areas" over at least parts of the town area. As suggested by the graphic to the right, there is a significant amount of overlap between required comprehensive plan and farmland preservation plan elements, and under Chapter 91 the farmland preservation plan is supposed to be adopted as an element of county comprehensive plans. The required farmland preservation plan elements are mainly contained in the Agricultural Resources and Land Use chapters, but also extend into other chapters.



Like in 2005, this updated Comprehensive Plan was prepared in cooperation with Marquette County's **towns, villages, and the City of Montello.** Map 1: Jurisdictional Boundaries, shows the boundaries of all the communities and other jurisdictions in Marquette County.

Page intentionally left blank

Map 1: Jurisdictional Boundaries

Page intentionally left blank

C. PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW

Marquette County, in cooperation with local units of government, conducted several public participation events to involve public officials and private citizens in the *Comprehensive Plan* update. The County Planning and Zoning Committee oversaw the general *Plan* update process, while an ad hoc Farmland Preservation Steering Committee guided the farmland preservation planning aspects. Involvement opportunities included:

- *Countywide "Quadrant" Meetings.* Two sets of meetings (six total) informed the public and local officials about the farmland preservation planning and comprehensive plan update projects, developed plan directions, and gathered feedback on preliminary plan policies.
- *Local Government Meetings.* County staff and consultants met with local governments individually discuss the *Comprehensive Plan* update, farmland preservation, and the relationship to local planning. This focused on updating town, village, and City planned land use maps for inclusion within this County *Comprehensive Plan*. A total of 23 meetings were conducted at the municipal level.
- *County and Related Committee Meetings.* Standing County committees and other countywide groups guide portions of the updated *Comprehensive Plan* that pertained to their roles. The Marquette County Highway Committee, Land and Water Conservation Committee, Economic Development Corporation, Tourism and Visitor's Bureau, Tourism Commission, Planning and Zoning Committee, Farmland Preservation Steering Committee, Parks and Rural Planning Committee and Public Property Committee all held open meetings.
- *Recommendation and Approval Meetings.* The Planning and Zoning Committee in September 2015 recommended this *Plan* to the State for certification under its farmland preservation program. Following such certification, on December 2, 2015, the Committee conducted a public hearing and recommended *Plan* approval to the County Board. On January 21, 2016, the County Board adopted this *Comprehensive Plan*.

D. PLAN ORGANIZATION

This *Comprehensive Plan* is **organized into twelve chapters which roughly correspond with nine required plan elements under the Statutes.**

The first and last chapters differ in format from the rest. The first chapter (Issues and Opportunities) describes demographic and other trends affecting the County, forecasts future demographic change, describes the County's assets, and puts forth key plan themes and opportunities. The final chapter (Implementation) provides recommendations, strategies, and timelines to ensure the implementation of this *Plan,* including the process for *Plan* amendments and updates.

Each remaining chapter of this *Comprehensive Plan* covers a different aspect of the County's future growth, preservation, and change (e.g., land use, transportation). Each chapter includes a goal, objectives, policies, and programs which provide direction for the County Planning and Zoning Committee, County Board, County residents, and other interested groups and individuals to guide the future preservation and development of Marquette County over the next 20 years.

Goals, objectives, policies and programs are defined below:

- ***Goals*** are broad statements that express general public priorities about how the County should approach development issues during the next 20+ years.
- ***Objectives*** are more specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.
- ***Policies*** are rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Policies are intended to be used by decision-makers on a day-to-day basis.
- ***Programs*** are specific projects or services that are advised to achieve plan goals, objectives, and policies.

E. OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY PLAN THEMES

Successful implementation of this *Comprehensive Plan* depends on identifying and capitalizing on the **County's unique assets and opportunities.** Marquette County's opportunities are based on its regional position among growing urban areas, transportation and internet accessibility, abundant and unspoiled natural resources for recreation and relaxation, and the County's unique cultural flavor and history. Key themes and directions within this *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* include a program to attract and retain County residents; greater marketability of nature-, heritage-, agricultural and commercial-based tourist destinations; growth in traditional job and retail developments serving local and regional residents; and preservation of agricultural and natural areas.

Building on these key themes and directions, the remaining pages of this Introduction and Summary chapter summarize the key recommendations from each chapter of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

F. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Several **follow-up actions will be required for this *Comprehensive Plan* to become reality**. These actions will require substantial cooperation with local governments and property owners before implementation. Other County government priorities may also affect the completion of recommended implementation actions in suggested timeframes. Key "next steps" following plan adoption include:

- In cooperation with the towns, amend the County's zoning ordinance and maps to incorporate a State certified farmland preservation zoning district.
- Support the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation in implementing a coordinated economic development strategy
- Implement a program to attract and retain young professionals
- Identify County service and budgetary priorities through a strategic planning process
- Adopt a capital improvement program to address County facility needs over time
- Follow a consistent process to amend and update this *Plan* as future needs require

Natural Resources

- Protect environmental corridors, which are made up of wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes
- Protect and enhance surface and groundwater quality and quantity through a variety of basic initiatives
- Support sustainable agricultural and woodland management
- Continue to promote tourism and economic development related to natural resources, including the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Water Trail
- When new development is proposed, assure that natural features are identified by requiring a site assessment
- Continue to proactively plan for and address natural hazard events

Cultural Resources

- Protect known archeological and historic sites
- Promote heritage tourism, including the Barn Quilts and Hidden History Murals Trail, the John Muir Neighborhood and Nature and History Route, the Veterans Memorial Route, the Marquette County Historical Society Museum and historical buildings, and J.P. Vaughn Hall exhibits and events
- Identify and protect the character of areas with unique scenic, cultural, or historic value

Agricultural Resources

- Retain agriculture as a vital part of Marquette County's economy
- Minimize non-farm development, such as housing, in predominantly agricultural areas to allow farming to thrive in these areas
- Expand farmer and other stakeholder knowledge and understanding of the farmland preservation tax credit program
- Promote the health small- and large-scale farm operations
- Participate in State processes to review and manage the community and environmental impacts of large-scale livestock operations
- Encourage the expansion of local consumption of agricultural products produced in the County

Land Use

- Assemble town, village, and city updated planned land use maps to form the County's planned land use map
- Assist adjacent local governments resolve minor differences between their planned land use maps
- Minimize the conversion of agricultural lands by mapping planned agricultural areas, updating the County's AG-1 zoning district, and guiding new growth to already developed locations
- Guide intensive new development (e.g., industrial, multiple family) to areas with public utilities and services
- Encourage creative, high-quality development, including conservation/cluster designs for new homes in rural areas

Transportation

- Recognize that the County's transportation network is critical to its economic health
- Maintain State and County highways, and make improvements, primarily to address safety concerns
- Update County highway access control standards to ensure safe access
- Prepare model specifications for new town roads to assure proper construction
- Support and plan for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including the Ice Age Trail and connections to it

Utilities and Community Facilities

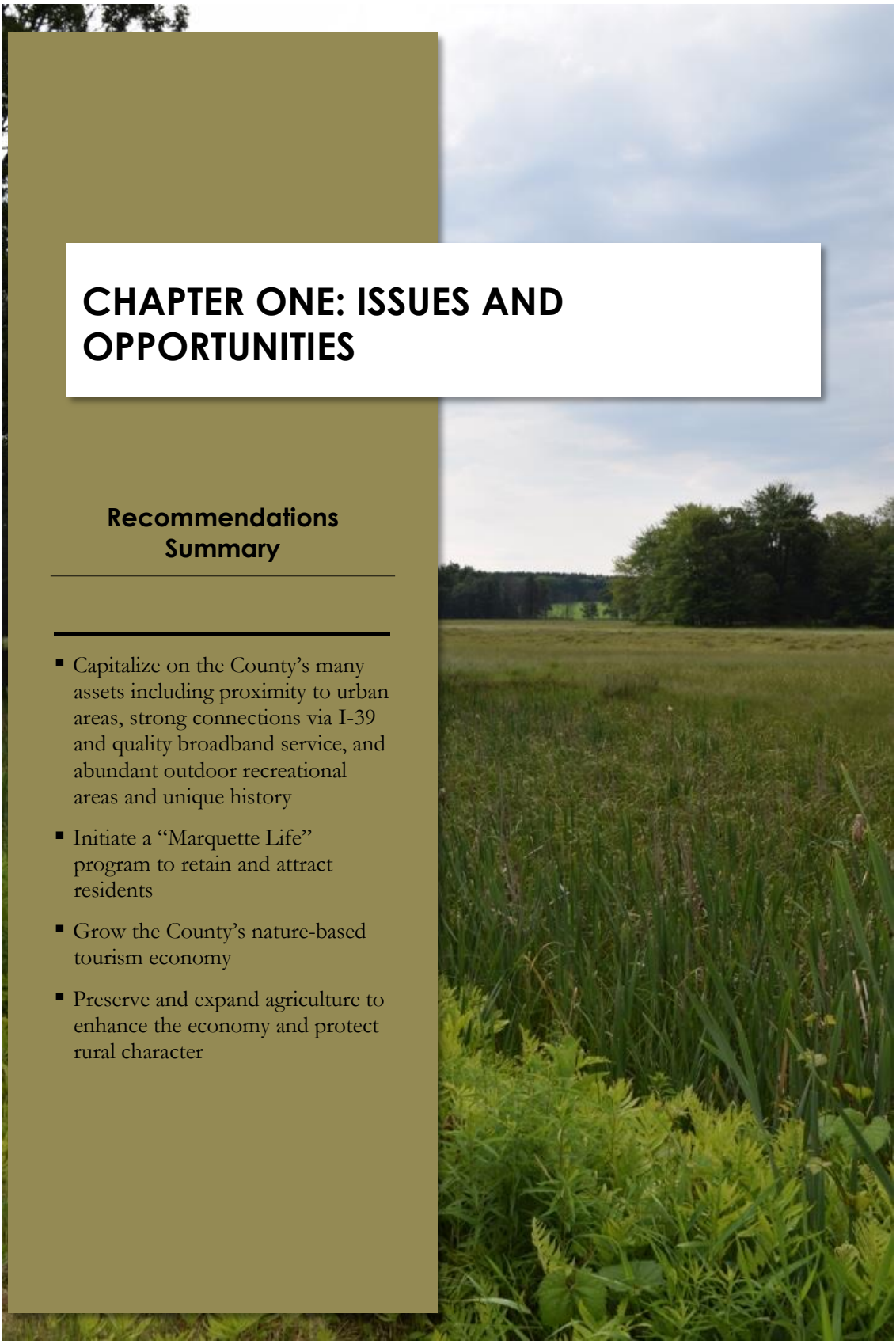
- Promote coordinated, long-term sanitary waste treatment planning, particularly in waterfront areas
- Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater, especially since most residents rely on private wells
- Recognize the role of local schools as both educational and community facilities
- Continue coordination on emergency service provision, while addressing current staffing and budgetary challenges
- Plan for the future of County park facilities and pursue funding assistance for planned facility improvements
- Identify County service and budgetary priorities through the strategic planning process

Housing and Neighborhood Development

- Provide enough land to meet forecasted housing demand, while retaining rural and small town character
- Accommodate affordable housing of various types and costs for all ages, income levels, and special needs
- Work with municipalities and home builders to increase the supply of new housing and neighborhoods that will appeal to families
- Encourage creative designs for new neighborhoods, including traditional and conservation neighborhood design

Economic Development

- Collaborate with the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation on a countywide economic development approach, building on natural and other unique regional assets.
- Focus on four key economic development strategies: retaining existing businesses and companies, nurturing rural entrepreneurship, pursuing tourism- and recreation-based development, and supporting home-based businesses.
- Implement a program to attract and retain young professionals
- Generally guide intensive commercial and industrial development to the City and villages
- Promote and support redevelopment of downtown areas, and of contaminated and underutilized sites
- Utilize site design standards to ensure high quality and long lasting commercial and industrial development



CHAPTER ONE: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Recommendations Summary

- Capitalize on the County's many assets including proximity to urban areas, strong connections via I-39 and quality broadband service, and abundant outdoor recreational areas and unique history
- Initiate a "Marquette Life" program to retain and attract residents
- Grow the County's nature-based tourism economy
- Preserve and expand agriculture to enhance the economy and protect rural character

Through this chapter, Marquette County analyzes current and forecasted demographic conditions, explores future opportunities, and puts forth key plan themes and initiatives. This chapter sets the framework for the remainder of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

A. POPULATION TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Marquette County has experienced moderate population growth over the past 50 years. Figure 1.1 shows the County's population from 1960 to 2010, along with the proportion of the population that lived in a town (i.e., unincorporated community), or in a village or the City of Montello (i.e., incorporated communities). The County distribution of people in towns versus the City and villages grew during the 1960s and 1970s, but has remained stable over the past two decades.

There was relatively little growth in the County during the mid-twentieth century, but the **1970s saw strong growth.** At that stage, the entire nation experienced a "rural renaissance" as manufacturing firms moved into rural areas and city residents sought out nearby recreation and retirement areas. Marquette County, with its abundant natural resources and proximity to Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, the Fox Valley, and other nearby urban areas, took part in this movement. Most new migrants the County during the 1970s were seeking recreational or retirement homes along lakeshores or woodlots. This movement continued, albeit at a slower rate, throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

The two components of population change are natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (the number of people leaving an area subtracted from the number of people moving into an area). **Net migration has played a larger role in population change** in the County than natural increase. The Department of Workforce Development estimates that the County did not experience a natural increase in the population between 2010 and 2013, while its net migration during the same period was -0.2%.

Figure 1.1: Historic Population, 1960 - 2010

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
In Marquette County	**8,516**	**8,865**	**11,672**	**12,321**	**14,555**	**15,404**
In Towns	5,380 (63%)	5,733 (65%)	8,219 (70%)	8,668 (70%)	10,512 (72%)	11,146 (72%)
In City and Villages	3,136 (37%)	3,132 (35%)	3,459 (30%)	3,653 (30%)	4,043 (28%)	4,258 (28%)

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1950-2010

Figure 1.2 compares Marquette County's population trends over the past 30 years to trends in neighboring counties and the State. From 2000 to 2010, the County's growth rate of about 5.8% was comparable to Waushara County (6.2%) and the State (6.0%).

Figure 1.2: Population Trends, 1970 - 2010

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	10 Year Change*	% Change*
Marquette County	**8,865**	**11,672**	**12,321**	**14,555**	**15,404**	**+849**	**+5.8**
Green Lake County	16,878	18,370	18,651	19,105	19,051	-54	-0.3
Waushara County	14,795	18,526	19,385	23,154	24,496	+1,342	+6.2
Adams County	9,234	13,457	15,682	18,643	20,875	+2,232	+11.9
Columbia County	40,150	43,222	45,088	52,468	56,833	+4,365	+8.3
East Central Region**	475,090	511,033	542,712	609,438	651,835	+42,397	+7.0
Wisconsin	4,417,731	4,705,767	4,891,769	5,363,675	5,686,986	+323,311	+6.0

Sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970 – 2010; East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 2013
** 2000 to 2010 population change*
*** Includes Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Menomonee, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago Counties*

Population estimates and projections for the County's towns, villages, and City are provided in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: Municipal Populations and Projections, 2010-2040

	Census	Estimate	Projections					
Towns	**2010**	**2013**	**2015**	**2020**	**2025**	**2030**	**2035**	**2040**
Buffalo	1,221	1,222	1,285	1,335	1,420	1,475	1,505	1,500
Crystal Lake	484	486	505	505	520	530	520	510
Douglas	725	722	740	735	750	745	725	695
Harris	790	791	820	840	870	890	885	870
Mecan	686	690	715	725	750	760	755	740
Montello	1,033	1,033	1,070	1,075	1,105	1,115	1,100	1,065
Moundville	552	550	570	570	585	590	580	565
Neshkoro	561	556	570	570	580	575	560	540
Newton	547	547	565	570	590	595	590	575
Oxford	885	886	925	950	990	1,020	1,025	1,010
Packwaukee	1,416	1,411	1,475	1,510	1,575	1,615	1,615	1,595
Shields	550	548	575	595	630	655	665	665
Springfield	830	832	875	920	980	1,030	1,050	1,055
Westfield	866	870	915	960	1,025	1,075	1,100	1,105
Incorporated Communities								
Endeavor	468	461	480	490	510	520	520	510
Neshkoro	434	429	440	440	445	445	430	415
Oxford	607	603	630	645	670	685	690	680
Westfield	1,254	1,260	1,310	1,330	1,380	1,400	1,395	1,370
Montello	1,495	1,479	1,535	1,550	1,595	1,605	1,595	1,550
County Total	**15,404**	**15,376**	**16,000**	**16,315**	**16,970**	**17,325**	**17,305**	**17,015**

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2014

Since the 2010 Census, Marquette County's population has declined slightly, with an estimated population of **15,399 residents by 2014**. Figure 1.4 shows the County's projected population in five-year increments over the next 25 years, based on forecasts prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) in 2013. Forecasts for neighboring counties and the State are also shown for comparison. According to these forecasts, Marquette County's population is projected to increase by **an additional 1,611 residents by 2040**.

Population forecasts are useful for long-term County land use, housing, and community facility planning. However, the **limitations of these projections** should be recognized. The State bases these projections on historical growth patterns and the composition of the current population base. The reliability of these projections depends on the continuation of the County's past growth trends. Projecting populations for rural areas such as Marquette County are subject to error, as minor changes in birth, death or migration rates can significantly impact County growth rates. Given the importance of in-migration rates in the County, these projections are particularly vulnerable to external "push" and "pull" factors that determine migration flow. Actual future population will depend on market conditions, attitudes toward growth, and development regulations. Local policies and plans can certainly affect these rates of growth.

Figure 1.4: Population Forecasts, 2010 - 2040

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Marquette County	**15,404**	**16,000**	**16,315**	**16,970**	**17,325**	**17,305**	**17,015**
Green Lake County	19,051	19,190	19,240	19,400	19,445	19,225	18,885
Waushara County	24,496	24,705	25,860	27,180	28,230	28,385	27,990
Adams County	20,875	21,410	22,035	23,120	23,830	23,780	23,315
Columbia County	56,833	57,585	61,410	64,745	67,455	68,460	68,450
Wisconsin	5,686,986	5,783,015	6,005,080	6,203,850	6,375,910	6,476,270	6,491,635

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2013

B. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Marquette County's changing age structure has important implications for education, services, housing and transportation needs. **The County's population is aging**, along with the rest of the region and State. The number of preschool and school-age children in the County declined over the past thirty years, while the number of working age and elderly residents increased. Figure 1.5 compares the County's age and sex distribution in 2010 with that of surrounding counties and the State. In 2010, Marquette County's median age of 48.0 years was comparable to nearby Adams County but slightly older than the rest of the counties with the East Central Region and nearly a **decade older than the median age for the State**.

Figure 1.5: Age and Gender Distribution, 2010

	Median Age	% under 18	% over 65	% Female
Marquette County	**48.0**	**20.0**	**21.1**	**49.3**
Green Lake County	44.5	23	19.2	50.1
Waushara County	46.2	19.7	19.9	47.4
Adams County	49.2	16.4	23.5	46.2
Columbia County	42.4	20.0	21.1	49.3
Wisconsin	38.5	23.6	13.7	50.4

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2010

The percentage of Marquette County's population under 18 years of age in 2010 was slightly lower than the State's, but comparable to neighboring counties. The percentage of the County's senior population (aged 65 and older) was higher than the State, but was again comparable to other counties in the region. Together, these statistics suggest that the County had a large population between 50 and 65 years of age in 2010, whose children had largely become adults themselves.

Figure 1.6 shows forecasts for the County's age groups through 2040. According to State projections, the County's **elderly age cohort will increase by 101% between 2010 and 2040,** while the younger age groups will continue to decrease. By 2040, nearly 30% of the County's population will be 65 years or older, as compared to 20% of the population in 2010. This projected change in age groups in Marquette County will have important planning implications for the future, from school facility planning to elderly housing and transportation. It also suggests policy approaches to try to influence this demographic change.

Figure 1.6: County Age Cohort Forecasts, 2010 to 2040

Year	Under 5	5 - 19	20-64	65+
2010	801	2,569	8,788	3,246
2015	780	2,470	9,105	3,645
2020	785	2,405	8,730	4,395
2025	775	2,470	8,325	5,400
2030	760	2,475	7,885	6,205
2035	715	2,390	7,700	6,500
2040	660	2,210	7,590	6,555

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2013

Most of Marquette County residents reported "White" as their only race (96.9%); followed by "Hispanic or Latino" (2.5%). "Black or African American," "Asian," "American Indian," and "Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander" made up the remaining 1% of the population. Hispanics or Latinos are the fastest growing racial or ethnic group in Marquette County, growing from 215 in 2000 to 391 people in 2010. This is common throughout the State.

C. County Assets and Initiatives

1. County Assets

One theme of this *Comprehensive Plan* is to address the County's increasing median age and limited population growth. As the information contained earlier in this Chapter indicates, Marquette County's population is significantly older than the State, and the County's total population has been increasing at a much slower rate than that the State and several adjoining counties. Recognizing that there is not a simple solution to these demographic challenges, the County intends to take advantage of and market its unique assets, resources, and amenities to attract and retain residents, and get children to return after they grow up and are ready to settle down.

The County's assets, if capitalized upon, can drive the future growth and health of the County. These are described below and presented on Map 2: Marquette County's Assets and Influences.

Proximity to Metropolitan Areas

The County lies within an "urban field," a term used to describe peripheral rural areas that share a strong flow of people, commodities, money, and information with nearby metropolitan magnets. Rural places in the **"urban field"** are popular for weekend visits, seasonal recreation, vacation homes, and retirement living. Marquette County lies within a 1-to 4-hour drive from the Madison, Milwaukee, Fox Valley, and Chicago areas. Wausau, Stevens Point, and Wisconsin Rapids are also within an hour.

This flow of people and goods will undoubtedly increase as the surrounding metropolitan areas become more populated and congested. Over the next 30 years, the Chicago seven-county metro area is projected to increase by almost 30% or by 2.4 million people, reaching a projected population of slightly over 10.6 million people. Similarly, the Milwaukee four-county metro area is projected to grow 11% by 2040 to a population of 1.7 million people. Dane County is projected to grow 24% by 2040 to reach a population of 606,620 people. Today, nearly one half of Marquette County's workforce commutes outside of the County for work. This trend will likely continue as job opportunities expand in the Madison and Fox Valley metropolitan areas.

Good Access and Connections

Interstate 39, with its **connections to major urban centers** including Madison and Chicago (and Milwaukee and Minneapolis/Saint Paul via Interstate 94), provides excellent access to Marquette County. State Highways 22 and 23 provide access to and from adjacent communities and regional markets such as the Fox Valley area, the Lake Puckaway/Green Lake area, and the Wisconsin Dells/Baraboo area. This access to regional markets supports traditional forms of **economic development** (e.g., industrial parks), continued **tourism growth, and the ability of two-wage earner families to live in Marquette County and each work in a different metro area within an hour's drive**.

Marquette County also has excellent access to **high-speed internet service**, based largely on investments by a rural cooperative. Strong internet access cannot be underestimated as an economic asset. It allows business growth in industries dependent on high-speed data transmission. It also enables telecommuting and good connections for visitors, retirees, and educational service delivery.

Abundant Outdoor Recreation Areas

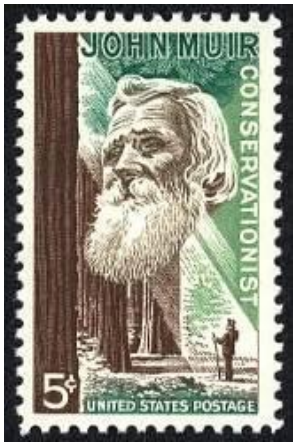
Marquette County's open lands, trout streams, lakes, river impoundments and woodlands make it a popular destination for residents, seasonal hunters, fishermen, boaters, hikers, campers, and tourists. **The County offers four seasons of outdoor recreational opportunities and greater than 12,000 acres in public ownership available for recreation.**

Some of the most popular outdoor activities in the County are hunting and fishing. The total economic impact of hunting and fishing in Marquette County has not been measured, but data is available for the State. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, hunting related expenditures in Wisconsin totaled $2.5 billion in 2011 and fishing related expenditures totaled $1.4 billion. In 2011, there were approximately **1.6 million hunters and anglers in Wisconsin, who spent an average of $29 per day during a fishing or hunting trip**. As the region's population base grows over the next 20 to 30 years, use of County lands for fishing and hunting will likely increase, along with increased expenditures in local sporting goods stores, accommodations, restaurants, guides, and other service-related establishments.

The Fox River provides another unique regional opportunity. It enters the County from Columbia County and flows through to Green Lake County. **The Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Water Trail has been designated by the National Park Service as a National Recreation Trail.** The purpose of this river parkway between Portage and Green Bay is to highlight unique cultural, historical, recreational and

natural resources. Along the Upper Fox River portion of the parkway, State and federal plans suggest opportunities to promote designated canoe routes that re-trace the discovery route of Marquette and Joliet, early French explorers. Land-based trail systems along the corridor are also envisioned.

Unique History



Marquette County's natural resources also have a unique and colorful history. The boyhood home of **John Muir**, a naturalist considered the "Father of our National Park System" is located within Marquette County. In 1849, the Muir family moved from Scotland and homesteaded 160 acres in Marquette County. Much of Muir's land ethic and philosophy came from the seven years he spent as a boy near Ennis Lake. He later moved to California and traveled much of the western United States, and had a direct hand in the establishment of Yosemite, Sequoia, Mount Rainier, Petrified Forest, and Grand Canyon National Parks. In 1892, Muir helped found the Sierra Club. The County park bearing his name or the entire County could be the site of unique **outdoor-conservation related events** such as orientation competitions, book festivals, landscape photography exhibits, conservation seminars, Scottish-themed festivals or other similar events honoring Muir's legacy that, over time, will create a unique identity for the area as "Muir-quette" County.

2. Key County Initiatives

The County's unique assets make it an attractive place to visit or live. Marquette County will recognize, improve, and market the varied resources and amenities found in Marquette County through the following priority initiatives.

Initiate "Marquette Life" to Attract and Retain Residents

Marquette County has an abundant supply of another resource often overlooked in assessing economic development opportunities: **small town atmosphere**. Marquette County's communities offer opportunities to live a slower pace, find affordable housing, be within short walking or biking distance to schools and shops, and be in proximity to the recreational and entertainment assets of the region. The County will seek to attract new residents, from young families to commuters to "urban refugees" to retirees—all seeking a quality, affordable, living environment.

Marquette County desires to proactively address (and hopefully reverse) the County's aging demographic and limited population growth, capitalizing on the unique quality of life offered in Marquette County and on new efforts to improve it. A "Marquette Life" theme is advanced throughout this Comprehensive Plan, and detailed in Chapter Nine: Economic Development. "Marquette Life" encompasses a set of initiatives and programs to improve the quality of life and opportunities for existing residents, prospective residents, and visitors (who sometimes become residents). The following Marquette Life icons are located throughout this Comprehensive Plan:

The Accessible icon identifies existing County features or future programs that tie Marquette County to regional or State resources and population centers.

The Active icon highlights natural and recreational amenities and programs already within the County, or planned.

The Heritage icon highlights features and programs that build on the County's unique history and cultural resources, fostering its sense of place and uniqueness.

The Connect icon identifies programs that foster a sense of community, intending to further relationships between County residents and to the unique land of Marquette County.

Grow Tourism

Tourism is one of Wisconsin's top three industries. In 2013, travelers spent nearly $10.6 billion in the state (with an estimated $20.2 million in Marquette County, an increase of over 4% from 2012). **Travelers to Marquette County contributed $2.5 million in State and local taxes and the County's tourism industry employed 291 people in 2013.** With its proximity to growing metropolitan areas, the County is poised to take advantage of this trend for years to come. With greater access, careful management and thoughtful preservation, the multitude of outdoor activities available – have the capacity to expand the County as a center for **nature based-tourism**. These include biking, hiking, climbing, canoeing, boating, hunting, camping, nature viewing, and fishing. For example, the County's blue-ribbon **trout streams** draw fishermen from across the State and region. There are opportunities to cooperatively develop and market these recreational activities with other counties and cities in the region to a growing, eager market in nearby metro areas.

The tourist entertainment destinations surrounding the County, including the hotels and water parks located in the Dells area, the weekend flea market in Princeton, and the hotels and vacation homes in Green Lake County, provide an opportunity to create a **market niche**. This niche should complement the events and activities going on around the region and take advantage of the County's natural assets. The continued growth potential for this niche, if carefully planned, will provide a significant growth opportunity for the County. Finally, the co-marketing of the nature based-tourist activities, cultural destinations, and local festivals in conjunction with the tourist entertainment activities will create a unique tourist destination with the capacity to meet a wide range of needs and interests.

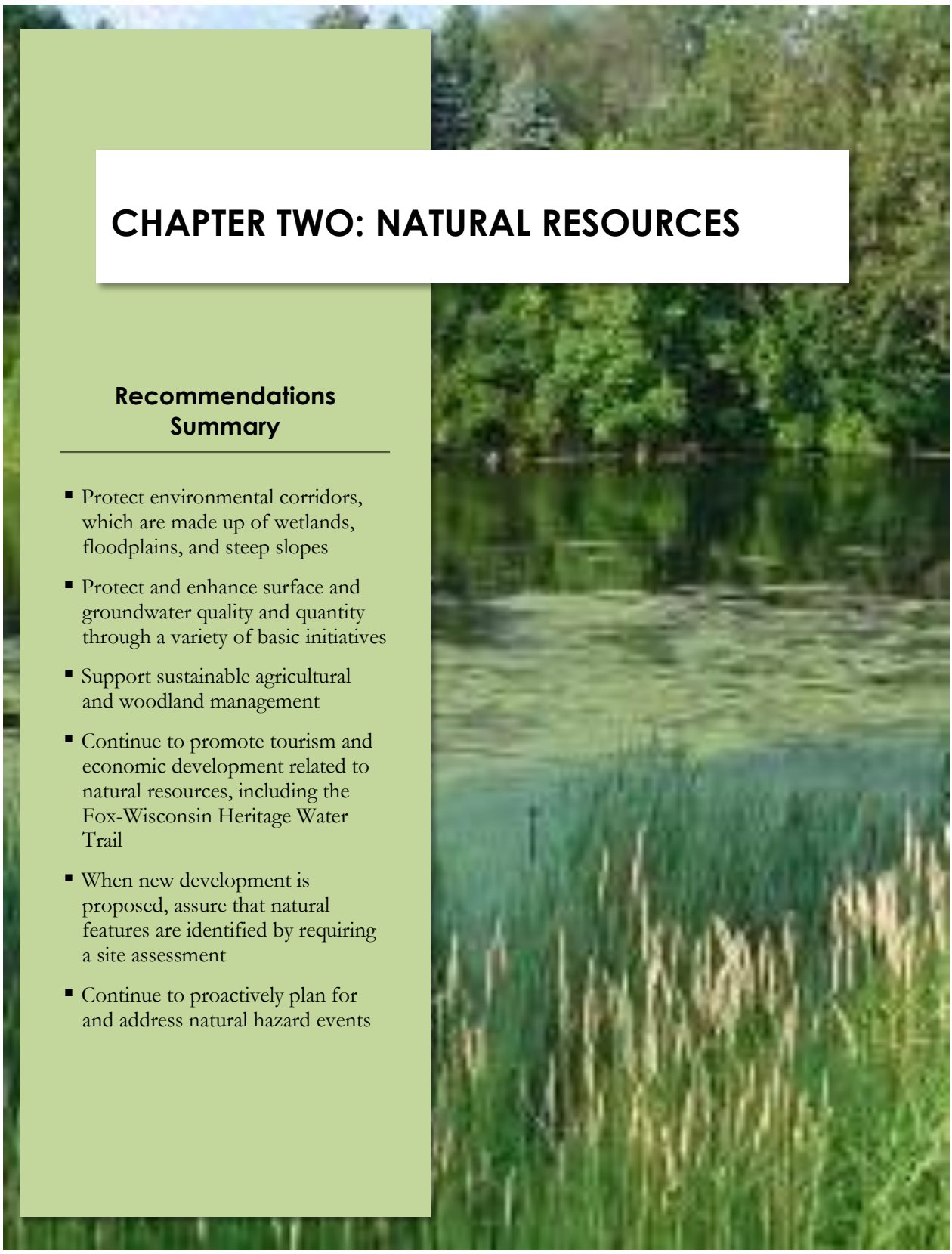
Preserve Agriculture as an Economic Activity

Preservation of the County's agricultural uses and heritage is an important component of the future growth, both economic and physical. The changing national market for agricultural products, including the demand for local and organic products, value-added agriculture, niche and specialty crop markets, and the role for agriculture in biotechnology, create an opportunity for agriculture-based economic growth. The existence of an economic driver for agricultural preservation creates a secondary, though equally important, result. This is the preservation of the rural character and scenic views, which are valued by residents and visitors alike.

Agricultural tourism provides another opportunity to add value to the local agricultural economy. In conjunction with other heritage-based tourism activities in the area, local farmers' markets, day-on-the-farm and pick-your-own programs, the Marquette County fair, brat festivals, miniature horse fairs, and other local festivals provide families with a variety a day-tripping activities for both residents and visitors.

Map 2: Marquette County's Assets and Influences

Page intentionally left blank



CHAPTER TWO: NATURAL RESOURCES

Recommendations Summary

- Protect environmental corridors, which are made up of wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes
- Protect and enhance surface and groundwater quality and quantity through a variety of basic initiatives
- Support sustainable agricultural and woodland management
- Continue to promote tourism and economic development related to natural resources, including the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Water Trail
- When new development is proposed, assure that natural features are identified by requiring a site assessment
- Continue to proactively plan for and address natural hazard events

This chapter contains a compilation of background data, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs for natural resource conservation and protection. This chapter also contains a map depicting the County's natural resources.

A. NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

Marquette County's rural landscape is defined by rolling fields, wetlands, lakes, streams, woodlots, and other natural features. Residents and visitors value the County's natural resources as central to the area's quality of life, recreational opportunities, and economic health. Map 3 depicts the County's key natural resources, some of which are described in more detail below.

1. LANDFORMS/TOPOGRAPHY

Marquette County's landforms and topography are characterized by several **glacial advances and retreats** that took place over northeastern and central Wisconsin some 15,000 to 25,000 years ago. As a result of this activity, numerous unique geologic and topographic features emerged such as escarpments, outwash plains, lake plains, terminal moraines, ground moraines, and drumlins. Each of these features has its own unique qualities that relate to land use planning, including: structural suitability, groundwater interaction, and the provision of non-metallic minerals to serve growing development in the region.

The County's western portion is covered by a thick mantle of glacial till referred to as the terminal moraine. Within the moraine, old glacial lake beds exist, now reflected in marshland and scattered areas of red clay. The remainder of the County has a shallower mantle of drift, referred to as ground moraine, associated with large tracts of marsh deposits.

2. METALLIC AND NONMETALLIC RESOURCES

The County lies in a very significant region geologically, home to several stone quarries and masonry industries. Underlying bedrock is primarily Upper Cambrian Sandstone, with limestone capping the hills in the northwestern portion of the county. A notable rock feature found in the area is **Montello granite**; once heralded as the hardest granite in the world. Many buildings in the City of Montello's commercial historic district, along with the State capitol building, incorporate Montello granite into their designs. Extensive deposits of sand and gravel are found in several areas of the County, and there were a total of four active non-metallic mining (or quarry) locations operating in the County as of 2015.

At time of writing, County zoning allowed nonmetallic mining, or quarrying, operations as a permitted use in the Commercial - Industrial (CM-I) zoning district and as by special exception permit within the following zoning districts: Agricultural – Residential (AG-3); General Agricultural (AG-2); Prime Agricultural (AG-1); Recreational (REC), and Commercial – Business (CM-B).

In accordance with NR-135, Marquette County adopted a Non-Metallic Mine Reclamation Ordinance in 2001 to assure that lands opened to mining are reclaimed to near pre-mine conditions, or to a more environmentally friendly use. New mineral extraction sites are generally subject to the reclamation standards under this ordinance. The ordinance includes requirements for applications, reclamation plans, multi-agency review, public hearings, and enforcement.

3. GENERAL SOILS INFORMATION

Soil types help determine the best and most cost-effective locations for new development; about 28% of the County may be unsuitable for development based on soil type. As defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the soils in Marquette County are of the following major types:

- The *Plainfield-Gotham* is the most extensive soil association in the county, covering about 30% of its land area. It is distributed mainly in the north and central parts of the County. The soils in this association are the sandy Plainfield soils which are excessively drained. Most of the areas in this association remain in woodland, but some areas have been cleared and are used for agriculture. The

steeper soils are used mainly for pasture and maintained as woodland. This soil association poses few limitations for development and on-site sewage disposal.

- The *Houghton-Adrain* association covers about 18% of the County's land area, and includes organic soils underlain by stratified loamy and sandy soils at about three feet. These soils are very poorly drained. This association is distributed mostly in the southern and eastern parts of the county and occupies broad, low lying areas. Most of the areas in this association remain in native vegetation of sedges, grasses and reeds. In some areas the soils have been drained and cultivated. These soils are generally unsuitable for development or on-site sewage disposal.
- About 16% of the County is covered by the *Oshtemo-Gotham* soil association, which includes loamy soils underlain by sandy material at about three feet. These soils are well drained. This association is distributed mainly in the east-central and southeastern parts of the county, and occupies hills, ridges, outwash terraces and sloping areas. Much of the area in this association is cultivated and suited for farming, with the steeper soils used mainly for pasture or woodlands. This soil association poses few limitations for development and on-site sewage disposal.
- The soils in the *Delton-Briggsville-Mundelein* association cover about 15% of the County's land area, and are generally sandy underlain by silty clay at about three feet. Most of the areas in this association are well drained and suited for farming. This association is distributed mostly in the western part of the county and occupies hills, foot slopes, terraces and lower lying areas. This soil association poses slight to moderate limitations for development and on-site sewage disposal.
- The soils found in the *Granby-Tedrow-Moundville* association are poorly drained and include the Yahara and Keowns soils. This association is distributed mostly in the northeastern, central, and eastern parts of the county, where it occupies low lying areas, terraces and outwash plains. Much of this association is in woodland and/or permanent pasture with some areas having been cleared for cultivation. About 10% of the County is in this association. This soil association poses moderate to severe limitations for development and on-site sewage disposal.

4. Drainage Basins

Marquette County is divided into **seven major watersheds**, all of which lie within the Upper Fox River Basin. The boundaries of these major watersheds are shown on Map 3. The Montello River Watershed drains the northwest part of the County, and is the largest in the County, covering 126 square miles of agriculture, forestland, and the developed areas of Westfield, Harrisville and parts of the City of Montello. The Little Roche A Cri Creek drains a small portion of the northwest corner of the County and drains to the Wisconsin River. The northeastern part of the County is drained by the Mecan River, White River and Fox River watershed areas. Several groundwater fed "glacial pothole" lakes are located in this watershed. The County's southern portion is drained by the Neenah Creek, Buffalo-Puckaway and Lower Grand River Watersheds.

The Neenah Creek was chosen as a **priority watershed** in 1992 under the Wisconsin Priority Watershed Program. This watershed is the only one in the County with an inventory of nonpoint source pollution sources and rates, which was documented in the 1994 Neenah Creek Nonpoint Source Control Plan.

5. GROUNDWATER

Groundwater is comprised of the portion of rainfall that does not run off to streams or rivers and that does not evaporate or transpire from plants. This water percolates down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone of an aquifer. Groundwater supplies nearly all of the water for domestic, commercial and industrial uses in Marquette County. In the County's rural areas, groundwater is primarily used for rural domestic, irrigation, and stock watering uses.

In general, **groundwater use has increased in the County** and throughout the region as urban areas continue to grow and require significant quantities of water for residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The increase in rural housing developments, each with their own private well, also places demands on the existing aquifer system. According to a 2010 report by the U.S. Geological Survey, there are 3.76 million gallons of groundwater used every day for municipal, private well domestic, industrial and agricultural uses in Marquette County. This is an increase of 66% from 2005, when 2.5 million gallons of groundwater was used daily.

In the past decade, the number of high capacity wells increased dramatically. High capacity wells are defined by the Wisconsin Administrative Code as any well system that has the capacity to pump 70 or more gallons of water per minute. In 2015, Marquette County had 299 high capacity wells–an increase of 139 wells since 2005.

The U.S. Geological Survey and the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey maintain five monitoring wells in Marquette County. The five wells are in three different aquifers and provide information on water level below land surface. In 2014, **water levels at all five wells were in the "normal" range.** Water level information can help determine the effects of well pumping, groundwater response to drought and effects of land use on groundwater resources.

6. SURFACE WATERS

The County has over **90 lakes and several streams and rivers**. **Covering 2,210 acres, Buffalo Lake is the largest lake in the County.** Other prominent lakes include Montello Lake, Lawrence Lake, Tuttle Lake, Crystal Lake, White Lake, Mason Lake, and the large Lake Puckaway, which is technically in Green Lake County but abuts the Town of Mecan in Marquette County. There are nine lake districts in the County and 13 organizations dedicated to the preservation and protection of these lakes. Buffalo Lake and the Fox River at Buffalo Lake are the only two water bodies in the County listed on the Federal 303d Impaired Waters List, which identifies waters that are not meeting water quality standards according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In 2001, the County updated and revised its Shoreland Zoning Ordinance to protect waterfront areas during shoreland development or land disturbing activities, and in 2011 Marquette County updated the Private On-Site Waste Water Treatment System Chapter of the County Code to address the long term maintenance of private septic systems.

The Fox River is the main waterway in the County. It enters the County from Columbia County and flows through to Green Lake County. The large Buffalo Lake and Lake Puckaway were formed by dams on the Fox. The Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Water Trail has been designated by the National Park Service as a National Recreation Trail. The purpose of this river parkway between Portage and Green Bay is to highlight unique cultural, historical, recreational and natural resources. The lineal parkway complements

numerous multi-purpose sites including parks, historic sites, tourist attractions and wildlife areas—some are in Marquette County.

The County has 13 trout streams, and over 51 miles of waterway classified as **Class 1 trout streams.** These include portions of the Mecan River, Neenah Creek, Chaffee Creek, Tagatz Creek, Caves Creek, Lawrence Creek, and Little Pine Creek.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR), there were 37 dams in Marquette County in 2014. Fourteen of the County's dams are classified as "large dams," meaning they are higher than 6 feet. Many of the dams in the region have outlived their useful lives and are in various states of disrepair or abandonment. Others still serve useful purposes in terms of providing water level management functions.

7. FLOODPLAINS

In Wisconsin, **floods are one of the most common types of natural disasters** and each year Wisconsin communities suffer millions of dollars in flood damages. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates regional floodplain areas. These are areas predicted to be inundated with flood waters in the 100-year storm event (e.g., a storm that has a 1% chance of happening in any given year). The State requires county, city and village regulation of development in floodplains. Map 3 shows the boundaries of mapped floodplains in Marquette County. The National Flood Insurance Program maps, produced by the FEMA, should be referenced for official delineation and elevations of floodplain boundaries. Development is strongly discouraged in floodplains to avoid both on-site and up- and downstream property damage.

8. WETLANDS

Wetlands cover nearly one-quarter of Marquette County's land area; ranking it 11th in the State for the percentage of land area covered by wetlands. These wetlands are important for aquifer recharge, groundwater and surface water quality improvement, wildlife habitat, and serve social functions such as open space, recreation, and aesthetics. Historically, the greatest threats to wetlands have been agricultural drainage and urban development. Thousands of acres of hydric soils have been drained and converted to farmland or filled for roads and urban development, according to a review of historic USDA soil survey maps conducted by the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC).

In 2014, there were 6,088 acres of wetland in Marquette County enrolled in the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), which is about a 20% increase from 2004. This was a voluntary program that provided technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private lands. The Federal Agricultural Act of 2014 replaced the Wetland Reserve Program with the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

A few of the larger wetland areas in the County include the White River, Germania, and Grand River Marshes (see Map 3). Most of these are partially protected as State Wildlife Areas. All known wetland areas over 5 acres have been identified and mapped by WisDNR through its Wisconsin Wetlands Inventory, which was used to create the wetland layer on Map 3. County zoning generally prevents development in all wetlands, and construction is required to be set back 75 feet from a wetland edge.

9. WOODLANDS

According to the 2009 Marquette County *Land and Water Resources Management Plan*, approximately **one third of the County (95,000 acres) is covered by woodlands**. County upland woods contain mostly Oak, Pine and central hardwoods; while the lowlands contain mostly Tamarack, Black Spruce and bottomland hardwoods. The majority of the County is made up of "scrub oak," which has a low timber value. Forest management in the County can be challenging, where scattered development has led to fragmentation of wooded areas.

As of April 2014, there were over 19,459 acres of privately-owned forestland in Marquette County enrolled in either the Forest Crop Law (FCL) or Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, both administered

by the WisDNR—a 55% increase from 2003. This increase in enrollment was primarily due to changes in the MFL program requirements and property taxation benefits associated with enrollment.

There are 2 landowners and 155 acres of County forest land remaining in the FCL program. New enrollment for this program terminated in 1986.

The MFL program was enacted in 1986 to take the place of the FCL program. As of January 2015, **19,394 acres in Marquette County were enrolled in the MFL program**. Of this area, 687 acres of MFL land are "open" for hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and sight-seeing. To qualify for MFL enrollment, the forest land must be at least 10 contiguous acres in area and participating landowners must adopt a forest management plan. In exchange, their land is assessed for tax purposes at a rate below the State average. Property owners must allow public access to all but 160 acres of MFL-enrolled lands in a single town for hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, hiking, and sightseeing. Owners have the option of posting up to 160 acres per town as closed for recreational activities. Landowners with "closed" MFL land pay a higher annual property tax than those who allow their land to be "open" for public recreation. Buildings used or "developed for human (year-round) residence" are not allowed on MFL-enrolled lands.

10. Steep Slopes

Marquette County is generally characterized by gently rolling topography. As shown on Map 4 in Chapter Four: Agricultural Resources, steep slopes exceeding a 20% grade are in limited locations. Development on slopes that exceed a 20% grade presents major challenges and can result in environmental and property damage due to water run-off, soil erosion, and unstable slopes. Slopes of 12% grade or greater can also present some challenges for building site development.

11. Ecological Landscapes

Marquette County lies in an ecological region known as the **"Central Sand Hills."** This region is located at the eastern edge of the old Glacial Lake Wisconsin and contains a series of glacial moraines and partially covered glacial outwash. Pre-settlement vegetation consisted of oak forests, oak savanna, and a variety of prairie types. According to the County's 2009 *Outdoor Recreation Plan*, there are two prairie remnants in the County—the Kotek Prairie south of the Village of Endeavor and the Laing Creek Prairie west of the City of Montello. Both remnants are on private lands. There is one oak savanna in the County, the Black Oak Savanna east of the Village of Westfield, which is also located on private land.

12. Rare Species Occurrences

WisDNR's Natural Heritage Inventory program maintains data on the general location and status of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species in the State. This data is obtained through field inventory. As of October 2014, there were **70 different rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species** identified within Marquette County. Map 3 shows general areas, by section, where these occurrences were reported. More specific information on location and type of specie is available from the WisDNR's Bureau of Endangered Resources.

The **Karner blue butterfly**, added to the Federal Endangered Species list in 1992, may be found in parts of the northern half of the County. On public rights-of-way where the protected blue butterfly exists, towns and county highway departments engaging in mowing and maintenance activities are required to obtain a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

13. State Natural Areas/National Wildlife Refuges

There are **eleven State Natural Areas** within Marquette County. State Natural Areas are formally designated sites devoted to scientific research, the teaching of conservation biology, and the preservation of natural features and genetic diversity for future generations. These State Natural Areas include the

Comstock Bog Meadow in Shields, the Germania Wet Prairie and the Mecan River Pine-Oak Forest in Crystal Lake, the Lawrence Creek Area in the Town of Westfield, the John Muir County Park and Observatory Hill Area in Buffalo, the Page Creek Marsh in Packwaukee, a portion of the Upper Fox Headwaters in Springfield, the Wedde Creek Savanna in Newton, and the Summerton Bog Area in the Town of Oxford. In 2012, the Department of Natural Resources acquired the French Creek-North Wildlife Area, a 1,439 acre parcel located in the Town of Buffalo. These natural areas often coincide with State Wildlife or Fishery Areas, as shown and labeled on Map 3. Many of these areas have long-range project plans and land acquisition boundaries showing where the WisDNR would consider purchasing land from willing landowners for future expansion.

The **Fox River National Wildlife Refuge** is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and is the only land under federal ownership in Marquette County. The 1,054-acre refuge is located in the Town of Buffalo on the east bank of the Fox River, directly west of John Muir County Park. The refuge is an important breeding and staging area for the Greater Sandhill Crane.

14. Land Legacy Places

In 2006, WisDNR published the Wisconsin Land Legacy Report that identifies areas across the State that would be critical in meeting Wisconsin's conservation and recreation needs for the next 50 years. According to the report, these places vary in size, contain both common and rare species, and offer outdoor recreation, conservation and environmental values of varying significance. In Marquette County, **eight sites were identified as Land Legacy Places**: Comstock-Germania Marshes, Grand River Marsh and Lake Puckaway, Montello Area Coast Plain Marshes, Neenah Creek, the Portage to Buffalo Lake Corridor, Sand Country Trout Streams, White River Marsh and Uplands, and the Oxford Savanna. The report does not draw boundaries around any of these places, nor does it identify current ownership, how and when these places should be protected, or who should protect them.

