

# TOWN OF NEPEUSKUN

WINNEBAGO COUNTY, WISCONSIN



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2040 ADOPTED – NOVEMBER, 2021

Prepared for  
Town of Nepeuskun

Planning Assistance by  
Cedar Corporation  
1695 Bellevue Street  
Green Bay, Wisconsin 54311



## Acknowledgements

### **Plan Commission**

Ron Bahn \_Chairperson  
Brett Helmbrecht – Vice Chairman  
Robert Zache, Town Board Representative  
Jeremy DeVries – Secretary  
Scott Schuster – Voting Member  
Fred Krahn – Voting Member  
Aaron Grove – Voting Member

### **Town Board**

Kyle Grahn, Town Chairperson  
Robert Zache, Supervisor  
Mike Wargula – Supervisor  
Rebecca Pinnow – Town Clerk  
Melissa Gravunder – Town Treasurer

### **Zoning Administrator**

Jeff Kussow, Cedar Corporation

### **Planning Assistance**

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TOWN OF NEPEUSKUN

ORDINANCE NO. 11-2021-01

ADOPTION OF THE  
TOWN OF NEPEUSKUN YEAR 2040  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Town Board of the Town of Nepeuskun, Winnebago County, Wisconsin, does ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. Pursuant to Sections 60.22(3) and 62.23(2) and (3), Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Nepeuskun is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in Sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2), Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 2. The Town of Nepeuskun has provided opportunities for public involvement in accordance with the Public Participation Plan adopted by the Town Board. A public hearing was held on November 8, 2021, in compliance with the requirements of Section 66.1001 (4), Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 3. The Town of Nepeuskun Plan Commission, by a majority vote of the entire commission, recorded in its official minutes, has adopted a resolution recommending to the Town Board the adoption of the document entitled "*Town of Nepeuskun Year 2040 Comprehensive Plan*" containing all the elements specified in Section 66.1001(2), Wisconsin Statutes.

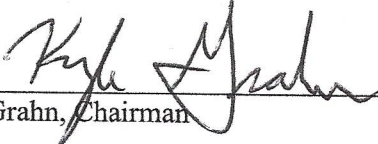
SECTION 5. The Town Board of the Town of Nepeuskun does, by the enactment of this ordinance, formally adopt the "*Town of Nepeuskun Year 2040 Comprehensive Plan*" pursuant to Section 66.1001(4)(c), Wisconsin Statutes.

SECTION 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the Town Board and posting as required by law.

ADOPTED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2021.

AYE 3

NAY 0

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kyle Grahn, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca Pinnow, Town Clerk

**A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL FROM  
THE TOWN OF NEPEUSKUN PLAN COMMISSION TO THE TOWN BOARD TO  
ADOPT THE TOWN OF NEPEUSKUN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040**

WHEREAS, Pursuant to sections 62.23(2) and (3) for cities, villages, and towns exercising village powers under 60.22(3) of Wisconsin Statutes, the Town of Nepeuskun is authorized to prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan as defined in sections 66.1001(1)(a) and 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Nepeuskun Town Board has committed funding to develop a comprehensive plan for the Town of Nepeuskun; and

WHEREAS, a Plan Commission was established by the Town Board and participated in the production of the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan 2040* to guide and coordinate land use decisions and development in the town; and

WHEREAS, forums for public involvement consistent with an adopted Public Participation Plan have been held to gather citizen input including a public informational meeting, open Plan Commission meetings and the posting of the "Recommended Plan" document on the town's web site and a copy at the Ripon Public Library for public inspection and comment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Nepeuskun Plan Commission, hereby recommends that the "Recommended Plan" of the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan 2040* and plan adoption ordinance are filed with the governmental units specified under section 66.1001(4)(b) and (c), and will be discussed at a public hearing required under section 66.1001(4)(d); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Nepeuskun Plan Commission hereby recommends that, subject to the public hearing on the "Recommended Plan" and incorporation of plan revisions deemed necessary as a result of the public hearing or comments received from governmental units with which the plan was filed, the Town Board adopt the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan 2040* by ordinance in accordance with section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes.

ADOPTED this 4<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.

Motion for adoption moved by: Member Zache

Motion for adoption seconded by: Member Grove

Voting Aye: 5 Voting Nay: 0

Plan Commission Chair

Ronald Bahm

ATTEST:

Jaemy Dubs  
Plan Commission Secretary

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## **Element Abbreviations**

IO	Issues and Opportunities
H	Population and Housing
T	Transportation
UCF	Utilities and Community Facilities
ANC	Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources
ED	Economic Development
IC	Intergovernmental Cooperation
LU	Land Use
I	Implementation

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## Introduction

### **The Value of a Comprehensive Plan**

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When we think about places we have visited or lived, some stand out as models of natural beauty and human comfort, supported by thriving local economies. The most satisfying places to live, work, and raise families are communities that meet the needs of local businesses and individual expression and provide opportunities to explore and conserve our natural environment.

Great communities do not grow by accident or without public debate and agreed-upon guidelines. Collaborative planning processes and comprehensive plans are the building blocks of such great communities. Planning helps maintain and promote livable, vital communities.

The Town of Nepeuskun is a great place to live. Rush Lake provides hunting and recreation opportunities for residents, and it is one of the gems of the town. The beautiful countryside of Nepeuskun is rich with productive farmland. Generations of Nepeuskun families have enjoyed the quiet rural character and strong sense of community found here. This Comprehensive Plan outlines how to maintain what we like about our community and identifies key improvements to make our community even better.

This plan is intended to capture a shared vision for the town. It is a statement reflecting community pride and how residents want the town to manage growth and development in the future. This plan will help elected officials make decisions that reflect the short- and long-term wishes of the town. It will help them prioritize the town's human and financial resources to provide the necessary public infrastructure and amenities needed to maintain a high quality of life. In doing so, the Plan also seeks to foster sustainable development and an economy that is in keeping with the town's rural character.



*Rush Lake is one of the things that make Nepeuskun a great place to live.*

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This plan is a blueprint for community-wide action over the next 20 years. Action must come from all segments of the town – business owners, residents, and visitors - not just from Town Government. Everyone must be involved and dedicated to making the needed improvements and to continue those efforts that have already had a positive influence.

### **Wisconsin “Smart Growth” Legislation**

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As part of the state's 1999-2000 biennial budget, Governor Thompson signed into law what is referred to as the “Smart Growth” legislation (1999 Wisconsin Act 9). Smart Growth legislation significantly changed the stature of comprehensive planning in the state and placed it very high on the “to do” list. Although state statutes do not require local governmental units to adopt comprehensive plans consistent with the requirements, it provides that if a local governmental unit does not do so by January 1, 2010 the local government may not enforce existing or adopt new ordinances, plans, or regulations that in anyway affect land use.

If a community wants to prepare a comprehensive plan, it must follow various substantive and procedural requirements. State statute 66.1001 defines nine areas that need to be addressed in a community’s comprehensive plan:

1. Issues and opportunities (Chapter 1)
2. Housing (Chapter 2)
3. Transportation (Chapter 3)
4. Utilities and community facilities (Chapter 4)
5. Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources (Chapter 5)
6. Economic development (Chapter 6)
7. Land use (Chapter 7)
8. Intergovernmental cooperation (Chapter 8)
9. Implementation (Chapter 9)

The Smart Growth legislation also outlines specific procedures for public participation that must be followed as part of the comprehensive planning process. Specifically, a municipality must hold at least one public hearing on the plan and notify the public at least 30 days in advance of this hearing. In an effort to foster meaningful public input, the Town of Nepeuskun provided additional opportunities for public involvement, as outlined below. A copy of the Town of Nepeuskun’s public participation plan can be found in Appendix A.

**Past Planning Efforts and Outreach**

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Prior to this update, the most recent comprehensive planning effort occurred in 2009 and was led by the consulting firm of Crispell-Snyder, Inc.

The 2009 comprehensive plan set forth a direction for the future development of the town, guiding policy and decisions for residential areas, parks and recreation, commercial development, and industrial centers, in order to maintain an attractive environment. Specifically, the Land Use Plan portion of the Comprehensive Plan, aimed to control sprawl and protect farmland and rural character by directing development away from prime agricultural lands to less productive farmland or non-

farm areas minimizing unplanned scatter. The plan called for concentrating development near the existing crossroads community of Rush Lake while maintaining an open, largely undeveloped, agricultural landscape in the rural countryside.

Completed in April 2008, the Rush Lake/Upper Waukau Creek Strategic Management Plan was a collaborative effort between Northern Environmental, Inc and the Rush Lake Steering Committee (made up of local residents and state and federal officials). The main initiative for the plan’s creation was to revitalize the lake and surrounding wetlands, so that the area once again can reach its achievable species diversification and recreational usage. The following are the main highlights of the plan:

- Re-establish more desirable and diverse aquatic vegetation;
- Design well planned water level management and control strategies;
- Improve waterfowl and wildlife habitat;
- Improve water quality;
- Reduce carp population/improve fisheries; and
- Reduce effect of lead on the ecosystem.

**A Community Process**

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The 2021 comprehensive plan update incorporates the 2009 planning process in that key public input that was obtained in that effort is considered still valid. That said, the 2009 planning process set out to celebrate and protect the diversity of lifestyles and interests within the town, build on the strengths to achieve goals, and guide the future of the town.

In order to fulfill the charge, the Plan Commission took seriously the process of engaging as many residents as possible in the comprehensive planning process. The Plan Commission’s job was not merely to produce a report but to reach out and collaborate with the community, to educate residents about planning, and to

involve them in developing the plan. These goals stem from the fundamental aim of the planning process: engage residents in building community consensus for a vision for Nepeuskun's future.

Throughout the process, the Town Newsletter was used to inform citizens of meeting dates and to summarize the developments of the planning process. This ensured that everyone in the town was aware of the process, even if they were unable to attend specific planning meetings.

### **Community Visioning Workshop**

The planning process began with a public visioning workshop on July 30<sup>th</sup> 2008. Members of the community met in small groups to engage in a guided discussion on the community's current assets, issues, and opportunities and to identify specific top priority goals and actions for the comprehensive plan.

### **Land Use Planning Workshop**

A land use workshop for the town occur in January 2009 with thirteen people in attendance. During this workshop participants were provided with existing land use maps and worked in small groups to determine appropriate areas for development, redevelopment, and conservation.

### **Focus Groups**

In August 2008, six focus groups with a total of 18 individuals identified by the Plan Commission. These focus groups covered a wide range of topics and were designed to solicit additional insight into key issues. The following groups met for 30-45 minutes each:

- Farmers
- Business Owners
- Land Conservation
- Rush Lake Association
- Planning and Zoning
- Soil and Farmland Conservation



*Residents of the Land Use Planning Workshop in January worked on individual visual preference surveys and in small groups to identify priority housing and preservation areas.*

### **Community Survey**

In September 2008, the Plan Commission, conducted a town-wide survey to collect public input for the comprehensive plan. The survey was designed to build on the previous Community Survey conducted in the late 1990s as part of the Land Use Plan process. The survey was mailed to all households as part of the Town Newsletter and additional copies were also available. Approximately 105 people returned the survey.

A report was for the Plan Commission which included analysis of survey responses, residents' priorities and

goals for the comprehensive plan, and the best strategies for achieving the goals.

**2009 Open House**

Based on input from the public and extensive data and analysis provided by the planning consultants, the Plan Commission identified specific goals, objectives, and actions for the plan. A draft plan was completed in May 2009 and an open house was held to seek additional public input.

The plan was then revised based on comments received at the open house, and a final plan was approved and adopted on July 20, 2009 following a public hearing by the Town Board.



*Residents attended the Open House in May 2009 and offered comments on the final draft plan before the Plan Commission recommended it to the Town Board for adoption.*

**2019-2021 Comprehensive Plan Update Process**

In 2018, the Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan was nearing the 10-year update requirement as specified by the Wis. Stats 66.1001. In addition to the 10 year update requirement, many other trends and initiatives had emerged that warranted the need for an update. Some of those factors included:

- Changes in housing markets and preferences by younger home buyers.
- Potential tax credit impacts to farmers based on the role of the Winnebago Farmland Preservation Plan.
- Changes in farming practices and the emergence of Agri-tourism and Value Added Agriculture.

Town leaders felt this planning effort needed to better define what the term “agriculture” really meant within the town and how this use would continue to function compatibly with other uses. Town leaders also felt that the plan needed to protect the town logo of: “Agriculture” “Recreation” and “Rural Living” as the primary objectives.

To help facilitate the update effort, the town hired the planning consulting firm of Cedar Corporation to assist. As occurred in 2009, the Town adopted a similar Public Participation Plan (See Appendix A) to lead the 2021 Comprehensive Plan update effort.

The plan update effort was led under the direction of the Town of Nepeuskun Plan Commission. All meetings were open to the public and opened for public comment. Plan adoption procedures occurred as required under Wis. Stats. 66.1001. Copies of the Plan Commission Resolution recommending plan approval to the Town Board and the Town Board Adoption Ordinance are included.

The most important map to be developed through the update process is Map 1 – Future Land Use. Future Land Use decisions should be made in accordance with this map. See Chapter 7, Land Use, for a more detailed description.

# Town of Nepeuskun






Winnebago County, Wisconsin

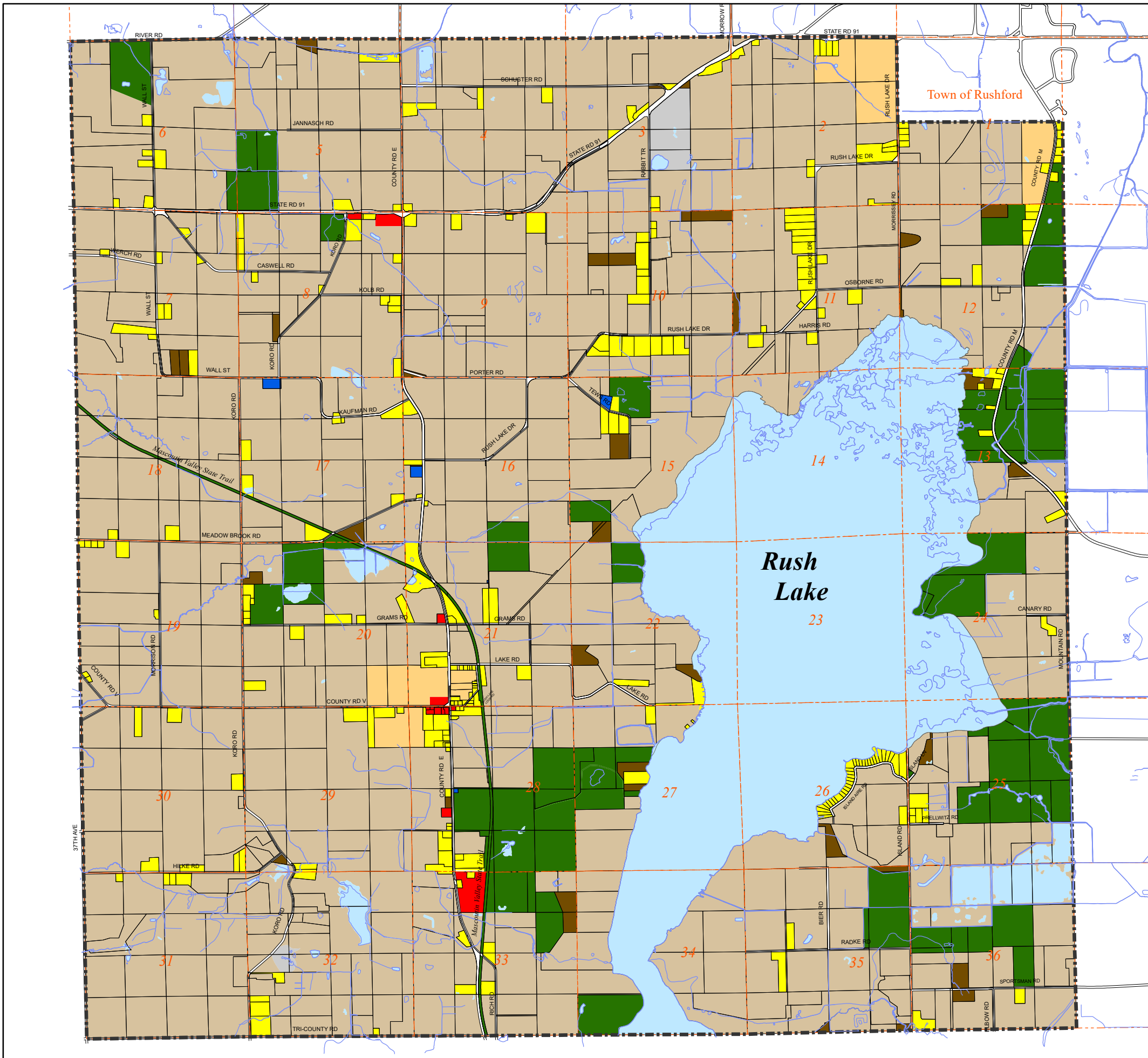
## Future Land Use Plan

### Land Use Categories

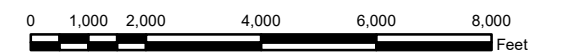
-  Residential
-  Housing Focus Area
-  Agriculture Transition
-  Commercial
-  Non-Metalic Mining Sites
-  Government & Institutional Facilities
-  Natural Resources and Recreational Areas
-  Agricultural & Open Space

### Map Features

-  Municipal Boundary
-  Section Lines
-  Parcel Lines
-  Waterways
-  Open Water/Pool Lakes



Approximate Scale



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## Martenson & Eisele, Inc.

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## Issues and Opportunities

### Geology and Natural Surroundings

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Nepeuskun’s gently rolling landscape and numerous wetlands are reflective of glacial activity. Of particular significance to the Nepeuskun area is Rush Lake, one of the largest “prairie potholes” east of the Mississippi River. Prairie potholes are depressional wetlands (primarily freshwater marshes) found most often in the upper Midwest. These potholes fill with snowmelt and rain in the spring. Some prairie pothole marshes are temporary, while others, such as Rush Lake, are essentially permanent.

About 90 percent of the 3,000-acre Rush Lake lies in the Town of Nepeuskun. The lake is shallow, with a depth in most areas of approximately two feet and provides ideal conditions for waterfowl habitat. It is the major recreational resource in the area for fishing, hunting, bird watching and light boating.



*Nepeuskun’s landscape is one of gently rolling hills and wetlands, reflective of past glacial activity.*

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### Location and History of Settlement

---

The Town of Nepeuskun is located in southwestern Winnebago County (See Map 2). The town generally has a rural character with many farms and productive soils. There are urban influences, however, with the City of Oshkosh and the greater Fox River Valley only 10 minutes away via State Highway 91 and State Highway 44. The town is also influenced by its proximity to the

Cities of Ripon, Green Lake, Berlin, and Omro.

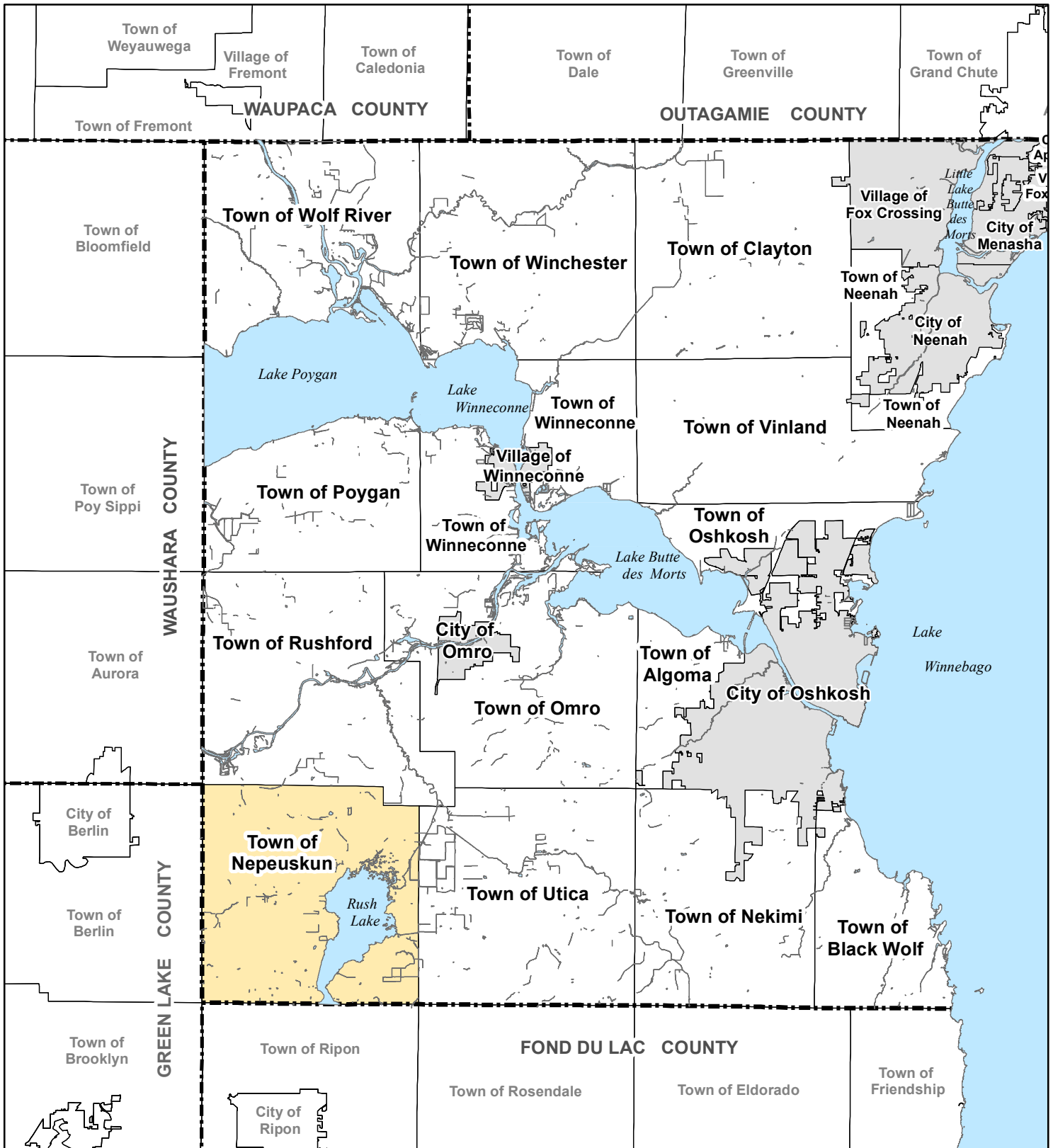
Native Americans were the first to live in the area, dating back about 8,000 to 11,000 years ago.

Nomadic tribes took advantage of

the rich hunting opportunities offered by Rush Lake and the abundance of edible native flora and fauna. Much later, agriculturally dominated tribes flourished. The entire shoreland around the lake is thought to have once been one continuous village site. Numerous mounds, earthworks, and ancient human remains have been found throughout this area (Rush Lake/Upper Waukau Creek Resource Inventory and Strategic Planning Project).

Initially settled by Europeans around 1846, the Town of Nepeuskun quickly expanded to include a post office, six schools, three churches, homes, and businesses. By 1857, the Milwaukee and Horicon rail service was connecting the town to commodities and settlers, contributing to growth in the area. Farming was the primary driving force for historic growth and prosperity in the town.

Initially settled by Europeans around 1846 the Town of Nepeuskun quickly expanded to include a post office, six schools, three churches, homes, and businesses.



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## Map 2 Location Map



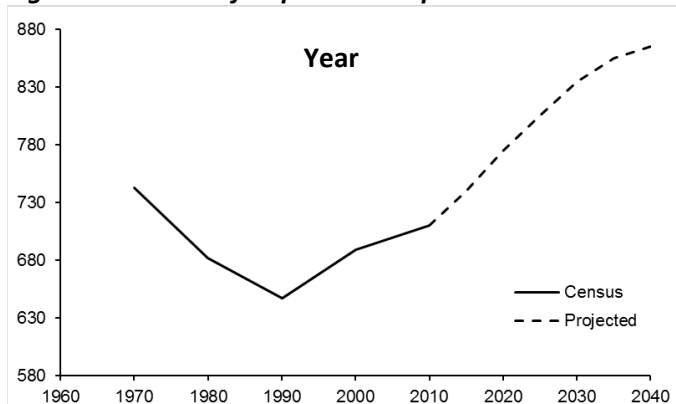
**Town of Nepeuskun**  
 Winnebago County, Wisconsin

**Population Trends and Projections**

In the early 1900s, Nepeuskun had a population of 888 residents. By 1990, the population of Nepeuskun had declined to 647 people, reflecting a general decline in the rural population across the United States. During the 1990s, however, the population began to grow again in the town and by 2000 the population had increased to 689 and 710 in 2010.

This recent population increase is likely due in part to employment opportunities in nearby Fox Valley. People are also drawn to Nepeuskun by affordable land and housing and the attractiveness of its rural character.

**Figure 1-1. Town of Nepeuskun Population Chart**



The Wisconsin Department of Administration projects that this trend will likely continue in Nepeuskun, with gradual growth resulting in a projected population of 775 in 2020 and 865 in 2040. This represents about 5 additional people per year.

As population increases, household size is expected to gradually decrease. This follows the national trend of smaller household size, and it reflects a decrease in the number of children per family and an increase in the number of people who live by themselves. In 2010, the average household size in Nepeuskun was 2.56 people (US Census). By 2040, this is expected to decrease to 2.46 (WDOA). This means that while the total population is only expected to increase by 22 percent between 2010 and 2040, the number of households in the town is projected to increase by 27 percent from 277 to 352. However, it appears the WDOA projections maybe

tracking higher than expected. For example, the official 2019 WDOA Estimate, which is released annually, reveals a population of 745 which is 30 persons less than the 2020 projection number of 775. The exodus of younger population workers to urbanizing areas where more jobs and services are readily available (a national trend), maybe having an impact on the projections falling short. Nonetheless, even a modest increase in new housing units across the town could have a significant effect on the rural character of Nepeuskun unless they are appropriately located and designed.

**Figure 1-2. Nepeuskun Population and Households**

YEAR	POPULATION	HOUSEHOLDS
<b>US Census of Population and Housing</b>		
1970	743	190
1980	682	224
1990	647	230
2000	689	254
2010	710	277
<b>Wisconsin DOA Projections</b>		
*2019	745	291
2020	775	307
2025	805	321
2030	835	336
2035	855	346
2040	865	352

\* = WDOA Estimate

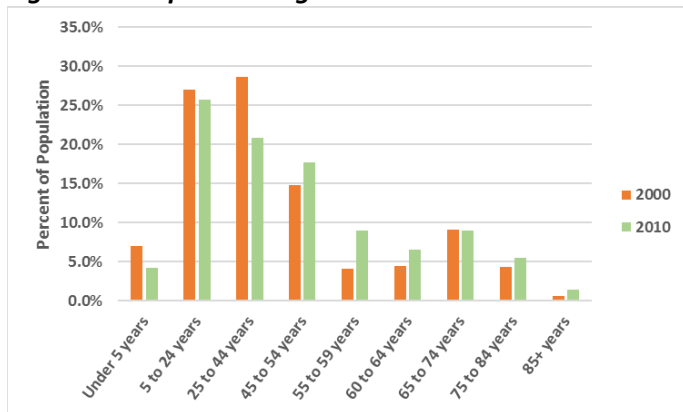
It is important to understand the significant uncertainty inherent in population projections. Projections are based on past population and household trends; however, it is difficult--if not impossible--to predict future deviations from these trends. Gas prices, for example, may discourage people from living away from their place of employment. Similarly, the closure of a major nearby employment center can force people to leave the community in search of work. On the other hand, new employment opportunities can significantly increase population growth. Population projections should therefore be viewed with caution, and potential population growth beyond what is anticipated should be accommodated in future efforts and plans. As of the adoption of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, 2020 US Census figures at a town level were not referenced.

**Age Distribution**

The Town of Nepeuskun has experienced a decline in the percent of the population of all age brackets below 44 years of age, and an increase within those brackets of individuals 45 years or older. This is reflected by the median age of Town residents increasing from 38.5 in 2000 to 44.4 in 2010. Those age groups growing within the Town are not those of young growing families. However, there is still a large percentage of these residents falling within the younger age brackets.

These changing demographics suggest that the rural nature of Nepeuskun is not attracting new younger families to the area. Middle-age groups have had the greatest increase in the Town; those between the ages of 45 and 64.

**Figure 1-3 Nepeuskun Age Distributions**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010

**Education and Employment Trends and Projections**

Nepeuskun has historically been an agricultural community. While employment in farming-related occupations is declining, these rural roots still influence employment and education patterns in the town.

Nepeuskun residents generally had less formal education than the rest of Winnebago County in 2000, however this trend is shifting. From 2000 to 2010 there has been an increase in the percentage of residents obtaining higher education. About 91 percent of the town’s population has a high school degree or higher. This is slightly higher than the Winnebago County’s 89 percent. The Town’s

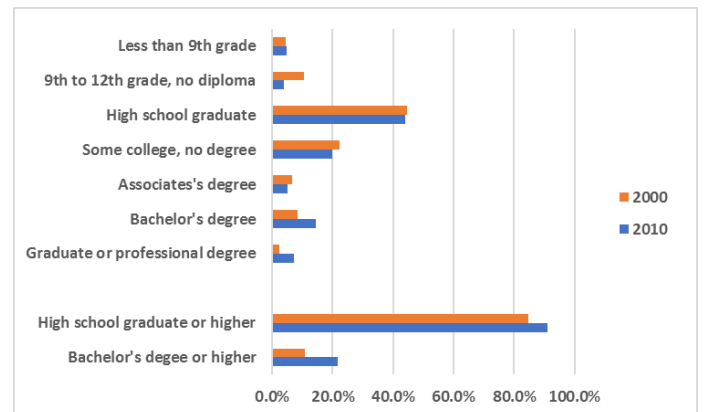
population with a bachelor degree or higher (approximately 22 percent) has continued to increase, and now rests only slightly below that percentage of the County at 23.7 percent. The percent of the town’s population with a bachelor’s degree continues to increase. In 1990, only 6 percent of the population had a bachelor’s degree or higher.

The percent of the town’s population with a bachelor’s degree or higher has significantly increased since 2000.

Moving forward, it will be interesting to see which level of post high school

education experiences the biggest increase. The cost of college has increased significantly during the last decade resulting in increased student debt to achieve a bachelor’s degree. As an alternative, Associate Degrees through Technical Colleges have emerged as a less costly alternative. Labor shortages in many of the manufacturing and nursing trades have fueled the transition. In fact, many companies have actively recruited high school graduates to seek technical education that supports their trade.

**Figure 1-4 Nepeuskun Education Levels**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 & 2010

There has also been a corresponding increase in income levels. In 1989, the median household income in Nepeuskun was \$32,083. By 1999, this had increased to \$47,344. Taking inflation into account, this represents a 10 percent increase in average household income over a 10-year period. The most significant increase was seen in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range in 2000. The median

household income increased by nearly 36 percent to \$64,375, likely accounting for the continued increase in education levels. The most significant increase was seen in the \$100,000 to \$149,999 range between 2000 and 2010.

This reflects both the changing education levels of residents as well as changes in the employment characteristics of the town. The most significant changes in employment can be seen in the agricultural, forestry, fishing & hunting and mining sector, the transportation & warehousing and utilities sector and the educational, health and social services sector. Employment in the agricultural sector decreased substantially between 2000 and 2010 by a little more than 50 percent decrease. In 2000, 7.4 percent (29 people) of the workforce population in the Town were employed in agricultural, forestry, fishing & hunting and mining. By 2010, this had decreased to only 3.6 percent (13 people) of the workforce population.

