

Vision and Directions Volume

Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan



**Recommended by Plan Commission: November 7, 2017
(via Commission Resolution TW-2017-005)**

**Adopted by Town Board: November 7, 2017
(via Board Ordinance 2017-004, effective November
11, 2017)**

Acknowledgements

Town of Weston Board

Milton Olson, Chair
Arnie Baumann
Walter John Chilsen
Thomas Salzman
Robert Wesenick

Town Plan Commission

Milton Olson, Chair
Thomas Salzman
Randy Christiansen
Mark Hull
Renee Radcliffe
Rita Kasten
Arnie Baumann

Town Staff

Robin Huempfner, Clerk/Treasurer
Peter Erdman, Former Clerk/Treasurer
Sara Stevens, Former Clerk/Treasurer

Town of Weston Contact Info

5209 Mesker Street
Weston, WI 54476
(715) 241-8209
<http://www.townofwestonwi.com>

Village of Weston Staff

Jennifer Higgins, Director of Planning & Development
Jared Wehner, Assistant Planner
Nathan Crowe, Director of Technology Services

Planning Consultants

MDRoffers Consulting LLC
(608) 770-0338
www.mdoffers.com

Osterberg Planning LLC
(715) 252-9459
www.osterbergplanning.com



Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	4
Chapter 2: Community Vision	5
2.1. Purpose.....	6
2.2. Initiatives.....	6
Map 2-1: Regional Context.....	7
Chapter 3: Land Use	10
3.1. Objectives	11
3.2. Policies.....	11
Map 3-1: Future Land Use	12
3.3. Initiatives.....	13
Figure 3-1: Town of Weston Future Land Use Designations and Policies	14
Chapter 4: Economic Development.....	16
4.1. Objectives	17
4.2. Policies.....	17
4.3. Initiatives.....	18
Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods.....	20
5.1. Objectives	21
5.2. Policies.....	21
5.3. Initiatives.....	22
Chapter 6: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources	25
6.1. Objectives	26
6.2. Policies.....	26
6.3. Initiatives.....	27
Chapter 7: Transportation	30
7.1. Objectives	31
7.2. Policies.....	31
7.3. Initiatives.....	32
Chapter 8: Community Facilities and Utilities.....	35
8.1. Objectives	36
8.2. Policies.....	36
8.3. Initiatives.....	37
Figure 8-1: Identification and Timetable for Community Facilities and Utilities Projects.....	38
Chapter 9: Broadband Technology.....	42
9.1. Purpose.....	43
9.2. Objectives	43
9.3. Policies.....	43



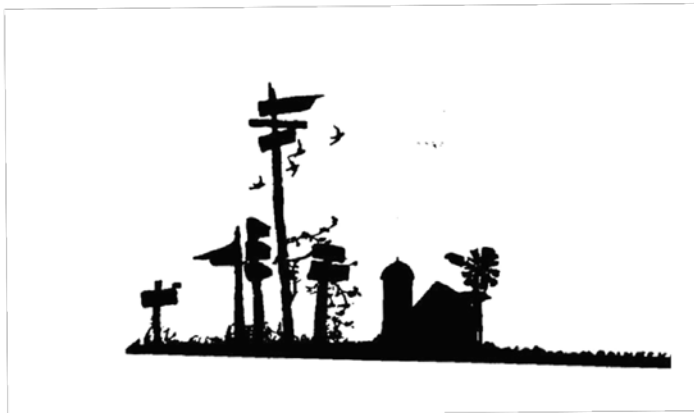
9.4. Initiatives	45
Chapter 10: Intergovernmental Cooperation	53
10.1. Objectives.....	54
10.2. Policies	54
10.3. Initiatives	55
Chapter 11: Implementation.....	58
11.1. Purpose.....	59
11.2. Adopt the Plan.....	59
11.3. Share and Institutionalize the Town’s Plan.....	59
11.4. Implement Plan Initiatives	59
Figure 11-1: Prioritization of Initiatives from Volume 2 of Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan	60
11.5. Evaluate Consistency Between the Plan and Decision Making.....	61
11.6. Amend and Update the Plan as Necessary	62



Chapter 1: Introduction

- Explain the purpose of the Town's Comprehensive Plan
- Describe the two-volume structure of the Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Weston's Comprehensive Plan guides the future growth and preservation of the Town over the next 10 to 20 years. This volume of the Comprehensive Plan provides the Town's vision and directions for land use, natural area and farmland preservation, housing development, transportation and community facilities, intergovernmental relations, and other factors that together form the Town's future.



This Comprehensive Plan is a complete update and replacement of the Town's 2006 Plan. The Town's updated Plan is divided into two volumes.

Volume 1: Conditions and Issues includes descriptions of current conditions and trends affecting the Town, and projects population and future land use demand. Volume 1 does not include any policy guidance. It does include Comprehensive Plan background information required under Wisconsin law.

Volume 2: Vision and Directions, the volume you are reading, contains the Town's vision and the comprehensive plan chapters specified under Wisconsin law. Most chapters include a goal (on each cover page), objectives, policies, and initiatives to guide the future enhancement, development and preservation of the Town. Goals are broad statements that express general public priorities about how the Town will approach each topic of the Comprehensive Plan. Objectives are more specific than goals, and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. Policies may be understood as day-to-day rules to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Initiatives are specific, proactive projects or efforts that will, once implemented, achieve the vision, goals, and objectives in this volume.



Chapter 2: Community Vision

- Explore the Town of Weston’s assets and opportunities
- Establish a framework for the chapters and initiatives that follow

Vision Statement

The Town of Weston will guide the growth and development of the Town in such a way as to preserve its rural, natural, and agricultural character, while maintaining property owner rights, property values, and an affordable Town tax rate.

Community Vision Initiatives



Initiative <small>(Follow links for further details)</small>	Description	Funding	Responsibility
<u>Capitalize on Weston’s Assets and Opportunities</u>	To be successful as a rural community, the Town of Weston needs to recognize and protect the Town’s unique resources. Town of Weston residents value the rural and agricultural character of the Town.	These two initiatives will be carried out through the more detailed initiatives described in subsequent chapters of this volume, each with its own particular funding need and source.	In conjunction with the Town’s Plan Commission, the The Town Board will articulate, communicate, and implement the general initiatives laid out in this Community Vision chapter.
<u>Advance a Compelling Vision for the Town’s Future</u>	The Town’s vision statement is included in the upper right corner of this cover page. This vision is coupled with broad goals, which form the basis for remaining chapters of this volume and will help evaluate the community’s future performance against the Comprehensive Plan.		



2.1. Purpose

To be successful, the Town's Comprehensive Plan must have a point. Broadly speaking, that point should focus on providing what Weston residents value—what attracts them to this community and what will compel them to stay and enjoy their lives here.

Through this chapter, the Town explores its future opportunities and puts forth a clear and compelling vision for its future. This chapter is a framework for future decision making and sets the context for the rest of Volume 2 of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. It is intentionally broad, leaving the other chapters to describe initiatives and detailed policies to carry out the vision in this chapter. The final chapter, Implementation, summarizes and prioritizes these initiatives.

This Community Vision chapter meets the "Issues and Opportunities" element requirement within Wisconsin Statutes, once combined with information in the accompanying Conditions and Issues volume of the Comprehensive Plan. The Conditions and Issues volume includes an examination of background data and trends.

2.2. Initiatives

The following pages further describe the broad, vision-based initiatives included on the cover page of this Chapter.

2.2.1. Capitalize on Weston's Assets and Opportunities

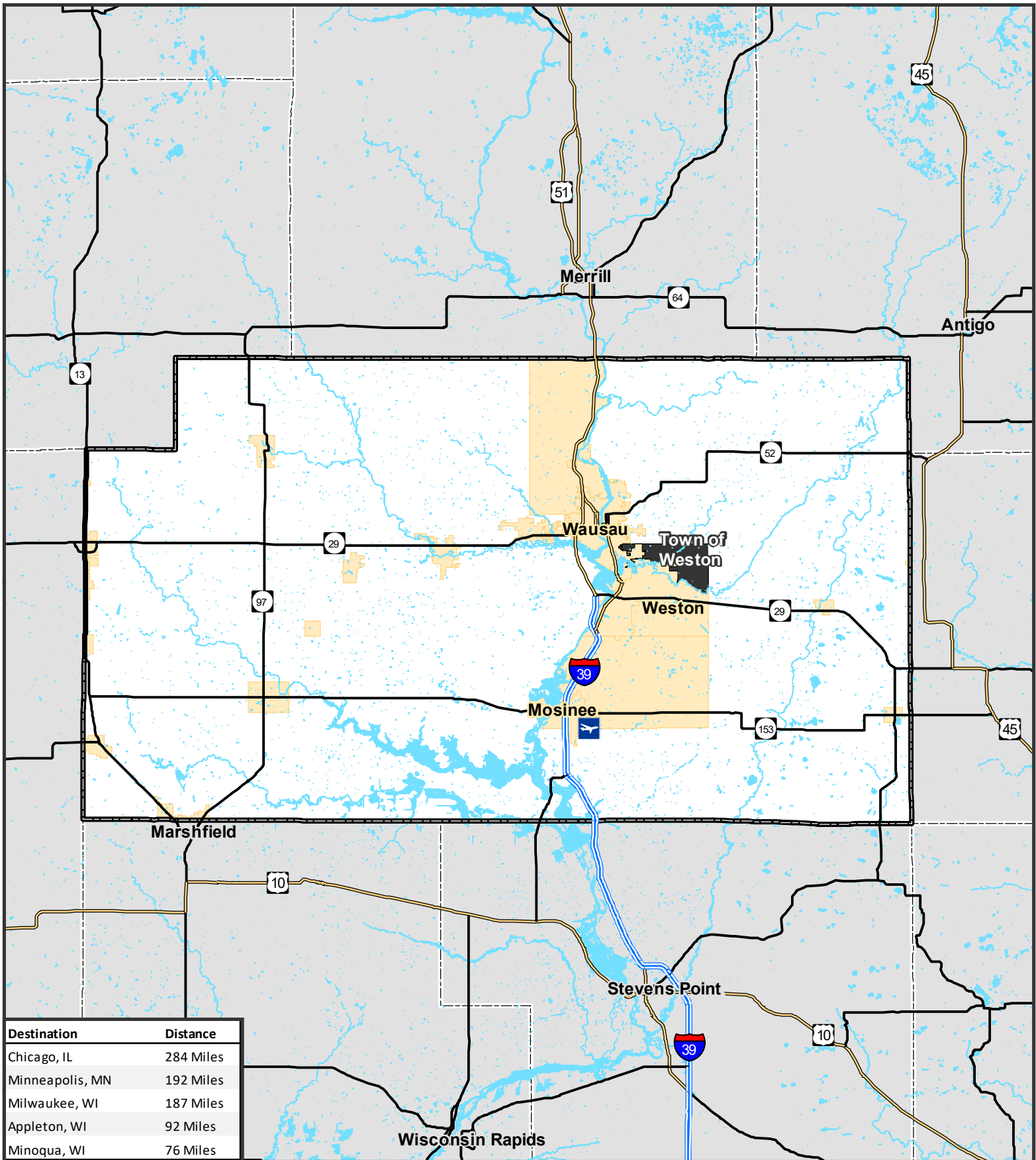
Identifying the Town's current assets and future opportunities is important to establishing a bold yet realistic vision and Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Weston's context in the broader central Wisconsin region is represented in Map 2-1. Weston is connected to the region and the Midwest through an extensive, modern freeway network. Its position relative to growing communities in Marathon County presents opportunities for collaboration, as well as challenges including decreasing Town land base due to annexation.

Most of the more developed areas of the Town of Weston were incorporated as the Village of Weston in 1996—dramatically affecting the face of Weston. As a result, the Town's population decreased by over 95 percent between 1990 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, though, the Town's population had rebounded by almost 20 percent to reach 639 residents.

The Town of Weston values its rural residential landscape and agricultural character, which is in contrast to the more heavily developed areas of the adjacent Village of Weston and City of Wausau.





Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan

2-1





Regional Context








Map Date: 11/10/2017
Adoption Date: 11/11/2017
Created by Village of Weston
Tech. Services Department

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Legend

US Highway System
 Interstate
 US Highway
 State Highway
 Surface Water

 Town of Weston
 Incorporated Boundaries
 Marathon County
 County Boundary
 Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA)

Weston's community assets include its rural character, moderate taxes, D.C. Everest schools, nearby healthcare, accessible location in central Wisconsin, open space, and natural and recreational amenities.

In a 2013 community survey, Town of Weston respondents indicated that they lived in the Town of Weston because they enjoyed the rural atmosphere and did not desire to see additional commercial development within the Town. This result affirmed the vision statement contained within the Town's 1998 and 2005 plans, which was: "The purpose of land use planning in the Town of Weston is to guide the growth and development of the township in such a way as to preserve the rural character of the township while balancing the rights of individual property owners with the town's need to protect property values community-wide and keep the cost of government as low as possible." The vision statement on the cover page of this Chapter 2 largely carries forward this older vision statement.



St. Clare's Hospital at the Weston Regional Medical Center, and other health care facilities are among the Weston area's key assets

Building on this vision, the Town of Weston will work to maintain the Town's rural character. This will be accomplished by limiting new development in Town's more scenic areas, discouraging higher density rural residential and commercial development, not placing burdening existing agricultural operations through conflicting land uses and road usage, and protecting natural resources that add value for residents. The Town will also continue to provide a quality rural living environment.

2.2.2. Advance a Compelling Vision for the Town's Future

The upper right hand corner of the cover page of this chapter includes the Town's vision statement, which may be understood as:

- A presentation of how the Town wishes to look, feel, and be perceived.
- An inspirational view of the Town and its future.
- A platform for the Town to take advantage of its assets and opportunities.
- A broad framework around which to build more detailed initiatives, including those in this Comprehensive Plan.

The vision statement is elaborated through a set of goals, included in Figure 2-1 and guiding the content of the remaining chapters in Volume 2.



Figure 2-1: Town of Weston Goals (by Chapter Focus)

Chapter (click on link to go to chapter)	Goal
<u>3: Land Use</u>	The Town of Weston will continue to be a desirable place for rural living and open space activities. The Town will plan for new land development and preservation in a manner that maximizes use of existing infrastructure and land base, protects the environment, honors the Town's rural and agricultural heritage, and preserves and enhances the quality of life for its residents.
<u>4: Economic Development</u>	The Town of Weston will continue to be an agricultural and rural residential community. The Town supports limited economic development consistent with this character, with more intensive economic development directed to the Village of Weston (also within the D.C. Everest School District).
<u>5: Housing and Neighborhoods</u>	The Town of Weston will accommodate new housing at low densities in a manner that honors the Town's rural character, guiding more intensive housing and neighborhood development to nearby villages and cities.
<u>6: Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resources</u>	The Town of Weston supports preservation of farmland and farming as an occupation, the Sandy Creek and the Eau Claire River corridors, other natural areas and habitat, and the Town's rural and scenic heritage.
<u>7: Transportation</u>	The Town of Weston will work with other units of government to develop and maintain a safe, efficient, and interconnected road and trail network that is consistent with the Town of Weston's rural character and serves local residents.
<u>8: Community Facilities and Utilities</u>	The Town of Weston will strive to meet resident service expectations by providing public services and facilities that are appropriate for the Town's rural character and maintain reasonable rates, fees, and taxes.
<u>9: Broadband Technology</u>	The Town of Weston will work with the Village of Weston, area organizations and utility providers to develop a high quality affordable broadband network within the Town.
<u>10: Intergovernmental Cooperation</u>	Working with other governments, districts, and agencies, the Town of Weston will enhance intergovernmental relationships to avoid conflicts, achieve common goals, share resources, educate residents, improve services, increase efficiency, and reduce costs.
<u>11: Implementation</u>	The Town of Weston intends to share and explain this Plan to the community, consider strategic amendments, and track progress and completion of priority initiatives.



Chapter 3: Land Use

- Illustrate and describe the Town’s future land use goal (to right)
- Provide guidelines for the siting, density, and design of future land development

Land Use Goal

The Town of Weston will continue to be a desirable place for rural living and open space activities. The Town will plan for new land development and preservation in a manner that maximizes use of existing infrastructure and land base, protects the environment, honors the Town’s rural and agricultural heritage, and preserves and enhances the quality of life for its residents.