15. Related Plans

Marquette County has several existing plans that inform the Natural Resources chapter of this *Comprehensive Plan*. These include:

- Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan (2009-2019)
- Marquette County Erosion Control Plan (1987)
- Neenah Creek Priority Watershed Plan (1994)
- State of the Upper Fox Basin Plan (2001)
- Marquette County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (2011)
- Montello River Watershed Study by University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (2010)

16. Conservation Land Trusts

Land trusts are a rapidly growing conservation movement throughout the nation and within the State. Within Wisconsin alone, land trusts protect and manage almost 280,000 acres with significant ecological, scenic, recreational, agricultural, cultural, or historic value. Land trusts are non-profit organizations set up by local people to acquire—through purchase or donation—environmentally significant lands. Acquisitions may be for fee simple title, conservation easements (development rights), or other means. The Twin Lakes Conservancy, Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust and Nature Conservancy are land trusts operating in Marquette County. The Nature Conservancy owns 1100 acres in Marquette County within the Towns Douglas, Oxford and Packwaukee, the majority of this area is part of the Sommerton Bog and Page Creek Marsh State Natural Areas. Additionally, as of 2015, Marquette County property owners, working with the Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, have placed 450 acres of land in a protective conservation easement.

Page intentionally left blank

Map 3: Natural Areas

Page intentionally left blank

B. NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: Protect the County's natural features to maintain quality of life, property, water quality, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat.

Objectives:

1. Identify and protect the County's natural resources, such as rivers, lakes, floodplains, wetlands, groundwater, shorelines, and steep slopes.
2. Encourage the use of soil conservation practices and the proper management of woodlands.
3. Direct development away from environmental corridors and other environmentally sensitive areas.
4. Pursue opportunities that support both natural resource protection and economic and recreational development.

Policies:

1. **Map and protect "environmental corridors"** as a composite of the County's most sensitive natural areas by:
   i. Protecting areas classified as wetlands from development to preserve the significant natural functions that wetlands provide.
   ii. Protecting areas within the 100-year floodplain to avoid damage to private and public property and the health, safety and welfare of the County.
   iii. Discouraging building or driveway development on slopes in excess of 20%.
2. **Protect surface water quality** (e.g., waterways, drainage channels, lakes, ponds, impoundments, and wetlands) by supporting stream bank management, natural shoreline restoration, erosion control, proper agricultural practices, stormwater management, and vegetative buffer areas as appropriate practices to protect the County's water quality.

3. **Protect groundwater quality** through properly placing new on-site wastewater treatment systems, appropriate maintenance and replacement of older systems, managing the types of development allowed near municipal wellheads, preventing excessive irrigation practices, and monitoring permits for new high capacity wells.
4. Continue to **monitor impoundment drawdown and dam removal initiatives**, consistent with the Marquette County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
5. **Support long-term woodland management efforts** and encourage forest landowners to enroll in the State's Managed Forest Land (MFL) program, ideally designating such land as open for recreation to both increase tax benefits and grow the County's recreation/tourist economy.
6. Work to **protect wildlife habitat areas and rare species**, such as the Karner blue butterfly.

7. Ensure adequate analysis of natural features by **requiring or conducting a "site assessment"** for more intensive development proposals.
8. **Build on the County's natural resources to promote recreation-based tourism** and local economic development.
9. **Enforce policies and procedures** for nonmetallic extraction operations and their reclamation.
10. **Cooperate with other units of government and non-profit land conservation agencies** (such as the Twin Lakes Conservancy and the Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust) on the preservation of natural resources which are under shared authority or cross government boundaries.
11. Continue to support efforts to **educate citizens** on the tools, programs, and incentives that protect the natural environment and promote e**nvironmental stewardship among the County's youth**.
12. **Implement and update every five years the County's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan** as a means to protect against natural hazards and minimize their impacts on the population and property.

C. NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expanding on the planning policies listed above, this section of the *Plan* provides specific recommendations for conserving the County's natural resources. Specific tools and a timeline to implement these recommendations are provided in Chapter Eleven: Implementation.

1. PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS

Environmental corridors are a composite of important individual elements of the natural resource base. They have immeasurable environmental, ecological, passive recreational, stormwater management, groundwater protection and recharge, erosion control, wildlife, timber, and scenic value. Environmental corridors also have severe limitations for development; therefore, minimizing development in these areas also protects private property. Environmental corridors generally occur in a linear (corridor) pattern on the landscape (see Map 7 for environmental corridor delineations). As mapped within Marquette County, environmental corridors include the following areas:

- WisDNR-identified **wetlands** as mapped in the Wisconsin Wetlands Inventory and subject to existing County zoning. Wetlands of 5 acres or greater are included. This layer may not include all wetlands that are subject to State and/or federal disturbance rules.
- FEMA-designated **floodplains** subject to existing County zoning. These general floodplain delineations represent the areas potentially subject to the 100-year flood. All areas of the County subject to flooding are not necessarily reflected in mapped floodplains (or within the environmental corridor delineation).
- Lands with **steep slopes** of 20% or greater. Due to the instability of these soils and erosion concerns, development on these steep slopes is not advisable.

New development should generally be discouraged in environmental corridors, and is often very limited by existing State-mandated county zoning. Development types should be limited to those which will not impair the resource, and which are compatible with existing and proposed uses on surrounding

lands. Generally appropriate uses include open space, agriculture, and forestry activities using Best Management Practices. New homes and other buildings should not be placed in these areas if other, more appropriate, building sites are available outside the environmental corridor. Where other sites are not available, development should generally be limited to a density of one home per 10 acres (or one home per 40 acres if the lands are also in the *Agriculture* planned land use designation on Map 7). Sensitivity to surrounding natural resources should be the guiding principal when reviewing the appropriateness of development in mapped environmental corridors.

The environmental corridors depicted in Map 7 are necessarily broad and should be used to identify general areas where development may not be appropriate. Lands may be "de-designated" as environmental corridor under one or more of the following circumstances:

- A more detailed study reveals that the characteristic(s) which resulted in its designation as an environmental corridor no longer exists, or never existed;
- Approvals from appropriate agencies are granted to alter a property so that the characteristic which resulted in its classification as an environmental corridor will no longer exist; or
- A mapping error has been identified.

2. PROTECT SURFACE WATER QUALITY

Marquette County will seek to protect surface water quality through implementation of the 2009 *Marquette County Land and Water Resource Management Plan*. The 2009 Land and Water Resource Management Plan included many recommendations designed to **protect and enhance water quality in the County.** Additionally, the Marquette County Zoning Department, through the Septic Maintenance Program, Shoreland and General Zoning Ordinances mitigates and monitors the impact of proposed and existing development on surface water quality. The County will execute recommendations in the following categorical areas to protect surface water quality.

Sediment and Nutrient Delivery from Agriculture

Through its Land and Water Conservation Department, the County intends to complete the following actions to limit non-point source discharge to surface waters:

- Continue implementation of State agricultural performance standards set forth in Chapter NR 151 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, using the *County Land and Water Resource Management Plan* as a guide.
- Encourage landowners to participate in the State's farmland preservation program, described in greater detail in Chapter Four: Agricultural Resources. Program eligibility requirements include conservation compliance with NR 151.
- Update the County's 1994 Animal Waste Storage ordinance to incorporate updated standards and specifications including nutrient management planning requirements.

Septic Nutrient Management

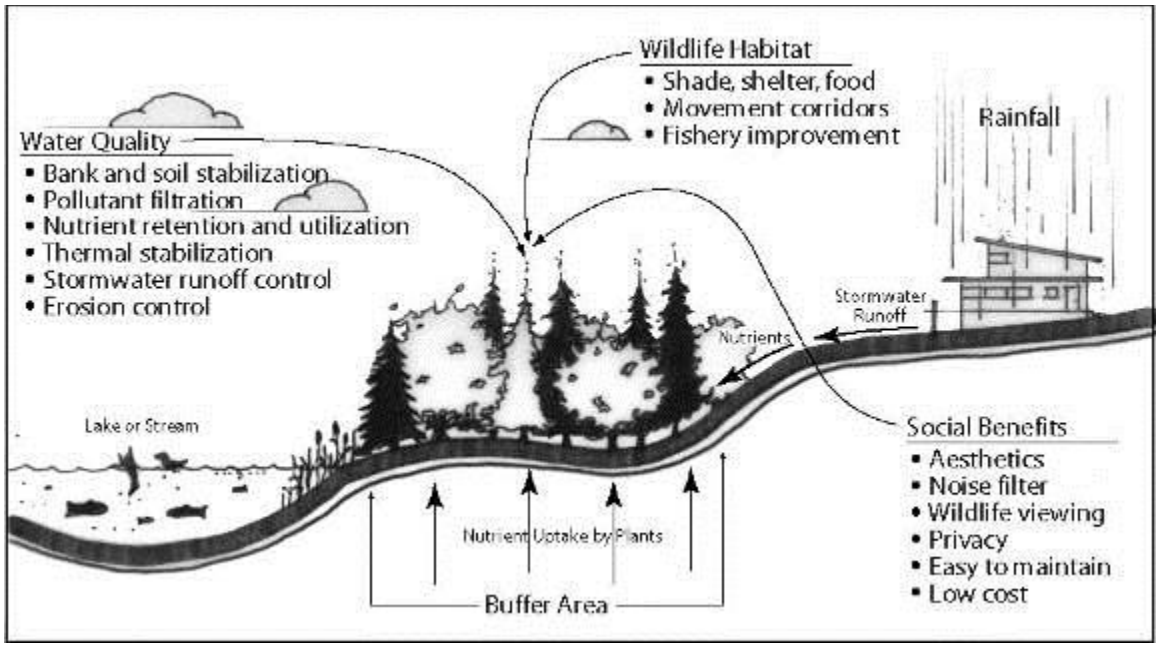
As elaborated on in Chapter Seven: Utilities and Community Facilities, Marquette County will continue to ensure that private on-site wastewater systems are properly maintained to avoid untreated discharge of septic waste to surface water. The septic maintenance program requires that all private on-site wastewater treatment systems be serviced and inspected once every three years.

Erosion Control and Stormwater Management for New Development

Unmanaged construction sites are one of the greatest contributors to off-site sediment runoff. Currently, construction site erosion control plans are required by the State for all sites over 1 acre in area, and for all land disturbing activities within the jurisdiction of the Marquette County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. The County also intends to require stormwater management for subdivisions and other larger projects. Stormwater techniques include natural drainage swales, retention and detention basins, and vegetative buffers adjacent to water bodies and other sensitive resources (see Figure 2.1). These techniques control

the quantity and improve the quality of water run-off, which are particularly critical in shoreland areas and may serve as an important filtration system within groundwater recharge areas.

Figure 2.1: Benefits of Vegetative Buffers



Adopt and Encourage Participation in the Healthy Lakes Implementation Plan

In late 2014, WisDNR introduced the Healthy Lakes Implementation Plan, identifying best practices for the protection and improvement of shorelands around lakes. These include habitat restoration and runoff and erosion control best practices. This WisDNR grant program encourages and provides funds for simple lakeshore best management projects to improve fish habitat, integrate native plantings, divert and clean runoff water, and promote natural beauty.

Best management practices outlined within the Healthy Lakes Implementation Plan include:

- *Fish sticks in the in-lake shoreland area.* Fish sticks are large woody fish habitat structures that utilize whole trees grouped together, at a ratio of greater than one tree per 50 feet of shoreline. Fish sticks structures are anchored to the shore where they are partially or fully submerged.
- *Native plantings in the shore transition area.* Large, contiguous areas of native plantings adjacent to the lakeshore.
- *Water runoff diversion.* Runoff diversion practices include the use of a berm or shallow trench to intercept and divert water runoff into an infiltration area.
- *Rock infiltration practice.* This involves installation of a rock filled trench along structures and other impervious areas to reduce runoff by storing and infiltrating stormwater.
- *Rain Gardens.* Landscaped shallow depressions that collect and infiltrate stormwater from roofs and driveways.

Marquette County endorses the Healthy Lakes Plan, enabling County property owners to be eligible for funding assistance for lake shoreland improvements. In 2015, the Healthy Lakes Program has $200,000 in funding available Statewide, and provides up to $1,000 in State grant dollars for each "best practice" identified in a proposal for an individual property. Eligible sponsors, such as lake groups, waterfront organizations and communities can also apply for funds under this grant program, with a maximum award amount of $25,000 for community projects.

Focus on Key Watersheds

The County will focus on **preserving surface water quality in existing high-quality watersheds and improving water quality in watersheds with the greatest water quality problems**. There are seven watersheds in Marquette County, all of which are part of the Upper Fox River Basin. The WisDNR is in the process of establishing a Target Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to improve water quality in the Upper Fox Basin. Waters within the Basin have been identified as impaired due to excessive phosphorus and total suspended solids. The TMDL will identify pollution sources and reductions necessary to improve water quality. Implementation of the TMDL relies on Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination Permits for point sources, implementation of NR 151 for agricultural nonpoint sources, and local shoreland and site erosion control ordinances for other potential pollution sources. Marquette County will continue to work with WisDNR to implement the TMDL for the Upper Fox Basin.

The County will continue to seek funds from State programs designed to assist in efforts to protect and enhance surface water quality in key areas. For example, the WisDNR Targeted Runoff Management Program provides financial assistance to communities to either construct best management practices themselves or contract with individual landowners to install such practices. The WisDNR River Protection Planning and River Protection Management Grant Programs aim to prevent the deterioration of water quality, fisheries habitat, and natural beauty as the number of homes, recreational activities, and other uses increase along rivers. Grant dollars under the River Protection Planning grant program may be used for the formation of a river management organization; information and education; assessments of water quality, fish, and aquatic life; nonpoint source evaluations; and river management plan development. Grant dollars under the River Protection Management program may be used for the purchase of land or conservation easements; project management; installation of nonpoint source pollution control practices; and habitat restoration.

Lake Quality Assessment

Marquette County will consider adopting and implementing a lake classification system. Lake classification is a management tool that helps protect an area's lakes by applying protection strategies based on certain characteristics. By tailoring strategies for lake management and protection by class, a community can achieve standards of management sensitive to the unique characteristics of an individual lake. Lake classification systems generally consider the type, size, shape, and location of a water body and the intensity of surrounding development or land use activities. Lakes can be grouped based on hydrology, average depth, surface area, shoreline configuration, susceptibility to pollution, and sensitivity to recreational use. Typically, there are three classes of lakes identified:

- *Natural Environment/Wild Lakes*. These lakes may need special care in order to protect diverse or unique wildlife, pristine vegetation and exceptional water quality. Appreciating and maintaining the natural state of the lake, and preserving habitat for species like loons and fish would be high priority. The restrictive standards applied to these lakes may include large or clustered lots, deep setbacks, and use restrictions.
- *Intermediate Lakes*. These lakes, in spite of significant shore and surface use, are relatively intact as natural systems. A plan for these lakes may be to maintain existing development levels but minimize trends toward higher building densities. Future development plans may allow more homes if they

have a gentler impact on lake health. Homes may be required to be set back farther or clustered away from the water. Certain types of low-density development lakes may be best suited for fishing and wildlife watching.

- *General Development Lakes*. These lakes tend to be the least sensitive to shoreland disturbance due to size, shape, or other factors, or are already highly developed. Generally the least restrictive set of standards are placed on development of these lakes and management strategies are focused on restoration rather than prevention.

UW Extension and the WisDNR provide assistance with lakes classification through the Lakes Protection Grant program. These grants are administered to communities, qualified lakes association, non-profits, and other recipients. These grants include 75% cost sharing up to $50,000.

3. Monitor Impoundment Drawdowns and Dam Maintenance and Repair Proposals

A **change in water surface level or water flow due to drawdowns and dam removals can have significant impacts** not only to the water resource, but also the enjoyment and use of the resource by local residents and visitors. The County and local communities request notification and involvement in any decisions involving river impoundment drawdowns and dam removals.

Impoundment Drawdowns

Impoundment drawdown is used for many purposes at a dam site: conducting repairs on an unsafe dam structure, controlling invasive species, or enhancing the habitat for certain species of aquatic plants, fisheries, and wildlife. Drawdowns fall into two categories- emergency and non-emergency. Emergency drawdowns typically occur when a dam is in need of immediate repair for safety reasons. In non-emergency cases, the drawdown should follow a certain process. The drawdown is typically initiated by the dam owner, the WisDNR, or a lake district or association. A detailed assessment should follow the initial request, including an aquatic plant survey. In certain cases (where there are formally established water levels), the WisDNR is required to conduct an Environmental Assessment prior to the drawdown. The Environmental Assessment includes a consideration of fisheries, wildlife, endangered resources, vegetation, and a broad range of other potential impacts, as well as management alternatives. The Environmental Assessment process is also required to incorporate public comments and include at least one public meeting or hearing on the proposed drawdown activity. Based on the Environmental Assessment and the results of the public meeting, the drawdown activity may be approved or denied. The drawdown permit may also be approved with a range of conditions specified by the WisDNR. Marquette County and its local communities have several opportunities to be involved in the impoundment drawdown process:

- Landowners, lake associations, or lake districts may initiate a drawdown for dam repair, habitat enhancement, or lake management purposes.
- Individuals and organizations can review and comment on the WisDNR's Environmental Assessment. In cases where an Environmental Assessment is not required, comments from local groups, communities, and individuals are encouraged via WisDNR regional or central office staff.
- Attend and provide feedback at the required public informational meeting and/or hearing.
- Form a local organization (such as a lake district or association) to work directly with the WisDNR on drawdown and lake management issues. These organizations can receive regular updates, engage in monitoring, provide consistent input, and help guide lake management in their community.

Dam Repair and Removal Process

Dams are important features in many Marquette County communities. Over the 20-year planning period, communities may be faced with issues related to the repair or removal of an aging dam. Local units of government and the County should work closely with the WisDNR to consider dam management options. Aging dams or those in need of repair may be community safety hazards and cause environmental degradation. Owners of dams in a high hazard condition have the option of repairing the dam to meet safety standards or abandoning the permit for the dam and removing it from the waterway.

When repair is deemed less desirable from a financial, safety or ecological standpoint, dam removal may be an option. Decisions to remove or repair deteriorating dams in Marquette County should be based on a careful analysis of economic, social, and environmental factors.

Dam repair is often much more costly than removing a deteriorating dam structure. The WisDNR is required to review and approve all applications for dam abandonment and removal. The WisDNR's role is to help the public understand the various management options and the benefits of dam removal, and providing funding to purchase an owner's interest in the dam. The decision to remove an unsafe or abandoned dam can be made only after an established protocol is followed. This process generally consists of:

- Inspection of dam by a certified engineer
- Contact and notification to dam owner of any problems or hazards that exist
- An official order to repair the dam to meet standards, or dam removal
- Public information session to inform and gain public input
- Notification and/or opportunity for public hearing prior to WisDNR action
- If dam removal is pursued, an Environmental Assessment may be required

Communities have several options for becoming involved in this process, but ultimately it may hinge on regular communications and updates from the WisDNR. Some communities have chosen to be involved in decisions to repair or remove unsafe dams within their jurisdiction by:

- Pursuing assistance from the WisDNR to develop a removal plan. In addition to removing the structure, this type of plan may develop parkland within former impoundment areas. The WisDNR can work with the community to establish a re-vegetation plan and reconstruct channels. Some communities have created extensive park areas with trails, canoe launches, athletic fields, and other public amenities.
- Engaging in community visioning and public involvement to create a public forum for discussion of the dam removal and a cooperative, future-oriented approach to planning for the site.
- Using dam removal to spur revitalization efforts including river-related development such as wayside parks, an area dedicated to the history of the dams and the river, a river walkway, and the revitalization of a riverside historic district.

- Extending benefits to the local economy by encouraging activities and local businesses associated with river recreation such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.

State and federal resources for dam removal and associated local improvements that communities can pursue include:

- *Municipal Dam Grant Program.* Funds a maximum of 50% of eligible engineering and construction costs for dam maintenance, repair, modification or abandonment, or removal up to a maximum of $400,000. Funding is only available for municipally owned dams and is prioritized by the size of the dam, downstream hazard rating, downstream zoning, dam repair costs, the financial need of the community, and stream navigability.
- *Dam Removal Grant Program.* Assists communities, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, and private dam owners to remove small or abandoned dams. The WisDNR will fund 100% of eligible project costs, with a maximum grant award of $50,000. Eligible project costs include labor, materials, and equipment directly related to planning the actual removal, the dam removal itself, and the restoration of the impoundment.
- *Wisconsin Stewardship Program.* Provides for public improvements associated with dam removal.

4. PROTECT GROUNDWATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

Groundwater is the source of the County's drinking water supply. If groundwater is removed from an aquifer more quickly than it is recharged, the amount of water available in the aquifer is reduced. This may be of particular concern where water tables are dropping rapidly resulting from growth-induced groundwater use. Its protection is critical. Through this *Plan,* the County supports **several efforts to protect groundwater quality and quantity,** including the following:

- *Avoid planning for new development within about ¼ mile of all open and closed landfill sites.* To protect drinking water quality, WisDNR requires a separation of 1,200 feet (a little less than ¼ mile) between open or closed landfills and nearby private water supply wells. This separation is measured from the edge of the nearest exaction area or, if unknown because it is a filled site, from the site's property line. The inventory of known landfills, including their 1,200 foot buffer, is shown in Map 7.
- *Identify and preserve wellhead protection areas for municipal wells.* Private well supplies are typically more susceptible to contaminants because these wells are shallow. Deeper municipal wells can also be affected by contaminants. These concerns have prompted many communities to prepare "wellhead protection plans" to assist in identifying and regulating contaminant sources resulting from land use activities. Presently, there are no such plans for Marquette County municipalities. Wellhead protection planning is advised for the City of Montello's two wells.
- *Ensure the proper placement and maintenance of on-site waste treatment (septic) systems.* Improper placement and maintenance, particularly of both old systems and chemical and biological treatment systems allowed under the "COMM 83" law, can result in groundwater contamination. On-site system recommendations are addressed more completely in Chapter Seven: Utilities and Community Facilities.
- *Encourage identification, assessment, remediation, and reuse of "brownfield" sites.* These sites have the potential to contaminate groundwater. State and federal dollars are available for brownfield assessment, planning, and clean-up in advance of redevelopment.
- *Remain informed and involved in decisions pertaining to high capacity wells.* Permits for high capacity wells (those withdrawing more than 100,000 gallons per day) must be registered with and permitted by WisDNR. WisDNR may not approve wells that impair public water utility supplies. Wells drawing more than 2 million gallons per day are evaluated in terms of whether they impair public water rights, future water use plans, cause adverse groundwater effects, or otherwise contribute to environmental degradation. The County and its local units of government desire to remain informed and involved in any WisDNR decisions regarding high capacity well decisions through regular communication and providing public comment during Environmental Impact Statement review periods. The County also regulates high capacity well siting in areas within 1,000 feet of lakes and 300 feet of rivers and streams through its Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

- *Better understand impacts of high capacity wells on groundwater supply.* The County may examine working with UW-Extension, the Central Wisconsin Ground Water Center, and the United States Geological Survey to develop a Groundwater Flow Model to analyze the cumulative impact of high capacity wells. The Groundwater Flow Model in Columbia County identified groundwater recharge and discharge areas in the County and provided recommendations for well design.

5. SUPPORT WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

Nearly a third of Marquette County's land base is wooded. The County's **public and private woodlands are a critical component of the County's recreational base and rural economy.** These woodlots provide timber revenues to private landowners and abundant recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors. Development located near and within the County's vast woodlands should not negatively affect the resource.

The County will encourage private landowners to participate in the State's Managed Forest Land (MFL) Program, and to increase the amount of such MFL land that is open to recreation.

Through this *Plan*, the County also recommends the use of forestry **"Best Management Practices"** on private and public forested lands. These standards are particularly important within designated environmental corridors (see Map 7), in shoreland zones, and in areas of significant recreational and scenic value. When harvesting on private lands, property owners should obtain the advice of a professional forester. The forester can advise on harvesting methods that follow "best management practices" and promote habitat preservation.

Examples of Forestry Best Management Practices

- Proper logging road construction and maintenance
- Prompt re-planting of harvested areas
- Protection of forest soils, minimize erosion

Other programs and organizations that provide information and assistance in developing forestry management plans include the Wisconsin Forest Landowner Grant Program, the American Tree Farm System, the Wisconsin Woodland Owner's Association, and the Wisconsin Conservation Reserve Program.

Increased residential development in the County's wooded areas could increase the chances for more **wildfire damage to private property**, as experienced in the Town of Crystal Lake in April 2003. WisDNR provides information for private homeowners and local communities on preventative measures and strategies to mitigate wildfire damage in residential areas within or adjacent to forestland. This *Plan* and the Multi-hazard Mitigation Plan include several strategies that the County, local communities, and private landowners should pursue to prevent or minimize any major wildfire damage in the future. Chapter Six address issues related to access, road and property fire number identification, and overall road circulation to properly respond to a wildfire; Chapter Seven provides recommendations on the types of facilities and services that could improve local emergency preparedness for wildfires; and Chapter Eight presents specific recommendations on preventative measures that could be used around a private lot and home to mitigate wildfire damage and spreading.

6. Protect Rare Species and Wildlife Habitat Areas

Preservation of wildlife habitat and rare plant and animal species enhances the quality of residents' lives, preserves rural character, increases pride and stewardship in private land ownership, and enhances recreation and tourism. Map 7 shows *Potential Recreation Expansion Area* boundaries that reflect areas identified by WisDNR as foreseeable expansions of State-owned parks, fishery areas, wildlife areas, or similar resource areas. It is WisDNR policy to purchase land within the expansion area only from willing landowners.

Preserving habitat and protecting rare species at the local level may also minimize the potential that a species will officially become "threatened" or "endangered," thereby requiring federal intervention under the Endangered Species Act. The WisDNR—Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation maintains a database entitled the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI). Map 3 shows all sections in Marquette County where rare plant or animal species and natural communities have been documented in that database. NHI data is collected in the field on a continuous basis by biologists. However, it is important to note that not all sections of Marquette County have been inventoried for the presence of rare species. Because rare species are vulnerable to collection and intentional destruction, the exact locations and type of rare species is not made readily accessible. However, this data is available through submittal of a "Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory Request Form."

The County will continue to properly manage its road right-of-ways in compliance with USFWS rules intended to protect the Karner blue butterfly, which was added to the Federal Endangered Species list in 1992. Within the butterfly's habitat area (which includes much of northern Marquette County), examples of potential disturbance activities that require a USFWS permit include highway and utility corridor construction and maintenance such as mowing and prescribed burning.

7. Implement Natural Resource Identification Checklist

The identification and mapping of natural resources on a site should be the first step in planning any site development, and a prerequisite for receiving development approval. This includes detailed mapping of productive farmland, woodlots, environmental corridors, and their component features (e.g., wetlands, floodplains, surface waters).

The County intends to amend its zoning and subdivision regulations to require a "site assessment checklist" be completed and evaluated for preliminary subdivision plats, rezonings, and with special exception applications for larger commercial and industrial projects. The site assessment checklist should include a description of the natural resource characteristics of the land, and/or

mapping of those characteristics. These assessments should also identify which natural resource features are proposed to be disturbed, and any mitigation which is planned for the disturbed areas. Figure 2.2 below provides an example portion of a site assessment checklist.

Figure 2.2: Portion of an Example Site Assessment Checklist

DEVELOPMENT SITE FEATURES	Yes	No
Land Resources. Does the proposed development site include and/or is it adjacent to:		
(1) Slopes of 20% or greater? (Based on on-site survey.)		
(2) A floodplain, as designated by FEMA? (See Map 3 of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan. If "yes," attach map of the 100-year floodplain limits at a scale that relates to the site.)		
(3) Wetlands? (See Map 3 of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.)		
(4) Bedrock within 10 ft. of surface? (Based on NRCS soil survey or site soil borings.)		
(5) Soils having severe or very severe limitations for private on-site waste treatment (septic) systems? (Based on the NRCS soil survey, or on-site soil borings.)		
(6) A "brownfield"/contaminated site? (Based on WisDNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System or complete site assessment.)		
(7) Mineral rights owned by someone aside from the owner of the lot(s)? (If "yes", provide more info.)		
(8) A mineral extraction operation, whether approved, in operation, or both? (See Map 3 of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.)		
(9) Class I or II agricultural soils? (Based on Map 4 of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan and NRCS data.)		
(10) A State Park, Natural Area, or Wildlife Area or Recreational Expansion Area? (Based on WisDNR park maps and County Comprehensive Plan Map 7)		
(11) Environmental corridors? (See Map 7 of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.)		
(12) Woodlands? (See Map 3 of the Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.)		
(13) A section of land that the WisDNR Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory identifies as containing endangered or rare plant or animal species? (If "yes," submit a WisDNR Endangered Species (NHI) Review Request Form" (Form 1700-047).)		

8. CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES TO PROMOTE TOURISM

As identified and described in Chapter 1, expanding Marquette County as a **center for nature-based tourism** provides the opportunity for residents to enjoy financial benefits of increased economic development while simultaneously preserving the area's unspoiled environment. These opportunities are particularly well-suited for Marquette County, given its proximity to growing urban areas, transportation accessibility, abundant and unspoiled natural resources for recreation and relaxation, and clusters of surrounding tourist destinations.

Marquette County's **abundant natural areas** are particularly well-suited to attract the growth in wildlife watching. In 2011, the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, which gathers information on the number of anglers, hunters and wildlife watchers in the United States, found that Wisconsin's participation rate in wildlife watching was the third highest of all states, with 48% of all residents age 16 and older participating in this activity. In Wisconsin, the direct spending impact of wildlife observers amounted to $235 million in 2011, of which $144 million was spent on food and lodging, $82 million on transportation costs, and $8 million on other trip-related costs.

Birding has become big business. The Great Wisconsin Birding Trail is a Statewide auto trail that leads people to parks, historic sites, rivers, lakes, and biking trails in Wisconsin. This trail system and accompanying trail map serves all types of visitors, from the die-hard birding enthusiast to the curious visitor who is looking for something different. Currently, this Statewide trail consists of five regional trails: The Great River Birding Trail, Oak Leaf Birding Trail, Horicon Marsh, Lake Superior/Northwoods Birding and Nature Trail, and Ozaukee County Interurban Trail. Currently there are two sites within Marquette County on the Great Wisconsin Birding Trail, the Muir Park State Natural Area (site 39), which features the Pleated Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird and the rare Redheaded Woodpecker, Acadian Fly Catcher and Bob-white quail and the Observatory Hill State Natural Area (site 40) where visitors may observe Turkey Vultures, Bald Eagles, Eastern Phoebes and rare Loggerhead Shrikes, Warbling Vireos, and Redheaded Woodpeckers. The County encourages the Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau, to identify additional sites or a Countywide "Trail Loop" system for nomination.

The Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Water Trail is a two mile wide corridor connecting Prairie du Chien to Green Bay, encompassing portions of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. The Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway Committee has designated numerous stops and trips along the corridor, including four boat landings within Marquette County. Marquette County and the Marquette County Tourism and Visitor's Bureau will work with the Lower Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway Committee to designate additional sites and trips within Marquette County along the Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Water Trail.

9. Promote Environmental Education Activities

Environmental education helps establish the critical connection between natural resources and humans, hopefully instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility for Marquette County's incredible natural environment.

Nature-Based Education Options

Marquette County's wealth of public and privately owned natural areas and resources offer significant opportunities for outdoor learning experiences for all ages. Local schools, local community organizations, and environmental groups have opportunities to enhance awareness of regional ecosystems by developing educational programs that integrate hands-on learning experiences within these natural areas. The County, local communities, and the local school districts have access to a variety of resources for enhancing and developing educational programs. Such local resource groups may include Marquette County UW-Extension, outdoor groups like Ducks Unlimited and Trout Unlimited, friends of parks groups, and other groups. The County could be involved in such an effort by supporting and sponsoring events in partnership with the above groups that engage adults and children in the management and preservation of natural areas. In Marquette County, introducing environmental and nature-based education into summer-school curriculum may be a good initial step to more deeply integrating these ideas into school curriculum—and boost the health of the local school districts.

A great example of this type of educational activity is Montello School District's 4th grade Howard and Betty Love Marquette County program. A local resident's two registered therapy dogs lead 4th graders on a tour of Marquette County, showing them their favorite venues. Howard and Betty take the 4th graders

on many adventures including field trips to Buffalo and Puckaway Lakes, Observatory Hill, and the Marquette County Courthouse. This program provides school age children with an outdoor experience while learning about the unique history and natural features found in Marquette County.

In addition to fostering a sense of environmental stewardship, nature based education can help build a lasting relationship between school aged children and the unique natural resources of Marquette County. As these young adults leave Marquette County to pursue higher education opportunities, they are more likely to return to the County after graduation if they feel a strong relationship to the natural environment.

Green and Healthy Schools

Schools also play an important role in promoting environmentally responsible practices and helping to foster a socially and environmentally healthy community. Further integration of environmental education into the school curriculum is supported by the Wisconsin Green and Healthy Schools program, sponsored by a partnership between WisDNR, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education. The mission of this program is to "…increase the students' knowledge and awareness of Wisconsin's natural resources and the environmental, health, and safety concerns and challenges that face our schools, our communities, and our Earth. The Green and Healthy Schools program will help students develop the necessary skills and expertise to address these challenges, and to foster life-long attitudes, behaviors, and commitments in order to make informed decisions and to encourage students to become active participants in their communities…"

This program is designed so that students and staff work together to discover how to utilize existing resources to improve the school environment, modify and enhance the school curriculum, and contribute more actively to the surrounding community. At the time this *Plan* was written, the High Marq Environmental Charter School in Montello participates in the Green and Healthy School program, offering environmental based education, field trips and service learning activities.

Schools that have engaged in this program have seen a variety of benefits, including a healthier and safer learning environment; increased sense of ownership by staff, faculty, and students; economic savings associated with reduced consumption and operating costs; increased protection of local natural resources; increased connections between the community and the school; use of the school site and facilities as a teaching tool; and increases in academic achievement.

Although the Green and Healthy School program would be implemented by the School District(s) and not by the County, staff and elected officials can contribute to this effort by supporting and promoting the program wherever possible, facilitating open communication between staff, elected officials, School District staff, and school board members, assisting in educational activities such as providing information on County land and water conservation activities and accommodating service learning opportunities at County owned facilities and parks.

10. Implement, Maintain and Update the County's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

In 2011, Marquette County adopted the Marquette County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, which details a set of actions designed to reduce the long term risk to people and property from natural hazards. The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan allowed the County to confirm the commitment of community leaders and citizens to mitigate the effects of disasters, provided a definitive guide to initiate changes that will decrease damages incurred from disasters, ensured the long-term continuity of mitigation policies and programs, and enabled the County to be eligible for a variety of FEMA grant programs.

FEMA requires Hazard Mitigation Plans be updated every five years. Marquette County intends to pursue an update to the County's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The update should, at a minimum, contain a summary of any disaster related damages and completed mitigation projects since adoption of the 2011 Plan, as well as a review of the vulnerability, risk, and mitigation recommendations contained within the original Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

11. Continue to Apply Standards for Nonmetallic Mineral Extraction Sites

The County's **mineral resources have potentially significant economic, community, and environmental impacts** on local areas and the County as a whole. Mineral resources are placed in two general categories—nonmetallic (e.g., sand and gravel) and metallic (e.g., gold, silver, copper). While there are several non-metallic sites in the County, there are no active metallic extraction sites.

The County's Non-Metallic Mine Reclamation Ordinance addresses the reclamation of mineral extraction sites after extraction operations are complete. It does not address the impacts on roads, neighboring properties, and the environment of active extraction operations. Applications for approval of new or expanded extraction operations should present a clear picture of proposed activities, through submittal of the information listed below.

The applicant for a non-metallic mining permit should submit a written statement containing the following information:

- General description of the operation.
- The types and quantities of the materials that would be extracted.
- Proposed dates to begin extraction, end extraction, and complete reclamation.
- Geologic composition and depth to the mineral deposit.
- Existing use of the land.
- Existing natural and archeological features on and adjacent to the land.
- Where extracted materials would be hauled and over what roads.
- Types, quantities, and frequency of use of equipment to extract, process, and haul.
- Whether blasting, drilling, crushing, screening, or washing would be performed on site.
- Any proposed temporary or permanent structures (e.g., scales, offices).
- Proposed hours of operation.
- Proposed use after reclamation.
- Any special measures that will be used for spill prevention and control, dust control, transportation, or environmental protection.

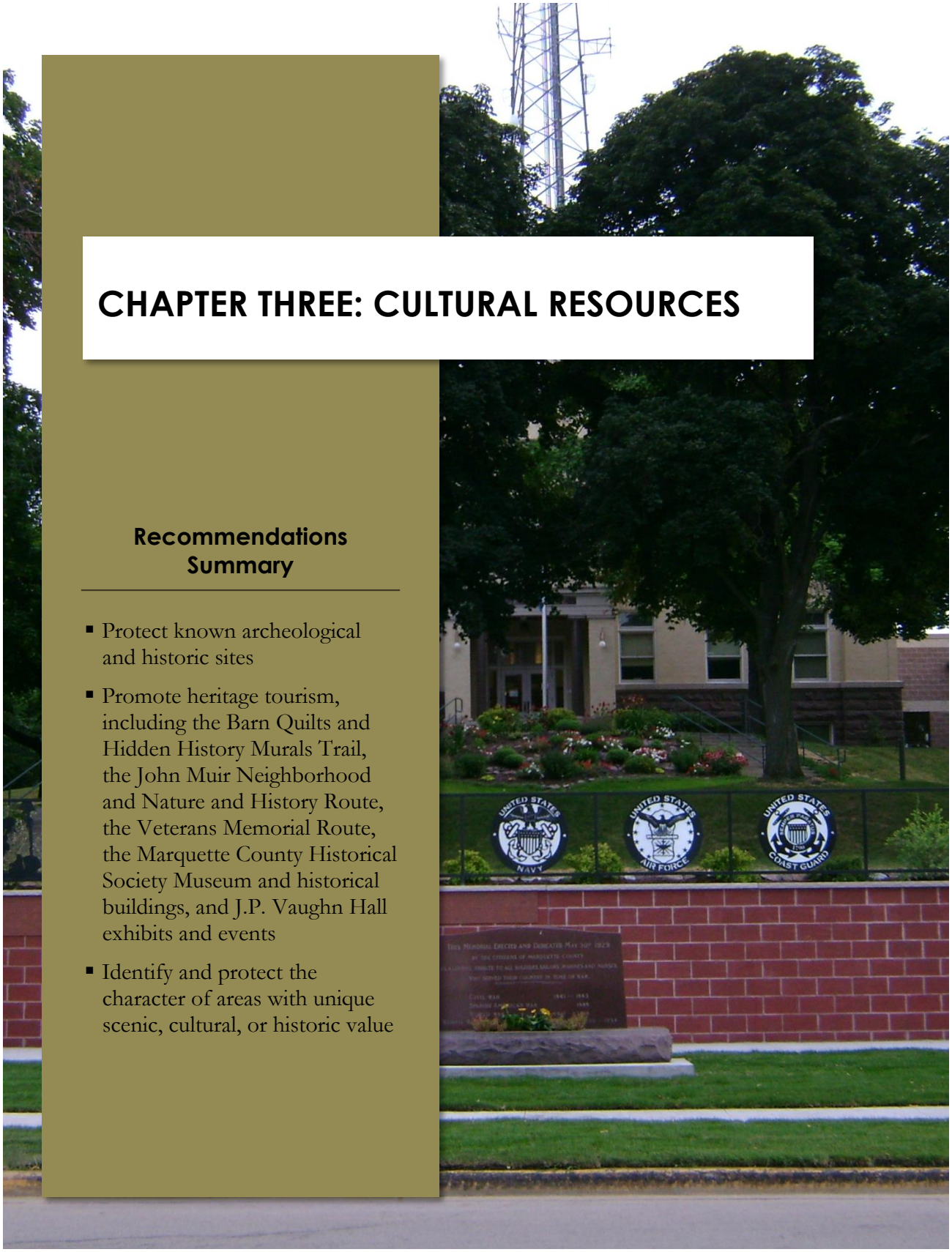
The applicant should also submit a detailed site/operations plan map, drawn to scale by a qualified professional, and showing the following information:

- Boundaries of the extraction site.
- Existing contour lines.
- Existing roads, driveways, and utilities.
- Existing natural features, including lakes, streams, floodplains, and wetlands.
- Proposed erosion control and stormwater management strategies and areas.
- All residences within 1,000 feet of the extraction site.
- Location of the proposed extraction operation, staging areas, and equipment storage areas.
- Proposed location and surfacing of roads, driveways, and site access points.
- Proposed phasing plan, if any (recommended for larger sites).
- Proposed fencing of property and gating of driveways, and type of screening berms and landscaping.
- Proposed stockpile location.
- Proposed location of temporary and permanent structures, including scales and offices.

The County will apply minimum standards to proposed extraction operations. These standards can either be codified in the zoning ordinance or included as conditions to the granting of each special exception permit. The standards should address the following aspects of the non-metallic mining operation:

- The project should be subject to an erosion control plan prepared by a qualified engineer.
- There should be assurances that the site would be developed and operated according to the site/operations plan.
- The date that operations are expected to cease should be clearly expressed.
- Reclamation should be addressed according to State requirements.
- Driveway surfacing should be addressed. In general, to prevent tracking of mud onto public roads, driveways should generally be paved within a certain distance of the public roads.
- Spraying of the site and driveways should be considered to control dust.
- On-site bulk fuel storage and appropriate places for fueling of equipment (e.g., above the water table) should be addressed to minimize the potential for groundwater contamination.
- Access to the site should only be through points designated as entrances on the site/ operations plan; such access points should be secured when the site is not in operation.
- Hours of operation should be specified, and should be limited if the extraction site is close to residential properties.
- Expectations for any blasting, drilling, and screening should be clearly understood, and separate acceptable hours for these activities may be specified.
- If blasting or drilling is requested, additional sets of standards should be applied with relation to frequency, noise and vibration levels, notice to neighbors, pre-inspection of neighboring basements and wells, and claims procedures.
- Unless the extraction site is very inaccessible, it should be completely enclosed by a safety fence or maintained at a gentle slope.
- The County and appropriate town should be listed as "additional named insureds" on the liability insurance policy, which should remain in effect until reclamation is complete. The petitioner should have to furnish a certificate of insurance before operations commence.
- The Zoning Administrator or his designee should be authorized to enter the premises to ascertain compliance with the site/operations plan and the conditions of approval.
- Approval should be subject to amendment or revocation if non-compliance is identified.
- Provisions for the upgrade, repair, and maintenance of Town and County roads may be appropriate depending on the intensity of the operation and the existing condition and capacity of such roads. Posting a bond for such work may be required.

The State reclamation program provides procedures for mineral producers and land owners to register the locations of marketable nonmetallic mineral reserves. The effect of the registration is to prohibit the granting of zoning-type permission for any land use activities that would permanently interfere with the future extraction of the mineral deposit. Registration does not require that Marquette County or the towns revise their land use plan designations for the property. It does mean that a subsequent zoning change to implement that planned land use designation may not take effect if the zoning change would interfere with future mining. The County will accurately record all future registrations, and make this information available to all requestors.



CHAPTER THREE: CULTURAL RESOURCES

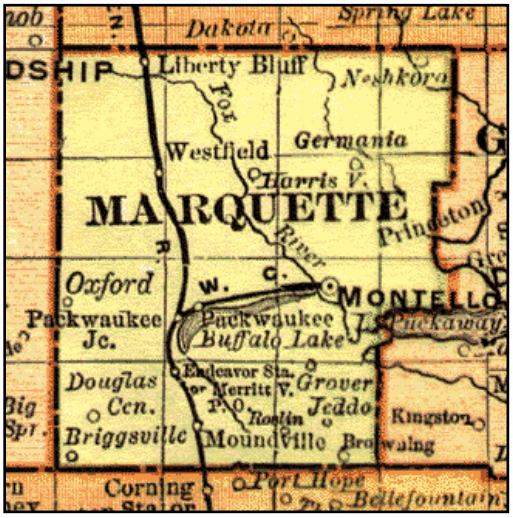
Recommendations Summary

- Protect known archeological and historic sites
- Promote heritage tourism, including the Barn Quilts and Hidden History Murals Trail, the John Muir Neighborhood and Nature and History Route, the Veterans Memorial Route, the Marquette County Historical Society Museum and historical buildings, and J.P. Vaughn Hall exhibits and events
- Identify and protect the character of areas with unique scenic, cultural, or historic value

This chapter contains a compilation of background data, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs for cultural resource preservation and promotion.

A. CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

Marquette County and the entire region was once home to several tribal Native American groups. The three prominent Native American tribes in the region were the Menominee, and the Ho-Chunk (or Winnebago). In 1673, French Jesuit priest Jacques Marquette and explorer Louis Joliet were the first known Europeans to travel the entire length of the Fox River from Green Bay to Portage and onward down the Wisconsin River. From these early beginnings until the 1830s, fur trading was the main activity along the river as numerous types of fur bearing animals were found along the waterways and shoreline woodlands.



Waves of European immigrants arrived in the region in the mid-1800s, particularly after Wisconsin gained statehood in 1848. English, Irish and Scottish along with Yankees and even some Finnish settled mostly south of the Fox River. German settlers generally settled north of the Fox. By 2000, about 45% of the County's population reported German ancestry, followed by 12% reporting Irish ancestry.

Each succession of ethnic groups and each generation of residents have added to the cultural, religious, and architectural flavor of the region. Preservation of these historic and cultural resources fosters a sense of pride, improves quality of life, and provides an important feeling of social and cultural continuity between the past, present and future.

1. HISTORIC RESOURCES

There are **six sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places** in Marquette County. These include the Marquette County Courthouse (listed in 1982), 22 buildings within the Montello Commercial Historic District (listed in 1996), Vaughn's Hall and Blacksmith Shop (2007) and the Charles Samuel Richter House (listed in 1996)–all located in the City of Montello. The Bonnie Oaks Historic District (listed in 1986) located in the Town of Douglas, and the Fountain Lake Farm (listed in 1990) located in the Town of Buffalo, are also listed on the National Register.

While not on any national list, there are numerous properties in the County listed as local historic resources in the State Historical Society's database. The Society's Architecture and History Inventory (AHI) contains data on a wide range of historic properties throughout the state—such as round barns, cast iron bridges, commercial buildings, schoolhouses, and turn-of-the-century homes—that create Wisconsin's distinct cultural landscape. The AHI includes 994 documented properties in Marquette County. These properties include older homes, commercial buildings and government buildings.

Marquette County is home to one National Historic Landmark: the historic farm and landscape that is associated with the life of **Scottish-born naturalist John Muir**. A Wisconsin Historical Marker on STH 22 commemorates the naturalist and his work.

To preserve and promote these historic resources, the **Marquette County Historical Society Museum**, located in Westfield, showcases an extensive collection of artifacts, dating from the area's earliest pioneering days through the mid-twentieth century. The Museum's collection is exhibited in four separate buildings: the Kerst Exhibit Building, and three historic structures, a railroad tool building containing memorabilia of earlier railroad days, the Riverside School, a historic school house relocated from the Town of Buffalo, and the Cochrane-Nelson House, a stately two-story home with high-ceilings and

filigree woodwork constructed in 1903, furnished from top to bottom with antiques and collectibles that were useful and fashionable when the County was young. The Museum's research library contains over 16,500 obituaries and other County records, maps, and plat books.

There were two other active historical societies in Marquette County: the **Montello Historic Preservation Society and the Packwaukee Historical Society**. The latter has a preserved utilitarian agriculture building as its museum that was originally located on the Daniel Muir property. It is a granary that dates to the mid-1800s.

A **Veterans Memorial is located at the County Courthouse campus**. In 2014, Marquette County invested approximately $45,000 to expand an existing pre-World War Two veterans monument to reflect subsequent wars and honor the County's veterans who served in them. The monument was relocated to its current location, allowing for greater visibility and a wall was constructed into the hillside where engraved brick markers of veterans' names and dates of service are placed. The area is illuminated at night and, as of 2015, there were 433 brick markers awaiting installation in the memorial. A Marquette County Veterans Memorial brochure identifies this and other veteran memorials in communities around the County.

2. Archeological Resources

According to the State Historical Society, there are **over 200 archeological sites within Marquette County**. These sites include cemeteries/burial mounds, Native American villages and campsites, rock art sites, early farm sites and mills and quarries. Nearly 80% of all archeological sites statewide have been destroyed or severely damaged, primarily by modern land development and farming practices. Many sites have also been damaged or looted. There are federal and state laws to protect archeological sites. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to ensure that their actions do not adversely affect archeological sites on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Archeological sites can be protected during the course of state agency activities if the sites have been recorded with the Office of the State Archeologist. All human burial sites, including cemeteries and Indian mounds, are protected under state law.

A historical kiosk at the County boat landing in Montello that has three panels that tell about the first people who lived here, including the over 600 conical and effigy mounds that were identified ringing Buffalo Lake.

B. Cultural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal: Preserve the County's cultural, historic and archeological sites and scenic character

Objectives:

1. Identify and promote the preservation of the County's cultural, historic, and archeological resources that celebrate the County's pre-settlement and early settlement periods.
2. Preserve large blocks of woodlands, hunting land, wetlands, and open space that contribute to Marquette County's rural character and way of life.

Policies:

1. Encourage private landowners to **protect and rehabilitate known historic and archeological sites**.
2. Protect the narrow, winding, **lightly traveled roadways** that contribute to the County's scenic quality and, for some, outdoor recreation opportunities.
3. **Preserve and celebrate the scenic landscape and byways** in the County.
4. **Promote "heritage tourism"** (e.g., local festivals, fairs, farm tours, and markets) that celebrates the County's heritage and rural setting, including the Barn Quilts and Hidden History Murals Trail.

C. CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Like other rural places in Wisconsin, the rural landscape in Marquette County is constantly evolving, as it reflects changes in the economy and lifestyle, as well as individual landowner needs, aspirations and traditions. Expanding on the policies listed above, through this *Plan* the County intends to preserve and celebrate its treasured cultural resources through the following programs:

1. PROTECT KNOWN HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

Per the recommended "site assessment checklist," the County will require documentation of known archaeological or historic sites with significant new development proposals. The County or affected town intend to make a specific request to the State Historical Society for more detailed information when a specific development proposal is offered on land in an area where a known historic or archeological site has been mapped, if its location is not readily apparent. Mapped archeological sites are predominantly burial sites.

2. PRESERVE THE SCENIC LANDSCAPE

Scenic beauty is a very important cultural resource in Marquette County. The County offers a very diverse landscape of glacial hills, lakes, rivers, and agricultural areas. There are numerous local areas that offer stunning views of the landscape, key landmarks (e.g., hills), and bodies of water. Though there are many scenic locations in the County, local comprehensive plans adopted in 2005 identified the following specific areas as having high scenic value:

- Crystal and Tuttle Lakes, the Mecan River corridor, and the open expanses of the Germania Marsh State Wildlife Area in Crystal Lake.
- The area around Highways X and A in the Town of Douglas.
- Town roads like Duck Creek Avenue in Neshkoro, which may qualify for "rustic road" status.
- The buffalo farm and view of the town center from the opposite shore of Buffalo Lake in Packwaukee.

More generally, throughout the County, lakes, rivers, wildlife areas, marshes, wetlands, and small woodlands have great scenic value. Within and near these areas, the recommended "site assessment checklist" (see Natural Resources chapter) should include consideration of scenic views before approving new developments. A viewshed analysis would identify the places from where the new development could be seen from other locations, and the impact of the view that would result if development occurred in the manner proposed. New development should ideally be designed, located, and landscaped in a manner that does not detract from these scenic views. Chapter Eight: Housing and Neighborhood Development provides additional guidance on minimizing the visual impact of development.

State and federal "rustic road" and "scenic byway" programs are also techniques to preserve and celebrate particularly scenic road corridors. Chapter Six: Transportation provides additional guidance on these programs.

3. Market Local Festivals, Gatherings, and Events

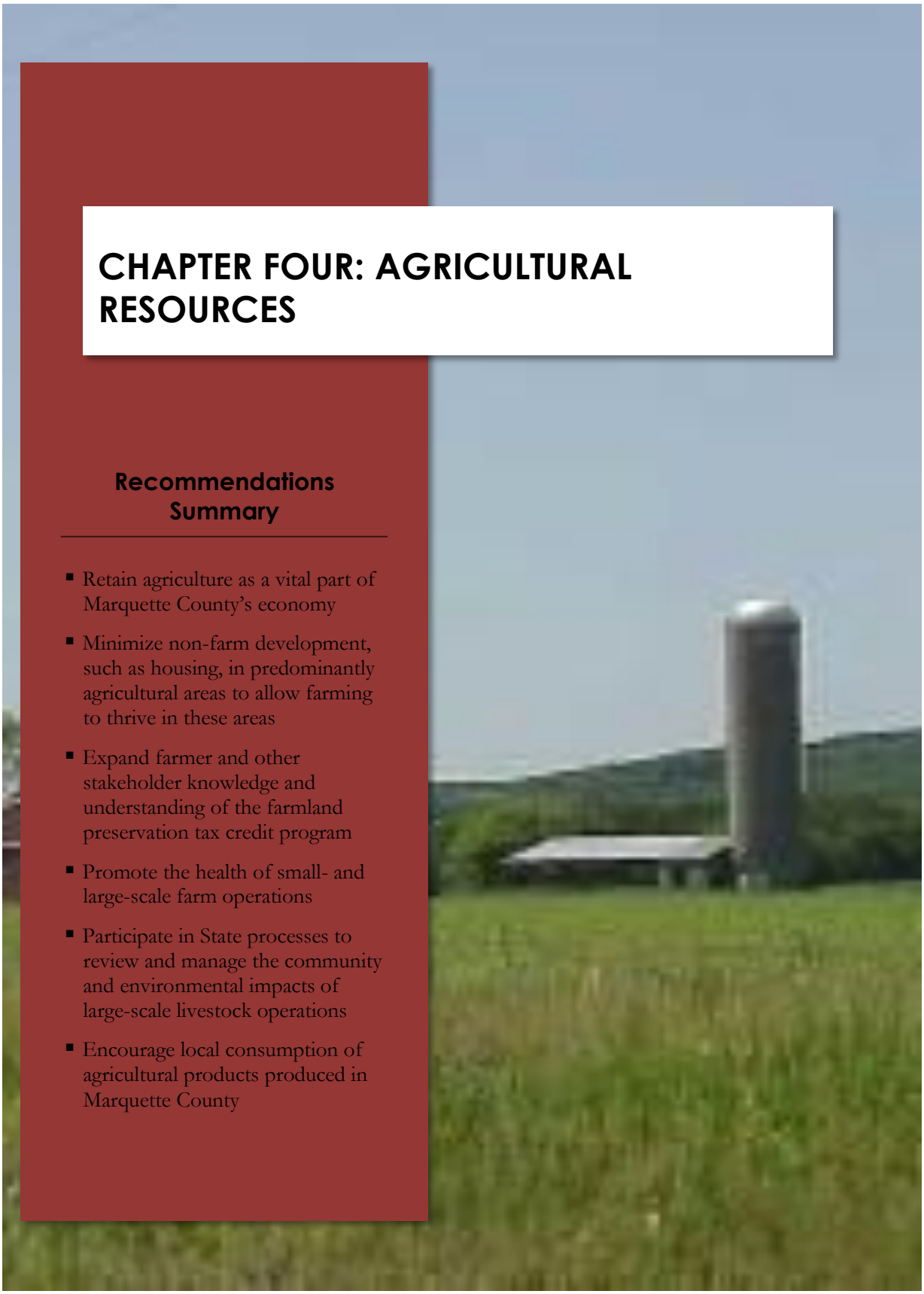
The County and local communities will continue to work together with the Marquette County Tourism and Visitor's Bureau to market and promote area events. Many of the communities and local organizations throughout Marquette County have regular or annual local events or celebrations that help define what makes the community special. The vast majority of these events are listed on the Marquette County Tourism and Visitor's Bureau website. Recognizing that many of these events are small, pairing events is a strategic way to draw larger numbers of visitors to the County. Scheduling two events over a weekend so that visitors could enjoy one event on a Saturday and the next on Sunday would be a way of encouraging visitors to spend more time within the County. One example of this could be having an event related to the Barn Quilt and Hidden History Murals Trail on the Sunday following Father Marquette Days.

4. Promote Heritage Tourism

The County and/or Tourism and Visitors Bureau will continue to promote tourism opportunities that celebrate and take economic advantage of the County's historic, archeological, agricultural, and scenic resources, including through State grants. This type of tourism—often called "Heritage Tourism"—will become increasingly popular as the baby boom generation eases into retirement. Heritage tourism may focus on museums and cultural centers, vibrant rural communities, historic architecture, historic settlement patterns and the County's considerable and diverse natural amenities and views. Agricultural tourism highlighting both traditional agriculture and organic farms has also been successful in the region, such as seasonal farm events with pumpkin patches, sleigh rides, corn mazes or tours of organic farms.

The Marquette County Barn Quilt and Hidden History Murals Trail is an excellent example of promoting heritage tourism and the rural history of the County. The trail consists of over 30 barn quilts and 24 murals throughout Marquette County. These barn "quilts" celebrate the agricultural history and structures within the County while providing an attraction for area tourists. The Barn Quilt and Hidden History Murals Trail has garnered statewide attention, including receipt of a Wisconsin Top Rural Development Initiative award in 2011.

Page intentionally left blank



CHAPTER FOUR: AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Recommendations Summary

- Retain agriculture as a vital part of Marquette County's economy
- Minimize non-farm development, such as housing, in predominantly agricultural areas to allow farming to thrive in these areas
- Expand farmer and other stakeholder knowledge and understanding of the farmland preservation tax credit program
- Promote the health of small- and large-scale farm operations
- Participate in State processes to review and manage the community and environmental impacts of large-scale livestock operations
- Encourage local consumption of agricultural products produced in Marquette County

This chapter contains a compilation of background data, goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs for agricultural preservation, per the comprehensive planning requirements under Section 66.1001 of Wisconsin Statutes. The chapter also fulfills the County's farmland preservation planning requirements under Chapter 91 of Statutes, combined with other chapters of this *Plan,* including the following:

- Key initiatives and population trends and projections, Chapter One: Issues and Opportunities
- Natural resources and environmental preservation policies, Chapter Two: Natural Resources
- Heritage and agricultural-based tourism opportunities, Chapter Three: Cultural Resources
- Agricultural land use inventory, development policies within farmland preservation areas, housing density inside and outside the farmland preservation area, other land use issues relating to farmland preservation; Chapter Five: Land Use
- Transportation network inventory, Chapter Six: Transportation
- Community facilities, energy, and waste management network inventory, Chapter Seven: Utilities and Community Facilities
- Housing trends and projections, Chapter Eight: Housing and Neighborhood Development
- Economic growth analysis and trends, Chapter Nine: Economic Development
- Further municipal expansion analysis, Chapter Ten: Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Overall plan implementation priorities, Chapter Eleven: Implementation

A. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

Agriculture remains a significant part of Marquette County's economy and landscape. As evidence:

- Local farmers produce a variety of agricultural commodities for local and distant markets, including dairy products, alfalfa, corn and soybeans.
- Between 350 to 620 full-time County jobs, or 5 to 14% of the County's workforce, are related to agriculture.
- There are about 105,000 acres of cropland in County, or about 36% of the total land base.
- Roughly one-quarter of the County is comprised of Class I-III agricultural soils, which the County considers prime agricultural soils.

This section includes an inventory of the character, location, and viability of farming activity in Marquette County from the late 2000s and to the early 2010s.

1. FARMING BY THE NUMBERS

Figure 4.1 provides historic trends for farming in the County. **The number of farms, acres in farmland, and mean farm size have declined since the late-1970s.** The U.S. Census of Agriculture defines a farm as "any place that produced and sold, or normally would have sold, $1,000 or more of agricultural products during the Census year." 272 (56%) of the reported 478 farms in Marquette County had sales of $10,000 or less.

Figure 4.1: Farm Changes in Marquette County, 1978 to 2012

Year	Number of Farms	Acres in Farmland	Average (Mean) Farm Acreage
1978	585	157,231	274
1982	549	150,775	275
1987	502	145,661	290
1992	444	135,538	305
1997	443[a]/551[b]	124,804	282
2002	624	145,552	233
2007	626	135,914	217
2012	478	120,185	251

Source: US Census of Agriculture, 1978-2012
[a] Non-adjusted figure; represents old methodology for counting farms. The non-adjusted figure should be used when comparing 1978-1992 to 1997.
[b] Adjusted figure, represents new methodology, which is able to count small farms that were not included in the previous method. The adjusted figure should be used when comparing 1997 to 2002-2012.

While total acres of cropland in Marquette County have declined, **harvested cropland has increased since 1992** (see Figure 4.2). This has been driven by increases in corn (for grain rather than silage), wheat, and especially soybeans. Increased commodity prices and interest in biofuels, such as ethanol, have boosted the acreage in Marquette County devoted to corn and soybeans since 2007. Oat production has decreased, with County farmers now planting a third of the acreage that was devoted to oats in 1992.

Figure 4.2: Marquette County Changes in Crop Acreage, 1992-2012

	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	% Change 1992-2012	% Change 2007-2012
Total cropland	93,144	86,037	92,590	90,299	84,161	-10%	-7%
Harvested cropland	66,212	69,719	73,071	76,704	75,311	+14%	-2%
Corn for grain	24,735	27,232	26,387	31,521	30,203	+22%	-4%
Corn for silage	7,847	4,754	4,382	3,845	7,636	-3%	+99%
Oats for grain	1,918	1,137	1,427	1,377	620	-68%	-55%
Wheat for grain	139	721	721	1,745	785	+465%	-55%
Soybeans for beans	4,052	7,025	11,966	9,481	14,783	+265%	+56%

Source: USDA Agricultural Census, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012

Mirroring State and national trends, the **number of smaller farms and very large farms in the County is increasing**, **while mid-sized farms are decreasing** (see Figure 4.3). Between 1992 and 2012, farms of 1-9 acres and 10-49 acres increased by 62% and 151% respectively. Over that same period, farms of 50–179 acres increased by 31 percent, but those of 180–999 acres decreased. The number of farms with 1000+ acres grew by 47% from 1992 to 2012. This was the only group of farms to increase between 2007 and 2012. As presented in Figure 4.1, the mean farm size in 2012 was 251 acres. As presented in Figure 4.3, 2012's median farm size of 100 acres suggests the County's largest farms significantly increase the mean. **70% of farms in the County were comprised of less than 180 acres in 2012**.

Figure 4.3: Marquette County Farm Size Trends, 1992-2012

	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	% Change 1992-2012	% Change 2007-2012
1-9 acres	13	14	26	24	21	+62%	-13%
10-49 acres	45	65	135	178	113	+151%	-37%
50-179 acres	156	150	247	242	204	+31%	-16%
180-499 acres	154	150	150	126	96	-38%	-24%
500-999 acres	59	36	45	33	19	-68%	-42%
1,000+ acres	17	18	21	23	25	+47%	+9%
Median Farm size (acres)	N/A	168	160	93	100	N/A	+8%

Source: USDA Agricultural Census, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012

Per the U.S. Census of Agriculture, Marquette County's average farm income in 2012 was $26,527. Principal operators of farms are overwhelmingly male (90%) and were on average 57.5 years old in 2012. **Farmers in Marquette County often supplement their farm income with other sources, and farming is often not their primary income source.** Of the 478 principal operators in Marquette County in 2012, 48% listed another occupation as their primary occupation. The Census also reported that 623 people were hired to perform farm labor in Marquette County in 2012. Over half were hired for fewer than 150 days per year (i.e., seasonal labor).

2. Economic Contribution of Agriculture

Sales of agricultural commodities produced in Marquette are of great importance to the County's economy. In 2014, University of Wisconsin-Madison in collaboration with University of Wisconsin-Extension produced an estimate of the total economic impact of agriculture in Wisconsin, providing individualized data for each county. The figures provided are an estimate and include all impacts to the economy. Direct economic impacts are income and sales attributed to an individual farmer. The farmer would then have indirect impacts to the County's economy through agricultural income and business interactions and sales related to agriculture, such as veterinary services and feed suppliers. Finally, agriculture is understood to have an induced effect on a regional economy through farmer and employee wages spent and circulated through the County. Combined, the cumulative effect of agriculture in Marquette County is better understood and **the industry had a total impact in 2012 of $593 million in economic activity and contributed $29.4 million of business sales in the County.**

Sales figures for the top commodities in the County were:

- Milk ($25.4 million)
- Grain ($20.4 million)
- Vegetables ($10.1 million)
- Other crops and hay ($4.4 million)
- Cattle/calves ($3.9 million).

Marquette County is also a **lead producer of spearmint and peppermint** grown for oil. Local farmers report that the market for mint oil is shrinking and the number of mint farmers in the County dropped from six producers in 2007 to just four in 2014. Mint is generally grown on drained Class III soils. Other specialty markets in the County include sod production and a Christmas tree operation.

Also according to the UW-Madison/UW-Extension, **poultry processing in 2012 accounted for $107.6 million of income in Marquette County.** This is on account of Brakebush Brothers, a poultry processing plant, located in the Town of Oxford. Brakebush Brothers is also one of two agricultural product processing operation in Marquette County. Therefore, **most Marquette County farmers must send their products elsewhere for preparation and distribution**. The County's industrial parks, good highway access, and potential on-site processing provide future opportunity for more in-County processing.

Farms in Marquette County are served by agricultural support businesses, such as implement dealers, feed and seed operations. These businesses provide necessary services, materials, and access to markets for the County's farmers. According the Marquette County UW-Extension Agriculture Agent, the local Farm Bureau, and other sources, the following storage, supply, and distribution operations are located in Marquette County:

- Riesterer & Schnell (Westfield) – Agricultural Implements
- Integrity Nutrition Services LLC (Endeavor) – Animal Nutrition and Feed
- Gumz Seed Service (Endeavor) – Seed Supply
- Gumz Muck Farms (Endeavor) – Processing for Wholesale
- Fox River Feed Mill (Montello) – Feed Storage and Agricultural Supply
- ADM (Westfield) – Grain Storage
- Andy's Deli (Moundville) - Butchering
- Adams-Marquette Veterinary Services (Oxford) – Veterinary Services

Tractors for Sale at Riesterer & Schnell, Westfield

Figure 4.4 depicts changes in the market value of farm products sold in Marquette County, direct sales made in the County, and government subsidies paid to farmers from 2002 to 2012. The **market value of farm products sold in Marquette County increased by nearly 148% from 1992 to 2012**, not accounting for inflation. In 2012, the average market value per farm was $145,774, compared to State average market value per farm of $168,370. The largest increase in market value of products sold occurred between 2002 and 2007, correlating with the increased acreage of harvested cropland during the same time period.

Government payments to farmers increased by 20% from 1992 to 2012. In 2012, the Natural Resource Conservation Service reported Marquette County farmers yielded $1,187,899 in farm commodity subsidies and $107,177 through federal conservation programs. In the same year, Marquette County ranked 43rd of Wisconsin counties in receiving funds through conservation programs and 54th in receiving commodity payments. In 2013, Marquette County farmers also received about $30,000 in State farmland preservation income tax credits, per the State Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

Direct sales are interactions between farmer and consumer, where a farm product is grown for direct consumption with little to no product processing. These sales include roadside stands, farmers markets, and other forms of direct commerce. Following direct sales is one way to gauge the impacts of local food and the success of small-scale farmers in the County. **Direct sales increased between 1997 and 2007, but decreased substantially between 2007 and 2012.** This is counter to trends in other parts of the State.

Figure 4.4: Changes in Market Value, Government Payments, and Direct Sales; Marquette County, 1992-2012

	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	% Change 1992-2012	% Change 2007-2012
Value of products sold	$28,058,000	$32,281,000	$37,557,000	$55,686,000	$69,680,000	+148%	+25%
Avg. per farm	$63,193	$72,870	$60,188	$88,955	$145,774	+31%	+64%
Gov't Payments	$1,173,000	$1,212,000	$1,495,000	$1,506,000	$1,410,000	+20%	-6%
Avg. Pmt per farm	$5,584	$4,505	$5,397	$4,442	$6,468	+16%	+46%
Direct Sales	$160,000	$70,000	$163,000	$213,000	$73,000	-54%	-66%

Source: USDA Agricultural Census, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012

Figure 4.5 depicts agricultural land sales in 2011, 2012, and 2013 in Marquette County compared to neighboring counties. Compared to other nearby counties, **Marquette County's agricultural land tends to remain in agricultural use when sold.** Over this three year period, 2,408 acres of agricultural land in Marquette County was sold, with only 293 acres (12%) converted to non-agricultural use. Average sale price for land sold in the County that was kept in agricultural use was $3,620 per acre in 2013. In neighboring counties, the price of land sold and retained in agricultural use ranged from $2,962 and $3,098 in Juneau and Adams Counties to a high of $4,394 in Waupaca and $7,636 in Green Lake Counties.

No agricultural land in the County sold in 2013 was diverted to another use. Community members report that this trend is cyclical and follows commodity prices. High prices for corn and soybeans in this same time period have made farming a lucrative business. Prices are projected to decrease in coming years, making agricultural land sales in future years more susceptible to conversion to other land uses, such as recreational land.

Figure 4.5: Agricultural Land Sales, 2011-2013

Year/County	Land Continuing in Ag Use			Land Converted to Other Uses		
	Transactions	Acres Sold	% of Total Sales	Transactions	Acres Sold	% of Total Sales
2013						
Marquette County	11	759	100%	0	0	0%
Adams County	16	1,142	94%	1	22	6%
Green Lake County	9	383	90%	1	146	10%
Juneau County	23	177	77%	7	345	23%
Portage County	32	1,941	94%	2	41	6%
Waupaca County	32	1,773	94%	2	87	6%
Waushara County	21	2,531	100%	0	0	0%
Wood County	24	1,454	92%	2	117	8%
Wisconsin	1,817	116,979	95%	98	4,419	5%
2012						
Marquette County	9	858	64%	5	121	36%
Adams County	16	1,246	100%	0	0	0%
Green Lake County	7	555	100%	0	0	0%
Juneau County	28	1,328	100%	0	0	0%
Portage County	16	1,133	89%	2	47	11%
Waupaca County	34	1,928	94%	2	59	6%
Waushara County	16	1,364	94%	1	23	6%
Wood County	27	1,447	100%	0	0	0%
Wisconsin	2,194	144,971	96%	88	4,277	4%
2011						
Marquette County	4	498	33%	3	172	25%
Adams County	18	2,643	100%	0	0	0%
Green Lake County	8	700	100%	0	0	0%
Juneau County	21	1,083	95%	1	33	5%
Portage County	18	1,090	90%	2	41	10%
Waupaca County	23	1,408	96%	1	19	4%
Waushara County	15	1,092	94%	1	48	6%
Wood County	33	1,579	94%	2	206	6%
Wisconsin	1,784	129,108	95%	103	3,764	5%

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service

3. SOIL SUITABILITY

The Natural Resources Conservation Service groups soils based on their capability to produce common cultivated crops and pasture plants without deteriorating over a long period of time. These capability classifications are based on numerous criteria that include, but are not limited to, the soil's salinity; capacity to hold moisture; potential for erosion; depth, texture, and structure; as well as local climatic limitations (e.g., temperature and rainfall). Under this system of classification, soils are separated into eight classes.

Within Marquette County, soils in Classes I, II, and III are considered "prime farmland." These soil types are indicated on Map 4.

Generally, Class I and Class II soils are the best suited for the cultivation of crops. Class I soils have few limitations that restrict their use for cropland. These soils can sustain a wide variety of plants and are well suited for cultivated crops, pasture plants, range lands, and woodlands. Class II soils have moderate limitations that restrict the types of plants that can be grown or require simple conservation practices or soil management techniques to prevent deterioration over time. However, these practices are generally easy to apply, and, therefore, these soils are still able to sustain cultivated crops, pasture plants, range lands, and woodlands. About 13% of the soils in Marquette County are Class I or II soils. These are concentrated in the western and southern parts of the County.

Soils in Class III have limitations that, under natural circumstances, restrict the types of plants that can be grown, and/or that alter the timing of planting, tillage, and harvesting. However, with the application and careful management of special conservation practices, these soils may still be used for cultivated crops, pasture plants, woodlands, and range lands. Another 13% of the soils in Marquette County are Class III soils. Class III soils are spread fairly evenly throughout the County.

Soils in capability classes IV through VIII present increasingly severe limitations to the cultivation of crops. Soils in Classes VI through VIII generally have limitations that entirely preclude their use for commercial plant production.

Map 4: Soil Suitability for Agriculture

Page intentionally left blank

4. FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

In 2009, in response to the State's Working Lands Initiative, the Wisconsin Legislature enacted significant alterations to the State farmland preservation program (Chapter 91 of Wisconsin Statutes). These include a **wider array of choices for State-certified farmland preservation zoning districts, a new system of calculating State income tax credits for eligible landowners, and adjustments to conservation requirements** for land owners interested in obtaining tax credits. Another noteworthy component of the update to Chapter 91 is the inclusion of forest management an agricultural use.

A new farmland preservation plan, certified by the State, is an essential first step to enable farmers in designated "farmland preservation areas" (as depicted in Maps 5a-5j at the end of this chapter) to obtain farmland preservation credits on their State income taxes.

To be eligible for an income tax credit at a rate of $7.50 per acre, farmers owning lands in planned "farmland preservation areas" must also be situated in a State-certified farmland preservation zoning district (such as the County's AG-1 Prime Agricultural district), meet minimum farm income requirements, and be issued a Certificate of Compliance by the Marquette County Land and Water Conservation Department certifying they are in compliance with the NR 151 Agricultural Performance Standards and Prohibitions incorporated into ATCP 50.

Upon the expiration of remaining individual farmland preservation agreements issued prior to the update of Chapter 91 in 2009, farmers that are not located in a State-certified farmland preservation zoning district may only obtain tax credits (at a lower $5 per acre rate) if they own land within a State-approved "Agricultural Enterprise Area." Farmers that are in a farmland preservation zoning district and within an "Agricultural Enterprise Area" are eligible for tax credits at the highest rate ($10 per acre). However, the "Agricultural Enterprise Area" rates are possible only if the farmer enters into a contract with the State restricting land from development for 15 years. At time of writing, there were no Agricultural Enterprise Areas in Marquette County.

What is the State's Farmland Preservation Program?

The program is primarily documented of Chapter 91 of Wisconsin State Statutes and Chapter ATCP 49 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Main components include:

- Modernization of land use planning and zoning program for farmland preservation
- Requirement that all counties update their farmland preservation plans
- Establishment of a competitive Agricultural Enterprise Area (AEA) program to designate areas with greatest opportunity for and commitment to farmland preservation
- Increased State income tax credit opportunities for farmers in areas with farmland preservation zoning or AEAs

Provided that they meet all farmland preservation program eligibility requirements, landowners who are enrolled in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program are also able to obtain farmland preservation income tax credits. Further, forestland does not need to be enrolled in the MFL program for the owner to be eligible for farmland preservation income tax credits.

The Farmland Preservation Program includes other paired grant and loan programs to expand the farm economy and assist individual businesses engaged in or related to farming.

5. FEDERAL FARMLAND PROGRAMS

The **Conservation Reserve Program** (CRP) is a voluntary program administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). The CRP program provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. As of 2012, about 27 million acres across the U.S. were enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted into the program can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving ground covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years). To be eligible for placement in CRP, land must be cropland that is planted

or considered planted with an agricultural commodity for four of the previous six crop years, and be physically and legally capable of being planted (no planting restrictions due to an easement or other legally binding instrument) in a normal manner with an agricultural commodity. In return for establishing long-term, resource-conserving covers, the FSA provides annual rental payments to participant, based on the relative productivity of the soils within each county, the average dryland cash rent using data provided by the National Agricultural Statistical Service and cash-rent equivalents. The maximum CRP rental rate for each offer is calculated in advance of enrollment. Producers may offer land at that rate or offer a lower rental rate to increase the likelihood that their offer will be accepted.

The **Conservation Stewardship Program** (CSP) is a voluntary program administered by USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) that encourages agricultural and forestry producers to address resource concerns by undertaking additional conservation activities and improving and maintaining existing conservation systems. CSP provides financial and technical assistance to help producers, regardless of operation size or crops produced, conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. To be eligible for the program, applicants must comply with various standards and include all eligible land in their agricultural or forestry operation. In return, CSP pays for conservation performance – the higher the performance the higher the payment. Payments under this program include an annual payment for installing and maintaining conservation activities, and a supplemental payment for participants adopting a resource crop rotation. Five year contracts are offered.

The **Wetland Reserve Easement** (WRE) is a voluntary program administered by USDA NRCS, which provides technical and financial support to help landowners with wetland restoration efforts. The following types of lands are eligible for a WRE: wetlands farmed under natural conditions, farmed wetlands, prior converted cropland, farmed wetland pasture, certain lands that have the potential to become a wetland as a result of flooding, rangeland, pasture, or forest production lands where the hydrology has been significantly degraded and can be restored, riparian areas that link protected wetlands, lands adjacent to protected wetlands that contribute significantly to wetland functions and values, wetlands previously restored under a local, State, or federal program that need long-term protection. Enrollment options include a permanent easement (at 100% of easement value and restoration costs) or a 30-year easement (at 75% funding). Other arrangements include restoration cost-share assistance (where the agreement restores or enhances wetland functions without placing an easement on enrolled acres) and a 30 year contract on tribal lands.

Planting potatoes near Endeavor. (Photo courtesy of Gumz Muck Farms)

The **Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative** is a collaborative initiative involving NRCS as well as individuals and organizations focused on providing technical assistance to help interested farmers begin using rotational grazing methods. Trained grazing specialists work one-on-one with farmers to develop grazing plans, including seeding recommendations, fencing, and watering plans. This process has formed coalitions that represent grass root concerns about the impact of private grazing land. These coalitions actively seek sources to increase technical assistance and public awareness activities that maintain or enhance grazing land resources.

The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program** (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land to owners of land in forest or agricultural production up to a maximum term of ten years in length. These contracts provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns and opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. In addition, a purpose of EQIP is to help producers meet federal, State, tribal and local environmental regulations. Historically underserved producers (limited resource farmers/ranchers, beginning farmers/ranchers, socially disadvantaged producers, tribes) may be eligible for a higher payment rate for implementation of conservation practices and preparation of conservation plans. Producers may use a certified Technical Service Provider (TSP) for technical assistance needed for certain eligible activities, services and the development of conservation plans. Historically underserved producers may also be eligible for advance payments up to 30% of the cost needed to purchase materials or contracting services to begin installation of approved conservation practices.

6. Other Potential Resources for Implementation of Agricultural Initiatives

The following is a list of programs and resources available to help implement agricultural-related initiatives described in this *Plan*. The list includes the name of the program, a general description, and a link to obtain more information as needed to connect County farmers and landowners with specific agricultural development opportunities.

- *Agribusiness Guarantee.* Provides low interest, long term loans to develop or expand production of products using a Wisconsin raw agricultural commodity. Funding can be used for a wide variety of items including equipment, buildings, land, capital, inventory, and refinancing. Source: Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). Link: http://www.wheda.com/root/BusinessPartners/SmallBusinessLenders/Dynamic.aspx?id=833
- *Value-Added Dairy Revolving Loans.* Encourages adding value to dairy products, by helping to fund new equipment and installation. The goal is to increase Wisconsin's value-added dairy production by building a partnership between the processor and their bank. Source: DATCP. Link: http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Grants_and_Financial_Aid/Revolving_Loan/index.aspx
- *Producers First.* Provides technical support and consultation to expand agricultural producer capacity. Source: DATCP. Link: http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin/Producers_First/index.aspx
- *Something Special from Wisconsin.* This program is a trademark marketing program administered by the Division of Agricultural Development of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Any business, no matter how large or how small, may participate in the SSfW™ program. Something Special from Wisconsin™ logos can be applied to a sellable product or service if at least 50 percent of the value is attributable to Wisconsin ingredients, production or processing activities. Link: http://www.somethingspecialwi.com/
- *Organic Growers Support.* Provides resources and support to help farmers grow organic successfully. Source: Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service. Link: http://www.mosesorganic.org/
- *Agriculture and Food Related Initiatives (AFRI).* Supplies funding for research on agriculture and food related initiatives, geared primarily toward universities or extensions. Source: USDA. Link: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/afri/afri_synopsis.html
- *Farm to School Lunch.* Promotes the direct connection between farms and school lunch programs. Source: Collaboration of different groups. Link: http://www.farmtoschool.org/WI/orgs.htm

- *"Food Systems" Development Support.* Various programs, research support, and technical support for projects that help development local food systems. A food system includes all processes and infrastructure involved in feeding a population: growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related items. Source: UW-Wisconsin Center for Integrated Agricultural Studies (CIAS). Link: http://www.cias.wisc.edu/category/farm-to-fork/
- *Loan Guarantee Program.* Encourages early commercial use of new or improved technologies in energy, with the potential to link local biomass to energy production. Source: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Link: http://www.lgprogram.energy.gov/
- *State Energy Program - Recovery Act, Clean Energy.* Encourages the adoption of emerging renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies, including linking biomass to energy production. Source: Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. Link: http://wedc.org/sep
- *Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) Conversion Project.* Provides assistance in establishment of biomass crops. Source: USDA Farm Service Agency. Link: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=ener&topic=bcap-pjt
- *Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Guaranteed Loan.* Encourages commercial financing of renewable energy and energy efficiency, including biomass. Source: USDA. Link: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/BCP_ReapLoans.htm;
- *Agricultural Tourism Assistance.* Provides resources and support for rural and agricultural based tourism initiative. Source: Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association. Link: http://www.visitdairyland.com/
- *Carbon Credit Program.* Promotes carbon credits as a way to gain profit from sustainable agricultural practices. Carbon credits are certificates that represent a reduction of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Projects that prevent the generation of greenhouse gases earn these credits, which can in turn then be sold to other businesses and individuals to offset the emissions they generate. Source: Wisconsin Farmers Union. Link: http://www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com)

7. Land Use Issues Related to Agriculture

Marquette County's farmland affects not only the economy of the area, but the heritage and lifestyle of many parts of the County. Preserving agricultural land uses and a rural way of life are important components of the future vision for the County.

A large amount of residential development in agricultural areas makes farming difficult to continue. There are numerous conflicts between such uses, including, noise, odors, use of roads, and hours of operation. Further, a significant number of non-farm uses in farming areas brings a sense of impermanence of agricultural uses, which discourages further investment by remaining farmers.

Significant expansion of village and City boundaries in Marquette County is not likely over the next 10 or so years. This is the result of the modest projected growth rates in the County; the cost of extending sewer, water, road and other infrastructure versus low new lot prices in the County; and the availability of vacant land within the current boundaries of most villages in the County. Growth pressures experienced in the County are different than they are in other parts of the State. As mentioned previously, commodity prices can drive the likelihood of a farmer selling their land. While some may sell their land to out-of-county buyers, it is unlikely that this would drive a large conversion of agricultural land. Buyers for recreation lands are generally attracted to the County's lakes and forestlands, not cropland.

In addition, the County encourages higher density residential development and non-agricultural businesses and industries in areas where public utilities are available. Marquette County, the City, villages, and adjoining towns should coordinate their planned land use maps to preserve sufficient area to allow

reasonable municipal growth, balancing such growth with farmland preservation, natural resource protection, and the desires of town governments and residents. Municipal expansion in accordance with a city/town or village/town intergovernmental boundary agreement or cooperative boundary plan is usually the best way to achieve such balance.

8. A Brief Assessment of Marquette County's Agricultural Future

The County does not expect that the high commodity prices seen in recent years will continue. In fact, the County anticipates a ten-year period of weak commodity prices. Due to a variety of factors, the exact future of the agricultural economy within Marquette County is difficult to predict. Compared to other farming communities around the State, the threat of annexation of Marquette County farmland is low, as is demand for cropland given the anticipation of poor commodity prices and high capital costs for farming. Overall, the County does not anticipate a significant loss of agricultural lands in the next ten years. This will particularly be the case if farm commodity prices remain relatively strong, weather is relatively stable, and non-agricultural development is managed in predominantly agricultural areas. Areas specifically planned for farmland preservation will be key locations for continued agricultural activities, but other productive areas will also have continued agricultural viability.

The supply of agricultural products in Marquette County should continue to grow as demand for food, fiber, and new uses for agricultural products increases. The decreasing supply of agricultural land in metropolitan areas will also boost agricultural demands for Marquette County farmland. Cash cropping and poultry processing should continue to be the major components of the local agricultural economy.

The County anticipates the continuation of agricultural storage, processing, supply, and distribution businesses in appropriate locations that are close to the farms they serve. Through organizations like the Marquette County Economic Development Corporation, **the County intends to work to help expand existing processing facilities.** The County zoning ordinance enables a wide range of on-farm processing activities and farm supply operations in rural areas, which will be particularly viable in areas where non-farm residential development is minimized. Industrial parks provide some viable locations for larger-scale processing facilities, but as indicated in the Economic Development chapter, the supply of improved industrial land in the County is low.

Particularly with the uncongested Interstate 39, the agricultural distribution system in the County is strong. Still, ongoing budget challenges at the federal, State, County, and town levels could result in deferred road maintenance, which could negatively affect agricultural distribution over time.

B. Agricultural Resource Goal, Objectives and Policies

Goal: Protect farming as a component of Marquette County's economy, landscape, and way of life.

Objectives:

1. Preserve tracts of productive crop, pasture, and forest land.
2. Manage the impacts of farm operations on and minimize conflicts with surrounding uses and communities.

3. Add production, processing, markets, uses, and value for farm and forestry products in the County, working in collaboration with producers, manufacturers, sellers, and other organizations.
4. Manage water quality and natural resource protection through education of land stewardship practices.

Policies:

1. Promote continuation of the **"family" farm** by supporting the introduction, maintenance, and growth of agriculture-support businesses, and providing families with additional opportunities for small non-farm businesses to supplement farm income.
2. Maintain the **farmland preservation plan** as a component of this *Comprehensive Plan* document.
3. Work collaboratively with interested towns and property owners to **identify farmland preservation areas** as places to focus agricultural and related uses and to limit non-agricultural development.
4. Amend zoning and subdivision ordinances to preserve farmland and minimize conflicts, including **required amendments to the AG-1 Prime Agricultural zoning district and zoning maps**.
5. Support policies and programs outlined in Chapter Two: Natural Resources that support efforts to **educate citizens** on the tools, programs, and incentives that protect the natural environment and establish eligibility for farmers in farmland preservation areas to meet soil and water conservation requirements in order to **obtain State income tax credits.**
6. Work with towns that do not, as of December 31, 2015, have mapped "farmland preservation area" within them, but in the future desire to have such areas included in this County *Plan*.
7. Continue to Implement the **County Animal Waste Storage ordinance**, which regulates livestock operations and mitigates their impacts on the community and environment.
8. **Guide intensive housing development to planned non-farm development areas**, instead of in farmland preservation areas. More appropriate locations for intensive housing development such as subdivision plats and multiple family housing, include the City and villages, areas planned in the "rural lands" use category on Map 7: Planned Land Use, and other areas with limited agricultural activities and/or with public utilities and services.
9. Implement the housing development and density policies described in Chapter Five: Land Use as a means to **manage housing development in agricultural and rural areas** and direct it to other areas where possible.

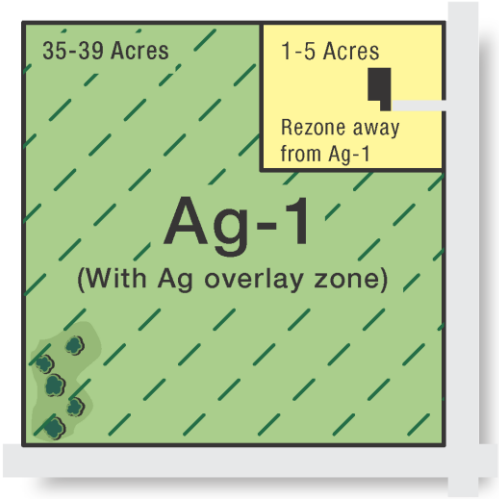
C. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Preserving agricultural land uses and a rural way of life are important components of Marquette County's future. The changing national market for agricultural products, including the demand for organic products, value-added agriculture, niche and specialty crops, and the role for agriculture in biotechnology all create a significant opportunity for agriculture-based economic growth. Expanding on the policies listed in Section B, the County puts forth the following strategies to preserve and enhance agriculture:

1. Minimize Nonagricultural Development in Areas Used for Farming

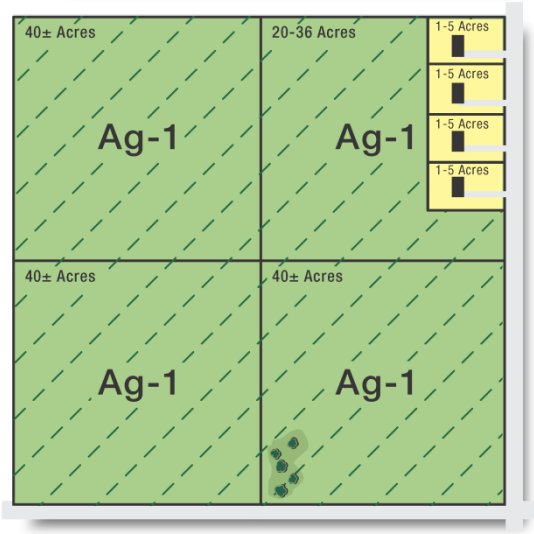
Too much non-farm housing in areas predominately in agricultural use makes farming difficult. Conflicts between such uses relate to noise, odors, use of roads, and hours of operation. Too much housing also brings a sense of impermanence, which discourages further investment from remaining farmers. To minimize these situations, Chapter Five of this *Plan* includes policies for limiting the amount of residential development in parts of the County that contain a number of active farms. These are either mapped as "farmland preservation area" or "rural lands" on Map 7 within that chapter.

As presented in Maps 5a-5j of this chapter and Map 7, the "farmland preservation area" planned land use category is mapped where individual towns desire to emphasize farming as the preferred long-term land use. These priority farming areas were mapped on the basis of soil types, topography, agricultural productivity, existing plans and zoning, and current and potential agricultural uses. The County proposes a variety of techniques to keep farm parcels in these areas intact, while providing a non-farm economic return for the landowners.



The "farmland preservation area" category on Maps 5a-5j and Map 7 allows a range of agricultural uses. For those parts of the "farmland preservation area" that are also zoned AG-1 Prime Agricultural, rezonings will be allowed for housing at a density of no greater than one home per 40 acres owned. This policy does not promote 40 acre lot sizes. The idea is generally represented on the top graphic to the right and described in greater detail in Chapter Five.Chapter Five also contains detailed descriptions of all of the other planned land use categories on these maps.

This "1 per 40" density policy in planned "farmland preservation areas" is coupled with policies to guide homesites away from cultivated fields and prime agricultural soils. An adjacent woodlot, the edge of a tilled field, or other soils with lower productivity may be a better site. In addition, owners of large tracts in planned "farmland preservation areas" are encouraged to cluster available homesites in less productive parts of their farm, suggested by the bottom graphic to the right.



Many towns mapped the "rural lands" planned land use category over areas where agricultural soils might be less productive, where farming or commitment to farming has been a bit less, and/or where acceptance of land use limits are lower. These too are shown on Maps 5a-j and Map 7. These "rural lands" remain suitable for farming use. Housing density of one home per 10 acres is allowed within "rural lands" areas that are zoned AG-2 General Agricultural, or one per 20 acres if preferred by the town under a variation of that zoning district.

2. Engage in Effort to Educate Farmers on the Farmland Preservation Program

In the 2013 tax year, around 30 Marquette County farmers claimed farmland preservation tax credits, totaling only $30,000 in Wisconsin tax dollars being returned to the County's farmers and economy each year. This figure is dwarfed by the several hundred thousand in credits being returned to farmers in nearby counties. Increasing the credits received in Marquette County would enhance farm income, promote farm facility and equipment investments, and boost spending in the County.

The level of awareness of the currently opportunities and obligations under the tax credit program could be improved. As the County does not administer the program itself, it intends to work with DATCP and other State agencies to engage in an educational effort to:

- Inform County farmers of the $7.50 per acre tax credit available, if planned as a "farmland preservation area" and zoned AG-1. Some farmers may still believe that the formula is more complex and tied to farm income, as it was before 2009.
- Educate farmers on the conservation requirements associated with tax credit eligibility, including linking them with providers of and funding for conservation and nutrient management plans, and opportunities for self-certification to prepare their own plans.
- Connect with local tax accountants, town officials, and other local communicators on the program as well. Increased accountant familiarity in particular is a significant need that both ensures farmer are receiving credits correctly and provides a new outlet for education about the program.

The County intends to reach out to potential partners beyond DATCP—such as the County's chapter of the Farm Bureau, Marquette County's UW-Extension agricultural agent, the Wisconsin Farmer's Union, and the Department of Revenue—to assist with these efforts.

Marquette County Muck Soils

As shown on Map 4: Soil Suitability for Agriculture, Class III soils account for 13% of Marquette County's land base. Much of these Class III soils are known as muck soils. These soils are rich in organic matter and are generally poorly drained. Many commodity crops grow poorly in these conditions. However, with the addition of drainage, red potatoes, onions, carrots, and mint do extremely well in muck soils.

One farming operation taking advantage of the County's abundance of Class III muck soils is Gumz Muck Farms, LLC, which grows over 3,000 acres of these specialty crops on muck soils in Marquette, Columbia, and Sauk Counties. Growing red potatoes, onions, carrots, and mint on muck soil provides enhanced color, texture, and flavor compared to crops grown on mineral soil. Mint oil from Marquette County ends up in chewing gum and toothpaste used around the world.

Gumz Muck Farms, LLC not only grows red potatoes and onions, but stores, sizes, grades, and packages them for grocery stores.

Offering locally grown onions and red potatoes to consumers throughout Wisconsin and its bordering states allows Marquette County growers to better utilize their soils and the central location of Marquette County.

3. Diversify Farming Options and Promote Continuation of the Agriculture as a Viable and Desirable Occupation

Efforts to preserve farmland in the County are accompanied by generating interest and promoting agriculture as a viable, desirable occupation worth pursuing. Demographic trends for the County depict a pattern of a population disproportionately aged. Fewer young people are living in the area and starting families, which has had a domino effect across the County's communities. Area schools are struggling to keep doors open. County and town planning processes showed support for alternatives that would entice young people to come back and farm.

The future economic viability of commodity farming is hard to predict. Farmers, local governments, and the County have little control over the price for agricultural products, which is set by federal policy and

price subsidies. However, interested parties can work locally on a variety of efforts to improve farm family income. These may include:

- Working with UW-Extension and County staff to increase efficiency in farm operations, provide technical assistance including exploring alternative farming techniques (e.g., grazing), provide advice on other financial and technical support opportunities, and promote agricultural cooperatives.
- Promoting educational partnerships with area groups such as the Westfield and Montello High School chapters of FFA and local 4-H Clubs.
- Supporting diversification through alternative, organic, or niche forms of agriculture suited to the area as well as smaller-scale operations. These may include mint, vegetables, dairy, meat, cheese, hops, and other specialty crops in demand locally and nationally.
- Supporting the introduction, operation, and continuation of agriculture-support businesses, such as farm equipment sales, service, and repair; farm product sales and distribution; mixing, blending, and storage of feeds, seeds, and fertilizers; livestock and farm commodity shipping services; processing and preserving of natural agricultural products, fruits, and vegetables; sales, service, and repair of lawn and garden equipment; and sales and distribution of nursery stock and plants. As the analysis earlier in this chapter suggests, agricultural support and processing businesses are in relatively short supply in Marquette County.
- Working to promote local specialty and value-added agriculture operations, directed primarily to providing food and products for the local market, such as on-farm food processing facilities, farmers markets and stands, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). CSAs sell shares of produce to consumers in advance, and the consumer then receives weekly "shares" of the harvest from that farm. These types of efforts can keep profits from the County's agricultural products circulating in the local economy by providing markets for farm products, income for farmers, employment for local people, and residents with greater access to locally produced goods. Increasing the County's visibility through participation with such outlets like the Farm Fresh Atlas of Eastern Wisconsin or the Central Rivers Farmshed will help promote existing County farm operations that produce local food and food products.

MORE Café and Food Store, Montello

- Working with area restaurants and institutions to increase their usage of locally produced foods. Schools and other institutions that purchase large quantities of food to purchase directly from local producers or grower cooperatives for seasonally-available meat and produce items. Eating fresh, in-season produce could be promoted more widely for the health of students and the elderly. A prime example of this is the coordination between the Montello and Westfield School Districts' Food Services Department and the Tri-County Produce Auction. The School Districts purchase and process produce from the Auction to use in school lunches. Farms proving produce to be sold at the Tri-County Produce Auction must be located within 180 miles of the Auction site in Dalton, WI.

- Working with the Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau to promote agricultural-based tourism such as farm tours, on-site sales of products, pick-your-own operations, corn mazes, etc., as part of a broader heritage- and nature-based tourism effort advanced under this *Comprehensive Plan* (see, for example, Chapter Three: Cultural Resources and Chapter Nine: Economic Development).
- Collaborating with the Stevens Point Aquaponics Innovation Center in Montello. The University of Wisconsin in partnership with Nelson and Pade, a Montello company that combines fish farming with hydroponic agriculture, has established a 13,500 green house to educate and train UW-Stevens Point students on this emerging agricultural industry.
- Proving families with opportunities for other small non-farm businesses to supplement farm income, though flexible zoning and other land use regulations. The County's pending amendments to the AG-1 zoning district that are necessary to meet the State farmland preservation requirements will provide this opportunity.

Marquette County fish featured at a Madison restaurant.

Map 5a: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Buffalo

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5b: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Crystal Lake

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5c: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Harris

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5d: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Mecan

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5e: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Moundville

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5f: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Neshkoro

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5g: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Newton

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5h: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Oxford

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5i: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Packwaukee

Page intentionally left blank

Map 5j: Planned Land Use & Farmland Preservation Plan Map for the Town of Westfield

Page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER FIVE: LAND USE

Recommendations Summary

- Assemble town, village, and city updated planned land use maps to form the County's planned land use map
- Assist adjacent local governments resolve minor differences between their planned land use maps
- Minimize the conversion of agricultural lands by mapping farmland preservation areas, updating the County's AG-1 district, and guiding new growth in already developed locations
- Guide intensive new development (e.g., industrial, multiple family) to areas with public utilities and services
- Encourage creative, high-quality development, including conservation/cluster designs for new homes in rural areas

This chapter contains background information, goals, objectives, policies and programs to guide the preservation and development of lands in Marquette County. The chapter features a map that shows recommended future land uses reflecting land use planning completed at the town, village, and City levels, meeting State comprehensive and farmland preservation mapping requirements.

A. EXISTING LAND USE

An accurate depiction of Marquette County's *existing* land use pattern is the first step in planning for a desired *future* land use pattern. As part of the 2003 Comprehensive Planning process the County's consultant conducted an inventory of existing land uses using State data, aerial photography, and spot field checks. It is important to recognize that existing land use is not always the same as the current zoning of a property.