At the same time, the number of people employed in the education, health care, and social services and construction sectors increased. Employment in the construction sector had doubled from 4.6 percent in 2000 to 9.9 percent in 2010. Other sectors had minor changes in percentages, but nothing substantial.

It is difficult to predict future employment at the town level. In the Fox Valley region of Wisconsin, however, jobs are expected to grow from 236,327 jobs in 2014 to 247,083 jobs in 2024 (based on Wisconsin OEA economic projections). Education and health services, and professional and business services are expected to lead this growth, with a combined projected growth of 3,971 jobs between 2014 and 2024. While much of this growth will likely occur outside of Nepeuskun, these trends suggest the types of job opportunities that might be available in the future for town residents. More details on employment growth can be found in the Economic Development chapter of this plan.

## **Key Issues and Opportunities Identified by Residents**

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Town residents are proud to call Nepeuskun home; at the same time, they recognize that there are a number of challenges and opportunities that they collectively face as residents of the town. This plan is designed to help focus the collective energy of residents and elected officials and offer a blueprint for the physical, economic and cultural growth and preservation of the Town of Nepeuskun.

A wide variety of issues and opportunities were identified throughout the original planning process back in 2009. The community survey, visioning workshops, and interviews with key stakeholders and decision makers highlighted several critical issues and opportunities that the town is facing. The most important of these are summarized below.

### ***Limit the visual impact of new housing development***

- Need vegetation buffers – encourage new homes to “settle” into the landscape
- Do not permit houses to “line up” along roadways without some screening

### ***Protect prime farmland while allowing farmers some flexibility to sell off lots***

- Limit the number of new houses, especially in agricultural areas
- Limit the size of non-farm lots
- Limit conflicts between farm and residential uses

### ***Support farming that is compatible with Nepeuskun’s character and goals***

- Restrict mega farms
- Help to connect new or next generation farmers with farmland in the town
- Educate non-farm neighbors about the reality of farming

**Pursue opportunities to enhance tax base**

- Encourage some commercial development that is related to agriculture and/or recreation/tourism

**Safe rural roads**

- Improve pedestrian and bike safety along County Road E
- Improve safety of key intersections and roads

**Improve Rush Lake**

- Promote the lake as hunting and bird-watching destination
- Evaluate other opportunities for the lake

**Balance regulations and property rights**

- Establish and enforce regulations needed to protect what people like about Nepeuskun
- Maintain property rights and freedoms associated with rural living

**Work with non-governmental agencies such as non-profit organizations to implement plan goals, objectives, policies and recommendations.**

**Definition of Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goals** are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach preservation and development issues. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the Town.

**Objectives** suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishments of an objective contribute to the fulfillment of a goal. While achievement of an objective is often not easily measured, objectives are usually attainable through policies and specific implementation activities.

**Policies** are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure *Plan* implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Town decision makers should use policies on a day-to-day basis. Success in achieving policies is usually measurable.

**Town of Nepeuskun Overall Planning Goals**

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Overall planning goals set the stage for what we are trying to accomplish in Nepeuskun. Just as the vision paints a picture of Nepeuskun in twenty years, these goals help to describe what we are trying to achieve over the long-term. The specific goals contained in each chapter of the plan reflect and support the overall planning goals:

**Goal 1.1** Protect economically productive areas, including viable farmland and forests.

**Goal 1.2** Expand the current economic base, with a focus on farming and agricultural-related services.

**Goal 1.3** Protect natural areas, including wetlands, wildlife habitats, Rush Lake, woodlands, open spaces and groundwater resources.

**Goal 1.4** Protect scenic resources and promote patterns of development that are compatible with the rural character of Nepeuskun.

**Goal 1.5** Encourage residential development in areas away from productive farmland and promote densities that allow for efficient use of land and rural lifestyles.

**Goal 1.6** Provide an adequate supply of developable land to meet existing and future market demand for residential and commercial uses.

**Goal 1.7** Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.

**Goal 1.8** Preserve cultural, historic, and archeological sites in Nepeuskun.

**Goal 1.9** Support an efficient and economical transportation system that affords mobility, convenience, and safety, and meets the needs of all citizens.

**Goal 1.10** Work in cooperation with nearby units of government and the school district to achieve regional community goals.

## Town of Nepeuskun 20-Year Vision

Read the Town of Nepeuskun logo and you will see the words “Agriculture. Recreation & Rural Living”. These words provide the foundation for which the town was established and will continue to maintain for the foreseeable future. The purpose of comprehensive planning is to identify a clear and compelling vision for the future and to develop strategies to reach that vision. Each section of the plan contains goals, objectives, and action items that will help lead our town to a bright future. The following vision statement paints a picture of what this future will look like.

### **Working together, we envision Nepeuskun twenty years from now as a place where:**

- The town is proud of its agrarian heritage and identity. Farms are the economic and cultural backbone of the town. Family farms continue to have adjusted to changing conditions and challenges. The gradual development of farm-supporting uses such as Agri-tourism and other activities has also provided new employment opportunities for town residents.
- New housing is primarily clustered which feature mid-sized lots and extensive connected open space. These new homes fit into the rural landscape and are set back from the road to minimize visual impact. New residential lots in the agricultural areas are located away from productive farmland and sensitive natural features and have been configured in such a way to preserve as much contiguous farmland as possible.
- A well-maintained transportation system offers a variety of options for all residents. Roads and corridors are safely shared by motorists, bicycles, and pedestrians alike.
- All residents have access to safe drinking water, and private septic systems are well maintained.
- Storm water regulations have effectively limited the potential impact of new development on water quality and flooding.
- Rush Lake has been successfully restored as a hunting and bird watching paradise and provides recreation opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Land around Rush Lake has been protected from development, and key views of the lake have been preserved so that people can continue to enjoy the beauty of this key natural resource.
- Stream buffers throughout town and the greater Rush Lake Watershed have been restored and help to reduce soil erosion and nutrient run-off.
- Historic buildings throughout town help to connect the community to its agrarian culture and history.
- Intergovernmental cooperation exists between the town, surrounding communities, regional and state level agencies in order to address issues of mutual concern before they turn into conflicts.

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# Housing

## Overview

The presence of vast agricultural land and Nepeuskun’s proximity to Fox Valley cities has placed moderate residential housing development pressure on the town. So far, Nepeuskun has maintained the rural characteristics that residents of the town value and has managed to keep the number of housing units low, at 277 units. It is important for Nepeuskun to plan for how many and where new houses should be built. Preserving the productive agricultural land found in Nepeuskun while at the same time accommodating future residential growth will continue to be the land use challenge within the town.

Future housing needs will be influenced by changes in household size as well as consumer preferences. Following local and national trends, household size is expected to decrease. This, combined with expected population growth, will result in an increased demand for housing. There are expected to be 352 households in Nepeuskun by 2040 (see Table 2-1), indicating a need for about 75 new housing units. There are currently about 277 housing units in Nepeuskun, suggesting a need for about two or three new housing units per year. Recent building permit (2010-2019) data, suggests that there may be a demand for an average of two new units per year or a total of 40 additional units over the next twenty years (See Table 7-2 in the Land Use Element). Additional new housing units may be needed to replace old houses or those that are demolished or lost to disasters.

The majority of homes in Nepeuskun are single-family homes and recent trends have continued along the same path. Between 2010 and 2019, single-family homes accounted for all 19 residential building permits in the Town of Nepeuskun.

**Table 2-1. Past and Projected Population and Households.**

YEAR	POPULATION	HOUSEHOLDS
<b>US Census of Population and Housing</b>		
1970	743	190
1980	682	224
1990	647	230
2000	689	254
2010	710	277
<b>Wisconsin DOA Projections</b>		
2020	775	307
2025	805	321
2030	835	336
2035	855	346
2040	865	352

<b>Town of Nepeuskun Housing Facts (2010)</b>	
Total households	277
Average household size	2.56
Average household size (owner occupied)	2.63
Average household size (renter occupied)	2.17
Total housing units	325
Homeowner vacancy rate	0.8%
Rental vacancy rate	4.5%
Owner-occupied units	85.2%
Rental-occupied units	15.2%
Median value of owner-occupied units	\$179,500
Median rent	\$833

Source: US Census Bureau 2010

Providing affordable housing options for all residents, including lower income families and seniors, is also important for the quality of life in Nepeuskun and society in general. While housing remains relatively affordable in Nepeuskun, finding quality affordable housing is still difficult for some residents, especially new home buyers. This issue is most critical for renters, lower and moderate-income families in Nepeuskun. If Nepeuskun

desires to be sustainable, accommodating the housing needs for all age groups will be fundamental to that success.

This chapter highlights the types of housing currently found in Nepeuskun, discusses issues associated with housing quality and affordability, and describes opportunities for new housing development in the town. Specific goals, objectives, and policies for appropriate housing development are identified.

**Existing Housing Stock**

**Age of Homes**

Nepeuskun has a high percentage of older homes, with nearly 42 percent of homes in the town having been constructed prior to 1940. Table 2-2 shows construction years for housing stock in the Town of Nepeuskun, Winnebago County, and Wisconsin as of 2010.

**Table 2-2. Year of Construction**

Year Constructed	Town of Nepeuskun		Winnebago County Percent	Wisconsin Percent
	Number	Percent		
2005 to 2010	6	2.1	3.1	3.2
2000 to 2004	47	16.4	8.3	8.2
1990 to 1999	56	19.6	14.0	14.0
1980 to 1989	18	6.3	61.0	9.9
1970 to 1979	26	9.1	13.5	15.2
1960 to 1969	14	4.9	10.7	10.1
1940 to 1959	11	3.8	16.7	17.5
Prior to 1940	108	37.8	22.7	21.9
Total	286	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: US Census of Population and Housing, 2010  
 Note: The percent column may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Older homes require more maintenance. If homeowners are unable to afford costly maintenance projects, homes can show signs of disrepair and property values may go down. Rehabilitating the existing housing stock can revitalize neighborhoods and decrease the need for development of open space and farmland areas.

**Types of Housing Units**

Over 95 percent of the housing units in Nepeuskun are single-family homes, and almost 89 percent of all housing units are owner occupied (up minimally from 2000). There are no multi-family housing units in Nepeuskun; duplexes and manufactured homes make up the remainder of the housing stock. Table 2-3 shows that Nepeuskun has a higher percent of single-family homes than both the county and state in 2010. Between 2010 and 2019, 19 new single-family housing units were built in the Town of Nepeuskun. There were no new duplexes built during this time period.

**Table 2-3. Housing Units by Type: 2010**

Housing Type	Town of Nepeuskun		Winnebago County	Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Single-Family	275	96.1	69.9	70.7
Duplex	0	0	7.6	7
Multi-Family	0	0	20.5	18.4
Manufactured	11	3.8	2	3.9
Other	0	0	0	0.02
Total	286	100	100	100

Source: US Census of Population and Housing

**Table 2-4. Occupancy Status, 2010**

Occupancy Status	Town of Nepeuskun		Winnebago County	Wisconsin
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Occupied Units	277	85.2	92.1	87.7
Unoccupied Units	48 *	14.8	7.9	12.3
Total	325	100	100	100

Source: US Census of Population and Housing (Summary Tape File 1A)

Note: The percent column may not add up to 100 due to rounding.  
 \* May include seasonal occupancy.

**Housing Demand**

In the past, residents have expressed concerns over the number and location of future homes. Residents expressed the desire for any new homes built in the town to “blend into” the surrounding rural character. There should be vegetation buffers and screening to help

maintain the privacy currently offered in Nepeuskun. Residents also feel that it is important to utilize the present subdivided lots before new pieces of land are subdivided. To prevent further fragmentation of the landscape (which is not conducive to agricultural activity) existing parcels in the town that are 10 acres or less are most preferable to accommodate new development that is not agricultural related or other areas specifically identified on the Future Land Use Map.

### **Vacancy Rates**

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Vacancy rates reflect housing supply and demand. It's a difficult balance between vacancy rates deemed "too high" and "too low". If the housing supply is insufficient, it is likely that housing costs will increase, making it more difficult to find affordable housing. If there is too much available housing, vacant homes and apartments can undermine the viability of the housing market. A vacancy rate of 3 percent (1.5 percent for owned units and 1.5 percent for rentals) is considered healthy and able to support housing needs. In Nepeuskun the overall vacancy rate in 2010 was 14.8 percent, which is higher than the rate for Winnebago County and the state of Wisconsin

However, the homeowner vacancy rate in Nepeuskun in 2010 was healthy at only 0.8 percent while the rental vacancy rate was higher at 4.5 percent.

A certain percentage of the housing units in the town should be vacant at any point in time. A reasonable vacancy rate allows consumers a choice of housing options and helps to stabilize housing prices. In addition, more housing units will need to be constructed to replace housing units that are destroyed, demolished, or converted to non-residential uses.



*Residents have indicated that new residential development should blend in with the surroundings and existing homes.*

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It must be noted that vacancy rates are usually associated with factors beyond what a town the size of Nepeuskun can control and are more often the result of the status of the state or federal economy. During the final phases of this plan's development, the world was hit with a global pandemic caused by the Covid 19 virus. The economic impacts of business shutdowns and company layoffs were impacted, and rate of economic resurgence is still questionable but performed better.

### **Household Size**

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Household size indicates how many housing units a community may need. Recent trends in living choices have led to lower household sizes and more homes needed in the community. Many factors contribute to the decreasing trend in household size, including: increasing number of single parent homes, decreasing number of children per household, and increasing life expectancy.

In 2010, the average household size in Nepeuskun was 2.56 people (U.S. Census). By 2040, this is expected to decrease to 2.46. This means that while the total population according to WDOA projections is expected to increase by approximately 22 percent between 2010 and 2040, the number of households in the town will increase by 27 percent (from 277 to 352).

## **Future Housing Needs**

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As previously stated, the WDOA's household projection appears aggressive when compared to recent building permit data from 2010-2019 when over the course of that period, only 19 new homes were constructed in the town. Add to this the uncertainty of future economic conditions due to Covid 19, it appears very likely the number of future households in the town will track below these projections.

Based on the projected decrease in household size, WDOA projections, recent new home building permit activity and a possible downturn in economic conditions (bear market or possible recession due to Covid 19 impacts), it is projected that the Town of Nepeuskun will need approximately 50 new housing units by 2040. This is about an 18 percent increase over the 2010 housing unit number of 277.

As new homes are built or renovated, the makeup of housing is expected to change. Changes in household size and household make-up will necessitate a variety of housing options in the future. The increasing number of single-person households, the preference for young couples to wait to have children, the increase in the number of young couples moving to larger metropolitan areas and the expected increase in the over-65 population will all impact the types of housing Nepeuskun needs.

There is often a desire by town residents to see high end housing come to the town as a way to enhance the tax base. Although "high end" housing may be preferred, housing types must be made affordable to attract a younger demographic. At the same time, it is important to residents that new homes built in the town are limited to areas that will not negatively impact farming and agriculture in the area.

## **Affordable Housing**

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Affordable and decent housing has long been considered a basic tenet of quality of life. Yet it is not always possible

to find housing that is both decent and affordable, even in times of relative economic prosperity. So, when the economy is struggling, housing affordability can become a critical issue.

The generally accepted definition of "affordable" is that a household should pay no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. According to the US Census, 23 percent of homeowners in Nepeuskun have affordability problems, compared to 34 percent in the county and 30 percent in the state. Currently, there are only 6 renter households in Nepeuskun facing affordability problems. When households spend more than they can afford on housing they may not have enough left over for other necessities such as food, clothing, and transportation.

The National Association of Realtors® Affordability Index is one tool available to measure whether or not a typical family could qualify for a mortgage loan on a typical home. This number is reported at the national level and can be roughly calculated at the local level as well. For this calculation, a typical home is defined as the median price for a single-family home. The typical family is defined as earning the median family income as reported by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, projected to 2016 levels. An Index value of 100 means that a family with the median income has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage on a median-priced home. An Index above 100 signifies that a family that earns the median income has more than enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on a median-priced home. An increase in the Index, then, shows that an average family is more able to afford an average priced home. At the national level, the Affordability Index in 2016 was 157.

Of course, not all families are "typical families." Lower income residents, larger families, young people without built-up equity, and seniors may have a particularly difficult time finding affordable housing. Providing diverse housing options that are affordable to a variety of family types and income levels will ensure that all residents of Nepeuskun have access to good housing.

## Senior and Special Needs Housing

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The special housing needs of the elderly must be an important part of any community's commitment to provide appropriate housing options for all of its residents. The availability of special facilities is especially important to residents who want to stay in the community and remain near family and friends. "Age in Place" is the common term and most retired people prefer this option if their health or close by family members allow them to stay in their current residence.

In 2016, the population over age 64 will account for 17 percent of the town population, which is slightly higher than the 14 percent of 2000. As more Baby Boomers age, we can expect to see a significant increase in retirees in the coming years. In fact, as of 2020, this transition is well underway. This population will place demands on government, service systems, and the community-at-large in a multitude of ways.

As people age, their income tends to decline. Low and low-moderate income seniors will need affordable housing options. Most seniors want to stay in their homes or "age in place," as long as they can. Coordinated services such as Meals on Wheels, grocery delivery, snow removal and home repairs allow seniors to stay in their homes longer. Many seniors may also wish to move into smaller homes to reduce costs and regular upkeep.

Reverse mortgages, which allow owners to gradually get back the equity in their house while still living there, is also an important financial tool for seniors looking to age in place.

Due to increased life expectancy, assisted living is the fastest growing and fastest changing sector of senior housing. Private-pay assisted living units have been added to the market, but there is a lack of subsidized units for seniors needing high levels of personal care. Affordability of assisted living facilities and services is a major issue for many seniors. The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS), Division of Supportive Living licenses a number of residential settings for the elderly along with facilities for the

physically and developmentally disabled. Table 2-6 lists various residential settings and the total capacity in Winnebago County and the number of such beds in Nepeuskun.

Currently there are no assisted living facilities in Nepeuskun, but residents would like to see options that would allow elderly residents to remain in the town.

## State Housing Programs

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

For more than 45 years, WHEDA has worked to provide low-cost financing for housing and small business development in Wisconsin. Since 1972, WHEDA has financed more than 75,000 affordable rental units, helped more than 133,000 families purchase a home and provided more than 29,000 small business and agricultural loan guarantees. WHEDA is a self-supporting public corporation that receives no tax dollars for its operations. For more information on WHEDA programs, visit [wheda.com](http://wheda.com) or call 800-334-6873. Contact: Jennifer Sereno, WHEDA Public Affairs, 608-770-8084, [Jennifer.Sereno@WHEDA.com](mailto:Jennifer.Sereno@WHEDA.com)

### Office of Rural Prosperity within the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers called for creating the Office of Rural Prosperity in his State of the State speech in February 2020 to "provide a one-stop shop for folks to navigate state programs and resources tailored to rural communities, businesses and workers."

The program is in its infancy and just hired an Executive Director to lead the effort. The program has the potential to be a "game changer" in linking resources to rural communities for workforce housing, ag-related business, agri-tourism and much more. Information as the program develops can be obtained through the WEDC web site at: <https://wedc.org/>

**USDA Rural Housing Programs**

The mission of the US Department of Agriculture Rural Development is to improve the quality of life in rural areas. The housing programs help rural communities and individuals by providing loans and grants for housing and community facilities to fund single-family homes, apartments for low-income persons or the elderly, and

**Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants** provide low-cost financing for the development of affordable rental housing for both year-round and migrant "domestic farm laborers" and their households. These programs may be used to build, buy, improve, or repair farm labor housing and provide related facilities, such as on-site child care centers.

**Table 2-5. Special Needs Housing in Nepeuskun and Winnebago County**

Facility Type	Description	Total Number Town of Nepeuskun	Winnebago County
<b>Adult Family Homes (Licensed by the State)</b>	A place where three or four adults receive care, treatment or services (above the level of room and board), including up to seven hours of nursing care.	0	36 Facilities
<b>Adult Day Care Center</b>	A group day facility for adults who need assistance with activities of daily living, supervision or protection.	0	0 Facilities
<b>Community Based Residential Facility</b>	A place where five or more unrelated people live together in a community setting. Services provided include room and board, supervision, support services and may include up to three hours of nursing care per week.	0	61 Facilities
<b>Facility for the Developmentally Disabled</b>	A residential facility for three or more unrelated persons with developmental disabilities.	0	0 Facilities
<b>Nursing Home</b>	A residential facility for three or more unrelated persons that provides 24-hour services, including room and board and extensive nursing care.	0	938 Beds
<b>Residential Care Apartment Complex</b>	Independent apartment units in which the following services are provided: room and board, up to 28 hours per week of supportive care, personal care and nursing services.	0	546 Apartments

Source: Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Quality Assurance, 2018.

housing for farm laborers. The following is a list of a variety of USDA rural housing loan and grant programs. A complete list of programs can be found on the USDA Rural Development Web Site:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/about-rd/agencies/rural-housing-service>

Checking the web site frequently is suggested as program specifics are removed, added or changed regularly based on legislation and/or orders.

**Housing Preservation Grants** provide qualified public nonprofit organizations and public agencies funding to assist very low and low-income homeowners repair and rehabilitate their homes in rural areas.

**Rural Housing Site Loans** are short term loans to finance development costs of subdivisions located in communities with a population less than 10,000 persons. Developed lots are to be sold to families with low to moderate household income (up to 115 percent of the county median income).

**Repair Loans and Grants** are low interest home improvement loans and grants designed for very low-income individuals (50 percent or less of county median income). Funding can be used for making repairs, installing essential features, or to removing health and safety hazards. In order to be eligible for grants, the applicant must be at least 62 years old and be unable to repay the loan.

**Single Family Housing Direct Loans** are for families seeking financing to purchase (existing or new construction), repair, or improve a home. This subsidized housing program offers loan benefits as down payment assistance to enable purchase with a loan through a private lending source (Rural Development accepts a junior lien behind the primary lender) or as a sole source of assistance for purchase, repair, or improvement. Sole source assistance is limited to families who are unable to obtain any part of the needed credit from another lending source.

The **Guaranteed Rural Housing (GRH)** loan program provides moderate income families with access to affordable home ownership in eligible rural areas. Approved GRH lenders provide home purchase financing requiring no down payment and can finance loan closing costs and repairs up to the property's appraised value.

**Multi-Family Housing Direct Loans** provide loans for the development of affordable rental housing in rural communities for seniors, individuals, and families. Low and very low-income households are targeted as tenants, but moderate-income households are also eligible. Rural Development may also provide Rental Assistance (RA) with its loan. Rental Assistance is a project-based tenant subsidy that pays a portion of tenant shelter costs, reducing them to an affordable level (30 percent of adjusted income).

**Multi-Family Housing Guaranteed Loans** serve the rental housing needs of low and moderate-income rural households by providing loan guarantees for newly constructed or rehabilitated rental property in eligible rural areas. Guarantees may be used in conjunction with other subsidy programs, such as the Low-Income Tax Credit, HOME, and state rental assistance programs.

Loans can be made for a variety of rental housing types, for example: family elderly, congregate housing, and mobile homes. Loans can be made for new construction moderate or substantial rehabilitation, acquisition of buildings that meet "special housing needs," and combination construction and permanent loans.

### **Wisconsin Rural Partners (WRP)**

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Since December 1992, WRP has served as Wisconsin's state rural development council (SRDC) through a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Agriculture. WRP initiatives are more far reaching than just housing but the WRP can provide key resources.

WRP is a neutral, nonprofit organization that brings together a cross section of residents, organizations and leaders important to rural communities throughout the state. WRP is focused on addressing issues and building collaboration between community, state, federal, nonprofit, and private sector leaders that impact rural communities.

WRP has designed and implemented highly effective programming to identify and address key issues that impact rural life. WRP actively promotes economic, social and community development for rural Wisconsin. WRP is a member of National Rural Development Partnership and Partners for Rural America.

WRP is an active advocate for locally-based solutions focused on core issues and opportunities. WRP encourages private/public partnerships for sustainable rural community development. They foster and celebrate local initiatives and projects that promote stewardship and expansion of community and natural resources including:

- Broadband Access and Adoption
- Community Infrastructure and Systems
- Child and Health Care Access
- Housing Financing and Construction
- Transportation Maintenance, Access and Use
- Agriculture and Natural Resource Use and Conservation

More information can be obtained through the WRP web site at: <https://www.wiruralpartners.org>

## Housing

### 10-Year Vision

In the year 2040, the Town of Nepeuskun is rural, family-friendly, and growing. Active farmsteads are blended into rolling hillsides and forested lands, and the town is proud of its agrarian heritage and identity. The town has retained its rural character by keeping residential development sparse and protecting farming and productive agricultural lands.

The Town of Nepeuskun is a family-friendly community. Town residents are proud that parents can bring up their children in a safe community and provide a rural quality of life. New residents come here because of our natural beauty and rural character, to leave the bustle of city-life behind, and to be closer to recreational opportunities. Housing is affordable for seniors and others. Houses and properties are well-maintained as people take pride in their homes and neighborhoods.

New housing is hidden from main roads by natural topography, vegetation (e.g., tree lines, wooded edges), landscaped yards, and setbacks. Vegetative buffers separate building sites, preserving wetlands, and streams, mature trees, stone rows, fence lines, and tree lines are preserved. Homes are clustered on smaller lots to preserve farmland.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

#### Goals

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*Goals provide concise statements of what the town aims to accomplish over the life of the plan—for the next ten to twenty years. The goals provide the basic organization and direction for the plan’s policies and actions.*

- G2.1** Maintain the town’s rural and agrarian character.
- G2.2** Encourage high quality construction, enforcement, and maintenance standards for new and existing housing.
- G2.3** Encourage neighborhood design and locations that protect residential areas from incompatible land uses, promote connectivity of environmental systems, and preserve rural character.
- G2.4** Support affordable, quality housing available to all residents.

#### Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishments of an objective contribute to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O2.1** Maintain low densities that are compatible with existing development patterns and that will preserve the rural character of the town.
- O2.2** Direct residential development to areas that are not environmentally sensitive and are not prime/productive farmlands.
- O2.3** Encourage conservation subdivisions.
- O2.4** Encourage housing design that blends with the rural environment and will not adversely affect neighboring properties.
- O2.5** Acknowledge the potential need for agriculturally based workforce housing.

#### Policies

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*Policies provide the definite course of action or direction decided upon by the town to be employed to attain the goals. They provide ongoing guidance for elected and appointed community leaders, staff and administrators as they make decisions about development, programs, and investments in the town.*

- P2.1** Develop design guidelines and subdivision regulations for conservation/cluster residential development.

- P2.2** Consider implementing a maximum lot size for new residential land divisions in the town.
- P2.3** Direct new residential into areas with existing residential development, such as the Crossroad Community of Rush Lake.
- P2.4** Consider requiring all residential subdividers to provide covenants and deed restrictions that include architectural and site design, and guidelines for individual homes.
- P2.5** Revise the town's Land Division Ordinance to meet the standards and guidelines of the town's Comprehensive Plan.
- P2.6** Revise the town's zoning ordinance or create a licensing ordinance to regulate short-term rentals (STRs') throughout the town.
- P2.7** Review the requirements and regulations pertaining to tiny homes and determine applicability for the town.

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# Transportation

## Overview

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Residents of Nepeuskun depend on the transportation facilities in their town to connect them to other areas of the region and state. The type, quality, and location of transportation facilities are an important component in residents’ quality of life.

There is a significant relationship between transportation and land use. New development or changes in existing land uses, whether incremental or sudden, directly affects the safety and functionality of roadways and the demand for additional transportation facilities. Thus, this element and the Land Use Element support and complement one another.

The intent of this element is to provide basic information on the existing transportation network in the Town of Nepeuskun and the region. Statewide planning efforts are reviewed to assess how these efforts may or may not affect transportation facilities within and around Nepeuskun. State programmatic budgets are reviewed to determine what transportation projects, if any, are anticipated. The final section presents a future transportation network plan for the town. Taken together this review will help to better define the issues, problems, and opportunities this plan should address to accommodate residents’ needs. As an end-product, the future transportation plan will guide development of the road network over the planning period.

## Existing Transportation Network

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Nepeuskun is situated among a number of low-traffic-volume rural roads. The county road system connects the community to Berlin and Ripon, as well as to the larger Fox River Valley. The town is within 2 hours of Madison and within 5 hours of Chicago and Minneapolis. Opportunities for air travel include the Outagamie Airport (Appleton) and the Madison and Milwaukee

regional airports. Freight service is located within 15 miles of Nepeuskun.



*Nepeuskun is connected by a series of rural roadways that support and enhance the character of the town.*

---

## Road Classification

To help plan for current and future traffic conditions, it is useful to categorize roads based on their primary function. Arterials accommodate the rapid movement of vehicles, while local streets provide the land access function. Collectors serve both local and through-traffic by providing a connection between arterial and local roads. A description of DOT’s classification system is provided in Table 3-1. For reference, Map 3 shows the WDOT functional road classifications in the town and road types.

Primary Arterials: None are located in Nepeuskun. The closest primary arterials are Interstate 41 and State Highway 26, located east of town, and State Highway 21 located north of town. In Green Lake County to the west, State Highway 49 runs north/south and State Highway 23 runs east-west. State Highway 23 to the south provides access to Madison to the south and Wausau to the north.

**Table 3-1 Functional Classification System**

Classification	Description
Primary arterials	Serve interstate and interregional trips. These routes generally serve all urban areas greater than 5,000 population. The rural principal arterials are further subdivided into (1) Interstate highways and (2) other principal arterials.
Minor arterials	In conjunction with the principal arterials, they serve cities, large communities and other major traffic generators providing intra-regional and inter-area traffic movement.
Major collectors	Provide service to moderate size communities and other intra-area traffic generators and link those generators to nearby larger population centers or higher function routes.
Minor collectors	Collect traffic from local roads, and provide links to all remaining smaller communities, locally important traffic generators and higher function roads. All developed areas should be within a reasonable distance of a collector road.
Local roads	Provide access to adjacent land and provide travel over relatively short distances. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors are local function roads.

Source: "Facilities Development Manual" Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

**Minor Arterials:** State Road 91 runs east/west in the northern portion of the town, and it serves as a direct route to the Wittman Airport and Oshkosh. In the west, it ends in Berlin.

**Major Collectors:** County Highway E runs north connecting to the major arterials of State Road 91 and 21 farther north, and south connecting to downtown Ripon. Running through the northeast corner of town, County Highway M can be accessed by State Rd 91 and connects north to Waukau and south to State Highway 23 and 44.

**Minor Collectors:** There are no minor collectors in the town. County Road V, which runs east and west through the central portion of town, use to be a minor collector but has since lost that designation.

**Town/Local Roads:** The remaining public roads in Nepeuskun are considered local roads.

**Private Roads:** Island Aire Road is a private road that commences at the north end of Island Rd and provides access to all of the lots in the Island Aire Subdivision.

**Rustic Roads**

The Wisconsin Legislature established the Rustic Roads program in 1973 to help citizens and local units of government preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads. An officially designated Rustic Road shall continue to be under local control and is eligible for state aids just as any other public highway.

Mountain Road, beginning at its intersection with County M and proceeding in a southerly then easterly direction until its intersection again with County M (3.1 miles), has been officially designated as a Rustic Road. Mountain Road offers great wildlife and wildflower viewing in a serene setting. It passes through the middle of 270 acres owned by the WDNR. It is home to many birds including sandhill cranes, short-eared owls, northern bobwhite quail, and pheasants. A traveler will encounter an abundance of wildflowers bordering the roadway including mayapple, trillium, Canada anenome, wild geraniums, Solomon's seal, wild roses, and goldenrods. (Wisconsin DOT)

**Bridges**

There is one county highway bridge on M over Waukau Creek in the northeastern corner of Nepeuskun. It is maintained and inspected by the county. In addition to bridges, the town manages numerous road culverts within the town road network.