Land Use Initiatives

Initiative (Follow links for further details)	Description	Funding	Responsibility
<u>Use the Future Land Use Map to Guide Growth and Development</u>	The Town’s Future Land Use map (Map 3-1) represents the desired land use future of the Town through the year 2035. This map and policies for each future land use designation shown on this map will guide Town decisions on rezonings, plat and CSM approvals, intergovernmental agreements, and other land use decisions.	Town’s general fund	Town Board, Plan Commission, and Extraterritorial Zoning Committee, with contracted assistance for services from the Village of Weston.
<u>Maintain the Rural Character of the Town</u>	The Town of Weston will minimize and appropriately guide new rural residential development, and work with the Village on logical future urban expansion.	Town’s general fund	Town Board, Plan Commission, and Extraterritorial Zoning Committee, with contracted assistance for services from the Village of Weston.



3.1. Objectives

1. Establish a land use pattern that is efficient and enhances the Town's image as a rural and agricultural community.
2. Collaborate with the Village of Weston on implementation of the Town's land use plan.

3.2. Policies

1. Use this chapter as a basis for Town and extraterritorial zoning maps and ordinances, rezonings and conditional use permits, subdivision plats and CSMs, and intergovernmental agreements.
2. Ensure consistency between this Comprehensive Plan and zoning and subdivision ordinances, rezonings, and other land use decisions.
3. Ensure the Future Land Use Map and subsequent land use decisions preserve the rural natural, and agricultural character of the Town of Weston.
4. Interconnect areas of different development, including via road and open space linkages throughout the community.
5. Encourage the careful mixing, transitioning, and buffering between different land uses to maximize benefits and minimize conflicts associated with locating different uses and activities in proximity.
6. Utilize standards in this Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance to guide the quality of land development.
7. Collaborate with adjacent communities, Marathon County, and the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission on complementary land use patterns, while maintaining a distinct sense of place for the Town of Weston.
8. Continue to work in cooperation with the Village of Weston on land use and residential expansion, as envisioned on the Future Land Use map (Map 3-1).
9. Work with the D.C. Everest Area School District to coordinate residential growth with future school facility needs.



Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan

3-1

Future Land Use



Map Date: 11/10/2017

Adoption Date 11/11/2017

Created by the Village of Weston
Tech. Services Department

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Legend

Future Land Use Designations

- Single Family Residential - Unsewered
- Agriculture and Rural
- Transition
- Environmental Corridor
- Right-of-Way
- Surface Water

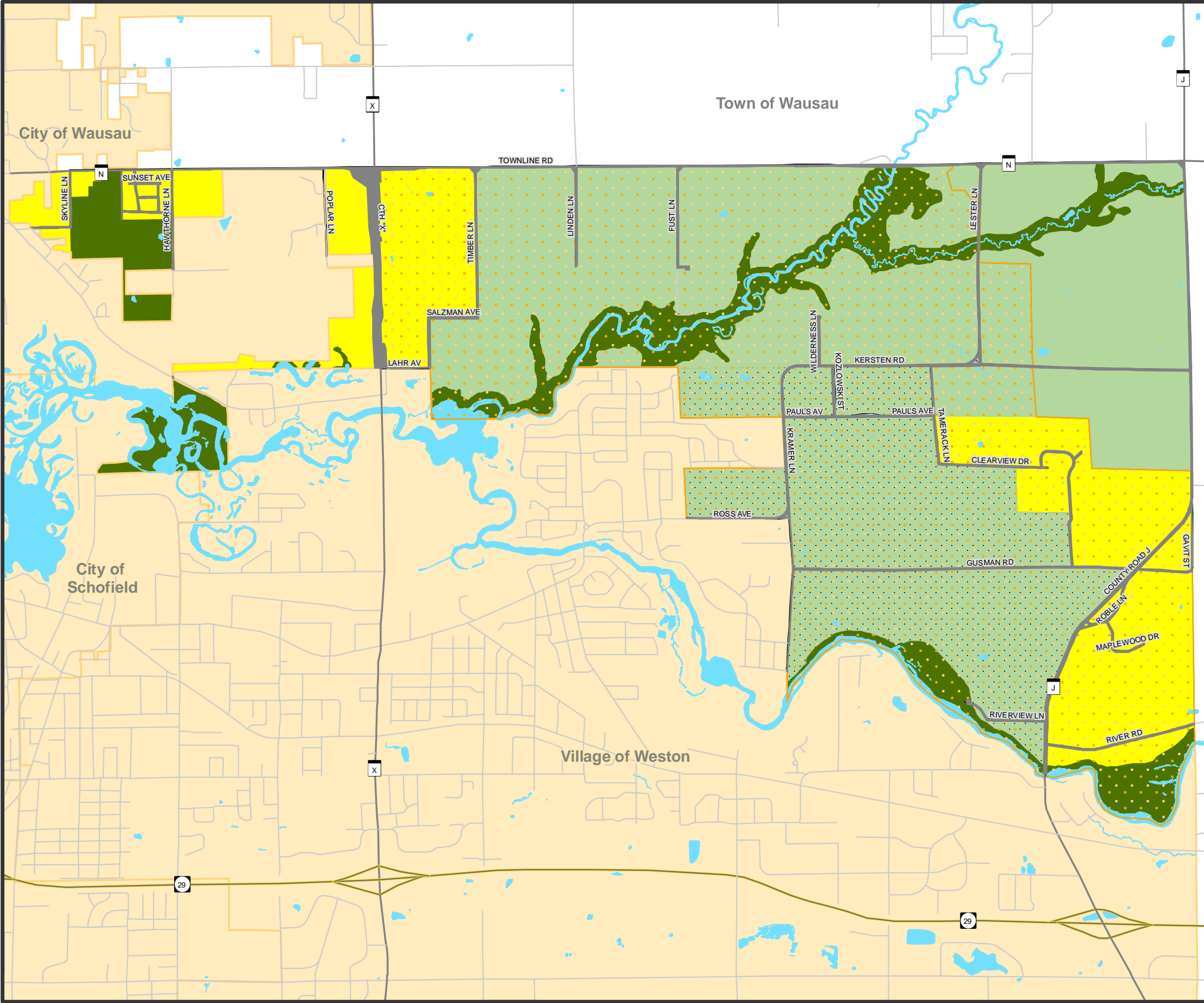
Municipal Features

- Town of Weston (2017)
- City/Village Boundaries (2017)
- Village of Weston Extraterritorial Zoning Boundary
- Other Town Boundaries (2017)

Transportation

- Interstate Hwy
- US Hwy
- State Hwy
- County Hwy
- Local Road

Note: The designations on this map are the town's general recommendation for future land use. Actual boundaries between different land uses and the associated zoning districts may vary from the representation on this map. Future land uses shown on this map may not be immediately appropriate for associated development approvals. See the Land Use chapter of the Visions and Directions volume for more detail.



3.3. Initiatives

The following pages describe the initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter.

3.3.1. Use the Future Land Use Map to Guide Growth and Development

Map 3-1: Future Land Use outlines the Town of Weston's desired future land use pattern. This map and associated policies will be a basis for land development decisions. These include annexations, rezonings, conditional use permits, subdivision, redevelopment decisions, and utility service areas and extensions. Village of Weston plans will also influence such decisions.

The planning horizon for this Future Land Use map is about 20 years (i.e., through 2037). This doesn't mean that all areas identified for development on Map 3-1 will be developed by 2037. In fact, the Future Land Use map was crafted to designate more than enough land for development than will be needed through 2037.

The writing of this Plan occurred after an update of the Town of Weston and Village of Weston zoning ordinances and associated zoning maps, which affect the entire Town. There are similarities between the Future Land Use map and the Town and extraterritorial zoning maps. However, they are not the same for a couple of reasons. First, there are intentionally more zoning districts than future land use designations used on Map 3-1. Second, the zoning map identifies the most appropriate uses of land at the time that map is viewed, while Map 3-1 shows the desired land use pattern through 2037. Not every area shown for land use change on Map 3-1 is immediately appropriate for such change, so current zoning is usually different than desired future use in such areas.

Following adoption of this Plan, property owners will be the ones to initiate change in existing land uses and zoning to implement the recommendations shown on Map 3-1 and described in this Chapter. Exceptions may occur where the Town observes a significant discrepancy between the desired future land use pattern shown on the map and the parcel's current zoning. Existing uses, however, may remain despite their status on the Future Land Use map. Neither Map 3-1 nor the Comprehensive Plan as a whole compels property owners to change the current use of their land, unless otherwise required by law. Similarly, the Town is not compelled to immediately approve development proposals to coincide with the 20-year vision on the Future Land Use map.

The Future Land Use map contains different land use designations to illustrate its land use vision. These are represented by different colored areas on Map 3-1. Each designation has a unique description, set of typical implementing zoning districts, recommended lot size and/or density range, and specific development policies. On the following page is a matrix providing this information, Figure 3-1: Town of Weston Future Land Use Designations and Policies.

How was the Future Land Use map prepared?

The Future Land Use map (Map 3-1) is based on the following factors:

- A similar map in the Town's 2006 Comprehensive Plan.
- Existing land use and zoning patterns.
- Location and capacity of existing and planned roads and utility service areas.
- Natural areas and environmental constraints.
- Future land demand projections for the Town, included in the Conditions and Issues volume.
- The Town's vision for future growth and change, described in Chapter 2: Community Vision
- Plans and intergovernmental arrangements with nearby cities, villages, and towns, especially the Village of Weston.



Figure 3-1: Town of Weston Future Land Use Designations and Policies

Future Land Use Designation (shown on Map 3-1)	General Description of Land Uses Allowed	Typical Implementing Zoning Districts	Lot Size and/or Density Range	Development Policies (see also Town zoning, subdivision, stormwater management, official map, and other ordinances)
Single Family Residential—Unsewered	Single family residences, home occupations, small-scale institutional, recreational, and agricultural uses, all served by private waste treatment (septic) systems.	RR-2 and RR-5 Rural Residential for new subdivisions (smaller-lot residential zoning districts may be used for older subdivisions, particularly near the northwest corner of the Town)	Minimum lot sizes of 2 acres (RR-2) or 5 acres (RR-5) for new subdivisions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design all lots with public road frontage, and to allow the construction of driveways suitable in for emergency vehicle access, in accordance with the Town’s driveway ordinance. 2. Minimize removal of mature trees and shoreline vegetation, and maintain waterway access. 3. Provide a vegetative buffer along highways, emphasizing diverse native vegetation. 4. Promote interconnection in road and trail networks within and among neighborhoods.
Agriculture and Rural	Agricultural, forested, and other open lands. Also includes and is intended to accommodate farmsteads, limited non-farm housing in accordance with associated zoning policies, associated home occupations and family businesses, and other uses allowed in implementing zoning districts.	AR Agriculture and Residential	Within AR district, minimum lot size of 20 acres, or minimum lot size of 2 acres if density of one home per every 20 acres is maintained.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support continued farming and forestry where in accordance with property owner and Town wishes. 2. Support ag research operations, seed production operations, operations that process farm products grown mainly on-site and where farming remains the primary activity, and agricultural entertainment. 3. Support density-based approach for limited residential development. See zoning ordinance. 4. Assure that rural uses do not impede future urban development or road or utility extensions.
Transition	Same as “Agriculture and Rural,” except that “Transition” areas may be be appropriate for future urban development following extension of sewer, water, road, and other urban infrastructure and services.	AR Agriculture and Residential, prior to designation for more intensive development per the policies to the right. After such designation, a variety of residential and other zoning districts available within the Village of Weston’s zoning ordinance (extraterritorial jurisdiction) may be mapped.	Within AR district, minimum lot size of 20 acres, or minimum lot size of 2 acres if density of one home per every 20 acres is maintained. Density and lot sizes will vary once land is designated for more intensive development per the policies to the right.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In advance of a proposal for urban (public sewer and water) development in the “Transition” area, follow policies applicable to the “Agriculture and Rural” future land use designation. 2. Consider more intensive developments in the “Transition” area, once these standards are met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The local government has received a property owner request for more intensive development. o The property owner or developer has submitted a conceptual development plan. o There is a plan for extension of public utilities, which is feasible, cost-effective, and environmentally sound. o The proposed development is justified by community growth forecasts. o The proposed development will not have a substantial adverse effect upon adjacent property, the planned character of the area, or the environment.
Environmental Corridor	Environmentally sensitive lands, natural resources, and wildlife habitat intended for long-term preservation. More particularly, includes FEMA 1% regional (100-year) floodplains, WisDNR mapped wetlands, and 75 foot shoreland setback areas from navigable waterways, where state and federal regulations significantly limit development.	A variety of “base” zoning districts, plus floodplain, shoreland-wetland, and shoreland overlay zoning districts	No new building development typically allowed, except for recreational and/or education structures providing citizen access to environmental corridors for the purpose of facilitating public appreciation of such corridors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow preexisting uses plus cropping, grazing, and passive recreational activities like trails. 2. Preserve, protect, and enhance open spaces and conservancy areas along waterways. 3. Where development is proposed near mapped Environmental Corridors, determine the exact boundaries of the Environmental Corridor based on the features that define those areas. Remap these areas away from Environmental Corridor to allow more intensive uses if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o more detailed information or studies reveal that the characteristic(s) that resulted in their designation as an Environmental Corridor is not actually present, o approvals from appropriate agencies are granted to alter land so that the characteristic that resulted in its designation will not exist, and/or o a mapping error is confirmed.



3.3.2. Maintain the Rural Character of the Town

Town of Weston residents enjoy and appreciate the rural character and agricultural feel of the Town. The Town of Weston will carefully consider the placement of new development and try to minimize the impact of new development on existing agricultural and rural residential land uses.

The vast majority of new development is anticipated to occur within the Village of Weston's extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction. The Town of Weston will work with the Village to help ensure the orderly and efficient development of this area, while respecting the rural ambiance of the surroundings and the remaining, less-developed areas of Town.

Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning law requires that communities identify "Smart Growth Areas" in their comprehensive plans. Smart Growth Areas are defined as "areas that will enable the development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and municipal, State, and utility services, where practical, or that will encourage efficient development patterns that are contiguous to existing development and at densities which will have relatively low municipal, State governmental, and utility costs."

Due to its rural nature and limited developed area, the Town of Weston does not have any areas appropriate for redevelopment, however, by directing the vast majority of new non-residential and higher density residential development to the Village of Weston, the Town is encouraging the efficient use of existing infrastructure and a more compact development pattern.



Chapter 4: Economic Development

- Outline a strategy for economic growth
- Provide a framework to enhance the Weston area business climate and retain and expand businesses and jobs

Economic Development Goal

The Town of Weston will continue to be an agricultural and rural residential community. The Town supports limited economic development consistent with this character, with more intensive economic development directed to the Village of Weston (which is also within the D.C. Everest School District).



Economic Development Initiatives

Initiative <small>(Follow links for further details)</small>	Description	Funding	Responsibility
<u>Support Economic Development Initiatives in the Greater Weston Area</u>	The Town of Weston will support economic development efforts in greater Weston area. Given the close proximity of “the two Westons,” it is efficient and logical for the two communities to collaborate on economic development.	Town official volunteer efforts; Town general fund	Town Board
<u>Grow the Local Agricultural Economy</u>	The Town of Weston will encourage and support agriculture and agriculture related businesses in the Town.	Town official volunteer efforts; Town general fund	Town Board, with assistance from the Town Plan Commission and Marathon County



4.1. Objectives

1. Help existing Weston-area businesses expand employment and increase sales.
2. Limited non-farm commercial development within the Town.
3. Maintain and support the agricultural economy.
4. Collaborate with the Village of Weston on economic development activities.

4.2. Policies

1. Utilize the zoning ordinance to streamline development approval processes and promote high-quality economic growth.
2. Collaborate with the Village of Weston and regional business development agencies to advance economic development, retain existing businesses and help them succeed and grow, and provide business services and networking.
3. Continue to rely on neighboring municipalities for medical, employment, retail, and educational opportunities.
4. Utilize Chapter 3: Land Use to geographically guide and adequately plan for non-residential development.
5. Continue to support infrastructure improvements that drive economic activity, such as improvements to the utility, highway, and broadband networks.
6. Recognize and promote agriculture in the Town of Weston by ensuring Town policies, programs and ordinances do not overly burden Town farmers, and provide opportunities for agriculture-based economic development.