1. EXISTING LAND USE MAP CATEGORIES

Map 6 divides existing land uses in Marquette County into several categories. These categories include:

- *Agriculture and Rural Lands.* Land used primarily for open space, farming, farmsteads, nurseries, and farm-support activities, and limited single-family residential development, generally with densities at or below 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres, and small-scale institutional uses such as cemeteries, churches and town hall buildings. Also includes grasslands, shrubland, and sandy or barren land.
- *Forest.* Privately-owned forest land covered with coniferous, broad-leaved deciduous, and mixed deciduous trees, in certain cases also including private recreational uses or single-family residential development generally with densities at or below 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres.
- *Open Water.* Lakes, rivers and perennial streams.
- *Wetlands.* Wetlands over two acres identified through WisDNR's Wisconsin Wetland Inventory.
- *Public Open Space.* Publicly-owned land designated as State parks and scenic areas; State conservation areas; conservancy land owned by non-profit agencies; County parks and recreation areas; town, village, or city parks, or other recreational facilities owned by the public or private utility companies.
- *Residential.* Groupings of predominantly single family residential development, with limited pockets of higher-density residential uses, including apartments and mobile home parks.
- *Business.* Commercial, office, telecommunication facilities, and occasional outdoor display land uses.
- *Industrial.* Manufacturing, warehousing, and other industrial land uses, sometimes with outdoor storage areas.
- *Institutional.* Large-scale public buildings, hospitals, airports/landing strips, non-profit campgrounds, and special-care facilities at varying densities.

2. EXISTING LAND USE PATTERN

Marquette County's existing land use pattern is primarily rural, with pockets of farmland, woodlots, and wetlands. Population is concentrated in villages, a City, historic rural settlements, and waterfront areas (particularly Buffalo Lake). Large tracts of *Agriculture & Rural Lands* are found throughout the County, but most prominently in the southern portion and near the Interstate. Large *Wetland* areas cover the north central and northeastern parts of the County, as well as along the Fox River corridor. The County's northern portion contains most of the *Public Open Space* areas, but a few sites are also located along Buffalo Lake. This includes the 428-acre Endeavor Marsh, owned by the Nature Conservancy. There are tracts of *Forest* land in every town.

Most towns contain pockets of *Residential* development, usually along waterfronts or in crossroad hamlets. The City and four villages contain the densest land uses, with a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses, and at least small historic downtown areas.

Residential densities have increased throughout the County, region and State. In Marquette County, the residential density in 2010 was 21.7 homes per square mile, up from 19 homes per square mile in 2000. But still residential density in Marquette County is low compared to nearby counties. The East Central Region's average residential density in 2010 was 54.6 homes per square mile and the State's was 48.5 homes per square mile.

Figure 5.1 provides an estimate of the type, amount, and percentage of land in each of several existing land use category in Marquette County as of 2014. These include lands within the City and four villages.

Figure 5.1: Estimated Existing Land Use Totals, 2014, Marquette County

Existing Land Use Category	Acres	%
Agriculture & Rural Lands	105,261	36%
Wetlands	72,800	25%
Public Open Space	13,800	5%
Forest	79,962	27%
Open Water	7,450	3%
Single Family Residential – Rural	7,020	2%
Single Family Residential - Sewered	1,064	0%
Two Family Residential	10	0%
Multiple Family/Mobile Home	582	0%
Commercial Recreation	350	0%
Business	632	0%
Downtown	75	0%
Industrial	555	0%
Extraction	40	0%
Institutional	1,600	1%
TOTAL	**291,200**	**100%**

Source: GIS Inventory, Vandewalle & Associates, 2003; Marquette County Zoning Department 2003-2013

Map 6: Existing Land Use

Page intentionally left blank

3. LAND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

As of 2015, ten towns in Marquette County participated in County zoning: Crystal Lake, Douglas, Harris, Mecan, Montello, Moundville, Neshkoro, Newton, Packwaukee, and Westfield. The Towns of Oxford, Shields, and Springfield were not under the jurisdiction of a general zoning ordinance. The Town of Buffalo, the City of Montello and Villages of Westfield, Oxford, Neshkoro and Endeavor had their own zoning ordinances.

According to the Marquette County Zoning Department, **between 2003 and 2013, there were 961 new parcels created in the County's unincorporated areas** (towns) though either land divisions or certified survey maps. This means that there were, on average, 87 new parcels created on an annual basis. During this period 2,645 zoning permits were granted (which averages 240 per year) in the towns participating in County zoning. Marquette County sanitary records indicate that 879 new dwelling units were constructed throughout all towns during this same period, or about 80 new dwelling units per year.

This land division and building activity suggests:

- A relatively close correlation between parcels created and homes built, but there may be a reasonable supply of vacant lots in the County.
- Land division and building activity was significantly greater before 2006 than after. This is when the housing market crashed nationally.
- Land division and building activity was greater in the 1992 to 2002 timeframe than in the 2003 to 2013 period. Between 1992 and 2002, 146 new parcels were created and 91 new homes were built per year.

Figure 5.2: New Lots Created, Marquette County Towns, 2003 - 2013

Town	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average
Buffalo	23	19	17	7	3	4	5	3	17	4	4	9.6
Crystal Lake	17	12	9	0	6	2	0	2	0	0	0	4.4
Douglas	17	23	12	31	1	0	2	5	6	9	1	9.7
Harris	5	8	13	9	0	2	3	1	3	6	2	4.7
Mecan	6	4	10	6	9	11	8	1	1	0	2	5.3
Montello	13	24	66	9	10	8	6	6	4	4	4	14
Moundville	5	10	8	6	2	4	0	1	0	1	0	3.4
Neshkoro	6	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	1.5
Newton	11	4	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.2
Oxford	3	2	8	8	10	1	0	3	4	0	0	3.5
Packwaukee	13	5	9	10	9	8	7	4	9	13	4	8.3
Shields	13	10	13	7	11	0	4	1	1	7	3	6.4
Springfield	9	24	35	4	22	2	2	3	1	3	1	9.6
Westfield	4	10	12	8	7	7	0	2	2	0	0	4.7
Marquette County	**145**	**159**	**215**	**110**	**93**	**49**	**37**	**32**	**52**	**47**	**22**	**87.4**

Source: Marquette County Zoning Department

4. LAND MARKET TRENDS

The Wisconsin Realtors Association's Multiple Listing Service reports 1,311 home sales in Marquette County between 2007 and 2013, or an average of 187 sales per year. Figure 5.3 suggests the median sale price of a home in the County declined from $130,000 in 2007 to $91,150 in 2014. This reflects a national decline in the real estate market. However, it appears that the median sale price in the County is stabilizing.

Figure 5.3: Marquette County Home Sales, 2007 - 2013

Year	Number of Home Sales	Median Sale Price
2007	263	$130,000
2008	198	$124,250
2009	153	$119,980
2010	163	$95,000
2011	159	$97.900
2012	190	$85,250
2013	185	$100,000

Source: Wisconsin Realtors Association Consumer Resources

Figure 5.4 shows the equalized value of all property in Marquette County for 1990, 2000, and 2010. The highest increases in land value occurred in the residential, swamp and wasteland, and manufacturing real estate categories. The increase in swamp and wasteland resulted in a change in real estate classification and altering market perceptions. In 1980, swamp and wasteland was seen as having little market value. By 2000, real estate classified as swamp and wasteland become popular, as more individuals began purchasing this land for hunting and other recreational purposes.

Figure 5.4: Equalized Land Values, 1990 - 2010

	Residential	Commercial	Manufacturing	Agricultural*	Swamp & Waste & Other*	Forest* Land	Total
1990	$64,229,450	$4,613,020	$329,100	$47,300,032	$8,715,330	$32,392,135	$157,579,067
2000	$154,786,562	$9,073,275	$549,600	$30,318,824	$30,432,440	$55,785,770	$280,396,871
2010	$1,185,390,700	$72,713,300	$18,353,800	$54,287,300	$137,552,600	$129,364,500	$1,597,662,200

Source: East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, 2003 & Wisconsin Department of Revenue, 2014
**In 2004, Act 33 removed the Swamp & Waste real estate category; these lands were moved into the Undeveloped category. Act 33 also created the Ag Forest category. For the purposes of comparison in the above table, Ag Forest remains combined with Agricultural and the Undeveloped Land category is included in the Swamp and Wasteland and Other category.*

5. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL LAND USE CONFLICTS

When new development occurs in Marquette County, land use conflicts are inevitable. Urban and rural residential, commercial and industrial land use development will require the conversion and possible fragmentation of farmland, woodlots, and open areas. Other potential rural land uses that could conflict with neighboring uses include large-scale farm operations, nonmetallic mining operations, and rural manufacturing plants.

Through implementation of this *Plan,* the County seeks to avoid potential land use conflicts through thoughtful and comprehensive land use planning at the local and County level. The County's multi-jurisdictional planning processes have been useful to minimize potential land use conflicts along community borders.

6. PROJECTED LAND SUPPLY AND DEMAND

This chapter includes projections of land use demand over the 20-year planning period (in five-year increments) for residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses in Marquette County. Projecting residential land use demand in the County is based on year-round population, household size, and housing unit forecasts prepared by the Department of Administration and discussed in Chapter One: Issues and Opportunities. Using these forecasts, and assuming that the average future residential home site in Marquette County will be 2 acres (considering both urban and rural development areas), Figure 5.5 shows the amount of year-round residential acreage needed to accommodate future growth in five-year increments. Figure 5.5 does not account for seasonal home development, which makes up nearly a quarter of the County's housing stock.

Figure 5.5: Projected Residential Land Use Demand

	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030 - 2035	Totals 2010 - 2035
Projected Number of New Residents	+596	+315	+655	+355	-20	+1,901
Projected Household Size	2.33	2.24	2.21	2.16	2.13	n/a
Projected Number of New Housing Units	258	141	296	164	n/a	859
Projected Residential Land Use Gross Acreage Demand	516 acres	282 acres	592 acres	328 acres	n/a	1,718 acres

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, MDRoffers Consulting

As shown on Figure 5.5, the County should accommodate approximately 1,718 acres for projected housing demand in its towns, villages, and city over the next 20 years. For perspective, this acreage amount is larger than the size of the City of Montello's current municipal land area. Future development planned on Map 7 and allowed under the policies of this *Plan* a will provide more than enough capacity to accommodate this expected residential land use demand through the year 2035. This is due to the large supply of *Rural Lands* and *Single Family Residential–Rural* plan land use areas in the towns and the large supply of *Single Family Residential-Sewered*, *Two Family Residential*, and *Mixed Residential* planned land use areas in the villages and City.

Commercial land use demand projections assume that the ratio of the current number of jobs in the County's "commercial" employment sectors (retail trade, finance, insurance and real estate, and services) to the current commercial acreage will remain constant over the planning period. In 2013, there were approximately 610 jobs in the County's "commercial" employment sector and 1,057 acres of commercial land use. Assuming that job growth will increase 8% over the next decade as reported in Chapter 1 and that this rate of growth will remain constant through the planning period, **approximately 176 additional acres of commercial land may be needed to support the projected 1,233 commercial employment jobs** – resulting in about 35 acres for commercial use every 5 years.

Projected demand for the County's industrial land use base is similarly tied to projected growth in the sectors of mining and construction, manufacturing, transportation, utilities and communication, and wholesale trade. Based on 2013 ratios and employment projections, **approximately 100 additional acres of industrial land is needed to accommodate the projected 2,313 manufacturing employment sector jobs**, or about 20 acres every 5 years over the 20-year planning period.

The projected decline in the acreage demanded for agricultural use is based on trends in Marquette County from 2003 to 2013. According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, approximately 529 acres of agricultural land in Marquette County were converted out of agricultural use between 2003 and 2013, a loss of approximately 48 acres per year. This is a decrease from the 1,509 acres converted

between the 4-year period between 1998 to 2002 alone. The above land demand forecasts in this chapter suggest that 1,994 acres will be needed for residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Not all of the land needed to supply that will solely from agricultural land. Assuming that 15% (about 300 acres) of land for development comes from converted forested land, the amount of agricultural land in active use is projected to decrease by almost 1,650 acres over the 20-year planning period, with an average of 412 acres converted every five years.

B. LAND USE GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: Work cooperatively with town, village and city governments to promote an economically efficient, environmentally sustainable, and compatible development pattern that also respects private property rights.

Objectives:

1. Promote new development consistent with this *Comprehensive Plan* and local comprehensive plans.
2. Working with towns, villages, and the City, continue to plan for a compatible land use pattern, minimizing land use conflicts.
3. Minimize the conversion of agricultural land throughout the County for new development, and support the preservation of agricultural lands in large, contiguous blocks.

Policies:

1. **Continue to incorporate the recommendations of City, village and town planned land use maps** as the County's planned land use map, except in very rare instances where County interests may not be served by such a policy.
2. Work with local communities and the State on programs to **preserve farmland over the long term**, such as the State farmland preservation program as described more fully in Chapter Four: Agricultural Resources.
3. Plan for a **sufficient supply of developable land** for a range of different uses, in areas, types, and densities consistent with local community wishes and service requirements.
4. Guide **intensive new development** requiring higher levels of municipal utilities and services to the County's **villages and City**.
5. When making land use decisions such as **rezonings**, special exception requests, and subdivision plats, **follow the land use recommendations** mapped in Map 7 and described in this *Plan*.
6. Work with the towns under County zoning to **change or add zoning** districts and standards and amend zoning maps as needed **to reflect recommendations of this *Plan*** and town plans.
7. Work with the towns, villages, City and surrounding counties to **resolve remaining incompatibilities between local land use plans** over the 20-year planning period.
8. Encourage the use of **conservation neighborhood design** for rural residential development in appropriate areas and where consistent with local community wishes. Support other innovative approaches to land development to increase flexibility and achieve the goals of this *Plan*.
9. Work with local governments and landowners to assure **incompatible land uses** are not located close to one another or are buffered through screening, where nearby locations are unavoidable.
10. When **changes in zoning** are proposed that would permit nonresidential development on a parcel of land, require the submittal of a **specific development proposal** (comprised of a detailed site plan) before approving the rezoning. Approval of the development proposal should be based on the degree to which the project fulfills the goals, objectives, and policies of this *Plan*.

Map 7: Planned Land Use

Page intentionally left blank.

C. LAND USE PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 7 is the Planned Land Use map for Marquette County. It shows the recommended future land use pattern for the County over the 20-year planning period, although it may be amended over that period. Map 7 is a composite of the locally adopted planned land use maps prepared by the participating communities as part of the County's multi-jurisdictional planning processes.

Map 7 shows more than enough developable acreage to accommodate projected population and land use demands for the next 20 years. Changes from the County's existing land use pattern to realize this planned land use pattern may occur if and when private property owners make requests for rezoning, subdivisions or land divisions, special exception permits, or other development approvals. Map 7, along with the recommended policies and programs listed in this chapter, will be used to guide County decision-making on future land use and zoning changes (see sidebar). Map 7 and this *Comprehensive Plan* do not require anyone to change the current use of his or her land.

Map 7 uses numerous planned land use categories to describe the desired type and future location of different land uses in the County. These planned land use categories were prepared in a joint effort with participating towns, villages, and the City. They reflect the range of potential economic and geographic conditions in the County. The following is a description, programs, and policies for each mapped planned land use category shown on Map 7.

Relationship between Planned Land Use Categories and Future Zoning

Map 7 is not a zoning map. However, the planned land use categories shown on Map 7 generally advise appropriate future zoning districts. In many cases, existing zoning districts reflect desired future land uses as indicated by the planned land use category mapped over those areas. In some cases, zoning map or text changes may be required to meet some of these planned land use recommendations.

The identification of desired future land use types through Map 7 does not imply that any area is immediately appropriate for rezoning. Given service demands and a desire for controlled growth, careful consideration to the timing of zoning decisions is essential. In some places, it may be desirable to rezone land to reflect the planned land use category as soon as possible. In other cases, it may be appropriate to wait to rezone the area until an actual development proposal is brought forward by the landowner.

The policies in this chapter are intended to guide future decisions on rezoning, including where lands should be rezoned, how much land, and how much development should be enabled once land is rezoned.

1. FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA

Description: The *Farmland Preservation Area* planned land use category is mapped to accommodate primarily agricultural uses or agricultural-related uses (e.g., implement dealerships), and focus on areas actively used for farming, with productive agricultural soils, with topographic conditions suitable for farming, and with long-term (15+ year) farming suitability. This category is also intended to:

- Preserve productive agricultural lands, rural character, and undeveloped natural resources of lands so designated in the long-term;
- Protect existing farm

operations from encroachment by incompatible uses;

- Minimize non-farm development, allowing via rezonings away from the County's AG-1 zoning district a maximum residential development density of one residence per 40 acres of land, as further described by the policies and programs below;
- Accommodate a range of agricultural practices and intensities, forest management, farmsteads, home occupations, family businesses, and other uses compatible with farmland preservation and identified as permitted and special exceptions in implementing zoning districts.
- Provide equity and fairness to owners of land with similar resource and location characteristics;
- Maintain farmer eligibility for farmland preservation incentive programs, such as State income tax credits. The *Farmland Preservation Area* is the only planned land use category laid out in this chapter that is intended for certification by the State Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

Mapping Criteria for Farmland Preservation Area:

Under Statutes, the County is required to clearly identify and map *Farmland Preservation Areas*, and describe the rationale used to determine where *Farmland Preservation Areas* are mapped. Working with interested towns, the County used the following factors to map *Farmland Preservation Areas*:

- Areas designated for future "Agriculture" use on the Planned Land Use map within 2005 versions of County and town comprehensive plans.
- Areas with concentrations of Class I, II, or III agricultural soils, as presented on Map 4.
- Lands that have been actively farmed or forested, used by or close to agricultural infrastructure and support businesses, or occupied by other land uses and activities that are commonly located within agricultural areas (such as mineral extraction).
- Undeveloped natural resource and open space areas that connect farmland parcels to create an uninterrupted, block of preserved area, in which current residential development generally does not exceed a density of one home per 40 acres and/or which have scattered, small-scale, pre-existing commercial uses.
- Large, contiguous blocks of land—at least ¼ square mile each—as opposed to patchworks of scattered farm parcels, to create a critical mass of farming areas.
- Lands outside of current city and village limits.
- Lands that may be under some development pressure over the next 15 years, but that are not expected in the next 15 years to be developed with non-agricultural uses or other incompatible uses under adopted County and town plans. Expected 15-year development areas cannot under statute be placed within a *Farmland Preservation Area* or be in a farmland preservation zoning district (e.g., AG-1).
- The needs, intentions, and preferences of farm operators and non-farmers in the associated town, provided that the mapped *Farmland Preservation Area* was not based primarily on landowner preferences. The State does not permit basing boundaries of any Farmland Preservation Area primarily on landowner preferences and will reject farmland preservation plan certification in such cases.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts*. The AG-1 Prime Agricultural zoning district is the preferred zoning district to implement *Farmland Preservation Area* policies. Additional zoning districts that may be used, usually in limited amounts, within *Farmland Preservation Areas* include RP Resource Protection, AG-2 General Agricultural, AG-3 Agricultural-Residential, and REC Recreational (for open space uses). Other zoning districts may be utilized on an occasional basis,

particularly based on pre-existing land use and zoning patterns. Further, the County will consider creating a new variation of the AG-3 zoning district (e.g., 4 acres) to limit further division of 4-5 acre lots that are divided in accordance with the density policy below.

b. *Agricultural Use and Related Businesses Encouraged.* Encourage a range of agricultural uses and agricultural-related businesses that support farmers, including farm-scale businesses in the AG-1 zoning district (meeting statutory requirements as applicable) and larger-scale operations by special exception permit or rezoning.

c. *Preexisting Residences May Remain in AG-1 District.* Allow residences legally established before January 1, 2014 (and their replacements) to remain as permitted-by-right uses within the AG-1 zoning district when historically zoned in that manner, except where new land divisions are required or farm consolidations are proposed (see below).

d. *General Rezoning Criteria.* Whenever land is proposed for rezoning from the AG-1 Prime Agricultural district, require that the following criteria are met:

   i. The land is better suited for a use not allowed in the AG-1 zoning district.

   ii. The rezoning is consistent with the applicable town and County comprehensive plans, including the farmland preservation plan component of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

   iii. The rezoning will not substantially impair or limit current or future agricultural use of surrounding parcels of land that are zoned for or legally restricted to agricultural use.

e. *Conversion of Prime Farmland Limited.* Minimize the conversion of prime farmland (Class I-III soils), as shown on Map 4: Soil Suitability for Agriculture, for residences and other nonfarm development. The County Planning and Zoning Committee will consider creation of new residential lots on prime farmland only if the Committee determines that no available non-prime farmland exists on the parcel of record or that placement of lots on prime farmland provides better protection of land, environmental, and habitat resources than a non-prime location. In addition, per Section 91.46(2) of Wisconsin Statutes, new development may not convert prime farmland from agricultural use or convert land previously used as cropland, other than a woodlot, from agricultural use if on the farm there is a reasonable alternative location or size for a nonfarm residential parcel or nonfarm residence; or significantly impair or limit the current or future agricultural use of other protected farmland.

f. *Maximum Residential Development Density.* Within parts of the *Farmland Preservation Area* also zoned in the County's AG-1 Prime Agricultural district, rezonings for single family residences are subject to the following density criteria:

   i. The owner of each ¼ ¼ section of land (standard tax parcel of 40± acres), and other parcels that are between 40 and 79 acres, shall be able to rezone AG-1 zoned land for one single family residence, and can maintain any preexisting residence on the parcel (see left panel in Figure 5.2).

   ii. The owner of each smaller parcel of land zoned AG-1, if legally created before January 1, 2014, shall be able to rezone such parcel for one single family residence, and can maintain any preexisting residence on the parcel.

   iii. The owner of at least two contiguous ¼ ¼ sections of land, and other lands in contiguous common ownership that are at least 80 acres, shall be able to rezone AG-1 zoned land for cluster(s) of single family residential lots at a density of one lot for every 40 full acres, including any preexisting residence (see 160 acre example in right panel of Figure 5.2). Landowners may develop one or more clusters, if acreage allows. Clusters may be located adjacent to other clusters on adjoining parcels in different ownership.

g. *Rezoning Required for New Residences and Farm Divisions*. The County will require rezoning away from the AG-1 zoning district, along with a new lot created by land division, for all farm division residences and new residences. (A "farm division residence" is defined as a residence that existed before January 1, 2014 and all of its accessory buildings, but which is no longer connected to the farm operation as a result of the sale of adjacent lands.) The rezoning will be to AG-2, AG-3, or to another zoning district that allows single family residences. As depicted in Figure 5.2, the balance of the acreage used to enable the approval of a single family residential lot will be limited to agricultural or open space uses via a new Agricultural Overlay zoning district applied to that balance. The County intends to create this Agricultural Overlay district in 2016. Land in that Agricultural Overlay district cannot be used together with other land not in the overlay district to achieve the acreage normally necessary to build another single family residence. The County may relax the requirement for creation of a new residential lot where the residence is proposed on a sub-40 acre parcel legally created before January 1, 2014.

h. *Residential Lot Size and Siting Standards*. The County will apply the following policies, along with those depicted on Figure 5.2, for siting new residences in the *Farmland Preservation Area* in conjunction with the rezoning of land away from the AG-1 zoning district

   i. Each residence must be on a newly divided lot of between one and five acres created by a land division (e.g., CSM), except that the County may relax this requirement where the residence is proposed on a sub-40 acre parcel legally created before January 1, 2014.

   ii. Each newly created residential lot must abut a public road, or have a suitable access easement.

   iii. The new residence will not adversely affect agricultural operations in surrounding areas or be situated such that future inhabitants of the residence might be adversely affected by agricultural operations in surrounding areas.

   iv. The new residence and the new driveway needed to serve the residence will not divide existing farm fields, but instead will be beyond the farm field or towards the edge of a farm field where a location beyond the field is not practical.

   v. The proposed location of the new residence is not well suited for agricultural use by virtue of being wooded, having unfavorable topography for farming, an odd shape for farming, unsuitable soil characteristics, or other factors that limit its agricultural suitability.

Figure 5.2: Approach to Housing in Farmland Preservation Area

i. *Right-to-Farm Notice on Residential Divisions*. Protect the rights of farmers by requiring that the following language be included on new subdivision plats and certified survey maps (CSMs) that enable new residential development in the *Farmland Preservation Area*, to notify future residents of the potential effects of nearby farming activities on their property: "Through Section 823.08 of Wisconsin Statutes, the Wisconsin Legislature has adopted a right to farm law. This statute limits the remedies of owners of later established residential property to seek changes to pre-existing agricultural practices in the vicinity of residential property. Active agricultural operations are now taking place and may continue on lands in the vicinity of this plat/CSM. These active agricultural operations may produce noises, odors, dust, machinery traffic, or other conditions during daytime and evening hours."

j. *Support for Complementary Town Policies and Initiatives*. Where associated policies within the adopted town comprehensive plan are stricter than County policies for lands within a designated *Farmland Preservation Area*, support the town in its actions on rezoning requests, so that the stricter policy based on the town's comprehensive plan may be applied.

k. *Policy towards Potential Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)*. Support landowner/town applications to DATCP to establish new Agricultural Enterprise Areas that meet the following criteria:

   i. The AEA is located within portions of the *Farmland Preservation Area* particularly suited for long-term agricultural enterprise development.

   ii. The AEA is consistent with DATCP criteria for such designation and with this *Plan*.

   iii. There is sufficient interest among area farmers and town governments.

l. *Land Conservation Support*. As budget resources allow, work through the Land Conservation Department to assist farmers in the *Farmland Preservation Area* meet land conservation and nutrient management requirements, and become educated on the opportunities for tax credits (see also Chapter Four: Agricultural Resources).

m. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. The *Environmental Corridor* includes wetlands, floodplains, and slopes of 20% or greater. See subsection 4 below for additional policies affecting lands than are both in a *Farmland Preservation Area* and *Environmental Corridor*.

2. Rural Lands

Description: Includes privately owned undeveloped lands, small woodlots, grasslands, forestland, and open lands in agriculture, aquaculture or commercial forestry uses. Continued open space uses (including farming and forestry) are generally recommended for these areas. Appropriate development includes seasonal and permanent single family residences with a density generally between 1 new residence per 10 gross acres and 1 new residence per 40 gross acres (including undevelopable natural areas), associated home occupations and small family businesses which do not interfere with the interests of nearby property owners, small-scale forest production and processing, public access motorized and non-motorized recreational uses where permitted by the Forest Crop Law or Managed Forest Law programs, and the keeping of animals in numbers appropriate to the size of the lot. Within some areas under the *Rural Lands* category, existing development at slightly greater densities may already be in place.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts*. When considering future rezone requests, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *Rural Lands* category is the General Agricultural (AG-2) district, which requires a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Some town plans consider other zoning districts appropriate to carry out the recommendations of the Rural Lands planned land use category. For instance, in certain cases some areas may also be zoned Resource Protection (RP). Limited areas with large areas wetlands or floodplains may remain in other zoning districts, provided that the overall development density in the area does not exceed the recommended maximums.

b. *Clustering of Smaller Homesites at Similar Densities Supported*. To promote clustering of homes and preservation of land for open space use within mapped *Rural Lands* areas, promote use of the County's Cluster Overly Development Zoning District, which allows new residences as a maximum density of one home per 10 acres, but on smaller lots.

c. *Residential Siting Standards*. Encourage new residential development in *Rural Lands* areas to be designed and located in a manner that does not detract from the area's rural character, and which can be easily served by County, town, and emergency services. For example, new roads or driveways could be placed along existing contours, property lines, fencerows, lines of existing vegetation, or other natural features wherever possible. The proposed location of the new residence should also minimize its visibility from public roadways, such as by utilizing landforms, existing vegetation, and/or new plantings to provide screening.

EXAMPLE OF CLUSTER OVERLAY DEVELOPMENT

A property owner who owns 80 acres of land mapped under the *Rural Lands* planned land use category would be allowed to create eight residential lots on his or her 80 acres of land. This figure is calculated by applying the "1 home per 10 acres" density standard—through dividing 80 by 10. Rather than subdividing eight 10-acre lots, those four homes could instead be built on smaller lots that are perhaps two or three acres in size. These smaller lots could be clustered away from the best farm soils or sensitive natural features and towards more attractive or lower-impact sites such as a woodlot, at the edge of a tilled field, or on soils with lower productivity. There are literally thousands of other combinations of how this "1 home per 10 acres" density standard could be applied to this 80 acres of land —one 40 acre lot, one 22 acre lot, six 3 acre lots, etc., etc..

d. *Certain Non-Residential Uses Allowed*. Allow home occupations and home-based businesses within mapped *Rural Lands* areas that do not impact neighboring properties. Also consider certain types of small-scale non-residential uses such as churches, day care centers, parks and walking trails as generally appropriate within *Rural Lands* areas.

e. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. The *Environmental Corridor* includes wetlands, floodplains, and slopes of 20% or greater. See subsection 4 below for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Rural Lands* and *Environmental Corridor*.

3. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Description: Includes publicly-owned land designated as State parks, scenic areas, wildlife areas, or conservation areas; County parks or recreation areas; town, city, or village parks; or other recreational facilities owned by the public or non-profit agencies. This planned land use category also includes publically owned existing and planned forest lands.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts*. The Marquette County zoning districts most compatible with the Public Open Space category are the Resource Protection (RP) district and the Recreational (REC) district.

b. *Planning with other Public Agencies*. Cooperate and maintain communication with the WisDNR regarding the long term management of the *Public Open Space* areas in the County.

c. *Coordinate Land Use Regulation and Planning*. Marquette County will cooperate and maintain communication with other governmental agencies and interested citizen organizations regarding the long term management of the *Public Open Space* areas.

d. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. Land within the *Public Open Space* planned land use category often contains wetlands, floodplains, and slopes of 20% or greater, which are also designated as *Environmental Corridor*. See subsection 4 below for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both as *Public Open Space* and *Environmental Corridor*.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR

Description: This overlay planned land use category includes generally continuous open space systems based on lands including sensitive natural resources and severe limitations for development. This category includes the following three component parts: WisDNR-identified wetlands subject to existing State-mandated County zoning, FEMA designated floodplains also subject to County zoning, and slopes of 20% or greater, which if disturbed can result in erosion and unstable building sites. There are very few slopes that are this steep in Marquette County (see Map Y).

Policies and Programs:

a. *Coordinate the Environmental Corridor with the underlying Planned Land Use Category*. The *Environmental Corridor* is an overlay planned land use category, which means that both the guidelines associated with the *Environmental Corridor* category and the underlying category on Map 7 (e.g., *Farmland Preservation Area*) will guide County zoning decisions.

b. *Pre-Existing Uses Allowed*. Cropping, grazing, forestry and other pre-existing land uses should be allowed to continue in mapped *Environmental Corridors*, provided these land uses utilize best management practices to minimize their impact on the natural features that comprise the *Environmental Corridor*.

c. *Discourage New Development.* New development will be guided away from mapped *Environmental Corridors* wherever practical.

d. *Amend the Environmental Corridor to Reflect More Detailed Information.* If development is proposed on parcels where this category is mapped, the property owner or developer is responsible for determining the exact boundaries of the *Environmental Corridor* based on the actual location of wetlands, floodplain, or steep slopes on the subject property. Chapter Two: Natural Resources provides more information on mapping, protecting, and potentially adjusting the boundaries of the *Environmental Corridor*.

5. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL – RURAL

Description: Includes single family residential development, generally at densities between 1 dwelling unit per 30,000 square feet to 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres, and generally served by individual on-site waste water treatment (septic) systems. Many of these areas have been developed or are planned to be developed as subdivision plats.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts.* When considering future rezone requests, the Marquette County zoning districts most compatible with the *Single Family Residential – Rural* category are the Agricultural - Residential (AG-3) district and the Residential (R-1) district. The AG-3 district requires a minimum lot size of 2 acres; the R-1 district requires a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet. Soil suitability, natural resources (e.g., woodlands), desires expressed in town plans, and the character of the surrounding area should be considered when deciding on the most appropriate zoning district. The AG-3 District may be most appropriate where the proposed development is close to sensitive and high-quality natural areas.

b. *Encourage Well-Planned Subdivision Development.* In an effort to direct intensive future housing development away from *Rural Lands* and *Agriculture* areas, allow well-planned subdivision development in the planned *Single Family Residential – Rural* areas. Encourage new residential development to be designed and located in a manner that does not detract from the area's rural character, and which can be easily served by County, town, and emergency services. Chapter Eight: Housing and Neighborhood Development contains additional ideas on how to thoughtfully design new subdivision development.

c. *Manage Stormwater from New Residential Development.* For *Single Family Residential – Rural* areas planned along County lakes, rivers, and streams, all new development will need to meet the County's shoreland setback requirements and possibly floodplain and wetland ordinances depending on location. All subdivisions should utilize modern construction site erosion control and stormwater management techniques, including vegetative buffers and stormwater storage and infiltration. For additional information on innovative stormwater management techniques for residential development in shoreland areas, see Chapter Two: Natural Resources.

d. *Allow Compatible Non-Residential Uses.* Allow home occupations and home-based businesses within mapped *Single Family Residential – Rural* areas that do not impact neighboring properties. Also

consider certain types of small-scale non-residential uses such as churches, day care centers, parks, and trails as generally appropriate within *Single Family Residential – Rural* areas.

e. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Single Family Residential – Rural* and *Environmental Corridor*.

6. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL – SEWERED

Description: Includes single-family detached residential development, generally at densities of at least 1 dwelling unit per 30,000 square feet, usually served by a public sanitary sewer system, and typically developed by subdivision plat.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts*. When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *Single Family Residential – Sewered* category is the Residential (R-1) district. Most of area within the *Single Family Residential – Sewered* Planned Land Use Category is within the City and villages, and therefore these areas are more likely to be developed within a municipal zoning district.

b. *Allow Compatible Non-Residential Uses*. Allow home occupations and home-based businesses within mapped *Single Family Residential–Sewered* areas that do not impact neighboring properties. Also, certain types of small-scale non-residential uses such as churches, day care centers, parks, and trails are generally appropriate within *Single Family Residential – Sewered* areas.

c. *Minimize Incompatible Land Uses*. Work with communities that have mapped this category to minimize the potential for incompatible land uses (e.g., high traffic generators, noisy uses) within or next to *Single Family Residential–Sewered* areas. Where such uses do occur in close proximity, identify measures to mitigate the incompatible land use's impact on *Single Family Residential–Sewere*d areas, including minimal outdoor lighting and the use of landscaped buffers.

d. *Encourage Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Residential Structures*. Promote maintenance of the County's existing single-family residential housing stock, particularly through State and federal grant programs as described in greater detail within Chapter Eight: Housing and Neighborhood Development.

e. *Coordinate Community Facility Planning*. Thoughtfully locate community facilities such as roads, paths, parks, sidewalks, schools, churches, and libraries to provide convenient access to residential areas.

f. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Single Family Residential–Sewered* and *Environmental Corridor*.

7. Two Family Residential

Description: Includes groupings of two or more duplexes and attached single-family residences with individual entries (e.g., townhouses) served by public sanitary sewer service. This category is primarily mapped in the County's villages and the City.

Policies and Programs:

b. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District.* When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning districts most compatible with the *Two Family Residential* category are the Multiple Family Residential (R-2) district and the Residential (R-1) district. Most of these areas are more likely to be developed under City or village zoning districts.

c. *Allow Compatible Non-Residential Uses Allowed.* Allow home occupations and home-based businesses within mapped *Two Family Residential* areas that do not impact neighboring properties. Also consider certain types of small-scale non-residential uses such as churches, day care centers, parks and walking trails as generally appropriate within *Two Family Residential* areas.

d. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors.* See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Two Family Residential* and *Environmental Corridor*.

8. Planned Neighborhood

Description: Includes areas that should be carefully planned as a mixture of predominantly single family residences, combined with uses within one or more of these planned land use categories: *Two Family Residential*, *Mixed Residential*, *Neighborhood Business*, neighborhood-oriented *Institutional* (churches and day care facilities), and *Public Open Space*. The mix of residential types in this neighborhood should match the community's historic mix of single, two, and multi-family housing. These areas should be served by public sewer.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District.* When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *Planned Neighborhood* category is the Planned Development (PD) district.

b. *Design Standards.* Ensure that all land use decisions related to the *Planned Neighborhood* category are in coordination with the Housing and Neighborhood Development recommendations in Chapter 8 of this *Plan*.

c. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors.* See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are within both *Planned Neighborhood* and *Environmental Corridor* categories.

9. Mixed Residential

Description: Includes a variety of residential units, including multiple-family housing (3+ unit buildings) and manufactured and mobile home parks served by a public sanitary sewer service system or group on-site waste water treatment system. This category is primarily mapped in the County's villages and City.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District*. When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *Mixed Residential* category are the Multiple Family Residential (R-2) district. Most of these areas are more likely to be developed under City or village zoning districts.

b. *Allow Compatible Non-Residential Uses*. Allow home occupations and home-based businesses within mapped *Mixed Residential* areas that do not impact neighboring properties. Also consider certain types of small-scale non-residential uses such as churches, day care centers, parks, and trails as generally appropriate within *Mixed Residential* areas.

c. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Mixed Residential* and *Environmental Corridor*.

10. Commercial Recreation

Description: Includes privately-owned lands designated as recreation areas or businesses, such as for for-profit campgrounds, private golf courses, "fish for fee" farms, and waterfront businesses.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District*. When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the Commercial Recreation category is the Commercial (CM) district.

b. *Site Plan Review*. Marquette County will require a detailed site and operations plan prior to approving expansion of existing campgrounds, and other new and expanded commercial recreational uses. Chapter Nine: Economic Development includes suggested standards for site plan review.

c. *Multi-Agency Review*. Marquette County will coordinate communication between the County's campgrounds, local municipalities and the State to assure continued success and compliance with local, County, and State rules. The County also encourages shelters, multiple access points, and communications within campground to minimize the impacts of natural hazards. The County's All-Hazard Mitigation Plan includes additional details.

d. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both Commercial Recreation and Environmental Corridor.

11. Neighborhood Business

Description: Includes small-scale, neighborhood supporting retail, service, and office uses that preserve surrounding residential or "small town" character through building scale and appearance, landscaping, and signs.

Policies and Programs

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District.* Marquette County will consider applying the Rural Center (RC) zoning district when development proposals are submitted for these areas. Most of the areas planned for *Neighborhood Business* are more likely to be developed under City or village zoning districts.

b. *Site Planning.* Marquette County requires that all proposed commercial projects submit a detailed site plan showing the proposed location of the building, parking, outdoor storage, loading, signage, landscaping and lighting prior to development approval. All new commercial development should be accessed by public roads. Chapter Nine: Economic Development includes suggested standards for site plan review.

c. *Neighborhood Design.* Development within the *Neighborhood Business* planned land use category should be compatible in scale, appearance, and design with surrounding land uses.

d. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors.* See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Neighborhood Business* and *Environmental Corridor*.

12. General Business

Description: Includes indoor commercial, office, institutional, telecommunication facilities, and outdoor display land uses, with new development including high-quality building design, generous landscaping, modest lighting, and attractive signage.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District.* When considering future rezone requests, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *General Business* category is the Commercial District-Business (CM-B) zoning district, which allows a range of commercial uses. Some of the General Business planned land use areas are likely to be developed under City or village zoning districts.

b. *Timing for rezoning.* Generally, it is Marquette County's policy to not "pre-zone" areas planned for *General Business* use. Rather, the County will generally wait to rezone areas in this planned land use category until specific development proposals are received.

c. *Site Planning.* Marquette County requires that all proposed commercial projects submit a detailed site plan showing the proposed location of the building, parking, outdoor storage, loading, signage, landscaping and lighting prior to development approval. All new commercial development should be accessed by public roads. Chapter Nine: Economic Development includes suggested standards for site plan review.

d. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *General Business* and *Environmental Corridor*.

13. DOWNTOWN

Description: Includes pedestrian-oriented commercial, office, institutional, and residential uses in a traditional "downtown" setting with minimal setbacks and on-street parking. These are generally historic areas near the center of the City or a village that are characterized by two-story commercial buildings along the street edge.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District*. When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *Downtown* category is the Rural Center (RC) district. However, most of these areas will be subject to City or village zoning.

b. *Recognize the Role of Downtowns as Civic Centers*. Continue to promote downtown districts as commercial, civic, and social centers. This includes supporting community events such as parades, special events, and celebrations in downtown. Specific strategies are discussed in Chapter Nine: Economic Development, and within individual City and village comprehensive plans.

c. *Promote and Retain Businesses*. Work with local governments, chambers of commerce, and business groups to use marketing, investment, and incentive strategies to promote and retain specialty retail, local food and drink, financial services, offices, entertainment business, and services.

d. *Build and Expand Tourism Related Uses*. Support the expansion of uses that provide goods and services to tourists attracted to the area for its outdoor recreation opportunities or quaint communities. Such businesses might include additional restaurants (including those focus on local foods), nature stores (e.g., bird and wildlife related items), gift shops, art galleries, home and garden stores, and sporting goods stores/outfitters.

e. *Enable Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. Market the County's downtown districts as places to start up small, aspiring businesses and promote increased utilization of second story space for housing and offices.

f. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Downtown* and *Environmental Corridor*.

14. GENERAL INDUSTRIAL

Description: Includes indoor manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and office uses, some with outdoor storage areas. New development should attend to building design, landscaping, modest lighting, screened storage areas, and attractive signage.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning District*. When considering future rezone requests, the Marquette County zoning district most compatible with the *General Industrial* category is the Commercial District-Industrial (CM-I) zoning district, which allows a range of commercial and industrial uses. Many of these areas are likely to be developed under City or village zoning districts.

b. *Buffering*. When new industrial development occurs, protect nearby residential development areas through screening and vegetative buffering.

c. *Rezoning*. It is Marquette County's policy to not "pre-zone" areas planned for *General Industrial* use. Rather, the County will generally wait to rezone areas in this planned land use category until specific development proposals are received.

d. *Site Planning*. Marquette County requires that all proposed industrial projects submit a detailed site plan, building elevations, landscape plan, lighting plan, grading/stormwater management plan and signage plan prior to development approval. All new industrial development should be accessed by public roads. Recommended site planning and design standards for industrial development projects are provided in Chapter 9 of this *Plan*.

e. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Industrial* and *Environmental Corridor*.

15. EXTRACTION

Description: Includes sites in use as a quarry, gravel pit, clay extraction, peat extraction, or related land uses.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts*. When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the Marquette County zoning districts that allow extraction uses include Commercial-Industrial (CM-I), Commercial-Business (CM-B), Prime Agricultural (AG-1), General Agricultural (AG-2), and Agricultural-Residential (AG-3).

b. *New Extraction Use Review*. For all new proposed extraction uses, follow the recommended criteria provided in Chapter Two of this *Plan*.

c. *Policies for Lands Also Mapped as Environmental Corridors*. See subsection 4 above for additional policies affecting lands than are designated both *Extraction* and *Environmental Corridor*.

16. INSTITUTIONAL

Description: Includes large-scale public buildings, hospitals, airports, non-profit campgrounds, power substations, and special-care facilities. Small institutional uses, such as town hall buildings, cemeteries, and churches, may also be in other land use categories.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Appropriate Implementing Zoning Districts.* When considering possible rezone requests in the future, the vast majority of Marquette County zoning districts allow *Institutional* uses as a permitted or special exception use.

b. *New Uses.* Should additional *Institutional* uses be necessary beyond those shown on Map 7, thoughtfully locate them (and promote their location) in accessible areas.

c. *Implement Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter Recommendations.* Ensure that all land use decisions related to the *Institutional* category are in coordination with Utilities and Community Facilities recommendations of this *Plan*, found in the associated chapter.

17. Well Setback Area from Landfill

Description: This boundary depicts the 1,200 foot setback area around closed landfills where the installation of a new private drinking well is generally prohibited under WisDNR rules, unless a waiver is granted.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Limit Residential Development.* Avoid planning for new rural residential development within this ¼ mile setback area.

b. *Monitor Groundwater.* Work with WisDNR staff to research the landfills in terms of what impact, if any, they are having on groundwater quality in the long term.

18. Potential Recreation Expansion Area

Description: Areas within this boundary have been identified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) as foreseeable expansions of State-owned parks, fishery areas, wildlife areas, or similar resource areas. WisDNR refers to these areas as "project boundaries." It is WisDNR's policy to purchase lands within its project boundaries only from willing landowners.

Policies and Programs:

a. *Work with Interested Property Owners.* Land in the *Potential Recreation Expansion Area* should be acquired only from willing landowners through land purchases or easements.

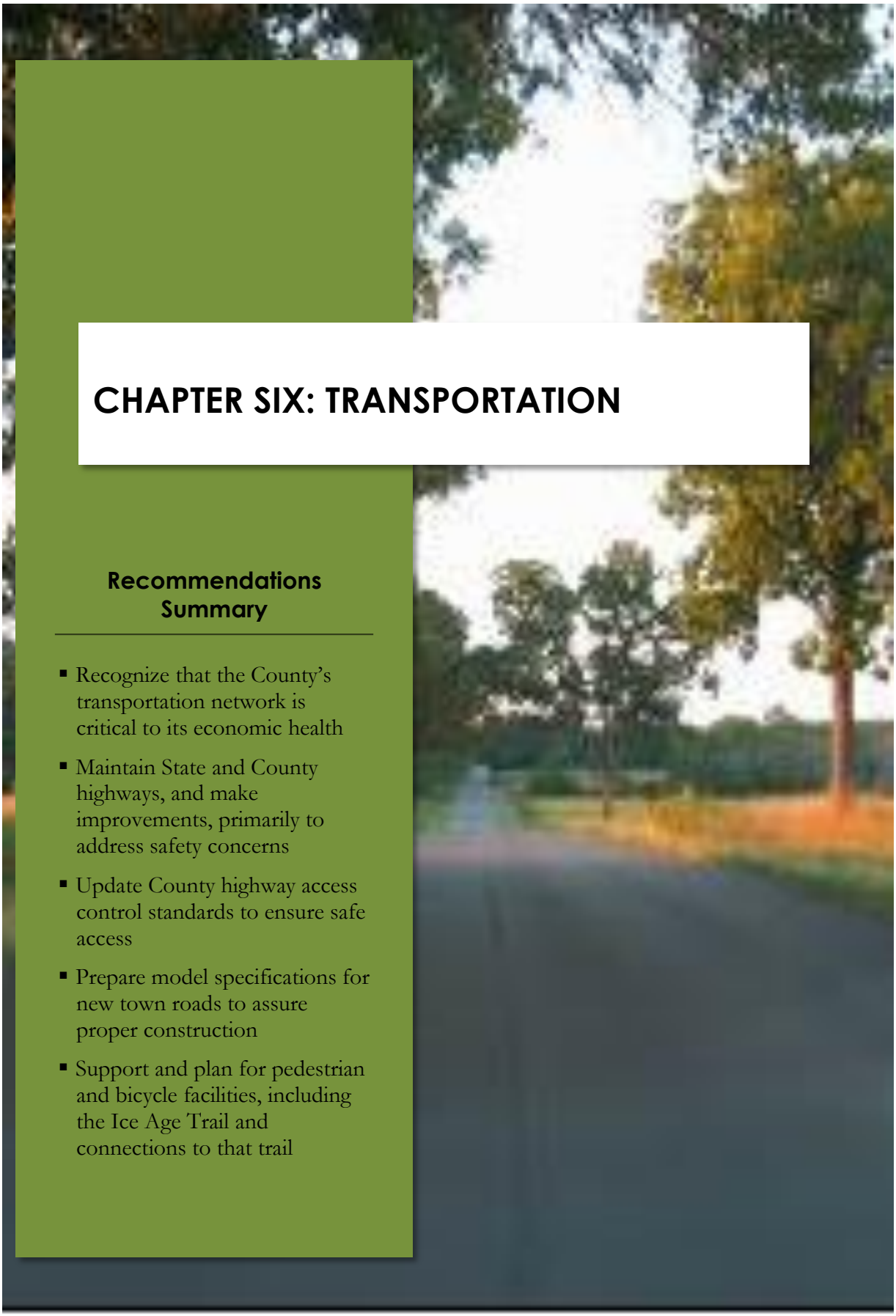
b. *"Rural Lands" Policies Generally Control.* Until and unless individual properties in the delineated *Expansion Area* are acquired, these lands are generally recommended for uses and densities described in the *Rural Lands* category.

D. OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT AND SMART GROWTH AREAS

Through this *Plan*, the County identifies several **opportunities for redevelopment and for development of Smart Growth areas, as guided by locally adopted comprehensive plans**.

Opportunities for redevelopment include deteriorating buildings and brownfield sites in the villages of Neshkoro, Westfield, Oxford, and Endeavor, as well as in the City of Montello. The County supports a range of strategies to redevelop or revitalize these areas. **Specific strategies are provided in Chapter Nine: Economic Development**, as well as in the local comprehensive plans.

In addition, several places are identified as Smart Growth areas. As defined under Wisconsin Statutes, Smart Growth areas are those "areas that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and municipal, State, and utility services, where practical, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are both contiguous to existing development and at densities which will have relatively low municipal, State governmental, and utility costs." These include the potential redevelopment areas discussed above, but extend to include potential for infill housing and commercial development within existing mostly-developed areas, within existing City or village limits that are presently undeveloped, within existing utility or sanitary district boundaries, or in logical extensions of these areas as depicted on Map 7.



CHAPTER SIX: TRANSPORTATION

Recommendations Summary

- Recognize that the County's transportation network is critical to its economic health
- Maintain State and County highways, and make improvements, primarily to address safety concerns
- Update County highway access control standards to ensure safe access
- Prepare model specifications for new town roads to assure proper construction
- Support and plan for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including the Ice Age Trail and connections to that trail

This chapter includes background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs to guide the future development and maintenance of various modes of transportation in Marquette County. Given the County's rural setting, the primary focus is on highways and local roads.

A. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Access is a key determinant of growth because it facilitates the flow of goods and people. Marquette County is well connected to the region through the existing roadway network, especially the Interstate. Other transportation facilities, such as freight rail and bike and recreational trails and routes, are also found in the County. This section summarizes the County's existing transportation facilities.