# Town of Nepeuskun

Winnebago County, Wisconsin

## Functional Road Classifications and Daily Traffic Counts

### Functional Classification

- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Local Minor Collector

<https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/projects/data-plan/plan-res/function.aspx>

### Daily Traffic Counts

2019 Daily Traffic Counts

2016 Daily Traffic Counts

2010 Daily Traffic Counts

2004 Daily Traffic Counts

<https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/projects/data-plan/traf-counts/default.aspx>

### Road Types

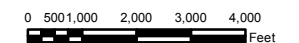
- State Road
- County Road
- Local Road
- Private Road
- Rustic Road

### Map Features

- Municipal Boundary
- Section Lines
- Waterways
- Open Water



Approximate Scale

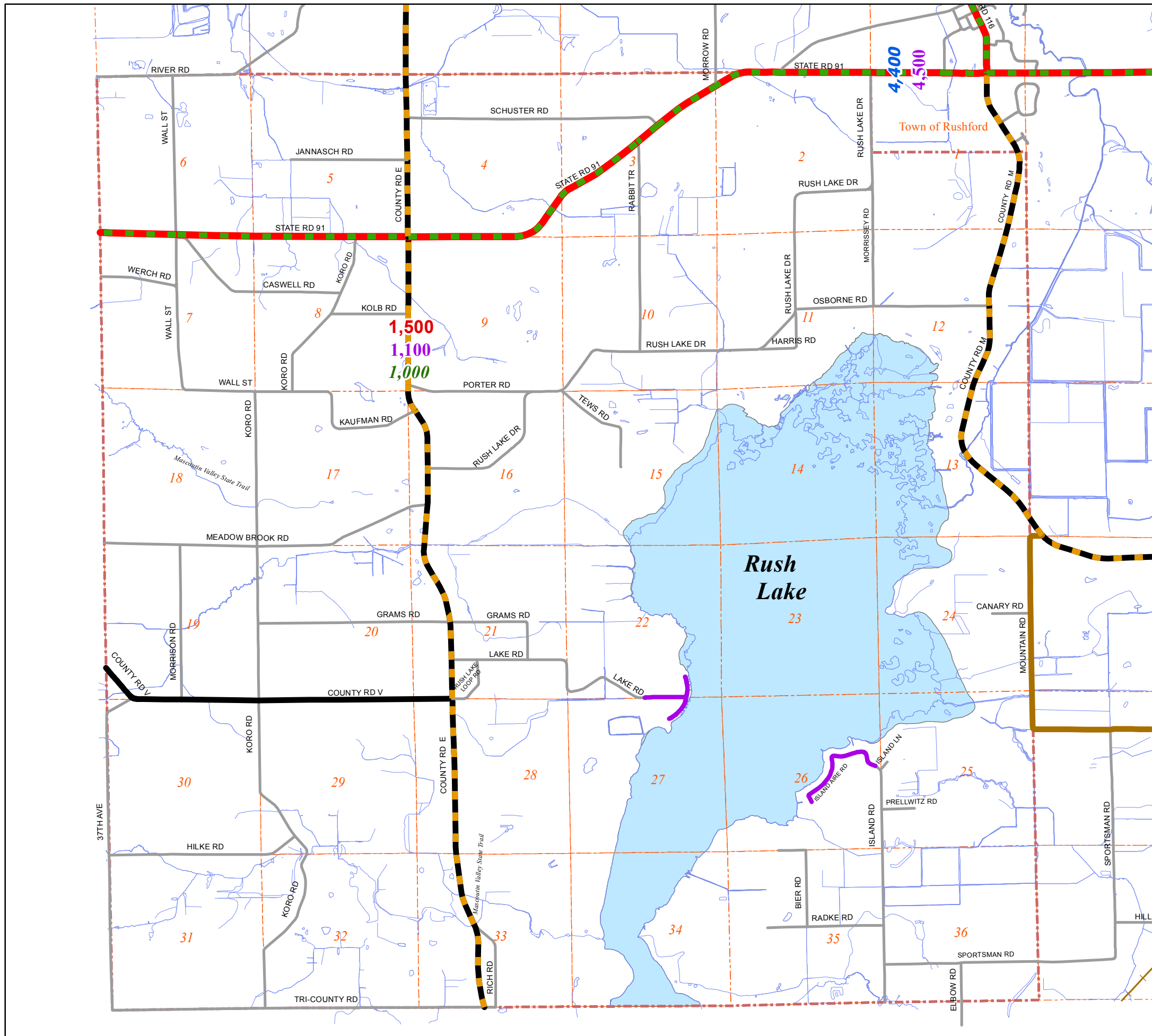


This base map was created by Winnebago County, who expressly disclaims all liability regarding fitness of use of the information. The user is responsible for understanding the accuracy limitations of the data provided herein.

## Martenson & Eisele, Inc.

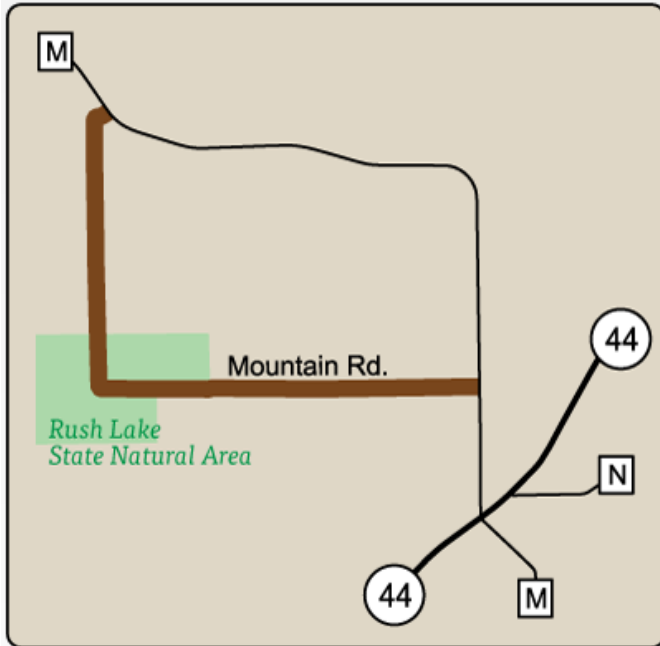
1377 Midway Road  
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920.731.0381 1.800.236.0381  
argis10328002gis.mxd\_04/28/2020

Planning  
Environmental  
Surveying  
Engineering  
Architecture



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**Figure 3-1. Rustic Roads**



**Truck Routes**

State Road 91 is the only truck route located in Nepeuskun. It is designated as a 75-foot restricted truck route. This route accommodates commercial truck traffic. Trucks also utilize the county highways within the town subject to weight restrictions.

**Air Transportation**

Within Wisconsin, there are 100 public-use airports of various size and capabilities that are part of the State Airport System. Airports included in this system are primarily owned by a municipality or a county. However, certain privately-owned, public-use airports are also part of the system because they may provide general aviation relief to a major airport.

The Appleton International Airport is classified as a transport/corporate airport. The airport is owned by Outagamie County and is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and regional cargo jet aircraft, and small commuter planes. Other airports that serve residents of Nepeuskun include the Dane County Regional Airport in Madison, General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee, and Austin Straubel

International Airport in Green Bay. The town does not contain any private air strips.

**Railroad Facilities**

A railroad runs just south of the town and is a short line rail operation that serves the Oshkosh area and the southern portion of Winnebago County. A multi modal railroad facility is located east of the town crossing State Road 91 near the City of Oshkosh. There is also rail access in the City of Ripon.

Additionally, the town is served by a fertilizer, seed and supply company located on the rail adjacent to the town which has access to multiple grain elevators within a short drive from any where in the town. Direct markets to the international grain trade is just a few short miles from any farm in the town.

**Bicycle / Walking Paths**

The Mascoutin Valley State Trail (formerly known as the Rush Lake Trail) follows an abandoned rail corridor for approximately five miles through the southwestern portion of the town (See Map 3). This 4.5-mile portion of the trail is owned and maintained by Winnebago County. The total length of this multi-use trail (horses, bicycles, hiking, and snowmobiles) is 31.1 miles including 11.1 miles available for horseback riding. It eventually will connect Berlin and Fond du Lac; there are sections that are not complete in Fond du Lac County but plans are underway to complete that portion of the trail.

Residents and visitors alike enjoy the Mascoutin Valley Trail. The Town should entertain opportunities to enhance trail access and support amenities for recreation along the trail.

There are snowmobile trails maintained by private clubs for winter recreation opportunities in the town.

A growing rural transportation trend is ATV & UTV use for farm and recreation use. The Town currently has designated ATV or UTV routes. The Town should continue discussions with residents and/or clubs for future designated routes.

Low traffic volume roads are often used by town residents for walking which is common in rural areas.

**Special Transit Facilities**

The Town of Nepeuskun has limited public transportation options. However, a subsidized service called “Go Transit” serving the greater Oshkosh area, provides transportation in rural Winnebago County for residents over age 60 and persons with disabilities.

The Rural Over 60 Program provides sedan service to seniors (age 60 and over) in rural Winnebago County. This service can be used for any trips within the county. Each participant is limited to 10 one-way rides per month.

The Rural Under 60 Program provides sedan and lift-equipped van service to rural residents with a qualifying disability in Winnebago County. This service can be used for any trips within the county. Each participant is limited to 10 one-way rides per month. Both Ripon and Berlin also have a taxi service as well as a senior citizen van transportation mode. Other private sector transportation options such as Uber and Lyft have emerged and will provide service to rural areas. However, they are typically a more cost-effective option serving urban centers.

**Package and Freight Delivery**

Nepeuskun residents are provided with door-to-door services of multiple package and freight delivery package options including, but not limited to, the United States Post Office, Speedy Delivery, UPS, FEDEX, Chewy, DHL and others.

**Water Transit**

There is no waterborne freight movement in Nepeuskun. Water freight moves in and out of the region through the ports of Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Chicago. Local navigable waters are used only for recreational purposes.

**I Transportation**

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I Transportation includes the transportation of data and other forms of telecommunication. Without highspeed internet availability, opportunity is lost. The workplace is moving to work at home. Work at home scenarios require high speed internet and precision farming does not work without high-speed connectivity. Searching for information, replacement parts, shopping and commerce rely on high-speed connectivity. In addition to daily function, high speed internet also provides a wealth of entertainment. Meetings like Zoom, Webex, and many others all require highspeed internet access. Tele-medicine requires highspeed internet and patient monitoring also requires high speed downloads for vital signs and health checks. If highspeed internet is unavailable, business and people go to places that have access to quality broadband. The Town of Nepeuskun has both quality highspeed internet at reasonable prices, some areas of the town require expensive additional equipment and fees to access high speed internet and some areas of the town are restricted to slow dial up service or very costly satellite access. Continued investment in improving I Transportation service is essential for the town.

**Transportation Patterns and Traffic Conditions**

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As part of a statewide system, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) monitors traffic flow at selected locations in three-year cycles. Map 3 shows the locations of these counts taken in and around the Town of Nepeuskun during 2004, 2010, 2016 & 2019. The highest traffic levels are on State Road 91, running east and west through the town. Traffic volume has generally decreased since 2010. On the other hand, County Road E has experienced a steady increase growing to 1500 vehicles per day as of 2019. Classified as a major collector, it’s the most utilized county highway in the town connecting to STH 21 to the north with STH 23 to the south.

A number of transportation concerns have been expressed by the public. People felt that the local town roads tend to be in poor condition. But concerns like this have become increasingly common in rural Wisconsin towns as the state has battled a degrading road infrastructure system for the past decade or more. Attempts by the Wisconsin Towns Association to increase local road aids and fund new programs have had some recent success but still track far behind town road needs. In addition, farm equipment size has generally increased and the weights can put undo pressure on town roads, especially in spring and fall.

Recently, the state has increased local road aids or funding to towns like Nepeuskun to overcome required road repairs. However, the Town will need to look for creative solutions to fund required road repairs.

Also expressed was concern about the increase in bicyclists and pedestrians along County Road E, which is generally too narrow and has too high of traffic volume to safely accommodate both vehicular and pedestrian/bike traffic. Increasing traffic volumes will likely exacerbate the issue. Wider shoulders for walking and/or biking would help address these issues the next time major road work on CTH E is planned. It was also stated that the 45-mph speed limit is not enforced sufficiently along this road.

There is also some concern that the speed and heavy truck traffic through Rush Lake Crossroads conflicts with the residential living in this area. The corner of Rush Lake Loop Road, County Road V, and County Road E has been identified as a problem intersection. These issues should continue to be monitored and appropriate improvements implemented.

**Road Conditions and Maintenance**

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**Road Conditions**

Periodically Winnebago County inspects all of the public roads that the town maintains and assigns a rating for the physical appearance of each road by segment. The

system is referred to as PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating). Data from the most recent survey can be obtained through the WDOT web page which is updated periodically.

**Road Maintenance**

The Town of Nepeuskun contracts with Winnebago County and private contractors for all town road maintenance. The Town also works with the county and private contractors for the responsibility of snow plowing, weeding and cutting along roads, and all road repairs and rebuilding.

The county typically double seal coats approximately one to two miles of road per year depending on road wear conditions. The amount of paving and seal-coating done in a given year depends on the snowplowing expenditures for the year. Surplus or deficient funds in the road snowplowing budget are balanced with the road maintenance budget.

**New Roads**

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Given the projected slow population growth and minimal housing demand over the next twenty years in Nepeuskun, construction of new collector and local roads will be limited. There are no anticipated locations where new roads need to be added.

**Regional Transportation Information**

The Town of Nepeuskun is serviced by the following regional transportation facilities:

AMTRAK Stations;

Portage, WI approximately 60 miles

Columbus, WI approximately 60 miles

Bus Stations;

Appleton, WI approximately 40 miles

Oshkosh, WI approximately 24 miles

Fond du Lac, WI approximately 30 miles

Stevens Point, WI approximately 80 miles

International Airports;

- Appleton, WI approximately 40 miles
- Green bay, WI approximately 80 miles

Municipal Airports;

- Fond du Lac County Airport approximately 30 miles
- Portage Municipal Airport approximately 60 miles
- Stevens Point Municipal Airport approximately 80 miles

Regional Airports;

- Oshkosh, Wittman Regional Airport approximately 24 miles

**State and Regional Transportation Plans**

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**State Plans**

A number of statewide transportation planning efforts will affect the transportation facilities and services in the region. The following sections provide a brief overview of the plans that have been completed or that are in a draft phase. Please note that most of the plans referenced in this section are available through the wisconsin.gov web site under the "Projects and Studies" tab. Also, for future reference, Winnebago County and the Town of Nepeuskun are located in the WDOT's Northeast (NE) Region.

**Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030**

Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 and its accompanying System-Plan Environmental Evaluation (SEE) is the statewide long-range airport transportation plan. The 20-year plan builds off the policies and issues identified in Connections 2030, Wisconsin's statewide long-range transportation plan adopted in October 2009.

Wisconsin's State Airport System Plan identifies a system of 98 public-use airports adequate to meet different aviation needs in all parts of the state, and is a guide for federal and state investment decisions. The identification of potential projects in this plan is not a

commitment for federal or state project funding, nor does it provide project justification. Prior to project implementation all projects must be justified through the local master planning and environmental process, and approved by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration, when appropriate. The plan includes a statewide vision for aviation, an overview and analysis of the state's system of airports, a SEE, and an environmental justice analysis.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) officially adopted Wisconsin State Airport System Plan 2030 on February 19, 2015. It includes nine chapters with supporting materials included as appendices. The plan can be downloaded by chapter through the final plan link on the left side of this page.

For more information, contact:

Judy Harding, Bureau of Aeronautics  
judy.harding@dot.wi.gov,  
(608) 267-1223.

**Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030**

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 is the statewide long-range rail transportation plan. It provides a vision for freight rail, intercity passenger rail and commuter rail, and identifies priorities and strategies that will serve as a basis for Wisconsin rail investments over the next 20 years. It serves as a guide for decision makers through 2030.

Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 brings the State of Wisconsin in compliance with the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). In order to be eligible for federal funding, PRIIA legislation requires state to develop a long-range plan for freight, intercity passenger and commuter rail, and update the plan at least every five years. Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 also brings the State of Wisconsin in compliance with Title 49 United States Code Section 22102 requirements, making the state eligible to receive financial assistance based on compliance with regulations through the U.S.

Secretary of Transportation. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) officially adopted Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 on March 19, 2014.

### **Wisconsin State Freight Plan**

Enhancing freight mobility is a top priority for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The State Freight Plan (SFP) provides a vision for multimodal freight transportation and positions the state to remain competitive in the global marketplace. The SFP was approved by the U.S. Department of Transportation on March 19, 2018. For Winnebago County, the plan focuses on major improvements to the USH 10-USH10/STH 441 corridors. For nearby Fond du Lac County, the plan recognizes the need for reconstructing STH 23 as a major freight route.

### **Connections 2030**

Connections 2030 is Wisconsin's statewide long-range, multimodal transportation plan that was adopted in 2009 and is still utilized today. This plan addresses all forms of transportation over a 20-year planning horizon: highways, local roads, air, water, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and transit. The plan identifies a series of multimodal corridors for each part of the state. Nepeuskun is part of the Cranberry Country Corridor which runs from Tomah to Oshkosh. When completed, the multimodal corridor plans will prioritize investments and assist Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) in identifying future segments for more detailed corridor plans. One major feature that affects the town is the recommended construction of a passing lane on State Road 91.

### **Connect 2050**

Wisconsin's Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan, Connect 2050, focuses on addressing the state's multimodal transportation needs through the year 2050.

Connect 2050 is a new plan for a new time; a streamlined, user-friendly document that utilizes innovative planning and data visualization techniques to guide Wisconsin's transportation future. Associated

technical reports, analysis, and modal-specific plans will exist alongside this plan, allowing Connect 2050 to stand alone as a visionary document that will guide overall transportation decision-making for Wisconsin. When officially adopted, the plan should be reviewed for recommendations that may impact the town.

### **State Six-Year Highway Improvement Plan**

The Six Year Highway Improvement Plan covers Wisconsin has 115,543 miles of public roads, from Interstate freeways to city and village streets. This highway improvement program covers only the 11,745-mile state highway system which is administered and maintained by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). The other 103,798 miles are improved and maintained by the cities, towns, counties and villages in which they are located.

Each wisely invested dollar returns benefits in terms of time savings, fewer accidents and decreased vehicle operating costs. Poor roads mean more accidents and deaths, higher insurance costs, more wear and tear on vehicles, more time on the road and less efficient and competitive commerce. Please visit our [master contract schedule page](#), which identifies projects for the future and represents WisDOT's best estimate of when projects will be ready for letting.

Wisconsin's transportation budget is divided into two subprograms for implementing improvements to state highway facilities:

- [Major Highway Development](#)
- [State Highway Rehabilitation \(SHR\)](#)

The six-year program details projects that are scheduled for improvement over the next years. There are no projects currently within the program associated with the Town of Nepeuskun. However, the town should monitor the program for future improvements to STH 91.

### **Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan - 2020**

The Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan – 2020 presents a blueprint for developing and integrating

bicycling into the overall transportation system. In an effort to promote bicycling between communities, the plan analyzed the condition of all county trunk and state trunk highways in the state and included maps showing the suitability of these roads for bicycle traffic. Suitability criteria were based primarily on road width and traffic volumes with secondary consideration given to pavement condition, passing opportunities, and percent and volume of truck traffic.

This plan identifies the Mascoutin Valley State Trail as a major bicycling tour trail. It also identifies County Road V as being a “best conditions for bicycling” route. County Road V connects to HWY 49 in Green Lake County. County Road E, on the other hand, has been labeled as having too high of a traffic volume and has other undesirable conditions for bicycling.

#### **State Recreational Trails Network Plan**

In 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) adopted the State Trails Network Plan as an amendment to the Wisconsin State Trail Strategic Plan. This plan identifies a network of trail corridors throughout the state referred to as the “trail interstate system” that potentially could consist of more than 4,000 miles of trails. These potential trails may follow one or more of the following: highway corridors, utility corridors, rail corridors, and linear natural features (e.g. rivers and other topographic features).

Even though a proposed trail corridor may not run through a community, the plan encourages communities and counties throughout the state to develop additional trails that would link to the statewide trail system. The Mascoutin Valley State Trail provides one such opportunity for linkage. The WisDNR is currently considering extending the trail from Ripon to Oxford along the abandoned rail line.

#### **Regional Plans**

Winnebago County is a member of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The 2030

Regional Comprehensive Plan serves Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Menominee, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara along with Winnebago Counties.

The transportation element to this plan encourages intergovernmental cooperation to address the increase in traffic volumes and the need for capacity expansions on the region’s roadways.

#### **County Plans**

Towns work closely with their parent county so coordinated planning is essential. The following planning efforts are always ongoing in Winnebago County:

#### **Winnebago County Road Projects Plan**

Winnebago County maintains a county road projects plan where a copy is available to review on their web site. Projects are listed on an annual basis. The town should continuously monitor the need for county highway projects for all of the county highways within the town including E, M and V.

#### **Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan**

The Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan’s transportation element acts to guide improvements for all modes of transportation and to advise local communities in respect to the larger county transportation framework. It does not identify any major changes occurring in Nepeuskun. It does, however, identify the Mascoutin Valley State Trail expansion from Ripon to Oxford. The plan emphasizes the importance of a multi-modal transportation network throughout the county.

## Transportation 20-Year Vision

In 2040, we envision Nepeuskun as a place with a well-maintained transportation system that offers a variety of options for all residents. Roads and corridors are safely shared by motorists, bicycles, and pedestrians alike. County Road V has been designated as a county bicycle route, and the Mascoutin Valley State Trail continues to provide visitors and residents with a safe and scenic hiking, biking, horseback riding, and snowmobiling route through town. Widened shoulders along County Road E have improved pedestrian and bicycle safety along this key corridor.

Speed limit signs have been installed throughout town and additional traffic enforcement, particularly along County Road E, has improved road safety. The speed limit of County Road E through the Crossroads of Rush Lake has been reduced, and the intersection of County Road V, E, and Rush Lake Loop Road has been improved to address safety and visibility issues.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

### Goals

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*Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach transportation issues.*

- G3.1** Maintain the design, function, and safety of the existing road network
- G3.2** Coordinate land use and transportation planning to meet the needs of drivers, farmers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and local residents.
- G3.3** Enhance and promote the use of bicycles and walking as recognized forms of transportation by providing multi-use trails, bicycle routes, and wide shoulders on key roads.
- G3.4** Reduce the impact of traffic on residential life.
- G3.5** Provide opportunities for low cost highspeed internet access and broadband essential for quality of life and work/business opportunities within the Town of Nepeuskun.

### Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishment of an objective contribute to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O3.1** Support reducing the speed of traffic traveling through Rush Lake Crossroads.
- O3.2** Work to improve safety and visibility at intersections.
- O3.3** Reduce the number of local roads requiring reconstruction or structural improvements.
- O3.4** Maintain and improve the safety of roads for bicycles and pedestrians.
- O3.5** Improve access to, increase use of the Mascoutin Valley State Trail.

### Policies

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*Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives.*

- P3.1** Continue to double-seal coat one to two miles of local roads in the town each year.
- P3.2** Work with Winnebago County to provide paratransit (supplemented fixed-route mass

transit rides) in Nepeuskun through the subsidized taxi and van service.

- P3.3** Work with the county to evaluate options to address traffic speed and safety in the Crossroads of Rush Lake and consider options for improving the safety at the intersection of County Road E and County Road V.
- P3.4** Work with the county to evaluate options for increasing traffic enforcement in the town, especially near the Crossroads of Rush Lake.
- P3.5** Work to improve the condition of roads in the town that have been identified as needing reconstruction or structural improvements.
- P3.6** Work with the county to designate County Road V as a bicycle route.
- P3.7** Work with the county to evaluate the feasibility of increasing the shoulder width along County Road E to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- P3.8** Determine how to pay for needed road repairs.

## Utilities and Community Facilities

### Overview

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This chapter provides basic information on the community-type services currently offered in the Town of Nepeuskun with the exception of transportation related facilities, which are addressed in the Transportation Chapter of the plan. The location, use, capacity and extent of services are identified for both public and private-sector utilities and services. This information was used to determine which public services should be expanded or rehabilitated and what, if any, new services could be provided to meet any unmet need.

### Sewer, Water, and Storm Water Facilities

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#### Wastewater

Private, on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS) are used throughout the Town of Nepeuskun. Typically, individual systems are designed for each household or business based on the site's soil characteristics and capabilities. On-site systems, depending on the type and maintenance frequency, can function for fifteen to thirty years and can cost-effectively treat waste in rural areas not served by public sewers. Sanitary permits for new or replacement POWTS are issued by Winnebago County, not by the Town.

#### Water Supply

Residents in the Town of Nepeuskun rely on groundwater tapped through private wells for their drinking water. Based on a study conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR), the Town of Nepeuskun is located in an area that is highly susceptible to groundwater contamination based on depth to bedrock, bedrock type, soil characteristics, surficial deposits, and depth-to-water table.

Nitrate-nitrogen is the most widespread groundwater contaminant in the state, and this problem is increasing in extent and severity. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established maximum contaminate level (MCL) for nitrates as 10 parts per million (ppm). Based on private well sampling conducted between 1985 and 1994, an estimated 20 percent of the wells in the Town of Nepeuskun are at or above this threshold. Wells with elevated nitrate levels were found near the Crossroads of Rush Lake and the northeastern corner of the town. Nitrate inputs originate from manure spreading, agricultural fertilizers, lawn and garden fertilizers and legume cropping systems. On-site wastewater systems (septic tanks) can also be a significant nitrate source.

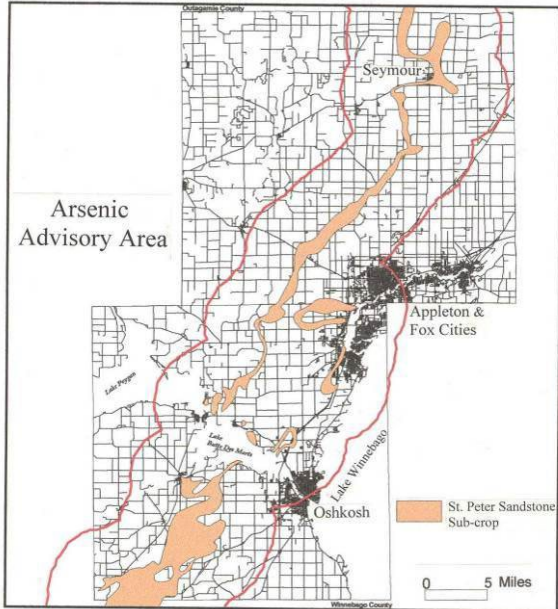
In addition, a 2002 study estimated that 33 percent of private drinking water wells in the region of Wisconsin that includes the Town of Nepeuskun contained a detectable level of an herbicide or herbicide metabolite. Pesticides occur in groundwater more commonly in agricultural regions.

Figure 4-1 depicts an area five miles either side of the sub-crop of the St Peter Sandstone. Since the St. Peter Sandstone is one of the primary sulfide minerals bearing zones (i.e., arsenic bearing) and is shallow, lying just below the glacial sediments, the area has a higher potential for the development of water quality problems.

Given the information previously stated, residents should have their water tested to ensure safe potable water. Testing should be a collective town effort, potentially collaborating with the WisDNR, so a central collection of testing results can be maintained, and water quality can be monitored over time. All abandoned wells in the Town shall be decommissioned to WDNR standards.

The Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources Chapter of this Plan provides additional information on groundwater contamination and protection.

**Figure 4.1. WisDNR Arsenic Advisory Areas**



Storm water runoff and management have recently gained more attention as an environmental concern due to surface water quality issues. According to studies conducted by the Center for Watershed Protections, as little as 10 percent impervious cover (e.g., streets, roofs, parking lots, driveways, etc.) within a watershed can negatively impact fish habitat. Managing and controlling storm water runoff is imperative for a healthy environment. It is also a matter of health, safety, and welfare for a community in that surface water runoff can lead to erosion and flooding problems.

Located within Chapter 23, Winnebago County’s Town/County Zoning Ordinance is Article 15, “Winnebago County Construction Site Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance”, adopted February 13, 2018. This ordinance serves to address the issues of storm water and erosion control. The ordinance provides for management of storm water and erosion control on both a larger scale and smaller scale (single

lot) development level. The Town of Nepeuskun indicates in Ch. 6-11 of their ordinances the requirement to incorporate “Green” strategies for storm water management into new development as well as meet the requirements of Winnebago County Construction Site Erosion Control and Stormwater Management Ordinance. Green strategies can be for example, rain gardens, vegetated swales, green roofs or permeable pavements. Regulation of storm water runoff is critical for the long-term protection of water resources and personal property in the town.

For rural towns such as Nepeuskun, a majority of stormwater flows through a system of roadside ditches and culverts, discharging into natural drainageways. Ongoing ditch maintenance is the responsibility of the town while private culverts are to be maintained by the driveway owner. The placement of a culvert requires a town permit. Culvert dimensions are regulated by the permit.

As previously stated, when more intensive development is proposed, Chapter 23 of the Winnebago County Ordinance will apply, often requiring the use of Best Management Practices designed to retain and pretreat stormwater from the site.

**10 Things Residents Can Do  
about Storm Water**

Residents play an important role in helping to manage and control stormwater runoff and associated pollution. Suggestions for what residents can do, including:

1. Be a watershed watchdog. If you see a potential storm water problem, contact the town.
2. Properly manage animal waste. Animal waste is a major source of water contamination.
3. Properly apply lawn and garden fertilizer to avoid over-fertilizing.
4. Properly dispose of yard waste
5. Properly dispose of household chemicals.
6. Regularly maintain your car and fix any oil, radiator, or transmission leak as soon as you see them.
7. Maximize infiltration in your yard by directing rainwater away from paved areas.
8. Use a proper container for trash and recyclables.
9. Keep soil in your yard, and out of waterways.
10. Join a local watershed association.

Winnebago, Outagamie, and Brown counties have a 25-year agreement to handle the disposal of solid waste recycling within their respective counties. Consolidation of the recycling efforts began in 2002, and landfill resources in 2003.

Recycling drop-off of paper and co-mingled glass, plastic, steel and aluminum containers is provided at the Town Hall per established schedules.

Private waste disposal facilities near the Town of Nepeuskun include Advanced Disposal located in Omro, and Waste Management of WI, located in Berlin. The town also has considered providing curb-side trash and recycling pick-up.

Backyard burning, once a common practice, is an illegal activity now in the town. Exceptions are made for leaf and wood burning as needed. Disposal of prescription medication is handled through periodic collections.

**Electrical, Gas, Power, and Telecommunication Facilities**

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**Electrical Service**

Alliant Energy serves the southwestern area of the county for electrical services, including the entire Town of Nepeuskun. Their infrastructure is well-maintained, and there is no anticipated change in service.

**Natural Gas**

Two major natural gas pipelines run along the west side of Lake Winnebago and along State Road 91. They have the potential to provide services to the town if there were ever a significant demand. Currently, many residences and a grain drying operation are connected to the natural gas pipeline system. The main line from Berlin to Oshkosh is laid underground within the Town of Nepeuskun for approximately six miles. Expanded access has also been made within the town on an individual resident basis and in neighboring communities.

**Solid Waste and Recycling**

Garbage pickup is provided on a subscription basis by a private company. Many households use a small dumpster, often times shared with several households. Some households take garbage directly to one of the three facilities discussed below.

The Winnebago County Sunnyview Recycling Facility, located in the Town of Oshkosh, is the closest public waste disposal facility. It accommodates garbage, appliances, tires and alike. The county also runs a Household Hazardous Material Facility, Industrial Waste and Yard Waste Beneficial Utilization Program.