4.3. Initiatives

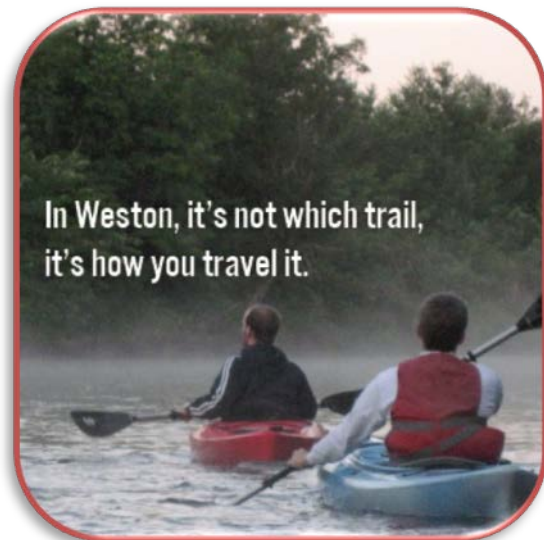
The following pages further describe the initiatives summarized on the cover page.

4.3.1. Support Economic Development Initiatives in the Greater Weston Area

With limited commercial and industrial development, the economy of the Town of Weston relies heavily on the economic health of neighboring incorporated areas. The Town of Weston will support and assist with economic development activities in the greater Wausau/Weston area.

The Town of Weston will support the following Village of Weston priority economic development initiatives:

- **Attract Retailers in Targeted Sectors.** The Village of Weston intends to actively promote and encourage growth in targeted business sectors, in order to capitalize on its particular strengths or assets and/or fill perceived community needs. Weston's residents have consistently requested an increase in retail and dining opportunities in the Village.
- **Help Expand and Attract Industries in Targeted Sectors.** The Village of Weston seeks to expand its tax and job base through new and expanded businesses in key industry sectors, including expansion of existing healthcare operations and related industries, additional senior housing opportunities, and additional business related to prominent driver industries in the greater Wausau metropolitan area (paper and wood products, machinery, dairy products, and fabricated metals).
- **The "It's Right Here" Marketing Effort.** The Village of Weston has created a new brand identity, marketing messages and materials to use to attract new businesses and residents. The rebranding has included a new logo and tag line: It's Right Here. These efforts will help marketing targets know that whatever they may be looking for—from dining opportunities, to quality schools, to recreational amenities, to steady industries—is right here in the Village of Weston.



4.3.2. Grow the Local Agricultural Economy

The Town encourages farmers to expand the scopes of their operations and develop markets for their agricultural products. Producing, processing, and marketing farm products to local, Wausau-area, and Midwest metro consumers will bring more income to Weston area farm families. It could also mean more home-based businesses, value-added on-site processing, organic food production, agricultural tourism, and direct marketing.

Direct marketing to consumers adds value to locally produced agricultural products. This approach will become increasingly viable for the Weston area as local and regional population and tourism increases. The Weston communities are well-positioned to take advantage of the local food



movement as an economic, farmland preservation, and community health initiative. Some direct marketing techniques that may be considered or expanded include:

- **Farmers' markets.** These provide an outlet for locally-produced food, contribute to the local economy, and enhance a sense of place and downtown activity. With the popularity of the Wausau and Weston farmers' markets nearby, the continuing trend for fresh produce suggests that even more farm market locations could be supported in the area. Markets could be diversified through programming and events that attract additional consumers.
- **Community-supported agriculture (CSA).** CSA programs are defined by farmers selling shares of their products to consumers in advance of the growing season. This cooperation can provide healthful food choices that support local farms, while relieving some of the burdens and uncertainties of conventional marketing.
- **Special on-farm events.** Such activities can enhance the bottom line for farmers and provide educational and recreational opportunities for visitors. Events like "Summer Saturday Breakfasts" and pick-your-own events generate enthusiasm for local products and can even reduce labor costs.
- **Better links to local restaurants and grocery stores.** Groceries and restaurants are finding new marketing opportunities by promoting locally grown produce and meats on their menus and in their stores. Forward-thinking market buyers can provide the freshest food products to their customers, support local farms, ensure an increasingly wary public of the quality of its food products, and use this approach as a marketing strategy to attract local residents and visitors. Weston would also benefit from one or more restaurants specializing in locally-grown food.
- **More local foods to schools and hospitals.** Institutions purchase large quantities of food and are focused on wellness. This seems to be a particular opportunity for Weston area, with several hospitals and schools within a short drive. Institutions purchase directly from local producers or grower cooperatives for seasonally-available produce and animal products. Eating fresh, in-season produce could be promoted even more widely for the health of students, elderly, and hospital patients.



An example of a grocery store that supplies and markets local foods.



Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods

- Guide development of new housing and maintenance of existing housing
- Provide a collaborative framework for neighborhood planning with the Village in growth areas

Housing and Neighborhoods Goal

The Town of Weston will accommodate new housing at low densities in a manner that honors the Town’s rural character, guiding more intensive housing and neighborhood development to nearby villages and cities.



Housing and Neighborhood Initiatives

Initiative <small>(Follow links for further details)</small>	Description	Funding	Responsibility
<u>Thoughtfully Site New Residential Development</u>	The Town will encourage new homes to be placed in a manner that reflects the rural landscape and allows for cost effective service delivery, consistent with Town and extraterritorial zoning standards.	General fund; partnerships with landowners	Town Board, with assistance from the Village of Weston Planning & Development Department
<u>Work with the Village of Weston to Develop Neighborhood Plans for Growth Areas</u>	Neighborhood development plans are the recommended bridge between the policies and land use recommendations in this and the Village’s plans and subdivision platting. The Town promotes neighborhood development planning in planned “Transition” areas on Map 3-1 to create neighborhoods that are functional and attractive, and that connect residents to each other and the community.	Village of Weston; partnerships with large land owners and developers	Extraterritorial Zoning Committee, Village Planning & Development Department
<u>Encourage High Quality Property Maintenance</u>	The Town of Weston will work to ensure high quality property maintenance through relationships with property owners and enforcement of local ordinances.	General fund; partnerships with landowners	Town Board, Plan Commission, ETZ Committee, Village Planning & Development, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer



5.1. Objectives

Promote a housing mix that:

- a. Reflects the Town's desire to continue to be a rural community.
- b. Emphasizes owner-occupancy and single-family housing, including for moderate income residents.
- c. Achieves a lasting and high quality housing base.
- d. Does not overburden the Town and D.C. Everest Area School District to provide services and facilities.

5.2. Policies

1. Encourage the limited, density-based lot development option described within Town and extraterritorial zoning ordinances.
2. Encourage home siting where there is existing roads and other infrastructure, conflicts with and unnecessary conversion of agricultural lands is minimized, where scenic viewsheds and natural areas are maintained, and where property or environmental damage will not result.
3. Direct intensive new housing and neighborhood development to areas in close proximity to existing development, including the northwest corner of the Town near the Home Sweet Home subdivision and to nearby incorporated areas, particularly the Village of Weston.
4. Emphasize home and property maintenance, supporting efforts to help maintain and rehabilitate the Town's existing housing stock.



5.3. Initiatives

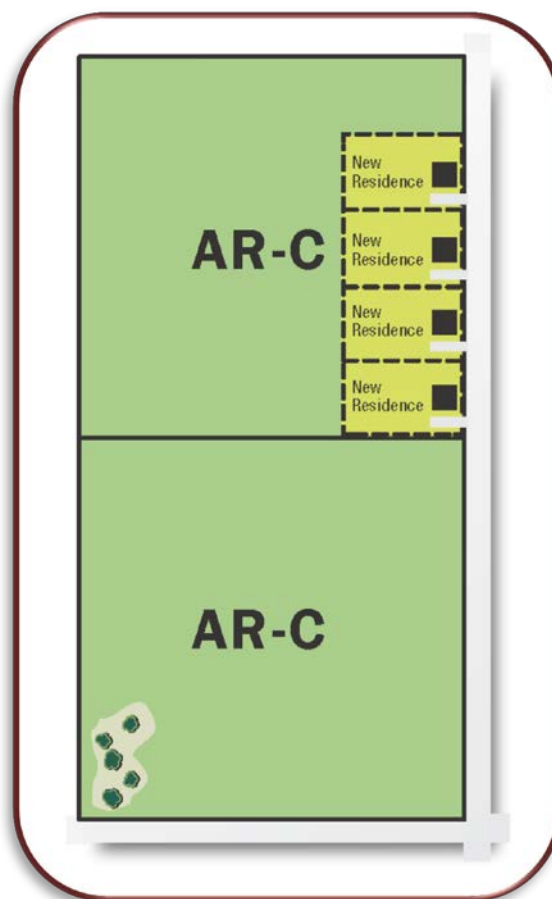
The following pages describe the initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter.

5.3.1. Thoughtfully Site New Residential Development

The Town is expected to experience moderate residential development pressure. In a 2013 Town survey, the majority of resident respondents indicated an appreciation for the Town's rural country atmosphere, and that farmland preservation was important to them.

By thoughtfully siting new residential development, the Town of Weston can balance residents' desires to preserve farmland and the Town's rural atmosphere with the need for additional residential development. The Town will promote the following design guidelines to limit the visual and environmental impact of new development:

- Preserve open space, farmland, woodland, and natural features that define, sustain, and connect rural neighborhoods and enhance rural character.
- Site homes behind trees, hills, ridges and other natural features. Where such features are absent, the use of berms with natural plantings can also be effective. Another method would be to discourage the development of highly-visible "frontage lots" along roadways, as these have the greatest visual and traffic impacts. It should be noted, however, that while minimizing the visual impact of development, it is also critical to maintain safe fire access and appropriate road and driveway markings to ensure fast emergency response.
- Minimize the impact of residential development through the clustering of lots in a portion of the development site. Recent upgrades to Town of Weston and extraterritorial zoning ordinances allows for a density based, rather than minimum lot size, based development in areas zoned Agricultural Residential (i.e., most of the Town). Smaller lots that are "clustered" in buildable portions of a property allow for greater protection of natural features and open space in other portions of the land.

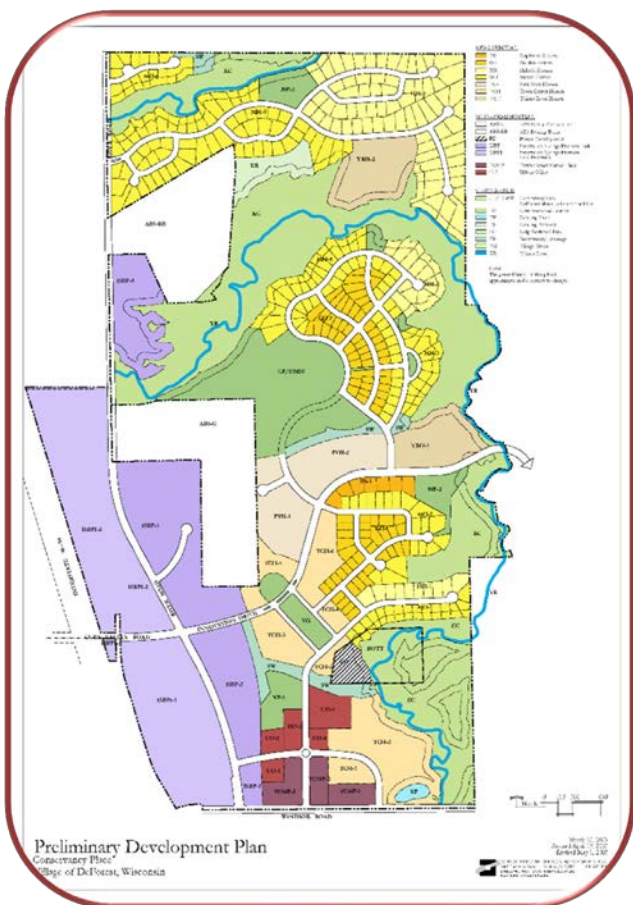


Example of a density based development allowed in the Agriculture and Residential zoning district. Smaller clustered lots reduce the impact of new development on the rural landscape. The balance of the land is then preserved. See the zoning ordinances for more detail.



5.3.2. Work with the Village of Weston to Develop Neighborhood Plans for Growth Areas

Map 3-1 shows an area east of the Village of Weston as a “Transition” area. This area is part, but not all, of an area the Village has identified for future neighborhood development. The Town supports the will of property owners in this area to either remain in the Town, and keep their lands open to develop to rural density standards described in this chapter and under Agricultural Residential zoning, or develop more intensively with sewer and water services. If there is sufficient interest in the latter, the Village’s plan and good practice advises preparation of a neighborhood development plan in advance of development. The Town desires participation in any such effort.



Example of a neighborhood development plan map from another community.

What are the recommended contents of a neighborhood development plan?

- An inventory and analysis, including an investigation of opportunities given the neighborhood’s position in Weston and the greater Wausau Area.
- A development plan map and text including residential, commercial, and institutional use areas (see example to left).
- Locations for single-family housing consistent with the Village of Weston’s housing mix policy, and techniques to validate and enhance the market for single-family housing.
- Recommended areas and themes for parks, environmental corridors, other natural areas, and stormwater management.
- A layout for interconnected arterial, collector, and other important future streets.
- Bicycle/pedestrian trails and routes, including connections to adjacent neighborhoods and regional trails and routes.
- Housing and neighborhood design concepts for an attractive, functional place integrated within the larger community.
- Recommendations for public utility system and stormwater management improvements, such as conveyance routes and logical regional basin locations.
- An implementation strategy with zoning and subdivision approaches, capital improvement programming, and grants.



A neighborhood development plan will help ensure that the new subdivisions within the area serve a variety of functions, connect with one another and the broader community, provide amenities like parks in appropriate locations, relate appropriately to the remaining rural and natural environment, and most importantly provide appealing places for residents to raise their families and enjoy their lives.

5.3.3. Encourage High Quality Property Maintenance

In the 2013 Town's Community Satisfaction Index Survey, the majority of respondents indicated that enforcement of property maintenance ordinances and regulations was an important Town service.

The Town of Weston will continue to help ensure high quality property maintenance, the purpose of which is to maintain, and where necessary enhance, the quality of life and property values in the Town of Weston. The Town will facilitate property maintenance by communicating expectations with land owners directly and through tools like the Town web page, enforcing its building and property maintenance codes, and working with Marathon County and the Village of Weston to enforce zoning and other standards.



Chapter 6: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources

- Describe environmental protection efforts
- Indicate an agricultural preservation approach
- Support historic preservation and culture

Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources Goal

The Town of Weston supports preservation of farmland and farming as an occupation, the Sandy Creek and the Eau Claire River corridors, other natural areas and habitat, and the Town’s rural and scenic heritage.



Natural, Agricultural and Cultural Resource Initiatives

Initiative	Description	Funding	Responsibility
(Follow links for further details)			
<u>Increase the Visibility, Quality, and Use of the Eau Claire River</u>	The Eau Claire River is an undervalued resource with great potential. The Town of Weston will work with the Village to encourage greater river appreciation and use, such as through development of the Eau Claire River Water Trail and other efforts to improve the environment and activity around the River.	Foundations, stakeholder groups, riverfront landowners, County Environmental Impact Fund, Wisconsin Stewardship and Federal LAWCON programs, donations, partnerships with other local governments, Town general fund	Town of Weston Board and Plan Commission
<u>Communicate and Uniformly Implement Environmental Regulations</u>	Weston’s environmental features, such as the Eau Claire River and Big and Little Sandy Creeks contribute to the Town’s rural sense of place. The Town will work towards protection of these and other natural resources, while striving for efficient and consistent regulations.	Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department, Village of Weston, contracted services	Plan Commission and ETZ Committee, in cooperation with County and Village staff
<u>Promote the Continuance of Agriculture in the Town of Weston</u>	The Town of Weston will work with area farmers to help ensure that agriculture remains a prominent land use in the Town and that the Town supports farmers to the extent practical.	Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning Department, UW-Extension, NRCS, potential grant funding through WisDNR	Town of Weston Board, Plan Commission



6.1. Objectives

1. Preserve environmental corridors given their multiple benefits to scenic beauty, recreation, public health, and wildlife habitat.
2. Manage quality and quantity of water entering waterways, especially Sandy Creek and the Eau Claire River.
3. Respect the agricultural heritage of the Town and support area farmers.