1. ROADWAYS

Marquette County is served by Interstate 39 and four State Trunk Highways, all of which link the County with the region's major cities. These links are vital to the County's tourism and recreation-based economy, as well as channeling product and commuter flows. **Interstate 39** serves as the County's primary north-south traffic artery. This four-lane freeway is designed to keep traffic flowing smoothly across the entire State, and connects Wisconsin's metropolitan areas in the south to the "northwoods" region. Traffic has significantly increased since 2000. According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), which records average daily traffic volumes (number of cars per day) for major State roadways, traffic on I-39 increased by almost 50 percent from 2001 to 2008 to an average of 16,500 vehicles per day. WisDOT maintains a rest area to serve northbound traffic on Interstate 39 north of the Village of Westfield. The rest area provides modern restroom facilities and other amenities for the traveling public.

In 2015, the County's consultant updated an earlier assessment of the **economic development potential** of lands along the Interstate 39 corridor. It included an assessment of access, daily traffic volumes, adjacent land uses and zoning, visibility, and environmental constraints to development. This assessment is included in Chapter Eight.

State Trunk Highways (STHs) are the arterial roadways in the network. **STH 23** is the main east-west route through the County which, between 2000 and 2008, experienced a 12 percent decrease in traffic (as measured on the west side of Montello) with average daily traffic (ADT) of 3,700 vehicles in 2008. **STH 22**, which runs generally north-south through the County, saw traffic volumes south of Montello, just north of the Union Pacific Railroad, decrease by about 23 percent over this same period, to an ADT of 1,700 vehicles by 2008. **STH 82**, running west from the Interstate through the Village of Oxford, experienced a slight decrease in traffic volume between 2006 and 2008, with ADT of 3,700 vehicles in 2008. **STH 73** serves the far northeastern portion of the County and the Village of Neshkoro. Traffic volume on STH 73 remained constant between 2000 and 2008 with an ADT of 2,700 vehicles.

Roadway Function Classification System

Throughout Wisconsin, all local, County, State and federal transportation routes are classified in categories under the "Roadway Functional Classification" system.

As identified by WisDOT, the functional classification system groups roads and highways according to the character of service they offer, ranging from rapid through access to local land access. The purpose of functional classification is to enhance overall travel efficiency and accommodate traffic patterns and land uses by designing streets to the standards suggested by their functional class. The three main functional classes include:

- Arterials that provide primary access to and through an area
- Collectors that disperse traffic within an area, and
- Local streets that provide access to individual properties.

See Map 8 for functional classification system designations in Marquette County.

The County is also served by a 238-mile network of County trunk highways (CTHs). County highways usually serve as collector roads that both serve adjacent land uses and distribute local traffic to

the Interstate and arterial system. They serve an important role in linking the area's farm and forest resources to the County's urban centers and major highways. The major County highways—D, E, F, and M—had ADTs of between 800 and 1,400 vehicles in 2008. ADT along CTH D and along CTH F, south of Montello, was 1,100 vehicles. Along County E west from Westfield, the ADT was 1,400 vehicles. Moderate-volume County highways, with ADTs between 450 and 800, include CTHs A, B, C, J, K, O, CH, and CX. The lowest volume County highways, with ADTs of 450 or less, were N, P, T, Y, and JJ. Modest traffic increases along the County highway network should be expected with new development in the more rural parts of Marquette County.

Town roads are also important components of the transportation system. There are 536 miles of town roads in Marquette County. Town roads serve local development and farming and forestry areas. They also provide access to many of the County's lakes and streams. Most of these roads are maintained by town governments, but the County does provide town road maintenance services under individual agreements.

The segment of 14th Road in the Town of Buffalo, between CTHs O and CM, is enrolled in the Rustic Roads program. This program was created by the State legislature in 1973 to help citizens and local units of government preserve scenic, lightly-traveled roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers, and motorists. Featuring open agricultural vistas against a backdrop of wooded hills, 14th Road provides the traveler with a canopy of hardwood forests and cottonwood trees, along with views of century old farms and remnant prairie areas.

2. Bridges

There are **37 State-maintained bridges** in Marquette County, located either along Interstate 39 or State highways. In addition, there are **21 bridges along County highways and 22 bridges along town roads,** which are maintained by either Marquette County or local governments. The State and County maintain condition reports for bridges. There are also five railroad bridges, which are maintained by the Union Pacific Railroad.

3. Airports

There are no airports in Marquette County, but there are **several small private airstrips**. The nearest larger airport is the Portage Municipal Airport in Columbia County, which is classified as a "medium general aviation" airport serving small general aviation single and twin-engine aircrafts. There is another "medium general aviation" airport in the Wisconsin Dells area and "small general aviation" airports used for recreational flying, training, and crop dusting near Wautoma, Wild Rose and Friendship. WisDOT, in its *2010 Wisconsin State Airport Systems Plan*, recommended that Adams County Legion Field in Friendship be improved to "medium general aviation" standards.

Air carrier and passenger facilities are located approximately an hour's drive to the south in Madison at the Dane County Regional Airport, and to the east at the Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh (charter service), at the Outagamie County Airport in Appleton, and the Central Wisconsin Airport in Mosinee.

4. Rail

The **Union Pacific Railroad** runs through the southern part of Marquette County, beginning in the Town of Buffalo and running through the Towns of Packwaukee, Montello and Oxford. This rail line connects Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis and traverses Wisconsin in a roughly diagonal route. This

is a freight rail route; there is no passenger rail service serving the County and none is anticipated. The nearest passenger rail service is located within the City of Portage, where the Amtrak Empire Builder rail route stops. The Empire Builder connects Chicago to Seattle.

5. Water and Truck Transportation

Most freight shipments in Marquette County occur by truck or rail. There is no waterborne freight movement in the County, and none is anticipated. Semi-truck shipments are most prevalent along Interstate 39. The City and villages in the County have **designated truck routes** to guide truck traffic from the major highways and freeways into industrial parks and business areas.

6. Bicycle Routes

The County's highly scenic rural roads provide abundant opportunities for bicycling and bike touring. In recognition of this opportunity, a group made up of the Citizens Recreation Committee, County Highway Department, and Marquette County Board cooperatively identified and mapped several on-road bike route tours in the County in 1999. The ten signed routes provide approximately **140 miles of bike touring** opportunities (see Map 8). The shortest of these routes is the Mecan River Circuit (9 miles) and the longest is the Germania Jaunt (19 miles). No off-road recreational trails for bicyclists were available in the County at the time of writing.

7. ATV Routes

Between 2011 and 2014, Marquette County, local municipalities and the Marquette County ATV Club identified, designated and appropriately signed over 300 miles of County and municipal roads as an on-road ATV Route. The ATV routes connect area population centers to commercial businesses and serves as an important transportation and recreational amenity for Marquette County residents and visitors.

8. Walking and Hiking

Marquette County's villages and the City of Montello have pedestrian facilities that include sidewalk systems of various extents and capacities.

Tracing Wisconsin's rich glacial history, the route of the **Ice Age Trail** passes through Marquette County as it loops through the State some 1,000 miles from Door County to Interstate Park on the St. Croix River. Using a combination of public land, easements across private property acquired from willing sellers, abandoned rail corridors, and low traffic roads, the completed trail will be an exceptional resource for recreationalists wishing to hike its entire length or merely a small portion of it. **A 10-mile segment of the trail has been designated between Portage and John Muir County Park, considered to be one of the highlights of the trail.** To date, a two mile long portion of the Ice Age Trail has been designated and improved within the John Muir County Park. The remainder of the trail, which awaits finalization and designation, would extend to Montello, Harrisville, Westfield, and north into Waushara County. The Marquette County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance is a volunteer organization dedicated to the planning, maintenance, and marketing of trail activities.

There are numerous other hiking and walking opportunities available on State-owned lands in the County.

9. Transportation Facilities for Elderly and Disabled (Para-Transit)

Para-transit is a **specialized transit service** for specific segments of the population that require more accessible vehicles and flexible routing. The Marquette County Commission on Aging administers a para-transit program with limited services to County residents for local trips and longer distance trips. The largest proportion of the population served is the frail elderly living in their own homes, in nursing homes, or some type of community based residential facility. As of 2015, the Commission has five buses and a van providing transportation for elderly and disabled passengers from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

10. Review of State, Regional, and County Transportation Plans

The following State, regional and County transportation plans and studies are relevant to Marquette County. There are no known conflicts between the policies and recommendations set forth in this *Comprehensive Plan*, and those of these other State, regional and County plans.

Marquette County 5-Year Transportation Improvement Plan

Led by the Highway Commissioner, the Marquette County Highway Department is responsible for construction and maintenance of County highways, under the direction of the Highway Committee. Duties of the Highway Department include completing necessary engineering studies, surveys, plans and cost estimates for highway construction; care and maintenance of County road equipment and supplies; recording all expenditures; planning and supervising highway maintenance and construction work; maintaining County and town bridges, and providing general maintenance of State highways. The Department currently maintains 238 miles of County highways and 114 centerline miles of State highways. As of January 2015, the Department had 30 full-time employees to perform these duties.

With fixed funding for the foreseeable future, steadily increasing material costs, unpredictable fuel costs, and increasingly intense and frequent storms forecast, it will be difficult for the Department to maintain the current level of service in upcoming years. Still, the Highway Department maintains a five-year plan for future improvement projects on County highways. From 2015 to 2020, planned improvements to the County highway system include relatively minor activities such as roadway resurfacing. The County's 5-Year Transportation Improvement Program (2015 – 2020) includes resurfacing portions of CTHs O, JJ, M, Y, J, E, and T.

The five-year transportation improvement plan is subject to change and in all likelihood will change from time to time. Changes are precipitated based on many factors, including:

- *Pavement failure*. Safety considerations will move a failed pavement section to a top priority;
- *Budget constraints*. To stay within budget, projects may be moved within the program depending upon actual winter maintenance costs;
- *Future funding opportunities*. Improvements to high-priority sections of highway may be deferred if there is an opportunity to acquire federal or State grants or other outside funding;
- *Asphalt availability*. Projects may be moved in the plan depending upon when an asphalt plant is available in the area;
- *Project efficiencies*. Since larger projects are more cost-effective to construct, smaller projects close to a larger project may advance; and
- *Coordination with other projects*. Projects may be moved to accommodate large State construction projects or bridge replacements.

2014-2018 Marquette County Human Services Public Transportation Coordinated Plan

In December 2013, Marquette adopted the *2014-2018 Marquette County Human Services Public Transportation Coordinated Plan*. This plan provided an analysis of existing public transportation options, user surveys, and recommendations on how to improve public transportation within Marquette County. The Public Transportation Coordinated Plan recommended increasing the availability of para-transit and providing transportation options to medical facilities outside of the County. These recommendations rely on increased program funding at the federal, State, and County levels.

Wisconsin State Highway 6-Year Improvement Program

WisDOT prepares 6-Year Highway Improvement Programs for each region in the State. The 2015-2020 Plan for the North Central Region identifies 14 projects in Marquette County, most of which involve pavement reconditioning and resurfacing. The entirety of State Trunk Highway (STH) 22 through Marquette County is planned for resurfacing between 2017 and 2020, with bicycle and pedestrian improvements added through the City of Montello during this timeframe. The State also plans on reconstructing 0.63 miles of STH 23 within the City of Montello and resurfacing the segment of STH 82 from Interstate 39 to the Village of Oxford. The Highway Improvement Plan also calls for improvement and replacement of bridges along Interstate 39 in 2016.

Wisconsin Connections 2030: Wisconsin's Long-range Multimodal Transportation Plan

Adopted in October 2009, Connections 2030 is part of WisDOT's long range transportation plan. It identifies 37 priority transportation corridors in the State that are vital to State's economy. The Wisconsin River corridor runs through Marquette County, extending from the City of Madison to Ironwood, Michigan. Interstate 39 is classified as a "Backbone Route"—a multilane, divided highway interconnecting major population and economic centers of the State and linking them to the national transportation network. The future corridor vision includes continued improvements to I-39 and transit services from Madison, Wisconsin to Minneapolis, Minnesota with stops in Portage, Stevens Point, and Wausau.

As part of Wisconsin Connections 2030, WisDOT has created a statewide map of existing transportation systems throughout the State that includes the following categories: commuter rail, large bus systems, rural networks, shared ride taxi service, small bus systems, and intercity bus service. The private company Lamers offers daily intercity bus service that runs along Interstate 39 from Wausau to Madison, with a stop in the Village of Westfield.

Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* presents a blueprint for improving conditions for bicycling, clarifies the WisDOT's role in bicycle transportation, and establishes policies for further integrating bicycling into the current transportation system. That plan reports that more than one-third of all Wisconsin households included someone who took at least one bike trip in the previous week. The plan map shows existing State trails and future "priority corridors and key linkages" for bicycling along the State Trunk Highway system in Wisconsin. In Marquette, **STH 22 from Montello to Wautoma** was listed as a key linkage.

Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan 2020

The 2002 *Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan 2020* outlines Statewide and local measures to increase walking and to promote pedestrian comfort and safety. That plan provides a policy framework addressing pedestrian issues and clarifies WisDOT's role in meeting pedestrian needs. Pedestrian facilities include sidewalks, walkways, streetscapes, crosswalks, traffic control signals, overpasses and underpasses, bridges, multi-use paths, curb cuts and ramps, transit stops, and paved shoulders. Many of these types of facilities are found in Marquette County's incorporated areas.

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030

The *Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030,* adopted in 2014, provides a vision for freight rail, intercity passenger rail and commuter rail service within the State. The plan also identifies priorities and strategies which assist in

determining rail investments for a twenty year period. No critical rail transportation issues related to Marquette County are identified.

2010 Wisconsin State Airport Systems Plan

The *2010 Wisconsin State Airport Systems Plan* includes an inventory of the 98 public use airport facilities in the State and provides a framework for the preservation and enhancement of a system to meet current and future aviation needs of the State. That plan includes recommendations to upgrade existing facilities through runway extensions and replacements and facility improvements, but does not identify new locations for airports to meet future needs. There are no recommendations related to Marquette County within this plan.

B. TRANSPORTATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: Provide a safe and efficient transportation system that meets the needs of Marquette County's residents and visitors

Objectives:

1. Provide for adequate highway capacities and safe conditions, in conjunction with the State and local communities.
2. Ensure that transportation-related improvements and investments are coordinated with land use planning and economic development.
3. Preserve the scenic value along certain roadways to protect and enhance the County's rural character.
4. Support and develop facilities for biking, walking, and other alternative modes of transportation.

Policies:

1. **Support appropriate improvements and maintenance to existing State and County highways**, intersections, and bridges, in accordance with 5-6 year improvement programs, updated regularly.
2. Identify **consistent and stable sources for funding** road improvement and maintenance projects.
3. Work with towns to **help maintain and upgrade town roads and bridges**, and in general support local governments in their transportation improvement programs to the extent practical.
4. **Upgrade highway access control standards** and support rural character objectives by discouraging large amounts of "side of the road" development on main roadways.
5. **Promote and accommodate places to bike and walk,** with particular focus on maintaining the County bike route network and promoting the planning and development of the Ice Age Trail.
6. **Support other transportation options** for those without access to an automobile, including the elderly, disabled, and children.
7. Coordinate with local communities, neighboring counties and the State on promoting **alternative modes of transit** to serve those with special needs including the disabled, and on rail, air, trucks, and water transport.

8. In partnership with the towns and utilizing State programs, **protect the rural character along scenic roadways** in the County as a means of tourism development and to preserve local heritage.

C. Transportation Programs and Recommendations

To implement safe and efficient movement within Marquette County over the next 20 years and promote a transportation network that advances community and economic development, the County may pursue or support the following programs:

Land Use	Acres	Percent	Units	Percent	Population
Single Family	975.7	24.8%	2,927.1	59.7%	7,317.7
Two Family	155.6	4.0%	933.4	19.1%	2,333.5
Mixed Residential	103.8	2.6%	1,038.4	21.2%	2,596.1
Traditional Neighborhood*	1,420.9	36.1%	4,113.4		10,283.5
Neighborhood Office	2.1	0.1%			
Planned Office	77.6	2.0%			
Neighborhood Commercial	3.4	0.1%			
Planned Commercial	263.7	6.7%			
Central Mixed Use	12.7	0.3%			
Planned Industrial	276.1	7.0%			
General Industrial	59.6	1.5%			
Extraction	269.1	6.8%			
Institutional	11.1	0.3%			
Active Recreation	70.5	1.8%			
Passive Recreation	131.6	3.3%			
TOTAL	3,933.4	100.0%			22,530.8

Note: Excludes Rural land uses, Environmental Corridors, Surface Water, & Transportation

*Traditional Neighborhood Assumptions: 23% of area non-residential, 75% of area residential, 62% Single Family (65% of population); 18% Two-family (15% of population); 8% Mixed Residential (20% of population).

Other Assumptions: Single Family = 3 du/acre; Two-family = 6 du/acre; Mixed Residential = 10 du/acre

1. Support Appropriate Improvements to Existing Highways

Marquette County intends to ensure that the County served when major transp programs are proposed. T to work with WisDOT, the Regional Planning (ECWRPC), and develop and implem and maintain existi County highways and bridges. Any improvements will have important implications on many of the land use recommendations provided in this *Plan* (see sidebar for more discussion on the link between transportation and land use planning).

The Link between Transportation, Land Use, and Economic Development

There is a strong relationship between transportation planning, land use planning, and growing the County's economy. Constructing new roads or widening existing roads causes direct impacts on land use, usually for landowners of adjoining properties. Indirect impacts on land use and economic development are also caused by new or enhanced transportation facilities. For example, constructing a new on-ramp and off-ramp along a busy highway can significantly influence future development patterns for the entire interchange area. In addition, not providing new roads in areas designated for additional development can impede economic growth.

Ignoring the interaction between transportation, economic development, and land use may result in undesired development patterns, increased congestion, traffic safety concerns, unrealized growth potential, and diminished rural character.

For the State highway system, WisDOT has identified 14 improvement projects in the County between 2015 and 2020, which primarily involve pavement resurfacing and reconstruction. The County intends to advocate inclusion of the following recommended studies and improvements as part of **WisDOT's 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program:**

- STH 23 corridor study to assess potential capacity improvements and other long-term needs.
- As part of the planned STH 22 project, safety improvements at its hazardous intersection with CTH J in the Town of Shields, at its intersection with CTH E in Budsin, and a possible passing lane along STH 22 near the former Flea Market in the Town of Montello.
- Study of possible access improvements to Interstate 39, including potential upgrades of the CTH D interchange in the Town of Packwaukee and possible access ramps to the north.

For the **County highway system**, several improvement projects are scheduled for completion between 2015 and 2020. The following additional projects will be considered as part of future updates to the County's six-year Transportation Program and are depicted on Map 8:

- The intersections of CTH E and 17th Avenue/Tuttle Lake Road in Crystal Lake.
- The intersection of CTH E and CTH B in the Town of Newton.
- The intersection of CTH A and CTH E in the Town of Westfield.
- The intersections of CTH E and Pioneer Park Road, CTH J and CTH E, and CTH CH and Pioneer Park Road in the Village of Westfield.
- The intersection of CTH J and CTH N in the Town of Shields.

To ensure an adequate and safe County transportation network, the County intends to develop a **County Road Management Program**. A typical Road Management Program contains the following information:

- Minimum baseline standards for Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER), paved surface width, and shoulders.
- An evaluation of all County highways, including their PASER, improved surface width, and shoulder condition.
- A chart and map depicting prioritized projects based on this evaluation and anticipated funding. The chart could contain, at a minimum: road name, current condition, proposed improvements, improvement timeline, and anticipated project budget.

There are several ongoing federal and State sponsored improvement **programs and funding sources** available to the County and local communities to assist with these types of transportation projects, including the following:

- *Connecting Highway Aids (CHA).* Assists communities with the costs associated with increased traffic and maintenance on streets and highways that connect segments of the State highway system.
- *General Transportation Aids (GTA).* Provides a partial reimbursement to offset County and municipal road construction, maintenance, traffic, and police costs.
- *Local Bridge Improvement Assistance Program.* Assists with costs to rehabilitate and replace existing bridges on local roadways with a sufficiency rating of 80 or less.
- *Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP).* Assists with improving seriously deteriorating county highways, town roads, and municipal streets.
- *Surface Transportation Rural Program (STP-Rural).* Improves federal aid eligible highways outside of urban areas, primarily county highways.
- *Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).* Funds highway safety projects at sites that have experienced a high crash history.
- *Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-21).* Promotes multi-modal activities that complement a project or an area served by a transportation project (e.g., sidewalks along State highways).
- *Specialized Transportation Assistance Program.* Assists with county funding to provide transportation services for elderly or disabled persons.
- *Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA).* Provides funding for transportation projects that help attract employers, or assist in business retention.
- *Disaster Damage Aids (DDA).* Assists local governments with improving or repairing roads or roadway structures that have significant damage due to a disaster event, such as fire, flooding, mudslide, tornado or storm. Petitions must be submitted to WisDOT within sixty days of the disaster event.
- *Emergency Relief (ER).* Assists local governments with replacing or repairing roadways on federal aid highways resulting from a catastrophic failure or natural disaster. The ER program also covers debris removal and traffic control expenses associated with the natural disaster.

Additional information on these and other special programs (e.g., TIGER, STP-Freight) is available from the WisDOT North Central Region office in Wisconsin Rapids and University of Wisconsin Transportation Information Center.

2. HELP MAINTAIN AND UPGRADE TOWN ROADS AND BRIDGES

Over the 20-year planning period, existing town roads will need maintenance and upgrades to safely accommodate residential and rural development. The County Highway Department intends to offer assistance to towns to identify and **maintain a database on the physical condition of all roads and bridges** under each town's jurisdiction. Wisconsin legislation requires that local governments collect and submit condition ratings for all local roads. The most commonly used pavement condition rating system is PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating). PASER is a method of rating asphalt and concrete roads on a scale of 1 to 10, based on visual inspection.

The County Highway Department also will offer assistance to towns to update and implement five-year **Town Road Improvement Programs (TRIPs)** to schedule road upgrades and seek funding. Road rights-of-way should be maintained for adequate vision, to control noxious weeds, reduce shoulder maintenance, and provide adequate drainage. It is particularly important to clear brush and trim trees near road intersections. In the habitat areas for the federally-protected Karner blue butterfly, the Highway Department will obtain a permit for any ditch mowing or maintenance on public rights-of-way.

Wisconsin Statutes allow local governments to **establish vehicle weight limitations** for Class "B" roadways under their jurisdiction. The weight limits can be set year-round or seasonally, and must be properly posted. Maximum weight limits on roadways are established are the sole discretion of the governing body. Certain vehicular traffic is exempted from local weight restrictions; specifically agriculture related hauling traffic, logging traffic, and waste hauling. In 2014, Marquette County adopted the lengths and widths imposed under Wisconsin Act 322 for implements of husbandry and agricultural commercial motor vehicles, using Option "F" while still monitoring the permit applications and road conditions with the option of changing on a yearly basis.

3. UPDATE DESIGN AND LAYOUT STANDARDS FOR NEW TOWN ROADS

In areas of the County planned for significant residential development, the County will pursue and recommends an interconnected road system for reasons of highway access control, emergency access and evacuation (e.g., two ways in and out), and rural character preservation.

In the past 10 years….

The vast majority of Marquette County towns adopted a Town Driveway and Highway Access Ordinance to specify the placement, repair, construction, improvement and reconstruction of private driveways within their jurisdiction. This was an implementation priority within the original Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.

All new roads in Marquette County should be designed for the function they serve. Adherence to outdated engineering standards has frequently led to the overbuilding of roads, which can have negative safety, environmental, and community character impacts. Currently, each town follows its own town road design standards, but most adhere to the minimum design standards under Section 86.26 of Statutes. The following standards are advised:

- *Establish a minimum roadway construction standard.* Local roads should be built to high-quality roadway standards with a solid base course and adequate pavement thickness. The depth of a crushed gravel base should be at least 8 inches, and the pavement thickness should be at least 2½ inches

after compaction. Marquette County's subdivision ordinance requires that all town road right-of-ways be at least 66 feet wide, with at least 20 feet of graded width and at least 16 feet of paved surface width.

- *Provide for adequate drainage and stormwater management.* The County intends to establish standards for storm drainage facilities associated with road construction. In all subdivision plats where a new town road is proposed, the town and County should require a detailed grading and stormwater management plan that addresses drainage issues. The town or County could also require that all roadway design plans be prepared and stamped by a Wisconsin professional engineer. Standards should require that roadway ditches be constructed to provide adequate drainage, with the bottom of the ditch located at least one foot below the gravel base and an ideal side slope of 3 to 1. Longitudinal grade of the ditch should be 1% to insure proper flow. All ditches should be seeded with rough grasses. All culverts should be a minimum 15 inches in diameter. Culverts should be placed to match existing contours and in existing channels if possible. Town boards should have the authority to review and approve culvert sizes and type of material.
- *Avoid long dead end streets and cul-de-sacs serving multiple properties or major facilities.* These types of roads are difficult and inefficient to providing plowing, school bussing, protective, and emergency services. Long one-way streets can also create hazardous situations for residents and visitors, such as in the event of a flood or tornado, if that only route is cut off.
- *Provide cul-de-sac and turnaround standards.* Although streets ending in a cul-de-sac or turnaround are discouraged, there are instances, particularly at existing road and railroad intersections where installation of a cul-de-sac or turnaround may be a preferred option. As agencies and local governments work together to identify these potentially hazardous situations, the County and local governments should have formally established design standards for dead end streets.
- *Promote a logical and consistent road naming and addressing scheme.* The County and towns should work together to ensure a logical road naming and addressing scheme. The appropriate time to address this issue is at the final platting and certified survey mapping stage, when new town roads are sometimes established.

4. Upgrade Highway Access Control Standards

WisDOT controls the number, spacing, and design of all access points along State and federal highways. The Marquette County Highway Department, in collaboration with the County Surveyor and the Zoning Department, controls the number, spacing and design of all access points along County highways. There are no set access control measures for town roads. The County's *Access Control Plan* recommended establishing a town road access permit system similar to the County system. The purpose of access control is to reduce the number of potential conflict points along a road, create a more safe and efficient flow of traffic, and avoid or delay costly road capacity expansion projects. Ideally, access management techniques are applied to road corridors that are just beginning to experience development pressure. Some common access management techniques include:

- *Limiting the number of access points allowed for each property.* Generally, the number of new access points from a property to a State or County highway should be limited to a maximum of one per property. With lots where the abutting frontage is greater than 400 feet, a second access point may be considered.
- *Encouraging shared driveways between adjacent developments.* Where any driveway is planned to be located along or near property lines, the landowner should be encouraged to maintain a shared driveway with the abutting lot or parcel. The driveway centerline may be the property line between two lots or parcels of land or may be a mutually agreed upon land access easement. If shared driveways are not practical, then separate driveways should be adequately spaced from each other.
- *Promoting connectivity between neighboring parcels and for parcels across from one another.* Commercial developments, campgrounds, and similar facilities should provide, when feasible, for shared access

points and for inner-connected roads and drives, so that vehicles do not need to go out onto the public street to access different parts of the development.

- *Requiring "no vehicular access" areas on subdivision plats, certified survey maps, and other development plans where appropriate.* The County may require a deed restriction to be placed on a lot to limit vehicular access to abutting streets and highways. Such vehicular non-access reservations may be graphically noted on subdivision plats, certified survey maps, or site plans.
- *Guiding the placement of driveways to protect sight distance.* Direct vehicular access driveways and roads should be placed such that an exiting vehicle has a minimum unobstructed sight distance based upon the operating design speed of the abutting street or highway.
- *Restricting access points a certain distance from one another and from an intersection.* Figure 6.1 shows the recommended minimum spacing between access points (or driveways) along roadways. These recommended distances are based on posted speed limits and average vehicle acceleration and deceleration rates and considered necessary to maintain safe traffic operation.

Figure 6.1: Recommended Spacing between Driveways Along Town Roads

Road Speed Limit	Minimum Driveway Spacing Measured at the Street Right-of-Way Line
25 mph	105 feet
30 mph	125 feet
35 mph	150 feet
40 mph	185 feet
45 mph	230 feet
50 mph	275 feet
55 mph	300 feet

Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers. Traffic Engineering Handbook (4th Edition), Englewood Cliff, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992, p. 379 and the American Planning Association. Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Memo, July 1983.

5. Plan, Promote and Accommodate Places to Bike, Walk, and Hike

To continue to grow the tourist economy, Marquette County intends to pursue development of a **Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**, funding permitting. A Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan would contain an inventory of existing non-motorized transportation infrastructure and existing obstacles to biking, walking, and hiking. Such a plan would also identify new bike and pedestrian routes, improvements to existing routes, and other projects to facilitate non-motorized transportation within the County. Once developed, such a plan would be a basis for grant applications for the development of bike and pedestrian facilities, through both the WisDOT and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR).

A Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan would incorporate and expand on existing opportunities for biking and walking, including current on-road bike routes. In 1999, Marquette County identified and mapped on-road bike route tours. The ten identified routes provide approximately 140 miles of bike touring opportunities. Shoulders of all State and County highways identified on the mapped bike route should be paved when these highways are scheduled for resurfacing. The recommended minimum width of paved shoulders on rural highways intended for bicycling is 4 feet.

Ideas to pursue as part of a Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan include:

- Improving bike and pedestrian connectivity between cities and villages.
- Continuing to develop hiking and biking paths within parks.
- In the villages and City, developing sidewalks that connect residential areas and other destinations, establishing and signing/marking new and existing bicycle routes, and developing trails and connecting them to a wider network of trails in the area.
- In the northern part of the County, developing off-street hiking and biking trails and enhancing on-street bicycle routes by paving shoulders and improving route marking.
- In the southern part of the County, developing more signed bicycle routes on lightly traveled County roads and improving existing routes by paving shoulders where practical.
- Pave local roadway shoulders where practical to make them easier and safer to walk along.
- Working with the Village and Town of Neshkoro and Waushara County to explore continuation of the Bannerman Trail, which currently ends near the County line.
- Advancing the Ice Age Trail and local connections to it.

The federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-21) provides funding for a variety of non-motorized transportation projects, including bicycle and pedestrian planning activities. Marquette County may be a strong candidate for a planning grant due to the County's demographics, current lack of off-road walking and biking facilities, and commitment to existing on-road bike routes.

The Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan including identified project and goals for non-motorized transportation will be incorporated into the County's revised Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. If funding and/or grant opportunities are not available, the County could choose to utilize the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as a venue to study and further the previously identified objectives for hiking and biking within the County.

Another component of the Transportation Alternatives Program is the **Safe Routes to School** (SRTS) program. SRTS activities are another way to build the County's bike and pedestrian network. SRTS encourages children to walk and bike to school by a combination of improving infrastructure and social incentives. SRTS programs can promote a healthier lifestyle for school aged children, improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, and reduce auto emissions near schools. If requested, Marquette County will collaborate on SRTS related activities with interested municipalities and school districts.

Last but not least, the County will continue to support the National Park Service, WisDNR, the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation, and the Marquette County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance to **complete the designation of the Ice Age Trail corridor** through the County. The County also supports these partner agencies in acquiring land and easements from willing landowners. WisDNR has established the **Conservation Capacity: Ice Age Trail grant program** to assist with the costs of trail development, management and protection. Eligible activities include promotion of the Ice Age Trail, associated tourism

activities, and volunteer development. Private non-profit groups are eligible to apply for this program. A 50 percent local match is required.

6. Support Other Transportation Options

Marquette County will work with State, regional, and local jurisdictions in support of other transportation options, which may include the following:

Commuter Facilities

Each workday, nearly half of the County's residents leave the County to work elsewhere. A majority of these commuters work in Columbia and Dane Counties. One or more **park-and-ride facilities** might alleviate some of the daily traffic between Marquette County and regional employment destinations, and make the County an increasingly attractive residential destination for commuters desiring a rural lifestyle. Park-and-ride facilities enable commuters to park at a designated location and transfer to a bus or meet a carpool or vanpool. Some town hall parking lots in the County currently serve this function. Across Wisconsin, many lots offer overnight parking, secure bike rack parking, telephones for safety and convenience, and shelters for comfort while waiting for a ride.

The County will attempt work with WisDOT to further explore interest in a park-and-ride lot at one or more of the I-39 interchange areas. The exact location(s) for a future lot has not been mapped, but the site should be identified before these interchange areas completely develop. The County and local governments may work with WisDOT on funding options for park-and-ride lot construction. One possible arrangement could have WisDOT entering into an agreement with a commercial business at one of the I-39 intersections to reserve some parking spaces for a park-and-ride arrangement.

Para-Transit

Continuation of adequate para-transit services are advised, particularly to serve the County's growing elderly population. Needs for access to adult education programs, such as through the regional technical colleges, might also be explored. The County will explore the following programs administered by WisDOT for transportation assistance for the elderly, disabled, and lower-income populations:

- *Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP).* This program provides education to individuals who provide transit service in rural areas. Scholarships for educational activities are available; however, they must be applied for a minimum of thirty days prior to the training or conference date.
- *County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance.* Assists with funding county elderly and disabled transportation programs. Marquette County received $130,961 from this program in 2014.
- *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program.* A funding program for the purchase of vehicles and operating assistance for organizations providing transportation to the elderly and disabled. This program provides grants that cover 80% of eligible costs.

Freight Rail

The County endorses continued use of the Union Pacific Railroad for freight rail transportation and as an economic development tool—particularly in the Village of Oxford where planned industrial expansion coincides with the rail line. The County also supports continued safety improvements to at-grade intersections with town and County roadways.

Trucking and Water Transportation

Local roads and highways should be properly maintained to accommodate truck traffic. Through this *Plan*, the County attempts to direct future land uses requiring intensive trucking activity close to major highways. **Truck routes should be designated** between major highways and existing industrial areas in the villages and city. Establishing weight limits may be appropriate on other local roads. Water transportation is not applicable to Marquette County, except for recreational purposes.

Air Transport

The County will continue to rely on the broader region to support air transportation needs.

7. Protect Rural Character Along Scenic Roadways

Further use of the State's **Rustic Road program** may help preserve and celebrate the County's rural heritage and advance tourism. To qualify for this program, a road:

- Should have outstanding natural features along its borders such as rugged terrain, native vegetation, native wildlife, or include open areas with agricultural vistas which singly or in combination uniquely set this road apart from other roads.
- Should be a lightly traveled local access road, one which serves the adjacent property owners and those wishing to travel by auto, bicycle, or hiking for purposes of recreational enjoyment of its rustic features.
- Should not be one scheduled nor anticipated for major improvements which would change its rustic characteristics.
- Should have, preferably, a minimum length of two miles and, where feasible, should provide a completed closure or loop, or connect to major highways at both ends of the route.

A Rustic Road may be a dirt, gravel or paved road. It may also have bicycle or hiking paths adjacent to or incorporated in the roadway area. The scenic qualities of these roads are protected by agreement with bordering property owners and by controlling roadside maintenance practices to facilitate wildflowers and other native flora. These designated roads have also been found to have a positive economic benefit for local communities. To apply for the program, interested town governments should initiate and circulate petitions among property owners along the roadway. Along with this petition, there are specific application materials that need to be submitted to WisDOT.

There is already one designated Rustic Road in Marquette County—in the Town of Buffalo. The County supports possible future nomination of the following roadways, if the individual community chooses to move forward with this initiative:

- Sunset Drive in the City of Montello;
- CTHs X and A in the Town of Douglas;
- CTH T in the Town of Moundville;
- CTH C to Montello;
- CTH D and K south of Buffalo Lake;
- CTH D to CTH F to Muir Park in the Town of Packwaukee.

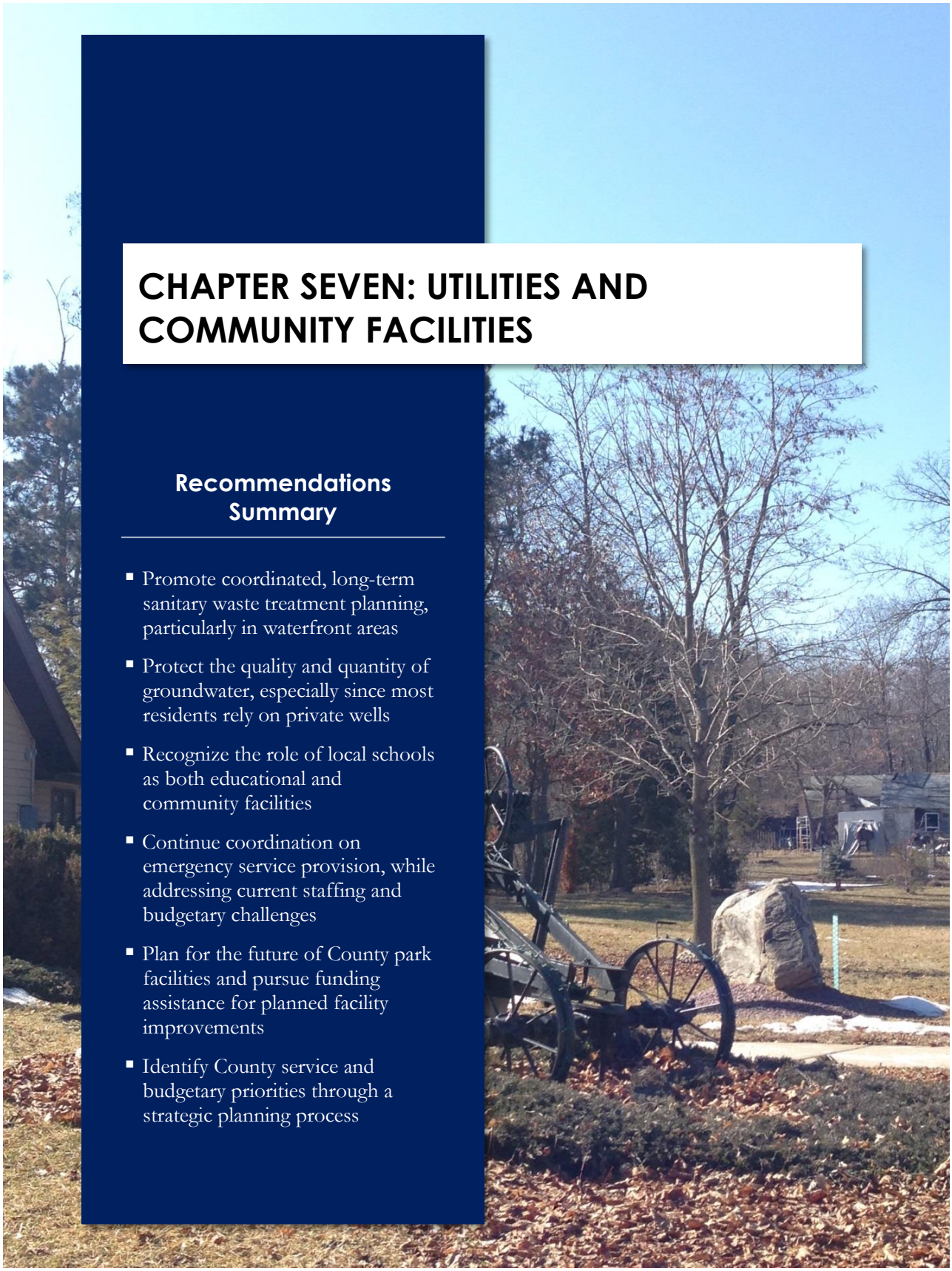
In addition to the Rustic Road program, there is an **opportunity for the County to designate and market scenic driving loops that showcase the County's unique natural and cultural resources**. One potential driving loop is formed by CTHs Y, E, N and STH 23 northeast from the City of Montello and southeast of the Village of Neshkoro. Other potential scenic driving routes include: Ember Lane,

Evergreen Lane and 11th Road in the Town of Harris; Duck Creek, Dove Lane, 19th Avenue, 22nd Street in the Town of Neshkoro.

In order to fully appreciate the beauty of Marquette County's rural roads they should be relatively clean of litter and debris. In coordination with WisDOT, Marquette County will pursue development of a **Countywide Adopt-A-Highway program**. The County could assist area groups with training and documentation necessary to complete the formal highway "adoption" process. The Adopt-A-Highway program has a dual purpose; volunteers not only help to create a litter free roadway, they can also develop a sense of community and stewardship for these shared resources.

Map 8: Existing and Planned Transportation and Community Facilities

Page intentionally left blank



CHAPTER SEVEN: UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Recommendations Summary

- Promote coordinated, long-term sanitary waste treatment planning, particularly in waterfront areas
- Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater, especially since most residents rely on private wells
- Recognize the role of local schools as both educational and community facilities
- Continue coordination on emergency service provision, while addressing current staffing and budgetary challenges
- Plan for the future of County park facilities and pursue funding assistance for planned facility improvements
- Identify County service and budgetary priorities through a strategic planning process

This chapter compiles background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs to guide the future maintenance and development of utilities and community facilities in Marquette County.

A. EXISTING UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. COUNTY FACILITIES

Marquette County's government offices operate out of several buildings, most located in the City of Montello.

The **County Courthouse,** located on West Park Street in central Montello, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The State's largest tree is located near the building's front lawn. The historic courthouse building includes administrative offices and court facilities. The modern Courthouse annex to its east includes the Sheriff's Office, County Dispatch Center, and Jail.

The County Service Center and Human Services Building are located along Underwood Avenue and Highway 23 on the west side of the City of Montello. The Service Center houses UW-Extension, Clinical Service, Veteran's Services and the EMS Department. The adjacent County Highway Department contains both administrative offices and garage and yard spaces. The Highway Department also maintains satellite facilities in the Villages of Neshkoro and Westfield, and a storage facility in Endeavor.

In 2014, Marquette County purchased an approximately 10-acre parcel in the City of Montello, adjacent to the County Service Center, Human Services and Highway Department facilities. Also in 2014, the County applied for and obtained a conditional use permit from the City of Montello, in the short-term to develop a private access road on the property from Highway C to facilitate emergency vehicle movement.

The County Land and Water Conservation Department is located in a building in the Westfield Business Park, in conjunction with other related agencies.

The County Fairgrounds occupies a 40-acre site in the southwestern portion of the Village of Westfield. Facilities include a softball diamond, horse racing track, a grandstand, restrooms, and several livestock and exposition buildings. The **County Fair** is held annually in July.

2. PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Marquette County owns 239 acres of land presently or potentially available for outdoor recreation. The County park system contains eight sites totaling 200 acres (with the County Fairgrounds making up the remaining acreage). A complete description of the County's park and recreation facilities is provided in the County's 2009 *Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

The County owns **seven public access points** on the County's major lakes and rivers. These access facilities range in size from a ½ acre boat launch on Tuttle Lake to 20 acres of riverfront access along the Mecan River.

John Muir Memorial Park is located on Highway F approximately eight miles south of the City of Montello. The 166-acre County Park is on the site of the boyhood home of the renowned American naturalist John Muir, who is widely recognized as the "Father of Our National Park System." Much of Muir's philosophy on conservation and land ethic was shaped by his youthful experiences on this land and Ennis (Muir) Lake, which is enclosed within the park's boundary. The Sierra Club, a private

environmental organization, is actively involved with efforts to simulate pre-settlement conditions in the park. A portion of which has been designated as a Wisconsin Scientific Area. The park is designated as a Wisconsin Scientific Area, State Natural Area and National Historic Landmark.

Marquette County has about **100 miles of snowmobile trails**. The County's network of interconnecting privately-maintained club trails are readily accessible to all portions of the County and link with trails of surrounding counties as part of a statewide system. Most of the public trails are on wintertime easements which cross private property. The public snowmobile trail system has a positive impact on the County's economy during the winter months. No public cross-country ski trails presently exist in the County. The Mecan River Lodge, located on STH 23, offers a private 15-kilometer trail, which is available for public use for a fee.

The County and area municipalities also have an **On-Road ATV Route** through the County. Located on existing roads, the ATV Route connects existing population centers and links to ATV routes and trails in adjoining counties. The Route is organized by the Marquette County ATV Club and is open annually from April 1st to October 31st.

Four towns in Marquette County have their own public parks. These include Firemen's Park and William Lange Park in the Town of Harrisville, the Ray Horton Memorial Field in the Town of Douglas (Briggsville), and a "downtown" park adjacent to the town hall in the Town of Packwaukee. The City of Montello and the four villages also provide parks systems to serve local residents.

3. Law Enforcement Services

The Marquette County **Sheriff's Office** serves as the primary law enforcement agency for town residents. The Office has 19 full-time law enforcement officials, including 13 patrol officers, three criminal investigators, a captain, a chief deputy, and the sheriff. Based on the County's 2014 population, the County provides approximately 1.3 officers per 1,000 people, which is less than the 2008 state ratio of 2.4 and the 2005 East Central Region ratio of 1.7.

The City and the villages provide their own policing services. The Village of Westfield has three full time police officers; the City of Montello has two full time officers; and the Villages of Neshkoro, Oxford, and Endeavor each employ law enforcement officers on a part-time basis.

In 2015, Marquette County was in the process of evaluating the establishment of a standalone "911" center. The County's current Dispatch Center is located within the jail, where officers are responsible for receiving "911" calls and dispatching emergency first responders, while also responding to inmate needs. A standalone "911" center would eliminate the need for officers to be dually trained and could lead to more efficient response to emergency calls.

4. Fire and Emergency Medical Services

There are **ten fire departments** in Marquette County (see Figure 7.1 for district boundaries). The Montello Fire Department is the largest department, serving residents in the city and town of Montello, and the towns of Buffalo, Packwaukee, and Shields.

As of 2015, Marquette County's Emergency Medical Service (EMS) was staffed with five full-time employees. The director of EMS and the Department's secretary work at the Services Center building in Montello.

Three full time emergency medical technicians (EMTs) serve as crew chiefs from ambulance facilities in Oxford, Montello, and Westfield, supported by 70 "on-call" volunteer EMTs. These "first-responders" provide a vital service to the County's rural population, providing emergency care from the rural areas to regional hospitals. **Call volume increased 11 percent** between 2006 and 2014, with 1,310 calls in 2014.

About two-thirds of Marquette County's EMS annual operating budget of nearly $800,000 comes from user fees (which are typically covered by Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, private pay and special service contracts), and the remaining third comes from property tax levies. This budget covers the five full time employees, modest compensations for on-call EMTs, equipment, and operating costs.

In 2007, first responder groups began operating from the Briggsville, Endeavor and Town of Springfield fire department facilities. The addition of these fire-based first responders improved response in areas without nearby ambulances.

Marquette County's older population demographic will likely continue to increase the demand for these services. A shortage of trained volunteer staff to provide emergency medical services to these areas was identified as a growing need during the planning process. At time of writing, the County's EMS Department was developing options for consideration to improve its services, including additional staffing scenarios and increased on-call EMT compensation.

Maps 9 and 10: Fire and Ambulance District Boundaries

5. Health Care and Child Care Services

The County has no major hospitals. The nearest hospital located in Portage. However, at time of writing, three medical clinics are located in Marquette County. Oxford Crossroads Clinic is located in the Town

of Oxford and provides primary care, laboratory, x-ray, acute care, and physical therapy services. Moundview Memorial Hospital and Clinics opened their Village of Westfield primary medical care clinic in 2014 and Community Health Network (CHN) operates a family medical clinic in the City of Montello.

The Marquette County Human Services Department currently provides its Mental Health, Personal Care, and Integrated Services programing through a contract with Northland Community Services, a private, for profit human service agency.

There are several day care and **childcare facilities** located in the County's urban areas.

6. SCHOOLS

Marquette County school-age children are served by **six public school districts**. The two largest are the **Montello** and **Westfield** districts. Others include the **Wisconsin Dells**, **Princeton**, **Portage**, and **Markesan** School Districts, with only the Portage district having schools in Marquette County (in Endeavor and Douglas). The boundaries of these school districts are shown on Map 1, in the Introduction and Summary to this *Plan*.

Figure 7.1: School District Enrollment, 2008-2014

	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Westfield School District	1,208	1,223	1,142	1,122	1,105	1,067
Montello School District	736	699	690	700	713	719

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2014

The **Westfield School District** serves 3,955 households and had a K-12 enrollment of 1,067 during the 2013/2014 school year. Enrollment declined 20% between 2002 and 2014. This district serves the villages of Westfield, Neshkoro and Oxford and the towns of Springfield, Newton, Westfield, Harris, Crystal Lake, Neshkoro, Oxford, and a portion of Douglas. It also serves Coloma in Waushara County. The Westfield School District has a high school and middle school, both located in the Village of Westfield. The District also has three elementary schools, in the villages of Westfield, Oxford, and Coloma. The former Neshkoro Elementary School closed in 2011 after 51 years of service. In its final year, it served just 62 students. The district also owns a 175-acre school forest.

Resurrection Lutheran School, a parochial K-8 school, is also located within the Village of Westfield.

The **Montello School District** serves 2,666 households and had a total K-12 enrollment of 719 students in the 2013/2014 school year. Enrollment decreased 17% between 2002 and 2014. The District serves students living in the City of Montello and the towns of Montello, Shields, Packwaukee and Buffalo. The District's only high school, middle school and elementary school are all located in the City of Montello. The High Marq Charter School is also part of the Montello School District. The Charter School serves students from 7th to 12th grade and is located in the City of Montello. The District's 120-acre school forest and interpretive nature trail, known as Hungary Hills, is located in the Town of Montello.

The City of Montello is also home to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran School, which provides K-8 parochial education.

Both the Westfield and Montello districts have faced declining enrollment and financial difficulties in recent years. In November 2010, residents in the Westfield and Montello School Districts voted on a referendum to decide whether the two districts should consolidate as an option to ease mounting pressures. The referendum did not pass in either district. In April 2015, the Montello School District conducted another referendum, asking voters for $2.9 million over three years to maintain instructional programs. That referendum also failed.

Most of Marquette County is located in the Madison Area Technical College district, with some of the northeastern part of the County served by Moraine Park Technical College district.