**Telecommunication Facilities**

There are several service companies providing telecommunications. Both internet and cell telephone services are regarded by residents to be inadequate throughout the town. There are some areas where service is unreliable or nonexistent. There is a strong need for better telecommunication service in Nepeuskun including broad band service. In addition, see the Transportation Chapter for discussion on the evolution of “I Transportation”.

**Cemeteries**

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There are two cemeteries located in the Town of Nepeuskun: the Krebs Cemetery and the Nepeuskun Cemetery. No additional cemeteries are projected to be needed throughout the life of this plan. The town may also contain burial sites which are regulated by the federal government, state or tribal agencies. Also see the Cultural Resources section for more information on Native American Sites.

**Public Safety and Emergency Services**

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**Police Service**

There is one county law enforcement agency in Winnebago County, which covers the jurisdiction of the Town of Nepeuskun. In addition to the county sheriff departments, the State Patrol also provides law enforcement in the region. Winnebago County is part of District 3 of the Wisconsin Division of State Patrol (Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan). The town has a constable who’s responsible for animal control via ordinance.

**Fire Protection**

The town is split into a north half (sections 1-20), which is covered by the Berlin Fire Department, and a south half (sections 21-36), which is covered by the Ripon Area Fire District. The other surrounding fire departments also provide mutual aid.

**Emergency Medical Services**

The Town of Nepeuskun is primarily covered by two outside municipality’s emergency medical services. The southern portion of the town is covered by Ripon and the northern portion if covered by Berlin. Since all hospitals in the region provide emergency medical care, most residents in the region are within thirty minutes of an emergency room.

**Health Care Facilities**

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The closest medical centers to the town are Ripon, (within approximately 7 miles) and Berlin (within approximately 6 miles). There are also two general hospitals located in the City of Oshkosh.

There are licensed nursing homes in Oshkosh, Berlin, Ripon Omro, Neenah, Menasha, and Appleton. There are nursing homes located in Ripon, Berlin and surrounding areas. There is one county owned psychiatric hospital in Fond du Lac County.

Community Based Retirement Facilities can be found in Berlin.

**Libraries, Schools, Childcare and Senior Facilities**

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**Libraries**

The Winnefox Library system serves Winnebago County. The public libraries are located in the cities of Neenah, Menasha, Oshkosh and Omro and the Village of Winneconne. There is also one located in the City of Ripon and Berlin as part of the Winnefox Library system.

**Schools**

The Town of Nepeuskun is located in three school districts. The northern portion of town is located within the Berlin and Omro School Districts; the southern portion is located within the Ripon School District.

The Ripon, Berlin and Omro School Districts are comprised of Pre-K through 12 schools. Each district

# Town of Nepeuskun

Winnebago County, Wisconsin

## Service Area Boundaries & Community Facilities

### School District Boundaries

- Berlin Area School District
- Omro School District
- Ripon Area School District

### Fire/EMS Service Boundaries

- Berlin Fire and EMS
- Ripon Fire and EMS

### Community Facilities

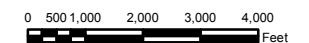
- 1 Town Hall
- 2 Nepeuskun Cemetery
- 3 Krebs Cemetery

### Map Features

- Parcel Lines
- Section Lines
- Waterways
- Open Water



Approximate Scale

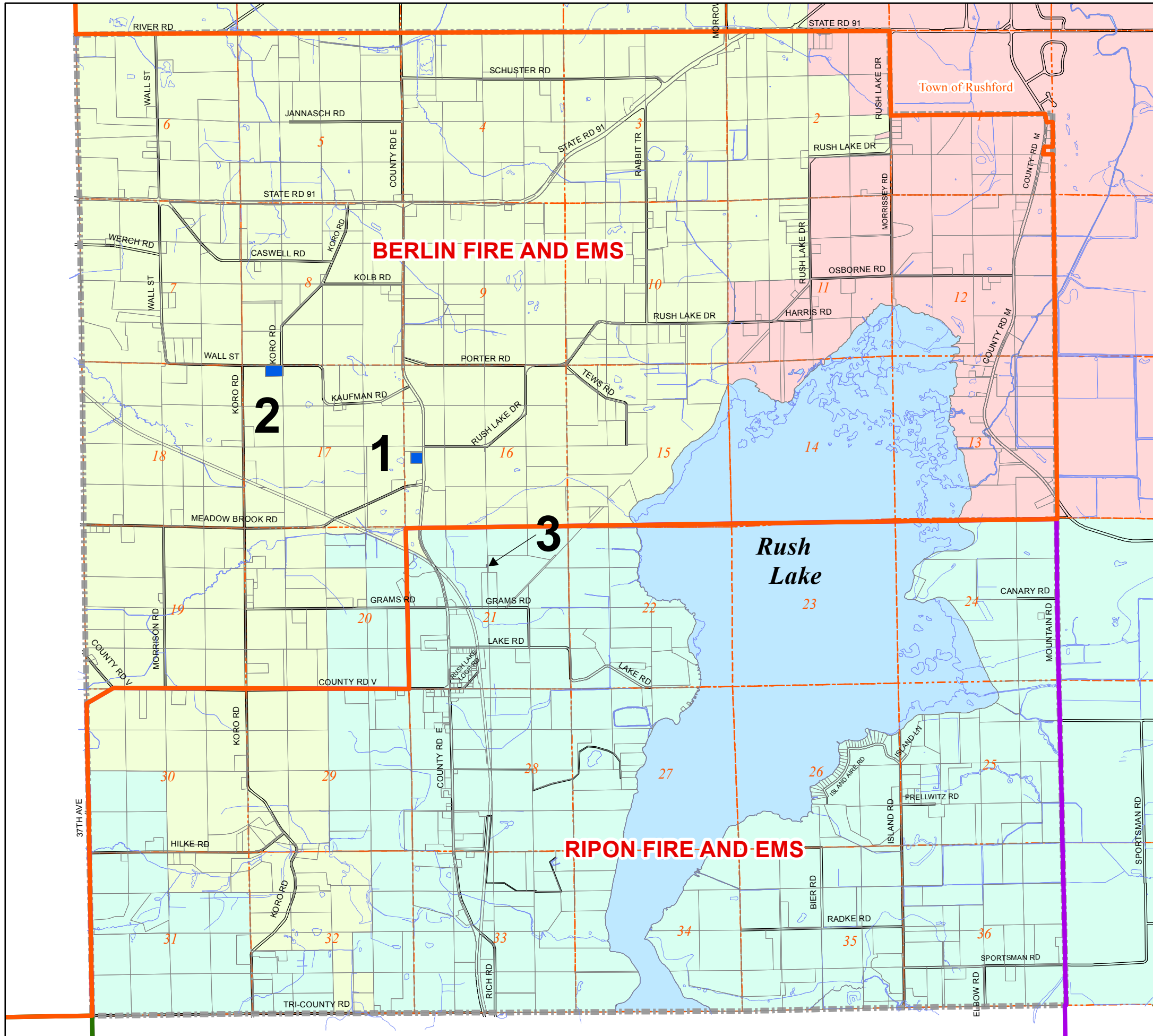


This base map was created by Winnebago County, who expressly disclaims all liability regarding fitness of use of the information. The user is responsible for understanding the accuracy limitations of the data provided herein.

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 920.731.0381 1.800.236.0381  
 argis10328002gis.mxd\_03/12/2020

Planning  
 Environmental  
 Surveying  
 Engineering  
 Architecture



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continually monitors and projects enrollments. For specific school names, types, and location, please consult the appropriate school district web site. In addition to the public-school system, various private schools are located in nearby communities.

There are also two institutions of higher education located in Winnebago County. The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and the UW-Fox Valley in Menasha. The Moraine Park District State Vocational System with a school facility is located in Fond du Lac. The northeast section of the town is served by the Fox Valley Vocational System.

#### **Childcare Facilities**

Public and private child-care facilities are located throughout the various neighboring communities based on demand.

#### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

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##### **Public Recreation Land**

There is only one undeveloped park in the Town of Nepeuskun. Located at the intersection of Island Aire Road and Island Lane in the southeastern portion of the town near Rush Lake. This piece of property is owned by the town and was established as public parkland in the mid 1970s when the Island Aire subdivision plat was approved. The site lacks easy access (i.e., driveway) or parking. It is not mowed or improved in any way for public use.

Map 5, in Chapter 5, shows the location of public land, natural areas and waterfowl protection areas. The scattered location of these areas contributes to the town's rural character and unique rural environment. The Mascoutain Valley State Trail has 5.3 miles of unpaved trail running through the southwest corner of Winnebago County then continues into both Green Lake and Fond du Lac Counties. There is parking and an access point at Rush Lake Loop Road off of Highway E by Rush Lake.

#### **Rush Lake Access**

There are three boat access points are located on Rush Lake, two are in the town. These points provide access for hunting, fishing, trapping, birding and other recreational uses.

## Utilities and Community Facilities 20-Year Vision

In 2040, the Town of Nepeuskun has safe drinking water for all residents, and private septic systems are well maintained. Storm water regulations have effectively limited the potential impact of new development on water quality and flooding. Local residents continue to enjoy the recreational opportunities provided by Rush Lake and unimproved public lands - in keeping with its rural character, there are no improved park facilities located in the town.

Town residents continue to have access to and be served by high-quality, affordable utilities and community facilities.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

### Goals

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*Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach preservation and development issues.*

- G4.1** Investigate the use of grants and low interest loans to support other town needs (i.e. road improvements, buildings, natural resource projects, etc.)
- G4.2** Ensure that private septic systems effectively treat wastewater and do not contribute to groundwater contamination.
- G4.3** Limit the impact of storm water on water quality and mitigate potential flooding issues.
- G4.4** Support the private provision of adequate cemeteries in and near the Town of Nepeuskun.
- G4.5** Support efforts that residents and businesses have access to affordable, reliable, and technologically advanced power and communication services.
- G4.6** Support efforts that residents have convenient access to state-of-the art health care facilities and services.

- G4.7** Support efforts that children and families have access to high-quality, affordable daycare facilities.
- G4.8** Support efforts that residents continue to have access to solid waste disposal and recycling facilities.
- G4.9** Support efforts that police, fire, and rescue services continue to meet the public health and safety needs of the public.
- G4.10** Support efforts that the public library and school systems continue to meet the educational needs of the public.
- G4.11** Encourage the use of renewable energy and, alternative fuels as a source of energy for town residents

### Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishments of an objective contribute to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O4.1** Limit to the greatest extent possible the runoff of water and pollutants from the site at which they are generated.
- O4.2** Work with local farms and the Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation Department to reduce ground and surface water contamination from agriculture.

**04.3** Encourage local residents to reduce potential sources of ground and surface water contamination.

### **Policies**

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*Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives.*

**P4.1** Manage water and water pollutants at the source by requiring/encouraging new development to incorporate on-site storm water strategies, such as rain gardens and infiltration areas, into new development.

**P4.2** Reduce the overall amount of impervious cover associated with new development.

**P4.3** Support establishing a drinking water testing program, coordinating with WisDNR or Winnebago County, to identify any harmful contaminants (such as arsenic).



*Boat access to Rush Lake can be found on the eastern shoreline.*

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# Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources

## Overview

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Agricultural, natural, and cultural resources help to define a community’s character, quality of life, and economic activities. Agriculture is central to life in the Town of Nepeuskun, providing fuel for the local economy and scenic vistas around town. Rush Lake has shaped the town’s past and continues to be an important feature in the landscape. The historic and cultural resources found in the town and surrounding communities lend pride to our past and current agrarian heritage. These resources are the backbone to our community. As Nepeuskun grows and prospers, we must plan for the continued presence of these resources in and around our community.

This chapter highlights the key agricultural, natural, and cultural resources found in Nepeuskun and sets goals, objectives, and policies for protecting and enhancing these resources.



*Agricultural activities define Nepeuskun, unfortunately, total cattle and dairy farms have been decreasing over the years.*

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## Agriculture Resources

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### County and Local Agricultural Trends

Assessing current and future agricultural trends in the Town of Nepeuskun cannot be summarized by looking at just one county’s agricultural census. Within Winnebago County but bordered on the west by Green Lake County and to the south by Fond du lac County, the Town of Nepeuskun is influenced by the agricultural trends of all three counties. In fact, it could be argued that the town is more in line with the agricultural trends and preservation efforts of Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties who participate heavily in the Wisconsin Farmland Preservation Program administered by Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). In fact, the only town included within the Winnebago County Farmland Preservation Plan, which was certified by DATCP in 2019, is Nepeuskun.

As part of the farmland preservation effort, the Town embarked on a very detailed, objective based land analysis. The objective of the analysis, including the selected criteria, were twofold: 1. Identify and map working farmland to qualify landowners for tax credits through the state farmland preservation program. 2. Use the identified farmland preservation areas within the town as the basis to create the Future Land Use Map for the Comprehensive Plan. This process will be discussed in more detail within the Land Use Element of this plan.

Relative to agricultural trends, the most recent United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Census was completed in 2017. The report was recently published in 2019. The complete report is available on the USDA web site.

Without going into great analysis of the census data, some general trends are evident for agriculture in the town’s region. First, it is expected that the number of

farms may decrease slightly, while the size of the remaining farms will increase. The number of farms is influenced by an interest in establishing 5 to 10-acre farmettes. Secondly, overall cattle numbers will increase slightly due to the increase in large dairies in the region. These dairies will need a substantial land base to support crops in the feeding of livestock while accommodating manure management. Should a down market for milk and grain prices continue, farmers will likely increase the number of head to buffer the loss of income due to poor market prices. These changes pose a challenge to all stakeholders in terms of planning for agricultural economic stability, diversifying farming operations, and protecting natural resources such as productive soils and water quality.

Finally, the town can expect an increase in more unique and diverse agricultural opportunities ranging from organic products, an increase in fruit and vegetable growers, hemp and associated “agri-tourism” just to mention a few. Since the Town of Nepeuskun wishes to maintain its strong rural and agricultural culture, the town must look for ways and means to accommodate these future uses.

#### **Local and Regional Markets**

Changes in farm size and diversity influence the types of markets that local farmers sell to. Conversely, the types of marketing opportunities available to farmers can influence farm size and the types of crops that farmers grow.

Larger farms often look to regional and international markets for their products, although they do rely on the local supplies. Smaller farms are generally more reliant on local markets for their products. Direct marketing to consumers provides opportunities for increased profits and makes smaller farms more financially viable than they might otherwise be. That said, the use of on-line sales supplemented by local farmers markets and on-site sales is often used to generate the required revenue. The town has seen the establishment of several

entrepreneurial based agricultural businesses in the town which has added to its unique rural culture. It is expected these business will grow and fit within the vision of the town.

#### **Large Agricultural Livestock Operations**

Extremely large livestock operations and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) can have both environmental and quality of life impacts on a community. While farms are generally getting larger, the farms in the town are still family owned and of relatively modest size. Supporting family farms while at the same time deemphasizing large corporate farms is important for maintaining the agrarian character that Town residents’ value.

There are several characteristics of the town that have discouraged large livestock operations from locating here. Larger growers are looking for specific soils and relatively level land. Sandy and loamy soil can be found throughout the town. Sandy ground does not lend itself to earthen storage of manure, which is needed for the larger animal farms. In addition, Nepeuskun’s mix of rolling hills, forests, and wetlands break up the available farmland into smaller sections, making it unlikely for a very large operation to move into the township.

Despite these physical limitations, it is possible for a large livestock operation to purchase land in town. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources reviews and approves the specifications, including storm water and manure management, for CAFOs. State regulations, however, do not restrict the location of CAFOs. In order to control this, the town may adopt livestock siting regulations that restrict where new large livestock operations can be located. No towns in the county have adopted these regulations, although Nepeuskun has looked into this in the past. Even if regulations are put in place, state law dictates that existing farmers can expand their livestock operations as long as they meet certain criteria.

However, as of the writing of this plan, DATCP had introduced revisions to ATCP51, the Livestock Siting Rules. After years of drafting the changes involving numerous stakeholder groups, the bill died shortly after being reintroduced in the fall of 2019. One of the reasons the bill died were late additions which took away local control in the permitting process. That position didn't sit well with some legislators and the Wisconsin Town's Association. A series of workshops and meetings were scheduled to revive the bill and achieve resolution. Should the bill be revived, relative to Nepeuskun interests, the provision of local control must be maintained.

### **Soils**

Winnebago County and the Town of Nepeuskun have excellent soil quality. The US Department of Agriculture classifies soil based on its quality for agricultural production. Class I, II, and Class III soils are all considered good soils for agricultural production, with Class I being the best. Although there are no Class I soils in the town, 67 percent of the town is made up of Class II or III soils (1,024 acres and 373 acres respectively). Indeed, about 60 percent of the soils in the town are classified as prime farmland or soils of statewide significance (274 acres and 533 acres respectively).

As Nepeuskun's population continues to slowly grow, careful consideration should be given to the location of high-quality soils and viable farms. One way to conserve and protect valuable farmland is to carefully plan growth so that the impact of development is minimal.

### **Farmland Conservation**

Unfortunately, as in many parts of the state and country, prime farmland in Winnebago County continues to be lost to scattered development, farmer retirement, and farm business failure. Nepeuskun, however, has lost relatively little farmland, with about 60 percent of the town remaining in agriculture. According to the Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation Department, Nepeuskun has done a good job of

protecting its farmland. Some development is starting to creep into the town resulting in some loss of farmland. This has been relatively minor compared to other town's located closer to Fox Valley.

However, as previously stated, Nepeuskun is the only town in Winnebago County that participated in the county's farmland preservation planning efforts. The town will follow up the planning effort, with recertification of its farmland preservation zoning ordinance ensuring the option for landowners to file for farmland preservation tax credits. Both the farmland preservation plan and farmland preservation zoning ordinance certification were approved for ten years.

In addition to the farmland preservation program, there are other conservation opportunities for land in the town. The Glacial Habitat Restoration program, is a regional conservation approach. Land is purchased and a perpetual conservation easement is established. These properties are open to the public for hunting and recreation use. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program for agricultural landowners. Through CRP, you can receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on eligible farmland. Enrollees sign contracts that are valid for ten to fifteen years. Information on this program can be obtained from the Farm Service Agency.

Private forest land can enroll in the WDNR's Managed Forest Law program in either 25- or 50-year contracts. Recreational land access can still be controlled by the landowner. Landowners benefit through reduced property taxes in exchange for required forest management practices which include scheduled timber harvests.

Some farming communities in Wisconsin have begun looking at other options for helping farmers to protect their land. The Town of Dunn in Dane County, for example, has established a purchase of development rights (PDR) program to protect farmland. PDR is a

voluntary land protection technique that compensates landowners for limiting future development on their property. PDR has been used by local and state governments on the east coast since the mid-1970s. Under a PDR program, an entity, such as a town or a private organization, purchases development rights to a piece of property. By doing so, the organization or government agency is essentially buying the landowner's right to develop that land. The land itself remains in private ownership and the landowner still retains all other rights and responsibilities associated with being a property owner. Since the Town of Dunn's program started in 1997, 35 conservation easements on 34 protected properties, covering 3,396.4 acres and representing about 20.8% of the area of Dunn have been protected.

The Federal farmland preservation program provides one potential future funding source for PDR, although to date it has not been used in Winnebago County. The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), run by the NRCS, provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. There are three levels of protection that a property owner can sign up for, permanent easements, 30-year easements, and term easements. Each has a different level of funding associated with them. Additional information can be found on the NRCS website, <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

#### **Potential Conflicts with Non-Farm Neighbors**

Farm practices such as spraying, manure spreading, and late night (sometimes 24 hours/day) are not always compatible with residential uses. As more residential development occurs in the town, it is important to notify new neighbors that Nepeuskun is a farming community and that normal farming practices (such as manure spreading and late-night noise) is part of the "rural package".

#### **Agriculture and Water Quality**

The State of Wisconsin provides cost share money to implement improvements on farms within priority watersheds; however, the Town of Nepeuskun is not in a priority watershed. There is some county-level funding for cost share on farms outside of priority watersheds. The Winnebago County LWCD annually applies for, receives, and administers the Wisconsin Soil and Water Resource Management grant program to support the costs associated with putting conservation on the land. LWCD typically receives \$120,000 to \$135,000 for staff and expenditure support and \$100,000 to \$130,000 for cost-share contracts with landowners.









The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has indicated that it would like to see mandatory stream buffers in place in the Town of Nepeuskun. Although NRCS and the county offer cost-sharing for stream buffer installation and restoration through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), there are still many miles of streams that need buffers including parts of Meadow Brook Creek.

State Agricultural Performance Standards also regulate certain farm practices in an effort to limit the impact of agricultural operations on the environment. Compliance with these standards is required by law, although enforcement differs from town to town. Some towns require the landowner to be in compliance with State Standards as part of issuance of a building permit or rezoning. State Agricultural Performance Standards compliance is very important for clean water. These standards play a significant role in reducing sediment and phosphorus loading.




Some farmland in sensitive areas has been converted to permanent grassland cover, wooded acreage, and wetland areas through restoration projects in the county. These efforts provide increased erosion control, water quality improvements, and wildlife habitat. Such contributions provide a better quality of life to Nepeuskun residents and increase the natural amenity value for recreation and economic activity.

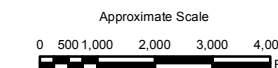
Town of Nepeuskun  
Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Natural Features and  
Public Lands

-  Municipal Boundary
-  DNR Managed Lands
-  Water Shed
-  Mascoutin Valley State Trail
-  100 yr Floodplain
-  Wetlands
-  Waterways
-  Open Water

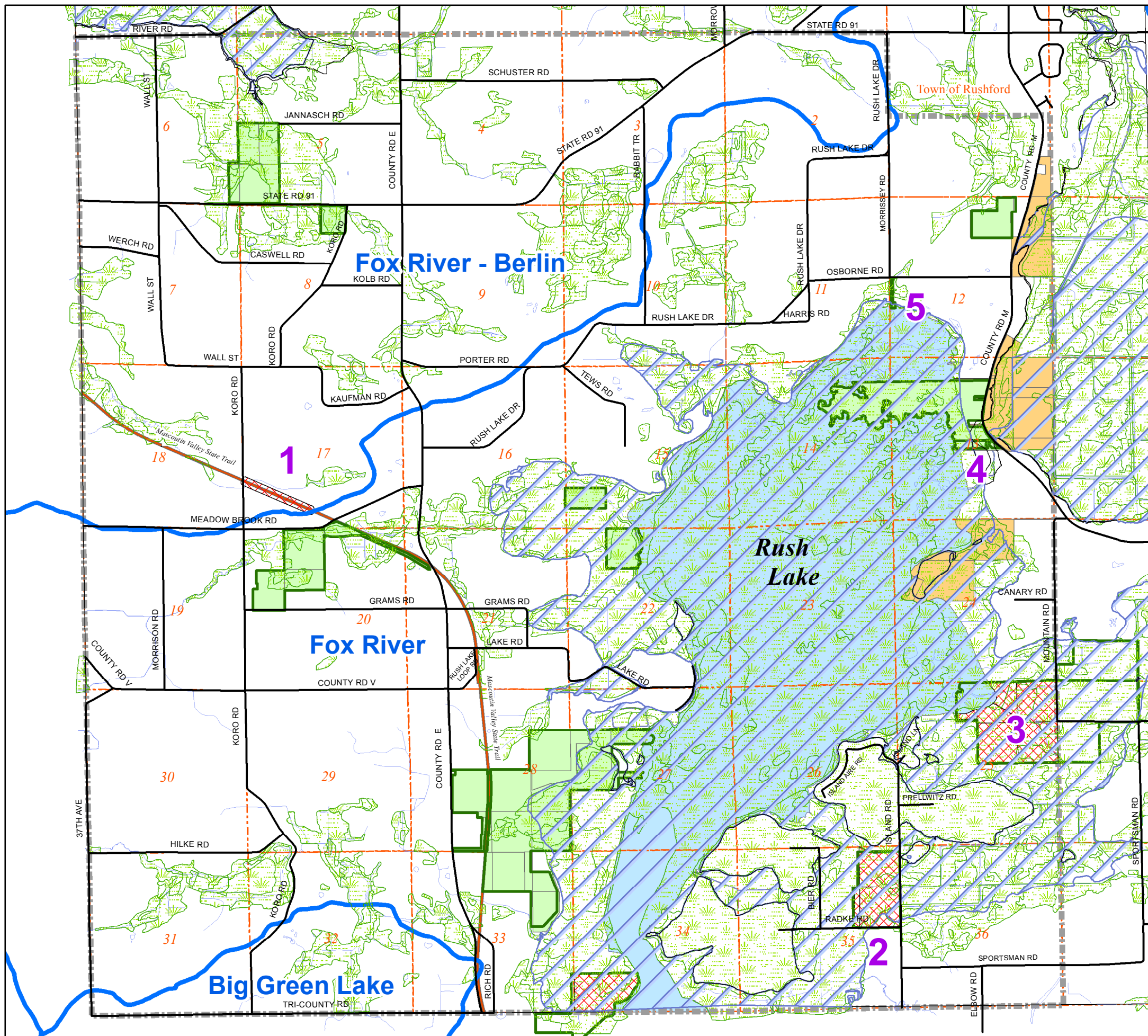
WI Public Access Lands

-  Glacial Habitat Restoration
-  Natural Area
-  Waterfowl Protection
- 1** Koro Railroad Prairie State Natural Area
- 2** DNR Parking Area
- 3** Rush Lake State Natural Area
- 4** Statewide Public Access
- 5** Rush Lake Right of Way



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**Natural Resources**

Protecting the natural resources of Nepeuskun is critical to the long term economic vitality and quality of life in the town. Winnebago County is entirely within the Fox-Wolf River Basin, which contains 84,000 acres of surface water. This network is also known as the “Winnebago System.”

Prior to European settlement, Nepeuskun and the western section of Winnebago County consisted mainly of sedge meadow, which grows on saturated soils, prairie grass, and oak savanna. The lowering of water tables through artificial drainage is suspected of causing shrub invasion in some of the remaining sedge meadows throughout the county and state.

The landscape continues to be a great mosaic of lake, stream, marsh, savannah, agricultural land, forested land, and prairie openings, supporting a wide diversity of wildlife.

**Figure 5.1. Wisconsin Watershed Basins**



**Geology and Topography**

The current landscape of Nepeuskun and Winnebago County reflects the most recent glacial activity. About

10,000 years ago, glacial activity deposited clay loam in the southwestern part of the county, including Nepeuskun. The rolling uplands throughout the town are underlain by this fertile soil, which has proved to be a great agricultural resource for both past and present residents.

The topology is nearly level but prominent slopes exist in the southwest corner of Nepeuskun. Other important features are Rush Lake and the surrounding marsh lands. The topological features are controlled by surface geology, which is mainly sandstone and limestone. The varying thickness of glacial till overlies the irregular surface of these rock formations. Glacial material over limestone tends to be thinner than over sandstones (Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan).

**Forests**

Trees provide multiple benefits to the residents of the town: shade in the summer, beauty year-round, wind reduction, energy savings, pollution removal, carbon sequestration, and a source of income. Forests provide raw materials and a setting for the tourism industry. They also provide a venue for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities. A tree canopy above also allows rain to soak more slowly into the ground, minimizing runoff.

Prior to settlement, the vegetation in Nepeuskun and Winnebago County was mostly forest and oak savanna, with some areas of sedge meadow and prairie grass. Most of the forests have since been cleared for agricultural crops. In Nepeuskun, approximately 1,000 acres of forest land remains, or about 5 percent of the total land area. Winnebago County today has roughly 20,000 acres that remain in woodland cover or about 7 percent of the total land area. Species found in Nepeuskun and Winnebago County include oak, hickory, maple, beech, birch, ash, aspen, cottonwood, and mixed conifers.

Although the woodland acreage of the town is relatively small, it provides a considerable source of timber and

related products for private use. The woodlands are also very important in terms of providing habitat for a variety of wildlife species. More importantly, from an agricultural perspective, woodlands provide soil conservation benefits including wind and water erosion reduction.

Continued woodland management will be necessary in order to maintain these benefits. Programs that promote tree planting and sustained management of woodland resources help landowners accomplish this objective. These programs include the Federal Conservation Reserve Program and the previously mentioned Wisconsin Managed Forest Law Program administered by the WDNR.

### **Rush Lake**

Rush Lake occupies a shallow marshy basin between two parallel low-lying hills located in the southeast section of Nepeuskun. Along with the Township of Nepeuskun, the Townships of Ripon, Utica, and Rushford surround the lake. Rush Lake provides the town residents with food, recreation, historical value, and other natural amenities.

Rush Lake is approximately four miles long, two miles wide, roughly 3,000 acres, and has been documented to be the largest prairie pothole east of the Mississippi River. Although it covers a large area, Rush Lake is quite shallow with an average depth of 1.5 feet and a maximum depth of approximately 7 feet. The bottom is mostly muck, a combination of accumulated fine grain sediments and organic detritus. The depth of this muck can be in excess of twenty feet. About one percent of the bottom is composed of cobbles, sand, and gravel. Henderson Creek is the only named tributary that feeds Rush Lake.

Rush Lake's history includes frequent water level controversies. Rush Lake was first dammed in 1846, the year that Nepeuskun was first settled by non-Native Americans. The first controversy was published in Prairie, pines, and people: Winnebago County in a new perspective (Metz 1976, 50),

In 1846 the millers built a brush and log dam across the outlet to Rush Lake. The Utica (as the township had been named) and Liberty Prairie (as the area was more or less officially known) farmers feared their lands would be flooded. First they reached an understanding with the Wauaku entrepreneurs that the lake would be raised only a foot. But in the spring of 1847 the settlers found a dam five feet high had doubled the size of the lake. On June 15, nearly forty farmers built a large bonfire at one edge of the dam, drawing a band of almost one hundred curious Indians as spectators. The Indians must have been bemused as the angry white men gathered at the fire...and then tore into the dam with great vigor. Breaching the stoutly constructed dam called for a mighty effort, but at last the farmers watched as the waters split through, widening the gap and finally carrying the logs and debris merrily down Waukau Creek.

After the destruction of the first dam, others were installed, but given the utilization of steam power, Rush Lake was generally undammed for half a century. Then, on January 29, 1946, the Public Service Commission granted the Town of Nepeuskun a permit dated to construct that dam; the Public Service Commission permit and order states that "In recent years, due to fluctuating water levels inherent in a lake having a small drainage area and the invasion of carp, most of the wildlife has disappeared." The dam was constructed shortly after and required a series of modifications in the following years because it could not regulate water levels as prescribed.

Lake access improved with higher levels, but the carp invasion did not improve and eventually, most vegetation was lost, including most of the bulrush, which Rush Lake is named after. Problems with runoff from surrounding farms and lead contamination from decades of heavy waterfowl hunting are also issues that hindered the full potential of the lake. These factors caused public concern for the fishery, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

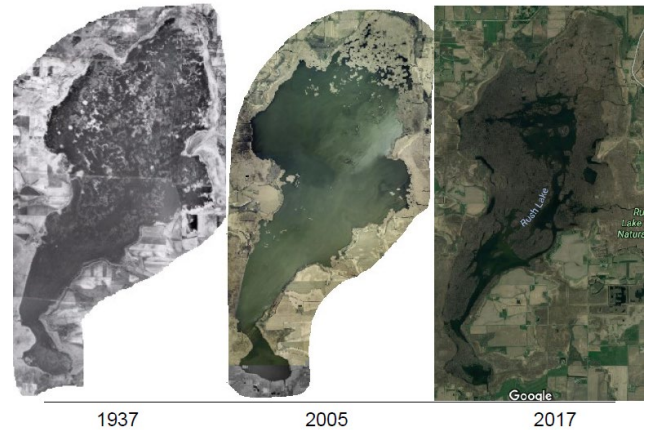
As a response to these issues a steering committee of WDNR, county, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and township representatives was formed in the early 2000's and a significant lake management project was completed. In 2005, the project drew down the water in the lake by installing a new dam and dredging the outlet channel. This allowed more flow of water leaving the marsh and was thought to regenerate bulrush seeds in the sediment. Significantly reducing the amount of water in the marsh would also reduce the carp population.