6.2. Policies

1. Cooperate on the protection of regional natural resources and systems, particularly the environmental corridors including the Eau Claire River, Big Sandy Creek and Little Sandy Creek.
2. Promote farming as a prominent land use in the Town of Weston and preserve prime agricultural soils.
3. Promote the continuation of agriculture in the Town, including by encouraging agricultural related businesses, value-added agriculture, and other farm family business opportunities to supplement farm income.
4. Protect and celebrate remaining vestiges of the Town's historic character and buildings.
5. Continue stewardship of land and water resources for their multiple benefits to human well-being, community image, and environmental health.
6. Foster a new generation of Town leaders and volunteers.



6.3. Initiatives

The following pages describe the initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter.

6.3.1. Increase the Visibility, Quality, and Use of the Eau Claire River

The Eau Claire River flows near the southern border of the Town of Weston. In a previous era, it was used as a method of transportation for logs felled from local forests, taking them to mills that supported the community. With the mills gone, the River is now an undervalued community asset, providing new opportunities for Weston and the surrounding area. The Town intends to support the Village of Weston as it leads on the following efforts associated with bringing new purpose to the Eau Claire River:

- **Establish Advocacy Group for River Protection and Recreation.** An advocacy or “friends” group could assist in the promotion, development, and maintenance of the Riverway. Such a group would work to increase the number and visibility of River-based activities, advocate for River-based improvements such as new launches to adjacent park enhancements, and educate the public about River-related issues. Partners may include other municipalities through which the River flows, the D.C. Everest Area School District, YMCA Camp Sturtevant, the Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Lakes, and the Camp Phillips Boy Scout Camp. The “friends” group would be advised to become a member of the Wisconsin River Alliance, for technical support and networking.
- **Organize River Clean-Up Days.** The Village and Town of Weston, in conjunction with nationally recognized days such as Earth Day or other appropriate community events, may organize a River cleanup day to remove debris and litter that prevents safe passage and dampens full enjoyment of the River experience. Local construction companies may be engaged in the effort, to deal with more significant blockages. This effort could instead be organized by the “friends” group, if formed, and potentially coordinated with the D. C. Everest Area School District.
- **Encourage River Use Through Development of the Eau Claire River Water Trail.** The Eau Claire River boasts the potential for a number of different recreational opportunities, such as a more formal and maintained water trail. The Village of Weston is creating/improving a series of kayak and canoe launches that are connected through wayfinding signage, enhancing paddler access to and experience on the water. In 2015, the Village created visioning materials to help the public, regional partners, key stakeholders, foundations, and other potential funders see the potential of the Water Trail.



The Eau Claire River during a quieter time of the year.



6.3.2. Communicate and Uniformly Implement Environmental Regulations

Environmental regulations in the Town of Weston are mainly administered by Marathon County. The County is responsible for administering an array of regulations designed to protect the environment and private property from flooding and other natural disasters and is mandated under State law to regulate development in floodplains, shoreland areas, wetlands in shoreland areas in the Town of Weston.

Marathon County administered environmental regulations, summarized as follows, are also available for further review as parts of the Marathon County Code at <http://www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/CountyClerk/CodeofOrdinances.aspx>. The Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Development Department is responsible for administering these regulations. County Departmental staff can identify on a site-by-site basis whether any unique review processes or standards apply. Chapter 22 of the Marathon County Code Shoreland, Shoreland-Wetland, and Floodplain is summarized below and was updated in June 2016.

- **Erosion Control and Stormwater Management.** Marathon County enforces erosion control and stormwater management regulations in the Town of Weston. Depending on size and geographic area, development projects may also be subject to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR) erosion control and stormwater management plan review and standards.
- **Floodplain.** Floodplain regulations are within Chapter 22, Title 3 of the Marathon County Code. The intent of the regulations is to limit development and filling in floodplain areas within Marathon County to minimize the effects of flooding on private property. The County must maintain floodplain regulations to enable property owners in the floodplain to participate in the national flood insurance program.
- **Shoreland.** Shoreland zoning regulations are in Chapter 22, Title 2 of the County's Code, which applies to all shoreland areas within Marathon County. These regulations include a 75 foot building setback from waterways, maximum building heights and impervious surface area within the shoreland area. The shoreland area is comprised of all lands within 1,000 feet of all lakes and ponds, and 300 feet from all rivers and streams (or from their floodplain, if greater).
- **Shoreland-wetland.** Marathon County is required by State law to limit the alteration of wetlands of five acres or greater within the designated shoreland area. The County's shoreland-wetland regulations are within Chapter 22, Title 2 of the Municipal Code. State and federal regulation of wetlands, administered by the WisDNR and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is stricter and more inclusive of all wetlands in the Town of Weston.

A small part of the Weston ETZ area is also located within a wellhead protection area, which is subject to additional regulation through the Village of Weston zoning ordinance. To implement the Village's State-mandated wellhead protection plan, the Village adopted into Section 94.6.03 of its zoning ordinance the WHP Wellhead Protection Overlay district. This district is applicable to municipal well recharge areas within the Village limits and the extraterritorial zoning area. The WHP district is intended to protect groundwater quality and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of municipal water users through land use regulation.

There are other provisions of Town and Village extraterritorial zoning (Chapter 94), subdivision (Chapter 74), and other ordinances that are designed to identify and preserve different elements of the natural environment.



Working with the County and Village, the Town will communicate these regulations to property owners and work to apply them uniformly. This will enable decisions and adjustments to be made before significant expense is made.

6.3.3. Promote the Continuance of Agriculture in the Town of Weston

Residents in the Town of Weston value the rural nature and agricultural landscape in the Town. Although the Town of Weston has little control over many external factors that impact the financial viability of farming and the price for agricultural products, interested parties can work locally on a variety of efforts to improve farming potential. These may include:

- **Working with University of Wisconsin Extension and Marathon County staff to increase efficiency in farm operations**, provide technical assistance, including exploring alternative farming techniques (e.g., grazing), promote agricultural cooperatives, and provide advice on other financial and technical support opportunities.
- **Promoting zoning approaches**, like the Agricultural Residential zoning district, which seek to minimize conflicts between farming and non-farm uses, while still allowing farmers a limited ability to sell land for housing.
- **Continuing to allow flexibility in zoning regulations** to allow non-farm home businesses which have little to no impact on surrounding properties.
- **Promoting educational partnerships** with area groups such as the D.C. Everest High School chapter of FFA and local 4-H Clubs.
- **Supporting agricultural diversification** through alternative, organic, or niche forms of agriculture suited to the area as well as smaller-scale operations. These may include ginseng, mint, vegetables, dairy, meat, cheese, hops, and other specialty crops in demand locally and nationally.

Agriculture—A Valued Weston Resource

Through the 2013 Community Satisfaction Index Survey, Town respondents consistently indicated their support for agriculture in the Weston area and agreed that farming is an important part of the Town's heritage.

Consistently, most respondents indicated that lot sizes should be regulated to prevent farmland fragmentation and that they were not bothered by dust and odors from nearby agricultural operations.

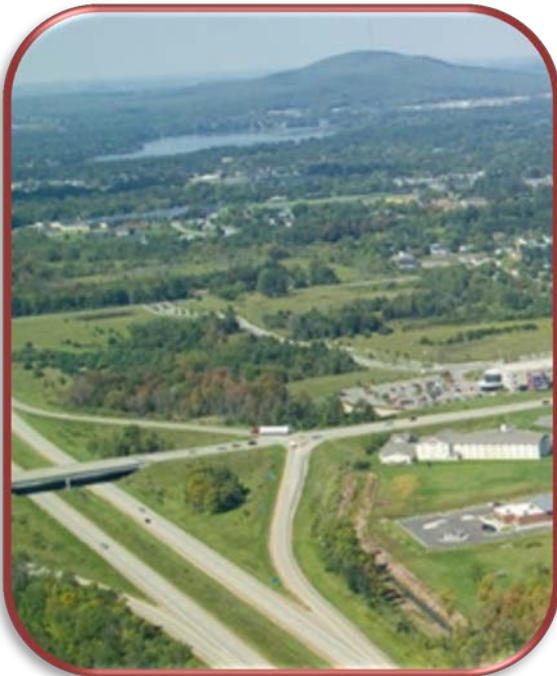


Chapter 7: Transportation

- Direct future transportation investments
- Connect the Town of Weston with the greater Wausau area and beyond

Transportation Goal

The Town of Weston will work with other units of government to develop and maintain a safe, efficient, and interconnected road and trail network that is consistent with the Town of Weston’s rural character and serves local residents.



Transportation Initiatives

Initiative	Description	Funding	Responsibility
(Follow links for further details)			
<u>Maintain the Function and Condition of the Town’s Roadways</u>	Maintaining Town roads is essential for daily transportation and agricultural needs. Keeping existing roads in good condition and engaging in strategic, modest improvements will take priority over new construction projects.	Bonding; Town general fund; State Town Road Improvement Discretionary Provisions program; Participation with Marathon County on Camp Phillips Road, CTH J and CTH N; Special Assessments	Town Board
<u>Prioritize a Limited Number of Roadway Expansion Projects</u>	The Town will have limited resources for the foreseeable future to undertake major roadway projects. The Town will prioritize projects based on need, economic impact, funding, and leadership by other units of government.	Bonding; State and federal construction funding, such as STP/Urban Funding and TIGER (for large projects); Town general fund; Special Assessments	Town Board
<u>Support Additional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities</u>	The Town values bike and pedestrian movement, both as a transportation and recreational option. Certain corridors—including routes to the Eau Claire River Dells and Riverside Elementary School—are priorities.	State and federal grant programs, such as TAP-21 (Safe Routes to School) and Stewardship; Town general fund	Town Board



7.1. Objectives

1. Maintain the Town's road network in a way that prioritizes fiscal responsibility and safety.
2. Collaborate with regional, County, State, and federal partners to connect Weston to the broader region.
3. Accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access wherever practical.

7.2. Policies

1. Provide connections between Town residents, job and shopping centers, schools, and parks in adjacent communities.
2. Prioritize major road projects in the Town and nominate projects to the regional transportation improvement program.
3. Access State and federal transportation funding and partnerships to support the Town's priority transportation projects.
4. Participate in and encourage State, regional, County and intergovernmental transportation planning efforts that benefit the Town.
5. Discourage future road designs that feature cul-de-sacs and other streets with only one outlet.
6. Seek multiple purposes and benefits for transportation projects with each other, and with other initiatives the Town is undertaking (e.g., road project that provides paved shoulders or side path for bike access).
7. Advocate for a "dig once" policy for roadway improvement projects, as described further in Chapter 9: Broadband Technology.

Town Residents Value Roads

In the 2013 Town of Weston Community Satisfaction Index Survey, respondents indicated that if \$100,000 were added to the Town of Weston budget, their number one priority would be to use that money for "road maintenance and construction." Also, when asked what should be cut if \$100,000 were removed from the Town's budget, "road maintenance and construction" ranked only behind "fire and ambulance service" as the most important efforts to retain.



7.3. Initiatives

The following pages describe the initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter.

7.3.1. Maintain the Function and Condition of the Town's Roadways

Town of Weston residents depend on local roadways for trips in cars, trucks, agricultural vehicles, bikes, and on foot. In this era of diminishing fiscal resources for roads, the Town will prioritize maintaining and, where necessary, rebuilding its existing roadways, based on objective measures and considering the needs of all users. Through timely maintenance and an appropriate level of reconstruction, existing roads can be maintained with modest investment. Conversely, deferring maintenance will be costlier to the Town over the long term.



The Town has a basic responsibility to maintain its roads.

The Town will continue to use its Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system to help decide which of the existing roadways in the community should be resurfaced or reconstructed, as part of its annual budgeting and capital improvement programming process. Through PASER, the Town assigns a condition rating between 1 (worst) and 10 (best) to each road in the Town. The Town's latest PASER ratings are summarized in Chapter 11 of the Conditions and Issues volume.

The Town will consider a road for reconstruction once it has a PASER rating of 5 or lower. Other factors will include traffic volumes, safety issues, and economic development impact. PASER allows citizens and business leaders to understand the relative condition of "their road" compared to other roads in the Town. Equally important, simply knowing the Town has a fair and objective process for inventorying and programming needed road improvements helps minimize public criticism and opposition to needed investments.

The Town will also continue to regulate driveway placement along Town Roads, applying adopted zoning and subdivision ordinance standards. The Town will work with Marathon County to control access along State and County highways.

7.3.2. Prioritize a Limited Number of Roadway Expansion Projects

Map 7-1 is the Town's Future Transportation Map and Official Map. Improvements suggested on this map will provide a more interconnected and efficient transportation network. Some projects identified on Map 7-1 will take years to realize, and in many cases timing is linked to development of adjacent land. This includes the suggested road network in the east central portion of the Town.

The following are the most significant future projects suggested on this map. The Town will work with the Wausau Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to list these projects on the regional Long Range Transportation Plan.

- **Camp Phillips Road.** Camp Phillips Road is the major north-south route in the Town of Weston, connecting Highway 29 on the south to County Trunk Highway (CTH) N on the north. Due to



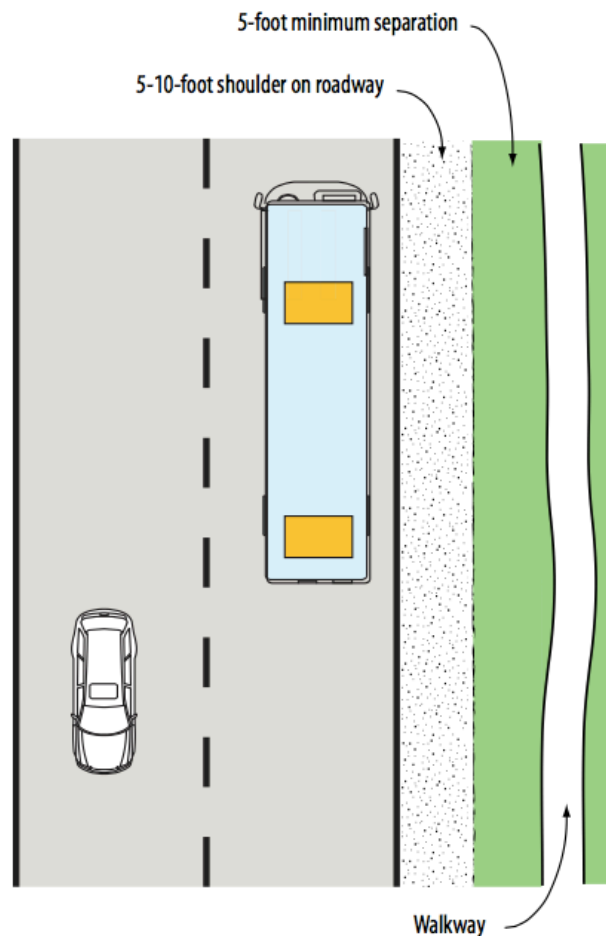
higher traffic volume, safety is a concern along this roadway. The Town will work collaboratively with Marathon County and the Village of Weston to improve safety and manage traffic along Camp Philips Road.

- **Ross Avenue, Kramer Lane, Kersten Road and Lester Street.** This road network was formerly CTH SS and reverted to municipal ownership several years ago. Together the roads provide access to the Sandy Meadows neighborhood and Machmueller Park in the Village of Weston and connect the northeast portion of the Town with the more developed areas in the Village of Weston. These roads will also require future improvements to address increasing vehicular, bike, and pedestrian traffic. Roadway projects here (and elsewhere) should coordinate the laying of conduit to encourage broadband expansion.

7.3.3. Support Additional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The Town of Weston will work with the Wausau MPO and neighboring municipalities to increase bicycling and pedestrian transportation opportunities within the Town. In a rural setting, bicycle traffic can often be accommodated on quiet town roads and/or within paved shoulders. However, Wisconsin Statute does not consider road shoulders a legal pedestrian facility under Wisconsin law. For reconstruction of major roadways, the Town of Weston supports bicycle and pedestrian accommodations based on the cost of the improvement versus the overall project cost as well as probable use by non-auto traffic.

The Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies one route through the Town of Weston—along the Kramer Lane, Kersten Road, Lester Street corridor. Through that Plan, the MPO recommends construction of paved shoulders to facilitate non-motorized traffic along this corridor. Either in conjunction with paved shoulders or in the alternative, the Town advises the construction of a separated side walkway or path—as shown in the graphic to the right. Once fully developed, this route would connect the Town and Village of Weston to the Eau Claire Dells, which would be an economic and recreational resource.