7. Libraries

There are **six libraries** in the County, located in the City of Montello, the villages of Endeavor, Neshkoro, Oxford and Westfield, and the Town of Packwaukee. Marquette County participates in the federated library system, which is designed to provide expanded library services to more people without making additional large expenditures. The County is part of the Winnefox Library System, which also includes Fond du Lac, Winnebago, Waushara, and Green Lake counties.

8. Water Supply

The **City of Montello has the only public water system** in the County, serving about 651 customers. The municipal system includes one water tower and two active wells that pumped, on average, 15 million gallons per day in 2005. Residents in the County's 14 towns and four villages all obtain their water supply from private wells. Chapter Two: Natural Resources provides more detailed information on the quantity and quality of Marquette County's groundwater supply.

9. Sanitary Sewer Service/Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Facilities (POWTS)

The City of Montello and the four villages (Endeavor, Neshkoro, Oxford and Westfield) all have municipal wastewater collection and treatment facilities. In addition, residents located within Sanitary District No. 1 in the central part of the Town of Packwaukee, on the north side of Buffalo Lake, are also served by public sanitary sewer service.

In other parts of the County's unincorporated areas, the disposal of domestic and commercial wastewater is handled through the use of **private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS)**. These on-site systems, often referred to as septic systems, generally discharge the wastewater to underground drainage fields.

As authorized under Section 59.70 of the Wisconsin Statutes, the County has adopted Chapter 74 of its Code of Ordinances to regulate the siting, design, installation, inspection and maintenance of all existing, new and replacement POWTS in the County. Installation of a POWTS requires a permit

Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) in Marquette County

Most POWTS in Marquette County include a gravity flow design, where waste flows from the house to the septic tank, and then from the tank into a soil absorption field. The wastewater is purified as it moves down through the soil and into the groundwater. Variations to this conventional design either add a lift pump and pump chamber to the system or incorporate a mound absorption area to increase soil depth for purification (called "mound systems"). A soil depth of at least three feet is needed to adequately purify the wastewater before it discharges into the groundwater.

Some areas in the County lack the required soil depth and/or drain field area for conventional systems. As a result, another common POWTS in Marquette County is a holding tank. A holding tank is typically made of metal or concrete with no outlet into the soil. The contents of the tank must be regularly pumped and transferred to a disposal facility or area per state statutory requirements. This type of system is particularly prevalent in lakefront development areas, and is allowed only as a "system of last resort" in the County. Holding tanks are only permitted as replacement systems and not for new construction.

Variations to the conventional gravity flow design have been developed as better solutions for these situations. These new designs employ chemical or biological agents to "break down" nitrates in the wastewater before it flows into the soil absorption field. These new designs are called advanced pre-treatment systems. These systems incorporate sand filters, re-circulating drainage pipes, or the application of a chemical or biological agent into the process.

Advanced pre-treatment systems require more detailed installation, monitoring, maintenance and repair procedures. Therefore, advanced pre-treatment systems are more expensive to build and operate than conventional systems. Because the wastewater is pre-treated before flowing into the soil absorption field, not as much soil depth is required to purify the wastewater in a properly functioning system. Still, according to some studies, a soil depth of at least two feet should be provided.

though the County Planning and Zoning Department. The standards used to implement Chapter 74 have been developed by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services and promulgated under Wisconsin Administrative Code DSPS 383.

10. Stormwater Management

Stormwater management has gained more attention statewide in recent years as an environmental concern due to flooding, property damage, and surface water quality issues. Many communities have stormwater management rules to control run-off, such as establishing maximum impervious surface ratios, requiring that the amount of run-off occurring after development is the same as before development, and setting minimum water quality standards. Controlling run-off during site grading and construction has been viewed as particularly important. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approval of construction site erosion control plans are required for all sites over 1 acre in area.

In rural areas, another method to address stormwater run-off concerns is through a drainage district. In Marquette County, there are three **drainage districts** overseen by commissions of appointed individuals. These districts can plan, operate, and maintain district-wide drainage and dam facilities; levy assessments against landowners who benefit from drainage; award damages to landowners injured by the construction of drainage facilities; make or recommend modifications to drainage district boundaries; and resolve drainage disputes.

11. Telecommunications

Three telephone companies serve most of Marquette County: Verizon North, Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative, and Century Tel.

Fiber optic lines for broadband internet access are provided in the City of Montello, the villages of Endeavor, Oxford, and Westfield and portions of the towns of Westfield, Oxford, Packwaukee, Moundville, and Douglas. Between 2010 and 2014, the **Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative laid over 500 miles of high-speed fiber optic cable**, expanding the Cooperative's service area by 54% and increasing connection speed.

Currently, there 15 **cell towers** located in Marquette County, most are sited along major highways and provide good 4G and 4G LTE service to much of the County. On some of these cell towers, the County's EMS added antennas to improve countywide emergency dispatch communication. Antennas were placed near the Westfield High School, near the Village of Neshkoro, and in the Town of Endeavor near Interstate 39.

In total, Marquette County's high-speed telecommunication access is a rarity among rural counties and an asset for future community development, as described in other chapters of this *Plan*.

12. Electric Generation and Power Distribution Systems

The County is served by **three electric power utilities**: Pioneer Power and Light (Westfield Electric), Alliant-Wisconsin Power and Light, and the Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative. There are four **hydropower electrical generating facilities** in Marquette County—in the City of Montello, Town of Harris, and Villages of Neshkoro and Oxford.

There are **three 69kV electric transmission lines** running north-south through the County, all operated by the American Transmission Company (ATC). These lines carry electric energy from power plants to local communities. The rights-of-way for the three lines in the County vary from a width of 40 feet to 100 feet. As of 2015, there were six substations within Marquette County.

13. Solid Waste Disposal Services and Sites/Recycling Facilities

According to a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) registry, there are **35 closed solid waste disposal (or landfill) sites** in Marquette County. None of these landfill sites are open or active. The location of these landfill sites and the state-required 1,200 foot setback for a private drinking well around each site are depicted on Map 7.

There are several solid waste and **recycling drop-off points** throughout the County, most located at town hall buildings or adjacent parks. The County adopted its *Recycling Plan* in 1991 to establish a framework for the development of an effective recycling program to serve the entire County.

14. CEMETERIES

There are several public and private cemeteries located throughout Marquette County. The locations of most of these sites are available from County plat books and town maps, as well as from the County Historic Society. The Internet also provides information on County cemeteries and genealogical records.

B. UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: Promote modern utilities, community facilities, and public services that meet expectations and manage expense

Objectives:

1. Coordinate community facilities and utility systems planning with land use, transportation, and natural resource planning.
2. Direct intensive development to areas where a full array of utilities, community facilities, and public services are available.
3. Provide the appropriate level of community services, administrative facilities and practices, while striving for a low tax levy.
4. Protect public and environmental health through proper waste disposal.
5. Provide quality and accessible parks and recreational facilities, areas, and services for all residents, including persons with disabilities and the elderly.
6. Protect the lives, property, and rights of all residents through law enforcement and fire services.
7. Support high quality educational opportunities for all residents.

Policies:

1. **Encourage compact and well-planned development areas,** so that community facilities and services (e.g., school bus routes, snow removal, police patrol) can be provided in a cost-effective manner.
2. **Promote and continue joint service agreements** as a means to consolidate and coordinate services among the County, towns, city, villages, and school districts to achieve better services and/or cost savings.
3. **Promote long-range sanitary sewer system planning** with cities, villages, and the appropriate towns to accommodate current and future development, and address problem areas with concentrations of failing septic systems.
4. **Continue to properly site and monitor private on-site wastewater treatment systems** to assure public health and groundwater quality.
5. **Follow the recommendations of the County's updated Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan** when making park acquisition and development decisions.
6. **Partner on planning efforts for motorized recreational trail development** and maintenance (e.g., snowmobile, ATVs).
7. **Promote greater public access to lakes and streams** by maintaining and improving existing access points and securing new public access points as land is subdivided next to water bodies.

8. Encourage efforts to **retain and improve community schools and educational services** directed to educating the County's youth and providing continuing education and training to adults.
9. **Help coordinate and support local emergency services and facilities** (e.g., police, fire, and rescue/EMS) through adequate funding, training, facilities, and equipment.
10. **Coordinate rural addressing**, road naming, and driveway construction to ensure safe and adequate emergency response services.
11. **Analyze the efficient provision of County services and facility needs,** through the Strategic Planning process.
12. Conduct detailed studies on potential **service delivery adjustments for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and Human Services.**
13. Continue to encourage telecommunication companies to provide **high-speed telecommunication services** in the County, seek grants where possible (see sidebar), and market these services as a real asset for a rural county.
14. Support local communities in efforts to improve and/or expand on **facilities for solid waste disposal and recycling,** including promoting joint service agreements for these services.
15. Continue to require construction **site erosion control and ongoing stormwater management** for subdivisions and other larger projects.
16. **Stay informed on any plans for the American Transmission Company (ATC) related to the location of power lines and/or substations in the County.** Promotes corridor sharing or the use of existing transmission line right-of–way for other facilities. Corridor sharing reduced impacts by locating linear land uses (roads, pipelines, power lines, trails) together, and minimizes the amount of land affected by new easements.
17. Encourage the provision of new **and improved services and facilities geared to the growing elderly population**.

Promising High-Speed Internet Expansion Grants

- *PSC Broadband Expansion Grants.* Administered by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to improve broadband communication facilities, targeted to underserved areas.
- *Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Grants.* Supports community development efforts and provide financial incentives for shovel-ready projects. Grant recipients must demonstrate significant, measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values, and/or leveraged investment by local and private partners.
- *Community Development Block Grant.* Offers both public facilities and economic development grants, which can be leveraged to support infrastructure and facility projects.
- *USDA Community Connect Grants.* Offers grants to fund acquisition or leasing of facilities to serve residences and businesses, as well as community access points.

C. Utilities and Community Facilities Programs and Recommendations

Expanding on the policies listed above, Marquette County recommends the following programs:

1. Promote Joint Service Agreements With and Between Local Governments

In the County's rural areas, the key public services provided to town residents and property owners include public education and school busing, police and fire protection, emergency medical service, road maintenance, recycling, and snow removal. Most towns have agreements with the County to provide road maintenance and snow removal services. Local governments and school districts should **explore or extend joint service agreements where consolidating and coordinating services can result in cost savings, better services, or both.** These types of agreements are particularly important in the current

era of diminishing government financial resources. The County can play an active role in promoting these agreements.

2. Facilitate Municipal Election Equipment Planning and Election Worker Training

Marquette County is well positioned to facilitate election equipment planning and election worker training within the County. In particular, the Marquette County Clerk's Office intends to assist local municipalities as new technologies and processes are incorporated into the election process. This may include:

- *Continue Municipal Clerk and Election Officer Training*. One new service may be education regarding recent changes in State law requiring voters to provide identification prior to obtaining a ballot.
- *Coordinate with the Government Accountability Board*. Marquette County will continue to coordinate education and training opportunities with the State of Wisconsin Government Accountability Board and ensure information from the State is timely disseminated to area municipalities in a timely manner.
- *Seek Efficiencies in Election Related Purchases*. New voting technologies can be a significant cost to area municipalities. Marquette County will attempt to coordinate large purchases of election materials and equipment among towns, villages, and the City to reduce cost and provide a consistent voting experience throughout the County.

3. Properly Site and Monitor Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS)

Other than the unincorporated Village of Packwaukee, which has a centralized wastewater treatment system, development of property within Marquette County's towns requires the use of a POWTS, more commonly known as a septic system, to treat wastewater.

In the past 10 years….

Marquette County has included all of the Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) on the County's maintenance program. Between 2011 and 2014, 65% of the POWTS in Marquette County were added to the County's POWTS maintenance program, ensuring that these systems were functioning in a safe and proper manner.

In response to a change in State law, the County implemented a **Countywide POWTS maintenance program** in April 2011. As part of the maintenance program, property owners are mailed a POWTS maintenance notice every three years. The maintenance program requires that the property owner contract with a septic service provider to have the system inspected and serviced by a specific due date. The service provider inspects, pumps the septic system and reports the results of the inspection to the County via an on line reporting system. The reporting platform has a series of questions regarding the condition of the system that must be answered by the service provider. Between April 2011 and April 2015, approximately 8,000 notices were mailed to property owners. While the vast majority of the systems have passed inspections, 142 inspections over that period resulted in failure notices being sent and replacement systems installed. The major cause of system failure has been old steel tanks that are either collapsed or leaking, with many of the failed systems being located on waterfront properties serving older cottages and cabins.

Replacing a POWTS can be a significant expense for a property owner and to provide assistance to lower income residents the County participates in the **Wisconsin Fund Grant Program**. In addition to the Wisconsin Fund other financial assistance is potentially available through the USDA Rural Housing Program. The County will continue active administration of its POWTS maintenance program, and will link homeowners to the Wisconsin Fund where necessary.

The 2005 *Comprehensive Plan* suggested an assertive program of sanitary sewer extensions, creation of new sanitary/utility districts, and encouragement of group replacement systems to address failing septic systems and improve water quality. These approaches were not carried out, however, based on the associated public expense and the fact that septic failures have not occurred en masse at any one location.

While the County supports expansion of public sewer where feasible, the main orientation has now changed to making sure that POWTS are operating properly and replaced where necessary.

4. Assure a High-Quality and Abundant Supply of Drinking Water

Both municipal and private wells draw water from the upper aquifer, which can be susceptible to contamination. Therefore, Marquette County, working with local towns, villages and cities, will consider the following steps to protect groundwater resources.

Designate Municipal Wellhead Protection Areas
Many communities have taken proactive steps to reducing the potential for contamination in their water supply by preparing a wellhead protection plan. This type of plan identifies the recharge area for the municipal well, inventories the potential contamination sources within that area and recommends steps to protect the recharge area from well contamination. The City of Montello should consider pursuing the designation and protection of a "wellhead protection area" for its two municipal water wells, and to the extent those areas extend into the Town of Montello, the County will consider adopting appropriate zoning regulations.

Minimize Groundwater Contamination in Concentrated Development Areas Utilizing Private Wells
Strategies to minimize groundwater contamination in dense areas include:

- Identify the land area that contributes recharge (through infiltration) to the private wells. This recharge area can allow contaminates to enter the subsurface. If an underground storage tank or a landfill leaks contaminants into the ground within the recharge area, these contaminants could reach private wells.
- Limit and closely monitor the types of land uses and activities within a recharge area that could create potential groundwater contaminants, such as chemical storage facilities, road salt usage and storage, animal feedlots, fertilizer and pesticide use, septic tanks and drain fields, underground storage tanks, underground pipelines and sewers, landfills, and quarries. This may be done through County or local zoning.
- Refer to the County's Disaster Plan for addressing accidental spills. Wisconsin statutes require that spills of hazardous materials be immediately reported and cleaned.

Minimize Groundwater Contamination in Rural Areas Utilizing Private Wells
Strategies to minimize groundwater contamination in more scattered rural areas include:

- Limit intensive development. There is a low probability of groundwater pollution associated with on-site waste treatment systems where overall housing densities in an area are less than one house per two acres.
- Minimize impervious surfaces (e.g., rooftops, paved areas) and promote water infiltration (e.g., stormwater basins) in groundwater recharge areas.
- Direct residential development using private wells away from all landfills (1,200 foot radius).
- Work with the State and local governments in cleaning up contaminated sites.

- Work with local governments to limit the use of salt on roads, and locate and manage snow and salt storage areas to avoid groundwater and stream pollution.
- Work with farmers to manage the use of fertilizers and manure.

5. UPDATE THE COUNTY'S OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

The County adopted a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) in 2009 to guide maintenance and improvement of County park and recreational facilities. A State-approved CORP, updated once every five years, also assures that the County maintains eligibility for State funding for additional parkland acquisition, or for park improvements through the State's Stewardship Grant program or the State-administered Federal Land and Water Conservation (LAWCON) program. At time of writing, the County was in the process of preparing a five-year update to its CORP.

This *Comprehensive Plan* lists general recommendations for County-owned recreational facilities, generally building off of recommendations in the County's *Outdoor Recreation Plan* (2009–2013) that have yet to be undertaken. Potential priorities for a new CORP include the following:

- Take more active steps toward marketing the **County's historic and cultural resources and sites**, such as the **quarries** of Montello, the legacy of John Muir, and the early exploration of the Fox River.
- **Develop master plans for the larger County owned recreational facilities**, including John Muir County Park. Each park master plan would allow the County to identify and communicate planned park improvements to area recreationalists and assist in preparing future funding requests.

- Enhance facilities at **John Muir County Park** to encourage greater use, including an educational center with flush toilets and potable water; a repaired building, and resurfaced walkways and entrance drive. Showcase the park as a key segment of the **Ice Age Trail**, working with the trail's local chapter.
- Collaborate with the effort to **map and develop the Fox Wisconsin Heritage Parkway**, including identification of potential day trips along the Parkway and designation of a bike route along both sides of the Upper Fox River.
- Repair and replace the boat landing on Turtle Lake.
- Work closely with WisDNR and other public landholders to provide multiple use facilities such as **hiking, nature study, bird watching,** cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting, and fishing on County and state-owned lands where multiple uses are appropriate and environmentally sound.
- Identify feasible locations and funding sources to develop and maintain a public **cross-country ski and snowshoeing** area or routes.
- Improve the Moon Lake access point by installing gravel, completing building repairs and replacing the existing dock.

6. Partner on Planning for Motorized Recreational Trails

Snowmobiling is an important winter recreational and economic activity in Marquette County. The County will continue to work with local snowmobile clubs to maintain these facilities. The County will also apply for Snowmobile Trail Aids from WisDNR. These funds are available to provide a statewide system of well-signed and well-groomed snowmobile trails. Eligible projects include trail maintenance such as signing, brushing, and grooming; purchase of liability insurance; development of snowmobile bridges; acquisition of short-term easements; and trail development. Counties are the only unit of government eligible to apply for these aids. The County Sheriff's Office may also apply for funds available for snowmobile enforcement patrols. The Marquette County ATV Club has established an on-road ATV route through the County. The County will continue to coordinate motorized trail planning with the ATV Club and support their efforts to promote and expand ATV/UTV use within the County.

7. Promote Greater Public Access to Lakes and Streams

The County intends to **work with local communities and lake organizations to identify, upgrade and improve lake and stream access points for both local residents and visitors.** The County's 2009 *Outdoor Recreation Plan* identified general improvements needed for County-owned boat access areas. Suggested improvements included expanding parking areas, repairing boat ramp docks and planks, resurfacing or grading boat launching ramps, and improving signage identifying the public access points. The County will also monitor any decisions involving river impoundment drawdowns that can affect lake access (see Chapter Two for recommendations and strategies related to this issue).

State-owned access points throughout the County should also be maintained. Map 7 shows **Potential Recreation Expansion Areas** identified by WisDNR as foreseeable expansions of state-owned parks, fishery areas, wildlife areas, or similar resource areas. It is WisDNR's policy to purchase lands within the expansion areas only from willing landowners. These expansion areas may provide a means to provide greater public access to area streams and rivers.

8. Retain and Improve Community Schools and Educational Services

The County's two main school districts—Westfield and Montello—have confronted declining enrollment and funding over the past decade or two. This should be a major concern for all of Marquette County, as a vicious cycle may result. It is increasingly difficult to retain and attract young families, businesses and other desirable economic development without healthy local schools. In addition, local schools are important to community identity. Schools serve to define a community's character and result in a sense of pride and optimism. Integrating social and community activities into schools serves a variety of groups in a community.

Endeavor Elementary School Gains Statewide Recognition

In early 2015, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction nominated Endeavor Elementary School for the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program. Endeavor Elementary was one of only eight schools nominated Statewide for this national program recognizing excellence in public education. Siting it as an "exemplary achievement gap closing" school, Endeavor Elementary could become one of 7,500 schools recognized nationwide, demonstrating the quality education rural schools provide in Marquette County.

While County government is not directly involved in public education, maintaining primary and secondary education is critical to the County's future. Therefore, the County encourages appropriate investment in local schools, districts, and primary and secondary education.

The County also advises partnerships between educational institutions, local businesses, and governments to retain younger workers in Marquette County. In particular, the **Madison Area Technical College should have a greater presence in Marquette County** and direct its programs to verified training needs of local workers and businesses.

The County, local governments, and the County's Economic Development Corporation could work to promote the provision of childcare services within businesses and near job centers. The Economic Development Corporation could assist in facilitating joint day care by multiple businesses. Exploring means to provide access to adult education opportunities is also a consideration.

9. Evaluate the Organizational Structure of the Marquette County Food Bank

The Marquette County Department of Human Services currently operates the Marquette County Care and Share Food Bank. The Montello based Food Bank provides food to income eligible individuals following an application process. The Care and Share Food Bank has had difficulty receiving donations due its status within the County. Marquette County will evaluate the best options for the future sustainability of the Food Bank, including designation of a Food Bank Coordinator and formation of a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

10. Plan for the Future of Emergency Medical Service

Marquette County's Emergency Medical Services Department provides ambulance and emergency care to all County residents. It has become increasingly difficult to maintain an emergency medical service staffed primarily by EMT with modest compensation. Challenges have included:

- Addressing the increased needs of retirees and the elderly—the County's fastest growing demographic.
- Responding to modest population, tourist, and traffic growth in the County.
- Increases in State training and continuing education requirements.
- Modest compensation for EMTs makes recruitment and retention difficult.
- Longer response times, resulting from limited volunteer availability within close proximity to where ambulances are stored.

In short, the long-term viability of maintaining a mostly volunteer emergency medical service is in question. Marquette County is not alone in facing this issue. In October 2014, the Dells-Delton EMS Board voted to transition to a full time paramedic based staffing model and in 2013 Waushara County obtained a consultant to prepare an EMS Assessment.

Marquette County intends to pursue an assessment to help determine the best way to provide emergency medical service going forward. This assessment may be a component of the County's strategic planning process proposed later in this chapter, or a stand-alone study. Such an assessment may include the following components:

- *Establish a Baseline Mobilization and Response Time.* The assessment would include a target mobilization and response time to guide discussion and frame future possibilities. Mobilization time represents the interval between when the Public Safety Answering Center receives a call for emergency aid and when the EMS unit starts heading to the emergency, and response time represents the interval between the call and the response on the scene. Currently, mobilization time averages 8.3 minutes within Marquette County. Through its 2013 assessment, Waushara County established a 20 minute response time goal for 90% of calls. Currently, Marquette County's response times were under 20 minutes for 74.8% of the calls.

- *Identify Challenges and Gaps with Current System.* This may include a survey of other rural areas providing similar services, interviews with existing and prior EMTs, and other techniques.
- *Explore Different Scenarios for Future Service.* The assessment could establish a range of possible future models or scenarios for delivering emergency medical service in Marquette County, including a comparison of relative costs, advantages, and disadvantages. These would include retaining the current model, and transitioning to a full time paid staffing model. Under such a transition model, the assessment could explore options that would have EMTs continuing to respond from their private residences; EMTs housed at and responding from current sites in Montello, Westfield and Oxford; and EMTs responding from some type of single central facility.
- *Advise Future Organization, Staffing, and Facility Needs and Recommendations.* From among the options, the assessment may advise a long term organizational, staffing, and facility plan for emergency medical service within Marquette County. The actual direction taken would be subject to County Board approval.

11. Undertake a Strategic Planning Process Focused on County Services

Through the 2015 *Comprehensive Plan* update process, several County department heads recommended that the County create a process to determine and prioritize the provision of County services. Marquette County intends to **complete a strategic plan** with that as a focus.

Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is and what it does. A strategic plan focuses on organization dynamics and typically identifies a handful strategic issues and provides strategies to address them. At the County government level, a strategic plan can help shape budgetary, staffing, facility, and legislative policy. The plan should be based on the County's mission (see right sidebar), core values, and stakeholder and taxpayer needs.

> ***Marquette County Board Mission Statement***
>
> To provide solution oriented services to the members of our public through the application of professional skills, adopted plans, and standards which facilitate the growth of the local economy and improve the quality of life. To preserve the natural environment, beauty and historical values of our County while enjoying the benefits of a safe, healthy citizenry for the current and future generations as we uphold our oath of office.

Based on information provided by the University of Wisconsin-Extension, the following are the recommended stages for a Marquette County Strategic Plan:

- *Commence "Pre-Planning."* The County would first establish a steering committee. The committee could be comprised of the County Board Chair, Committee chairs, or other Board members, along with County department heads. At this stage, the steering committee would establish a project schedule, identify key stakeholders and planning participants, and articulate process goals.
- *Uncover Existing Conditions and Mandates.* Existing conditions are analyzed. Many of these are already discussed within this *Comprehensive Plan*. Official and informal mandates should be differentiated. Official mandates are actions and programs the County is required by law to conduct. Informal mandates are programs and activities Marquette County residents expect the County to perform. For example, a gravel road surface for a County highway might be legal, but may not meet the expectations of Marquette County residents.
- *Analyze Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats (SWOTs).* Such an analysis includes review of internal assets and liabilities (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors that may positively or negatively affect the organizations (opportunities and threats). Many of the SWOTs identified within this *Comprehensive Plan*, such as in Chapter Nine: Economic Development, can be incorporated into a more formal SWOT analysis.
- *Develop Mission, Vision, and Values.* The County may examine modifying the existing County Board mission statement to encompass all County operations, and to minimize overlap with a vision

statement. The vision statement included in Chapter One: Issues and Opportunities could be used or modified. In any case, a vision statement should be forward looking, inspirational, and ambitious. Establishing a set of values that describe the manner in which County government will behave as it works towards accomplishing the identified mission and vision is important. This stage would benefit from involvement from the full County Board.

- *Conduct Department Needs Analysis.* County department heads, with input from their home committees, would complete a survey describing the history, current conditions, and future needs of the Department. Future needs would be evaluated relative to the County's mission, vision, and values. The survey could include a summary of the department's history; a description of current conditions (e.g., staffing, facilities, space); an inventory of functions the department performs including mandatory versus discretionary functions; the department's mission, values, and priorities; minimum service levels and quantifiable performance measures; and future facility, space, and staffing needs.
- *Identify Strategic Issues and Initiatives.* For each of a handful of strategic issues, a handful of initiatives to address or answer the strategic issue are developed. One strategic issue perhaps should be, "How do we best organize County services to respond to County needs? An initiative addressing this issue may include developing a master plan for the future development of the 10-acre site acquired in 2014 near the County Service Center and Highway Department building to guide future development of the site.
- *Finalize Strategic Plan Report and Execute.* The steering committee would create a strategic plan report for the Marquette County Board. The Board would be asked to adopt the strategic plan. Next, annual budgets, improvement programs, department organization, facility changes, and other steps could be undertaking according to the plan.

12. Address County Facility, Space, and Equipment Needs

Wisconsin Statutes require that each comprehensive plan "shall include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new utilities and facilities." County department heads were asked in Winter 2015 to submit suggested capital improvements and planning programs.

The **priority County projects and capital improvements are included in Figure 7.2**. The capital improvement recommendations are intended to promote efficient delivery of services and provide "one-stop-shopping" for users. The strategic planning process described above may result in changes to the activities described in this figure and throughout Chapter Seven. Following adoption of this *Comprehensive Plan* and that strategic planning process, the County intends to establish a three- to six-year capital improvement program including these types of items. Budgetary constraints and other unforeseen circumstances may affect the timeframe for making the proposed improvements.

In the past 10 years…

Marquette County has made numerous and substantial improvements to County facilities, including:

- Improved systems, structure, energy efficiency, and storage at the County Highway Department's Montello, Westfield, and Neshkoro shops
- Constructed new buildings for the County's Health and Human Services Departments
- Developed a County information technology center in vacated space at the Courthouse building

Figure 7.2: Timetable to Improve or Enhance County Facilities (multipage figure)

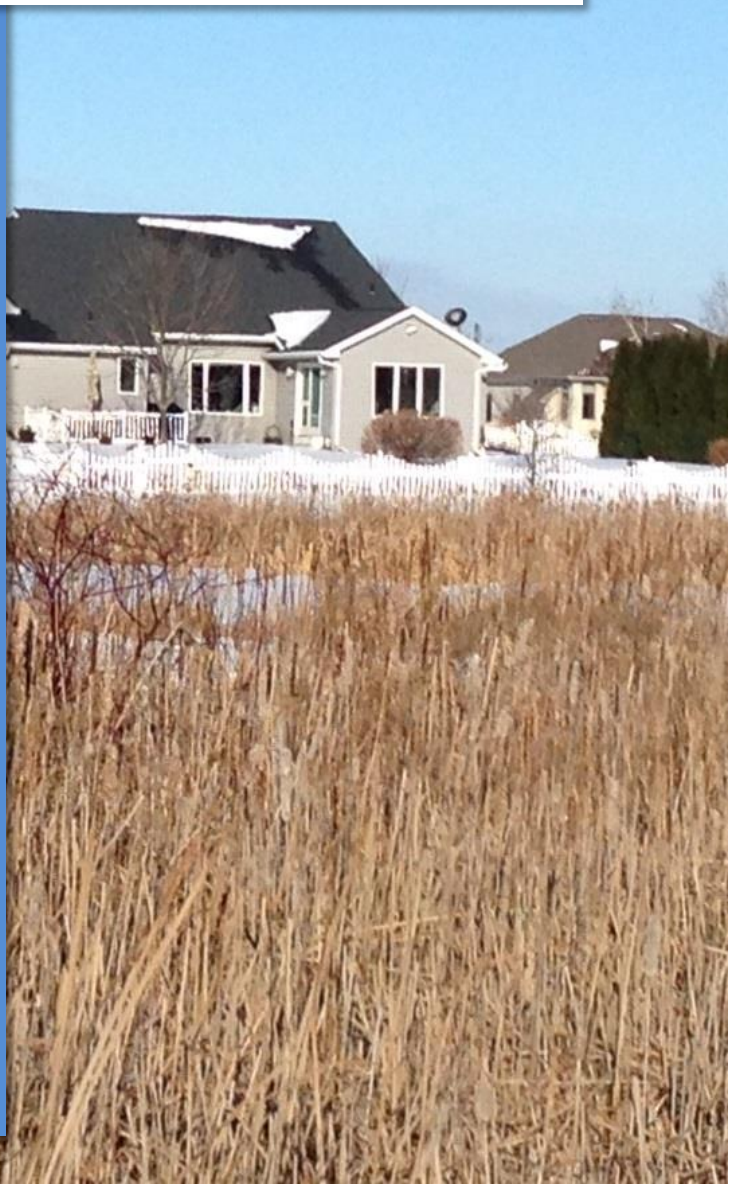
Utility or Facility	Responsibility (County Agency)	Recommended Program or Action	Timeframe for Improvements
Water Supply	Zoning; Land and Water Conservation; Lake Districts	Monitor water supply, potential sources of contamination, or other threats to water supply	Ongoing
	WisDNR, Land and Water Conservation	Identify groundwater recharge areas and communicate this information to local governments and the Zoning Department to inform land use decisions	2016 - 2018
	Zoning; Land and Water Conservation	Encourage the City of Montello to adopt wellhead protection plans for its municipal well	2016
On-Site Wastewater Treatment Technology	County Zoning	Continue to implement the POWTS Maintenance Program and promote the Wisconsin Fund to help replace or repair failing septic systems	Ongoing
Solid Waste Disposal	County Zoning	All landfills in the County are closed. The County's solid waste disposal service should meet forecasted needs over the planning period	N/A
Stormwater Management	Zoning, City, Villages, Land and Water Conservation Department	Ensure that on-site erosion control and stormwater management practices are being complied with as local development occurs	Ongoing
County Highway Department Facilities	Highway	Develop a County Road Maintenance Program to inventory County Trunk Highways, and identify and prioritize necessary improvements	2016 – 2017
	Highway	Pursue improvements to Endeavor shop, including insulation and siding	2016 – 2017
County Administrative and Department Offices	Administration, UW-Extension	Coordinate strategic planning process	2016 – 2018
	Administration	Pending result of strategic planning process, coordinate completion of a master plan for the future development of the 10-acre site in Montello acquired in 2014	2018 - 2019
	Administration/Property	Complete Courthouse HVAC duct project	2016 - 2020
	Administration/ Property	Replace Courthouse windows	2016 - 2020
	Administration/ Property	Replace Courthouse basement HVAC roof	2016 - 2020

Utility or Facility	Responsibility (County Agency)	Recommended Program or Action	Timeframe for Improvements
	Administration/ Property	Replace Courthouse roof	2020 - 2025
	Property	Construct new maintenance garage	2020 - 2025
	Property	Demolition of old jail	2020
County Courthouse	Property	Remodel courtroom, including technology systems	2015 - 2020
Recycling	Land and Water Conservation	The County's recycling efforts should meet forecasted needs over the planning period	Ongoing
Law Enforcement	Sheriff	Improve detective office in basement, and building heating and cooling system controls of Public Service Building	2016 – 2017
	Sheriff	Evaluate the emergency call response process and the need for dually trained dispatch/jail staff	2015
	Sheriff	Conduct a space needs assessment for the Sheriff's Office	2016 - 2017
	Sheriff/Property	Replace Public Service Building roof	2016 - 2020
	Sheriff/Property	Improve/build cold storage	2020 - 2025
Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services	Administration/ Marquette County EMS	Joint fire services are sufficient to meet current and forecasted needs, occasional equipment upgrades and agreement renegotiation will be needed	Ongoing
	Administration/ Marquette County EMS	Conduct an EMS assessment to determine how to cost efficiently and safely provide EMS in the County including any needs for new facilities.	2016 – 2017
Medical and Health Care Facilities	N/A	Area medical facilities in the region appear to meet needs. Beyond Health Department functions, County will not play active role in providing medical services	Ongoing
	Human Services	Conduct study to explore the best method of health and human services delivery to County residents	2016 – 2017
Libraries	N/A	County libraries meet current and forecasted needs of residents, with minor upgrades and maintenance likely over the planning period. Future expansions to the Neshkoro Library may be desired.	Ongoing

Utility or Facility	Responsibility (County Agency)	Recommended Program or Action	Timeframe for Improvements
Schools	Administration	Work with the two School Districts on maintaining school facilities and viability; support continued and expanded primary, secondary, and technical education in the County.	Ongoing
Child Care Facilities	N/A	Area childcare facilities projected to meet needs over the planning period. County will not play an active role in providing child care services, except perhaps to promote more private care facilities.	2015 - 2035
Park & Recreation Facilities	Parks and Rural Planning Committee, Land Conservation	Prepare an update to County's 2009 Outdoor Recreation Plan	2015 and 2020
Telecommunication Facilities	Administration, Highway	When roadway improvements are conducted, work with the State and local governments to ensure fiber optic cables are laid. Continue to support expansion of high-speed internet service in County as quality of life, education, and economic development tool.	Ongoing
Cemeteries	N/A	There are several cemeteries located throughout the County. Any needed future sites or expansions will likely be handled by private entities.	Ongoing

Page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER EIGHT: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT



Recommendations Summary

- Provide enough land to meet forecasted housing demand, while retaining rural and small town character
- Accommodate affordable housing of various types and costs for all ages, income levels, and special needs
- Work with municipalities and home builders to increase the supply of new housing and neighborhoods that will appeal to families
- Encourage creative designs for new neighborhoods, including traditional and conservation neighborhood design

This chapter contains a compilation of background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs aimed at providing an adequate and attractive supply of housing for Marquette County.

A. EXISTING HOUSING FRAMEWORK

1. HOUSING TYPE AND OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

According to 2012 American Community Survey data, there were 9,876 housing units in Marquette County. As shown in Figure 8.1, the **County's housing stock is predominately single-family homes** (83%). This proportion of single family homes is significantly higher than the East Central Region's housing stock (77%) and the statewide figure (67%). Marquette County had a comparable number of multifamily units (3%) to Waushara, Green Lake, and Adams Counties, and the second largest share of mobile homes, trailers and other units (11%) in the East Central Region.

Figure 8.1 describes the County's historic median age and household size information. The County's age has been rising steadily since 1980 while average household size has decreased, mirroring trends also occurring at the State level.

Figure 8.1: Marquette County Historic Age and Household Trends, 1970-2010

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Median Age	37.5	36.1	39.1	40.9	48.0
Average Household Size	2.70	2.65	2.52	2.41	2.32

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

According to State Department of Administration (DOA) estimates, the County added about 120 new units per year in the early 2000s. The economic recession of the late 2000s to early 2010s significantly slowed housing growth. Between the 2010 Census and 2013, the DOA estimates that the County added an average of fewer than 20 new housing units per year. Chapter Five: Land Use contains additional trends on recent housing unit growth.

Figure 8.2: Housing by Type, Marquette County, 2000-2012

Units per Structure	2000 Housing Units	2000 % of Total	2012 Housing Units	2012 % of Total
Single Family	6,832	79%	8,231	83%
Two Family (Duplex)	157	2%	164	2%
Multi-Family	279	3%	536	5%
Mobile Home	1,396	16%	1,100	11%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

Figure 8.3 compares 2010 housing stock characteristics for Marquette County with the region and State. **Over a quarter of the County's housing stock is classified as "seasonal"** by the U.S. Census. Seasonal units are intended for use only in certain seasons or for weekend or other occasional use throughout the year. They include cottages, cabins, time-share units, and temporary housing for migrant workers. Seasonal units comprised the largest share of vacant units in the State, region, and the County. The **median value of an owner-occupied home in the County nearly doubled** from 2000 ($87,000) to 2012 ($145,100). About 44% of the County's housing stock in 2010 was valued in the $50,000 to $149,000 price range.

Figure 8.3: Comparison of Housing Stock Characteristics, 2010

	Marquette County	Wisconsin
Total Housing Units	9,896	2,633,330
Occupancy Rate	66.14%	86.9%
% Vacant (Homeowner)	3.8%	2.2%
% Vacant (Rental)	7.9%	8.0%
% Seasonal	27.8%	7.4%
% Owner Occupied	81.0%	68.1%
Median Value of Owner Occupied Housing	$145,100	$169,000

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2010

2. HOUSEHOLD TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Figure 8.4 compares selected household characteristics for Marquette County with surrounding counties and the State. Marquette County's average household size was lower than the State and surrounding counties, with the exception of Adams County. As depicted in Figure 8.1 above, the County's average household size has steadily decreased over the past thirty years. The percent of households occupied by a single resident in the County was comparable to neighboring counties.

Figure 8.4: Household Characteristic Comparisons, 2010

	Total Housing Units	Total Households	Average Household Size	% Single-person Household
Marquette County	**9,896**	**6,571**	**2.32**	**27.3**
Green Lake County	10,616	7,919	2.38	29.0
Waushara County	14,843	9,949	2.34	27.5
Adams County	17,436	8,666	2.24	27.7
Columbia County	22,735	26,137	2.43	26.0
Wisconsin	2,624,358	2,279,768	2.43	28.2

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2010

As presented in Figure 8.5, DOA projects an increase of total number of households and household population while average household size decreasing. It is likely that the projected decrease in average household size is due to the County's aging population and increasing median age. The projected average household size is used to estimate the future number of housing units needed in Marquette County during the 20-year planning period.

Figure 8.5: Household Population and Size Projections, 2010-2040

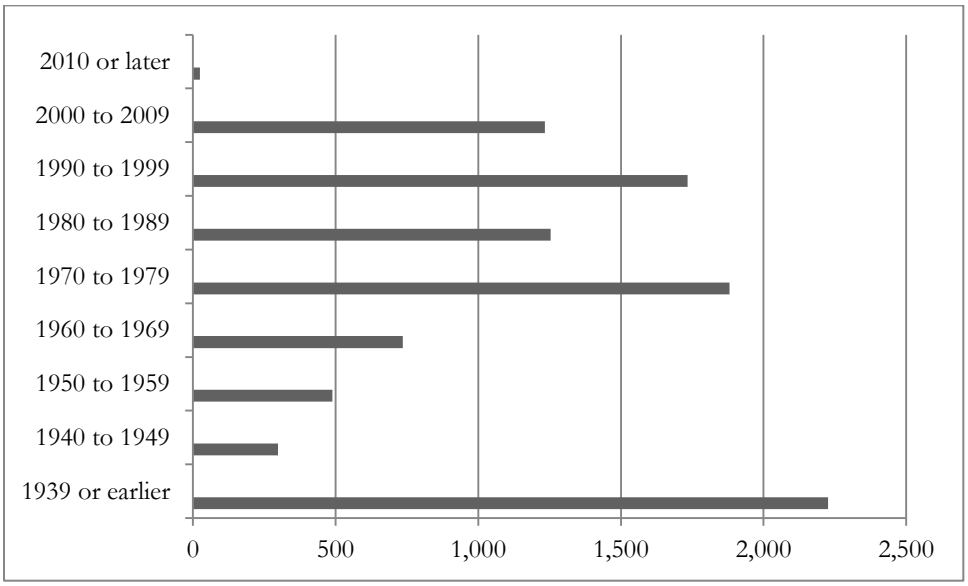
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Households	6,571	7,073	7,331	7,769	8,058	8,202	8,219
Household Population	15,251	15,844	16,155	16,792	17,127	17,077	16,754
Average Household Size	2.33	2.24	2.21	2.16	2.13	2.08	2.04

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration, 2014

3. Housing Age and Structural Characteristics

The overall condition of housing in Marquette County can be generally assessed through American Community Survey data, including structural age, presence of complete plumbing facilities, and overcrowding. Figure 8.6 illustrates the age of the County's housing stock. The County experienced its highest building rate during the 1970s–which parallels the County's biggest growth spurt in population. About 30% of the County's homes were built before 1959. These homes will show signs of wear over the 20-year planning period, which could increase the overall interest in housing rehabilitation resources.

Figure 8.6: Age of Housing in Marquette County



In 2012, the proportion of occupied housing units that lacked complete kitchen or bathroom facilities was just 1%. Only 1% of all housing units in the County were considered "overcrowded;" overcrowding is defined as units with more than one person per room. About 1.7% of units in the State were overcrowded. The percentage of overcrowded housing units has been decreasing at the State and County levels.

4. Housing Needs Analysis

Throughout Marquette County, several governmental, private and nonprofit agencies provide assistance to meet the needs of individuals who lack adequate housing due to financial difficulties, disabilities, age, domestic violence situations, or drug abuse problems. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Low Income Housing Tax Credit Database, there were **124 federally assisted rental units** in the County in 2012 (up from 116 in 1999).

Housing affordability may be measured by the percentage of household income spent on rent or home ownership costs. The national standard for determining whether rent or home ownership costs comprise a disproportionate share of income is set at 30% of gross household income. Households spending more

than 30% of their income for housing may be at greater risk of losing their housing should they be confronted with unemployment, unexpected bills, or other unexpected events. According to the 2013 American Community Survey, **one third (33.3%) of homeowners in Marquette County were paying 30% or more of their income for housing**, which was the highest rate in the East Central Region (averaging 17.7%) and higher than the State average of 32.7%. The percentage of renters in Marquette County paying a disproportionate share of their income for housing was 36.6%, which was lower than the State average.

Data from the Wisconsin Realtors Association provides further insight to the condition of the housing market in the County. Figure 8.7 details the median sale price and number of homes sold in the seven year period between 2007 and 2013. Home sales fell sharply in 2008 and remained low, increasing slightly in 2012. Sale prices for homes also decreased, recovering slightly in 2012.

Figure 8.7: Marquette County Real Estate Transactions, 2007-2013

Year	Homes Sold	Median Sale Price
2007	264	$129,950
2008	198	$125,500
2009	153	$116,475
2010	163	$93,125
2011	159	$90,000
2012	190	$101,850
2013	185	$99,250

Source: Wisconsin REALTORS® Association, 2014

5. HOUSING PROGRAMS

The following housing providers and programs are available to Marquette County, its communities, and/or its residents. Several of these programs are referenced in the "programs and recommendations" section near the end of this chapter.

- *WHEDA Programs.* WHEDA administers a variety of programs designed to assist moderate and low-income homeowners and renters. WHEDA programs also encourage the development of affordable and low-income multiple-family housing by providing private investors with income tax credits when they invest these types of housing developments. Tax credits are allocated to housing projects on a competitive basis. Local government support is an important factor in the award of tax credits. WHEDA also administers a property tax deferral program, which 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. The WHEDA web site contains the most up-to-date information on available programs.

- *CAP Services Programs.* CAP Services is a regional provider of business, housing and social services has a financial assistance program for first-time homebuyers. It provides matching funds to low- and moderate-income first-time homebuyers for down payment and closing costs. CAP Services also provides housing rehabilitation and weatherization for owner-occupied and rental housing.

- *Housing Cost Reduction Initiative (HCRI).* This State administered program provides funding to local public and non-profit agencies throughout Wisconsin to reduce housing costs for low- and moderate-income households. Funds are administered through a competitive application process. Eligible activities include down payment assistance, foreclosure prevention measures

(mortgage and property tax payments), emergency rental aid, and related housing initiatives. Applications are typically due in February. CAP Services administers this program for Marquette County.

- *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.* The CDBG program provides grants for housing rehabilitation programs that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income households. Using CDBG funds, communities and counties may establish rehabilitation loans or grants to assist owner occupants with repairs. In Wisconsin, the Department of Administration's Bureau of Housing administers the CDBG program. Any Wisconsin rural county, city, village or town with a population less than 50,000 residents is eligible to apply for grant funding. Wisconsin is divided into seven regions to ensure grant dollars are allocated equally throughout the State. Marquette County is situated in the Central Housing Region. In 2014, the Central Housing Region received a $2,103,000 Community Development Block Grant to rehabilitate and improve housing in the region. Interest free deferred loans are available to income eligible homeowners in Marquette County to improve their homes. County landlords, providing housing to individuals meeting the grant program income requirements, are also eligible for low interest rate loans to repair and improve rental units. The 2015 maximum household income eligible was $47,100 for a family of four.
- *HOME Homebuyer and Rehabilitation Program (HHR).* The HHR program is intended to expand the supply of affordable housing, to very low income and low-income families. In Wisconsin, the Department of Administration's Bureau of Housing administers the HOME program. Grant awards typically fund down payment and closing cost assistance for home buyers, weatherization related repairs, and accessibility improvements. The application deadline is typically in May.
- *HOME Rental Housing Development (RHD).* The RHD program is a State administered program that distributes federal funds throughout the State. The RHD program targets activities to expand the rental housing market available to low and moderate income individuals. Grants are available for acquisition rehabilitation and new construction of rental housing units. The program has a first come, first serve, set aside for rural housing projects. Applications are generally due in early June.
- *Downpayment Plus.* This program is administered by the Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development, Inc., and provides down payment and closing cost assistance to homebuyers who meet income guidelines and other qualifying criteria. Loans are forgivable following a five year period of owner occupancy.
- *Section 8 Program.* This federal program provides rent assistance to eligible low-income families based on family size, income, and fair market rents. Typically, the tenant's share of the rent payment does not exceed 30% of annual income.
- *Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP).* This State program provides payments to utility companies or individuals to help pay for home heating costs. The program is funded by both the State and federal governments, and is only available to individuals at or below 60% of the State median income. Funds are distributed through an application process, administered by Energy Services, Inc. in Montello.
- *Wisconsin's Weatherization Assistance Program.* This program provides funding for energy saving improvements to homes primarily occupied by the elderly, handicapped and children under age 6. Energy audits are completed to determine what weatherization services are needed, the identified improvements are then made by agency crews and subcontractors. The Wisconsin's Weatherization Assistance Program is also administered by Energy Services, Inc. in Montello.
- *USDA Rural Development Agency Programs.* This federal agency provides housing assistance in the form of low-interest loans to low-income homebuyers; and to very low-income owner

occupants, to improve or repair homes, to remove health and safety hazards, or to make homes accessible to disabled household members.

- *Habitat for Humanity.* Habitat for Humanity offers homeownership opportunities to people of moderate or low incomes in Marquette County. Habitat asks able-bodied purchasers to help build their new home and in return participants receive low interest loans.
- *Movin' Out.* Movin' Out is a regional Community Housing Development Organization dedicated to assisting lower income individuals with disabilities find safe, affordable housing.
- *U.S. Veterans Administration Programs.* The VA provides low-cost loans and other housing assistance to veterans.

At time of writing, the Marquette County UW-Extension office was working to establish a **housing coalition study** for the County. This coalition could conduct a needs assessment to inventory the County's housing stock and identify housing issues and opportunities within the County. After conducting this needs assessment, the coalition will determine what should be done to improve the quality and affordability of the County's housing stock. The Extension office began the "Rent Smart" program which educates low-income families about skills for communicating with landlords and neighbors. This program seeks to break down barriers for people receiving housing assistance and is offered three times each year.

B. HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: Facilitate a range of housing and neighborhood choices that meet resident needs and advance community development

Objectives:

1. Encourage new housing and neighborhood developments as a means to attract and retain new families.
2. Provide for a wide choice of affordable housing types throughout the County serving persons of different income levels, ages, and special needs.
3. Require high quality construction and maintenance of housing and residential areas.

Policies:

1. **Plan for a sufficient supply of developable land** for a range of different housing types, in areas and at densities consistent with local community wishes and community service and utility availability, as shown on Map 7.
2. **Enforce zoning, housing, and property maintenance ordinances** to ensure decent and safe living environments, and update these ordinances as necessary.
3. Working with UW-Extension and non-profit housing groups, **connect Marquette County property owners and landlords on available funding to maintain and improve housing**, including the Central Housing Region's Community Development Block Grant program.

4. **Support the private market in developing new housing that is affordable and attractive to families and the** elderly, connecting providers with available outside funding as warranted.
5. Encourage **neighborhood designs and locations** that protect residential areas from incompatible land uses, promote and preserve connectivity of roadway and environmental systems, and preserve farmland and rural and open space character.
6. **Support efforts to protect private homes from natural hazards including flooding wildfire hazard,** through thoughtful home siting and grounds maintenance, such as by providing emergency service providers with the opportunity to review and comment on major subdivisions or large-scale non-residential development projects. See also the Marquette County All-Hazards Mitigation Plan.

C. HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In an effort to promote housing choices for all residents, and expanding on the goal, objectives and policies listed above, the following programs are advised:

1. PLAN FOR A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF DEVELOPABLE LAND FOR HOUSING

Through working directly with the participating towns, villages and City, Marquette County has planned sufficient areas for residential development to **accommodate at least 20 years of anticipated housing demand**. See Chapter Five: Land Use for more information on this projected demand. In general, intensive areas of new housing development are proposed to be located in or near the City and villages, within sanitary districts or in areas with substantial amounts of existing development, such as along Buffalo Lake and rural hamlets.

The recommended Planned Land Use map for Marquette County (Map 7) will accommodate significant housing development over the 20 year planning period and beyond, within a variety of residential and rural planned land use categories. As led by local governments, the *Plan* may be amended over time to accommodate additional housing opportunities in different areas as warranted.

2. INCREASE ATTRACTIVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES

As discussed within the Introduction and elaborated in Chapter Nine: Economic Development, retaining and attracting families is a key initiative within this *Comprehensive Plan*. An attractive and adequate supply of housing is a key ingredient. There is a reasonable supply of already-built housing in Marquette County. However, the older age and associated size limitations, maintenance responsibilities, and rehabilitation needs limit their appeal to families. Further, much of the new housing in the County has been located in waterfront and more remote locations that may not be appealing to most family buyers. In cooperation with the City, villages, and homebuilders, the **County encourages the construction of new single family housing and neighborhoods aimed at the family buyer.** Ideas for potential implementation include:

- Assuring that attractive areas of the community are available for new subdivision development, and are not jeopardized through the approval of incompatible industrial and other uses nearby. There are presently few available lots on which to build new homes in the villages and City in Marquette County.
- Revisiting minimum lot size and subdivision design standards in zoning and subdivision ordinances to make sure they are not an impediment to new subdivisions and housing. Within publicly sewered areas, new lot sizes as small as 6,000 square feet and modest public improvement standards (e.g., drainage swales instead of curb and gutter) should be considered.
- Exploring the various State and federal programs to assist low- and moderate-income homebuyers to build and buy new single family homes, or to assist builders to construct them. While tax incremental financing generally cannot be used to incentivize single family residences, "mixed use" and other tax incremental district options under Wisconsin law provide possibilities.
- Considering incentives for families to build and buy new homes in Marquette County. The City of Waterloo, Wisconsin provides $4,000 in local merchandise credits for people building new homes ($2,000 for buyers of existing homes). The City's printed "money" can be used at participating businesses to buy groceries, veterinary care, bicycles, and other goods and services.
- Sharing information and brainstorming with regional real estate agents and builders on these and other ideas.

3. Promote Quality Neighborhood Design and Layouts in New Residential Areas

The County endorses **high-quality neighborhood design and layout in all newly planned residential areas in both urban and rural places**. This includes protecting "environmental corridors" during the platting and construction phase (see Chapters Two and Five) and providing safe and adequate road access (see Chapter Six).

In the rural (town) areas where future *Single Family Residential – Rural* development is suggested in Map 7, "conservation neighborhood design" techniques are promoted for the planning and developing of new subdivisions. Overall, conservation neighborhood design will create neighborhoods that are more livable, interactive, efficient, and protective of natural resources. The following are some guiding principles for "conservation neighborhood design" for rural areas:

a. Minimize visibility of development from main roads through natural topography, vegetation (e.g., tree lines, wooded edges), and setbacks. Minimize placement of lots in open fields.

b. Back lots onto county, state, and federal highways, designing deeper lots and landscape bufferyards into these areas.

c. Arrange lots so houses are not placed on exposed hill tops or ridge lines. Roof lines should not be higher than ridge lines.

d. Include an interconnected network of streets meeting town road standards.

e. Design streets and lot layouts to blend with natural land contours.

f. Limit cul-de-sacs except where topography, environmentally sensitive areas, or the pre-existing development pattern in the area necessitates their use.

g. Avoid building placement within wetlands, floodplains, hydric soils, and slopes greater than 20%.

h. Integrate natural resources into the subdivision design as aesthetic and conservation landscape elements.

i. Restore the quality and continuity of degraded environmental areas within the subdivision, such as streams and wetlands.

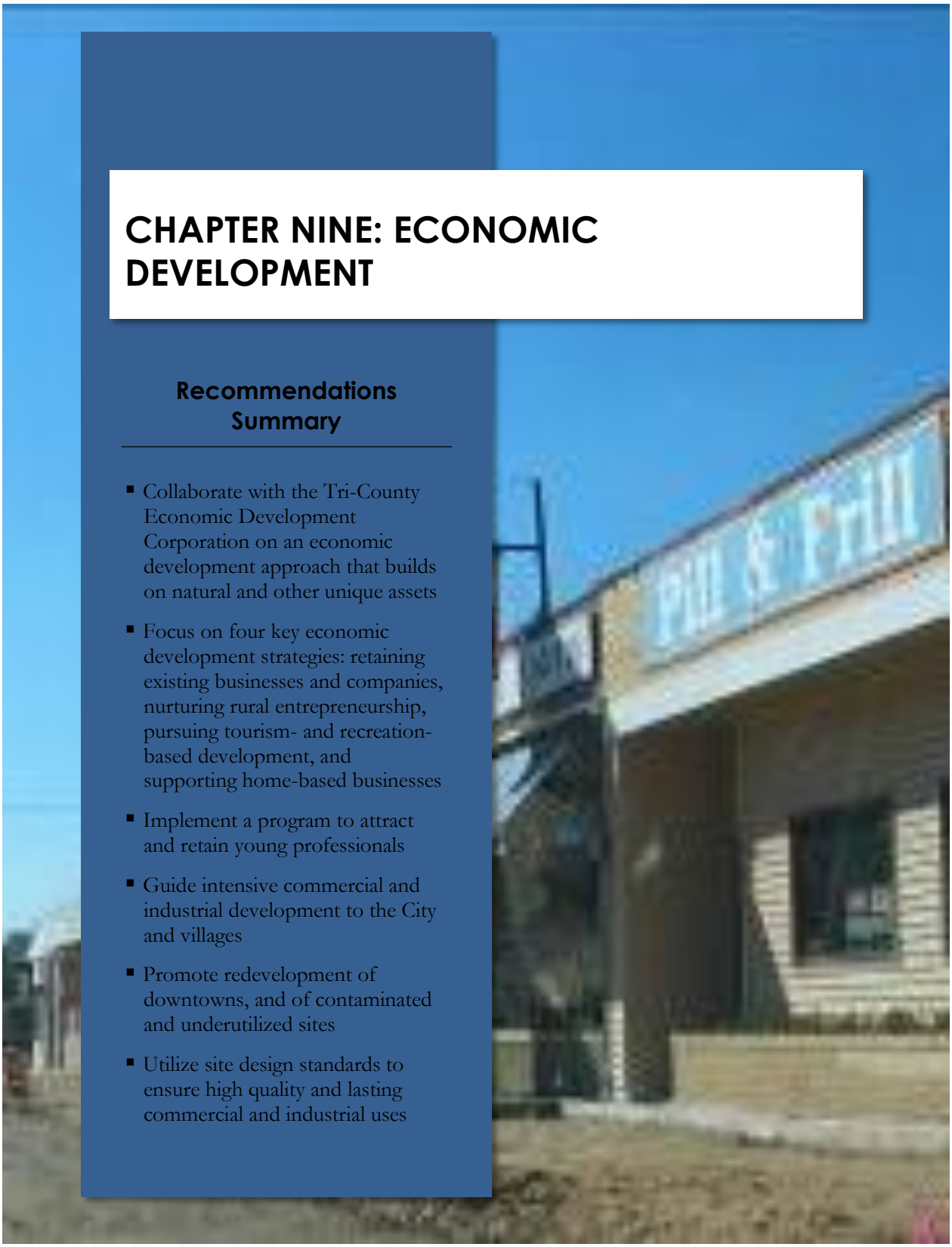
j. Encourage stormwater management treatment systems that focus on Best Management Practices (BMPs) rather than conventional engineering strategies. BMPs may include overland transfer, natural landscaping to increase infiltration and reduce runoff, bio-infiltration systems, residential roof runoff directed to pervious yard areas, and maximum impervious surface ratios for development sites.

k. Provide vegetative buffers of at least 75 feet between building sites and wetlands and streams.

l. Provide wide areas for public access to parks and common open spaces, and trail connectors where possible.

m. Maximize preservation of common open space in the neighborhood through public dedication and/or private management of open space through a homeowner's association with conservation easements.

The County encourages use of its Cluster Development Overlay zone as an option for property owners looking to divide their land for residential development.



CHAPTER NINE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recommendations Summary

- Collaborate with the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation on an economic development approach that builds on natural and other unique assets
- Focus on four key economic development strategies: retaining existing businesses and companies, nurturing rural entrepreneurship, pursuing tourism- and recreation-based development, and supporting home-based businesses
- Implement a program to attract and retain young professionals
- Guide intensive commercial and industrial development to the City and villages
- Promote redevelopment of downtowns, and of contaminated and underutilized sites
- Utilize site design standards to ensure high quality and lasting commercial and industrial uses

This chapter contains background information, goals, objectives, policies and recommended programs to promote a sound economic base in Marquette County. This chapter also includes an assessment of new businesses and industries that are desired in the County and the County's strengths and weaknesses in attracting and retaining businesses and industries.

A. EXISTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1. LABOR FORCE TRENDS

In 2014, Marquette County's labor force consisted of about 7,457 residents. (A community's labor force is the portion of the population age 16 or older that is employed or available for work. The labor force includes people who are in the armed forces, employed, unemployed, or actively seeking employment). The s**ize of Marquette County's labor force has remained fairly constant since 2002**, when it was 7,470. As of October 2014, the County's unemployment rate stood at 5.6%. This was comparable to adjoining counties and slightly higher than the State's unemployment rate of 4.6%. In 2004, the County's unemployment rate was 6.5%.

2. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The number of jobs in the County decreased by 4% between 2001 and 2013, with a total of 3,653 Marquette County jobs in 2013. The County's job base is centered in the education, health, and manufacturing industries. According to the State's Department of Workforce Development (WisDWD), **manufacturing is the largest industry segment within the County**. Food Manufacturing comprises the largest industry sub-segment, due to the location of Brakebush Brothers, Inc. within the County. Between 2007 and 2012, the total number of jobs in the Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing and Animal Production industries increased. Fabricated metal product manufacturing grew by 24 jobs, most likely due to growth of TW Design and Manufacturing in the City of Montello. All other reported industries observed a decrease in number of jobs, likely a result of the "Great Recession" that occurred during this period.

In 2010, the largest private employers in Marquette County included Brakebush Brothers, Inc. (poultry processing); Glen Oak Lumber and Milling, Inc. (lumber, millwork and wood products); Gumz Muck Farms LLC (crop farming); Wisconsin Illinois Senior (nursing care); TW Design and Manufacturing LLC (machining shop); Northland Community Services, Inc. (individual and family services); and Arimon Technologies Inc. (electric component manufacturing).

As depicted in Figure 9.1, Marquette County has substantially fewer people employed in sales and office occupational groups than the State. However, a greater portion of the County's labor force is employed in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining; and the Manufacturing occupational groups.

Figure 9.1: Marquette County Labor Force Characteristics, 2009-2013, Estimate

Occupational Group	% of County Labor Force	% of Wisconsin Labor Force
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	5.2	2.5
Construction	7.0	5.3
Manufacturing	22.4	18.2
Wholesale Trade	2.0	2.7
Retail Trade	10	11.4
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	5.3	4.4
Information	1.4	1.7
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, Leasing	3.6	6.2
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	4.5	7.9
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Services Assistance	17.3	23.2
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, Food Service	10.4	8.7
Other Services, except Public Administration	4.9	4.2
Public Administration	5.8	3.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

Figure 9.2, below, shows the total number of jobs in Marquette County between 2011 and 2014. Overall, the County lost jobs during this time period.

Figure 9.2: Average Monthly Employment, 2011 - 2014

	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Natural Resources & Mining	230	251	262	262
Construction	80	80	77	69
Manufacturing	1,192	1,218	1,206	1,161
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	486	467	501	491
Information	40	41	38	40
Financial Activities	100	102	96	93
Professional & Business Services	133	90	72	68
Education & Health Services	636	666	683	719
Leisure & Hospitality	439	446	419	327
Other Services	93	96	88	82
Public Administration	193	199	183	167
Total	**3,621**	**3,654**	**3,623**	**3,479**

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 2014
** First Quarter data only*

Employment projections for Marquette County are available from WisDWD. WisDWD forecasts growth for jobs in the "Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods" 3-digit NAICS code, referencing a growth of 32% in this industry within Marquette County between 2007 and 2012. The State saw a 7% decline in jobs in this sector during the same time period. WisDWD sees another potential area for economic growth in animal production, which saw a 10% increase between 2007 and 2012. Gasoline stations, food services, and nursing and residential care facilities saw dramatic decrease–each around 25%–during this same time period.

Additional economic information is available through Economic Modeling Specialists (EMSI), a firm providing comprehensive labor market analysis. EMSI projects that the manufacturing and poultry processing industries will continue to grow between 2013 and 2023, with a total increase of 221 jobs within Marquette County. However, this is somewhat offset by projected declines in employment in farming, sawmills, and drinking establishments. **EMSI projects that the total number of jobs within Marquette County will grow by 8% between 2013 and 2023.**

3. Educational Attainment and Income Data

According to 2012 American Community Survey data, of the County's population age 25 and older, 86.2% attained a high school level education. Approximately 13.3% of this same age group in the County had attained a college level education (bachelor's degree or higher). Both of these rates increased since 2000.

The U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey found that **the median household income in Marquette County was $46,077**. Within the County, the average median household income in the 14 towns was $47,163 and the average median household income within the City and four villages was $43,876, the Town of Westfield had the highest median household income of $57,222. Additional income data for Marquette County is available from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce

Development. The Department found **the per capita personal income for County residents was $32,466 in 2012, which is the 5th lowest in the State**. For comparison, the average per capita personal income for all Wisconsin residents in 2012 was $42,121. While this information is concerning, it is also at least partially reflective of the reality that a substantial percentage of Marquette County's population is retired, and therefore on a limited income. Educational attainment is the highest degree or level of school completed, and is a variable used when assessing a community's labor force potential. Educational attainment differs by ethnicity, access to higher education, employer expectations and socioeconomic status.

4. Commuting Patterns

Greater than half of Marquette County's workforce is employed outside the County, according to the 2013 WisDWD County to County Worker Flow in Wisconsin Report. Of the 3,673 workers commuting to places outside the County, **41% (1,517 workers) commute to Columbia County to the south. Dane County is the second most common workplace destination**, drawing 15% of the commuting workforce (542 workers). 200 or more Marquette County workers commute to Sauk, Waushara, or Green Lake County. About 1,588 workers commute *into* Marquette County for employment. Substantial numbers drive in from Adams (390 workers), Columbia (383 workers), Waushara (263 workers), and Green Lake (147 workers) Counties. The **average time a County resident travels to work increased from 26 minutes in 2000 to 28 minutes by 2010**, suggesting that many residents are taking jobs even further away.

5. Environmentally Contaminated Sites

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) maintains the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS)—a list of contaminated sites, or "brownfields." WisDNR defines brownfields as "abandoned or under-utilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination." Sites listed on the BRRTS are in "open" or "closed" status, with a closed status indicating that actions have been taken to the extent practicable to restore the environment. Examples might include a large abandoned industrial site or a small corner gas station with a leaking underground storage tank. Properties listed in the WisDNR database are self-reported, and do not necessarily represent a comprehensive listing of possible brownfields.

As of November 2014, there were 4 open sites and 174 closed sites within the County listed in WisDNR's system. There are three types of sites listed in the database: Spills, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, and Environmental Repair Sites. These sites are defined below:

- There were 99 Spills listed. A spill is a discharge of hazardous substances that may adversely impact, or threaten to adversely impact public health, welfare, or the environment. Spills are usually cleaned up quickly.
- There were 61 Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites. These include sites where a leaking underground storage tank has contaminated soil and/or groundwater with petroleum. LUST cleanups are either reviewed by the WisDNR or by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.
- There were 16 Environmental Repair (ERP) sites. ERP are sites other than LUST sites that have contaminated soil and/or groundwater. Examples include industrial spills (or dumping) that need long term investigation, buried containers or hazardous substances, and closed landfills that have caused contamination. Contamination from above-ground petroleum sources are also considered in ERP reviews.
- There were 2 abandoned container (AC) sites. An "abandoned container" is any container that holds a hazardous substance and is not currently being monitored and maintained.

Brownfield redevelopment programs seek to return abandoned or underused industrial and/or commercial sites to active use through cleaning up environmental contamination and encouraging

redevelopment of the sites. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and WisDNR administer several grant programs that fund brownfields cleanup. These programs fund environmental studies that determine the nature and extent of contamination as well as remediation of contaminated sites. Additional information on the requirements a community must meet to receive these grants is available through the WEDC and WisDNR.

6. Location of Economic Development Activity

Map 6 shows the location of current economic development activity in Marquette County. These areas are labeled under the *Commercial Recreation*, *General Business*, *Downtown*, and *Industrial* land use categories on the map. Most of these land uses are located with the County's villages and City, but there are a few larger industrial uses in the towns. There are **three industrial parks in Marquette County:** Montello Industrial Park, Westfield Industrial Park, and Endeavor Industrial Park. Combined, these three parks provide 102 acres of *Industrial* land use. As of 2015, approximately 18 acres was vacant and available for development, which represents a very limited inventory.

7. Economic Development Programs and Agencies

Aside from local economic development initiatives, the following economic development programs and agencies are currently benefiting, or are available to, the County, local governments, and their residents.

Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation (TREDC)

Recognizing that individual county economic development corporations would have limited staff and financial resources, Marquette, Green Lake, and Waushara counties formed the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation in 2004. Based in the Village of Neshkoro, TREDC employs an Executive Director. TREDC oversees numerous economic development programs including a revolving loan fund, economic working groups, and business development resources. Regional economic development goals include informing the public of TREDC services, providing assistance to local businesses, developing and utilizing funding sources for economic development projects, and creating businesses and jobs which enhance tax revenues and provide employment opportunities within the Tri-County area.

Marquette County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC)

The Marquette County Economic Development Corporation was formed in 2003 and is a "501 c3" nonprofit corporation. After creation of the TREDC, the functions and role of the MCEDC have become more limited. The MCEDC meets twice annually.

Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau

The Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau, formerly known as Marquette NOW, actively promotes and markets Marquette County to external visitors. The Bureau is run by a Committee comprised of representatives from UW-Extension, the three County Chamber of Commerce organizations, area resort owners, and members of local government. In addition to attending regional events to market the County, the Bureau maintains the www.travelmarquettecounty.com website, develops marketing materials, and maintains signage along I-39 promoting the County's amenities to the traveling public.

Marquette County Tourism Commission

The Marquette County Tourism Commission administers and distributes the County's room tax funds. The Commission funds a variety of community initiatives and programs that enhance Marquette County's tourism economy. The Commission also maintains the http://marquettecountywisconsinlodging.com/ website, which contains a directory of all lodging establishments within the County.

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (ECWRPC) Economic Development Strategy

The ECWRPC, which includes Marquette County, was designated an Economic Development District in 1984. ECWRPC is responsible for preparing various economic development strategies for the region. These strategies are described in the 2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report, which is used to distribute Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for designated projects in each county within the region. For example, in 1999, a grant of $835,000 was awarded to the Village of Westfield in Marquette County for various capital improvements to its Industrial Park. This project was designed to attract new jobs to the area and increase the County's manufacturing base.

Community Assets for People (CAP)

CAP Services, Inc. is a federally-designated community action agency for Marquette, Portage, Waushara, Waupaca, and Outagamie Counties. It is the only federally-designated Community Development Financial Institution operating in Marquette County. CAP Services programs are designed to assist low- and moderate-income residents address the causes of poverty. Examples include below market rate loans for low to moderate income entrepreneurs wishing to start or expand a business, an income qualified first-time homebuyers program and a Head Start program to provide daycare and childcare. CAP Services manages 117,000 square feet of business incubator space in seven buildings spread across three counties. In 2013, CAP Services' business programs helped start 13 businesses and provided 25 business loans which in turn have created 21 new living-wage jobs. Households below 80% of the County median income ($47,100 for a family of four in 2014) qualify for these programs.

Chambers of Commerce

Three local Chambers of Commerce operate in Marquette County. The City of Montello, Village of Oxford, and the Village of Westfield have chambers to foster economic and business success and to promote tourism in their communities. These organizations sponsor regular events including fundraisers, social events, and outings for all ages. The Montello Chamber of Commerce also organizes the annual Father Marquette Days, a two-day celebration of the area's heritage.

Wisconsin Rural Partners

Wisconsin Rural Partners (WRP) is a nonprofit organization that focuses on rural community and economic development. WRP serves as Wisconsin's State rural development council. It provides a wide range of services that includes economic development workshops and education. WRP also offers follow-up assessments of a community's progress in achieving its development goals.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The USDA provides business loans, technical assistance, distance learning, and telemedicine loans and grants to assist in developing technological and/or medical services in rural areas. The USDA also administers several broadband loan and grant programs intended to accelerate the deployment of broadband services in rural America. This includes the Community Connect grants program to fund acquisition or leasing of facilities to serve residences and businesses, as well as community access points. The nearest USDA-Rural Development Office is located in Stevens Point.

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

Formed in 2011, the WEDC administers a variety of programs for businesses, local governments, and entrepreneurs. WEDC supports community development efforts and provide financial incentives for shovel-ready projects. Grant recipients must demonstrate significant, measurable benefits in job

opportunities, property values, and/or leveraged investment by local and private partners. Programs that may be of particular interest in Marquette County include:

- *Certified Sites Program.* Certifying businesses, buildings, and parcels for commercial and industrial activity and eligible for additional marketing activities.
- *Community Development Investment Grant*. A financing program for shovel ready projects, preferably in a downtown location.
- *Forward Community Investments Loan Program.* Providing loans to non-profit organizations to improve facilities, bridge funding gaps, and expand capacity.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

The federal CDBG program provides grant funding opportunities via the following five initiatives. These initiatives are available via the Wisconsin Department of Administration. For all five of these CDBG initiatives, any Wisconsin rural county, city, village, or town with a population less than 50,000 residents is eligible to apply for grant funding.

- *Public Facilities for Economic Development.* Underwrites the cost of infrastructure necessary for business development that retains or creates employment. Using these CDBG funds, local governments can make improvements to public facilities such as water systems, sewage systems and roads, which will principally result in business retention or creation. Successful applications will also need to meet a CDBG national objective. Proposals can be submitted throughout the year with funding awarded on an as needed basis.
- *Public Facilities.* Provides grant funds to help finance infrastructure development, community centers, fire stations, and other facilities that principally serve low and moderate income persons. Using these CDBG funds, local governments can improve publicly-owned utility systems, streets, sidewalks, handicap accessibility facilities, community centers, libraries, fire stations and medical facilities. These facilities often have a secondary economic development benefit. This program awards grants on an annual cycle, usually with a spring application deadline.
- *Economic Development.* Provides financial assistance to local governments for business loans to expand facilities or purchase equipment, awards for specialized employee training, or business infrastructure projects. The goal is to assist local governments in lending funds to private community businesses. The application process is competitive with successful applications meeting a CDBG national objective, having a minimum 50% funding match and, identifying the private company benefiting from the program. Applications are accepted year round, with funding awarded on an as needed basis.
- *Emergency Grant.* Helps restore or replace critical infrastructure damaged or destroyed as a result of a natural or man-made catastrophe. Using these CDBG funds, local governments can restore or replace publicly-owned utility systems, streets, sidewalks, community centers, and other community facilities.
- *Planning Grant.* Provides monetary assistance to local units of government for the development of community or site specific planning projects that advance decent affordable housing, a suitable living environment, and the expansion of economic opportunities, principally for the benefit of persons of low and moderate income. $25,000 awards are available for community wide initiatives and $15,000 awards are available for site specific projects. Applications require a 50% match and need to be submitted to the Department of Administration in early June.

Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) of South Central Wisconsin is a 37-member board that is dedicated to developing strong community partnerships to support innovation and excellence in workforce development. The WDB serves six counties: Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Marquette, and Sauk.

U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Certified Development Company (CDC) Loan Program provides growing businesses with long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets, such as land and buildings. 504 loans can be used to fund land purchases and improvements, grading, street improvements, utilities, parking lots and landscaping, construction of new facilities, or modernizing, renovating or converting existing facilities. There are six CDCs covering specific geographic areas in Wisconsin—the Wisconsin Business Development Finance Corporation's office in Oshkosh serves Marquette County.

Wisconsin Public Services Commission (PSC) Broadband Expansion Grants

Administered by the PSC to improve broadband communication facilities, targeted to underserved areas.

Agricultural Development Programs

A number of potential funding sources for agricultural-related economic development are identified in Chapter Four: Agricultural Resources.

8. Economic Development Assessment

The Wisconsin comprehensive planning statute requires that, through this *Comprehensive Plan*, the County "assess categories or particular types of new businesses and industries that are desired." Working in collaboration with the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation, the County has targeted small-scale industrial and retail development, tourism and recreational development, enabling home-based businesses, agriculture, and businesses and efforts to attract and retain younger County residents.

Many of these economic development opportunities are discussed and mapped in more detail in Chapter One: Issues and Opportunities of this *Plan*.

Figure 9.3 shows Marquette County's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining targeted businesses, industries, and residents to the County.

Figure 9.3: County Strengths and Weaknesses for Economic Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
Proximity to Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago, and Fox River Valley metro areas	Declining youth population, leading to some school district struggles
Safety from large amounts of crime, traffic accidents, natural disasters, and terrorism	Lack of large or dynamic city or village to attract new residents and activity
Surrounded by recreational areas and tourist destinations (Wisconsin Dells, Green Lake, Princeton)	Industry closures and downsizing; jobs gravitating to major urban areas or overseas
Interstate 39, including undeveloped lands at interchange areas	Moderate incomes and wealth in area
Unique tourism resources (e.g., lakes, trout streams, hunting land, trails, John Muir's birthplace)	County is distant from major airports and educational/training institutions
Growing agricultural preservation interest; opportunity to tap into specialty, value-added agricultural directions	Aging population base
Coordinated and comprehensive tourism promotion through the Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau made possible through room tax funding	Expense of infrastructure development versus value of improved land makes industrial park and subdivision development challenging
High-speed broadband internet service available to many areas through the Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative enhances telecommuting, home-based business, and tourist opportunities	Limited healthcare facilities within the County
Affordable housing prices	

9. Interstate Corridor Economic Development and Character Assessment

Interstate 39 will be a primary engine for economic development in Marquette County and local communities. In October 2003, an assessment of the economic development potential of lands along the Interstate 39 corridor was conducted. A summary of this assessment, updated in 2015, is provided in Figures 9.4 and 9.5. In general, the Westfield/Harris interchange has the greatest development potential given good access, visibility, traffic volumes, proximity to a population base, and utility service capabilities. The Endeavor/Moundville interchange also benefits from good access and visibility. The Montello/Oxford interchange has good access and visibility and available land, but is situated some distance from population centers. The Packwaukee interchange has access limitations. Local communities along the Interstate corridor can use this information to guide local land use and economic development decisions for lands at the interchanges. Local communities and the County can use information in these figures to identify possible strategies to protect the overall image and visual character of the County as seen from the freeway.

Figure 9.4: Interstate 39 Interchange Analysis

	Endeavor/Moundville Interchange (23 West)	Packwaukee Interchange (CTH D)	Montello/Oxford Interchange (STH 23/82)	Westfield/Harris Interchange (CTH J)
Interchange Type	•Diamond	•½ diamond; only exit northbound & only southbound entrance	•Diamond	•Diamond
Transportation Access	•Good state highway access •CTH CX intersection within 1 mile to east •CTH P intersection 1 mile to west	•Relatively poor overall access •CTH M intersection within 1 mile to east	•Good state highway access in both directions •New pavement & wide paved shoulders •CTH M intersection within 1 mile to east	•Good county highway access •Frontage road on NE •SW quadrant access with rural road •CTH E within 1 mile east of ramps •NW access best of four corners, including sidewalk
Interstate Daily Traffic (2008)	•19400	•16400	•15000	•10000
Cross Highway Daily Traffic Volumes (2008)	•1900* west of Interstate •1800* east of Interstate	•1200 east on CTH M	•4800 east on STH 23	•2700* east on CTH J •7100 west on CTH E
Adjacent Land Use/Zoning				
Northeast	•Small diner & gas station •Open lands – single family residential •Lands for sale •Evergreen tree farm near ramp	•Woodland •Scattered single family homes	•County highway facility •Crossroads Motel •Cell tower	•Commercial sites (cemetery, used car sales, mini-storage, motel) •Undeveloped commercial sites for sale
Northwest	•Cropland	•Pasture/open land •Single family home	•Gas station/convenience store	•Restaurant, mote fast food, shops, mini-golf, bank, medical office, & park to the north
Southeast	•Mature trees •Woodland, pasture, farm buildings •Slaughterhouse/retail store ¼ mile to the south	•Bar •Mobile homes •Contractor & storage	•Oak woods •Cell tower •Single family home	•Cropland •Agricultural implement dealership
Southwest	•Cropland	•Pasture/open land	•Retail store	•Gas station •Bank •School •Garden equipment retail sales
Development Quality	•Fair	•Fair to poor on east side •Fair on west side	•Good on west side •Fair on east side	•Fair to poor on east side •Average to good on west side, but lot of pavement
Visibility from Interstate	•Good in all quadrants	•West- good •East – fair to poor	•Southeast – poor, southwest- fair •Northeast – good, Northwest – good	•Excellent in all quadrants •Sites below Interstate on west, above Interstate on east
Availability of Public Services	•Nearest public sewer is in Endeavor	•No public services available at interchange •Packwaukee's long-range sanitary sewer service plan includes interchange area. Capacity limitations	•No public services available near interchange	•Sanitary sewer service available from Westfield
Nearest Population Center	•Endeavor (1 mile away)	•Packwaukee (1 mile away)	•Oxford (4 miles west) & Montello (7 miles east)	•Westfield (in immediate area)
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	•Good Earth Creek located immediate southwest of interchange	•SW quadrant – some low areas with standing water •Drainage flows east of interchange •Significant wetlands between interchange & Buffalo Lake	•Drainage flowing into Ox Creek located in NE quadrant of interchange	•Dry ground in all quadrants
Soil Suitability for Development	•Majority of area has slight limitations for building with foundations & slight to severe limitations for onsite sewage disposal	•Majority area on the west side of the interchange has little limitation for building & onsite sewage disposal •Greater limitations for buildings with foundations & onsite sewage disposal	•Majority of the area has moderate to severe limitations for buildings & severe onsite sewage disposal limitations	•Majority of the areas has a slight limitation for buildings with foundations & moderate onsite sewage disposal limitations
Other Development Opportunities	•Large undivided parcels •Vacant downtown buildings	•Buffalo Lake	•Undeveloped lands •Close to Oxford & Montello •On attractive state highways	•Busy crossroads •Trucking activity •Natural stopping point •Nearest services to north; gas station 20 min, drive-thru/sit-down restaurants, motel 35 min
Other Development Limitations	•Sewer service 1+ mile away	•Quality of existing development •Poor interchange access •Heavily wooded	•Small parcels on east – visibility •Small market areas – V. Oxford/T. Oxford	•Few large parcels left on west side •Westfield completely developed •Road sign clutter

*Indicates AADT 2002 or older

Figure 9.5: Interstate 39 Segment Character Analysis

	South County Line to Endeavor/Moundville Exit		Endeavor/Moundville Exit to Packwaukee Exit		Packwaukee Exit to Westfield/Harris Exit		Westfield Exit to North County Line	
	East	**West**	**East**	**West**	**East**	**West**	**East**	**West**
Views	•Long, some tight •Opens up to the north	•Constrained by trees •Opens up near interchange	•Expansive	•Expansive	•Open farmland/woodland •Views become tighter to north, more woods/less Ag	•Open views	•Mainly enclosed views by trees •Views open in spots	•Mainly enclosed by trees
Landscape Character	•From rolling to flat •Many lowlands •More rolling croplands to the north	•From rolling to flat •Many lowlands	•Endeavor developed •Lowland/creeks •High ground south end/lowland north	•Cropland/woodland •Lowland/creeks •High ground south end/lowland north	•Flat – low wooded	•Flat – low wooded	•Interstate splits through woodland rural feel •Northwoods feel •Suma –scenic •Very rural	•High ground •Interstate climbing •Very rural
Land Use/Zoning	•Mainly undeveloped •Cell tower substation	•Mainly undeveloped •Hunting grounds •Cell tower •Irrigated cropland •Prairie	•Forest products •Light industrial •Auto dealer •Endeavor •Cell tower •Railroad bridge •Buffalo Care facility	•Mainly undeveloped •Cell tower •Muck Farm •Bar	•Mainly undeveloped	•Mainly undeveloped •Cell tower	•Ag feed facility •State highway rest area •Cell tower	•Woodland •State highway rest area
Billboards	•Large – none •Small – 1	•Large – none •Small – none	•Large – 6 •Small – 2	•Large – 4 •Small – 2	•Large – none •Small – none	•Large – none •Small – 2	•Large – 2 •Small – none	•Large – none •Small – none

B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal: Expand the County's economy and incomes by taking advantage of unique assets, opportunities and strengths

Objectives:

1. Retain and help grow existing Marquette County businesses and job opportunities.
2. Establish a coordinated economic development program that capitalizes on the County's natural resource base, recreational opportunities, Interstate access, and proximity to other population and recreation centers.
3. Direct large-scale economic development projects to the villages and city—where a range of utilities, services, roads and other infrastructure is available.
4. Discourage unplanned, continuous strip commercial development, and an overabundance of commercial signs and billboards, along major roadways.
5. Where consistent with local plans, promote neighborhood-serving retail development near planned residential areas, allow small, low-impact non-farm businesses on farming properties and support and allow home-based businesses where there will be no impact on surrounding properties.
6. Encourage the redevelopment and reuse of the downtown districts and aging or contaminated business locations in the County's city and villages.

Policies:

1. **Plan for an adequate supply of developable land for commercial and industrial uses** in logical areas consistent with local government wishes as shown on Map 7.
2. Expand **shovel-ready economic development sites** in industrial parks and elsewhere, by working with interested local governments; utilizing regional, State, and federal grant programs to help close funding gaps; and supplementing with local tools like tax incremental financing.
3. Accommodate **high quality employment opportunities** in areas planned for commercial and industrial uses on Map 7, and in smaller areas like via home-based businesses driven by strong internet access.
4. **Focus on a sustainable economic development approach**, anchored in business retention and expansion, rural entrepreneurship, tourism- and resource-based development, and home-based business development. Encourage local communities to specialize in an economic approach that takes advantage of their respective attributes.
5. Capitalize on County assets and comprehensive plan implementation activities to **retain and attract young entrepreneurial and professional residents**, including via providing attractive neighborhood environments and schools.
6. Continue to support the Economic Development Corporation's mission to **foster economic development programs and partnerships**, and help prepare, refine, and implement an economic development strategy to attract and retain businesses and economic activity to the County.

7. Work with the City of Montello, four villages, and the Town of Packwaukee on efforts to **advance downtown revitalization and redevelopment efforts**, utilizing grant funding and local tools like tax incremental financing where appropriate.
8. Actively pursue and support efforts and State and federal funding to **reuse environmentally contaminated sites** in the County's urban and rural areas.
9. Emphasize **economic development and quality development at Interstate interchange areas**, provided that an appropriate range of services are available to these areas and they are developed in accordance with the high quality design standards discussed later in this chapter.
10. Through rezoning and special exception permit processes, thoughtfully review and appropriately condition proposed commercial and industrial development to **assure a high value, lasting development pattern**, especially in visible locations like the Interstate 39 corridor**.**
11. **Work with local public and private utility providers** to improve broadband, telecommunications, sewer, water, and other infrastructure in planned economic development centers and corridors.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expanding on the policies listed above, the following are more detailed economic development initiatives for Marquette County. The Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (TREDC) is encouraged to work with local governments and University of Wisconsin-Extension staff to further consider, refine, enhance, and implement the suggested programs and recommendations below. These may be incorporated into the TREDC's Strategic Plan, when updated in the future.

In the past 10 years….

Marquette County has accomplished a great deal to advance the tourism economy within the County, including:

- Formed the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation to advance regional economic development initiatives
- Established a room tax to help fund the Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau. The Tourism Commission administers the room tax and maintains http://marquettecountywisconsinlodging.com/ a database of all County businesses providing overnight accommodations
- Created www.travelmarquettecounty.com as a resource for Marquette County tourists
- Designated on-road ATV trail system to link area businesses and attract ATV enthusiasts to the County

These efforts have resulted in the second largest percent growth in tourist expenditures in the East Central Region between 2011 and 2012.

1. FOCUS ON A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

As part of a sustainable economic development approach, the County intends to focus on four key strategies, outlined below.

Retaining Existing Businesses

Locally-grown and owned businesses are one of the County's greatest assets. Many local businesses have become identified with the County and impart local flavor (often in the form of unique goods and services). Since many business owners also live in the County, there is a much greater familiarity and likelihood that the profits (not just the payrolls) will be spent locally as well. **Local business retention and expansion will be a primary economic development focus**. For example, the TREDC may help the local food processing and manufacturing industries expand. Currently, the County sponsors or partners with others on several local efforts to retain and expand local businesses.

Nurturing Rural Entrepreneurship

Small business entrepreneurship can benefit rural communities in a number of ways: by creating a diverse job opportunities, reducing dependency on non-local corporations, and providing locations for residents

to spend money locally. Successful economic development programs in rural areas often require **creativity and partnerships** among potential business owners and policy-makers alike.

Innovation and an entrepreneurial mindset can create wholly new services, products, employment, firms, and local business leaders. Challenges facing would-be entrepreneurs include access to startup capital, availability of affordable sites and equipment, access to information on starting and running small businesses, and aversion to investing in high-risk research and development.

Through TREDC, the UW-Extension, and local governments, and other partners, the County will promote innovation and entrepreneurs through efforts like the following:

- *Encouraging the Establishment of Business Incubator Programs.* Business incubator programs accelerate the development of new companies by providing guidance, technical assistance, locations, and/or tailored counseling services for new entrepreneurs. The main goal of the business incubator program is to produce new firms that are financially viable and that will strengthen the local economy by creating jobs.

- *Matching Potential Entrepreneurs with Resources.* Directing would-be entrepreneurs to the numerous County, State, regional, and federal programs, agencies, and private organizations that exist to provide information and financial assistance on training, grants, and product and service research. TREDC, the South Central Workforce Development Board, and the Wisconsin Development Corporation are examples of organizations that provide staff capable of matching interested individuals with links to these numerous and varied resources.

- *Developing Partnerships with School Districts.* Partnering with local school districts to provide entrepreneurship training would instill in the youth population that starting a businesses is a legitimate career choice if it is researched, planned, and executed intelligently.

- *Continuing to Build a Strong Broadband Network.* Entrepreneurial activity is often linked to technology. This may include developing a local product that has a national or international audience, or providing a consulting service to distant corporations. Having high-speed, reliable internet service is increasingly essential. Working with providers like the Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative and accessing grants through the PSC and USDA is advised.

- *Capitalizing on Each Community's Competitive Advantages.* Up-front market research to identify local opportunities should be completed prior to embarking on a campaign to attract and develop entrepreneurs. The UW-Extension's Center for Community Economic Development provides assistance with this type of market analysis, through online resources and through intensive, participatory community assessments.

Pursuing Tourism- and Resource-Based Development

Marquette County's natural resource base offers opportunities to **develop a healthy tourism economy**. These opportunities are based on proximity to growing urban areas, transportation accessibility, abundant and unspoiled natural resources for recreation and relaxation, clusters of surrounding tourist destinations, and improved access via cell phone and the internet. The Department of Tourism reported an increase in tourist spending in Marquette County of 102% between 1993 and 2002. Additionally, the ECWRPC, in its 2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, reported that between 2011 and 2012, tourist expenditures in Marquette County increased by 6.4%, which was the second greatest increase in the Region.

Businesses and services that support Marquette County's resource-based industries, such as agriculture, are also a related point of emphasis. Businesses supporting the agricultural economy include farm-equipment sales, service, and repair; farm product sales and distribution; mixing, blending, and storage of feeds, seeds, and fertilizers; livestock and farm commodity shipping services; processing and preserving of natural agricultural products, fruits, and vegetables; sales, service, and repair of lawn and garden equipment; and sales and distribution of nursery stock and plants.

In addition to supporting these types of businesses, the County encourages value added agricultural opportunities and promote the continued success and possible expansion of existing organizations. Local businesses help keep profits from the County's agricultural products circulating in the local economy by providing markets for farm products, income for farmers, employment for local people, and residents greater access to locally-produced goods.

There is also an opportunity for the County to strengthen existing networks and expand into **new sectors of the agricultural economy** through production of value added products and niche marketing. Examples of agricultural development opportunities and "new uses" for agricultural products include:

- Developing incentives for dairy farmers to convert to managed grazing. Increased acreage is currently a limiting factor for these farmers;
- Encouraging value-added agriculture (e.g., establishing an on-site food processing facility to package fresh produce and/or minimally process crops for sale to restaurants and local schools);

- Considering growing and marketing flowers with medicinal properties to take advantage of the increasing use of plants in pharmaceutical production;
- Marketing the agricultural heritage of the County through farm tours and increasing the visibility of the farmers' markets in Westfield and Montello through additional marketing;
- Encouraging growth in alternative livestock farming, such as bison and trout, and;
- Promoting Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs to increase local connections between the farming and the non-farming community, and to provide a guaranteed income to farmers. CSAs sell shares of produce to consumers in advance, and the consumer then receives weekly "shares" of the harvest from that farm.

Supporting Home-Based Businesses

Home-based businesses and professional services will be promoted. These uses are particularly appropriate in rural areas to supplement household income (e.g., farm families). Home-based businesses that involve telecommuting will become increasing popular for places like Marquette County, where increasing numbers of residents are traveling outside of the County for work. Home-based businesses and services range from those who supplement their income by selling a craft item or repairing a lawnmower to those who are employed by a company, but do most of their work from a home office (commonly called telecommuters). Two major trends have attributed to the rise of home occupations: the expansion of the computer and the internet and the re-structuring of the corporate workforce (e.g., downsizing, out-sourcing, "satellite" offices).

The County Zoning Ordinance facilitates home occupations, with most zoning districts allowing home occupations as a permitted use, provided the business employs only residents of the home. Marquette County could amend the County's Zoning Ordinance to allow more permissive home occupation standards, such as those set forth in the Working Lands Legislation for lands within a certified farmland preservation zoning district (like the County's AG-1 district). The Working Lands legislation allows home occupations to employ up to four non-residents and the sale of goods not produced on the premises, provided the home occupation does not detract from the agricultural use of the property.

As advised above, efforts to expand affordable broadband internet service throughout the County will also increase opportunities for home-based businesses and delivery of related training.

2. Develop a Marketing Strategy to Attract and Bring Back Residents

Recognizing stagnant population growth and a population older than the State average, the County supports a new initiative to attract new and younger residents to boost the local economy and add new vitality to local communities. This initiative should be branded with a title—such as "Marquette Life"—to add visibility and recognition. The "Marquette Life" initiative may include:

- *Designating a Committee to Oversee "Marquette Life" Initiative.* An existing committee may be designated or a new committee formed to oversee a marketing strategy to attract new residents. The committee may be comprised of local government representatives, County educators, realtors, and other area business owners. The committee could be housed out of the UW-Extension, be a subcommittee of the Marquette County Tourism and Visitors Bureau or a Chamber of Commerce, or a new independent committee.
- *Creating a Work Plan for the "Marquette Life" Initiative.* One of the first jobs of this committee would be to create a work plan. As described and organized in the Introduction and Implementation Chapters, this *Comprehensive Plan* contains ideas and recommendations that can be used for this initiative. The Connect, Active, Heritage and Accessible icons identify existing County assets or new initiatives, that once complete could be incorporated into the Marquette Life initiative. One of the first action items for the Marquette Life Committee could be prioritizing the implementation recommendations of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

- *Pursuing Staff Assistance.* Having staff support would greatly enhance the progress of the committee's work. Staffing could potentially be through University of Wisconsin-Extension staff, Economic Development Corporation staff, or even an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer. VISTA volunteers typically spend one year in full time service dedicated to building social networks and expanding community resources to fight poverty within their community.
- *Conducting a Survey of Targeted Population.* The committee would be advised to survey of the population the County is seeking to target. This may include residents who recently relocated to Marquette County, area residents within the desired age range who are native to the County, and former residents who no longer reside within the County. According to the UW-Madison Applied Population Laboratory, there were approximately 19 migrants per 100 individuals between ages 30-34 to Marquette County during the 2000s. Identifying these newcomers and what specific aspects of Marquette County made it a desirable place to relocate could be crucial in attracting more. Additionally, finding out what aspects of the "Marquette life" residents find challenging could help tailor the committee's work program.
- *Finalizing and Implementing a Work Program.* The committee and its staff should, once it completes the preliminary activities indicated above, actively market the benefits of living in Marquette County to a potential population. The development of marketing materials can both have the obvious benefits, and can help foster a dialogue among existing residents about of the benefits of living in Marquette County and recognition of the County's unique resources. The County's strengths, identified in Figure 9.3, could be starting points for marketing materials. The County could also use the Marquette Life initiative to evaluate and review proposed projects, budgetary policy, and allocation of County resources, perhaps by evaluating against the following questions: Does the proposal highlight or expand on one of the County's existing resources? Does the proposal improve the County's quality of life or offerings? Does the proposal connect Marquette County's communities, and the County to the greater region? Does the proposal foster a sense of community or connectedness among residents?
- *Considering a "Welcome to Marquette" Program.* The "Marquette Life" committee may pursue development of a program to welcome new residents to the County. So often in rural communities it is difficult to make social connections, find appropriate services, and take full advantage of community resources. Working with area school districts, University of Wisconsin-Extension staff, and area realtors, the committee could identify new residents and provide them with appropriate

Learning from other Rural Communities

Iron County, Wisconsin faces some of the same challenges as Marquette County. Recognizing a declining and aging population, the County's University of Wisconsin-Extension staff helped launch an asset based economic development program. The program consisted of surveying the targeted demographic to ascertain what was viewed as the community's strengths and made it a desirable place to live. After collecting and analyzing the survey results, the County created four separate workgroups to focus on different community development programs with the goal to attract and retain young residents in Iron County and the Gogebic Range:

- *Strengthen our Niche.* Dedicated to improving the County's existing assets.
- *Promote our Strengths.* A workgroup dedicated to promoting and advertising the assets of Iron County and Gogebic Range.
- *Retain Young Adults.* A social group dedicated to retaining young adults in Iron County. Renamed Live LiFE, the group meets monthly and maintains a webpage (www.felivelife.com) and Facebook page.
- *Retain Students.* An initiative to help Iron County area students recognize and embrace the assets that the County has to offer.

A program to retain and attract young adults is a long-term initiative. Iron County began its work in the late 2000s and is looking forward to the 2020 Census to determine the efficacy of the program.

information on area amenities, social groups (such as the Young Professionals group described below), and other resources.

3. EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNGER RESIDENTS

It is in the interest of Marquette County, its communities, and its school districts to work together to attract, retain and bring back younger residents. Having a more balanced age structure and steadily growing population ensures the future vitality of the County, including job growth, business success, and the health of area school districts.

Younger residents often have not built social capital or social networks in their new communities. This is particularly problematic in rural communities where business, careers, and public service opportunities are often spread by word of mouth rather than through more formal communication channels. Additionally, Millennials (individuals born between 1980 and the mid 2000's) are noted for the value they place on community and service. Lack of social connections and networks may deter individuals from staying in Marquette County. Building connections between young people and the greater community will increase the likelihood of retaining a younger demographic.

While the "Marquette Life" marketing initiative, described previously, aims to publicize the unique benefits that Marquette County has to offer, the County also seeks to make these new residents permanent members of the community by expanding the social and professional opportunities available to them.

Marquette County can learn from successful initiatives in other rural areas to retain young people. The following ideas may assist in developing an initiative to retain younger, professional, entrepreneurial residents:

- *Forming a Marquette County Young Professionals Group.* Such a group could be comprised of interested individuals both native recently relocated to Marquette County. The Young Professionals group would build social and professional relationships by a combination of educational, volunteer, and social activities. UW-Extension staff and/or the "Marquette Life" committee described above could engage and facilitate this Young Professionals group, but it should have the freedom to pursue initiatives it determines to be a priority. In other places, similar Young Professionals groups engage in social activities such as bowling, skiing, hiking, and a book club while other groups prefer to concentrate on volunteer work such as youth mentoring, adopt-a-highway, and community meal programs. Networking and educational opportunities should also be a key component of the group.
- *Developing Mentor Relationships.* Mentor relationships allow one-on-one interaction and accountability. Development of a mentoring program among young professionals and more established professionals and officials may be considered. This would allow for each young professional to establish contacts outside of their daily activities and the ability to learn from an established and successful individual within Marquette County.
- *Increasing Student Connections to the Community.* Young individuals who recognize the County's assets and feel strong ties to the community are more likely to stay and return to Marquette County after pursuing higher education elsewhere. The County, area school districts, TREDC, and/or UW-Extension could partner on educational and social activities that build connections between students, civic institutions, and local businesses. These activities could include a youth grant committee (dedicated to fund raising and providing community grants), youth members on chambers of commerce and local governing boards, education and art activities that take advantage of and highlight Marquette County's scenic natural resources, or even creation of a high school leadership group dedicated to improving the community. Chapter Three: Natural Resources outlines additional ideas on how to integrate education and the unique resources of Marquette County.
- *Strategically Using Social Media.* The County, in conjunction with area chambers of commerce, the Marquette Tourism and Visitors Bureau, and the Young Professionals group, could strategically use social media to share community events, and provide information on the "Welcome to Marquette"

program and the Young Professionals group ideas described above. By using Facebook, an independent Young Professionals Group webpage, and Twitter, the County can portray digitally that it not only is a good place for younger individuals and families to live, but that they are a welcome and wanted addition to the community.