In 2008, when the water was raised, the lake looked much different. While carp populations were reduced and water clarity and quality were vastly improved, the primary vegetation to regrow was not bulrush, but cattail. Invasive cattail now dominates roughly 80% of the surface area of Rush Lake. Cattail provides limited wildlife benefit, makes much of the lake inaccessible for most people, and for those who choose to try to access isolated pockets of water, potentially dangerous. The water level regime that was employed from 2008 until 2016 was not useful in helping to decrease the population of cattail. The water level regime necessary to effectively manage the invasive cattail population on Rush Lake is not known.

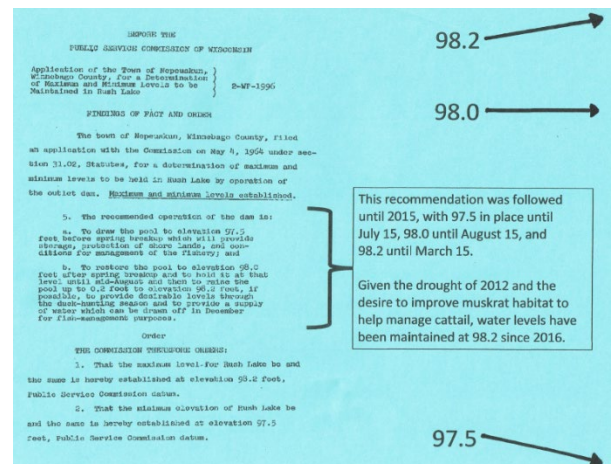
In 2019, Rush Lake Watershed Restoration, Inc. a nonprofit 501(c)3 which was formed in the early 2000's in conjunction with the steering committee's activities, started efforts to develop a new Lake Management Plan. Their approach was to pick up where the old Lake Management Plan left off, but with one addition. The 2000's era plan had little to offer about risks of invasive plants and what to do about it if it occurred. The 2019 planning sought to reassess lead contamination and water quality, but in order to best help the fishery, wildlife habitat, and native vegetation, invasive cattail and invasive Phragmites needed to be effectively managed. Rush Lake's water levels are one of the broadest ways to take lake-wide management action. As such, an updated water level regime was to be

developed. Once developed it was planned to be used instead of the 1964 Public Service Commission recommendation which was used from 2008 - 2015, and 2016 - 2019 trial water level project.

Present: Rush Lake 2000's Restoration & Results



An aerial view of Rush Lake in 1937, 2005, and 2017 depicts the drastic changes of vegetation over time.



A handout provided at the September 7, 2019 Open House explains and contrasts the 1964 Public Service Commission Recommendation and the 2016-2019 trial water level regime.

In 2020, Rush Lake Watershed Restoration, Inc. discontinued its planning activities, given challenges stemming from potential legal liability which could personally expose its volunteer board of directors and the public. Because of this, an updated Lake

Management Plan with complementary water level regime is not being developed. How Rush Lake will be able to sustainably improve upon from what it is today is unclear. Furthermore, prevention of further loss of acreage to invasive cattail and invasive Phragmites is unclear.

Tributaries to Rush Lake were sampled in 2019 and their nutrient loads regularly exceeded DNR thresholds for phosphorus. DNR Water resources staff have expressed that high nutrient loads can be a contributing factor to cattail invasion.

Nepeuskun residents have expressed a strong desire to protect surface water resources. In a previous community survey, 60 percent of respondents indicated that the town should regulate activities that adversely impact surface water quality. Seventy-six percent of respondents specifically felt that the Town should enact an ordinance addressing surface water runoff issues.



*An aerial view of Rush Lake depicts the sensitive environment of Nepeuskun, preserving natural features and agricultural lands are important for town residents.*

**Waukau Creek**

Waukau Creek is a tributary of the Fox River and begins at Rush Lake’s dam. This stream has a very low rate of flow and has been known to dry up during drought periods. Silt, gravel, and rubble are the major bottom materials. Northern pike, perch, bullhead and carp migrate up the creek to Rush Lake in the spring to spawn.

Improvements to the dam at Rush Lake have been made over the years to help prevent carp from entering the lake.

**Floodplains**

A 100-year floodplain, according to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), surrounds most of Rush Lake, the surrounding marsh lands, northward along the Waukau Creek and southward along Henderson Creek (see Map 5).

There is also a 100-year floodplain established in the northern part of the town, which extends from the Fox River to the north between Wall Street and County Highway E.



*Identifying and developing in accordance with floodplains is “smart growth” and could potentially prevent future flooding concerns, as seen in the flooded road above.*

**Wetlands**

Wetlands are nature’s filters and sponges. They temporarily store floodwaters, filter pollutants from surface waters, control erosion and sediment, supply surface water flow, and recharge groundwater supplies, and provide habitat for wildlife. The loss of these key areas represents a dramatic change in the environment – one that has repercussions throughout the watershed and region.



*Nepeuskun is home to a plethora of wetlands, which act as a pollutant filter and floodwater storage area. Healthy local wetlands are imperative for a healthy regional watershed.*

Nepeuskun is proud to be home of one of the largest wetland areas in Winnebago County (see Map 5). The county has approximately 51,400 acres of wetland areas. Although vast wetland areas surround Rush Lake, pollutants have direct access through a series of old drainage ditches that drain large, historic wetlands (Winnebago County Land and Water Management Plan, 2010).

In addition to providing habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife species, the remaining wetlands are important for the recharge of aquifers and the protection of groundwater quality. They are extremely efficient at trapping and filtering out nutrients and sediments contained in runoff and they provide highly effective flood storage areas. It is critical that the remaining wetland resources in Nepeuskun and Winnebago County be protected from further degradation.

### **Groundwater**

All of the groundwater in Winnebago County originates from local precipitation that infiltrates through the soil into the recharge area of the aquifers. Contamination risks from land use practices are the greatest threat to groundwater resources. Potential sources of

contaminants are from old unregulated landfills, underground storage tanks, on-site waste disposal systems, livestock manure handling and storage, and septic disposal. All of these sources are presently regulated or are being addressed through ordinances and/or technical assistance provided by various county and state agencies.

To protect the groundwater and surface water resources, Winnebago County has adopted an animal waste management ordinance that applies to all unincorporated areas of the county, including the Town of Nepeuskun. This ordinance addresses:

- Animal waste storage facilities;
- New and expanding feedlots;
- Nutrient management;
- Overflow of manure storage structures;
- Unconfined manure stacking or piling within areas adjacent to stream banks, lakeshores, and in drainage canals;
- Direct runoff from feedlots or stored manure to waters of the state; and
- Livestock access to waters of the state where high concentrations of animals prevent adequate sod cover.

According to the WDNR's Wisconsin Groundwater Management Plan Report, Nepeuskun is an area with a moderate to high susceptibility of groundwater contamination. Factors that influence groundwater contamination susceptibility include depth to bedrock, type of bedrock, soil characteristics, depth to water table and characteristics of surficial deposits.

The WDNR has reported that nitrate-nitrogen is the most widespread groundwater contaminant in the state, and this problem is increasing in extent and severity. Nitrate inputs originate from manure spreading, agricultural fertilizers, and legume cropping systems. On-site wastewater systems (e.g., septic tanks) can also be a significant nitrate source. Of the private wells sampled throughout the county by the WDNR in 2004, the ones in

or near the Town of Nepeuskun ranged from the lowest (less than 2 milligrams per liter) to the second highest (10 to 20 milligrams per liter) levels of nitrate concentration.

Pesticides and herbicide contamination is also a concern in Nepeuskun. A 2007 study estimated that about a third of private drinking water wells in Wisconsin, contained a detectable level of an herbicide or herbicide metabolite.

Local residents have expressed a strong interest in protecting groundwater resources. In the 2008 community survey, 60 percent of respondents indicated that the town should regulate activities that adversely affect groundwater resources.

### Threatened and Endangered Species

Three species of endangered plants and three species of threatened plants are found in Winnebago County. Four endangered aquatic bird species have emerged in the county, three that breed here annually. Other species of concern in the county include two threatened fish, one endangered fish, one threatened mussel, and two threatened turtles (Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan).

Based on information contained in Wisconsin's Natural Heritage Inventory, there are three plants, eight birds and five ecological communities in the Town of Nepeuskun that are either threatened, endangered, or a species of special concern. They include:

#### Birds

- *Chlidonias niger* (black tern) Species of Special Concern: Destruction of marshes, sloughs, and rivers has greatly reduced the extent of suitable habitat. Reliant on bulrush and cattails for nesting (NatureServe).
- *Ixobrychus exilis* (least bittern) Species of Special Concern: Improvement of wetland habitats, particularly large (i.e., greater than five hectare), shallow wetlands with dense growths of robust,

emergent vegetation, is the most urgent management need (NatureServe).

- *Nycticorax nycticorax* (black-crowned night-heron) Species of Special Concern: Has declined in some areas due to disturbance, degradation, and/or destruction of nesting and foraging areas (e.g., swamps and marshes) (NatureServe).
- *Podiceps grisegena* (red-necked grebe) Wisconsin Endangered Species: Habitat degradation has occurred in the breeding range as a result of development near and drainage of wetlands and potholes (NatureServe).
- *Sterna forsteri* (forster's tern) Wisconsin Endangered Species: Threats include human disturbance and development of nesting areas (e.g., floating mass of marsh plants), loss of nests to natural flooding, and possibly predation by laughing gulls (NatureServe).
- *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* (yellow-headed blackbird) Species of Special Concern: Alteration of wetland habitats for agriculture or urban development threatens the viability of the species.
- *Botaurus lentiginosus* (American bittern) Species of Special Concern: The species is threatened by the degradation and destruction of wetlands from drainage, filling and conversion to agriculture.

#### Plants

- *Cypripedium candidum* (small white lady's-slipper) Threatened Species: Habitat destruction (e.g., mesic blacksoil and wet blacksoil prairie, glacial till hill prairie, and sedge meadow), collection by wildflower hunters, herbicide application, and loss of pollinators has been known to lead to their decline (NatureServe).
- *Galium brevipes* (swamp bedstraw) Species of Special Concern: The primary threat is loss of habitat--mainly in exsiccated alkaline soils of mud flats, loamy riverbanks, sandy lakeshores, and mossy swales--to development (NatureServe).

Ecological Communities

- *Emergent marsh*  
Threats can come from motorized boats, weed removal, and pesticide use, near-by development, sedimentation and pollution, invasive species, and dams (WDNR)
- *Mesic prairie*  
The present rarity is due to its high productivity for agricultural uses (WDNR).
- *Oak opening*  
Absence of fire, fragmentation due to rural housing, unsustainable forest practices, invasive plants, soil loss and sedimentation, high deer density, as well as potential damage from gypsy moth infestations are all threats to this community (WDNR).
- *Wet-mesic prairie*  
Historically converted to agriculture, the remaining sites are small and isolated, which are difficult to manage. Conversion of prairie to woody species and invasive species are major problems. Needs comprehensive land use planning for restoration (WDNR).
- *Southern Sedge Meadow*  
The southern sedge meadow community occurred with prairie, savanna, and hardwood forest communities, and many of them apparently burned periodically. In the absence of fire, shrubs and trees are able to readily encroach on the open wetlands; encroachment can be exacerbated when wetlands are drained (WDNR).

**Wildlife Habitat and Sensitive Areas**

The lakes, marshes, rivers, and adjacent uplands in Winnebago County have provided prime waterfowl habitat for centuries. Sharp decline in duck populations throughout the U.S. during the 1970s and 80s reflected the dramatic use of the Winnebago System by hunters and coincided with the loss of important aquatic food sources such as wild celery in Nepeuskun (Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan).

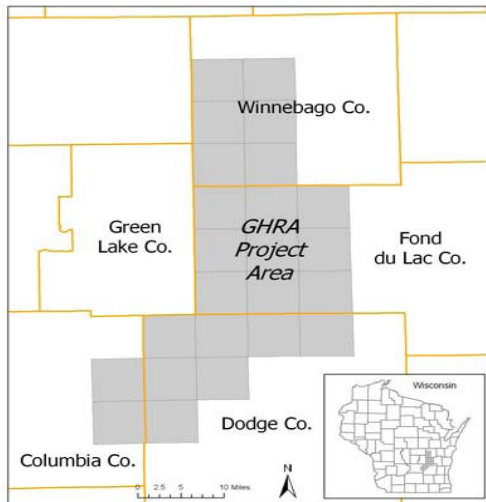
Waterfowl hunting remains an important recreational activity in the town. Other important hunting activities in the town include deer, turkey and pheasant hunting.

Because Winnebago County is located in what was formerly one of the best regions of the state for duck and pheasant production, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources initiated the Glacial Habitat Restoration Area project in the southwestern part of the county. This project is designed to restore wetlands and grasslands on private and public lands to benefit mallards, blue winged teal, pheasants, and grassland songbirds. Rush Lake is the core of the Glacial Habitat Restoration Area; it anchors the whole habitat area. The DNR has expressed an interest in acquiring additional land around Rush Lake if available.

The Town of Nepeuskun is also home to the Koro Railroad Prairie State Natural Area located along the Winnebago County Recreational Trail in the northwest portion of the town.

The 3-acre site features high-quality mesic prairie with many species of native prairie plants. Dominated by big bluestem, this site contains other common mesic prairie species such as switch grass, New Jersey tea, prairie dock, stiff goldenrod, and spiderwort. This remnant is especially noteworthy because of its location at the northeastern edge of the prairie-oak savanna region in Wisconsin. The site runs along an abandoned railroad right-of-way and frequent fires sparked by the trains helped maintain the fire-adapted prairie vegetation. Other species include mountain mint, shooting star, false dandelion, narrow-leaved loosestrife, turk's cap lily, culver's root, and Riddell's goldenrod. Koro Prairie is owned by Winnebago County and was designated a State Natural Area in 1990 (WDNR).

**Figure 5.2. Glacial Habitat Restoration Area Project Boundary**



USDA, GHRA Wisconsin Farm Service Agency Fact

**Parks and Open Space**

Parks and open space are addressed in the Community Facilities Chapter of this plan. However, it cannot be emphasized enough, the year-round importance of the Mascoutin State Trail to the town as a recreational resource and quality of life benefits. Likewise, the importance of public lands for hunting and wildlife viewing. Opportunities for the advancement of both the trail and public hunting opportunities should be encouraged by the town.

**Metallic/Non-metallic Mineral Resources**

Permits are required for all metallic and non-metallic mining sites, in accordance Winnebago County Non-Metallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance and Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 135. According to the Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan, there are three registered non-metallic mining sites in Nepeuskun: Craig Pit (Section 3), Clausen Pit (Section 36), and Stark Borrow Area (Section 6).

**Cultural Resources**

**Native American Sites**

Native Americans once dominated the area and pollen evidence from lake cores suggest that large amounts of wild rice grew along the shoreline. Islands within the marshes were ideal spots for Native American encampments. One such locality is known as Dutchmen’s Island on the northeast side of Rush Lake. Burial grounds and mounds as well as ceramic and lithic artifacts from Middle/Woodlands Indian cultures have also been discovered along the lakeshore (Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan).

**Historic Architecture**

In the Town of Nepeuskun, there are forty-eight historic sites identified by the Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory database. These sites are representative of the town’s strong agrarian history. The survey indicated that there are 36 homes on the inventory, 2 – one to six room school houses, 7 barns, 1 domestic outbuilding, and one silo. Additional information on these properties can be found on the Wisconsin Historical Society website at:

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS2834>

The barn types consist of basement, bank, and pole barns all-encompassing the astylistic utilitarian building style. These are all located along Highway 91.

The preservation of these historic sites is an important way to sustain the heritage and history of the town for future generations.



*The historic school house in Nepeuskun, along with the other historic sites, is an example of the strong agrarian history of the town.*

### **Cultural Facilities**

Although there are no cultural or social facilities in Nepeuskun, the nearby communities of Omro, Berlin, and Ripon offer facilities within close proximity of the township.

The City of Berlin, located approximately 3 miles west of the town has a number of cultural organizations serving the area. The list below describes the variety of organizations but be advised, may change over time.

- Berlin Lions Club
- Berlin Boat Club
- American Red Cross
- Berlin Kiwanis
- Grow Em-Show Em Garden Club
- Athena Club Berlin
- Boys and Girls Club
- Berlin Youth Soccer
- American Legion
- Berlin Blue Knights
- Berlin Snowmobile Club
- Green Lake County Home and Community Education
- United Way

- Berlin Community Scholarship
- Rainbow Cloggers
- Berlin Athletic Association
- Berlin Conservation Club
- Berlin Historical Society
- Berlin Senior Center
- Berlin Cub Scouts and Boy Scout Troop 632
- Street Cruzers Car Club
- Berlin Rotary Club

The City of Omro, located approximately 8 miles north of the township, has a Lions Club, which organizes a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Arts and Crafts Fair with over seventy vendors. The city also has a Family Aquatic Center located one block north on Highway 21 at Lincoln Avenue. The Omro Kiwanis Club is also very active and offer additional opportunity for community involvement.

To the south, town residents enjoy close proximity, or approximately 10 miles, to the City of Ripon and its various services and activities. Ripon offers historic walking tours, and it is home to the C.J. Rodman Center of the Arts and the Green Lake/Ripon Festival of Music, among other cultural resources.

### **Programs**

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

For more than 45 years, WHEDA has worked to provide low-cost financing for housing and small business development in Wisconsin. Since 1972, WHEDA has financed more than 75,000 affordable rental units, helped more than 133,000 families purchase a home and provided more than 29,000 small business and agricultural loan guarantees. WHEDA is a self-supporting public corporation that receives no tax dollars for its operations. For more information on WHEDA programs, visit [wheda.com](http://wheda.com) or call 800-334-6873. Contact: Jennifer Sereno, WHEDA Public Affairs, 608-770-8084, [Jennifer.Sereno@WHEDA.com](mailto:Jennifer.Sereno@WHEDA.com)

## Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural Resources 20-Year Vision

In 2040, we envision Nepeuskun as a place that continues to be characterized by its agricultural and natural resources. Good farmland throughout the town has been protected from development and remains in active agriculture. These farms are the economic and cultural backbone of the town. Farms continue and have adjusted to changing conditions and challenges. The town has worked to support and encourage these farms, while at the same time deemphasizing larger corporate farms. Livestock siting regulations have been put in place to regulate where new large livestock operations can locate, protecting town residents from the potential nuisances associated with these facilities.

In this future vision, Rush Lake is successfully managed as a hunting and bird watching paradise, and it provides recreation opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Bulrush and other native aquatic plants have returned to the lake and support large populations of native waterfowl, including the red-necked grebe and Foster’s tern. Issues of invasive species and lead contamination have been minimized. Stream buffers throughout the town and the greater Rush Lake Watershed have been restored and help to reduce soil erosion and nutrient run-off. Land around Rush Lake has been protected from development, and key views of the lake have been preserved so that residents and visitors can continue to enjoy the beauty of this key natural resource. Groundwater quality has also been protected from potential contamination sources.

Historic buildings throughout town help to connect the community to its agrarian culture and history. The rural character of Nepeuskun can also be seen in newer homes, which have been designed and sited to fit into the agrarian landscape of the community.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

### Goals

*Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach issues identified in the comprehensive plan.*

- G5.1** Protect productive farmland for agricultural production and/or resource protection purposes.
- G5.2** Support agri-tourism as a viable component of the town’s agricultural heritage.
- G5.3** Deemphasize large corporate farms from locating in Nepeuskun and limit the impact of these farms if they do locate in the town.

- G5.4** Reduce potential conflicts between farmers and non-farm neighbors.
- G5.5** Support continuing efforts to improve water quality in Rush Lake.
- G5.6** Support continuing efforts to reduce invasive species and restore native species populations to Rush Lake.
- G5.7** Support the recreational amenities and views of Rush Lake.
- G5.8** Protect groundwater from contamination.
- G5.9** Protect historic buildings throughout town and encourage new homes to be sited in a way that is compatible with this historic aesthetic.

## Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O5.1** Work with interested farmers to pursue long-term protection of productive farmland.
- O5.2** Limit new residential development in areas with productive farmland.
- O5.3** Direct any new large livestock operations to specific areas where the impact of these operations would be minimized.
- O5.4** Educate new residents about agricultural practices and the right to farm.
- O5.5** Reduce storm water runoff and pollutants found in this runoff.
- O5.6** Establish native vegetated buffers along streams throughout town.
- O5.7** Limit new development around Rush Lake.
- O5.8** Improve public access to Rush Lake.
- O5.9** Protect key views of Rush Lake.

## Policies

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*Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives.*

- P5.1** Evaluate options and potential funding sources for protecting good farmland in cooperation with interested farmers.
- P5.2** Locate residential zoning districts away from productive farmland.
- P5.3** Modify the existing zoning ordinance to limit development in areas with productive farmland, while still allowing some land divisions.
- P5.4** Refer to the Town Municipal Code for livestock siting regulations.
- P5.5** Support efforts for educating nonfarm residents about farming practices, including potentially installing “farming community” signs and/or

distributing information brochures about living in an agricultural area.

- P5.6** Work with the county and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to address runoff issues.
- P5.7** Through the site plan review process, require new development to comprehensively address storm water management and consideration of “green infrastructure” (e.g., vegetated swales).
- P5.8** Work with Winnebago County to modify shoreland zoning regulations along Rush Lake to further limit subdivision and new development.
- P5.9** Work with WisDNR and/or other appropriate conservation organizations to identify priority lands for long-term protection. In assessing whether or not to protect key lands, potential fiscal impacts including any reduction in the tax base should be considered.
- P5.10** Support efforts that conduct a scenic resources inventory to identify priority views that should be protected.
- P5.11** Encourage historic patterns of development and site design.

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## Economic Development

### Overview

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The Town of Nepeuskun is a rural community focused on agricultural production. The town is located in close proximity to the economic centers of Ripon, Berlin, Omro, Green Lake and the Fox Valley communities, specifically Oshkosh. Residents of Nepeuskun enjoy the privacy and quality of life associated with rural living and benefit from easy access to a variety of jobs and services located in nearby cities.

Nepeuskun's local economy has long been based on agricultural production, but employment in agriculture and forestry has drastically decreased, with only a slight rebound recently. While there has also been a decrease in Nepeuskun residents employed in manufacturing the services sector has seen a large increase in the percentage of employed residents. As increasing development pressure is placed on agricultural land in the area, the decrease in agricultural jobs may continue leading to a necessary increase in other employment options for Nepeuskun residents. Given the lack of infrastructure for significant commercial or industrial development in Nepeuskun, most of these jobs will need to be provided in adjacent municipalities or through home occupations.

The 2008 community survey guided the issues addressed in the 2009 comprehensive plan, including tourism and development. No survey was conducted for the 2020 update effort. From the 2008 survey, a majority of residents, 62 percent, felt that the amount of commercial development in the town is sufficient. But through the planning process, residents expressed the need to increase the tax base and local service opportunities by allowing limited commercial activity in the future. The majority of survey respondents, 51 percent, also felt that tourism does not necessarily need to play a key role in the local economy, while 40 percent felt tourism was somewhat important for the local

economy. In 2008, the town residents were looking to maintain their rural character by limiting commercial and tourism activities throughout the town.

However, if the town wishes to attract a younger population base for which to sustain the town's future, entrepreneurial opportunities should be accommodated and perhaps even encouraged.

Some trends have emerged over the last decade. For example, agricultural activities have expanded to include more interaction with the public in an effort to educate and entertain visitors through agricultural activities. More commonly referred to as "Agri-tourism", the town should be prepared to address these opportunities through their zoning code. Provisions for agriculture related business is captured through DATCP farmland preservation ordinance samples so the vehicles are in place to potentially accommodate these opportunities under current Agriculture zoning.

In addition, Appendix B of this plan features a WTA presentation on rural economic opportunities. The presentation includes a variety of business opportunities currently found in Wisconsin towns that have proven successful. Many of the uses identified could be accommodated into the Town of Nepeuskun.

Finally, the following economic review will analyze data from the 2010 US Census. The US Census was undertaken in 2020 but the results will not become public until 2022.

### Employment

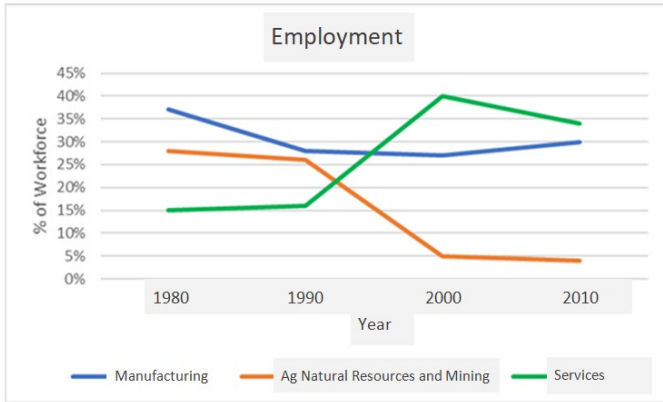
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#### Job Types

The types of jobs that town residents have been engaged in have shifted over the past thirty years. The most significant shifts have occurred primarily in three sectors: Manufacturing; Services; and Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing. The Manufacturing and Agriculture sectors both

experienced an overall decline, whereas the number of people employed in the Services sector increased. (See Figure 6.1)

**Figure 6.1 Manufacturing, Services, and Agricultural Sectors**



In 1980 there were an estimated 116 people employed in manufacturing, representing 37 percent of the town’s workforce. By 2000, the total number of manufacturing jobs had decreased by 10 percent to 105 persons; and rose slightly in 2010 to 30 percent of the workforce. Despite this initial decline between 1980 and 1990, the number of persons in Nepeuskun employed in manufacturing remains fairly strong.

Unfortunately, the number of people working in the Natural Resources and Mining sector (which also include agriculture), has declined significantly since 1980. Between 1990 and 2000, however, the number of people employed in agriculture and forestry decreased from 89 to 23 workers, plummeting from 26 percent of the total workforce to only 7 percent in 2000. This sector continued to decrease to 3.6 percent of the workforce in 2010. More recent county wide data supports this expanding trend.

While manufacturing and agricultural employment have declined, employment in the Services sector has increased significantly. In 1980 services accounted for 15 percent of the labor force and 46 jobs. By 2000, the number of Nepeuskun residents employed in the services sector had increased by 125 jobs, accounting for 40 percent of total employment. In 2010 the percentage

of residents employed in the services industry slipped slightly to 34 percent.

The number of people employed in Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities represents 2.5 percent of the workforce in Nepeuskun. Retail and Wholesale Trade represents 14 percent and Construction 10 percent of the workforce in 2010. More recent county wide data suggests job growth will grow more significantly over the next decade along with growth in the health care sector.

Growth in the Natural Resources (ex. logging) and Mining Sector which includes agriculture, will continue to slide. The farming economy has struggled (especially dairy) over the last five plus years. Although the agriculture sector has showed recent signs of recovery, it’s unlikely any substantial job growth will occur. This puts rural based towns like Nepeuskun in an awkward situation. Although the town’s goal is to promote “rural living” most of the residents in the town will likely be employed in other sectors.

**Unemployment Rates**

The unemployment rate in Nepeuskun was a remarkable 0.0 percent in 2000 (US Census). This likely reflects a data sampling issue, rather than the reality of unemployment in the town. In 2010, the unemployment rate was 2.4 percent. According to the US Census, the Winnebago County unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in 2000 and 6.0 percent in 2010. At the state level, the unemployment rate was 4.7 percent in 2000 and 6.7 percent in 2010.

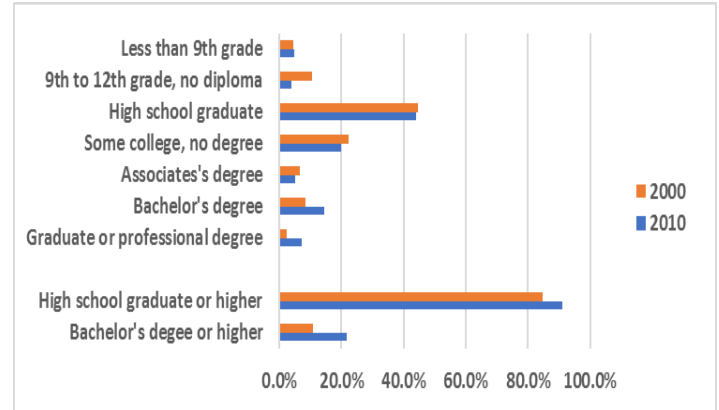
In January 2020, the State of Wisconsin had an unemployment rate of 3.5%. However, due to the impacts of the Covid-19 virus and the ordered shutdown of non-essential business by the Governor to combat the spread of the virus, unemployment rates rose significantly. However, the rates have rebounded as businesses have figured ways to adapt to the pandemic. Once the virus subsides, unemployment rates should stabilize, other factor being consistent.

**Education and Income Levels**

Nepeuskun residents generally have achieved slightly lower education levels than the rest of Winnebago County, however in recent years the Town is consistent with the level of education compared to the county. Figure 6.2 shows the towns education attainment since 2000. In 2000, 11 percent of the town’s population had a college degree or higher, while 24 percent of Winnebago County residents had a college degree or higher. In 2010, 27 percent of the town’s population had a college degree or higher in comparison to the county’s 33 percent. However, according to more recent county data from the Economic Overview, the county’s percentage has dropped to 28.8%. This may be due to the increasing cost of higher education and other lower cost educational alternatives. Eighty-five percent of Nepeuskun residents have obtained a high school diploma or higher in 2000 and 91.2 percent in 2010. It is important to note that Winnebago County is a relatively easy commute to the Fox Valley and Green Bay employment centers and contains UW-Oshkosh.

Nepeuskun residents experienced almost a 31 percent increase in median household income levels between 2000 and 2010. According to the US Census, the median household income in 2000 was \$47,344, only slightly lower than the Winnebago County median household income of \$49,043. In 2010 Nepeuskun’s median household income surpassed the county’s. Nepeuskun was \$61,875, whereas Winnebago County was \$50,974. More recent data from the Winnebago County Economic Overview, shows median household income in the county continued to rise and was listed \$57,124. That data would suggest, the Nepeuskun income levels rose proportionately as well.

**Figure 6.2 Nepeuskun Education Attainment, US Census**



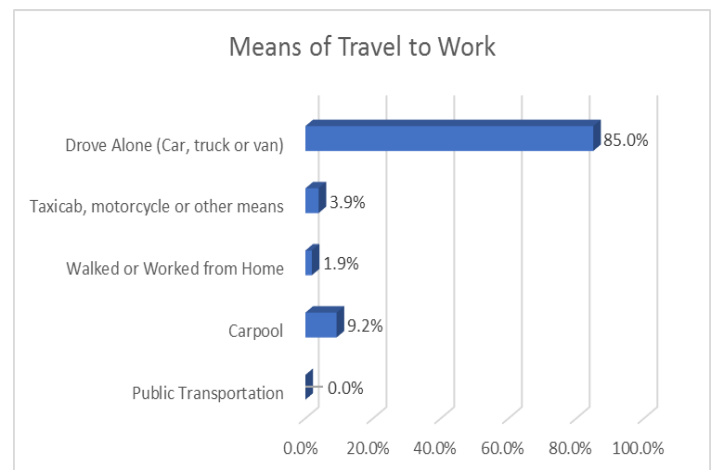
**The Commute to Work**

More and more people who live in Nepeuskun are finding work outside the community. In 1990, 53 percent of residents worked in Winnebago County. By 2000, this had decreased to 44 percent of residents, and further to 42 percent in 2010.