The Town of Weston will also work with area municipalities and the D.C. Everest Area School District on Safe Route to School planning and associated infrastructure projects. Riverside Elementary School is located on River Road in the Town of Ringle, just east of the Town of Weston. The Town of Weston supports a plan to establish better and safer infrastructure for students to bicycle and walk to school. The Town has potentially identified the Guzman Road corridor as a connector between housing development in the Village of Weston and Riverside Elementary School.



Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan

7-1

Future Transportation, Community Facility & Official Maps



Map Date: 11/10/2017

Adoption Date 11/11/2017

Created by the Village of Weston
Tech. Services Department

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Legend

Future Features

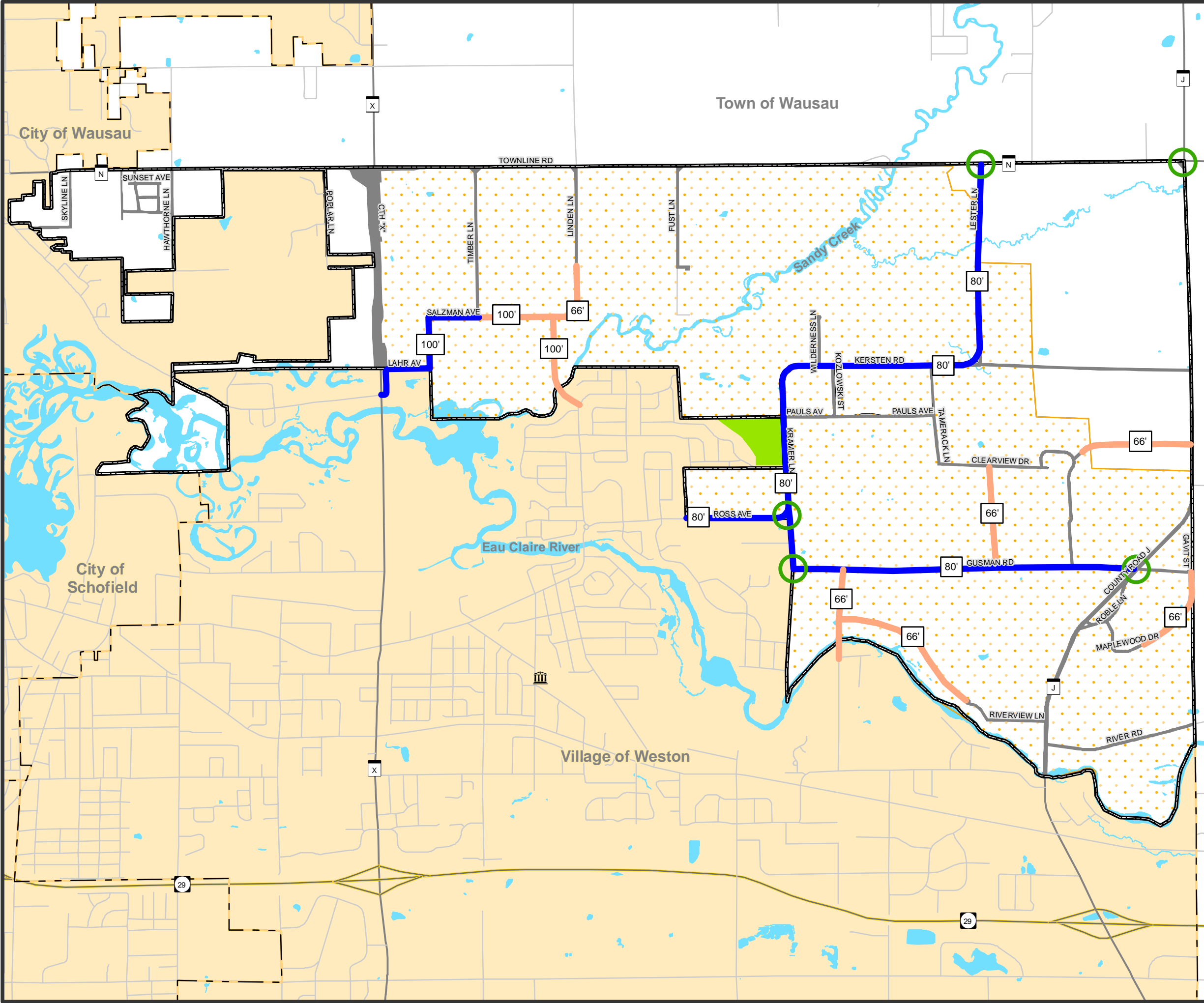
- Future Major Road (with right-of-way width)
- Planned Road Construction (with right-of-way width)
- Planned Intersection Improvement

Municipal Features

- Town of Weston (2017)
- City/Village Boundaries (2017)
- Other Town Boundaries (2017)
- Village of Weston Extraterritorial Zoning Boundary
- Right-of-Way
- Town Hall
- Machmueller Park
- Surface Water

Transportation

- Interstate Hwy
- US Hwy
- State Hwy
- County Hwy
- Local Road



Chapter 8: Community Facilities and Utilities

- Identify priority public infrastructure projects coordinated by the Town
- Provide a capital improvement program for budgetary purposes

Community Facilities and Utilities Goal

The Town of Weston will strive to meet resident service and expense expectations by providing public services and facilities that are appropriate for the Town’s rural character and maintain reasonable rates, fees, and taxes.



Community Facilities and Utilities Initiatives

Initiative (Follow links for further details)	Description	Funding	Responsibility
<u>Effectively Manage Town Facilities and Services</u>	The Town of Weston will utilize information in this chapter, including Figure 8-1, to guide its provision of services to residents. The Town will also continue and monitor contracts and intergovernmental agreements to provide services.	Town general fund, grants	Town Board
<u>Facilitate a Clean and Plentiful Water Supply</u>	Water quality is critical to community health and well-being. The Town will monitor and protect its ground water supply to ensure a safe drinking water supply.	Town general fund, grants, partnerships with State and County agencies	Town Board
<u>Support Development of Weston-area Recreational Facilities</u>	The Town of Weston values the recreational amenities that are and could be available to its residents. The Town will continue to work with other units of governments on park and trail improvements and maintenance in the Weston area.	Town general fund and state grants through the WDNR	Town Board, with assistance from the Joint Park Committee



8.1. Objectives

1. Provide and support services and facilities for a quality living and working environment.
2. Maintain the current level of community services in a cost effective manner.
3. Coordinate utility and community facility systems planning with land use, transportation, natural resources, and intergovernmental planning.

8.2. Policies

1. Direct new intensive land uses to incorporated areas with appropriate levels of urban services to make efficient use of existing sewer, water, and road infrastructure.
2. Invest in technologies and infrastructure solutions that reduce costs, promote resource stewardship, and protect the environment.
3. Limit the placement of new holding tanks and regulate the placement of private septic systems through the Town and extraterritorial zoning ordinances and Chapter 15 of Marathon County's General Code of Ordinances.
4. Work with neighboring communities to ensure that collaborative agencies—such as SAFER and Everest Metro Police Department—provide appropriate services and have adequate staffing, facility, and equipment capacity.
5. Collaborate with the D.C. Everest Area School District on projects of mutual interest, and ensure the District is aware of community growth issues that may impact schools.
6. Implement and require progressive stormwater management, and collaborate with others such as the North Central Wisconsin Stormwater Coalition.
7. Work with Marathon County, University of Wisconsin-Extension and other organizations on programs to protect groundwater quality and quantity, including efforts to identify, map and protect groundwater recharge areas.



8.3. Initiatives

The following pages describe the initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter.

8.3.1. Effectively Manage Town Facilities and Services

The Town intends to engage in a limited array of Town facilities and services over the next 5 to 10 years. Figure 8-1 will guide the Town with these investments. Figure 8-1 includes some elements that are not typically considered municipal responsibilities, but are required to be addressed in a comprehensive plan under Wisconsin Statutes.

The Town of Weston contracts with neighboring municipalities for the provision of many community services, through different intergovernmental agreements and arrangements. The Village of Weston provides land use regulation and zoning, building permit and inspections, refuse and recycling, snowplowing, road paving, maintenance and construction. Fire and Emergency response is provided by the South Area Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) District. Police protection is provided by the Everest Metro Police Department.

The Town of Weston will continue to evaluate and monitor these existing intergovernmental agreements to ensure that services are provided in the most efficient and cost effective manner.



Figure 8-1: Identification and Timetable for Community Facilities and Utilities Projects

Public Infrastructure Category	Projected Improvement Timeframe ¹	Recommendations ²
Water Supply	Ongoing	Implement strategies to help ensure high quality ground water, described later in this chapter.
Sanitary Wastewater Treatment	Ongoing	Coordinate with Marathon County to ensure the proper siting and maintenance of private on site waste treatment systems.
Solid Waste Disposal	Before contract expires	Review contract with the Village of Weston for solid waste disposal
Recycling	Before contract expires	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Renew/rebid contract when set to expire2. Continue to monitor and advocate the Town’s “One and Done” program for recycling carts3. Investigate pilot food waste disposal cart program and other new and innovative ideas for recycling
Stormwater Management	As state and federal mandates require	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Comply with Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) sediment reduction requirement to extent practicable2. Attempt to meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements3. Keep Town ordinances and practices up to date
Hazard Mitigation	Every 5 years	Participate in updates to the County Hazard Mitigation Plan
Town Administration	As need arises	Evaluation municipal building to ensure that it adequately serves residents’ needs
Parks and Recreation	As needed	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Encourage improvements to Machmueller Park in conjunction with the Village (see Map 8-1).2. Work with the Wausau MPO to implement the recommendations contained within the Wausau MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan3. Encourage trail projects outlined in this chapter and in the Transportation chapter.
Fire Protection and EMS	Revisit agreement when warranted	Continue participation in the S.A.F.E.R. District
Police Protection	Revisit agreement when warranted	Continue participation in the Everest Metro Police Department
Library	As determined by Library System	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Encourage continued library service to Weston residents by the Marathon County Library System2. Participate in discussions with the Village of Weston regarding development of a library in the Village
Schools	As determined by School District	Work with D.C. Everest Area School District regarding shared resources and common goals
Telecommunications	As market or Town needs require	See Chapter 9: Broadband Technology for objectives, policies, and programs
Medical Facilities	As market requires	Encourage growth of the Weston Regional Medical Center
Cemeteries	As market requires	Private parties will add to cemetery land as needed. Promote cremation as alternative.
Childcare Facilities	As market requires	Area child care facilities will expand to meet needs

Notes:

1. The Town Board may alter projects and timeframes based on a variety of factors, including other Town priorities, the availability of grants or other unique opportunities, and the timing of development or other factors that affect the demand for such services.
2. Completion of some of these improvements may affect the Town’s need to complete other recommended improvements.

8.3.2. Facilitate A Clean and Plentiful Water Supply

Weston's water supply is a critical component of enabling residents to function in a safe and healthy manner. This broad initiative includes the following potential efforts that, cumulatively, would protect and enhance the quantity and quality of the Town's water supply.

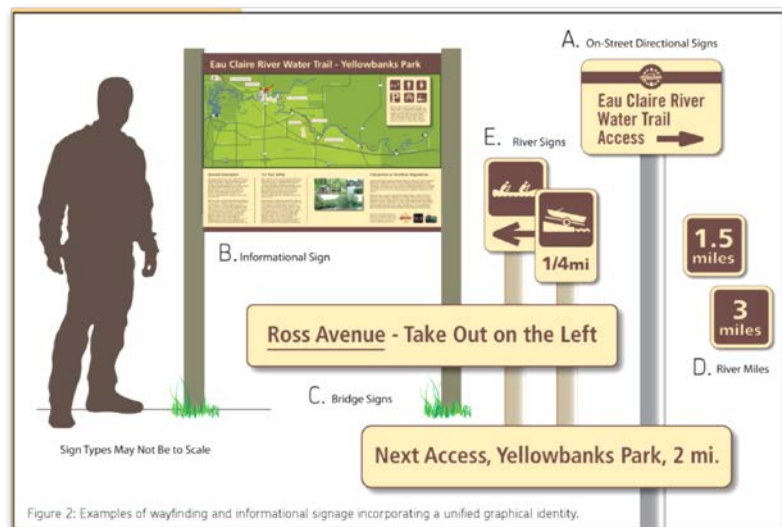
- **Support Implementation of the Wisconsin River TMDL Study.** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR), together with partners throughout the Wisconsin River basin, aims to improve the basin's water quality, reservoirs, and tributaries. WisDNR's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study and implementation plan provides a strategic framework for water quality improvements. The Town of Weston participates in this effort collaboratively with Marathon County. The Town and County work with area farmers to ensure that stormwater runoff from agricultural areas complies with Marathon County Code Chapter 11.02 Animal Waste Storage and Nutrient Management Code and NR 151. Weston's interest in improving water quality and activity in the Eau Claire River is an area of particular contribution to the Wisconsin River TMDL Study.
- **Work with Farmers to Reduce Sediment and Nutrient Delivery from Agriculture** Encouraging farmers in the Town of Weston to comply with the conservation standards found in NR 151 can help reduce erosion and limit nutrient loss. These include agricultural best management practices such as nutrient and manure management, tillage and grazing setbacks from water bodies, and vegetated drainageways and steep slopes. Implementing the Wisconsin River TMDL study will also assist in protecting surface water quality.
- **Septic Nutrient Management.** The Town of Weston will work with Marathon County to properly site new waste water treatment systems and facilitate the proper maintenance of existing systems in the Town to limit the potential for untreated discharge of septic waste into surface water.
- **Implement Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs).** BMPs for stormwater often use vegetation, soils, and natural processes and terrain to manage water, as opposed to piping and discarding stormwater as quickly as possible. BMPs include engineered and planted swales along roads (see example below), deep tilling of construction sites, installation and maintenance of rain gardens, and preservation and use of natural drainageways in new developments. Major drainageways in and around the Town are presented on Map 7-1. BMPs will be considered in Town road and stormwater projects. In addition, the Town's updated zoning and subdivision ordinances encourage and sometimes require BMPs.
- **Well Water Testing Program.** The Town of Weston will consider implementing a well water testing program for Town residents. A testing program would provide water test kits to Town residents and facilitate analysis of the results. This program would encourage residential water testing while also allowing the Town to develop a database of water test results.
- **Encourage Proper Siting and Maintenance of Private on Site Wastewater Treatment Systems.** Development in the Town utilizes private on-site sewage systems. Wisconsin's Safety and Professional Services (SPS) regulates the siting, design, installation, and inspection of most private on-site waste treatment systems under SPS 383, which is administered by Marathon County in Chapter 15 of the County Code. Marathon County issues permits, conducts system inspections, addresses violations, and oversees a Countywide septic system maintenance program. The Town of Weston will coordinate with Marathon County to assist residents that have failing septic systems and will provide residents with information regarding the County's maintenance program.