4. Establish and Maintain an Internet Presence and Message for Economic Development

Currently, the Marquette County Economic Development Corporation has no presence on the internet, beyond its indirect presence in affiliation with the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation. Businesses, site selectors, and entrepreneurs increasingly rely on the internet to conduct their initial screening of potential development locations before formerly contacting property owners, brokers, or the community/county itself for more information. This may mean that the County is not even in the game when it comes to attracting new businesses and industries.

The County, working in tandem with the Economic Development Corporations, may develop a straightforward economic development web site. This site could be part of Marquette County's or the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation's current web site. A County economic development web site should:

- Summarize the County's vision, assets, and strengths for economic development, as expressed in this *Comprehensive Plan* and including maps and graphics in this *Plan*.
- Provide County and local policies, plans, and general locations for economic development, again through this *Plan* and local comprehensive plans.
- Provide "community profile" information to help prospective businesses learn more about Marquette County.
- Contain information on and a link to the Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporation's website (www.tcredc.org) and the Marquette County Tourism & Visitors Bureau website (www.travelmarquettecounty.com).
- Provide a contact person with the County or Tri-County EDC for economic development inquiries, and links to contacts at the City of Montello and Marquette County's villages.
- Provide a link to properties in Marquette County listed on www.inwisconsin.com database. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation maintains this as search engine listing buildings, sites, and businesses for sale in Wisconsin. Additionally, the Economic Development Corporations and municipalities within the County should encourage listing of available properties on this State's database.

5. Plan for an Adequate Supply of Land for Commercial and Industrial Uses

The County's Planned Land Use map **(Map 7) identifies land for future commercial and industrial development**. For the city and villages, the County supports downtown revitalization and redevelopment, as well as appropriate expansion of other commercial and industrial areas where utilities and infrastructure are already in place. Furthermore, most new commercial and industrial development in the County is planned for sites adjacent to the villages and city where required infrastructure—including sanitary sewer and roads—is available or may be extended. New economic development activity is also planned around interchanges along Interstate 39. In the long-term, some local comprehensive plans identified areas for either an expanded industrial park or a new industrial park. Additionally, small-scale retail businesses, services, and light industrial uses are planned for several rural centers and crossroad areas throughout the County.

There is a shortage of improved, shovel-ready sites in Marquette County's industrial parks (18 acres at time of writing). This means that the County and its communities may not even be "in the game" when an industry is considering relocating or starting up. The County **encourages its city and villages to expand the supply of available and improved industrial and commercial land.** The County or TREDC could also explore the possibility of a County business park, patterned after other county

business parks found along Interstate 39 like the Portage County Business Park. The challenge often lays in financing new or expanded industrial parks. Often, expansion will be possible only through the successful pursuit of State and federal grants, such as those identified earlier in this chapter, and/or local financing tools like tax incremental financing. Communication services, like high-speed internet, should be included with sewer, water, and new roads as critical infrastructure within new and expanded industrial parks.

Local communities are encouraged to **specialize in a specific economic development approach** based on their relative advantages, rather than having each community compete with one another for the same limited economic development opportunities. For example, Westfield, Oxford, Endeavor, and Packwaukee benefit from Interstate 39 visibility and access, which suggests a stronger focus on industry and highway commercial development. In contrast, the City of Montello and Village of Neshkoro benefit from historic downtowns, their roles as gathering places, and the surrounding lakes, which suggests a stronger focus on tourism, niche retail, and professional service opportunities.

6. Advance Revitalization and Redevelopment Efforts

Opportunities exist to retain existing businesses, expand local entrepreneurs, and recruit additional firms to existing downtowns and other redevelopment sites, including brownfields. The County supports the villages, City, and the Town of Packwaukee in downtown revitalization efforts. The sidebar provides revitalization "tips". Utilizing UW-Extension community development expertise, the following programs may be considered to advance redevelopment:

- *Business Improvement District.* A BID is an option available to the County's villages and city. Typically, business properties included in a BID contribute to programs designed to promote, manage, maintain and develop the district. Special assessments on businesses within the BID raise the funds to implement a variety of programs to improve the quality of the district's business climate.
- *Wisconsin Main Street Program.* This Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation administered program provides financial assistance in the form of technical support and training to help communities reinvigorate their downtowns as community and business centers. The program has a successful track record in creating new jobs and attracting businesses.

Revitalization and Redevelopment Initiatives

Various initiatives may be considered to revitalize and redevelop Marquette County's downtowns, aging commercial and industrial areas, and brownfields for productive economic use:

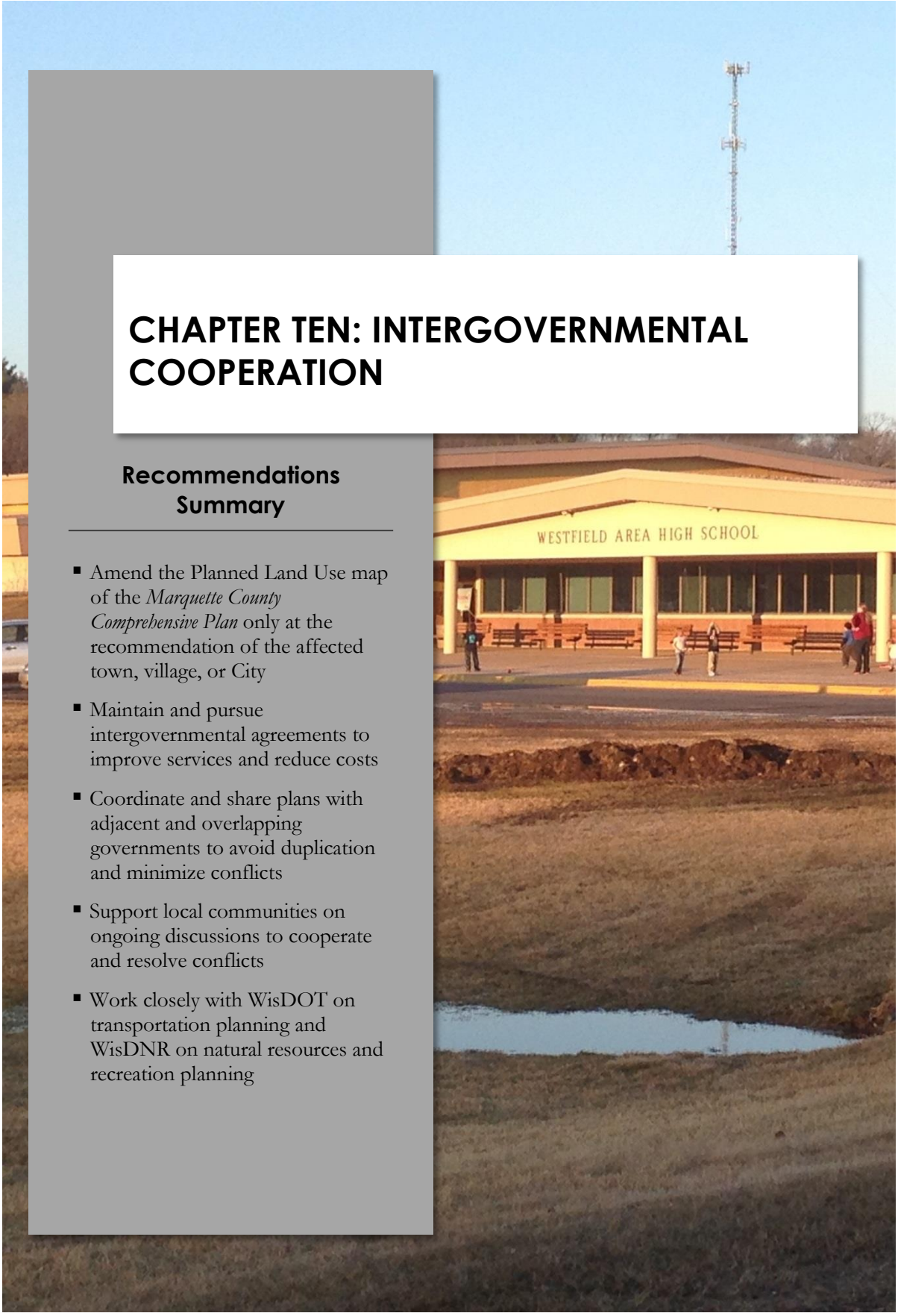
- Make remediated brownfield sites available to small businesses and start-ups, or for downtown housing.
- Complete an analysis of each community's retail mix. Identifying the number and type of retail businesses in a village or city is one way to pinpoint downtown business opportunities. In a small community, a single retail business might provide a variety of services.
- Promote entrepreneurship and workforce development by providing access to educational opportunities and assisting start-up businesses.
- Consider appropriate locations in downtowns to develop business incubator space to encourage small, local start-up businesses.
- Create, where appropriate, interpretive signage and other way finding tools to direct bikers, ATV users, snowmobilers, and other tourists to interesting locations in the downtown.
- Coordinate marketing of downtown businesses for special events and daily marketing to increase foot traffic in the downtown.
- Pursue opportunities to retain and help grow already-existing businesses.
- Encourage the development of a "buy local" campaign to raise awareness of the importance of spending locally and to increase the amount of local trade dollars captured by the community.

- *Brownfield Clean-up Initiatives*. The County and local governments should require proper environmental assessment and any required clean-up before final approval of a development proposal on any property identified as possibly having environmental contamination. In most cases, basic environmental assessments have yet to be performed to determine the type and extent of contamination. This is a critical first step in ultimately reusing brownfields. Several State and federal grant programs are available to assist with environmental assessments.
- *Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts*. TIF provides up-front public expenditures for land, infrastructure, and other incentives for development. The resulting development pays for such initial expenditures over time through dedicated property tax revenue. TIF has been used successfully to spearhead redevelopment initiatives, particularly in downtowns where redevelopment may happen only with incentives.

7. Ensure High Quality Design for Commercial and Industrial Projects

Economic development should not only be focused on job creation, but also on ensuring that new business, office or manufacturing facilities are **designed in a way that complements community character**, increases tax base, and ensures lasting quality. In many cases, and often intentionally, nonresidential uses locate on highly visible sites which can dramatically affect the image of the County and local communities. The following design standards should be used in the development and review of new commercial and industrial uses, particularly those in highly visible locations like the Interstate corridor and at community entryways:

- High-quality signage treatment that is based on the area of building frontage, road frontage and façade area. The use of monument signs should be encouraged instead of pole signs.
- Retention of existing trees where possible.
- High quality landscaping treatment of bufferyards, street frontages, paved areas and building foundations.
- Intensive activity areas such as building entrances, service and loading areas, parking lots, and trash receptacle storage areas oriented away from less intensive land uses.
- Parking lots landscaped with perimeter landscaping and/or landscaped islands, along with screening (hedges, berms, trees, and decorative walls) to limit views from streets and adjacent residential uses.
- Parking to the sides and rear of buildings wherever possible, rather than having all parking in the front.
- Interconnected parking lots and driveways to facilitate on-site movement.
- Location of loading docks, dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and outdoor storage areas behind buildings and complete screening through use of landscaping, walls, and architectural features.
- Illumination from lighting kept on site through use of cut-off, shoebox fixtures.
- High-quality building materials and architectural details.
- Canopies, awnings, trellises, bays, and windows to add visual interest to building facades.
- Variations in building height and roof lines.



CHAPTER TEN: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Recommendations Summary

- Amend the Planned Land Use map of the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* only at the recommendation of the affected town, village, or City
- Maintain and pursue intergovernmental agreements to improve services and reduce costs
- Coordinate and share plans with adjacent and overlapping governments to avoid duplication and minimize conflicts
- Support local communities on ongoing discussions to cooperate and resolve conflicts
- Work closely with WisDOT on transportation planning and WisDNR on natural resources and recreation planning

Intergovernmental cooperation has been a hallmark of Marquette County's planning processes, first resulting in the 2005 *Comprehensive Plan* and numerous local plans and now resulting in this 2015 updated *Comprehensive Plan*. Through this plan update process, several local governments reviewed and updated their planned land use maps and over 60 local officials representing each municipality in Marquette County attended quadrant meetings focused on the comprehensive and farmland preservation plan update.

This Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter:

- Analyzes the relationship between Marquette County and adjacent and overlapping governmental jurisdictions, the region, and the State.
- Includes goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations for joint planning and decision making.
- Identifies known existing or potential conflicts between known plans of different governmental units; and describes processes to resolve these conflicts.

A. EXISTING REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

The following describes the local governments in Marquette County, and other regional and State jurisdictions operating within or adjacent to the County. Map 1, presented in this *Plan's* Introduction and Summary, shows the boundaries of the various jurisdictions.

1. MARQUETTE COUNTY

Marquette County covers 455 square miles and is located in the south central part of Wisconsin. The County is situated about 50 miles north of Madison, 110 miles northwest of Milwaukee, and 200 miles northwest of Chicago. The County's estimated 2014 population is 15,399 residents. **Marquette County is made up of 19 local units of government**: 14 towns, four villages, and one City. All of these local jurisdictions have less than 1,500 people, with only a few exceeding 1,000 people. The primary traffic artery running north-south through the County is Interstate 39. The County has a sizeable seasonal population, with over a quarter of its housing listed as "seasonal." It is also home to several summer camps. In addition to this *Comprehensive Plan,* which directly incorporates its farmland preservation plan, the County has an outdoor recreation plan, land and water resources management plan, erosion control plan, zoning ordinance, land division ordinance, and highway access control plan.

Currently, the County is not party to any plans or agreements under §66.0307 or §66.0309 of Wisconsin Statutes. The County is party to general cooperative agreements for fire, police, rescue, road maintenance, and other services with several towns, villages and City under §66.0301, which are incorporated by reference into this *Comprehensive Plan*. Marquette County is also part of the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation, which was formed jointly with Waushara and Green Lake counties in the mid-2000s.

2. CITY OF MONTELLO

Located in the central part of the County, the **City of Montello** is the largest incorporated area and serves as the County seat. Per the State Department of Administration (DOA), the City's estimated 2014 population is 1,485 residents. The City has a comprehensive plan, park and recreation plan, land division ordinance, and zoning ordinance. In 2005, the City of Montello prepared its comprehensive plan in coordination with other Marquette County communities, and had begun an update at time of writing. There are no apparent existing or potential conflicts between the long-range plans of the City of Montello and this County *Plan*.

3. VILLAGES OF ENDEAVOR, WESTFIELD, OXFORD AND NESHKORO

There are four villages dispersed across the County, each serving as trade centers for the surrounding countryside. **Endeavor** (DOA estimates 461 residents in 2013) is located in the southwestern corner of the County. **Westfield** (1,260 residents) is in the northwestern corner. **Neshkoro** (429 residents) is in the northeastern corner. **Oxford** (607 residents) is on the County's west side. Westfield is the only city or village in Marquette County that experienced an increase in population between 2010 and 2013; the

others had slight decreases. All four villages prepared their 2005 comprehensive plans in coordination with other Marquette County communities. There are no apparent existing or potential conflicts between the long-range plans of these four villages and this County *Comprehensive Plan*. Some limited differences between village and adjoining town plans will be discussed later in this chapter. The villages were each either updating or reviewing their comprehensive plans at time of writing.

4. Towns

The County's 14 towns are **Buffalo, Crystal Lake, Douglas, Harris, Mecan, Montello, Moundville, Neshkoro, Newton, Oxford, Packwaukee, Shields, Springfield, and Westfield.** The estimated 2013 populations in these towns range from 486 to 1,411 residents. In general, town population has remained relatively constant since the 2010 Census. Within a few towns, there are unincorporated "villages" (sometimes called hamlets) at major crossroads or along lakefronts. These include Packwaukee, Harrisville, Budsin, Germania, and Briggsville. They typically include a cluster of homes, a church, one or more businesses, and maybe a park.

Ten towns have adopted the County's general zoning ordinance and districts. The Town of Buffalo adopted a town zoning ordinance in 2011; as of 2015 administration of that ordinances contracted with Marquette County. The remaining three towns (Springfield, Shields, and Oxford) are not subject to regulation under a general zoning ordinance, though Oxford was considering adoption at time of writing. The County's shoreland and floodplain zoning ordinances are in effect in all towns. Twelve of the towns adopted comprehensive plans as part of the 2005 countywide planning process; several towns updated their planned land use maps as part of the 2015 process. There are no existing or potential conflicts between the long-range plans of these towns and this County *Plan*. Some limited differences between village and adjoining town plans will be discussed later in this chapter.

5. Surrounding Counties

The four counties surrounding Marquette County are all more populated and have higher development densities. Marquette County is bordered to the south by **Columbia** County (DOA estimated 2014 population of 56,795), to the east by **Green Lake** County (estimated 2014 population 19,114), to the west by **Adams** County (estimated 2014 population 20,844), and to the north by **Waushara** County (estimated 2014 population 24,511). Existing or potential conflicts between the long-range plans of these counties and this *Marquette County Plan* are discussed later in this chapter.

6. Regional Planning Jurisdiction

Marquette County is in the **East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's** (ECWRPC) planning jurisdiction, although the County is not an official member of the Commission. The ECWRPC is the comprehensive planning agency for the counties of Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Menominee, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago. Planning services provided by the Commission include comprehensive land use planning; transportation improvement and corridor planning; open space, recreational and environmental planning; economic development; demographic information; technical assistance to local governments; Geographic Information Services; and aerial photography distribution.

The ECWRPC adopted a Year 2030 Comprehensive Plan in 2008 for the ten regional counties. This plan is comprised of thematic vision statements pertaining to each of the nine required comprehensive plan elements. Themes include providing educational activities and increasing public awareness; increasing intergovernmental and public/private sector cooperation; and developing integrated, proactive, and sustainable planning. The ECWRPC Year 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes a regional future land use map that is compatible with Marquette County's Planned Land Use map presented in Chapter Five: Land Use.

7. Important State and Federal Agency Jurisdictions

There are several State agencies that affect planning in Marquette County. The County is located within the Wisconsin **Department of Transportation's** (WisDOT) North Central Transportation Region, with

its regional office located in Wisconsin Rapids. The County is located in the Wisconsin **Department of Natural Resources'** (WisDNR) Northeast Region, with its regional office in Green Bay. The nearest WisDNR Northeast Region service centers are located in Oshkosh and Horicon. The **University of Wisconsin Extension** office is located in the City of Montello in the Marquette County Service Center Building and serves as an educational resource for County residents. Since there is a National Wildlife Refuge located within the County, the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** also maintains a presence. There are no apparent existing or potential conflicts between the long-range plans of State and federal agencies and this County *Plan*.

8. SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Marquette County is served by five public school districts. The two districts that serve the majority of County residents are the **Montello School District** (serving the central and southeastern portions of the County) and the **Westfield School District** (serving the north and northwest part of the County). The Princeton School District serves portions of the towns of Neshkoro and Mecan; the Portage Community School District serves portions of the towns of Moundville, Douglas, and the Village of Endeavor; the Wisconsin Dells School District serves residents in the far southwest corner of the Town of Douglas; and the Markesan School District serves a few households in the Town of Montello's far southeast corner.

Marquette County is part of the 6-County South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board. This program provides some funds to the County for this program. Marquette County is within the Madison Area Technical College (MATC) District which offers education in liberal studies and over 100 other fields.

There are no apparent existing or potential conflicts between the long-range plans of these educational districts and this County *Plan*.

B. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION GOAL, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES & PROGRAMS

Goal: Establish and maintain mutually beneficial intergovernmental relations with other governmental jurisdictions, both within and outside the County

Objectives:

1. Work with local governments, State agencies, regional planning agencies, and school districts on land use and community development issues of mutual concern.
2. Engage in and support processes to resolve conflicts between the plans of governments with overlapping jurisdictions.
3. Encourage villages, the City, and towns to enter into joint planning initiatives, including formal intergovernmental agreements where necessary.
4. Continue, enter, and promote shared public service agreements where such agreements will provide improved services at equal or lower costs.

5. Cooperate with local communities and neighboring jurisdictions to better inform land use decisions, coordinate growth management and preservation efforts, and provide for more efficient delivery of services.

Policies and Programs:

1. **Work with other government agencies** to implement the objectives, policies, and recommendations included this *Plan* that depend or would benefit from intergovernmental cooperation.
2. Work to **resolve actual and potential conflicts** between County and local plans through informal discussions, cooperative initiatives, and amendments to this *Comprehensive Plan* where appropriate.
3. **Cooperate with the school districts** on ongoing district and planning activities. Participate in collaborative facilities and recreation planning efforts.
4. Encourage and **support towns that have not yet adopted zoning ordinances** to do so.
5. Consider the recommendations of local comprehensive plans when amending and updating **other, more detailed, County plans** (e.g., Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Transportation Improvement Programs).
6. **Amend the Planned Land Use map** (Map 7) of the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* **only at the recommendation of the affected town**, village or City, and amend other parts of the *Comprehensive Plan* only after providing local governments and others with the opportunity to provide comments.
7. Continue to provide **towns a regular role in County zoning** and subdivision ordinance changes and day-to-day land use decisions.
8. Continue to work with the UW-Extension on **educational forums and ongoing intergovernmental communication** designed to inform local officials of opportunities related to land use, growth management, and intergovernmental relationships. Focus these efforts on implementing the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*.
9. Promote **cooperative planning among neighboring towns and villages/cities**. Encourage land use and boundary agreements to formalize cooperative plans between adjoining cities/villages and towns, where necessary.
10. Encourage local governments to consider **joint service agreements** where consolidating, coordinating, or sharing services would result in better services or cost savings.
11. **Work with WisDOT** to ensure that Marquette County's transportation system is coordinated with neighboring communities, the region, and that the County's interests are well served when major transportation facilities or programs are proposed.
12. **Work with WisDNR** on natural resource issues that apply to the County and local communities.

C. DETAILED INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION PROGRAMS

1. ENCOURAGE COOPERATIVE LAND USE PLANNING

The Planned Land Use map (Map 7) included in Chapter Five: Land Use is a "patchwork" of the recommendations of each locally adopted planned land use map. Further, nearly all of the future land use recommendations made by each town, village, and the City are consistent with each other. These two facts will help achieve the desired future land use pattern within the County. In cases where minor differences exist between local plans at border areas, the County encourages continued discussion between the affected municipalities. Eventually reaching a mutually agreed-upon future land use pattern provides the most certainty to the communities, land owners, and potential developers; minimizes costly land use disputes; and provides better direction for related County land use decisions.

Over time, different wishes for future land use could emerge in response to local community desires, new development proposals, or otherwise changing conditions. This *Plan* is a framework for addressing existing and potential differences that may arise over time. Also, steps for amending local comprehensive plans and this County *Plan* in the future are laid out in Chapter Eleven: Implementation.

2. SUPPORT INTERGOVERNMENTAL BOUNDARY AND LAND USE AGREEMENTS WHERE NECESSARY

Through this *Plan,* the County promotes **ongoing cooperation related to municipal boundary and land use issues at the edges of towns and adjacent cities/villages**. Decisions about municipal boundaries are usually linked to land use and utility service decisions. Towns and neighboring villages/City should work toward mutually agreeable solutions for long-term municipal boundaries and land use. Continuing cooperation on comprehensive plans is one good way to achieve coordination among neighboring communities. Going further, plans can be formalized through intergovernmental boundary and land use agreements. Formal intergovernmental agreements may cover agreed future land uses in edge areas, set long term municipal boundaries, or set utility expansion limits. Such agreements help minimize potential for future conflicts as time passes, local officials change, and initial ideals and reasons for cooperation can get murkier.

There are two main **formats for intergovernmental agreements** under Wisconsin Statutes. The first is available under Section 66.0301, which allows two or more communities to agree to cooperate for the purpose of furnishing services or the joint exercise of any power or duty authorized under State law. While this is the most commonly used approach, a "66.0301" agreement is limited by the restriction that the municipalities must be able to exercise co-equal powers. Another format for an intergovernmental agreement is a "cooperative plan" under Section 66.0307 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This approach is more labor intensive and ultimately requires State approval of the agreement, but does not have some of the limitations of the "66.0301" agreement format.

3. ENGAGE IN COLLABORATIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLANNING

This *Comprehensive Plan* makes several recommendations to coordinate transportation improvement efforts at the local, County, regional, and State level because **transportation system planning requires a multi-jurisdictional approach**. Roads are critical to rural communities, but communities often do not have the resources and expertise to maintain the road network on their own. Furthermore, many of the major thoroughfares for local communities are County highways. Finally, State and Interstate highways form the backbone of the County's transportation system. Long-

term planning for those roadways requires County and local cooperation with WisDOT. Collaborative transportation initiatives are explored in Chapter Six: Transportation.

4. Coordinate on Community Services and Facility Provision

Consolidating and coordinating services and facilities between communities results in cost savings and better services. Cooperative service agreements are particularly important in the current era of diminishing government financial resources. Collaborative community service and facility ideas are explored in Chapter Seven: Utilities and Community Facilities.

5. Cooperate on Economic and Housing Development

Intergovernmental cooperation and countywide approaches are advised for sound and effective economic development. Through this *Plan*, the County promotes partnerships and cooperative programs that encourage efficient sharing of resources to advance the County's economic health and provide decent housing opportunities. The Marquette County and Tri-County Regional Economic Development Corporations will be the center point for many of these intergovernmental initiatives. Collaborative housing and economic development initiatives are explored in Chapters Eight and Nine.

D. Potential Conflicts and Processes to Resolve Them

This *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* must identify existing and potential conflicts between the County and other governmental units, and describe processes to resolve such conflicts. The 2005 countywide planning process and 2015 *Comprehensive Plan* update process were designed to avoid and minimize potential conflicts. However, numerous government entities affect planning and land use in Marquette County. Some minor differences remained following the completion and update of local and County comprehensive plans.

The County encourages towns, villages and the City to continue to coordinate with each other and the County on land use planning. This should include ongoing discussions and at times formal agreements between adjacent communities and overlapping units of government in regards to planning for future land use types; promoting the quality, character, and intensity of development; mitigating adverse impacts between neighboring uses; and deciding on the best jurisdiction and service arrangements for new development.

The following sections address remaining or potential conflict areas and potential resolution processes, with a particular focus on potential future land use conflicts.

1. Between the County Plan and Local Plans

The 2015 update to the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* emphasized involvement at both the County and local levels and included greater than 20 meetings at the municipal level. Because of the careful design of the process, there are not existing or anticipated conflicts between the County *Plan* and local comprehensive plans.

During the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update process, each local municipality was offered the opportunity to update their planned land use maps, and possibly designate farmland preservation areas. Local planned land use maps were then, **incorporated without change into the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.*** Specifically, the County's Planned Land Use map (Map 7) is a "quilt" of the locally approved planned land use maps. As a result, this County *Plan* and the local plans share an emphasis on preservation of rural character; agriculture, and natural resources; cooperative transportation system improvement and planning; and intensive development generally directed to the villages, City, and interchange areas. In the few instances where there are conflicts between the plans of neighboring village and town planned land use maps, the County *Plan* identifies those areas as "Local Plan Difference Areas" on the Planned Land Use map (Map 7).

2. Between This and Other County Plans and Policies

This *Comprehensive Plan* is consistent with previously adopted County plans and policies, with a few exceptions, based largely on the fact that some of those plans are out of date and have not been updated.

As a near-term implementation strategy, the **County intends to review and revise the AG-1 zoning district**, associated regulations, and the County zoning map to reflect the recommendations contained in Chapter Four: Agricultural Resources and Chapter 91, Wisconsin Statutes**.** This effort will be completed in close coordination with towns that have designated farmland preservation areas within their community.

Several town plans also advise new initiatives that Marquette County should consider as it completes updates to other plans, including the Marquette County Outdoor Recreation Plan. County staff or consultants assigned to these various plan update efforts should refer to the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* and town comprehensive plans when preparing such updates.

3. Among Town Land Use Plans in Marquette County

By having numerous town comprehensive plans prepared simultaneously in the early 2000s and the County actively engaging local municipalities during the 2015 update process, conflicts between land use policies and plans between adjoining towns was greatly minimized. However, points of conflict may result where one town allows land uses near its borders that are more intensive than those allowed within the neighboring town. This may be of particular concern in areas without zoning. The affected towns, working with the County as requested, should work to resolve these potential conflicts. Resolution may be achieved through continued intergovernmental dialogue, consideration of zoning by un-zoned towns, consideration of a comprehensive plan for un-planned towns; and/or minor amendments to existing town plans and this *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.*

4. Between Towns and Villages/Cities in Marquette County

Through the initial 2005 planning process and the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update, neighboring communities undertook discussions to resolve potential differences between local comprehensive plans before their adoption. This approach generally succeeded. The philosophy underlying this multi-jurisdictional planning process suggested that locally adopted plans be incorporated without change into the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan.* However, this became more complicated in the limited instances where there remained differences between the adopted planned land use maps of neighboring jurisdictions.

Figure 10.1 summarizes **the relationships between abutting town and village/City plans**. The figure identifies where differences between adopted plans occur, key border issues, and suggested steps to resolution of existing and potential future conflicts.

Figure 10.1: Relationships between Local Comprehensive Plans

Town and Village/City Pair	"Planned Land Use Difference Areas" on Map 7	Key Border Issues	Suggested Steps to Resolve Issues
City of Montello/ Town of Montello	None	▪ Commercial and industrial development ▪ Possible utility extensions ▪ Residential development on south and west sides of City	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions ▪ Possible intergovernmental agreement
Village of Neshkoro/ Town of Neshkoro	None	▪ Commercial and industrial development north of Village ▪ Possible utility extensions	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions
Village of Endeavor/ Town of Moundville	▪ East side of CTH CX in Section 8: Town planned area for Single Family Residential – Rural and Village planned same area for mix of General Business, Mixed Residential, and Single Family Residential - Sewered. ▪ Lands abutting west side of I-39: Town planned area for Agriculture (1 home per 40 acres) and the Village planned same area as Rural Lands (1 home per 10 acres).	▪ Future location, density, and sanitary treatment for residential development ▪ Location of commercial and multi-family residential development ▪ Maximum density of residential development in rural/agricultural areas	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions
Village of Oxford/ Town of Oxford	▪ East side of Village, north of STH 82: Town planned area for Rural Lands (1 home per 10 acres) and Village planned same area for General Business with buffer to the north. ▪ Lands abutting west side of the Village, south of STH 82: Town planned area for Single Family Residential – Rural and Village planned same area for Single Family Residential – Sewered.	▪ Location of commercial development. ▪ Rural land preservation. ▪ Density of residential development. ▪ Possible utility extensions.	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions ▪ Special intergovernmental meetings when a development proposal is under consideration
Village of Westfield/ Town of Westfield	▪ None	▪ Village plan does not anticipate expansion into town	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions

Town and Village/City Pair	"Planned Land Use Difference Areas" on Map 7	Key Border Issues	Suggested Steps to Resolve Issues
Village of Westfield/ Town of Harris	None	▪ Commercial and neighborhood development east of I-39 ▪ Possible sewer extension	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions ▪ Possible intergovernmental agreement
Village of Westfield/ Town of Springfield	None	▪ Residential development north of Village ▪ Possible sewer extension ▪ Agricultural operation expansion in Town	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions ▪ Possible intergovernmental agreement
Village of Westfield/ Town of Newton	None	None	▪ Ongoing intergovernmental discussions

Continued intergovernmental discussions are an effective approach for resolving the remaining differences between local plans, and to deal with future border issues. **Formal intergovernmental agreements**, described earlier this chapter, are another, more long-term approach. Local communities are encouraged to amend their comprehensive plans in the future to carry out the results of informal discussions or formal agreements regarding the above plan differences.

5. Between the Marquette County Plan and Plans of Adjoining Counties and Towns

The following is a summary of existing land use plans, current planning efforts and potential conflicts in neighboring counties:

Green Lake County (east of Marquette County)

At time of writing, Green Lake County was also completing a comprehensive plan and farmland preservation plan update. The Towns of Seneca and Saint Marie adjoining Marquette County are not subject to regulation under a general zoning ordinance. Green Lake County is currently preparing a farmland preservation plan map which designates all parcels greater than 8 acres in area and containing more than 50% working lands for as farmland preservation areas. Provided Green Lake County adopts an updated plan in alignment with this criterion, there should be no conflicts between Marquette and Green Lake County's planning documents.

Waushara County (north of Marquette County)

Waushara County adopted a comprehensive plan in 2009. The Waushara County Comprehensive Plan was prepared in a bottom up, locally driven process and is a compilation of the locally adopted comprehensive plans. The towns of Marion, Dakota, Richford and Coloma, which adjoin Marquette County, participated in the County's multijurisdictional comprehensive planning effort. Generally, lands adjacent to Marquette County in the Towns of Coloma, Dakota and Richford are situated in the General Agriculture zoning district. The adjoining Town of Marion has a higher existing and planned density of development, with most of the Town situated in development based zoning districts, and the majority of land adjacent to Marquette County situated in the Agriculture Residential zoning district.

Waushara County adopted a farmland preservation plan in December 2014. The Waushara County Farmland Preservation Plan classifies the vast majority of lands adjacent to Marquette County as farmland preservation areas. There are no foreseeable conflicts between Waushara County's land use plans and this *Marquette County Plan*.

Adams County (west of Marquette County)

Adams County and all of its local communities completed comprehensive plans in 2006. The Adams County Comprehensive Plan emphasizes preservation of rural character and recognizes the economic impact of agriculture and forestry land uses. The majority of land adjacent to Marquette County is planned for agricultural and forestry use, with some rural residential use in the Town of Lincoln. Of the towns bordering Marquette County, New Chester, Jackson, and New Haven were under Adams County zoning. The Town of Lincoln regulates land use through its own zoning ordinance. There are no apparent existing or anticipated future conflicts among the plans and policies of Adams County, its local communities, and this *Marquette County Plan.*

As of 2015, Adams County was working with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to update its farmland preservation plan.

Columbia County (south of Marquette County)

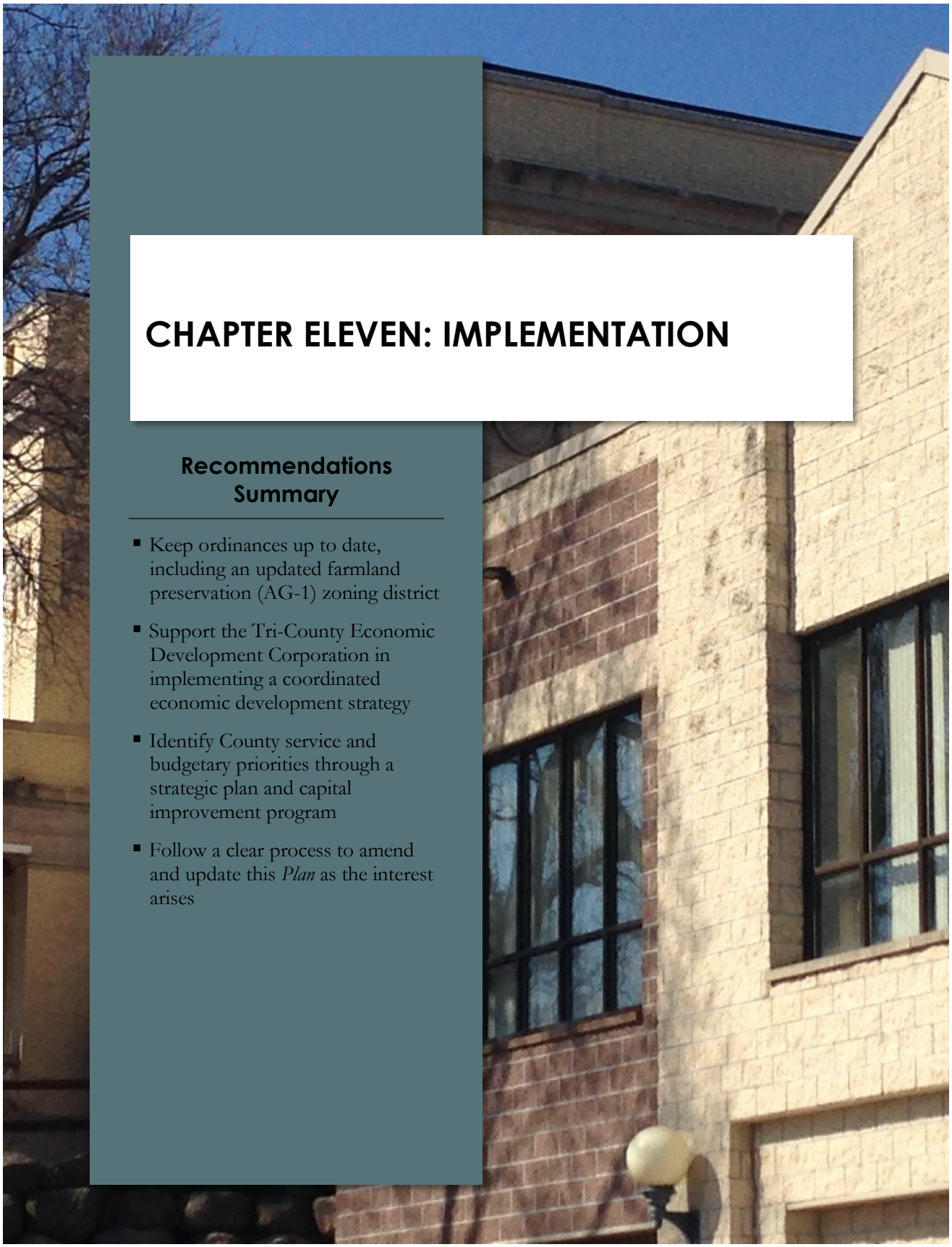
In 2007, the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan 2030 was prepared in conjunction with comprehensive plans for most of the towns in Columbia County, and also reflected city and village plans. The Columbia County Comprehensive Plan 2030 includes an "Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources" element; a future land use map that identifies planned "Agricultural and Other Open Space Areas," and policies for limited residential development within such areas. In 2013, the County adopted amendments to the Columbia County Comprehensive Plan 2030 to ensure full consistency with its new farmland preservation plan, which itself was adopted as a detailed component of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The vast majority of lands adjoining Marquette County are designated as farmland preservation areas. There are no apparent existing or anticipated future conflicts among the plans and policies of Columbia County, its local communities, and this *Marquette County Plan.*

Where existing or potential future incompatibilities between plans or policies exist, **Marquette County intends to cooperate with neighboring counties and communities and other units of government to minimize and resolve any potential intergovernmental conflicts and ensure that the policies and recommendations of this *Plan* are implemented.** The process to resolve intergovernmental conflicts might include regular informal or formal intergovernmental discussions, reviewing and commenting on the plans of neighboring counties and local communities, and sharing information (including a copy of draft plans) with neighboring communities and counties.

6. Among County, School District, Regional, and State Plans

There are no known conflicts between the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* and the various adopted and known plans and policies of other listed jurisdictions. These plan documents were reviewed as part of this planning process. This *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* advises future coordination in the planning of those various jurisdictions. Also, the County advises that the policies and plans of these other agencies may be updated and enhanced in the future to incorporate some of the recommendations in this *Comprehensive Plan*. For example, the *Plan* advises some improvements to the State highway system to address local concerns. The County will also attempt to assure that the ECWRPC considers the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* in its relevant planning documents.

Page intentionally left blank



CHAPTER ELEVEN: IMPLEMENTATION

Recommendations Summary

- Keep ordinances up to date, including an updated farmland preservation (AG-1) zoning district
- Support the Tri-County Economic Development Corporation in implementing a coordinated economic development strategy
- Identify County service and budgetary priorities through a strategic plan and capital improvement program
- Follow a clear process to amend and update this *Plan* as the interest arises

This final chapter provides a **roadmap for specific actions to fully implement the *Plan's* recommendations**. This chapter generally does not cover day-to-day decisions. Instead, it identifies specific programs that Marquette County may undertake over the next several years.

A. PLAN ADOPTION

The process to prepare the *2005 Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* included **extensive public, town, village and city input throughout the process, featuring roughly 200 local public meetings**. The 2015 update to the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* included a farmland preservation plan update and several opportunities for input. The 2015 *Comprehensive Plan* update also followed the adoption process set forth in Section 66.1001 of the Wisconsin Statutes, including a formal public hearing that was properly noticed and held. The County Board then adopted the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* by ordinance.

B. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Figure 11.1 provides implementation recommendations, reflecting each of the "programs" described in the prior chapters of this *Plan*. The figure has three different columns of information, described as follows:

- *Chapter*. The first column lists the chapters of this *Comprehensive Plan* in which the programs listed in the second column are described in greater detail.
- *Program*. The second column lists the specific programs recommended within this *Comprehensive Plan*. Additional detail on each recommended program may be found by reviewing the applicable previous chapter of this *Plan*.
- *Priority Rating*. "Top" priorities are a primary focus. "High" priorities should advance as soon as practical, assuming that "top" priorities are on course and manageable. The general idea is that "top" and "high" priority programs would be completed in the 10 years following plan adoption. "Moderate" priorities may elevate to "high" or "top" priorities, or may be ongoing or time-permitting initiatives.

Figure 11.1: Recommended Implementation Actions

Chapter	Program	Priority Rating
Natural Resources	Protect Environmental Corridors	Moderate
	Protect Surface Water Quality	High
	Monitor Impoundment Drawdowns and Dam Proposals	Moderate
	Protect Groundwater Quality and Quantity	Top
	Support Woodland Management	Moderate
	Protect Rare Species and Wildlife Habitat Areas	Moderate
	Implement Natural Resource Identification Checklist	Moderate
	Continue to Build on Natural Resources to Promote Tourism	High
	Promote Environmental Education Activities	Moderate
	Implement, Maintain and Update Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan	Moderate
	Apply Standards for Nonmetallic Mineral Extraction Sites	Moderate
Cultural Resources	Protect Known Historic and Archeological Sites	Moderate
	Preserve the Scenic Landscape	Moderate
	Market Local Festivals, Gatherings, and Events	High
	Promote Heritage Tourism	High
Agricultural Resources	Minimize Non-farm Development in Areas Used for Farming	Top
	Engage in Effort to Educate Farmers on the Farmland Preservation Program	Moderate
	Diversify Farming Options and Promote Continuation of the Agriculture as a Viable and Desirable Occupation	High
Land Use	Follow the County's Planned Land Use map and associated policies when making zoning decisions	Top
Transportation	Support Appropriate Improvements to Existing Highways	Top
	Help Maintain and Upgrade Town Roads and Bridges	High
	Update Design and Layout Standards for New Town Roads	Moderate
	Upgrade Highway Access Control Standards	Moderate
	Plan, Promote and Accommodate Places to Bike, Walk, and Hike	High
	Support Transportation Options for Commuters and Freight	Moderate
	Protect Rural Character Along Scenic Roadways	High

Chapter	Program	Priority Rating
Utilities and Community Facilities	Promote Joint Service Agreements With and Between Local Governments	High
	Facilitate Municipal Election Equipment Planning and Election Worker Training	High
	Properly Site and Monitor Private Wastewater Treatment Systems	Moderate
	Assure a High-Quality and Abundant Supply of Drinking Water	High
	Update the County's Outdoor Recreation Plan	Moderate
	Partner on Planning for Motorized Recreational Trails	Moderate
	Promote Greater Public Access to Lakes and Streams	Moderate
	Retain and Improve Schools and Educational Services	Moderate
	Evaluate Organizational Structure of the County Food Bank	High
	Plan for the Future of Emergency Medical Service	Top
	Undertake Strategic Planning Process for County Services	High
	Address County Facility, Space, and Equipment Needs (see Figure 7.2 for listing)	High
Housing and Neighborhood Development	Plan a Sufficient Supply of Land for Housing	Moderate
	Promote Quality New Neighborhood Design and Layouts	Moderate
	Increase Attractive Housing Options for Families	Moderate
Economic Development	Focus on a Sustainable Economic Development Approach	Top
	Develop Marketing Strategy to Attract and Bring Back Residents	High
	Expand Opportunities for Younger Residents	High
	Establish an Internet Presence for Economic Development	Moderate
	Plan a Sufficient Supply of Land for Commercial/Industrial Uses	Moderate
	Advance Revitalization and Redevelopment Efforts	Moderate
	Ensure High Quality Design for Commercial /Industrial Projects	Moderate
Intergovernmental Cooperation	Encourage Cooperative Land Use Planning	High
	Support Intergovernmental Boundary and Land Use Agreements	Moderate
	Engage in Collaborative Transportation System Planning	Moderate
	Cooperate on Community Services and Facility Provision	High
	Cooperate on Economic and Housing Development	High

C. PLAN MONITORING, AMENDMENTS, AND UPDATE

The County intends to **regularly evaluate its progress towards achieving the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*, and amend and update the *Plan* as appropriate**. This section suggests recommended criteria and procedures for using, monitoring, amending, and updating the *Plan*.

1. PLAN MONITORING AND USE

Marquette County will constantly evaluate its decisions on private development proposals, public investments, regulations, incentives, and other actions against the recommendations of this *Comprehensive*

Plan. The recommendations and prioritization suggested in Figure 11.1 will provide a starting point for budgeting and work program planning.

This *Plan* will be used to guide local and County decisions on future development requests. Before submitting a formal application for development approval to the County and/or local communities, the County urges petitioners to first:

- Review the recommendations of this *Plan* and the local town, village or City comprehensive plan.
- Review zoning, subdivision, and other land development regulations.
- Meet with County zoning staff (or city/village staff) to learn about the development review process.
- Discuss the request conceptually and informally with the applicable local plan commission or board. Conceptual review almost always results in an improved development product and can save the petitioner time and money.

2. PLAN AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this *Comprehensive Plan* may be appropriate in the years following adoption of this *Plan* update and in instances where the *Plan* becomes irrelevant, contradictory to emerging policy or trends, or no longer reflecting local wishes. "Amendments" are generally defined as minor changes to the *Plan* maps or text. Frequent amendments to accommodate specific development proposals should be avoided.

The State **comprehensive planning law requires that the County use the same basic process to amend, add to, or update the *Comprehensive Plan* as it used to initially adopt the *Plan*.** This means that the procedures defined under Section 66.1001(4) of Wisconsin Statutes need to be followed. Specifically, the County intends to use the following procedure to amend the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan*:

a. The County Board or Planning and Zoning Committee initiates the proposed *Comprehensive Plan* amendment. This may occur as a result of an annual review of the *Plan*, or may by initiated at the request of a property owner, developer, or local government.

b. The County publishes a Class 1 notice, with such notice published at least 30 days before a County Planning and Zoning Committee public hearing and containing information required under Section 66.1001(4)d. Nonmetallic mine operators, any person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit with the local government, and any other property owner or leaseholder who has requested notification in writing must be informed through this notice procedure.

c. The Planning and Zoning Committee holds a public hearing on the proposed *Comprehensive Plan* amendment(s). Following the public meeting(s), the Committee makes a recommendation by resolution to the County Board by majority vote of the entire Committee (see Section 66.1001(4)b of Statutes).

d. Following the public hearing, the County Board approves or denies the ordinance adopting the proposed *Plan* amendment(s). Adoption must be by a majority vote of all members. The County Board may require changes from the Committee recommended version of the proposed amendment(s).

e. The County Clerk sends a copy of the adopted ordinance and the amendment(s) (not the entire *Comprehensive Plan*) to all adjacent and overlapping government jurisdictions, mine operators, any person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit with the County, and any other property owner or leaseholder who has requested notification in writing, as required under Section 66.1001(4)b and c, Wisconsin Statutes.

f. The Zoning Administrator integrates the *Plan* amendments into the *Comprehensive Plan* document, and distributes and posts appropriately.

The *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* is intended to function cooperatively with local community plans. This fact highlights the importance of striving for **ongoing consistency between**

local community comprehensive plans and this county-level *Plan*. Plan consistency will help achieve the desired patterns of future growth and consistent, predictable decision making because local governments and the County will be "reading from the same playbook." This is particularly important because Marquette County shares zoning authority with many town governments.

Local governments in Marquette County should play a central role in decisions to amend the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan*. The County does not intend approve an amendment to the Planned Land Use map in this document (Map 7) unless it is first approved ore recommended for approval by the affected town board, village board, or city council or affects County-owned lands.

Local governments (particularly towns under County zoning) are encouraged to consult with County zoning staff before making amendments to their own comprehensive plans. This is especially advised for proposed changes to the local Planned Land Use map, because it directly relates to the County Planned Land Use map (Map 7). It is also advised that every amendment to a town, village, or city comprehensive plan be forwarded on for County Board consideration after such an amendment is adopted by the town board, village board, or city council. Locally-adopted amendments to the Planned Land Use map should be adopted by the County Board, along with other local plan changes that affect the County *Comprehensive Plan*. The County need not adopt future amendments to town, village, and city comprehensive plans that do not affect the content or the implementation of the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan*.

3. Plan Update

The State comprehensive planning law requires that **the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* be updated at least once every ten years**. State statutes also require that farmland preservation plans be updated once every ten years. As opposed to an amendment, an update is often a substantial re-write of the *Plan* document and maps. The County intends to complete an update to this Comprehensive Plan, including its farmland preservation plan component, by 2025.

D. Consistency Among Plan Elements

The State comprehensive planning statute requires that the implementation element "describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan shall be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan." **Preparing and updating the various elements of the *Marquette County Comprehensive Plan* simultaneously has ensured that there are no known internal inconsistencies between the different elements of this *Plan*.**

Actual or potential inconsistencies between various plans of the County, towns, villages, and City are addressed in Chapter Ten: Intergovernmental Cooperation.