The majority of the workforce population (nearly 65 percent) drive between 10 and 29 minutes to work each day. There are very few, 2.2 percent, that drive over 45 minutes to their place of employment.

Conversely, more people are also driving to work alone (See Figure 6.3). Eighty-five percent of residents drove to work alone in 2010, up from 82 percent of residents in 2000. There was a corresponding decrease in the number of people who walked, worked from home, or carpooled to work.

**Figure 6.3 Commuting Behaviors, US Census**



### **Businesses in Nepeuskun**

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There are only a handful of non-agricultural businesses in the town. These include car repair shops, an eating and drinking establishment, restaurant, and a hunt club. A town winery is known regionally. Agricultural-based businesses are much more numerous and include more than a dozen active farms a produce distribution business and plant nursery sales.

### **Home Based Businesses**

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The number of people working from home declined dramatically between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, 20 percent of the town’s workforce (64 out of 313 people) worked from home. By 2000, this decreased to 4 percent of the workforce (17 out of 389 people) and 1.9 percent (7 out of 360 people) in 2010. This is in part reflective of changes in agricultural employment, such as the drastic decrease in agricultural-based employment between 1990 and 2010.

Home based businesses, however, have a long and prosperous history in rural communities, and it is likely that they will play a part in future economic development in Nepeuskun. Events such as the Covid-19 outbreak forced, even professionals, to work from home. Thus, it is likely this may become more of the norm increasing the percentage working from home over time. Especially, if needed infrastructure was purchased to accommodate the “stay at home” order.

However, for this to occur, rural towns will need adequate broadband to accommodate the required internet speeds for business operations. In addition, explore opportunities to make the town code more accommodating for home occupation businesses that are consistent with town ideals and objectives.

### **Nepeuskun Strengths and Weaknesses**

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Economic development is closely tied to a number of other issues addressed in this comprehensive plan, including transportation, natural and agricultural

resources, utilities and community facilities, and land use. A brief summary of associated strengths and weaknesses that relate to economic development are discussed below. These strengths and weaknesses are also discussed in greater detail in the corresponding chapters of this plan.

Nepeuskun is strategically located within close proximity to Oshkosh, Fond du Lac and the Fox Valley cities. The proximity of these urban areas creates opportunities as well as challenges. On the one hand, residents are within commuting distance of a large pool of employment opportunities. The metropolitan areas also provide a significant number of potential tourists and visitors within an easy drive. On the other hand, many residents drive out of town to access goods and services, thereby undermining support for local businesses in Nepeuskun. Future economic growth will benefit tremendously by creating a draw for regional tourists and encouraging residents to buy local.

Rush Lake and its surrounding natural beauty have long attracted hunters, fishers, and nature lovers to the Nepeuskun area. Rush Lake, as well as the Waukau Creek, has the potential to attract tourists and hunters to the town as one way to bring attract money into the area. Current efforts are underway to improve the condition and access to Rush Lake.



*Rush Lake has attracted hunters, fishers, and nature lovers alike to enjoy Nepeuskun and efforts are underway to provide more access to the lake thus supporting local tourism.*

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## Growth Opportunities

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### Regional Trends

In the Fox Valley region of Wisconsin, jobs are expected to grow from 221,721 non-Natural Resources and Mining jobs in 2014 to 232,094 by 2024 (based on Wisconsin OEA economic projections). While much of this growth will likely occur in the urban areas, this projection suggests the types of potential growth opportunities that might be available to Town of Nepeuskun residents. Based on the Winnebago Industry snapshot, expect job growth in the areas of health care, social service and construction. Locally, the town could see growth in the Agri-tourism area.

### Pandemic Impacts

According to data analyzed by UW Extension, at the onset of the pandemic, Wisconsin lost almost 408,000 nonfarm jobs between February and April of 2020. While the state has recovered 70 percent of this loss, total employment remains 4.0 percent or 121,000 jobs below its pre-pandemic level. Employment change since February 2020 has been somewhat uneven by industry. Despite declines in most industries, the three industry sectors of professional, scientific, and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; and transportation, warehousing, and utilities had modest employment gains between February 2020 and August 2021. While Manufacturing, Wisconsin's largest industry in terms of employment, remains slightly below its pre-pandemic level, it has added over 22,000 jobs in the last year.

### Types of Businesses Preferred by Residents

Residents of Nepeuskun expressed a strong desire to maintain the rural and agricultural character of the area, particularly as new development comes to town. Business development provides many positive benefits to the town (e.g., tax base, jobs, services close to home); however, it is critical that these new businesses fit into the existing rural character of the town and support, rather than detract from, the rural agricultural economy.

Home based and other small-scale businesses that generally would fit into the community's rural character include:

- Industries related to the production, processing, marketing, and sale of agricultural and natural resource-based products such as timber harvesting, sawmills, maple syrup production, farmstands, fruit orchards, nurseries, fish farms, animal husbandry, dairy farms, food and herb processing, and feed, seed, and equipment dealers;
- Overnight lodging, restaurants, arts, entertainment, and recreation, such as cafes, taverns, B&Bs, retreat centers, artist studios, and hunt clubs;
- Small businesses, including retail, many home-based, and professional services such as construction, well-drilling, snowplowing, landscaping, daycare, veterinary, fine carpentry, and general stores.

As previously mentioned, Appendix B of this plan features a WTA presentation on rural economic opportunities. The presentation features many of the uses listed above. Any of these business opportunities could be successful in the town. Ensuring the town's zoning ordinance allows for these opportunities is critical for them to become a reality and contributor to the town's economic base.

### Contaminated Sites

The Wisconsin DNR's Environmental Remediation and Redevelopment Program maintains a list of contaminated sites or "brownfields" in the state. The WDNR defines brownfields as "abandoned or underutilized commercial or industrial properties where expansion or redevelopment is hindered by real or perceived contamination." Properties listed in the DNR database are self-reported and do not necessarily represent a comprehensive listing of possible locations in a community. There are three types of sites listed in the Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking

System (BRRTS) database: Spills, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, and Environmental Repair Sites.

There are currently no open contaminated sites, listed by the WDNR, in the Town of Nepeuskun. There are leaking underground storage tanks, spills or environmental repair sites in Nepeuskun.

## **Economic Development Programs**

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### **Statewide Programs**

At the state-level there is a wide range of programs to assist business retention, expansion, and relocation.

Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation has a series of programs under their business development program, In Wisconsin®. These programs fall under the following areas: business growth, business attraction, export, and entrepreneur programs.

### **Regional Program**

Winnebago County is a member of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission which is responsible for preparing various economic development strategies for the region. These strategies are described in the 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report that is the Region's economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. According to the summary, "This report analyzes the East Central WI Region's current economic conditions and serves as an update on the region's progress towards reaching regional goals and objectives and implementing the region's plan of action. In addition, this report contains an updated Regional Project Inventory list of community and economic development projects from throughout the region that meets Economic Development Association investment priorities and pertains to various funding sources."

### **County Programs**

The Winnebago County Industrial Development Board (IDB) directly administers or has access to economic development programs that financially assist local units of government and businesses in the county. The IDB's mission is to create and retain quality job opportunities, increase the county's tax base, and raise income levels for local residents. Programs administered by the IDB include:

- Marketing and Promotional Program
- Revolving Loan Fund for local governments to finance infrastructure improvements, purchase real estate, and assist business looking to expand or relocate
- Winnebago County Per Capita Funding Program to assist local governments with economic development related programs and projects
- Winnebago County Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development Program. Provides low interest funding for business and industrial development

### State and Federal Economic Development Programs

- **The Community Development Block Grant-Public Facilities for Economic Development (CDBG-PFED) Program** is a federally funded program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. A CDBG-PFED grant is designed to assist communities that want to expand or upgrade their infrastructure to accommodate businesses that will create new jobs, or for business retention
- **The Community Development Block Grant-Economic Development (CDBG-ED) Program** is a federally funded program administered by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce awards funds to local governments to assist businesses to create or retain jobs for individuals with low and moderate incomes. Examples of eligible projects include: business loans to expand facilities or purchase equipment, specialized employee training, or business infrastructure projects. When funds from this program are repaid by the business to the local government, the funds are deposited into a Community Development Block Grant Revolving Loan Fund for Economic Development (CDBG-RLF-ED) to be loaned to other businesses.
- **Enterprise Zone Tax Credits** was first authorized in 2005 and has expanded over time. WEDC may designate no more than 30 enterprise zones, each of which may remain in effect for no more than 12 years. Five enterprise zones must be in areas comprising political subdivisions with populations of less than 5,000 people, and two enterprise zones must be in areas comprising political subdivisions with populations of at least 5,000 but fewer than 30,000 people.
- **Regional Innovation Strategies Program** is operated by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDA currently awards grants that build regional capacity to translate innovations into jobs (1) through proof-of-concept and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs and (2) through operational support for organizations that provide essential early-stage risk capital to innovators and entrepreneurs.
- **Transportation Facilities Economic Assistance and Development Program** funds transportation facilities improvements (road, rail, harbor and airport) that are part of an economic development project.
- **Wisconsin Rural Partners** is a non-profit organization chartered to pursue an educational mission dedicated to building collaborative partnerships across the public and private sectors for the benefit of rural Wisconsin. Since December 1992, the organization has served as Wisconsin's state rural development council (SRDC) through a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Agriculture. In November, 2003, Wisconsin Rural Partners, Inc. received formal federal recognition to continue this responsibility into 2007. Wisconsin Rural Partners is an active member of the National Rural Development Partnership, whose federal designation was reauthorized in the 2008 Farm Bill.

## Economic Development

### 20-Year Vision

In 2040, we envision Nepeuskun to have been preserved as an agriculture-based community. Farms and farming flourish, with each generation picking up where the last has left off.

The nearby cities of Berlin, Ripon, Green Lake, and Oshkosh provide much of our shopping and services needs in their quaint and conveniently located downtowns. These communities continue to provide for the manufacturing and industrial employment base for non-farm residents. The gradual development of farm-supporting uses and activities has also provided new employment opportunities for town residents. With good jobs locally, most residents work within a short distance of their homes, and some even work at home in their home-based businesses.

In this future vision, agri-tourism flourishes as a result of our abundant natural resources. Nepeuskun is recognized as beautiful respite for people looking to get away from the bustle of urban life. Rush Lake is a major draw for tourists where hunting, fishing, bird watching, paddling, and bicycling opportunities are plentiful. Technologies will be evaluated that utilize natural resources for the purpose of energy production or other applications.

The town has proven its commitment to economic prosperity by capitalizing on its agriculture and natural resource heritage while mitigating the impacts of incompatible land uses and the degradation of the natural environment.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

#### Goals

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*Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach preservation and development issues.*

- G6.1** Support the town’s agricultural economy by ensuring productive farmland is permanently preserved for agricultural uses and/or resources protection purposes.
- G6.2** Encourage economic development opportunities appropriate to the town’s resources, character, and service level.
- G6.3** Protect and enhance the town’s scenic and environmental character as an economic asset to the town and the region.

- G6.4** Recognize agriculture and tourism, specifically agri-tourism as important economic resources and support the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

#### Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O6.1** Focus economic development efforts on natural resources, agriculture, nature and agriculture related businesses, and small, community-serving businesses.
- O6.2** Discourage the sale of productive farmland to non-agricultural interests except for natural resource protection purposes.
- O6.3** Direct rural, non-farm uses, to those areas least suitable for cultivation.
- O6.4** Encourage participation in the farmland preservation program.
- O6.5** Capitalize on the town’s recreational resources (e.g., lakes, rivers, trails) to encourage and locate appropriate retail and service businesses, such as bed and breakfasts, outfitters, cross country ski

trails, biking trails, walking trails, and/or nature sanctuaries.

- O6.6** Discourage economic development that could negatively impact the town's rural character, outstanding natural resources and/or groundwater & surface water resources.
- O6.7** Assist in the promotion and attraction of agricultural related services and industries to maintain agriculture as a viable business.
- O6.8** Direct industrial or manufacturing uses to locate in nearby cities or villages. If accommodated in the town, encourage the location to county or state highways.
- O6.9** Promote the careful placement and design of mineral extraction sites, wireless telecommunication facilities, energy generations, and other uses that may have a significant visual, environmental, or neighboring property owner impact.

## **Policies**

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*Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives.*

- P6.1** Investigate the use of grant monies or low interest loans to pursue rural economic development opportunities.
- P6.2** Continue to support the right to farm.
- P6.3** Allow home occupation businesses where there will be low impact on surrounding properties consistent with town code requirements.
- P6.4** Allow small, low-impact non-farm businesses or Agri-tourism on farm properties consistent with town code requirements.
- P6.5** Explore opportunities to make the town code more accommodating for home occupation businesses that are consistent with town ideals and objectives.

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## Land Use

### Overview

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Land use is one of the most important factors in determining the character and livability of a community. The Town of Nepeuskun is defined by its rural landscape of farms and natural areas. Maintaining the rural quality of life that residents' value is dependent on limiting sprawling patterns of development and incompatible mixes of land use.

Even though development will occur, it is the goal of this plan to maintain the rural character of the town. Determining the type, location, quality, and character of new development will help ensure a high quality of life for Nepeuskun residents.

This chapter discusses patterns of land use, land supply and demand, land use conflict, and future goals, objectives, and policies for future land use.

### Planning from the Outside-In

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Planners have long taken the approach to land use planning that future development would grow out of the established core of developed incorporated communities (cities and villages). Land within the path of development would be consumed for more intensive-type land uses (residential, commercial, industrial). This approach is certainly valid for growing communities as they plan their infrastructure and service systems, but it does little to preserve the value of natural resource type land uses which Nepeuskun residents' value. This approach also assumes that land used for undeveloped purposes doesn't hold the same economic value as developed land. In addition, many future land use plan maps for cities and villages grossly overestimate the actual land required to accommodate future growth. Often, the intent is to hold back the encroachment of incompatible agricultural use and make it ready for accommodating development.

Land use planning for rural counties and towns is much different. Towns like Nepeuskun lack the public infrastructure (public water and sewer systems) to accommodate more intensive type land uses. Non-agricultural related residential developments are often located on larger lots that can accommodate individual wells and on-site wastewater treatment systems. In addition, scattered non-agricultural related development can create barriers to agricultural expansion and profitability.

A better approach to land use planning for rural counties and towns is to "Plan from the Outside-In". Basically, this approach gives all land equal value and establishes future use based on the strengths of the features of the land. Current or existing land use plays a big part in determining future use. The reason for this is current land use has weathered economic challenges (most recently a recession) and stands a greater chance of carrying that use forward into the future. Changes from the existing land use pattern are considered in certain locations but are driven by how the local town interprets pressure (or market) for that change and what services it may require. Should unique land use opportunities arise, they will most likely be addressed on a case-by-case basis and be weighed against compatibility with existing uses around them.

The Town of Nepeuskun was given a unique opportunity to execute the "Planning from the Outside-In" approach. Since most of the town is rural by nature and heavily influenced by farming and natural resources, it was determined that the farmland preservation planning efforts should be developed first and then incorporated into the updated comprehensive plan.

When the 2009 Comprehensive Plan was originally developed, "Agriculture" was classified as a general land use type. No specific preservation strategy was identified. In addition, the planning effort provided no

criteria for the rationale to determine agriculture or farmland preservation areas.

However, by conducting the farmland preservation plan effort first, integration was seamless as the areas designated for farmland preservation were used to create the “Agriculture & Open Space” future land use classification within the town comprehensive plan update. The identified farmland preservation areas (Map 6) have been transferred to the Future Land Use Plan Map (Map 1) within the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan* update ensuring “consistency” between the two maps. Implementation of future agricultural use has taken on far more importance and will be directed by the Town’s Farmland Preservation Zoning Ordinance.

The result of this planning approach has created a Future Land Use Plan Map that:

- a. Represents a better reality for attaining the projected future land uses for the town
- b. Uses an established criterion for farmland preservation planning
- c. Elevates agriculture and natural resource features as a future land use type (not just a holding area for future development)
- d. Accommodates agricultural related business as an economic opportunity

**Existing Land Use**

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Map 7 shows the existing land uses in the town. The map was developed using the most recent land use data from the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The map was reviewed by the Town Planning Commission for accuracy during the planning process.

Table 7-1 includes a detailed breakdown of all existing land use categories. The town’s existing land use is primarily rural based including agriculture, woodlands, open water and other open land including wetlands. In fact, over 95 percent of the town’s land area is non-

developed and resource based. Intensive type land uses such as single-family residential, farmsteads, commercial, institutional, mining and transportation are scattered throughout the entire town. Intensive use only comprises 4.5 percent of the town’s land area further demonstrating that Nepeuskun is indeed a rural based town.

**Table 7-1  
Town of Nepeuskun  
Existing Land Use Acres**

Land Use Category	Acres	% of Total Town Acres
Farmsteads	117.6	0.5
Single Family Residential (Including Mobile Homes)	296.3	1.3
Commercial	6.7	0.1
Mining/Quarries	51.9	0.2
Institution/Governmental	6.6	0.1
Recreational Facilities	52.7	0.2
Transportation	490.7	2.1
Agriculture	10037.6	43.4
Planted Woodlands	357.0	1.5
General Woodlands	1920.8	8.3
Other Open Land	6762.5	29.3
Open Water	2994.2	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>23094.6</b>	<b>100</b>

**Land Use Conflicts**

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Land use conflicts can arise when different types of land uses are located, or potentially located, in close proximity to one another. The nature of a conflict depends on localized circumstances and the personal opinion of affected individuals. As a result, conflicts can develop or subside as demographic characteristics of an

Town of Nepeuskun  
Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Farmland Preservation Plan

Farmland Preservation Areas

Areas of Agricultural Use and Agriculture Related Use

Nonagricultural Development Areas

Areas of Nonagricultural Development

Map Features

Municipal Boundary

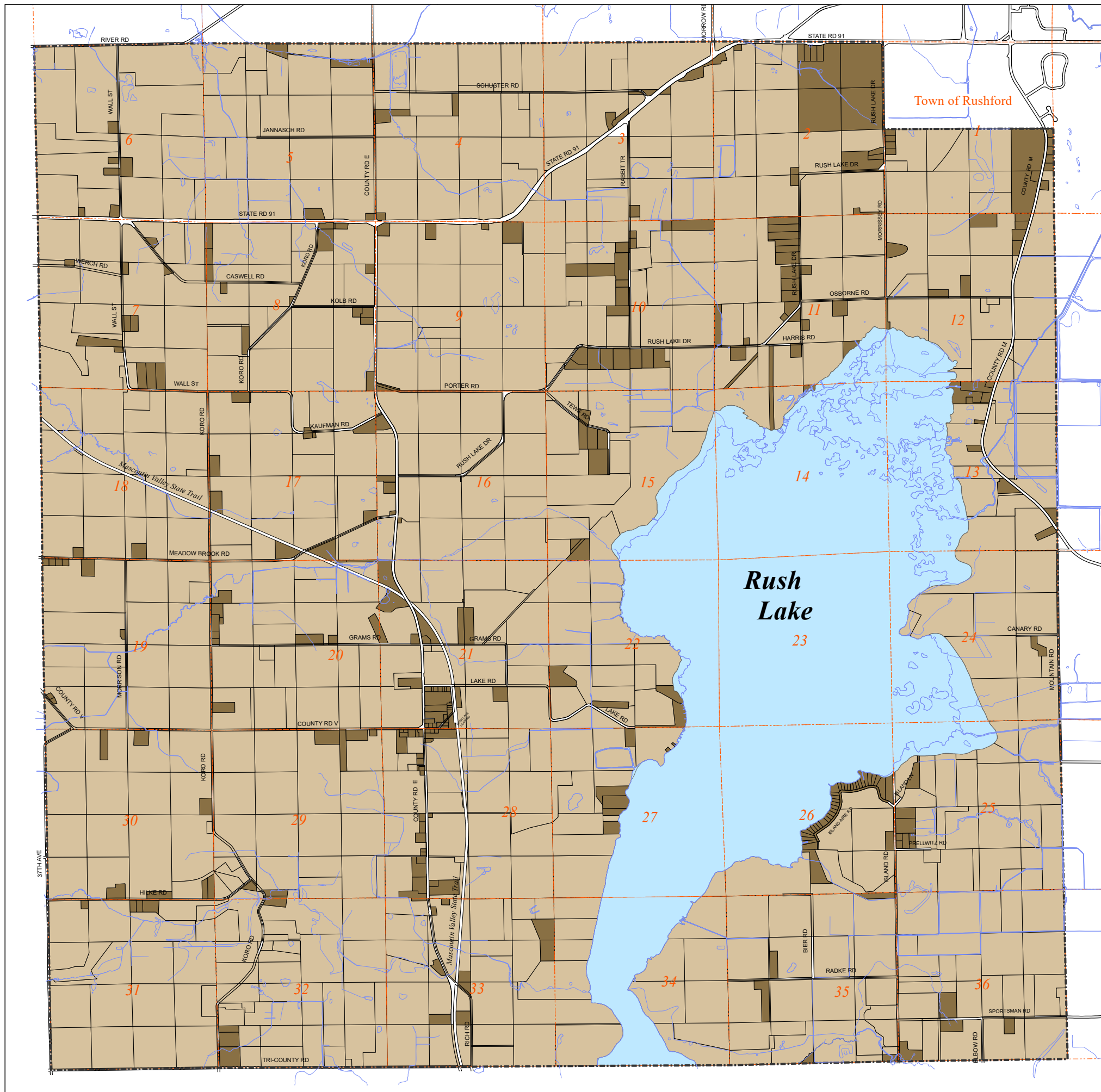
Section Lines

Parcel Lines

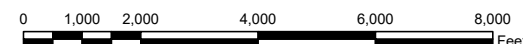
Right of Way Lines

Waterways

Open Water



Note : In the event of any conflicts between interpretation of the County's Proposed Land Use Plan Map and the County's Farmland Preservation Plan Map, the County's Farmland Preservation Plan Map shall take precedence over other future land use classifications on the Proposed Land Use Map for the purposes of planning for agriculture.



This base map was created by Winnebago County, who expressly disclaims all liability regarding fitness of use of the information. The user is responsible for understanding the accuracy limitations of the data provided herein.

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# Town of Nepeuskun

Winnebago County, Wisconsin

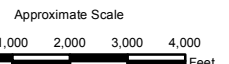
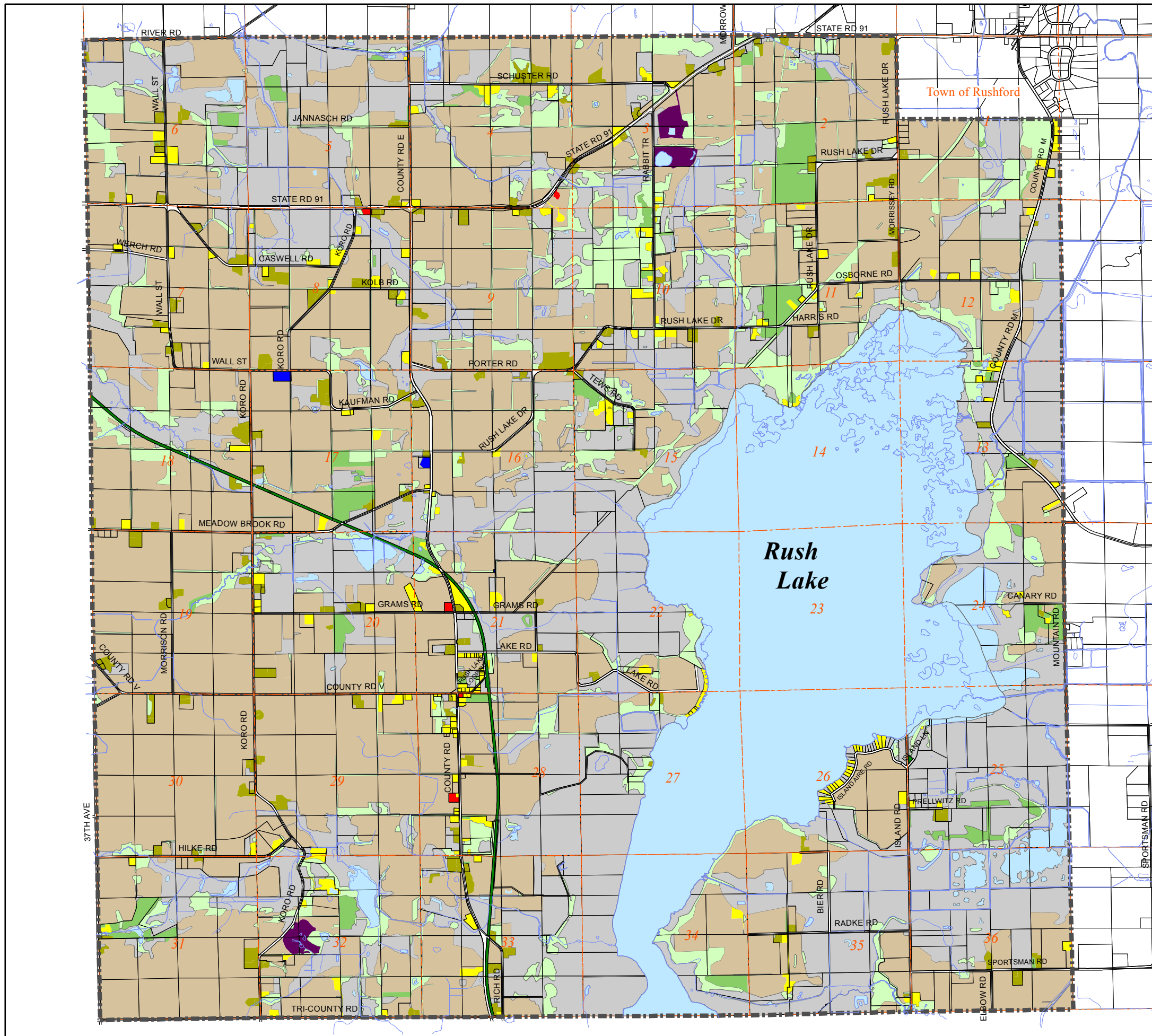
## Existing Land Use Map

### Land Use Categories

- Farmsteads
- Single Family Residential
- Mobile Home
- Commercial
- Mining/Quarries
- Institutional Facilities
- Recreational Facilities
- Agriculture
- Planted Woodlands
- General Woodlands
- Open Other Land

### Map Features

- Municipal Boundary
- Section Lines
- Parcel Lines
- Waterways
- Open Water



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area or community change over time. This can be particularly true in rural farming communities that experience an increase in non-farming residents.

Development pressures can increase conflicts between agricultural uses and residential development. Non-metallic mining operations and large-scale farm operations can also result in conflicts with neighboring rural land uses, such as residential, recreational, and natural features.

In order to preserve the rural quality of life, maintain viable farming operations, and plan for new residential development, there needs to be a clear plan for limiting conflicts between residential and farm uses. Vegetative buffers can help mitigate conflicts, as well as limit the number of dwelling units in farming areas. It is also important to educate newcomers to the area about the realities of rural life and farm operations.

Land use conflicts can also arise at the border between two communities when the planning goals or regulations differ. The Town of Nepeuskun, however, has identified no existing land use conflicts with the surrounding townships. The intergovernmental cooperation efforts outlined in the plan will help to minimize potential future land use conflicts between neighboring jurisdictions.

### **Future Land Use Plan**

The Town of Nepeuskun's Future Land Use Plan (Map 1) includes future land use categories that contain broad descriptions. These descriptions give meaning to the map by describing the purpose of each classification. The descriptions of these future land use categories closely match the Town of Nepeuskun's Zoning Ordinance. However, the zoning ordinance provides greater detail and further specifies classifications within each land use. However, it should be noted that any future rezones by the town should be supported by the Future Land Use Plan. If not, a comprehensive plan amendment should be undertaken.

These future land use areas also include policy statements that are specific to areas of the town mapped under a particular classification. Any such policies carry the same weight and serve the same function as policies found elsewhere in this plan. Table 7-4 displays the distribution of each future land use classification as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

### **Residential (Yellow)**

This category represents those areas where residential land uses already exist, or, where such uses are planned to be the predominant land use. The density of residential development may vary depending on applicable zoning and includes single-family and two-family housing in this category. Multi-family residential uses are also allowed as residential but will require conditional use approval due to increase support provisions. Where agricultural uses occur in these mapped areas, it is anticipated that these areas will become predominantly single-family residential over time.

#### Policies

- ◆ New single and two-family residential development should occur preferably in the planned areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
- ◆ Densities will be regulated by the town's development review criteria and zoning code.
- ◆ Single-family residential neighborhoods should contain some form of buffering, e.g., landscaping, berming, screening, and/or additional building setbacks, between the residences and potentially incompatible land uses such as agricultural, business, or industrial.

### **Housing Focus Areas (Orange)**

This category represents those areas where planned, more concentrated, residential land uses could exist without jeopardizing future agricultural use or rural character valued by residents of the town. There are

basically, two primary Housing Focus Areas located in the Town: An area in the far NE corner adjacent the Town of Rushford. And another adjacent the historic “hamlet” development of Rush Lake. The density of residential development may vary depending on applicable zoning and includes single-family and two-family housing in this category. Multi-family residential use could also occur with conditional approval. Where agricultural uses occur in the Housing Focus Areas, it is anticipated it will continue. However, should increase demand for rural type subdivisions housing occur in the future, these locations would be the priority area for residential development to occur.

Policies

- ◆ Same as the “Residential” future land use category.

**Agriculture Transition (Dark Brown)**

Agriculture Transition is a unique land use category within the Town of Nepeuskun Future Land Use Plan in that the locations are not planned for a specific type of land use. The identified parcels resulted from the town’s farmland preservation planning process where the parcel acreage was less than the 10-acre standard required for inclusion as a farmland protection area. Thus, a use other than agriculture may be an option. Agriculture Transition parcels are not owned by any adjacent property owner where it could be managed as a larger agricultural enterprise. Also, many Agriculture Transition parcels lack public road frontage which may limit future use options. Should a change in current use be proposed for any Agriculture Transition Area, the Planning Commission shall determine the type of acceptable land use based on compatibility with adjacent uses, public service access and other land use considerations. The following policies shall apply to those lands designated as Agriculture Transition.

Policies

- ◆ Support continuation of agricultural and open space land uses within the agricultural transition area.

- ◆ Consider these transition areas as possible locations for new residential development.

**Commercial (Red)**

These mapped areas represent where business type land uses are occurring now or anticipated in the future. Examples include general sales & service, storage, or agricultural related businesses. Specific types of commercial uses will be determined by the town’s zoning ordinance. It is also recognized that some light industrial activity could be located within the identified commercial locations.

Policies

- ◆ New business and light industrial development should occur exclusively in the planned commercial areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
- ◆ Specific uses and densities will be regulated by the town’s development review criteria and zoning code.
- ◆ The town should assess the use of some minimum design standards which promote quality and aesthetics and do not detract from the town’s rural character.
- ◆ Individual lot sizes may vary depending on the location and the services available.
- ◆ All new developments should include site plan review including, but not limited to, parking, road access/capacity, landscaping, lighting, signage, outdoor storage and loading facilities.
- ◆ Negative intensive commercial or light industrial impacts in close proximity to residential development should be minimized.
- ◆ Discourage the proliferation of large billboards and off-premises signs associated with business development in favor of smaller, less obtrusive signage.