8.3.3. Support Development of Weston-area Recreational Facilities

The Town of Weston does not currently provide its own recreational facilities, but did contribute to the Village's development of Machmueller Park and has a continued interest in recreational facilities in the Weston area, including the following:

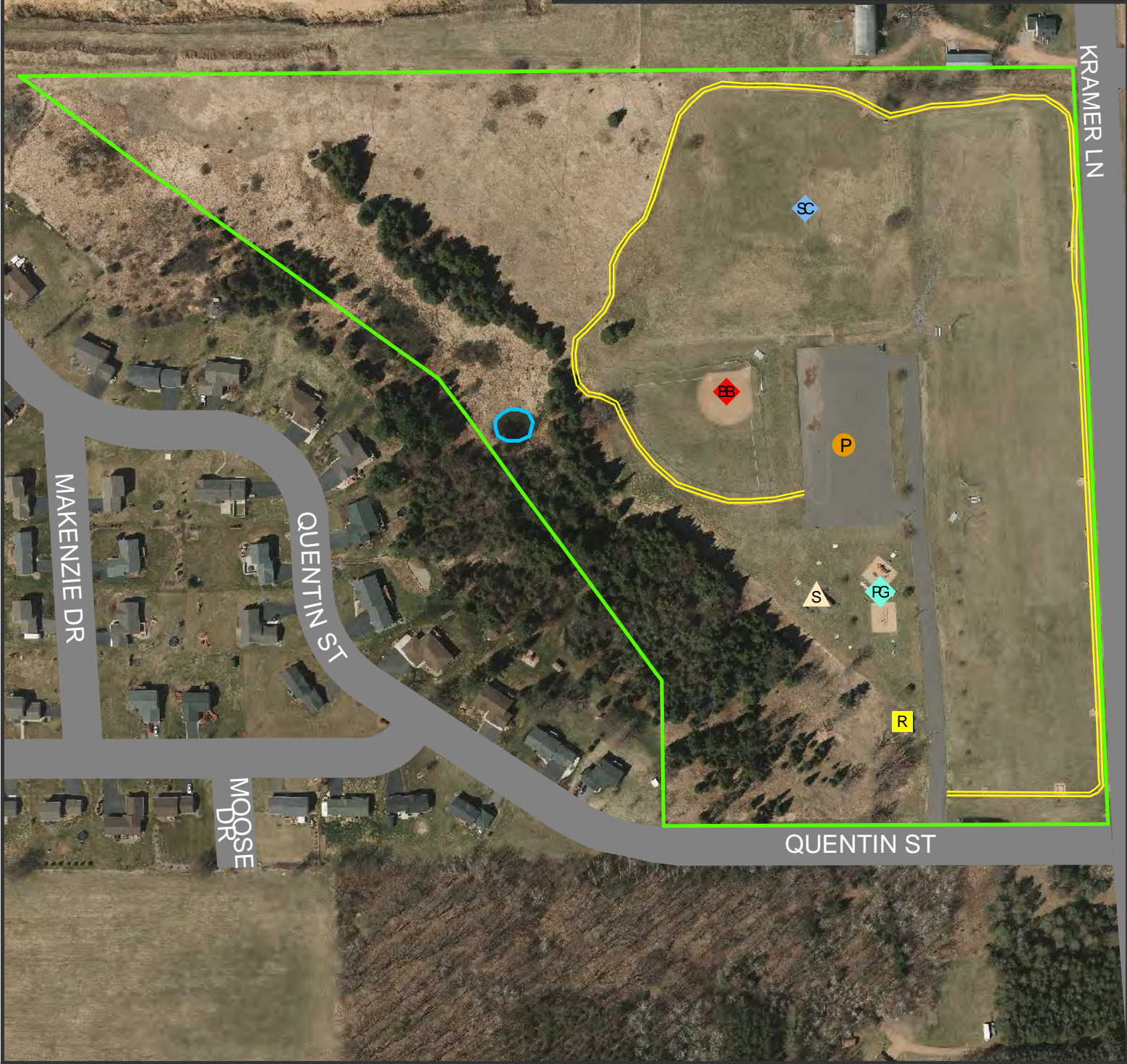
- **Machmueller Park Improvements.** Map 8-1 depicts Machmueller Park, and recommended improvements identified in the Village's Comprehensive Plan. The Town of Weston will consider supporting such improvements.
- **Bike and Pedestrian Facilities.** Within the Weston area, there are several local and regional multiuse, off-street trails. Such trails provide for bike and pedestrian access. Depending on surfacing and corridor width, some also provide access for in-line skating, cross-country skiing, and/or snowmobiling. The Town will work with the Village, other adjoining municipalities, and the County on interconnected trail and bike route systems. Where possible, these should use existing road, environmental, and utility corridors.
- **Snowmobile Trail Connections to the Mountain-Bay Trail.** In winter, snowmobile trails are a popular form of entertainment and recreation. They are also a significant driver of winter tourism. The Town of Weston is part of a larger snowmobile network. Route 15 winds its way through the northern edge of the Town, southeast to the Village of Weston and connects to the Mountain Bay Trail and a second snowmobile route runs north-south through the Town along the Camp Philips Road corridor. The Town will work with area snowmobile clubs on trail development and support snowmobile accommodations in the greater Weston area.
- **Eau Claire River Water Trail.** The Town supports the Village's initiative to expand use of the Eau Claire River for canoeing, kayaking, tubing, fishing, and swimming. To maintain a successful water trail, navigability during most times of the year is key, including the maintenance of sufficient water flow and the cleaning of woody and other debris. Other potential barriers, such as bridges and underpasses, need to be considered. Map 7-1 shows potential locations for water trail launches, some of which are used informally today. Launches should be improved, and also accompanied by convenient parking areas. Trailhead signs and bridge underpass signs installed along the water trail also would provide users an easy way to identify progress along the trail and ease when finding their destination. The Town is particularly concerned about identifying a safer drop-off/put-in spot in the Highway J bridge area.



New signs along the water trail will help users with navigation.



Vilas E. Machmueller Park		
Priority	Potential Future Project	Cost
1	Install volleyball court	\$2,000
2	Install basketball court	\$5,000
3	Install Pickleball courts	\$3,000
4	Install park trees/landscaping	\$2,000
5	Expand parkland	TBD



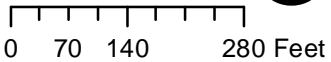
Town of Weston
Comprehensive Plan

8-1

Vilas E. Machmueller Park



Map Date: 11/10/2017
Adoption Date: 11/11/2017
Created by the Village of Weston
Tech. Services Department



Legend

- Parking
- Restrooms
- Shelter
- Playground
- Baseball
- Soccer
- Fitness Trail
- Parkland
- Surface Water

Chapter 9: Broadband Technology

- Facilitate and expand the development of broadband technology in the Town
- Identify ways to supplement and support the private sector in providing high speed internet access to Town residents and businesses

Broadband Technology Goal

The Town of Weston will work with the Village of Weston, area organizations and utility providers to develop a high quality affordable broadband network within the Town.



Priority Broadband Technology Initiatives (Other Initiatives in Chapter)

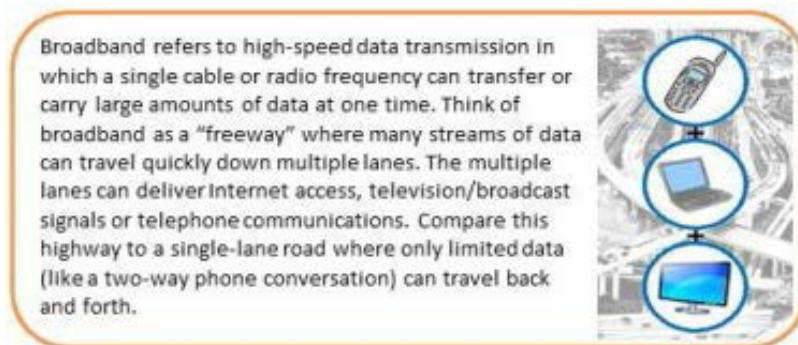
Initiative (Follow links for further details)	Description	Funding	Responsibility
<u>Change the Funding “Bottom Line” for Broadband Expansion</u>	The Town will work with the Village of Weston to increase the financial incentive for broadband service providers to expand service in the greater Weston area.	Collaboration with the Village of Weston, potential grant funding from the USDA, Wisconsin Public Service Commission, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and federal Community Development Block Grants	Town Board
<u>Continue to Expand Access to Residential Customers</u>	Inadequate residential access to broadband limits home based business, telecommuting and education opportunities for Town of Weston residents. The Town of Weston will continue to work to expand residential access to broadband.	Town general fund; continued grant funding through the Public Service Commission and others; partnerships with local broadband providers	Town Board
<u>Target Broadband Expansion to Specific Underserved Areas</u>	The Town and Village of Weston have identified specific neighborhoods in the Weston area that are priority for broadband expansion, in the Town, including the Ross Avenue/Kramer Street corridor.	Village of Weston, Marathon County, internet service providers, potential grant funding through the Public Service Commission	Town Board



9.1. Purpose

Given the incredible importance of broadband access, the Town of Weston coordinated with the Village of Weston to create a chapter solely related to this topic. This chapter was drafted as a guide to help coordinate local policies, procedures, and infrastructure to facilitate broadband internet expansion in the Weston area.

Broadband technology is a dynamic area of inquiry. The municipal strategies advanced in this Chapter will build on State, north-central region, and private sector initiatives to expand broadband access. To prepare this chapter, technology experts, regional providers, and other sources were consulted. This chapter includes a synthesis of this information to better understand the extent and scope of technology infrastructure already on the ground, pending, and possible in the Weston area.



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's definition of Broadband.

9.2. Objectives

1. Strengthen relationships with broadband service providers and regional entities to expand broadband access.
2. Promote extension of fiber and other broadband technology to support growth of local businesses and attract new businesses.
3. Increase awareness and usage of internet services in the area, thereby making expansion proposals more cost-effective.
4. Integrate the broadband expansion goal into all decisions, such as new infrastructure.
5. Enhance internet service available to residents throughout the Town and Village.

9.3. Policies

1. Secure grants and other resources to expand broadband to businesses and residents.
2. Explore creative use of tax incremental financing and other development-funded sources of revenue to assist with broadband expansion.
3. Include facilities and provisions to expand broadband access when public infrastructure investments are being planned or installed.
4. Share information and facilities with others in the Weston area who are interested in expanding broadband here.
5. Assure that local policies and ordinances support the expansion of broadband service, while protecting other community interests.
6. Expand familiarity, comfort, and use of the internet as a communication tool.



7. Encourage public libraries, the Northcentral Technical College, the UW-Extension, and other institutions to serve as centers of technology training and to raise awareness.
8. In areas where fiber extension is less financially feasible, promote options for other technologies to provide high speed internet communications.
9. Work to expand internet coverage and particularly to enhance speeds in residential areas throughout the Town and Village, as a mechanism to maintain property values, deliver educational services, enable rural entrepreneurship, and minimize isolation for aging residents.



9.4. Initiatives

The following pages describe the priority initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter, plus other initiatives the Town may consider to expand broadband service.

9.4.1. Change the Funding “Bottom Line” for Broadband Expansion

Private providers will expand broadband service to areas only where they determine that the rate of economic return is high enough and the risk of the expansion is low enough. The Village and Town will attempt to affect that equation and potentially lead to greater expansion to business areas in particular via the following efforts:

- **Continue to pursue grant funding** to extend fiber throughout Town residential areas and Village business, commercial, and industrial areas to support growth of local businesses and effectively recruit businesses with high data usage. Examples are listed in the sidebar to the right, with a description of these and other programs in Volume 1 of the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Pursue creative use of existing local funding**, beyond property taxes, as means to expand broadband infrastructure in Weston. These may include utilizing tax incremental financing (TIF) as a means to assist private providers with service extensions or businesses with technology investments. Such use may require appropriate inclusions or amendments to associated tax incremental district project plans, so that they include the potential for funding for such technology. Other potential local tools include development impact fees and area-wide assessments, if the broadband infrastructure will be publicly owned.
- **Organize a consortium of business stakeholders** to assess needs against the levels of service that are available, identify the needs that are not being met, and explore new opportunities to expand use. This consortium could be connected to service providers.

Promising Broadband Expansion Grants

- **PSC Broadband Expansion Grants:** Administered by the Wisconsin Public Services Commission to improve broadband communication facilities, targeted to underserved areas. The village and private sector partners were awarded funds through this program in 2014. The Village and Town of Weston have already used these funds to extend infrastructure to serve business and technology employment areas south of State Highway 29 and to extend higher-speed internet service to Town residents.
- **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Grants:** Supports community development efforts and provide financial incentives for shovel-ready projects. Grant recipients must demonstrate significant, measurable benefits in job opportunities, property values, and/or leveraged investment by local and private partners.
- **Community Development Block Grant:** Offers both public facilities and economic development grants, which can be leveraged to support infrastructure and facility projects.
- **USDA Community Connect Grants:** Offers grants to fund acquisition or leasing of facilities to serve residences and businesses, as well as community access points.



9.4.2. Establish Policy Direction to Work with ISPs on Expansion

As discussed under Initiative 9.4.1, internet service providers (ISPs) make decisions for where and when they will place broadband service largely based on the business case, or expected return on investment (ROI). Communities like Weston may face challenges in attracting ISPs to provide service to the community, while balancing community interests of meeting community needs for service levels and price points. The Village and Town have already successfully attempted to work directly with existing ISPs in the area to expand broadband service to priority areas that are currently underserved. Demand on and opportunities for many ISPs is so high at this time that they are only serving areas that have the greatest positive impact on corporate profit, maximizing ROIs. In the past, ISPs have reportedly over-built facilities. As a result, ISPs now evaluate more closely each expansion request, usually based on a short term (e.g., 3 year) ROI projection.

The Village and Town hope to convince ISPs of the “business case” (expected ROI) of continuing to expand broadband infrastructure in the area, while at the same time facilitating provision of a range of reasonable marketplace choices to serve residents. Given the unique challenges and limitations to providing broadband infrastructure in Wisconsin, the Town will explore the following policy questions to help guide future strategies toward service provision:

- How should the Town best facilitate and structure partnerships with private sector ISPs to make an attractive business case for expanding service?
- How should the Town most fairly facilitate provision of a fair market and meet consumer goals of choice and variety?
- What is the most effective way to balance private sector expense with public sector expense when providing broadband infrastructure? For ISPs? For business users?

9.4.3. Explore Town Leadership Opportunities for Broadband

As suggested above, there are challenges to convincing private ISPs to provide broadband service to underserved parts of the community. The Town of Weston, in conjunction with the Village, may therefore explore opportunities to take a more active role in directly providing broadband infrastructure and service.

Wis. Stat. § 66.0422 sets forth the requirements that must be met before a municipality is permitted to provide broadband services directly or indirectly to its residents. Specifically, § 66.0422(2) prohibits a town or other municipality from enacting an ordinance or adopting a resolution authorizing the municipality to construct, own, or operate any facility for providing broadband service to the public unless all of the following are satisfied:

1. The municipality holds a public hearing on the proposed ordinance or resolution;
2. The municipality provides notice of the public hearing to all parties potentially affected by the proposed ordinance or resolution; and
3. No less than 30 days before the public hearing, the municipality prepares and makes available for public inspection a report estimating the total cost of the proposed ordinance or resolution, and revenues derived from constructing, owning, or operating the facility, including a cost-benefit analysis of the facility for a period of at least three years.

There are exceptions to this prohibition that do not require satisfaction of the three above steps. One exception is if the Public Service Commission has determined that the local government is an



“alternative telecommunications utility” as of November 1, 2003. (There are 31 municipalities that qualify as an “alternative telecommunications utility”, including area communities like Marshfield, Antigo, Shawano and Waupaca.) Another exception is if a majority of the Town Board votes to submit the question to the electors in an advisory referendum and a majority of the voters who vote in the referendum support the operation of such a facility. A third exception requires the Town to ask each broadband service provider within the boundaries of the Town whether the provider currently provides broadband service to the area or intends to provide broadband service to the area within nine months. The Town may enact an ordinance or adopt a resolution authorizing the Town to construct, own or operate a broadband service facility if no provider responds in writing, within 60 days, to the Town that the provider currently provides broadband service to the area or intends to provide broadband service to the area within nine months.

Finally, under § 66.0422(3m), municipalities can build broadband infrastructure and lease it to private entities to operate and deliver broadband service to residents using that infrastructure. The leasing of any community-owned infrastructure must be done on a non-discriminatory basis.

9.4.4. Implement a Dig Once and Joint Trench Use Policy

“Dig once” and joint trench use policies are local government efforts to reduce the number and scale of repeated excavations for the installation and maintenance communications and utilities infrastructure in public rights-of-way. They require a coordinated effort among public and private entities for installing infrastructure when there are plans for excavation. According to the Federal Highway Administration, such policies are sensible solutions to expedite the deployment of fiber along main routes when implemented as part of a cooperative planning process.

The Village and Town adopt a dig once and joint trench use policy with the following components. To fully implement certain aspects of the policy, adjustments to ordinances and engineering design standards are also necessary or advisable, such as to the Town’s subdivision ordinance.

- **Share Town and Village capital improvement programs** with utility, telecommunication companies, and non-profit entities like WCAN to enhance likelihood of coordinating projects.
- **Coordinate with broadband services providers** for joint trenching and simultaneous projects when undertaking the engineering/design and pre-construction phases of all road and utility projects. The communities could also include fiber/conduit as part of the bid document, and in any case will coordinate on timing.
- **Require coordination between road and utility construction projects**, no matter which agency or business initiates such projects, to the extent permitted by State and federal law. This should include sharing of engineering/design plans for comment and contribution, invitations and attendance at pre-construction meetings, and joint trenching wherever possible. Joint trenching for electrical and fiber lines are particularly feasible and even desirable.
- **Include the simultaneous installation of fiber conduit within all Village and Town infrastructure installation projects**, including local infrastructure installed by developers in new subdivisions and business parks, unless infeasible from a cost, public safety, or available space standpoint. Conduit serves as “place holder” for future service providers to maximize future opportunities for broadband network expansion.
- **Adopt engineering standards for designing roads and utilities (including developer installation) to ensure that conduit will be of a feasible size, design, and placement** for future fiber installation and to maximize joint trenching. Also, establish standards advising the



scope of project for which conduit would be required to be installed (e.g. major corridors or all roadways?).