# Town of Nepeuskun






Winnebago County, Wisconsin

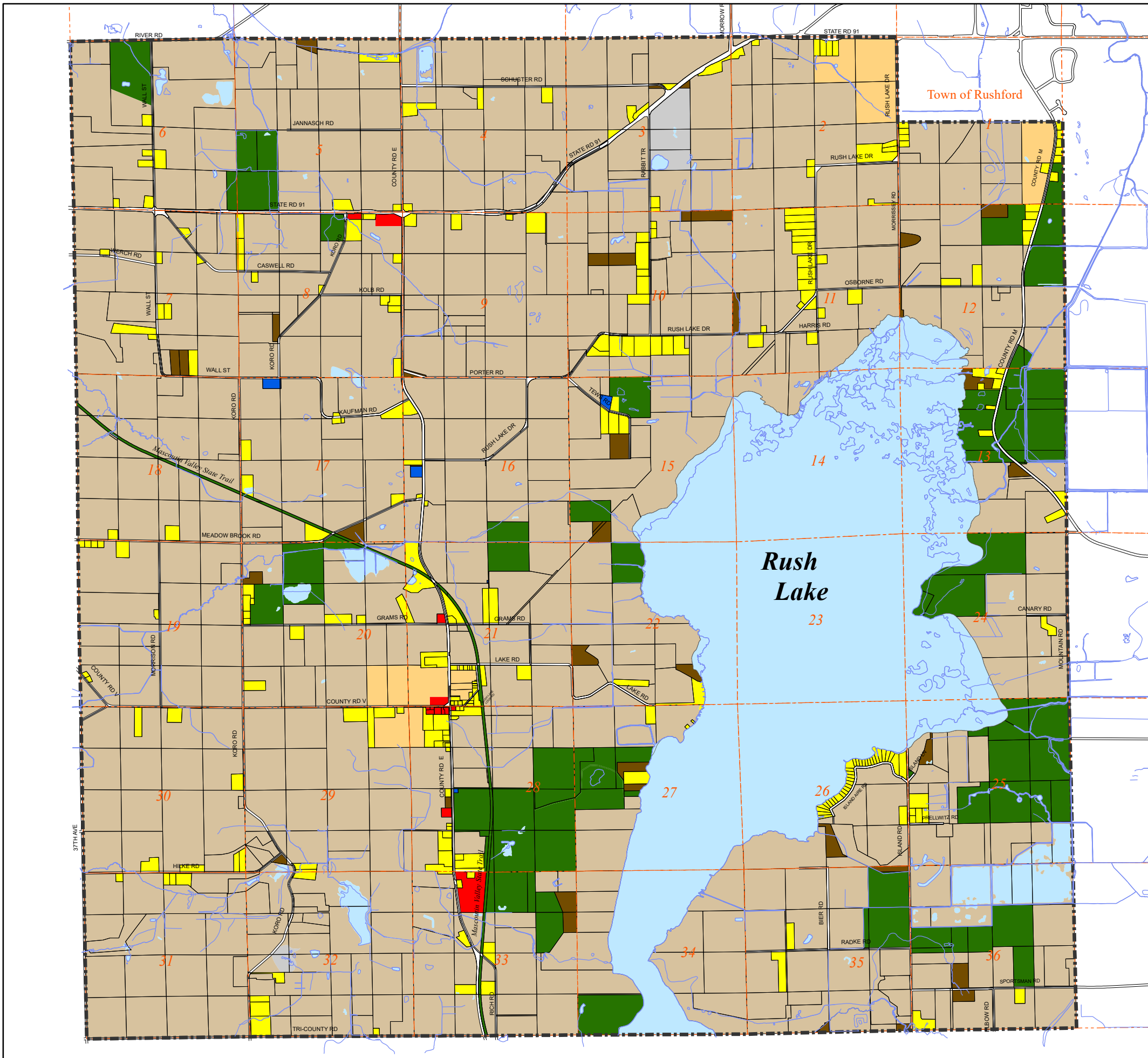
## Future Land Use Plan

### Land Use Categories

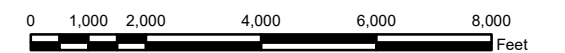
-  Residential
-  Housing Focus Area
-  Agriculture Transition
-  Commercial
-  Non-Metalic Mining Sites
-  Government & Institutional Facilities
-  Natural Resources and Recreational Areas
-  Agricultural & Open Space

### Map Features

-  Municipal Boundary
-  Section Lines
-  Parcel Lines
-  Waterways
-  Open Water/Pool Lakes



Approximate Scale



This base map was created by Winnebago County, who expressly disclaims all liability regarding fitness of use of the information. The user is responsible for understanding the accuracy limitations of the data provided herein.

### Martenson & Eisele, Inc.

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 Menasha, WI 54952 Environmental  
 www.martenson-eisele.com Surveying  
 info@martenson-eisele.com Engineering  
 920.731.0381 1.800.236.0381 Architecture

argis10328002gis.mxd\_08/10/2021

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**Non-Metallic Mining (Grey)**

These mapped areas include locations of active non-metallic mining operations. Active non-metallic mining operations are regulated by NR 135 of the Wisconsin Legislature which establishes mine reclamation standards. These standards are typically administered by the county, local governmental unit or regional planning commission. Reclaimed mining sites are most often used as an amenity for new residential development, recreation use, wildlife habitat or placed back into agriculture production.

Policies

- ◆ Reclaimed nonmetallic mining sites shall incorporate a future use that is an asset to town.

**Natural Resource & Recreation Areas (Dark Green)**

This category includes federal and state-owned properties used for natural resource protection, management, public access and passive recreation. The specific type of program used to manage these areas can be seen on Map 5, Natural Features and Public Lands. Recreational facilities under this category include the Mascoutin Valley State Trail. This category represents locations that are positive attributes to the town in protecting its rural living goal. These areas are also important public investment to provide leisure opportunities to residents and visitors alike.

Policies

- ◆ Continue to work with US Fish & Wildlife, State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), non-profit organizations and local conservation clubs to plan for and manage existing and future natural resource land in the town.
- ◆ Wetland, forested and floodplain areas are encouraged for the purpose of passive, outdoor recreation opportunities, e.g., walking/hiking trails, wildlife movement, and overall rural character enhancement.

**Government/Institutional (Dark Blue)**

This category can accommodate a variety of public or quasi-public owned uses. Examples include public safety facilities, government administration buildings, instructional facilities museums, schools and alike.

Policies

- ◆ New government or institutional facilities should be regulated by the town's development review criteria, zoning code and any applicable requirements of the state of Wisconsin.

**Agriculture and Open Space**

This category, which represents the greatest majority of the town's land use and are those areas where agricultural uses such as dairy and crop farming are the anticipated predominant land use in the area. Preservation of the town's agricultural areas was identified to be a priority need through the comprehensive planning process. The areas planned for agriculture and open space were mapped through a very detailed land assessment process undertaken by the town to identify areas for farmland preservation. Map 6 shows the location of the farmland preservation areas in the town as submitted to Winnebago County for inclusion in the *Winnebago County Farmland Preservation Plan*. The plan has been certified by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to qualify eligible landowners to farmland preservation tax credits.

Several strategies for preserving the town's significant agricultural resource have been identified and outlined in this plan. These strategies primarily include strengthening agricultural zoning and directing future residential development into Residential and Housing Focus Areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan (Map 1).

The agriculture and open space category could include a limited amount of residential development, but the predominant land use would be agricultural in nature. Within this category, housing for a farm operator or the

son or daughter of the farm operator is acceptable. However, non-farm related residential development would have to be located in the A-2 zoning district which is not impacted by the farmland preservation zoning overlay provisions.

A minimal amount of other land uses, e.g., energy systems, wireless communication facilities, dog kennels, veterinary clinics, mineral extraction, wildlife ponds, agriculture related business and even agri-tourism, may also occur in areas planned for agriculture and open space. Major subdivisions (those proposing to create five or more lots) and other similar large-scale developments are prohibited in these areas. The following policies shall apply to those lands designated as Agricultural and Open Space on the Future Land Use Plan (Map 1):

Policies

- ♦ The principal land uses within the Agriculture and Open Space land use category shall be agriculture, forestry, and natural open spaces (e.g., wetlands). Other uses may be allowed but should be subject to town review, rezones, and/or conditional use approval to assure current and future maintenance of the agricultural resource, compatibility with agricultural operations, and consistency with other town goals and objectives. Such uses include but is not limited to the following:
  - a. Residential housing
  - b. On-farm enterprises, agricultural support businesses, agritourism and/or home-based businesses
  - c. Manufacturing of agricultural products
  - d. Sand and gravel extraction
  - e. Churches, cemeteries, aircraft landing strips, schools, local government buildings and facilities, and solid waste disposal/recycling sites
  - f. Energy production
  - g. Communication transmission

- ♦ The A-1, A-2 and Farmland Preservation Overlay Districts shall be the primary zoning districts regulating land use in the agriculture and open space land use category.

**Table 7-2  
Future Land Use,  
Town of Nepeuskun, 2021**

Future Land Use (Map 1)	Acres	% of Total
Residential	808.8	3.5%
Housing Focus Areas	293.4	1.3%
Agriculture Transition	214.8	0.9%
Commercial (w/light industrial)	45.1	0.2%
Non-Metallic Mining	76.5	0.3%
Government/Institutional	10.8	0.0%
Natural Resource and Recreation Areas	1819.6	7.9%
Agriculture & Open Space	16299.9	70.6%
Transportation	510.3	2.2%
Water Features	3015.9	13.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>23095.1</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Land Use Trends and Projections**

Table 7-2 reveals the acreages and percentages projected as part of the Future land Use Map (Map 1). Land use trends and preferences are changing, especially in rural areas. Like many rural towns, there was an increase in rural residential development and land division activity during the subdivision boom years on the 80’s, 90’s and early 2000’s. However, the Recession of 2008 put a drastic halt to housing development, especially in rural areas. Nepeuskun was not excluded. The level of residential development never regained the momentum of those periods. Today, most rural towns see little new development almost to the point of concern in sustaining the necessary tax base to support services. Nepeuskun could easily fall in that realm if flexibility within the land use plan doesn’t allow for

some types of development that is compatible with agriculture.

Looking too far back as the basis to project future growth may not be an accurate or even a “visionary” approach. For example, it’s increasingly clear, the Millennial generation (mid to late 20s of age as of 2020) bring with them different perspectives. This generation (the largest of all generations by population), drive less, are attracted to larger urban centers and have more interest in rental housing than any of the previous generations.

In line with that trend, is an agricultural industry that has invested significantly in support infrastructure and now requires a larger land base to support it. Large dairy operations are probably the best recent example. Simply put, the once gap between the value of land for residential purposes as opposed to continue agricultural use has closed significantly since the disparities of the 1990’s and early 2000’s. Larger farms continue to add land to support their agricultural investments.

What does that mean for rural town like Nepeuskun in the future? Probably far less demand for land to accommodate uses such as single-family housing or other non-agricultural based development than historical projections would suggest. Agriculture will continue to be a major player in the land use fabric of rural towns such as Nepeuskun.

**Land for Housing**

Land use projections for housing take into account population and housing projections discussed in the Issues and Opportunities chapter and the Housing chapter. Based on the housing projections, there appears to be a demand for about 50 additional housing units over the next twenty years, just over two new houses per year. This projection by the WDOA appears a bit high and recent building permit activity (2010-2020) data seems to support that claim (see Table 7-3).

**Table 7-3  
Town of Nepeuskun  
Historic Zoning (Building) Permits**

Year	New Residential Home	* Commercial Structures	* Agriculture Infrastructure >\$25,000
2010	4	0	1
2011	3	0	3
2012	1	1	1
2013	2	0	1
2014	2	0	4
2015	2	0	3
2016	1	0	4
2017	3	0	1
2018	0	0	4
2019	1	0	4
Total	19	1	26
Avg/Yr.	1.9	0.1	2.6

\* = Includes new construction and major addition/accessory structures

During the last decade, the town has added just under two new residential structures per year. This reduced number was likely impacted by the Recession of 2008 and more recently, by the trends previously discussed. The amount of acreage required to accommodate future residential development will vary. Some new homes were rebuilds on existing lots. However, if five (5) acres is used as a basic standard to accommodate a new residential structure, the town can expect anywhere between 100 to 250 acres of land consumed for residential purposes over the next 20 years.

**Type of Housing**

The mix of housing types and lot size are major factors in determining the amount of land required to accommodate future housing growth. The current mix of housing in the town consists of over 95 percent detached

single-family units, 2.9 percent 2-unit structures, and 1.8 percent mobile homes. Residents and decision-makers in the town have expressed a strong interest in perpetuating single-family housing as the dominant residential type. Lack of any public infrastructure within the town would denounce the development of any multi-family complex type structures.

**Lot Size**

Future residential lot size in Nepeuskun will be implemented by the Town’s zoning ordinance. Provisions exist for the sale on non-farm residential within the agriculture zoning district, but the ultimate goal is to preserve farm acreage.

The Future Land Use Map (Map 1) identifies approximately 293.4 acres of land as “Housing Focus Areas”. The Housing Focus Area locations have been reduced from the 2009 comprehensive plan. The primary reason

is that the town sees reduced interest

Future residential lots within the “Housing Focus Areas” should be between two and five acres. In the agricultural areas, there should be a mixture of larger lots (greater than 20 acres) and smaller lots (two to five acres).

for concentrated housing development in a rural town. In addition, the town has other areas zoned specifically for residential use. The town also understands, some rural housing will occur as part of and within its agricultural zoning districts consistent with allowed dimensional requirements .

Outside the Housing Focus Areas and residentially zoned areas, limited residential development should be permitted. A total of twenty new housing units are anticipated in the agricultural/undeveloped portions of the town over the next twenty years, some of which will likely occur on existing lots. New lots in the agricultural areas should be between two and five acres. These lots should preserve as much contiguous farmland as possible.

**Land for Commercial and Industrial Development**

Given the very small amount of commercial land (seven acres) and the limited overall development expected in the town of the next twenty years, it is assumed that small amounts of land will be needed for commercial or industrial development over the next two decades. The Future Land Use Map identifies land at the intersection County Highway E and State Highway 91 and the intersection of County Highway V and County Highway E for this purpose.

Redevelopment of existing commercial land may allow for additional new businesses in the future. Agriculturally-related commercial uses (e.g., farm equipment sales and repair) industries related to the production, processing, and sale of agricultural-related products should also be permitted on existing farms to increase economic opportunities in the town and to accommodate commercial activities without the need for additional commercial land. In addition, uses associated with the growing trend of agri-tourism should be accommodated through specified zoning provisions throughout the town. It is likely most of the economic growth in the town will occur through the agricultural sector.

**Rural Character and Design**

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Preserving Nepeuskun’s rural character as an important goal for the town. Rural character is influenced not only by the amount of development but also by other factors such as the type of development, the position of homes and buildings in relation to the road and other features, the preservation of key views and natural areas, and the continuation of farming.

Nepeuskun’s rural character is also derived from its historic development as an agricultural, hunting, and outdoor recreational community. This character is reflected in the houses, old school houses, as well as barns, silos, and sheds. These unique properties provide local landmarks, and enhance the overall “rural”

character of the town. The town should encourage proactive preservation of these landmarks.



*The preservation of key view, such as Rush Lake and the surrounding natural areas, is important in the overall rural character of the town.*

Some typical design standards and landforms that are commonly associated with rural character include the following:

- Extensive mature trees around and in front of housing
- Houses that were set back from the road
- Homes that blend in with the surrounding landscape and didn't "stick out"
- Homes that were surrounded by open space
- Residential areas with adequate spacing between homes
- Residential areas with winding roadways
- Residential areas with housing on one side of the road and open space on the other

To ensure that Nepeuskun's rural character is maintained over the planning period, this section of the plan provides the basis for rural character planning, addresses in more detail the nature of development outlined on the Future Land Use Map and sets the framework for the more detailed location of land uses.

### **Rural Views and Key Landscape Features**

As you drive down any road in Nepeuskun, farms fields, barns, trees, and wetlands dominate the landscape and provide an attractive rural setting. Occasional views of Rush Lake and the surrounding natural landscape also help to define the character of the town.

Preserving this rural landscape is dependent on limiting development in key areas and protecting significant landscape features and views when development does occur. Specifically, new development in the town should:

- Avoid productive farmland and, in areas with nearby farmland, be located so as to limit potential impacts on future farming operations
- Protect and provide adequate buffers for sensitive environmental features, including open water, wetlands, streams, forests, and key habitat areas
- Protect key views of rural vistas, ridgelines, and key natural features such as Rush Lake
- Minimize the visual intrusion of new buildings by preserving trees and other vegetation on the site; locating buildings away from the road and where possible behind vegetation or physical landscape features that help to obscure the structure; and limiting the distance from which you can see new buildings by avoiding ridgelines and open fields

Codifying design standards in the town's zoning ordinance and applying them to any new development proposal is key. In addition, billboards should be restricted to preserve the character and aesthetics of the town.

### **Clustered Versus Scattered Housing**

Like many rural communities, Nepeuskun seeks ways to accommodate new homes in a way that protects the rural landscape. In some instances, smaller lot sizes can help to protect rural character by limiting the loss of farmland and habitat fragmentation. Similarly, clustering

several homes together, rather than spreading them throughout the town, can help to limit the impact of new development on farming, habitat, and hunting opportunities by maintaining large expanses of unbroken land and by concentrating new housing away from agricultural areas.

On the other hand, clustered housing and houses on small lots are not necessarily part of the historic rural landscape or experience. As a result, this pattern of development can look out of place in the rural setting and may not meet the needs of people seeking a rural life.

This plan calls for clustered housing surrounded by open space within the “Housing Focus Areas” and a combination of clustered and scattered houses within the agricultural areas. To protect high quality farmland and rural character, housing in the agricultural areas should be limited as discussed above.

## Land Use 20-Year Vision

In 2040, Nepeuskun remains an attractive rural farming community. Utilizing the town’s farmland preservation program, new housing is primarily clustered in designated “Housing Focus Areas”, which feature low rural densities and extensive connected open space. These new homes fit into the rural landscape and are set back from the road to minimize visual impact. Outside the Housing Focus Areas, new residential development has been limited to protect farmland and preserve the rural character of the community. New residential lots in the agricultural areas are configured in such a way to preserve as much contiguous farmland as possible. Natural areas and rural views have been protected throughout the town. The result is a community that creates opportunities for rural living without undermining the visual character, agricultural resources, ability to farm and natural areas that residents’ value.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving this vision. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

### Goals

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*Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach preservation and development issues.*

- G7.1** Protect productive farmland from development.
- G7.2** Protect sensitive natural areas from development.
- G7.3** Allow for growth without losing the rural characteristics of the town.
- G7.4** Protect private property rights and provide farmers and other land owners with some flexibility to sell off lots consistent with the town’s code and farmland preservation zoning requirements.
- G7.5** Limit the visual impact of new residential development.

- G7.6** Provide opportunities for new agricultural-related business and Agri-tourism.
- G7.7** Provide residents with a high-quality rural life.

### Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O7.1** Limit the amount of residential development in agricultural areas.
- O7.2** Locate new residential development to preserve as much contiguous farmland as possible.
- O7.3** Configure new lots in agricultural areas in a way that preserves as much contiguous farmland as possible.
- O7.4** Protect key views of rural vistas, ridgelines, and key natural features such as Rush Lake.
- O7.5** Encourage the preservation of trees and other vegetation on new residential lots.
- O7.6** Encourage locating new buildings away from the road and where possible behind vegetation or physical landscape features that help to obscure the building.

- 07.7** Actively participate in the Winnebago County Farmland Preservation Program.

### **Policies**

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*Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives.*

- P7.1** Consider the Town’s Future Land Use Map to guide all future rezones and land divisions for consistency with the Smart Growth requirements found in WI Stats. 66.1001.
- P7.2** Establish rural design guidelines that limit the visual impact of new development.
- P7.3** Revise the town’s zoning ordinance to permit agriculturally-related commercial uses on existing farms, such as farm equipment sales and repair, industries related to the production, processing, and sale of agricultural-related products.

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

### Overview

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This chapter is focused on “intergovernmental cooperation”, or any formal or informal arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve land use, transportation, natural resource, utility or facility services, or other issues of mutual interest. While the Comprehensive Planning Law does require that a community consider intergovernmental relationships and develop ways to resolve conflicts, it does not require that it undertake specific intergovernmental activities. However, in a state with over 2,500 units of government or special purpose districts (e.g., technical colleges, sanitary districts, lake districts, drainage districts, etc.), it is becoming increasingly important to coordinate decisions that affect neighboring communities in the comprehensive planning process.

Per the requirements of Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning legislation, this chapter of the comprehensive plan includes goals, objectives, policies and programs for joint planning and decision-making; incorporates by reference all plans and agreements to which the Town of Nepeuskun is a party under §66.0301, §66.0307, and §66.0309, Wisconsin Statutes; and identifies known existing or potential conflicts between this comprehensive plan and the plans of adjacent towns, Winnebago, Green Lake and Fond du Lac counties, the State of Wisconsin, and school districts.

As a part of the Smart Growth planning process, the town recognizes that some plan recommendations, along with the potential effects of town decisions, do not necessarily recognize municipal boundaries. In fact, Nepeuskun is part of an active and thriving region, with a wide variety of different issues. Town officials understand that the measure of a well-conceived plan

will be determined not only by how well it serves Nepeuskun, but also how well it meshes with the plans and policies of neighboring communities and state and county agencies.

### Benefits of Intergovernmental Cooperation

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According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, some of the benefits of good intergovernmental cooperation include:

**Cost Savings.** Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication.

**Address regional issues.** By communicating their actions and working with regional and state jurisdictions, local communities are able to address and resolve issues that are regional in nature.

**Early identification of issues.** Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage before political stakes have been raised and before issues have become conflicts or crises.

**Reduced litigation.** Communities that cooperate are able to resolve issues before they become mired in litigation. Reducing the possibility of costly litigation can save a community money, as well as the disappointment and frustration of unwanted outcomes.

**Consistency.** Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.

**Predictability.** Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to residents, developers,

businesses, and others. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.

**Understanding.** As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become aware of one another’s needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

**Trust.** Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and outcomes that build trust between jurisdictions.

**History of Success.** When jurisdictions cooperate successfully in one area, the success creates positive feelings and an expectation that other intergovernmental issues can be resolved as well.

**Service to Citizens.** The biggest beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation are citizens for whom the government was created in the first place. They may not understand, or even care about the intricacies of a particular intergovernmental issue, but all Wisconsin residents appreciate the benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

### **Existing Regional Framework**

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The following is a description of the plans of other state and regional jurisdictions operating within or adjacent to the Town of Nepeuskun. Following the description of each jurisdiction’s plan, this section analyzes potential conflicts with the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan*. Where conflicts are apparent, a process to resolve them is also proposed.

#### **State Agency Jurisdictions**

WisDOT. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is geographically organized into eight district offices throughout the state. Winnebago County is in the Northeast Region, along with Brown, Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie, and Sheboygan. The regional office is located in Green Bay. Adjacent to Nepeuskun

is also Green Lake and Fond du Lac counties to the south and west, which are part of the North Central Region—its office is located in Rhinelander.

See the Transportation Element Chapter of this plan for future projects by the WisDot that may impact Nepeuskun.

WisDNR. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) is organized into five geographic regions. Winnebago County is located in the North East Region along with twelve other counties, including adjacent Green Lake and Fond du Lac counties.

The WisDNR has been very successful over the years in working with local governments to establish recreational trails throughout Wisconsin. In 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) adopted the State Trails Network Plan as an amendment to the Wisconsin State Trail Strategic Plan. This plan identifies a network of trail corridors throughout the state referred to as the “trail interstate system” that potentially could consist of more than 4,000 miles of trails. These potential trails may follow one or more of the following: highway corridors, utility corridors, rail corridors, and linear natural features (e.g. rivers and other topographic features).

Even though a proposed trail corridor may not run through a community, the plan encourages communities and counties throughout the state to develop additional trails that would link to the statewide trail system. The Mascoutin Valley State Trail provides one such opportunity for linkage. The WisDNR is currently considering extending the trail from Ripon to Oxford along the abandoned rail line.

WisDNR also administers Wisconsin’s Stewardship Grants which fund recreational projects and land acquisition for such use. Trail projects are highly successful in applications submitted by communities or non-profit groups. More on grant programs can be found on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources web site.

Finally, WisDNR, also provides assistance in the vegetation management program at Rush Lake.

### Regional Planning Commissions

The Town of Nepeuskun—along with all of Winnebago County—is located within the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s (ECWRPC) planning jurisdiction. Typically, an RPC has the function of preparing and adopting an advisory master plan for the physical development of the region.

East Central RPC completed their *Year 2030 Regional Comprehensive Plan* in June 2008. The plan is in the process of being updated in 2021-22. The plan lists the following goals, recommendations, and policies as they relate to Nepeuskun:

- Achieve consistency amongst all levels (e.g., state, regional, county and local) of comprehensive plans and move toward more sustainable land use decisions within the region
- Provide an objective role in assisting and facilitating intergovernmental cooperation
- Preservation of natural resource amenities for protection of their functional values, as well as for nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities
- Preserve, protect, provide access to, and leverage the region’s cultural features and landscapes
- Ensure the housing market meets the needs of urban and rural households of all types, ages, income, cultures, and mobility status
- Ensure that the economy is strong and resilient, being able to adapt to external and internal forces that are projected to occur due to globalization and demographic trends
- Ensure an efficient and well-connected regional transportation network provides options for the mobility needs of all people,

goods, and services, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as efficient public transit

- Place an emphasis on cost effective community facilities and service provision, cooperative planning, fostering collaboration, enhancing partnerships, sharing resources and transcending boundaries, as appropriate
- Ensure that development pressures are diverted from farmland and ample, unfragmented, agricultural districts exist and that farming is practiced on the most productive soils for current and future farm use
- Promote tax and land use policies that support the enhancement of agricultural activities and the preservation of farms

Fortunately, no conflicts have been identified between the goals, recommendations, and policies presented by ECWRPC and this plan.

### Adjacent and Overlapping Jurisdictions

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The following is a description of the plans for the jurisdictions adjacent to the Town of Nepeuskun. Again, this section analyzes potential conflicts between those plans and the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan*. Where conflicts are apparent, a process to resolve them is also proposed.

#### Town of Rushford

The Town of Rushford is located to the north of Nepeuskun. Their comprehensive plan was adopted in 2006. According to the Town Clerk, no update is in progress.

The goals of the plan appear to be compatible with the Town of Nepeuskun. No conflicts or issues have been identified between the Town of Rushford’s comprehensive plan and the Town of Nepeuskun’s.

### **Town and City of Ripon**

South of Nepeuskun is the Town of Ripon. The Town of Ripon surrounds the City of Ripon. In 2009, both communities prepared a joint comprehensive plan. In 2020, the City of Ripon updated the plan as a solo document specifically for the City. The Town of Ripon has not initiated a comprehensive plan update at this time.

The City of Ripon is a major shopping, recreation, educational, and health care center for the residents of Nepeuskun. Nepeuskun needs to maintain a strong relationship with both the Town and City of Ripon as both communities provide many services Nepeuskun residents' use. A strong Ripon community greatly supports the quality of life in Nepeuskun.

### **City of Berlin**

The City of Berlin, located in the northeast corner of Green Lake County, completed their comprehensive plan in 2003. To date, no plan update has been undertaken. Similar to Ripon, the City of Berlin provides essential services and employment opportunities for Nepeuskun residents. Similar to the City of Ripon, an economically strong City of Berlin is healthy for Town of Nepeuskun residents as well so coordinated planning efforts are important.

### **Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan: 2016**

The *Winnebago County Comprehensive Plan* was last updated in 2016. Unlike planning efforts in both Green Lake County and Fond du Lac Counties (discussed later in this section), Winnebago County did not use its farmland preservation plan as a fundamental piece of its comprehensive planning effort. That said, it appears support for agricultural as a preferred land use isn't recognized to the same standard as Green Lake and Fond du Lac counties who border the Town of Nepeuskun on the west and southern borders respectively.

This should be concerning to the Town of Nepeuskun as the town's land use goals appear to align better with

its adjoining counties. Although, Winnebago County has an updated farmland preservation plan certified by DATCP, Nepeuskun is the only town recognized in the county plan designating farmland preservation areas. Although, the farmland preservation plan is a county planning document, the identification of farmland preservation areas within the town was undertaken by the town itself and forwarded to Winnebago County for inclusion.

Also, since Winnebago County regulates land use (zoning) within the shoreland district (300' from creek and rivers and 1000' from lakes and impoundments), cooperation between the town and county relative to land use is critically important. Especially by landowners who wish to claim farmland preservation tax credits in the shoreland areas.

### **Green Lake County Comprehensive Plan: 2016**

Green Lake County, located to the southwest of Nepeuskun, is a relatively small county in size but significant in agriculture as a land use. Almost half of the county, or 45 percent, is designated farmland. The county completed their comprehensive plan in 2016 in conjunction with their farmland preservation plan.

No conflicts or issues were identified between Green Lake County's comprehensive plan and the Town of Nepeuskun's plan. In fact, Green Lake County's commitment to promoting agriculture and maintaining a rural landscape basically parallels the Town of Nepeuskun comprehensive plan goals.

### **Fond du Lac County**

In 2021, Fond du Lac County completed an update to their 2012 Farmland Preservation Plan. The update provided the foundation to develop the county's first comprehensive plan which was also adopted in 2021. Similar to Green Lake County, the Fond du Lac County Comprehensive Plan promotes agriculture as a primary land use as all 21 towns that have certified farmland preservation zoning districts already in place. That said, compatibility with the Nepeuskun comprehensive plan

should be consistent. Town officials are encouraged to maintain a working relationship with the county in order to address and/or prevent any conflicts from arising. In addition, Fond du Lac and/or Green Lake County may decide to pursue the establishment of Agriculture Enterprise Areas, (AEA's) in the future through their farmland preservation programs. AEA's can cross county boundaries so Nepeuskun landowners could engage in the efforts with Fond du Lac and Green Lake County towns and landowners.

### **Intergovernmental Meeting**

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Intergovernmental meetings provide an opportunity to outline the broader community vision and plan direction, specific mutual interests, issues and concerns, objectives, and to review mapping products.

An intergovernmental meeting was held on March 23, 2009 and was attended by nineteen officials representing nine different jurisdictions or agencies. The meeting was intended to initiate dialogue between the Town of Nepeuskun and its neighbors, and to provide an opportunity to "lay cards on the table" at an early stage in the process. Some of the topics discussed included Agriculture (farm preservation and limiting large scale farming practices); Natural Features (land and water conservation); Utilities (storm water management); Public Services (fire and EMS and school districts); and intergovernmental annual meetings.

Much has changed in terms of land use and services needs since that meeting but certainly the town is open to any future intergovernmental meetings to address cooperation and government efficiencies.

### **Existing Areas of Cooperation**

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The Town of Nepeuskun has engaged in a number of areas of intergovernmental cooperation with the surrounding towns, the Berlin and Ripon School

District, and Winnebago County. The following is a listing of previous and existing cooperative efforts.

- The town is currently supported by the Berlin and Ripon fire and emergency medical services protection.
- The town currently has an agreement with Winnebago County to govern maintenance responsibilities for all roadways.
- The Winnebago County police department's jurisdiction includes the Town of Nepeuskun.
- The town cooperates with the WisDNR and the lake organizations to protect Rush lake, improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

### **Future Areas of Potential Cooperation**

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The following is a listing of areas/opportunities outlined in the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan* for future intergovernmental cooperation:

#### **Lake/River Water Quality**

The Winnebago System Watershed includes the entire county and is part of the larger Fox-Wolf River Basin Watershed, which covers portions of fourteen counties. The geography of the watershed necessitates intergovernmental cooperation. Significant water quality improvement is unlikely to occur without the cooperation and active involvement of multiple municipalities within the watershed.