- **Add “broadband/ fiber” to the list of required public improvements in new subdivisions** and other developments at the expense of the developer, and specify design requirements and construction standards/scope for installation of conduit and fiber infrastructure.
- **Restrict the frequency of road excavation** for the purpose of installing utility, communications, or other underground infrastructure. This is designed to protect street investments, encourage earlier collaboration, and enable other alternatives like directional boring and small cells. Directional boring is a trenchless method of installing underground pipes, conduits, and cables along a prescribed bore path by using a surface-launched drilling rig, with minimal impact on the surrounding area. Small cells are devices that can be attached to poles and/or buildings to increase network capacity via a wireless signal instead of excavation.
- **Encourage or require different techniques to minimize the impact of excavation**, where the Town or Village determine that road excavation is required. For example, micro-trenching involves digging a small trench just inches under the road surface along the curb line to install fiber optic lines.
- **Encourage the County and State to coordinate with telecommunication providers and install conduit for fiber** in accordance with local standards, when participating on technical teams supporting or advising on County and State highway projects.
- **Investigate and follow Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) standards for facilitating highway corridors for broadband infrastructure**, and explore possible relationships that may result in expansion of facilities from providers in the Green Bay market area utilizing the Highway 29 corridor.

9.4.5. Collaborate on Mapping Efforts for Economic Growth

There could be better sharing of mapping and data resources among the Town, Village of Weston, private communications service providers, and regional entities for the common goal of increasing business activity. It appears that competitive concerns and in some cases lack of awareness impedes map and data sharing. The Town of Weston supports and will assist the Village in:

- **Creating and sharing a database of map and attribute information** to facilitate private provider access to existing towers, alternative support structures, trenches, and right-of-way and easement resources.
- **Obtaining and assembling maps from internet service providers** of their broadband facilities (both lit and dark fiber) or service areas. Competitive concerns suggest that the Town and Village not, for example, publish such maps on the internet. Other legal arrangements to limit access ought to be explored. However, having access to such maps would greatly aid economic development efforts, including recruiting and guiding new businesses to locations with good service. If necessary, the Town or Village may be able to require that this information be provided as a condition of renewing franchise contracts or using road rights-of-way.
- **Assessing current broadband service hot-spots and gaps**, by comparing locations of existing and planned commercial, office/research, healthcare, business/industrial, and community/institutional development, and work with providers to close each gap.



9.4.6. Continue to Expand Access to Residential Customers

Broadband service providers repeatedly indicate that a critical mass of demonstrated demand is necessary for expansions to businesses and residences. Within the Weston area, perceived or real lack of demand is a particular problem limiting service to rural areas. Without financial assistance, it does not appear that any of the current providers are anticipating land-line expansions to rural subdivisions or clusters in the near future. In short, there is no magic bullet to increasing internet speeds in rural parts of Weston.

As a component of the process to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan, a survey was made available to residents and some questions asked about internet usage. For the small number of respondents who stated they do not have access to internet in their home, the top reasons where that internet service was too costly or that they were able to access service on their smart phones. Respondents were also asked about Weston's biggest internet service challenges that need to be addressed. Top responses were:

- Lower costs (73% of respondents)
- Increased number of internet service providers (51%)
- Increased internet speeds in my area (37%)
- Improved quality of internet service providers (28%)
- Improved service reliability in my area, or from my internet provider (22%)

The communities can encourage participation in LinkWISCONSIN's Broadband Demand Survey (<http://wisconsindashboard.org/console>). This survey identifies un-served and under-served locations specific to consumer/business addresses. This information will be used to understand and analyze broadband gaps, and hopefully lead to opportunities to address gaps. Partnering with agencies like UW-Extension to increase subscribership may also demonstrate general demand in the area.

Other options beyond fully wired connections may be the most viable in rural areas, including:

- **Pursue grants in conjunction with ISPs to expand service.** In 2016, the Town collaborated with Frontier Communications on a PSC grant to do just this.
- **Increase actual speeds of 4G LTE cellular service for phones, tablets, and other devices.** This can mainly be accomplished by encouraging better tower-to-fiber access, where advertised speeds are often lost.
- **Support high-speed, high-capacity wireless internet routers** on existing or future tall structures, working with an ISP to provide wireless point-to-point internet service to customers within the tower's wireless range.
- **Encourage expansion and use of satellite services.** Still, such services suffer from the lag associated with transmitting information to and from space.
- **Explore other new technology options, such as providing Broadband over Power-line (BPL).** BPL has not been applied in Wisconsin, but encouraging collaboration with ATC as power lines are added and replaced is encouraged.

Providing and supporting alternate locations for free- or low-cost broadband service is an alternative to connecting every home. It also provides for a more "connected" community, which can be used as an economic development and marketing tool. Locations and opportunities include



free wireless hotspots at public facilities such as parks and the Town and Village Halls. Encouraging private businesses such as restaurants and coffee shops to provide internet service can increase activity and business. The communities may also help connect residents to locations that have access to computers for the underserved, replicating places like the “Neighbors Place” in downtown Wausau. Some communities, like Wood County, have supported provision of refurbished computers to families in need.

9.4.7. Target Broadband Expansion to Specific Underserved Areas

The Town and Village will work to facilitate new or expanded broadband infrastructure in at least two specific, underserved areas. The Village will accomplish this using techniques described through the other initiatives in this Chapter.

A first underserved area has been the Business and Technology Park – South, the adjacent Highview Business Park, and surrounding planned development areas south of Highway 29. Technology-based business location and expansion would be facilitated by broadband expansion in this area. The Village of Weston, together with private sector partners including Charter, was awarded grant funding of close to \$74,000 in fall of 2014 through the PSC Broadband Expansion Grant Program to serve this location. That project was completed in two phases, with the first phase completed in 2014 and the second in 2016.

The second underserved area includes the northern neighborhoods of the Village and nearby residential areas in the Town of Weston. Proposed broadband expansion to this area would facilitate greater internet speeds for home-based education and employment.

In 2016, the Town of Weston partnered with Marathon County and Frontier North on a PSC broadband grant application in 2016. They were awarded an approximately \$201,000 grant, which is to be combined with approximately \$201,000 from Frontier North, \$50,000 from the Town, and \$50,000 from the County. The approximately ½ million-dollar project will be to extend broadband fiber from its current terminus in the Village of Weston northeast along County Highway SS into the Town. The project will also include 4 nodes along this line to which existing copper cable will be connected. Once complete, the project will result in higher internet speeds within 1 mile of the new SS broadband line. Construction is anticipated in 2017.

Additionally, when Ross and Kramer Avenues are reconstructed, or when multiuse paths are built along either of these avenues, the Village intends to work to ensure that broadband infrastructure is included from the Ross Avenue roundabout to Machmueller Park, unless

Case Study: Fixed Wireless as Alternative to Broadband

Also motivated by the importance of broadband for economic opportunity and quality of life, Racine County leadership implemented an innovative partnership to fill gaps in service.

Specifically, the County decided to partner with an Internet Service Provider (ISP), to provide fixed wireless access to subscribers in areas that did not have a broadband service option. The ISP rents space on water towers and other tall assets owned by the County (and by towns in the County). Racine County is one of a growing group of counties and municipalities across the state pursuing methods of giving private providers access to these assets to expand broadband options and coverage in these communities.”

Fixed wireless connections to service providers use radio signals rather than cables. See more information on Fixed Wireless technology in the Issues and Conditions report.

Source: Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. March 2013. Wisconsin Playbook for Broadband Expansion.



another route of broadband is available.

Finally, the Village and Town could collaborate to connect this service to a new telecommunications tower in or near Machmueller Park. This could be a publicly- or privately-owned tower. Other potential locations for a tower to expand access to the area could also be explored. The tower could host a range of important services, perhaps including:

- A high-speed wireless internet router, working with an ISP to provide wireless point-to-point internet service to area homes and Machmueller Park users.
- Village of Weston communications equipment, including the Water Utility Radiometric Read System, Sewer Utility SCADA system, Public Safety Tornado Sirens.
- Public safety dispatch and communications equipment owned and operated by Marathon County, leased by Marathon County to help defray tower costs.
- Antenna arrays of other cellular and internet service providers.

9.4.8. Participate in the Wausau Community Area Network

There are area, regional, and State of Wisconsin efforts that the Village and Town of Weston will continue to monitor and consider direct participation. These include the Wausau Community Area Network (WCAN). WCAN is a Wausau-area institutional broadband network currently comprised of the City of Wausau, Marathon County, Wausau School District, Northcentral Technical College, UW-Marathon County, the UW-Extension, and non-profit institutions like hospitals/healthcare. WCAN currently owns and operates 12 miles of fiber connecting many of these institutions, which went “live” in late 2013. WCAN is not an ISP. WCAN may also be a vehicle for the Village and Town to connect with other opportunities. These include a statewide fiber line along Highway 29, and Northcentral Technical College’s efforts to connect with its satellite campuses via the WCAN and Highway 29 lines.

At the time this Plan was prepared, the existing WCAN lines and the fiber along Highway 29 lines may only serve participating public and non-profit institutions via a very high speed network (e.g., 10 gb). These currently include the Village, Town, and many healthcare organizations currently operating in Weston, including Ministry St. Clare. Membership in WCAN is available. Excess capacity may also be available for lease to other qualifying organizations. It is conceivable that, over time, the universe of potentially eligible users could expand, and collaboration with private providers is possible. The Village intends to pursue Village connection to the WCAN, as well as encourage DC Everest School District connection.

9.4.9. Collaboratively Plan for Tall Structures

High speed internet service is becoming increasingly available through 4G LTE cellular networks in the area, and may be a viable means of providing higher-speed service to rural customers in the near term (see above). Such services depend both of the location and placement of antenna arrays on tall structures, and on connections of those arrays to fiber networks.



The Town and Village of Weston also need tall structures to provide water service and for public safety communications. The Town and Village also review tall structures proposed by others as part of their zoning functions. Whenever upgrades to or installation of new water towers or public safety communication towers occurs, the Town and Village will engage private cellular providers to determine whether their needs could be integrated into the design (ideally with cost-sharing). Also, when conducting zoning reviews of tall structures proposed by others, the Town and Village will encourage the entity engaging in the construction project to connect with telecommunication providers to co-locate their facilities.



Example of “stealth” telecommunication facility placement at a high school athletic field complex.



Chapter 10: Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Provide a blueprint for intergovernmental collaboration to meet common objectives
- Set a platform for working with neighboring communities, the School District, and regional and State agencies

Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal

Working with other governments, districts, and agencies, the Town of Weston will enhance intergovernmental relationships to avoid conflicts, achieve common goals, share resources, educate residents, improve services, increase efficiency, and reduce costs.



Intergovernmental Cooperation Initiatives

Initiative	Description	Funding	Responsibility
(Follow links for further details)			
<u>Continue the Intergovernmental Relationship with the Village of Weston</u>	The Village of Weston is the Town’s closest partner. The Town may pursue additional planning, zoning, and development efforts with the Village. The Town also seeks a mutually-agreed, phased approach to annexation, perhaps via a cooperative boundary plan/agreement.	Town general fund	Town Board, with guidance from the Plan Commission
<u>Streamline the Planning and Zoning Relationship with Marathon County</u>	Landowners in the Town are subject to a sometimes confusing range of local and County development regulations. The Town seeks to streamline the experience when land owners interface with County shoreland zoning rules in particular.	Town general fund	Town Board, with guidance from the Plan Commission



10.1. Objectives

1. Advance the Town's vision and a regional ethic via intergovernmental relationships.
2. Maintain intergovernmental communication, whether through formal agreements or not.
3. Improve efficiencies in service and utility delivery across jurisdictional boundaries and traditional service categories.
4. Increase collaboration on economic development, tourism, and recreation initiatives.

10.2. Policies

1. Monitor, honor, and implement intergovernmental agreements to which the Town is a party.
2. Continue to formalize major areas of agreement, such as new, amended, and replacement intergovernmental agreements and cooperative plans, as authorized under State Statutes.
3. Continue to engage in informal intergovernmental arrangements, such as sharing of information, personnel, marketing, equipment, facilities, parkland/trails, and recreational programming.
4. Seek opportunities to expand intergovernmental arrangements with abutting Town governments.
5. Seek opportunities to coordinate bidding and construction of infrastructure and equipment projects.
6. Collaborate on regional sewer service area planning, flood protection, stormwater management, transportation (highways, trails, bus), and park and open space projects with Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WisDNR), North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC), Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission (Wausau Area MPO), Marathon County, and other communities.
7. Continue to support intergovernmental and cross-community organizations that enhance the area's quality of life, such as the Marathon County Development Corporation (MCDEVCO), Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce, Central Wisconsin Off-road Cycling Coalition (CWOCC), Marathon County Friends of the Mountain-Bay State Trail, Hmong American Center, the Marathon County Public Library system, and environmental/watershed organizations.
8. In the event of disagreements between the plans, policies, programs, ordinances, or interpretation of intergovernmental agreements between the Town and adjacent or overlapping units of government, pursue dispute resolution approaches that rely on open, direct communications between Town officials and the officials of other affected governments.



10.3. Initiatives

The following pages describes the initiatives summarized on the cover page of this chapter.

10.3.1. Continue the Intergovernmental Relationship with the Village of Weston

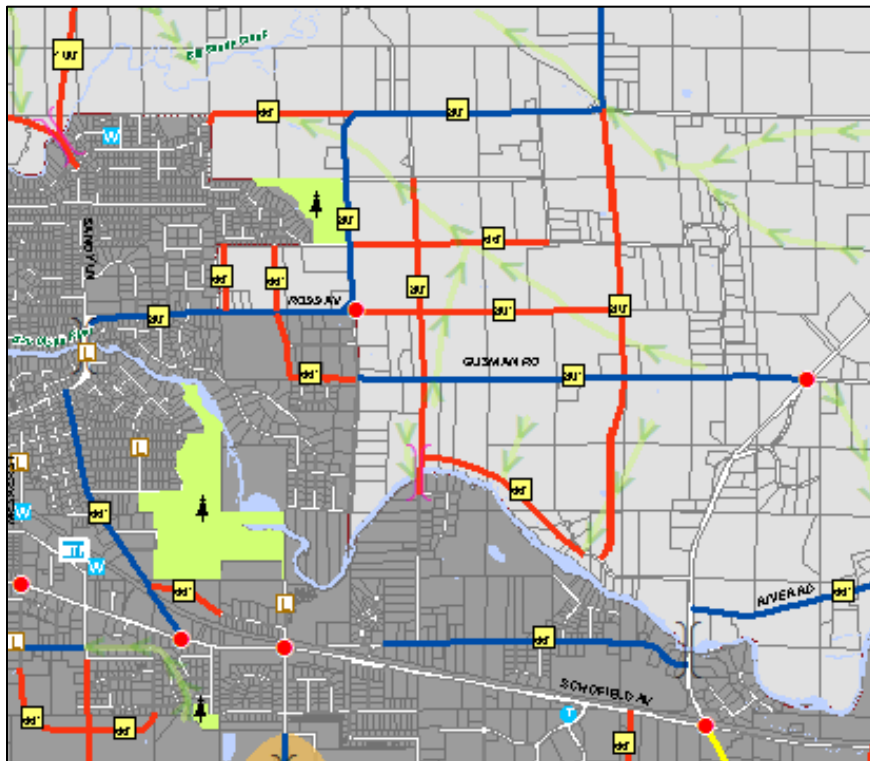
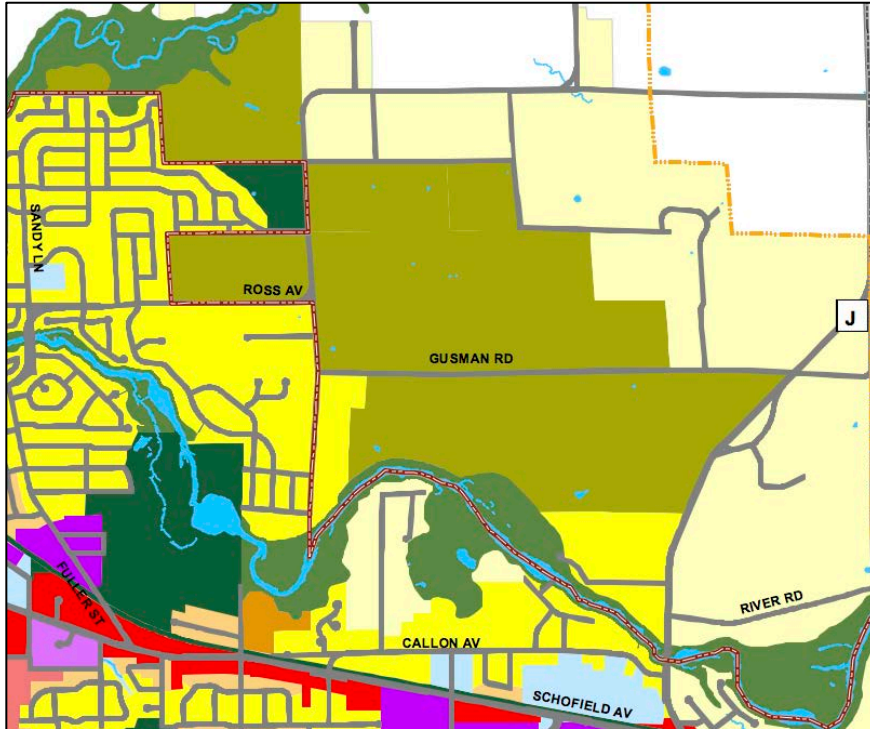
The Town values its relationship with the Village of Weston. Opportunities and avenues for further collaboration and integration between the Town and Village may include the following:

- **Broadband Implementation.** Opportunities for collaborative broadband expansion are laid out within Chapter 9.
- **Road Reconstruction.** Figure 7-1 in the Transportation Chapter identifies, as a priority roadway project, the reconstruction and improvement of the Ross Avenue/Kramer Lane, Kersten Road/Lester Street corridor. This project would require collaboration between the Village and Town.
- **Potential Expansion of Extraterritorial Zoning.** Portions of the Town of Weston close to the Village are under an extraterritorial zoning ordinance, while other parts more remote from the Village limits are under Town zoning. The Village and Town intend to continue their collaboration on the zoning of both areas. Beyond this, Section 66.0307(7m) of Wisconsin Statutes appears to enable the Village zoning ordinance to apply throughout the Town, if the Village and Town were to enter a “cooperative plan” under Section 66.0307. This may simplify zoning jurisdiction and administration in the Town.
- **Collaborative Planning in Northeast Growth Area.** The Village has identified lands northeast and east of the current Village limits for future neighborhood development, and associated detailed planning. The graphics on the following page are portions of the Village of Weston’s Future Land Use map and Future Transportation map, from its separate Comprehensive Plan. The Village plans for much of the area between Highways N and J as appropriate for either “Planned Neighborhood” or “Single Family-Unsewered” use. “Planned Neighborhood” areas are envisioned for development on public sewer and water systems. The Village also plans for an interconnected road network and other facilities like parks and trails in this area. The Town of Weston’s Future Land Use Map (Map 3-1) depicts some, but not all, of these same areas as “Transition,” as described in Figure 3-1. The Town of Weston will collaboratively work with the Village as these areas are planned and developed to ensure that they blend with the more rural areas of the Town. See also the recommendation on an ensuing page related to annexation.

The Two Westons

Since the Village was incorporated from the Town of Weston in 1996, the Village and Town have maintained a close working relationship. This has included traditional areas of collaboration, such as maintenance of border roads. The cooperation has extended to joint planning and zoning. This includes an extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) area and contracted Village administration of Town zoning beyond the ETZ area. The Town and Village also share certain planning documents, such as for Broadband Technology.





To the left are portions of the Village of Weston's Future Land Use map (top) and Future Transportation map (bottom) from the Village's Comprehensive Plan. They identify a generalized future land use pattern and transportation network for lands at and beyond the current northeast boundary of the Village, extending into the Town of Weston. The olive colored area on the Future Land Use map represents lands planned by the Village for neighborhood development on municipal sewer and water, while the light yellow areas to their east are planned for rural/unsewered single family development. The lines on the Future Transportation map represent planned future (red) and expanded (blue) roads, with suggested road right-of-way widths.



- **Annexation and Boundary Agreement.** The Town of Weston understands and anticipates that some lands indicated as “Transition” on the Future Land Use map will be annexed by the Village of Weston and subsequently developed using municipal utilities. The Town seeks to minimize the area of annexation. Where annexed and developed, the Town and Village desire development in an orderly, sequential manner. Annexation phasing, and other matters discussed above, could be included within a “cooperative boundary plan” as authorized under Section 66.0307 of Wisconsin Statutes. Such agreements include provisions for orderly, predictable annexation and other provisions to retain the fiscal viability of the Town.

10.3.2. Streamline the Planning and Zoning Relationship with Marathon County

The Town and Village manage general zoning within the Town’s boundaries, and of course the Town is able to prepare and update its own comprehensive plan. Still, land in the Town remains subject to certain County plans (e.g., farmland preservation), subdivision regulations, and specialized zoning directed to wetland, floodplain, and shoreland area protection. Shoreland areas are generally within 1,000 feet of a lake and 300 feet of a stream or river.

The Town seeks to streamline development review processes for owners within the shoreland area in particular, which appears to be the most common interface with County development regulations. The Town and Village intend to approach the County to develop a more unified application and review scheme when landowners wish to construct buildings or improve sites within the shoreland area. This should be done in a manner that does not compromise surface water quality or waterfront experience, which are key objectives of shoreland zoning.

There also appears to be somewhat of a confusing relationship between the Marathon County Farmland Preservation Plan and this Town Comprehensive Plan. Ideally, that relationship will be resolved before the next required 10-year updates of both of these plans.



Chapter 11: Implementation

- Prioritize initiatives put forward in other chapters of this Plan
- Provide a guide for future Plan use and amendments

Implementation Goal

The Town of Weston intends to share and explain this Plan with the community, consider strategic amendments, and track progress and completion of priority initiatives.



Implementation Effort

(Follow links for further details)

Description

Responsibility

Share and Institutionalize the Town’s Plan

The Town’s Comprehensive Plan will have value only if it is understood, supported, and used by staff, officials, land owners, residents, and others interested in the future of the Town to guide future growth and preserve the existing rural heritage of the town. The Town will therefore work to increase awareness of its Plan.

Town Board, Plan Commission, and ETZ Committee, in partnership with Village Planning & Development Department staff

Implement Priority Plan Initiatives

This volume of the Comprehensive Plan contains a number of suggested initiatives. Figure 11-1 includes all of the initiatives from the previous chapters, with each one assigned a top, high, or moderate priority.

Responsibilities for each of the priority initiatives in Figure 11-1 are described on the cover pages for each of the previous Plan chapters

Evaluate Consistency Between the Plan and Decision Making

The Town will strive to make decisions that are consistent with its Comprehensive Plan, and is required to do so for rezonings and certain other decisions. This section describes what “consistency” means for various decisions.

Town Board and Plan Commission



11.1. Purpose

Few of the directions of this volume of the Comprehensive Plan will be automatically implemented. Specific follow-up actions will be required to convert the Plan into reality. This final chapter of Volume 2 of the Town's Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide Weston with a roadmap for implementation. The following pages further describe the implementation priorities included on the cover page of this chapter and necessary to achieve the Town's vision.

11.2. Adopt the Plan

This volume of the Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan was adopted following procedures specified by Wisconsin's comprehensive planning statute. Combined with Volume 1, the Town included all necessary elements and met all the procedural requirements under the statute. This included opportunities for public input, a Town Plan Commission recommendation, a formal public hearing, and finally Town Board adoption of this volume by ordinance.

11.3. Share and Institutionalize the Town's Plan

The Town's Comprehensive Plan will have value only if it is understood, supported, and used by staff, officials, developers, residents, and others interested in the future of the Town to guide future growth and change. The Town will work to increase awareness and absorption of its Plan, by:

- Ensuring that up-to-date materials are easily accessible on the Town website.
- Coordinating educational activities and plan dissemination with the Village of Weston, and encouraging the Village of Weston to share the Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan with interested parties.
- Encouraging all Town committees and staff to become familiar with and use the Plan in their decision making.
- Incorporating major initiatives into annual budgets and grant requests, as funding allows.

11.4. Implement Plan Initiatives

Figure 11-1 includes the initiatives from all of the preceding chapters' cover pages. The referenced chapter includes more information on each initiative. The Town Board and Plan Commission have evaluated all of these initiatives against one another to arrive at the priority ratings in Figure 11-1.

The highest priority initiatives are a primary focus, and implementation ought to begin almost immediately (if not already started). Priorities a bit further down the list should advance as soon as practical, assuming that the highest priorities are on course and manageable. Lower priority initiatives may elevate, or may be ongoing or time-permitting initiatives of the associated board, committee, or staff.

The Town may adjust priorities to capture unique opportunities or reflect policy changes. Also, some priority initiatives will require substantial cooperation with others, including surrounding local governments and local property owners, which can affect implementation timeframes.



Figure 11-1: Prioritization of Initiatives from Volume 2 of Town of Weston Comprehensive Plan

Priority Initiative (click on link to learn more)	Chapter Reference	Priority Rating
<u>Effectively Manage Town Facilities and Services</u>	Chapter 8: Community Facilities and Utilities	1
<u>Maintain the Rural Character of the Town</u>	Chapter 3: Land Use	2
<u>Maintain the Function and Condition of the Town’s Roadways</u>	Chapter 7: Transportation	3
<u>Facilitate a Clean and Plentiful Water Supply</u>	Chapter 8: Community Facilities and Utilities	4 (tie)
<u>Promote the Continuance of Agriculture in the Town of Weston</u>	Chapter 6: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources	4 (tie)
<u>Communicate and Uniformly Implement Environmental Regulations</u>	Chapter 6: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources	6
<u>Use the Future Land Use Map to Guide Growth and Development</u>	Chapter 3: Land Use	7
<u>Continue to Expand Broadband Access to Residential Customers</u>	Chapter 9: Broadband Technology	8
<u>Increase the Visibility, Quality, and Use of the Eau Claire River</u>	Chapter 6: Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources	9
<u>Thoughtfully Site New Residential Development</u>	Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods	10
<u>Support Development of Weston-area Recreational Facilities</u>	Chapter 8: Community Facilities and Utilities	11
<u>Continue the Intergovernmental Relationship with the Village of Weston</u>	Chapter 10: Intergovernmental Cooperation	12
<u>Target Broadband Expansion to Specific Underserved Areas</u>	Chapter 9: Broadband Technology	13
<u>Prioritize a Limited Number of Roadway Expansion Projects</u>	Chapter 7: Transportation	14
<u>Encourage High Quality Property Maintenance</u>	Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods	15
<u>Grow the Local Agricultural Economy</u>	Chapter 4: Economic Development	16
<u>Support Economic Development Initiatives in the Greater Weston Area</u>	Chapter 4: Economic Development	17
<u>Support Additional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities</u>	Chapter 7: Transportation	18
<u>Change the Funding “Bottom Line” for Broadband Expansion</u>	Chapter 9: Broadband Technology	19
<u>Streamline the Planning and Zoning Relationship with Marathon County</u>	Chapter 10: Intergovernmental Cooperation	20
<u>Work with the Village of Weston to Develop Neighborhood Plans for Growth Areas</u>	Chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods	21



11.5. Evaluate Consistency Between the Plan and Decision Making

Many of the individual decisions guided by this Plan will revolve around zoning, land divisions, public investments, and intergovernmental relations. The State's comprehensive planning statute requires that new and amended zoning ordinances (and rezonings), subdivision regulations, and official maps be "consistent" with this Town Comprehensive Plan. The Town's approach to evaluating consistency of subsequent decisions with this Comprehensive Plan is as listed below:

- **Zoning.** Proposed zoning text and map amendments (rezonings) must be consistent with this Plan. The Future Land Use map will be used to guide the application of the general pattern of permanent zoning. However, the precise location of zoning district boundaries may vary from the Future Land Use map, as judged appropriate by the Plan Commission, ETZ Committee, and Town Board. Departures from the exact land use boundaries depicted on the Future Land Use map may be particularly appropriate for properties located at the edges of future land use areas. In their consideration of zoning map changes, the Plan Commission, ETZ Committee, and Town Board will also evaluate the specific timing of the zoning map amendment request, its relationship to the nature of both existing and future land uses, the current availability of public infrastructure and services, and the details of the proposed development. Therefore, this Plan allows for the phasing of zoning actions and the refinement of the precise recommended land use boundaries through the zoning processes. Where the Town wishes to amend its zoning map in a manner that differs from this Plan, the Town will first need to amend the Plan to resolve the difference(s).
- **Land Division.** Proposed land divisions should be generally consistent with the recommendations in this Plan. In their consideration of land divisions, the Plan Commission and Town Board will also evaluate the specific timing of the land division request, its relationship to the nature of both existing and future land uses, the current availability of public infrastructure and services, and the details of the proposed development. This Plan allows for the phased timing and the refinement of the precise recommended development pattern through the land division process, as deemed appropriate by the Plan Commission and Town Board, in cooperation with the Village of Weston.
- **Public Investments.** Proposed public investment decisions will generally be guided by the recommendations in the Town Comprehensive Plan. The timing and precise location of public investments may vary, as judged appropriate by the Town Board, often following recommendations from appropriate committees. This Plan allows for the phased timing and the refinement of the precise recommended public facilities and other public investments, as deemed appropriate by the Town Board.
- **Intergovernmental Relations.** Proposed intergovernmental relation decisions will generally be guided by the recommendations in this Plan, as the Town Board deems appropriate. However, in its consideration of intergovernmental decisions and agreements, the Town Board will also evaluate a wide variety of other factors. Departures from the recommendations in this Plan shall be resolved by the Town Board through the associated intergovernmental process.



11.6. Amend and Update the Plan as Necessary

“Amendments” are generally defined as minor changes to the maps or text in the Comprehensive Plan. Amendments may be appropriate in instances where the Plan becomes irrelevant or contradictory to emerging policy, initiatives, or trends. Weston is also likely to receive and wish to entertain requests for Plan amendments from land owners, developers, and others.

The State comprehensive planning law requires that the Town use the same basic process to amend, add to, or update the Comprehensive Plan as it used to adopt the Plan. Adoption or amendment of the Comprehensive Plan shall comply with the procedures set forth in Section 66.1001(4)a of Wisconsin Statutes. The Town intends to use the following procedure to amend, add to, or update the Comprehensive Plan:

- a. The Plan Commission initiates the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, perhaps based on a referral or request from the Town Board, ETZ Committee, or Town staff or consultants.
- b. Following an opportunity for public input on the proposed Plan amendment, the Plan Commission recommends Town Board approval (or rejection or modification) of the amendment via resolution.
- c. Following passage of the Plan Commission resolution recommending the amendment, the Town Clerk schedules a formal public hearing on the Plan amendment in front of the Town Board and publishes a Class 1 notice at least 30 days before the hearing. The Class 1 notice shall contain the date, time, and place of the hearing, a summary of the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment, the name of a Town employee to be contacted to provide information about the amendment, the location and time wherein the amendment can be inspected before the hearing, and information about how a copy can be obtained. Also, at least 30 days before the hearing, the Clerk provides written notice to those entities that qualify under Sections 66.1001(4)(e) and (f) of Wisconsin Statutes.
- d. Following the public hearing, the amendment may be enacted by the Town Board in the form of an ordinance adopted by majority vote of all the members of the Town Board (not a simple majority of a quorum).
- e. Following Town Board approval of the amendment, the Town Clerk sends a CD or hard copy of the approved ordinance and Plan amendment to the nearest branch of the Marathon County Library System, Wisconsin Department of Administration (Division of Intergovernmental Relations), Marathon County Clerk and Planning and Development Department, Northcentral Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and all adjoining towns, cities, and villages.

The State comprehensive planning law requires that the Comprehensive Plan be updated at least once every ten years. As opposed to an amendment, an update is often a substantial re-write of the Plan document and maps. The Town intends to update its Comprehensive Plan by the year 2027 (i.e., ten years after 2017).