Improving water quality and controlling cattails, phragmites and other invasive species in Rush Lake plus the preservation of wetlands is critical for maintaining a high quality of life in Nepeuskun. The town supports healthy wildlife habitats and improving recreational opportunities. The town recognizes the important role that land use and associated activities play on water quality and has proposed specific activities for reducing sedimentation, nutrient loading, and pollution runoff (see the Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural chapter of this plan).



*There is potential cooperation between adjoining communities, WisDNR and other lake and wetland protection organizations to protect, preserve and enhance the natural areas in Nepeuskun.*

The town also seeks to work cooperatively with area organizations/associations, adjacent municipalities, the county, and the WisDNR to address watershed-wide issues. Participants at the intergovernmental meetings discussed WisDNR’s central role in coordinating these efforts.

**Open Space and Farmland Protection**

The protection of open space and productive agricultural farmland starts with establishing a farmland preservation program which was accomplished through this planning process as well as through the Winnebago County Farmland Preservation Plan. Implementation of the farmland preservation program can be achieved in a number of ways. One of the most common is through farmland preservation zoning which provides landowners with tax credits in exchange for limited development potential and nutrient management requirements. The Town of Nepeuskun has a DATCP certified farmland preservation zoning ordinance. However, land use within the town’s shoreland areas is regulated by Winnebago County. That said, coordination between

both jurisdictions (town and county) will be required to ensure qualified agricultural property owners both within and outside of shoreland areas can obtain tax credits through the farmland preservation program.

In addition, the Town of Nepeuskun will need to recertify their farmland preservation ordinance text and map through DATCP. This must be completed by December 31, 2021 for participating landowners to maintain their tax credits.

The town could also engage in a purchase of development rights program with adjacent towns and/or counties to acquire and thus protect large tracks of farmland across jurisdictional boundaries. Purchase of development rights (PDR) programs are one viable approach that state and local governments are using to preserve farmland and open space.

PDR programs provide a way to financially compensate willing landowners for not developing their land. When buying development rights, the community obtains a legal easement, sometimes referred to as a conservation easement, that restricts development on the land. The landowner, however, still owns the land and can use or sell it for purposes specified in the easement, such as farming, timber production, or hunting. Since PDR programs are flexible, program administrators can customize purchases of development rights to meet the objectives of both landowners and communities. For example, an easement designed to preserve agricultural resources might allow the landowner to build an additional home or two as long as the placement of the structure did not limit the property's long-term agricultural potential.

For communities, PDR programs are a means to manage growth and provide the benefits of open space without the expense of purchasing, maintaining, and policing publicly-owned land. Preserving land can also save communities money in the long run, since development often costs more in public infrastructure

and community services than the tax revenue realized by the growth.

### **Areas of Potential Intergovernmental Cooperation**

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Overall, the Town of Nepeuskun feels there are very few, intergovernmental conflicts with surrounding communities. Adjacent municipalities, counties, and the regional planning commission have no immediate land use conflicts with this plan. Common objectives include maintaining the need to protect open space and farmland throughout the area, as well as encourage development in already developed areas and/or cluster development in the most developable areas.

### **Process to Resolve Potential Conflicts**

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This comprehensive plan encourages the town to engage in regular meetings with the other jurisdictions to discuss community service and development issues of mutual concern. This aligns with the recommendations currently incorporated into the long-range plans of the adjacent towns and Winnebago, Green Lake, and Fond du Lac counties.

Probably one of the best ways for the town to stay engaged with neighboring towns is through involvement with the Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA). The WTA holds County unit meetings four times a year and an annual convention which addresses most issues and opportunities town's endure. The format allows for the continued exchange of ideas between towns and their associated counties. Nepeuskun leaders are encouraged to be active within the WTA to stay abreast of the ways and means by which to address town issues and opportunities.

Relative to specific processes available to towns to exercise intergovernmental cooperation, there are two main formats under Wisconsin Statutes. The first is available under Section 66.0301, which allows any 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 it does not have some of the limitations of the "66.0301" agreement format.

The following is a summary of issues that an intergovernmental agreement could cover. Often intergovernmental agreements are executed after a series of meetings, research, and consideration of options, writing, and legal review.

**Future Land Use Recommendations.** Frequently, intergovernmental agreements include maps or descriptions that specify future land uses or development densities considered acceptable or unacceptable in areas that concern both communities. For example, the agreement may specify certain areas that both communities agree should remain in open space or at least maintain an open space character as limited development occurs. Some agreements also include provisions that the communities will then amend their comprehensive plans to be consistent with the future land use recommendations negotiated in the agreement or to not amend their comprehensive plans in a manner that would be inconsistent with the agreement.

**Shared Programs or Services.** The most common types of intergovernmental agreements focus on shared services or programs between communities. The Town of Nepeuskun currently has such agreements with the surroundings communities with respect to provision of road maintenance, fire, EMS services and school districting. The management of recreational lands and programs is another service that is occasionally shared

across municipal boundaries. The town could engage in a purchase of development rights program with adjacent towns and/or counties to acquire and protect large tracks of farmland across jurisdictional boundaries.

**Agreement Term and Amendments.** An intergovernmental agreement should specify the length of time that it is applicable. Twenty years is a typical timeframe as this corresponds with local comprehensive planning time horizons. Occasionally, agreements have provisions for automatic extensions if neither party decides to withdraw. Most agreements also include provisions for periodic review and possible amendments if both parties agree. This keeps the agreement fresh in people's minds and allows adaptability as conditions change.

## Intergovernmental Cooperation 20-Year Vision

Intergovernmental cooperation efforts have enabled Nepeuskun to establish partnerships with the towns of Rushford, Utica, Ripon and Berlin, cities of Ripon, Omro and Berlin, the Berlin, Omro and Ripon School Districts, Winnebago County and state agencies to provide coordinated, cost-effective services. Contested land use issues have been avoided based on carefully planned coordination with the surrounding municipalities that Nepeuskun shares local services with, as well as by directing development to areas with existing development thereby further preserving the rural character of the town.

**The following goals, objectives, and policies are intended to provide a comprehensive approach for achieving intergovernmental cooperation. The order in which these goals, objectives, and policies are listed does not necessarily denote their priority.**

### Goals

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*Goals are broad, advisory statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach preservation and development issues.*

- G8.1** Develop/maintain mutually beneficial relations with adjacent and overlapping governments.
- G8.2** Seek opportunities to maintain and improve the provision of shared public services and facilities such as police, fire, emergency rescue, education, parks, library, transportation, and storm water management.
- G8.3** Seek coordination and communication on planning activities between the Towns of Rushford, Utica, Berlin, Ripon, the Cities of Ripon, Omro and Berlin, Green Lake, Winnebago and Fond du Lac counties, regional, state and federal agencies.

### Objectives

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*Objectives suggest future directions in a way that is more specific than goals. The accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.*

- O8.1** Work with neighboring municipalities to encourage an orderly, efficient land use pattern and to protect the natural environment and agricultural land of the area in a manner that forwards this Plan.
- O8.2** Pursue opportunities for cooperative agreements with neighboring towns and/or cities regarding expansion of public facilities, sharing of services and revenues, and density management.
- O8.3** Continue communicating and meeting with other local governmental units to encourage discussion and action on shared issues and opportunities.
- O8.4** Work cooperatively with surrounding communities in the comprehensive plan development, adoption, and amendment processes to encourage an orderly, efficient development pattern that preserves valued community features and minimizes conflicts between land uses along community boundaries.
- O8.5** Cooperate with Winnebago County and neighboring jurisdictions on comprehensive planning efforts, including the determination

of future municipal boundary changes, consolidation of services, farmland preservation, shoreland zoning and land use policies.

- 08.6** Explore regional approaches to mitigating flooding and storm water issues affecting the basin.
- 08.7** Enhance the water quality of the Town’s features.

and other lake organizations to address water quality, control phragmites and other invasive species for the betterment of Rush Lake.

- P8.8** Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Winnebago County to assure that transportation improvements are consistent with the goals and objectives of the plan.
- P8.9** Work with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to assure that development, resources protection, and other improvements are consistent with the goals and objectives of the plan.
- P8.10** Work with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to assure that development, resources protection, and other improvements are consistent with the goals and objectives of the plan.

**Policies**

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*Policies are rules, courses of action, or programs used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. The town’s policies are stated in the form of position statements, directives to the town, or as criteria for the review of proposed development.*

- P8.1** Provide a copy of the comprehensive plan to all surrounding local governments.
- P8.2** Work to resolve any differences between the *Town of Nepeuskun Comprehensive Plan* and plans of the adjacent towns.
- P8.3** Continue intergovernmental and shared service agreements for public facilities and services.
- P8.4** Cooperate with other units of government on natural resources, places of recreation, transportation facilities, agricultural preservation and viability, and other systems that are under shared authority or cross governmental boundaries; pursue cost sharing agreements where practical.
- P8.5** Attend UWEX and WTA Winnebago County Unit Meetings as scheduled and encourage cooperation between towns on key directives.
- P8.6** Encourage landowners to continue to enroll in county, state and non-profit sponsored programs for land and water preservation.
- P8.7** Support Rush Lake Watershed Restoration Inc. in joint cooperation with towns, county, WisDNR

## Implementation

### **Plan Adoption**

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Section 66.1001(4) of the Wisconsin Statutes dictates the specific procedures that are required for the adoption of a comprehensive plan. Adoption is a critical step in implementation and sets the stage for meaningful use of the Plan for implementing the town's future vision.

### **Plan Consistency and Use**

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The intent is for this plan to serve as a guide for all actions by the town. The plan outlines not only specific programs and actions, but also broader vision, goals, and objectives for the future of Nepeuskun. It is critical that the plan be used on a regular basis by elected officials, appointed committees, and staff members as a decision-making tool.

At a minimum, State Law dictates that beginning on January 1, 2010, the following town actions must be consistent with the town's comprehensive plan:

- Official mapping established or amended under s. 62.23 (6).
- Subdivision regulation under s. 236.45 or 236.46.
- Zoning ordinances enacted or amended under s. 60.61 or 60.62.
- Zoning of shorelands or wetlands in shorelands under s. 59.692, 61.351 or 62.231.

Zoning maps do not necessarily need to be the same as the future land use map, since the future projections are twenty to thirty years out while the zoning map is current. However, future amendments to the zoning map must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan,

specifically the Future Land Use Map. If not, the Future Land Use Map (as part of the comprehensive plan) must be amended prior to the rezone.

In addition, proposed subdivisions can be rejected based on their inconsistency with the comprehensive plan.

### **Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan**

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The Town Plan Commission will report progress in implementing the plan. This will include identification of action items that have been initiated and the results of those actions. The Plan Commission report should include a discussion of any barriers to implementation that have been encountered.

The Plan Commission should also take the opportunity to review and consider any requested changes to the plan, especially as they relate to the Future Land Use Map. The Town of Nepeuskun is likely to receive occasional requests for plan amendments, especially regarding potential rezones. Plan amendments requested by property owners and/or developers should follow a standard application form process administered by the town, typically the zoning administrator.

Within five years following adoption of the plan, the town will review and evaluate the success of plan implementation. This evaluation should include actions that have been initiated but also assess whether these actions have been effective in furthering the goals and objectives of the plan. It is expected that this evaluation will result in some actions and/or policies being dropped, or others added as necessary. This five-year review does not necessarily need to include extensive public participation but still requires the adoption of a public participation plan for the amendment.

The plan's time horizon is intended to be twenty years; however, after ten-years the plan should be completely reviewed and updated. At this time, extensive public involvement and detailed analysis should be conducted.

### **Plan Amendment Procedures**

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Any amendments to the plan must undergo a formal review process and be adopted by the town in the same manner as the original plan, as outlined in Section 66.1001(4) of the Wisconsin Statutes. Frequent amendments to the plan to accommodate specific projects should be avoided, as this might result in development that is not in keeping with the broader intent of the plan. The basic plan amendment can be generally summarized as follows:

1. The Town Board or Plan Commission recommends amendment of a comprehensive plan.
2. Written procedures to foster public participation are adopted. The public participation process for plan amendment does not necessarily need to include the same steps as the original comprehensive plan.
3. The Plan Commission prepares the text or maps associated with the proposed amendment.
4. The Plan Commission holds one or more public meetings on the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, and follows any additional procedures outlined in the written public participation plan.
5. Following the public meeting(s), the Plan Commission makes a recommendation by resolution to the Town Board by majority vote of the entire Plan Commission.

6. The Town Clerk sends a copy of the recommended plan amendment sections to all adjacent and surrounding government jurisdictions, the county, and the state. In addition, 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. These governments and individuals should have at least thirty days to review and comment on the recommended plan amendment.
7. The Town Clerk directs the publishing of a Class 1 notice, published at least thirty days before a public hearing held before the Plan Commission, Town Board or both and containing information required under Section 66.1001(4)d, Wisconsin Statutes.
8. The Town holds a formal public hearing on the proposed plan amendment.
9. Following the public hearing, the Town Board approves (or denies) the ordinance adopting the proposed plan amendment. Adoption must be by a majority vote of all members. The Town Board may require changes from the Plan Commission recommended version of the proposed plan amendment. However, if the changes are considered significant, another public hearing is required before ordinance adoption.
10. The Town Clerk sends a copy of the adopted ordinance and plan amendment sections to all parties that received a copy under step #6.

## **Implementation Framework**

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The comprehensive plan identifies priority actions to be initiated within the next five to ten years. (See Table 9-1) Specific dates for implementation are provided. Many actions are ongoing. The order in which items are listed does not necessarily denote their priority for implementation.

The Town of Nepeuskun Plan Commission will take the lead on implementing most of the actions identified below. Very few actions, however, can be undertaken and completed exclusively by the Plan Commission.

Successful implementation of this plan will require county coordination, public-private partnerships, inter-municipal efforts, and/or inter-agency coordination and cooperation. A cooperative, collaborative approach is essential for the plan to be successful.

Table 9-1 summarizes many of the key recommendations contained within this comprehensive plan. The table is designed to be a quick reference by which the Plan Commission and Town Board can monitor plan implementation on an annual basis.

**Table 9-1  
Priority Programs and Actions**

<b>Comprehensive Plan</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A1. Provide a copy of this comprehensive plan to all surrounding local governments.	2021
A2. Amend the Comprehensive as required to be consistent with rezones.	Ongoing
A3. Amend the Comprehensive Plan every 10 years as a minimum, consistent with WI Stats 66.1001	2030
<b>Intergovernmental Cooperation</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A4. Stay active with the Wisconsin Towns Association (WTA), especially the Winnebago County Unit Meetings and WTA Annual Convention, special seminars and on-line webinars.	Ongoing
<b>Town Regulations and Ordinances</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A5. Update Subdivision Regulations as required	Ongoing
A6. Update the town’s zoning ordinance. Review for mapping consistency with county GIS site. Recertify with DATCP for farmland preservation tax credit eligibility. Incorporate Agri-Tourism standards.	2021
A7. Strongly consider the establishment of mobile tower siting regulations	2022
A8. Work with the county to administer shoreland zoning regulations for farmland preservation tax credits.	2021
<b>Public Infrastructure</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A9. Work with the county to evaluate and implement potential transportation safety improvements.	Ongoing
A10. Expand rural broadband capabilities.	Ongoing
A11. Pursue WDOT road grant opportunities such as LRIP.	Annually
<b>Agriculture</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A12. Maintain town eligibility in the State of Wisconsin farmland preservation program.	Ongoing
A13. Utilize farmland preservation zoning for tax credits and consider the establishment of an AEA (Agriculture Enterprise Area)	Ongoing
<b>Environment</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A14. Support options for addressing agricultural runoff issues, in cooperation with the county and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.	Ongoing
A15. Support priority lands for conservation with partner agencies.	Ongoing
<b>Rural Economic Development</b>	
<b>Program or Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>
A16. Pursue grant opportunities for rural economic development.	Ongoing

**Appendix A**

**Public Participation Plan**

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**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN  
2018 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Town of Nepeuskun, Winnebago County, Wisconsin**

**Purpose**

In order for the Comprehensive Plan to operate effectively and according to the law and to address the needs of citizens of Nepeuskun, the residents must be kept informed and provided an opportunity to participate in the planning process. In addition, pursuant to s.66.1001 (4)(a) of the statutes written notice shall specifically be provided to owners of property, or to persons who have a leasehold interest in property pursuant to which the persons may extract nonmetallic mineral resources in or on property, in which the allowable use or intensity of use of the property is changed by the comprehensive plan. Further, public participation will be used to collect data and opinions for the plan update process. The information received will be used to determine the needs of the Town and develop community direction.

**Public Participation Efforts**

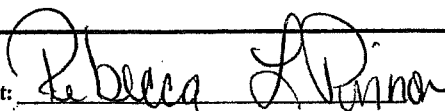
1. Interviews with Town Officials, Committee Members, Work Groups, Staff and Agency Personnel
2. Present planning process information and provide a "Comment Box" on Town of Nepeuskun web site
3. Meeting notices posted at the Town Hall and two other locations. Also on the Town web site
4. Public hearing on "Planning Commission Recommended Plan"
5. Receive and respond to written, e-mail, or web site Comment Box requests
6. Thirty days prior to the public hearing, provide written notice to interested - individuals via first class mail in compliance with s.66.1001 (4)(a) of the statutes.

**Methodology**

- Hold interviews and meetings with Town Officials, Committee Members, Work Groups, Staff, Agency Personnel and interested citizens.
- Display notices of Plan Commission meetings where in the Comprehensive Plan Update will be discussed in a manner consistent with the usual Town meeting notices.
- Hold at least one public hearing. The meeting notice shall also include the notification of parties specified in s.66.1001 (4)(a) including: (a) an operator who has applied for or obtained a nonmetallic reclamation permit; (b) a person who has registered a marketable nonmetallic mineral deposit; and (c) any other property owner or leaseholder who has an interest in property allowing extraction of nonmetallic mineral resources if the property owner requests in writing to be notified of the public hearing.
- The official notice for the public hearing(s) will be by public notice in the official newspaper with a class one notice at least 30 days preceding the hearing. In addition, the public notice shall be posted at the Town Hall, two other required locations and the town web site. These notices will include the following information: time, place and date of hearing; summary of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update; name of a Town contact who may provide additional information regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan, adoption ordinance, and information relating to where and when the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update will be passed; how a copy of the Comprehensive Plan Update may be inspected before the hearing; and how a copy of the Comprehensive Plan Update may be obtained.
- Citizens may submit comments or questions on the Comprehensive Plan Update to Rebecca Pinnow, Town Clerk, 8605 Lake Rd, Ripon, WI, 54971, via e-mail at [pinnowr@yahoo.com](mailto:pinnowr@yahoo.com) or through the Web Site Comment Box at: [www.townofnepeuskun.org](http://www.townofnepeuskun.org). The Town will respond in writing to those comments or questions if requested.

As adopted by the Town Board on

Attest:

  
4/16/18

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## **Appendix B**

# **Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns**

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## **Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns**

by  
Ken Jaworski

**Planning and Allowing for Prosperity  
A Link between Planning & Economic Development  
Wisconsin Towns Association Annual Conference  
October 9-11, 2016**

1



Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

### **Mega Forces in Motion**

- Wisconsin has a strong national brand for food quality and ethnic culture
- The “Buy Local” movement
- Agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship is alive and advancing across much of Wisconsin and Rural America
- Growing interest (especially by Millennials) to select a location to live first then look for ways to make a living
- Continued Interest for small business to be a major contributor to the work force. (Main Street vs Wall Street)

2

## Town Economies Understood How big is Wisconsin Agriculture?

- \$88.3 billion in earnings (2015). \$43 billion in dairy alone.
- #1 in cheese. #2 in raw milk
- 138 cheese plants, 14 butter plants, 14 yogurt plants, 203 plants which use at least one or more dairy products
- 70,000 active farms. Average 200 acres in size.
- If Wisconsin was a country, it would rank #3 in the world in cheese production. 26% of the US market. 27% growth since 2005. Yogurt had the largest gains.
- # 1 in goat milk and cheese production
- #1 in cranberries and #3 in potato production
- # 3 in wine production. # 1 in micro breweries
- 400,000 jobs.

3

## Why could towns or rural areas be attractive to new entrepreneurs?

- “Many shows promote this lifestyle such as:
  - “My Wisconsin Life”
  - “Around the Farm Table”
  - “Wisconsin Foodie”
  - “Discover Wisconsin”
- Plus numerous shows and features on “Create TV”



4

### **Why could towns or rural areas be attractive to new entrepreneurs?**

- Entrepreneurs are seeking unique opportunities that engage the community, promote attractive lifestyles, provide economic return and are “entrepreneurial friendly”. “Placemaking” with a rural twist.
- Research, education and “how to” made easy. Goggle, You-Tube, Webinars, Conferences.
- On-line marketing, promotions and sales
- State & Federal assistance through education, training and other economic development programs. (Ex. Farm Bill)

5

### **Why could towns or rural areas be attractive to new entrepreneurs? (Town Assets)**

- Ample amounts of land. Most undeveloped.
- “Openness” of the land. Some uses just need space, a buffer or require a land base to support the functionality of their business or operation.
- “Country Atmosphere & Experience. Hard for some businesses to be attractive and successful in urban environments.
- Structures which have a direct connection to the land or local culture. Agriculturally, this could be farmhouses, barns, silos, large sheds. Culturally, these could rural churches, town halls, school houses, historic markers older businesses (country taverns, supper clubs & country stores)

6

## Who are today's rural entrepreneurs?

- **Young Professionals.** Highly educated and trained in a variety of agronomy, business and art disciplines. Looking for and need investment capital.
- **Retiring "Baby Boomers".**
  - Looking to do something they always wanted to do.
  - Looking for a means to supplement retirement income.
  - Usually had a connection to the land in the past.
  - Have financial resources and time to invest.
  - Good mentors. Like to see provide opportunities to young workers
- **Lifestyle Seekers.**
  - Ex. Amish & Mennonite Cultures

7

## Benefits of Entrepreneurship

- Research has shown a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial activity and economic growth.
- Entrepreneurship builds on local assets both area **and individual**. Focuses on competitive advantages of the area.
- Entrepreneurship is diversified and dependent on the success of many small ventures.
- Entrepreneurs energize a community and bring forward future success and ideas. They spawn a "Can Do" attitude.

8

## Town Economies Understood

- The general understanding of the role Town's play in the economy is primarily associated with agriculture
- "Agriculture" understood as crop fields, dairy farming and farm infrastructure
- Farmland Preservation is recognized as an essential policy.
- However, the rural economy of today and future is/will be far more involved than just agriculture

9

## Broad Land Use Categories

- In the context of today's discussion, most economic opportunities can be place within five general categories:
  - Agriculture Use
  - Agricultural Related Use
  - Cultural, Recreation & General Commercial Use
  - Non-Metallic Extraction
  - Energy, Communication & Transportation

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## Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses

- Defined specifically through the revamped State of WI Farmland Preservation Program (2009). Also known as the “Working Lands Initiative”. WI Stats. Chapter 91. Good Source for definitions.
- Implemented through farmland preservation zoning and AEA’s certified by DATCP. Qualifying farmers receive tax credits.
- Key Change: Acknowledges the importance of Agriculture Related Business as part of the local agriculture economy. Removes some barriers. Creates opportunities.
- It’s “Holistic”. That sounds right!

11

## Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses Successful Examples of On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)

- **These options are endless and are only bound by the lack of creativity and innovation**
  - Dairy. (creameries, cheese, ice cream & yogurt shops).
  - Organic Vegetables & Meat (Farmer’s Markets, Greenhouse & Country Store Sales)
  - Wineries & Cider Mills
  - Fruits (Apples, cranberries, cherries, strawberries, etc.)

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses**  
**Successful Examples of**  
**On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



13

Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses**  
**Successful Examples of**  
**On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



14

Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

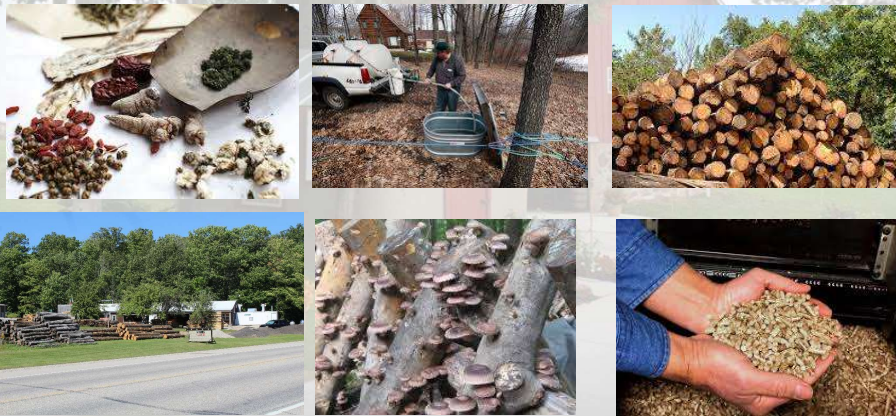
**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses  
Successful Examples of  
On Site Production, Process and Sale**

- Herbs (for tea, seasoning, potpourri)
- Forest Specialties (maple & hickory syrup, wood processing, landscape mulch, shitake mushrooms, nuts, fire wood, wood pellets)
- Aquaponics (vegetables & fish)
- Plant and Animal Oils (lavender, emu)
- Landscape & Urban Gardening Products (sod, black dirt, decorative rocks, straw, marsh hay)

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

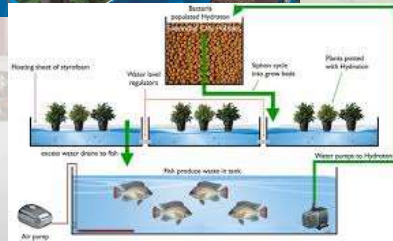
**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses  
Successful Examples of  
On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses  
Successful Examples of  
On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses  
Successful Examples of  
On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses  
Successful Examples of  
On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses  
Successful Examples of  
On Site Production, Process and Sale**

- Christmas Trees
- Cut Flowers
- Halloween Products (pumpkins, squash, gourds, stalks)
- Game Birds
- Honey
- Animal hair and wool
- Bio-fuels

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses**  
**Successful Examples of**  
**On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses**  
**Successful Examples of**  
**On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Agricultural and Agricultural Related Uses**  
**Successful Examples of**  
**On Site Production, Process and Sale (Value-Agriculture)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

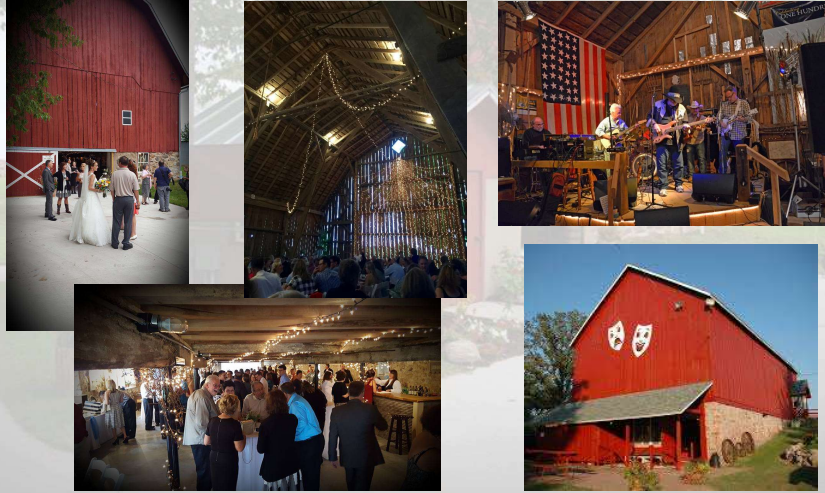
**Cultural, Recreation & Commercial Uses**  
**Successful Examples**  
**(Farm Buildings & Infrastructure Adaptive Reuse)**

- Social Engagement Venues (barn weddings, reunions, banquets, meetings, classes, special events)
- Theater & Performing Arts Center
- Gift, Novelty, Souvenir Sales
- Bed & Breakfast
- Inn and/or Youth Hostel
- Art/Photography Studios & Galleries
- Dance & Exercise Studios

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**

- Bar & Restaurant
- Storage (Boats, Cars, Collectibles)
- Service Clubs (Lions, Kiwanis, Conservation)
- Creative Wood, Metal & Pottery Works
- Flea Markets
- Building Fabrication (mini sheds, building trusses & walls)
- Equestrian Riding Schools & Therapy

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

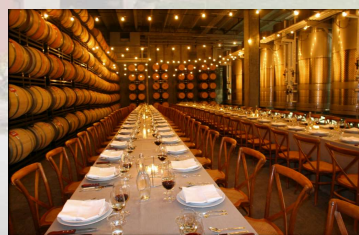
**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
(Farm Buildings & Infrastructure Adaptive Reuse)**

- Antique Mall/Shop
- Saw Mills and Lumber Sales
- Salvage Facilities
- Rental Services
- Fire Works Storage & Sales
- Landscape Business
- Fencing
- Carpentry & Cabinet Making (Ex Barn Quilts)

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Successful Examples**  
**(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**

- Animal Boarding & Breeding (including kennels)
- Dog Grooming
- Equipment Sales & Repair
- Start Up Businesses “Incubators”
- Youth Camps
- Town Parks
- Museums, Historical & Heritage Societies
- Churches

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Successful Examples**  
**(Farm Building & Infrastructure. Adaptive Reuse Examples)**

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Successful Examples *without* Adaptive Reuse**

- Country Eating and Drinking Establishments
- Mini Storage
- Private Airports & Hangers
- Paint Ball Courses
- Race Tracks
- Shooting Ranges & Courses
- Sales of Bait and Sporting Goods

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Other Successful Examples *without* Adaptive Reuse**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse**

- Well Drilling
- Construction Services (general contractors)
- Excavation Services
- Large Equipment and Truck Driving Schools
- Trucking Terminals
- Salvage Facilities
- Recycling
- Fuel Services & Terminals
- Wholesale Distributors
- Equipment Sales, Service & Rental (heavy, farm & garden)

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Other Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Other Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses  
Successful Examples  
Other Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Other Successful Examples without Adaptive Reuse**

- Drive In Theaters
- Fireworks Sales
- Petting Zoos
- Adventure Parks
- Animal Care

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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Other Successful Examples without Adaptive Reuse**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Other Successful Examples without Adaptive Reuse**



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Cultural, Recreation and Commercial Uses**  
**Other Successful Examples **without** Adaptive Reuse**



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## Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

### Code Challenges

- Reuse- Asbestos and building codes
- When agriculture transitions to entertainment. When does commercial zoning or a conditional use apply?
- Addressing multiple uses on the same parcel
- Defining Home Business, Accessory Use, Incidental Use and Principal Use



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## Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

### Planning for Rural Economic Prosperity

“To keep every cog and wheel is the first pre-caution to intelligent tinkering”: Aldo Leopold

- Identify key structural and cultural assets
- Include the “Creative Rural Economic Development & Entrepreneurial Opportunities” discussion in the context of future comprehensive plan updates at both the town and county levels)
- Survey your community on what uses are expected and supported

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## Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns



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## Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns



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Creative Economic Opportunities for Rural Towns

**Planning for Rural Economic Prosperity**

Be Entrepreneurial Friendly!

- Review code terminology. Allow opportunity for creative and innovative ideas to have a chance to succeed within your codes
- Understand that new Entrepreneurs want to be good neighbors
- “We have seen the enemy and he is us”. Look for solutions not barriers. Creativity and Innovation.
- Promote your community as “Entrepreneurial Friendly” as part of your web site and outreach efforts.

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**Creative Economic Opportunities for  
Rural Towns**

by  
Ken Jaworski

**Thank You!**

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